



PO Box 51592  
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# Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Newsletter

*Exploring the Smokies Since 1924*

February 2023

## SMHC ANNUAL AWARDS

### 2022 SMHC Recognition of Appalachian Trail Maintainers

Submitted by Diane Petrilla

It is certainly a pleasure to be able to recognize our SMHC Appalachian Trail Maintainers in person at our annual Holiday Installation Banquet again! Our A.T. maintainers devote numerous volunteer hours to maintaining their sections, taking care of blowdowns, supplying mulch to privies, and working on large projects, all with the desire to "give back" and with a deep sense of stewardship for the Trail. As the Appalachian Trail Conservancy notes in their recognition program, "some very dedicated volunteers reject the thought of formal recognition for their efforts."

Here is a list of our SMHC maintainers who have achieved special levels of performance for fiscal year 2022.

### SMHC Awards- Hours for One Year Ending 9/30/2022

(New awards are underlined; (\*) indicates awards in prior years. Bold indicates they did it again this year. Platinum and Gold repeaters receive an ATC pin for their cap.)

**Platinum (200 hours):** Pete Berntsen\*, Randy Bullock, Ed Fleming\*, Tom Howard\*, Dick Ketelle\*, **Franklin LaFond\***, Diane Petrilla\*, Bill Pyle\*, Steve Reagan\*, **Janet Snyder\***, **Mark Snyder\***, Stewart Taylor\*, **Taylor Weatherbee\***.

**Gold (100 hours):** Amanda Beal, Sunaree Bullock, Steve Dunkin\*, **Rick Hughes\***, **Terry Martin\***, Keith Mertz\*, Randy Mitchell\*, Philip Royer\*, Brian Schloff\*, Neil Snepp\*, Jerry Troxler\*, Rick Waggener.

**Silver (50 hours):** Adam Beal, Jonny Bruce, **David Gall\***, Kathy Gardner, **Mike Harrington\***, **Charlie McDonald\***, Jim Rugh. 54 maintainers have won this award previously.

**Bronze (25 hours):** **Barbara Allen\***, Debra Barton, Patricia Bryant, Kelly Conway, Elizabeth Davis, **Gene Desrosiers\***, Dale Gerhardt, **Stefanie Gose\***, Brian Groenhout, **Tracy Kressler\***, Lynn Kzsos, Peter Lloyd, Debbie McDonald, **Randy Rainey\***, Hiram Rogers, **Tim Ryan\***, Nicole Samu, **Jay Schmid\***, **Lisa Sumter\***, Yugong Tan. 81 maintainers have won this award previously.

### ATC Awards- Hours since 10/1/2000

(Start of the Database; only new awardee maintainers are listed)

**ATC Vest (1000 cumulative hours):** These maintainers have provided the greatest and longest commitments over the history of our A.T. involvement and have our deep gratitude: Keith Mertz, Diane Petrilla. 24 maintainers have previously earned the ATC Vest.

**ATC Cap (500 cumulative hours):** Terry Martin. 27 maintainers have previously earned the ATC cap.

**ATC Patch (100 cumulative hours):** Adam Beal, Sunaree Bullock, Crystal Burnes, Kelly Conway, Chris Darnold, David Gall, Lisa Sumter, Josh Talley. 132 maintainers have previously earned the ATC patch.

### ATPO Awards

(250 hours since last eligibility date, to earn National Parks Pass for 1 year)

Maintainers who have become eligible are contacted individually to choose whether they want the Pass. 36 maintainers are eligible this year; many have earned this Pass more than once.

## Parking Tag Required Beginning March 1, 2023



<https://www.nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/fees.htm>

### Upcoming Hikes

Pre-registration at [SMHClub.org](http://SMHClub.org) is required for all hikes unless stated in description. Please contact the leader if you are not sure of when and where to meet.

#### February 4 (Saturday) Will Skelton Greenway walk

For this pleasant winter walk, we will meet at 10 am at the Forks of the River Wildlife Management Area parking lot at the dead end of McClure Lane in south Knoxville (3140 McClure Lane) and plan on hiking the Will Skelton Greenway in a NE direction through the WMA, always near the Tennessee River. Our walk will be distinguished by being led by its namesake, Will Skelton, who can talk about conserving greenspaces in Knoxville, based on his notable career! We'll plan an easy walk of about 3 miles RT.

Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org) or with Will Skelton, [whshome@bellsouth.net](mailto:whshome@bellsouth.net) or with Diane Petrilla, [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com).  
Leaders: Will Skelton and Diane Petrilla

#### February 8, Wednesday Pickett State Park Loop

For this fun hike, we will combine a number of shorter trails in Pickett that will allow us to hike virtually every trail on the west side of the park. We'll start at the Hazard Cave Trail, then pick up Ridge, Lakeview, Lake, Bluff, Island, and Natural Bridge Trails, before going back to our cars. Along the way, we'll see wonderful rock formations and CCC camp historical areas. 9.2 miles. Rated moderate. Meet at Books-a-Million, 310 S Illinois Ave., Oak Ridge at 8am or at the Pickett SP Visitor Center at 9:45am. RT drive 145 miles= \$14.50.

Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org) or with leader.  
Leader: Diane Petrilla, [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com), 931-224-5149.

#### February 11, Saturday East Tellico Lakeshore Trail, Sinking Creek and Lotterdale Branch

Let's enjoy some lake views as we hike. Starting at the Coytee trailhead we will do the Sinking Creek Branch and Lotterdale Branch sections for 8.3 miles. This will involve a short car shuttle. Rated moderate due to the distance. Meet at the Maryville Walmart at 8:30. Drive 35 miles RT. 0.10x35= \$3.50.

Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org).  
Leaders: David Smith [dcsmith041@gmail.com](mailto:dcsmith041@gmail.com) John Smiley [jslenoir34@gmail.com](mailto:jslenoir34@gmail.com)

**February 15, Wednesday**  
**Mt. Cammerer from Davenport Gap via the A.T.**

Let's climb to Mt. Cammerer the "other" way, via the A.T., at Davenport Gap. The 3000 ft. ascent is fairly gradual, passing junctions with Chestnut Branch Trail and Lower Mt. Cammerer Trail. There is a long sturdy rock wall built by the CCC as we get higher, and some magnificent views towards the Pigeon River Valley and the Black Mountains. As long as trail conditions permit, we will take the .6 mile spur trail to Mt. Cammerer. Total hike mileage 12.6, rated moderate to difficult. Some folks may choose to just go partway up the AT, for a slightly easier hike. Meet at Cracker Barrel Strawberry Plains, 1510 Cracker Barrel Lane, Knoxville, at 8am or at Davenport Gap at 9:15am. RT drive 110 miles= \$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.

**February 18, Saturday**  
**Elkmont to Tremont or to Metcalf Bottoms**

The planned hike as described in the handbook is to hike from Elkmont to Tremont by way of the Meigs Mountain Trail and the Lumber Ridge Trail for a total hiking distance of 10.4 miles. However, the Lumber Ridge Trail is closed as of this writing but may be open by February 18. If it is not open at the time of the hike, we will exit off the Meigs Mountain trail and go down the Curry Mountain trail to Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area for a total of 7.7 miles. Both routes are rated moderate. We will have a car shuttle to Elkmont from either the Tremont Institute or from Metcalf Bottoms depending on which hiking route we end up taking. Meet at Food City in Alcoa at 8:00 a.m. If you wish to meet at the shuttle point, please contact the leader. Round trip drive is about 70 miles. 0.10 X 70 = \$7.00

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

Leader: Brian Worley at 865-207-2625 or [baw2222@aol.com](mailto:baw2222@aol.com)

**February 25, Saturday**  
**Pogue Creek Canyon**

For this hike, we will explore the Pogue Creek Canyon State Natural Area, near Pickett State Park. Starting with one arm of the Overlook Loop, we will visit the Pogue Canyon Overlook, then hike the new trail down off the plateau, where we will ascend and descend small gorges, hike under fabulous sandstone bluffs with unusual geologic formations including a very unique arch. Then we will hike on to a beautiful overlook at the terminus of this in and out hike. On our return, we will close the second half of the Overlook Loop. There are ladders and steep steps involved on this trail. Hike approximately 8-9 miles rated moderate. Rt drive 140 miles RT = \$14.00. Meet at Books-a-Million, 310 S. Illinois Ave., Oak Ridge at 8am or at Pogue Creek Canyon parking area at 9:45am.

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

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

**February 25, Saturday**  
**The Catstairs, Off-trail**

A trip up the Catstairs in Greenbrier is one of those iconic hikes that all adventurous lovers of the Smokies should take. On this outing, we'll put a new spin on the traditional route with an approach from the north face of the Pinnacle along Catstairs Branch. The first mile or so will feature a walk along Timothy Creek and its tributary across relatively gentle terrain, but the way will eventually turn quite steep. As we quickly gain elevation, we'll have to negotiate a treacherous but beautiful boulder field of giant moss-covered rocks randomly scattered down the mountainside. After a while, we'll come to a towering cliff line that conceals one of the most interesting rock formations in the park. Our path to the top of the bluff will pass up the Kitty Crack, a narrow tunnel that twists and turns through the rock. From there, we'll descend the Catstairs and make our way back to the Old Settlers Trail. This off trail hike is rated difficult.

Pre-register with trip leaders for meeting place and time.

Leaders: David Sands, [dsands314@yahoo.com](mailto:dsands314@yahoo.com) and Ken Wise, [kwise@utk.edu](mailto:kwise@utk.edu).

# For the Record

## December 3 Ijams Boardwalk and Quarry

Three members joined the leader at Meads Quarry in light rain that stopped as soon as we started hiking. We did a figure 8--Tower Trail and repaired boardwalk (Loop 1) and then up to the Keyhole. We also explored the lime kilns, the primal playground, and the steps down to the cave waterfall.

