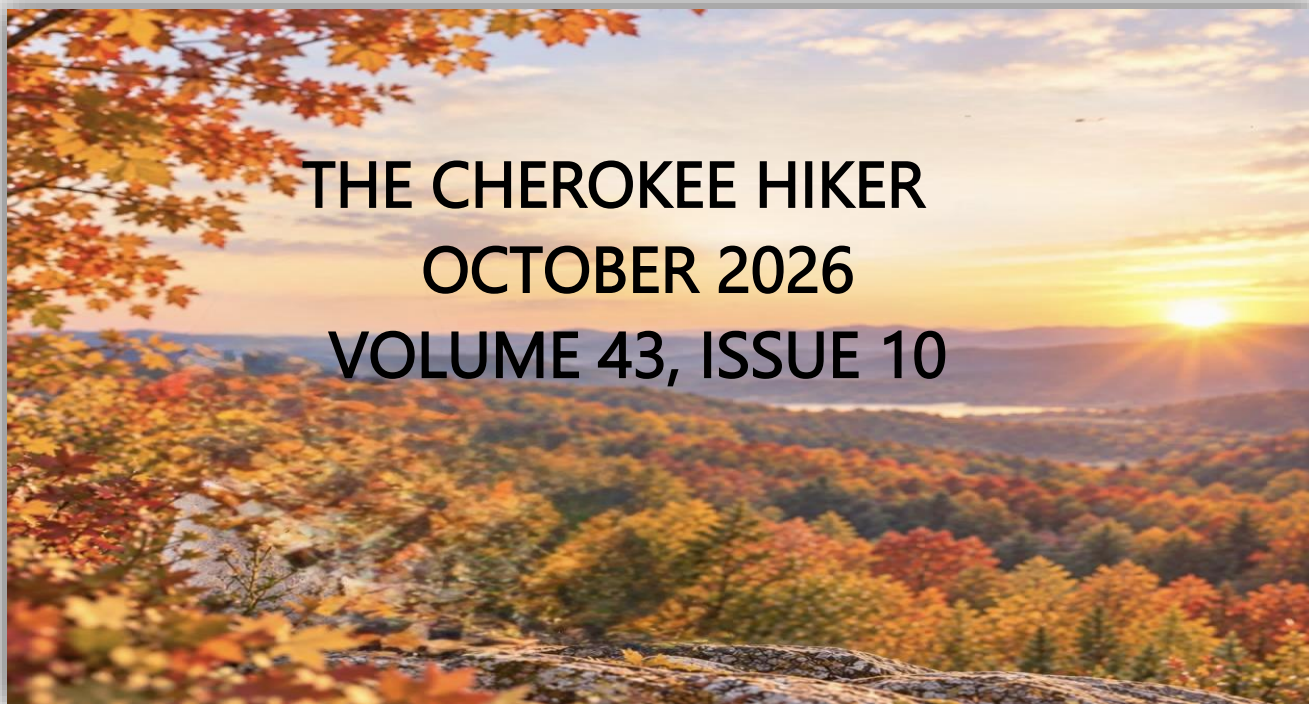




THE CHEROKEE HIKER

OCTOBER 2026

VOLUME 43, ISSUE 10

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

“And into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul.” - John Muir

Thanks go out to Otis Pannel for leading our hike club meeting in September. His capable leadership is much appreciated. I regretted missing Rick Harris present his thoughts on trail maintenance as whatever Rick does, he does in an exemplary fashion. I, too, appreciate Rick’s many other contributions to our club throughout the year. He plans and implements more hikes for our club than any other member. He keeps our website updated and accurate. He is a continuing source of support and advice as part of our Executive Committee. Although I regretted missing our club meeting, I enjoyed being with Anne, Lucia, Phyllis, James and Janet hiking in the Dolomites in Northern Italy. We did manage to take a few pictures and will be sharing our trip in a future club meeting.

In the September Newsletter, I posted a Mission Statement for our club to consider for adoption. The reasons for having a mission statement were also shared. Because it is important that our mission statement closely reflects who we are as a club, I am posting it again in this newsletter. Please read it carefully and be ready to discuss it at our next club meeting October 8.

