

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Spring 2017

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

WORK HIKES

First Saturday resumed 3/4/17

Bruce Agnew

540-846-6180 csc236inf@gmail.com

Monday, April 10 - 8:30 AM

Monday, April 24 - 8:30 AM

Monday, May 8 - 8:30 AM

Monday, May 22 - 8:30 AM

Monday, June 5 - 8:30 AM

Monday, June 19 - 8:30 AM

Trail Supervisor

Jim Webb

562-8896 – startover14@peoplepc.com

Hike Leadership Training

April 18

See Page 4

BOARD MEETINGS

Glenvar Public Library

3917 Daugherty Rd, Salem 24153

(All members are always welcome.)

Monday, April 10, 7:00 PM

Monday, May 8, 7:00 PM

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Contacting the RATC Back

We need your feedback on Meetup. Especially if it is not working well for you. We can never go back the way we were. But we can always move forward and find new ways to serve you as well as or better than we have in the past. We are up for the challenge! Email me at blazer@ratc.org or mail me at 8131 Webster Dr, Roanoke, VA 24019.

We need your feedback on Hike descriptions. They can be found on ratc.org and the link may get a more prominent location, but you can also go to peckmanjazz.com and click in [Hike Library](#) on the left. I have assembled over 300 hikes and now it is your turn to contribute to our library. Make corrections and additions to the descriptions and directions. Give me links to maps and where to buy them. Use them so we have common names and speak a common language. Give me better names to share. The best praise is constructive criticism!

President's Report

Spring is here. Or maybe winter! It has been hard to tell for months. Some things we do know: trees blew down over the winter, bears and cubs will be out soon, hiker season is here, and there is always good work to be done on the AT.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Congratulations to our new board members: Susan Terwilliger (Secretary), Julia Chong, Brian Boggs, and Anne Kohinke (Counselors). From our previous board, John Miller (Vice President) and Bruce Agnew (Membership) moved into new roles. We are very appreciative of the continued leadership from Blanche Brower (Treasurer), Jim Webb (Trail Supervisor), Homer & Therese Witcher (Shelter Supervisors), Bruce Davidson (Land Management Supervisor), Bob Peckman (Blazer editor and Hikemaster) and Butch Kelly (Conservation Supervisor). And we extend most sincere thanks to past board members Roger Holnback (who has many time-consuming volunteer responsibilities elsewhere), David Jones (who still maintains a section for RATC), Carina Hughes (who will remain active in the McAfee Knob Task Force), and Brendle Wolfe (who remains active with our Facebook page and deserves credit for the \$2,150 that RATC received in one day from the Roanoke Valley Gives campaign on March 15). David Youmans, our Regional Partnership Representative, has volunteered to take over the Land Management Supervisor position that Bruce Davidson is ready to pass along.

We are always looking for potential new board members and can especially use help with: leaders who are experienced at organizing and leading meetings; people who are experienced with social media like Facebook, MeetUp and Word Press blogging. If you are interested, let one of us know or attend board meeting.

NEW: SHORT PROGRAMS AT BOARD MEETINGS

We are going to try something new this year, now that we have found a good home for our meetings at the Glenvar Branch Library in Roanoke County (3917 Daugherty Road, Salem, Va 24153). Our board meetings will include short (15 to 20 minute) programs about the AT along with discussion.

Our first program will be at the next board meeting: 7 pm, Monday, April 10 (arrive as early as 6:30 to socialize and help setup). Topic this month: I will share a program I delivered at the Southern Regional Partnership Meeting in March on Visitor Use Management at McAfee Knob/Triple Crown – lot of pretty pictures and lots of challenges.

LOTS TO DO – COME AND HELP

We need help in some of the prettiest places in the region! Here is a sample:

Tend the trail. We have work hikes many Mondays and Saturdays – check the Meetup calendar.

Lead a hike. Talk with Susan Herndon-Powell, currently assisting as Hikemaster, about hike leader training. susan.e.powell07@gmail.com or 678-485-3519.

Help us table at a social event and get new members. It's a tough job, and Bruce Agnew can show you how to do it! csc236inf@gmail.com or 540-846-6180.

Join the McAfee Knob Task Force and help patrol the Knob, Dragon's Tooth or Tinker Cliffs one day a month. Talk to Brian Boggs about what is required. 1brianboggs@bellsouth.net or 954-536-5925.

Become an AT Boundary Maintainer. About 35 miles of our 120-mile section of the AT is National Park Service land that we monitor. If you like to use a map and compass and do challenging work off the main trail, this is for you. Contact Bruce Davidson, catawbamtn@verizon.net or 540-384-6760 if you would like to help.

MOUNTAIN VALLEY PIPELINE: A LOOMING SHADOW

We are awaiting the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). So far, the materials prepared by Mountain Valley Pipeline have been extremely deficient. The latest example is the visual impact study prepared for the pipeline company by Tetra Tech, a West Coast Consulting firm. Some reasons why the study is totally unacceptable:

The pipeline company was told to work with both RATC and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) in looking at maps of the AT and at potential impacts, but they never contacted either of us.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement, a very incomplete document, was released in September, with a comment period ending December 22, 2016. Unfortunately, the pipeline company continued to release thousands of pages of poorly organized materials throughout the comment period and after the comment period was over! For example, the visual impact study for the AT and the Jefferson National Forest was released on February 17, 2017 – almost two months after the end of the comment period. At no time did the pipeline company contact either ATC or RATC for input on the project.

