

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello to all!

The year is off to a great start with the campout at Big Bend National Park, the completion of the annual Calendar of Events, and numerous hikes, from short easy ones to a more lengthy ten-mile hike on the Cumberland Trail.

Upcoming club meetings have a great lineup of interesting subjects by members, with Clare Sullivan leading the way with her recent presentation on the BMTA. And the food at the potluck meals is always delicious; the effort by members to provide these meals is greatly appreciated. And did I mention desserts? Exceptional. Looking forward to the March meeting with a presentation by James and Phyllis Anderson on their trip across the pond to England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Ireland.

Next month, the rolls will be purged of non-paying members, so please get your checks in to Jennifer.

Great hikes are coming up in March as spring is upon us, and there should be some great wildflower viewing. Don't miss this special time of year that we have, with an abundance of spectacular plants in our area.

Jack Callahan, Club President

PAST EVENTS

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK JANUARY 14 – 23, 2024

See trip report attachment in the March 2024 newsletter email. • Buddy Arnold

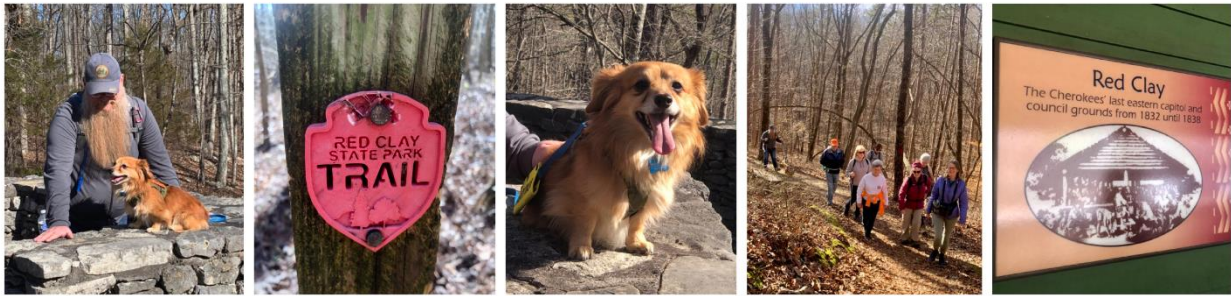
EUREKA TRAIL FEBRUARY 1, 2024



Eleven hikers set out on the Eureka Trail in Athens. For quite a few of us, this was one of the first times we had hiked in about two weeks due to a winter storm and freezing temperatures. It felt good to enjoy the sunshine and good company. James Carroll, Jack and Margaret Callahan, Beth Briggs, Deborah Burroughs, Bob Dornfeld and his pup, Smoky, Kim Luzader, Janet and Rob Coombs, Judy Price, and Melanie Miller joined Hike Leader Kelly Ducham for a six-mile out-and-back hike. • Kelly Ducham



RED CLAY STATE HISTORIC PARK FEBRUARY 5, 2024



We had a lovely sunny day to enjoy the 1.7-mile Council of Trees Trail. Hike Leader Kelly Ducham was joined by Jack Callahan, James Carroll and his pup, Hades, Jill Davis, Patricia Whitmore, Connie Ocepek, Carol Guhne, Cathy Doss, and Judy Price. Our hike began at the trailhead near the amphitheater and took us over the gentle hills of the park. We enjoyed the view from the Overlook Tower and then continued the loop, ending up at the amphitheater. It was snack time so we all settled in around a picnic table to relax. We continued our walk and saw the Eternal Flame and Blue Hole Spring, which is a sacred site for the Cherokee people. Our walk continued along the stream where we heard the calls of a Carolina wren and tufted titmouse; we then walked through the fields, winding back around to the farmstead and finally the Visitor Center. This is a nice compact state park with lots of history and worthy of many return trips. • Kelly Ducham



