



# Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Newsletter

*Exploring the Smokies Since 1924*

October 2022

PO Box 51592  
Knoxville, TN 37950-1592

## Upcoming Hikes

Pre-registration at [SMHClub.org](http://SMHClub.org) or the leader is required for all hikes.

Please contact the leader if you are not sure of 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.

### October 1, Saturday AT Work Trip

We will start working 0.6 of a mile north of Newfound Gap and then proceed back to the Parking Lot at NFG, with various projects along the way. No cleaning of water bars as that has already taken place. We need workers, be it man or woman or anyone else, who is willing to help rebuild the trail to a more aesthetic, safe and durable treadway. Tools will be provided; however, you may bring your favorite shovel, sledge hammer, pick-mattock, or rock bar. (The tools I bring are for right handed people, but they can adapt to lefties).

We will meet at Newfound Gap at 9 a.m. I will also be at the Sugarlands rest room parking area at 8:20 AM to provide a ride for someone up the mountain, as my van can take three more workers up to the NFG, leaving at 8:30 AM.

Leader: Mark Snyder, 865-448-1183, [markandjanets@gmail.com](mailto:markandjanets@gmail.com)

### October 8, Saturday Hannah Mtn and Rabbit Creek (Remote portions map-marker hike)

We'll take advantage of the recent reopening of Parson Branch Road to shorten hiking remote portions of Hannah Mtn and Rabbit Creek trails as a car shuttle hike. We'll leave some cars at the Rabbit/Abrams Creek trailhead in Cades Cove and shuttle over on Parson Branch Rd to Sams Gap and begin hiking on Hannah Mountain Trail. Hannah Mountain Trail traverses a remote section of the park with gentle ups and downs and some historical and natural interests. At 7.6 miles we intersect Rabbit Creek Trail at Scott Gap which we follow back to Cades Cove. The Rabbit Creek Trail climbs gradually to a long flat ridge and ends with an easy creek crossing of Mill Creek to the Cades Cove Abrams Creek parking lot. We return to Sams Gap with the waiting cars via one way Parson Branch Rd and drive back to the car pool via a portion of The Dragon. Parson Branch Rd. is a bit rough in places so higher ground clearance vehicles recommended. If the group would rather hike 4 mi on Parson Branch Rd and shorten the drive back we can go with that option.

Hike 12.7 miles with 1000 ft elevation gain and two creek crossings. Rated difficult due to length and access. Drive 67 miles @ 10 cents=\$6.70. Meet at Alcoa Food City at 8 and plan on leaving promptly for Cades Cove. Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org).

Leader: Tim Bigelow, 865-607-6781, [bigelowt2@mindspring.com](mailto:bigelowt2@mindspring.com)

**October 5, Wednesday**  
**Nemo Bridge to Breakaway Bluff and beyond, Cumberland Trail**

This is a very pleasant hike that originates in the Obed Section of the Cumberland Trail, beginning at Rock Creek Campground, in Wartburg, across Nemo Bridge on the right. From that trailhead, we'll hike to Breakaway Bluff, for panoramic views of the Obed Gorge. Depending on how scouting goes, some of us may want to go a bit further on this in and out hike. Nemo to Breakaway is 8.4 miles RT, rated moderate. Meet at BAM!, Oak Ridge, at 8am, or at Rock Creek Campground, over Nemo Bridge in Wartburg at 9am. Drive 60 miles RT {@ \$.10/ mile= \$6:00}.

Pre-register with leader or at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org).

Leader: Diane Petrilla, [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com), 931-224-5149

**October 15, Saturday**  
**Needles Eye, Big South Fork (Out and Back)**

For this seldom visited but spectacular arch/ cave complex, we will begin at the Leatherwood Ford Bridge parking lot in Big South Fork. We'll hike north along the John Muir Trail, with delightful views of the Big South Fork River. We'll cross the O&W bridge, and start climbing, to see Devils Den (huge rock house), a spectacular overlook of the river, and perhaps a little Fall foliage. Winding among several crisscrossing pathways (where this leader plans on taking no wrong turns!), we'll make our way to a rather ordinary looking spur trail that leads to the Needles Eye, an incredible sandstone formation in the BSF. The hike is 8.6 rather rugged miles. Rated Moderate. Meet at Hardees, 107 Buffalo Rd. near I-75, Clinton, TN at 8am or at Leatherwood Ford parking area at 9am. Drive 110 miles RT {@ 0.10/mile = \$11.00}.

Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org) or with leader.

Leader: Diane Petrilla, [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com), 931-224-5149

**October 22, Saturday**  
**Hemphill Bald Loop**

There are so many outstanding views to be found in the Smokies, and the panorama seen from Hemphill Bald is exceptional. We will start at the Hemphill Bald Trailhead at Polls Gap off Heintooga Road. After 4.7 miles, we'll reach The Bald itself and hope for clear skies to enjoy the views below. Continuing on Hemphill Bald, we'll start a sharp descent to pass the Cataloochee Divide junction at Double Gap, make a sharp left turn to continue on the Hemphill Bald Trail until we reach the junction with the Caldwell Fork Trail. What goes down must come up. We'll climb up Caldwell Fork to reach Rough Fork where we'll continue the climb to return to the parking lot. Hike is 13.6 miles with an elevation gain of almost 3,000 ft., rated Difficult due to the distance and the *tough climb out*. Meet at the Hemphill Bald Trailhead at 8:30am (from the Blue Ridge Parkway, follow signs toward Balsam Mountain Campground and park at Polls Gap).

Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org)

Leader: Pat Watts, [watts\\_at\\_home@yahoo.com](mailto:watts_at_home@yahoo.com), 901-487-7941.

**October 26, Wednesday**  
**Low Gap to Mt. Cammerer**  
**Out and back**

For this classic Fall hike, we will start at the Cosby hiker parking area, taking Low Gap Trail for a steep but beautiful climb up to the AT, seeing some amazing old growth trees along the way. We may see "South bounders" on a short stretch of the AT, until we reach the Mt. Cammerer spur trail. The Mt. Cammerer Fire Tower, lovingly restored and picturesque, offers stunning 360 degree views of the surrounding mountains, which hopefully will be showing some Fall color. Elevation gain 2800 ft. 11.4 miles. Rated Difficult. Meet at Cracker Barrel Strawberry Plains at 8 am or at Low Gap TH at 9:15 am.

Drive 115 miles RT {@ 0.10/mile = \$11.50}. Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org) or with leader.

Leader: Diane Petrilla, [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com), 931-224-5149

**October 29, Saturday**  
**Mt. Cammerer via Low Gap and Lower Mt Cammerer**  
**(Trail map marker hike)**

We'll make this annual SMHC fall color hike to scenic Mt Cammerer a longer loop hike to include the lesser used and longer Lower Mt. Cammerer trail and call it a Map-Marker hike. From Cosby Hiker parking lot we hike up famously steep Low Gap Trail and join up with the AT at the gap. We take the AT over Sunup Knob and anyone interested can help the ATMC by performing some light trail maintenance on the way to the Mt Cammerer fire tower where we enjoy a lunch break and views of colors changing below. We may meet up with the SMHC off trail group there. After lunch we'll return back to the AT and continue downhill about 2 miles with more chance for light trail maintenance on to the intersection with Lower Mt Cammerer Trail. This trail has a slower downhill rate and passes an interesting view of the valley on its way back to Cosby. Hike 15.5 miles RT with 3200 Ft elevation gain. Rated difficult due to length and elevation gain. If some members of the group wish to return via the shorter AT/Low Gap Route the hike can be reduced by 4.5 miles. Meet at Strawberry Plains Cracker Barrel promptly at 8 am and drive to Cosby hiker parking lot (Drive 110 miles RT @ 10 cents = \$11.00) or meet at Cosby parking lot at 9:15.

Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org).

Leader: Tim Bigelow, 865-607-6781, [bigelowt2@mindspring.com](mailto:bigelowt2@mindspring.com)

**October 29, Saturday**  
**Miner Stairs of Leadmine Ridge--Mount Cammerer Off-Trail**

This hike begins along TN32 as an easy stroll through open woods and gentle slopes and soon follows the course of Rowdy Creek to a lovely rock-wall waterfall. Above the waterfall the terrain transitions to that of a field of boulders interspersed with thick clusters of luxurious ferns. Ranging along the upper reaches of the boulder field high cliffs form a vanguard defending the north flank of Cammerer Ridge. Buttressing the cliffs is Leadmine Ridge with the Miner Stairs arranged along its spine. The Miner Stairs are layers of sandstone arranged in a stair-step configuration and impeded with impenetrable thickets of dense laurel yet affording superb views deep into the Tennessee Valley. The stairs terminate just below the access trail leading a short distance to the Mount Cammerer Lookout Tower. After a leisurely lunch at the tower, the hike will continue, but becoming a mad, reckless headlong dash down the steep muddy exceedingly-slick Groundhog Ridge manway, terminating in less than an hour at the starting point along TN32.

