



Smoky Mountains Hiking Club

P O Box 51592 Knoxville, TN 37950-1592

Exploring the Smokies Since 1924

January 2020

*****MEMBER DUES ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE FOR 2020*****

Please see page 4 which details how to pay annual dues and how to update contact information, if needed.

Members in good standing at the end of 2019 automatically receive the 2020 Handbook, on the assumption that they will renew membership. For further details, see the options at the bottom of page 4.

SEVEN ISLANDS STATE BIRDING PARK

January 1- Wednesday

There is no better way to start 2020 than with a leisurely hike over the rolling hills of Seven Islands. No need to rise early, but do bring a sack lunch or snack. This is an easy 5-mile hike. Bring the kids! Meet at Comcast, 5720 Asheville Highway, ready to leave at 9:30 or at the upper parking lot next to the barn and gate at 10AM. Drive is 28 miles @ \$.05=\$1.50.

Leader: Adele Soucy, ftom4141@aol.com, 865-352-9156

CHESTNUT TOP

January 4- Saturday

This classic hike allows us to experience the Smokies with easy access. From the trailhead located across the road from the Townsend Wye, we will have a gradual ascent of about 1200 feet through deciduous and pine forests. There are beautiful views of the Smokies to the left, including Thunderhead Mountain, and Tuckaleechee Cove to the right. At 4.3 miles we intersect with the Schoolhouse Gap Trail, our turn-around point.

Hike 8.6 miles, rated moderate. Meet at Alcoa Food City, 121 North Hall Road, at 8:30 AM. Drive 40 miles RT x \$.05 = \$2.00.

Leaders: Tom Welch, 224-944-3333, coast5588@yahoo.com and Jeff Cooper, jeffcooper100@yahoo.com, 865-804-5065

MARYVILLE / ALCOA GREENBELT

January 11 - Saturday

Our walk will take us from Foothills Elementary School in Maryville to Springbrook Recreation Center in Alcoa. Our path follows Pistol Creek most of the way and goes through several parks and around a couple of lakes. Distance is 10.5 miles, all paved, so wear comfortable shoes. Involves a car shuttle. Rated easy to moderate (for Distance).

Meet at the Springbrook Recreation Center, 1537 Dalton St. Alcoa, @ 9:00a.m.

Leaders: David Smith dcshiker@bellsouth.net, 865-202-2074 and John Smiley JohnSmiley55@bellsouth.net

ABRAMS FALLS VIA LITTLE BOTTOMS TRAIL

January 15 - Wednesday

The popular, back-way hike to the Falls from Abrams Creek Ranger Station starts near Campsite #1 on the Cooper Road Trail. We follow it to the Little Bottoms Trail, an old, well-used footpath that starts with a short, steep climb, descends to follow Abrams Creek, and climbs a ridge to the junction with Hatcher Mountain Trail. We follow that trail just 0.2 miles down to Abrams Falls Trail, which rises along the creek 1.7 miles to the Falls. After lunch we return by the same route. Total elevation gain, 2,446 ft.; rated moderate due to distance (11.0 miles). Meet at Alcoa Food City at 8:00 am or at the Abrams Creek ranger station at 8:45. Drive 30 miles RT =\$1.50.

Leader: Eric Sundstrom sundstrom.eric@gmail.com, 865-406-8794

NATURALIST LED HIKE UP SPRUCE FLATS MANWAY AND UPPER BUCKHORN GAP MANWAY TO MIDDLE PRONG TRAIL

January 18 - Saturday

This hike allows us to enjoy both creekside walking and ridge views. We'll begin by walking up the Spruce Flats manway past Spruce Flats Falls. There are approximately 10-12 small creek crossings on Spruce Flats manway, which may be rock-hopped in low water (in high water we may take Lumber Ridge instead). We'll then transition to the ridge, following Upper Buckhorn Gap manway to the Middle Prong trail, with excellent views across Walker Valley to the north, west, and south. There is a crossing of Lynn Camp Prong near the end of our route that will be a refreshing opportunity to get our feet (and possibly knees) wet. A naturalist from Tremont Institute will provide insight into the history and ecology of this section of the park as we walk. We will meet at the Alcoa Food City parking lot at 8:00. Drive time to Tremont is around forty-five minutes. RT: 44 miles. Carpool reimbursement: \$2.00. Hike distance is approximately 8-9 miles, rated moderate due to manway and winter weather. **Weather Note: If snow or ice is predicted the hike will be cancelled.** In case of high water the route may be altered.

Leader: Steve Dunkin, 865-202-3286,

jsdunkin1302@gmail.com

In Memoriam: SMHC expresses our

condolences to family and friends of member Virginia Coleman. Many of you may remember her as both a Life Member and a 50+ Year Member.

