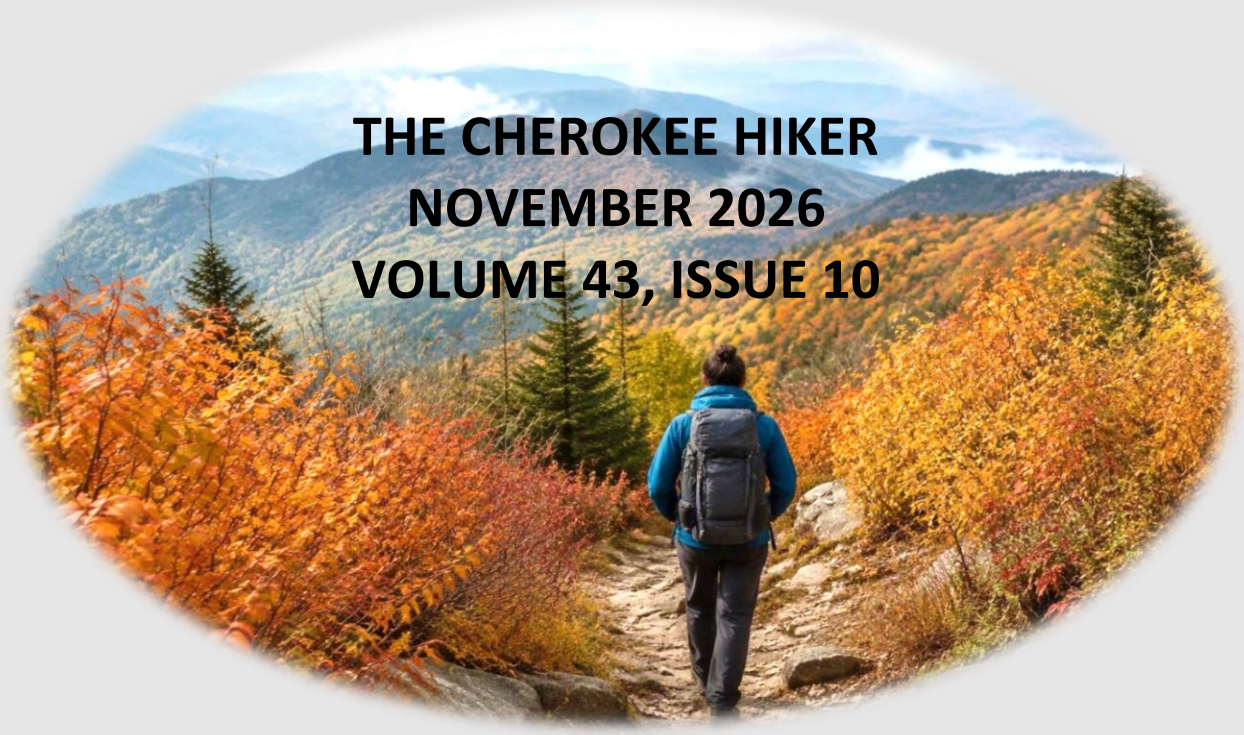


THE CHEROKEE HIKER
NOVEMBER 2026
VOLUME 43, ISSUE 10

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

"It's only a hill, get over it." Tim Badger

During the October club meeting, the following mission statement was adopted by unanimous vote: "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 human powered activities that encourage conservation, 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 sustainable outdoor pursuits." Our mission statement will be posted on our website, social media, and other appropriate places to help promote our club.

Would you like to live to be 100 years old? Surprisingly, most people so fear loss – loss of health, loss of strength, loss of sight, loss of freedom, loss of mind, loss of mobility, loss of friends - that the thought of living100 years brings a shudder rather than delight. But, living to 100 doesn't have to mean losing your health or even most of your freedom. In fact, currently only 30 percent of those who live to be centenarians are both mentally and physically impaired. Another 40 percent have some limitations of vision, mobility, or mental function but are still doing reasonably well. The final 30 percent (almost 1 out 3 people over 100) show few signs of significant impairment.

Due to better health care, better diet, and good exercise, humans are capable of living longer and longer. In fact, according to the Social Security Administration, if you reach age 50 without any catastrophic illnesses, your projected life expectancy is 84-91 for females and 79-89 for males. Dying sooner is a result

of lifestyle choice 45 percent of the time. Poor diet, failure to exercise, and smoking are the leading lifestyle choices that result in early death.

