

Newsletter of the Chattanooga Hiking Club

March 2019

Making

Club Meeting

The Chattanooga Hiking Club meets at 6:30 PM on the first Monday of even numbered months (except December) at the REI store at 2507 Lifestyle Way, behind the Embassy Suites off Shallowford Road.

Next meeting – Monday April 1, 2019

It's Dues Time Again

Yes it will soon (April 1) be time to renew membership. If you have joined the club since the first of the year, your membership is good through March 31, 2020. And of course if you've already renewed, thank you! There is a renewal form available on the website, under the "About Us" tab. You can print it and mail it in along with your check. And please tell us about any changes to your address, phone number, email, etc.



Canyon pictures from Jenny



Reports from the Field

Cloudland Canyon, Sitton Gulch Saturday January 26, 2019

Sitton Gulch and West Rim Trails (11.2 miles). A dozen brave hikers braced themselves Saturday morning for the 27-degree temperatures that awaited us as we started on the Sitton Gulch Trail. Today, several new hikers joined us on our cold weather hike. As we began hiking, we were all enjoying the conversations that come when meeting new hikers. Quickly our attention focused on the unbelievable views of nature that surrounded us. The rain of the past several months has left the creeks and waterfalls in Cloudland Canyon in rare form. The creek beds were filled with rushing water that pulled your eyes from the trail to the water. Waterfalls snuck in all around as we hiked towards the West Rim Trail. The one water crossing on the Sitton Gulch Trail that is usually a trickle of water, at best, was a water crossing that took care not to submerge your feet. Luckily, previous hikers left a trail of rocks that allowed us to hike without getting wet. As we reached the two major waterfalls of Cloudland Canyon, we were left amazed. None of us have seen these waterfalls as full as they were. However, the cold weather left us with the challenge of climbing the steps without falling on ice. Most of the steps were fine but two places were fill of ice on the trail. The icicles surrounded as we climbed these steps. The West Rim Trail greeted us with the warmth of the sun. We enjoyed lunch with the sun shining on and temperatures that rose to the mid-40's. This trail seemed easy after the ice and water of the

Sitton Gulch Trail. Today's hike was enjoyable because of the chance to enjoy the wonder of nature's beauty. Even more important, was the chance to meet new friends. Thank you to everyone for making this hike AWESOME! Members Present: Boe Rudder, Rick Glisson, Tim Chomvn, Chervl Hale, John Rowland, Brian Kinder, Terri Holcomb, Bill Guiffre, Jennifer Parson, Steve Miller, Diehl Boggs, and Merry Boggs, and Jenny Hopkins met us on the trail!



Picture from Tim

Upcoming Outings

Ritchie Hollow Saturday March 2, 2019

Location: Tennessee River Gorge, Chattanooga, TN

Distance: 5.4 miles Elevation Gain: 1,200+ feet

Rating: Moderate to moderately strenuous (see description)

Pace: Standard

The March 2 hike will be the Ritchie Hollow Trail. This trail begins at the level of the Tennessee River at Pot Point cabin and winds its way through lovely woods, rising to its intersection with the Cumberland Trail. It will combine a good climb (over 1,200 feet elevation gain) with contemplative pauses to enjoy nature's displays, including a snack break at the 30-foot Blowing Winds waterfall. At this time, our hike is expected to be 5.4 miles round trip. It should be noted that at the top, the trail meets the Pot Point Loop trail in Prentice Cooper Forest. If the weather is propitious with hints of spring, as the time approaches, we may extend the hike along the Pot Point Loop trail to the Natural Bridge and back. With an extended hike and the inherent elevation gain, the hike may approach being moderately strenuous. Register with Edie Behringer at ebehringer @att.net if you plan to hike.

Daffodils Extravaganza, Gibbs Gardens Saturday March 9, 2019

Location: near Ballground, GA

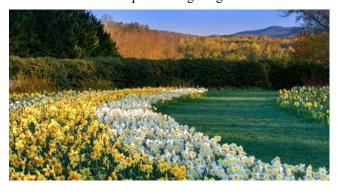
Driving time: 2 hours from Chattanooga

Distance: less than 3 miles if you wandered the whole place

Elevation: 100 ft at most, and that's optional Rating: Very easy, literally a walk in the park Pace: Leisurely stroll, lots of stops for pictures

