



Newsletter of the
Chattanooga Hiking Club

March 2020

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 6, 2020

Welcome from the other officers, and thank you from all members to our new treasurer, Jenny Hopkins!



Making

TRACKS



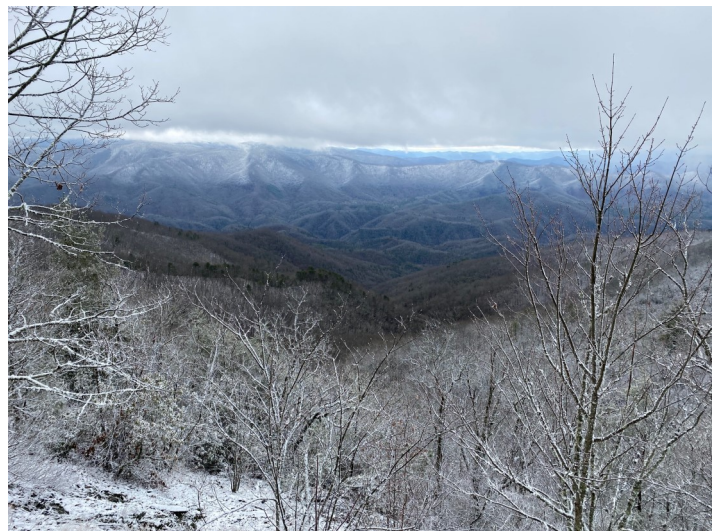
Reports from the Field

Smokies Shuckstack Loop Saturday January 25, 2020

Three hikers completed 15 miles and 3300 ft of climbing in near freezing conditions to the Shuckstack fire tower up the AT from Fontana Dam. We returned via Lost Cove trail and Lakeshore trail. We were treated to a nice light snow covering on the way up to Shuckstack but unfortunately heavy fog at the tower that did not permit much of a view. Lost Cove trail turned out to be a challenge with approximately six rather deep water crossings, which we completed by several techniques including crawling and sliding across logs and wading through the cold water! We did get several beautiful long range views including Fontana Lake, and finished off the day with a delicious dinner at Bojangles! Rick Glisson led the hike with Peter Williams and Celia Suarez also participating.



Pictures from Rick



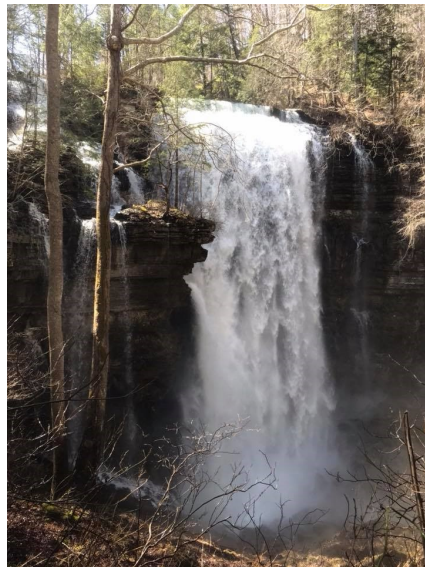
Upcoming Outings

Virgin Falls

Saturday March 7, 2020

Location: Sparta, TN
 Driving time: 2 hrs. one way
 Distance: 9-mile loop
 Elevation gain: 1,300 ft.
 Rating: Strenuous
 Pace: Standard

Virgin Falls Pocket Wilderness is one of the most unusual waterfall hikes (four falls on a 9-mile loop) within driving distance of Chattanooga. This hike offers 4 waterfalls, subterranean tributaries, and scenic overlooks. One of the most unusual aspects of the pocket wilderness is its karst features - Virgin Falls being a prime example. Its high-volume tributary bursts out of a cave and flows several hundred feet above ground, before plunging 110 feet. At the base of the falls it immediately disappears back underground. The hike also offers a great cave mouth at Big Laurel Falls, with its 80 ft. ceiling and expansive breadth. When we did this hike in March of 2018, it was spectacular! Dinner at The Cookie Jar in Dunlap is a definite possibility. To register, contact Barbara McCollum at bpmccollum@yahoo.com.



