

# The Cherokee Hiker

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Cherokee Hiking Club, Inc. • 2349 Varnell Road • Cleveland, TN 37311  
[www.cherokeehikingclub.org](http://www.cherokeehikingclub.org)

## ~CHC Calendar~

**Welcome New Members!!!**      Donna Robinson and Russ Miller from Delano TN

### Please note the following article about the CHC monthly meeting, April 9

Joyce Baker, Professor of Chemistry and Associate Dean of Sciences & Mathematics at Tennessee Wesleyan College, will be our guest speaker at the joint meeting of the Hiwassee and Cherokee Hiking Clubs, April 9. Professor Baker was fortunate to receive a grant to visit the Galapagos Islands in January, 2008. She will share information regarding the formation of the islands as well as pictures and stories of her experiences. Professor Baker is a long time fellow hiker of many of the members of both clubs. The meeting will be at the United Methodist Church in Etowah at 6:30 p.m. A potluck meal will precede the presentation. *See announcement below.*

## APRIL HIKES & OTHER EVENTS

**>April 4 - John Muir Clean-up Hike – 3 or 6 miles, easy**  
**Hike Leader: Debbie Flower**

Weather permitting, we will meet at Childer's Creek Trail Head at 9:00 a.m. The hike is a beautiful, easy 3 mile trail along the Hiwassee River. It can be either a 3 mile or a 6 mile hike depending on time and car shuttle. Please bring gloves, clippers, water and a snack/lunch. Trash bags will be provided. If you plan on attending, please call the hike leader by Friday evening, April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Directions:** If coming from Cleveland, go to and through Benton, turn right onto Rt. 30 towards Reliance, cross the bridge at Webb's Store, cross the railroad tracks, turn immediately right at Rosie's Restaurant and follow the road until Childer's Creek sign on right.

**>April 11, 2009, Saturday - John Muir Trail - Leader: Leon Bates    Difficulty rating: Easy.**

**Elevation gain: Minimal elevation gain. Hike Leader: Leon**

**Brief Description:** An easy spring wildflower hike along the John Muir Trail and other sites along the Hiwassee River. **Length:** 1-3 miles

**Directions to Trailhead:** We will depart from the John Muir trailhead at Childers Creek at 8:00 AM. From Hwy 411 follow TN 30 to Reliance, cross Hiwassee River on TN 315, turn right past railroad tracks onto FS 105, trailhead 0.5 miles on right.

**Trail Description:** This hike along the John Muir Trail and other sites along the Hiwassee River will allow hikers to view spectacular scenery and wildflowers in all their splendor. Abundant wildflowers will be available for close-up inspection ; hikers are encouraged to bring a magnifying lens and camera. We will hike about one mile and return for carpooling to Big Bend and Towee Creek area. (Note: day

use user fees are applicable.) The first loop follows the trail downstream about one mile to view colonies of trilliums, blue cohosh, wild ginger, Jacob's ladder and pawpaws. More diverse flora will be viewed at Towee Creek. If time permits on the return to Hwy. 411 we will stop at river access sites that have profuse displays of flowering plants such as bluebells, yellow root, fire pink and bloodroot. Bring lunch or snacks and drinks if you plan to stay through lunch. Wear comfortable walking shoes and rain gear if needed.

Call Leon by Friday evening April 10 to confirm attendance or if you have questions.

**>April 18, Saturday. BMTA Hike. ([www.bmta.org](http://www.bmta.org)). Please see website.**

**> April 18, Saturday. Cleveland State Community College "It's Good to be Green" Fair.** CHC will have a booth.

**W/T April 22-23, Wed & Thur. Cohutta Hickory Creek backpack (6 mi round trip). Moderate. Leader: Karen Young.** *Moderate due to 380' elevation drop.* We will take the Hickory Creek Trail down to the Bray Field area. Altho this is a popular area, there is plenty of room and it should be quiet during the week. We can camp by the Conasauga River, which the trail follows for much of this hike. It is downhill for the first mile, then fairly level for the next 2. One creek crossing may require wading but is usually a rock hop. There are 4 trails that intersect here providing opportunities to explore, either on Wed. afternoon, Th. morning, or both. Meeting time: 10:30am. Meeting place will be determined according to participants. (If the weather looks dreary but you would like to do this hike at a later date, please contact me anyway so I'll know if there is enough interest to reschedule.) Leader: Karen Young.

