

August 4, 2020

Dear Members of the SMHC,

The Board of Directors of the SMHC hopes that you are continuing to stay safe and healthy as we move into the late summer with the coronavirus pandemic. As many of you know, the southeastern United States is experiencing a rise in the number of COVID-19 cases (over 100 cases per week, rolling average, per 100,000 people), with significantly increasing case numbers in Sevier and Knox counties (among others). Our outdoor activities will remain relatively safe, if we continue to follow the guidelines established by the Club for hiking events. Most critical are the rules to avoid crowded trailheads, not carpooling with anyone except those in your safe "bubble", wearing face coverings at trailheads, maintaining at least 6 ft. of distance between hikers, and continuing to keep hiking groups limited to 10 people or less. (For complete list, see below.) *We are deeply appreciative of your adherence to these guidelines, since it will allow ALL of us to continue to hike together as a Club and hopefully avoid potential hike cancellations, until the risks from the pandemic are over.* And those risks will pass, with time!

Best wishes to all of you and stay safe!

Diane Petrilla M.D.

President, SMHC

### **RABBIT CREEK TRAIL TO HANNAH MOUNTAIN TRAIL TO CAMPSITE 14**

**September 2 - Wednesday**

12 miles. 2138 elevation gain. Moderate. 1st group meets at 8:00. 2nd group at 8:30. Meet at the parking lot by Abrams Creek Ranger Station. (Bring water shoes) Michael Zielinski [kf4yws@comcast.net](mailto:kf4yws@comcast.net) or 865-363-6527

### **HENSLEY SETTLEMENT VIA CHADWELL GAP**

**September 5 - Saturday**

We will meet at the Chadwell Gap trailhead at 10:00 AM. That should give everyone time to get there without leaving at a too unreasonable hour. For some the fastest route will be Maynardville Highway all the way to Harrogate, TN, while others will want to take I-75 North to the Caryville / Lofollette exit and take SR 63 to Harrogate. Check your mapping app to see which is faster for you. Continue north on Highway 25E through the pretty little college town of Harrogate. From the intersection of US-25E and US-58 just outside of Harrogate, TN, travel US-58 east for 10.3 miles to signed SR-690. Turn left onto SR-690 and proceed for 2.2 miles to SR-688. Continue onto SR-688 where SR-690 turns left, and drive 0.7 miles to the signed, gravel trailhead parking area on the left. Once assembled at the trailhead we will begin a gentle climb followed by a long traverse before we hit the old Chadwell Gap trail at about the 3-mile mark that pretty much heads straight up the mountain. This is a steep, rocky climb that only gets steeper towards the top. After gaining almost 2000 feet in about a mile, we finally gain the Ridge trail that runs along the length of the park. It is a relatively easy walk from this intersection to Hensley Settlement, a restored and maintained example of an isolated mountain farming community, complete with a schoolhouse, church, and cemetery, as well as several houses, cabins, barns, and other structures. We will stop for lunch and explore the area, before exiting via the back of the settlement to begin our hike back down the way we came. All totaled, about 10 miles, rated moderate to difficult. Drive is about 90 miles from downtown Knoxville. Please contact leader to pre-register. Leader: Brad Reese, 865-599-1708, [bradktn@gmail.com](mailto:bradktn@gmail.com)

### **AT WORK TRIP**

**September 12 - Saturday**

On this AT work trip, we will be hiking out of Cosby along the Low Gap Trail. Once at Low Gap, we will divide into groups of 4 or less, as per COVID guidelines. Some participants will go north and some south. We will perform general maintenance duties including clearing out vegetation and cleaning water bars. Bring work gloves and plenty of water.

Pre-registration with the leader is required

Leader: Mark Shipley, [shipleymark57@gmail.com](mailto:shipleymark57@gmail.com)

### **SEVEN ISLANDS STATE BIRDING PARK**

**September 13 - Sunday**

We'll meet at the at barn on Kelly Road and explore the native plantings and then stroll down the paved path to the fantastic bridge with cliff swallows. We'll take the loop around the island, look for herons and eagles, and then cross to the other barn and return by Kelly Lane. It will be 4-5 miles according to the wishes of the group. Meet in the main parking lot (not the boat launch) at 8:00 am. Pre-register with leader.

