



Newsletter of the
Chattanooga Hiking Club

June 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 June 4, 2018

Doug Carson will be our speaker. We have generally once a year or more hiked the Estelle Mines/Pigeon Mountain area down in north Georgia; in fact the Wednesday group was there just back in April. The remnants of the iron ore mining at Estelle and Pigeon Mountain will be Doug's topic. His family owned the Pocket Farm at Pigeon mountain for a half century, and he grew up as an enthusiast about the caves, geology, and mining relics that are found there. Doug is a retired member of the Hamilton County cave/cliff rescue team, and he plays fiddle at civil war reenactment events.

In addition, Tim Chomyn would like to speak briefly to us about the upcoming Make A Wish Foundation Trail Challenge.

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

Yes, the \$20 annual dues were due 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.



Coker Creek hikers - picture from Barbara

Making

TRACKS



Reports from the Field

Denny's Cove

Wednesday April 25, 2018

Chattanooga hikers have been anticipating the opening of the Denny's Cove trail in the South Cumberland State Park. On this day we were led there by valued trail advocate, journalist, and naturalist Bob Butters. The road into the trail head parking area is on the mountain above Jasper and one gravel road before you get to the road into Foster Falls. There is a kiosk with a map to this small but beautiful wilderness spot. Plan for a 3 mile hike that will be rather slow as rocks make careful foot placement a must. Rugged as it is, the waterfall at the end is magnificent! And it seems the Scarlet Tanagers love this area as we saw many of them. There are ferns, flowers, and directional signs to the climbing walls. Southeastern climbers (including John Dorough) contributed to the building of this trail making it hiker friendly and giving access to extreme climbing walls. On the way in (or out) there is a fork in the trail that leads a short distance up onto a bluff where you can look off toward Fiery Gizzard. Tired but happy to have the privilege for hiking this trail were: Patti Giles, Mac Dean, Teresa Dean, Susan Garrett, Renee Grace, Jenny Hopkins, Edie Behringer, Bill Kinnaman, Larry Parks, Cecile Shenouda, Tom Carter, Jennifer Yarbrough, Debbie Lambert, Joe Teringer, Susan Basch, Stormy McGauley, Charlie Breeding, Bob Rudder, Joy Ward, Che Carico reporting, Bob Butters leading.

Unicoi Mtn, Coker Creek Falls

Wednesday May 2, 2018

It had been 10 years since I followed Gary Smith on this route. He took the lead again on this moderate to strenuous path up and along a ridge, through pine forest and hardwood, and past another wonderland of wildflowers. We even saw a pink lady slipper and a "field" of blooming stone crop spreading as far as we could see as we approached Coker Creek. Jennifer nearly missed stepping on a very large copperhead (yes Wayne we have a picture), and a long black snake awaited our arrival near the bridge over to the campsites and lunch spot beside the rushing water. After lunch we started uphill and had lots of this for the next 3 miles to the falls destination and the trail head where we had left cars. This was our first really hot hike this year and most could have used more water. Some, however, took the time at the falls to shed boots and soak feet. All made it safely out and home later than after most hikes. It is a long drive to the Hwy 68 trail head, then placing cars on the other end made for an 11am beginning to this 7.2 mile hike. A beautiful trail and another adventure enjoyed by: Kathy Seymour, Larry Parks, Charlie Breeding, Renee Grace, Jennifer Yarbrough, Patti Giles, Suzanne Dorough, Bill Kinnaman, Barbara McCollum, Mary Ann Langevin, Tim Chomyn, Betsy Parson, Susan Garrett, Bob Rahn, Stormy McGauley, Wanda McCarter, Bill LaRoque, Bill Needham, Che Carico reporting, Gary Smith leading.

