

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

WINTER 2001

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club is a recreational hiking association of volunteers who preserve and improve the Appalachian Trail as the nation's premier, continuous, long-distance footpath.

Andy Layne Trail Dedication

2:00 PM Saturday, March 3. We will carpool from the Orange Market and assemble at the bulletin board on The Andy Layne Trail, 100 yards from the parking lot on VA-779.

If you knew Andy you won't want to miss this; if you didn't know him, come and find out why we named the trail after him.

Annual Meeting and Banquet

6:00 PM Saturday, March 3 at Christ Lutheran Church – reservations are essential and need to be *received* with \$12 by Shirley Kotheimer at 5914 Janda Drive, Roanoke 24019 by **February 28** – Shirley will leave for Spain on March 1 so last minute problems will fall on Linda Akers.– Leonard Adkins will entertain us with Wildflowers of the Appalachian Trail – The caterer and menu are the same as last year, including honey ham and seafood casserole, spinach salad and fruit bowl, and steamed assorted vegetables and assorted desserts. Questions – call Shirley at 562-0356

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Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club
PO BOX 12282
ROANOKE VA 24024-2282

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Dick Clark
 989-7053..... artscoun@roanoke.infi.net

Vice President, Lucien Metayer
 344-1877..... metayer@roanoke.infi.net

Secretary, Sharon Bottomley
 989-1818..... sharonr@rev.net

Treasurer, Bill Lamson
 774-8981..... blueridge@prodigy.net

Land Mgmt. Supervisor, Hal Cantrill
 387-2347..... hacantrill@worldnet.att.net

Trail Supervisor, Charles Parry
 951-1402..... parrycj@math.vt.edu

Shelter Supervisor, Ron McCorkle
 982-8289..... rdsinvco@home.com

Hikemaster, Mike Ferguson
 344-8525..... mferguson11@juno.com

Newsletter Editor, Bob Peckman
 366-7780..... bob@peckmanjazz.com

Membership Coordinator, Liz Lamson
 774-8981..... blueridge@prodigy.net

Counselor, Leonard Adkins
 384-7485.....

Counselor, Don Nulph
 774-8618..... nulph-d@home.com

ATC Board of Managers, Jimmy Whitney
 344-4117..... jwhitney@mooreandcampbell.com

ATC Board of Managers Vice Chair, Jim Hutchings
 427-4536..... James.Hutchings@indsys.ge.com

ATC Trail & Land Management Committee-Hal Cantrill
 387-2347..... hacantrill@worldnet.att.net

ANCILLARIES

Social Chairman, Shirley Kothierner
 562-0356.....

Phone Tree Chairman, Liz Lamson
 774-8981..... blueridge@prodigy.net

Hike Reports Editor, Kris Peckman
 366-7780..... kris@peckmanjazz.com

Newsletter Distribution, Bobbie Stitche
 890-2140..... bobbie@rbnet.com

Webmaster, David A. Cheslow
 389-7791..... dcheslow@swva.net

Roanoke College Rep., Brian Chisom
 389-7393..... and 375-2084

Mid-week Workhikes, Bill Gordge
 774-3016..... BillBuzz@worldnet.att.net

ATC Land Trust Coordinators

James River to New River, Roger B. Holnback
 540-473-1515..... holnback@aol.com

New River to Damascus, Steve Reisinger
 504-951-7580..... srei38@hotmail.com

CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

Saturday, March 3
Andy Layne Trail Dedication

Saturday, March 3
Annual Meeting & Banquet

WORK HIKES

Sunday, January 21
Brushy Mtn. Workhike Bland Co.

Sunday, February 11
Catawba Creek Bridge

Sunday, March 18
Daleville - planting trees

Hike-planning Meeting
Monday, February 12

BOARD MEETINGS

(Open to Club members who contact host in advance.)

Thursday, January 4 , 7 30 p.m.
Hosted by Bob & Kris Peckman

Thursday, February 8 , 7 30 p.m.
Hosted by Don Nulph

Thursday, March 8, 7 30 p.m.
Hosted by Dick Clark

The Blazer is on-line through <http://ratc.org> and at <http://peckmanjazz.com/blazer.htm>.

**The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club is an affiliate of
 The Appalachian Trail Conference
 and a member of The Nature Conservancy**

Hike Schedule - WINTER 2001

Guests Visitors are always welcome. Come dressed for hiking. You are expected to follow the directions of the hike leaders.

Transportation You may drive your own car if you wish; however, the hike leader is responsible for arranging transportation and all will follow his/her directions. The cost to help defray car expenses is noted on the schedule and should be given to the driver.

Meeting Place The point of departure is at the discretion of the hike leader, so always check with the leader when planning to attend.

Sunday, January 7, 2001 - 8:30 AM Dragon's Tooth to Trout Creek

7 miles moderate, \$2.50 carpool fee
Bobbie Stitcher 890-2140
Kris Peckman 366-7780

Sunday, January 7, 2001 - 1:00 PM Daleville to Rt. 652

4 miles easy, -0- carpool fee
Sharon Bottomley 989-1818
Liz Lamson 774-8981

Sunday, January 14, 2001 - 8:00 AM Price Mt./Patterson Mt.

7 or 11 miles, depending on weather
\$3.00 carpool fee
Kris Peckman 366-7780
Sharon Bottomley 989-1818

Sunday, January 14, 2001 - 1:00 PM Flat Top

5 miles moderate, \$3.00 carpool fee
Zetta Campbell 366-8165
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

Sunday, January 21, 2001 - 8:00 AM Brushy Mtn Workhike, Bland Co.

