

## NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello all!

Some fall color is beginning to show at higher elevations! Can cooler weather be far away?

Several club events coming up will be in the mountains. We look forward to wearing jackets at Big South Fork. The fireplace at BSF will get a workout!

Get out and support your Hike Leaders and enjoy this early fall season. As always, be safe and stay hydrated!

*Jack Callahan, Club President*

## 2025 EVENTS

Looking ahead to 2025—I am planning two trips that you need to know about now.

The first is a canoe trip at Boundary Waters in Minnesota. It will be August 17 to 22, 2025, plus travel days to and from the area. We will use an outfitter to rent lightweight canoes. **Sign up with me by January 10, 2025.** After that date, those signed up will "meet" to discuss our route. Already on the list are Jack, James A, Jerry, Rick, Kelley M, and Buddy.

The second trip is a tour of Utah's National Parks. The "main plan" will be:

- September 16, 17, and 18, 2025, we will camp at Zion National Park. **Reservations can be made six months ahead.** While at Zion, we will also visit Capitol Reef National Park.
- September 19, 2025, we will stay at Bryce Canyon (National Park) Lodge. **Reservations can be made NOW.**
- September 20, 21, and 22, 2025, we will camp at Arches National Park. **Reservations can be made six months ahead.** While at Arches, we will visit Canyonlands National Park.
- **Travel to and from Utah is on your own.** There are lots of options to stay in hotels just outside the parks if you don't want to camp. The club will plan various day hikes each day according to what the group wants to do. **Make your own reservations.**

Contact me at [jennifergeologist@gmail.com](mailto:jennifergeologist@gmail.com) or 423-284-1256. • Jennifer Schroll

# PAST EVENTS

## WARRIORS PASSAGE MAY 11, 2024



I neglected to include this photo of our happy hikers in the June 2024 newsletter! • Judy Price

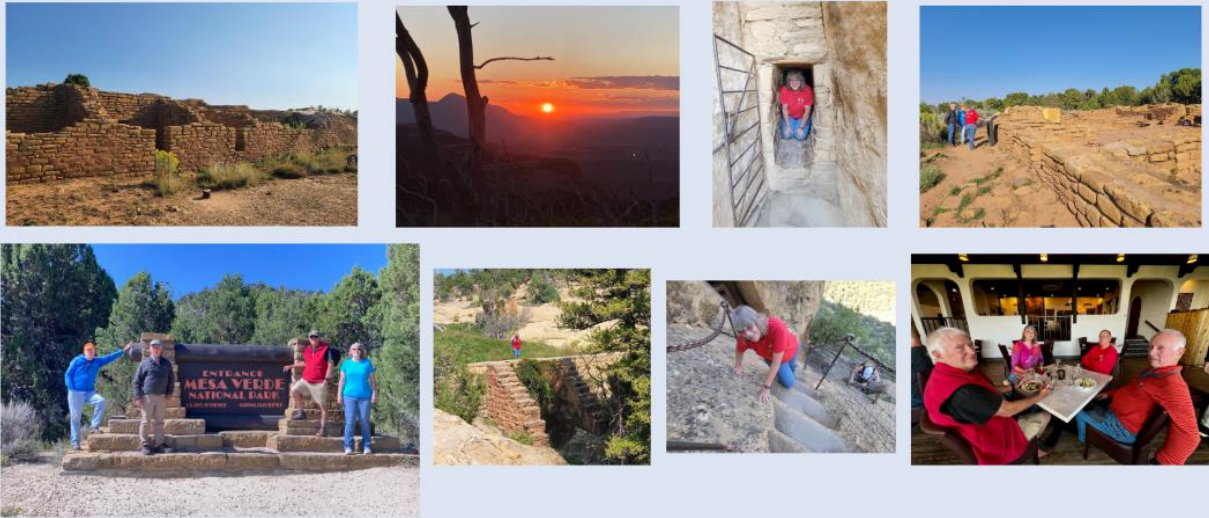
## PAWPAW WALK AUGUST 31, 2024



The annual pawpaw event was held in Cherokee National Forest. In attendance were Brenda Harris, Jennifer Schroll, Danny Yarberry, and Event Leader Jack Callahan. There were still many pawpaws in the several groves along the stream, but the popularity of the area is evident as not that much ripe fruit was found near the trail. As one ventured further towards the river, there was still a lot of fruit on the trees. The preferred method of shaking the trees brought down numerous plump pawpaws and no one was injured by the falling orbs. With spoon in hand, the group sampled many of the custard-like tropical native. Several folks took some home to let them further ripen. Afterwards, two members stopped for a late lunch at the Blue Hole BBQ on US 64. Good service and food were enjoyed. • Jack Callahan



