



Photo Credit: James Anderson

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

"Carry as little as possible, but choose that little with care." - Earl Shaffer

As our May monthly club meeting approached, I eagerly anticipated Kelly Ducham's *Belize and Panama Birding* presentation, and I was not disappointed. Kelly can identify more birds than any person I know. I marvel at the breadth of her knowledge. I share her love for birds, but try as I may, I struggle to recall many birds by name. The joy of seeing and hearing a variety of birds as we explore the great outdoors is certainly one of the joys of being alive. Thank you, Kelly, for an absolutely beautiful presentation.

As an adult, I have marveled at the ease a child approaches another child and asks, "Would you like to play?" So simple. So easy. And usually results in hours of enjoyment. Why is this so difficult for adults? We were all once children. We know how much fun there is to be had. Yet, we hesitate. Imagine, knocking on the door of a neighbor and asking, "Would you like to come out and play?" At best this would probably get a polite smile and a quickly shut and locked door. This is sad because play is not only a source of fun but an essential component to living a healthy life. Play is the secret of perpetual youth. All work and no play really do make Jack a dull boy. Like eating, sleeping, reading, and thinking, playtime should be a part of every day. Playing will help you feel younger, enhance your creativity, fuel your imagination, promote problem-solving abilities, improve your mental health, reduce stress, enhance your connections with others, and help you to not take life so seriously. As important as play is, chances are, none of us are going to knock on doors hoping to find someone who wants to play. Thankfully, as members of the Cherokee Hiking Club, we already have a play group. Would you like to come out and play? Become an active member of our club and you will discover there are many who will readily say, "Yes, I want to play with you."

Remember, we will not have a June monthly club meeting as many of our members will be out-of-town on hiking and bicycling trips. Normally, we do not meet during the month of August, but this year we will meet in August since we will not be meeting in June.

See you at the July club meeting at the Etowah Senior Center on Thursday, July 10, 2025. Our presentation will be The Great Allegheny Passage Trail presented by James Anderson, Otis Pannel, and Rob Coombs.

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.

JUNE EVENTS

Wednesdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25 - 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.

Saturday, June 7, 2025 - National Trails Day Maintenance Trip, GA-TN/NC Cherokee National Forest-

In honor of National Trails Day, the Cherokee Hiking Club is encouraging members to join the Benton MacKaye Trail Association's Wilderness Walk Maintenance Trip.

Why: The Cherokee Hiking Club wants to show support and assistance for our local national forest in honor of National Trails Day. The publicity will be good for the club.

Contact: Here is the link to let the BMTA Maintenance Director know that you will be there.

<https://bmta.org/events/june-7-2025-national-trails-day-work-trip>. This is needed so the director can plan the work for the day, bring enough helmets, tools, etc., and plan the chowtime. A taco bar will be enjoyed following maintenance.

Where: Thunder Rock >> 12a up steep climb to powerline to Little Frog sign, Kimsey Hwy >> Dry Pond Lead - Work northbound and southbound, Kimsey Hwy >> 12b-c - Head southbound doing tread work and tie in with Dry Pond Crew, Section 11 - Southbound towards Big Frog.

Time: 7:45 A.M. - Blue Ridge Home Depot to consolidate vehicle; 8:30 A.M. Safety Briefing at Thunder Rock Campground.

Welcome to BMTA's National Trails Day Maintenance Trip

Overview of Wilderness Tools

Meeting Location: Blue Ridge Home Depot, Thunder Rock Campground

Tentative Plan for the Day: Partial Wilderness! Complete details TBA

- Crew 1: Thunder Rock >> 12a - Up steep climb to powerline to Little Frog sign.
- Crew 2: Kimsey Hwy >> Dry Pond Lead - Work northbound and southbound.)
- Crew 3: Kimsey Hwy >> 12b-c - Head southbound doing tread work and tie in with Dry Pond Crew.
- Crew 4: Section 11 - Work towards Big Frog

What to Bring/What to Wear: Water, food/snacks, gloves, long pants and boots with non-slip soles. Bring safety glasses, hard hats and hand tools if you have them. PPE will be provided for those without.

Thank you, Clare Sullivan

Sunday, June 8 - Sunday, June 15, 2025 - Great Allegheny Passage Trail

Great Allegheny Passage Bike outing begins Sunday, June 8, in Cumberland, MD. This is an 8.5-hour drive from Cleveland, TN. Thirteen riders have signed up, and there is space for more. The daily riding average is 37.2 miles for a total distance of 148.8 miles. A shuttle service will take us from Cumberland to Pittsburgh's Point State Park on Monday. Overnight stays on the bike trip are in West Newton, PA, Ohiopyle, PA, and Meyersdale, PA. We have ample time for leisurely lunch breaks, visiting museums, and taking photos. The trip can be extended an additional 184.5 miles by riding on from Cumberland, MD. to Washington D.C. on the **C&O Canal Tow Path**. See GAPTRAIL.org. Questions: Call Jerry Schneider, 513-324-4564.