\$3.50 carpool fee
Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Kenny Garrett 890-8946

Sunday, January 21, 2001 - 1:00 PM Wolf Creek Greenway

3 miles easy - No carpool fee
Mike Ferguson 344-8525
Ron McCorkle 982-8289

Sunday, January 28, 2001 - 1:00 PM Hay Rock

7 miles moderate - No carpool fee
Zetta Campbell 366-8165
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

Sunday, February 4, 2001 - 8:00 AM Lickskillet Hollow to I-77

13 miles moderate - \$3.50 carpool fee
Kenny Garrett 890-8946, Kris Peckman 366-7780

Sunday, February 4, 2001 1:00 PM Devils Marblyard

5 miles moderate - \$3.50 carpool fee
Ed Wallace 774-0175, Betty Mathews 343-4225

Sunday, February 11, 2001 - 8:30 Catawba Creek Bridge Workhike

\$1.00 carpool fee
Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Don Nulph 774-8618

Sunday, February 11, 2001 1:00 PM Chestnut Ridge Trail

5 miles easy - No carpool fee
Lucie n Metayer 344-1877
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

Sunday, February 18, 2001 - 8:00 AM Cornelius Creek Shelter to Petites Gap

10 miles moderate - \$3.50 carpool fee
Ed Wallace 774-0175

Sunday, February 18, 2001 - 1:00 PM Cascades

4 miles easy - \$3.00 carpool fee plus parking fee
Zetta Campbell 366-8165

Sunday, February 25, 2001 - 8:00 AM McAfees / Tinker Cliffs/Andy Layne Trail

12 miles strenuous - \$1.50 carpool fee
Mike Ferguson 344-8525
Bobbie Stitcher 890-2140

Sunday, February 25, 2001 - 1:00 PM Grouse Trail to Rt. 311

5 miles moderate - \$1.50 carpool fee
Betty Mathews 343-4225
Mervin Brower 387-9732

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members. We look forward to meeting you on the trail soon.

Connie & Milton Carter,
 Arneta Austin,
 John C, Everett, Jr.,
 Jeanette & John Huebner,
 Don Barnhart,

Stephen & Michele Wright,
 Jean Warren,
 Greg & Cathy Tinaglia,
 William Weikart,
 Stephanie Humphries,

Scott Jarrett,
 Barbara Franck,
 Ange & Holly Walker,
 Paul Mattox, and
 Kristi L. Mullins

Membership Report

The RATC ends the year 2000 with 269 paying memberships representing 352 adults and 13 complimentary memberships.

IT'S TIME TO RENEW MEMBERSHIPS

Your 2001 dues are payable on January 1st. Use the renewal form at the end of the hike schedule to pay them now. Last winter, many of our members paid for two years, and it's very easy to check to see if you are among that group. The number after your name shows the last year of your paid membership. For example:

HANK & HEATHER HIKER 00
 1234 WALKER ROAD
 ROANOKE, VA 24015

Hank and Heather have paid through 2000, and their 2001 dues are due now. 01 on the right of the mailing label says a member has paid through 2001 and owes nothing at this time. If you are delinquent and want to be re-instated, you may do so by simply paying your 2001 dues during this grace period! The bylaws stipulate that we drop those more than six months delinquent from the rolls.

Membership Coordinator, Liz Lamson
 774-8981blueridge@prodigy.net

President's Message

With the completion of the Andy Layne Trail to Tinker Cliffs I found myself thinking, as I often do, about Andy. Although I only knew him for about ten years, it seems considerably longer. Within an hour of meeting him for the first time, I felt that I had known him all of my life and that we had done dozens of wild and improbable things together. I think he must have had that effect on everyone.

Andy loved to be around people and was involved with nearly everything that was going on in the club. He was equally happy whether he was swinging a pulaski, taking a fledging hiker under his wing, or helping me put the new hike schedule together. He canoed and backpacked. I have a wonderful memory of Andy working his way through the boulders on Old Rag with an old-fashioned army pack that was almost as big as he was.

Along with Andy's endless supply of fireballs was his endless supply of corny jokes and trail stories which we never tired of hearing. He flirted shamelessly with the women and no one seemed to mind. His laugh was legendary. First, his eyes crinkled shut; then you could see the laugh moving up his throat before you could hear it. Finally, his entire body would be convulsed with the sheer joy of it all. He was a character in the very best sense of the word.

Without question, Andy had a deep and impassioned love for the mountains. He thrived in the great outdoors and was always ready for any kind of trail adventure. The Andy Layne Trail is a fitting memorial to a man who can truly be described as unique. He was our friend. We miss him.

Dick Clark

Hikemaster Report

Thanks to all the leaders and assistants. In recognition of your dedication, I am pleased to announce the following winners from 10-1-99 to 9-30-00. For helping with 5 to 7 hikes: Linda Akers, Sharon Bottomley, Mervin Brower, Dick Clark, Sue Scanlin, Bobbie Sticher, and Ed Wallace. There were no winners in the 8 or 9 hikes category. And can anybody guess who the only winner in the 10 or more hikes category is?

That's right, Zetta Campbell. The hats and the hat and T-shirt will be awarded at the annual banquet on March 3rd. If you feel you were slighted, please call me before the banquet and I'll be glad to adjust the winners' circle.

The next hike planning meeting will be Monday, February 12, 2001.

Mike Ferguson

Trail Supervisor's Report

We have our first set of winners under our new worker awards system. Even I find it necessary to review the requirements, so I will give a brief summary. If you work 4 or more days in a year you receive a RATC hat, 7 or more days you receive a RATC T-shirt, 9 or more days you receive a RATC hat and T-shirt. The winners for the year Oct. 1, 1999 to Sept. 30, 2000 are for hat : Peggy Bryant, Dave Cheslow, Brian Chisom, Kenny Garrett, Dave Hicks, Brian Kelley, Linda King, Lindsay Marshall, Lucien Metayer, Marge O'Connell, Walter Parry, Bob Peckman, Clyde Perdue, Homer Witcher and Therese Witcher; for T-shirt: Lynn Bryant; for both: Malcolm Black, Hal Cantrill, Bill Floyd, Bill Gorge, Ron McCorkle, Charles Parry, Kris Peckman and Maurice Turner. As with the Florida vote count mistakes are possible, so if anyone has been missed, please let me know. We are pleased to have two Roanoke College students among the winners. These awards will be given out at the annual banquet, but please let me congratulate the winners now. Thanks to Homer and Therese Witcher, we achieved our goal of completing the Andy Layne Trail relocation in the 20th century with more than a month to spare. For the

