



Smoky Mountains Hiking Club

P O Box 51592 Knoxville, TN 37950-1592

Exploring the Smokies Since 1924

September 2019

A.T. MAINTENANCE WORK TRIP

September 7 - Saturday

On this AT work trip, participants will cut weeds and prune larger vegetation and perform general maintenance, including clearing waterbars, from the intersection of the AT and the Clingmans Dome access trail south toward the Double Springs Gap Shelter. 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 other pertinent information.

Leader: Mark Shipley, 865-388-5261, shipleymark57@gmail.com

RICH MOUNTAIN TRAIL @ ACE GAP TO INDIAN GRAVE GAP TO SCOTT MOUNTAIN TRAIL TO CAMPSITE 6 AND RETURN

September 11- Wednesday

8.6 miles. Rated moderate due to a 1,600-foot climb in the first 2.3 miles. Meet at Alcoa Food City at 8:00 AM. Roundtrip is 42 miles @.05= \$2.10.

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

ANTHONY CREEK / BOTE MTN / A.T. TO ROCKY TOP

September 14 - Saturday

For this beginning-of-Fall hike, we will park at the Cades Cove picnic area and hike up Anthony Creek trail, crossing Anthony Creek itself several times via footlog. At Bote Mountain, we will turn right, and head up to the A.T. at Spence Field. It is worth taking a slight detour to see Spence Field and shelter, and the brand new privy there! Returning to the A.T., we will travel north for about 1.2 miles to Rocky Top, where there are two "rocky" places, only one considered the "true" Rocky Top!! This leader thinks it would be pretty fun to sing a verse "Rocky Top" there (the song first written in 1967 in a hotel room in Gatlinburg).... so beware! Hike rated Difficult, approx. 13 miles, with total ascent about 3500 ft. Meet at Alcoa Food City at 7:30 am (note early time), or at back of Cades Cove picnic area parking lot at 8:15am. 60 miles RT carpool= \$3.00.

Leader: Diane Petrilla, petrillad@gmail.com or 931-224-5149.

DEFEAT RIDGE WOMAN-WAY, OFF-TRAIL

September 21- Saturday

Whenever six women conspire to lead an off-trail hike along the venerable Defeat Ridge woman-way, there will be no guarantees of the outcome. Sarah Hernandez, Erica Burnette, Cindy McJunkin, and the Page sisters, Kindel, Rapunzel, and Kinsey, will co-lead this adventure, beginning at the Middle Prong Trailhead near Tremont and following the woman-way to the crest of Defeat Ridge where it turns and traces the ridgeline to it terminus on Thunderhead Mountain. After an excursion through Spence Field, the six will lead the hike down the Bote Mountain Trail and out Lead Cove. Total hike is fifteen miles and men are welcome to follow too! Rated difficult. Contact Kindel at thethreesisterspage@gmail.com or Cindy at mcjfive@aol.com to pre-register and for details about the meeting place and time.

MOUNT STERLING

September 21- Saturday

We will start at the hikers' parking area near the Big Creek ranger station and proceed 0.5 mile down the dirt road to Baxter Creek Trail. We then ascend 4,000 feet in 6.2 miles to the fire/observation tower on Mount Sterling. The fire tower offers fabulous panoramic views. Round trip distance is approximately 13.4 miles and will take about seven hours. This is a strenuous hike due to at least one creek crossing that requires wading and multiple large tree scrambles, as well as a steady uphill hike for over six miles. Meet at Comcast on Asheville Hwy at 8:00 AM or at the Big Creek hikers' parking area at 9:00 AM. Round trip is 120 miles @ 0.05 = \$6.00.

Leader: Pete Berntsen, peteberntsen@gmail.com or 865-256-7896, 865-363-6527.

Easy Hike: FORT DICKERSON

September 21 - Saturday

We will start at the quarry overlook, hike down Pit Viper Trail to the swimming area, then walk out to the new park entrance and amenities on Augusta Road. Then we'll climb up the twisty Booger Trail to the fort and check the cannons and earthworks. A short kudzu walk will take us back to the cars. Meet at the first parking lot on the Chapman Highway Entrance to Fort Dickerson Park. Time: 8:30 am. Hike: about 3 miles, some uphill and downhill. Bring towel if you want to cool off in the quarry.