Proposed Mission Statement

Our purpose is to inspire individuals to engage in outdoor adventure while providing the organization and support needed for successful experiences. We are dedicated to promoting a variety of activities that encourage exploration and enjoyment of the natural world. Our efforts are focused on organizing events and opportunities that make it easy for individuals to participate and connect with others who share a passion for outdoor pursuits.

During the October club meeting I will open a discussion to consider the adoption of this mission statement. If a motion is made and seconded for approval, the mission statement will stand as approved by our club. If the statement needs further revisions, the revisions will be made and presented again at the November club meeting.

See you at the October club meeting at the home of Janet and Rob Coombs on Thursday, October 8, 2026. We will be set up by 4:30 p.m. for outdoor games and socializing, with dinner at 6 p.m. Only thing you need to bring is an appetite, as dinner will be provided with meat and vegetarian hamburgers, hot dogs, sides, drinks, etc. Join us for an evening of conversation, playing games, outdoor grilling, a brief business meeting, and dining by the pool. The address is 5057 South Lee Highway, McDonald, TN 37353.

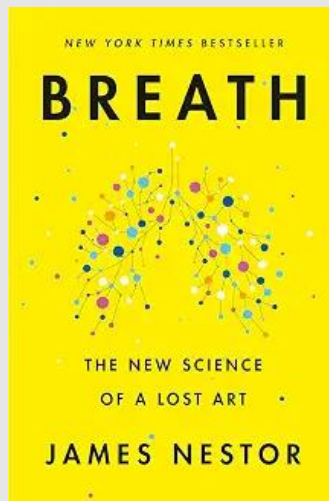
Rob Coombs, Club President



HIKE CLUB BOOK RECOMMENDATION . . .

Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art, by James Nestor

There is nothing more essential to our health and well-being than breathing: take air in, let it out, repeat twenty-five thousand times a day. Yet, as a species, humans have lost the ability to breathe correctly, with grave consequences. Drawing on thousands of years of medical texts and recent cutting-edge studies in pulmonology, psychology, biochemistry, and human physiology, *Breath* turns the conventional wisdom of what we thought we knew about our most basic biological function on its head. A great read for any hiker.



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

OCTOBER EVENTS

Thursday, October 8, 2026 - Thursday Monthly Club Meeting - Join us at the home of Janet and Rob Coombs for hamburgers, hot dogs, games, and fellowship. More details in President Note above.

Friday, October 9, 2026 – PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS HIKE WAS PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 16. **BMT Tellico River to Campsite 11 on Bald River Road - Hike Leaders: Rick & Brenda Harris (and Nahme, our dog).** Meet at Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center Departure Time: 9 a.m.; Return Time: 4 p.m. Hike Difficulty: Moderately Strenuous. Bring lunch, water, wading shoes, and your dog on leash. Description: THIS HIKE IS OPEN TO DOGS AND TO MEMBERS OF BOTH THE BMTA AND CHC. This 7-mile hike begins at the Fish Hatchery on Tellico River Rd above Green Cove on the BMT, climbs up Sugar Mtn then down the south side into the valley of the Upper Bald River Wilderness. Once it crosses Brookshire Creek above a small waterfall, we will leave the BMT and continue to follow the Brookshire Creek Trail downstream to come out onto Bald River Rd at Campsite 11. There are six stream crossings, so either wear shoes you don't mind getting wet or plan on changing into water shoes at each stream crossing. Since this trail is partly in Wilderness, it will be limited to 12 hikers. Afterwards, we will retrieve our shuttle vehicles and perhaps eat supper in Tellico Plains. Contact: Email: HarrisRi1947@gmail.com; Cell phone: 513-260-1184.

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 - Brady Mountain, Cumberland Trail - Hike Leader: Sue Robinson. Location: Crab Orchard. Meet at Spring City McDonalds at 9:30 a.m. eastern time to carpool. Departure Time: 10:00 a.m. Return Time: 3:00 p.m. Hike Difficulty: Moderately Strenuous. Elevation gain is about 1,100 feet. Bring: Food, Water. Brief Description: In/Out 5 - 6-mile hike with significant elevation gain at start of hike. We will hike up 2.5 miles to scenic overlook of grassy gap and enjoy view. We can continue hiking along ridge line to see an arch. May shop at American Grill in Spring City after for food/ lunch. Contact: cell phone: 423-519-9751 (please text, not call).