Leader: Doris Gove, [dorisgove@aol.com](mailto:dorisgove@aol.com), 865-456-8198

### **JAKES CREEK TRAIL TO CUCUMBER GAP TO LITTLE RIVER TRAIL TO GOSHEN PRONG TRAIL TO CAMPSITE 30**

**September 16 - Wednesday**

14.5 miles. Moderate. 1st group meets at 9:00, 2nd at 9:30. Meet at trailhead. Pre-register with leader.

Michael Zielinski [kf4yws@comcast.net](mailto:kf4yws@comcast.net) or 865-363-6527

#### **PLEASE NOTE:**

The SMHC is preparing the **2021** Handbook. If your name, e-mail address or phone number requires any change or correction from what is currently listed, please contact George Ritter at [rittergeo@gmail.com](mailto:rittergeo@gmail.com). Thank you!

**SLAVE FALLS LOOP/ SLAVE FALLS CONNECTOR  
/CHARIT CREEK LOOP and TWIN ARCHES, BSF  
September 19 - Saturday**

The hike originally scheduled for this date (Fiery Gizzard, SCSRA) has been postponed to 2021 due to travel distance and the pandemic. Instead of hiking one of the southern-most parts of the Cumberland Plateau, we will head north on the plateau, to an area no less striking! Beginning at the Sawmill Trailhead area near the Middle Creek Equestrian center in Big South Fork, we will hike on the northern leg of the Slave Falls Loop Trail, visiting Slave Falls and then Needle Arch. Picking up the Connector Trail, we'll hike to Jakes Place, the site of an old homestead. We'll then climb to the stunning Twin Arches of BSF, by hiking clockwise on the Charit Creek Loop. After the arches, we'll descend on the loop to historic Charit Creek Lodge, then re-join with the Connector Trail and head back. Hike approx. 11.5 miles, rated Moderate- Difficult. Let's meet at the Pogue Creek Canyon State Natural Area parking lot, and we'll caravan the short distance to the trailhead. Meet at 9:00 am. Leaders: Diane Petrilla and Amanda Beal. Pre-register with Diane at [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com) or 931-224-5149.

**ROARING FORK VIA DOME FALLS—Off-Trail  
September 26 – Saturday**

To everyone's great disappointment, the regularly scheduled women-led hike to Topless Falls is being cancelled. A recent scouting trip discovered the falls without its fine display of water and summer undergrowth along the stream particularly nasty and brutish. Nonetheless, Sarah, Kindel, Rapunzel, Kinsey, Erica, Liz, and Cindy will be leading an equally exciting adventure up Roaring Fork to Mount Le Conte by way of Dome Falls. Roaring Fork, one of the Club's classic hikes, has traditionally been led by Greg Hoover and Greg Harrell, however they have graciously agreed to let the women try to find Dome Falls. In accordance with the Club's coronavirus avoidance guidelines, hikers will be segregated into groups of ten with staggered start times. A mask is required at the trailhead. Meet at the Grotto Falls parking area 1.6 miles along the Roaring Motor Fork Nature Trail. Pre-registration for this off-trail hike is required. Leader: Cindy McJunkin [mcjfive@aol.com](mailto:mcjfive@aol.com) (828) 712-9646.

**OUT-AND-BACK FAMILY HIKE FROM INDIAN GAP TO  
NEWFOUND GAP  
September 26 - Saturday**

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy and its 31 trail maintaining clubs invite families to take a hike on the AT on the **10th Annual Family Hiking Day**. Held trail-wide on National Public Lands Day, Family Hiking Day is an opportunity to introduce children to America's premier footpath and all of the benefits that come from being active and spending time outdoors. Our hike will offer a respite from summer heat as we walk through lovely conifer and beech forests. We will have lunch at the end of our hike at Indian Gap. Hike: 3.4 miles round trip, rated easy (for length) - moderate (500' climb out of Newfound Gap). Meet at Indian Gap parking lot (1.3 miles from Newfound Gap on the right side of Clingmans Dome Road) at 10:00 AM. Pre-registration with leader is required. Leader: Cindy Spangler, [spangler@utk.edu](mailto:spangler@utk.edu), 865-776-1301

**MEETING PLACES:** Reminder that all hikes will meet at the trailhead. Preregister with the leaders to ensure space for you with the group and to ensure you know when and where to meet. We request that you cancel your registration if unable to hike to allow someone on the waiting list to take your spot. Please familiarize yourself with the following Club guidelines as set forth by the Board's Covid Committee.

