

# TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB



Fall 2018

*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

October 12-14 - Go Fest  
Holiday Potluck - December 8

### Workhikes

Monday, October 1 - 8:30 AM  
Monday, October 15 - 8:30 AM  
Monday, October 29 - 8:30 AM  
Monday, November 12 - 8:30 AM

Monday, November 26 - 8:30 AM

Monday, December 10 - 8:30 AM

Trail Supervisor - Jim Webb  
540-266-8537 – TrailSupervisor@ratc.org

### BOARD MEETINGS

Glenvar Public Library  
3917 Daugherty Rd, Salem 24153  
(All members are always welcome.)

Monday, October 1, 7:00 PM

Monday, November 5, 7:00 PM



Our Departed Friend, Maurice Turner

Gordge

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# Maurice Turner Remembered

Maurice Clifton Turner age, 76, of Boones Mill passed away on Sunday, August 19, 2018 after a brief illness.

He was born August 9, 1942, a son of the late Hurst and Jesse Turner, and was also preceded in death by his brothers: Bobby Pearson, Harold Turner, Ronnie Turner; sisters: Pauline Fisher, Mildred Meador and Evelyn Shockley. He is survived by a brother Bill Turner (Claudine); as well as numerous nieces and nephews. It was Maurice's wish to be cremated and for all services to be private.

He attended VA Tech, served in the U.S. Coast Guard and retired from Norfolk Southern. Maurice was an avid hiker and an active member of our club since the 1980s and has been overseer of Sawtooth Ridge for most of that time. He is also a long-time member of the Midweek Crew, and they define active. He also worked with Malcolm and Jimmie on the Nature Conservancy trail at Bottom Creek Gorge and continued after their passing. He even opened a new trail in Boones Mill just last year. Maurice was also

active on the Boones Mill Planning Commission and at one time was mayor of Boones Mill.

Maurice was diagnosed with carcinoma and given six months. He went into hospice with his niece Tina and Larry Waldron in Roanoke, but died sooner than expected on August 19th.

The following are some thoughts and remembrances that have been shared with us:



Maurice

Hubble

I've known Maurice since 1997 and spent many great times with him on both club outings and other trips, such as three days hiking the Spruce Knob NRA and a WV cross country skiing trip. He was a truly great guy in all respects and one of my very best friends. Rest In peace, old friend.

**John Lynham**



Larry Austin &amp; Maurice Cornett

In life, one encounters many people but only a few become friends. For me, Maurice was one of those few people. Maurice was thoughtful, respectful, honest, hard-working, a gentle spirit and a dedicated friend. He cared about the AT and worked many years to help maintain it. We shared many local hikes and some trips out West to National Parks to hike. We always had good

conversations solving world problems and simply enjoying the beauty of the outdoors. Due to his illness he was unable to continue hiking with me but when we talked he would always want to know where I had hiked that week and what I saw. His love of the trail and outdoors will live on in my memories, and his spirit will share my experiences so long as I am able to continue hiking. I was indeed blessed to have Maurice as a friend. - **Larry Austin**

I only got to work with Maurice on a few occasions, mostly when I was a Konnarock crew leader, but I certainly have fond memories of the times I did. One of my favorite group photos of all time is attached here, from June of 2012 when we were working on the "back side" of McAfee Knob (just north of Devils Kitchen, on the descent to Campbell). I asked the group for "big arms", and boy did Maurice bring the big arms! That was a really fun week, and Maurice was no small part of making it so. - **Kathryn Herndon-Powell**





May Almighty God Bless the sweet memory of Mayor Maurice Turner...He loved our sacred Earth, and hiked her many forested trails....And, as an occasional hiker companion, he shared with me his truly American appreciation for our blessed Virginia environment ....May God Bless Maurice, and bring comfort, peace and consolation to his family and friends.

***David Bowers***

I only knew Maurice as a fellow RATC hiker. I always felt happy and comfortable in his company. I wish I had known him better and shared things like cross-country skiing. Among my fondest memories are a hike in the snow with Maurice and Larry, and of Maurice's visit to Jack Ferguson's farm, where Maurice and Jack made Franklin County connections. - ***Kris Peckman***

I don't know how long I have known Maurice; it seems like forever. He was the model of gentleman; we should all want to grow up to be like him. There are a few who were intimate friends and are hurting badly. But all of us who knew him, loved him and know that we have lost something. It has been interesting reviewing his photos. Most of us have fleeting smiles, but from the photos we see that he was smiling all the time. He was a man of many purposes who led a full and meaningful life and we are a smaller place without him. May his memory be a blessing to all of us. - ***Bob Peckman***



Lunch in the Snow

Peckman



Maurice &amp; Blanche Brower

Maurice was like family. As Maurice, Mervin and I got to know each other better, we would team up and work together on each other's sections of the AT. We would lead club hikes on the AT but the three of us would also do our own hikes. In addition, Maurice talked Mervin and me into

going out with the Mid-Week Crew. After Mervin's death, Maurice and I continued to go together to maintain our sections of the AT.