The visual impact study is quite sloppy. For example:

The locations selected only partially represent what RATC and ATC would have recommended, ignoring possible pipeline visibility from Sinking Creek Mountain, Brush Mountain and Dragon's Tooth.

Nine of the 22 simulations were done in fog, some of it quite dense. This included all of the simulations done at Kelly Knob and on Pocahontas Road where a pipeline access road would actually run concurrent with the AT. The ATC commissioned the very reputable Hill Studio of Roanoke to do several simulations of the pipeline view from Kelly Knob. *See a comparison of ATC and pipeline company simulations from Kelly Knob on this page.*



MOUNTAIN VALLEY PIPELINE FROM KELLY KNOB – TWO SIMULATIONS

Left: Hill Studio for ATC

Right: Tetra Tech for Mountain Valley Pipeline

The simulation done by Hill Studio of Roanoke for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy used a photo taken on a clear day with a lens that shows how the scene would look to a human hiker.

The simulation done by Tetra Tech for Mountain Valley Pipeline was taken on a foggy day with an excessively wide angle lens. In addition, it appears that the photo may have been reversed, since the pipeline appears to be coming up the valley from the left rather than the right.

We will keep our membership informed about the pipeline and are having weekly meetings about it with ATC and NPS staff.

Enjoy the Trail!!!

Diana Christopulos

Member News

We are happy to welcome the following new members:

Bryant Altizer

Brian Buccola

Shawn Buck

Kenneth & Jobeth

Bunning

Julia Chong

Bradford & Milza Clay

Theresa Conti

Andrew Feeney

Ernest Garrett

Eric Giebelstein

Jessica Harber

Denise Hendon

Sharon Holland

Katie Ikenberry

Wayne Leftwich

Tim & Karen Ligon

Granger Lobb

Sissy Logan

Christopher & Donna

Lynch

Patrick Murphy

Kelly O'Rourke

John Pendleton

Jill Pennington

Judy Repass

Mike Russell

Emily Sullivan

Dennis Talley

Denise Tuttle

Nancy Wallace

Susan Webb

Charles Williams

Hike Leader Training

Our next Leader Training is Tuesday, April 18, 2017: 6-7:30 pm

Glenvar Library: 3917 Daugherty Road, Salem
Every RATC member is welcome!

6:00-6:10 pm Welcome and introduction of everyone (Susan)

6:10-6:40 pm Splinting Ankles & Arms (Dave Youmans)

6:40-7:00 pm New Meet-up Policies and Health Form (Susan)

We will discuss and create a new policy for folks that sign up for hikes but habitually do not show up. Especially for hikes with size limitations so the no-show leaves an empty spot while another

hiker must stay home. We will also discuss implementation of a health form.

7:00-7:20 pm New Leaders - Basics (Bob)
RATC Hike Leader Guidelines, Hike posting and scheduling, meeting and carpooling, equipment and readiness of hikers, The sign-up sheet, liability and medical issues, hiking policies and rules, hike reports, etc.

7:00-7:20 pm Returning Leaders - Situations (Susan & Chris)
Dogs, Separated Groups and Lost Hikers, Carpools and Hike Ratings

7:20-7:30 pm Questions and wrap-up

Susan Herndon-Powell

Hikemaster's Report

Two of our hikes met at Gander Mountain instead of the Daleville Commuter Lot. Getting on I-81 North at Daleville can be a bit hairy at best. And getting into and out of the Daleville lot is also a bit hairy. Should we make Gander Mountain our "standard" meeting place for hikes headed North?

Roanoke has another Meetup group with similar interests, the Roanoke Outdoor Adventure Group. Many of their hiking events are joint meetups with

RATC. Our very own Chris Means is a driving force with this group. I just joined the group because I want to paddle my canoe on the rivers again and also cycle on the roads without any racing mentality. Unlike the RATC Meetup group, this is only a Meetup group. Our Meetup group is really just a tool of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club for scheduling our hikes.

We need to hear from you how Meetup is working for you, especially if it is not working well. My email address and phone number are listed on the back cover. In the 35 years that I have worked with the club, we have serviced our members and we will continue to service our members, all our members. Talk to me; tell me what you need. We cannot make it the way it was, but there are many

ways to serve you, no matter what your computer involvement.

I will not be your Hikemaster much longer. As soon as I can train the two who will share the job that they already know more than me about, I will be replaced. More news about that later.

Bob Peckman

Day hiking (Slack Packing) the Appalachian Trail – Doing My Own Car Switch!!!

It's easy. Using one of the new driverless cars, I connect a GPS to its computer and enter the GPS coordinates of the trailhead at which I want to end my hike. I send it off, then get in my minivan and drive to the trailhead at which I want to begin my hike. When I get to the ending trailhead, lo and behold – the driverless car is there waiting for me. I get into it, and let it take me back to the vehicle I parked at the beginning trailhead....

You don't believe me? Good for you – even if this were possible, I wouldn't be able to afford it.

