

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Winter 2013

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.

CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

Potluck Banquet & Business
Saturday, March 2 - 6:00 PM
Details page 15

WORK HIKES

Sunday, February 24 - 8:00 AM
Stony Creek/ Bailey Gap

Saturday, March 23 - 8:30 AM
McAfee Knob

Hike Scheduling

Contact Adam Wood
302-528-9680 – adampaulwood@yahoo.com

BOARD MEETINGS

(All members are always welcome.
Please let the host know you plan to attend.)

Monday, January 14, 7:00 p.m.
Hosted by *Homer & Therese Witcher*

Monday, February 18, 7:00 p.m.
Hosted by *Dick Clark*

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The complete hike leader, chef, waiter and bar tender

Don't try to compete with the catering skills of Larry Austin or John Merkwan. They both lead wonderful, beautiful and interesting hikes which would be more than enough to be thankful for. But if their snacks were expected, then they would be the only two hike leaders.

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

James Curtis Altice Family

Jennifer Arrington

James E. Brown

Lynne Edwards

Marissa Grifasi

Colleen & Greg Johnson

Berndie Lunsford

Christopher Mason

Carmen McLean

Taylor Petty

Dale, Jay & Callie Pokorski

Joshua Salmon

Ineke S. Salo

Melissa (Missy) Talley

Susan Terwilliger

Carl Virgin

Jim Webb

Kyle Williams

And we thank these folks for making donations:

Liz Belcher

David Bower

Clark Britt

Theresa Conti

Conrad & Bee Grundlehner

John Hollandsworth

Christopher Mason

Carmen McLean

Reinhard O'Neill

Taylor Petty

Joshua Salmon

We look forward to meeting you soon: hiking on the trail, at work, social event, or a board meeting.

Bob Blankenbaker

President's Report

“Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.”

John Muir

In September my wife and I traveled to California. We traveled along the coast and spent a week backpacking in Yosemite National Park. As you may know, John Muir was instrumental in the creation of that national park. Originally from Scotland, he went to California as a young man, and fell in love with the Sierra Nevada Mountains. He spent many summers hiking and camping in Yosemite. The mountains there are truly breathtaking and well worth visiting.

Closer to home, our Appalachian Mountains, while not as dramatic as the Sierras, are also beautiful and worth visiting. For the past thirty plus years I have enjoyed hiking in the mountains in Virginia. There are so many great trails and vistas in our area. I particularly like going out on hikes with other club members. It's great to meet new people and catch up with old friends while

hiking through the wilderness. Our club usually offers two hikes each weekend. In the past few months I've noticed a drop off in participation in our club's hikes. Several hikes have been cancelled due to lack of participation and some of the hikes only have two or three people going on the hike. Lack of participation can be discouraging to our club's hike leaders. They work hard scouting out new hikes and set aside time on their weekends to lead the hikes. Our club has well over 300 members. If you are a new member or an existing member who has been considering going on a club hike, I strongly encourage you to sign up and go on a hike. I am sure you will find it a rewarding experience. Our club has been conducting hikes for over 80 years. It's up to our current generation of club members to keep this tradition going. I would not like to see our club hike schedule get scaled back due to lack of interest. Please contact our Hikemaster, Adam Wood, if you have any questions or suggestions about club hikes.

The board is putting the final touches on a major revision to our Club Management Plan. This 100+

page document outlines the club's policies on such items as trail maintenance, shelter usage, trail corridor monitoring, and usage of the trail. We will post the Plan on the club website once it is finalized and send out an email letting members know it has been posted. The plan was last updated in 1991.

The term of office for the current RATC board ends in March. We will have elections for the new board members at our annual March banquet.

Please contact me if you are interested in serving on the board. We typically meet once per month. A list of the board positions can be found in the club bylaws on our web site, <http://www.ratc.org/>. In particular, we are looking for a new club secretary. Please contact me if you have any questions about the board or the duties of a specific position on the board.

In the past few months we have been gathering historical records of the club. At this point we are looking for members to serve on a committee to go through the records and organize them. Please contact me if you are interested in serving on the committee.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is having a photo contest. Appalachian Trail (A.T.) photographs taken since April 1, 2011, and submitted by April 1, 2013, will be reviewed by a jury of avid photographers for final judging by a

noted professional photographer.

Winning photographs will be exhibited during the ATC's 2013 biennial membership meeting, July 19 to 26, 2013, at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, N.C., and they anticipate other exciting uses of the winning photographs after the biennial. For details about the contest go to the ATC web site at www.appalachiantrail.org.

In November the A.T. Ridgerunner for our area, Eric West, completed his duties for the season. As a Ridgerunner, Eric hiked up to Dragons Tooth and McAfee Knob each weekend monitoring trail usage and assisting hikers. He did a great job monitoring the two trails. These two sections of trail are the most heavily used in our area.

Ridgerunners and caretakers are generally seasonal employees assigned to hike and camp along high-use sections of the A.T. The ridgerunner enhances the recreational trail experience by talking to visitors about the A.T. and its intended primitive experience, its location, regulations, and traditions, as well as ways they can minimize their impact on the Trail.

Each year, more than 30 Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) supported ridgerunners and caretakers are hired by the ATC.

Mike Vaughn

Trail Supervisor's Report

The RATC hosted an overseers weekend at Woods Hole Hostel, Pearisburg, VA on September 15-16, 2012. This is the first event of this type the club has provided. This function acknowledged the contribution of the annual work of the overseers, familiarized the overseers with each other and with the club officials, trained the overseers and encouraged feedback. Each overseer chose any or all of the activities: 1) an all day hike on the AT near Wood's Hole, 2) an overseers meeting Saturday afternoon/evening, 3) a dinner, bonfire, sleepover, and breakfast. The cost was shared with Woods Hole Hostel. Woods Hole provided sleeping space in their bunkhouse or camping at no cost and RATC paid \$13 per person for dinner, \$8 for breakfast and provide volunteer help in the kitchen.

The weather was outstanding. Six people attended the loop hike on the Ribble Trail and the AT while discussing covered structures, bridges and shelters, trail grades and lopping. Fifteen people participated in the meeting which covered the succession of the Trail Supervisor's position, the action plan for RATC's maintenance efforts, and overseers training. Jerry Kyle, an overseer and a professional medical technician, gave a lecture on critical first aid techniques related to trail maintainers working in remote locations. Woods Hole made and served a full dinner with dessert and then people mingled and conversed around a bonfire. Fifteen people had dinner and ten people stayed for the evening and had breakfast.

David Jones

Hikemaster's Report

Cold temperatures, wind, and possibly a dusting of snow. These are all possible ingredients comprising the Roanoke Valley winter. For many this weather is a nice change of pace and a welcome respite from the suffocating humidity of summer. Winter brings views not possible during full foliage, and it also offers the possibility for unique views of snow covered valleys. However, with the recent Indian summer we might be seeing some warm upcoming hikes.

The club is always looking for good ways to increase participation on hikes. Starting with the current schedule the RATC will have a Meet Up group and will start posting select hikes on the site. We hope that having another form of advertising for the hikes will expose the club to new members. The posting of hikes has been left to the discretion of the hike leaders.

You will also note that some of the hike leaders have chosen to place a 24 hour RSVP on their hikes. Please ensure that you review the hike descriptions to determine if this applies to any hikes in which you might be interested. Out of respect for the hike leaders with these limits, please ensure that you contact them prior to 24 hours before the hike.

