

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

"A walk in nature walks the soul back home." - Mary Davis

What a great presentation by Jennifer Schroll, Jack Callahan, and Rick Harris on their Colorado visit to Mesa Verde and their backpacking hike in Weminuche. All five hikers displayed true grit as they battled cold weather and steep climbs over long distances. Their perseverance paid off with absolutely breathtaking views. Of course, hiking at over 12,000 feet the views were not the only thing that took their breath away.

Why do we hike? I suppose there are as many answers to this question as there are people who hike. Certainly, common themes would include thoughts on increased physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental well-being. There is an abundance of information that validate this is true. I believe the reason we feel better when we hike is hiking provides the absolutely best setting to experience the feeling of awe. Awe is a powerful emotion often described as a feeling of being connected to something greater than ourselves. Feeling awe can lead to increased feelings of well-being, humility, connections to others, connection to the world in which we live, and even to a greater connection to the universe we have yet to fully understand. Our feelings of awe increase our sense of wonder and amazement that often are overlooked in the ordinary experiences of everyday life. Taking the time to get away from the ordinary affords so many opportunities to experience awe. Awe surrounds and encapsulates us in breathtaking sunrises and sunsets, views from a mountain top, running streams in a valley, the fragrances of flowers in the early spring, the sounds of leaves beneath our boots in the fall, the chill of the winter air while fixing breakfast outside a tent.

During the April 10 club business meeting we reviewed how to use *the Lead a Hike Request Form* that is now available in a fillable form format on our website. You can access the form by clicking on the "Forms" tab and then select the *Lead a Hike Request Form*. Type the information in the required fields and then rename and save the completed form and send to me either by text (423-400-8008) or email (drcombs@aol.com). I will review the form and then send the hike information to our Publicist, Phyllis

Anderson and our Webmaster, Rick Harris. If you would rather phone me to communicate the information needed, please feel free to do so. Also, if you wish, you can print the form with your hike information and send it to me through the postal service. My home address is P.O. Box 246, McDonald, TN 37353.

See you at the May club meeting at the Etowah Senior Center on Thursday, May 8, 2025. Our presentation will be Belize and Panama Birding presented by Kelly Ducham.

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.

MAY EVENTS

Saturday, May 3, 2025 - Wild Edibles

Located on the Yuchi Wildlife Refuge on the Tennessee River, northwest of Decatur, Tennessee this is a 2-mile walk. Earl Baldwin will lead an interpretive hike describing wild edibles that the Cherokee used in their everyday lives. There will be a \$5 per person fee collected by Jack. Hike difficulty is rated Easy. We will depart at 9:00 A.M. and return at 2 P.M. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Text Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you plan to attend.

Thursday, May 8, 2025 - Thursday Monthly Club Meeting

Potluck supper at 6:00 P.M., followed by a presentation by Kelly Ducham on Belize and Panama Birding. Meet at the Etowah Senior Center in Etowah.

Monday, May 12 - Thursday, May 15, 2025 - Red River Gorge, Kentucky

Three nights at Koomer Ridge Campground with a variety of hikes each day. Reserve your campsite on www.recreation.gov by searching "Koomer Ridge". Koomer Ridge is a Daniel Boone National Forest facility. Hike difficulty is rated from *easy*, *moderate*, or *strenuous* depending on the hike taken. Bring all camping gear and supplies you will need for a 4-day camping trip. There are sites for tents and for RV's. There is also a state park nearby with additional lodging. Jerry will conduct a meeting at Site 23 Thursday evening for orientation and a description of daily events. You must contact: Jerry Schneider at 513-324-4564 if you plan to attend and/or need additional information or if you have questions or other ideas.

Update: Koomer Ridge campsites are available to reserve from May 12 through check-out on the morning of May 15. There are also private cabins and other campgrounds in the Gorge area that can be reserved. Eighteen members have signed up and more are expected as the date gets closer. Planned hikes range in difficulty from chairlift & downhill *easy* to *challenging*. All trails are well marked, including a few scenic off-trail destinations. Free trail maps can be downloaded and printed at: <https://gopoco.org/red-river-gorge-natural-bridge-trail-maps/> A responsible social hour evening is planned at an offsite cabin.

Update: Red River Gorge, May 12 to 15. There are now 28 people coming on this outing. There's room for a few more. It is a dog-friendly recreation area so bring your pup and camp with us. Call or text Jerry Schneider, at 513-324-4564.

