



## Newsletter of the Chattanooga Hiking Club

October 2019

### 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.

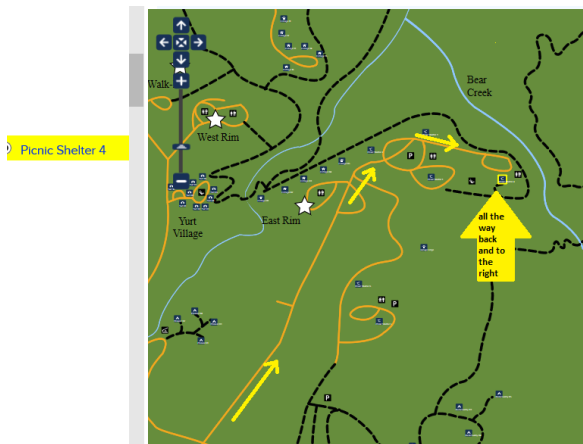
### Next meeting – Monday October 7, 2019

Jordan Sikkema from Tennessee State Parks will be giving us an in-depth power point update on the Cumberland Trail, including a short history, current status, plus current and future projects. Jordan came here from Illinois during his high school years, and came to love the mountains and hiking. He has a degree in Biology and Chemistry, plus a masters in Environmental Studies, with a thesis on Large Flowered Skull-cap, a rare plant found only here in the area, including on CT property. Jordan has been with State Parks for 4 years.

### Our 30th Anniversary Gathering

2019 marks our 30th year, so we're going to have a picnic at Cloudland Canyon on Saturday, October 19. There will be covered dishes to feed the multitudes, a little bit of hiking (or maybe more for those with more energy), lots of current members, but hopefully lots of former members or friends that we just don't see much any more. So mark the date on your calendars, round up some old pictures, dust off your best tall tales, and join us for a day of hiking, food, friendship, and laughter!

Susan will be sending out an email soon with more details.



## Making

# TRACKS



### Special Report

### Happy 30th Birthday to Us!

The Chattanooga Hiking Club came into being on May 22, 1989. This year, 2019, it is 30 years old.

Mary Young, one of the club's founding and most active members recapped the club's history and activities when she wrote "Happy 10th Birthday to Us!!!" in May 1999. It can be viewed on the club's website under "About Us," "History." (Mary passed away September 8, 2014.)

Susan Faidley, a current member since early 1996, was a sparkplug for the club, leading hikes and backpack trips and serving as Outings Coordinator from 2000 to 2005. During our December 2003 Christmas Party, she reported on "The State of our Outings for 2004." Susan incorporated it in the article she wrote for the January 2004 newsletter. It almost serves as a 15th year report, and also can be found on the website. (Susan moved away in 2011.)

Today, the club continues to offer outings (hikes, backpack trips, car camps, and occasional "other" activities) each month for both our weekend and Wednesday hikers. Most of these outings are local (within a 75-mile radius), but it is not uncommon to venture to the Smokies (or into Georgia or North Carolina). Sometimes, further.

Several current and past club members have hiked the entire Appalachian Trail, and several are section hiking portions of it toward the day they will have also completed the entire AT. Some also have hiked all, or a portion of, other "long" trails.

And some have led members on trips to hike and experience other distant U.S. places, such as western National Parks (notably Betty Petty). Others have taken members to hike or backpack in other countries (notably Susan Faidley).

Returning from a hike in January 2004, a carload of hikers decided to make completing all of the trails in the Smokies (nearly 800 miles) a goal. They (with others) became the "Trail Baggers of the Smokies" (TBOTS). By the end of 2006, 7 members had achieved this goal. (Subsequently, several other club members have now also done the same, resulting in over a dozen members who have done so.) Wayne Chambers (3rd TBOTS member to complete all of the trails) has continued to lead outings and is now helping a new group to hike/backpack all of the Smokies' trails.

The club has helped build or maintain trail for other organizations, including Cherokee National Forest, Prentice Cooper State Forest, Tennessee River Gorge Trust, Lula Lake Land Trust, Cumberland Trails Conservancy, and the Benton MacKaye Trail Association. (continued on page 2)

<b>Special Report</b>
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(continued...)

Communications, along with willing outings leaders, and full outing schedules have bound the club together for 30 years.