I believe I speak for most of the hike leaders in saying this, but I wanted to thank our members for doing a nice job of communicating with the hike leaders about scheduled hikes. On the hikes that I

have led I have been contacted by everyone who has shown up for the hike. Thanks for taking this communication responsibility seriously and please keep up the good work!

Our hike leaders work very hard to take their time to plan and design hikes for our members. Please show them your appreciation by trying to attend an RATC hike each quarter. We have a lot of members in this club, and it is unfortunate when our hike participation is not reflective of our strong membership. Thus, I urge you to please take advantage of these fine offerings that our hike leaders provide.

The 2012 season has seen us battle some rough weather that wreaked havoc on many trails including most of the RATC's section of the AT. We have so many wonderful trail and shelter maintainers in this club, and our great hikes would not be nearly as rewarding or feasible without the support of these folks. Please take a moment to thank our trail maintainers.

Our upcoming schedule is loaded with hikes. In fact, there are many more offerings compared to previous quarters. Ed Burgess has stepped up and is offering at least one weekday hike each week, and most of our weekend dates are also full. No one should have trouble finding a hike for the winter 2013 schedule. Thanks to our hike leaders and our club members. We appreciate all of you.

Adam Wood

Hike Reports

Sunday, September 9, 2012 8:00 AM Longdale North Mountain Trail

John Merkwan (leader), Carina Hughes (assistant), Dawn Lamb, Karen Callahan, Ivy Lidstone, Adam Wood, Anne Hanna, Lois Smith and Fred Meyer.

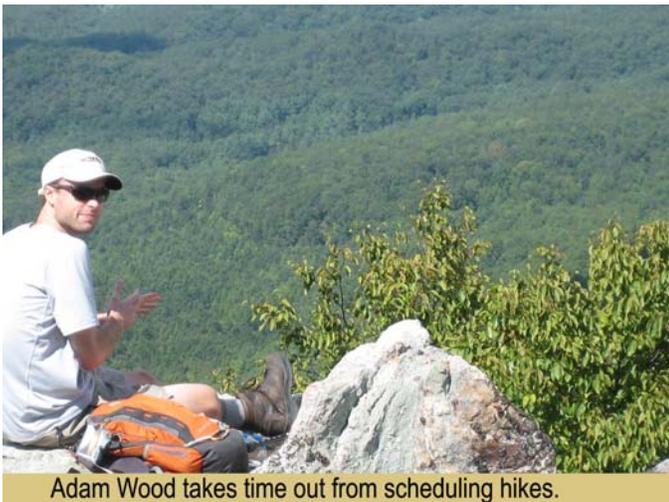
Nine hikers came out on this wonderful day to be outdoors. Total hike distance was 11.4 miles which took 6 1/2 hours. The first 2 1/2 miles of the hike was on an old forest service road track with gentle terrain that provided a nice warm up. The trail then followed a stream for 1 mile up the hollow followed by 1/2 mile of

long switchbacks to get to the top of the ridge. It was in the hollow section that we had to contend with a few derecho blowdowns. One in particular was a challenge to work through since the terrain on either side was too steep to go around. Irrespective of the blowdowns this hollow section was very interesting with a wide variety of shapes and colors of mushrooms/fungi. Our destination on top of North Mountain was a rock outcropping formation called Pete's Cave. Coincidentally, we met the Natural Bridge ATC at Pete's Cave for lunch. They hiked in from the north along the

ridge. After lunch we poked around the huge boulders and crevasses for a bit before heading back.



Anne and Fred living the high life.



Adam Wood takes time out from scheduling hikes.

**Wednesday, September 12, 2012 5:00PM
Tinker Cliffs (Sunset Hike)**

Chris Wilson (leader), Lois Smith, Madeleine Taylor, Brendle Wolfe and Carol Duvall

A nice warm evening is how we began this hike from the Andy Layne trail. After a steady climb up we enjoyed an evening dinner on top of Tinker Cliffs as we watched the sunset. Not only did we enjoy the sunset's vibrant colors of pinks and oranges, we also enjoyed watching the planes flying over Roanoke. A very active night for them tonight! While picnicking, a hiker glanced back and noticed a plastic box and rubber squeaky dog toy. To our pleasant surprise it was a geocache! After taking our item from the cache (as instructed) and leaving a new item we began our slow trek back down the Andy Layne trail, by headlamp.

**Sunday, September 16, 2012 2:00PM
Bottom Creek Gorge**

Edward Wilson (leader), Margo Guesberg, Mike Cutlip, Jim Wilson, Eric Thornton, Sara Van Zele and Rusty Havens

A cold overcast day with the threat of showers is not the ideal time to hike, but the 8 of us headed to the trailhead anyway! Fortunately the hike was completed with no precipitation! Unfortunately the climax of the hike (Bent Mountain Waterfall) was completely bone dry. Despite the lack of water the trip was still a fun one with lots of good company and enjoyment to be had by all.

**Sunday, September 30, 2012 8:00 AM
Tinker Cliffs**

Mike Vaughn (Hike Leader), HR Blankenship, Carl Cornett, Lynne Edwards, Anne Hanna, Ivy Lidstone, Sheila Vaughn

It was a great day for a hike. The temperature was cool and there was not a cloud in the sky. We started on the trail around 8:30. At the first creek crossing, less than a half-mile from the road, we heard a shout of "Bear!". Sheila, who had been acting as sweep, had seen a large black bear crossing the trail. Fortunately the bear was heading in the opposite direction that we were hiking, so we continued on with our hike. We soon reached the steep uphill section of the trail. After a steady climb we reached the cliffs. It was a clear, low humidity day, and the views were great. After a long lunch break at the top of the mountain we headed back down. Right about the same place that Sheila saw the black bear, we spotted a five-foot long black snake along the trail. After taking a few pictures of the snake we got back to the trailhead around 1:00 pm. We all enjoyed our hike up to this familiar landmark.

**Sunday, October 7, 2012 1:30PM
Family Day Hike at Beagle Ridge Herb Farm**

Cancelled-Lack of Participants

**Saturday, October 13, 2012 8:00 AM
Cascades to Butt Mt.**

Cancelled

**Saturday, October 13, 2012 8:00 AM
Dragon's Tooth Parking to Dragon's Tooth**

Chris and Edward Wilson (co-leaders)

Sadly, no one else decided to attend this hike, but being as it was beautiful and sunny with mild fall temperatures we set off on the trail anyways. After the steady climb up to Dragon's Tooth, a well deserved lunch break was spent on top of Dragon's Tooth. Fall foliage is close to peaking, although it's still rather early this year. Several south bound thru hikers were encountered and even a few section hikers and one north bounder, who is finishing his "flip flop" hike of the AT.

**Saturday, October 13, 2012 10:40 AM
Roanoke River & Tinker Creek Greenways**

Mark McClain & Diana Christopoulos (leaders), Lynne Edwards, Georgia Gallaher, Harry Ballard, Maya Bohler, Bee & Conrad Grundlehner, Joanne Derryberry

It could not have been a nicer day for this 10+ mile walk along the Roanoke River and Tinker Creek Greenways, which now offer a continuous hike/bike trail from Bridge Street in west Roanoke to Wise Avenue at Tinker Creek. We gathered at the Wise Ave. trailhead (in Fallon Park) and hopped on the Valley Metro B bus, which served as our shuttle vehicle for the ride to Bridge Street. Not long into the hike, we diverted our route to grab lunch at the popular Village Grill on Grandin, and later, after the weather started to warm up a bit, a stop at HITS (ice cream shop) at the Walnut bridge was a welcome rest. At the end of the walk, all but one of the group (who had to report to work at 5:30) gathered at Bob's Restaurant, a friendly bar & grill just across Tinker Creek in Vinton. Best wildlife sighting of the day was a group of a dozen or so black vultures, who were roosting along Tinker Creek, perhaps hoping that one of our group would collapse on the final leg of our trek - they (the vultures) were disappointed!

