

THE CHEROKEE HIKER

ISSUE NO 11 | NOVEMBER 2025 | VOLUME 42



NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

"Everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occur while you are climbing it." Andy Rooney

Genuine happiness is a byproduct of a life that appreciates and celebrates the treasures that come our way each and every day. I learned this lesson from a lady who learned this lesson only in the final weeks of her life as she lay in bed dying of cancer. Her entire life she suffered an unquenchable thirst. She had accumulated plenty of things, but nothing ever satisfied her. One afternoon as we sat and talked, she told me that before her cancer she had always hated sparrows. "They're messy, noisy, and much too common." Lying in bed, day after day, one of these "messy, noisy, and much too common" sparrows started visiting her outside her window. Same time every day the little sparrow would come, sit on her windowsill, peck on the glass. "It wasn't long before I could hardly wait for that little sparrow's arrival each afternoon. I believe the sparrow came to me to teach me what is really important in life. It's taken all this sickness to realize that my thirst in life can only be quenched through the simple appreciation of life's simple pleasures "

We don't have to become sick to realize our thirst can be satisfied through an appreciation of the treasures that surround us every day: a walk with a friend; a glorious sunset on a cool fall evening; wild flowers in the spring; an interesting rock on a well-worn path; reading an inspiring book, the smell of coffee in the morning, a rainbow after a summer rain; a campfire on a cold winter night. We need not thirst for anything as we are surrounded by what we truly need. Janet and I were so disappointed to cancel the October meeting at our home. It seemed the most responsible decision to make in light of the potential for knowingly exposing our club members to the Covid virus. We are already planning to schedule another meeting at our home next year.

See you at the November club meeting on Thursday, November 13, 2025 at the Etowah Senior Center. Our presentation will be Smokey Mountain Storyteller presented by Anne Van Curen.

Rob Coombs, Club President

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NOVEMBER EVENTS

DECEMBER AT-A-GLANCE

SECTION 2

HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST
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SECTION 3

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NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

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. AN EMAIL TO THE HIKING CLUB WILL NOT GO DIRECTLY TO THE LEADER OF THE HIKE.

NOVEMBER EVENTS

November 3-7, 2025 - Lakeshore Trail in the Smokies 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, totally \$40 each, so total cost is about \$75. There is a limit of 6 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. The difficulty rating is *strenuous* mostly due to its length, about 36 miles total. There are nice views of the lake along the way and a lot of historical aspects. 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. Hike coordinator Buddy Arnold, we_arnold@outlook.com and cell phone 601-415-3551.

Tuesday, November 11, 2025 - Sycamore Creek Trail. This is a pretty trail. For the first two miles, the trail is relatively flat and follows Sycamore Creek. Then the trail is a very pleasant climb that winds moderately up through hardwood and hemlock forests. This trail goes all the way to Whigg Meadow, but we will do about 3.5 miles only and then return the same way we came. For those that are interested, we can have lunch at the Tellico Bakery in Tellico Plains. This trail is rated moderate. We will meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Tellico River Fish Hatchery off of the Tellico River Road and return at 1:00 p.m. Hike difficulty is rated *moderate*. Contact the hike leader Leslie Auriemmo, Lauriemmo@yahoo.com or 423-331-8967.

Thursday, November 13, 2025 - Monthly Club Meeting Potluck supper at 6:00 p.m. followed by a presentation by Anne Van Curen, a Smoky Mountain Storyteller. Meet at Etowah Senior Center.

Thursday, November 20, 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.

Saturday, November 29, 2025 - Linda Davis Memorial Greenway Hike Meet on the Cleveland/Bradley Greenway at the pavilion at Raider Drive. We will depart at 9 a.m. and return at 11:00 a.m. Bring clothing as appropriate and water. Hike difficulty is rated easy. For additional information contact Randy Morris at 423-6500985 or randytaylor@comcast.net.

Wednesdays, November 5, 12, 19, 26 - 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.