The club's 1st monthly newsletter was published in June 1989 and continues currently. Betty Petty (a very active club member from the early 1990s) assumed the editorship of the club's monthly newsletter in May 2000. She died suddenly and tragically in December 2013. John Rowland then stepped up and took over the task of publishing our newsletter, which at the time was mailed to each member, monthly. In an effort primarily to avoid raising our membership dues, John moved the newsletter onto a digital format with the May 2015 issue and has added color pictures to the "Reports from the Field" articles.

In June 1997, Betty Petty established a club website. Following her death, John Rowland also succeeded in researching and re-establishing the website. He has now updated it and expanded its format and content.

Susan Faidley's "State of our Outings for 2004" report dealt heavily on the activities of the weekend hikers/backpackers. At the time, this was perhaps the largest and most visible segment of the club. That segment has since dwindled in numbers and activity level. Some of its members have retired (with some now active with the Wednesday hikers). Some have moved away. Grandparenting duties have commanded the time of some. (And, allegedly some have just gotten older.) The existence of "meet up" groups has captured some of our members, as well as some other nearby hiking organizations.

The Wednesday hikers are now the more visible and active segment. They are going farther afield and doing more diverse hikes. It is not uncommon for there to be 20-30 participants for one of their weekly outings. The continuing growth and success of the Wednesday hiking segment is directly attributable to Che Carico, who took over organizing and leading these hikes in 1993 and is still energetically doing so. The number of Che's hikes is certainly over 1,200!!

For 30 years, the success of the outings schedule (and therefore the participation and enjoyment of our members) has been the willingness of members volunteering to lead outings. Certain members can always be depended upon to volunteer: John Rowland (who led his 1st hike in 2004) continues to lead hikes, backpack trips, and car camps. Wayne Chambers, and now Barbara McCollum, have been consistent willing leaders. And, of course, Che! I'm pleased to see some new names now beginning to appear as leaders. Please keep it up! We need more of you to do so.

Club membership during the 2004-2006 period was in the 250/275 range. It subsequently began dropping, eventually to less than 100. With Barbara McCollum as current Outings Coordinator, the Saturday outings schedule is becoming noticeably fuller. Due to Che's and Barbara's involvement, our club membership will undoubtedly pass the 150 mark this year.

Under the leadership of current president, Gary Petty, the club's Constitution & By-laws have been updated and an Executive Board activated. (During the previous 20 years, decisions and club direction were primarily discussed during the monthly get-togethers to fold, address, and prepare newsletters for mailing.)

<b>Special Report</b>
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(continued...)

Our bi-monthly club meetings are no longer held in what was the Chattanooga Nature Center. Currently they are held in the REI conference room. Each meeting has a speaker or presentation related to hiking, an organization, or activities important or of interest to us.

The club's financial position is presently stable enough that we have been able to make a donation to several organizations during the last few years. These have included the Cumberland Trails Conference, Tennessee River Gorge Trust, Southeastern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS), and the National Park Service (for new signage on Lookout Mountain).

With its proximity to mountains, water, and woodlands, Chattanooga is most fortunate. Federal, State, Municipal, and private entities make large expanses of these wonderful and beautiful features readily available for the use and enjoyment of the public. (It is sad to think of the large segment of our population that is oblivious to, or unable to take advantage of, these opportunities.)

The numerous "Reports from the Field" in each of our newsletters attest to the fact many members of the Chattanooga Hiking Club avail themselves of these opportunities each month (in all seasons, and sometimes in all sorts of weather). The age range of these people is about 50 years! It is due to the time and efforts of our outing leaders, our officers, and the others supporting/assisting them (recognized, and unrecognized) that we are such an active and successful club!

I began hiking with the club in late 1996. Doing so has allowed me to visit and see so many wonderful places I would not have otherwise known and enjoyed. It has also resulted in meeting so many diverse, interesting, and wonderful people. (I even married one of them!)

I have also enjoyed leading over 100 outings, serving as co-, and then, Trail Maintenance Coordinator for a number of years, Vice President, President (5½ years), and Treasurer (8 years). Guess I might be considered somewhat of the club's historian, which likely is why I was asked to write something acknowledging our 30th birthday.