Update: This just appeared on the Koomer Ridge Campground site: Our facility is experiencing a temporary water outage. Please bring all the water you'll need for your visit, including drinking water.

Seen on Recreation.gov 4/22/25. Hopefully this situation will be corrected by May 12.

Thursday, May 15, 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.

Wednesdays, May 7, 14, 21, 28 - 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.

JUNE AT-A-GLANCE

NOTE: Due to the high number of club members who plan to be away during the week of our June meeting, we have decided to CANCEL the June meeting and move the agenda to August. (Normally, we do not have a meeting in August.) Jack Callahan has agreed to move his presentation, *Enhancing the Camping/Hiking Experience*, originally scheduled for June to the August meeting. The location of the August meeting will be the Chilhowee Campground.

Saturday, June 7, 2025 - National Trails Day Maintenance Trip, Cherokee National Forest-Contact Claire Sullivan at clare7982@gmail.com or 404-849-0872 for further information.

Sunday, June 8 - Sunday, June 15, 2025 - Great Allegheny Passage Trail Bike Trip-Contact Jerry Schneider at 513-324-4564 if you plan to attend and/or need additional information.

Update: Great Allegheny Passage, June 8 - 12 (-15). Fifteen cyclists have joined the group. Two more will follow our route in their SUV. This is a ride at your own pace, semi-supported, bike trip. Check out...



<http://www.gaptrail.org/> Call or text Jerry Schneider, 513-324-4564.

Tuesday, June 10, 2025 - Lost Creek-Contact Sue Robinson at 423-519-9751.

Thursday, June 19, 2025 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast-For more information, contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

Wednesdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25 - Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway-Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

Monday-Friday, June 23-27, 2025-AT Backpack, Roan Mountain Area including Caver's Gap to 19E Portion-Buddy Arnold 601-415-3551.

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 .

HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

Greenway Walk, April 7, 2025, Jack Callahan



Black Mountain, April 8, 2025, Sue Robinson

Our Black Mountain hike started out a bit cold but turned into a beautiful day. Eight of us, plus one dog, hiked the 1600+ elevation gain to get to the top where the blue skies gave us great views of Grassy Cove and beyond. The rock formations "cubes" will always be my favorite part of the hike, and the springhouse is also a favorite. Hiked about 8 miles +/- as some took the extra steps to the cave. Thank you to those who could join me on one of my favorite hikes.



Monthly Meeting, April 10, 2025, Etowah Senior Center

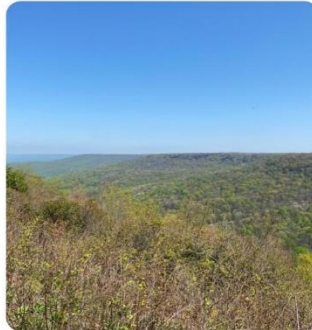
James and James were twinning at tonight's meeting. Jack, Rick, and Jennifer gave a very interesting presentation highlighting their hike in the Mesa Verde/Weminuche Wilderness. Jack Callahan was the extremely fortunate winner of a dozen fresh eggs.



Shakerag Hollow, April 12, 2025, Jack Callahan

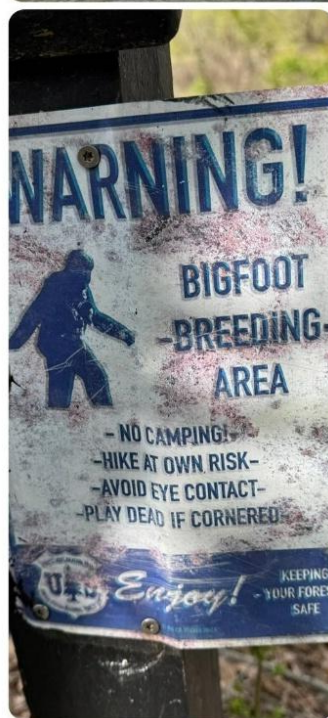
On April 15, six club members met at the trailhead and hiked the 5.5-mile loop hike through Shake Rag Hollow and back along the edge of the golf course. We were treated with numerous wildflowers from poppy to trillium, to Jack-in-the-Pulpits, May Apples, and many, many more.

After the hike, we had lunch at the University of the South cafeteria - always a nice way to end a hike with such a wide selection of good food. Hikers were Lucia, Lynne, Henry, Jennifer, Margaret and event leader Jack.



