

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Summer 2015

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

Corn Boil - August 1

6:00 – 9:00 PM

Catawba Community Center

WORK HIKES

Monday, July 13 - 8:30 AM

Konnarock, July 23 - 27

Konnarock, July 31 – August 4

Konnarock, August 8 - 12

Monday, August 24 - 8:30 AM

Monday, September 14 - 8:30 AM

Monday, September 28 - 8:30 AM

Hike Scheduling

Contact Bob Peckman

540-366-7780 – bob@peckmanjazz.com

BOARD MEETINGS

(All members are always welcome.

Please let the host know you plan to attend.)

Monday, July 20, 7:00 p.m.

Hollins Branch Library

Monday, September 28, 6:00 p.m.

***County maintenance office
on Kessler Mill Road***

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Editor's Notes

I am serving as the interim Blazer editor and would be happy to relinquish this position if anyone in the club is interested in serving for the remainder of this term (until March). Please send me hike reports and pictures to witchers4@juno.com so I can include them in the next Blazer.

**Thanks,
Therese Witcher**

President's Report

It has been an interesting couple of months on the RATC board and as a result of a few departures from the board I was named interim president at the April meeting and by May we had made several additional interim board placements to fill out the roster of the board. Please note the entire list of your clubs board on the back of the blazer and note that four are interim positions as only the membership can officially elect board officers and as we only meet and have elections in March the by-laws have a provision for interim placements. So while I served as president for a few years back in the day, for the next 10 months I am your interim president. We are still looking for a conservation supervisor, who will be dealing mostly with invasive species on the AT corridor, and a secretary to replace John Miller who has been doing a great job filling in but only until a replacement is found.

Want a job, call me 556-2919.

But the work of your board continues and we are pleased that VP Diana Christopolus has lead our fight against the Pipeline threatening the AT and all of us in the Region. See the story below. We are also excited to have had McAfee knob named as one of this years ten Hot Spots by the Leave No Trace organization. Check out their website at <https://lnt.org/> With this designation we hope to provide greater community awareness of the threat of overuse and neglect by users

is having on the knob, the trails to and from and even the nearby shelters and privies that are seeing record use. While it is exciting that our press and community leaders are finally recognizing what a great outdoors destination our region is with the unique combination of the Parkway to the east and the AT to the west, there is a down side. Overuse. Our work hikes are ending up being scheduled on the McAfee section once or more times per month, we have two ridge runners out there on weekends and a great new group of volunteers the McAfee Taskforce. The task force is up and running and WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS LIKE YOU to promote LNT practices, support the ridge runners, and provide information to users on often simple but critical things like "do you have sufficient water, good shoes, a leash for your dog, and don't forget to pack out everything you bring in."

The RATC has even paid for one (two starting soon) "port a johns" for the 311 parking lot as the cat holes nearby and along the trail were awful.

Well enough about that..... I am excited to be again leading your board and helping the RATC be a fun and productive organization protecting and maintaining our 113 miles and promoting hiking as a great leisure activity good for both the heart... and the soul. Happy hiking!

Roger Holnback

RATC task force weighs in on Mountain Valley Pipeline

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club has a proud history. Myron Avery, one of the AT's founders, established RATC in 1932, and our volunteers have built, maintained and protected over 120 miles of the Appalachian Trail in Virginia – over 20 percent of the AT's 550 miles in the state.

RATC is incorporated under the provisions of Chapter 2 of title 13.1 of the Code of Virginia (Articles of Incorporation, November 1, 1985). Our bylaws identify our purpose, which includes the following responsibilities:

- to collect data of interest to users of the Trail concerning scenery, history, geology, botany, forestry, and wildlife of the Appalachian Mountains.
- to provide support to the Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC) in monitoring and

managing the National Park Service lands within its assigned sector of the Trail which were purchased for the purpose of Trail Protection.

- to participate in and encourage the development of laws and regulations that protect the Appalachian Trail and its related interests.
- to use all legal means to protect and defend the Appalachian Trail and its related interests.



Mountain Valley Pipeline, a Pittsburgh-based corporation, proposes to build a 42-inch natural gas transmission pipeline about 300 miles long to transport fracked natural

gas from West Virginia to Pittsylvania County, Virginia for sale east of the Blue Ridge. This is one of

three active proposals for large pipelines across the AT in Virginia, with a fourth “on hold.” The proposed Western Marcellus/Appalachian Connector pipeline would follow almost the same route as the MVP.

MVP proposes to cross the Appalachian Trail in one of three identified locations:

- Across the top of Peters Mountain, just south of Symms Gap Meadow
- Across Sinking Creek Mountain, between Niday Shelter and Sarver Hollow Shelter and then between the Brush Mountain Wilderness and Brush Mountain Wilderness East
- Between Brush Mountain and Cove Mountain along the Trout Creek drainage near Pickle Branch Shelter and then past Dragon’s Tooth.

