FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021

We wish you a Happy and Hopeful New Year!

The BOD of the SMHC wants to take this opportunity to wish you and your family and friends a wonderful Holiday Season and Happy New Year! We thank you for your patience and good practices during this extraordinary time. We are very hopeful that 2021 will gradually bring a progression towards “normalcy” and safety in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic. Never has the outdoors and our mission as a Club been more important: to foster the enjoyment of hiking and the appreciation, education and conservation of the outdoors.

Best wishes to all,
Board of Directors, SMHC

SMHC Hiking Guidelines During COVID

1. One hike leader will serve as pre-registration contact, with email and phone # available in the write-up. Pre-registration is required for all hikes.

2. No more than 10 total participants may be on a hike (including leader, co-leader). Registration will have to be halted when there are 10 participants.

3. All meetups will be at the trail head, so adjust meetup drive time accordingly.

4. No carpooling except for people in their trusted "bubble."

5. Hikes will be chosen to avoid crowded trailheads and crowded trails.

6. Events should be no more than a 2-hour drive from the Knoxville area.

7. Avoid hikes that will involve a key swap or shuttle.

8. Hikers must sign a release form, with accurate contact information.

9. Inform hikers if anyone becomes ill with in a few days of the event, with symptoms concerning for COVID-19, to contact the hike leader immediately. (In addition to the usual pre-hike info). For regular pre-hike prep, see http://www.smhelub.org/outingpreparation.htm.

10. All participants must have a face mask, to use at trailhead meetup, and then if needed, when distancing on the trail from other hikers is not feasible.

11. Maintain 6 ft. of distance between hikers, and if possible 10-12 ft.

12. Stop at junctions to be sure group is all present, given the spacing out.

13. All participants should have hand sanitizer or wipes.

14. No sharing of food.

15. If leader(s) or any participant feels sick, please stay at home.

16. If leader(s) need to alter planned activity, please contact an SMHC Board member ASAP to discuss proposed changes.

OVER NINETY DUES CHANGE

The SMHC Board of Directors voted on December 7, 2020, to waive membership fees for anyone 90 years and older, effective January 1, 2021.

MASKS UP!!!

“The COVID Committee of the SMHC would like to respectfully remind everyone to have "Masks Up!" when congregating at trail junctions or other stops, not just at trailheads. In addition, with rising COVID case numbers this winter, if any hike leader feels uncomfortable leading a hike, please notify spangler@utk.edu.”
I was born in Staten Island, NY, and moved with my family (including two younger brothers) many times while growing up due to my father’s job as a Westinghouse project manager. From about 12, I knew I wanted to be a physician; I have no idea why, since there were no doctors in my family. But all of my subsequent education (University of Chicago undergraduate and Georgetown University School of Medicine) helped me reach my goal. After a Family Practice residency in Huntsville, AL., my husband (also a physician) and I began private practice in Sewanee, TN. Both of us were committed to practicing in an underserved area, and Sewanee was adjacent to Grundy County, one of the poorest of Tennessee’s 95 counties. Being a primary care physician in a rural setting with a small hospital meant much work- from office practice, in-patient care, nursing home care, and serving as Director of The University of the South’s Student Health Service for many years. I managed many chronic health conditions and took much pleasure in working with patients over time to control their hypertension, cardiovascular disease risk, and diabetes, among many other things. In between, I would intermittently have to run across the parking lot to the hospital to take care of a cardiac arrest or a gunshot wound, a chainsaw laceration, or a copperhead bite! And much more. I saw my first case of lead poisoning in private practice from a moonshine maker who distilled their mash through an old car radiator! I also traveled with University students to Haiti five different times to work with people there and open eyes (including my own) to global poverty issues. My husband and I raised three wonderful children in Sewanee, Joe, Allyson, and Adrianne.

Life brings changes, however, and in 2010 I left Sewanee after 25 years of practice. I did traveling physician work for one year and had the great adventure of working with the IHS on the Navajo reservation in Ft. Defiance, Arizona, for six months as one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. I could order a Medicine man consult on one of my assignments. Life brought new opportunities and adventures to Sewanee and the surrounding area. I have continued to provide primary care to patients in Sewanee and the surrounding area, and I have continued to enjoy hiking, backpacking, and volunteering with University students on humanitarian adventures.

My great joy now is spending time with my family, including two granddaughters, and of course, HIKING. My father, George G. Ritter, instilled a great love of hiking and backpacking in myself and my children, beginning three decades ago, and I feel that we live in one of the richest outdoor areas in the country. My bucket list of trails yet to be hiked is long- I look forward to many more adventures! And it is an incredible privilege to share that love of the outdoors with people I volunteer with and hike within the SMHC.