Thursday, October 15, 2026 - 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.

Wednesday, October 21, 2026 PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS HIKE WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 7.- **Fort Loudoun State Park - Hike Leader: Leslie Auriemmo.** Location: Fort Loudoun State Park. Departure Time: 9:30 a.m. Return Time: Noon. Hike Difficulty: Easy. Bring: Water. Brief Description: 5-mile hike through Fort Loudoun State Park over easy undulating terrain. Nice views of the Fort and lake. For those interested, after the hike, you may tour the fort and visitor center. Admission to both is free. Contact: Lauriemmo@yahoo.com. Cell Phone: 423-331-8967.

Saturday, October 24, 2026 - Mt LeConte - Hike Leader: Jennifer Schroll. Location: Smoky Mountain National Park. Departure Time: 7 a.m. Return Time: unknown. Hike Difficulty: Strenuous. Bring: water and lunch. Brief Description: Leave early from Cleveland. Meet at Home Depot at 7a.m. (maybe earlier). Drive to trailhead or shuttle spot. Hike up the steep Alum Cave Bluff Trail 3000 ft. elevation gain, 11 miles round-trip. Stop for supper on the way home. Contact: jennifergeologist@gmail.com; Cell phone: 423-284-1256.

Tuesday, October 27, 2026 - Piney River - Hike Leader: Doug Lynch. Location: Spring City, Tennessee. Departure Time: 9:30 a.m. Return Time: 3:30 p.m. Hike Difficulty: Moderate. Brief Description: Meet at

McDonald's in Spring City, TN at 9:30 a.m. Moderate hike of 8 miles. Beautiful hike along a creek.
Contact Email: dhiker10@gmail.com; Cell Phone: 865-850-7243.

Tuesdays, October 6, 13, 20, 27 - Tuesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway - Every Tuesday 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 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.

NOVEMBER AT-A-GLANCE

Monday - Friday, November 2 - 6, 2026 - Lakeshore Trail Smokies, Backpack - Hike Leader: Buddy Arnold.

Location: Smokies Mountain National Park, about 3 hours from Cleveland, TN; near Fontana Dam. Meet at the Fontana Dam. Meet time is 7:00 a.m. on November 2. Departure time is the afternoon of November 6. Hike Difficulty: Rated *strenuous* due to length (about 35 miles) and some elevation change. What to Bring: I planned this hike last year in November but did not do the whole hike due to illness. So, this is a redo of the entire hike. The shuttle is about \$35 per hiker. There is also a \$10 charge per night per hiker at the campsites (totaling \$40 each) so the total cost will be \$75 per person. There is a limit of 6 hikers due to the limits at the campsites. I will have to make reservations by mid-September to secure campsite reservations. The hike does have some elevations change and 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.

Description of the Hike:

Day 1: Drive to Fontana Dam and arrive about 9:30 a.m. Take the shuttle to Bryson City, Lakeshore Drive and trailhead at Road to Nowhere. Hike to Campsite 98, about 9.5 miles via the tunnel. (An option would be to camp at the Fontana Dam campground, Sunday, November 1 and start the hike early on Monday, November 2.)

Day 2: Hike 7.0 miles to Campsite 77.

Day 3: Hike 7.5 miles to Campsite 86. Day 4: Hike 5.5 miles to Fontana Dam and drive home.

Contact: email we_arnold@outlook.com; Cell phone: 601-415-3551.

Thursday, November 5, 2026 - Saturday, November 7, 2026 - BMTA Hike Fest - Events for the BMTA Hike Fest are not released until May 2026. There will be 3 - 5 hikes daily for hikers to choose from. Contact Clair Sullivan for further information. Cell phone: 404-849-0872.

Wednesday, November 11, 2026 - Sycamore Creek Trail - Hike Leader: Leslie Auriemmo. Location: Meet at trail at Tellico Fish Hatchery. Departure Time: 9:00 a.m. Return Time: 1:00 p.m. Hike Difficulty: Moderately Strenuous. Bring: Water. Brief Description: We will do approximately 7 miles around trip. The first 2 miles are relatively flat and follows Sycamore Creek. Then the trail gradually winds uphill in a zig sag fashion. This is an up and back hike. For those interested, we will have lunch at the Tellico Bakery. Contact: Lauriemmo@yahoo.com. Cell Phone: 423-331-8967.