I'm sure we've all seen motor-homes, many with a small car being towed behind them. Basically, I'm doing the same thing. But my towing vehicle is much smaller – a minivan - behind which I tow a car, (in my case, a small station wagon which is commonly called a "**toad**"). I've been working on hiking the Appalachian Trail, primarily as day hikes, since 1989. Since 2001, I've had this towing setup available to me. So, how does it work?

Here's how: I drive the minivan, with the **toad** behind it, to the trailhead where I want to end my hike. I then separate the vehicles, generally leaving the, **toad** at the endpoint. For example, if I want to hike a series of sections northbound, I drive the towing combination to the northern end of the series and leave a vehicle there. I then drive the other vehicle to a trailhead further south on the trail and hike northbound. When I arrive at the ending trailhead, and the vehicle there, I use it to either return to the vehicle at the beginning trailhead, or

alternatively to continue past it to a trailhead further south along the trail. If I do the latter, I then hike (again northbound) to the trailhead/vehicle from which I originally started hiking.

Most commonly, I drive to a region, then position a vehicle at either the north or the south end of a series of sections. I then hike each of the sections in the same direction – flipping cars for a period of days, or weeks. If I'm hiking the sections in a northbound direction, I'm gradually moving the vehicles southward along the trail. If I'm hiking southbound, I'm gradually moving the vehicles northward along the trail. When I complete the series of sections, I reconnect the vehicles, using the minivan to tow the smaller vehicle, i.e., the "**toad**", home.

Last year (2016), I used this combination to hike the Appalachian Trail through the entire state of Vermont during the month of August. I covered 161.5 miles across a 32-day period. I actually hiked 20 of those days, averaging 8 miles per hike. I spent the other days taking care of logistics (shopping etc.), some sightseeing, visiting with friends and generally avoiding hiking on rainy days.... This was a very enjoyable trip, and a framework I anticipate using for future long hiking trips. Further installments in this series of articles will cover some of my hikes in Vermont....

David Leaman

P. S. - I invite you to visit my website at www.theclimber.info.

Hike Reports

Saturday, Dec 24, 2016 - 9:30 AM Peaks of Otter 3 Trail Santa Spotting Hike Flat Top, Harkening Hill & Johnson Farm

Chris Means (leader) and Jerry Brown Peaks of Otter, rain, rain, rain and the elusive Santa Claus was nowhere to be seen. Jerry Brown and I were the only two to brave the wet weather and get to Flat Top. Visibility was not good from the top of Flat Top and I proceeded to go solo to Harkening Hill and Johnson Farm as the skies started to clear later in the day. Soggy hike but as I've heard it said, no bad days just bad gear !! (no pics for this one).



Means

Tuesday, December 27, 2016 - 10:00 AM Little Dry Run Wilderness to Comers Rock Fire Tower, Speedwell VA

Chris Means (leader), Carol Rowlett, Julie Shumaker, Jennifer Frye and Kathy Ruble

Sunday, January 1, 2017 - 10:00 AM Hungry Mother 4 Trail hike; Lake Loop, Molly's Knob, Clayburn Hol and Stone Lick

Chris Means (leader)



Means

Little Dry Run was everything but dry, a steady mist with occasionally solid periods of rain started our hike. We encountered more than 10 stream crossings, the first being within 50 yards of the trailhead, so we were all feeling lucky that this turned out to be a particularly warm day for December. By the time we reached to top of Comer's Rock Fire Tower 5 miles in, the sky was parting and some sunshine had crept in. A great hike with some rock star ladies driving 110 miles one way from Roanoke, just to walk in the woods in the rain.



**Saturday, January 14, 2017 · 9:30 AM
AT Hike - Ranger Station at Rt.16 Sugar Grove,
VA to Rt.11 Groseclose, VA**

Chris Means (leader), Gwen & Claire Spangler, Claire & Abby Williams, Wilma Vargas and Jennifer Frye.

There were low clouds at the start of this 11-miler which gave the woods a very medieval feel, personally one of my favorite settings to hike in. We traverse 3 mountains on this jaunt: Brushy, Locust and Glade Mountains. Lunch was enjoyed by Vaught Branch Creek at Chatfield Shelter. A very distinct hike with mountains, creeks, meadows and rolling hills all within the 11 miles. We even spotted a beaver dam closing out the hike at the R&R crossing near US-11. Great hike with some awesome people.



**Wednesday, January 25, 2017 · 8:00 AM
Spy Rock - The Priest - Crabtree**

David Horst (“leader”), Jeff Edwards (the real leader), Terri McClure (soon to be a through hiker), Evan Lukow (our resident physician), Maria Bowling (from Arizona), Wilma Vargas (world class hiker on several continents), David Youmans (Konnarock extraordinaire), Nancy Wallace (resident happy person), Beverly Appel (spiritual advisor), Chase Davidson (father time), and Julie Petruska (magic mixture).