**Sunday, October 14, 2012 1:00 PM
Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee Knob**

Chris & Edward Wilson (co-leaders), Lynne Edwards, Karen Callahan, Wendy Cummings, and Maya Bohler.

What a beautiful day for a hike! Really a more perfect day could not have been had. Beautiful, sunny, cool fall temperatures provided the backdrop to the perfect hike up to one of RATC's most favorite spots. A busy day on the trail: we passed many families taking advantage of the last little bit of good weather to hike up to take a peek at the bright fall colors surrounding the Roanoke Valley. The hike down provided an exciting moment of watching a bear bound off, although, sadly half the group didn't get to see him. The entire group did, however, get to see the baby rattlesnake as it slid off the trail in front of us. Another great RATC hike, filled with wonderful company of fellow hikers.

**Sunday, October 14, 2012 1:00 PM
Bottom Creek Gorge**

Sue Scanlin (leader), Linda Akers, Ineke Salo

Beautiful foliage and a clear, sunny sky promised to make this another memorable hike. We left Cave Spring Corner shortly after 1 PM. At the preserve gate there were about ten cars parked already, so we knew we wouldn't be the only ones on the trail. This being the first time Ineke was going on these trails, we stopped for quite a while at the kiosk before heading down the Loop trail. It was so beautiful with the sun shining through the multicolored foliage!

As was to be expected, the overlook was almost crowded with other hikers, including a family that had brought along an exchange student from Norway. The falls were a bit disappointing due to the sparse water flow - we had to 'peel our eyes' to see any water at all.

After taking in the view, taking pictures, and having some snacks, we continued up the Johnson trail and then the Knight trail with a side trip down the spur trail to the creek itself. Neither there nor later in the pond did we see any fish; just as we didn't see any wildlife along the way.

We returned to Cave Springs Corner just before 5 PM. It was an enjoyable hike and good to see Linda back. Ineke got a brochure and sounded like she'd join the RATC as a member.

**Saturday, October 20, 2012 9:00 AM
Read Mountain**

John Miller (leader), Jean Warren and Dawn Lamb

This hike was a part of the Go Outdoors Festival that took place in Roanoke. Unfortunately no one not already a member of our club joined us. It was a great Fall day for a hike. We took the blue blazed trail up to where the new trail intersects it. We then climbed Jacob's Ladder on the new trail and followed it to Weeping Rock back on the blue blazed trail. We followed that up to Buzzard's Rock and enjoyed the views, met another hiking club and watched two planes land at the airport. Jean then left us where the CCC trail goes out to Summit Ridge. Dawn and I took that trail down to where the new trail begins. We followed the new trail back past Jacob's Ladder to the blue blazed trail back to the parking lot. The total hike was probably closer to 5 miles than 4.5 but we enjoyed it.

**Sunday, October 21, 2012 8:00 AM
Fullhardt Knob Work Hike**

Steve Burt, Timo Grueneberg, David Jones, Glen Mitchell, Susanna Mitchell, Hanna Mitchell, Phillip Strokus, Fred Walters, Jim Webb, Marlyse Whitaker

Our group worked on water management structures and rebuilt a couple of switchbacks on Fulhardt Knob.

**Sunday, October 21, 2012 9:00 AM
Tinker Cliffs**

Mike Vaughn (Hike Leader), Karen Callahan, Harold Ellis, Marion Ellis, Carina Hughes, Melissa Talley, Brendle Wolfe, & Sheila Vaughn

This hike was done in conjunction with GoFest, which was held in Roanoke over the weekend. We started on the Andy Layne Trail about 9:30. It was cool and breezy so we moved along fairly quickly. The leaves were at peak color, so it was a real treat to be outside enjoying them. The ascent up the trail was uneventful. We ran into quite a few backpackers that were heading down the trail. The views were fantastic from the cliffs. Due to the breezy conditions we didn't stay long at the top of the mountain. We went quickly down the trail and were back in the parking lot by 2:00.

**Saturday, October 27, 2012 7:00 AM
Buffalo Mountain/Fairy Stone State Park**

Cancelled due to leader injury.

**Sunday, October 28, 2012 8:00 AM
Andy Layne Trail to Daleville
113-Mile Hike #3**

Kris Peckman (leader), Carl Cornett, Dawn Lamb, Ivy Lidstone



This maple leaf couldn't decide.

Our group was small, probably due to a confusing forecast which made the "Frankenstorm" sound as if it were coming sooner than it actually did. Instead, we had mostly cloudy weather with comfortable temperatures except in a few windy spots. There were still colorful leaves at the lower elevations, creating a sort of orange glow. One curious leaf was exactly half yellow and half red. Near Tinker Cliffs we met a man from California whose family was on a home-school history trip while he worked a temporary job as a physical therapist in Daleville. At the Lambert's Meadow shelter we met three young southbound hikers from Massachusetts, hiking as far as they could before Thanksgiving. One of them said Pennsylvania is a boot-breaker. At the overlook where we ate lunch, a hawk and several buzzards soared overhead, enjoying the thermals. Carvin's Cove was lovely from all angles. As we approached Daleville, we met a few Sunday-afternoon hikers just starting up the hill. All in all, it was a nice workout on a very pleasant day.

**Saturday, November 3, 2012 8:00 AM
Allegheny Trail to Pine Swamp**

Cancelled

**Sunday, November 4, 2012 10:00 AM
Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee Knob**

Sue Scanlin (leader), Frank Munley, Bill Ancina

One could call this 'the hike of almost three strikes' against it.

First, late sign-ups almost canceled it. Luckily, we ended up as a threesome, ready to go.

Second, as we were about to leave from Hanging Rock OM in Sue's car, Frank noticed that the rear tire on the right was way, way low. Got air and, to be safe, Frank and Sue rode with Bill.

Contrary to the norm, we went up on the fire road. Once we had reached the altitude from which we could look down into Catawba Valley, strike 3: it was gone – the mist had made it invisible. Nothing to see from the Knob other than the rocks we were standing on, the vegetation behind us, and mist ahead. And this was after 12 noon! Frank and Sue raved enough about the view on better days to make Bill, who only recently came to Roanoke to live, curious enough to try to see it on another day. Bill seemed quite enthusiastic about exploring his new surroundings and it wouldn't come as a surprise if he signs up as a new member before long.



Frank Munley & Bill Ancina enjoying the views

On our descent, loads of people were on the trail going in the opposite direction. We stopped to talk briefly with Barbara Duerk and her Girl Scouts' group of three or four, and at the Catawba Mtn. shelter to take some pictures with a background. Bill tested the spring water along the way and found it to be good.

We were back at Hanging Rock around 3 PM, the air in my tire had stayed in, and a nail was removed from the tire the next day.

All is well that ends well.