-Doris Gove



Lime slag mound



Geologic fold near  
Boardwalk



## December 14 Rich Mountain Loop, Crooked Arm Loop, Indian Grave Gap

At the Cades Cove Loop entrance, 11 hikers began the counterclockwise hike of the Rich Mountain Loop Trail. After ascending Crooked Arm Ridge, we were able to see obscured views of Cades Cove, the Great Smokies main range, Dry Valley and Tuckaleechee Cove. At the next junction, we turned on Indian Grave Gap Trail. Light rain began as hikers split into two compatible pacing groups, and each stopped for quick lunches on Cerulean Knob (3686 ft. Elev.) Upon finishing, we passed the Rich Mountain trail junction and continued 0.8 mi. to rejoin the loop trail. We descended on some wet slick rocky sections, seeing a large buck, 4-6 points, on the way. Most hikers sheltered briefly at the John Oliver cabin to get a break from the now steady rain before continuing to the finish. Total 8.6 miles, 1,958 ft. elevation gain.

-Larry Johnson





## December 17 Old Settlers Trail

Twelve members and 4 visitors met at the Steiner-Bell parking lot to set up a car shuttle to begin this chilly day's hike at the McCarter barn pull-out along US 321. We first hiked up to see the McCarter barn, house chimneys and spring house. Then heading up Webb Creek, we crossed over off-trail to see Big John Williams stone bathtub and remnants of two Ramsey homes close together. Heading back down a manway, we continued along the beautiful high stone walls built by the McCarter sisters, then went off-trail again to the Johnny Ramsey homesite and grave. Old Settlers continued its rather challenging course, up and down drainages where there once were communities, with plenty of creek crossings. We saw the off-trail site of a plane crash, and saw two more gorgeous tall chimneys near Noisy Creek. After crossing Redwine Creek to CS 33, it wasn't far to the Steiner Bell manway junction with OST. This group was agile over those crossings and patient with all the climbing and exploring. Although the day stayed cold, it was sunny, and as always, beautiful in the Smokies!

-Diane Petrilla and Brian Worley



## December 21 Frozen Head--Spicewood, Chimney Top, Lookout Tower, N. Old Mac trails

Seventeen hikers, all club members, met for a cool 28 degree start at the Old Mac Trailhead. Everyone appeared to be in excellent holiday season spirits on this Winter Solstice day, and the group welcomed four new Wednesday Hikers. After passing the junctions of the N. Old Mac Trail and then the S. Old Mac Trail, we turned right on Spicewood trail. We continued 1.2 miles climbing up a steep, rooted section that transitioned into a classic slopeside contour and emerged into bright sunshine before the gap and Chimney Top trail junction. We turned right to the Mart Fields backcountry campsite. Looking right, upslope, we saw huge southeastern facing rock formations illuminated by the solstice low-angle eastern sunshine, and soon had fine distant views southwest of the Crab Orchard Mountains, northwest to Bird Mountain, and east to Brushy, Windrock and Cross mountains which form part of the Tennessee Valley Divide. Returning on the Chimney Top trail we continued to our lunch spot at Tub Springs. After lunch, various hiker groups at their own pace finished the loop 3.5 miles. We descended on N. Old Mac trail, passed the Panther Branch Trail junction, and turned at the junction to the trail head. Total mileage: 10.5 miles, 2,000 feet elevation gain. All hikers seemed happily satisfied to have done this fun solstice hike.

-Larry Johnson



## SMHC will celebrate its 100th birthday in 2024!

Planning is underway for the SMHC's Centennial Celebration, and if you want to participate in planning, please contact Rebekah Young, the Steering committee Chair, at [rebekahy27@aol.com](mailto:rebekahy27@aol.com)

## Beer!



Now that we have your attention – SMHC is considering teaming with a local brewery for a commemorative brew in recognition of our 100<sup>th</sup> birthday! We could use your help in coming up with a short, catchy name for the brew. Please send your suggested names to Rebekah Young at [rebekahy27@aol.com](mailto:rebekahy27@aol.com) or to Mike Harrington at [Mike\\_Harr@bellsouth.net](mailto:Mike_Harr@bellsouth.net). Next month, we will publish selected names in the newsletter and give you the chance to vote for your favorite.

### 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.

### 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.

### Attention Hike Leaders

If you are interested in being able to view the list of registrants for your hikes via the SMHC website, you can be given access to do that. Some hike leaders find this helpful. Currently, you receive individual registrations via the website; this will not change. But if you'd like to review a list with all contact info before your hikes, you can have access to the website for this. Please contact Scott Walker at [swalker.dev@gmail.com](mailto:swalker.dev@gmail.com) if you are interested. Also, please note that hike participants who contact you personally and who do not register thru the website, will not be on the website list.



### 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.

### Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Officers and Directors

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

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

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

Treasurer: Diane Petrilla [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com)

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

Membership Secretary: Scott Walker [swalker.dev@gmail.com](mailto:swalker.dev@gmail.com)

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

Historian: Brian Worley [baw2222@aol.com](mailto:baw2222@aol.com)

Director: Tim Bigelow [bigelowt2@mindspring.com](mailto:bigelowt2@mindspring.com)

Director: Pat Watts [watts\\_at\\_home@yahoo.com](mailto:watts_at_home@yahoo.com)

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

Code of Conduct Coordinator: Taylor Weatherbee  
[tweatherbe@aol.com](mailto:tweatherbe@aol.com)