Murphy, NC, Riverwalk and Local Museum, April 15, 2025, James Anderson

Six of us had the pleasure of hiking the River Walk in Murphy. Besides enjoying views of the river, a beautiful bluebird, and the old caboose at the beginning of the trail, we encountered some spectacular flowers situated by a park bench. For those of you that are plant aficionados, you may be interested in learning that these rare flowers are only found in Murphy, NC, and beside this particular park bench!!!! In addition to the walk, we enjoyed great food and conversation at the Red Brick Deli. Afterward, some visited the local museum while others spent some time at the local art center. Hikers were Dean, Leslie, Rob, Bobbie, Phyllis and James.



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., April 10, 2025 Etowah Senior Center

President Rob Coombs opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting Sign-in Sheet was distributed and 21 members signed. Jack Callahan won the *Tonight's Lucky Hiker* door prize. Rob Coombs began the meeting by sharing a quote and thoughts from Mary Davis "A walk in nature walks the soul back home."

- I. The Treasurer's Report was given by Jennifer Schroll. The current balance in the club treasury is \$3,041.09. A motion was made to accept the report as reported, seconded, and accepted.**

II. Unfinished Business

- A. A discussion of where to meet for our October Fall Group camp out was on the agenda. Rob Coombs reported that he had reserved the Group Camp at Big South Fork for October 12 - October 16, 2025, explaining that October calendar for the group camp at Big South Fork was filling up. Cancellation policy allows for the reservation to be cancelled 2 weeks in advance. He asked for other alternatives. Fall Cree Falls and Norris Center Hill Lake were suggested as possibilities. It was mentioned that offsite people still need to pay on the reservation at Big South Fork since everyone uses the pavilion. Other options were given including Standing Indiana, Black Mountain, and Apple Tree. These options will continue to be explored.**
- B. Lead a Hike Request Form - This form is now available on our website. Our president explained how to use this form. These instructions will also be made available in the May newsletter.**

III. New Business

- A. Fillable Form**
- B. The following new members have been added to our club roster. Presently, there are 105 active members in our club.**
- 1. Bobbie Schoss**
 - 2. Mark Healey (on behalf of Friends of the Cherokee National Forest)**
- C. Hikes / Meetings / Events since our last meeting included:**
- 1. 3/15, 2025 - Lookout Mountain to Sunset Rock - Jennifer Schroll (Canceled due to weather)**
 - 2. 3/19 - Ghost town of Caney Creek - Clair Sullivan (good hike and paddle)**
 - 3. 3/20 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast - Jack Callahan**
 - 4. 3/22 - Mount LeConte Meet at the Alum Cave Trail - Jack Callahan (Canceled due to weather)**
 - 5. 3/25 - Walk in Johnston Woods - James Anderson**
 - 6. 3/28 - Laurel Falls / Buzzard Point - Randy Morris**
 - 7. 4/8 - Black Mountain on the Cumberland Trail - Sue Robinson**
 - 8. Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway - Jack Callahan**
- D. Hikes/Activities scheduled for the month ahead are listed on our website. Rob Coombs shared that the calendar continues to be updated throughout the calendar year. Members should fill out the**

Request to Lead a Hike form found on our website and send it to the president who will review the form checking to see if all the needed information is included and, also, if the date conflicts with another club hike. He will then forward the ***Request to Lead a Hike*** form to the webmaster and the publicist. Members present shared thoughts about the following scheduled hikes:

Hikes / Activities / Events scheduled for the month ahead.

- 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. 5/3 - Wild Edibles, Yuchi Wildlife Refuge, Decatur - Jack Callahan**
- 6. Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway - Jack Callahan**

E. Our publicist, Phyllis Anderson, needs to have materials submitted for the May newsletter no later than 4/21/2024 as she will need to submit the newsletter for May early due to personal plans at the end of the month of April.

IV. Our presentation for the evening was entitled *The Mesa Verde/Weminuche Backpacking Hike* presented by Jennifer Schroll, Jack Callahan, and Rick Harris.

V. Our next meeting will be held at the Etowah Senior Center on Thursday, May 8, 2025. Our presentation will be *Belize and Panama Birding* presented by Kelly Ducham.

Respectfully submitted by Otis Pannel, Vice President, on April 10, 2025