DECEMBER AT-A-GLANCE

Saturday, December 13, 2025 - Saturday Annual Christmas Party 🎄 - The Christmas party is at the Etowah Senior Center, and the cost is \$10 per person at the door. Arrive at noon and eat at 1 p.m. After the meal, there will be a brief business meeting. The 2026 officers will be inducted, and then the (always entertaining) "Unwashed Santa" (Dirty Santa) gift exchange will be held. RSVP to cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com with Subject Line "Christmas Party" and the names of those in your party who are attending. Bring a \$15 to \$20 gift if you would like to participate in the gift exchange. Participation is not required!

Thursday, December 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.

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Sunday, December 7, 2025, Annual Planning Meeting – We will meet at Wesley Memorial United Methodist, 923 Ohio Avenue, Etowah, TN 37331, for the Annual Planning Meeting. If you cannot attend the Planning Meeting, please email drcoombs@aol.com with your event-hike information. Forms are available on the club website.
Coordinated by Rob Coombs

HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

Greenway Walks, Wednesdays in October 2025-Jack Callahan. Thank you, Jennifer, for leading several walks in Jack's absence.



Monthly Breakfast, Thursday, October 16, Old Fort Restaurant, Cleveland, Tennessee

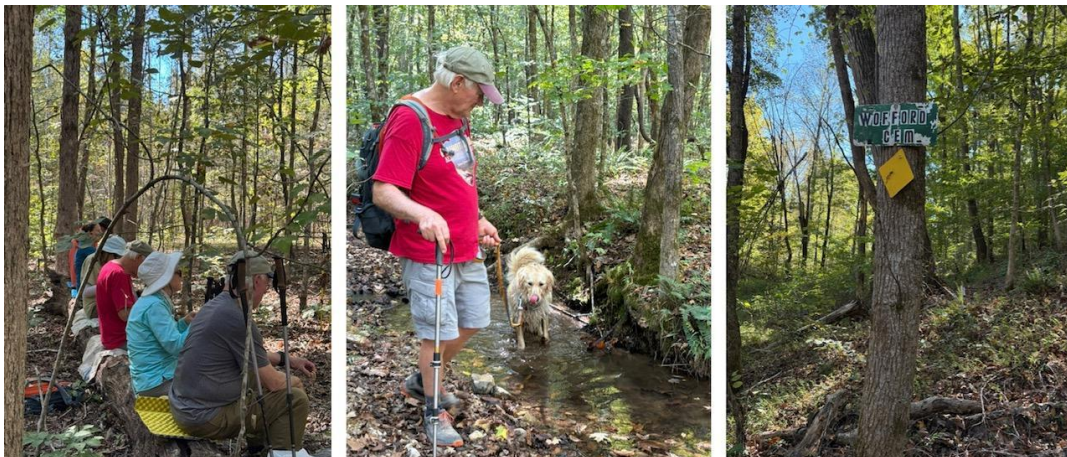
We had nine folks at the breakfast last week but forgot to take a picture. In attendance were Edmund and Gail, Bill and Ann, Carol Ingram and her friend, Cahy, Kathy, Nicka and a prospective new member, Sherrie Mitchell.

Land Between the Lakes Camp-Out, October 13-17

Eight hike club members enjoyed 4 days/nights of beautiful camping weather at Piney Campground in the Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area (LBL). Janet & Rob Coombs, Michele Ritter, Jerry Schneider, Phyllis & James Anderson, Brenda & Rick Harris (and their dog, Nahme), congregated on Monday afternoon at the campground pavilion for a cookout. As we each returned to our tent, cabin, or campers, we noted that many sites were extensively decorated for Halloween - apparently an October tradition in Piney Campground.



On Tuesday, we hiked a 7.5-mile loop on the Ft. Henry Trails. It was a nice hike through woodlands with occasional clearings. The hike often traced a mostly dry creek-bed where we discovered beautiful blue glassy rocks, which were formed as a by-product of the iron ore smelting process that took place in the LBL area from 1840 to early 1900s. These rocks known as "slag" are considered historic artifacts not to be removed, as many of them are at least 150 years old. We also found remnants of an old cemetery. Tuesday evening, we socialized by a campfire and enjoyed S'Mores.



