

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year to all!

Dues for 2024 are due! If you haven't done so, please send a \$15 (per family in a household) check to Cherokee Hiking Club, 1295 Crown Street NW, Cleveland, TN 37312.

We closed out the year with a great Christmas Party catered by Jennifer Schroll, with more than 50 in attendance. I want to thank everyone for their participation in leading events, giving presentations, and, most importantly, keeping our potluck meals delicious and amply-covered. Twenty twenty-three was a great year, and we did a lot of interesting hikes, events, and trips. I look forward to 2024 with plans to make it another interesting and event-filled year. I want to make sure we provide something for all club members, so if there is an event you would like to lead or suggest, please attend the upcoming Planning Meeting on January 14, or give me a call.

We already have numerous interesting hikes and historic/museum tours planned for the coming year. Project Chimps, Booth Western Museum, New Echota State Historic Site, and group campouts at Roan Mountain and Standing Indian Campground are but a few. And the calendar is filling up with interesting speakers at club meetings.

I want to especially thank the officers who are volunteering their time to do the daily activities that keep the club functioning smoothly. Their efforts are much appreciated.

Have a safe New Year and hope to see you at the Planning Meeting.

Jack Callahan, Club President

MEMBER UPDATES

BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

James Anderson has been appointed 2024 TN/NC Representative by BMTA President Bob Cowdrick.

FRIENDS OF THE CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

Leslie Auriemmo is serving on the [FOCNF](#) Board of Directors.

CHATTANOOGA TIMES FREE PRESS

Rick Harris and Pam Hall Mathews are featured in this *Chattanooga Times Free Press* [article](#) discussing their book, *Great Hikes and Backpack Trips near Tellico Plains TN*. (Hat tip: Clare Sullivan)

THE TODAY SHOW

Phyllis and James Anderson made their second appearance in 26 years on *The Today Show*!

