



THE CHEROKEE HIKER

APRIL 2025

VOLUME 42, ISSUE 4

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

"It's not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves." - Sir Edmund Hillary

Johnnie Arnett's presentation on the Master Gardener Program at our March hike club meeting was both helpful and enjoyable. Her slides of numerous varieties of wildflowers are a reminder that the most beautiful things in life are available to all. I appreciated her wealth of knowledge and found myself wishing for more.

Observing the world around us spring to life is absolutely miraculous. Tiny seeds, some so small we can scarcely see them, have imprinted within them the potential to become a trillium, lady slipper, orchid, azalea, rhododendron, pin oak, or tulip popular. Amazing. But even more amazing is the tiny seed of life we come from is imprinted with the potential of whom we might become. I now understand that reaching that potential takes a lifetime. One of the many privileges of growing old is the opportunity to gain both a deeper understanding and wisdom of who we were meant to become. A walk in the woods can be a vivid reminder of our continuing potential.

During the March 13 club business meeting, we entertained a motion to vote on the acceptance of the revisions to our Constitution and Bylaws as written. The vote was approved which means our revised Constitution and Bylaws are now active. We also entertained a motion to accept the newly composed job descriptions for our Executive Committee members. Following the guidelines as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws, the newly written job descriptions for our President, Vice President, Treasurer, Hostess, Publicist, and Webmaster were also approved as written. The club also voted to review the Bylaws, Constitution, and Job Descriptions every five years to assure that our organizational structure continues to meet the needs of our club.

See you at the April club meeting at the Etowah Senior Center on Thursday, April 17, 2025. Our presentation will be the Mesa Verde/Weminuche Backpacking Hike presented by Jennifer Schroll, Jack Callahan, and Rick Harris.

NOTICE OF CALENDAR CHANGE: Due to the high number of club members who plan to be away during the week of our June Club meeting, we have decided to **cancel** the June meeting and move the agenda to August. (Normally, we do not have a meeting in August.) Jack Callahan has agreed to move his presentation, *Enhancing the Camping/Hiking Experience*, originally scheduled for June to the August meeting. The location of the August meeting will be the Chilhowee Campground.

Rob Coombs, Club President

REMINDER

TO ATTEND ANY EVENT, YOU MUST CONTACT THE EVENT LEADER AS THERE ARE TIMES DUE TO WEATHER OR OTHER CONDITIONS WHERE A HIKE IS CANCELED OR RESCHEDULED. THE EVENT LEADER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CONTACT YOU IF YOU DO NOT GET ON THE ATTENDEE LIST.

APRIL EVENTS

Wednesdays, April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 - Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway

Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland Greenway, meeting at the lower end of the parking lot across from Perkits and the Gondolier restaurant adjacent to Keith Street. Meet time is currently 4:30 P.M. A note on the walk is sent out at the beginning of each week on Messenger. Hike difficulty is rated *Easy*. Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you want to be included in the messages.

Tuesday, April 8, 2025 - Black Mountain

Located on the Cumberland Trail in Crab Orchard, this hike difficulty is rated *Moderately Strenuous*. There are many large rock formations, a cave, an old spring house, and several overlooks. Meet at the Spring City McDonald's to carpool to the trailhead. Departure time is 10:00 A.M. and return time is 3:00 P.M. Contact Sue Robinson at 423-519-9751.

Thursday, April 10, 2025 - Thursday Monthly Club Meeting

Potluck supper at 6:00 P.M. followed by a presentation by Jack, Jennifer, Rick on the Mesa Verde/Weminuche Backpacking Trip. Meet at the Etowah Senior Center in Etowah.

Saturday, April 12, 2025 - Shake Rag Hollow

Located at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee, this hike difficulty is rated *Moderate*. Meet at the trailhead parking lot on the right just past the entrance columns on TN 41A at 9:00 A.M. EST. We will hike an approximately 5-mile loop down to the hollow and back out around the edge of the golf course. After the hike, we will enjoy lunch in the college cafeteria. The cost of lunch is approximately \$12 per person. Return time is 4 p.m. EST. Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you plan to attend.

