



Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Outings – March 2017

The SMHC has been leading hiking outings in east Tennessee for over ninety years! Our outings are open to all. You do not have to be a member of the Club to participate, and we welcome guests. Join us!

1 – Wednesday: Schoolhouse Gap / Turkey Pen Ridge / Finley Cane / West Prong Trail Loop

This loop hike will include the Schoolhouse Gap, Turkey Pen Ridge, Finley Cane, and West Prong trails. Hike: 8.5 miles, rated moderate. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:00 am or at the **Townsend Wye** at 8:30 am. Drive: 50 miles RT {@4¢=\$2}.

Leader: Ray Fuehrer, Ray.fuehrer@yahoo.com, 865-314-2279.

4 – Saturday: Appalachian Trail Maintenance

For this work trip, we will do general trail rehabilitation north of the Cable Gap Shelter in the Nantahala National Forest. We will be walking in approximately 2 miles to the work areas from the Yellow Creek Rd trailhead. Participants will need to wear sturdy footwear, bring work gloves, lunch, snacks and plenty of water. If you have a hardhat, ear protection, and/or safety glasses, please bring those as well. **Please contact Franklin or Pam in advance so that we can determine number of crews and have appropriate tools available.** Meet at the **Maryville Walmart on Hwy 411 <see list>** at 7:00 am. Drive: 110 miles RT {@4¢=\$4.40}. If you prefer to meet the group in the National Forest, the group will start hiking north from the Yellow Creek Trailhead at 9:00 am.

Leaders: Franklin LaFond, ox97game@aol.com, 678-464-3380 and Pam Reddoch, preddoch@comcast.net, 865-705-1923.

11 – Saturday: SMHC Cemetery Hike

The hike will begin on the Maddron Bald Trail, with a shortcut to the Maddron Cemetery. We will then hike east on the Old Settlers Trail and continue on the Gabes Mountain Trail, visiting the Sally Sutton and Jennifer cemeteries, which are single graves. After hiking the Gabes Mountain Trail to the Cosby picnic area, we will visit the Campbell Cemetery. Hike: about 8 miles, rated moderate. We will meet in front of the picnic pavilion in the Cosby Campground at 9:00 am. The hike leaders will not be at any other SMHC meeting location but will instead meet everyone at Cosby. We will shuttle hikers from Cosby to the Maddron Bald Trailhead in as few vehicles as possible. For questions, contact Frank March at frankamarch@gmail.com. Any members wishing to carpool can meet at **Comcast on Asheville Hwy <see list>** at 8:00 am. Drive: 100 miles RT from Comcast {@4¢=\$4}.

Leaders: Frank March at frankamarch@gmail.com, and Richard Ryburn.

15 - Wednesday: Rich Mountain / Crooker Arm Ridge / Indian Grave Gap Loop

This Rich Mountain loop hike will include the Crooked Arm Ridge, Indian Grave Gap, and Rich Mountain trails. Hike: 8.2 miles, rated moderate. Option to add Indian Grave to Rich Mountain Road, for additional 2.2 mile out and back. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:00 am or at the **Cades Cove entrance parking lot** at 8:45 am. Drive: 50 miles RT {@4¢=\$2}.

Leader: Ray Fuehrer, Ray.fuehrer@yahoo.com, 865-314-2279.

18 - Saturday: Bearpen Hollow to Mt. LeConte Off-Trail

The oldest trail climbing to the summit of Mount LeConte from the south side followed the steeply sloped defile of Bearpen Hollow to West Point before turning east and proceeding along the jagged, fir-infested ridgeline connecting West Point with Cliff Top. Our hike up the old Bearpen Hollow manway is an off-trail excursion that is extremely steep in places and requires some crawling through laurel thickets. We may return by the 1000-foot Scar, Big Duckhawk Peak, or the Alum Cave Trail depending on weather conditions. Hike: 9 miles, rated difficult. **Pre-registration with leaders is required for this off-trail hike.**

Leaders: Greg Harrell, GSHarrell@milligan.edu, 865-719-0173, and Greg Hoover, ghoover@cn.edu, 865-475-7832.