MONTHLY CLUB MEETING FEBRUARY 8, 2024



The club met at the Etowah Senior Center at 6:00 pm. After a great potluck meal provided by the members, there was a brief business meeting by Jack, and then he introduced the evening speaker, Clare Sullivan. Clare gave a really interesting history of the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) and highlights of the club. She finished with the efforts being made to have the BMT made a national trail designation. Clare's presentation was very professional and informative and well-received by the club members. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm. • Jack Callahan



OUTER LOOP | BOOKER T. WASHINGTON STATE PARK FEBRUARY 12, 2024

Rescheduled to March 11, 2024, due to inclement weather. • Kelly Ducham

GRAYSVILLE MOUNTAIN RMA SECTION OF THE CUMBERLAND TRAIL FEBRUARY 17, 2024



Five hikers braved morning snow flurries to hike almost ten miles from Dayton, TN, to Graysville, TN. We met at the Roaring Creek Trailhead and shuttled to the beginning of the section. And we were on our way! We saw beautiful vistas and flowing waterfalls, crossed creeks, and walked through pine forests. We rock-hopped Sale Creek; and, as we climbed, we saw a bald eagle, North Cranmore Cove, and many rockhouses and rock bluffs. A few miles in, the sun finally came out and we stopped at the bridge at pretty Gilbreath Falls, whose pool is framed by a mountain view. On we went to our lunch destination, Cranmore Cove Overlook. Breathtaking! We disturbed some vultures resting below the outcrop and they flew over the cove. After a relaxing lunch, we returned to the trail, soon arriving at Wildcat Hollow Falls, then Roaring Creek Overlook. As we headed down the mountain, we saw a brilliant patch of British soldiers lichen. We hiked through a boulder field, where trailing arbutus was starting to bud, and crossed gorgeous Graysville Falls. Our last leg to the trailhead was flat trail alongside Roaring Creek (living up to its name), where we passed the remains of the former mining operation. Hikers enjoying the day were James Anderson, Jack Callahan, Kelly Ducham, Henry Mahler, and Hike Leader Judy Price. • Judy Price





ENTERPRISE SOUTH NATURE PARK FEBRUARY 22, 2024



Eight hikers and one pup gathered at Enterprise South Nature Park in Chattanooga to hike the trails. This park has 2,800 wooded acres that were a part of the Volunteer Army Ammunition Plant property in the 1940's. Today, there are hiking and biking trails, a scenic drive, and much more. The day was a bit cloudy but warmer for our walk that started out at Parking Lot #1 on the Upper Poe Run Trail which has just enough gentle hills to get warmed up. We walked up a few switchbacks to the Poe Overlook Trail and then descended to the Hidden Lake, which is very lovely for a break on the swings and view of the lake. While at the lake, a small flock of sandhill cranes flew over. There were no signs of wood ducks but, hopefully, the nest boxes will be active soon. We stopped by the concrete magazine #50 which we were able to enter and experience the interesting acoustics. Hikers Charlene Sudore, Judy Price, Nicka Boone, James Carroll, Ginger Pippenger, Carin Taber, and Bob Dornfeld and his pup Smoky joined Hike Leader Kelly Ducham for the four-mile hike. • Kelly Ducham