## BACKPACKING TRIP IN WEMINUCHE WILDERNESS SEPTEMBER 4 - 15, 2024



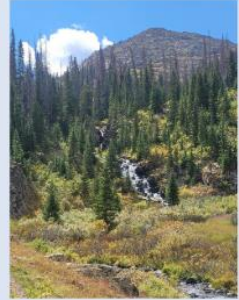
On September 4, four members of the club met in Durango, CO, and traveled to Mesa Verde National Park to begin acclimation to the high altitude. Upon entering the park, we visited several overlooks to enjoy the stunning sunset. After spending the night at Far View Lodge in the park, the group began several tours, two of which were guided by park rangers. The tours were Cliff Palace and Balcony House. All members joined in on the Cliff Palace tour, but Jack declined to go on the Balcony House tour which included a crawl through a rock tunnel about 18 inches wide! Way too confining for some. Between tours, the group visited numerous stops and overlooks in the park.



After the second night at the lodge, the group headed north to a museum near McPhee Reservoir dedicated to the Canyon of the Ancients run by the Bureau of Land Management. This is an excellent museum and a must-see if anyone is in the area. From there, the group headed to Durango, with a stop at the San Juan National Forest supervisor's office to get the latest information on trail conditions, fire danger, and weather. The folks there were well-informed and shared information with us about numerous things and answered all our questions. Then, on to our lodging. Later, we were joined by our fifth club member to round out our group. During the evening meal in downtown Durango, we were joined by club member Sue Robinson who made the trip with her sister but was unable to backpack with us.



Saturday, September 7, we joined Sue and her sister, Donna, and made a four-mile hike north of town, then shopped for last minute items before the backpacking trip.