Upcoming Outings

Friday-Sunday June 1-3, 2018

Benton MacKaye Project Car Camp

Location: Cherokee National Forest near Tellico Plains, TN
Driving Time: 1.5 hours

Don't miss the second series of the Benton MacKaye Trail, a two-year club project to section hike the entire 287.3 miles from Springer Mountain, Georgia, to the Great Smoky Mountains. The June series will be a car camp at McNabb Creek Group Campground near Bald River Falls in the Cherokee National Forest, a primitive campground which can accommodate small RV's, campers, and tents. There are no hookups or potable water, but there are porta toilets. Saturday's hike is 14.5 miles and Sunday's hike is 12.2 miles. Please see the Benton MacKaye Trail Project on the club's website for more hiking details (Section 6). You don't have to sign up for the entire project to enjoy this fun weekend of camping, food, fellowship, games, and hiking. There are plenty of other trails nearby and some great fishing, too. **ADVANCE**

RESERVATIONS NEEDED BY MAY 15TH FOR PLANNING PURPOSES. Campground reservations have already been made for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights with expenses to be divided among campers. Contact Cathy Love with technical questions lovecat@charter.net or 334.329.4807. To register, contact Barbara McCollum, bpmccollum@yahoo.com or 770.289.7143.

Saturday June 9, 2018

Panther Creek Falls

Location: Cohutta Wilderness near Chatsworth, GA

Distance: 7 miles or 10 miles

Rating: Strenuous

Pace: Standard

Driving Time: 45 minutes

Cohutta Wilderness - Panther Creek Falls from the lower, western side. Hikers have 2 great choices for this hike: All together we will hike the Hickory Creek Trail to the Conasauga River Trail to the junction with the Panther Creek Trail. If you want to stop here and hang out by the river you will be 3.5 miles out and 3.5 miles back for a total of 7 miles with no river crossing. If you want to continue on, you will cross the river (usually shallow crossing) and hike the Panther Creek Trail to Panther Creek Falls. Your mileage will be 5 miles out and 5 miles back with 2 river crossings and a challenging quarter mile grunt through the 20,000-year old boulder field for a total of 10 satisfying miles. Contact Tony Cook, tonyps23@optilink.us or Angela Evans, gapeachy@bellsouth.net to register for the hike.

Thursday-Friday June 14-15, 2018

Little Hump/Big Hump road trip

Location: Roan Highlands east of Johnson City, TN

Distance: 8.2 miles

Elevation Gain: 2,200 ft (in 3 chunks)

Rating: Strenuous

Pace: Standard

Driving Time: 3 hrs to Johnson City

ADVANCE RESERVATIONS NEEDED -- This is probably one of THE BEST HIKES for long range views that you can find. We'll depart Ooltewah early Thursday morning, drive to Johnson City, have lunch, then visit Rhododendron Gardens near Carver's Gap. We'll have dinner at Cootie Brown's in Johnson

Upcoming Outings

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City with plans to stay overnight at The Sleep Inn. On Friday morning, we'll depart early for the Roaring Creek trailhead to begin our spectacular hike along the Appalachian Trail to Big Hump and Little Hump Mountains. Flame azalea, rhododendron, and wildflowers will be abundant. It will be an in and out hike. Contact hike leader Barbara McCollum with questions or to register for the trip, bpmccollum@yahoo.com or 770.289.7143 .

Saturday June 23, 2018

Gee Creek

Location: Gee Creek Wilderness area

Distance: 4 miles

Elevation Gain: 600 ft

Rating: Strenuous

Pace: Standard

Driving Time: 1 hour

Gee Creek Wilderness area was established in 1975 and was the first in Tennessee. The trail is approximately 3.8 miles in and out with minimal elevation gain of 600 feet. Because there are eight water crossings each way, I recommend wearing sturdy water shoes for the entire hike and bring an extra set of clothes. We will hike .4 mile to the pedestrian bridge that starts us through the gorge between Starr Mountain and Chestnut Mountain. The trail is rocky, and the crossings can be slick. Trekking poles are a must. This is a short, but strenuous trail and we will pass an old concrete flume used by the Tennessee Copper Company for iron ore extraction used in copper smelting. At .9 miles, we will come to Twin Falls. This is a popular picnic and swimming area. Most people do not go further than this. At 1.9 miles, we will take a snack break before turning around. Should the water level be too high to safely cross the stream, we will hike the lower section of Starr Mountain trail (which has been recently logged out) and possibly the old logging loop. Bring water, snacks, trekking poles, extra clothes, and a towel. Hike leaders are Boe Rudder, boerrudder@gmail.com, 423.400.1103 and Steve Barnes, sebarnestorm@gmail.com.

