



Smoky Mountains Hiking Club

P O Box 51592 Knoxville, TN 37950-1592

Exploring the Smokies Since 1924

October 2017

APPALACHIAN TRAIL MAINTENANCE October 7 - Saturday

The October AT work trip will take place about 1.2 miles northeast of Newfound Gap. We will work to return the trail tread to its proper location and improve water drainage in the area. The work will require moving rocks and possibly adding steps. Participants will need to dress for the weather and bring work gloves, lunch, and water. Hike: ~3 miles, rated moderate. Meet at **Comcast on Asheville Hwy <see list>** at 8:00 am or at Newfound Gap at 9:30 am. Drive: 100 miles RT {@4¢ = \$4}. Leaders: Pete Berntsen, peteberntsen@gmail.com, 865-256-7896; and Mark Stanfill, mastanfill@yahoo.com.

EASY HIKE – NEW TRAILS OF FORT DICKERSON October 8 - Sunday

There have been many changes at Fort Dickerson Park in the last year. The new showcase entrance is only the beginning. There are around 3 miles of new trails that allow more thorough exploration of this 85-acre park. We will walk most of the new trails which now allows a complete loop around the quarry with some great views. There is also a trail that goes through a stand of large trees on the way to the top of the park where the Civil War cannons are on display at the actual fort location. We'll discuss some of the changes planned for this park in the next year. Bring some water and snack for an afternoon in this beautiful park in South Knoxville. Hike: about 4 miles, rated easy. Meet at **Fort Dickerson lower parking lot <see list>** near quarry overlook - the first left after entering the park on Fort Dickerson Road, Knoxville - at 1:00 PM. Leader: Mac Post 865-806-0980, mpost3116@aol.com.

RICH GAP - BOUNDARY TRAIL - ROAD LOOP October 8 - Sunday (cancelled)

WEDNESDAY HIKE: SINKING CREEK BRANCH OF THE EAST LAKESHORE TRAIL October 11 - Wednesday

We will hike the Sinking Creek Branch of the East Lakeshore Trail at Tellico Lake. Hiking distance is 9 easy miles along Tellico Lake. 1200 ft cumulative elevation gain. Meet at **Lenoir City Cracker Barrel <see list>** at 9:00 am. Drive 20 miles RT {@4¢ = \$1}. Leader: Terry Nyenhuis, terrynyenhuis@gmail.com, 865-206-9476.

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

YAHOO FALLS & SHELTOWEE TRACE LOOP AT BIG SOUTH FORK October 14 - Saturday

We will begin this Big South Fork hike with beautiful Yahoo Falls, the tallest waterfall in Kentucky at 113 ft. We will then pick up the trail to Yahoo Arch, Markers Arch and loop around to Shelhowee Trace (National Recreation Trail) which follows Big South Fork itself, north, back to Yahoo Falls. The geology and botany of the Cumberland Plateau is always interesting to contrast and compare to the Smokies, and October is always a wonderful month to hike! Hike: ~10.5 miles, rated moderate. Meet at **Oak Ridge Books-a-Million/Gold's Gym <see list>** at 8:00 am. Drive 165 miles RT {@4¢ = \$6.50}. Leaders: Diane Petrilla, petrillad@gmail.com, 931-224-5149, and Lynda Bryan, ellymay2015@aol.com.

HANGOVER FROM BIG FAT GAP October 21 - Saturday

Our day will begin with driving the infamous Dragon, then seven miles along a forest road. The Hangover Lead Trail gains 2,172 feet in 2.5 miles to reach Saddle Tree Gap. From there it is an easy half mile to the Hangover. From the Hangover, we will have 360-degree views of the Cherokee and Nantahala National Forest along with the Smoky Mountains, perfect for viewing fall colors - a challenging but rewarding hike. Hike: 6 miles, rated difficult due to elevation gain and condition of the trail. Meet at **Maryville Walmart <see list>** at 7:30 am. Drive: 100 miles RT {@4¢ = \$4}. Leaders: David Smith, dcshiker@bellsouth.net.

WEDNESDAY HIKE: BIRD MOUNTAIN TRAIL IN FROZEN HEAD STATE PARK October 25 - Wednesday

We will hike the Bird Mountain Trail in beautiful Frozen Head State Park. Hike: 9 moderate miles, rated moderate, with 2700 feet cumulative elevation gain. We will climb 2000 feet in the first 2 miles. Meet at **Oak Ridge Books-a-Million/Gold's Gym <see list>** at 8:00 am. Drive 50 miles RT {@4¢ = \$2}. Leader: Terry Nyenhuis, terrynyenhuis@gmail.com, 865-206-9476.