Not only are more people living to a very old age, but they are doing so in better and better health. Research reveals that these "old timers" have mastered the following skills: (1) They handle stress well. (2) They tend to live for the day. (3) They have a good sense of humor. (4) They are adaptable, assertive, and independent. (5) They have meaningful relationships with family and friends. (6) They have a spiritual life. (7) They stay active mentally. (8) They stay active physically. (9) They follow a good diet. (10) They let go of past failures.

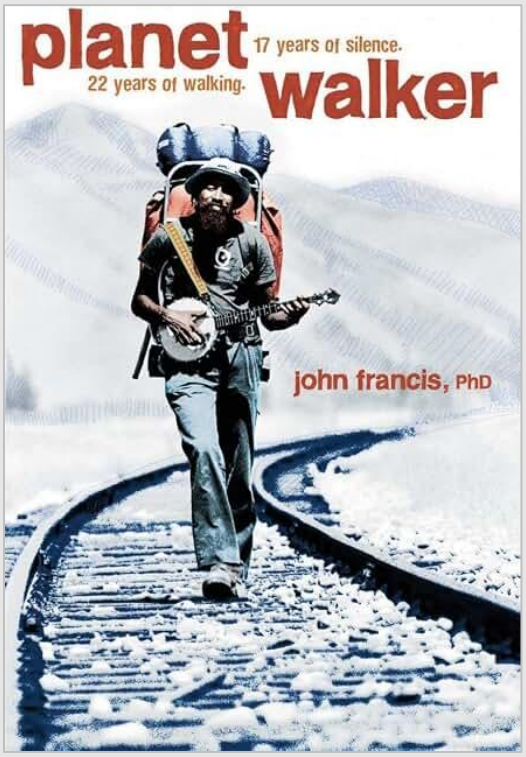
See you at our next scheduled club meeting at the Etowah Senior Center on Thursday, November 12, 2026. Our presentation will be *Trails & Tales: Our Year in Photos* presented by the Publicist and the President (Phyllis Anderson & Rob Coombs).

Rob Coombs, Club President

HIKE CLUB BOOK RECOMMENDATION . . .

Planet Walker, by John Francis, Ph.D.

Dr. John Francis (known as the Planetwalker) is an environmentalist and educator who stopped using motorized vehicles for 22 years and took a 17-year vow of silence after witnessing a 1971 oil spill in San Francisco Bay.



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.

PLAN AHEAD

Following are several club events that Jack will be proposing for 2027. He is sharing these as some of the dates to make reservations are now open or will be at the end of October:

*The New Orleans event is still in the planning with Michelle Ritter, Jerry Schneider and me developing it.

*The backpacking trip has been discussed with several club backpacking members, and there is sufficient interest to move forward.

March 2027. New Orleans (NO) and Mississippi River experience. Under consideration are tours of the Battle of NO, unique cemeteries, and tours of plantation homes upriver. There is also the WW2 Museum in NO.

April 26-30, 2027. Campout at Pickensville campground, Pickensville, AL with guided tours of the WW2 POW Museum in Aliceville, Moundville Archeological site, and the Tom Bevil Lock and Dam on the Tenn-Tom Waterway. Reservations for campground will be open on October 26 of this year.

September 2027. Flat Tops Mountain Wilderness, Colorado. Second week of the month, a 6/5 backpacking trip of about 28 miles with a zero day on an alpine lake with fisheries. Tentative plans to fly to Grand Junction, CO, a few days prior to begin acclamation. Most of the hike will be above 10,000 ft. elevation.

September 27-October 1, 2027. Reelfoot Lake State Park, TN Guided tours on the lake, history of Reelfoot, wildlife of Reelfoot given by state park experts. Tour of historic Civil War fort at Columbus Belmont State Park and a passenger ride on a small ferry across Mississippi and back on the Dorena Hickman ferry. Reservations at Reelfoot State Park now being accepted.

Jack Callahan

NOVEMBER EVENTS

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 There will be 3-5 hikes daily from which hikers can choose. See more information in the last section of the newsletter and/or 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 seven miles around trip. The first two 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 entitled *Trails & Tales: Our Year in Photos* presented by the Publicist and the President (Phyllis Anderson & Rob Coombs).

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: James Anderson. 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: jeandersonishere@gmail.com or phone 423-715-8824.

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.