Funeral arrangements were not available at press time.



**NORRIS WATERSHED AND NORRIS DAM STATE PARK
January 26 - Sunday**

The Norris Municipal Watershed is a 2300-acre area that is the watershed of Clear Creek, the source of the city's water supply. Our hike will begin at the Lenoir Museum (Norris Dam State Park) parking area, which is located about 1 mile downstream from Norris Dam on U.S. Hwy. 441. We will hike up Clear Creek Trail and then Dyer Hollow Trail. Next, we will climb up to Reservoir Hill through older upland hardwood forest and reverted old fields of yellow poplar. The hike then travels to Observation Point where there is an open view of Norris Dam, the Clinch River, and Walden's Ridge. We will then descend on Cliff Trail, which was constructed by the CCCs in the 30s, to the starting point. The hike will take us through several different forest eco-types, and we will see some of the work done by the CCCs and TVA in the 1930s as part of the Norris Dam Project. This hike is 3.7 miles in length and rated easy, with a total elevation gain of about 600 feet. Meet at Lenoir Museum parking area, 2121 Norris Fwy, Norris, TN 37828, at 2 pm.
Leaders: Debra Barton, (865) 494-0276, dgbarton@comcast.net
Lois Esmark, (865) 414-9097, misse711@aol.com

**Snake Den Ridge / Appalachian Trail / Low Gap Loop
January 29 - Wednesday**

This beautiful, challenging hike (rated difficult) from the Snake Den Ridge trailhead (Cosby Campground site B-55), a short walk from the hikers' parking area, goes 5.8 miles uphill, with spectacular views east and north. Just 0.4 mile before the junction with Maddron Bald Trail (at mile 5.0) a nice meadow makes an inviting stop – before the climb to the A.T., the hike's high point (5,780 ft. at mile 5.7) near Inadu Knob. After a scenic downhill walk to Camel Gap, the trail climbs ~400 ft. east along the ridge-top, with spectacular views north and south, to Cosby Knob, where the shelter makes a good rest stop. It's downhill to Low Gap Trail, then 2.9 miles mostly following Cosby Creek down to the trailhead at the parking lot. Hiking 13.3 miles with a 3,942 ft. climb. (If there is snow in the higher elevations near Cosby, we'll take a low-altitude, alternate hike from the same parking lot: Gabe's Mountain Trail to Campsite #34 and return.) Meet at Comcast Asheville Hwy at 7:30 am or at Cosby Campground hiker parking lot at 8:30. Drive 120 miles RT = \$6.00
Leader: Eric Sundstrom sundstrom.eric@gmail.com, 865-406-8794

MEETING PLACES: **Abram's Creek Ranger Station** Head southeast on Court St toward High St 0.8 mi then turn right onto Barnes Ave. After 0.3 mi, turn left onto Montvale Rd and continue 7.7 mi. Continue onto Happy Valley Rd 4.6 mi. Turn left onto Abrams Creek Rd 0.4 m and Continue onto Abrams Creek Campground Rd [Map Link](#). **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](#). **Gold's Gym & Books-a-Million in Oak Ridge** = 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](#). **W.G. Lenior Museum**, 2121 Norris Fwy, Norris, TN 37828 [Map Link](#) **Springbrook Recreation Center** 1537 Dalton St. Alcoa: From Alcoa Hwy take the Hunt Road exit. Turn right onto Hunt Rd, Then, right onto Springbrook Rd, left onto Alcoa Rd. Right onto Dalton Street. Recreation Center on the right. [MapLink](#)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Scott Adams adamsscott1950@gmail.com 865-608-0879
115 Wildwood Dr Oak Ridge TN 37830
- Leroy Black LBlack4578@comcast.net 865-382-7709
107 Cypress Ln Oak Ridge TN 37830
- Dalton & Jim Harper dharp601@gmail.com 843-910-4487
3325 Brocks Mill Rd Cheraw SC 29520
- Elaine Highsmith highsmithelaine@gmail.com 423-921-2535
545 Oak Grove Rd Rogersville TN 37857

COMING EVENTS – February 2020

- 1 Saturday Cumberland Trail Section at Frozen Head
- 8 Saturday Daddys Creek
- 9 Sunday Travel Photo Show
- 15 Saturday Albright Grove
- 15 Saturday Little Cataloochee, Off-Trail
- 22 Saturday Leader's Choice
- 29 Saturday Sugarland Valley History Hike