2018 SMHC HIKE LEADERS SEND HANDBOOK INPUT

All hike leaders for SMHC hikes during 2018 should have submitted a brief description of their hike to the SMHC Handbook Editors by September 30. Brevity would be appreciated. If you have not already done so, please submit your hike descriptions immediately to George Ritter (rittergeo@gmail.com) and Ken Wise, (kwise@utk.edu).

**MT CAMMERER VIA GROUNDHOG RIDGE MANWAY
OFF-TRAIL**

October 28 - Saturday

Our route will begin on TN-32 about 4 miles past the Cosby Campground entrance where Groundhog Creek passes under the highway and the Groundhog manway begins. We will climb up this manway, which is mostly open but very steep on the upper end, to the Mt. Cammerer tower where we should have some great views of the autumn leaf colors. Our return route will be back down the same manway. Hike: around 5 miles, rated difficult due to being all off-trail with significant elevation change. Drive 130 miles RT {@4¢ = \$5.20}. **Preregistration for this off-trail hike is required – please contact the leaders to get meeting place and time for this hike.**

Leader: Ed Fleming, edwrdfilm@aol.com, 865-548-2489; and Jon Richey, jon.richey.spsu@gmail.com, 404-213-6955.

MT. CAMMERER VIA CHESTNUT BRANCH

October 28 - Saturday

This hike to Mt. Cammerer is a club October classic! We will start at the Big Creek Ranger Station and follow the Chestnut Branch Trail to its junction with the AT, then turn left onto the AT and continue climbing to the Mt. Cammerer Trail junction. A right turn and a half-mile hike up will bring us to the impressive Mt. Cammerer lookout tower and beautiful 360-degree views of the mountains draped in fall colors. Hike: 12 miles with 3300 feet elevation gain in the first six miles, rated strenuous. Meet at **Comcast on Asheville Hwy <see list>** at 7:30 am. Drive: 110 miles RT {@4¢ = \$4.40}.

Leaders: Rebekah Young, rebekahy27@aol.com, and Elise Eustace.

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](#). **Fort Dickerson Park lower parking lot** = From US-441 S (South Henley), turn onto Fort Dickerson Road, then first left to parking area. [Map Link](#). **Lenoir City Cracker Barrel** = From I-75 Exit 81, go east 0.6 mile or 3 stoplights (toward Lenoir City) to 325 Fort Loudon Medical Center Drive. [Map Link](#). **Maryville Walmart** = On Hwy 411 S between Market Pl and Legends Way, 2410 Hwy 411. Meet near fuel center [Map Link](#). **Oak Ridge Books-a-Million/Gold's Gym** = 310 South Illinois Avenue 3-1/2 traffic lights in, on left coming from Knoxville, opposite Walmart. Meet next to Illinois Ave. in front of Books-a-Million [Map Link](#).

COMING EVENTS – NOVEMBER 2017

4 Saturday	AT Trail Maintenance
5 Sunday	Laurel Falls/Cove Mountain
11 Saturday	Leader's Choice
18 Saturday	Hanging Valley near Noland Creek
24 Saturday	Bird Mountain Loop at Frozen Head

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

- Dan Freeman, df@utk.edu, 865-974-0614, 2348 Robinson Road, Knoxville, TN 37923.
- Larry Jones, larry.allen.jones@gmail.com, 317-752-2991, 703 Killian Drive, Beech Grove, IN 46107.
- Bob Kans, 978217@att.net, 276-445-4920, 328 Parkey Road, Ewing, WV 24248.
- Gregory J. Mihalek, gjminnie48@gmail.com, 865-446-2109, 3246 Catons Chapel Road, Sevierville, TN 37876.
- Stephanie Welch, Stephanie@vote4welch.com, 865-368-5307, 2137 Hillsboro Heights, Knoxville, TN 37920

FOR THE RECORD

Charlies Bunion **8/6/2017**

Whenever a hiker sets out for the AT, they can't help but wonder what the weather up there is going to be like. For these 20 hikers on this particular day, the weather was wonderful. It was cool and dry as twelve members and eight visitors set out from the Newfound Gap parking lot and headed up towards the tourist bunion destination otherwise known as "Charlies Bunion." We were all discussing how great it felt knowing that it could definitely be otherwise in August. The views at the Bunion were spectacular as we all scrambled for a rocky spot to eat our lunches. Several in the group were on the LeConte hike the week before and mentioned that the views on that day were whited out. Several other hikers commented that they had never been up to Charlies Bunion. It was a great walk back down, all in all a beautiful day, and we were all glad that we came.