~Diane Petrilla

UPCOMING HIKES
Meeting Places
Pre-registration with the leader is required for the hike and to ensure you know when and where to meet. We request that you cancel your registration ASAP if unable to hike to allow someone on the waiting list to take your spot. Please familiarize yourself with the Club guidelines in this newsletter.

Abrams Falls via Cades Cove
Saturday — January 2
The eight-mile round-trip hike to Abrams Falls in winter is a favorite of the SMHC. We will meet at the Abrams Falls trailhead in Cades Cove and hike to the falls and back. The falls in the winter has a different feel than in the summer. Contact the hike leader Steve Dunkin for details and to sign up for the hike. Numbers will be limited for the hike.
Pre-registration with the leader is required.
Leader: Steve Dunkin, 865-202-3286, jsdunkin1302@gmail.com

Cumberland Trail Anderson Mountain Segment
Saturday — January 9
This segment of the Cumberland Trail starts in the New River Valley. From the trailhead along Norma Rd, the trail climbs steadily. There are occasional views of the New River. We pass several coal mining remnants and some rock formations along the way. There are some excellent views of distant mountains and Buffalo Mtn windmills at higher elevations. Near the top of Anderson Mt, there are open meadows, more views, and remnants from coal mining long ago. We will retrace our steps back down to the valley. Before returning to the cars, hike a short way down to the river for an up-close look. Hike 8.5 miles with 2000 ft elevation gain. It is rated moderate to difficult, depending on the weather. If winter weather makes the steep drive over the mountain to Norma Rd difficult, we may choose to hike to Cross Mtn at the other end of the segment. Drive 70 miles RT from Oak Ridge caravan location. Pre-registration with the leader is required.
Leader: Tim Bigelow bigelowt2@mindspring.com 865-607-6781

Digital Newsletter Suggestion
Thanks to those who changed from the print version to the digital newsletter. If you are receiving the newsletter by mail, consider going digital. Check out and review the club digital club newsletter at http://www.smhclub.org/index.htm under Outings on the menu bar. If you have a printer you can print out a personal copy from the online pdf. Email smhcnewsletter@gmail.com to make the change.

Visit our Website: www.smhclub.org

January 2021
Blanket Mountain Hike with a History Slant
Saturday — January 30

We plan to go to numerous homesites of various people who lived in the Elkmont area as we work our way up Jakes Creek. We will visit the homesites of Lem Ownby's siblings and will have photocopies to share with the group. We will then hike to the Avent Cabin with a side trip to the homesite of the Avent's daughter's cabin and then on to Sam Cook's. After viewing these sites, the hike will follow the trail to Jakes Gap and then the old jeep road to the fire tower location. Logging history will be pointed out. Due to safety, snow, ice, and the water level will prevent some of the explorations yet will save us from briars galore. Park at the upper lot for Jakes Creek, ready to leave at 9 am. Total mileage is 9 miles and rated strenuous due to steep elevation gain; however, the leaders will maintain a slower pace. Pre-registration with the leader is required.

Leaders: Mark and Janet Snyder, (865) 448-1183

Reminder for Members: Dues for 2021 are now due. For information about membership and paying your dues visit http://www.smhclub.org/master.htm

SMHC Newsletter Editor: Dale Potter
Send hike write-ups to smhcnewsletter@gmail.com. Please include both email and phone contact information. Please submit photos from your hike if available. Submit photos from your hike to the above email and to Website Manager Michael Vaughn mvaughn@knology.net.

January 2021
For The Record

Black Mountain Hike  November 7

With deep blue skies, colorful fall leaves, valley vistas, and monolithic rocks all around, we hiked an unusual route through and around the Black Mountain crest. We took overlook photos, descended the stone steps (I reminisced how back in the day before it was the Cumberland Trail, we scooted down between the leaf-filled crevasses – so much more fun!), then played at climbing the rocks before going to the campsite for lunch. On the way back, we left the CT and hiked along the bluff base, learn a little geology, and ascended another trail where we found a hole in the rock, a CCC foundation and chimney and spring house, and then back to the car. Beautiful day and great fun with a really fun group.

~ Betty Glenn

Homesite Hike in The Copeland Creek Area Off-Trail  November 8

On an unusually warm November morning, eight members began this hike with a visit to the Frazer Cemetery. This was followed by visiting numerous homesites, the site of Evans Chapel church, and four more cemeteries on six named creek drainages. Along the ridgetops dividing these streams, there were some brilliant displays of autumn foliage. All enjoyed a great day in the woods, exploring some of the old roads and trails of the area.

~~ Ed Fleming, Hiram Rogers

“There really is no correct way to hike the trail, and anyone who insists that there is ought not to worry so much about other people’s experiences. Hikers need to hike the trail that’s right for them...”