Leader: Doris Gove, dorisgove@aol.com, 865-456-8198

NEWFOUND GAP OUT THE A.T. TO SWEAT HEIFER CREEK TRAIL TO KEPHART PRONG TRAIL TO DRY SLUICE BACK TO THE A.T. AND NEWFOUND GAP

September 25 - Wednesday

13.6 miles. Rated moderately strenuous due to mileage. Meet at Alcoa Food City at **7:30 AM** or at Newfound Gap at **8:45**. 100 miles R/T @.05 = \$5.00

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

Family Hike: LITTLE RIVER-CUCUMBER GAP-JAKES CREEK LOOP

September 28 - Saturday

National Public Lands Day, observed annually on the 4th Saturday in September, offers the perfect opportunity to spend the day outside with friends and family. This year's hike will take us on a lovely loop from the Little River Trail to the Cucumber Gap Trail intersection and then down Jakes Creek Trail. There is one stream crossing which may require wading. Following the hike, we can tour Elkmont, including the Appalachian Clubhouse, which was the heart of a resort community that served the commercial and social elite of Knoxville. **Note:** this hike is most suitable for children 10 and older. Distance: 5.2 miles. Meet at Alcoa Food City at 8:00 AM or at the Little River trailhead at 9:00 AM. Round trip is 70 miles @ 0.05 = \$3.50.

Leader: Pete Berntsen, peteberntsen@gmail.com or 865-256-7896.

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**. From the Henley Street Bridge in downtown Knoxville, continue 1 mile to entrance to the park on the right. [Map Link](#).

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Kenneth & Judy Batey bteam89@comcast.net 615/587-1048
 2715 Vista Meadows Ln Sevierville, TN 37876
 Michael Hurley jklandm@comcast.net 603/866-1797
 9310 Aldergate Wy, Apt 4102 Knoxville, TN 37922
 Barbara Marine bmarine@utmck.edu 865/803-1696
 1215 Harrington Dr Knoxville, TN 37922
 Dave Roberts daver786984@gmail.com 513/258-4906
 7150 Ragland Rd Lot 26 Cincinnati, OH 45244
 Randall Wilson randywilson612@yahoo.com
 3404 Mutton Hollow Rd Maryville, TN 37803

COMING EVENTS – October 2019

- 5 Saturday AT Work Trip
- 6 Sunday Leader's Choice
- 12 Saturday Rock Creek Gorge
- 13 Sunday Cades Cove Moonlight Hike
- 19 Saturday Hangover-Slickrock Loop
- 26 Saturday Mt. Cammerer via Panther Stair, off trail

For the Record

Mt. Leconte via Alum Cave

7-13-2019

Five hikers met on an overcast Saturday and shuttled up to the always busy Alum Cave trail-head. There we met 5 more hikers (including a couple of Club members) from the CC&B group ("Chips, Chocolate, & Beer"?) who were hiking up the Alum Cave Trail and out via the Boulevard Trail. The 10 of us headed up past the rhododendrons in bloom, through the old growth forest under cloudy skies (but no rain yet). We stopped briefly at the cave and continued to the Mt. LeConte Lodge, where most of us ate lunch on the deck with a fine view of the inside of a cloud. We skipped the side-trip to Cliff Top, since we had already seen the clouds. The cool (mid-50s) temperatures gave a welcome respite from the 90s at the lower elevations. After bidding adieu to the other group, the 5 of us headed back down toward the cars. The clouds lifted enough to give us a view of the arches on Duck Hawk Ridge and we had other nice but brief views as winds parted the clouds. Rain fell on us briefly about halfway down – just enough to prompt some to put on rain gear – but not enough to dampen our spirits.



Neil Snapp and Eric Sundstrom.

Middle Prong to Indian Flats Falls

7-14 2019

It was a lovely day for a hike. Sixteen hikers gathered at the Middle Prong trailhead and prepared to hike. Just after we started, Len joined us to make 17 hikers. It was a bright and sunny day but that was hard to tell because the tree coverage is so dense that very little sunlight was getting through. Lynn Camp prong was looking great as usual even though the water flow was lower than sometimes. When we got to the manway to Indian Flats falls there

was some confusion. Some went down to the falls and came back, others went down to the falls and were planning to eat lunch. So, some ate lunch at the falls and others ate lunch at the intersection and two went on to campsite 28 for lunch. One hiker had turned around at the Panther Creek trail intersection. The falls had much less water flow than usual. On the way back, just before Panther Creek trail three hikers had a close encounter with a bear. It was close enough to be somewhat startling to us, but the bear did not seem concerned, looked at us and went on across the trail and up the hill. Being a relatively short hike (7.8 miles) and not too steep (1,175 feet of elevation gain) and a short drive to get to, we were home early. We were all pleased to have Malcolm join us for this hike.