**Sunday, November 4, 2012 8:00 AM
Fuller Rocks / Big Rocky Row**

Mike Vaughn (Hike Leader), Maya Bohler, Cynthia Munley

It was a little cloudy when we started out from Roanoke. By the time we got to the trail head, near the James River Foot Bridge, the clouds had grown much thicker. As we started the 2,500' ascent up to Fuller Rocks we soon ran into fog. Fortunately this kept the temperatures down which made the climb easier. Unfortunately, when we reached the top there were no views. We stopped for lunch and then continued on to the summit of Rocky Row. Again there were no views. We passed several backpackers out for the weekend. We pushed on to Saddle Gap and took that trail back to the road and our car. As we descended the trail the clouds began to break and by the time we reached the road it was a bright sunny day. Overall, we still enjoyed our nine mile walk in the woods.

**Saturday, November 10, 2012 8:00 AM
Stony Creek / Bailey Gap Work Hike
Dismal Creek Bridge repair**

Blanche Brower, Mervin Brower, Bill Floyd, Timo Grueneberg, David Jones, Michael Lasecki, Jim Webb, Marlyse Whitaker

The scheduled work hike was to do some typical trail maintenance work on the AT near Big Stony Creek. However, during the fall overseers weekend hike it was noted that Dismal Creek was dry and that fixing one of the Dismal Creek bridges which had fallen into the creek would be much easier with the creek being dry. So we switched work hike locations.

The day was cold but clear when we met at Trent's Store way down in Bland County. The weather forecast for moderate temperatures but being November, it was good that the creek was dry for this work. The group drove to the Ribble Trail access and we started hiking in. We had about a mile walk to the bridge that needed repair.

It was turning out to be a nice day. There are numerous bridges along this section and in the fall after the summer has dried out the country one wonders why all these bridges are here, since they seem to cross dry drainages. In the spring things are different when rains and snow melt can fill all these minor depressions.

At the last bridge before the one we were going to repair there was something a bit different. The bridge crossed a stream bed which was full of water. And, walking another hundred yards there was the bridge which

needed repair with one end submerged in the streambed full of water. So much for the best laid plans.

Fortunately the group set to the task at hand and by the middle of the afternoon both ends of the bridge were once again high and dry. And this work was done with only two people getting their feet wet.

**Sunday, November 11, 2012 8:00 AM
Little & Big Devil Stairs**

Cancelled

**Saturday, November 17, 2012 11:00 AM
Lick Run Greenway**

Mark McClain & Diana Christopoulos (leaders), Paul Blaicklock, Caryl Connolly, Linda Harrison, Rudy & Karen Vietmeier, Fred Meyer

It was a perfect, cool, sunny day for a 6-mile down-and-back walk from Valley View Boulevard to downtown Roanoke. We got a good look at the new footbridge that connects Lick Run Greenway with a nearby neighborhood, and we were joined near that point by Cyndi Hilton, who lives nearby and was one of the many volunteers who helped build that bridge. Upon arrival at the Roanoke Market Building downtown we fanned out and everyone selected their favorite food from the many vendors. This was followed by a quick turn around the farmers' market then the trek back to our starting place, during which time we marveled at the many "horse apples" along the trail. This common tree of Texas is not native to Virginia, but along Lick Run is one of many colonies that have naturalized from fencerow of windbreak plantings of the osage orange tree.

**Sunday, November 18, 2012 8:00 AM
Elliott Knob**

Chris & Edward Wilson (co-leaders), Carmen McLean, Joshua Salmon, HR Blankenship and Fred Meyer

As we left Roanoke temperatures were quite cool, but after the 1.5 hour drive to Augusta County, the home of Elliott's Knob, it had warmed up quite nicely. A lovely walk (about 2 miles) along the creek takes the hiker by several small cascading waterfalls and provides a nice mossy-bed for walking. After the first 2 miles, the trail turns into a gravel road, and for the next 1.5 miles we find ourselves hiking up the steep road. Rather boring, but a few small gems can be found: a small pond with stream and several stands of virgin Red Spruce trees, a species not found very often in Virginia. Along the climb we also encountered a backpacking Boy Scout troop and several mountain bikers- talk about a rough ride! The view from the top of Elliott's Knob made the

climb absolutely worth it! A beautiful 180-degree view of the distant mountains, plus an old fire tower from the 1960s. Theoretically, if one would climb to the top of the tower it would provide a 360-degree view; sadly it's illegal to do so. Also at the top of the mountain we were greeted with Carmen's delicious oatmeal cookies! We all agreed the cookies themselves were worth the climb. After the snack and lunch break we headed back down the trail to the cars and the long ride home. A wonderful day was had by all!

**Saturday, November 24, 2012 10:00 AM
Daleville (Rt 220) to Hay Rock**

Mervin & Blanche Brower (leaders) and Maya Bohler

The hike started from Daleville commuter parking lot. The day was in the 30s and sunny. It was windy but when we got to the top of the ridge the wind died down and was great for hiking.. We left the parking lot at about 10:00 AM and returned at 3:30. The air was very clear and we had a good view of the valley toward Daleville. Carvins Cove was very pretty from the view points. At the rock the graffiti was painted over by Michael Vaughn and looks great. We met several overnight hikers on our way down..

**Sunday, November 25, 2012 7:15 AM
Rich Hole Wilderness North**

John Merkwon (leader), Carina Hughes, Ivy Lidstone, Carl Cornett, H.R. Blankenship, Linda King, Allen Duncan (Guest), Anne Hanna, and Mike & Sheila Vaughn.

This hike was in the Rich Hole Wilderness Area which burned in April of this year. The fire burned away the brush but left the canopy intact. That made for some dirty hikers as part of the hike included 3.5 miles of a ridge bushwhack where we had to push through some brush and do some rock scrambling in one section. In a few places along a ridge line, we hopped from rock to rock which Ivy said would improve a ballerina's balance while I was thinking more of football agility drills. Anne won the "porcupine award" collecting the most weed seeds on her tights through one brushy area. The return leg followed upstream along North Branch Simpson Creek for 4 1/2 miles. As always seems the case, a trail alongside a stream cannot help itself in wanting to cross it numerous times. This also helped us develop our balance as we tiptoed across the high rocks in the stream bed. We did scare up a flock of about 20 turkeys whose flightpath arched back over us like a formation of Blue Angels. It was a tough hike but I did hear some favorable comments so I think I'll try it again next year. Distance: A hard and long 13.8 Miles taking 8 3/4 hours.



Carl sacrificed to trail gods by Linda (moral: keep off altars).

Saturday, December 1, 2012 8:00 AM Falls Ridge Nature Preserve

Adam Wood (Leader), Ineke Salo, Melissa Talley, Edward Burgess, Joshua Salmon, Fred Meyer, Bobby Blankenship (Guest), Matt Janas (Guest)

One could not have asked for a better way to bring in the month of December. The great weather with above average temperatures and the excellent company of these eager hikers were just two factors that made this a great hike. We left the parking lot at 9:00 AM and enjoyed

the small waterfall. The limestone we found in the river basin was quite interesting and we spent some time studying it. We then completed the entire loop hike for a total of 4.7 miles in about 2 < hours. It was a great way to get in some calorie burning before over indulging at the RATC banquet that evening.

Sunday, December 2, 2012 8:00 AM Patterson and Price Mountains

John Merkwon (leader), Carina Hughes, Ivy Lidstone, Carl Cornett, H.R. Blankenship, Mike Vaughn, Karen Callahan, Fred Meyer, Anne Hanna, Maya Bohler, Kris & Bob Peckman.