As we went to press, the RATC Task Force on Pipelines was finalizing comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the agency that will decide whether to permit construction of the MVP. , Members include: Mervin Brower, Diana Christopulos, Megan Duvall, Roger Holnback, Mark McClain, Kris Peckman, Bob Peckman, Larry Willis and Bill Wolf. Laura Belleville, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy’s conservation director, helped us by sharing the ATC’s new policy on natural gas pipelines as well as comments made by ATC and another maintaining club on some of the other nine large pipelines that could potentially cross the AT.

RATC’s comments will focus on these six topics:

1. **Necessity of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to examine cumulative impact of all proposed major natural pipeline crossings of the Appalachian Trail.**
2. **Avoidance of threats to regional air quality and human health**
3. **Satisfaction of criteria in the Appalachian Trail Conservancy’s 2015 Policy on Pipeline Crossings of the Appalachian Trail.**
4. **Avoidance of threats to regional water supplies and to drinking water for Appalachian Trail hikers**
5. **Avoidance of karst topography and active seismic zones in the proposed AT crossing locations**
6. **Avoidance of specific impacts, including scenic impacts, likely with currently proposed AT crossing alternatives**

A copy of the RATC’s comments will be posted on the RATC website after they have been finalized and adopted by the board of directors.

Diana Christopulos

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

Randall Adams
Brian Boggs
Denis Daly

Jonathon Giuffria
Robin Jordan
Scott Karns

Mark Millberger
Jennifer Pfister
Martha Pillow

And the following donors:

Karl Huber & David Grimes “In honor of **Therese & Homer Witcher** for their generosity with assisting hikers” and

Jim & Jill Beeson
Christopher Lynch

Fred Meyer
Marilyn Moody

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

Brendle Wolfe

McAfee Knob Volunteer Ridgerunners help with outreach, maintenance and parking lot patrol – more training scheduled on August 8

McAfee Knob is popular, which is both a blessing and a curse. Every weekend hundreds of day hikers and



quite a few backpackers head for the Knob. Two wonderful paid Ridgerunners - Stephanie Breig and Eric West – take turns patrolling the section from Dragon’s Tooth to Lambert’s Meadow on weekends, but they can’t be everywhere.

That is where the volunteers come in. On May 23, eleven

RATC members completed a day of training led by ATC staffer Kathryn Herndon and assisted by Stephanie and Eric. The volunteers trained were: Brian Boggs, Diana Christopulos, Bob Egbert, David Foster, Jonathon Giuffria, Carina Hughes, Robin Jordan, Mark McClain, Bruce Sellars, Jim Webb and David Youmans.

At least one day each month from April to October, McAfee Knob Task Force Volunteer Ridgerunners will

help protect the resource in one of three volunteer positions, or may combine duties from these positions as suits their interests:

Trail Patrol Outreach: Encourage and promote desired wildland ethics among Appalachian Trail visitors at McAfee Knob by offering interpretation on the natural or cultural significance of this high-use areas and tips on best-practices for enjoying the Trail safely and responsibly.

Trail Patrol Maintenance: Preserve the A.T. experience and ecological integrity along the most heavily trafficked section of the Trail in the Roanoke and New River Valleys, by mitigating human impacts and preventing minor impacts from becoming exacerbated.

Parking Lot Patrol: Prevent emergencies and rescues, accidents, and incidents along the most heavily trafficked section of the Trail in the Roanoke and New River Valleys, by engaging visitors at the beginning of their hikes to make sure they are prepared and informed.

A second training session will be held from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, August 8, 2015, with location and other details to be announced later. You can learn more by joining the RATC’s McAfee Knob Taskforce Meetup group or by contacting Diana Christopulos at dianak16@earthlink.net.

RATC Annual Corn Boil and Potluck Dinner

Saturday, August 1st, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Shuck Corn & Set-up 5:00 PM

Catawba Community Center

From Hanging Rock, take Route 311 over Catawba Mountain, turn right on Route 779.

The Community Center is just past the Post Office.

RATC provides pork BBQ, corn, beverages and table service.

Bring a large covered dish to share (we host the Konnarock Crew).

Don't forget: we reuse the plastic tableware -- place them in container provided.

Carolyn McPeak (540-890-2855, mcpeakcr@aol.com) has graciously agreed to head up the affair in Linda's absence. Please call her if you have questions; or better yet, if you can help out (shucking corn, setting up, etc.)

Thanks!

Hike Reports

Monday, March 9, 2015 8:30 AM Workhike – McAfee Knob

Mike Vaughn, Dave Horst, John Miller, Dave Youmans, Jim Webb, & Adam.

There were also 12 students from Baldwin Wallace College in Berea Ohio who gave up their week of spring break to work with us on the trail.

We removed the old wooden bridge #6 on the trail and replaced it with a more natural log bridge with crushed stone fill. It required the crew to drill four holes in the rock face and epoxy supporting rods in to support the logs. The old bridge was carried up the mountain to the service road for later removal. The Park Service wants to replace these bridges and replace them with more natural structures requiring less maintenance.