It was a relaxing day Wednesday visiting several attractions in LBL. Driving up the Woodlands Trace National Scenic Byway, we stopped at the well-preserved Great Western Iron Furnace, one of eight furnaces built in the 1840s-50s to produce "pig iron" in the area then known to residents as "Between the Rivers." Only two furnaces are still visible today, as some deteriorated and others were immersed under the lake

waters when TVA established Lake Barkley. We proceeded on to the Homeplace 1850's Farm, where interpreters in era-appropriate dress demonstrate how people lived, worked, and entertained themselves on a Middle Tennessee farm in the 1850s. This site has preserved 16 log structures from the LBL area and filled them with furniture, tools, as well as livestock and garden plants authentic to a working farm of the Victorian era. A few of us bought F.R.O.G. Jam (fig, raspberry, orange, ginger) which is one of several products made at the farm and sold at the gift shop. We then drove through a prairie where a native grassland habitat has been established, and elk and bison herds have been restored (although we did not see any of them during our mid-day drive-through). Our last stop was the Golden Pond Visitor Center and Planetarium.

We ended the day by eating a wonderful dinner on the patio overlooking the Tennessee River at the Paris Landing State Park Lodge restaurant located about 10 minutes from our campground.



On Thursday, some experienced Lake Barkley close up by riding/fishing on the Anderson's boat or kayaking. Others did bicycle riding and/or a hike. This camp-out experience was a reminder to me that Fall is such a wonderful time of year to be outdoors in Tennessee.



Submitted by Janet H Coombs



Thirteen Cherokee Hiking Club members made their way to Utah. Jack & Megan Callahan, Sue Robinson, and Jennifer Schroll traveled in "Honda Car". Carol Guhune, Dion Butler, Sonia & Cathy Doss traveled in "Huge White Car". We started on the 13th day of September. Our first stop was Mt. Magazine State Park. Mt. Magazine is Arkansas' highest point at 2753 feet. Not at the peak, but at the lodge where we all ate supper together, there were great views. The next day we ate steaks at The Big Texan and saw lots of windmills. On September 15th we arrived at Canyon de Chelly National Monument. Canyon de Chelly is a beautiful canyon area and the homeland of the Dine People. The Navajo Nation operates the campground and Thunderbird Lodge where we stayed. The photos below show the iconic Spider Rock spire and dwelling ruins along the lower canyon walls. Janet & Rob Coombs, Phyllis and James Anderson (the "Red Car" group) and Henry Mahler flew into Las Vegas and drove to Zion National Park.



Zion National Park is Utah's first National Park, established in 1919. Zion National Park is majestic. It has high, towering walls of red sandstone flanking a main canyon where the beautiful North Fork Virgin River meanders through. The sides of the canyon offer stunning views and pretty water features. We all met at the Visitors Center at 4pm to plan details for our exploration of the park. We then went to the group campsite at Watchman Campground to eat a supper prepared by Jennifer – sloppy joes, chips, and crème brûlée for dessert. James, Phyllis, Janet, and Jennifer navigated the traffic through the Zion Tunnel and hiked to the Canyon Overlook to watch the sunset. Then we hurried back to meet up with the others for the Evening Ranger Program, which was about building the incredible Zion-Mt. Caramel roadway and tunnel. In the 1920s, one crew built a roadway with 7 switchbacks from the floor of the canyon to the canyon-side tunnel entrance. Another crew worked from the western end of the tunnel. The 1.1-mile tunnel was blasted and drilled through the massive Navajo Sandstone by creating windows or galleries into the side of the

sandstone. These windows can be seen as you drive through the tunnel today. The approaching roadways and pilot tunnel were completed in just 3 years. The pilot tunnel was then widened into a "roomy" 2-way-road and opened to traffic in July 1930. Today, large RVs can only go through the tunnel in one direction at a time.