Reminder: Laurel Creek Road The seven-mile access road leading from the Townsend Wye to Cades Cove will be closed to all motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians from January 3 through February 29 to repair the Bote Mountain Tunnel. The full closure, beginning just past Tremont Road, is necessary to allow equipment set-up for the repair of the internal drainage system in the walls and ceiling of the 121-foot long tunnel. Crews will enclose and heat the tunnel, allowing the temperature-sensitive repairs to be conducted during the winter months when visitation is lower. Intermittent single-lane closures will be necessary between March 1 and June 15 to complete the tunnel repairs and to re-pave the tunnel area. The Cades Cove Campground, normally open during the winter months, will be closed December 30, 2019 through March 5. To accommodate winter campers, Elkmont Campground will remain open along with Smokemont Campground in NC. The Bote Mountain Tunnel, constructed in 1948, has not had any significant rehabilitation work since that time.
<https://www.nps.gov/grsm/learn/news/great-smoky-mountains-national-parks.htm>

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. Always bring rain gear, water, and food. Each carpool rider should reimburse the driver 5¢ per mile. If you have any doubts or questions, please contact the hike leader.

And please note: No dogs or firearms are permitted on any Club hikes, whether inside or outside of GSMNP

FOR THE RECORD

Ramsey Cascades 11-6-2019
 Nineteen hikers gathered to hike up to Ramsey cascades. One hiker only went as far as the giant tulip poplars. The weather was ideal. Cool brisk temperature at the start but warming nicely throughout the day. Sitting in the sun on the rocks at the cascades for lunch was very pleasant. Of course we had to stop at the giant tulip poplars and make a human ring around the biggest. It took nine hikers but if the tree is hugged tight enough it can be done with five. The trail to the poplars starts out relatively easy with good footing but after the turnaround when the trail leaves the former road and becomes a



real trail, it starts to get rockier and steeper. This trend continues all the way to the cascades with the last part getting very rugged. One hiker forgot her hiking boots but had a pair of sneakers to wear. Unfortunately, part way up the trail the sole started to come off one of the sneakers. Bring out the duct tape. After the repairs, we continued on. Later the sole started to come off the other sneaker, so more duct tape was used. After several stops to reapply duct tape to the shoes, she made it all the way to the top and back.

Ron Brandenburg

Tunnel Ridge Off-trail 11-10-2019

Under perfect bluebird skies seven SMHC members completed an off-trail loop from the tunnel at the Road to Nowhere connecting Laurel Branch, Forney Ridge and Tunnel Ridge. Though some rhodo yoga was necessary in ascending moderate salad along Laurel Branch, some "lucky" route finding by the leader allowed the group to avoid the worst of the tangles, and to visit a rarely seen old homesite. The afternoon was spent in the glorious



descent of the wide-open hardwoods of Forney and Tunnel ridges. A short walk on the Tunnel Bypass Trail completed the loop. Clyde Austin and Hiram Rogers

Spicewood/ Chimney Top Loop, Frozen Head SP 11/30/2019

On a grey chilly day, with rain in the forecast, 5 members came on this Saturday after Thanksgiving to get outside! Frozen Head SP is always a pleasure to hike in the late Fall/ early Winter, since the bare trees allow views of the rugged mountainsides and grassy coves below. After climbing up Spicewood Tr, we followed Chimney Top Tr along the ridge line, where there are fabulous sandstone rock formations, and views to either side into the coves. There were some very steep ascents and descents, but all were navigated well. In the last 30 minutes, the promised rain arrived (along with thunder and lightning!) but for most of the hike, we walked without rain and with great enjoyment.



Diane Petrilla and Pete Berntsen

photo credit: Michael Zielinski

Knoxville History Hike- Battle of Fort Sanders 11-29-2019



Thirteen urban hikers enjoyed a fascinating tour of the Fort Sanders battlefield on its 156th anniversary-- November 29, 1863. Led by Charlie and Terry Faulkner, authors of Rediscovering Civil War Fort Sanders, we saw the exact location where the Confederate Army attempted to take Knoxville from the Union during a bloody 20-minute battle. We also walked around the area of the former interior of the Fort and saw remnants that were thought to have disappeared a hundred years ago.

~Cindy Spangler, Co-Leader

Big Ridge State Park Loop 12-7-2019

5 members and 1 visitor came out on this balmy December day to hike a pretty vigorous figure eight loop in BRSP. Beginning with the Ghost House Trail, we then climbed Pinnacle Ridge on the Big Valley Trail, walked the Indian Rock Trail high on Big Ridge itself, to visit the site of Sharps Station. This was primitive fortified settlement built along the Clinch River in the late 1700s for people migrating south into the Appalachians after the



Revolutionary War. One of our hikers is a descendant of the Sharps, so that was an added special detail of our experience! The descents and ascents to and from Sharps Station were quite challenging! We hiked back along Dark Hollow east, and finally the Lake Trail, where we veered off and hiked to Loyston Point. With the leaves

all down, we had good views of the "Loyston Sea", waters of Norris that covered the community of Loyston, and a beautiful lunch spot. Also part of the hike were 3 historic cemeteries, and much other evidence of the communities that lived in this area before Norris Dam was built by the TVA in the 1930s. It was a pleasure to hike with this great group!