DECEMBER AT-A-GLANCE

Tuesday, December 1, 2026 - Bear Paw River View Loop - Hike Leader: James Anderson. Location: Park at location of former Whitewater Center on Ocoee River highway 64. Departure Time: 10:00 a.m. Return Time: 2 p.m. or a bit later. Hike Difficulty: Moderate. Bring: Water and lunch. Brief Description: The hike begins where the Whitewater Center previously stood and crosses the Ocoee via the iron bridge. It provides some views of the Ocoee River as it weaves in and up the ridges surrounding that area. Even though the hike will probably be around 6 miles, I rated it as moderate due to some elevation gain as it is not a flat or level hike. Contact: Cell phone: 423-715-8824.

Sunday, December 6, 2026 - Annual Hike Club Planning Meeting - This meeting will take place at Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church, Etowah TN. The church is located on the corner of Ohio Avenue and 10th Street. Please enter through the 10th street entrance. Club will provide soft drinks. Members may want to bring a simple dessert for the break. "Hiking Request Forms" will be available at the meeting. If you cannot attend, you may email the information to cherokeehikingclub@gmail.com.

Saturday, December 12, 2026 - Annual Club Christmas Party - Meet at the Etowah Senior Center for lunch with a sit-down time of 12:30 p.m. Arrive around 12:00 noon to claim your seat and get settled in for a great catered Christmas dinner. After the meal, the 2027 officers will be inducted and then the always entertaining "unwashed Santa" gift exchange will be held, so bring a $10 gift if you wish to participate. More details in December newsletter…

Thursday, December 17, 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.

Thursday, December 18, 2026 - Indian Boundary Lake Loop Trail - Hike Leaders: Rick & Brenda Harris (and Nahme, our dog). Meet at Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center. Departure Time:10 a.m. Return Time: 3 p.m. Hike Difficulty: *easy*. 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 3.1-mile easy hike around the lake at

Indian Boundary Recreation Area is indeed a beautiful hike. The lake will be low, but the views will be panoramic with Flats Mountain in the background. This is a well-groomed trail with 13 bridges over small creeks feeding the lake. It is a busy bike trail by kids during the summer while camping there. But in December, there will probably be no other hikers or bikers. The campground will be closed except for the Overflow Campground. Afterwards, we can eat supper at one of the restaurants in Tellico Plains. Contact: Email: HarrisRi1947@gmail.com. Cell phone: 513-260-1184.

Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 – 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.

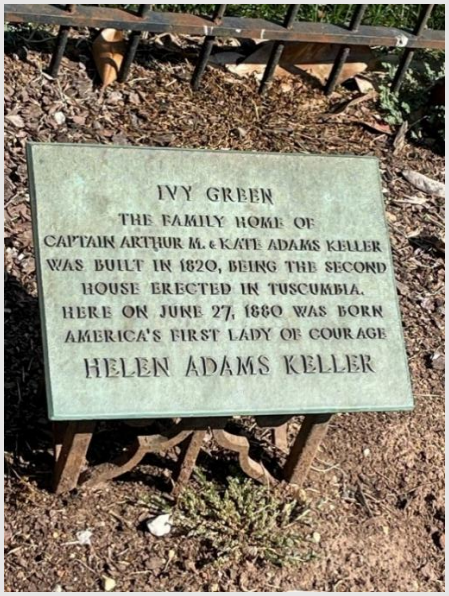
HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

Joe Wheeler State Park Event, leader, Jack Callahan

Monday, September 21
Members traveled to the park, with a mix of campers, cabin and lodge attendees. A short meeting was held in the lodge lobby to go over the agenda.

Tuesday, September 22
The group assembled at Ivy Green, the home of Hellen Keller. We were given a guided tour of the home and an in-depth coverage of Ms. Keller. She was an extremely gifted person and learned to sign, and eventually to speak, even though she was blind and deaf. Her accomplishments were amazing.

The members then took a self-guided tour of the grounds.







Afterwords, several met at a city park for lunch on the Tennessee River, while others chose one of the local restaurants.



In the afternoon we reconvened at the visitor center in Florence and began the tour of the Rosenbaum home, the only Frank Lloyd Wright designed home in Alabama. Our guide was well versed in the history of the home and shared a lot of information about the construction and the unique features common to many of Mr. Wright's homes.

Afterwords, everyone was on their own to travel back to the park.













Wednesday, September 23

The group headed out early for the drive to Mooresville Alabama, with a memorable pit stop at a well-appointed Marathon fuel center, then on to the town.