Virgin Falls in March, 2018 -picture from Rick Glisson

Smokies Old Settlers Trail

Friday-Saturday March 20-21, 2020

Location: Great Smoky Mountains National Park, TN
 Distance: 18 miles
 Elevation gain: slight
 Rating: Moderate
 Pace: Standard

The 18 mile trail will be divided over each day (approximately 9 miles each day). We will leave from the Food City at 7:00 AM Friday morning in Ooltewah and return Saturday evening. Contact Tim Chomyn at chomyn@catt.com or phone 706-346-6746 or Che at Mtnhikerche@bellsouth.net. Che has a block of rooms at the Comfort Inn in Newport. Make sure you contact Che for room reservations and prices, preference for roommate, and instructions for making your reservation.

Trail Maintenance

Saturday March 28, 2020

Watch the newsletter for details

Upcoming Outings

Wolf Ridge

Saturday April 4, 2020

Location: Cherokee National Forest
 Distance: 5.2 miles

We will walk the lower portion of the Wolf Ridge trail beginning from the Peavine-Sheeds Creek Road trailhead. It is a ridgetop route. After the first mile, it follows the Blue Ridge which is on the Tennessee Valley Divide. After 2.6 miles, we will stop at the junction with the old Chestnut Mtn. Trail where we will break for lunch before descending back along the trail - total distance is 5.2 miles at a moderate pace. Should have some good views of the surrounding mountains. Steve Barnes

Jacks River Falls via Beech Bottom

Saturday April 4, 2020

Location: Cohutta Wilderness
 Distance: 9.1 miles

Rating: Moderate to Strenuous

Moderate-strenuous 9.1 mile hike out-and-back. We will meet at the Ooltewah Food City (Exit 11) at 8:30 am. Trip leader is Betsy Darken at (423) 718-2060.

Chattanooga Connector/Moonshine trails

Saturday April 18, 2020

Location: Lookout Mountain
 Distance: 9 miles

Elevation gain: approx. 950 ft.

Rating: Moderate

Pace: Standard

We will park at Covenant College, then start down the Chattanooga Connector Trail heading south towards Lula Lake. We'll hike the White Lightning Trail, stop for lunch or a snack at the bridge over the Gerber Branch, hike up the Firewater Trail to the Bathtub Gin Trail, then back down the Firewater Trail to the Gerber Branch. We'll pick up the Chattanooga Connector Trail again there and hike that all the way back to our cars, for a total hike of about nine (9) miles. To register for this Hike contact hike leader Susan Basch at 706-633-6159 or sbasch@nexband.com.

Smokies - Long Hungry Ridge, Doe Knob, AT, Gregory Bald trails; and Wolf Ridge trail via Parson Branch

Saturday-Sunday April 25-26, 2020

Location: Great Smoky Mountains National Park, TN & NC
 Distances: 16.4 miles and around 13.9 miles

Elevation gains: 3500 ft and 1900'+

Rating: Strenuous

Contact hike leader Sandy Barlett to sign up or ask about the lodging/camping information. sandybarlett@gmail.com or 330-718-6245

More details on the website...

Reports from the Field

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**Little Soddy Creek Gorge
Wednesday January 29, 2020**

A perfect day for a morning only hike as rain in forecast that afternoon. It was sprinkling as we met at Tractor Supply and rather chilly but no worse for rain as the morning went on. It was like herding cats to place cars for the trail heads on Mowbray Pike Road and then at Hotwater/Sluder Lane! "Got 'er done" and off we went into the moist and verdant woods. This trail is quite varied with ups and downs, smooth path, rocky path, rock hopping creeks, bridges, huge boulder structures typical for the Cumberland Plateau standing tall above our heads, bluff view of the Tennessee Valley from high plateau bluff, and barren stretches of forest showing off the rolling ridges. Great history of mining and mining families for this stretch of CT - google to read. This is a really pretty yet challenging stretch of the Cumberland Trail we intend to conquer section by section (5.6 miles) Choices were made as some headed for home, some lunched on the trail and some went to Scottie's in Soddy Daisy for lunch: Todd Roeder, Joe Tehringer, Edith Behringer, Boe Rudder, Renee Grace, Bill Kinnaman, Betsy Darken, Stormy McGauley, Barbara Miller, Ed Stokes, Tim Chomyn, Jean Dickinson, Teresa Dean, Mac Dean, Susan Garrett, Betsy Parson, Rachel Bryant, Suzanne Dorough, Wanda McCarter, Che Carico reporting, Stormy and Susan in the lead!

