



Newsletter of the
Chattanooga Hiking Club

April 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 June 1, 2020 (?)

**Don't forget to renew your membership!
On the website, under "About Us", then
under "Renewal Form".**

Well, this will be a different newsletter – and maybe the next two or three, as well. Along with many, many other things, our gatherings have become somewhat untenable. While getting outdoors, getting some exercise, and spending time with good friends is possibly even more constructive than before, it seems the "with good friends" part needs to be dialed back considerably. Carpooling is especially a concern. As a result, upcoming club outings have been cancelled or postponed; we'll try to keep you up to date.

We had a great looking program lined up for the April meeting – several of our members were going to tell us about their Camino across northern Spain. That has been tentatively moved to June.

If you do get out on the trail, by yourself or with one or two "DISTANT" friends, please be careful and stay safe! And if you're on Facebook and want to post some pictures from a hike you've done during this... whatever you call it, I'll gladly borrow a few of them for "mini outings reports" in the newsletter. Several of our members probably aren't on Facebook, and they might appreciate that. Or if you're not on Facebook but want to send me a picture or two via email (jrowland_1@hotmail.com), please do. Then at least we can see and appreciate that trails are still out there waiting for our return as a group.

Everybody, stay well!



Reports from the Field

Virgin Falls Saturday March 7, 2020

Spring Fever or maybe cabin fever was the motivation for 16 hikers to take on a 9-mile strenuous hike to Virgin Falls near Sparta, Tennessee. The temperatures were in the high 30's when we started hiking with some wind, but it turned into a beautiful sunny day with a high in the low 60's. The cable creek crossing at 1.5 miles was easily navigated and it was on to Big Laurel Falls for a few photos and then to the beautiful Virgin Falls where we enjoyed lunch. Some of the Virgin Falls virgins hiked the spur trail to the top of the Falls to see the cave where it actually begins. On the return out of the gorge, several stopped at the Sheep Cave for a "look see" and then it was just a slow trudge to the trailhead. Everyone agreed the hike was strenuous, but also readily agreed that Virgin Falls was worth the difficulty. Six in the group opted to stop at a club favorite, The Cookie Jar in Dunlap, but a 45-minute wait didn't sit well on our empty stomachs, so we moved on to Steve's Landing in Soddy Daisy for a delicious dinner. A huge slice of Italian Cream Cake, purchased at The Cookie Jar, was divided six ways and enjoyed by all. Enjoying a spectacular day on the trail were club members: Ed Stokes, Jenny Hopkins, Joe Teringer, John Rowland, John Wayne, Joyce Campbell, Mary Ann Langevin, Mary Ann Pawlowski, Renee Roeder, Rita Pendergast, Susan Basch, Tim Chomyn, Todd Roeder, Susan Holmes (newly joined) and James Hall (prospective member). Of note, ten of the six hikers hailed from north Georgia and all agreed that Tennessee offers some amazing hiking. Barbara McCollum, reporting.



Picture from Tim

Reports from the Field

Reports from the Field

More pictures from Virgin Falls



Pictures from Barbara

**Johnston Woods, McDonald, TN
Wednesday March 11, 2020**

Google Johnston Woods for complete information about the features of this 375 acre pristine property up the road towards Cleveland. It is an event site that offers shelters and picnic tables for group events, a wedding venue, catered meals for special events, a small kitchen for use by those who might want to hold a more informal event on the property, a lake, and hiking trails!! We drove up a winding road surrounded by woods only to come out into the open at the parking area and trailhead. There is a well-designed kiosk showing the trails that lead out from that spot in two directions forming a figure 8. The 4 mile offering is easy to follow and easy underfoot with minor ups and downs. No wildflowers just yet but surely there will be some later in the spring. Glad to have had a little more warmth and a new adventure close to home were: Gary Smith, Todd Roeder, Carla Schunk, Patti Giles, Wanda McCarter, Bill Kinnaman, Suzanne Dorough, Gary Petty, Stormy McGauley, Bob Shafto, Donna Mahrous, Betsy Parson, Diehl Boggs, Merry Boggs, Tom Long, Maureen Brock, Charlie Breeding, Joy Ward, Mary Anne Langevin, Betsy Darken, Teresa Dean , Mac Dean, Kathy Seymour, Ed Stokes, Renee Grace, Che Carico reporting, Bob Shafto leading.

**Sitton's Gulch
Wednesday March 18, 2020**

Our group of 14 hikers met at the Sitton's Gulch trailhead in Trenton and did our best to maintain social distancing while hiking along the creek to Hemlock Falls, which was gushing after the previous day's rain. Many beautiful wildflowers were blooming, with more to emerge. One lone jack-in-the-pulpit was spotted by eagle-eyed Barbara McCollum. We also saw bellwort, violets, mayapples, trout lilies, foamflower, hepatica, rue anemone, star chickweed, toothwort, purple phacelia, trillium, and more! A handful of hearty hikers continued climbing the stairs to Cherokee Falls, and some even added in the West Rim Loop! Hiking on this unseasonably warm morning were Susan Basch, Susan Garrett, Terri Holcomb, Bill Kinnaman, Barbara McCollum, Richard Park, Betsy Parsons, Bob Shafto, Monty Simmons, Ed Stokes, Joy Ward, Beverly and Barry Ligon, and Jenny Hopkins, reporting.