Saturday June 30, 2018

Amadahy Trail "Family" Hike

Location: near Chatsworth, GA

Distance: 3.6 miles

Rating: Easy

Elevation Gain: minimal

Pace: Leisurely

Driving Time: 45 minutes

The Amadahy Trail is a pleasant loop trail around Carters Lake which is the deepest of Georgia's reservoir lakes located in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Chatsworth. It is owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is a man-made lake without private docks or houses along its shore. The lake is fed by the Coosawattee River that runs between Ellijay and Chatsworth. Join Barbara for a "family" hike along this pleasant trail with just a few ups and downs and a very scenic shoreline. This trail is good for any skill level. Bring the spouse, kids, grandkids, and well-behaved dogs on leashes for a fun day on the trail. Bathroom facilities at the trailhead. To register, contact Barbara McCollum at 770.289.7143 or bpmccollum@yahoo.com.

Reports from the Field



More Coker Creek pictures from Barbara

Reports from the Field

Cove Mountain Saturday May 12, 2018

Every Smokies trail is beautiful and special in its own way as discovered by 10 club hikers on this very hot day in May. Temperatures were in the 90's during much of the hike. The two trails hiked were Cove Mountain and Laurel Falls for a total of 12.6 miles. Cove Mountain skirts the park boundary for several miles, offers some great views of Mt. LeConte, and still had some burned areas from the November 2016 fires. Mountain Laurel was in various stages of bloom while the Flame Azalea put on a colorful show. The Laurel Falls Trail offered the beautiful falls, lots of tourists, a bear sighting, and some gorgeous areas of wildflowers including Foam Flowers and Canada Violets. A key swap helped hikers to get home earlier than usual. Beginning on the 4-mile Laurel Falls Trail with 1,700 feet in elevation gain were Ken Smith, Carolyn Brannon, Joyce Campbell, and Bonnie Smith. This group had a bear sighting on the Cove Mountain Trail. Starting on the 8.6-mile Cove Mountain Trail with 2,650 feet in elevation gain were Tim Chomyn, Rick Glisson, Shelly Claiborne, Betsy Parson, Boe Rudder, and hike leader Barbara McCollum. This group encountered two snakes—a timber rattler and a small nonvenomous snake. Also, a little play time in Laurel Falls and a bear sighting below the falls. Waterfalls, snakes, bears, and wildflowers made for another memorable day in the Smoky Mountains. Barbara McCollum, reporting.



Pictures from Tim



Picture from Betsy

Reports from the Field



A really nice Flame Azalea picture from Tim

Savage Gulf Day Loop Wednesday May 16, 2018

It was a good day for this 5 mile hike as not too far to drive. Thunderstorms were in the forecast for the afternoon. The featured flower search for today was the abundant and beautiful Mountain Laurel. We were not disappointed! An unexpected surprise was the patch of Lady Slippers off to the left soon after beginning the hike. Ferns were splendid and the waterfall roared with lots of water filling a large pool below the falls. Giant rocks surrounding the pool made for a good perch to enjoy the sounds of the falling water and feel the coolness of the surrounding woods. Off for afternoon errands or lunch at our favorite Cookie Jar were: Wayne Chambers, Bill Kinnaman, Bob Rahn, Cecile Shenouda, Charlie Breeding, Larry Parks, Renee Grace, Sue Christensen, Suzanne Dorough, Wanda McCarter, Joy Ward, Joe Teringer, Che Carico reporting and Debbie Lambert leading.

