

A hiker stands on a rocky peak, looking out over a vast mountain range under a cloudy sky. The hiker is silhouetted against the bright sky. The mountains below are covered in green vegetation and are shrouded in a light mist or haze.

THE CHEROKEE HIKER

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NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

"Returning home is the most difficult part of long-distance hiking. You have grown outside the puzzle, and your piece no longer fits." Cindy Ross

Better, but harder. This is the reality of life. Life can become better and better as it goes along and, at the same time, become harder and harder. Probably, your initial reaction to this assertion is ambiguous. One part of the formula is obviously true. Yes, we as adults often lament, life does get harder and harder. Not only does it get physically harder, it gets emotionally more difficult. Our memory fades, we can't run as fast, and a juicy prime rib becomes a threat to cholesterol levels and high-blood pressure. The obvious reality that life does get harder and harder sometimes can make us doubt that it also gets better and better. But life can get better and better as it goes along, even though it becomes harder and harder. The longer we live, the more we discover how life is infinitely worth living. Although life becomes more and more complex as we age, there can be greater joy, better insight, deeper love, a more profound appreciation of what it means to simply be alive. For many, age increases appreciation for life. Because of the many experiences of life (the good, the bad, and the ugly), we learn and mature, which places us in a better place in life than those who have yet to travel as far. There are so many interesting people in our hike club that have traveled far physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Traveling, hiking, canoeing, bicycling, camping, and dining together provide excellent opportunities to share and embrace the realities of how our lives are better, even though harder.

See you at the September club meeting at the Etowah Senior Center on Thursday, September 11, 2025. Our presentation will be *The Boundary Waters* presented by Jennifer Schroll, Janet Coombs, and Jack Callahan.

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

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Wednesdays, September 3, 10, 17, 24 - Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland Greenway. Contact Jack at 423-284-7885 if you want to be included in the messages.

Thursday, September 11, 2025 - Thursday Monthly Club Meeting Potluck supper at 6:00 P.M., followed by a presentation by Jennifer, Jack, Janet and Rob Coombs on *The Boundary Waters*. Meet at the Etowah Senior Center.

Tuesday, September 16 - Monday, September 22, 2025, Utah National Parks Camping Trip Camp at Zion National Park, Watchman Campground (electric site) on the nights of September 16, 17, 18th. Some will stay at the Bryce Canyon Lodge on the night of the 19th. On September 20, 21, and 22 we will camp at Arches National Park (no electric sites). Trip leader, Jennifer Schroll, 423-284-1256, email, jennifergeologist@gmail.com.

Thursday, September 18, 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.

Monday, September 29, 2025-Dutch Settlement, CNF Hike to the area of the historical "Old Dutch Settlement" of the 1840's on 70,000 acres in the Sylco Mountains in the Ocoee District of the CNF and look for artifacts. The hike is five miles, and the hike difficulty is rated moderate. Bring water, snacks, and a lunch. Departure time is 9:30 A.M. Meet at the King Slough Boat Launch Parking Lot, 250-348 Sugar Loaf Drive, Ocoee, TN. Hike leaders are Ken Jones and Clare Sullivan. For additional information, contact Clare Sullivan at clare7982@gmail.com or 404-849-0872.

OCTOBER AT-A-GLANCE

Thursday, October 9, 2025 - Thursday Monthly Club Meeting Join us at the home of Janet and Rob Coombs for hamburgers, games, and fellowship. Bring an appetizer or dessert. Hamburgers and drinks will be provided. Activity hosted by Janet & Rob Coombs - Talking, Grilling, and Playing at Coombs home.

Monday, October 13 - Friday, October 17, 2025 - Piney Campground at Land Between the Lakes - The Land Between The Lakes area is exceptionally scenic and provides a multitude of things to do including 100 miles of hiking trails, a Bison & Elk Prairie, Planetarium & Observatory, Homeplace Working Farm, Woodlands Nature Station, Lake access for fishing, paddling kayaks, and canoes (bring or rent), and an archery range. Check-in is Monday October 13, 2025, and check-out is Friday, October 17, 2025. Details of this trip can be found on our website, cherokeehikingclub.org, or feel free to text or call Rob Coombs at 423-400-8008.

Thursday, October 16, 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, October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 - 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.

Tuesday, October 21, 2025 - Club Workday on the Childers' Creek Trail This event is to carry out trail maintenance on a beautiful 3-mile section of the Benton MacKaye Trail that runs along the Hiwassee River just upstream and east of Reliance, TN. Contact James Anderson, the event leader, at 423-715-8824 so you will be aware of any event changes or cancellations.