Maurice was always invited to our gatherings, all holidays, pot lucks with croquet, table games or watching the Super Bowl. We went on bike rides, lots of walking on the greenway, picking blue berries, blackberries, and taking each other out for birthdays. Maurice and I were like brother and sister to each other, always available for each other to talk, listen or whatever we needed. When he got sick, I called most days to make sure he was OK, just talk and listen, or accompany him to doctor's appointments. We were talking about a train trip out west when he got better, but he caught the train to a much better place and is no longer suffering. Maurice was a truly caring person, always concerned about the welfare of others. He was ready to help anyone in need. I will miss him very much, as will all his friends and family. - **Blanche Brower**



Maurice Turner, Jim Roberson &amp; Malcolm Black

Gordge

## President's Report

As I mentioned in my first President's Report, I am in the process of learning how RATC works with and relies upon many partners to accomplish our mission. These partners include, but are not limited to: the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), the National Park Service, the US Forest Service, the Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards, the Virginia Department Of Transportation (VDOT), the Roanoke Emergency Services and Botetourt Emergency Services. I attended an Appalachian Trail Conservancy Volunteer Leadership meeting August 10-12 in Shepherdstown, WV. It was an opportunity to meet representatives from our partner organizations, along with leaders from each of the 31 ATC clubs, ATC staff and board members. The enthusiasm, commitment and pride in the AT were evident and contagious as you meet and get to know these individuals. Along these lines we have an upcoming meeting with Erik Taylor who is the newly appointed US Forest Service Eastern Divide Recreation Program Manager and our primary contact for AT issues, such as trail relocation/maintenance and shelter maintenance. October 21 is the Regional Partnership meeting with Virginia AT clubs, partners and ATC staff in Buena Vista, VA. Agenda items include bear canister/box recommendations and distribution of Virginia AT license plate proceeds to Virginia AT clubs. RATC continues our active involvement in the VA 311 pedestrian bridge project with VDOT and other partners. This group meets on a regular basis as planning continues toward pedestrian bridge, parking lot improvement and restroom facilities.

Several action items have been completed since the last Trail Blazer. These include:

+ Approval for removing hazard trees using chain saws around Pine Swamp Branch Shelter and subsequent removal of hazard trees and reopening of Pine Swamp Branch Shelter after a three-year closure. This shelter is in a Wilderness designated area and the use of chain saws or other motorized equipment is not permitted without special approval. Thank you to US Forest Service for completion of this project!

+ Replacement of drain culvert and addition of stone crush to VA 621 trailhead parking lot. The previous

culvert was damaged and the lot became a muddy dangerous mess during any rain event. This was a true partnership effort with RATC paying for the culvert and the US Forest Service providing equipment, stone crush and labor to repair. Thank you to US Forest Service!

+ Konnarock Crew spent five weeks on the Sinking Creek relocation project. This project is almost complete and requires approximately one additional week of work. Special thank you to our Trail Supervisor Jim Webb, who, while not an official member of the Konnarock crew, spent many hours assisting them.

+ RATC Cornboil on July 21 to recognize Konnarock crew was well organized by Scott Karns and attended by approximately 50 RATC members.

+ Diana Christopulos continues to be a dedicated steward of the AT as she monitors the Mountain Valley pipeline and works with other partner organizations to insure Mountain Valley follows all rules and regulations.

+ RATC received a \$250 donation from Facebook readers who viewed our posts regarding the Catawba fire and its impact on the AT and chose to donate for AT trail maintenance. These Facebook posts received over 35,000 views and dramatically demonstrate the power of social media. Thanks to Diana Christopulos for her diligence in posting this information.

+ On September 9, 2018 the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy honored RATC with the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy Landsaver Award for our work in encouraging and enabling outdoor recreation and love for the mountains we all call home.

**Mark your calendar for December 8, 2018 as date for RATC Holiday Potluck with location and time TBD.**

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve. I welcome your comments and suggestions in an effort to be sure RATC fulfills our mission to be stewards of the AT. I hope to see you on the AT hiking or performing trail maintenance.

*Jim Beeson*

### Member News

We are happy to welcome the following new members:

*Laura Legere*

*Whitney Jennings*

*Rachel Ruhlen*

*Scott Cisco*

*Leigh Ehlers*

*Zoe Scopa*

*Douglas Adkins*

*Gregory Jamison*

*Gregory Elliott*

*Donald Parks*

113-Mile Patch:

*William Neilan*

*Andrea Bratcher*

Contributions:

*Michael "Tabasco" Smith*

*Stephan Sabo*

*Global Giving Foundation*

*Madeleine Beal*

*Walter Mushlitz*

*Acetate Intermediate*

*Holdings (Deutsche)*

Contributions:in memory of Maurice Turner *Larry Austin*

### Hikemaster Report

A hot and rainy summer is finally making way for cooler temperatures. It's my favorite time to get on the trail and I hope you will join us on an RATC hike. Fall is a great time of year to start working toward the 113-Miler Club. The 113-Miler Club recognizes people that have hiked the entire RATC section (120 miles). The 113-Mile Club began in the 1980s, when RATC maintained 113 miles of the Appalachian Trail. Due to relocations and other changes, our section is now a little over 120 miles

long, but we have kept the historic name and patch. For more information about the 113-Miler Club or to submit your completed section chart,, you can visit <https://www.ratc.org/trail-info/113-mile-club/>. Congrats to William Neilan and Andrea Bratcher, who most recently received their 113-Miler patch.

I'd also like to welcome Carissa Crowe as the newest RATC hike leader. Carissa is looking forward to leading a variety of hikes and meeting more RATC members. *Susan Herndon-Powell*



Merv Jim Bill Lynn Hugh Jim Maurice Dave Steve Jim  
Brower Overholser Gordge Bryant Scruggs Roberson Turner Foster Hubble Brown

## New Trails, New Friends

What drives your desire to hike along the Appalachian Trail? Is it the enjoyment of nature, the physical challenge, the mental housekeeping? As with each personality, we all have our own reasons. One I never really considered; making friends!

Through the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club, I have met many new folks and made new friends. Last summer, I along with my 13-year-old grandson Michael, whom some of you know, were hiking the RATC section of the AT. While over-night camping at Lambert's Meadow campground, we met some folks from New England who were sectioning our area. They were fun, positive and very nice people. We finished the rest of their multi-days hike with them and exchanged contact information with the oft-stated invitation to come up and hike with them sometime.

In January, I received an email inviting us up to hike the state of Connecticut with them. We communicated back and forth, made plans, coordinated vacations, two surgeries and mapped out details. With readied gear and supplies, then executed the plan. On July 13<sup>th</sup>, we met up with them to begin the hike.