Tuesday, June 10, 2025 - Lost Creek

One hill at the beginning of the hike and another at the end of the hike. There are creek crossings that cannot be hopped. The trail is mostly level along the creek. We will meet in Reliance at 10 A.M. at the public boat ramp next to the Hiwassee Outfitters. We should return around 2 P.M. Hike difficulty is rated Moderate. Contact Sue Robinson at 423-519-9751.

Thursday, June 19, 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.

June 23-26, 2025 – Cherokee Hiking Club-Backpack

Below is the plan for the AT Backpack 23-26 June 2025. I changed the itinerary to eliminate part of the hike that would require a long and steep hike up Roan High Top from the Iron Gap side. But the hike is

still rated *strenuous*. Limit is 8 hikers. Right now, we have 4, so room for several more. We plan to leave Cleveland on the morning of June 23 about 7:00.

Location: Roan Mountain Area including Caver's Gap to 19E Portion

Trail Name and Number: AT

Difficulty Rating: Strenuous

Meet up time and location: Meet at Mountain Harbor B&B about 11:00 on Monday, June 9, 2025. There is a parking fee to leave a vehicle there (\$10 I think). Shuttle to Cavers Gap. Shuttle costs \$15 per person depending on number of hikers. Total miles, about 22. Only one of the shelters currently open, so tents needed. Due to elevation at some points on hike (over 6000 feet), need warm bags and warm gear. Always have rain gear in case needed.

There is a hostel and regular rooms at the Mountain Harbor B&B, phone number 866-834-7361. Great breakfast buffet if you want to come a day early (reservations needed).

Hike Description:

- Day 1, Shuttle to Cavers Gap, elev. about 5500; hike 1.6 miles to Roan High Top Shelter, elev. About 6200. The shelter is currently closed due to poor condition, but tent camp sites can be used. Set up camp. Side hike along ridge top to scenic view, 2 miles round trip.
- Day 2, hike 7 miles to Overmountain Shelter, elev. about 4500. Overmountain shelter closed, but plenty of tent sites.
- Day 3, hike 6.5 miles up and over Little Hump and Big Hump to Doll Flats, elev. about 4500; tent camp. (Little Hump elev. About 4900, Big Hump about 5200.)
- Day 4, hike 3.5 miles to 19E, elev. 3000., return home.

There is a hostel and regular rooms at the Mountain Harbor B & B, phone number 866-834-7361. Great breakfast buffet if you want to come a day early (reservations needed).

Hike coordinator Buddy Arnold we.arnold@outlook.com and cell phone 601-415-3551.

JULY AT-A-GLANCE

Thursday, July 10, 2025 - Thursday Monthly Club Meeting Potluck supper at 6:00 P.M. followed by a presentation by James Anderson, Otis Pannel, and Rob Coombs on the Great Allegheny Passage Trail. Meet at the Etowah Senior Center.

Saturday, July 12, 2025 - Oak Ridge and University of Tennessee Arboretum Text Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 for more information.

Thursday, July 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.

Saturday, July 26 (originally scheduled for July 19) 2025- Brasstown Bald Contact Jennifer Schroll at 423-284-1256 or email jennifergeologist@gmail.com for more information.

Tuesday, July 29, 2025 - Bob Bald Start at Beech Gap on Cherohala Skyway Contact Anne Anderson at ahander@aol.com or 423-284-7032.

Wednesdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 - Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you want to be included in the messages.

PLAN AHEAD...

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

- 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.
- Land Between the Lakes, October 13-17, 2025. Book early! Individual participants will be responsible for booking their own accommodations. Refer to e-mail dated 5/9/25 for all the details.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

Indian Boundary Lake Campout-April 28 to May 2, 2025

Monday, April 28: Campers arrived Monday afternoon and set up camp. Several hikers did the 3-mile loop hike around the lake.



Tuesday, April 29: Due to fires in North Carolina, we had to change plans for hikes. We decided to hike to Bald River Falls from the back trail. This was about 11 miles round trip. We got to view the falls and the new bridge that has been under construction for over 2 years and closed to the public.



Wednesday, April 30: We got word that the trail to Bob Bald was open and had a nice hike of about 7 miles.



Thursday, May 1: Due to rain that morning, we decided to go into Tellico Plains and see sights there with Rick Harris leading the group. We viewed a lumber company that makes nice furniture, the museum, and had a nice lunch before returning home.