Monday, March 23, 2015 8:30 AM McAfee Knob Workhike

Jim Webb, Mike Vaughn & Dave Youmans

We cribbed a section of trail next to bridge #1 with logs and crushed rock.

Sunday, March 15, 2015 8:00 AM Apple Orchard Falls, AT, Cornelius Creek Loop

John Merkwon (leader), Rebecca Terrill, Val Dymond, Karen Callahan, Chris Means, Mary Harshfield, Marc Williams, Anita Grant, Kris and Bob Peckman

What a difference a week makes. The week prior, the access road to the trail head was nearly impassable due to the snow and hiking was difficult. A week later you were hard pressed to find any snow. We did find one piece of ice about 18" long on the trail but that was it. The hike was a bit longer than normal due the Forrester Service closing the access road because of a soft roadbed so we had to hike in an extra 1.8 miles each way but it was a very pleasant day and the extra distance only extended the pleasure. Water was flowing over the falls and with the leaves off we could see the entire falls from top to bottom. Cornelius Creek was manageable and with a little teamwork, we nearly all made the hike with dry feet doing a balance routine over a log bridge (OK - a very scary thick stick) over the creek in one place. Finally, to cap off the hike we saw the first hike flowers of the season with a patch of coltsfoot at the end of the hike. Hike distance was 10.6 miles which took about 5 1/2 hours.



Hikers enjoying Apple Orchard Falls. Left to Right:
Bob and Kris Peckman, Rebecca Terrill, Mary Harshfield, Val Dymond, Marc Williams, Chris Means, Anita Grant and Karen Callahan



If there is a bench, we will use it. Left to Right: Mary Harshfield, Val Dymond, Anita Grant

Sunday, March 29. 8:00 AM North Mountain

Kris and Bob Peckman (leaders), Jim Beeson, Karen Callahan, Jeff Edwards, Arietta Fleming-Davies, Angela Steahly, Tod Whitehurst

After a brutally cold, windy Saturday, Sunday turned out a little chilly, but sunny and calm. We warmed up quickly as we hiked up the nicely graded Catawba Valley Trail (thank you, Midweek Group!). At the ridgetop we encountered the only wildflower of the day, a cut-leaved toothwort still in the bud stage. Later we came across a patch of garlic mustard already green coming through the dead leaves, but there was too much of it to pull up today. Up and down the countless bumps

of the ridge, we followed the North Mountain Trail past Turkey, then Grouse, then Deer trails, noting Tinker Cliffs, McAfee Knob, and Catawba Hospital to our left, and New Castle to our right. Jeff carried out a long aluminum post that was lying beside the trail. At the end of the hike, some of us had a nice chat sitting on the grass while we waited for the shuttle drivers to return. The signs told us that the hike was in fact 11.7 miles, not the advertised 10.4. I have seen the mileage for this hike change over the years, while the route remained the same—different measuring techniques, perhaps? Anyway, 11.7 sounded right considering the hike time. No one seemed to mind; it was a congenial group of competent hikers.

**Monday, April 6, 2015 8:30 AM
McAfee Knob Workhike**

Dave Youmans, Dave Horst, John Miller, Fred Meyers and Jim Webb

Reworked some rock steps and brushed in social trails at McAfee's Knob.

**Sunday, April 12, 8:00 AM
Chessie Nature Trail**

Kris and Bob Peckman (leaders), Kathy Arrington with Luna, Bob Blankenbaker, Mo Crowley, Caryl Connolly with Oliver, Caralee Eicher, Gayle Lovern, Bob Slackman

Before the hike even started, the men wanted to call this group "Bobs and the Bobettes". The women did not concur. Oliver and Luna had no opinions. A most congenial group enjoyed a magnificent day.

Immediately as we set out on the trail, we were greeted by a large stand of Virginia bluebells. Soon after, we saw Dutchman's breeches and cut-leaved toothwort, and one columbine in the cliff. We also saw several toadshade trillium—a treat infrequently seen. A fisherman showed us a group of large-mouth bass in an eddy, just looking at him peacefully. The river was moving along at a good clip, giving the geese a nice ride. Luna enjoyed a good roll in a cow pie.

There were several locks along the way, from the time before the railroad when the river was the main form of transport to Lexington. One of the Bobs (I forget which one) said Stonewall Jackson's body was returned to Lexington by boat. There is even a cable car line which was used to ferry goods across the river to a canal on the opposite side.

After crossing some large cow pastures, we had lunch near an old lock shortly before the end of the hike.

**Sunday, April 19, 8:00 AM
Longdale North Mountain Trail**

John Merkwán (leader), Crystal Wright, Ellie Snead, Dee Case, Carol Rowlett, Maya Bohler, Kathy Arrington, Kris and Bob Peckman.