Chilhowee Mountain Wednesday May 23, 2018

Chilhowee is an amazing natural area with a beach and swimming lake, bathrooms with running water, grills and picnic tables, campsites, and well marked hiking trails tracing its beauty. This complex of trails has become a favorite of Chattanooga hikers as the trail system offers varying sequences all of which cannot possibly be covered in one day. The choice for this day was the Benton Falls trail for a short distance to the first Naked Widow trail head, a

Reports from the Field

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challenging uphill trek to a major field and a right turn through the grasses to pick up the footpath and continue on the Slick Rock Hancock Loop, on around to a left turn onto the Slick Rock Laurel Loop, left onto a short section of the Clemmer Trail, finally arriving at the Benton Falls trail. This area had experienced a major burn quite a few years ago - either controlled or naturally started - which left it quite bare and blackened. Today there were only signs of healing as the rhododendrons, ferns, and magnificent mountain laurel were fully restored along the foot path that now narrowly cuts through the vegetation. We did see one flame azalea. Tim commented the water in the falls was the most he has ever seen in this waterfall! Lunch was enjoyed beside the rushing waters that then spilled over the bluff. Beating the rain and safely home were: Tim Chomyn, Sue Christensen, Cecile Shenouda, Bill Kinnaman, Patti Giles, Larry Parks, Charlie Breeding, Linda Keown, Wendy Gunn, Renee Grace, Che Carico reporting, Mac and Teresa Dean leading.

Stringer's Ridge Saturday May 26, 2018

The unofficial start of summer (Memorial Day weekend) was heralded by our group of hikers at Stringer's Ridge Park in Chattanooga on May 26. The park, a 92-acre urban wilderness, is enjoyed by hikers, trail runners, and bikers alike, and it indeed seemed "away from it all" on this quiet Saturday. Moderate temperature and overcast skies were appreciated as we wound around and up and down the Blue Loop consisting of the Hill City, Double-J, and Gig City trails. We also took a quick trip up the Cherokee Trail to look out over the city. There was a sampling of wildflowers along the way, and we were surprised and delighted by roses abundantly blooming near the foundation of an old derelict building on the property. Our group consisted of Boe Rudder, Susan Basch, Tim Chonym and his guests John, Paula, and Eden Muina, Dolores Ladd, Joe Teringer, and new member Leslie Vaccaro and her daughter Alexandra, with Edie Behringer leading.



Picture from Edie

Outings Schedule

06/01-03/18	BMT Series	B McCollum
06/09/18	Panther Creek, Cohutta (S)	A Evans
06/14-15/18	Big Hump/Little Hump (road trip)	B McCollum
06/23/18	Gee Creek (S)	B Rudder
06/30/18	Amadahy "Family Hike" (E)	B McCollum

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

Charit Creek Lodge October 24-25, 2018

From Barbara McCollum

11 spaces are still available for **Charit Creek Lodge** in Big South Fork near Jamestown, TN for the night of **Wednesday, October 24, 2018**. I have two detached field cabins--one for the men and one for the women as well as the corn crib which will accommodate two people. My goal is to put 10 people in each detached cabin and two in the corn crib. The cost is \$115 per person and includes an evening and breakfast meal. Meals are provided in the lodge and served family style.

Charit Creek Lodge is similar to LeConte Lodge in its accommodations with no power in the cabins or the main lodge, but there is a solar shower and flush toilets in the bathroom. Bed linens are provided, however, you must bring your own towels and washcloths.

Please send checks for \$115 (single) or \$230 (couple) payable to me: Barbara McCollum, 10 Huntington Rd., S.W., Rome, GA 30165-8553.

My tentative plan is to leave Chattanooga fairly early Wednesday morning, eat lunch at Litton's in Knoxville, and then drive to the trailhead to begin the hike. There are two options for hiking into the lodge--one is only 1.4 miles and the other is around 5 miles which includes the Twin Arches route. We will hike out Thursday morning and possibly do another hike in the park before returning home on Thursday afternoon.

I encourage hikers to look at the Charit Creek Lodge website before sending their check. There is a 28-day cancellation policy with a cancellation fee involved and I suggest hikers read before sending me their check.

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

Membership Database - Susan Basch (706) 375-7750

Outings - Barbara McCollum (770) 289-7143

Boe Rudder (423) 400-1103

Newsletter/Webmaster - 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)