Tuesday, April 15, 2025 - Murphy NC River Walk, Lunch, and Museum Tour

We will meet at the Cleveland Hobby Lobby parking lot at 9 a.m. and carpool to Murphy, NC. Any wishing to meet us in Murphy should be at the L&N Depot parking lot on McClelland Street in Murphy at 10 A.M. We will begin our walk there. We will cover about 3-4 miles along the trail and some streets coming back into town. We plan to have lunch at the Red Brick Deli after we walk. After lunch, if you are interested, we can walk to and tour the Cherokee County Historical Museum. The admission cost is \$3.00. Please wear comfortable shoes and bring a bottle of water. The hike difficulty of this hike is *Easy* mostly, but with a few inclines. We will return late afternoon. Anyone planning to attend is encouraged to text or call James Anderson, the event leader, at 423-715-8824 so you will be aware of any event changes or cancellations.

Thursday, April 17, 2025 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast

Join us for conversation over breakfast at 8:30 a.m. at Old Fort Restaurant on 25th Street in Cleveland. For more information, contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

Monday, April 28 - Friday, May 2, 2025 - Group Camp Indian Boundary Lake Campground

Indian Boundary Lake Campground is a nice, well-maintained campground near a beautiful lake. There is a 3-mile trail around the lake. There are regular campsites available for RV's or tents as well as group sites. The group sites have fewer amenities, so it is recommended that adjoining regular sites be used. For those wanting to bring RV's, you will need to make those reservations. Everyone will be responsible for their own meals. Some of the hikes may require shuttles, and that can be arranged as needed. Since reservations for this campground are difficult to get, I will be making reservations as soon as I can before the dates for at least two adjoining sites for tent campers. The overflow area, as I understand it, is first-come, first-serve. It does not have the facilities as the regular sites, but it is not too far away. If you plan to attend, let me know by February 15, and if you plan to tent camp, I will try to get enough adjoining sites for tent campers. The location is near Tellico Plains, Tn., about two hours from Cleveland, Tn. Various day hikes will be available ranging from *Easy* to *Strenuous*. Possible hikes include Bob's Bald, Wigg Meadow, and The Hangover. Contact Buddy Arnold at we_arnold@outlook.com or 601-415-3551.

Update:

I have sites 78 and 79 reserved at the campground for tent campers. Each site can have five campers. So far, one site will be enough unless others join the group. Others have made reservations for RVs separately. Here is a list of some possible hikes in the general area ranging from strenuous to easy that we may hike, depending on what the group desires, or we can split into a couple of groups. Some hikes will require shuttles.

➤ Indian Boundary Loop	3.1 miles	Easy
➤ Bob's Bald	7.0 miles	Moderate to strenuous
➤ The Hangover	6.4 miles	Strenuous
➤ Falls Branch Falls	2.4 miles	Moderate
➤ Flats Mountain Trail	6.2 miles	Moderate
➤ Coker Creek Falls	5.4 miles	Moderate
➤ Conasauga Falls	1.3 miles	Easy
➤ Unicoi Turnpike	2.2 miles	Moderate
➤ Whigg Meadow	3.2 miles	Moderate
➤ Bald River Loop	3.5 miles	Moderate
➤ Sycamore Creek	6.0 miles	Strenuous

MAY AT-A-GLANCE

Wednesdays, May 7, 14, 21, 28 - Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway

Saturday, May 3, 2025 – Wildlife and Edibles

Thursday, May 8, 2025 - Thursday Monthly Club Meeting

Monday, May 12 - Thursday, May 15, 2025 - Red River Gorge, Kentucky

Thursday, May 15, 2025 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast

PLAN AHEAD...

More details of the following can be found in the 2025 Calendar of Events:

- Red River Gorge Outing Update: Koomer Ridge campsites are available to reserve from May 12 through check out on the morning of May 15. There are also private cabins and other campgrounds in the Gorge area that can be reserved. Eighteen members have signed up and more are expected as the date gets closer. Planned hikes range in difficulty from chairlift & downhill easy to challenging. All trails are well marked, including a few scenic off-trail destinations. Free trail maps can be downloaded and printed at:

<https://gopoco.org/red-river-gorge-natural-bridge-trail-maps/>

A responsible social hour evening is planned at an offsite cabin. Please confirm you are coming and if you have questions and other ideas. Jerry Schneider, 513-324-4564.