PLAN AHEAD

Nov 3-7, 2025, Lakeshore Trail Backpack Smokies Mountain National Park, about three hours from Cleveland, TN, near Fontana Dam

Departure Time: 7:00 A.M., Nov. 3- Return Time: Afternoon of Nov. 7. Rated *strenuous* due to length, about 36 miles. This hike will require a boat shuttle from Fontana Dam Marina to the start of the hike. Cost for the shuttle is about \$35 per hiker. There is also a \$10 charge per night, per hiker at the campsites, Total, \$40 each. So total cost is about \$75. There is a limit of six hikers due to limits at the campsites. I will have to make reservations early to ensure campsite reservations, so I will need a number by mid-August. The hike does not have a lot of elevation change but goes up and down a lot across drainage divides along the shore of Lake Fontana. There are nice views of the lake along the way and a lot of historical aspects.

Hike Description:

Day 1 Drive to Fontana Dam and arrive about 10:30. Take boat shuttle to Campsite 66 near Road to Nowhere. Hike to Campsite 74, about 5.0 miles via the tunnel.

Day 2 Hike 9.8 miles to Campsite 76

Day 3 Hike 7.4 miles to Campsite 81

Day 4 Hike 7.7 miles to Campsite 90

Day 5 Hike 5.0 miles to Fontana Dam and drive home.

Contact: Buddy Arnold at : we_arnold@outlook.com or 601-415-3551 for more information.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

Monthly Meeting, Charleston City Park, August 14, 2025

Otis Pannel, club vice-president, presided over our August meeting. Jack Callahan presented the program entitled, "Enhancing the Camping/Hiking Experience." He shared many valuable tips and solicited input from fellow members as well. One of the things he shared that many were interested in is pictured below, a portable shower deck, from Camping World.



Portable Shower Deck from Camping World



We had a young guest and, hopefully, a future hiker. He REALLY enjoyed the yummy food! James Denver Anderson, grandson of publicist. (This job does have its perks!) 😊



Greenway Walks, Wednesdays in August 2025, Jack Callahan It was a HOT day on the greenway. Thank you for your dedication, Jack!



Breakfast, August 21, at Old Fort Restaurant in Cleveland (Photo credit: Carol Guhne)



Pawpaw Event, Childers Creek Trailhead, August 30

Six adventurers met at Childers Creek trailhead to collect and sample the nation's largest indigenous fruit, the pawpaw. Someone had beat us to the patch this year as most of the fruit was already harvested. But the group collected a nice grocery bag of pawpaws and had several ripe ones to sample. Some really liked the custard like fruit while others were just ok with the taste.

The group then moved to Big Bend trailhead to check some other trees. A few more fruit were found. A couple of folks took seeds home to hopefully get some to grow.

Our one visitor discussed the upcoming workday at a pawpaw persimmon orchard near Etowah. Information and time will be shared with the club members who are invited to join in the activities.

Individuals attending today were Yvone Rittenhouse, James Anderson, Phyllis Anderson, Gary Harwell, and visitor, Richard Ward. Event leader, Jack Callahan. (Scroll to the end for information on "Volunteer Days at the Orchard," a truly unique opportunity.)





Minutes

Cherokee Hiking Club
Monthly Club Meeting
6:00 P.M., August 14, 2025
Charleston City Park

Vice-President Otis Pannel opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting Sign-in Sheet was distributed and 21 members plus 1 visitor signed. There was no *Tonight's Lucky Hiker* door prize.

I. The Treasurer's Report was given by Jennifer Schroll. The current balance in the club treasury is \$2,916.67. A motion was made to accept the report as reported, seconded, and accepted.