misinformed, the 21st century begins Jan. 1, 2001. With one notable exception, the new trail is a great improvement over the old one. The reason for the one steep section of the new trail is that we are sandwiched between a property boundary on one side and a deep gully on the other. We are planning a dedication of the Andy Layne Trail for March 3rd, the afternoon of the day of the annual banquet. It will be announced elsewhere in this Blazer. This will be 10 years after Andy left us. The dedication will be an opportunity to remember Andy and to give thanks to Roanoke Cement Company for allowing us to build the trail on their land. Now that the Andy Layne Trail is complete, we can concentrate on making repairs and improvements to the AT. Among items planned for the next several months are bridge replacements in the Catawba and Dismal Creek areas and planting of 2000 - 3000 trees in the Daleville area. It looks like we will be having a chainsaw certification course sometime this spring. I will pass the details along by e-mail when I receive them. If possible, I will put the details on the web-Blazer and in the Spring Blazer.

Charles Parry

Please email me: bob@peckmanjazz.com so I can add your email address to the database. The Blazer deadline is always five weeks before the last hike scheduled in the previous Blazer. The best way to send Blazer material and hike reports is to cut and paste it into email or attach a text file or MS-Word-97 file to bob@peckmanjazz.com or mail a floppy. I can scan plain typing and of course handwriting is also fine. I am just the editor; you are the authors.

Bob Peckman

First Annual RATC Christmas Art Show

The First Annual Christmas Art Show was a great success. There were six Club artisans who shared their works with the 40 to 50 club members at the Annual Christmas Party.

1. Malcolm & Jimmie Black (Wildflower Studio & Lit'l Folks) shared their beautiful ceramics and unusual woodcarvings.
2. Betsy Briggs displayed two outstanding monotype paintings titled "Two Willows" and "Snow Clouds".
3. Bill Gordge, past president of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club, exhibited his talents in photography and his outstanding talent in welded iron sculptors.
4. Lucien (Larry) Metayer, Jr. (Appalachian Outdoor Photography) Vice President RATC shared his unusual photographs of the Trail and surrounding areas.
5. Maurice Turner, past Shelter Supervisor, displayed one of his beautiful refinished tables.
6. Ed and Mary Wallace exhibited their flair for photography with photos from their many trips out West. **Note:** Ed has two pictures in this year's Appalachian Trail Conference 2000 calendar.

I would like to thank all of those who shared their special talents in arts and their willingness to share their work with the Club membership at this show.

Larry Metayer, Jr.

www.ratc.org News

The web site maintenance software is working very well now and is maintaining "Links", "Contacts" and "Gallery". Stephanie Kent is working on the content for the "History" section while in the middle of moving to Roanoke. CONTENT is needed for the "Advocacy," "Shelters," and "Trail Work" sections. For example:

1. A title (name of a shelter, topic of advocacy, place that needs work)
 2. A description Current status (what needs doing, how to volunteer/help, upcoming milestones and events)
 3. A contact person (name, phone, email)
- Related web links
4. Special things to note (new shelter project?, how to voice an opinion to legislators?, Read mountain project?)

5. Photos Related subjects, interesting sidelines
Anything else that someone might want to know

David will probably schedule a data entry party for the "Hikes" section sometime in January. He'll need volunteers who are familiar with the hikes... no computer experience necessary.

The work on maintenance program has been "behind the scenes." Now the visible progress can be very rapid... it all depends on CONTENT. David likes email, but will retype paper, scan photos, and check spelling and grammar. No excuses, don't hold back! David Cheslow's email address is cheslow@swva.net

David Cheslow

Roanoke Appalachian Trail club Annual Banquet and Business Meeting

Christ Lutheran Church, Corner of Grandin and Brandon
6 p.m. Saturday, March 3, 2001

Menu: Spinach Salad, Ham, Sweet Potatoes, Seafood Casserole, Rice, Green Beans, Mixed Medley of Vegetables, Fruit Salad, Variety of Desserts, Tea, Coffee.

Speaker: Leonard Adkins – Wildflowers of the Appalachian Trail

Reservation Form Mail to Shirley Kotheimer, 5914 Janda Drive, Roanoke, VA 24019
Must receive by February 28th, before Shirley flies to Spain

Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club Annual Dinner and Business Meeting

Please reserve _____ places at the RATC Annual Dinner Meeting

Please Make out name tags as follows: _____

Enclosed is a check for \$_____ (\$12.00 per person) Please make checks payable to RATC

THE BEAR THAT DOESN'T EXIST!_(on the right coast)

Otterbill and I hike all year long, up and down the Appalachian Trail in Virginia. And more than once while looking through leafless trees, I've said "Wouldn't it be cool to see a bear lumbering up that hill way over there." Well I got my wish, only this encounter was up close and personal. It was May 30th in the year of our Lord 2000 about 1:28pm. Otterbill and I were walking up the Andy Layne trail, (the old AT in Botetourt County), to where it joined the AT at Scorched Earth Gap just below Tinker Cliffs. I was walking up the hill, with my head down when I saw what appeared to be about 2 square feet of this reddish brown fur just a couple feet from me. I thought " what's that?", when suddenly this bear jumped onto this tree about 7 feet from me. My reaction was, "Holy !@@### !". I immediately backed up about 4 feet. The bear was about 15 feet from me with no trees or brush between it and me. Otterbill was about 30

yards down the hill from me and he thought I had ran upon a snake. I just stood there wondering what to do. I knew if that bear was having a bad day I'd be dead in 2 seconds. I thought, well, where am I going. I've got nowhere to go. So I just stood there staring at the bear as it was at me. We must have looked at each other for about 3 minutes. There were many thoughts running through my mind, as you can imagine, but strangely enough, I was very calm. "What a cute critter. Look at them ears sticking straight out of his head. Wait a minute, this is the top of the food chain! Let's keep this in perspective." Now I can tell you I know nothing about bears. I've only seen them on TV and in pictures. I did know that bears on the East Coast were black or so I thought? But I also knew this bear was not black but reddish brown and big (and as I found out later about 250 pounds). His hind legs were about 2 feet off