Thursday, November 12, 2026 - Monthly Club Meeting - We will meet at the Etowah Senior Center in Etowah at 6:00 p.m. for a potluck supper and a presentation. Presenter for the evening will be listed when available.

Thursday, November 19, 2026 - 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.

Friday, November 20, 2026 -Unicoi Turnpike National Historical Trail - Hike Leaders: Rick & Brenda Harris (and Nahme, our dog). Meet at Coker Creek Welcome Departure Time: 10 a.m.; Return Time: 4 p.m. Hike Difficulty: Easy. Bring: lunch, water, your dog on leash. Description of the Hike: THIS HIKE IS OPEN TO DOGS AND TO MEMBERS OF BOTH THE BMTA AND CHC. This ~3-mile hike is mostly downhill and is full of history. This is an easy hike, and it will be fun to explore what is left of the CCC Rolling Stones Camp. We will meet at the Coker Creek Welcome Center, leave some vehicles at the bottom of the trail along Joe Brown Highway (a gravel USFS road), then drive to the top of the ridge at Unicoi Gap. We will follow the BMT southbound a quarter mile, then head down the Unicoi Turnpike Trail. This trail is a deep wagon rut which was used extensively first by the Cherokee Indians, then by militia during the War of 1812, then by settlers and gold seekers, and finally by us. The trail was the route to bring the Cherokee out of the NC mountains on the Trail of Tears as well. The Cherokee were kept at nearby Fort Armistead in Coker Creek, then transported to Charleston and down the Hiwassee River to Chattanooga (then called Ross's Landing). From there, the Cherokee walked or went by boat across Tennessee on out to Oklahoma. The deeply entrenched roadbed is sometimes over our head. About halfway down the trail, we enter the area of the old Rolling Stones CCC camp. Much of the campsite area is still easy to explore with lots of stone and cement structures. Once we get off the trail, we will retrieve our vehicles, then probably eat supper at the Blue Line Grill (a partner to the BMTA), a short distance south on TN-68. For information on the Unicoi Turnpike, Google it and also check out the www.warriorspassage.org website. There also is a nice brochure on the turnpike available the Coker Creek Welcome Center. Contact: Email: HarrisRi1947@gmail.com.Cell phone: 513-260-1184.

Saturday, November 28, 2026 - Linda Davis Memorial Hike on Cleveland Greenway - Hike Leader: Randy Morris. Location: Meet at the pavilion on the Cleveland Bradley Greenway off Raider Drive. Departure Time: 9:00 a.m. Return Time: 11:00 - 12:00 p.m. Hike Difficulty: Easy. Bring: Dress for the weather. Brief Description: Participants can walk as much or as little as they like given this is a public greenway. This hike is named in honor of long-time member Linda Davis who began the Saturday after Thanksgiving walks. Contact Email: randytaylorlormorris@gmail.com Cell Phone: 423-650-0485.

Tuesdays, November 3, 10, 17, 24 - Tuesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway - Every Tuesday 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.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

September 10 Monthly Club Meeting at Etowah Senior Center- "Thank you," Otis, for presiding over the meeting while Rob was out-of-town. And "thank you" to Rick for his presentation on trail maintenance.



Joanne Jackson was the luck winner of the doorprize.



September 17, 2026-There was possibly record-breaking attendance at the monthly breakfast held at the Old Fort Restaurant in Cleveland, Tennessee. Make plans to join us. It is hosted and arranged by Jack Callahan. Thank you, Jack!



September 18, 2026 Falls Branch Falls & Conasauga Falls Hikes, Hike Leaders: Rick & Brenda Harris