19 - Sunday: Kephart Prong / Sweat Heifer / Grassy Branch Loop

This is a challenging but beautiful loop hike beginning at the Kephart Prong Trailhead off of US-441. We will climb 3100 ft. in 5.7 miles via the Kephart Prong and Sweat Heifer trails to reach the AT. After another 300 ft. or so, we reach our highest point at Mt. Ambler. On the AT, we will continue to head north to Charlies Bunion to admire late winter views, then descend via Dry Sluice Gap, Grassy Branch and Kephart Prong again. Road and weather conditions may modify this March hike. Hike: 14.5 miles, rated Difficult. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 7:30 am or **Sugarlands Visitor Center** at 8:15 am. Drive: 70 miles RT from Food City to SVC {@4¢= \$2.80}.

Leaders: Diane Petrilla, petrillad@gmail.com, 931-224-5149 and Cliff Caudill, skogsc3@me.com, 865-340-6419.

25 - Saturday: Easy Hike – Gatlinburg Trail

We will take the Gatlinburg Trail to town where we will walk the perimeter of downtown & survey the recovery after the fire. We will have breakfast/lunch at the Log Cabin Pancake House before returning to our cars. Hike: 5.5 miles. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:30 am or Sugarland's Visitor center at 9:30 am. Drive 80 miles RT from Alcoa {@4cents=\$3.20}.

Leader: David Smith dcshiker@bellsouth.net

25-26 – Saturday/Sunday: Pecks Corner Backpack & AT Maintenance

From Newfound Gap, we'll hike the Appalachian Trail 11 miles north to the Peck's Corner shelter and along the way enjoy nice views such as Charlies Bunion and Bradley's View. We'll also perform some light trail maintenance along the way, particularly closer to Peck's Corner. We'll stay at the Peck's Corner shelter for the night. In the morning, we will hike down the Hughes Ridge Trail to Chasteen Creek Trail and on to Smokemont. Hike: 21 miles RT, rated Difficult. A backpacker reservation is required in order to spend the night at Peck's Corner, and no camping outside the shelter is permitted. If you do not obtain a Park Backpacker Permit for Peck's Corner you will not be able to make this hike. We will have four permits available for hikers, so contact Steve Dunkin if you would like one, or contact GRSM Backcountry Permits to make a reservation as soon as you can for Saturday, March 25th. This is Spring Break and also AT Thru-Hiker season, so the shelters book up fast and are likely to be filled to capacity. **Pre-registration with the trip leaders is absolutely required for this trip, so please contact the trip leaders to learn the meeting place and time; also please let us know if you have your own reservation or need one of ours.**

Leaders: Steve Dunkin, jsdunkin@roaneschools.com, and Tim Bigelow, bigelowt2@mindspring.com.

MEETING PLACES:

Alcoa Food City = On right between 3rd & 4th stoplight (on Hall Rd., TN 35), a block before Big Lots [Map Link](#).

Comcast on Asheville Hwy = From Exit 394 ramp off I-40 go left (east) on Asheville Hwy, US-11E/25W/70, to signal light at top of hill; turn right, down into Comcast lot, 5720 Asheville Hwy; park to left of entry, about 2 lanes over toward the exit end of lot. [Map Link](#).

Maryville Walmart = On Hwy 411 S between Market Pl and Legends Way, 2410 Hwy 411. Meet at far right side of parking lot. [Map Link](#).

NOTES:

If you have any questions about an outing, please contact your outing leaders. They are there to help! Hiking is a strenuous physical activity which requires individuals to be in reasonably good physical condition and overall health. If you have any health conditions that might impact your ability to hike, please consult your physician prior to hiking. Our outings range from easy walks that most anyone can do, to difficult outings that require excellent fitness and prior hiking experience. If you have doubts about your ability to complete a hike, contact your outing leader and talk it over with them before you go.

We do expect each of our outing participants to bring along a hiking pack with adequate food, water, and first aid supplies, to wear sturdy hiking shoes or boots, and to dress appropriately for expected weather conditions in the mountains. Contact your outing leader if you have any questions.

Our outings nearly always have a carpool arrangement where we meet at a central location and take as few cars as possible to the trailhead. If you ride with someone, please consider giving them at least a small contribution toward gas expenses. Outing descriptions normally include the roundtrip driving mileage and the suggested contribution to the driver from each carpool rider based on eight cents per mile.

Please note: No dogs or firearms are permitted on any Club hikes, whether inside or outside the GSMNP.