the ground with his front 2 hugging the tree, his head turned and with his eyes fixed on me. When Otterbill got up to where we were, the bear saw him and figured he was outnumbered. At that point, he jumped off the tree and went down the hill. All you could hear was THUD, THUD, THUD and then, nothing. He was gone!. The first thing out of Otterbill's mouth was "Look at the color of that thing." Well, we marveled at what just happened. We checked out the tree and saw some fairly good size claw holes and reenacted the whole event. A few days go by and I'm asking everyone I can think of about the color of this bear. Does it have something to do with age? Does it have something to do with time of year? I talked to forestry people, game wardens, and although everyone was interested no one could tell me anything. Then I talked to the Game and Inland fisheries folks and I finally got an answer. What we saw was the Brown Phase of a black bear. Now get this, according to the expert, there is no known documentation these bears existing on the east coast. It is a western states bear often mistaken for a grizzly because of its **cinnamon** color. I almost fell out my chair when I heard this. In fact, after a follow up call a few months later, the bear expert had checked with some biologist from a local university and he told me

none have been seen **east of Minnesota!** Documentation of a rare animal means either a kill or an excellent photograph. If I had had a camera, I don't think I could have taken his picture because I was so awe struck by the beauty and size of this animal. I'm sure I would have scared him away immediately. How lucky can one get! The probably of seeing a bear is slim to say the least and to see one so up close and personal for several minutes is probably unheard of for a hiker. But to see one that **doesn't exist on the east coast** has to be miraculous. In all my years of hiking, I've seen a lot of things out there in the woods, good, bad and otherwise. And although I'll never forget this encounter, I know there will be others.

Dillard "Wrong Way" Childress

P.S. I got a chuckle out of the small article about how to defend yourself against a bear attack. Several months after our encounter, Otterbill and I were deep into the back country and ran upon some "colorful local guys" who told us if you were ever attacked by a bear, climb a small tree. Big bears can't climb small trees. Now they may try to shake you out of it but you'll be so scared you'll feel like the bark on that tree

Hike Reports

Fall - 2000

Sunday, April 30, 2000 Trillium Hike – Flat Top

Carolyn Baratta (Leader), Linda Akers (Assistant Leader), Bob Perry, Maggie Perry, Betty Matthews, Maggie Snyder, Shana Jackson, Shawn Jackson, Dana Helsley, Latisha Maye, Ralph Hart, Joyce Fisher

It was perfect hiking weather, with a clear blue sky, temperatures in the 70's, and calm winds. We had a nice mix of members and newcomers.

Many trillium were out, but signs of much more to come were all around. In addition to trillium, we saw mostly cut-leaved toothwort, Dutchman's breeches, chickweed, yellow,

purple, and white violets, and a few wild geranium, squawroot, and wood betony in bloom. The bloodroot was up but probably past blooming. Much May apple was about, but no blooms were seen. The leaves of the Solomon's seal and perfoliate bellwort were not fully emerged, and several other flowers usually seen on this hike were not out yet.

Dana spotted two birds building a nest on the ground near a fallen tree. The view of the mountain ranges was spectacular at the top. Ralph graciously watched over the faster hikers on the way up, but we all emerged from this wonderful hike within thirty minutes of each other.

**Sunday, May 28, 2000
Chestnut Ridge Trail**

Rained out.

**Sunday, August 20, 2000
Blackhorse Gap to Salt Pond Road**

Ed Wallace (leader), Zetta (assistant), Dana Helsley, Gary Bible, Mary Lou Gaminde, Sharon and Heather Harrison, Ryan Muldown, John Hollandsworth, Marilyn Peters

We are trying to make Zetta a one-name personality like Elvis and Cher, or maybe better someone can come up with an unpronounceable symbol similar to that of the artist formerly known as Prince.

The hike was real nice and it didn't rain on us. Didn't lose anybody

It was real nice to see Marilyn hiking with us again. She moved to Lynchburg and is a member of the Natural Bridge Club now. She and Zetta were gossiping about old times. (Men discuss; women gossip.)

I'll close now that I've gotten myself into trouble.

**Sunday, August 27, 2000
Deer Trail to Route 311**

The hike was cancelled by the leaders because of thunderstorms near the meeting time. By meeting time it had stopped, but heavy clouds were overhead. Three fellows went ahead and unofficially did the hike. Later the sun came out, the sky was blue with white clouds sailing along. Number One leader was chagrined to have missed out on a beautiful hike. That night we were pummelled with some severe thunderstorms. Weather has been changeable.

**Blazing Days
August 27, Sept. 3, Sept. 9**

Charles Parry (leader), Dave Hicks and Kenny Garrett (assistants), Larry Metayer, Bill Floyd, H.R. Blankenship, Fred Coughlan, Hal Cantrill,

Bob and Kris Peckman, Jesse Garrett, Bill Gordge, Ron McCorkle

On August 27, we had nine people and divided into three groups of 3 people each to blaze different parts of the trail. My group started at Pearisburg and headed towards Angel's Rest. Unfortunately, we got only about ¼ mile before it started to rain. We hoped it would be a passing shower, but we heard thunder. We got perhaps ¾ of a mile before Bill Floyd came running up behind us to tell us the other groups had deemed it too wet to blaze. Of course, the sun came out and shone all afternoon, but then we got a real serious thundershower Sunday evening (the night of a cancelled football game).

On September 3, the weather forecast was not real good, but we decided to give it a try again, knowing that we could clip if it rained. We had only four people, so decided to blaze Licksillet Hollow to Kimberling Creek in both directions. Bill and Ron blazed from Kimberling south while Kenny and I came from Licksillet north. As it turned out, the weather held and we got the job done. The next Saturday Kenny, Jesse and I blazed his section between the ends of the Ribble Trail. We still have another day's blazing to do out there, but at least we got something to show for our money.

