

Newsletter of the
Chattanooga Hiking Club

March 2018

Club Meeting

The Chattanooga Hiking Club meets at 6:30 PM on the first Monday of even numbered months at the Outdoor Chattanooga offices on River Street. Directions to the meeting site are on the club website: chatthiking.com

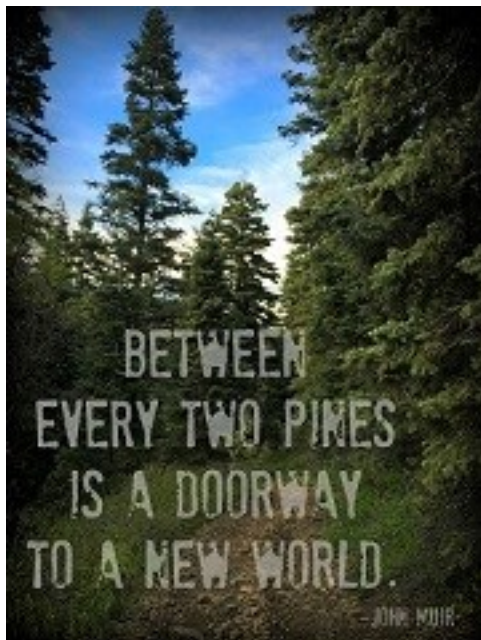
Next meeting – Monday April 2, 2018

*****Annual Dues*****

Yes, the \$20 annual dues will be due by April 1, 2018, unless you have joined since the first of this year or have already paid for this year. Go to the website, "About Us" tab, and "Renewal Form" tab, to print the form.

Hopefully we can get the stickers to update your Rock Creek discount cards out to you by the first of May.

Also, all officers and support staff members have agreed to serve again for the upcoming year, with the addition of Barbara McCollum as co-director of Outings. A big "Thank You!" to all of them. And anyone who might be thinking of becoming a hike leader or taking a position in the club, speak up! Come on in, the water's fine!



Making

TRACKS



Reports from the Field

Twenty-Mile to AT, Twenty-Mile Loop, Ridge Trail

Saturday January 27, 2018

An eager bunch left the Food City in Ooltewah at 6:30 headed to the Smokies. The trail started out deceptively flat but soon began the steady uphill trek to the intersection with the AT. It was so windy there that after touching the sign everyone dropped back down the trail for the lunch break. The return trip began rather quickly as the temperature, though not too cold, and wind had a very chilling effect. Twenty Mile Loop and a straight return on Twenty Mile trail were the choices for the return trip. Glad to get warm and head for dinner in Vonore at Pizzeria Venti were: Charlie Breeding, Betsy Parson, Bonnie Smith, Carolyn Brannon, Rick Glisson, Monty Simmons, Tim Chomyn, Anne Moore, and Wayne Chambers leading. Quote of the day: "Boy I sure am glad to get here!" after trekking uphill to the AT junction and touching the sign. Charlie Breeding

Booker T Washington State Park Wednesday January 31, 2018

This park has a nice system of trails featuring views of the lake. It is composed of a set of 3 loops - an outer loop and 2 shorter inner loops. The park also has fishing piers, camping facilities, bathrooms, trails for trail biking or paved roads for street biking, and an Olympic sized pool with lifeguards. Choices were made - some hiked the outer loop (3.9 miles) and others added one of the two inner loops. The trails are nicely marked. Maps on the kiosk will outline each. The two inner loops (1.2 miles and 2.2 miles) come back to the outer loop making adding more miles easy. The lunch destination was Sweenies Barbeque on highway 58. Enjoying this day in the sunshine were: Barbara Miller, Betsy Parson, Bill Kinnaman, Bill LaRoque, Bob Rahn, Cecile Shenouda, Charlie Breeding, Jenny Hopkins, Linda Keown, Mac Dean, Teresa Dean, Rachel Dean, Renee Grace, Stormy McGauley, Susan Basch, Suzanne Dorough, Tom Carter, Tom Long, Wanda McCarter, Joy Ward, Teresa Taylor, Carla Schunck, Larry Parks, Edith Behringer, Che Carico, and Wayne Chambers leading.