**SMHC COVID -19 Hike guidelines:**

1. One hike leader should serve as pre-registration contact, with e-mail and phone # available in your write-up. Pre-registration is required for all hikes.
  2. No more than 10 total participants may be on a hike (including leader, co-leader). You will therefore have to halt registration when you reach 10 participants.
  3. All meet-ups will be at the trailhead, so adjust meet-up time accordingly.
  4. No car-pooling except for people in their trusted "bubble"
  5. Choose hikes that will avoid crowded trailheads and crowded trails.
  6. Events should be no more than 2 hours drive from the Knoxville area.
  7. Avoid hikes that will involve a key swap or shuttle.
  8. Hikers must sign a release form with accurate contact information.
  9. Inform hikers if anyone becomes ill with in a few days of the event, with symptoms concerning for COVID-19, to contact the hike leader immediately. (In addition to your usual pre-hike talk). For regular pre-hike prep, see <http://www.smhclub.org/outingpreparation.htm>.
  10. All participants must have a face mask, to use at trailhead meetup, and then if needed, when distancing on the trail from other hikers is not feasible.
  11. Maintain 6 ft. of distance between hikers, and if possible 10-12 ft.
  12. Stop at junctions to be sure group is all present, given the spacing out.
  13. All participants should have hand sanitizer or wipes.
  14. No sharing of food.
  15. If you or any participant feels sick, please stay at home.
- Please let the leader know if you need to cancel, to allow someone on the waitlist to join.**

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Marty Teffeteller [marty1206@bellsouth.net](mailto:marty1206@bellsouth.net)  
3444 Cutshaw Road Maryville TN 37803

**COMING EVENTS – October 2019**

To be determined due to COVID-19  
Watch for the newsletter!



Photo courtesy  
of Mike  
Harrington

## For the Record

### Middle Prong

7.19.2020

9 hikers enjoyed a beautiful July day, lunched at Panther's Creek trailhead, were awed at the cascades, history, greenness and a small black snake climbing a tree. Some of us had many questions. Others, thankfully, had many answers. Some mysteries remain. The Panther's Creek trailhead is the new trailhead. The old trailhead is a little downstream. Some of us were able to see part of the original foundation and rods of an old horse trail bridge. Questions answered:

- Name of creek-Lynn Camp Prong.
- Lynn- nickname of white basswood tree.
- Middle Prong- forms just above the trailhead bridge where Lynn Camp Prong meets Thunderhead.
- Red flower near creek-beebalm.
- Christmas fern-most common fern in park. Name from sleigh or stocking shape of leaf-lets and is green at Christmas.
- Rattlesnake plantain-in orchid family.
- What is a cascade-series of waterfalls over rocks.

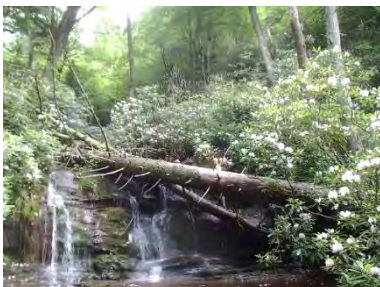
~Adele Soucy

### Trout Branch, Off-Trail

7.25.2020

On the fourth Saturday in July seventeen hikers gathered early at the foot of Mount Le Conte, ostensibly for an off-trail adventure up Trout Branch, but, to all intents and purposes, they came to see for themselves if leaders Greg Harrell and Greg Hoover could successfully lead a hike under the Hiking Club's new coronavirus restrictions. A quick headcount confirmed everyone's suspicions. The Club's guidelines strictly limited attendance to ten. To rectify the situation, the seventeen hikers were divided into two groups, one was to follow Greg Harrell on

the original plan of hiking Trout Branch while the other would detour off with Greg Hoover for a climb up the Thousand-Foot Scar and on out to Big Duckhawk Peak. After forming the groups, it was discovered the one



still had twelve hikers. Rather than continuing to struggle with the math, it was decided to start hiking and work out the necessities on the trail. The leaders briefed hikers on the rudiments of the Hiking Club's motto – "If you fall behind, you're left behind" – as both groups started up Trout Branch.