Bright and early the next day we caught the 7am shuttle bus and rode it to the last stop – Temple of Sinawava. We hiked out the Riverside Walk about 1 mile before the paved trail ends at the entrance to "The Narrows" section. The bravest of the group waded into the cold water and slogged our way up the canyon. Exploring the Narrows was not really hiking. We slipped, tripped, and stepped over rocks grapefruit to bowling ball sizes. In at least 1 place, the water was almost 4 feet deep. Did I mention it was cold? We didn't make it very far before we turned around, but it was a fun adventure. In the afternoon, some of our group did short hikes including "The Grotto" and the Watchman Trails. Henry took a longer hike along the western rim near Angels Landing. Jennifer rented an e-bike and explored the canyon floor. We all gathered for supper at the Zion Canyon Brew Pub in Springdale, the city just outside of Zion National Park. The next day, the whole group hiked the Emerald Pools trails. In the afternoon, some of our group visited the Zion Museum. For supper, we all ate at the quirky Whiptail Grill. Their specialty was a goat cheese chili relleno that was delicious. The restaurant was a converted old gas station.



On September 19th we left Zion and headed to Bryce Canyon National Park. Bryce Canyon National Park is incredibly photogenic. All along the rim of the canyon were fantastic views across and into the canyon area. The canyon is

full of weird, layered sandstone spires in various stages of erosion. These “hoo-dos” create a very unique landscape. There are several winding, switch-back trails leading down into the bottom of the canyon. We met up at Sunset Point, followed the rim around to Sunrise Point and descended into the canyon via the Queens Garden Trail. The trail meandered around and through the sandstone “hoo-dos”. We stopped for lunch at the junction of the Navajo and the Peek-A-Boo Loop Trails. We were joined by feisty chipmunks and chatty Stellar Blue Jays. After lunch, the group split into 2 groups. One group headed back up to the rim via the Wallstreet side of the Navajo Trail and the other group set out along the Peek-A-Boo Loop Trail. The Peek-A Boo Trail went up, down, around and through the spire formations in the lower canyon areas. We then hiked back up to the rim via the Navajo Trail. This combination of trails is called the “figure 8 hike” and was 6.4 miles in total. Pictures hardly do justice to the experience of hiking through this incredible landscape. Most of us met up for a fancy dinner at Bryce Canyon Lodge. Henry camped at the North Campground, Jack, Megan, Sue, and Jennifer stayed at the Bryce Canyon Lodge, and Janet, Rob, James, and Phyllis stayed in cabins in the nearby town of Tropic. The following morning Jack got up early and captured amazing Sunrise pictures.



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On September 20th, we all met up at a coffee shop in Tropic for breakfast. The group then took off toward Capital Reef National Park, each car creating their own adventures. All of the car groups drove to Capital Reef via Hwy 12 that winds through Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Some people stopped to explore the visitors center at Escalante. The drive through the Escalante area had sweeping vistas of colorful, layered, and sculpted rocks. We traveled over pretty ridgelines with yellow aspen forests and green open grasslands. This area also had free-range cattle, sometimes in the roadway. No looking at the scenery for the driver. It was a gorgeous drive. And then we arrived at Capital Reef National Park. The brochure describes the park as “a wrinkle in the Earth”. Capital Dome is a white layered rock formation that reminded early travelers of the US Capital building. Capital Reef is an interesting place. Some hoo-dos like Bryce, but much bigger, and with unique

colors including green layers. There were so many areas to explore at this park. I wish we had more time. Honda car group stopped at the Panorama Point Overlook and then the Fruita Visitors Center. Just past the visitors' center, along the scenic drive road, was a lush green, historic valley area with picnic tables, orchards, and a nature center. Huge White Car group stopped and ate lunch there. The other car groups continued to the end of the paved Scenic Drive. The road then turns into a sand and gravel jeep road through a narrow slot canyon. It was fantastic. There was not much parking, but Honda group and later the Red Car group squeezed into parking spots. Jennifer, Henry, and Sue hiked up the Capital Gorge slot canyon in a brief rain shower. We scrambled/climbed up the side wall of the canyon and wandered around until we finally found a "tank" or "water pocket". Very cool. Reluctantly, we headed back down into the slot canyon and ran into Red Car group. Together we hiked out and they showed us some petroglyphs that they had discovered. More, very cool stuff. All of the groups headed out of Capital Reef and drove another 2.5 hours to Moab, Utah.

