



Smoky Mountains Hiking Club

P O Box 51592 Knoxville, TN 37950-1592

Exploring the Smokies Since 1924

September 2017

ANAKEESTA RIDGE AND LANDSLIDE SCAR FROM US441 OFF-TRAIL September 2 - Saturday

From Newfound Gap road we'll ascend an unnamed side ridge consisting of alternating stretches of exposed rocks, brush, and blowdowns (and maybe one or two yellow jacket nests) to the main crest of Anakeesta Ridge, providing views of LeConte's southern side. After a short, shrubby descent along the narrow crest of Anakeesta Ridge, we'll reach the top of the huge landslide scar on its south slope. We'll spend the next hour or two scrambling and exploring this scar and its debris field and exit to the road at the bottom of the scar. Tough gloves and hat strongly recommended. This hike is 100% off-trail, so off-trail experience preferred; off-trail enthusiasm required. Our descent down the scar will be steep and open, but safe, and a wooded alternative is available if needed. Total hike: 1 mile, 5-6 hours, rated strenuous. Drive: 120 miles RT {@4¢ = \$4.80}. **Preregistration for this off-trail hike is required - to register for this hike (and to get meeting place and time), email hike leader Greg Hoover at ghoover@cn.edu.**

Leaders: Greg Harrell, gregharrell@emscas.com; and Greg Hoover, ghoover@cn.edu.

EASY HIKE: MOUSE CREEK FALLS VIA BIG CREEK September 2 - Saturday

Big Creek Trail follows an old railroad grade used to haul lumber out of the mountains during the logging boom at the start of the 20th century. At 1.4 miles the trail passes Midnight Hole, a deep, picturesque pool below a 6' falls. At 2.1 miles a short side trail on the left leads to a bench where hikers can rest and view Mouse Creek Falls which is on the far side of Big Creek. The falls are 45' in height. Hike: 4 miles RT, rated easy. It takes about 2-3 hours to hike to the waterfall and back. Bring lunch, water, and bug spray. Meet at **Comcast on Asheville Hwy <see list>** at 8:30 am. Drive: 110 miles {@4¢ = \$4.40}.

Leader: Betty Glenn, glennbj@roanestate.edu.

WEDNESDAY HIKE: GRAPEYARD RIDGE - INJUN CREEK - RHODODENDRON CREEK LOOP September 6 - Wednesday

This loop hike will include the Grapeyard Ridge, Injun Creek, and Rhododendron Creek trails. Hike: about 6 miles, rated moderately easy. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:00 am or Sugarlands Visitors Center at 9:00 am. Drive: 90 miles {@4¢ = \$3.60}.

Leader: Michael Zielinski, kf4yws@comcast.net, 865-363-6527.

SMHC Newsletter Editor: Don Dunning 865-705-2154

Send hike write-ups & photos to: dedz1@aol.com.
Please include preferred contact method (email, phone).

Visit our website: www.smhclub.org

APPALACHIAN TRAIL MAINTENANCE September 9 - Saturday

On this AT worktrip participants will clean waterbars and cut weeds from Sassafras Gap to Doe Knob. Participants are encouraged to bring appropriate clothing, sturdy footwear, and work gloves. For those interested, a side trip to Shuckstack fire tower will also be planned. **Pre-registration with the leader is required so that needed tools will be available. As part of pre-registration, the leader will provide for a meeting time and place and any other pertinent information.**

Leader: Mark Shipley, mshipley@townoffarragut.org, 865-388-5261.

MIDDLE PRONG - LYNN CAMP PRONG - MIRY RIDGE - PANTHER CREEK September 10 - Sunday

This long but lovely loop hike starts out on the wide Middle Prong trail, ascending beside the beautiful creek, boulders and cascades from which it gets its name. We reach Miry Ridge via Lynn Camp Prong after a total ascent of 2500 ft. After another 300 ft or so, we reach the highest point of this hike on Dripping Springs Mountain. Miry Ridge will hopefully afford some views of ridges beyond. At Jakes Gap we will pick up Panther Creek Trail to descend back to Middle Prong, with a number of wet crossings. Please note: the last crossing at the end of Panther Creek Trail requires water shoes. Hike: 14.9 miles, rated difficult. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:00 am or at Middle Prong trailhead at 8:40 am. Drive: 50 miles RT {@4¢ = \$2}. Leaders: Diane Petrilla, petrillad@gmail.com, 931-224-5149, and Mark Stanfill, mastanfill@yahoo.com.