The trail left New York, entered Connecticut, meandered up and down the mountains and through the forests, back into NY, then back again into CT all the way through the state crossing the border into Massachusetts. We endured temperatures in the 90s, thunderstorms with lightning and steady rain, mosquitoes and bears! Much of the trail followed the Housatonic River. Memorable experiences will be negotiating the St. John's Ledges, the Lemon Squeezer (a wall of vertical rock you have to inch your way sideways through, the Great Falls of the Housatonic at Falls Village and the Iron Bridge, Bear Mountain (the tallest mountain in the state of Connecticut), Sages

Ravine and Mt. Everett. The views were amazing. We spent one night in a hostel in Salisbury, CT, a quaint typical New England town. It was full of historic buildings, nice people and a good experience, especially for my Grandson.

After a long hot day and negotiating a particularly difficult section, we came upon a wonder of wonders: a trail angel with fruit, cookies, chips, all sorts of drinks and grilled to order cheeseburgers! Never has a Coca Cola and a burger tasted so good.

We met many different hikers, but a few will always be remembered. Kibs, from Texas. A great guy; funny, middle-aged fellow and is doing the entire trail while only having one arm. Amazing feat to me, considering some of the rough terrain, rocks and ledges we had to traverse, not only there in CT, but all along the trail. (Picture him descending Dragons Tooth with 35 lbs on his back, one handed), K TOM (kill the old man) a retired USAF Vet from Florida, Ms. Vanessa, Speedy Squirrel, Iron Foot...so many personalities with a common interest.

We had a good time and have re-affirmed what I hope will be lifelong friendships, made a few new friends, all possible through the Appalachian Trail. I hope we made lasting memories for my grandson, who did remarkably well on the hike. We are already planning next summer's adventure with our New England friends on another section of the trail.

You don't have to be a thru-hiker to enjoy it. Get out there, meet fellow AT enthusiasts who share your passion and plan your own adventure. And hey, give me a shout when you want to strap on the backpacks and hit the trail.

***Joe "Dragging Anchor" Berney***

## Hike Reports

**Monday, June 18, 2018 8:00 AM  
Workhike - Dragon's Tooth Trail**

Mark Farrell, Jim Beeson, Bob Egbert, Dave Horst, Mike Vaughn & Jim Webb

Right from the start of the day we knew we were in for a tough one. The temperature was forecast to be 95F in Roanoke and would not be very much cooler up on the mountain.

We split into 2 groups of 3 so that we wouldn't get in each other's way and everyone would be working. Moving heavy rocks is hard but moving heavy rocks on a hot, humid day is exhausting.

We worked on until our water was gone which was about 2:00PM. Neither group was able to finish the projects they were working on but together we did put in 14 steps.

**Friday, June 22 to Monday, June, 25, 2018  
Konnarock Crew on Sinking Creek Relo**

Day 1 - Jim Webb

Day 2 - Lin Yang & Jim Webb

Day 3 - Jim Webb

Day 4 - Kathryn Herndon-Powell & Jim Webb

Day 1, After setting up their camp for the week down Rte 42 at Joe's Trees, the Konnarock crew hiked up the equipment for setting up a high line. A high line is a cable strung between the trees in order to lift and carry large rocks from where they are found to where they need to be used in step construction. Setting up the high line is a pretty straightforward task made much more difficult in the rainstorm that came up and continued for an hour. A long wet hike to the parking lot ended the day.

Day 2, A new volunteer joined us on the second day, Lin Yang from Harrisonburg. Together we dug some sidehill while the Konnarock crew made some final adjustments to the highline and trimmed branches in the way. Once all was set, we joined

the crew as they quarried some rocks and moved them down the line to a part of the trail where rocks are scarce. Lin joined the crew working the high line while Jim worked with the crew on one of the rockslides installing steps.

Day 3, Near perfect weather allowed the crew to move forward with their tasks. The crew on the highline continued to quarry rock and send it down the trail. The trail in this area will need at least 30 steps with cribbing to complete. The crew on the rockslide continued finding, shaping and installing more steps.



Finishing Touches

Webb

Day 4, The weather was cloudy with occasional sprinkles but on the last day of work the crew was not to be denied. The highline crew continued to "fly" rocks down the trail as the step crew wrestled with one last obstacle. A large rock blocked the trail at an odd angle and had to be removed. Plan A was to drill the rock and split it with wedges. This did not pan out as the rock resisted splitting. Plan B evolved where the 4 of us took turns beating it into pebbles.



This one fought back, and lost. Webb

**Saturday, June 30 to Tuesday, July 3, 2018  
Workhike - Sinking Creek Mtn. Relo**

Day 1 - Jim Webb

Day 2 - Bruce Agnew & Jim Webb

Day 3 - Fred Meyer, Bob Egbert, Haley Grunwald & Jim Webb

Day 4 - Jim Webb

Day 1, After setting up camp at Joe's Trees on Rte 42, the crew for this week hiked up the mountain and arrived at the worksite around noon. The hike was easy since all the tools were left in place from last week. Temperatures for the week were forecast to be in the high 80's, which meant that water is very important. The afternoon was spent working in two places. One team worked on the extensive crib wall seen below, while the other worked to clear the next rockslide for the trail.



Cribwall

Webb

Day 2, A duplicate of the previous day, Hot, high humidity and working on the same jobs in the same places. The team working on the crib wall will finish their job today and switch to moving some large rocks tomorrow. Work continues on clearing the next rockslide for the trail.

Day 3, Continued working on the rockslide while the others "flew" some rocks down the trail to use as steps. The highline requires a team on each end to move these rocks plus someone to raise and lower the highline. Two people put straps around a rock and attach it to a pulley on the highline. The highline is then raised to lift the rock into the air. The rocks are then pulled down the trail to the required location and the line lowered and the rocks unloaded.