~ Adrienne Hall

January 2021
Pat’s report from group 1: Lakeshore Trail to CS 90.
After a soothing drive through The Dragon, 7 hikers making up Group 1 met at the Lakeshore trailhead. What a perfect day for a hike! The air was a crisp 30-something degrees with no wind, and the sky was a brilliant blue. We headed out the trail with a spring in our step (that spring was to generate a little heat). The hike write-up mentioned LOTS of rolling hills along the way, and Lakeshore really delivered. Just the first uphill pull had us shedding various layers. We easily discovered the car bodies scattered along the first mile or so of the hike. There were many views of Fontana Lake along the way, as brilliant a blue as the sky. One hiker had gone ahead to reach the intersection with Lost Cove and was already headed back to his car before we even got there. Our scintillating company was not enough to convince him to stay and have lunch at Campsite 90. After all, he didn’t need that 0.4 miles for his map. (I will admit that he had a meeting to attend and was conscious of his time). So 6 of us sat socially distance on the logs and enjoyed our time in the sun. Another hiker decided that the day was so perfect that she was going to make the loop up Lost Cove to the AT and then down to the cars so that she could mark off more miles on her map. If you have ever gone up Lost Cove, you know what a challenge she had in store. So 5 of us headed back to our cars. The rolling hills are just as bad coming back as they were going. No one complained (at least to my face) because it was such a perfect day. As we milled around our cars, here came our map marker bounding down from the AT, excited to have completed the loop. It was just another beautiful day in the mountains!

Ron’s report from Group 2:
What a gorgeous day for a hike. Not a cloud in the bright blue sky. Of the four hikers gathered at the trailhead for this hike, two were club members but had not hiked with us on Wednesday. About a mile and a quarter up the trail, we saw the remains of an old car. In the next half mile, four more remains of old cars were discovered. Three of the cars were complete enough that an expert in 30’s cars probably could identify them. The other two were just fragments with little to identify them. For the most part, the leaf-covered trail was in excellent condition, but there were a few rocky places. Where we ate lunch (I’m not sure it was really Campsite 90) was something to see. It is a wide-open area with lots of large rocks with Eagle Creek running around it. I suspect that if Fontana Lake were full, this area would be underwater. Since the land was dry and had some grass and other plants growing on it, it probably has not been flooded for some time. Someone went to a lot of work to build a unique fire ring. A series of seats made of large flat stones surround the fire ring. If we had discovered that earlier we would have sat there while we ate lunch. It was so pleasant sitting there in the sun on the stone seats that lunch took much longer than usual. The campsite is about 200 feet lower than the trailhead, so the hike out had about 200 feet more elevation gain than the hike in. 11.3 miles total with 1907 feet of elevation gain. Thank you, Pat, for planning a wonderful hike. Traffic on the Dragon was very light.

~ Leaders Pat Watts and Ron Brandenburg

On a gorgeous sunny and cool November day, 6 SMHC members and one visitor hiked in the Pogue Creek Canyon State Natural Area. Beginning with the Overlook Loop, we walked out to a view of high sandstone bluffs typical of the Cumberland Plateau. We then picked up the Pogue Creek Canyon Trail, descending and ascending within the gorge, past cliff walls and rock formations, including arches. The leader took a “wrong” spur trail, which led to the discovery of a high and delicate waterfall plunging over the bluff (quite beautiful). However, some smart alec in the group named it “Wrong-way Falls.” Further along, we found the correct spur trail to Circle Bar Arch! We continued to Kildeer Arch (seen in the photo), with its interesting bird-like shape. At the end of this trail, we ate on the saddle between 2 mesas, with another great view. The hike back was just as pleasant, and we took in the other half of the Overlook Trail. This was a great group, with lots of laughter! Pogue Creek Canyon never disappoints!

~ Leader Diane Petrilla

Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity.

~ John Muir
A wonderful group of 8 members started out on a cold but clear morning to explore this unique State Park which offers historic cemeteries, the site of an 18th-Century fort, a CCC dam, and lovely views of the Norris Reservoir. Many thanks to Claudia Dean who led the hike for Randy Mitchell who cancelled due to a family emergency.
~ Cindy Spangler

Welcome SMHC New Members
Bill & Roxine Behrens, Theresa & Fred Holtzclaw

Recent Loss of SMHC Member
The SMHC is sad to learn that member Margaret Matteson died on November 29, 2020. Memorial donations in her honor may be made to friendsofthesmokies.org in Margaret’s name.