We gathered at the front of the 1810 tavern and were welcomed by our tour guide Ms. Susan Golby who gave us an excellent 2-plus-hour walking of the historic town.



We stopped at the oldest continuously operated post office in the state and went inside the non-denominational church for a short sit down and discussion.

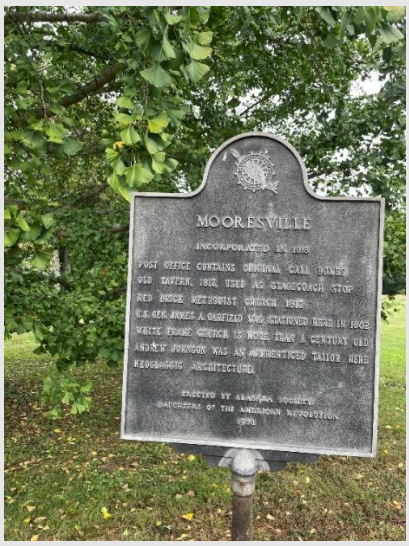




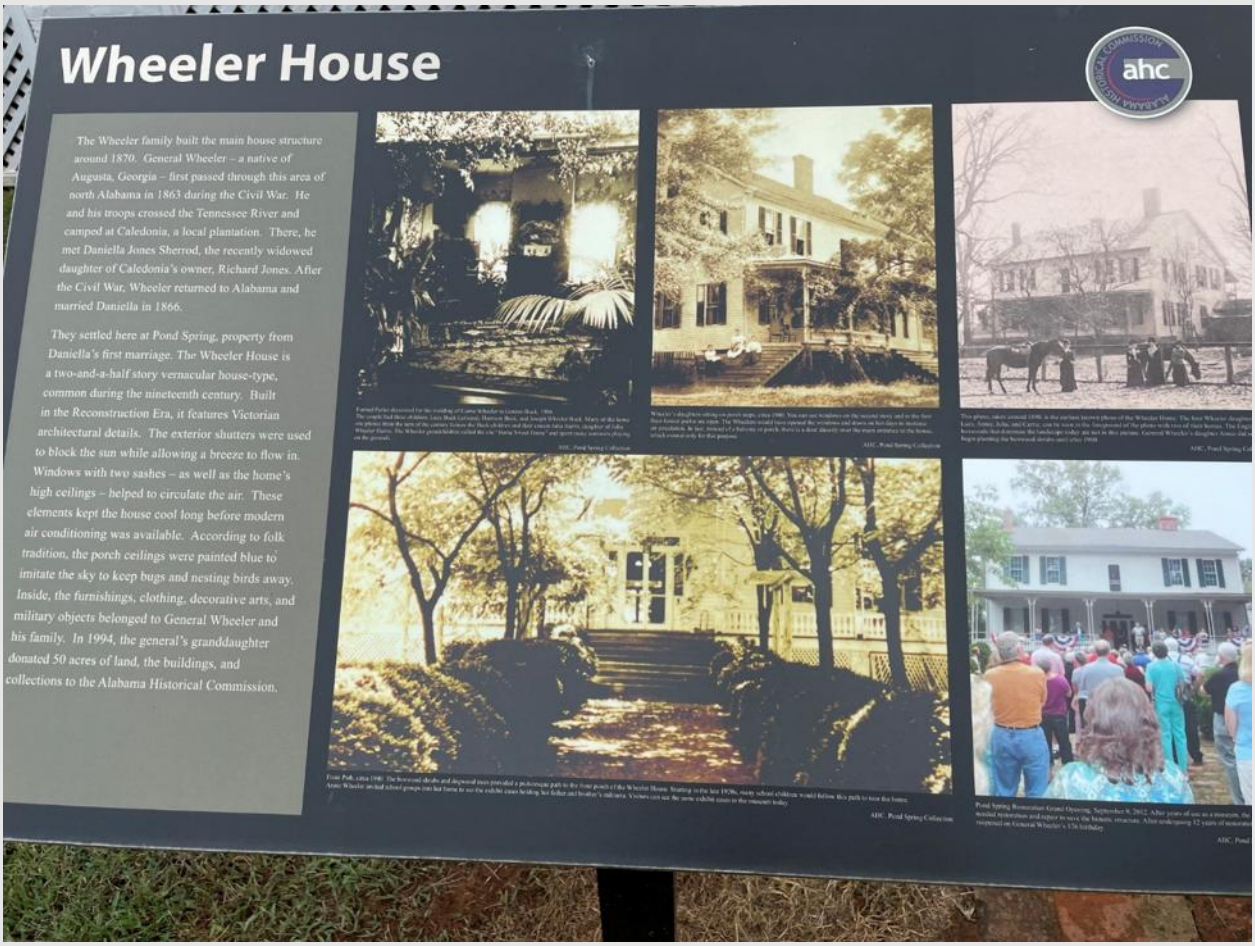
From there we walked around a block of the historic town, population 55, with one home still in the same family for 7 generations.