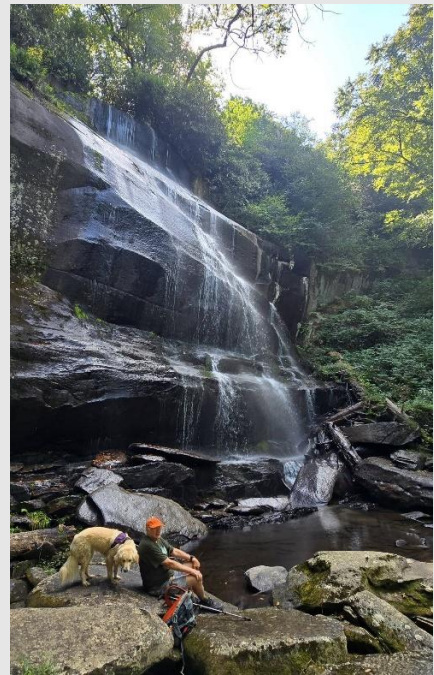
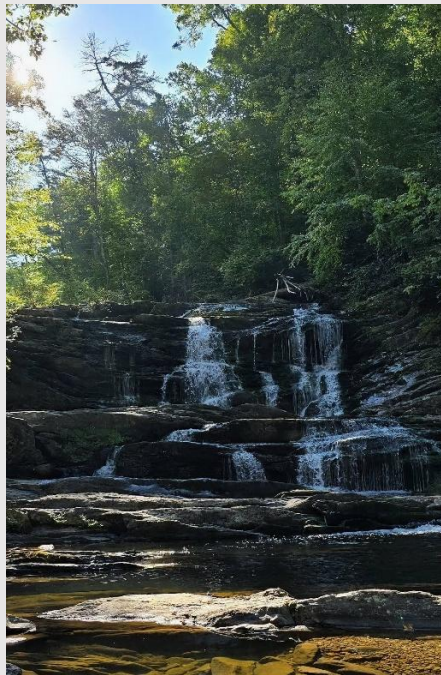
Distance: 5 miles total

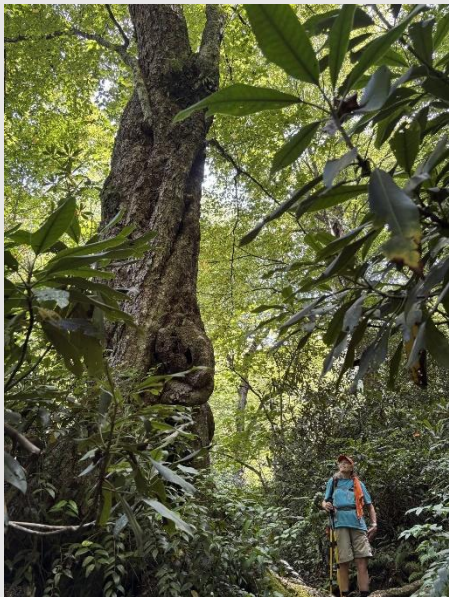
Attendees: Rick & Brenda Harris & Nahme (our dog), Ray Laws, Paula Laws, Stephanie Gordon, Tim Swan, Mollie May, Susie Rheault

We met at the Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center then drove first to the trailhead for the Conasauga Falls Trail. We hiked down to the falls. The first part was easy, but the last part was very rocky and steep in places. The water flow was quite low due to recent drought conditions, but the falls were still quite beautiful.

We then returned to the vehicles and drove back to the visitor center so folks could shop and use the restrooms. We then drove to the West Rattlesnake Parking Area on the Skyway, which is the trailhead for the Falls Branch Falls Trail. We ate lunch there. Then we hiked to the falls, which to say the least was quite challenging. The first half was easy on an old roadbed, but after leaving the roadbed and heading down to the creek, the trail became very steep and rocky with poor footing in most places. Despite the difficulty of the trail, everyone said it was well worth the misery. These falls never disappoint. They are estimated to be about 90 feet high with most of the distance being a sheer drop. Both trails were completely free of logs across the trail and well brushed out, thanks to the volunteer trail crews.

Afterwards, four of us and Nahme went to Tellico Brewing for their award-winning Oktoberfest beer and for snacks from Peach Steet Grill. The Tellico Brewing Oktoberfest beer won best in the nation in that category at the annual Great American Beer Festival in Denver. The Tellico Plains Oktoberfest was to be held the next day, Saturday, September 19, highlighting this gold-medal beer. But anyone can come to enjoy this award-winning beer later until supplies run out.





September Walks on the Cleveland Greenway led by Jack Callahan every Tuesday at 4:30.
Contact Jack Callahan for more information.