- Great Allegheny Passage Trail, Sunday, June 8-Sunday, June 15, 2025, Contact Jerry Schneider, 513-324-4564.
- Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness, August 16-23. Currently a wait list. Contact me at jennifergeologist@gmail.com or 423-284-1256. • Jennifer Schroll
- Utah National Parks Trip September 16-22. Camping at Zion NP nights of September 16, 17, 18. The 6-month reservation window opens this month. I plan to get an electric site in Loop A or B Watchman Campground. Bryce Canyon NP night of September 19. Some of us are staying at the lodge. Reservations can be made now for the Lodge. Arches NP nights of September 20,21,22. 6-month reservation window opens this month. There are lots of hotels just outside Zion in Springdale and just outside Arches in Moab. For more information contact Jennifer Schroll at 423-284-1256 or jennifergeologist@gmail.com .

HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

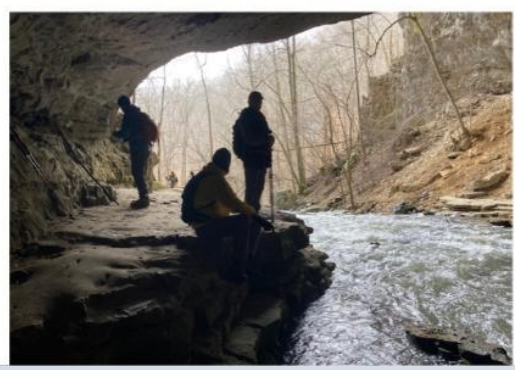
Buggytop Cave, March 5, 2025-Anne Anderson

On Wednesday, March 5, we finally made the trip to Buggytop trail. The Coombs's graciously taxied us all to the trailhead south of Sewanee, Tn. Due to the rain the night before, we had to carefully pick our way over wet rocks in the trail bed. Long before we got there, we could hear Crow Creek roaring out of the cave mouth.

Our first stop was the Peter Cave entrance. Along the 0.2-mile-long side trail there, we passed a stunning overlook into the cove below. At the horizontal Peter Cave opening, we could hear the creek underground. About 50 yards beyond Peter Cave there was a large rock overhang with a cave room behind it. After reading about it after I got home, I found out it is the Great Room, a third opening to the cave formed when a part of the cave ceiling collapsed. There is a passage on the east side of the cave room that leads to the nearby Peter Cave entrance. Janet, Rob, James and Charlie donned headlamps and peered into the room. The rest of us snaked and examined stalactites hanging from the roof of the overhang.

We proceeded on to the Buggytop Cave entrance which required scrambling down a steep slope. As we climbed down under a small cedar tree, Mary Alton spotted a screech owl perched a few feet above our heads. James Anderson got a good photo of it looking quite annoyed with us. The water rushing from the cave mouth made it hard for us to hear each other. We spent a short time exploring the cave entrance and taking photos of the cave and creek before heading back to the parking lot. On the way back the light drizzle became a light rain, but thankfully the temperature didn't start to drop until we were on the last ¼ mile.

It was mid-afternoon and we were hungry and chilly. In the interest of getting fed quickly we stopped at the University of the South's cafeteria. Soups and hot coffee were popular choices. Janet had the largest (and maybe the only) pimento cheese burrito we had ever seen. Mary Alton, Janet Coombs, Rob Coombs, James Anderson, Charlie Snow and Anne Anderson made the trip.



Etowah Indian Mounds Tour, March 8, 2025, Jack Callahan

On March 8, ten club hikers met at Etowah Indian Mounds Historic Site for a guided tour. We were met by Ranger Kevin Mardell, who began the tour in the museum and gave an overview of the site. From there we went outside to our first stop, a wattle and daub home. This is an example of typical homes at the time the site was occupied.

Next we moved to the largest mound, where the royal leaders would have lived at the top. From here there is a commanding view of the area. Then we went to the next mound, which was used as a burial site for the royal leaders. This mound was excavated by state archaeologists in the 1950's. The findings were ordered displayed in the museum but are now stored in a central location by the state. The artifacts will be returned to the descendants to be reinterred at a future date.