Star Chickweed from the archives

Reports from the Archives

Fall Creek Falls day hike

February 16, 2008

It was a beautiful and mostly sunny day for our drive across the Cumberland Plateau and through Sequatchie Valley to our hike beginning at Piney Falls. We did the Lower Loop which passes through Cane Creek Gulf, crossing a suspension bridge and on to a back-country campsite where we had lunch. Then, on to the Pawpaw Trail, which led us to the Nature Center and Cane Creek Falls. After a brief stop, most of the hikers followed the Woodland Trail to the BIG (Fall Creek) FALLS. Terry Smith, who had met us at Piney Falls, decided to hike two miles further to his car (12 miles total). The drivers (in a pre-arranged car) went to our beginning point to pick up our cars and met the others at the 'BIG FALLS'. Other hikers were Tony Cook, Donald Box (who lost his camera which was found a few days later and returned to him – THANK YOU), Bill Kinnaman, Bob Fanning, John Rowland, Cheryl Morris, John Hyler, Steve Arbour, Alice Coffman, Monty Simmons, Hoss Baghay, Linda O'Neal, Susan Faidley, Tom and Marlene Blewett and Boodie Fox, reporting.

(Editor's note:
Three days later
one of these hikers
who really
struggled that day
underwent a
double or triple
bypass!
...John



Len Foote Inn Weekend

March 1-2, 2008

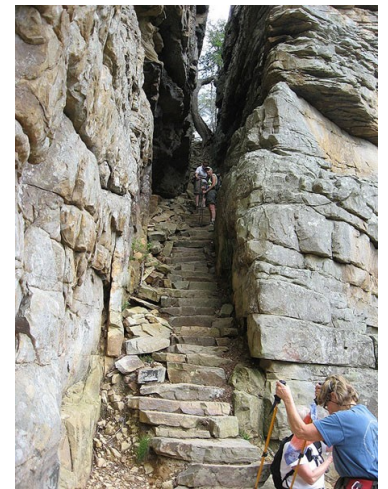
Thirty seven hikers enjoyed a great weekend on the first of March. We had two unexpected cancellations. Most people had never been or spent the night at the Inn. The food and friendship were great and programs were informative. I did hear some complaints about snoring. Who said that only men snore? Those participating were Kendra Cross, Betty Petty, Tim and Elaine Chomyn. Chris and Elizabeth O'Conner, Sharon Hixson, Michelle and Eric Andersen, Ralph Van Pelt, Mary and Harold Young, Susan Faidley, Wendy Gunn, John and Trish Hyler, Doug Cooper, Trisha Harrison, Bob and Jane Anne Seale, Hoss Baghay, John Rowland, Bill Kinnaman, Donna Ruiz, Jamie and Kevin Patterson, Carolyn Perry, Faye Nunez, Rick and Dari Selcer, Monty and Charlie Simmons, Trey Baldwin, Donald Box, Carolyn Boling, Vicki Chambers and Wayne Chambers reporting .



Greeter Falls to Stone Door via Big Creek Gulf and Big Creek Rim

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Once again there were many Wednesday hikers who had never been to this grand Cumberland Plateau area near Altamont and Beersheba Springs. The trek today began at the Greeter Falls entrance after placing cars and a cooler filled with ice and drinks at the Stone Door ranger station. There was a mandatory side trip to see the falls down a steep and rocky trail and a spiral staircase built to make falls access easier. After climbing back up to the main trail we continued on the Laurel Trail to the rushing Boardtree falls, crossed the bridge, enjoyed the bluff views, and regrouped at an intersection with the Big Creek Rim and Big Creek Gulf trails. Most took the trail down into the gorge where the flowers were found to be amazing! Phlox, larkspur, trillium, fire pink, jack-in-the-pulpit, anemone, may apples, and phacelia just to name a few. Lunch was by the Sink where Big Creek disappears under a limestone bluff. The .5 mile spur to Ranger Falls found the water there raging! For the most part the entire trail is rocky but the killer is the climb from the gorge floor up to and through the Stone Door or up the old logging road if you hike the trail in reverse. The huge rock outcropping on top of the Stone Door is a great place to catch your breath before heading on down the trail to the ranger station, waiting cars, and a cold drink. Several hiked the Big Creek Rim trail and enjoyed a leisurely lunch and incredible view of the wilderness. Stormy, Wayne, John, Debbie, Gary, Arlene, and Donald looped back to Greeter Falls trailhead in order to log in a few more miles. Hikers today were: Val Hargis, Trish Appleton, Cecile Shenouda, John Rowland, Larry Parks, Boe Rudder, Donald Box, Arlene Swallows, Richard Park, Bill Kinnaman, JD Dickinson, Suzanne Dorough, Teresa Dean, Kathy Seymour, Gary Petty, John Hyler, Stormy McGauley, Renee Grace, Vicki Armour, Pete Rittenberry, Pat Abercrombie, Bob Rahn, Linda Busby, Wayne Chambers, Mott Gammon, and Che Carico reporting.



Outings Schedule

04/04/20	Wolf Ridge	cancelled	S Barnes
04/04/20	Jacks River Falls	(betsy-darken@utc.edu)	B Darken
04/11/20	Keown Falls Loop	cancelled	T Chomyn
04/18/20	Chattanooga Connector Trail	cancelled	S Basch
04/25-26/20	Smokies Long Hungry Ridge	ppd	S Barlett

everything else is still very much up in the air...

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

(more on the website...)

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

Archival Reports

I am (we are) blessed to have the contents of Betty Petty's hard drive, and I've spent considerable time in the past plowing through all that. Now it's paying off! For the foreseeable future I'll try to post some old reports, looking for instances when I can match a report with a color picture that never made it to the newsletter in color. Hopefully that will satisfy to some extent our need to see some reports and pictures of somebody hiking!

And, as I said on the front page, I'll be looking for pictures of whatever hiking anyone does on their own or in a very tiny group. Thanks in advance for everyone's contributions!

John



Back on October 3, 2010, Kendra Cross led a hike for us at Lula Lake as part of River Rocks. There were 76 hikers!!! A record not even remotely challenged since!

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 - Jenny Hopkins

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)