**Sunday, September 3, 2000
Dragon's Tooth**

Betty Mathews (leader), Mary Lou Gaminde (assistant), Dana Helsley, Mike and Billy Ferguson, Pat Cousins, Jean Warren, Don Bamhart, Don Lawhorn

It was a hot and humid Sunday afternoon. We were all growing quite moist from the heat (especially Mike Ferguson who had his son Billy riding on his back) when the hard rain shower came along to cool us. Unfortunately the timing wasn't real great. Just as we hit the part of the trail that required s-t-r-e-t-c-h-i-n-g our legs over large rocks, the rain began to pelt our faces. Some of us who use eyeglasses couldn't focus through the raindrops that splattered on them and had to remove them in order to watch our feet! This made the trip

especially "adventurous". There were only four of us that continued all the way to the top to find the Dragon's Tooth rock formation. When we realized we were in a cloud and couldn't see much around us, three of us gave up and headed back down. But the fourth, Dana Helsley, walked approximately another 100 meters and found shelter from the rain under the rock we call Dragon's Tooth. As the rain slowed and the walk back became more routine, the tricky rocks of the creek pulled Pat Cousins in for a swim. As you can guess, she didn't really need to cool off at that point but she kept her spirits up as she pulled herself out. What a trooper!

Sunday, September 10, 2000 Harkening Hill

Mervin Brower (leader), Betty Matthews (assistant), Blanche Brower, Jean Huffman, Mary Lou Gaminde, , Harry Ballard, Lathen Davis, Charlie Minter, Tony and Lynnette Martin, Barbara Franck, J. Hollandsworth, Karen Bentley, and from morning hike Gary Bible and Dana Helsley

The day was hot and muggy in Roanoke and slightly better at the Peaks. We went through the Johnson farm. The guides and Rangers were taking a group photograph, which looked like the end of summer for the farm. We stopped at the balancing rock for a rest. Some people climbed on it for a rocking ride. The morning hikers caught up to us here. Then we went on to the top and looked at the view. After which it was all downhill to the information center which was the end of the hike.

Saturday, September 16, 2000 Mill Mountain Loop

Dick Clark (leader), Marge Griffith (assistant), Suzanne Barnett, Zetta Campbell, Pat Cousins, Dana Helsley, Laura Montague, Jim Stettner (NBATC)

We had a beautiful day and a good group for our outing on Mill Mountain. We followed the Star Trail to the summit where we examined the new Visitor Center, which is under construction.

After enjoying our snacks, we walked down the old Mill Mountain road, past Mayor Smith's house, and on to the hairpin turn about a mile from the Star. Then we followed a sequence of old trails that brought us back to the lower part of the Star Trail where we retraced our steps to the parking lot.

As it turned out, Jim Stettner was the only member of the Natural Bridge club who was along. We're glad he could make it and we enjoyed hiking with him.

Sunday, September 17, 2000 Andy Layne Trail Workhike

Charles Parry (leader), Dana Helsley, Malcolm Black, Bill Gordge, Homer and Therese Witcher, Fred Coughlan, Brian Chisom, Jess Hench, Mary Elizabeth Thomson, Katherine Rospench, Lindsay Marshall, Sara Gillespie, Chesnee Simmons, Mike Zeltkovich

We had a few surprises. First, when I got to the gate I discovered the lock had been changed, so I could not drive in to the creek. Consequently, I had to drive up to the parking lot. Of course by the time I got there, everyone else was gone. I realized that I had little choice but to carry tools for everyone back to the creek, not even knowing how many people were there. Five tools was about all I could manage, so that was what I took. After crossing the second bridge, I dropped the tools and went to look for the others where I usually drive to. It turned out we had exactly 5 people. When we got to the point where I expected to start work we discovered much more trail had been dug. I expect the Witchers were the guilty party and when we reached the point where the digging ended, someone said here comes somebody in the opposite direction. It was the Witchers and my suspicions proved correct. After an hour of digging we broke for lunch and heard a large group coming up the old trail. I expected it might be the Roanoke College group and I was correct. I had hoped they would see my truck in the parking lot and had left the back end unlocked. They missed the truck and were a bit confused. They did a round of digging while we took an extended lunch break. They had to

leave early anyway, so it worked out fine. I guess that we got another 300-400 feet of trail dug and got the whole thing raked. We should be able to open it on our next workhike. One good thing about coming in from the parking lot was that I got to inspect that part of the trail and discovered some problems.

**Sunday, September 24, 2000
Buffalo Mountain**

Bill and Liz Lamson (leaders) Jean Warren, Mary Lou Gaminde, Pat Cousins, Cathy, Greg, Karen, Jeff, and Mitzi Tinaglia, and Jack Lienhardt

This was a mostly overcast day, and it seemed cool enough until we started the climb up Buffalo Mountain. It was a hot pull most of the two miles up, so we were delighted to be rewarded with cool breezes at the top. The view from the top was stunning, even though the sky was hazy. Jeff had a lot of fun calling people on his portable ham radio. Coming down was easy, and that made a nice end to a very pleasant afternoon hike.

**Sunday, October 1
Tinker Creek Bridge Workhike**

Charles Parry (leader), Lucien Metayer (assistant), Dana Helsley, Don Nulph

The work for the day consisted of pulling logs out of Tinker Creek on the upstream side of the bridge. Knowing that I would get wet, I brought shorts and tennis shoes. It was dirty work and several of the logs had to be cut with a chain saw. Fortunately, the weather was reasonably warm. Also, we were done by lunch time. After lunch we bagged up the trash and Larry persuaded some hikers to carry it out for us. We met Don coming in to help us just as we started out. Hopefully, we won't have to do this job again for another 18 months or so.