This was an excellent day for a hike. We started by hiking onto Patterson Mountain going up for 1.5 miles until we reached the Tucker trail head at 3.0 miles. One mile down hill brought us to Patterson Creek and the Kelly trail which went up for 1.5 miles to the Price Mountain ridge. From there it was a dragon's back until we reached the summit of Price Mountain and then a cool-down as we descended for 1.2 miles to finish. Although the critter count was low on this hike (likely due to the fact that the main deer hunting season the previous two weeks), the great views were the singular outstanding feature of this hike Distance: Nine miles taking 6 hours.

Hike Schedule

Going on a group hike can fulfill a number of worthwhile purposes. These include such things as physical conditioning, social interaction, the enjoyment of nature, and the thrill of reaching a spectacular viewpoint. The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club consistently tries to provide a wide range of hiking opportunities for people of all ages, interests and abilities. Guests are always welcome to join us.

For the most part, we rate our hikes as follows:
Easy – 3 to 5 miles; good trails or old roads; modest elevation changes.

Moderate – 5 to 8 miles; steeper trails which may be rough in places.

Strenuous – 8 miles and up; long hikes with extensive climbs and possible rough trails or bushwhacking.

You may drive your own car to the trailhead if you wish. However, carpooling is encouraged to save gasoline and because trailhead parking may be limited.

The hike leader is responsible for arranging such carpooling as may be required. While there is no fee to hike with the club, the indicated amount is to defray automobile expenses and should be given to the driver of your carpool.

You will need to call the leader to find out where the hiking group will be meeting. If you are new to hiking, the leader can also give advice about clothing, footwear, and equipment. If you are unfamiliar with the hike, the leader will be glad to answer your questions and help you evaluate whether or not it is suitable for you.

The club is always looking for experienced hikers to lead hikes or assist hike leaders. If you know of someone that you think would be a good hike leader or assistant hike leader, or you wish to volunteer, please contact Adam Wood at 302-528-9680 or email adampaulwood@yahoo.com.

**Tuesday January 1, 2013 10:00 AM
Sprouts Run / Wilson Mountain Loop**

8.0 Miles, Moderately Strenuous
\$2 Carpool fee, 23 Miles From Roanoke

This hike will combine the Sprouts Run Trail and the Wilson Mountain Trail in a loop with a connection of a 0.9 mile Forest Service Road. Sprouts Run offers creek-side walking with some beautiful pools of water and cascading waterfalls. It also has some very large trees along the way. Wilson Mountain is mostly ridge walking with views of the James River and the Solitude Valley. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Chris & Edward Wilson..... 757-202-3331
..... theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

**Thursday January 3, 2013 10:00 AM
Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to Sandstone
Ridge (Rt. 624)**

6 Miles, Moderate
\$1 Carpool fee, 9 Miles From Roanoke

A short hike on the AT, Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to Sandstone Ridge (Rt. 624). Heading south on the A.T., we will go along Sawtooth Ridge, with a few ups and downs and occasional good views. We will then pass through open meadows in the Catawba Valley. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Ed Burgess H: 540-565-0016
C: 330-523-9788.....eb1574@gmail.com

**Saturday January 5, 2013 9:00 AM
McAfee Knob**

7.8 Miles, Strenuous
No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

A post New Year's day hike up one of the most popular and scenic viewpoints on the entire AT. Dress warmly in layers; who knows what the weather will be like. Group size is limited to 10 people. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Dan Dennison 540-251-1465
..... danmountain15@yahoo.com

**Sunday January 6, 2013 9:00 AM
Ferrier - Lick Branch - North Mountain Trails**

7.6 Miles, Strenuous
\$2.50 Carpool fee, 26 Miles From Roanoke

Located in Craig County east of New Castle on the border of Botetourt County, this lollipop hike will begin at the far end of North Mountain trail and ascend Broad Run Mountain. From there we will head southeast going down the Lick Branch Trail and continue on a gravel road connect to Ferrier Trail returning us back to Broad Run Mountain and finally accessing the North Mountain Trail to complete the hike.

John Merkwan 540-904-2299
.....merkwanjk@cox.net

**Tuesday January 8, 2013 10:00 AM
Catawba Valley Trail**

6 Miles, Moderate
\$1 Carpool fee, 12 Miles From Roanoke

We will be hiking up the Catawba Valley Trail to the summit of North Mountain and return. There are limited views from the summit of the Catawba Valley and Craig County. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Ed Burgess H: 540-565-0016
C: 330-523-9788.....eb1574@gmail.com

**Saturday January 12, 2013 8:00 AM
Cascades to Butt Mt.**

10.8 Miles, Strenuous
\$5 Carpool fee, 54 Miles From Roanoke
\$3 parking fee per car.

Located in Giles County near Pembroke, the hike will first go along Little Stony Creek to the Cascades – an impressive waterfall. It will then go up the Nature Conservancy Trail to Barney's Wall, a cliff that features a 700-foot drop. There is a great view of the New River Valley from Barney's Wall. From there it will continue along the ridgetop of Butt Mountain to the location of an old fire lookout tower. Group size is limited to 10 people.

Mike Vaughn 540-992-1350
.....mikeva999@yahoo.com

Sunday January 13, 2013 11:00 AM
Mill Mtn & Environs

5 Miles, Moderate
 No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

This will be a one-way hike from the Star Trail parking area to crest of Mill Mountain and down to South Roanoke via the Mill Mountain Greenway and Roanoke River Greenway. Lunch near the end of the hike in Crystal Spring area.

Mark McClain 540-355-6526
Diana Christopulos..... 540-387-0930
 mcclain.salem@gmail.com

Thursday January 17, 2013 10:00 AM
Chestnut Ridge Loop Trail

5.4 Miles, Moderate
 No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

The hike is located 4 miles from Roanoke and 1 mile from the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is a 5.4-mile loop around the Roanoke Campground behind Mill Mountain. The trail is well graded and surrounded by woods. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Ed Burgess.....H: 540-565-0016
C: 330-523-9788eb1574@gmail.com

Saturday January 19, 2013 8:00 AM
AT - Sinking Creek Rt 630 to Lee Hollow Rt 621
113-Mile Hike #8

10.4 Miles, Strenuous
 \$5 Carpool fee, 52 Miles From Christiansburg

This hike is a carpool from Christiansburg. Located in Craig County, the hike climbs up Sinking Creek Mountain, then follows the ridge where rock piles and old apple trees remain from the days when even the top of the mountain was farms. Several slanted rocks offer views of Craig Creek Valley and the mountains beyond. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
 theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Sunday January 20, 2013 1:00 PM
Daleville (Rt 220) to Mountain Pass Rd (Rt 652)
Out and Back

6.4 Miles, Easy
 No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

This will be an out and back hike, so there is no car shuttle. This hike will head north on the A.T., passing through woods and crossing Virginia Route 11 near Troutville. It will then ascend a hill to an open field which provides good views of the surrounding mountains.