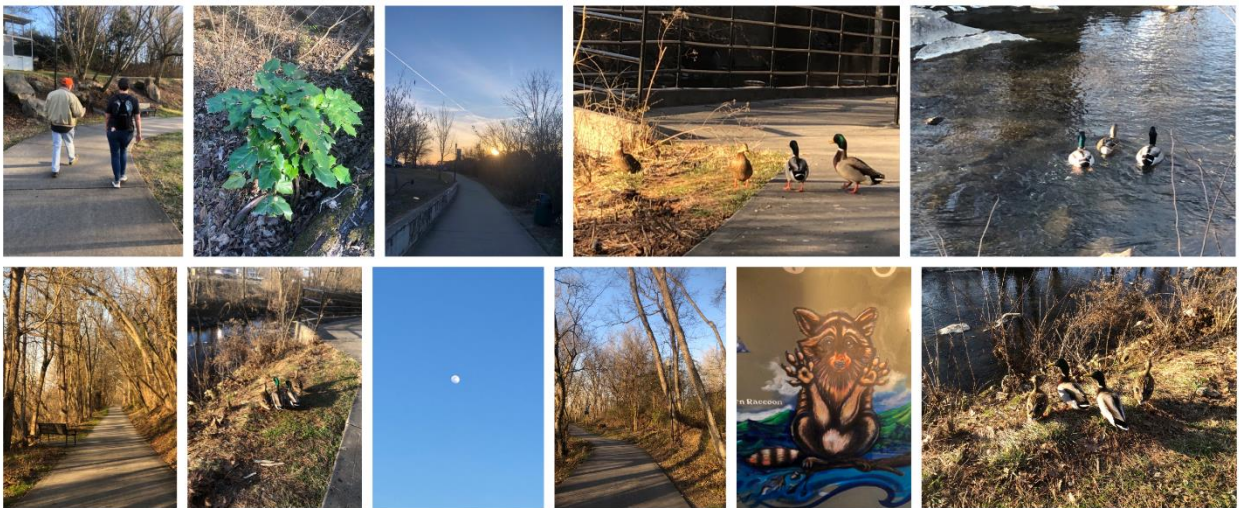
BUSHWHACK TO FALLS ON ROCK CREEK FEBRUARY 24, 2024



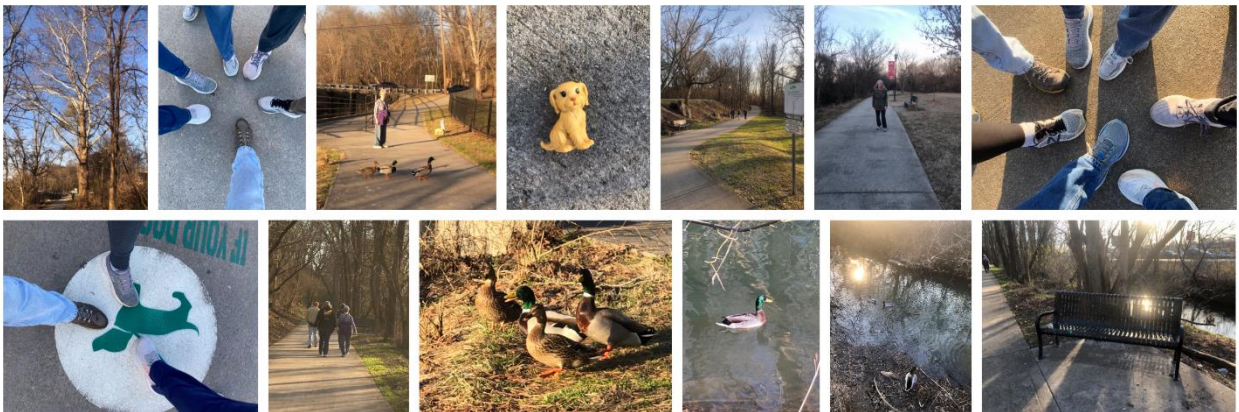
The Intrepid Seven met at the Clemmer Trailhead at 9 am and began a one-hour hike up towards Benton Falls along the Clemmer Bike Trail. Near the trail crossing of Laurel Branch, the group selected a location to begin the descent to Laurel Branch in search of the numerous waterfalls and cascades on the stream. The slope of the sidehill was steep, with mixed-size boulders from washtub to car-size, and with a dense cover of rhododendron, leaf litter, and moss. The group slid, crawled over, under, and around laurel and downed timber, finally reaching the stream and one of the waterfalls. From there, the group then worked their way downstream toward Rock Creek, which is aptly named. Numerous more falls were seen, and the slow-going required two hours to travel about a half-mile (400-foot descent) before reaching Rock Creek and the most spectacular waterfall of all. Along the way, the group slid down steep sections, almost needing to rappel down several steep rocky bluff sections, and constantly lost their footing in holes between rocks covered with leaf litter. It was not a path well-traveled. Finding an open spot on a steep sidehill to view the falls, the group stopped briefly for lunch. During this stop, there were several hikers who appeared along Rock Creek and, after a brief conversation, they indicated the best way back to Rainbow Falls and the regular trail. Our group followed them up and down a steep sidehill section and we soon were at Rainbow Falls, and we then hiked back to the trailhead. We arrived at the parking lot at 2 pm, muddy, with some possible skinned shins and sore muscle; but everyone was happy that they had made the trip, and there is talk of doing another section of Rock Creek below Benton Falls next year. This was a great group of experienced hikers, and everyone supported each other, and were in high spirits the entire time. Thanks to Clare for proposing the hike and to Jennifer for acquiring some good topo maps of the area. It was definitely a very difficult hike but well worth it. Hikers of the Intrepid Seven included Mary Alton, Anne Anderson, Jennifer Schroll, Doug Lynch, Clare and Ed Sullivan, and Jack Callahan. • Jack Callahan



WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND/BRADLEY COUNTY GREENWAY



Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland/Bradley County 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 pm. A note on the walk is sent out the beginning of each week on Messenger. Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you want to be included in the messages. • Jack Callahan



THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST



We had a delicious breakfast while discussing Studebakers! Join us next month 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. • Judy Price

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOTE: Event schedule subject to change according to guidance from governing agencies and offices regarding health and safety, weather, or other conditions.

CLEVELAND STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE NATURE TRAIL

MARCH 3, 2024 | SUNDAY | CLEVELAND TN

We will hike approximately two miles on this short but sweet trail that will give you a cardio workout. We have the option to repeat a loop in the opposite direction if we want to add miles and continue hiking. Contact Hike Leader Judy Price at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com for complete meetup details!

ROCK CREEK TRAIL

MARCH 4, 2024 | MONDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

Joint hike with Benton MacKaye Trail Association. We will begin from Thunder Rock Trailhead parking on Highway 64 and hike across the bridge over the Ocoee River and up the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) 2.2 miles to Rock Creek Trail. We will hike 5.6 miles on Rock Creek Trail. (Total mileage is 7.8 miles.) The climbs and descents are moderate. The rating for the entire hike is strenuous. There are a few minor creek crossings; one could be fairly deep. We will shuttle from the Rock Creek Trail trailhead on Highway 64 back to Thunder Rock, a very easy shuttle. Contact Hike Leaders Clare Sullivan, Judy Price, and Ed Sullivan at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com if you plan to attend.

WALK IN THE WOODS

MARCH 5, 2024 | TUESDAY 10 AM | JOHNSTON WOODS

The Walk in the Woods is at Johnston Woods off Highway 11 just south of Cleveland. It consists of two loop trails and is considered easy. Hikers have the option of walking the 1.2-mile loop and then the 2.9-mile loop for a total of 4.2 miles or just one of the loops. The meetup location is the trailhead parking lot at Johnston Woods. Text Hike Leader James Anderson at 423-715-8824 if you plan to attend. These are the hike dates:

- Tuesday March 5 at 10 am
- Tuesday June 11 at 8 am
- Tuesday August 6 at 8 am
- Tuesday November 5 at 10 am

EUREKA TRAIL

MARCH 7, 2024 | THURSDAY 10:30 AM | ATHENS TN

Beginning at 10:30, we will walk five to six miles along the easy wide gravel path. This is a multi-use trail so there may be bikers or horseback riders out for the day. We will begin our walk at the main trailhead located at 1400 East Madison Avenue in Athens. There are restrooms available. Bring water and a snack. The hike will be canceled in the event of poor weather. For questions or to sign up, please text Hike Leader Kelly Ducham at 239-784-7337 or email at dkss2063@hotmail.com.