Water-slickened rock surfaces and higher stream levels from rain the previous night made climbing difficult for those negotiating the waterfalls on Trout Branch as well as the group scaling the bare Thousand-Foot Scar. The first group required almost eight hours to complete the five-hour climb of Trout Branch. The second group did not do much better. As an extra special treat, a thunderstorm rolled in, bringing a torrent of rainfall. Both groups ended their climbs drenched to the core and looking forward to a long pedestrian trudge down the Alum Cave Trail. Nonetheless, a good time was had by one and all, though some apparently had a better time than others.

~Ken Wise

### Manway-Little River-Huskey Gap-Sugarland Mountain

7-29-2020

We had two full groups of ten for this hike. The second group got off to a slow start. Parking was tight but there was enough coming and going that we all found relatively good parking spots. By the time we got going it was 9:45. We went down the road to where the manway starts and took the group picture. I see that the first group did the same. We went up the manway and passed the cemetery. One hiker went up to look at the cemetery. The rest of us had seen it several times. After the cemetery we went on down the road but did not find the turnoff to the next piece of manway, so we ended up walking up the road until we got to the Little River trailhead. Three hikers decided to not do the loop and went on up Little River trail to Goshen Prong trail where they had lunch and started back down. The rest of us went up Huskey Gap trail. One hiker had to get home earlier so she went on ahead and we saw no more of her. On the way down Sugarland mountain trail we encountered some rain, but it was never hard enough to cause us to put on rain gear. The first group encountered a Timber Rattler on the way down Sugarland Mountain trail. Fortunately, it had moved on by the time the second group got there!



~Ron Brandenburg

### Gabes Mountain trail

8-5-2020

The day was pleasant as 15 hikers gathered to hike up Gabes Mountain trail. The first group had 10 hikers with some no-shows and some unexpected to fill the gaps. The second group was only five hikers. This is my report from the second group. The five of us started up the trail but got somewhat separated but four of us got back together at the one and only



intersection on this part of the trail. The fifth hiker lagged behind and only went as far as Hen Wallow falls as did one hiker from the first group. We met him coming up from the falls when we got there. From the pictures it appears that at least some of the first group went down to the falls

also. This trail up to the falls is in bad shape with the trail covered with roots to trip you or twist an ankle. After the falls the trail becomes much better. Most of the traffic on the trail stops at the falls and we saw only a few people that were not in group 1. There are several creek crossings on the higher part of the trail but all were easily crossed. The last one just before the campsite was the trickiest and could be a problem if the water was high. On the lower part of the trail we met many hikers making their way to the falls as we came down. A few sprinkles started as the last of us were changing boots but as we were driving out of the park a torrential downpour started and lasted until we were about to get on I-40. It would not have been fun at all if the rain came earlier and we had to walk over all the roots when they were wet and slippery.

~Ron Brandenburg

**The Board of Directors of the SMHC would like to request that you consider being a Leader or Co-leader for a hike in 2021!**

We are having a "virtual" sign-up, since we cannot have our usual election picnic sign-up this year. To be a Leader, you must be a member of the SMHC and have participated in at least 3 Club hikes or 2 A.T.

maintenance trips. Heading into 2021, we are anticipating continuing all COVID-19

guidelines (groups of 10 or less, pre-registration, etc.). The COVID Committee will continue to meet every month for the remainder of this year, and into 2021 to ascertain whether we must scale back our events or potentially loosen guidelines. So even if you sign up to lead a hike next year, if the pandemic conditions dictate a change, or you feel uncomfortable when the hike is scheduled to occur, we will make appropriate changes. Please review the list of needs below, and send your "sign-up" to Dale Potter at [dalepotter55@gmail.com](mailto:dalepotter55@gmail.com). Ken Wise of the handbook committee will also need your hike write-up as soon as possible but no later than September 15. **Please consider volunteering! We need your help!**



