



Smoky Mountains Hiking Club

P O Box 51592 Knoxville, TN 37950-1592

Exploring the Smokies Since 1924

December 2019

GHOST HOUSE TR-INDIAN ROCK LOOP-LAKE TRAIL BIG RIDGE STATE PARK

December 7- Saturday

Big Ridge SP is one of 3 TN State Parks around Norris Lake formed with the building of Norris Dam in 1936. As such, it flooded many communities and historical sites, while providing hydroelectric power, flood control, and recreational opportunities. This figure eight loop hike, traverses the two major ridges in Big Ridge, passing old home sites, historic cemeteries, (some with ghosts!) and the Sharps Station area, a small fort built as protection for people migrating to the Appalachians in the late 1700s. Much of the hike follows the edge of Norris Lake, and several places give lovely high views. Length approx. 9.5 miles, with net elevation gains (ups and downs) of about 1700 ft. The Indian Rock Tr has a portion with a very steep descent and ascent. Rated at the difficult end of moderate due to the latter. Meet at Hardees, 107 Buffalo Rd., Clinton TN (near I-75), at 8am. RT mileage to TH= 25 miles, \$1.25.

Leader: Diane Petrilla, petrillad@gmail.com, 931-224-5149.

BIRD MOUNTAIN LOOP December 11 - Wednesday

Frozen Head State Park, Wartburg, TN. We will hike up Bird Mountain trail and come down Lookout Tower trail for a total of 7.2 miles. Meet at Oak Ridge Gold's Gym at 8:00 a.m. Drive 50 miles. (\$2.50)

Leader: Carolyn Reeves (865)399-2972 or crhiker03@gmail.com

SMHC INSTALLATION DINNER

FOX DEN COUNTRY CLUB

December 14 – Saturday

5pm- 8:30pm

12284 N. Fox Den Drive

Knoxville, TN. 37934

Register now for our festive Holiday event. See page 4 for registration details.

HOUSE MOUNTAIN December 15 - Sunday

Come walk off the calories from the Installation banquet the night before by visiting the highest point in Knox County, House Mountain. We'll hike up the East Overlook trail, visit the east overlook, then walk the ridge to the west overlook, and then back down. This will be a more leisurely walk than most, about 5 miles, but don't underestimate this old piece of rock; the trails are rocky, eroded, and steep, in spots. Unfortunately, this hike also gives one a great example of the damage over-use and misuse (cutting switchbacks) can do to a trail. Drive about 20 miles round trip from Comcast (\$1.25 to driver). We'll leave from Comcast on Asheville Highway at 9:00 and meet up with those meeting at the House Mountain parking area at 9:30. As parking is limited carpooling is recommended. Due to length of the hike we won't stop for a formal lunch, but we will stop several times for views and/or snacks.

Leader Brad Reese, bradktn@gmail.com

RICH MOUNTAIN LOOP December 18- Wednesday

We will go up Crooked Arm Ridge and down Indian Grave Gap. The trail starts at the entrance to Cades Cove. Moderate hike, 8.5 miles, 1958' elevation gain. Should be great views as we will hike to the fire tower. Meet at Food City Alcoa at 8:00 a.m. Drive 60 miles (\$3.00).

Leader: Carolyn Reeves (865) 399-2972 or crhiker03@gmail.com

LUMBER RIDGE SPRUCE FLATS FALLS MANWAY LOOP

December 21 - Saturday

We will climb up Lumber Ridge for 4 miles to Buckhorn Gap. At the Buckhorn Gap intersection, we will take the manway for an off-trail hike to Spruce Flats Fall crossing several small stream crossings that we should be able to rock hop. You will want hiking boots that are water-resistant for the stream crossings and potentially muddy sections of the trail. We will continue along the manway to Honey Cove Falls and then Spruce Flats Falls. We will cross the stream below Spruce Flats Falls and continue back to Tremont Institute. The hike is rated moderate to difficult due to stream crossing and manway. It is about 8 miles. Meeting time is at 7:30 am Alcoa Food City. Drive 50 miles RT= \$2.50

Leader: Dale Potter dalepotter55gmail.com or 865-773-8114



Photo taken Cades Cove Night Hike
October 2019

**FORT DICKERSON
DECEMBER 28 -Saturday**

Fort Dickerson Park is part of the Legacy Parks Foundation /Knoxville Urban Wilderness, and hiking in this area takes in Fort Dickerson Quarry Lake, as well as Fort Dickerson. The latter is an earthworks fortification (still existing) built in 1863-64 by the Union Army during the Civil War, and which withstood the Battle of Knoxville. We will meander among the trails near the Fort, and the quarry, for a total of about 4-5 miles, discussing the interesting history of this area. Rated easy. Meet at back of REI parking lot, 6700 Papermill Dr NW at 9am or at the top of Ft Dickerson Rd. at the Interpretive Walk entrance at 9:30am. RT mileage from REI= 15 miles, \$0.75
Leaders: Eric Keller and Diane Petrilla
erkeller@live.com, 865-250-9266
petrillad@gmail.com, 931-224-5149