Total trip: off-trail 3.5 mile, on-trail 0.4 mile, 6 hours, drive 100 miles RT. This off-trail trip is rated *difficult*.

Pre-register with trip leader by email for meeting place and time.

Leaders: Greg Harrell and Greg Hoover, [GSHarrell@milligan.edu](mailto:GSHarrell@milligan.edu)

**October 30, Sunday**  
**Haw Ridge-Scenic East Side Trails along Melton Hill Lake**  
**Easy Hike**

This walk is along trails on the less frequented eastside of Haw Ridge Park and will have good views of Melton Hill Lake/Clinch River. We will discuss the developing concept of a Clinch River Blueway and have good views of TVA's Bull Run Steam Plant which is to be retired in the next few years. Also to be discussed will be the ongoing legal actions regarding cleanup of the coal ash piles easily visible along our hike. The hike will begin with the East Edge, East Shore, and Pond Trails and finish via the Powerline Trail. We will travel slowly, allowing for some botanizing and birding along the way. The hike will be about 4 miles and is rated easy. Meet at Haw Ridge Park, Trailhead 2 which is near the Life Development Center, 299 Old Edgemoor Rd, Oak Ridge, TN 37830, 1:00pm.

Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org) or with the leader.

Leader: Mac Post, [mpost3116@aol.com](mailto:mpost3116@aol.com), 865-806-0980.

# For the Record

## August 10 Gabes Mountain Trail

Ten hearty hikers challenged the Gabe Mountain Trail and a mere chance of 80% rain. The morning weather was great and the hike to campsite 34 was enjoyable. One hiker decided to have a shorter hike and early lunch. The return trip was, however, marked with vanishing trails being replaced with small rivers. The weatherman reported that 4.2 inches of rain fell within one hour. Everyone survived with wet but good spirits and a commitment to hike another day.

-Steve Vittatoo



## September 3 Jackson Bend Branch of the East Lakeshore Trail

Cancelled due to rain.

## CONSIDER GOING GREEN!!!

If you receive this newsletter by US Mail, please consider changing to the digital version distributed by email. To change from print to digital, just send an email to [swalker.dev@gmail.com](mailto:swalker.dev@gmail.com). Not only is the online version much easier to read, changing will help us save considerable time and will also cut the cost of printing and mailing.

### Post Hike Write-Ups

Post-hike write-ups and photos should be submitted to SMHC Newsletter editors, Connie and John Tatgenhorst at [newsletter@smhclub.org](mailto:newsletter@smhclub.org) and Betsy Bohannon, [betsybo1964@gmail.com](mailto:betsybo1964@gmail.com), Facebook manager. For your write-up, please include the following: Hike name and date, total number of members and visitors, and description of hike.

### Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Officers and Directors

President: Ken Wise [kwise@utk.edu](mailto:kwise@utk.edu)

Vice President: [jsdunkin1302@gmail.com](mailto:jsdunkin1302@gmail.com)

Recording Secretary: Kristi Knight [kcsknight@charter.net](mailto:kcsknight@charter.net)

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Trust Liaison: Jean Gauger [jeangauger@yahoo.com](mailto:jeangauger@yahoo.com)

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Director: Randy Mitchell [mitchell1982@tds.net](mailto:mitchell1982@tds.net)

Director: Will Skelton [whshome@bellsouth.net](mailto:whshome@bellsouth.net)

Director: Taylor Weatherbee [tweatherbe@aol.com](mailto:tweatherbe@aol.com)



### KROGER'S COMMUNITY AWARDS PROGRAM

**YOU** have the power to raise money for the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club! Follow these steps and help us:

- Create and login into your Kroger account.
- Select **My Account** and use the menu to choose **Community Rewards**.
- **Enter MV194** and hit **Save**.

By doing so, you will help support trail maintenance and other club projects. You can check each quarter to see how much money your spending at Kroger resulted in a donation to the club.