SNAKE DEN - AT - LOW GAP LOOP September 16 - Saturday

This 13-mile loop out of Cosby Campground will take us up the Snake Den Trail, north on the AT, and then down the Low Gap Trail. On reaching the AT, we will welcome moderate terrain with some good views looking west into Cosby and east towards Mount Sterling. We will take a break at the Cosby Knob Shelter before heading downhill on the Low Gap Trail to the Cosby campground. Hike: 13 miles, rated difficult due to an elevation gain of 3858 feet. Meet at **Comcast on Asheville Highway <see list>** at 8:00 am or at Cosby campground hiker parking lot at 9:00 am. Drive: 120 miles RT {@4¢ = \$4.80}. Leader: Cindy Spangler, spangler@utk.edu, 865-776-1301.

2018 SMHC HIKE LEADERS SEND HANDBOOK INPUT

All hike leaders for SMHC hikes during 2018 should submit a brief description of their hike to the SMHC Handbook Editors as soon as possible. Brevity would be appreciated; florid prose can be saved for the newsletter hike description. Please submit your hike descriptions no later than September 30 to George Ritter (rittergeo@gmail.com) and Ken Wise, (kwise@utk.edu).

WEDNESDAY HIKE: ALUM CAVE TO MT LECONTE
September 20 - Wednesday

We will hike the Alum Cave Trail to Mt. LeConte with possible trip to Cliff Tops if weather permits. Hike: 11 miles RT, rated moderately difficult. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:00 am or Sugarlands Visitors Center at 9:00 am. Drive: 80 miles {@4¢ = \$3.20}.
 Leader: Michael Zielinski, kf4yws@comcast.net, 865-363-6527.

GOSHEN PRONG - LITTLE RIVER TRAIL
September 23 - Saturday

This hike will be downhill with a car shuttle from Elkmont to Clingmans Dome in the morning. We will hike up to the Clingmans Dome Observation tower then head west on the AT to the Goshen Prong Trail. There will be a hint of fall color in the morning at the highest elevations but full greenery as the hike descends gradually to the Little River Trail and out to Elkmont. Hike is 14 miles with 4400-ft elevation loss, rated difficult. Meet at **Alcoa Food City <see list>** at 8:00 am or at Elkmont trailhead at 9:00 am. Drive: 100 miles RT {@4¢ = \$4}.
 Leader: Tim Bigelow, bigelowt2@mindspring.com, 865-607-6781.

BOOGERMAN TRAIL LOOP
September 30 - Saturday

Come join us for a leisurely hike on what some call the prettiest trail in Cataloochee. Perhaps we will learn something about the Boogerman himself. After an easy start we will climb through forest that was never logged. We will hike out the Fork Ridge Trail because bridges are out on Caldwell Fork. One minor creek crossing. Expect a couple of long, hard climbs. Then we will walk through Cataloochee & hope to see some Elk. Hike: 10.5 mile loop, rated moderately difficult. Drive: 175 miles RT {@4¢ = \$7}. Meet at **Comcast on Asheville Highway <see list>** at 8:00 am. Leaders: John Smiley, johnsmiley55@bellsouth.net, and David Smith, dcshiker@bellsouth.net.

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](#).

NEWCOMER TO HIKING WITH SMHC?

Some hints: Our 'difficulty ratings' are gauged to SMHC members with some experience with our hikes, not to the general public, nor to sometime or flatland hikers who are all likely to find our 'easy, moderate, or difficult' seem to under-rate the difficulty. Always be prepared for worse weather (wetter, colder) than expected. Wear adequate boots. Bring rainwear, water, spare food. Each carpool rider should reimburse driver about 4¢ per mile. Doubts? Call a leader.
 And please note: No dogs or firearms are permitted on any Club hikes, whether inside or outside of GSMNP

Congratulations to the SMHC Executive Board for 2018

President.....Brian Worley	Historian...Ken Wise
Vice President....Billy Heaton	Director....Pete Berntsen
Treasurer.....Tim Bigelow	Director....Steve Dunkin
Recording Sec...Brad Reese	Director....Jean Gauger*
Mmbrship Sec...George Ritter	Director....Diane Petrilla*
Comm Director...Cindy Spangler	Director....Will Skelton

*New to the Board.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Todd Ussery toddussery@yahoo.com, 808-756-4448,
 1116 Hampstead Place, Augusta, GA 30907.

