



Newsletter of the
Chattanooga Hiking Club

July 2017

Club Meeting

The Chattanooga Hiking Club meets at 6:30 PM on the first Monday of even numbered months at the Outdoor Chattanooga offices on River Street. Directions to the meeting site are on the club website: chatthiking.com

Next meeting – Monday August 7, 2017

We Have A New Secretary

Susan Basch has graciously agreed to become the club's secretary. We very much appreciate her willingness to help. Old and new members alike, if you have never held a club office, we encourage you to think about making yourself available for one next spring.

We Still Need Saturday Hike Leaders

And Che would no doubt appreciate a little help on Wednesdays occasionally. It's a very rewarding experience to lead folks on a hike, especially if some of them have never done that hike. The leader gets to pick the hike, so if you have a favorite that hasn't been done lately (or ever!), you can remedy that situation. Easy hikes or strenuous hikes, close by or involving a little travel, we can make room for all of them. The paperwork and procedures aren't bad, and there are experienced leaders who would be glad to help you with that. And a new leader is usually going to have an experienced leader along for moral support. So get in touch with Boe, and help us out!

Making

TRACKS



Reports from the Field

Ochs Gateway to Skyuka Springs to Kiddie Trail trailhead

Wednesday May 31, 2017

It was a good day to take this route previously suggested by Charlotte McNabb. Coming from the Gateway, instead of turning right and heading toward Sunset Rock, we turned left and proceeded gently downhill to Skyuka Springs - well marked to the Springs at the end of the Lower Truck trail and a better sign now indicating the Skyuka Springs trail back to highway. Summer flowers included spider wort, lots of ferns, coreopsis, and ever faithful bluets. The Springs had more water than noted on previous hikes passing by. A brief snack rest here then onto the Lower Truck trail to trek on out. A group stopped and lingered at lunch at the gazebo where a brown thrasher nervously tried to deliver food to her babies in a nest box hanging there. Others went on with the mission of retrieving cars from Ochs Gateway and lunch at the Purple Daisy. The Gazebo lunch group did also take time to circle around to the wildlife preserve. The endangered and protected Red Wolves were up and roaming to the delight of those who had not visited this compound before. It was a good day enjoyed by: Barry Ligon, Beverly Ligon, Bob Rahn, Linda Keown, Merry Boggs and Diehl Boggs who extended their hike by starting up the Kiddie Trail and meeting us at the springs, Patti Giles, Susan Garrett, Suzanne Dorough, Teres Dean, Wanda McCarter, Wayne Chambers, Wendy Gunn, Susan Basch, Barbara Miller, Boe Rudder, and Che Carico reporting.

Picture
from Teresa



Upcoming Outings

Saturday July 8, 2017 Berry College day hike

Location: Rome, GA
Distance: 8-10 miles
Elevation Gain: 900 ft
Rating: Moderate
Pace: Standard
Driving time: 1 hr

Here's your opportunity to hike on the world's most beautiful college campus according to Buzz Feed:

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/spenceralthouse/most-beautiful-college-campuses-in-the-world#.sbP5Be0PK>

We'll hike to all the highlights on Berry's mountain campus - the House o' Dreams, Old Mill, and reservoir. We'll picnic at the House o' Dreams and enjoy another beautiful day on Berry's 26,000+ acres. Contact hike leader Barbara McCollum at bpmccollum@yahoo.com or 770.289.7143.



House o' Dreams

Friday July 28, 2017 Smokies day hike

Location: Great Smoky Mtns National Park
Distance: 12-13 miles
Elevation Gain: 100-500 ft
Rating: Strenuous
Pace: Standard
Driving time: 3+ hrs

We're considering AT from Clingman's Dome/Goshen Prong/Little River or Mt Sterling/Swallow Fork/Big Creek. Final choice yet to be made.

Reports from the Field

Eagle Creek, Spence Field, Jenkins Ridge backpack

Thursday-Saturday June 1-3, 2017

The weather a week before this hike experience was gloomy with rain and thunderstorms for sure in the forecast. The two days of hiking, however, turned out to be cool enough for summer days and rain free! Steve Claxton met us at Cable Cove for transport across the lake to the Eagle Creek trailhead. Eagle Creek started out fairly level but with 18 swift and calf-to-knee depth crossings in the first 4.9 miles. So, lots of energy spent staying upright and dry in the crossings.