Day 4, More moving rocks down the highline and more building a trail through the rockslide. We have moved about 40 rocks down the highline to near their final resting place. In the next 2 weeks these will be made into steps on a steep trail section going up to the switchback.

Also in the next trip, the last rockslide will be conquered and starting on the tie in with the AT.

**Sunday, July 1, 2018 8:30 AM  
Cove Mountain & Little Cove Mountain Circuit**

Fred Meyer (leader), Bob Peckman (assistant), Josiah Leonard, Maya Bohler, Susan Terwilliger, Robert Wrobel, Chris Venable, Alessandro Ceci

This is a wonderful circuit hike. We started on VA-614 about a half mile from the AT trailhead and crossed the foot bridge over Jennings Creek. From there we proceeded counterclockwise. There were some splendid views along the way and we stopped for a snack at the Cove Mountain Shelter. I think this turned out to be about a 10-mile hike and it was a very hot day, but I think everyone had a good time.

**Saturday, July 7, 2018 9:00 AM  
Sprouts Run/Wilson Mountain**

Josiah Leonard (leader), Karen Leslie Major, Julie Petruska & Lisa Wild-Gingeliski

Before I describe the hike, let me offer sincere apologies to anyone who would like to have gone on this trip but could not because of the short notice. This hike was a last-minute idea and a sort of make-up hike after my cancelled hike from the previous week. It was nice having a first-time RATC participant (Lisa), a return hiker after a few years of absence (Karen), and one of my best hiking partners (Julie) on this trip.

The trip got started on time as Lisa volunteered to drive the four of us to Solitude, braving several miles on I-81 and a stalled train at Arcadia. Sprouts Run, the centerpiece of the hike, was running high after heavy rain the night before, so we all decided just to charge right through the crossings as there was virtually no chance of keeping dry feet. The cascades along the stream, though, were in fine form with the flowing water, making a pleasant start to the loop. After climbing out of the hollow and completing a section along forestry roads, we had lunch at the beginning of the Wilson Mountain Trail.

The mountain portion of the hike passed quickly after a couple of steep climbs along the ridge. We had a few modest views toward Apple Orchard Mountain and the James River, though this hike is definitely a winter hike if views are the priority. Before we knew it, our short eight-mile loop was at an end as we descended back to Sprouts Run and Lisa's car. But, the real highlight of the day was our side trip to Blue Hole, a great swimming hole in Jennings Creek. Lisa and I took the plunge into the cold water, while Julie and Karen only dipped their feet. Though a short hike, this was a thoroughly enjoyable time with great company! After the day's success, I hope to include more swimming opportunities on future summer hikes.

**Monday, July 9, 2018 8:00  
Workhike - Dragon's Tooth trail**

Mark Gordon, Mark Farrell, Mike Vaughn, Bob Egbert, Julie Petruska, & Jim Webb

The weather was perfect as we started up from the parking lot to do some unfinished work. On the

previous work hike, we had started two sets of steps in two separate locations and had not been able to finish either of them. On this trip, we were able to complete both sets and to start another small set of steps in addition to clearing some rocks exposed by erosion.

**Tuesday, July 10, 2018 7:30 AM  
Tinker Creek Greenway to Carvin's Cove**

Maya Bohler & Nancy Reid (co-leaders), Georgia Shaurette, Jimbo Harshfield, Mary Harshfield, Kathy Arrington, Madeleine Taylor

Hoping to beat the heat, we assembled early at the Tinker Creek Greenway- Hollins Trailhead. We had a beautiful sunny day for our walk over ridge to the shore of Carvin's Cove. There were interesting mushrooms, including some tiny chanterelles, along the trail, and we heard familiar bird songs.

Along the shore we paused and looked longingly at the water, but obeyed the rules and didn't get in. It turned out this was Jimbo's birthday. Only Mary had known beforehand, so the only gift we had for him was our companionship in a beautiful place.

After a snack at the picnic area we returned up the trail, looking at the lake through the summer leaves.

At the parking lot, we puzzled with our phone apps over the identification of a large, lovely tree...only to discover it was the invasive Tree of Heaven!

After surveying our sweat-stained shirts we decided we had not beaten the heat, but it had been a lovely birthday outing.

**Wednesday, July 11 to Saturday, July 14, 2018  
Konnarock - Sinking Creek Relocation**

Days 1, 2, & 3 - Jim Webb

Day 4 - Lin Yang & Jim Webb

Day 1 - As usual for this work location, the Konnarock crew set up their campsite down Rte 42 at Joe's Trees and then proceeded to hike up to the worksite arriving about noon. After lunch, the crew broke into groups with one working on the trail thru the rockslide, another working on the switchback steps, and a third quarrying rock for stepping stones.

Day 2 - A little bit of change from the first day. The group working on the trail thru the rockslide is able to finish their task and put a beautiful trail thru the rockslide. The group working on the switchback continues their work and the group quarrying the step rocks switches to "flying" the rocks via the highline down the trail.