COMING EVENTS – OCTOBER 2017

7 Saturday	AT Trail Maintenance
8 Sunday	Rich Gap/Boundary Trail/Road Loop
14 Saturday	Yahoo Falls - Sheltoewe Trace Loop
21 Saturday	Hangover from Big Fat Gap
28 Saturday	Mt Cammerer via Groundhog Ridge OT
28 Saturday	Mt Cammerer by trail

FOR THE RECORD

Appalachian Trail Work Day **7/8/2017**

Five members and one visitor braved the heat to pack much needed mulch to the Double Spring shelter privy. SMHC is responsible for maintaining the AT through the Park and south to NOC. This task includes maintaining the privies at the shelters along the trail, and these privies are in constant need of resupply of mulch to assist in the composting process. On the return to the Clingmans Dome trailhead, this hard working crew also cleaned waterbars/drains and cut back vegetation encroaching on the trail until we were chased off the mountain by a late afternoon thunderstorm. Many thanks to this outstanding crew.

Don Dunning

Drinkwater Pool **7/9/2017**

On a Sunday following almost a week of rain, a posse of fifteen of the initiated herded by leaders Greg Hoover and Greg Harrell set forth in search of the famous Drinkwater Pool. The first obstacle encountered was Ramsey Cascades sporting an astonishing volume of water hurtling headlong over its precipice. Above the cascades, the stream was cold, deep, and running fast, making it difficult to negotiate the many strikingly beautiful waterfalls that adorn upper Ramsey Prong. Upon reaching Drinkwater, there was, of course, great disagreement as to which particular coffin-shaped rock Harvey Broome once designated as the definitive marker identifying the approach to the pool. After enjoying lunch at pool's edge, the hikers split into two groups. The older, more mature hikers, cognizant that Greg Harrell's wife was imminently due to deliver a child, thought it best that we not tarry long, but hike down as quickly as possible so Greg could attend to his wife. The younger hikers, youthfully indifferent, continued on up Ramsey Prong to Mount Guyot, then out the AT and down Snake Den Ridge to Cosby Campground, not getting back to their cars until the rest of us were home in bed and sound asleep.

Greg Harrell and Greg Hoover

Mt. Sterling and Baxter Creek 7/15/2017

On a rather overcast day, ten members and one visitor met at Big Creek to set up a shuttle and hike to Mt Sterling from the Sterling Gap trailhead. We ascended about 2000 ft in 2.7 miles to reach the Mt Sterling fire tower after a short stretch on the Mt Sterling Ridge trail. After this challenging climb, we enjoyed lunch at the beautiful high elevation Mt Sterling campsite. Signs warned of much bear activity, but fortunately, we had no bear encounters! Hiking down Baxter Creek started with the ethereal moss-covered rocks, ferns and wood sorrel near the top, changing to rhododendron filled trail and deciduous forest as we descended the 4000 ft in 6.1 miles. Rain stayed with us for much of the hike down, but sunlight illuminated roaring Big Creek as we ended the hike. This was an excellent and congenial group to share this hike with!

Diane Petrilla and Eric Sundstrom



Max Patch to Roaring Fork Shelter 7/22/2017

What the weather man promised to be a very hot, humid day did not deter 12 hikers, eight members and 4 visitors from exploring the Bald of Max Patch and the portion of the Appalachian Trail that led north to the Roaring Fork shelter and for some of us beyond. We started from the parking lot and circled around the base of Max Patch which was overgrown with blackberries at this time, but we made our way through and found our way to the Appalachian trail. We followed the trail and climbed and climbed to the summit. It was sunny but hazy from the humidity at the summit so we made our way to the forest below. Being in the woods provided some relief from the heat, and we made our way to the shelter. After arriving at the shelter we had lunch. After lunch three members had decided that they met their hiking quota for the day and headed back. Nine of us continued on to a primitive camp site just shy of Lemon Gap. We took another break and started back the way we came. Although it was hot, it wasn't miserable and everyone seemed to enjoy their hike. We hiked back to the summit and took another break, sitting in the grass, enjoying the view and the breeze, and the camaraderie of each other's company. We had such a nice time together and after the hike we all stopped on the way back to have a meal in Hartford, TN. It was a great group of people from the beginning of the hike until the end, even if we smelled like sweaty hikers at the end.

Ron Blessinger



Mt. LeConte via Boulevard & Alum Cave 7/29/2017

Cool, foggy weather greeted seventeen hikers at Newfound Gap prepared to climb Mt LeConte. The slight breeze helped everyone maintain a relatively brisk pace, even during most of the steep climb along the LeConte end of the Boulevard trail. Unfortunately, the fog also shrouded most of the overlooks including those at the Jump-Off, Myrtle Point, and Clifftop. At the top, several people successfully added more rocks to the large cairn at High Top and bought the 2017 "I hiked it" T-shirts for their collections. After enjoying lunch at the Lodge, everyone descended the warmer and more crowded Alum Cave Bluff trail. It was interesting to observe the contrast between these two routes.