Lunch was refreshing at campsite 97 in an island setting with lots of logs for seating. Then the remaining 4 miles began unrelenting uphill! The stronger hikers seemed not to mind and reached the water source for Spence Field at least an hour and a half before this first-time backpacker! What a joy to finally reach this point, 0.1 miles from my sleeping quarters! Packs were emptied, "beds made", dinner served, and a fire built. We all settled in after enjoying the fire for a while, listening to tall tales, and toasts and singing.



Next day after breakfast and breaking camp this line of 11 hikers started the short uphill access to the AT and then Jenkins Ridge which was "downhill all the way". Right! Downhill along narrow trail overgrown with tall blackberry vines (two hikers slipped off the trail several feet because so narrow and could not see where to plant next step), steep uphill short distance, steep downhill, short uphill quite steep again, a brief leveling then a long downhill (so steep you had to plant your poles out front to put on your brakes) which finally bottomed out. As all regrouped at the junction with Hazel Creek trail, many stretched out on picnic tables and all said, "toughest two trails ever hiked back to back", and, "I'll never do that Stinking Jenkins trail again!"

Reports from the Field

(continued...)

(But an unexpected blessing for Stinking Jenkins were the rhododendrons blooming on the bald as the trail began and the brilliant flame azaleas along the trail. The bald reminded us of Gregory Bald.)

From here we still had 4 roadbed miles to go to reach the site of our ride back across Fontana Lake to Cable Cove. New backpackers and experienced ones included: John Hyler, Rick Glisson, Barbara McCollum, Betsy Parson, Bonnie Smith, Monty Simmons, Carolyn Brannon, Cathy Love, Terri Holcomb, Che Carico reporting and Wayne Chambers leading.

Thanks to Monty Simmons for carrying my pack AND his at least 4 miles when I developed a muscle spasm on the downhill of Jenkins Ridge and could not stand upright to hike out. Then, as my pack weight had been distributed to hikers waiting at campsite 84, they rounded up a cart and Wayne and Terri pulled me down the 4 miles of Hazel Creek roadbed to the edge of the lake! Carolyn diagnosed my hard-as-a-rock lower left back muscle spasm, Terri and Cathy shared water and electrolytes, and the others expressed great concern for the situation all the while carrying parts of my gear in order to relieve Monty of the full burden. Never will I forget and never can I thank them enough! Che



All pictures from Barbara

Hiwassee River area work day Saturday June 3, 2017

The CHC and a number of other regional clubs participated in the National Trails Day event sponsored by the Ocoee/Hiwassee Ranger District. More than 20 maintainers participated in the effort on a warm but pleasant day. The work focused on brushing out the Fisherman's trail on the southern bank of the Hiwassee River. The trail was overgrown but there was plenty of shade as well as the refreshing sound of the stream flowing nearby. The USFS did a fine job of planning and the team completed cutting and clearing nearly a mile and a half of trail. After the work was finished the Rangers provided a deluxe cookout at the Quinn Springs Recreation Area. CHC participants included Bill Kinnaman, J.D. Dickinson, Ralph Van Pelt and Steve Barnes, reporting.

Reports from the Field

Chilhowee Mountain: Azalea, Red Leaf, Slick Rock trails, and Benton Falls Wednesday June 7, 2017

Since the flame azaleas were so brilliant on Jenkins Ridge trail, we went in search of them on Chilhowee Mountain. Only a few were spotted, mountain laurel was fading, while a few rhododendrons were fresh. The route we took was different from previous hikes in this beautiful park and campground. It also left lots of room for choosing your own distance. Some chose to include the Slick Rock trail, others hiked on down to the falls then out, and at least one hiked out and around the lovely lake. Water was running fast in all creeks and it was observed that the falls had more water than ever seen before. The air was so clear that the overlooks were amazing at the pull offs on the way up and on the way down the mountain. The joy of leading hikes comes from the new hikers and their joy. Such was today as in this familiar area we still had new hikers! Inspired by Renee and her yoga routine on the big rock at the top of Benton Falls were: Bill Needham, Sue Christensen, Kathy Seymour, Wayne Chambers, Suzanne Dorough, Edie Behringer, Susan Basch, Bob Rahn, Patti Giles, Sandy Fenton (appearing fully restored after her auto accident), Shirley Wright, and Che Carico reporting.

