



PO Box 51592
Knoxville, TN 37950-1592

Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Newsletter

Exploring the Smokies Since 1924

August 2023

2023 SMHC Annual Election Picnic

COSBY PICNIC PAVILION

Saturday, August 12th
9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Directions:

[Cosby Picnic Area - Great Smoky Mountains National Park \(mysmokymountainguide.com\)](https://mysmokymountainguide.com)

GSMNP Parking Tags are REQUIRED

Short Hike—Tim Bigelow

Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Cosby Picnic Pavilion

Sutton Ridge Overlook: ~ 3.0-miles (round trip); moderately challenging

Potluck Lunch—12 Noon

Please bring a dish to share with everyone!!

SMHC will provide paper plates, napkins, utensils, cups, ice, iced tea, lemonade, water, and cookies.

Program

Election of 2024 Officers

2024 Hike Leader Sign-ups and Sneak Peek at our Special Centennial events!!

No registration is needed!! We look forward to seeing everyone!!

The Social Committee

Hiker Checklist

Do you know the 10 Essentials?
What is the best way to dress for a hike?
Should you use trekking poles?

Whether you're new to hiking or have hiked every trail in the Smokies, the answer to these questions and much more can be found on our web site.

<https://smhclub.org/Hiker-Checklist>

Be sure to check it out!

Slate of SMHC Officers for 2024

President, Steve Dunkin
Vice President (Interim), Diane Petrilla
Treasurer, Pat Watts
Recording Secretary, Tim Bigelow
Membership Secretary, Scott Walker
Trust Liaison, Jean Gauger
Communications Director, Randy Mitchell
Compliance Director, Taylor Weatherbee
Historian, Brian Worley
Director, Will Skelton
Director, Ken Wise
Director, Larry Johnson ****NEW****

Upcoming Hikes

Pre-registration at 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.

Please review [How We Rate Outings](#) and [Hiker Responsibilities](#) found on SMHClub.org as you consider a hike

August 2-Wednesday Gabes Mountain Trail to Campsite 34

On this out and back hike we will first hike 2.1 miles to the 90-foot Hen Wallow Falls then continue for 2.7 miles to Campsite 34. Roundtrip will be 9.6 miles. Rated moderate. Meet at Cracker Barrel at I-40 Exit 398 (1510 Cracker Barrel Lane, southeast corner of parking lot) at 8:00 am or at Cosby Campground at 9:00 am. Drive 120 miles RT {@ 0.10/mile = \$12.00}.

Register with Steve or smhclub.org.

Leader: Steve Vittatoe, 865-724-9666, svittatoe@charter.net

August 5-Saturday AT Work Trip- Mulch Haul

For this summer work trip, we will backpack mulch out to the Double Springs shelter storage bins and then stop by Mt Collins on the way back out Clingmans Dome Rd. to take some mulch in there. Mulch is pre-bagged in 20lb. bags (you're only expected to carry one!) and we have extra backpacking-style backpacks if needed. Although it doesn't sound very glamorous to carry mulch, it is a crucial part of backcountry waste management! Experienced and non-experienced mulch mules welcome! Hike to DS 6 miles RT, to Mt Collins 1.5 miles RT. Meet at Clingmans Dome parking lot at 8 am, or if you'd like to carpool, meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center at 7:15 am.

Register at smhclub.org, so I know how much mulch to bring.

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

August 5-Saturday Deep Creek--Off-Trail

Come cool off with a journey up the remote Left Fork of Deep Creek. We'll begin the excursion with a stroll down Fork Ridge Trail, before dropping steeply off the ridge into the gorgeous creek below. We'll wade up the main stem of the Left Fork, passing clear pools filled to the brim with trout that have never set eyes on a human. Higher up, our creek will fork and change character completely. We'll begin to encounter beautiful little cascades and waterfalls as we ascend higher back into the spruce forest. Eventually, after a full day, we'll top out on Clingmans Dome Road. Rated difficult.

Leader: David Sands, dsands314@yahoo.com

August 16-Wednesday Middle Prong Trail to Indian Flats Falls

We will hike 4.1 miles creekside along the beautiful Middle Prong Trail until we reach the unmarked junction to Indian Flats Falls, a multi-tiered falls including Lower Lynn Camp, Lynn Camp and Indian Flats. Historic artifacts to be seen along the trail include the rusting Cadillac (now crushed by a big tree), a homestead chimney and remnants from logging operations of the past. RT is 8.2 miles with 1175 ft. elevation gain. Rated easy to moderate. Meet at the old Alcoa Food City, now KARM, at 8:00 am or the trailhead at 8:45 am. Drive 50 miles RT {@ 0.10/mile = \$5.00}.

Register with Steve or at smhclub.org.

Leader: Steve Vittatoe, 865-724-9666, svittatoe@charter.net

**August 19, Saturday
UT Arboretum-Easy hike**

We'll meet in the parking lot of The University of Tennessee Arboretum at 9:00 a.m. for an hour-long easy hike. The Arboretum is located at 901 S. Illinois Avenue, Oak Ridge. We will see some things that are at their peak in the summer and fall, such as the bog garden, the rain garden, and the Elmore holly collection. There will be a little bit about local history prior to the Manhattan Project taking over this boot-legging farming "hollow," as well.

Register at smhclub.org.