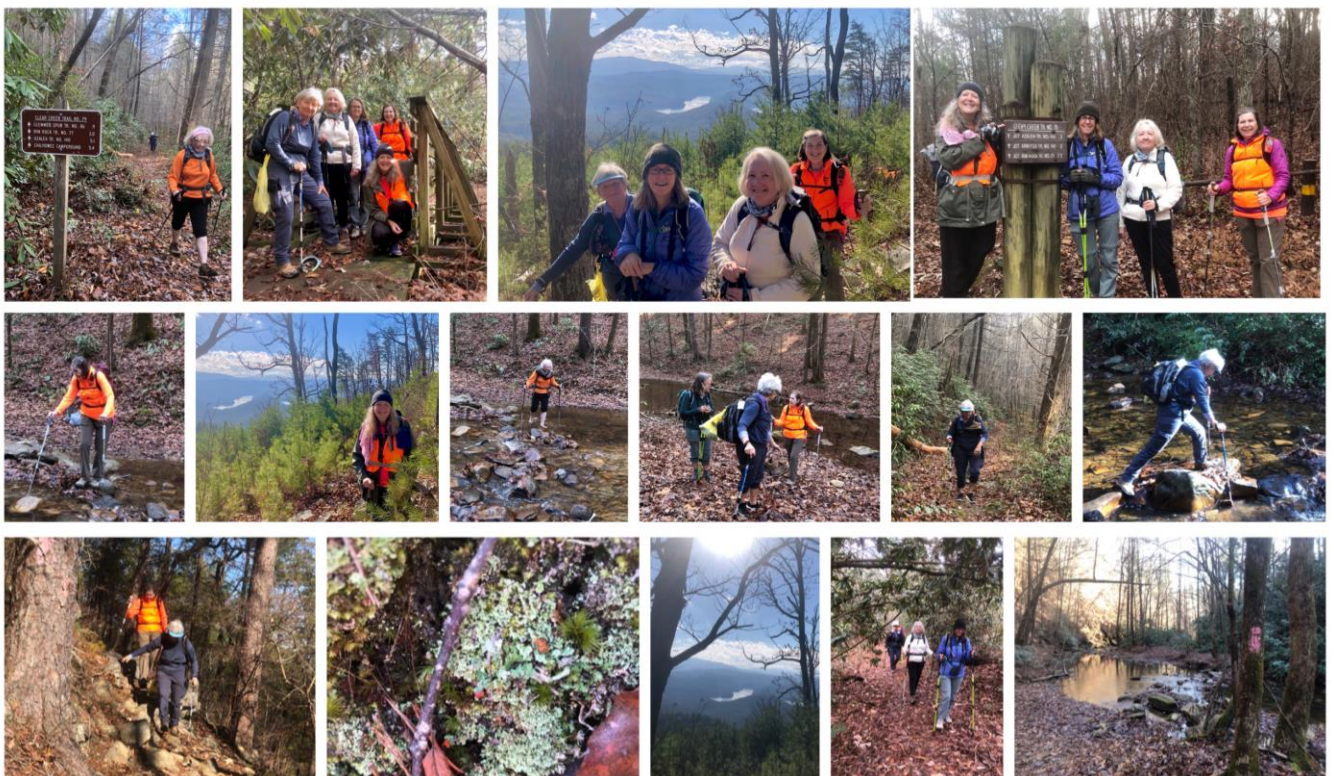


PAST EVENTS

CLEAR CREEK DECEMBER 4, 2023



Five hikers—Mary Alton, Kelly Ducham, Sandra Fenton, and Hike Leaders Clare Sullivan and Judy Price—met at the Ocoee Ranger Station in Cherokee National Forest to begin the shuttle to Clear Creek Trail. After dropping a vehicle on Hwy 30 at the trailhead, we traveled to Chilhowee Recreation Area and parked at the campground/picnic area where we were yelled at by a red-shouldered hawk. We started hiking to the beginning of Clear Creek Trail. The weather was damp and chilly as we walked through green tunnels, over bridges, on pine needles, and past ground cedar next to the creek. We could hear, but couldn't see, Benton Falls. About two-and-a-half miles in, the sun broke through the clouds! This was just before we reached the ridge with its spectacular views of Parksville Lake, Ocoee River, and Big Frog and the surrounding mountains. Mary pulled out her PeakVisor app and identified the peaks. After taking in the views, we started descending, passing rocks covered in lichens. We weren't exactly bird-watching, but we were bird-listening as Kelly and Mary identified birds including the Carolina wren and golden-crowned kinglet. Near the bottom, we had a spectacular view of Big Frog Mountain; unfortunately, as we hiked, it became obscured by baby pines popping up. We stopped for lunch but soon had to move along as we were attacked by yellowjackets! We passed by Clemmer Spur Trail and came to our first creek crossing. Thankfully, the creek was rock-hoppable due to lack of rain. A little farther on we came to our second picturesque creek crossing and everyone made it across safely. Before we knew it, we were back at the trailhead after a very enjoyable five-and-a-half-mile hike! • Clare Sullivan and Judy Price



CHRISTMAS PARTY DECEMBER 9, 2023



The club held its annual Christmas Party at Etowah Senior Center. We had a great turnout of 50 members attending. Several folks commented that the change to a noon meal was a great idea, as some prefer driving in the daylight! Our own Jennifer Schroll catered the meal with turkey, ham, all the trimmings, and a wonderful dessert selection. Jennifer is a wonderful cook and it showed. Jack Callahan MC'ed the program and, after the meal, gave a summary of the club events of 2023. It was quite a list of activities! Almost 400 miles of hiking, group campouts at numerous state parks, historic tours, biking, canoeing, birding, backpacking, great presentations at club meetings, and all-around fun. After Jack's summary of club events, the program was turned over to Jennifer Schroll who did the induction of new club officers for 2024. The theme this year was "Shoes." New officers are Jack Callahan, President; Rob Coombs, Vice-president; Jennifer Schroll, Treasurer; Richard Harris, Webmaster; Judy Price, Newsletter and Social Media Editor; and Ruth Pannell, Hospitality Director. The program was then handed over to Shauna and Jimmy Drinnon who handled the Dirty Santa gift exchange and they did an outstanding job! It was a wonderful event, and everyone had a nice time. • Jack Callahan







CANDIES CREEK GREENWAY DECEMBER 15, 2023



Six club members and a doggo—Margaret and Jack Callahan, Bob Dornfeld and Smoky, Carin Taber, Kathy Thelen, and Hike Leader Judy Price—walked two Cleveland greenways on a chilly but sunny day. We headed first to the Candies Creek Greenway. We ambled alongside the babbling creek and could hear sandhill cranes as we walked. The paved path is wide for cyclists, walkers, and runners. We soon reached the historic [Dobbs Ford Bridge](#) and crossed Candies Creek. The bridge was built in 1877 and is the “oldest metal truss bridge built for vehicular traffic in the State.” The path was recently paved from the bridge to the interstate, where it has the potential to continue under the freeway to Fletcher Park. We looped back, passed over the bridge, and returned the way we came. We then walked up Candies Lane to the Wetlands Loop or Back Nine Trail. A part of the former Rolling Hills Golf Course (I believe it was a tee) was left intact at the entrance as a reminder of the greenway’s former life. This is where we not only heard the sandhill cranes, but were fortunate to see them as they passed overhead in their V formations. They were a noisy bunch! This greenway has a cattails-filled wetlands pond which often hosts herons, ducks, and geese. We passed a couple of patches of yellow Carolina horsenettle berries which added color to the wintry landscape. We were watched by some curious cows! Soon, our walk was over and we headed home after a fun four-and-a-half miles with friends. Smoky had the best time! • Judy Price



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. • Jack Callahan

THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST



Another nice breakfast get-together! • Jack Callahan

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

BRUSH CREEK TRAIL

JANUARY 1, 2024 | MONDAY | CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

Start your year off the right way! Join us as we hike a loop out-and-back from Boyd Gap parking on the Brush Creek Trail. Bring water and snacks and wear hiking footwear. Contact Hike Leaders Jennifer Schroll and Judy Price at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com for meetup details.