Ron Brandenburg

Round Top to the Townsend Wye

7-20-19

This summer has been hot and muggy, so the prospect of a hike ending with a cool walk across the Little River was an inviting one for the 11 hikers who came on this day. We had a great mix of people- three folks who considered this their first "real" hike in the Smokies, and one (Steve Hill) for whom this hike was the very last of his 900 miles! Roundtop, with its southern facing slope was dry, but we saw some yellow fringed orchid, rattlesnake plantain, and a variety of different colored and shaped mushrooms. We stopped for lunch at a wide shady spot on the path, where one hiker made us laugh by blowing bubbles! The descent towards the river close to the end of the trail is of course bordered by beautiful Metcalf phyllite stone formations. The skies had been darkening as the hike went on, and just as we got to the river to cross, the rain came down in buckets! But who cared? We were up to our thighs in water, and getting wet from the rain, too! Soggy photos were taken to commemorate Steve's 900 miles, and the first-timers considered it a memorable hike, hopefully in only good ways!



Diane Petrilla

Fighting Creek Hike

7-24-2019

Oh, what a beautiful morning, Oh, what a beautiful day. OK, it was not Oklahoma but even more beautiful Tennessee. If you tried to define the perfect day for hiking this would have been a good starting point. When 26 hikers (why can I only find 24 + 1 photographer in the picture?) gathered at Fighting Creek Gap to do this hike), the parking lot was already full. We started by walking west along Little River road to the start of an old road marked by a large rock in the middle of the old road. This old road leads to the Old Elkmont cemetery



then on to a manway that more or less parallels Elkmont road then onto the road to reach Little River trailhead. After that we followed Little River trail, Huskey Gap trail and after lunch at Huskey Gap, Sugarland Mountain trail back to Fighting Creek Gap. Where the parking lot and all the overflow spots were full. The hike was 7.9 miles on established trail and about 2 miles on the roads and manways. The elevation gain was about 1,400 feet.

Ron Brandenburg

Rocky Fork State Park

07-27-2019

Rocky Fork State Park is a bit of a drive but well worth the effort especially on a nice day like we had. There were 13 hikers including 4 visitors. Some of the hikers represented the TCWP and some the Defenders of Wildlife groups. One visitor was John Beaudet who was an excellent local host and hike leader who has been active in preserving the wilderness nature of the park and also in efforts to maintain and improve trails with the state park staff.

The hike began with a short talk in the campfire ring by John



Beaudet and the two state park rangers on the staff there. The history of Rocky Fork SP (now named for Senator Lamar Alexander) and issues about plans for development by the state and some of the wildlife in the streams.

We then started walking the main trail which follows Rocky Fork about a mile. It's an amazingly clear stream and a good place for rare salamanders. We then turned off on Flint Creek trail and went past the site of an ambush and battle in 1789 between a militia led by John Sevier and Cherokee. John Beaudet had historical details and even a copy of the Charleston newspaper describing the battle. Further up Flint Creek we stopped for lunch then at the park boundary where the trail enters Cherokee National Forest just below the gap where it joins the AT. On the way back we took a steep side trail up to the top of Whitehouse Cliffs for an amazing view of the entire Rocky Fork drainage. There was some interesting vegetation there too including several American Chestnut trees. Tim Bigelow

A.T. Work Trip

8-3-2019

15 very strong hikers came on this day to backpack mulch up to Icewater shelter in support of our Club's Appalachian Trail



maintenance activities, and mulch operations in particular. Some folks were new to mulch-hauling, and yet proved they were more than up to the task! We had a beautiful cool and sunny morning for the 6 mile round trip hike to Icewater. We took a total

of 360 lbs. of mulch, completely filling one storage bin, and most of another. What an accomplishment! On the way back, some of us got to see a bear, just 1/2 mile from Newfound Gap on this very busy trail (go figure!). We made good time, got a good work-out, and did a good thing! With gratitude, Diane Petrilla