Upcoming Outings

Saturday March 3, 2018**Virgin Falls**

Location: Sparta, TN
 Distance: 9 mile loop
 Elevation Gain: 1,300 ft
 Rating: Strenuous
 Pace: Standard
 Driving Time: 2 hours

Virgin Falls Pocket Wilderness is one of the most unusual waterfall hikes (four falls on a 9-mile loop) within driving distance of Chattanooga. This hike offers 4 waterfalls, subterranean tributaries, and scenic overlooks. One of the most unusual aspects of the pocket wilderness is its karst features - Virgin Falls being a prime example. Its high-volume tributary bursts out of a cave and flows several hundred feet above ground, before plunging 110 feet. At the base of the falls it immediately disappears back underground. The hike also offers a great cave mouth at Big Laurel Falls, with its 80 ft. ceiling and expansive breadth. Most of the elevation gain will be on the hike out. With all the recent rain we've had, Virgin Falls should be spectacular. Dinner at The Cookie Jar in Dunlap is a definite possibility. To register, contact Barbara McCollum at bpmccollum@yahoo.com or 770.289.7143.

Saturday March 10, 2018**Abrams Falls**

Location: Great Smoky Mountains N.P.
 Distance: 11.2 miles
 Elevation Gain: 1,000 ft
 Rating: Strenuous
 Pace: Standard
 Driving Time: 2.5 hours

A long ago favorite of mine, this is the "road less traveled" to Abrams Falls, probably the highest volume waterfall in the Smokies. Instead of the short, "touristy" route from within Cades Cove, we'll start at the Abrams Creek Ranger Station near the southwestern border of the park, and hike a combination of Cooper Road, Little Bottoms, Hannah Mtn, and Abrams Falls trails. It's an up-and-down hike, never very far from Abrams Creek after the initial mile on Cooper Road. Tornado damage from a few years back has altered the landscape, but it has opened up more in the way of scenic views. A stop at Look Rock tower on Foothills Parkway is likely before we head home. Hike leader is John Rowland, jrowland_1@hotmail.com (preferred) or 423 802-7704.

Saturday March 17, 2018**Big Creek, Camel Gap, AT, Low Gap**

Location: Great Smoky Mountains N.P.
 Distance: 15.4 miles
 Elevation Gain: 3,400 ft
 Rating: Strenuous
 Pace: Standard
 Driving Time: 3 hours

We will spend the night at Newport Friday night and get an early start on Saturday. We need to drop a car off at Cosby campground and drive to Big Creek campground to start our hike on Big Creek trail. Then Camel Gap to the AT and down to Cosby campground. I recommend bringing a light source just in case. Hike leader, Wayne Chambers, 423-593-3717.

Upcoming Outings

Saturday March 24, 2018**Flats Mountain**

Location: near Tellico Plains, TN
 Distance: 6.1 miles
 Rating: Moderate
 Pace: Standard
 Driving Time: 1.5 hours

Will Skelton, author of "Cherokee National Forest Hiking Guide" is going to join us. Hike Leader is John Doyal, 423-315-0965, 2ndoutdoorscha@gmail.com

Saturday March 24, 2018**Walls of Jericho**

Location: between Scottsboro, AL and Winchester, TN
 Distance: 7 miles
 Elevation Gain: 1,000 ft
 Rating: Strenuous
 Pace: Standard
 Driving Time: 1.5 hours

An old standby spring wildflower hike that we haven't done on Saturday in quite a while. We descend, make a short side trip to hopefully admire a host of beautiful bluebells, cross foot logs at either end of a short bottomland stretch, then climb a rugged trail past a smorgasbord of wildflowers to the Walls themselves. There we will be able to explore and enjoy a waterfall into a rock-enclosed pool where the water flows underground to shortly pour out of a man-sized opening in the wall; the water then cascades to another waterfall into a large pool just below where we'll enjoy our lunch. All of this is in a very narrow, very steep-sided rocky gorge. Water shoes will be needed to wade the creek just below the Walls. The ruggedness of the climb to the Walls, and the fact that you climb again at the end of the hike make these 7 miles seem more like 10+; but it's well worth the effort. Hike leader is John Rowland, jrowland_1@hotmail.com (preferred) or 423 802-7704.