Ms. Colby answered all our questions and appreciated all the questions from the group. She has been a resident of Mooresville for 30 years and is currently living in one of the original homes.





From there the group scattered for lunch and met back at the home and estate of Gen Joe Wheeler. Here we had another guided tour of the home, by the property historian. He was well versed in the life and family of Wheeler, and of the contents of the home, of which all but about 6 items were original to the home.



Parts of the adjacent home, which is connected by a boardwalk, are currently under restoration.



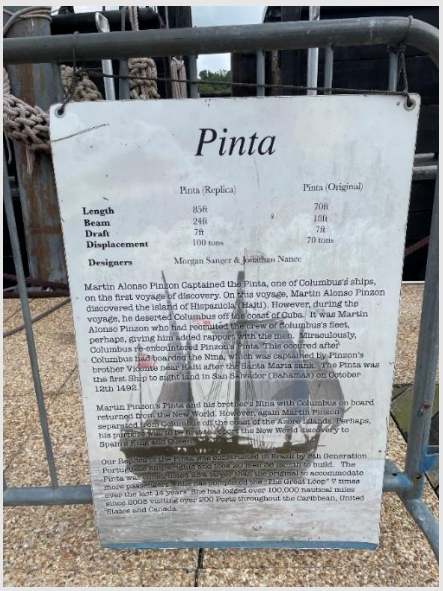


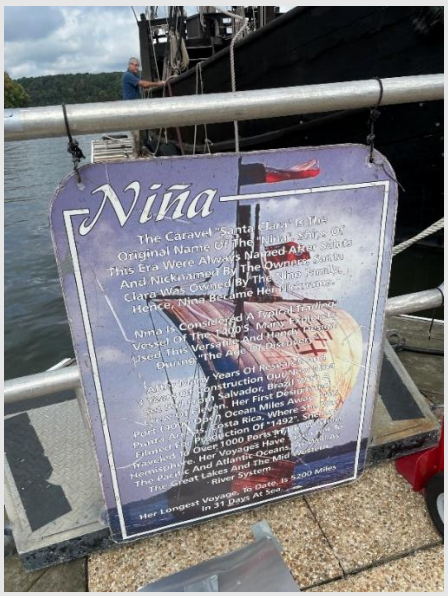




Thursday, September 24, Zero Day

Several of the group went to the harbor in front of the lodge and got a very informative summary of the Pinta and Nina, replicas of the original crafts used by Columbus.









Several folks golfed, others kayaked, and some visited adjacent towns.

At the campground a few of us had lunch and toasted the group with Ale8 pawpaw soda, compliments of Nicka Boone. It is quite good.





Friday, September 25
Members made their way home. There was a maximum of 17 club members at various tours, and all of the tours were very informative and done professionally. Event leader, Jack Callahan

October 8 Monthly Club Meeting at the home of Rob and Janet Coombs-A big "thank you" is in order from all the club members for Rob and Janet hosting this fun event.









October 9, 2026, Doublecamp Creek Road Hike Hike Leaders: Richard & Brenda Harris

Participants: Richard & Brenda Harris, Rodger & Stephanie Gordon, Trina Jordan, Kim Corley, and Nahme (our dog) Distance: 5.0 miles

The six of us met at the Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center and carpooled to the locked gate on Citico Creek Road. This road is closed due to the recent floods which wiped out sections of this road and almost all of the Doublecamp Creek Road. This hike was to check out the devastation to Doublecamp Creek Road.

We hiked downstream along Citico Creek Rd for 1.6 miles to the intersection of Doublecamp Creek Road. Then we hiked up this road which in many places no longer exists. We don't see how this road will ever be rebuilt. In places, the road is completely gone with only huge boulders to climb over and around. We were only able to hike up about a mile before reaching an area which was pretty much completely impassible.