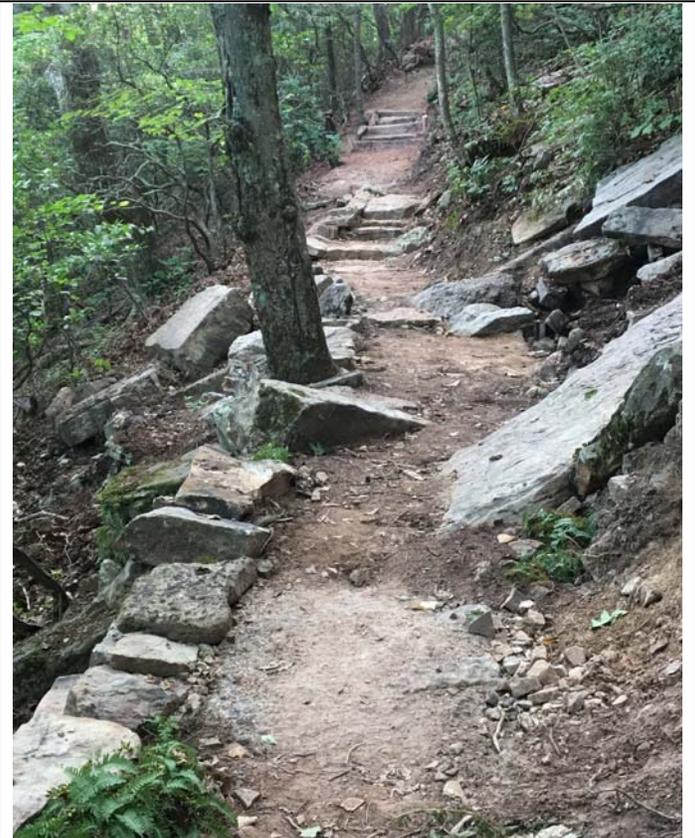


Pulley hangs from blue line, black & yellow lines control it. Webb

A special shoutout to RATC member Ron "longhorn" Sloan, who was waiting in the parking lot with cold drinks when we came marching out of the woods. Ron then proceeded to take a Thruhiker with what appeared to be a painful snakebite to the doctor.

Day 3 - A long day that saw more "flying " rocks and also a lot of gathering and crushing of rock in anticipation of putting in the forty steps needed to get up the steep slope to the switchback. The Switchback steps are finished and a lot of "crush" is made. The highline taken down and redirected to stage the rock steps along the trail where they will be needed.

Day 4 - The highline was taken down as it is no longer needed. Groups are assigned to build steps in three places to be joined together when finished. Another group builds log cribbing on a narrow trail section next to a tree.



Beautiful Finished Trail

Webb

Thursday, July 19 to Sunday, July 22, 2018  
Konnarock - Sinking Creek Relocation

Days 1 & 2 - Jim Webb

Days 3 & 4 - Lin Yang & Jim Webb



Puzzle Pieces

Webb

Day 1, Starting in where we had left off, we continued turning the large rocks left on the trail into steps. This week's crew is a little smaller than normal at six people but with lots of enthusiasm. Splitting into two groups we were able to work in separate areas without stepping on each other.

Day 2, More steps. It seems like they will never end. Each step has to be secured in place and the outside locked in with gargoyles. Finally finishing the section prior to the switchback we have 43 rock steps.

Day 3, With the main section of the relo done we have started on the lead in on the bottom. Another rocky section that will require more steps to gain the altitude needed. Starting from a slanted rock slab, three large rock steps were located on the hillside, moved down the hill, and maneuvered into position as steps. Three new steps in all.

Day 4, The weather for the first 3 days was very conducive to the work. On the last day our luck ran out. Between intermittent rain showers, work continued on the lead in to the relo with an additional eight steps being added. We also pinned rocks to the slanted slab and created a landing for our steps.

**Sunday, July 29, 2018 10:00 AM  
Sunset Field & Thunder Ridge**

Chris Means (leader), Lita Wood, Ken Myers, Jennifer Frye, Rita Krasnow, Madeleine Taylor



Sunset Ridge Means

The RATC and ROAG groups gathered and clicked off 8.6 miles on this sunny, late July afternoon. Oddly enough the air could almost be categorized as "nippy" once we'd gotten to the Bald top of Apple Orchard Mountain, given the steady wind we encountered up there. We partook in a lunch with a view at the Thunder Ridge Overlook, entertainment provided by the gift of sight.. Just another great day in these wonderful Virginia hills..



3-D Jigsaw Puzzle Webb

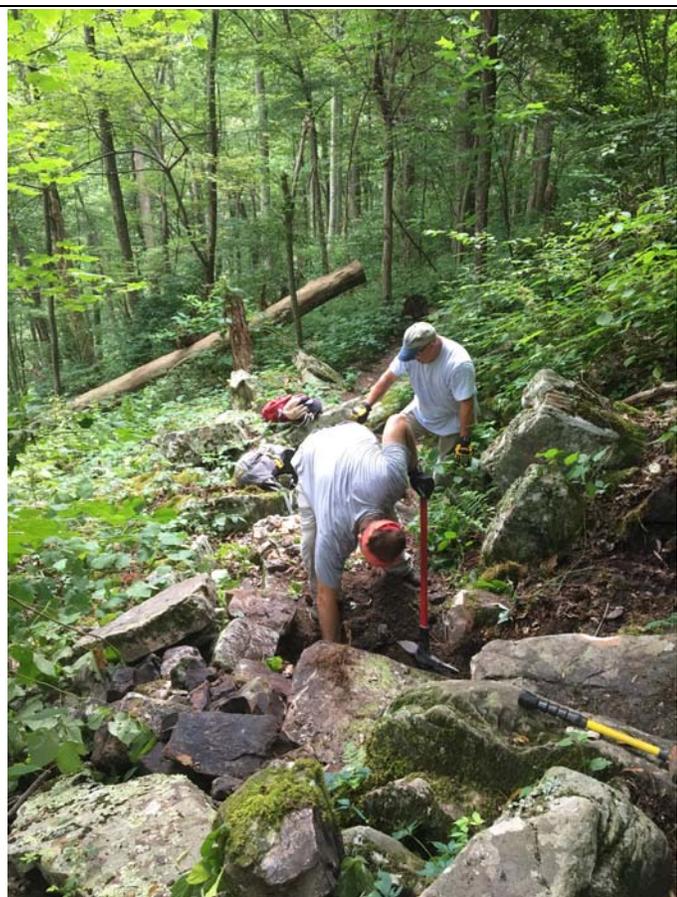


Stairway to Heaven Webb

**Monday, July 30, 2018 8:99 AM**  
**Workhike Rocky Gap, Rte 601**

Attending: Bill Neilan, Mark Farrell, Susan Terwilliger, Randy Pennington, Jill Pennington, Jim Beeson & Jim Webb

As with most of the workhikes this summer, the forecast was for rain as we left for the Rocky Gap worksite. The forecast was wrong this day as the sun came out in the afternoon. Great for us.