Possum Creek Trail, Imodium Falls Saturday June 10, 2017

A group of five hikers conquered the Janet M Hale Trail (aka Possum Creek Trail). Weather was perfect. The trail was 10.2 miles and we completed it in 4 ½ hours including a lunch break. We did not set out to hike quickly, but we were all lost in conversations and forgot the pace of our hiking. This hike is a car shuttle hike. I believe this hike is as beautiful as many of the Smoky Mountain hikes. The landscape changes at least five times during the hike. We crossed several bridges, one water crossing, a pine tree section, rocky section, and Imodium Falls. We did come across a large black snake. On the way back to pick up a car at the start of the trail, we came across a large black bear on the side of the road. We are all glad to be in our car. I am always amazed that this trail is in our backyard. Hikers today were: Joyce Campbell, Steven Miller, and Rick Glisson, and Diehl and Merry Boggs, reporting.



Picture from Merry

Reports from the Field

Falling Water Falls and McCoy Farm Wednesday June 14, 2017

So, it is summer now and finally the humidity is a factor as well as the higher temps. This led to the choice of a morning only hike and yet 25 hikers came out to trek it!! The maps online get better all the time, so you can find a pretty clear route to Mabbit Springs and then on to the falls. Louis was in the lead and peacefully sitting on a rock near the top of the falls by the time the end of the line got there! He and Susan led a portion of the group down and across the creek bed above the falls, up the other side, and on out the short distance to another trail head on Forest Park Drive. Wayne and Susan had fond memories of hiking into the falls from this side as children. All hiked out safely then splintered into different groups - some home, some to cool restaurant lunch, but most drove the short distance to the McCoy Farm at the top of the W Road. This old homestead has been entrusted to the Town of Walden and has been reclaimed by hardworking citizens bringing it to family recreation status. Sam Powell engineered the swinging bridge that crosses over a wetlands he so desperately wanted to protect, the Lions Club is rebuilding the blacksmith's shop and someone was working there today, Larry Mick was putting fresh paint on the pump house, and the gardens created by Master Gardeners were beautiful! This is only a "tich" of the volunteer efforts given to create this lovely venue. You can find the history of this property and family online. The McCoy Farm is open dawn to dusk and free for use by all; the property can also be rented for special events. Enjoying a nice hike and lunch somewhere were: Wayne Chambers, Susan Garrett, Debbie Lambert, Edie Behringer, Susan Basch, Freda Richie, Patti Giles, Cecile Shenouda, Linda McKeown, Charlie Breeding, Bob Rahn, Sue Christensen, Suzanne Dorough, Jenny Chandler, Teresa Dean, Mac Dean, Louis Spencer, Anne Dean, Rachel Bryant, Diehl Boggs, Merry Boggs, Connie Young, Renee Grace, Stormy McGauley, and Che Carico, reporting.



Pictures from Teresa (Editor's note: DON'T BE LEANING OVER THE EDGE LIKE THAT!)

Reports from the Field

Buggy Top/Carter Cave Wednesday June 21, 2017

Twelve hikers started out on this reported to be 2 miles in and 2 miles out trail near Sewanee. At the end, most agreed the longest 4 miles they had ever hiked! Upon hiking down to the Buggy Top (Carter Cave) entrance it was decided all (armed with flashlights) would enter the cave entrance, rock hop rather swift and somewhat deep water, and begin the ascent up and through this section to the almost imperceptible light shining from above. Doing this added to the mileage. It was harder than remembered because it seemed lots of rocks had shifted and finding a clear path was difficult. The new to this experience hikers either said it was their FAVORITE trail and experience or glad they had done it but never again! One corn snake was found and played with by Renee and one rattlesnake was discovered on a ledge and carefully avoided. New plants spotted today were Witch Hazel and Wild Petunia. Another white flower is as not yet identified. Lots of fern fields today and a pretty trail with areas of difficult rock underfoot. As usual as you walked into the presence of Buggy Top it felt like an air conditioner had been turned on! On to lunch at Shenanigan's and then the outfitter store. Rain began to pour as these happy hikers started home: Renee Grace, Wayne Chambers, Bob Rahn, Cecile Shenouda, Susan Garrett, Linda Keown, Sue Christensen, Tom Carter, Boe Rudder, Stormy McGauley, Susan Basch and Che Carico reporting.