MEETING PLACES: **Alcoa Food City** = On right between 3rd & 4th stoplight (on Hall Rd., TN 35), a block before Big Lots. [Map Link](#). **Comcast on Asheville Hwy** = From Exit 394 ramp off I-40 go left (east) on Asheville Hwy, US-11E/25W/70, to signal light at top of hill; turn right, down into Comcast lot, 5720 Asheville Hwy; park to left of entry, about 2 lanes over toward the exit end of lot. [Map Link](#). **Fox Den Country Club** = From I-40 Exit 373 take N. Campbell Station Road, turn right on Kingston Pike 2 miles, turn right on Fox Den Blvd, then left onto N. Fox Den Drive to 12284 N. Fox Den Drive. [Map Link](#). **Lenoir City Ruby Tuesday** = At I-75 Exit 81, immediately to the west of I-75, at 120 Interchange Park Lane, Lenoir City, TN. [Map Link](#). **Oak Ridge Books-a-Million/Gold's Gym** = 310 South Illinois Avenue 3-1/2 traffic lights in, on left coming from Knoxville, opposite Walmart. Meet next to Illinois Ave. in front of Books-a-Million. [Map Link](#).

COMING EVENTS – January 2020

- 1 Wednesday Seven Islands
- 4 Saturday Chestnut Top Lead
- 11 Saturday Maryville Greenbelt
- 18 Saturday Tremont Naturalist Hike
- 26 Sunday Norris Watershed / Norris Dam State Park



Welcome new members

- Jim Agnew jamesagnew69@yahoo.com
P.O.Box 1491 Canton MS 39046
- Jonathan Bruce jonny54172@gmail.com 757/478-5291
805 Evolve Way Apt 301 Knoxville TN37915
- Ruth Ann Hickey Rahickey50@aol.com 509/554-4673
1214 Adair Dr Richland WA 99352
- David & Debbie Payne david.w.payne@hotmail.com
865/466-5831
11005 Hunters Knoll Ln Knoxville TN37932
- Suzanne Wedekind suz.wede@gmail.com 865/742-4786
1425 Audena Ln Knoxville TN37919

FOR THE RECORD

Kirkland Creek in Upper Bald River Wilderness 10-6-19

This joint hike with TCWP to visit the newly designated (and remote) Upper Bald River Wilderness attracted 5 hikers including one SMHC member, 3 TCWP members and some visitors. There was light rain in the morning and it was a gloomy day, but the skies remained dry all day.

The trail follows Kirkland and Manchesi creeks and crosses them many times. Although the creeks weren't that swollen they still required wading at most crossings plus the Bald River itself required wading at the start of the trail. The valley is quite scenic and appears relatively undisturbed and climbs only slightly until the end where it heads up to the top of the ridge and joins the Benton Mackaye trail.

The leader and the Tellico area volunteers trail crew had done some maintenance earlier in the summer however there were many places that more trimming along the way helped to get through dog hobble covering the trail. One copperhead snake was stepped over and many birds were seen and heard. On the drive in, the group was surprised to learn that a bear hunt was taking place just up the road outside the wilderness, so fortunately we had some orange in the car. There were no hunters parked near the trail head nor dogs heard all day. The group was able to hike in about 3 miles to the start of the climb up to the ridge top but the creek crossings and weed whacking slowed things enough making that a good point to turn around to retrace our steps.

TIm Bigelow



Rock Creek, Cumberland Trail

10-12-19

Four members and 2 visitors enjoyed a gorgeous hike on the CT. Despite a gloomy forecast, we experienced clear skies and refreshing temps! The rock houses and exposed walls on this section are stunning. Our turnaround point was a "cascade" that was bone dry however Rock Creek provided some pools between massive, exposed boulders. A wonderful day!

Cindy Spangler



Cades Cove Moonlight Hike

10-13-19

Four members and one visitor joined the leader and co-leader for the beautiful walk around Cades Cove. We were rewarded at the entrance by a beautiful

sunset. We elected to take the Hyatt Lane cut-thru for a total of 8 miles. As we made our way around the loop we saw the beautiful full moon appear. The only wildlife encountered was the sound of an owl in the distance. Temps were very pleasant and long and short sleeves were sufficient. To those who missed the hike: To quote Jim Quick "It doesn't get any better than this".