**Leaders and Co-Leaders needed for 2021:**

- February 20: Sharps Ridge
- July 25: Virginia Creeper Bike Ride
- July 31: Charlies Bunion
- September 4: Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge
- September 18: Mount LeConte (Leader selects his/her preferred route).
- October 30: Mount Cammerer
- December 12: House Mountain

**Smoky Mountains Hiking Club History**

In 1921, Benton MacKaye made public his idea of an Appalachian Trail as a project in regional planning. In 1925, with others, he organized the Appalachian Trail Conference (eventually becoming the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, ATC). Activity to start breaking new ground for the trail started in the north but lagged in the south. Until organizations like ours took up the challenge. For the SMHC it was first organized in 1928. Here is the very first club AT Work Trip, as announced in the 1928 handbook

~Brian Worley, historian

*The Appalachian Trail*

*There is a movement on foot among some of the outdoor clubs of the New England States to open up a great, hiking trail along the backbone of the Appalachian Mountains from Maine to Georgia to be known as the Appalachian Trail. It will be one continuous trail without a break, other than these caused by natural barriers, for a distance of fifteen hundred miles.*

*It is gradually being opened up in the Eastern States. But little has been done in our Smoky Mountains.*

*The trail is fair from Indian Gap west to Gregory's Bald, but it is impossible to proceed east from Indian Gap to Guyot, with any assurance. A number of hikes in that area, during the past season came to naught, thru inability to distinguish the Stateline from diverging ridges, leading off into Tennessee or North Carolina.*

*It is one of the 1928 projects of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, after obtaining permission from the owners of the area and the proper State Authorities, to cooperate in this Appalachian Trail movement by working out the trail between Indian Gap and Guyot. No effort will be made to make the way less rugged, but simply to clean out brush and limbs at confusing places, so that the Stateline, and incidentally the Appalachian Trail, will be recognized as such.*

*To do this work more effectively, it is suggested and urged that all interested members of the Hiking Club, who can do so, arrange their vacations at the same time. The week immediately following the Greenbrier Pinnacle- Mt. Alexander hike, at the last of July and the first of August, has been tentatively set for the work. Those who take that hike will already be near the scene of the work.*

The SMHC Board is happy to announce that Dale Potter has agreed to serve as Newsletter Editor. We are very grateful to Sarah Wimmer who held this job for 2 years. Sarah, abundant thanks for your thoroughness, design-sense, flexibility, and mostly for your patience! You stepped up at a critical time and we're very grateful for all your hard work! Dale's email as editor is [smhcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:smhcnewsletter@gmail.com). ~ Cindy Spangler



**Great American Outdoors Act is passed into law August 2020 – a reason to celebrate**

"The Great American Outdoors Act is historic legislation that will significantly reduce the National Park Service maintenance backlog," said Jeff Hunter, Senior Program Manager for the National Parks Conservation Association. "In addition, the bill permanently reauthorizes and fully funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund at \$900 million annually. That is huge. The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) works to protect and enhance America's national parks for present and future generations. For years, the organization has been working to obtain much-needed funding to fix national parks' trails, service roads, and other critical park infrastructure. Locally, NPCA works with the land trust community to secure protection for lands adjacent to national parks. This includes obtaining wildlife corridors and other important conservation lands from willing sellers. The Land and Water Conservation Fund is key to making this possible. Jeff Hunter, Senior Program Manager for the National Parks Conservation Association, emphasized that these funds are critically needed. "Without passage of the GAOA, the visitor experience would continue to be diminished because of aging infrastructure and substandard facilities," he said. "The GAOA will bring our national parks into the 21st century while creating jobs and supporting gateway communities that rely on park visitors."

Excerpt from GSMA newsletter

<https://www.smokiesinformation.org/news/why-the-great-american-outdoors-act-will-be-game-changer-part-1.html>