Thanks to Barbara we discovered this amazingly lovely place last summer. While what we have already seen has been spectacular, we have been anxiously anticipating the early spring display of daffodils - fields of daffodils, whole hillsides of daffodils! Plus other varieties of early spring blooms. Cost is \$20 per person, \$18 for ages 65+, or we can get a group rate of \$16 each for 10 or more people, so sign up early! And that can be applied toward the purchase of a \$50 annual pass before you leave, if you choose, as a few of us did last summer. A small café sells sandwiches, salads, beverages, etc., with ample seating in a nice shaded area for dining. (They ask that you not bring anything but water onto the grounds.) This is definitely an opportunity to bring a nonhiking spouse and/or other family member. And since it's not really a hike, just comfy walking shoes and casual attire will be fine. And it's a great place for pictures; make sure you've got lots of battery - you'll need it! Contact John Rowland, (early!) jrowland 1@hotmail.com or 423 802-7704, or for our folks more down Georgia way, contact Barbara McCollum, bpmccollum@yahoo.com or 770.289.7143.

Check them out: https://www.gibbsgardens.com/



Upcoming Outings

Kennesaw Mtn. Loop Trail Saturday March 16, 2019

Location: Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park,

Kennesaw, GA Distance: 5.8 miles Elevation Gain: 900 feet Rating: Moderate Pace: Standard

Driving Time: 1 hour 45 minutes approx.

This is a 5.8 mile moderately difficult loop that begins and ends at the Visitor Center. The trail climbs Big and Little Kennesaw Mountains providing pretty overlook opportunities as it winds through the forest. The footing has lots of rocks and tree roots. We will follow the Red Loop on the attached map. Contact Sonja Parker at sonjaparker@windstream.net



Smokies, AT/Boulevard/Trillium Gap Saturday March 23, 2019

Location: Smokies Distance: 17.0 miles

Elevation Gain: 2200 feet over first 8.1 miles. Descent 3800

feet in 8.9 miles Rating: Strenuous Pace: Standard Drive Time: 2+ hrs

We'll start by dropping our cars at the Rainbow Falls Trailhead in Gatlinburg and shuttle up Highway 441 to Newfound Gap. Heading north on the AT, we'll hike 2.7 miles to The Boulevard Trail ascending about 1000 feet. We'll then follow The Boulevard Trail its entire 5.4 miles, gaining another 1200 feet on our journey to LeConte. At LeConte, we'll intersect with the Trillium Gap Trail which descends steeply for the first 5.5 miles to Grotto Falls, where we'll have a stream crossing that, depending on water levels, may be a rock hop or may require a ford. From Grotto Falls it's a more moderate descent the final 3.5 miles back to our cars. To register, contact hike leader Ken Smith at KenSmith323@gmail.com or call at 864-809-1800.

Upcoming Outings

Fort Mtn., Gahuti Backcountry Trail Saturday March 23, 2019

Location: Fort Mountain State Park, Chatsworth, GA

Distance: 8 miles Elevation Gain: 1551 feet Rating: Strenuous Pace: Standard

Driving Time: Approximately 1 ½ hours from Chattanooga This trail is an 8-mile moderately trafficked loop trail in Fort Mountain State Park, located near Chatsworth, GA. In Tim Homan's book The Hiking Trails of North Georgia he describes the first 2.6-mile section as a "tortuous, undulating route". It's not an easy hike! We will park at the Cool Spring Overlook and hike the Loop clockwise, stopping for lunch on the trail before heading back to our cars. For those of you who are interested, the additional 1.8 miles of interconnected trails to the Old Stone Tower and the mysterious Stone Wall can be hiked from where we're parked as well. To register contact Susan Basch, 706-633-6159 or sbasch@nexband.com.

Smokies backpack, Chasteen Creek, Hughes Ridge, Bradley Fork Thursday-Saturday March 28-30, 2019

Will drive to Cherokee the afternoon of the 28th of March. Spend night at Smokey Mountain Inn and Suites (rooms being held). Hike out of Smokemont - Chasteen to Hughes to Peck's Corner shelter the 29th of March. Hike back to Smokemont via upper Bradley Fork 30th of March. Reservation required for shelter and 9 currently on the list. To get on the list (if there's room) contact Che at mtnhikerche@bellsouth.net.

Abrams Falls via Little Bottoms Saturday March 30, 2019

Location: Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Distance: 11 miles

Elevation Gain: 1,200 feet in rollercoaster fashion

Rating: Strenuous Pace: Standard Driving Time: 2 hrs

We'll enter the SW corner of the park at the Abrams Creek ranger station, where we'll leave the cars. After hiking through the nearby campground, we'll cover a short section of Cooper Road trail, then turn onto Little Bottoms trail/manway. Up over a steep ridge, back down to the river for a while, then up some more, we'll connect with Hatcher Mtn trail. A quick downhill to the river again, and we'll use the Abrams Falls trail to reach the falls. If it's still been as rainy as it has been, water shoes might come in

handy on an early creek crossing. And you might want to wade a little in the pool below the falls! Early spring wildflowers should be out, the waterfalls itself should be strong, and after the hike we'll likely make a little side trip drive and another half -mile walk to check out Look Rock Tower on the Foothills Parkway. Dinner will be at Pizzeria Venti in Vonore! Contact John Rowland, jrowland_1@hotmail.com, or 423 802-7704.