One of my favorite day hikes in Virginia, this one never disappoints. Steep ascents, amazing 360-degree views, one of the most beautiful waterfalls on the east coast. And some of my favorite peeps to hike with. Dropping everyone off at the fish hatchery to do this one in the “easy direction”, and giving them a 15 minute head start, David Y, Evan, and I took the vehicles over to the end point at Crabtree. Coming back the three of us hiked up the steep trail to Spy Rock at a brisk pace to catch the others. Just in time to see Nancy W do her happy dance on the flat rocks of Spy Rock. Something everyone needs to see at least once. Heading over to the long steady climb up to the Priest, we again were treated to great views of the Virginia mountains. And then heading down through Crabtree Meadows to the falls, we stopped for a group photo, taken by a lone hiker taking in the views from the top. The descent down Crabtree Falls never disappoints and was full this day with plenty of crashing water. This was an especially strong group that made staying together a breeze!

**Saturday, January 28, 2017 · 9:00 AM
Black Horse Gap to Curry Gap
RATC 113-Mile Club Hike #1**

Susan Herndon-Powell (leader), Ken Myers, Madeleine Taylor, Mangala Kumar, Peter Whiteis, Jennifer Whiteis, Laurie Spangler, Jessica Harber, Doris Moorman, Clare Weaver, Dee Case, Georgia Shaurette, Maya Bohler, Sandie Meyers, Susan Terwilliger, Terri McClure, Carl Reed, David Youmans, Fred Meyer, Kathryn Herndon-Powell



Susan

With temperatures hovering around 30 degrees (and with quite a bit of wind!), it was a hearty crew of 20 hikers that braved the Appalachian Trail on Saturday, January 28. Because there was so much interest in this hike from Black Horse Gap to Curry Gap, along RATC section #1, we broke up into two smaller groups. Susan & Kathryn Herndon-Powell led nine hikers northbound, while Fred Meyer and Sandie Meyers led seven hikers southbound. With a car key exchange (and group photo!) when the two groups passed, we were able to keep car shuttling to a minimum. There were sunny skies and plenty of climbs to keep the group warm while we hiked. All in all, a great hike with some great folks.

**Saturday, January 28, 2017 · 9:00 AM
Salt Pond Mountain (Botetourt) Ramble**

Josiah Leonard (leader), Jerry "Coach" Anderson, Beverly Appel, Gary Bible, Kris Peckman, John Merkwon, Kelly O'Rourke, Wilma Vargas

The meet-up started on time at the Daleville Park & Ride with a strong group of hikers ready to explore. Special thanks to Gary and John for serving as our drivers for our short carpool to Salt Pond Road.

Our rambling got underway with a dive into Shay's Hollow, where the stream was running high to the detriment of our efforts to keep dry feet. After making it across the stream, we made the moderate, off-trail climb up the ridge to the Salt Pond, the namesake of the mountain. We then made the easy downhill grade to the Blue Ridge Parkway, perhaps becoming the first RATC hiking group to pass the parked cars of another RATC group during a hike. After adding suggestions that some of the cars wanted to be washed, we continued downhill, bottoming out for the day on the edge of the

national forest at a scenic waterfall created by an old mining dam. We had lunch there and took some dam pictures.

After lunch, we had the hardest climbing of the day as we scaled back up Salt Pond Mountain and regained the Appalachian Trail. We nearly decided to add an out-and-back to Fullhardt Knob Shelter, but tired heads prevailed, so we continued on to the summit of Flat Top. After looking over our second mountaintop pond of the day, we took a dive down to Council Rocks, then we followed the ridge down toward our cars. We ended with a rocky scramble down a hillside worthy of a ski slope.

The entire loop came in at about eight miles, much to Kelly's disappointment. (I owe you two miles, Kelly.) Overall, it was a beautiful day for a hike with a cool start warming to pleasant conditions by the afternoon. Thanks to our great group of hikers!

**Saturday, February 5, 2017 · 8:00 AM
Douthat State Park west side**

Kris and Bob Peckman (leaders), Karen Callahan, Val Dymond

We were down to four hikers by the time we got to the meeting place in Daleville. Too bad for those who dropped out, because we had excellent weather and a beautiful hike. Water in the lake was low, perhaps to prevent flooding when the snow (did I say snow?) melts. After leaving the lake, the trails took us to the top of Middle Mountain, where the wind blew fiercely as we strode along the ridge. Coming down to the Tuscarora Overlook for lunch, we had hoped that, being on the lee side of the mountain, we would be out of the wind, but no such luck. The view was spectacular, but we didn't linger long. The wind did diminish as we got lower down the mountain. We were impressed by the smooth trails (mountain bikers also use them) and especially the large, tall, straight trees. It's always nice in the winter to see the bones of trees. We stopped to admire Blue Suck Falls before descending on the Blue Suck Falls Trail to return to the car.

**Saturday, February 5, 2017 - 10:00 AM
Read Mountain Preserve 5 mile Hike**

Chris Means (leader), Shawn Buck, Susan Terwilliger, Dee Case, Carol Rowlett, Rachel Schmidt, Jim Dulaney, Rachel Tylock, Sharon Holland, David Jermann, Ken Myers, Chastity Graham, Lisette Frank, and Georgia Shaurette



Means

Great hike with a total of 14 people from both the RATC and ROAG joining, on a mostly sunny Sunday. The group hiked up to Buzzard Rock for a snack and some photos and then back down to the parking area taking the long way around the CCC trail. For some this was the first outing of the new year and it was nice to catch up with them again, and for others this was their first hike with either of the groups. A nice afternoon with some like minded nature lovers.