Red River Gorge Outing Report, May 12 thru May 15, 2025

After eighteen years the CHC returned to Red River Gorge. The Club's first outing to the Gorge was in June, 2007. Clayton Pannell organized and led it. His family, along with others whose last names were Bahannon, Guhne, Firestone and Flower, camped, photographed, and hiked many of the trails. The planning for our 2025 outing began two years ago at campfire conversations with Rick and Brenda Harris. Once the outing was approved and included on the 2025 calendar, members started suggesting hikes and ways to have fun in the evenings. Lynn McPhail and Clair Sullivan recommended some good restaurants. Otis Pannell and Jennifer Schroll promised to entertain with campfires. Jack Callahan assisted by pointing out potential trip planning road bumps.

Red River Gorge is a 40,000-acre geological area and is one of the most spectacular gorges in the United States. There are more arches there than anywhere in the US other than Arches National Park. Its cliffs and unique rock formations, and sandstone arches lure tourists, climbers, and hikers from all over the world. A dam proposal in the late 1960s, however, would have flooded the gorge. Kentuckians, with help from the Sierra Club and writer-activist Wendell Berry, battled the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers until the Red was finally granted federal protection in 1993 under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Now a new threat, a proposed destination resort development, has Red River Gorge residents and visitors concerned again.

This year twenty-six members and guests participated. *Some came in a day early and began exploring the different trail networks. Despite wet weather reports and light rain on Monday, skies eventually cleared. We ended our week with pleasant hiking weather. Half of us camped at the Forest Service's Koomer Ridge Campground and others booked rooms at the Kentucky State Park lodge. Several rented nearby private cabins.

Monday, after checking-in or pitching tents, eleven of us hiked 2.6 miles in a drizzle from Koomer Ridge campground to Silvermine Arch. There are about 75 steps down to the arch, but no silver. After dinner the Van Dykes, Sinclairs, Harris's, Janet Coombs, and myself drove the scenic loop road. The road goes through an historic, hand dug, one lane, tunnel originally used to haul out logs by rail.

Tuesday's featured hike saw 13 of us walking along a sandstone, knife edge, ridgeline flanked by 200 ft. vertical cliffs. Auxier ridge has great views and terminates after 2.5 miles at a large sandstone monolith named Court House Rock. Fortunately, the sky cleared and no more rain fell. We had to help each other down a difficult descent leading into the valley. There we crossed a stream and climbed up to a contour line trail along a parallel ridge that led to Double Arch. By the time we were back at our cars we had covered 6.8 scenic and challenging miles. The other half of the group explored trails in the area that led to destinations like Grays Arch, Middleton Arch, and Rock Bridge. The Rock Bridge loop hike went past Creation Falls. This was popular and people took photos. Some who had hiked the Auxier Ridge and Double Arch trails heard from the other group about how scenic the Rock Bridge Loop was and decided to do it the next day.

Tuesday evening, we gathered at Sky Bridge Station, a local watering hole, for burgers and beer. The place was crowded because this was their weekly Trivia Night. Needless to say, our CHC teams beat the locals and won the prize.

Everyone was well oriented to the area by this time and could select from an array of hikes. Natural Bridge State Park has an interesting network of trails, many of which start at Hemlock Lodge. The trails offer great views, some steep ascents, and narrow cliff side passages with stairways carved into the stone. There is even a chair lift up to Natural Bridge arch.

Wednesday, six of us set our sights on an unpublished, unmarked, off trail destination, "Indian Staircase." Jennifer Schroll, Nina and Jerry Barrow, Michelle Ritter, and I set off from the bridge across Gladie Creek. Note that Jack Callahan worked on site on the design of this bridge when he was an engineer with the US Forest Service. We hiked a short distance on the Bison Way trail and connected to the Sheltowee Trace. From there we hiked to an unmarked junction where a manway went steeply uphill. Look up Indian Staircase on YouTube. At its base we began ascending using hand and foot holds carved into the rock by Adena era indigenous peoples (circa 1000 BC - 200 BC). We took photos at the top to document our accomplishment. There we followed the cliff line to a large rock overhang called Council Chamber. This led out to a trail right along the cliff edge. We eventually got to the top of the cliff and found a spot to sit and eat lunch. We could watch people across the valley climbing the Staircase. In the meantime Rick and Brenda Harris went to the top of the staircase using a different route because their dog could not negotiate the cliff. They followed our route in reverse and could look down the staircase from above.

Other members and guests hiked a variety of trails from the State Park's Hemlock Lodge. They took a group photo on top of Natural Bridge. Some of them also hiked the Rock Bridge Loop. A few lucky Koomer Ridge campers finagled the use of showers from friends who had cabins.