The weather forecast was terrible. Sixteen hikers initially signed up but by hike time, we were down to nine. The forecast was for 80% chance of rain or heavy rain to begin at around 10:00 AM so the drop in numbers was completely understandable. As luck would have it, the hike was completely dry. The rain finally came as we were comfortable in our cars heading back to Roanoke. This hike was located about 8 miles east of Clifton Forge and started on the top of North Mountain. We had brunch at an area known as Pete's Cave which is an area of huge boulders and outcroppings with fantastic views. Additionally, we saw some spring flowers and with a skilled eye, Crystal managed to bag three morel mushrooms (one was ginormous) to take home. Although we had our rain gear at the ready, I think I can safely say that we were not disappointed that the rain held off until we completed this hike. The hike length was 8 1/2 miles taking an easy and dry five hours.



Ellie Snead in pink

Merkwan



Crystal Wright during a stop at Pete's Cave Merkwan



Maya Bohler relaxing at Pete's Cave Merkwan

**Tuesday, April 21. 8:30 AM
Catawba Mountain Workhike**

Mike Vaughn, Dave Horst, Jeff Edwards, Jim Webb



Webb

Removed the old Boy Scout bridge #7 and carted it up the hill. Drilled holes for 3/4" steel pins and epoxy pins in place. Cut a couple of Chestnut Oaks, debarked them and positioned them against the steel pins for cribbing. Finally, we used our hammers to crush some rocks to fill the cribbing to the top of the logs. This type of cribbing is preferred by the Park Service and really requires less maintenance.

**Monday, April 27
USFS Maintenance Facility on Cove Road
Workhike**

Mike Vaughn, Dave Horst, Jeff Edwards, Dave Youmans and Jim Webb

Took delivery of a tool storage shed from Lowes and after a couple of false starts, we got it to look like the picture on the literature.

**Saturday, May 9. 8:30 AM
1.5 miles North of Mountain Pass Road
Workhike**

Ronnie Crigger, Jim Webb

Redug about 100 ft of narrow side hill trail on the way up to FullHardt Knob.

**Sunday, May 10, 2015
Douthat State Park**

Bob and Kris Peckman (leaders), Dee Case, Susan Terwilliger

We were a small but enthusiastic group setting out on a warm but very pleasant day to visit some trails mostly on the east side of the road through Douthat State Park. Despite misleading advertising on the leader's part, we all survived the 11.5-mile hike which had been advertised as only 10 miles. We hiked up the incomprehensible turns of the Brushy Hollow Trail, continued along the Mountaintop Trail, Mountainside Trail, and Beards Gap Trail, then crossed the road to go up the Beards Gap Hollow Trail, across the Locust Gap Trail, and down the Stony Run Trail, then along Wilson Creek back to the car.

Fauna observed consisted of one vigorous spider with a big egg sac. Blooming flowers included squawroot, pussytoes, blueberries, a few star chickweed, one small stand of turkey's beard, pink azalea, wild pink, wild geranium, and most abundant: birdsfoot violets and moss phlox.

Lots of interesting conversation made the day informative as well.

**Monday, May 11. 8:30 AM
McAfee Knob Workhike**

Mike Vaughn, Dave Horst, John Miller, Gary Bible, Jim Webb

This hike featured some heavy rock work on a number of places along the trail. The first job to do was to fix a couple of rock steps on the first hill from the parking lot. Heavy use on the trail had caused these steps to become dislodged and slide down. We brought down a couple of large rocks from uphill and dug them into position. This recipe was repeated further up the trail at the service road crossing and again a mile the trail from there.



Webb

**Sunday, May 31. 8:00 AM
Anthony Knob Loop**

John Merkwon (leader), Maya Bohler, Kathy Arrington, Kris Peckman, Mary Harshfield, Val Dymond, Allan Dickerman, David Wickersham, David Youmans and Dee Case.

This was a 10 mile hike in the Longdale Recreation Area about 6 miles east of Clifton Forge. The terrain was varied from ridge top to stream side but the wet-foot warning I had issued prior to the hike was not necessary since the rains had stopped and low creek levels made for some easy rock hopping when crossing the streams. We did come across a box turtle and plenty of flowers of all kinds. The most prominent being the Mountain Laurel which was abundant and in bloom which made for many picturesque sections of the trail. Being a rather warm humid day, the cold watermelon at the end of the hike was a crowd pleaser. A historical note: This area was originally known as Green Pastures and was built for African Americans who were prevented from using the forest facilities during the days of segregation. In 1963 the area was opened to all races and the name was changed to Longdale.

**Monday, June 1. 8:30 AM
McAfee Knob bridge #5 Workhike**

Mike Vaughn, Dave Youmans, John Miller, Jeff Edwards, Gary Bible, Jim Webb



Before

Webb



After

Webb

We continued with our quest to replace the aging and high maintenance bridges on the trail up to McAfee Knob. These bridges were once a boy scout project, but have fallen into disrepair and need to be replaced. Bridge #5 was the target on this day. The weather was hot and humid as we rushed to beat a forecast of PM thundershowers. Tearing out the old bridge was eventful as the rocks holding the steps at one end were the home of a medium size copperhead. After he vacated the area, we resumed work on the bridge. Drilling into the rock face, epoxying steel pins into place, placing logs against the pins and crushing rocks to fill in the tread, we were able to beat the storm.