**Wednesday, February 8, 2017 - 8:30 AM
Kelly's Knob - Johns Creek Mt.**

Jeff Edwards (leader), David Horst (leader just along for the ride), Kelly O'Rourke (PATC hike organizer and soon to be one of RATC's best hike leaders), Beverly Appel, Jim Beeson (has sticker on his car that says 2189 – digest that marathon finishers!), Josiah Leonard (and I thought that my hikes were hard!), Wilma (also going to be a great RATC hike leader as soon as she gets back from hiking in Morocco), Nancy W., Terri McClure (who will get one of those stickers that Jim has), Jeff Monroe (our PATC, GPS, THE, VVRC expert) and Sarah Diaz.



The New Harry Potter Chair

Dropping off everyone at the VA-629 parking area, Kelly asked to go see the Keffer Oak. While 3 of us dropped cars at the end point at the top of John's Creek Mountain, Jim B led everyone else northbound on the AT to the big tree for photo ops. We got back from the car drop just as the group was coming out of the woods. We all started southbound and in less than a half mile toward VA-42, we came across this guy named Homer, his wonderful wife Therese, and this other guy named Kevin. They said they were training for through hiking and that they sometimes did trail maintenance. I said I would give their names to Jim Webb and maybe we could mold them into some really good trail maintainers....we will see. Continuing on, the group crossed VA-42 and Sinking Creek over the long cedar log puncheon bridge and began the long climb up to Kelly's Knob. Very soon, we lost sight of Josiah, and the rest of the group rapidly spread out. Stopping at the high point of the hike for a snack and some pictures, we were treated to great southern and western views. Continuing on the AT south to the intersection with the poorly maintained John's Creek Mountain trail, we began the descent to our end point. Some burned-out areas lend the trail some nice western and eastern views. Another wonderful day with great people.

Sunday, February 12, 2017 - 8:00 AM
James Face-Matts Creek Trail to Piney Ridge

David Horst ("leader"), Jeff Edwards (co-leader and so glad he was along!), Ruth Blaskis (amazing hiker!), Kelly O'Rourke, Terri McClure, Lois Smith, Beverly Appel, Wilma Vargas, David Y, Nancy W (I want what she takes in the morning), David Agnor and very talented daughter, Dee Case, Tancrede (absolutely one of the strongest hikers ever!), Julie Petruska, and that musician from WV – Fred Meyer.

Jeff Monroe had warned me that we may not be able to start at the MCT because of construction of the new bridge across the James River and demolition of the old one. But in my mind that just created an opportunity for some more off trail hiking! So we started at the footbridge, crossed the river and hiked quickly left away from the AT and headed southbound along the river until the "trail" ended. Then along the railroad tracks for about ¼ mile along the Cushaw Dam. Then hopped up some natural stone steps to a primitive trail and over to the MCT. And off we were. This is the harder of the two directions to do this hike. The hike over to Matts Creek Shelter gives some really nice views of the river gorge...much nicer than taking the AT. But then the real fun begins with a several mile long grinder up to and past Grassy Ridge...but with wonderful views along the way. A good reason to stop to catch your breath! It was really good to have Jeff E's help as this climb really separated the group. The faster hikers took the AT over to the Piney Ridge trail for a lunch break. The slower hikers took the Sulfur Springs trail to shorten the hike. Everyone but me, and led by Tancrede, took the Piney Ridge trail down to our end point. I have been wanting to explore a trail that leaves the Piney Ridge – AT – Sulfur Springs intersection for a future hike. So I headed down this primitive trail southbound where it split. I took the right fork and ended up at a campsite at the base of Highcock Knob. Then began a bushwhack down Bellamy Creek. My mistake was not continuing down the creek where I knew I would end up at the Piney Ridge trail head. Instead, I decided to also explore the parallel ridge with Piney Ridge. After an exhausting climb up to the ridge, I found endless briars and mountain laurels that were the result of a long ago burned out area. Not only did it add

another mile to my hike, but also added some scars to my arms and face. But as I came out of the woods, I found the rest of the group (minus a few of the slower hikers under the watchful skill of Jeff E) relaxing. A challenging hike for all (except for Ruth and Tancrede, and apparently Nancy W who still wanted to do some more hiking). I should have taken her on my bushwhack!

Monday, February 13, 2017- 8:00 AM
Work Hike on Sawtooth Ridge

Jim Webb (leader), and Bill Neilan

A very cold and windy day on Catawba Mountain. Too cold and windy to do any serious work. We proceeded to widen a few areas of side-hill that had become narrow due to erosion. Only a couple of hours of work before we knocked off for the day.