EUREKA TRAIL

JANUARY 4, 2024 | THURSDAY | ATHENS TN

We will walk four to six miles along the easy, wide gravel path. This is a multi-use trail so there may be bikers, as well as those riding horses out for the day. We will begin our walk at the main trailhead located at 1400 East Madison Avenue in Athens, TN. 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 dkss2063@hotmail.com for details.

MCGILL CREEK SECTION OF THE CUMBERLAND TRAIL

JANUARY 5, 2024 | FRIDAY | GRAYSVILLE TN

Join us on this picturesque section of the Cumberland Trail. This is a moderate, 5.6-mile (total) out-and-back hike. This trail crosses drainage areas which may be full or dry depending on the weather. Bring water shoes if that will offer peace of mind. Also bring water and snacks and wear hiking footwear. Contact Hike Leader Judy Price at cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com for meetup details.

BAY POINT LOOP

JANUARY 11, 2024 | THURSDAY | HARRISON BAY STATE PARK

Depart from Cleveland Park and Ride [commuter parking](#) next to the Mapco at I-75 and Hwy 60 at 10 am or meet at the [trailhead](#) at 10:30 am. This is a mostly-level, easy 4.3-mile loop hike. If it has rained recently, there are usually wet spots we will navigate around. 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 dkss2063@hotmail.com for details.

LOOKOUT WILD FILM FESTIVAL

JANUARY 11 - 14, 2024 | THURSDAY – SUNDAY | WALKER THEATER | CHATTANOOGA TN

Jack Callahan will lead the annual club trip to Chattanooga to enjoy another great weekend of outdoor films from around the world. This presentation is always memorable. If you have questions contact Jack at 423-284-7885.

ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING

JANUARY 14, 2023 | SUNDAY 2 PM | WESLEY MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | ETOWAH TN

Do you want to lead a hike or event? If so, bring your ideas to our annual planning meeting! The church is located on the corner of Ohio Avenue and 10th Street. Please enter through the 10th street entrance. Club will provide soft drinks. Members may want to bring a simple dessert for the break. Be sure to include all details **in writing** to turn in including date, time, description, hike difficulty, entrance fees, etc., on a single sheet of notebook paper to facilitate organization. If you cannot attend, you may email the information to cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com. See you there!

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK

JANUARY 14 – 23, 2024 | SUNDAY - TUESDAY | TEXAS

See the Proposed Big Bend Schedule & Day Hikes, Jan 2024 (Chisos Campground Group Site Option) in the newsletter email. Contact Hike Leader Buddy Arnold at we_arnold@outlook.com or 601-415-3551 for more information or to sign up.

OUTER LOOP

JANUARY 25, 2024 | THURSDAY | BOOKER T. WASHINGTON STATE PARK | HARRISON TN

Depart from Cleveland Park and Ride [commuter parking](#) next to the Mapco at I-75 and Hwy 60 at 10 am or meet at the trailhead at 10:30 am. We will hike the 3.9-mile easy Outer Loop Trail which skirts Chickamauga Lake for some nice views. 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 dkss2063@hotmail.com for details.

WESTMORE OUTDOOR EXPO AND DINNER

JANUARY 27, 2024 | SATURDAY 5 PM | WESTMORE CHURCH OF GOD | CLEVELAND TN

"Join us at Westmore for our Outdoor Expo and Dinner! Enjoy an evening of family fun, exhibits, dinner, and giveaways. Jody Robinson will be our guest speaker. Cost is only \$20 per person.

- Doors open to displays at 5 pm (Westmore Student Center)
- Dinner at 6 pm
- Program at 7 pm

There are only 400 tickets available and the deadline to register is by January 26, 2024."

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.

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/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 dates.

TENNESSEE STATE PARKS

Tennessee State Parks are offering First Day Hikes. See the website for options and to register.

CUMBERLAND TRAILS CONFERENCE

JANUARY 12, 2024

Volunteer trail maintenance on Lower Piney River Segment.

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

MINUTES

Christmas Party
December 9, 2023 noon
Etowah Senior Center

We did not hold a Business Meeting so there are no December minutes. We will vote on the November 2023 minutes at the January 2024 Annual Planning Meeting. The 2024 Officers were inducted:

- Jack Callahan, President
- Rob Coombs, Vice-president
- Jennifer Schroll, Treasurer
- Richard Harris, Webmaster
- Judy Price, Newsletter and Social Media Editor
- Ruth Pannell, Hospitality Director