Upcoming Outings

Len Foote Inn day hike Saturday April 6, 2019

Location: near Amicalola Falls, GA

Distance: 10 miles

Elevation Gain: ~1000 ft up and down

Rating: Moderately strenuous

Pace: Standard

Driving time: 2 hours from Chattanooga

This will be a 5 mile in and back hike for a total of 10 miles. The hike rating is moderate. If you have never been to the Hike Inn before, this is a good chance to see the facility. The CHC just completed its annual hike there in February and all had a great time. Bring your lunch and hiking supplies. We will have lunch in the dining room at the Inn. They supply beverages such as iced tea, water, and lemonade. There is a tip box for day hikers. You will have a chance to explore the Inn and see what it has to offer. Contact Tim Chomyn at chomyn@catt.com or (706) 346-6746 if interested.

Big South Fork car camp Friday-Sunday April 12-14, 2019

Location: Big South Fork Nat'l River & Rec Area

Drive Time: 2.5 hrs

Back to Bandy Creek Campground, complete with heated bathhouses and hot showers for those camping wanna-be's or newbies! We'll do the usual set of hikes starting with the 4.6 mile O&W Railroad Bridge hike on Friday afternoon. Then we'll make the 5.5 mile loop from Twin Arches down to Charit

Creek Lodge and back on Saturday. Sunday we'll do the 5.6 mile Angel Falls Overlook hike (at right). Last time we did this in the spring we found lots of wildflowers! And on the way up and back I'll definitely make time for burgers and oldfashioned shakes at



Cumberland Mtn General Store; yum! Campsites will need to be reserved, so please let me know as early as possible if you want to join us. Campsites are \$10 per night with a Golden Age/Golden Access/America the Beautiful senior pass (I'll need serial numbers so we can have one at each site). With individual tents, 4 per campsite is the norm. So I'm thinking 3 campsites, maybe 4 if there's that much interest. Campsite fees plus purchased firewood will probably come to around \$7-10 per person. Leader is John Rowland, contact at jrowland 1@hotmail.com or 423 802-7704.

Benton MacKaye backpack Friday-Monday April 26-29, 2019

Location: Great Smoky Mountains National Park, NC This time it's a 3 day/2 night backpack of BMT Section #21 - 26.5 miles, from Lakeshore Drive west of Bryson City to Smokemont Campground (also known/qualifies as GSMNP 900 Noland Creek, Pole Road Creek, Martins Gap, Newton Bald trails). Since group size will be limited to 8 per GSMNP rules, sign up early. Contact Cathy Love, lovecat@charter.net

Reports from the Field

Bear Paw, Chestnut Mtn Loop Saturday February 2, 2019

After a string of uncertain weather, seven of us were delighted with the beautiful day we had for our hike. Starting from the Ocoee Whitewater Center, we crossed the Olympic Bridge over

the Ocoee River and started up the Bear Paw Loop which connects to the Chestnut Mtn. Loop. After completing that loop, we joined the other half of the Bear Paw Loop back to the Visitor Center. The hike turned out to be about 9 miles instead of the 7.2 advertised, but nobody seemed to mind! Enjoying the day and our hike were Steve Barnes, John Budka, Tim Chomyn, Rick Glisson, Lindy Johnson and Joe Teringer. Susan Basch reporting.





Pictures above from Rick



Picture from Tim

Reports from the Field

Blue Loop, Shackleford Ridge Park, Mushroom Rock, Middle Creek

Wednesday February 6, 2019

Despite the cloudy sky and fine mist, hikers turned out to stretch their legs on this pretty trail on Signal Mountain. We approached the trail head via Sam Powell Trail named for our legendary friend and trail advocate who just passed away. The access today was from the kiosk at the parking lot for the football field at the Signal Mtn. Middle/High School. Our direction was clockwise from this point on the Blue Loop with a spur to Mushroom Rock and back. There are maps online for the sequence of trails in the park, but some trails are not clearly marked so a bit hard to follow. None-the-less all made it around before hard rain did set in. Especially noted were the vast areas of ground pine spreading through the forest. Headed off in different directions and especially to Rollo's Bar and Grill were Ronnie Williams, Betsy Darken, Wendy Gunn, Suzanne Dorough, Wanda McCarter, Cecile Shenouda, Sue Christensen, Bill Kinnaman, Charlie Breeding, Joe Teringer, Renee Grace, Stormy McGauley, Wayne Chambers, Spears McAllester, Doug Graydon, John Budka, Susan Garrett leading, and Che Carico reporting.