Steve Miller



SUPPORT SMHC THROUGH THE KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM

There is an **easy** way to show your support for the efforts of SMHC members who maintain over *100 miles* of the Appalachian Trail, including 15 trail shelters. All it takes is **a few minutes of your time** to enroll. **It costs you nothing**, but a fraction of your Kroger purchases will be returned to SMHC. From personal experience with a high school's participation in this program, it is amazing how the rewards can add up if large numbers of folks participate. SMHC's experience in the first year was that a few members signed up, and early returns were good, but folks failed to re-enroll, and numbers have dwindled. Kroger distributes up to **\$375,000 quarterly** to all registered programs. Imagine if even half of our 600 hiking club members enrolled!

Here's a simple How To Guide:

If you shop at Kroger even occasionally, you likely have a Kroger Plus Card. If so, you must go online to www.Kroger.com and choose "Community" from the pull-down menu:

1. If you have not created an account for your Plus Card, do so first.
2. Go to the "Community" section of your Account Information and enter the SMHC NPO number **92545**.

That's all. It takes 7 - 10 days for your enrollment to become active. The good news is that Kroger is making a change soon that will end the requirement to re-enroll annually, so your choice of SMHC will last as long as you choose. Of course, your child or grandchild might persuade you that his or her marching band is more deserving, but you can change back to SMHC after she or he graduates. It's your choice, but rest assured that the maintainers will utilize every dollar for our continuing efforts along the AT. Your choice of SMHC (or other community organization) will be printed at the bottom of your Kroger receipt for your convenience.

NOTE: The Smoky Mountains Hiking Club and its Executive Board maintain a strictly non-commercial status for the club and its activities. By providing information on the Community Rewards Program, SMHC in no way endorses or advertises the Kroger Company.

WELCOME TO NEW RIDGERUNNER, MATTHEW HENDERSON!

SMHC and ATC are happy to welcome our new Ridgerunner for the late summer-fall season. Matthew Henderson comes to us from Florida Gulf Coast University with great enthusiasm. Matthew provides the following information on his background:

"My name is Matthew Henderson and I have the honor of being the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's new Ridgerunner in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. I've always been an adamant hiker, backpacker, and traveler, so I'm very excited to start getting out on the trail! I recently graduated from Florida Gulf Coast University with my bachelor's degree in Biology with a concentration in Organismal and Ecological Studies. During my undergraduate years I got involved in a number of extracurricular activities, such as being the President of the FGCU Wildlife Club, volunteering and researching white-handed gibbons at the Talkin' Monkey Project, and working as a Student Naturalist for our Colloquium department. These years of learning, teaching, and working in the environmental field helped cement my goal of becoming an environmental biologist. I also just finished spending a year abroad, which included a three-month internship working at an animal sanctuary in Thailand, working and backpacking around Australia, and then traveling around the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. I hope to bring my years of experience and my drive to improve the natural world here to the Great Smoky Mountains and the Appalachian Trail."

We look forward to working with Matthew on the trail. We have been blessed to work with outstanding Ridgerunners in the GSMNP for many years, and no doubt Matthew will continue this fine tradition. For those who may not be familiar with the Ridgerunner program, these dedicated ATC employees patrol the trail typically for 5 consecutive days each week to monitor trail conditions and report any issues, educate hikers on Leave No Trace practices to reduce the impacts, educate hikers about the GSMNP permit system, and monitor and service the privies as needed. Please welcome Matthew as our newest Ridgerunner when you meet him on the trail.

REI REQUESTS SMHC HIKERS FOR OCTOBER PHOTO SHOOT (YOUR OPPORTUNITY FOR STARDOM?)

REI will be conducting a photo shoot in the Smoky Mountains in October centered around hiking and backpacking and we are looking to find enthusiastic hikers of all experience levels and from all walks of life to use as talent for these shoots.

To sign up, just go to REIcasting.com (FROM A DESKTOP COMPUTER, IT IS NOT MOBILE-OPTIMIZED), fill out a profile with some basic information about yourself (your measurements, your interests, and your outdoor experience) and a couple pictures (ideally a headshot, a full body shot, and any pictures of you at your most 'badass' in the outdoors) and then we'll be able to look you up for any shoot we do down there! Plus, we pay a day rate for all talent on our shoots, including any necessary mileage and travel expenses, AND your image could end up in some of our in-store and online media NATIONWIDE (always fun for an outdoor enthusiast in my experience). To say nothing of the fact that our shoots are just plain fun - getting paid to play outside in beautiful places with other outdoor enthusiasts.

Request submitted by Will Anderson, REI Contract Producer, wil1and@rei.com