Leaders: Janet and Tim Bigelow, janet_bigelow@tds.net (865) 300-5580

**August 19-Saturday
Bullhead Trail to Mt. Le Conte, return via Rainbow Falls**

This version of a classic summer hike starts with ~0.4 mile on Old Sugarlands Trail, from the Rainbow Falls parking lot to Bullhead Trail. From there we head south, up Mt. Le Conte through a few switchbacks, past a stone cairn (the "Pulpit," at mile 3.3), and up to the junction with Rainbow Falls Trail. Then we climb another 0.6 mile to Mt. Le Conte Lodge (~6,320 ft. elevation) and nearby picnic tables for lunch (it may be cool enough for a jacket). We return via Rainbow Falls Trail the whole way, past the Bullhead junction, past the falls, and through switchbacks down to the trailhead at Cherokee Orchard Road. Total, ~13.5 miles with ~3,770 ft. climb, rated difficult. For carpooling, meet at Cracker Barrel off I-40 at Exit 398 (1510 Cracker Barrel Lane, parking lot, southeast corner), at 6:15 am (74 miles RT @10 cents = \$7.40), or at the Rainbow Falls parking lot on Cherokee Orchard Road, by the trailhead (our point of return), ready to hike at 7:30 am.

Register at smhclub.org.

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

**August 26-Saturday
AT-Fork Ridge and Deep Creek Trails**

This hike requires a short car shuttle. We'll drive to Deep Creek Trailhead, 1.7 miles south of Newfound Gap, drop cars, and then a few cars containing all hikers will return to the Newfound Gap parking area. Hikers will cross the highway to access the A.T. and follow it southbound 4.2 miles while enjoying about 1300' of elevation gain mixed with some downhill. We'll take the connector trail to the Fork Ridge Trail and plummet almost 3000' downhill to meet Deep Creek Trail in 5.1 miles. Then we'll take Deep Creek 3.9 miles back up (1700') to our cars and finish the car shuttle back to Newfound Gap. The hike is about 13.3 miles with about 3000' of elevation gain and is rated difficult. Meet at KARM store (formerly Alcoa Food City) 131 N Hall Rd. Alcoa **ready to leave** at 7:00AM or 8:00AM at Sugarlands where we'll plan the shuttle. One hundred miles round trip from Alcoa (\$10) or 3 miles from Sugarlands (\$3.00). Please let the leader know where you will meet the group.

Register at smhclub.org

Leader: Claudia Dean, claudiadean0@gmail.com, 865-206-0145

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. 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 and Betsy Bohannon, 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.

For the Record

June 14 Chestnut Top

It was another beautiful day for a hike (aren't they all). It started out a little cool and cloudy with rain threatening. But it never rained and about 11:00 the sun came out and the rest of the day was sunny. For this hike we had 12 hikers again. Some hikers went part way and turned back, some went to the Schoolhouse Gap intersection and turned back, some went on to the picnic table before returning and two went even farther. Chestnut Top is known for a great wildflower display but we were too late. There were virtually no wildflowers except for a few mountain laurel and one great display of flame azaleas. All hikers except the two that went farther were back to the cars and ready to leave before 2:00.

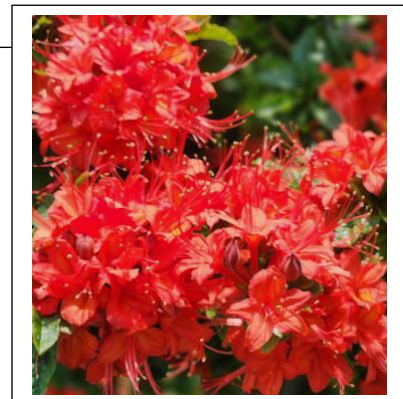
-Ron Brandenburg



June 17 Gregory Bald via Gregory Ridge Azalea Hike

Eleven members endured the congested traffic along the Cades Cove loop and a 3000+ foot climb to enjoy the colorful flame azalea. The weather was cool and breezy during the brisk climb but the air was hazy, blocking views of all landmarks beyond the Cove. Though many were not at peak bloom, the azaleas were quite beautiful and attracted over 40 other hikers at the expansive summit. The members who drove home through the cove were rewarded with a bear sighting and those who drove Parsons Branch enjoyed many splashes at its multiple creek crossings.

-Steven Miller



June 28
Metcalf Bottoms-Little Briar Gap-Little Greenbrier trails

Should I say it again. It was a great day for a hike. Eighteen hikers gathered at Metcalf Bottoms to hike to the Laurel Falls trail and beyond. One hiker went to the Walker Sisters' cabin and back. Two hikers went most of the way to Laurel Falls trail then ate lunch and headed back stopping at the Walker Sisters' cabin on the way back. The other 15 went to Laurel Falls trail and four of them went on up Laurel Falls trail to the tower. Two of those 15 hikers also stopped at the Walker Sister's cabin. Major renovations have been done to the cabin including a new roof, two new windows and some structural repairs. The day started cool but was getting hot by the time we finished although the shade along the trail helped. There was a good variety of summer wildflowers along these trails.

-Ron Brandenburg



June 17
Huggins Creek

The nine hikers who showed up for the Huggins Creek excursion on June 17 voted to alter the originally planned route in order to explore both Huggins and Little Huggins Creeks. They enjoyed an easy stroll out the AT to Double Springs Shelter, where commenced a descent of the Little Huggins watershed. They passed a splendid cascade that slid several meters down a continuous rock slab. Open forest and old grades led the hikers to the main split, where they enjoyed lunch and examined old railroad artifacts. From there, their route turned back uphill, and they were quickly treated to a large waterfall. More beautiful cascades followed, as upward they climbed. A final push through a beautiful spruce forest put the hikers back on the AT with energy and daylight to spare.

-David Sands

Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Officers and Directors

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