Wednesday, February 15, 2017 - 9:00 AM
Carvins Cove Hike

Maya Bohler and Kris Peckman (leaders), Carol McPeak, Mary Harshfield, William Neilan, Nancy Wallace, Mangala and Amar Kumar, Terri McClure, Ken Myers, Joanne Derryberry, Christine Yates, Jennifer Epps



Maya Bohler

Despite rain in the morning, a group of 13 showed up at the Orange Market, and we car-pooled to the parking lot on Timberview Rd. The rain had stopped when we started hiking, and soon we saw some patches of blue sky. We took the Trough up to Brushy Mountain Road. Instead of heading in the direction of the lake, we took a left in the direction of "un-known" territory, following the road to the end of the Carvins Cove Reserve. The road got more and more eroded and grown-in as we

proceeded. It circles around Brushy Mountain, and we had nice views, first of the city and the airport. After a while, there was no sign of civilization, and we had a feeling of being deep in the mountains. It is easy to miss the “no trespassing” signs where Carvins Cove ends and private property begins. There is also an old metal sign up on a tree that says “End of Carvins Cove Reserve”, but it can only be spotted on the way back. At that point which was about 4.5 miles from the trailhead we turned back. We found a pretty mossy bank where we had lunch. By then, the sun was out most of the time, but there was a chilly breeze which prevented us from lingering too long over lunch. As the day progressed, the weather became nicer and nicer, and everybody was happy to be outside. We made it back to the parking lot by 2:30 PM.

**Saturday, February 18, 2017 - 9:30 PM
Douthat State Park - Eastern Trails**

RATC/PATC: Jeff Monroe (leader), RATC: Ken Myers, and eight PATC – Charlottesville members.



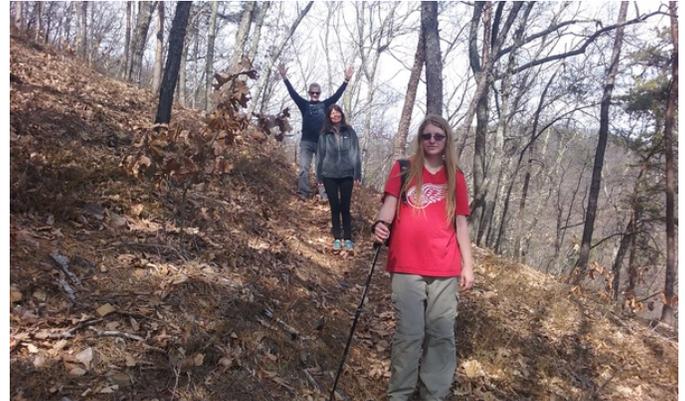
Monroe

A beautiful Saturday in February had a lone Roanoker heading north to meet up with nine hikers from Charlottesville in Douthat State Park. The group decided to head to the western reaches of the park to experience both views and waterfalls. Although the waterfalls turned out to be pretty weak, the views were five star. The group found a trail system that is very well marked and maintained, with relatively few other hikers on the trail.

**Tuesday, February 21, 2017 - 8:15 AM
Price and Patterson Mountains Loop
(Very Strenuous)**

Josiah Leonard (leader), Beverly Appel, Ruth Blaskis, David Horst

Our small but exceptional group met-up on-time at the Daleville Park and Ride on a gorgeous day that seemed more like mid-April than mid-February. Special thanks to Dave for being our driver for the commute to the trailhead.

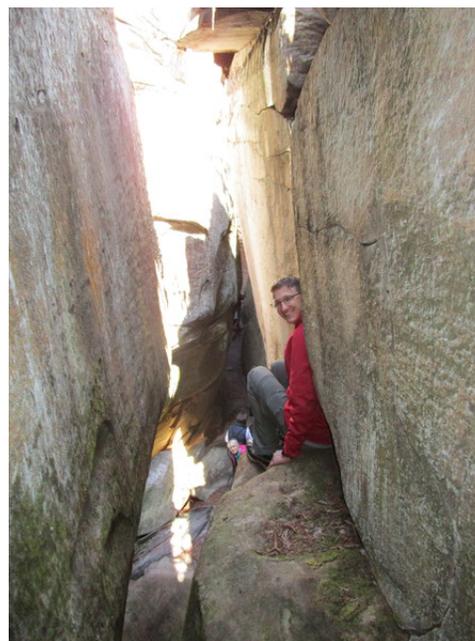


The arduous hike started with a steep climb out of the gap to the ridge of Price Mountain. We followed the rocky spine of the ridge before descending to Patterson Creek. The creek was running unusually low, allowing us to rock-hop the stream. We followed the Elmore Trail through a creek gorge then climbed to Patterson Mountain, with nice views to the north and back toward Price Mountain along the way. We had lunch at the high point of Patterson Mountain, then followed the ridge toward the south with views into the Craig Creek Valley.

We were getting tuckered out at the Tucker Trail, so we opted to shave a little off of the intended route by dropping early to Patterson Creek then back to Price Mountain on the Kelly Trail. We were certainly feeling the burn as we climbed the very steep return trail. The same knobs that had gone unnoticed on the way out suddenly seemed towering and endless. Yet, we arrived back at Dave’s truck in good order and well ahead of schedule. Congratulations to Beverly, Ruth, and Dave for completing a hike that was a true accomplishment!

Friday, February 24, 2017 - 8:00 AM
Curry Gap to Daleville - RATC 113-miler club
Hike #2

Susan Herndon-Powell (leader), Dave Youmans, Mary Harshfield, Maya Bohler, Curry Fisher, Ken Myers, Jill Pennington, Randal Pennington, Cynthia Munley, Doris Moorman, plus non-members: Carl Reed, and Hayley Ma



Herndon-Powell

We met at 8 am at the Daleville Park N' Ride and then had a quick shuttle up to Curry Gap/Salt Pond Road on the Blue Ridge Parkway. 12 hikers led by Susan Herndon-Powell and Dave Youmans made the trek up Salt Pond Road and then south on the AT, including two dogs (owned by Jill and Randal Pennington) and a little girl that accompanied her mother all the way from Baltimore for this hike. It was a beautiful sunny day for a hike, and temperatures rose up to 75 degrees by the time we finished our hike. No one could believe this was February weather!