Mervin & Blanche Brower 540-387-9732
mervinbrower@verizon.net
blanche.brower@verizon.net

Tuesday January 22, 2013 9:00 AM
Black Horse Gap (BRP) to Curry Gap (BRP)
113 Mile Hike #1

6.9 Miles, Moderate
 \$1.50 Carpool fee, 16 Miles From Roanoke

From Black Horse Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway, elevation 2,400 feet, the trail heads south. There are limited views on this section of trail. In 2.4 miles a blue blaze trail on right leads to the Wilson Creek Shelter. After crossing Wilson Creek, the trail ascends steeply. It then descends steadily and crosses Curry Creek. From there it ascends steeply on switchbacks to the Salt Pond Road road-crossing. Go left on Salt Pond Road for 0.9 miles back to BRP. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Ed Burgess.....H: 540-565-0016
C: 330-523-9788eb1574@gmail.com

Wednesday January 23, 2013 8:00 AM
Catawba Mountain to McAfee Knob via
Campbell Shelter

9 Miles, Moderate
 \$0.50 Carpool fee, 6 Miles From Roanoke

Located west of Salem in Roanoke County, the hike follows the Appalachian Trail up and back. Extensive cliffs at the top afford unparalleled views of both the Catawba Valley and the city of Roanoke. This hike will continue 0.5 miles past McAfee Knob and go to the Campbell Shelter before returning to McAfee and the VA 311 parking lot.

Mike Vaughn..... 540-992-1350
 mikeva999@yahoo.com

**Sunday January 27, 2013 8:00 AM
Douthat State Park**

11 Miles, Strenuous
\$4 Carpool fee, 40 Miles From Roanoke
\$3 parking fee per car.

The hike is located in Bath County in the George Washington National Forest near Clifton Forge. This hike is one of many possibilities in Douthat State Park. It will include Brushy Hollow Trail, Mountain Top Trail, Mountain Side Trail, Beards Gap Trail, Beards Gap Hollow Trail, Locust Gap Trail, and Stony Run Trail with some nice views of the lake and mountains.

Kris Peckman..... 540-366-7780

**Tuesday January 29, 2013 9:00 AM
Curry Gap (BRP) to Daleville (RT 220)
113-Mile Hike # 2**

9.4 Miles, Strenuous
\$1 Carpool fee, 9 Miles From Roanoke

The hike is located in Botetourt County From Curry Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway, the trail ascends on Salt Pond Road for 0.9 miles to the A.T. crossing. Turn left on the A.T. (south). The trail follows the ridge line, with limited views to the valley below. At 3.7 miles the blue-blazed trail on left leads to Fullhardt Knob Shelter and the wooded summit of Fullhardt Knob. The trail then descends from Fullhardt Knob. There are a series of switchbacks near the bottom. At 6.7 miles the trail crosses Mountain Pass Road (Route 652). It then ascends an open knoll, with good views of McAfee Knob and Tinker Mountain, before descending and crossing Va. Route 11. The trail continues through mainly old orchards to Route 220. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

**Ed Burgess.....H: 540-565-0016
C: 330-523-9788eb1574@gmail.com**

**Saturday February 2, 2013 8:00 AM
Old Hotel Trail / Cold Mountain / Mt. Pleasant**

12.6 Miles, Strenuous
\$5 Carpool fee, 57 Miles From Roanoke

The hike is located in the Mount Pleasant scenic area near route 60 in Amherst County. This double loop hike offers some of the most outstanding views anywhere in the area. The Old Hotel Trail trailhead is at Hog Camp Gap, roughly 8 miles from route 60 on a dirt and gravel road. The trail climbs steadily through woods and an open area, passing an A.T. shelter (during the stagecoach days there was an inn in this area, but nothing remains of it today). The trail intersects the A.T. at Cow Camp Gap. Following the A.T. north, the route climbs Cold Mountain. The summit of Cold Mountain is an open mountain bald and offers extraordinary views in all directions. Back at the trail head we wil then go to the summit of Mount Pleasant via the Henry Lanum Trail. There are sweeping views to the east and west from two rock outcrops at the summit. The hike will return to the starting point via the Pompey Trail. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

**Chris & Edward Wilson..... 757-202-3331
theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com.....**

**Sunday February 3, 2013 8:00 AM
North Mountain**

10.4 Miles, Moderate-Strenuous
\$2.00 Carpool fee, 18 Miles From Roanoke

This is a shuttle hike. The hike starts in Botetourt County and follows the border of Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke, counties; it climbs North Mountain on the gently graded Catawba Valley Trail, which begins just opposite the Andy Layne Trail on Route 779. The rest of the hike is an up-and-down ridge walk, with views on both sides visible through the trees in winter.

Kris Peckman 540-366-7780

**Tuesday February 5, 2013 9:00 AM
Andy Layne Trail to Daleville
113 Mile Hike #3**

13 Miles, Strenuous
\$1 Carpool fee, 12 Miles From Roanoke

The hike is just north of Roanoke, starting in the Catawba Valley and ending in Daleville. The hike is a stiff uphill on the relocated Andy Layne Trail and then a scenic ridge walk overlooking Carvins Cove, before descending Tinker Mountain. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

**Ed BurgessH: 540-565-0016
C: 330-523-9788.....eb1574@gmail.com**

**Saturday February 9, 2013 10:00 AM
Murray Run Greenway & Grandin Village**

5.5 Miles, Easy
No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

Starting at Virginia Western campus we'll walk the Murray Run Greenway, continue down to Grandin Village for lunch, then return to our starting place.

Mark McClain 540-355-6526

Diana Christopulos..... 540-387-0930

..... **mcclain.salem@gmail.com**

**Sunday February 10, 2013 10:00 AM
Cascades National Scenic Trail**

4.0 Miles, Easy
\$5 Carpool fee, 54 Miles From Roanoke
\$3 parking fee per car.

Located in Giles County near Pembroke, the hike uses trails which run along both sides of Little Stony Creek, and ends near the Cascades – an impressive waterfall. Usually the hike will go up one side of the creek and come back on the other.

Sue Scanlin 540-989-0497

scanlin@verizon.net

Ray Lawson..... 540-982-2150

..... **trail18294@aol.com**

**Sunday February 10, 2013 8:00 AM
Cove Mountain/Little Cove Mountain
Lollipop Loop**

12 Miles, Strenuous
\$2 Carpool fee, 22 Miles From Roanoke

This hike will encompass the Cove Mountain Trail, a portion of the Buchanan Trail, a portion of the AT, the Glenwood Horse Trail and the Little Cove Mountain Trail with a return to the starting point on the Cove Mountain Trail. It will offer a variety of views of mountain peaks in just about every direction.

Mike Vaughn..... 540-992-1350

..... **mikeva999@yahoo.com**

**Tuesday February 12, 2013 9:00 AM
Catawba Mt. Rt. 311 to Andy Layne Trail Rt. 779
113-Mile Hike # 4**

12.8 Miles, Strenuous
\$1.50 Carpool fee, 16 Miles From Roanoke

This hike offers the opportunity to see two of the prime vistas on the Appalachian Trail, McAfee Knob and Tinker Cliffs, in one day. The hike starts across from the large gravel A.T. crossing parking lot on Route 311.

Be extremely careful crossing route 311; visibility for cars is limited and they are moving very fast. The trail climbs gradually to McAfee's Knob, passing John's Spring Shelter at 1.0 mile and Catawba Mountain shelter at 3.0 miles. At 3.7 miles reach short blue-blazed trail on left to McAfee Knob. The cliffs there offer magnificent views of the Catawba Valley and the city of Roanoke. The trail then follows the ridge line to Tinker Cliffs at 8.6 miles, with views of McAfee Knob and North Mountain. Continue north on the A.T. for another half mile to Scorched Earth Gap. Go left on the Andy Layne Trail for descent to Rt. 779. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Ed Burgess..... **H: 540-565-0016**

C: 330-523-9788 **eb1574@gmail.com**

**Sunday February 17, 2013 8:00 AM
Bottom Creek Gorge**

4.5 Miles, Moderate
\$2 Carpool fee, 18 Miles From Roanoke

Forming the headwaters of the Roanoke River, Bottom Creek Gorge boasts spectacular scenery: the second highest waterfall in Virginia, virgin hemlocks and wildflowers - although it might be hard to find these in February. An option for Poor Mountain (3.8 miles) may be considered for those wishing to extend the day.