Nearby was the Etowah River, where a fish trap built by the inhabitants of the settlement was constructed. We then walked back by way of the dry moat which circled most of the town. This is where a majority of the material was obtained to construct the mounds.

We ended the tour with Ranger Mardell giving a discussion and display of tools, weapons and games that were used by the inhabitants. It was a great day, and Ranger Mardell is a wealth of knowledge and answered all our questions and did an excellent job of the tour.

Event leader, Jack Callahan





Old Dutch Settlement, March 10, Clare Sullivan

Due to a controlled burn, the group switched to a hike on a nearby horse trail.



Monthly Club Meeting, March 13, 2025 (minutes on last page)

The monthly club meeting was held at the Etowah Senior Center. Nicka won the *Lucky Hiker* door prize, a dozen farm-fresh eggs. The regular business meeting was followed by an excellent presentation by Johnny Arnett, master gardener.

Here are some confirmed vendors for native wildflowers:

Carolina Wild
Growing Old Nursery
Pennyrile Botanics
Sustainabillies LLC
The Azalea Farm

Chattanooga Bluebird Society
Native Plant Rescue Squad
Reflection Riding Native Plant Nursery
Tennessee Naturescapes
The Cat & The Crow

Euclaw Meadows Nursery
Overhill Gardens
Solstice Handmade
Thomas Nursery
Apothecary

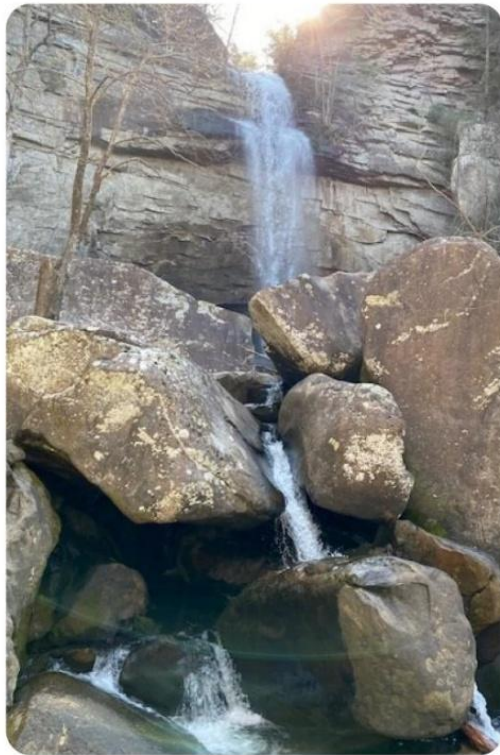


Hike to Caney Creek, March 19, Clare Sullivan



Laurel Falls/Buzzard Point—March 28, Randy Morris

A group of four (three two-leggers and a four-legger) enjoyed a beautiful spring day on the trails just outside of Dayton. Although warmer than expected, or desired, breezes throughout most of the day kept us more comfortable as temperatures approached 80 degrees. We traveled along Richland Creek which was flowing nicely and had many fantastic stretches of rapids and small waterfalls then up out of the gorge to Laurel Falls. After enjoying the falls for a few minutes, we then continued up the gorge, over the creek, and took the steep climb up to Buzzard Point where a couple of the birds responsible for the name were circling, as is almost always the case. Along the way we enjoyed some spring wildflowers including a nice patch of trout lilies. We estimate our total hike mileage at almost 10 miles (more than the leader originally said) but all were willing and able. Enjoying the day were Sue Robinson (and trusty sidekick Stretch), Doug Worth, and hike leader Randy Morris.



March Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway – SPRING HAS SPRUNG!!



Third Thursday of the month breakfast-Jack Callahan

Nice turn-out for the March breakfast. Join us for conversation over breakfast at 8:30 am at Old Fort Restaurant on 25th Street in Cleveland.

For more information, contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.



A Walk in Johnston Woods, March 25, James Anderson



NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

TELLICO/OCOE VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW

Check the Facebook page for future workdays.

BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION See the calendar for upcoming events and trail maintenance sites.

As always, go to the specific sponsor web page for more information on these events if you plan on attending.