**Len Foote Hike Inn overnight
Wednesday-Thursday February 12-13, 2020**

Only a hot shower, cheery fire, common room with puzzles and LRC, and a meal prepared by a 5 Star Chef could entice a vigorous band of CHC members to start up the trail to Len Foote Lodge with rain in the past few days and likely in the next two! Miraculously, only light rain (sprinkles) fell on us as we hiked to the Inn. Everyone had prepared for much worse with rain gear. We were warmly greeted by staff, hot water for tea and chocolate, coffee, and if you were lucky a chocolate brownie or piece of chocolate cake. Dinner did not disappoint - perfectly cooked pork loin, fresh and plentiful mixed salad greens, wild rice, green beans, delicious hot rolls, and cake. The program for anyone who would participate, was yoga instruction. Those not doing this retreated to the lobby to read, to the pot-bellied wood burning stove in the common room, took up places at the puzzle table, gathered around the table where new folks were taught how to play the whooping inspired LRC, or into a corner to tune the banjo, guitars newly purchased by the Inn, and voices! Before the night ended we had been greatly entertained by our two piece string band, vocals, and a stand-up comedian. New hikers were surprised and delighted along with all of us who actually knew what was coming.

Wayne Chambers began this club hike tradition many years ago. The participation has grown from about eight to filling the house! By choosing January or February and filling the house, the charge for our stay was half the normal charge. A real bargain for food, comfort, friendly conversation, and "professional" entertainment we will never forget! And by the way, the banjo carried up to the Inn weighed 25 pounds.

Sleep was mostly good except for the accidental setting off of the smoke alarm, maybe by nearby lightning and thunder! And yes, it did rain hard all night sparking fear of hiking out

(continued...)

in such rain. Not so! The rain completely stopped by 8:45 and the hikers began their hike out at 9:00 after a hearty breakfast of eggs, grits, gravy, biscuits, and sausage. So, a perfect ending to another celebration of friendship!

Che Carico, reporting Wayne Chambers, planning and leading.



Picture from Barbara



Pictures from John

Reports from the Field

Reports from the Field

More Len Foote pictures



Pictures from John

**Stringers Ridge
Saturday February 15, 2020**

What a beautiful day for a hike. The weather decided to play nice today. Eight hikers met at the Pinnacle Condos for the start of the hike. We hiked to the Stringers Ridge Trail head then hiked half of the trail to the Spears Road parking lot where we exited the trail. We added an urban hike as we walked to First Watch for breakfast/brunch. Bill Needham met us to eat due to the fact he is recovering from an injury. We had a wonderful breakfast/brunch with continuous laughter and conversations with friends. As always, the food did not disappoint. Thank you First Watch! After eating, we returned to finish the Stringers Ridge Trail. We hiked a total of 7 miles with a 1000 foot elevation change over the hike. We are already planning for another mixed hike that included an urban component, a trail component, and LUNCH! Thanks to our fellow hikers Tim and Elaine Chomyn, Joyce Campbell, Rita Pendergast, Susan Basch, Barbara McCollum, and Delores Ladd... Merry and Diehl Boggs, leading.



Pictures from Merry

Reports from the Field

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**CT sections, Signal Mtn schools to Signal Point
Wednesday February 19, 2020**