**Monday, June 8. 8:30 AM
Sinking Creek**

Tim Ferry, John Miller, Dave Horst, Travis Stanley, Mike Vaughn & Jim Webb

If you are familiar with the beaver dam across Sinking Creek south of Rt 42, then another work hike to that

location should come as no surprise. The beaver escalated the conflict by adding a couple of inches to the top of his dam. This unprovoked measure raised the level of water across the entire field and flooded areas that were solid ground, necessitating the addition of another 30 feet of bog bridge.

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

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.

We are bringing a full hike schedule back to the Blazer. Several new and old leaders have stepped up to offer hikes this summer, and we owe them thanks. If you have a hike you would like to lead on the fall schedule (October thru December), or if you would like to serve as a hike leader or assistant, please contact Bob Peckman at 366-7780 or bob@peckmanjazz.com.

**Sunday, July 5, 8:00 AM
McAfee Knob and Tinker Cliffs 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.

**Dave Socky 540-989-7693
..... sockyDR@cox.net**

**Sunday, July 5, 1:00 pm
Niday Shelter**

4 miles, Easy
\$1.50 carpool fee, 16 miles from Roanoke

This is an out-and-back hike from Route 621 to the Niday Shelter.

David Sutton 540-815-0375
..... dsutton24018@yahoo.com

**Saturday, July 11, 9:30 am
Poor Mountain Preserve**

4.5 miles, Moderate
\$1.00 carpool fee, 10 miles from Roanoke

This hike on Poor Mountain in Roanoke County will be a loop trail hike with some climbing. Please bring a lunch or snack to eat by the creek.

Mary and Jimbo Harshfield 540-632-1903
..... harsh803@gmail.com

**Sunday, July 12, 8:00 am
Mountain Lake**

7-8 miles, Moderate
\$5.00 carpool fee, 54 miles from Roanoke

Located in Giles County, this hike will explore between 7-8 miles of trails in and around the Mountain Lake Resort. I'll post an updated distance and a better hike description on Meetup prior to the hike.

John Merkwan 540-904-2299

**Sunday, July 12, 1:00 PM
Cascades**

4 miles, Easy
\$3.50 carpool fee, 37 miles from Roanoke

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

Merv and Blanche Brower 540-387-9732

**Monday, July 13, 8:30 AM
Workhike**

Please contact the hike leader or check the Meetup event for exact information of this hike. We will complete the most "urgent" trailwork that needs to be done for our sections of the trail.

Jim Webb 540-562-8896
..... startover14@peoplepc.com

**Saturday, July 18, 8:00 AM
Sinking Creek (630) to Craig Creek (621)
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 farmed. Several slanted rocks offer views of Craig Creek Valley and the mountains beyond. The hike starts with a 1,200' ascent of Sinking Creek Mountain. At 0.5 miles the trail passes the giant Keffer Oak, a very large, historic tree. At 1.9 miles the ridgeline of the mountain is reached. Most of the rest of the hike is along the crest of the mountain, with views of Craig Creek Valley to the right. At 3.2 miles the blue blazed trail to Sarver Cabin Shelter is reached. At 9.5 miles pass the Niday Shelter and continue descent on trail to Route 621.

David Youmans 302-528-1776
..... dby2@hotmail.com

**Saturday, July 18, 8:00 am
Dragon's Tooth**

5.2 miles, Moderate
\$1.00 carpool fee, 9 miles from Roanoke

Located on Cove Mountain near the Craig and Roanoke County line, the hike to Dragon's Tooth ascends steep, rugged outcrops of quartzite which form the spine of Cove Mountain. A difficult hike, Dragon's Tooth summit offers magnificent views of nearby and distant peaks year-round.

Mike Hopkins 540-330-5271
..... mphoppy@gmail.com

**Sunday, July 19, 8:00 am
Mt. Pleasant and Cole Mountain loops**

12 miles, Strenuous
\$5.50 carpool fee, 57 miles from Roanoke
Group size is limited to 10 hikers.

This hike is in the Mount Pleasant National Scenic Area situated in Amherst County northeast of Buena Vista. It consists of two loop trails, both having awesome views! We will park in the trailhead parking area (as space permits) and begin hiking in a clockwise fashion on the Henry Lanum Trail, up to Mount Pleasant summit trail, to enjoy spectacular views from the ridge top. Following our descent of Mount Pleasant, we will return to the Henry Lanum Trail, hike over to Pompey Mountain summit to see what there is to see, then back down to the parking area. Upon returning to the parking area, we will hike the Cole Mountain loop by taking the Hotel Trail counterclockwise, making our way to the Appalachian Trail. On the way, we will see "hog walls." Reportedly, these 200+ year old stone walls were constructed to partition livestock. The AT will meander through a mountain meadow, a rarity in this area, where you will feel like you're on top of the world! From the meadow, we will descend back to the parking area.