Pine Log Creek Saturday February 9, 2019

Pine Log Creek Hike - February 9, 2019 This Saturday hike of 4.6 miles and 800 ft of elevation gain just east of Adairsville started out on the chilly side in the high 30's but warmed up to near 50 deg near the end of the hike. The hike was a double loop winding through a beautiful rugged rolling forest of both deciduous and pine trees. Pine Log Creek is steeped in history, the former location of a Cherokee town that spanned one mile along the creek's level, fertile banks. The village's history spanned centuries: Spanish explorer De Soto visited the village in 1570, Chief Yellow Bird signed the Treaty of Hopewell here in 1785. Centuries later, many important Cherokee chieftains, including Ridge, Vann, and Hicks, were born in the thriving village. More recently, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camped nearby and created the rock quarry on the trail's eastern arc. There were a total of 9 hikers on the day. Yellow daffodils were the only flowers seen and they were very near the trailhead. The trail although rated moderate was quite easy to hike being devoid of most roots and rocks. Hiking half way brought us to the rock quarry. The water was still, clear and blue green in color. Large rocks below the surface were quite visible. This was the setting for a group photo and break before heading back out onto the trail. The second half of the hike was the more strenuous with a decent climb through pine needle padded trails near the top. The descent with the trees devoid of leaves offered good views of the surrounding hills that would have otherwise been obscured during summer time. Following the hike, a number of us met at Cracker Barrel in Adairsville for lunch. Hikers included Noel and Terri Holcomb, Brad and Amanda Kinder, Boe Rudder, Sonja Parker, Wayne Chambers, Tim Choymn and Bill Needham leading.

Reports from the Field





Pine Log Creek pictures above from Tim, below from Bill





Len Foote Hike Inn overnight Wednesday-Thursday February 13-14, 2019

The trip to the Hike Inn seems to have become an annual trek. Several years ago, Wayne Chambers discovered that often in the months of January and February the Lodge offers half price deals. Until this discovery the dates for the trip had been chosen randomly and with average participation. The half price deal has led to filling the Lodge with Chattanooga Hiking Club members and friends - 34. This very comfortable setting features great food for dinner and breakfast. Upon arrival the hikers settled into their rooms, gathered for hot chocolate, coffee, and cookies, and wandered down to the Sunrise Room. Here they spent time laughing, telling tall tales, working the hardest puzzle John or Stormy can pull off of the shelf, and playing the newest "poker" game LRC (Left Right Center) with high stakes - quarters! The dinner bell rang at 6, great food was served, a program presented, and the migration began back to the Sunrise Room where a wood fire was fueled throughout the evening, and the guitar picking and singing commenced. This little bit of paradise also offers hot showers! Happy hikers thanked Wayne for organizing again this year and for discovering the half price deal!!! Che Carico, reporting.

Reports from the Field



Picture above from Tim; pictures below from Teresa





Pictures below from Tim





Reports from the Field

Tennessee Riverwalk Wednesday February 13, 2019

While many of the CHC were embarking on the annual pilgrimage to Len Foote Inn, a small group remaining behind met at Chickamauga Dam in Chattanooga for an urban amble along the Tennessee Riverwalk. Weather was delightfully rainless that morning, but water pouring through gates in the dam created whitecaps on the rushing river. We were amazed and awed to observe at the outset of our hike a huge heron standing majestically on a perch above the water's surface (identified only later by this reporter as a Great Blue Heron in his spring breeding plumage). At a rather brisk pace we walked several miles to the Riverpoint trailhead, then turned off to explore along the South Chickamauga Creek Greenway as it heads toward the Sterchi Farm segment. We found a loop off the Riverwalk trail near the creek to be submerged and impassable. Including the return trip, we covered nearly 6 miles. Several of the group went on to lunch at Sitar restaurant downtown. Enjoying a morning's walk without raindrops were Gail Stokes, Jenny Hopkins, Larry Parks, Spears McAllester, Susan Basch, Joy Ward, Delores Ladd, and Edie Behringer, reporting.