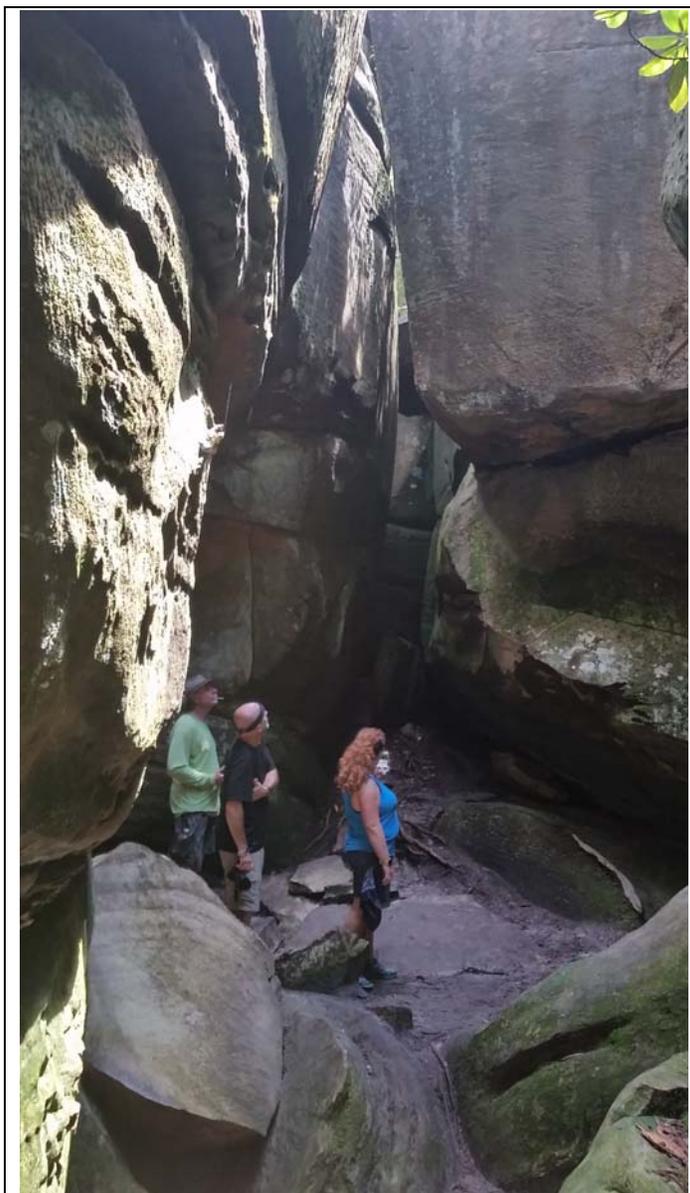
Mark & Jim

Webb

This is probably our last work related hike on this section this season. Most of the trail in the section has been repaired and this hike is to clean up a few of the unfinished parts of it. We split up into 2 groups to keep everyone busy. Each group was able to add 3 steps to the trail in a couple of difficult areas in the morning. After lunch, we were able to add 2 steps to an unfinished staircase and widen the trail along an eroded section.

**Sunday, August 5, 2018 10:00**  
**The Channels, Hayters Gap, Honaker, VA**

Chris Means (leader), Trand Lane, Joe Horne, L Ho, Bruce Agnew, Bob Buford, Shawn Buck, Chasity Graham



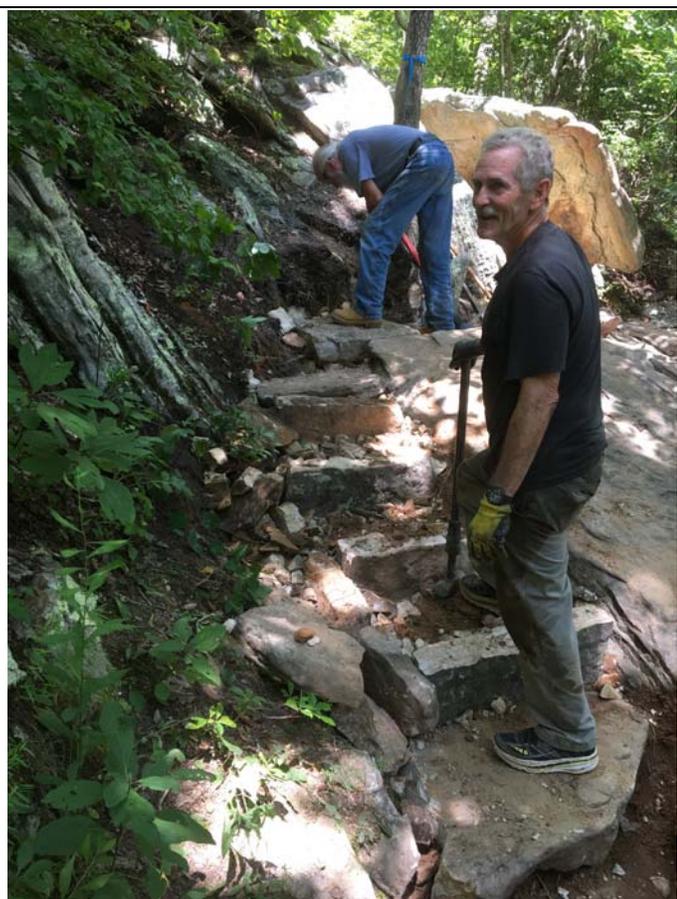
It takes a tall picture for the Channels

I hung out Sunday with a few members from 2 SW VA based groups, the RATC and the ROAG, as we ventured down to Washington County to stretch out our legs.. We visited The Channels, a most unusual place and not to be missed if you're the hiking type. The weather was great up there at about 10 degrees cooler than the valley, refreshing to say the least.. Pics were taken, snacks were eaten, stories were told and more plans were made. I so appreciate my hiking peeps, blessed are we the adventurous.. Be well peeps... and ... Get Your Outside On !!!