**Rhonda Prillaman 540-598-4585
..... rhondaprillaman@gmail.com**

**July 23 -27, 8:00 AM
Konnarock Workhike**

We will assist the Konnarock crew. Contact hike leader for details.

**Jim Webb 540-562-8896
.....startover14@peoplepc.com**

**Saturday, July 25, 7:30 am
Lick Run Greenway**

4 miles, Easy
No carpool fee, in Roanoke

We'll walk from the Upper Washington Park swimming pool to Valley View and back before it gets hot. If we're lucky, we'll see some interesting birds.

**Rupert Cutler345-7653
.....rupert.cutler48@gmail.com**

**Saturday, July 25, 8:00 am
Chestnut Ridge Loop Trail**

5.4 miles, Moderate
No carpool fee

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.

**Mike Hopkins.....330-5271
..... mphoppy@gmail.com**

**Sunday, July 26, 8:00 am
Broad Run Mountain – Lick Branch**

8.8 miles, Strenuous
\$2.50 carpool fee, 26 miles from Roanoke

The hike will start at the Lick Branch Trailhead, (the one on the New Castle side of Broad Run Mountain -- near the Ferrier Trailhead). We will bushwhack up one of the main side ridges till we reach the top of Broad Run Mountain. The hike will then follow the ridge line to the intersection with the Lick Branch Trail. We will turn onto the Lick Branch Trail, which will lead us back down the mountain, down Lick Branch and back to the trailhead. Although the first half of the hike is off-trail there is limited undergrowth so the footing is easy; however there is considerable elevation gain. If it is too brushy I'll change the hike and we will do a Ferrier-Lick Branch loop of 7.6 miles.

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

**Friday, July 31, 6:00 pm
Full moon hike to McAfee Knob**

7.6 miles, Moderate
\$0.50 carpool fee, 6 miles from Roanoke

We will meet at 6PM at the McAfee trail head on Catawba Mountain (Rte. 311) and hike up to McAfee Knob in time for the full moon rise at 8:32PM. We should be back at the parking lot around 11PM. Bring a flashlight (headlamp is best), water and snacks. Limited to 15 people.

**Maya Bohler.....344-6588
..... mayabohler@gmail.com
Brendle Wolfe 540-992-6621
..... blwolfe@mail.roanoke.edu**

**July 31 – August 4, 8:00 AM
Konnarock Workhike**

We will assist the Konnarock crew. Contact hike leader for details.

Jim Webb 540-562-8896
.....startover14@peoplepc.com

**Sunday, August 2, 8:00 am
Crabtree Falls and The Priest**

9 miles, Strenuous
\$6.50 carpool fee, 68 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Nelson County, and follows Crabtree Creek, with scenic overlooks at the five major cascades, which have a total fall of 1,200 feet. After reaching the top of the falls, we will take a side trail to connect to the A.T. near the Priest shelter. After some more climbing, we will begin a 3,000-foot descent from the summit of the Priest back to Route 56 on the Tye River.

Dave Socky 540-989-7693
.....sockyDR@cox.net

**Saturday, August 8, 8:00 am
Read Mountain**

8 miles, Moderate
\$0.50 carpool fee, 5 miles from Roanoke

We will follow the Buzzards Rock Trail to the Rocky Way Trail to Summit Ridge, CCC, Buzzards Rock, bushwhack to the summit, then follow the Buzzards Rock trail back to the parking lot.

Hugh Hall 540-725-8874
.....heelstar2000@yahoo.com

**August 8 - 12, 8:00 AM
Konnarock Workhike**

We will assist the Konnarock crew. Contact hike leader for details.

Jim Webb 540-562-8896
.....startover14@peoplepc.com

**Sunday, August 9, 1:00 pm
Read Mountain**

4.5 miles, Moderate
\$0.50 carpool fee, 5 miles from Roanoke

This will be a shorter version of Saturday’s hike, from the parking lot to Buzzard’s Rock and return.

Merv and Blanche Brower..... 540-387-9732

**Saturday, August 15, 8:00 am
Cascades and Barney’s Wall**

8 miles, Moderate
\$5.00 carpool fee, 54 miles from Roanoke

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.

Hugh Hall 540-725-8874
.....heelstar2000@yahoo.com
Karen Callahan..... 540-961-0640

**Saturday, August 15, 8:00 am
Bottom Creek Gorge**

5.3 miles, Moderate
\$1.50 carpool fee, 17 miles from Roanoke

Hidden away at the corner of Montgomery, Roanoke, and Floyd counties is the Bottom Creek Gorge Preserve on top of Bent Mountain. The Nature Conservancy has developed a network of trails that pass ponds, streams and meadows and follow tunnels of rhododendron that lead you around and down to the Bottom Creek George, then up to a vantage point to see Bent Mountain Falls flow from a mountain side. Dogs are not permitted on this hike, in compliance with Nature Conservancy policy.