So, . . . Happy 30th Birthday to us!!! Our 1st 30 years have been full and great, bringing thousands of people outdoors! Let's keep it up during our 2nd 30 years. (This can be accomplished with the help of new volunteers to step up and lead outings and serve the club in other supportive capacities).

- Donald Box

## Upcoming Outings

### **Virginia Creeper Bike Ride Wednesday-Thursday October 9-10, 2019**

Location: Abingdon & Damascus, VA  
Drive up to Abingdon on Wednesday; bike ride on Thursday.  
Contact Wayne Chambers, 423-593-3717, for more details.

### **Len Foote Inn dayhike Saturday October 12, 2019**

Location: Amicalola Falls State Park, GA  
Distance: 10 miles  
Pace: Moderate  
Elevation Gain: 800 ft.  
Rating: Moderate/Strenuous because of distance  
Driving time: 1 hour 30 minutes

The Chattanooga Hiking Club has been to the Hike Inn for several overnight hikes. It is called the Hike Inn because you have to hike 5 miles to get there. It is a unique Inn that has 20 rooms and is Gold Star Leed Certified for its conservation and ecological friendly structure. If you have not been there before, this would be a good time to take a peek. The hike starts above Amicalola Falls. We will start on the Approach Trail then split off to the Hike Inn Trail. It is 5 miles to the Inn. At the Inn there will be a dining room where we can have lunch. They usually have tea, lemonade and water to drink. Sometimes they have snacks. After lunch we will hike 5 miles back to the cars. Hike leader is Tim Chomyn (706)346-6746 chomyn@catt.com.

### **West Rim Loop Saturday October 19, 2019**

Location: Cloudland Canyon State Park, GA  
Distance: 4.9 miles  
Pace: Moderate  
Elevation Gain: 250 ft.  
Rating: Moderate

This hike will start and end at picnic area #4 in Cloudland Canyon State Park. This trail begins with lovely vistas from the picnic area before descending into the canyon of Sitton Gulch. It then crosses Daniels Creek and climbs large rock slabs onto the west rim of the gulch. The trail then begins the "lollipop loop" portion of the trail before curving back along the rim of Sitton Gulch. There are a number of nice overlooks along the trail. The hike will finish in plenty of time to allow us to join our 30th Anniversary Picnic! To register for this hike contact hike leader Susan Basch at sbasch@nexusband.com

### **BMT, Tapoco to Fontana, Beech Gap to Tellico R. Friday-Saturday October 25-26, 2019**

Location: Robbinsville, NC and Cherohala Skyway  
Distance: 14.1 miles (Friday) Tapoco/Hwy. 129 to Fontana  
Elevation change: 2,050 ft. ascent, 1,550 descent  
Distance: 12 miles (Saturday) Beech Gap to Tellico River  
Elevation change: 450 ft. ascent, 2,400 descent  
Rating: Strenuous  
Pace: Standard

You will need lodging on the night of October 24 at Tapoco Lodge or in Robbinsville, and the 25th likely in the Tellico Plains area (check with Barbara about lodging). Some have made previous arrangements at Tapoco Lodge for Thursday night. Check with the hike leader if you want to be added to the waiting list. Others may need to secure reservations in Robbinsville (Quality Inn or Phillips Motel). To register for the hike, contact Barbara McCollum at bpmccollum@yahoo.com or 770.289.7143.

## Reports from the Field

### **Prentice Cooper State Forest Wednesday September 4, 2019**

If you have walked the well known CT trails in this forest you will have seen the many jeep trails taking off in different directions from Tower Road and often crossing the well marked familiar trails. Today we explored and gained a better understanding as we hiked a sequence of these jeep trails put together by Don Deakins. Cars were placed at the trailhead for Mullins Cove trail and Indian Rock House Trail. The hike began at Persimmon Branch Road and included Maple Branch Loop and Short Creek Road which terminates at Lusk Cemetery on Tower Drive. After reading a few grave stones and crossing through the cemetery Don led us on East Brow Road to the CT crossing. Here we turned left into the woods, following the trail back to the trailhead. Distance @ 4.5 miles through dense forest, open spaces with far off views of distant ridges on this part of the plateau, ups and downs on wide jeep trails, and narrow forest trails. The cornmeal was used frequently to mark the turns that only Don knew! Happy once again to follow Don and Carol were: Bill Kinnaman, Susan Garrett, Suzanne Dorough, Betsy Parson, Barry Ligon, Beverly Ligon, Cecile Shenouda, Stormy McGauley, ( Bob Garrett Meal Plan at River Drifters), Che Carico reporting and Don and Carol Deakins leading.