Diane Petrilla

Note: the Kroger Community Rewards number for Smoky Mountain Hiking Club has been changed, so please update your account so that the Club can continue to receive these easy-to-donate funds. More information in the coming months, but the new # for Smoky Mountains Hiking Club is MV194. It's fun to look at the receipt and see that the grocery trip also contributed to the Club.



SMHC Past Presidents who attended the banquet on December 14th include from left to right: Andy Zimmerman, Tim Bigelow, Mark Shipley, Brian Worley, Ed Fleming, Rebekah Young, Ray Payne

SMHC Annual Installation Banquet held December 14 at Fox Den Country Club

The SMHC installation banquet was another huge success thanks to the hard work of our social committee: Janet and Tim Bigelow, Priscilla Clayton, Beth Eades, Jeannette Gilbert, Gary McKenna, Michael Vaughn and especially the continued and hardworking efforts of the chair Debbie Goddard.

SMHC President Brian Worley presented the Marshall Wilson Presidential Citation for extraordinary contribution to the Club to Diane Petrilla. Diane has worked tirelessly as chair of the AT Maintenance Committee heading up just about every area. She is an AT Trail Maintainer and has also hauled hundreds of pounds of mulch to almost every privy on the trail. She coordinates the visit of college volunteer workers and then joins them on their work crews. Diane is Chair and also recording secretary of the AT Maintenance committee which often has more than 20 items on its agenda. Diane served as the director of a

HUGELY successful 2019 National Trail Days which involved working out an extremely complicated database of work crew assignments, soliciting donations, helping with T-shirts and picnic, and recording volunteer hours for every single worker. Diane is the editor of the ATMC newsletter and serves as a club representative to AT Conservancy regional meetings. AND she leads more hikes than almost anyone else in the Club. CONGRATULATIONS DIANE on this most deserved award!



The program was presented by Backcountry Unit Search and Rescue (BUSAR) founder Andrew Harrington. The audience was captivated by both backcountry rescue stories and excellent information on what is needed to avoid being a victim.

Photo shows managing hypothermia with the burrito wrap.

AT Maintenance Committee chair Diane Petrilla presented Volunteer Awards. The Platinum Pulaski (200 hours of volunteer service in 2019) was awarded to Peter Bernsten, Don Dunning, Edward Fleming, Phyllis Henry, Tom Howard, Franklin LaFond, Ed Peck, Diane Petrilla, Steve Reagan, Janet Snyder, Mark Snyder, Steward Taylor, and Taylor Weatherbee. Most impressive however is the long list of SMHC trail maintainers who have provided the longest commitment--1000 or more cumulative hours since 2000: Pete Bernstein, Don Dunning, Ed Fleming, James Fondren, Dennis Fulcher, Jim Goddard, Doris Gove, Phyllis Henry, Steve Higdon, Tom Howard, Pete James, Bill Kerr, Dick Ketelle, Franklin LaFond, Mac McNutt, Lou Murray, Ed Peck, Randy Puckett, Steve Reagan, Philip Royer, Janet Snyder, Mark Snyder, Stew Taylor, Jerry Troxler, Wayne Williams. ABUNDANT THANKS TO ALL!!



Please return this form with your 2020 dues payment and make note of changes in contact information. (It is not necessary to return the form with your check if there are no changes to your current information.)
 Mail check to: SMHC, P.O. Box 51592, Knoxville TN 37950-1592

Check box beside membership category:

Regular Membership (\$20.00). Additional family members living in the same household and at least 16 years of age may become Family Members of the Club by dues payment of \$2.00 each. Family members will be listed in the handbook, but will not receive a separate copy of the handbook. Number of family members: _____ (x \$2 each).

IF adding or removing family members, please provide names: _____

Supporting Membership (\$30.00 or higher as you choose). Family Members, as defined above, are included without additional dues. Dues in excess of \$20.00 (regular membership) are tax deductible and help support various Conservation efforts of the Club, including Appalachian Trail maintenance.

Please indicate changes in address, phone number, or email below. Leave blank if there are no changes.

If you receive the newsletter by USPS mail and would you like to switch to the electronic PDF version, please include your email address: _____

You can also pay your dues online at the SMHC website (<http://www.smhclub.org/membership.htm>) if you prefer.

Thank you for your support of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club!