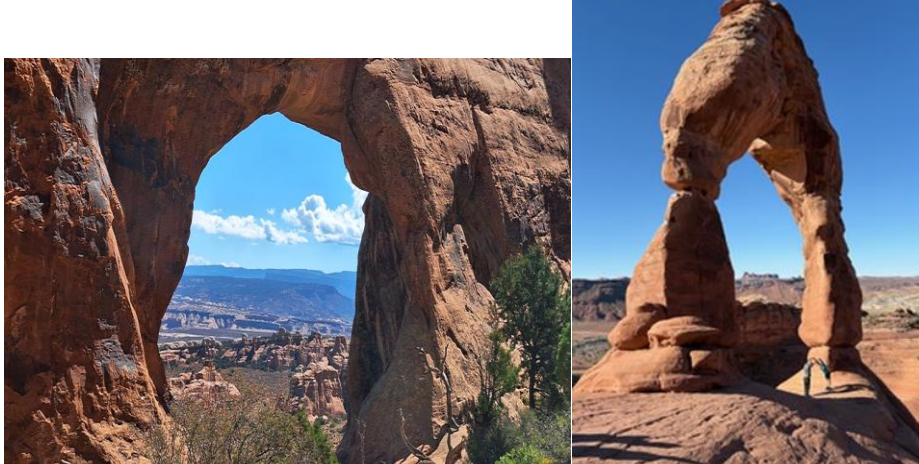


Moab is the city center for all kinds of outdoor recreation. Henry, Sue, Jack, Megan, and Jennifer camped at the Sun Outdoors Gateway Arch Campground. Cathy, Sonia, Dion, and Carol stayed at a hotel downtown, and James, Phyllis, Rob, and Janet stayed in a cabin. Jennifer, Sue, Jack, Carol, Dion, Sonia, and Cathy celebrated Megan's birthday by eating supper at Pasta Jay's. It was excellent Italian food.



Arches National Park is very crowded. We had timed entry permits for 8 a.m. to 9a.m. on September 21st. It still took us 30 minutes to get through the entry gate. Just after the entry gate is the Visitors Center, then the main road switchbacks way up onto a plateau where all the arches and other remnant formations are found. I will describe Arches National Park as awesome. Arches is a red-rock wonderland. This incredible landscape was formed from folded sandstone. As the stone warped, fractures were formed. Then uplift and erosion created the arches, honeycombs, and crazy-looking rocks we see today. There is 1 main roadway through the park that ends at an area called Devil's Garden. You could spend a week here exploring all the awesome places. After stopping at the Visitors Center, Huge White car and Honda car caravanned to the Delicate Arch Trailhead, only we couldn't find parking, so we headed to the Overlook Trailhead instead. This short, steep trail took us to good views of Delicate Arch in the distance. It turns out that it is hard to get good perspective taking pictures with these arches. Either the arch is very tiny, or the people are very tiny. Honda car next headed to Devils' Garden that has several arches along many trails. On the way, we lost Huge White Car. We figured they stopped somewhere, but NOPE. They broke down. Where they were, was hot desert, with no cell signal, no service, in the middle of nowhere. Luckily, Red Car group found them after they had finished their hike to Delicate Arch. The rescue began. Red Car shuttled people back to the visitors' center where there was cell phone coverage and took some people back to their hotel in Moab. Craziness- the rental car company wanted Dion to stay with the car, which would have been 6 hours – NO WAY! Meanwhile, Honda Car group and Henry hiked to Tunnel Arch, Pine Tree Arch, and Landscape Arch. Jennifer, Henry, and Sue navigated a scary climb up an archway to explore Navajo and Bat Guano Arches. Crazy, rugged trail. Worried about Huge White Car, we headed back, and as soon as we got cell signal, discovered the drama unfolding at the visitors center. Jack helped bring all the gear from the Huge White Car and once Rob made it back to the visitors' center, (took him an hour in the gateway line), we managed to shuttle everyone back to their places in Moab. Huge White Car group became New Car Group the next day, which was the soonest they could get a replacement car. Their hotel was in a downtown area where they could walk to eateries and shopping, so it was not that big of a deal.