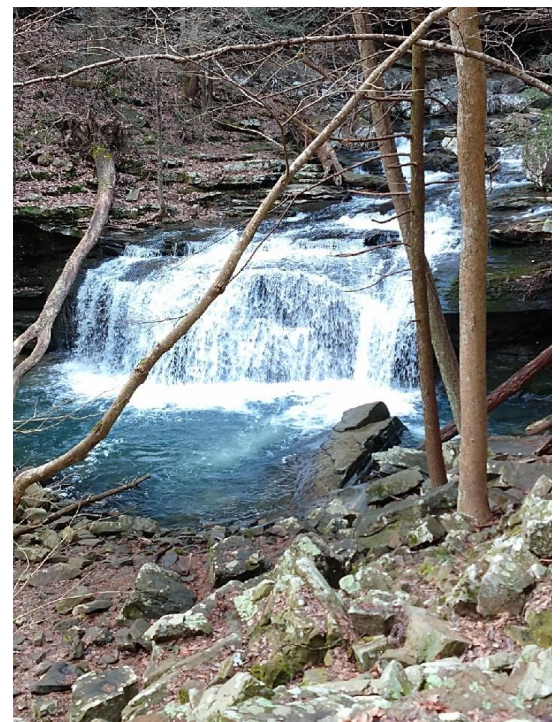
The clouds parted and the rain stopped for this hike. The meetup place was Signal Point on Signal Mountain, the southern terminus for the Cumberland Trail. We shuttled to the soccer fields below the Signal Mountain Middle High School. Stepping onto the blue trail and then the pink trail, we hiked around the property until we met the yellow/orange trail and then the orange trail (turn left) leading down into the gorge. Watch carefully to follow the orange trail as it turns right into the forest and runs alongside the Middle Creek. If you walk too far you will run into Middle Creek having gone too far! Today we followed the orange trail to the Rainbow Lake swinging bridge after walking under steep bluffs that showered us with dripping water. This was the case with the many rock hops and waterfalls along the trail - plentiful "falling" water! After the snack/lunch break at the Rainbow Lake campground, Charlie and Susan led most of the hikers along the CT back to Signal Point. A few chose to go upstream, find the trail up the "mountain", hike out at the Ohio Avenue trail head, and road walk back to Signal Point. This trail is challenging with rocks and roots, moderate elevation gains, and rock bluffs typical of the CT. Glad to have been challenged on a hike so close to home were: Todd Roeder, Betsy Darken, Teresa Dean, Mac Dean, Betsy Parson, Renee Grace, Bill Kinnaman, Mary Ann Langevin, Donna Koeninger, Susan Basch, Jenny Hopkins, Gary Petty, Wayne Chambers, Barbara Miller, Joy Ward, Ed Stokes, Che Carico reporting, Charlie Breeding and Susan Garrett leading (good job with corn meal arrows as this sequence had many turns). (pictures from Gary)

**Prentice Cooper Ransom Hollow Overlook
Saturday February 22, 2020**

With all the recent rain, I scratched the original plan to do a one-way from the CT parking area to Ransom Hollow Overlook, and then out to Tower Rd for a car shuttle. Instead we started at the Tower Rd parking area up from Snooper's Rock, and did an out-and-back to Ransom Hollow Overlook. We made the short side trip down to Hemlock Branch campsite just to check out the creek crossing, and it did look like it would have provided plenty of excitement! It was still a nice day and an enjoyable hike, with the great view provided by the overlook. Joining me were Rita Pendergast and Joe Teringer. On the way back out Tower Rd, Rita and I stopped to climb the tower. You get great views from up there; I recommend it to anyone on future trips to Prentice Cooper. John Rowland, leading and reporting.

**Cloudland Canyon Sitton Gulch
Saturday February 29, 2020**

Today's hike was an impromptu hike due to the forecast of a beautiful day and no RAIN! Diehl and I decided to plan a hike for Feb 29th, and we thought we should share with our hiking friends with Chattanooga Hiking Club. Thank you to Che and Gary for sharing the details of this hike. Seven hikers met at the Sitton Gulch Trail head for a Saturday morning to view the Cloudland Canyon waterfalls along the Sitton Gulch Trail. We were not disappointed. The waterfalls were beautiful as the picture shows. The weather was perfect. We met many hikers along the trail. Everyone was excited to have a sunny day. Surprisingly, there was no ice anywhere along the trail. Thank you to the hikers who participated in today's hike. We enjoyed meeting new friends, and all had fun visiting and talking along the way when we were not taking pictures. Hikers in attendance: Diehl and Merry Boggs, Monty Simmons, Wayne Chambers, Rita Pendergast, Carol and Tom Baker.



Picture from Merry

Outings Schedule

Other Stuff

03/07/20	Virgin Falls	B McCollum
03/20-21/20	Smokies Old Settlers trail	T Chomyn
03/28/20	Trail maintenance	B Rudder
04/04/20	Wolf Ridge	S Barnes
04/04/20	Jacks River Falls	B Darken
04/11/20	Keown Falls Loop	T Chomyn
04/18/20	Chattanooga Connector Trail	S Basch
04/25-26/20	Smokies Long Hungry Ridge & more	S Barlett
05/02/20	Smokies Porters Creek-Bull Head	C Carico
05/15/20	Virginia Creeper bike ride	W Chambers
06/06/20	Gee Creek	B Rudder
06/20/20	Pine Log Creek	B Needham
06/20/20	Mt Mitchell car camp	J Rowland

The passionate prime-time puzzlers at Len Foote did the entire AT in one day!



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** - Boe Rudder (423) 400-1103
- Secretary** - Susan Basch (706) 633-6159
- Membership Database** - Susan Basch (706) 633-6159
- Outings** - Barbara McCollum (770) 289-7143
- 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)

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.