Sunday, February 26, 2017 - 10:00 AM
Hiking in The Channels Natural Area Preserve
at Hayters Gap - Honaker, VA

Chris Means (leader)

Monday February 27, 2017
Monday, March 6, 2017
Work hike Moving Daleville Kiosk

Mike Vaughn, Jim Beeson, Bill Neilan, Dave Horst, Chase Davidson, Jeff Edwards & Jim Webb



Anyone that has hiked up Tinker Mountain from the Daleville Park and Ride has passed the large kiosk just a short distance from the parking lot. It was an Eagle Scout project a few years ago and wonderfully built. The only problem, being on a side trail, thruhikers never see it. We decided to dismantle it and move it 250 yards south to the intersection with the AT.

Things went very smoothly until we had to dismantle the roof. It was made of cedar shingles and not very well attached. It was decided that we use asphalt shingles on the relocated kiosk roof.

**Thursday, March 2, 2017 8:30am
Arcadia to Jennings's Creek**

Jeff Edwards and David Horst (leaders), Mike Vaughn, Beverly Appel, Nancy Wallace, Jim Beeson, and Julie Petruska

To avoid the familiar loop of Little Cove Mt – AT route, we began behind the church in Arcadia and hiked the blue blazed Cove Mt trail up about 3.5 miles. Since Mike had not hiked with the club in about 9 months, we put a leash on him to retrain him and keep him from wandering off trail. When we did go off trail to connect with the AT, he seemed more at home and seemed to be finally comfortable in the woods. Once we reached the AT, we began heading southbound along the ridge where the wind was howling and the wind-chill was dropping. But alas, when we got to the legendary rock formations looking down on Buchanan, the wind stopped and the sun shone! And we all climbed up and took in the amazing views. The hike over to and down the Little Cove Mt trail was peaceful and uneventful. As we made the last crossing over Little Cove Creek, the group went up to the waterfall coming down Cove Mt Creek. I went to my car on Jennings Creek Road where I just happened to have a cooler full of “refreshments” and brought them up to disperse among the participants. A really nice end to the hike....but there's more! As usual, Nancy W wasn't satisfied with just 9 miles. So while Mike and Jim had to get back, the rest headed over to Sprouts Run for some additional miles. Several hadn't been there before, so we hiked about 2.5 miles up the stream to Larry's Bench. This was really an amazing day with really fun people.

**Sunday, March 5, 2017 - 8:30 AM
Tinker Cliffs**

Fred Meyer (leader), Georgia Shaurette, Susan Terwilliger, Dee Case, Ken Myers, Sharon Holland, Dan Chitwood and Robert Wrobel

Most of us met at the Daleville Commuter Lot and then we met Robert Wrobel at the Andy Layne Trailhead on VA-779.



Fred Meyer on the Cliffs

It was a crisp, clear, and sunny day and this inspired us to start off at an early hour which was around 9 am. Everyone on this hike was well prepared. They brought snacks, water, drinks, etc. So this made it an especially great hike. We arrived at the top by 11:30 and enjoyed the wonderful view. You could see for many miles. On the way back down we met another group from Roanoke that had started around 10:30 am. This is a popular hike and we met quite a few others. We had a wonderful day.

**Monday, March 13, 2017 - 8:00 AM
Work Hike, South of 42, Sinking Creek**

Mike Vaughn & Jim Webb (leaders), Jim Beeson, and Bill Neilan

It turned out to be a beautiful day after a cold and windy start with a forecast of flurries. The trail south of Rte 42 across Sinking Creek was just starting to show signs of erosion on the steep grades. Using cedar trees located not too far off the trail, we put in 13 log steps & 6 log water bars. We also widened the trail in several narrow places and added some swales to divert water in 4 places.

**Sunday, March 19, 2017 - 8:30 AM
Hoop Hole**

David Horst and Jeff Edwards (leader), Kris and Bob Peckman, Beverly Appel, Jim Beeson, Doug Knighton and Lorie Crowley, Dee Case, Val Dymond, Julie Petruska.

While the lower loop of Hoop Hole is always a treasure, the upper loop is best done during the fall or winter for its wonderful leaf off views and lack of summer stinging nettles. And with wonderful weather, it did not disappoint! And the rain the day before gave Hipes Branch and Stoney Run added punch and beauty. Great group to hike with, although the different strengths did spread us out a bit. Always nice to have Doug Knighton back with us from down south....and his new sidekick Lorie.