**Monday, August 6, 2018 8:30 AM  
Workhike - Dragon's Tooth**

Julie Petruska, Dave Horst, Craig Rightmire, Mike Vaughn, Mark Farrell, Bill Neilan & Jim Webb

It was a long humid hike up from the Dragon's Tooth parking lot on what was to be a very warm day. As usual, we split into 2 groups to keep everyone busy. The group of Mike, Mark, Craig and Julie worked to add five steps in the middle of a disconnected staircase. The group of Dave, Bill and Jim added a series of check steps next to a large slanted rock that was very difficult to traverse in wet weather.



David

Webb

Both projects were finished within minutes of each other and we packed up and headed for the parking lot passing many hikers on their way up to enjoy the view.

**Wednesday, August 8, 2018 8:30 AM  
Tinker Creek Bridge Cleanout Picture Show**

This was a Rockin-The-Outhouse project.



Scott Stanton, Brendan Brogan, Paul Walko, John Hvozdovic, Homer & Therese Witcher, Dee Hobbs, Laura Puckett, & Bennett Witcher, photographer



Mission Impossible



Piece by Piece



Be Careful!



Almost Done

9 people worked on August 19 to clear the log jam in the culvert on Tinker Creek near Daleville which formed since last March. We had all hard workers which made the job easier. Bennett and John took the pictures.

**Monday, August 20, 2018 8:00 AM  
Workhike - AT south of Rte 624**

Bill Neilan, Jim Beeson, Mark Farrell, Mike Vaughn, Jill Pennington & Jim Webb

The cool misty day didn't dampen our spirits as we headed southbound on the trail from Rte 624. The worksite was an area of sidehill that had become very overgrown and eroded since some large trees had come down and opened it up to the sun. We cut back the weeds, redug the sidehill and put in 5 log steps.

We were so efficient at our task that we had time to go back to Rte 624 and go up the trail northbound. There was a switchback on the sidehill that required a couple of log steps. We found a suitable dead tree and cut out a couple of logs and installed them.

**Thursday, August 23, 2018 8:00 AM  
James River Foot Bridge to Locher Tract**

Josiah Leonard (leader), David Horst, Jeff Edwards, Mark Farrell, Jim "El Presidente" Beeson, Julie Petruska & Paul Winter

When planning hikes several weeks ahead, a hike leader has no idea if the weather is going to be wonderful, miserable, or something in-between. Our group could not have ordered better weather with highs in the upper-70s and virtually no humidity – not bad for late August. It was such a nice day that Julie even opted to use her fall / winter blend for her trail mix. Special thanks to Jim and Mark for being our carpool drivers.

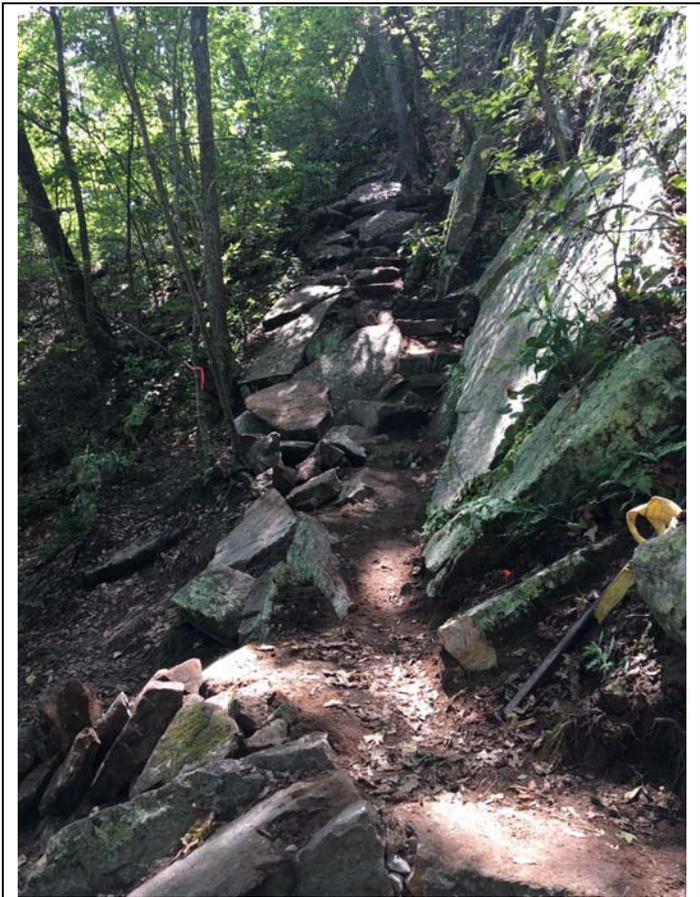
After meeting Dave and Paul at the James River Appalachian Trail crossing, we crossed the river and immediately deviated from our assigned route by bushwhacking to the old Appalachian Trail / present Matts Creek Trail. We had nice views of the Cushaw Dam and the former site of the Route 501 bridge. There were a few nice views from the old trail alignment toward Little Rocky Row. We took a short rest at Matts Creek Shelter after rejoining the present Appalachian Trail, then made the arduous climb up Grassy Ridge. There were a few views of the river below, though they were often obstructed by the leaves. At Big Cove Branch, we met a long-distance hiker, Compass, who decided to join us for the rest of our hike after we offered to get him resupplied.