Minutes

Cherokee Hiking Club
Monthly Club Meeting
6:00 p.m., March 13, 2025
Etowah Senior Center

President Rob Coombs opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting sign-in sheet was distributed and xx members signed. Nicka Boone won the *Tonight's Lucky Hiker* door prize. Rob Coombs began the meeting sharing a quote and thoughts from Sir Edmund Hillary, "It's not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves."

- I. The Treasure's Report was given by Jennifer Schroll. The current balance in the club treasury is \$3,016.09. A motion was made and accepted.
- II. Unfinished Business
 - A. A discussion of where to meet for our October Fall Group camp out was on the agenda. Rob Coombs reported that he had reserved the Group Camp at Big South Fork for October 12 - October 16, 2025 explaining that October calendar for the group camp at Big South Fork was filling up. Cancellation policy allows for the reservation to be cancelled 2 weeks in advance. He asked for other alternatives. Fall Cree Falls and Norris Center Hill Lake were suggested as possibilities. It was mentioned that offsite people still need to pay on the reservation at Big South Fork since everyone uses the pavilion. Other options will continue to be explored.
 - B. Lead a Hike Request Form - This form is now available on our website. Jennifer Schroll asked if the form can be in a format to allow members to fill out the form on a computer and, then send it to the president. Our president will explore this option
- III. New Business
 - A. The hike club entertained a motion made by Jack Callahan to vote on the acceptance of the revisions to our Constitution and Bylaws as written. The vote was approved which means our revised Constitution and Bylaws are now active.
 - B. The hike club entertained a motion made by Jack Callahan to accept the newly composed job descriptions for our Executive Committee members. Following the guidelines as set forth in Constitution and Bylaws, the newly written job descriptions for our President, Vice President, Treasurer, Hostess, Publicist, and Webmaster were also approved as written.
 - C. The club also entertained a motion made by Jack Callahan to review the Bylaws, Constitution, and Job Descriptions every five years to ensure that our organizational structure continues to meet the needs of our club. The Executive Committee will be assigned this task January of 2030.

D. Presently, there are 103 active members in our club. The following new members have been added to our club roster:

1. Laura Slack
2. Dean Smith
3. Janalee Wyant

E. Hikes / Meetings / Events since our last meeting included:

1. 2/15 - Dry Pond Lead on the BMT - Randy Morris
2. 2/18 - Athens Regional Park Loop Trail - James Anderson
3. 2/20 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast - Jack Callahan
4. 2/22 - CCC Camp Tour at Sylco, TN - Jack Callahan
5. 3/5 - Buggytop Cave and the Natural Bridge - Anne Anderson
6. 3/8 - Etowah Indian Mounds Tour - Jack & Ranger Kevin Mardell
7. 3/10 - Dutch Settlement, CNF - Ken Jones and Claire Sullivan
8. Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway - Jack Callahan

F. Hikes/Activities scheduled for the month ahead are listed on our website. Rob Coombs shared that the calendar will continue to be updated throughout the calendar year. Members should fill out the Request to Lead a Hike form found on our website and send it to the president who will review the form checking to see if all the needed information is included and, also, if the date conflicts with another club hike. He will then forward the Request to Lead a Hike form to the webmaster and the publicist. Members present shared thoughts about the following scheduled hikes:

1. 3/15, 2025 - *Lookout Mountain to Sunset Rock* - Jennifer Schroll
2. 3/19 - *Ghost Town of Caney Creek* - Clair Sullivan
3. 3/20 - *Monthly Hike Club Breakfast* - Jack Callahan
4. 3/22 - *Mount LeConte Meet at the Alum Cave Trail* - Jack Callahan
5. 3/25 - *Walk in Johnston Woods* - James Anderson
6. 3/28 - *Laurel Falls / Buzzard Point* - Randy Morris
7. 4/8 - *Black Mountain on the Cumberland Trail* - Sue Robinson
8. *Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway* - Jack Callahan

IV. Our presentation for the evening was entitled "The Master Gardener Program" presented by Johnny Arnett.

- V. Out next meeting will be held April 10, 2025 at 6:00 P.M. Our presentation for the evening will be "The Mesa Verde/Weminuche Backpacking Hike" presented by Jennifer Schroll, Jack Callahan, and Rick Harris

Respectfully submitted by Otis Pannel, Vice President on March 13, 2025