**Friday, March 24, 2017 - 8:00 AM
Daleville (US 220) to Andy Layne Trail (VA 779 /
Catawba Road) - RATC Hike #3**

Susan (leader) and Kathryn Herndon-Powell, Curry Fisher, Julie Petruska, Chase Davidson, Jeff Edwards, Jill and Randy Pennington, Terri

McClure, Ken Myers, Jim Beeson, Dee Case and Doris Moorman plus guest Gerald Better

A fine day for a hike from Daleville (US 220) to Scorched Earth Gap and then down the Andy Layne Trail to Catawba Rd! Most of the group met at the Andy Layne Trail at 8 am and shuttled over to the Daleville Park N Ride. We picked up two more hikers, and began the climb up to the power line cut. We trekked onwards to Hay Rock, where we took our group picture, and enjoyed being out of the wind a bit. The morning was a little chillier than expected, so the group kept a brisk pace. We stopped for lunch at one of the many overlooks along this section, and then another break at Lamberts Meadow Shelter. As we headed down the Andy Layne Trail, it was all sunny skies and the perfect temperature. We were treated with blood root, trout lilies, spring beauties, and even some blue bells as we approached Catawba Creek.



Hiking Guidelines
<http://www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Appalachian-Trail-Club/#calendar>

Both hikers and leaders, please consult the hike descriptions at <http://peckmanjazz.com/HIKERATC.HTM>
 Tell me how to make the descriptions better. Try to use the name and description when posting a hike on Meetup, or maybe we should change it.

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. Make requests if we don't fill your needs.

Hikes are rated by length and terrain so hikers can evaluate them based on their individual strengths.
 Easy terrain – Greenways or old roads
 Moderate terrain – Typical AT
 Strenuous terrain – long climbs and rough trails
 Challenging – neglected trails and bushwhacking

Shuttle lengths are included to calculate carpool fees. Carpooling is encouraged to save gasoline

and because trailhead parking may be limited. The hike leader is responsible for arranging the carpool. While there is no fee to hike with the club, the carpool fee is for the driver.

If you are new to hiking or unfamiliar with the hike, contact the leader who will be glad to help you evaluate whether the hike is appropriate for you and also if you are properly equipped. Hike leaders should recommend that you don't come if you are not prepared with equipment or condition.

The club is always looking for experienced hikers to help lead club hikes. RATC needs you! Get on Meetup and lead a hike or contact the leader on a hike and offer to assist. Come out for the next hike-leader training. Contact Bob Peckman at hikemaster@ratc.org. For Blazer matters blazer@ratc.org

Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club Application
New and 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 the instructions of the leader on group hikes and trips.

Name(s) _____	New Member Packet Fee	\$5.00 _____
Address _____	Indiv. # of years _____	x \$15.00 _____
City _____ State ____ Zip _____ - _____	Family # of years _____	x \$20.00 _____
Home Phone _____ Second Phone _____	Individual Life membership	\$250.00 _____
Email _____	Family life membership	\$300.00 _____
Dues are payable in January of each year. Make checks payable to RATC. Please send dues and any questions about money or membership to our treasurer, Blanche Brower, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, VA 24024, treasurer@ratc.org (540)387-9732. You can also use PayPal at ratc.org .		
	Donation	\$ _____
	Amount Enclosed	\$ _____

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387-0930**dianak16@earthlink.net**
Vice President, John Miller
375-3250 **john.miller591@comcast.net**
Secretary, Susan Terwilliger
540-808-6845**susan.nessler@gmail.com**
Treasurer, Blanche Brower
387-9732 **treasurer@ratc.org**
Conservation Supervisor, Butch Kelly
540-384-7429 **butch2410@msn.com**
Land Management Supervisor, Bruce Davidson
384-6760 **catawbamtn@verizon.net**
Trail Supervisor, Jim Webb
562-8896**startover14@peoplepc.com**
Shelter Supervisors, Homer & Therese Witcher
540-266-4849 **witchers4@juno.com**
Hikemaster, Bob Peckman
540-366-7780**hikemaster@ratc.org**
Newsletter Editor, Bob Peckman
540-366-7780 **blazer@ratc.org**
Membership Coordinator, Bruce Agnew
540-846-6180 **csc236inf@gmail.com**
Regional Partnership Committee Rep., David Youmans
302-528-1776 **dby2@hotmail.com**
Counselor, Anne Kohinke
.....**akohinke@verizon.net**
Counselor, Brian Boggs
954-596-5925 **1brianboggs@bellsouth.net**

Counselor, Susan Powell
678-485-3519**susan.e.powell07@gmail.com**

Counselor, Julia Chong
505-263-3941 **chongiii@hotmail.com**

ANCILLARIES

Social Chairman, Linda Akers
774-4391 **lakers4350@mail.com**
Webmaster, Jonathan Eagle
..... **webmaster@ratc.org**

OTHER

Southwest & Central VA Regional Director, Andrew Downs
540-904-4354 **adowns@appalachiantrail.org**
Regional Partnership Representative, David Youmans
302-528-1776 **DavidYoumans1221@gmail.com**
Regional Partnership Committee Alternate, John Miller
375-3250 **john.miller591@comcast.net**
The Mid-week Crew, Bill Gordge
774-3016 **bgordge@cox.net**
Roanoke College Liaison, Conner McBane
992-1350 **cmcbane@appalachiantrail.org**
Roanoke Valley Greenways Liaison, Diana Christopulos
387-0930 **dianak16@earthlink.net**
ATC-LT Coord. New River to Damascus, Steve Reisinger
540-951-7580 **srei38@hotmail.com**
Sir Speedy Printer
344-8550 **info@sspeedy.net**

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