We stopped for lunch at Grassy Ridge, then we had a pleasant stroll down the Balcony Falls Trail. There were several nice views of the Arnolds Valley and then of the town of Glasgow. The maintenance of the Balcony Falls Trail was slight on the upper portions, but got better as we neared Locher Tract. We finished after an elevation change of about 6,000 feet total and about 10.7 miles. Julie, Jeff, and I took a leisurely break by the James while the rest went to retrieve the cars. Jim was nice enough to take Compass for some food at Glasgow and then dropped him back on the trail.

**Tuesday, August 28, 2018, 8:00 AM  
Work Hike – Dragon’s Tooth**

Jim Webb (Leader) , Bill Neilan, Mark Farrell, Julie Petruska, Mike Vaughn, Dave Horst, Georgia Shaurette, & Jeff Edwards

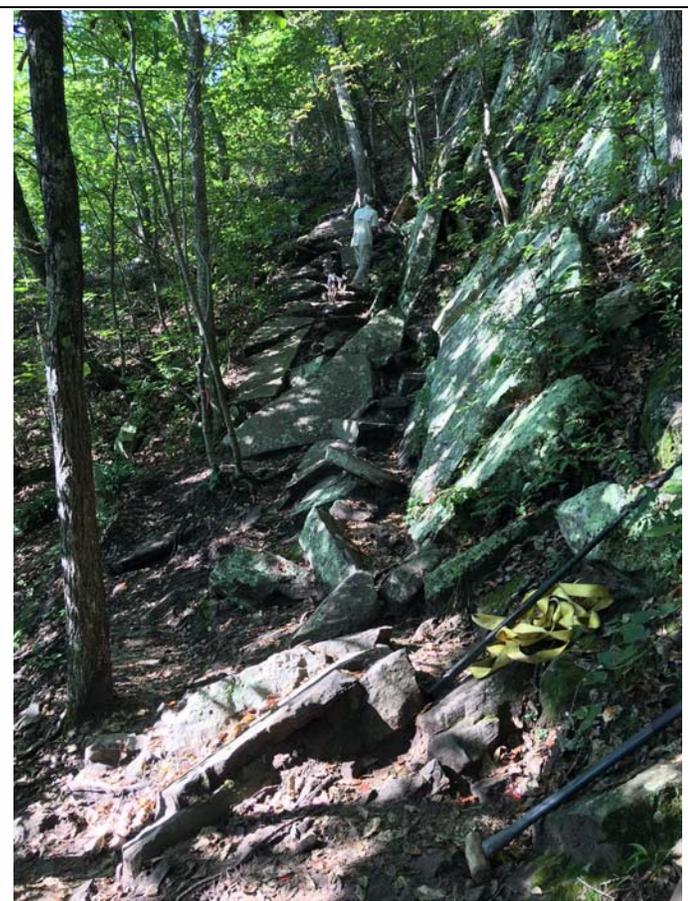
It was already hot and humid when we started up the trail from the Dragon’s Tooth parking area. The high temperature was forecast to be in the nineties. This was our sixth work hike in the past three months rehabbing the trail up to Dragon’s Tooth, so we had to hike up most of the way to the top to get to the work site. We have been working our way up the trail fixing problem areas.



After

Vaughn

Since there were eight of us, we separated into two groups and worked fairly close to each other. Despite it being a hot day, many day hikers and a few backpackers came past us throughout the day. By the end of the day we had installed 12 stone steps and cribbed and widened about 20 feet of trail. This brings to 65 the total steps installed along the trail over the course of the six work hikes there.



Before

Vaughn

**Tuesday, September 4, 2018 8:00 AM  
Workhike - Dragons Tooth Trail**

Bill Neilan, Mike Vaughn & Jim Webb

Another warm, humid workhike on the AT near Dragons Tooth. With only three of us on the hike we picked out a couple of small projects to work on. The first project was to put 3 steps on the trail where erosion had caused a large 22" step in the trail.



Bill

Webb

The second project was to remove a small tree from the middle of the trail, crib the edge of the trail and put in a rock step.

I guess we are making some kind of an impact on this section of trail when a day hiker, who uses this trail every couple of months, told us that it seems to be getting easier every time they come up.



Before



After

In order to lengthen the bridge, we first had to completely disassemble and move the bridge to the bank where we could add pieces to lengthen the stringers. At this point a couple of section hikers with bad timing showed up and had to get their feet wet as they forded the creek. After lengthening the stringers we repositioned the abutments and rebuilt the bridge using the old decking and adding some new pieces for the extra length.

**Monday, September 10, 2018 8:30 AM  
Dismal Creek Bridge Rehab  
about 1 mile south of Waipiti Shelter**

Bill Neilan, Mark Farrell, Mike Vaughn, Jeff Edwards, Bill Floyd, Mike Reilly, Bill Herndon, Pattie Hall & Jim Webb

The washout of one of the AT bridges in the Dismal Creek area provided the opportunity for a change from putting in rock steps. One of the many heavy rains in the area had built up debris in front of the bridge and managed to push it off the abutment and erode one bank and turn it into mud. It needed to be lengthened and the abutments moved back from the bank.

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

Both hikers and leaders, please go to <https://www.ratc.org/regional-hiking-resources/> and click on Bob Peckman's Regional Hike List to 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 suggest changes or new hikes.

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 of \$0.10/one-way mile. We carpool 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 driving expenses.

**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 Susan Herndon-Powell, [hikemaster@ratc.org](mailto:hikemaster@ratc.org).**

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**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 Treasurer, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, VA 24024, or use PayPal at <a href="http://ratc.org">ratc.org</a> .		
	Donation	\$ _____
	Amount Enclsed	\$ _____

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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 Blue Ridge Land Conservancy