2020 SMHC Year End Reports
Each year at the Annual Banquet the year end reports are announced to the membership. With COVID the club has continued to be as active as possible this year. The following pages contain the year end reports for the club. This is to provide the membership with copies of what the club has accomplished this year. As you read them, remember that the club needs you to continue to help support the SMHC as we start 2021.
2020 SMHC Year End Reports

Appalachian Trail Maintainer’s Committee Report 2020

Our work as maintainers this year on the A.T. was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The GRSM NP closed on March 24. The Nantahala NF closed trailhead facilities and other access points, and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, along with the National Park and National Forest, asked maintainers to stand down from their work. National Trails Day was canceled due to the pandemic. When maintainers were allowed to return to work after about three months, it was with careful guidelines about group size, masks, social distancing, and significant limitations on work related to shelters and privies. ATC Ridgerunners had been pulled from the A.T. for the season, so we also had less incoming data about Trail conditions. In spite of that, when we were allowed to work, I am very proud of the enthusiastic return to volunteer maintenance and adherence to safety guidelines we saw! Our Sawyers (particularly Dick Ketelle, Franklin LaFond, Bill Pyle, and Taylor Weatherbee) took care of multiple blowdowns in the Park and NNF with chainsaw variances and cross-cut expertise. Mulch teams got bins stocked up. The inability to be out doing general maintenance for months caused much extra work for section leaders and crews, but they got out there and took care of their sections! Saturday workdays resumed, with great leadership. Across the entire A.T., volunteer hours were down about 50% from 2019, and we were no exception.

However, we reported total fieldwork hours in the N.P. and NF of 2392 hrs. (4914 hrs in 2019), total fieldwork and admin hours N.P. and NF: 3847 hrs. (6708 hrs. in 2019) and grand total N.P. and N.F. hours with travel: 5342 hrs. (9014 hrs. in 2019). We look forward to a busy and productive 2021 and are very grateful for everyone’s hard work under such unusual conditions this year—[Note: Maintainer Awards will be published in the next SMHC Newsletter].

~Diane Pettrilla

Conservation Report 2020:

Probably the most significant national conservation achievement of 2020 was the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, which our Senator Lamar Alexander had a leading role in. The Club strongly supported the Act with correspondence to our Federal Representatives and Senators, and its enactment will permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund and provide funds for the maintenance backlog in our National Parks. We also wrote letters of support on other environmental issues. National issues included supporting the closure of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail at the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic, at the request of the ATC in March. On more local issues, in May, we submitted comments to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park regarding Metcalf Bottoms Access Improvements and on two occasions commented on the Park’s Wears Valley Mountain Bike Trail proposal, supporting the proposal but opposing any changes to allow bikes on existing Park trails. We also provided in June comments to the US Forest Service regarding the Nantahala- Pisgah Forest plan revision that is currently ongoing and in November a letter of support for land acquisition by the State of Tennessee along the Emory River (land gap on Cumberland Trail between Wartburg and Nemo).

~Will Skelton

Trust Distributions 2020

Two trusts, a Conservation Trust and an AT Trust, are the result of generous donations from past members. (Lionel Edney and Charlie Klabunde were major contributors, via their estates.) Other members have given memorial donations, or ‘donations in appreciation’ to the SMHC Trusts. A process was established in 2018 to determine amounts to be donated from the Trusts, consistent with the Club’s objectives and with Trust terms. The Board and ATMC designate distributions to be made from the respective trusts. The 2020 Trust Distributions were as follows:

Conservation Trust: The SMHC Board designated these distributions (made in early February): $2000 to support the AT Ridgerunner program of the Friends of the Smokies (FOS); $1000 to support the FOS Trails Forever program; $2000 to Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, to support their scholarship program; $1000 to the Cumberland Trails Conference, to support the CTC Alternative Spring Break program; $1000 to support the Sierra Club’s Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO) program in the Knoxville area; $1500 to Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS).

AT Trust: The ATMC designated in September 2020 a distribution of $3000 to support the AT Ridgerunner program of Friends of the Smokies. Some 2020 ATMC-supported activities were interrupted by Covid 19 restrictions. For 2021, several ATMC activities will be funded by carryover of prior (late 2019) AT Trust distributions. This includes support for shelter and privy maintenance, volunteer outreach and development, and National Trails Day.

~Jean Gauger
2020 Smoky Mountains Hiking Club and AT Maintenance Committee
Treasurer's Report Summary
This report summarizes the status of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club finances on December 7, 2020. The club’s funds are maintained in two accounts, one for overall activities and the other for Appalachian Trail Maintenance. A significant portion of the reserves is invested with the Trust Company of Knoxville, including a memorial fund consisting of donations from members bequests plus the Life Member Dues fund. Details of the Trust Company fund donations are in a separate report by Jean Gauger. The Conservation Fund comes from donations by members above the annual dues and is used for projects supporting conservation efforts both inside and outside the club that improve hiking areas in the region. In the past year, donations totaling $1500 were made to Cherokee Forest Voices, Legacy Parks Foundation, Foothills land Conservancy, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, and Tennessee Parks and Greenways.

SMHC Primary Account Balances

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<td>(in addition to the Life Membership Fund)</td>
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Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee Balances

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<td>Total Current Equity</td>
<td>$247,149.67</td>
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Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Officers and Directors
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