Roaring Creek Trail to Brush Creek and lunch at Trish Appleton's home Wednesday June 28, 2017

The Chattanooga Hiking Club is blessed by opportunities to hike and reunite with former hikers in a social setting. Such was this day as we planned a short hike along Roaring Creek. Bypassing the upturn to Graysville Mountain and the continuing stretching of the Cumberland Trail, the hikers continued creek side to Brush Creek. You can ford Brush Creek and get a view of a lovely waterfall, but not today. The long line of hikers turned here and headed back to go hungrily to the home of Trish Appleton and the covered dish lunch planned. Great trees provided shade and a breeze came off the lake making a cool site for folding chairs, great food, and catching up. Especially welcomed was Val Hargis who packed up in a 5th Wheel with husband Carl 3 years ago to roam the US! So glad she was in Chattanooga for this reunion time on the lake with old hiking friends. Boe Rudder had begun his hike several hours earlier and went up the mountain to the first overlook on top of the mountain and back, rejoining Rough Creek in time to encourage the hikers now coming up the Rough Creek trail. Joyful for a great day, a great picnic site, and the great hospitality of Trish were: Alicia, Emery, Ellie and Weston Carico (Che's family), Mac Dean, Teresa Dean, Edith Behringer, Bill LaRoque, Susan Garrett, Stormy McGauley, Renee Grace, Susan Basch, Patti Giles, Shirley Wright, Tim (brownie man!!) Chomyn, Boe Rudder, Donald and Madelaine Box, Suzanne Dorough, Sue Christensen, Melba Smothers, Charlie Breeding, Doug Graydon (back on the trail!), Linda Keown, Val (5th Wheel) Hargis, and Che Carico reporting.

Reports from the Field

Little Hump, Big Hump on the AT in the Roan Highlands

Thursday June 29, 2017

We originally planned this expedition a week earlier, but a threat of thunderstorms caused us to cancel. But a few were doggedly determined to mark this one off their list, and the leader was in the mood for another visit, so we changed our motel reservations and went a week later. After a great dinner at Cootie Brown's in Johnson City and a good night's motel sleep, we wound our way along the convoluted drive to the still relatively obscure trailhead to begin our hike at the Overmountain Shelter, aka the Red Barn. There we met several backpackers, mostly from Indiana - one of them took a group picture for us; before the day was over we wondered who stayed home to mind the store in Indiana!



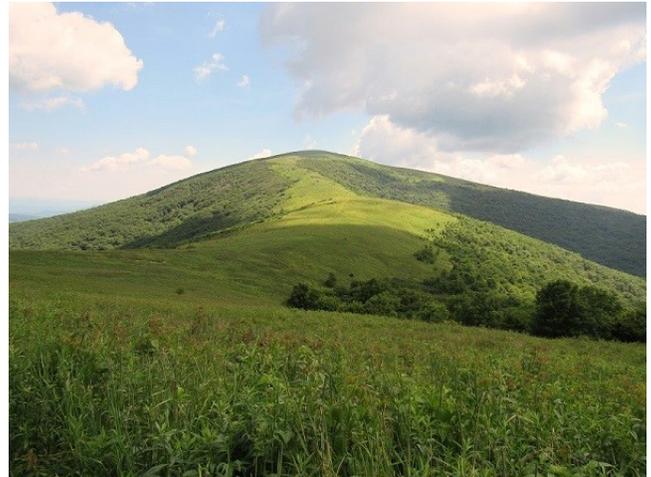
Right off the bat we got a good taste of high country grassy bald hiking, climbing steeply with nary a switchback in sight; but we stopped a few times to look back at the Red Barn as it seemed to shrink down to the size of a postage stamp, and that encouraged us to think that we really were making progress. After some ridgeline hiking in the woods, we then reached Little Hump, our second grassy bald, and were soon at its highest point. There were great views in most directions, but the most impressive view was Big Hump looming ahead to the north.



Reports from the Field

(continued...)

After descending through the woods, we came out into the clearing just above Bradley Gap at the base of Big Hump, where we could see the trail (still no switchbacks!) as it meandered toward the horizon.



In the early part of the climb our spirits were boosted by a beautiful stem of Gray's Lily, which grows only in the high country of that region. We resolutely plugged along, trying to ignore a couple of false summits, and again looking behind us to gauge our progress, until we finally did reach the top of Big Hump, with its magnificent 360-degree views. The grassy bald continues on northward, seemingly forever.