Along the way we ate lunch, then returned to our vehicles. Afterwards, we had beer and dinner at the Tellico Brewing Company and the Peach Street Grill. There, we watched painters working on the mural just across the street from The Peach Street Grill.







October 15, 2026-Another great turnout for 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!



October 24, 2026-Cherohala Skyway Festival, Richard Harris

Twelve volunteers "manned" and "womaned" the BMTA/SABCH booth at the Cherohala Skyway Festival this beautiful, cool and crisp October Saturday at The Charles Hall Museum. It was a very busy Saturday with thousands attending. Our booth was busy all day, and well over 100 kids and many adults tried their skills on the crosscut saw. Booth folks included Rick & Brenda Harris, Tim Williams, Barb Childress, Bob Cowdrick, Bobby & Joanne Mitchell, Darrel & Melissa Sheffield, Jennifer Bennet, Otis Pannel and Clare Sullivan.


BENTON MacKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION
BMT Trail Town Comm
Tellico Plains, Tennessee
BENTON MacKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION




BENTON MacKAYE TRAIL

October 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., October 8, 2026
Janet & Rob Coombs Home

President Rob Coombs opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting sign-in sheet was distributed and 26 members signed. Brenda Harris won the *Tonight's Lucky Hiker* door prize. Rob Coombs shared thoughts about his month's hike club quote "It's only a hill, get over it." Tim Badger

I. Treasury Report - Jennifer Schroll

A. Previous month balance - $3,293.24

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: Otis Pannel, Vote to Accept: Unanimous

II. Corrections from the September minutes are published in our newsletter.

A. No Corrections were made

B. Motion to accept the report - First: Jack Callahan; Second: Gail Drummond, Vote to Accept: Unanimous

III. Unfinished Business

A. Business - Hike Club History - Rob Coombs has completed the writing of our Club History, although he would still like to include a few more one page or less stories from our club members. Our president distributed printed copies of the club history to the members of our Executive Committee for review. Once they have completed the review and changes are made if needed, the club history will be posted on our website, social media, and used in other appropriate places.

IV. New Business

A. New members added to our club roster.

1. None

B. Take advantage of our 2026 20-page calendar with over 90 events offered. There is something for everyone from easy to strenuous.

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

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
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 14, 21, 28, October 5 - Walks on the Cleveland Greenway - Jack Callahan.

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

1. Tuesday, October 13, 2026 - Brady Mountain, Cumberland Trail - Hike Leader: Sue Robinson.
2. Thursday, October 15, 2026 - Monthly Hike Club Breakfast - Jack Callahan
3. Friday, October 16, 2026 - BMT Tellico River to Campsite 11 on Bald River Road - Hike Leaders: Rick & Brenda Harris
4. Saturday, October 24, 2026 - Mt LeConte - Hike Leader: Jennifer Schroll.
5. Tuesday, October 27, 2026 - Piney River - Hike Leader: Doug Lynch
6. Monday - Friday, November 2 - 6, 2026 - Lakeshore Trail Smokies, Backpack - Hike Leader: Buddy Arnold.
7. Thursday, November 5, 2026 - Saturday, November 7, 2026 - BMTA Hike Fest - Contact Clair Sullivan, 404-849-0872.
8. Wednesday, November 11, 2026 - Sycamore Creek Trail - Hike Leader: Leslie Auriemmo.
9. Tuesdays, October 6, 13, 20, 27, November 3 - Walks on the Cleveland Greenway - Jack Callahan

E. Mission State - Why our club needs a mission statement was distributed as part of our club agenda. The proposed mission statement was also printed on the agenda and then read by our president and discussed along with our ongoing activities (also printed on the agenda) that are a product of the mission statement as written. A motion was made by our president that the mission statement be accepted as printed. First: Gail Drummond; Second: Jack Callahan. After a brief discussion where members voiced their approval and appreciation of the proposed mission statement, a call for a Vote to Accept was made: The vote was unanimous to accept. The mission reads as follows:

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.

V. In lieu of a guest speaker, we continued our evening of conversation around the pool.

VI. Our next meeting will be held November 12, 2026. Our presentation for the evening will be *Trails & Tales: Our Year in Photos* presented by our President and Publicist (Phyllis Anderson & Rob Coombs) at the Etowah Senior Center.

Respectfully submitted by Otis Pannel, Vice President on October 8, 2026

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