Billy Heaton, Steve Hill and Ernie Wiles



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

Breakneck Ridge to Three-Forks Off-Trail 8/12/2017

On the morning of August 12, an overcast sky greeted fifteen hikers gathered in Round Bottom at the end of Straight Fork Road to discover for themselves whether they had the strength and stamina to hike Breakneck Ridge to Three Forks and back. Leaders Mike Harrington and Ken Wise attempted with varying degrees of success to steer the group on a practicable course around the succession of massive blowdowns that obstructed extensive stretches of the manway. When not clambering over the blowdowns, hikers were busy disentangling themselves from overreaching rhododendron or skidding off slick embankments and into the undergrowth. Nevertheless, all arrived at Three Forks in good form and each were soon awakened to a new understanding of the concept of "cold" as they plunged into the Big Pool for a refreshing swim. The newsletter announcement had suggested we would exit Three Forks via Right Fork, but the surge of high water in the stream and the impending threat of more rain plus the need for a quick warm-up for those who braved the cold water of the 4200-foot elevation Big Pool dictated that we struggle out on the manway. For much of the return hike up from Three Forks and out Breakneck Ridge the group was treated to intermittent light rain.

Mike Harrington and Ken Wise



SMHC Election Picnic 8/19/2017

We had a great turnout for the SMHC Election Picnic on this beautiful day. We enjoyed a wonderful smorgasbord of delicious foods at the Twin Creeks Picnic Pavilion, and successfully elected the SMHC Board members for 2018. We also recruited hike leaders for our 2018 program of exciting hikes, and enjoyed a hike on the Twin Creeks Trail before lunch. Many thanks to the SMHC Social Committee for organizing this important and fun event, including Mary Alice Porter, Janet and Tim Bigelow, and Priscilla Clayton, and to everyone attending for bringing the wonderful dishes to share.



Spence Field and Rocky Top 8/26/2017

Unusually cool, dry air welcomed 11 hikers at the Cades Cove picnic area as they prepared to ascend Rocky Top. Skies were clear during much of the very rocky climb but a few clouds lingered near the summit. Nevertheless, we saw beautiful views of Fontana Lake, Cades Cove, Look Rock, and Gregory Bald. We didn't see any girls that were part bear and the other part cat, but we did meet three members of the UT band who were making their first pilgrimage. Rocky Top attracts many hikers up its steep slopes because of the 1960's song but they pleasantly learn that its best feature is the panoramic view..

Steven Miller and Billy Heaton



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

CLINGMANS DOME OBSERVATION TOWER REHABILITATION PROJECT IS UNDERWAY

Great Smoky Mountains National Park officials announced that the Clingmans Dome Observation Tower will be closed beginning Wednesday, August 23 through the remainder of the 2017 season to complete rehabilitation work thanks to funding received from a Partners in Preservation (PIP) grant. The \$ 250,000 grant was awarded last summer to the Friends of the Smokies on behalf of the park after being one of the top nine, most voted for parks in the *Partners in Preservation: National Parks Campaign in 2016*.

Straddling the North Carolina and Tennessee state line at 6,643 feet, the tower is a prominent landmark and destination as the highest point in the park. The rehabilitation work will consist of repairing the worst deteriorated areas on the concrete columns and walls, stabilizing support walls at the base of the ramp, and repointing some stone masonry. To accomplish this work in a timely manner and for the safety of our visitors the tower will be closed for the duration of the project.

While visitors will not be able to climb the tower for views out over the surrounding tree tops, the Clingmans Dome parking overlook will be open and offers outstanding mountain top views. The visitor contact station and store, the trail to the tower, and all access to the trailheads in the vicinity will remain open. Visitors should expect some construction traffic in the vicinity of the contact station and along the trail.

The observation tower is a precedent-setting design of the National Park Service's Mission 66 program, which transformed park planning, management, and architecture and fundamentally altered the visitor experience in national parks. Since 1959, millions of visitors have climbed the tower, where they can see distances of up to 100 miles over the surrounding mountains and valleys. Some minimal preservation work today on the tower will ensure that visitors continue to experience this unique structure spiraling up from the highest point in the park.

For more information about the Clingmans Dome Tower, please visit the park website at <https://www.nps.gov/grsm/playourvisit/clingmansdome.htm>.

About Partners in Preservation: Partners in Preservation is a program in which American Express, in partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, awards preservation grants to historic places across the country. Since 2006, Partners in Preservation, a community-based partnership, has committed \$16 million in preservation funding to nearly 200 diverse sites in eight different cities across the country. Through this partnership, American Express and the National Trust for Historic Preservation seek to increase the public's awareness of the importance of historic preservation in the United States and to preserve America's historic and cultural places. The program also hopes to inspire long-term support from local citizens for the historic places at the heart of their communities.

[From GSMNP News Release, dated August 24, 2017.]

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.