**Sunday, October 1
Fenwick Mine Trail**

Sue Scanlin (leader), Linda Akers (assistant), Connie Grant, Jean Warren, Marianne Demkó, Doug Webber, Ralph Hart, Randy Sowden and

guests Jean Donnan, Heather Vovakes and Evelyn Vovakes (in carrier)

“Ah, Fall is on its way!” Such a beautiful day just beckoned for hikers to enjoy the great outdoors. Ranging in age from 14 months to probably 80 years, our group left from Hanging Rock OM towards Fenwick Mines, full of anticipation of a nice hike ahead. Little did it matter that Sue had left her directions on how to get to Fenwick Mines at home. We found them, enjoyed them and each other's company. Mill Creek certainly is a gem with its picture-book waterfall! On the way home we took a wrong turn but that didn't lower our spirits nearly as much as the preceding hike had lifted them.

**Sunday, October 8
Upper St. Mary's Wilderness Loop**

Larry Austin (leader), H.R. Blankenship, Dana Helsley, Rhonda Mick, Gary Bible

We gathered at the Daleville Park & Ride at 8:00 am and drove north to the entry of Saint Mary's Wilderness across from Fork Mountain Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway where this 11.5-mile loop hike started. The weather was partly to mostly sunny and crisp—great for hiking. The fall colors at this elevation (3,480 feet) were near peak. This hike combined four trails to make a loop (Mine Bank Trail, Saint Mary's Trail, the Jeep Trail and Bald Mountain Trail). We began the hike around 9:20 am on the Mine Bank Trail, descending approximately two miles to the junction with Saint Mary's Trail which we followed to Green Pond, a rare natural tarn surrounded by pines. At Green Pond we stopped for an early lunch. We then proceeded about 0.3 mile to the junction with the Jeep Trail. After hiking another three or so miles we veered off the Jeep Trail onto the Bald Mountain Trail which descends and follows the Bear Branch before ascending back to the trailhead at the parking area. We completed this hike around 1:20 pm. This was a very enjoyable hike which had a variety of scenery, including streams, cascading falls, mountains, and beautiful leaf colors on the trees, on the forest floor and floating in pools of water. The drive yielded some spectacular views, particularly

along the portion of the Blue Ridge Parkway which we used north of Buena Vista and Montebello.

**Sunday, October 8
Seven Mile Mountain**

Maurice Turner (leader), Mary Lou Gaminde, Bill Mistele, John Hollandsworth, Karen Bentley

Missing the Rte. 658 turn off Rte. 311 cost us some time but after chasing one vehicle down with the horn and lights flashing, we managed to start our hike from the Rte. 658 side around 2:30. With the temperature around 50, partly cloudy and a breeze, it was a perfect day for hiking. The foliage had begun to show its crimson, yellow and orange colors with some having fallen to the forest floor. We experienced some blow-downs throughout the hike and met a horseback rider along the ridge. The drivers finished ahead of the others in time to do the vehicle switch, but after getting back to Rte. 632, we found we had three fewer hikers. They had missed their turn halfway down the mountain and took another trail to Rte. 632 about a mile further up John's Creek. Two of us had just started back up the trail to look for them when a vehicle pulled up with the three hikers. A good hike with some excitement along the way.

**Sunday, October 15
Hoop Hole - Lower Loop**

Bill and Liz Lamson (leaders) Linda Akers, Marjorie Griffith, Paul Mattox, Carolyn Baratta, and Marianne Demkó

The group met at the commuter lot in Daleville and piled into the Lamsons' van for the ride to the trailhead. The woods were gorgeous with fall color, and we ambled along enjoying every step and the pleasant conversation with fellow hikers. Some of the group saw a deer and a black snake. Coming down the mountain we walked through a huge stand of rhododendron. We should go back next June when it's in bloom. On the way back to the commuter lot, we stopped at an apple shed. Those juicy,

crunchy apples were the perfect ending to a fall hike.

**Sunday, October 22
Garden Mt. VA 623 to FS 222**

Bobbie Stitche (leader), H.R. Blankenship, Bonnie Ferguson, Neil Fitzpatrick and Tina Welcher

Five hikers traveled for 3.5 hours to reach the trail on the crest of Garden Mountain at the Bland-Tazewell county line to begin the hike. We had just completed a 31-mile car switch which included going up a dirt road 8 miles and then down and up a 7 mile dirt road to the trailhead. There was a new parking area right by the trail where we left a car and would eventually finish the hike.

Most of the leaves were off the trees, but we had wonderful views of Burke's Garden. The day was mostly overcast and cloudy. We stopped at a spring at Walker Gap to get water for Neil and used Tina's iodine tablets to purify the water. We then reached the Chestnut Knob Shelter, which was originally an abandoned fire warden's cabin, located on the summit of Chestnut Knob. We walked along an open crest of Chestnut Ridge with views of Big Walker Mountain and Beartown Wilderness. We then descended to reach the trailhead, made the car switch and arrived back at 9pm.

We were pleased to have Bonnie Ferguson from California on this hike.

**Sunday, October 22
Sharp Top**

Sue Scanlin (leader), Mike Ferguson (assistant), Billy Ferguson, Suzanne Barnett, Dana Helsley, Mary Lou Gaminde, Marianne Demkó, Gary Bible

On a gorgeous fall day like this, a group of only eight hikers? What an anomaly! Well, hiking as an almost solitary activity was not what we were in for: at the hike start point there were hundreds of cars, and rangers served as parking lot attendants. And the trail itself was crowded,

too. The view from the top was a bit hazy but nice nevertheless. Some of us inadvertently did the summit loop, others – intentionally – made the side trip to Buzzard’s Roost. Mike with Billy in tow had turned around before ever making it to the top while Zetta, due to car problems, never even met up with us at the campstore as planned.