SODDY CREEK GORGE SECTION OF THE CUMBERLAND TRAIL

We will break this 17-mile section (plus additional miles for the Big Soddy Creek Gulf trails) into three hikes:

I. SODDY CREEK GORGE (NORTH) SECTION

MARCH 9, 2024 | SATURDAY

Heiss Mountain Road Trailhead to Big Soddy Creek Gulf Trailhead. Almost nine miles, moderate to strenuous due to miles, elevation, and terrain. We will hike next to a beautiful creek and pass waterfalls and cascades. Much of the trail is downhill or flat and covered in pine needles. However, there are some steep downhill sections and seasonal creek/drainage crossings. We will exit through Big Soddy Creek Gulf trails. There is a five-mile shuttle and we will need at least one volunteer driver. Contact Hike Leader Judy Price at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com for meetup details.

II. SODDY CREEK GORGE (SOUTH) SECTION

APRIL 13, 2024 | SATURDAY

Little Soddy Trailhead to Mowbray Pike Trailhead. Five miles, moderate, elevation change 450 feet. We will hike through a historic mining area, along a ridge with beautiful views, and past other remarkable sights. There are some seasonal creek/drainage crossings. There is a three-mile shuttle and we will need at least one volunteer driver. Contact Hike Leader Judy Price at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com for meetup details.

III. SODDY CREEK GORGE (NORTH) SECTION

NOVEMBER 2, 2024 | SATURDAY

Little Soddy Trailhead to Big Soddy Creek Gulf Trailhead. Approximately seven miles, moderate to strenuous due to miles, elevation, and terrain. We will pass through a former mining area. There are two creek crossings over bridges; we will hike down into the creek gorges and back up. We will exit through Big Soddy Creek Gulf trails. Estimated uphill elevation change on the entire north section is 1200 feet. There is a three-mile shuttle and we will need at least one volunteer driver. Contact Hike Leader Judy Price at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com for meetup details.

All the hikes will be shuttled so please let me know if you are available to assist (the drives between the two trailheads are not long). Bring food and water; wear appropriate hiking footwear and bring rain gear if necessary; and carry trekking poles. Contact Hike Leader Judy Price at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com for meetup details.

OUTER LOOP

MARCH 11, 2024 | MONDAY 10:30 AM | [BOOKER T. WASHINGTON STATE PARK](#)

We will hike the 3.9-mile Outer Loop trail which skirts Chickamauga Lake for some nice views. Bring water and a snack! Meet at the trailhead at 10:30 am. The hike will be canceled in the event of poor weather. For questions or to sign up, please text Hike Leader Kelly Ducham at 239-784-7337 or email at dkss2063@hotmail.com.

[PROJECT CHIMPS](#)

MARCH 12, 2024 | TUESDAY | BLUE RIDGE GA

Joint event with Benton MacKaye Trail Association. Kathy Williams will be our tour guide.

- 9:30 Meet in the parking lot in front of Ingles Food Store in Blue Ridge, GA, and carpool to Project Chimps. (Each hiker must bring cash/check for \$25/minimum donation.)
- 10:00 Private Tour while the Chimps are in their habitat.
- 11:00 Lunch Launch from the roof of their villa.
- 11:30 Hikers eat lunch at the picnic tables by the pond.
- 12:00 Hike the four-mile trail around the property.
- Visit the Project Chimps Gift Shop.

Visit the Project Chimps website or follow their Instagram (@projectchimps) for interesting stories about the chimpanzees. **You must contact Event Leader Clare Sullivan at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com prior to the event.**

MONTHLY CLUB MEETING

MARCH 14, 2024 | THURSDAY 6 PM | ETOWAH SENIOR CENTER

Bring your favorite dish for the potluck dinner. The club will furnish drinks, cups, and eating utensils. The program is **Trip to The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and The Republic of Ireland** by Phyllis and James Anderson.

BUSHWHACK TO LOWRY TOP

MARCH 16, 2024 | SATURDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

Meet at Quinn Springs parking/Oswald Dome Trailhead off Highway 30 at 9:00 am. This hike begins with a steady eight to ten percent grade for almost three miles then leaves the trail for another 1.5 miles to the lunch location. The views are worth the effort. Wear good hiking shoes and long pants, as there are briars and brush. Bring lunch and water. Text Event Leader Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you plan to attend.