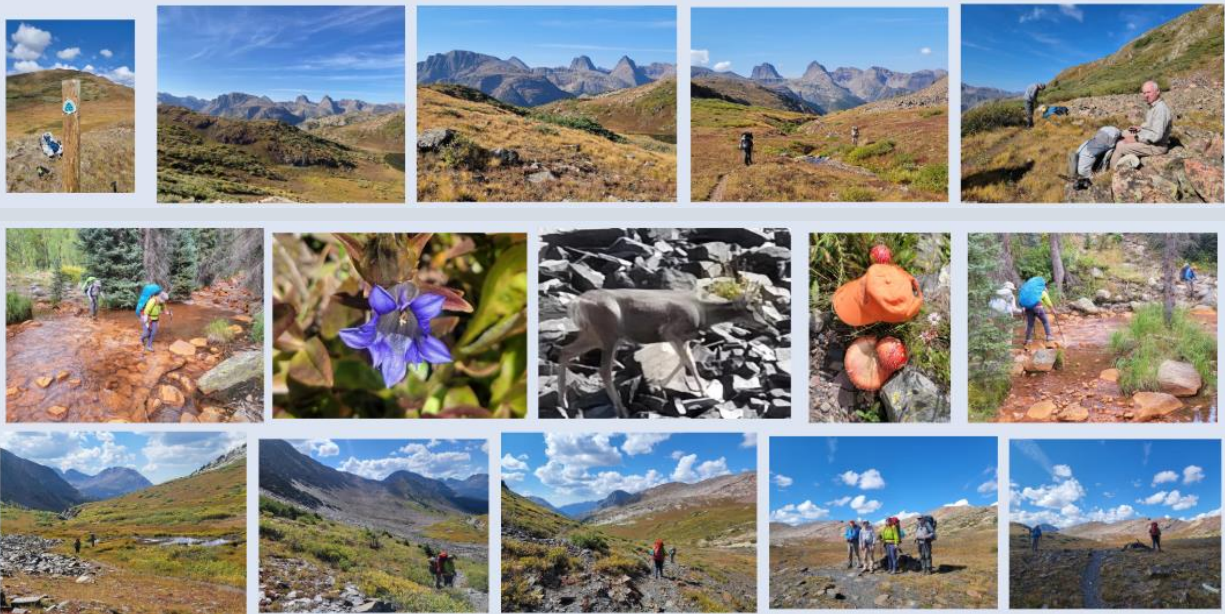


Sunday morning, September 8, the shuttle service picked us up at the motel and took us to the Highland Mary trailhead several miles east of Silverton. The shuttle was a four-wheel drive Mercedes and it was definitely needed as the last mile or so was exceedingly rough. We began our hike at around 10:30 am, climbing steadily up the steep and rocky trail, and wondering where the oxygen went. The trailhead was at slightly above 10,000-foot elevation. We climbed over some difficult trail and rock slopes before we finally topped out in the lake area, above tree line at over 12,000 feet. We found a nice campsite for the night and set up and ate, and some went quickly to bed.



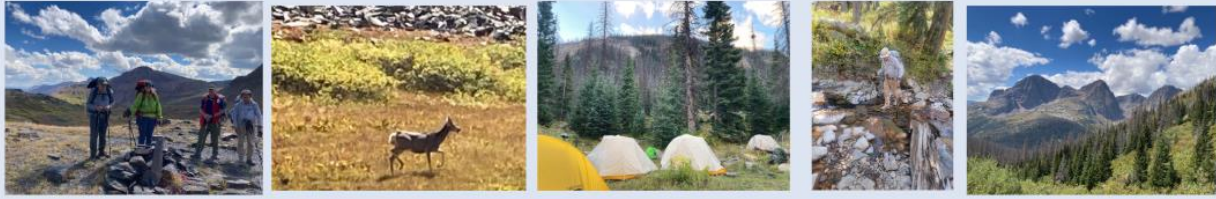


Monday morning, September 9, we were up at daylight and prepared breakfast and began packing. There was a heavy frost with the temperature falling into the mid-20s, and that forced us to put up tents wet. This is something we had to deal with almost every morning. We began our climb to the Continental Divide Trail (CDT) and were rewarded with more great views of the San Juan Mountains in all directions. Following the CDT south, we finally joined the Colorado Trail and looked down into the Elk Creek drainage, where several in the party had hiked a few years before. From there we made our highest climb, cresting at 12,865 feet before dropping down to Kite Lake for the night. At this point, we were four miles behind schedule. At Kite Lake, we were barely back in the tree line, but still above 12,000 feet.



The next morning, Tuesday, September 10, was another cold one—in the mid-20s and another heavy frost. The bright sun helped dry things out a bit, and we began our climb up and over Hunchback Pass, with a crest of 12,450 feet. From here, we made our last cell phone contacts for the next several days and began a steep decline into the Vallecito Creek drainage. We stopped at the trail to Mount Nebo and realized we could not make up the distance required to meet our shuttle if we continued on the original course; so, we chose to continue down to Rock Creek Trail and make a decision. Arriving at the Rock Creek Trailhead at around 4 pm, the group made the decision to continue on the Vallecito Trail. This required a change in shuttle pickup location and time. Thankfully, Rick had his satellite messaging device and was able to send a text to the shuttle service. They responded quickly and agreed to make the change. We camped across the stream in a really nice campsite and enjoyed a leisurely supper and slept to the roar of the cascades nearby.





Wednesday morning, September 11, dawned clear and warmer, and we were able to somewhat dry our gear before packing up and heading south again. Our goal was to reach Johnson Creek and stay in the nice campsites along the stream. The trail was generally slightly downhill with good tread, and we made good time. As we came into one of the small meadows which was about 100 yards across, we were met face to face with a large moose. He was on the trail coming at us. We all stopped and looked at one another for a short while. Finally, the moose made the first move and began moving to his right along the tree line. We sighed and thought he was gone. After a short walk, the moose turned and began to head directly at us. This caused some consternation as yours truly began to look for a tree to climb! The moose slowly turned and walked down the meadow and disappeared into the woods. Needless to say, the Hike Leader paid a bit more attention after that. Later that afternoon, we were engulfed in a hailstorm, with the ice pellets giving us a thorough hammering. As this cleared, we came to the Johnson Creek area and set up camp for the night. This campsite was excellent with a good location for tenting and cooking meals.