Mike Hopkins..... 540-330-5271
.....mphoppy@gmail.com

**Saturday, August 22, 8:00 am
Mill Mountain trails**

5 miles, Moderate
No carpool fee, in Roanoke

Woodthrush, Ridgeline, Watchtower, Star, and Driveway trails

**Mike Hopkins.....330-5271
.....mphoppy@gmail.com**

**Sunday, August 23, 8:00 am
Sugar Run Gap to Pearisburg**

11 miles, Strenuous
\$6.00 carpool fee, 60 miles from Roanoke

This hike follows the A.T. north from Sugar Run Gap in Giles County. It goes along the ridge line of Pearis Mountain. The trail passes Doc's Knob Shelter, followed by a cliff which offers good views of Wilburn Valley. Angel's Rest provides great views of the New River Valley and Peters Mountain. From there the trail begins a steady descent to Route 460.

**Homer and Therese Witcher266-8912 or 266-4849
.....witchers4@juno.com**

**Monday, August 24, 8:30 AM
Workhike**

Please contact the hike leader or check the Meetup event for exact information of this hike. We will complete the most "urgent" trailwork that needs to be done for our sections of the trail.

**Jim Webb 540-562-8896
.....startover14@peoplepc.com**

**Sunday, August 30, 8:00 am
Fuller Rocks/Big Rocky Row**

10.8 miles, Strenuous
\$3.50 carpool fee, 39 miles from Roanoke
Group size limited to 10 hikers.

This hike will begin from the James River Foot Bridge parking area off of Rt. 501/130 in Amherst County. It is a strenuous out and back hike with spectacular views of the James River cutting its way through the surrounding mountains! We will begin hiking North on the Appalachian Trail crossing Rt. 501/130 and Hercules Rd. before paralleling Rocky

Row Run creek. The hike then begins a tough ascent to Fuller Rocks (4.0 miles). We will continue to climb beyond Fuller Rocks, taking in a view of Glasgow to the West, then up Big Rocky Row overlook (5.4 miles) before heading back down. Upon returning to the parking area, if the group is up to a short detour, we will cool down with a hike across the James River Foot Bridge. Please come prepared for this hike. The climb is strenuous and this season is typically hot and humid.

**Rhonda Prillaman 540-598-4585
.....rhondaprillaman@gmail.com**

**Sunday, August 30, 1:00 pm
Mill Mountain trails**

5 miles, Moderate
No carpool fee, in Roanoke

We will hike the Mill Mountain Ridgeline with the Monument Loop Trail.

**David Sutton 540-815-0375
.....dsutton24018@yahoo.com**

**Saturday, September 5, 8:00 am
St. Mary's River**

8.8 miles, Strenuous
\$6.00 carpool fee, 63 miles from Roanoke

This hike will be along the St. Mary's River in the St. Mary's Wilderness Area in Augusta County, north of Roanoke. We will be passing several swimming holes, so bring your bathing suit and a towel so you can take a dip in the river.

**Mike Hopkins.....330-5271
.....mphoppy@gmail.com**

**Sunday, September 6, 8:00 am
Carvins Cove**

10 miles, Moderate
\$.25 carpool fee, 3 miles from Roanoke

Trails will include 4 Gorge, Tuckaway, Songbird, and the new Rattlin' Run trail built by the Pathfinders for Greenways Weekday crew. The Rattlin' Run trail has many interesting rocks and some nice views. The 4 Gorge Trail has had extensive repairs by the Pathfinders Weekend crew.

**Brian Batteiger 540-467-1629
.....bbatteiger@comcast.net**

**Saturday, September 12, 8:00 am
Rock Castle Gorge**

11 miles, Strenuous
\$5.50 carpool fee, 57 miles from Roanoke

Located in Patrick County on Blue Ridge Parkway land. After a steep 2,000-foot ascent, the hike parallels the Parkway - passing alternately through woods and open fields with extraordinary views. On the descent down the other side of the gorge, the hike passes some old cabin sites and a series of interesting rock formations. The last few miles are along Rock Castle Creek - a wild stream with many cataracts.

**Mike Hopkins..... 540-330-5271
..... mphoppy@gmail.com**

**Sunday, September 13, 1:00 pm
Read Mountain**

4.5 miles, Moderate
\$0.50 carpool fee, 5 miles from Roanoke

Join us for a hike up the trail to the summit of Read Mountain on the trail built by the mid-week work crew. There are good views of Roanoke and McAfee Knob from the summit of the mountain.

**Fred Walters 540-977-1430
..... N2422Y@aol.com**

**Monday, September 14, 8:30 AM
Workhike**

Please contact the hike leader or check the Meetup event for exact information of this hike. We will complete the most "urgent" trailwork that needs to be done for our sections of the trail.