Possum Creek Gorge Wednesday February 13, 2019

Heiss Mtn. Road to Perkins Point and back. Hikers Jean Dickinson & Bill Kinnaman. It was a bit chilly when we stepped onto the trail...33 degrees. This section of the trail becomes a real challenge in about ½ mile and the rest of the way to Perkins Point over rocks and stone steps going down into the gorge, across very slippery bridges covered with a heavy slick frost. Everything was wet and slippery. Bill and I hiked a cautious hike, took our time, and I'm proud to say we completed this section there and back with no mishaps. There were so many beautiful things to see today. The impressive scale and grandeur of the cliffs covered in miniature waterfalls and beads of water dropping like pearls everywhere you looked. BUT we never expected to see flowers! You know Mother Nature, she just loves surprises. Bill gets the credit for seeing them first and pointing them out to me. I just had to snap their picture. Brave little Violet beauties. Big Possum Creek was living up to its name today. You could hear its roar from quite a distance away. The bridge over the creek was covered with wet, partially frozen green slime. We both kept a firm grasp on the guard rail as we slid across. Nature always ends up boggling one's normal day by presenting you something totally out of the norm. In our case it was a shoe print, of all things, in stone. Looks to be a men's 10-10 ½. Really? At the end of our in-and-back-out hike we had covered 7 miles of God's Cathedral...we came away awed and humbled. Jean Dickinson reporting.

Reports from the Field

Cloudland Connector, Ascalon to Nickajack Saturday February 16, 2019

Our group made the short drive up Lookout Mountain and after a brief stop at Nickajack proceeded to the Ascalon trailhead where we met a few more folks from our Georgia contingent. It was a cloudy and moist day but the seemingly endless rain from the preceding days had thankfully paused. It was a nice surprise to have double digit participation for a Saturday hike, but it may have been attributable to 'cabin fever'. As we proceeded along the initial section toward Five Points the group gradually separated into three waves. Although there were quite a few mud holes and even flowing streams on the trail, these were no major obstacle since the trail is wide and well maintained. Never the less most of us ended up with wet feet before the day was done. We made the best of the wet conditions and navigated a few slick bridges over roaring reaches of Long Branch and several rock hops that are very rare on this section of the Cloudland Connector Trail. The leading wave finished well ahead of those of us in the last group as we stopped for a trail side snack and plodded toward the Nickajack terminus. There were a lot of lichen covered boulders, mountain laurel and rhododendron and some distant views which aren't visible in other seasons due to the thick vegetation. Those enjoying a welcome respite from a wet winter included Richard Park, Joe Teringer, Lindy Johnson, Kimmy Randolph, Rick Glisson, Tim Chomyn, Wayne Chambers, John Budka, Barbara McCollum, Terri Holcomb's, Brian and Amy Kinder, Susan Basch, Boe Rudder, and Steve Barnes reporting. Special thanks to Pam Park for shuttle help and Susan for sweeping.





Pictures above from Tim; pictures below from Rick





Outings Schedule

03/00/10	Gibbs Gardens, GA	Rowland/McCollum
03/16/19	Kennesaw Mtn, GA	S Parker
03/23/19	Smokies, AT/Blvd/Trillium Gap	K Smith
03/23/19	Ft Mtn, Gahuti Loop	S Basch
03/28-30/	19 Smokies Hughes Ridge backpa	ck Chambers/Carico
03/30/19	Smokies, Abrams Falls/Little Bot	toms J Rowland
04/06/19	Len Foote Hike Inn day hike	T Chomyn
04/12-14/	19 Big South Fork car camp	J Rowland
04/20/19	Smokies, Meigs Mtn/Meigs Creek	K Smith
04/20/19	Shakerag Hollow	M Boggs
04/24-25/	19 Virginia Creeper bike ride	W Chambers
04/26-29/	19 BMT backpack (Smokies)	C Love
04/27/19	Tommy Pt, Savage Gulf	J Rowland

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, notification of each week's plan is sent out by email on Sunday or Monday. Please call Che at (423) 718-9271, leave your email address, and ask to be added to the group list; or email her at MidWeek@chatthiking.com and likewise ask to be added to the group list.

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 unmaintained 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, email, text, etc., 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

Did you notice that this newsletter has two pages of Upcoming Outings? ...TWO!... That's a first, in my memory! Yay, us! And special thanks to newer members stepping up to lead outings!

More from Len Foote, from Tim





More from Gibbs Gardens



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) 633-6159

Membership Database - Susan Basch (706) 633-6159

Outings - Barbara McCollum (770) 289-7143

Boe Rudder (423) 400-1103

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

Trail Maintenance - Steve Barnes (423) 339-3019

Boe Rudder (423) 400-1103

Midweek Outings - Cheryl Carico (423) 718-9271

Website: chatthiking.com (includes link to newsletter)