Thursday morning, September 12, was clear and warmer as we were below 10,000 feet. We still had to pack some damp tents, but it was a leisurely morning. Heading south again, we hiked two miles to the location where we had to ford the fairly large Vallecito Creek. At its deepest point, it was over knee-deep with some good current. Everyone made it across safely and we continued south to the last possible campsite about three miles from a developed campground at the trailhead where the shuttle was to pick us up on Friday. Three of the group decided to hike on and stay in the campground and two spent one more night in the wilderness. In the campground, a good campfire was enjoyed and there was no dew under the large tree canopy. The two who stayed three miles back arrived around 11 am and we all got the nice shuttle ride back to our motel in Durango.



Friday, September 13, after returning to Durango and getting cleaned up, we headed downtown for a great late lunch of pizza and beverages. Saturday was a repacking and clothes-washing day and Henry headed to the airport and home.



Sunday morning came very early as Rick took the rest of us to the airport at 4 am. Jerry, Jennifer, and I flew on to our respective destinations and Rick took several days of driving and sightseeing on his way to Tellico Plains. Sue and her sister left a couple of days before we returned to Durango. Everyone made it home safely and no injuries occurred. The backpacking crew included Henry Mahler, Jennifer Schroll, Jerry Schneider, Rick Harris, and Event Leader Jack Callahan. • Jack Callahan

## MONTHLY CLUB MEETING SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

Canceled due to inclement weather. • Rob Coombs

### **WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND BRADLEY GREENWAY**



Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland Bradley Greenway. • Jack Callahan

### **THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST**



We had a wonderful club breakfast getting caught up and discussing fall hikes! • Judy Price



# UPCOMING EVENTS

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

## FALLS BRANCH FALLS

### OCTOBER 4, 2024 | FRIDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

*Great Hikes and Backpack Trips near Tellico Plains TN Pages 70, 78*

With Benton MacKaye Trail Association. Moderate, 2.4 miles with a 50-foot climb out of the gorge of the falls. We will drive on the Cherohala Skyway to mile 22.5 at the West Rattlesnake Trailhead. From there, we will hike down an old roadbed for about a mile, then steeply descend into the gorge, cross the creek (usually not requiring water shoes), then hike up to the base of the falls on a difficult trail. We will eat lunch there, then return the way we came, mostly uphill. The falls are spectacular and are about 90-feet high. Text Hike Leaders Rick and Benda Harris at 513-260-1184 if you plan to attend.

## TRAIL MAINTENANCE ON CHILDERS CREEK TO BIG BEND SECTION

### OCTOBER 5, 2024 | SATURDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

With Benton MacKaye Trail Association. Cherokee Hiking Club maintains the section of the Benton MacKaye Trail/John Muir National Recreation Trail from Childers Creek to Big Bend. We will do maintenance on this section with Event Leader James Anderson in charge. Typical work involves brushing and lopping limbs out of the trail and trash cleanup. This is a lovely and heavily-used section of trail, and we like to have our section well-maintained. Text James at 423-715-8824 if you plan to attend.

## THE HANGOVER

### OCTOBER 7, 2024 | MONDAY | JOYCE KILMER-SLICKROCK WILDERNESS

*Great Hikes and Backpack Trips near Tellico Plains TN Pages 94, 102*

With Benton MacKaye Trail Association. **Warning: this is a demanding hike.** Difficult, 7.5 miles. This difficult hike will start from the Wolf Laurel Trailhead in NC, about an hour drive from the Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center. We will first climb steeply about 500 feet to the ridge crest to meet the Haoe Lead Trail and the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT). We will turn right (north) and steeply descend 500 feet to Naked Ground, a great camping area. Then we will steeply climb up 500 feet to Haoe and down to the Hangover itself. On the stretch between Naked Ground and Haoe, the trail in places is often very overgrown with sticker bushes due to a fire several years ago at the same time as the Gatlinburg Fire. So, **wear long pants.** The views are incomparable with a 360-degree range of mountains, including the Smokies and the valley of the Little Tennessee, the Tennessee, and the Cheoah Rivers. We will eat lunch at the Hangover, one of the most scenic spots in the Southern Appalachians. Text Hike Leaders Rick and Brenda Harris at 513-260-1184 if you plan to attend.

## MONTHLY CLUB MEETING

### OCTOBER 10, 2024 | THURSDAY | MCDONALD TN

Bring your horseshoe and cornhole skills! The October monthly meeting will be held at Janet and Rob Coombs's home in McDonald, TN. Janet and Rob will grill hamburgers and the club will provide all fixings, dessert, and drinks. So there is no need to bring anything but a camp chair! Plan on arriving around 5 pm and we will eat at 6 pm. We will be outside so dress accordingly. The address is 5057 South Lee Highway, McDonald, TN.