Lowes Creek Off-Trail

8/3/2019

Eight of the Hiking Club's finest convened at the Porters Creek trailhead early on the first Saturday in August to follow the adroit leadership of Greg Harrell on a long-anticipated adventure up Lowes Creek. After a quick descent along Fern Falls Branch to a deep crossing of Porters Creek, the group enjoyed a fun-with-rhododendron cross-country scramble to reach Lowes Creek. With this summer's interminable rainy season, Lowes Creek was running high, nevertheless the group turned upstream and entered a veritable gauntlet of precipitous waterfalls, fast-rushing chutes, slick boulders, and waist-deep pools. Greg entertained everyone with several stories, one of which he illustrated with an unintended headlong swim in Lowes Creek when he demonstrated how to place too much reliance on a convenient overhanging vine. Virulent

stinging nettles welcomed us at unexpected intervals and nearing the top, we were greeted by an excruciatingly steep climb that mercifully ended upon reaching the Boulevard Trail. From this juncture, the group proceeded an additional mile to LeConte Lodge where all enjoyed a well-deserved rest before beginning a nine-mile race to reach our cars before nightfall. Everyone arrived back safely, thirteen-and-a-half hours after we had started.

Greg Harrell & Ken Wise



Welcome new Board member

Amanda Beal joined the SMHC in 2009 with her husband Adam and step-son Jack. Her first club hike was off-trail exploring Ash Hopper Branch with Charlie Klabunde.

From there, Amanda grew into an avid hiker and backpacker, enjoying lung-busting climbs up steep ridges, volunteering with SWEAT and Rocky Top trail crews, and hiking every trail in the park. 2019 has been an exciting year so far - Amanda joined the 900 Miler Club, adopted an AT section with Adam, and most recently was elected to serve on the SMHC Board of Directors.



LOST FOR A DAY requires one-day volunteers for search and rescue training

Canine Search and Recovery is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 organization that supports and mentors volunteer k9 handlers in search and rescue. Our main event is to sponsor a training seminar every fall to k9 handlers. This seminar moves throughout the country and this year we will be hosting our seminar just outside the beautiful Smoky Mountains at Camp Wesley Woods in Townsend TN from Oct 7-10. We have over 100 k9's and their handlers registered for this event coming from as far away as Alaska and Washington State and near as N.C. and Alabama. Our instructors volunteer their time to teach and are only compensated for their travel, lodging, and food. We offer classes in area, trailing, and HRD (human remains detection.) Our area and trailing classes will be held at numerous locations throughout the Townsend and Maryville area, and we are in need of volunteers to help as subjects. Our dogs need people to be "lost subjects" to find. Many of our areas will be wooded and rough terrain while others will be in a more urban environment. We have 5 trailing classes and 3 area classes and each needs at least one volunteer a day, while our advanced classes run more smoothly with two volunteers. Classes are held Monday through Thursday, Oct 7-10, from 8-5 with lunch included. If you are interested in helping with this very worthwhile endeavor and being "lost" for a day, please contact Janet Geist at djsdgeist04@gmail.com or call at 256-776-1757 (h) to get more information. I would love to talk with you about what we do and how you can help. You can get more information about our organization at www.csar.org or look us up on facebook at Canine Search and Recovery or CSAR Training Seminar-2019-Tennessee. I hope to hear from you soon. A fall day in the Smoky Mountains, hanging out in the woods with dogs, is a great way to spend a day!

~Janet Geist

Support Leave No Trace and National Public Lands Day in the Smokies

On September 28th The Great Smoky Mountains National Park will be distributing literature and talking to visitors about Leave No Trace. The SMHC has been asked to support displays at New Found Gap and Clingman's Dome. We will set up displays at both locations and hand out literature on LNT and describe the SMHC's efforts to support the park. The displays will be active between 10am and 3 pm. If you would like to come support this effort contact Steve Dunkin at jsdunkin1302@gmail.com.

Leave No Trace Trainer Course Open Enrollment

If you are interested in attending a two day Leave No Trace Trainer Course for free this is your chance. The National Park Service is hosting a LNT Trainer Course on October 5th and 6th at Big Creek Horse Camp in the Smokies. SMHC members are eligible to attend. If interested contact Christine Hoyer at Christine_Hoyer@nps.gov

Report on Board Meeting with Tim Hester on Status of the Smoky Mountain Railroad Trail Project

Tim Hester, City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Greenway Coordinator, met with the SMHC Board at their August 5 meeting to provide an update on the City's Smoky Mountain Railroad Trail project.

