

A hiker in a dark jacket and cap stands on a rocky mountain peak, looking out over a vast, hazy mountain range under a cloudy sky.

THE CHEROKEE HIKER

JULY 2025

VOLUME 42, ISSUE 7

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The 150-mile bicycle ride along the Great Allegheny Passage could not have been better. Jerry Schneider's attention to detail in the planning of this outing for our club certainly paid off with a wonderful 5-day trip that was enjoyable for all. Thank you, Jerry. A special thanks also goes out to Margaret and Jack Callahan who carried needed supplies in their car each day from one destination to another.

Like hiking, bicycling provides a lot of time to think. As I pedaled along, especially as we made our 130-mile gradual ascent from Pittsburgh, one question recurred a number of times: "Why am I doing this?" Obviously, there certainly are easier ways to get from Pennsylvania to Maryland. Many answers to this question come to mind including taking the time to slow down, absorb the beauty of one's surroundings, explore sites both on and off the path, push the limits of our physical abilities, test our mental endurance, to reach the finish line and celebrate the accomplishment.

Mostly, I believe we hike or bicycle or kayak because it is a vivid reminder of the lives we live. With every step on a path or rotation of a pedal or stroke of a paddle there is a potential for beauty, for injury, for feelings of peace, for unpredictability, for inspiration, for pain, for joy, for failure, for frustration, and for success. Our outdoor activities serve to remind us of both how fragile and how challenging our everyday lives are. By facing both the threats and challenges on a trail, or a path, or a waterway, we gain both understanding and confidence of our abilities to face the ongoing threats and challenges of the everyday lives we live.

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.

JULY EVENTS

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- Tour the K25 History Center in Oak Ridge TN Meet at the center at 10 A.M. Saturday, July 12, 652 Enrichment Street, Oak Ridge. The tour is \$10, \$5 for seniors or veterans. After the tour, we will eat lunch at Calhouns just south of the town of Oak Ridge, then visit the UT Arboretum, 901 S Illinois Ave, Oak Ridge. There is no charge at the Arboretum. To carpool from Cleveland, meet at the park-and-ride, I-75 exit 25 next to the Mapco service station on Georgetown Road at 8:30 A.M. Please let Jack Callahan know if you plan to attend. Text 423-284-7885

Wednesdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 - Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Bradley Greenway Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland Bradley 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 the beginning of each week on Messenger. Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you want to be included in the messages.

Thursday, July 17, 2025 - Monthly Hiking 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, 2025- Brasstown Bald Meet at Food City in Polk Co. at 9 A.M. to carpool. Hike difficulty is rated *easy*, but it is steep. Hike .6 miles to Georgia's highest point. Awesome views and a nature center at the top. There is a cost of \$8 per person collected at the parking lot. 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. The high altitude should make for a pleasant summer hike to the high bald on a ridge crest just east of the main Unicoi range. At an elevation of 5,262 feet, there is a scenic view of the highest Unicoi mountains to the south. Plan to eat lunch on the bald. Contact Anne Anderson at ahander@aol.com or 423-284-7032.

AUGUST AT-A-GLANCE

August 6, 13, 20, 27 Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Bradley Greenway Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

August 14, 2025, Monthly Hiking Club Meeting Thursday Monthly Club Meeting Potluck supper at 6:00 P.M. followed by a presentation by Jack Callahan on *Enhancing the Camping/Hiking Experience*. Meet at the Chilhowie Campground.

August 17-22, 2025, Boundary Waters Canoe Trip. This trip is currently full. Contact Jennifer Schroll at jennifergeologist@gmail.com for more info and/or to be put on a waiting list.

August 21, 2025, Monthly Hiking Club Breakfast, 8:30 A.M., Old Fort Restaurant in Cleveland, TN on 25th St.

Saturday, August 30, 2025 - Pawpaw Meet at Childers Creek at 10:00 A.M. and walk 200 feet to the paw-paw groves. We will collect and sample fruit from various trees. Afterwards, we will enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Hike difficulty is rated Easy. We should return around 2 P.M. Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 for additional information.