## GROUP CAMPOUT AT BIG SOUTH FORK NRRRA

### OCTOBER 13 - 17, 2024 | SUNDAY - THURSDAY | ONEIDA TN

The club has the Group Camp Loop E reserved in the Bandy Creek Campground, where we have stayed for the past several years. There are 18 individual campsites. No electrical or water hookups at the sites. The Group Camp has a screened-in shelter with electricity, picnic tables, and a nice large fireplace. The camp also has a bathhouse with hot showers and flush toilets. There are many interesting trails with great views, great arches, and rock formations available. We will develop individual day hikes when we arrive on-site the first night. Typically, there are two or three hikes each day of varying degrees of difficulty. For those who would prefer to stay at a cabin, Pickett Memorial State Park is about a 30-minute drive to the east of Bandy Creek Campground. The cost for the group campground per individual will be determined by the number of nights stayed. If you plan to attend, text Event Leader Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

## **WHIGG MEADOW**

### **OCTOBER 21, 2024 | MONDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST**

*Great Hikes and Backpack Trips near Tellico Plains TN* Pages 64, 74

With Benton MacKaye Trail Association. Easy to mildly moderate, 2.6 miles, 500-foot climb. We will drive to Mud Gap Trailhead on the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) at mile 3.5 on the NC side of the Cherokee Skyway. We will hike on an old roadbed steadily uphill to the 5000-foot summit of Whigg Meadow, a large wide open bald with expansive views into the surrounding mountains. We will eat lunch there, then return to Mud Gap. Text Hike Leaders Rick and Brenda Harris at 513-260-1184 if you plan to attend.

## **BACKPACKING TRIP ON THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL (AT)**

### **OCTOBER 28 – NOVEMBER 1, 2024 | MONDAY - FRIDAY**

Rated strenuous due to length and elevation gains.

- Day 1 Drive to Deep Gap, USFS Road 71. Shuttle or drive to Around the Bend Hostel on Hwy 76 in GA. Hike about 0.5 miles to Dick's Gap and then 3.9 miles to Plumorchard Gap Shelter.
- Day 2 Hike 7.2 miles to Muskrat Creek Shelter.
- Day 3 Hike 4.5 miles to Dick's Gap, then about 0.9 miles to Standing Indian Shelter. Optional hike that afternoon, out-and-back to Standing Indian Mountain, about 3.2 miles total.
- Day 4 Hike 0.9 miles to Deep Gap and vehicles.

Note: Hostel formerly known as Top of Georgia Hostel is under new management and may thus have a new name. They do offer shuttle service and vehicles can park there. We can possibly shuttle using our vehicles depending on the number of participants. Contact Hike Coordinator Buddy Arnold at [we\\_arnold@outlook.com](mailto:we_arnold@outlook.com) or 601-415-3551.

## **CHILDERS CREEK TO BIG BEND**

### **OCTOBER 29, 2024 | TUESDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST**

We will hike six miles on the John Muir National Recreation Trail along the Hiwassee River. Meet at the Childers Creek Trailhead at 9 am. Bring lunch and water. Rated moderate. Text Hike Leader Leslie Auriemmo at 423-331-8967 if you plan to attend.

## **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 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.

## **THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH 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.

# NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

## **TELLICO/OCOE 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 usually held the second Saturday of the month.

## **OPEN HOUSE | TELLICO RANGER DISTRICT**

**OCTOBER 3, 2024 | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST**

## **SITTONS CAVE WILD CAVE ADVENTURES**

**OCTOBER 5, 6, 13, 26, 27, 2024 | CLOUDLAND CANYON STATE PARK**

## **CUMBERLAND TRAIL SUMMIT 2024**

**OCTOBER 10 - 12, 2024 | CHATTANOOGA TN**

## **CUMBERLAND TRAILS CONFERENCE VOLUNTEER TRAIL MAINTENANCE**

**OCTOBER 25 & 26, 2024 | PINEY RIVER MANAGEMENT AREA**

## **CHEROHALA SKYWAY HERITAGE FESTIVAL**

**OCTOBER 26, 2024 | TELLICO PLAINS TN**

## **BMTA ANNUAL MEETING AND HIKE FEST**

**OCTOBER 31 – NOVEMBER 3, 2024 | UNICOI LODGE | HELEN GA**

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