As background, the SMHC investigated creating a hiking/biking trail on the SMRR grade in the late 60's. For various funding and legal reasons, the first effort failed, and subsequent pushes by first district council members have as well. In Feb. 2016, the SMHC Board voted to re-explore the project and to support the City in its efforts to create the trail. Various SMHC members have been doing some trail opening and maintenance work on the route since 2016. They opened the route from Doyle Park to Underwood Park in spring 2016 so it could be negotiated on foot. They also have maintained communication with the Greenways office.

Tim stated that although the City is doing some preliminary work on the SMRR, greenway projects in other parts of the City are currently higher priority; priorities can derive from a number of reasons including opportunity, volunteerism, and political will. He referenced greenway projects in north Knoxville and east Knoxville and contrasted those areas to South Knoxville, which is already well-developed with the Urban Wilderness and other trails. Tim provided a rough estimate of the cost of building a greenway on SMRR for its 2.67 mile length from Vestal to Gary Underwood Park at a 20-foot width as over \$3 million. This does not include the cost of acquiring easements. That estimate is based on a hard surface construction. He noted it would be less if a graveled surface was used instead. He said that his office had been in talks this summer with the South Knoxville Church of God, whose property contains a section of the SMRR grade, and that the church was very receptive to the idea of providing an easement for building the trail on their property, as long as it was routed around the playground and the ballfield. The current plan is to use that section and run the trail on Anna Rd. across Magazine Rd. to Moore Rd. The City is of the opinion that the grade along Moore Rd. into Underwood Park may belong to the City and plans to try to establish the SMRR from SKCOG to Underwood Park as a first, test segment. The hope is that once the community sees what the trail will be like, that support may increase for the full project in the future.

Tim asked that the SMHC should not do any further work on the Trail except within Doyle and Underwood Parks, due to the City Law Dept. deciding in 2009 that the grade right-of-way now belongs to the adjacent property owners. We will also not be leading further history outings on the full Doyle-to-Underwood segment as we did in April 2016-2018.

It's difficult to estimate both when construction will begin on the first,

trial section, and more so when a final form of the trail will be completed. The City's 2016 Greenway connector plan calls the SMRR Trail "Corridor L". It is in the long-term greenway plan as a connector which could be used not only for recreation, but as a commuting route from areas of south Knoxville to the south riverfront.

The Board reiterated its support for the project, and Tim plans to share the results of an upcoming City committee meeting taking place later in August. There is a general feeling of optimism about the City building the route in the future.

If any members have questions about the SMRR Trail project and our Club's involvement, please contact Tim Bigelow, SMHC director, at bigelowts@mindspring.com.

Appalachian Trail Conservancy recognizes SMHC Member Don Dunning

Don Dunning became an A.T. maintainer in 2002, he has been a member of the Smoky Mountain Hiking Club(SMHC) since 2007, and was a member of the SMHC Board of Directors from 2016-2017. Dunning and his wife Nancy have maintained their section of the Appalachian Trail from Sweat Heifer to the Boulevard Trail for eleven years.

Simultaneously, Dunning and Nancy were also spearheading the multistep process of all mulching operations for the SMHC. In order to prevent the introduction of forest pests in the backcountry Great Smoky Mountains National Park delivers the mulch in bulk to a central location for the Club. It then has to be dried and bagged before it is delivered to maintainer. While equestrians are able to help haul a lot of mulch at once with their pack stock to various backcountry privies along the A.T. Dunning regularly hikes these heavy mulch bags to various shelters. It was through Dunning's leadership and hard work that the privies on the SMHC's section of the A.T. continue to safely compost human waste as designed. While Dunning has recently "retired" from his volunteer responsibilities, he continues to provide help and advice to the SMHC. During his time as a prominent volunteer leader Dunning developed a wonderful relationship with the March



Consortium, a group of five colleges from across the nation that convene 100 students to the Park each year to deepen their understanding of parks and recreation management. Dunning also didn't fear taking his responsibilities a step further when he committed to publishing the Club's newsletter in 2015. This involved collating many hike and post-hike information and photos, as well as other important announcements and events. To top it all off, Dunning managed the preparation and registration of the SMHC's National Trails Day events for the past several years and was presented with the Harvey Broome Award in 2018. The Club's current Vice President Diane Petrilla states, "Don quietly and steadily simply gets the job done, whatever it may be, and has never hesitated to pitch in if he is needed for help on other projects. He has been a role model for all of us who are maintainers."

For the full story, follow this link:

<https://appalachiantrail.org/home/volunteer/volunteer-recognition/volunteer-biography-full-page/don-dunning>