Miguel's Pizza is where we ate dinner Wednesday night. That restaurant is a well-known destination for climbers, beer drinkers, motor cyclists, and tourists. It was a civil crowd and the parking lot on this evening was full of late model SUV'S. Back at the campsite, Otis, Lucia, and Jennifer had a roaring hot campfire.

Thursday morning involved breaking camp, packing up, and driving the loop only to find that Gladie Visitor Center was closed. Their employees did not show up to open the gate despite the hours posted on their website. Michelle managed a solo twelve-hour drive home to New Orleans. A devastating tornado early Saturday morning destroyed much of London, KY, killing fourteen.

Report submitted by trip leader, Jerry Schneider

"To cherish what remains of the Earth is to foster its renewal and is our only legitimate hope of survival." Wendell Berry

* Hikers: N=26

Anne Anderson	Janet Coombs	Doug Lynch	Jennifer Schroll
James Anderson	Rob Coombs	Lynne McPhail	Claire Sullivan
Phyllis Anderson	Brenda Harris	Judy Norton	Ed Sullivan
Sheila Ashe	Rick Harris	Otis Pannell	Candy Van Dyke
Jerry Barrow	Al Johnson	Michelle Ritter	Larry Van Dyke
Nina Barrow	Marrie Lasater	Sue Robinson	
Lucia Case	Tom	Jerry Schneider	

Greenway Walk, Wednesdays in May, 2025, Jack Callahan



Monthly Meeting, May 8, 2025, Etowah Senior Center



Breakfast, May 15, at Old Fort Restaurant in Cleveland



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., May 8, 2025 Etowah Senior Center

President Rob Coombs opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting Sign-in Sheet was distributed and 17 members signed. Phyllis Anderson won the Tonight's Lucky Hiker door prize. Rob Coombs began the meeting sharing a quote and thoughts from Earl Shaffer, "Carry as little as possible, but choose that little with care."

- I. The Treasure's Report was given by Jennifer Schroll. The current balance in the club treasury is \$2,950.04. A motion was made to accept the report as reported, seconded, and accepted.**

II. Unfinished Business

- A. A discussion of other possible places to hold our October Fall Group campout was on the agenda. Rob Coombs reported that he still had the reservation for the Group Camp at Big South Fork for October 12 - October 16, 2025, and had, as instructed in the April business meeting, continued to look for other possible locations. Our president presented The Land Between the Lakes Recreational Area. After a detailed look at the amenities this area had to offer, the club voted 16 to 1 to move our October Fall Group camp to The Land Between the Lakes. An email will be sent out by our publicist, Phyllis Anderson, on May 9 with the needed information to reserve a campsite at this location.**
- B. The pavilion at The Land Between the Lakes is available at a charge of \$50 per day. The club voted 17 to 0 to use club funds to secure this reservation.**

III. New Business

- A. No new members were added to our club roster.**
- B. Hikes / Meetings / Events since our last meeting.**
- 1. 4/12 - Shake Rag Hollow, Jack Callahan**
 - 2. 4/15 - Murphy NC River Walk, Lunch, Museum, James Anderson**
 - 3. 4/17 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast, Jack Callahan**
 - 4. 4/28 - 5/2 - Indian Boundary Lake Campground, Buddy Arnold**
 - 5. 5/03 - Wild Edibles, Yuchi Wildlife Refuge, Decatur, Jack Callahan (canceled)**
 - 6. Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway, Jack Callahan**
- C. Hikes / Activities / Events scheduled for the two months ahead.**
- 1. 5/12 - 5/15 - Red River Gorge at Koomer Ridge, Jerry Schneider**
 - 2. 5/15 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast, Jack Callahan**
 - 3. 6/07 - National Trails Maintenance Trip, Claire Sullivan**
 - 4. 6/08 - 6/15 - Great Allegheny Passage Trail, Jerry Schneider**
 - 5. 6/10 - Lost Creek, Sue Robinson**
 - 6. 6/19 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast, Jack Callahan**
 - 7. 6/23 - 6/27 - Backpack, Roan Mountain Area, Buddy Arnold**
 - 8. Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway, Jack Callahan**

- IV. Our presentation for the evening was entitled the Belize and Panama Birding presented by Kelly Ducham.**

- V. Our next meeting will be held **July 10, 2025**. Our presentation for the evening will be the Great Allegheny Passage Trail presented by James Anderson, Otis Pannel, and Rob Coombs. There will be no June meeting as**

most of our club officers will be bicycling the Great Allegheny Passage during the regularly scheduled time for the June meeting. In place of having our June Club Meeting we will meet August 14, 2025.

Respectfully submitted by Otis Pannel, Vice President on May 8, 2025