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The next day, September 22nd, each car group explored Canyonlands National Park and Dead Horse State Park. Canyonlands National Park is grand. The views are breath-taking in their grandness. Across the road from the Island in the Sky Visitors Center, there is suicidal, no guardrail, jeep road, hugging the shear wall and going into the canyon – Shafer Trail Road – Yikes! We could also see this road from Dead Horse Overlook. Canyonlands National Park has 3 areas – Island in the Sky, the area we explored, The Maze, and The Needles. The Green River and the Colorado River come together in this park. There is rafting, hiking, and jeep (4x4) adventuring galore. Lots to do but very spread out. Back in Moab, we met up for our last supper meal together. New Car group and Honda Car group decided to go back into Arches National Park for sunset. Hey! After a short line to get into the park, and the weather cooling off, we drove to the Double Arch Trailhead. We got some great photos and discovered this was the best time to visit the park. I wished we had more time.





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ON THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 23RD, EACH CAR GROUP HEADED IN A
DIFFERENT DIRECTION. HENRY DROVE BACK TO LAS VEGAS TO FLY HOME. JANET &

ROB DROPPED PHYLLIS AND JAMES AT THE GRAND JUNCTION AIRPORT AND THEN CONTINUED ON TO COLORADO SPRINGS. SEPARATELY, NEW CAR GROUP AND HONDA CAR GROUP HEADED TO THE BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON NATIONAL PARK SOUTH RIM VISITORS CENTER. NEW CAR GROUP ALSO STOPPED AT COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT AND SAW MOUNTAIN GOATS. THERE WAS LOTS OF FIRE DAMAGE FROM THE 2025 FIRE AT BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON AND WE COULD STILL SMELL THE CHARCOAL. HONDA CAR GROUP STOPPED AT SEVERAL SHORT TRAIL OVERLOOKS. SCARY! SHEER WALLS LOOKING INTO A DEEP CANYON WITH DRAMATIC BLACK COLORED ROCKS STREAKED WITH WHITE PEGMATITE INFUSIONS. BOTH NEW CAR GROUP AND HONDA CAR GROUP TRAVELED THROUGH 13 STATES ON THIS TRIP AND HONDA CAR GROUP GASSED UP 13 TIMES.





MINUTES – THERE WERE NO MINUTES TO REPORT SINCE THE OCTOBER MEETING WAS CANCELED DUE TO ILLNESS.

NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

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

TELICO/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.

Announcement From the Ocoee District Ranger, Cherokee National Forest

No Access to Chilhowee Recreation Area and Forest Service Road #77.

Beginning Monday, October 20, visitors will be unable to access the Chilhowee Recreation Area while the Forest Service undertakes a long-term improvement project that includes widening and resurfacing of existing roads and installation of dumpster pads for bear-proof dumpsters within the recreation site. The project, which utilizes funds previously authorized by the Great America Outdoors Act, is expected to be completed prior to the 2026 summer recreation season.

During this time, visitors will be unable to access the Chilhowee Campground and Day Use Area. The gate will be closed at the intersection of Forest Service Road #77 and the entrance road to Chilhowee Recreation Area restricting access to both the Campground and Day Use Area as well as McKamy Lake and the Benton Falls Trailhead. The public is advised to remain clear of the project work area at all times until the project is complete.

However, during the construction process, visitors can still access



Benton Falls by following one of the detours on the attached Benton Falls Reroute Map. This includes the Clemmer Trail, the Laurel Loop, and the Slick Rock Loop.

Additional construction work is planned for the Ocoee Scenic Byway Forest Road #77, resulting in intermittent interruptions to road access. Please consult the Cherokee National Forest website for road closure information.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/r08/cherokee>