Sunday, October 29
Andy Layne Trail Workhike

Charles Parry (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant), Bill Gorge, Malcolm Black, Rhonda Mick, Dana Helsley, Fred Coughlan, Hal Cantrill, Brian Chisom, Pete Hughes, Mary Thomson, Liz Sullivan, Homer and Therese Witcher

It was opening day and the work to be done was scattered between Catawba Creek and Scorched Earth Gap. Since Homer and Therese came in from the other direction, I never saw them. I met the others at Catawba Creek. Bill was assigned to wheel the trail. Dana was given a weedeater to use, while Kris and Malcolm were assigned blazing duty. As we wished to keep the old trail open for most of the day, we decided to start blazing in the middle at the bottom of the steep section. Rhonda and I went up with the blazers to clear out the steep section. When we got to the top of the steep area, Rhonda and I went back down the mountain, meeting the Roanoke College group coming up. I gave them some additional instructions and we continued down to the fence where Dana and Fred, who arrived later, were already bringing in the stile materials. We ate lunch, assembled the stile, and explored a further relocation. By that time, Hal arrived for fence repairs. As our blazers had not returned, I started Rhonda and Dana blazing from the bottom. The rest of us repaired fence and took out the stile on the old trail. Since we had a little time to kill, we unplugged the cement bridge across Catawba Creek. By the time we finished that, most of the blazers had returned, and we drove to the parking lot and began working on the fence by the sign board. As Robert Frost once said, “good fences make good neighbors,” so we hope this applies to trail neighbors.

It was a beautiful day to be outside, and we accomplished quite a bit in several difference places.

Sunday, October 29
Huckleberry Trail

Mike Ferguson (leader), Bobbie Sticher (assistant), Margaret, Billy, and Natalie Ferguson, Mervin and Blanche Brower, Don Lawhorn, Mary Lou Gaminde, Maurice Turner, Pat Cousins, Barbara Frank, Betty Mathews

It was a hike of amazing coincidences which proved we are all separated from everyone else by just one or two degrees. Pat just happened to ride in Betty’s car to the trailhead. Pat just happened to mention that she grew up in Wisconsin. Betty asked which town? So did she. Which high school? So did she. Which neighborhood? So did she. Which street? 24th. She lived on 25th. So on your next hike, be sure to ask the person next to you to name two people they know.

The hike itself was pleasant but chilly. The babies and I turned around after 1 ½ miles. Bobbie met the rest of the disgruntled hikers as they were crammed into the library lobby. I hear there was a near mutiny as everybody vowed to get into Bobbie’s car whether she like it or not.

Sunday, November 5
Bottom Creek Gorge

Betty A. Mathews (leader), Zetta Campbell (assistant), Cathy Tinaglia, Jo Svitzer, Connie Grant, Carolyn Baratta, David Miller, Don Barnhardt, Linda, Dave and Matthew Sutton, Sarah Burns, David and Donna Smith. There was also a couple: Suzy Tucker and David Wilson who signed up to go with us, took directions and said they wanted to ride in their own vehicle because they might have to leave early. They drove off in their vehicle never to be seen again. I guess they decided to do something else. That was a little unnerving but the rest of the day went well.

The weather was perfect for a Fall hike. The sun was shining and the air was slightly cool and crisp. There were three trails to choose from for our walk. We were able to take a route that included all three. While the trees looked bare, we were still able to see some colors as the trails were littered with beautifully colored leaves. After seeing a sparkling waterfall from the crest of a hill, we started a slightly uphill but very pleasant walk back to the starting point. Don called our attention to many brightly-colored green ferns scattered over the terrain as we were walking back. Why can't the ferns that I hang at my house look that pretty?

Saturday, November 11
Brush Mt. – Audie Murphy Monument

Kenny Garrett (leader), Betty Mathews (assistant), Karen Bentley, Carol McPeak, Bobbie Sticher, Bob Wade, Harry Harman, Laura Montague, Fred Cocke, John Hollandsworth, “Bozo” the dog

What a beautiful hike for Veterans’ Day. The sky was clear and the temperature held around 50 degrees all afternoon. This was a moderate hike which we decided to take by the northbound route and accomplished in approximately 3 ½ hours. The views were spectacular of both upper Craig Creek valley and Catawba valley. We could hear the occasional gun shot from a hunter's rifle. This made those of us who were not smart enough to wear blaze orange hike closer to the two who did wear blaze orange. Maybe hearing the gun shots in the distance while visiting the Audie Murphy Monument added a patriotic twist of the wars of years gone by.

Sunday, November 12
Andy Layne Trail Workhike

Charles Parry (leader), Kris and Bob Peckman (assistants), Malcolm Black, Brian Chisom, Sarah Gillespie, Sarah Marrow, Brandy Collier, Stephanie Fry, Kristen Derkovics, Chris Pollack-Thomas, Matt Benson, Daniel Tucker, Matt Bieriz, Philippe Moore, Lindsay Marshall

The plan for the day was to relocate a portion of the trail from the bottom of the first hill to Little Catawba Creek. The first job was to decide on a route and flag it. This took us an hour or so. When this was done, Kris and I returned to the truck for more tools, while Malcolm and Bob stayed behind to clip. On the way out we met the Roanoke College group and told them where digging was needed. We brought back the weedeater, a chainsaw, paint and a few other tools. We soon met Bob and assigned him the weedeater. After lunch, I began cutting logs for a set of steps. Just as I finished cutting them, some Roanoke College students arrived, and I got them to peel the logs while I gave others another digging assignment. About the same time, Malcolm and Kris started blazing. I told some of the others that we also needed to get the new trail wheeled. As I finished the steps, Kris came through with the wheel. I accompanied her to the second creek, taking notes. On the way, I found a pair of loppers that had been hung in a tree earlier in the day. On our way out, we closed off the old trail. It was another nice day, and we felt the new route was a big improvement. It eliminated some erosion problems and gives a beautiful walk along Little Catawba Creek.

Saturday, November 18
McAfee's Knob then Dinner at Homeplace

Sue Scanlin (leader), Linda Akers (assistant), Don Barnhart, Betty Mathews, Marjorie Griffith, Sarah Burns, Beverly Williamson, Marianne Demkó, Patsy Wheat

Patsy (who came from Bedford for this, her first hike with the RATC) was going to meet the rest of us at the hike starting point. So, shortly after 1pm, eight of us in 3 cars left Hanging Rock, headed up the mountain, met Pat, and started on our merry way. A few people passed us and a few, including Homer, his daughter Taylor and son Bennett, were already heading down again during our ascent. A brief look at the shelter showed that the roof is in need of some repair. Once at the fire road, we decided to continue following it, with a detour to look at the old Johnson Farm site. The higher of the two chimneys, the one made of brick and with a nice

fireplace inscribed "WILLAIR" (???), is showing more signs of deterioration than the smaller one.