Saturday March 31, 2018**Whigg Meadow to Sycamore Creek**

Location: near Tellico Plains, TN
 Distance: 7.4 miles
 Elevation Loss: 2,800 ft
 Rating: Moderate
 Pace: Standard
 Driving Time: 2 hours

The hike will be 7.4 miles, generally tracking downhill. We will start out at 4966 feet and descend to 2133 feet at the Tellico River. Whigg Meadow is a high elevation bald with 360-degree views. We will follow Whigg Meadow Road (dirt) to Whigg Ridge Trail and on to Sycamore Creek trail for two miles to the end. Sycamore Creek was the location of one of the major logging companies. A short walk from where we intersect Sycamore Creek trail is the remains of the logging camp. Hike leader is Boe Rudder, boerrudder@gmail.com

Friday-Sunday April 6-8, 2018**Big South Fork Car Camp**

Details soon on the website. Advance reservations, please.

Reports from the Field

Benton MacKaye Trail Friday-Sunday February 9-11, 2018

Ten hikers were not deterred by the rainy forecast for the first installment of the club's Benton MacKaye Trail project. We met up in Tellico Plains on Friday evening for dinner at the Tellicafe and an overnight stay at the very nice Lodge at Tellico. The lodge's Community Room provided a nice spot for after-dinner games and a "snack swap" from a smorgasbord of snacks brought by each hiker. Saturday's weather forecast had slightly improved overnight, but still called for a 100 percent chance of rain starting around 2:00 p.m. Trailheads had been scouted and a key swap was determined to be the best option for Saturday's 14-mile section from Reliance to Highway 68. Hiking northbound from the Childers Creek trailhead on the Hiwassee River also known as the John Muir Trail No. 152 were Tim Chomyn, Cathy Love, Terri Holcomb, Helen Owens, and Bonnie Smith. Hiking southbound from Highway 68 were Carolyn Brannon, Joyce Campbell, Betsy Parson, Charlie Breeding, and Barbara McCollum. Hikers had been warned of a potentially dangerous crossing of Loss Creek about a mile south of the Coker Creek Bridge. As luck would have it, a large tree had fallen over the creek providing the option to "butt scoot" avoiding the time-consuming removal of boots, gaiters, and putting on water shoes. One of the northbound hikers just plowed right through the stream even though there was still 4 more miles of uphill hiking. Both groups met up for lunch at a nice campsite along the Hiwassee River and shared stories of the morning's adventures. Sprinkles started about 2:00 p.m. and the heavy rain started at 3:00 p.m. Both groups were off the trail by 4:00 p.m. and headed back to Tellico Plains for a stop at the Subway with plans to meet back at the Community Room for dinner and dessert. As predicted, rain fell all night long on Saturday. Given the saturation of the ground, swelling creeks and rivers, the group easily came to a decision to postpone Sunday's hike with hopes to hike during the June event. Special thanks to Charlie Breeding for scouting the trailheads and to Cathy Love for masterminding this project and for the planning and coordinating of this weekend. Barbara McCollum, reporting.

Special note: The Benton MacKaye Trail project is open to all Chattanooga Hiking Club members and you must register for each event. The next event is June 1-3 with a car camp planned for McNabb Creek campground about 5 miles north of Bald River Falls. The campground will hold RV's, campers, tents, etc., but there are no hookups or potable water. More information on this project provided on the club's website. Contact Barbara McCollum at bpmccollum@yahoo.com for more information or to register.



Isn't this a beautiful shot!

Pictures from Carolyn

Fiery Gizzard Saturday February 24, 2018

Most of the week we were afraid we were going to get seriously wet if we did this hike. But all we got was a little spritzing, hardly enough to justify a rain jacket, especially since the unusually mild temp and the humidity made for some warm hiking. But on the down side, we saw absolutely zero icicles, which I had hoped for when the hike was scheduled. But on the up side, we saw more water than I can recall ever seeing in the creeks, cascades, and Sycamore Falls. And another up side for most of us was lunch at Papa Ron's in Monteagle – always a treat. Enjoying a morning in lovely water-splashed Fiery Gizzard were Kathy Seymour, Joy Ward, Betsy Parson, Tim Chomyn, Shelly Claiborne, Edith Behringer, and three welcome newcomers – Linda Williams, Charlene Townley, and Ronnie Williams. John Rowland reporting.