MINUTES

Cherokee Hiking Club
Monthly Club Meeting
6:00 p.m., September 10, 2026
Etowah Senior Center

Vice President Otis Pannel opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting Sign-in Sheet was distributed, and 12 members signed. Joanne Jackson won the *Tonight's Lucky Hiker* door prize. Otis Pannel shared thoughts about his month's hike club quote "Hiking is not for everyone. Notice the wilderness is mostly empty." Sonja Yoerg

- I. Treasury Report - Jennifer Schroll
 - A. Previous month balance - \$3,149.70
 - B. Any debts or corrections - payment for facility; dues
 - C. Current balance - \$3,293.24
 - D. Motion to accept the report - First: Jack Callahan; Second: Claire Sullivan, Vote to Accept: Unanimous
- II. Corrections from the July minutes published in our newsletter.
 - A. No Corrections were made
 - B. Motion to accept the report - First: Gail Drummond; Second: Jack Callahan, Vote to Accept: Unanimous
- III. Unfinished Business
 - A. Ottis Pannel asked that everyone carefully review the Mission Statement and be prepared to discuss this statement at the October meeting.
- IV. New Business
 - A. New members added to our club roster.
 - 1. Cindy Dees, Cheryl & Jeff Pair
 - B. Take advantage of our 2026 20-page calendar with over 90 events offered. There is something for everyone from easy to strenuous.

1. Jack Callahan gave details regarding the Wheeler State Park daily outings.
2. Jack Callahan reported that the Wednesday Walks on the Greenway will be held on Tuesday in the future.

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

1. Thursday, July 2 - Sunday, July 12 - Lake Superior Circle Tour - Hike Leader: Jerry Schneider
2. Tuesday, July 14, 2026 - Candies Creek Greenway - Hike Leader: James Anderson
3. Thursday, July 16, 2026 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast - Contact Jack Callahan
4. Friday, July 17, 2026 - Bob Bald - Hike Leaders: Rick & Brenda Harris
5. Sunday, July 18- Saturday, July 25 - Mt Katahdin, Mt Washington, Hike Leader: Jennifer Schroll
6. Friday, July 31, 2026 - Conasauga River Trail - Hike Leader: Anne Anderson.
7. Wednesdays Walks on the Cleveland Greenway - Leader Jack Callahan
8. Thursday, August 20, 2026 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast - Jack Callahan
9. Friday, August 21, 2026 - Rhododendron Trail - Hike Leader: Ken Cissna
10. Friday, August 21, 2026 - Warriors Passage - Hike Leaders: Rick & Brenda Harris
11. Thursday, September 10, 2026 - Thursday Monthly Club Meeting - Etowah Senior Center

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

1. Friday, September 11, 2026 - Boyd Gap to Old Copper Road Trail - Hike Leader: Ken Cissna.
2. Saturday, September 12, 2026 - Papaw Hike - Hike Leader: Clayton Pannell.
3. Thursday, September 17, 2026 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast - Jack Callahan
4. Thursday, September 18, 2026 - Rocky Flats Trail - Hike Leaders: Rick & Brenda Harris [Canceled]
5. Monday, September 21, 2026 - Friday, September 25, 2026 - John Wheeler State Park - Hike Leaders: Margaret & Jack Callahan.
6. Wednesday, October 7, 2026 - Fort Loudoun State Park - Hike Leader: Leslie Auriemmo.
7. Tuesdays, September 15, 22, 29, October 6 - Tuesday Walks on the Cleveland Greenway - Jack Callahan.

VI. Our presentation for the evening is entitled *Getting Involved: Trail Maintenance* presented by Rick Harris.

VII. Our next meeting will be held on October 8, 2026, at the home of Janet and Rob Coombs. Join us for an evening of conversation, playing games, outdoor grilling, and dining by the pool. Our address is 5057 South Lee Hwy, McDonald, TN.

NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

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

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.

The Benton MacKaye Trail Association would like to invite members of The Cherokee Hiking Club to the 2026 Hike Fest and Awards Banquet. Some of the hikes will be led by Anne Anderson, James Anderson, Rick and Brenda Harris, Judy Norton, Judy Price, and Clare and Ed Sullivan. Most all the hikes are in the Ocoee District of the Cherokee National Forest. You can view all the information at the link below:

<https://bmta.org/2026-annual-meeting-hike-fest/>



hikefest.pdf