Several hike participants had never before been on McAfee's Knob and were astounded at the beauty of the terrain, the rock formations, the view, well, you know, all the factors that make McAfee's Knob a favorite for many, regardless if they're first time or repeat visitors. At the top it was quite cold. Little puddles that had collected in the indentations of the rock had turned to ice and if we had stayed very long, we would have, too. We returned on the AT to the fire road and then followed the lower part of the fire road back to the parking lot. Marjorie saw a pileated woodpecker on the way down. Too bad, not all of us did. Following the hike, all but Patsy and Sue went to the Homeplace.

Sunday, November 26
Apple Orchard Falls/Cornelius Creek Loop

Larry Austin (leader), H.R. Blankenship, Bobbie Stitche, Dana Helsley

After a day of rain the skies started clearing up on Sunday morning for this 7.5-mile hike. The temperature varied depending on elevation but was around 45-50 degrees with light winds. We began the hike at the trailhead on North Creek using the Apple Orchard Falls Trail first to ascend the mountain to Apple Orchard Falls. Apple Orchard Falls Trail has been designated a National Scenic Trail and has a number of grand foot bridges over North Creek. The hike from this end of the trail offers a more dramatic approach to the falls. Once we reached the falls we were rewarded with not only a nice water flow but ice formations at different points on the rock formations. The National Forest Service completed a terrific boardwalk around the bottom of the falls with a great viewing stand in late summer of this year. From this point we continued our ascent up this trail another mile to

where it intersects the AT near Sunset Field. We utilized the AT for about 1.2 miles south to the entry of Cornelius Creek Trail. Cornelius Creek offered continued scenery and interest with its many small falls and deep pools along the way. We followed this trail to our starting point, finishing up around 1:15 pm. In spite of inclement weather on Saturday, this ended up being a great day for hiking.

Sunday, November 26
Roaring Run

Zetta Campbell (leader), Suzanne Barnett, Bill and Kathy Weikart, Marianne Demkó, Bill Rulison

The weather was miserable the day before, cold and rainy all day. No one would want to hike in that kind of weather, would they? Yet the rain was welcome because it had been dry. This day the sky was still covered with heavy clouds, but with some breaks in them, with the sun coming through a little at times. The weather was cool, not cold. Sweatshirts were enough while hiking. We hiked the high trail first and came back by the low trail. There was plenty of water coming down the falls, dividing as it does into two, but we could not sit down and enjoy it in a leisurely fashion unless we didn't mind wet pants. The rocks were wet. But we lingered awhile, munching on fruit and drinking water before starting back. Yes, we did take the low trail, crossing the stream on bridges. At one point we decided to take another trail that stayed on one side of the stream and needed no bridges. We may have shortened the hike somewhat. We found lichen in bloom with pink blooms as Marianne informed us. There was a lady walking the trail with a dog. We refrained from remarking the dog was walking her. That was an exuberant dog. This is a beautiful place, worth visiting, but the trail is not three miles, but only 1 ½ miles. How about that connection with the Hoop Hole Trail? There was a sign for it.

Hike Schedule

Winter 2001 (cont.)

**Saturday, March 3, 2001 - 2:00 PM
Andy Layne Trail Dedication**

100 yards easy – Meet at Hanging Rock Orange Market at 1:30 regardless of the weather.
Bob & Kris Peckman 366-7780

**Saturday, March 3, 2001 - 6:00 PM
Annual Banquet Christ Lutheran Church**

Brandon & Grandin Road, See reservation form for details. ***Must pay by Wednesday, Feb. 28***
Shirley Kotheimer 562-0356
Linda Akers 776-1969

**Sunday, March 4, 2001 - 8:30 AM
Rocky Gap to Rt. 42**

9 miles moderate - \$3.50 carpool fee
Bobbie Stitche 890-2140, Kris Peckman 366-7780

**Sunday, March 4, 2001 - 1:00 PM
Stiles Falls**

4 miles easy - \$2.50 carpool fee
Ron McCorkle 982-8289
Bill & Liz Lamson 774-8981

**Sunday, March 11, 2001 - 8:30 AM
Rock Castle Gorge**

11 miles strenuous - \$3.50 carpool fee
Dick Clark 989-7053, Sharon Bottomley 989-1818

**Sunday, March 11, 2001 - 1:00 PM
Angels Rest**

5 miles moderate - \$3.50 carpool fee
Betty Mathews 343-4225
Ken Garrett 890-8946

**Sunday, March 18, 2001 - 8:30 AM
Daleville - Workhike planting trees**

-0- carpool fee
Charles Parry 540/951-1402
Lucien Metayer 344-1877

**Sunday, March 18, 2001 - 1:00 PM Sunset
Field to Petites Gap**

7 miles moderate - \$3.50 carpool fee
Mervin Brower 387-9732
Bill & Liz Lamson 774-8981

**Sunday, March 25, 2001 - 1:00 PM McAfees
Knob**

7 miles moderate - \$1.50 carpool fee
Sharon Bottomley 989-1818
Ken Garrett 890-8946

If accepted for membership, I agree to:

**Roanoke Appalachian
Trail Club Application
New & Renewal**

1. Support the objectives of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club
2. Abide by the rules of the National and State Parks and Forests
3. Respect the interests of the owner when on private property
4. Keep trails and woodlands free of litter and
5. Abide by instructions of the leader on group hikes and trips

Names(s) _____

Address _____

Day Phone _____ Evening Phone _____

Email _____

Family Membership New 1 year \$20 New 2 year \$35 Renew 1 year \$15 Renew 2 year \$30
Individual Member New 1 year \$15 New 2 year \$25 Renew 1 year \$10 Renew 2 year \$20 Life \$50

Make checks payable to **RATC, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, 24024-2282** Amount Enclosed \$ _____