CANEY CREEK VILLAGE

MARCH 18, 2024 | MONDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

Joint hike with Benton MacKaye Trail Association. Rating: Moderate. Begin at 1,604 feet elevation and hike down to 840 feet elevation to see the remains of Caney Creek Village, then hike back up. The length of the hike is six miles. This village existed from 1912 to 1941. It had electricity, indoor plumbing, mass transit, a lighted tennis court, and a hotel. It is known as the only community in America that never had a vehicle or horse in the community. The remains are visible because the concrete foundations were made of the same grade of concrete as the dams on the Ocoee River. Members of the community built the flume along the Ocoee River. Contact Hike Leaders Clare and Ed Sullivan at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com for meetup details.

[BLACK MOUNTAIN SECTION OF THE CUMBERLAND TRAIL](#)

MARCH 26, 2024 | TUESDAY | CRAB ORCHARD TN

Meet at McDonald's parking lot in Spring City, TN, at 9:30 am to carpool to the trailhead. Approximately nine moderate miles with 1600-foot elevation gain. There are enormous rock formations, a cave, a spring house, and a great view at the top. Text Hike Leader Sue Robinson at 423-519-9751 if you plan to attend.

STONE DOOR TO GREETER FALLS

MARCH 29, 2024 | FRIDAY | [SAVAGE GULF STATE PARK](#)

Rescheduled to Friday, May 10, 2024.

WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND/BRADLEY COUNTY GREENWAY

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THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST

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NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

[TELLICO/OCOEE VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW](#)

Check the Facebook page for future work days.

[BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION](#)

See the calendar for upcoming events and trail maintenance sites. Trail maintenance is held the second Saturday of the month.

[TRAILS & TRILLIUMS](#)

APRIL 19 - 21, 2024 | BEERSHEBA SPRINGS TN

[Registration](#) opened February 22.

[SPRING WILDFLOWER PILGRIMAGE](#)

MAY 1 - 4, 2024

[Program](#) is available. Registration opens March 1, 2024, at 10 am.

[TENNESSEE DIVISION OF NATURAL AREAS 2024 EVENTS](#)

BEGINNING MARCH 1, 2024

[A.T. GATEWAYS FESTIVAL \(FKA A.T. KICKOFF\)](#)

MARCH 1 - 3, 2024 | AMICALOLA FALLS STATE PARK

[TENNESSEE STATE PARKS WEED WRANGLE](#)

MARCH 2, 2024

[FORT MOUNTAIN STATE PARK'S BACKPACKING 101](#)

MARCH 2, 2024 | PICNIC SHELTER 1 | 1 PM - 2 PM

[CITICO CREEK CLEAN UP](#)

MARCH 9, 2024 | 8 AM | INDIAN BOUNDARY OVERFLOW AND CAMPSITE #1

[INTRODUCTION TO BACKPACKING](#)

MARCH 9 - 10, 2024 | CUMBERLAND MOUNTAIN STATE PARK

[CUMBERLAND TRAILS CONFERENCE VOLUNTEER TRAIL BUILDING](#)

MARCH 14 & 15, 2024 | LOWER PINEY RIVER SEGMENT

[SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN WILDERNESS SKILLS INSTITUTE](#)

MAY 2024 | CRADLE OF FORESTRY NORTH CAROLINA

Apply by March 15, 2024.

[HIDDEN RIVERS: DISCOVER TELLICO PLAINS RICHEST WATERS](#)

MARCH 16, 2024 | 1 PM | CHARLES HALL MUSEUM | TELLICO PLAINS TN

[BACKPACKING 101](#)

MARCH 21, 2024 | FOUR BRIDGES OUTFITTERS | CHATTANOOGA TN

[SHELTOWEE TRACE ASSOCIATION INTRO TO BACKPACKING](#)

MARCH 22 - 24, 2024 | DANIEL BOONE NATIONAL FOREST

[TENNESSEE STATE PARKS SPRING HIKE](#)

MARCH 23, 2024

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