John Merkwan..... 540-904-2299

..... **merkwanjk@cox.net**

**Tuesday February 19, 2013 9:00 AM
McAfee Parking Lot to Dragon's Tooth Parking
113-Mile Hike # 5**

8.9 Miles, Strenuous
\$1.00 Carpool fee, 10 Miles From Roanoke

The hike begins at the 311 A.T. parking lot – just 15 minutes from Roanoke. The Appalachian Trail is followed south over the many humps of Catawba Mountain before dropping down to the open fields of Beckner's Gap. Between Routes 785 and 624, the trail crosses Sandstone Ridge. Beyond 624 the trail heads uphill past the Boy Scout Trail. It then reaches Rawie's Rest, a knife-like rocky outcrop, with good views. Continue on to Lost Spectacles Gap, where a blue-blazed trail on right leads down to the Dragon's Tooth parking lot. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Ed Burgess..... **H: 540-565-0016**

C: 330-523-9788 **eb1574@gmail.com**

**Wednesday February 20, 2013 8:00 AM
Sunset Field to Petites Gap**

7.3 Miles , Moderate
\$2.50 Carpool fee, 23 Miles From Roanoke

This hike will be on the A.T. from the Sunset Field overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway to Petites Gap on the BRP. This hike has wonderful views from Thunder Ridge Overlook and Apple Orchard Mountain, which has a large grassy bald at its summit. This route is also known for the Guillotine, a rock formation, where the trail passes under a suspended rock. There is also a beautiful series of over 100 rock steps installed by the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club along the trail immediately past the Guillotine.

Mike Vaughn..... 540-992-1350
..... **mikeva999@yahoo.com**

**Saturday February 23, 2013 8:00 AM
Troutville to Salt Pond Road**

13.0 Miles, Strenuous
No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

This is an out-and-back hike beginning in Troutville. We will visit the Fullhardt Knob shelter along the route to Salt Pond Road.

Linda King 540-342-2411
..... **jennelleking@gmail.com**

**Sunday February 24, 2013 8:00 AM
Big Stony Creek / Bailey Gap Work Hike**

\$6.00 Carpool fee, 62 Miles from Roanoke

We will be working on trail tread, improving water management structures and rehabilitating steps.

David Jones 540-552-3058
..... **dhjones@together.net**

**Tuesday February 26, 2013 9:00 AM
Trout Creek (RT 620) to Dragon's Tooth Parking
113 Mile Hike #6**

7.2 Miles, Strenuous
\$1.50 Carpool fee, 16 Miles From Roanoke

The hike is in Craig and Roanoke County west of Salem. After crossing Trout Creek, we will ascend through a fire recovery area, pass by the Pickle Branch shelter, then ascend to the ridge, which we will follow around the crescent-shaped top of Cove Mountain to Dragon's Tooth with its great views and rock-scrambling opportunities. We will descend on the A.T. to the Dragon's Tooth trail to the Dragon's Tooth parking lot. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Ed Burgess..... **H: 540-565-0016**
C: 330-523-9788 **eb1574@gmail.com**

**Saturday March 2, 2013 8:00 AM
Hanging Rock State Park**

12 Miles, Strenuous
\$7 Carpool fee, 70 Miles From Christiansburg

The carpool for this hike will leave from Christiansburg. A beautiful state park in the western part of North Carolina. On our 12 mile loop hike we will visit a fire tower on Moore's Knob plus outstanding overlooks on Balanced Rock, Cook's Wall, House Rock, and Wolf Rock. Toward the end of our hike we'll visit the park's namesake Hanging Rock. Up and over several mountains we'll experience extended stretches of uphill climbs followed by extended stretches of downhill hiking. In the park there are also several short hikes (0.5 miles or less) to waterfalls that we can hike if anyone is interested after the 12 miles. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
..... **theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com**

**Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club
Potluck Banquet & Business Meeting
Saturday, March 2, 6:00 PM
Christ Lutheran Church on the corner
of Brandon Ave. and Grandin Rd.
Dinner: The best potluck in Roanoke
Business: Election of the Board
Hat and T-shirt Awards
Program: Dave Socky
Hiking in the India Himalayas
Reservations not required**

**Sunday March 3, 2013 8:00 AM
Peaks of Otter - Sharp Top - Flat Top**

10 Miles, Strenuous
\$2.75 Carpool fee, 27 Miles From Roanoke

We will hike Sharp Top, Flat Top, and return to the Peaks of Otter Lodge by horse trail. Flat Top: At one point a side trail descends a short distance to an unusual formation known as Cross Rock. At the summit of Flat Top nice views may be obtained by easy scrambles onto projecting rocks. Sharp Top: The first half of hike is a steep ascent with many stone steps. There is a spectacular 360 degree view from the summit.

Fred Meyer..... 304-546-5572
304-744-9219 **wfmeyer@suddenlink.net**

**Tuesday March 5, 2013 9:00 AM
Lee Hollow (Rt. 621) to Trout Creek (Rt. 620)
113-Mile Hike # 7**

9.2 Miles, Strenuous
\$2.00 Carpool fee, 19 Miles From Roanoke

AT hike located in Craig and a little bit of Roanoke County, the hike on Brush Mt. includes the Audie Murphy Monument, a tribute to the most decorated soldier of WWII, who died in a plane crash on the mountain in 1971. This hike has a mile of road walk added because the bridge may be out on Rt. 620. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.
**Ed Burgess.....H: 540-565-0016
C: 330-523-9788eb1574@gmail.com**

**Saturday March 9, 2013 11:00 AM
Green Hill Park Trails**

4 Miles, Easy
No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

We will walk the Roanoke River Greenway in Green Hill Park and also do a loop hike on natural trails along the river and ridges of the park. Lunch follows the hike at Mamma Maria's.
**Mark McClain 540-355-6526
Diana Christopulos..... 540-387-0930
..... mcclain.salem@gmail.com**

**Sunday March 10, 2013 9:00 AM
Devil's Marbleyard**

3 Miles, Strenuous
\$3 Carpool fee, 30 Miles From Roanoke

The Devil's Marbleyard is a 3 mile hike located in the James River Face Wilderness area as part of the Belfast Trail. The marbleyard is a unique geological feature that can best be described as a huge rock field with boulders ranging from the size of coffee tables to those of large vans. It is one of the most talked-about natural wonders of Western Virginia if not one of the most-visited.
**Homer & Therese Witcher992-3932
..... witchers4@juno.com**

**Sunday March 10, 2013 1:00 PM
Chestnut Ridge Loop Trail**

5.4 Miles, Moderate
No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

This is a special Family & Friends hike, and the distance is subject to change. The hike is located 4 miles from Roanoke and 1 mile from the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is a 5.4-mile loop around the Roanoke Campground behind Mill Mountain. The trail is well graded and surrounded by woods.
**Barbara Duerk.....343-1616
..... barbgary@cox.net**