Outings Schedule

03/03/18	Virgin Falls day hike (S)	B McCollum
03/10/18	Smokies Abrams Falls day hike (S)	J Rowland
03/17/18	Smokies day hike (S)	W Chambers
03/24/18	Walls of Jericho day hike (S)	J Rowland
03/31/18	Sycamore Creek, Tellico day hike	B Rudder
04/06-08/18	Big South Fork car camp	J Rowland
04/14/18	Smokies (S)	W Chambers
04/21/18	Coker Creek Falls	B Rudder
04/28/18	Wolf Ridge	S Barnes
05/05/ or 05/06/18	Moonshine Trail, Lookout Mtn	J Hopkins

Wednesday Day Hikes - Che Carico - The Wednesday group hikes many of the same trails as the weekend hikers. Since a schedule is not published in advance, notification of each week's plan is sent out by email on Sunday or Monday. Please call Che at (423) 718-9271, leave your email address, and ask to be added to the group list; or email her at MidWeek@chatthiking.com and likewise ask to be added to the group list.

Hike Difficulty Ratings

The information below is provided as a guide only. Each hiker assumes the risks associated with hiking in the great outdoors, including the responsibility of paying any bills associated with rescue efforts or medical care. The wise hiker always carries water, food, and first aid items.

Easy (E): 6 miles or less; mostly level or only slight incline.

Moderate (M): 6-10 miles with an elevation gain that will generally not exceed 350 feet per mile, with a total elevation gain of no more than 1000 ft.

Moderately Strenuous (MS): 6-10 miles in length, but include rocky trail conditions, tricky stream crossings, or elevation gain of more than 1000 ft but less than 2000 ft.

Strenuous (S): a distance of 10-14 miles or with more than 2000 ft total elevation gain, but no more than 3000 ft.

Extremely Strenuous (S+): Usually involves distances of more than 14 miles or more than 3000 ft in elevation gain. There might be very steep/rugged climbs, deep stream crossings, or unmentioned trails.

Pace: Standard pace is 2 miles an hour; less on steep or rugged terrain. Fast pace is 2.5 to 3 miles an hour or more and may not vary much regardless of terrain.

Attention: When calling to go on an outing, please specify exact number of people who will be attending. Do NOT just show up with a friend or family member unannounced! This puts your hike leader in an awkward position as most hikes involve some planning of transportation. Also we frequently hike in wilderness areas and other places where the number of hikers in a group is limited. If that is the case, and the hike is already full, you may be turned away!

Cancellations: Hike leaders are entirely at the own discretion regarding the weather. It is possible that a leader may decide that, due to weather conditions, they do not feel safe hiking on that day. Lightning kills many people every year and can strike hikers on a trail. Also many of the areas where we hike are prone to flash floods that can kill or injure. The leader will call if deciding to cancel before the day of the hike. In the event that the decision to cancel is made on the day of the hike, the leader will give you the courtesy of showing up at the designated meeting place to announce that the hike is cancelled.

Other Stuff

Compass Readers

I know we all have our GPS systems on our cell phones or wrist watches or whatever now-a-days. But does anyone really know how to use an old fashioned compass? If so, would you like to pass on that knowledge to a group of Girl Scouts for about an hour on some Saturday morning in the Est Ridge/Lakeview/Ft Oglethorpe area. Please contact Kathy Seymour, 713 907-9602. Thanks!

McGill Creek Bridge

Continuing to follow up on this project, Don Deakins has sent us another pictorial update. Looking good!



Rock/Creek Discount Info

Show your Chattanooga Hiking Club Membership Card, along with your ID at any Rock/Creek Store.
Chattanooga Hiking Club - 10% off one Item
*Applies to one non-sale, in-stock item. Can not be combined with other discounts or promotions. Offer does not apply to gift cards, boats, boards, coolers, & electronics. **In-store only.**

Club Officers and Support:

President - Gary Petty (423) 488-5954

Vice President - Stormy McGauley (423) 505-4525

Treasurer - Donald Box (423) 892-6754

Secretary - Susan Basch (706) 375-7750

Outings - Barbara McCollum (770) 289-7143

Boe Rudder (423) 400-1103

Newsletter/Webmaster - John Rowland (423) 802-7704

Membership Database - John Rowland (423) 802-7704

Membership Information - Chris O'Conner (423) 991-3220

Trail Maintenance - Steve Barnes (423) 339-3019

Boe Rudder (423) 400-1103

Midweek Outings - Cheryl Carico (423) 781-9271

Website: chatthiking.com (includes link to newsletter)