**Jim Webb 540-562-8896
.....startover14@peoplepc.com**

**Saturday, September 19, 8:00 am
Apple Orchard Falls, Cornelius Creek loop**

8 miles, Moderate
\$2.50 carpool fee, 26 miles from Roanoke

This is a popular hike located in the North Creek camping area, near Arcadia. A blue-blazed trail, steep in places, leads uphill to Apple Orchard Falls which are impressive. Instead of cutting across to the Cornelius Creek Trail we'll head up to the AT to make a bigger loop before getting back to the Cornelius Creek Trail which follows the creek downhill back to the parking lot.

**Mike Hopkins..... 540-330-5271
..... mphoppy@gmail.com**

**Saturday, September 19, 8:30 am
Sharp Top**

3.8 miles, Moderate
\$2.50 carpool fee, 27 miles from Roanoke

We will be hiking to the top of Sharp Top, at the Peaks of Otter on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Bedford County. 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..... 304-744-9219
..... wfmeyer@suddenlink.net**

**Sunday, September 20, 8:00 am
Hay Rock**

8 miles, Moderate
No carpool fee, in Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County, north of Roanoke. Except for a short feeder trail, the route follows the Appalachian Trail to Hay Rock and back again. There are several good overlooks along the way, but the best one is Hay Rock. This overhanging chunk of sandstone provides shelter on one side and great views on the other - for those willing to scramble to the top.

**Mangala Kumar389-0026
.....mangalakumar@aol.com**

**Saturday, September 26, 8:30 am
Lost Spectacles Gap/Boy Scout Trail Loop**

4 miles, Moderate
\$1.00 carpool fee, 9 miles from Roanoke

We will hike the blue-blazed trail from the Dragon’s Tooth parking lot to Lost Spectacles Gap, then turn left to follow the AT north over Rawie’s Rest (nice views), then take the Boy Scout trail (yellow blazes) back to the blue-blazed trail which will take us back to the parking lot.

Jean Warren 540-384-6229

**Sunday, September 27, 8:00 am
Sugar Run Gap to Kimberling Creek Rt.606)**

14 miles, Strenuous
\$6.00 carpool fee, 60 miles from Roanoke

Located in Giles County, the hike descends Sugar Run Mountain and passes Wapiti shelter. The trail then follows Dismal Creek for several miles and is lined with rhododendron. There is a .3 mile blue blazed trail to Dismal Falls about 1.5 miles before reaching Kimberling Creek (Rt 606).

**Homer and Therese Witcher 266-8912 or 266-4849
..... witchers4@juno.com**

**Monday, September 28, 8:30 AM
Workhike**

Please contact the hike leader or check the Meetup event for exact information of this hike. We will complete the most "urgent" trailwork that needs to be done for our sections of the trail.

**Jim Webb 540-562-8896
..... startover14@peoplepc.com**

**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 _____ Individ. # 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 _____

Check here to save a tree and take only an e-Blazer Donation \$ _____

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

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375-3250 john.miller591@comcast.net
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387-9732 blanche.brower@verizon.net
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.....
Land Management Supervisor, Bruce Davidson
384-6760 catawbamtn@verizon.net
Trail Supervisor, Jim Webb
562-8896 startover14@peoplepc.com
Assistant Trail Supervisor, Michael Vaughn
992-1350 mikeva999@yahoo.com
Shelter Supervisors, Homer & Therese Witcher
540-266-4849 witchers4@juno.com
Hikemaster, Bob Peckman
540-366-7780 bob@peckmanjazz.com
Interim Newsletter Editor, Therese Witcher
540-266-8912 witchers4@juno.com
Membership Coordinator, Brendle Wolfe
540-992-6621 blwolfe@mail.roanoke.edu
Interim Counselor., David Jones
540-552-3058 dhjones@together.net
Interim Counselor, Carina Hughes
588-0433 carinawanderwoman@gmail.com
Counselor, Linda King
342-2411 JennelleKing@gmail.com

Counselor, Mervin Brower
540-387-9732 mervin.brower@verizon.net

ANCILLARIES

Social Chairman, Linda Akers
400-8117 lakers4350@mail.com
Interim Webmaster, Jonathan Eagle
540-776-1144 jeofva@cox.net

OTHER

Southwest & Central VA Regional Director, Andrew Downs
540-904-4354 adowns@appalachiantrail.org
ATC Regional Representative, Open
.....
Regional Partnership Committee Rep., Mervin Brower
540-387-9732 mervin.brower@verizon.net
Alternate Regional Partnership Committee Rep., Mike Vaughn
375-3250 john.miller591@comcast.net
The Mid-week Crew, Bill Gordge
774-3016 bgordge@cox.net
Roanoke Valley Greenways Liaison, Roger Holnback
Regional Partnership Committee Alternate, Roger Holnback
ATC-LT Coord. James to New River, Roger Holnback
556-2919 rholnback@gmail.com
ATC-LT Coord. New River to Damascus, Steve Reisinger
540-951-7580 srei38@hotmail.com
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