After lunch and some lingering to soak up the experience, we returned the way we had come, enjoying the fact that it was mostly downhill now.

A sighting of a little fawn in the woods just off the trail pretty much put the cap on a great hike. When the Red Barn came into view far below us, I decided to name that stretch "Our Victory Lap"!



And then we celebrated with another dinner at Cootie Brown's on the way home. Thanks to Merry and Diehl Boggs and Kathy Seymour for nudging me to lead it, and for nudging me several more

times when I needed it along the trail; John Rowland reporting.

Outings Schedule

07/08/17	Berry College day hike (M)	B McCollum
07/28/17	Smokies day hike (S)	W Chambers
09/01/17	Smokies day hike (S)	B McCollum

Wednesday Day Hikes - Che Carico - The Wednesday group hikes many of the same trails as the weekend hikers. Since a schedule is not published in advance, please call Che at (423) 886-5135 on Monday or Tuesday and listen to the week's hiking plan or before Sunday email her at MidWeek@chatthiking.com to be added to the email distribution list to receive the week's plan every week.

Hike Difficulty Ratings

The information below is provided as a guide only. Each hiker assumes the risks associated with hiking in the great outdoors, including the responsibility of paying any bills associated with rescue efforts or medical care. The wise hiker always carries water, food, and first aid items.

Easy (E): 6 miles or less; mostly level or only slight incline.

Moderate (M): 6-10 miles with an elevation gain that will generally not exceed 350 feet per mile, with a total elevation gain of no more than 1000 ft.

Moderately Strenuous (MS): 6-10 miles in length, but include rocky trail conditions, tricky stream crossings, or elevation gain of more than 1000 ft but less than 2000 ft.

Strenuous (S): a distance of 10-14 miles or with more than 2000 ft total elevation gain, but no more than 3000 ft.

Extremely Strenuous (S+): Usually involves distances of more than 14 miles or more than 3000 ft in elevation gain. There might be very steep/rugged climbs, deep stream crossings, or unmentioned trails.

Pace: Standard pace is 2 miles an hour; less on steep or rugged terrain. Fast pace is 2.5 to 3 miles an hour or more and may not vary much regardless of terrain.

Attention: When calling to go on an outing, please specify exact number of people who will be attending. Do NOT just show up with a friend or family member unannounced! This puts your hike leader in an awkward position as most hikes involve some planning of transportation. Also we frequently hike in wilderness areas and other places where the number of hikers in a group is limited. If that is the case, and the hike is already full, you may be turned away!

Cancellations: Hike leaders are entirely at the own discretion regarding the weather. It is possible that a leader may decide that, due to weather conditions, they do not feel safe hiking on that day. Lightning kills many people every year and can strike hikers on a trail. Also many of the areas where we hike are prone to flash floods that can kill or injure. The leader will call if deciding to cancel before the day of the hike. In the event that the decision to cancel is made on the day of the hike, the leader will give you the courtesy of showing up at the designated meeting place to announce that the hike is cancelled.

Other Stuff

Just to make sure that everyone knows there were creek crossings on the Eagle Creek Trail...



And then they played, "You put your right foot in, you put your right foot out..."

Pictures from Barbara

Club T-shirts

If you're interested in buying a Chattanooga Hiking Club t-shirt, Bo has worked to put together an opportunity to do so. Check out this link:

https://stores.inksoft.com/chattanooga_hiking_club

Rock/Creek Discount Info

Show your Chattanooga Hiking Club Membership Card, along with your ID at any Rock/Creek Store.

Chattanooga Hiking Club - 10% off one Item

*Applies to one non-sale, in-stock item. Can not be combined with other discounts or promotions. Offer does not apply to gift cards, boats, boards, coolers, & electronics. **In-store only.**

Club Officers and Support:

President - Gary Petty (423) 488-5954

Vice President - Stormy McGauley (423) 505-4525

Treasurer - Donald Box (423) 892-6754

Secretary - Susan Basch (706) 375-7750

Outings - Boe Rudder (423) 400-1103

Newsletter/Webmaster - John Rowland (423) 802-7704

Membership Database - John Rowland (423) 802-7704

Membership Information - Chris O'Conner (423) 991-3220

Trail Maintenance - Steve Barnes (423) 339-3019

Midweek Outings - Cheryl Carico (423) 886-5135

Website: chatthiking.com (includes link to newsletter)