### **North Chick Blue Hole Wednesday September 11, 2019**

Meeting place was recreation area at North Chickamauga Creek. Down near the picnic tables we accessed the trail behind the gate and hiked on down to where Charlie spotted the sign: Blue Hole. Here you cross the creek (today a rock hop) and hike gently upstream to the famous Blue Hole. It is a gathering place for the young at heart who enjoy jumping off the huge bolder at water's edge. Found such a group here today enjoying the jumping challenge and crystal clear water. The trail goes on past this point to another swimming hole that has, or did have, a rope swing. We went up the trail until we came across a big blow down and the trail became more overgrown. A picnic was planned for lunch time so this seemed like a good time to turn around. Up and back on the trail to the Blue Hole were: Susan Garrett, Bill Kinnaman, Charlie Breeding, Edith Behringer, Wayne Chambers, Che Carico reporting.

Trish Appleton has a beautiful home and property on the lake. She is generous with sharing! This day we gathered there with picnic type foods, put it all out on a common table, set up folding chairs, and enjoyed the shade, breeze, and conversation. Times like this are so good for getting together with those who are on the "injured list", surgery recoups, or just not prone to hike in the heat. Never short on food and never short on hearty appetites! Thanks Trish from too many to name in attendance today!

**Reports from the Field**

**Flat Creek Loop, Aska Trail System  
Blue Ridge, GA  
Saturday September 14, 2019**

Joe Teringer and I enjoyed the coolest morning we've had in a long time! Although the trail had it's share of ups and downs, with an elevation gain of approximately 1000 feet, it is a pretty hike, and we knocked off 5.7 miles quickly. Afterwards we braved the tourists in Blue Ridge and had a very nice lunch at Fightingtown Tavern. A good day all around! Susan Basch leading and reporting.



**Reports from the Field**



Audubon Acres pictures from Susan

**Audubon Acres  
Wednesday September 18, 2019**

Today many were introduced to the trail system and historical elements of Audubon Acres for the first time and some were reintroduced to a beautifully restored park after years of absence. The trails are easily followed with trail signs at each intersection and using the map picked up in the visitors' center. Volunteers must work hard to keep the shaded trails clear and paths cut around large meadows! Eagle Scouts have built benches alongside the trails and these are often creek side. Strong bridges have replaced the ones originally built in 1948! Picnic tables are scattered around under the shade of large and spreading trees. The historical buildings were not open today but can be entered when taking a tour utilizing headsets. Tom Carter proudly pointed out the Wauhatchie Forest Preschool (there is a website) built by the East Brainerd Kiwanis Club. Children were there today engaged in nature projects. Audubon Acres is truly a delightful recreation area for families, birders, and hikers. Happy to have walked in this lovely area and eager to support with membership dollars were: Bill Kinnaman, Renee Grace, Betsy Darken, Wayne Chambers, Jenny Hopkins, Susan Basch, Beverly Ligon, Barry Ligon, Jenny Chandler, Larry Parks, Bill LaRoque, Suzanne Dorough, Che Carico reporting and Tom Carter leading.



It is the Wauhatchie Forest Preschool and they have a website if members want more info. The East Brainerd Kiwanis Club did the work on the shelter area.

**Bald River  
Saturday September 28, 2019**

We had a group of five start this 8.5 mile round trip hike. Joe Teringer, Rita Pendergast, Tod Roeder, Renee Roeder and me. Unfortunately, I bruised my foot about a half mile into the hike and did not finish it. Joe led the hike to the upper shoals where the group took a snack break before returning. According to all (except me) it was a great hike. Humidity was a little high, but the temperature didn't get above mid 90's. The Roeders are new members and Rita was a guest. The trail condition was good with just three downed trees and one slide. Saw very few yellowjackets on this trip. Look forward to doing it again in cold weather. Reporting: Boe Rudder