II. Corrections from the July minutes published in our newsletter.

A. No Corrections were made

B. A motion was made to accept the report as reported, seconded, and accepted.

III. Unfinished Business - No unfinished business to report.

IV. New Business

A. New members added to our club roster.

1. Yvonne Riteenhouse (returning member)

2. Susan and Stephen Rynas

B. Hikes / Meetings / Events since our last meeting.

1. 7/12 - Oak Ridge and University of Tennessee Arboretum, Jack Callahan

2. 7/17 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast, Jack Callahan

3. 7/26 - Brasstown Bald, Jennifer Schroll (no one signed up for this hike)

4. 7/29 - Bob Bald, Anne Anderson (this hike did not take place)

5. Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway, Jack Callahan

C. Hikes / Activities / Events scheduled for the month ahead.

1. 8/16-23 - Boundary Waters, Ely, Minnesota, Jennifer Schroll

2. 8/30 - Paw Paw at Childers Creek, Jack Callahan

3. Wednesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway, Jack Callahan

IV. Our presentation for the evening was entitled *Enhancing the Camping/Hiking Experience* presented by Jack Callahan.

V. Our next meeting will be held on September 11, 2025. Our presentation for the evening will be *The Boundary Waters* presented Jennifer Schroll, Janet Coombs, and Jack Callahan at the Etowah Senior Center.

Respectfully submitted by Otis Pannel, Vice President, on August 14, 2025.

NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

DEDICATION OF OCOEE RIVER STATE PARK



Join us for the Dedication of
Ocoee River State Park.

September 20, 2025
10 A.M. – 11:30 A.M. ET
Optional Rafting Trip: 11:30 A.M. – 2:30 P.M. ET

R.S.V.P. HERE
Ocoee River State Park
Sugarloaf Mountain Recreation Area
2144 TN-40, Benton TN, 37307

 **TENNESSEE**
State Parks

[TELLICO/OCOEE VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW](#)

Check the Facebook page for future workdays.

[BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION](#) See the calendar for upcoming events and trail maintenance sites.

***VOLUNTEER DAYS at the ORCHARD, October 18 and 19, 2025**

Hello Everybody!

It has been a big year for the AFFN orchard! Thanks to everyone's work, the Orchard now contains over 75 pawpaw varieties and 200 persimmon varieties. And after this year of planting, pawpaw varieties will

exceed 125 and persimmons will be over 300! The orchard was featured at the recent 2025 Northern Nuts Growers Association conference and is now recognized as being possibly the largest public collection of persimmons and pawpaws in the country. In 2026, we will be (hopefully) completing the persimmon and pawpaw collections and more intensively collecting nut varieties like hickory, uncommon pecans, and "hicans" (crosses of hickories and pecans). Also, some of our trees are now old enough that they are showing their first fruits. This will expand in coming years, and I will keep everyone posted for pickings.

Of course, more trees than ever, also means more work than ever! :-) So this autumn, on a Saturday and a Sunday, on October 18th and 19th, "Volunteer Days at the Orchard - 2025" will take place. I am looking forward to everybody who can come, and the work that we will do together. **Please write to me to confirm you'll be coming (which days, how many people), so I have an idea of the quantity of tools and refreshments to have on site.** Please also send me the contact information of people whom you know who would like to participate!

Just as in previous years, the worksite is across the street from Coghill Baptist Church in Etowah, TN. The address is 104 County Rd 810, Etowah, TN 37331. I am looking forward to everybody who can come, and the work that we will do together!

The work we will do falls into three main categories – plant/cage maintenance, hole digging and some planting.

Things to definitely bring:

- Folding chairs – so you have a place to sit to take a break!
- Work gloves
- Sun-protective hat and clothing
- Heavy shoes or work boots

Helpful, but optional, things to bring:

- Hand tools: shovels, spades, hand rakes, shears
- Wheelbarrows
- Weed whacker with fuel (or charged up)
- Hedge trimmer with fuel (or charged up)
- Ear protection
- Eye protection

We'll have liquid refreshments and a light lunch on hand:

- Ciders and juices (apple, muscadine, scuppernong)

- Sandwiches (whole grain bread + nut butters + jellies – fig, blackberry/elderberry)
- Fresh apples and persimmons (and possibly fresh pawpaws, if they keep for the duration)
- Pawpaw ice cream, Persimmon pudding
- Water

The refreshments are centered around featuring the Local Fruits and Flavors of the plants on which everyone will be working. However, if you need additional or specialized sustenance, please bring it.

Some human needs items: For sanitary facilities, the Orchard's neighbors, Alan and Faith, have generously offered their bathroom to those who may need to use it. So, no one needs to worry that they may be "stranded" at the site. We will also have light first-aid materials on hand to handle any bug bites and minor scratches that may crop up.

Looking forward to seeing everyone who can make it!

Ken

423-544-0224

kechance@gmail.com

Also, here is a link to Ken's AFFN website:

Appalachian Foothills Fruits and Nuts, a 501.c.3 – Preserving America's Edible Plantscape

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