**Tuesday March 12, 2013 9:00 AM
Sinking Creek to Lee Hollow
113 Mile Hike #8**

10.4 Miles, Strenuous
\$4.00 Carpool fee, 41 Miles From Roanoke

Located in Craig County, the hike climbs up Sinking Creek Mountain, then follows the ridge where rock piles and old apple trees remain from the days when even the top of the mountain was farms. Several slanted rocks offer views of Craig Creek Valley and the mountains beyond. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.
**Ed Burgess.....H: 540-565-0016
C: 330-523-9788eb1574@gmail.com**

**Saturday March 16, 2013 1:00 PM
Chestnut Ridge Loop Trail**

5.4 Miles, Moderate
No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

This is a special Family & Friends hike, and the distance is subject to change. The hike is located 4 miles from Roanoke and 1 mile from the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is a 5.4-mile loop around the Roanoke Campground behind Mill Mountain. The trail is well graded and surrounded by woods.
**Barbara Duerk.....343-1616
..... barbgary@cox.net**

**Sunday March 17, 2013 1:00 PM
Carvin's Cove Trails**

6.0 Miles, Moderate
No Carpool fee, In Roanoke
\$2 parking fee per car.

This loop hike will start at the Bennett Springs parking lot and will explore some of the Carvin's Cove trails.
**Carina Hughes 540-588-0433
..... chughes@rcs.k12.va.us**

**Tuesday March 19, 2013 9:00 AM
 Johns Creek (Rt. 632) to Sinking Creek (Rt. 630)
 113-Mile Hike # 9**

8.3 Miles, Strenuous
 \$3 Carpool fee, 30 Miles From Roanoke

The hike is located in Craig and Giles counties. From Johns Creek Valley, the trail climbs steeply. At 2.0 miles it crosses route 601 at Rocky Gap. At 3.8 miles a blue blazed trail on right leads to White Rock, with great views of the New River Valley. The trail then descends, passing Laurel Creek Shelter at 5.1 miles. At 7.5 miles the trail crosses Route 42 in Sinking Creek Valley. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

**Ed Burgess.....H: 540-565-0016
 C: 330-523-9788eb1574@gmail.com**

**Sunday March 24, 2012 8:00 AM
 AT Trout Creek to Dragon's Tooth Parking
 113 Mile Hike #6**

7.6 Miles, Moderate
 \$1.50 Carpool fee, 16 Miles From Roanoke

This is a shuttle hike. The hike is in Craig and Roanoke County west of Salem. After crossing Trout Creek, we will go through a fire recovery area, pass by the Pickle Branch shelter, then ascend to the ridge, which we will follow around the crescent-shaped top of Cove Mountain to Dragon's Tooth with its great views and rock-scrambling opportunities. We will descend on the A.T. over Rawie's Rest (more rocks and great views) to the intersection with the yellow-blazed Boy Scout Trail which will take us to the Dragon's Tooth parking lot.

Kris Peckman..... 540-366-7780

**Tuesday March 26, 2013 9:00 AM
 Pine Swamp (Rt.635) to Johns Creek (Rt. 632)
 113-Mile Hike # 10**

13.2 Miles, Strenuous
 \$7 Carpool fee, 62 Miles From Roanoke

The hike is located in Giles County. From Stony Creek Valley we will climb 1,100 feet in one mile to the heavily wooded northern slope of Big Mountain. The trail winds through the 11,172-acre Mountain Lake Wilderness between Salt Sulphur Turnpike and the War Spur Shelter. Wind Rock on Potts Mountain provides the best viewpoint of the hike. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

**Ed Burgess.....H: 540-565-0016
 C: 330-523-9788eb1574@gmail.com**

**Saturday March 30, 2013 12:00 PM
 Buffalo Mountain**

4.3 Miles, Moderate
 \$4 Carpool fee, 41 Miles From Christiansburg

The carpool for this hike will be from Christiansburg. Located in Floyd County in the vicinity of Mabry Mill, the hike goes to the summit of Buffalo Mountain with extraordinary views in all directions. The distinctive shape of Pilot Mountain in North Carolina is visible in the distance on a clear day. A network of unofficial trails lead to various points on the edge of the mountain's massive rock face. Please RSVP at least 24 hours prior to hike time.

**Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
 theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com**

**Saturday March 23, 2013 8:30 AM
 Catawba Mountain Work Hike**

No Carpool fee, In Roanoke

We will make our quarterly visit to the trail up to McAfee Knob to rehabilitate the trail tread and make any necessary trail improvements.

**David Jones 540-552-3058
 dhjones@together.net**

**Sunday March 24, 2013 1:00 PM
 Poor Mountain**

5 Miles, Moderate
 \$1 Carpool fee, 10 Miles From Roanoke
 \$1 parking fee per car.

This hike consists of the Overlook Trail, Canyon and Cascades Trails. There are nice view points on the Overlook Trail affording views to the west encompassing Ft. Lewis Mtn. There are over 130 rock steps on the Overlook Trail, then the descent down the Canyon Trail and a climb back on the Cascade Trail.

**Carina Hughes 540-588-0433
 chughes@rcs.k12.va.us
 Sue Scanlin 540-989-0497
 scanlin@verizon.net**

**Saturday March 30, 2013 8:00 AM
Carvin's Cove**

15 Miles, Strenuous
No Carpool fee, In Roanoke
\$2 parking fee per car.

We will meet at the boat dock side of Carvin's Cove and will proceed up an unmarked trail, the old Tinker Mountain trail, to the top of the mountain where this trail will intersect the AT. We will follow the AT along the ridge until we reach Sawmill Branch trail, just before the Lambert's Meadow area. We will hike down Sawmill Branch trail to the Happy Valley trail, which is a forest service road, and will follow this trail for about 4 miles back to the parking lot.

**Linda King 540-342-2411
.....jennelleking@gmail.com**

**Sunday March 31, 2013 10:00 AM
Tinker Cliffs**

5.8 Miles, Moderate
\$1.25 Carpool fee, 12 Miles From Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County, the trailhead for this hike is on Route 779 roughly halfway between Catawba and Daleville. The hike crosses meadows and Catawba Creek and then starts the ascent to Scorched Earth Gap where it continues on the AT to Tinker Cliffs. Several spots along the cliffs offer excellent views of McAfee Knob and the Catawba Valley.

**Sue Scanlin 540-989-0497
..... scanlin@verizon.net**



Moving the Wapiti Shelter out house by LuAnne "Tigger" Anderson Won "Trail Community" catagoty at ALDHA gathering, Athens, WV Timo Grüneberg, Nathan Peterson, Homer Witcher, & the Unknown

Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club Application New & Renewal

- If accepted for membership, I agree to:
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

Name(s) _____ New Member Packet fee \$5.00 _____

Address _____ Indiv. # of years _____ x \$10.00 _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____ Family # of years _____ x \$15.00 _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Individual life membership \$250.00 _____

Email _____ Family life membership \$300.00 _____

Year you joined RATC (make a guess!) _____ RATC Stickers _____ x \$2.50 _____

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

Amount Enclosed \$ _____



Greenway coordinator Liz Belcher honored at Women of Achievements ceremony
 Jim Lee, Anita McMillan, Lucy Ellett, Liz Belcher, Linda Oberlender, & Mark McClain
 Liz is also a member of the RATC Board as RATC's Conservation Supervisor.

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



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The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club is an affiliate of
The Appalachian Trail Conservancy
and a member of The Nature Conservancy and the Western Virginia Land Trust