Lynda Bryan and Nancy Dunning



Hangover from Big Fat Gap

10-19-19

Rain was threatening most of the day but held off till the group returned to the starting point at Big Fat Gap near the edge of Joyce Kilmer/Slickrock wilderness. Four hikers, who are all members, realized the views would be worth the possible unfavorable weather! The hike up to Hangover is a steady steep climb and a bit rocky toward the end. When we



arrived at the top the views were great and there were nice bands of fall colors in the valleys below. At the top, the wind became very brisk so after a group picture we quickly headed

back down the hill to a nice quiet lunch spot. Due to the intense wind and dark clouds approaching, the group opted to return to the car. This left a bit of time to stop by and check out Tapoco on the way back. While hiking back we came across two bear hunters who were looking for their 5 dogs. We were ready with an orange vest but still surprised again by hunting before November this time actually on a trail in a wilderness. Tim Bigelow

Canal & Baker Hollow branches East Lakeshore Trail 10-23-19

On a bright and sunny but cool morning 22 hikers gathered to hike the Canal and Baker Hollow branches of the East Lakeshore trail along Tellico lake. These branches are the northern most parts of the East Lakeshore trail. The beginning of the trail is not that pretty with the

vegetation shortened to provide access to the power lines stretching overhead. But these distractions are quickly left behind as the trail goes into



the woods. The trail follows the shore line about two miles to Mizel Bluff where the best views of the lake are seen. After a stop to look, we continued on another 2.7 miles to the end of the Baker Hollow branch. There we had the luxury of having picnic tables to eat our lunches at and restrooms to use. On the way back to the cars there was another lengthy stop at Mizel Bluff where everyone just talked and enjoyed the view of the lake. Even with the stops we were finished and heading home by 2:00 pm. The length of the hike was 9.4 miles. Ron Brandenburg

Panther Stairs to Mount Cammerer

10/26/19

Dire predictions of unfavorable weather frightened off the faint-hearted, yet eleven of the Club's stalwarts convened on an overcast last Saturday in October anticipating an arduous climb to Mount Cammerer by way of the Panther Stairs. With Greg Harrell in the lead, the group proceeded quickly through a bit of low-elevation preliminaries before turning up Robinson Creek and into a long, relentlessly steep grind to reach the west flank of Rich Butt. Here, the real excitement began. From the crest of Rich Butt, Greg commanded a wild scramble up the Panther Stairs, a concatenation



of exposed rock outcroppings aligned stepwise on a narrow rib extending from the side of Mount Cammerer. The climb was exhilarating and the views from the outcroppings were stupendous. The whole of the Cosby watershed lay

below and the fall colors were at their best. Rain from the previous night had cleared the air of pollution, affording remarkable visibility. Nevertheless, a few stray wisps of mist drifted in below the Panther Stairs where they were churned and swirled, forced up then down by currents playing havoc around the cliffs. After a brief respite at the Mount Cammerer Lookout Tower, the group plunged recklessly down the venerable Groundhog Ridge manway, returning to TN 32 where our cars were waiting patiently to ferry us homeward. Greg Harrell and Ken Wise

Gabes Mountain

10-26-19

6 hikers met for what was to be a hike up the Low Gap trail and over to the Mt. Cammerer fire tower to view the fall colors. Because of the wind forecast (30 mph with gusts approaching 60 mph), the hike was moved and we hiked the Gabes Mountain trail from the Cosby campground to Madron Bald with a side trip to Henwallow Falls. The winds at the lower elevation were calm to a light breeze. While we did not have the panoramic views from the fire tower, we did enjoy the colors along the trail with some occasional views

through the trees of the surrounding hillsides speckled with the reds and yellows of the fall leaves. At 13.2 miles, the hike was a bit longer than



originally scheduled, providing ample time to enjoy the woods and share tales of previous adventures.

Neil Snapp



SMHC INSTALLATION DINNER

FOX DEN COUNTRY CLUB

December 14 - Saturday

5pm- 8:30pm

12284 N. Fox Den Drive

Knoxville, TN. 37934

The evening will include the ORHS string quartet, a fine meal and installation of our new board.

The Guest Speaker this year is Andrew Herrington. Mr. Herrington is head of the BUSAR (an all-hazard, all-volunteer, non-profit, highly trained Search and Rescue team) which assists the GSMNP and NPS in search and rescue missions. BUSAR was founded by Andrew in 2015 and was recognized with the NPS Search and Rescue Award in 2018. He will be accompanied by two crew members who will be talking about their experiences assisting the national park, as well as best safety practices, even for the most experienced hikers!

The Reservation Deadline is Saturday, December 7th

Entrée Choices: Turkey Dinner, Poached Salmon, Chicken Marsala, or Veggie Lasagne

Served with vegetable medley and mashed potatoes, hot rolls

Dessert choice of cheesecake, cherry cobbler, or chocolate layer cake

iced tea, coffee, and water

Register and prepay online at <http://smhclub.org/forms/banquet/>

or by phone to Jeannette Gilbert @ 865-483-8774, Priscilla Clayton @ 865-966-4142 or Beth Eades @ 865-609-8311

SMHC merchandise will be available for sale (cash or check only)

- T-shirts, \$15
- Caps, \$15
- Patch, \$3
- Jenny Bennett's book, **Murder at the Jump-Off**, \$10