PLAN AHEAD...

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

- Utah National Parks Tour September 16-23, 2025. A group campsite is reserved at Zion NP the nights of September 16, 17, 18. Some are staying at the Bryce Canyon Lodge on September 19 - make your own reservation. Some are camping at Sun Outdoors Arches Gateway Campground nights of September 20, 21, 22 - make your own reservations. A get together to discuss this trip is scheduled for July 19 at 4 P.M. Contact Jennifer Schroll at jennifergeologist@gmail.com for more information.
- 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

Greenway Walks, Wednesdays in June, 2025, Jack Callahan



Great Allegheny Passage Bike Trip, June 8-12, Jerry Schneider



CHC's four-day GAP bike touring trip in early June 2025 was a moderately strenuous, enjoyable, and interesting experience. Eleven club member cyclists, including guests, pedaled 150 miles from Pittsburgh

to Cumberland, Maryland. Jack and Margaret Callahan assisted the group by meeting us at the beginning and end of each day in their SUV. They could carry people's luggage and stand ready to help if mishaps occurred. Two of the group had experience on the GAP/C&O trails but for the majority, it was a new experience.

We pedaled at our own pace. We would catch up at lunch or at rest breaks. There were many places to stop for breaks and eat lunch at a restaurant in the small towns. One of the more interesting stops was a small art studio, Sager Mosaics. They sold homemade ice cream sandwiches in many delicious flavors. There was a lot of art along the trail.

The GAP is a top-rated, well-maintained, popular bicycle rail trail paved with finely crushed limestone. Paralleling the trail on the other side of the valley is the CSX-owned Keystone Corridor, a commercial railroad route. Heavy freight trains and Amtrak share the rails. Train horns blare during the day and late into the dark hours. This is disturbing when you are trying to sleep but can break the monotony of pedaling each day.

Towns along the route eagerly accept tourist dollars and prosper by catering to riders' needs. Mom and pop restaurants and microbrewery taprooms can be found in many of the towns. Historic placards and interpretive displays are located all along the trail. It is very scenic, and I had to remind myself to pedal and not stop to take photos.

The scenery changed as we travelled from noisy industrialized steel mill sections and moved on into the heavily wooded Laurel Highlands. On the second day, as we approached the touristy whitewater town of Ohiopyle the bike path was more forested, lush, and wet from recent rains. The rail trail followed whitewater rivers in the valleys below. Long railroad viaducts had been repurposed to carry bicycles instead of trains and many of the old tunnels required headlights.

As we progressed southeastward from Pennsylvania into Maryland, sounds changed. It was noisy in Pittsburgh because of freight trains and major highway traffic. In the hilly forests, however, it was peaceful and quiet. Bubbling mountain cascades often streamed down on our right. We saw deer, squirrels, snakes, horses, cows, and noisy birds.

Our lodgings varied in quality according to availability and personal choice; everything from cozy B&Bs to converted factory hostels. Trailside campgrounds were another option, but you had to bikepack all your gear. I'll simply take a credit card next time.

It rained the first night in West Newton but was clear from there on. Much of the time we had shade and experienced very little wind. The gradient went steadily uphill for the first three days. On the fourth day, the trail crested at the Eastern Continental Divide where we entered a tunnel. Exiting the divide tunnel we could coast downhill the final 23 miles to Cumberland. Most everyone drove home from Cumberland. One of our group took an Amtrak.

I encourage suggestions on where the club should bike tour next. Let me know your ideas.

Jerry Schneider
GAP Trip Leader, 513-324-4564

Lost Creek Hike, June 10, Sue Robinson

Great day to be outside with new and old friends. Seven people and four dogs headed out for a 7ish-mile hike. The water was raging and beautiful after yesterday's rainfall.



Breakfast, June 19, at Old Fort Restaurant in Cleveland, Jack Callahan



NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

TELICO/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.