**>April 25, Saturday. (BMT Section 2). Three Forks to Skeenah Creek (12.2 mi). Strenuous. Leader: Randy Morris.**

After putting in place a car shuttle, we will hike this beautiful section of the Benton MacKaye Trail from south at Three Forks to north at GA Highway 60. This hike has it all—old growth trees, cascades, Long Creek Falls, a wildlife opening with great views and a suspension bridge high over the Toccoa River. Plus, it is planned on a date which is supposed to be at the peak of the wildflower season and the silverbell bloom. This hike is rated strenuous due to the length and total elevation gain. We will go from approximately 1,800 feet of elevation at the beginning up to around 3,200 feet, back down to about 1,800 at the river and back up and down a small mountain another 800 feet. I am planning on an average pace of about 2 mph. We will leave from the overflow parking lot at the Ocoee Hardee's at 8:00 a.m. and will plan to eat at a restaurant around Blue Ridge after the hike. It will be a long day, but should be a great one! If interested, please call Randy Morris no later than Friday evening, April 24.

**>April 25, Saturday. Piney River Trail (10 mi). Moderate/difficult. Leader: Esther Nunley—joint with Hiwassee Hiking Club. *This hike was cancelled on March 28 due to severe weather. Oswald Dome hike will be re-scheduled to this fall (2009).***

Club members often hike the Piney River Trail in the spring to enjoy the wildflowers. We particularly look for the yellow lady slipper. We hike from Newby Branch Forest Camp on Walden's Ridge to the picnic area at Shut-In Gap near Spring City. A car shuttle is required. The hike has less than 500-ft elevation change as we hike along the Piney River's many cascades. The hike is 10 miles in length, rated moderate to difficult because of the length. Leave from Belk's Plaza at 8:00 a.m. Other meeting spots will be established based on the area the hikers are traveling from. Esther Nunley.

**>April 25, Saturday. BMTA TN/NC – Worktrip Topoca Section ([www.bmta.org](http://www.bmta.org)). Please see website.**

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**\*NOTE:** As a courtesy, **ALWAYS** contact the hike leader **in advance** of the hike to facilitate

planning.\*

### **Cherokee Hiking Club News – March Minutes - (March 12, 2009)**

The monthly meeting of the Cherokee Hiking Club was held on March 12, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at Michael's Restaurant in Etowah. There were thirty-one members present. We were happy to have Clayton Pannell return following his surgery and we want to wish him well. President Randy Morris called the business session to order at 7:45 p.m. Minutes of the previous meeting were read by Secretary Jane Bohannon and were approved as read. Treasurer Ann Gray reported the current.

**Old business:** We thanked our newsletter editor Verna Townsend for doing a great job on our name tags and newsletters.

There was a discussion on the environmental festival which is scheduled at CSCC on Saturday April 18 from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The name of the festival is "Its Good To Be Green." The club will have an exhibit there which will consist of a power point presentation by Rick Harris, display of our club tee shirts, and some flyers and pamphlets. There will be an assigned space inside for a projector. Randy asked for volunteers to assist with this project and we still need some more members to participate.

**New business:** Rick Harris volunteered to start a Facebook group for the club. If you have questions contact Rick.

**Hikes completed:** Brenda Harris reported on the Fort Loudon hike which was led by Bob Lee. Randy reported on the Rock Creek segment of the Cumberland Trail. James Anderson reported on the Big Frog Moonlight hike. Ken Jones reported on trail maintenance. The crew has been logging all Citico wilderness trails. College students have been assisting with trail work and with trash pick up. "Horse trails people" have been assisting with non horse trail maintenance.

**Upcoming hikes:** The Cohutta and the Old Copper Road hikes have been cancelled. The Tellico River Cleanup is March 14 "rain or shine." Refer to your newsletter or website for descriptions and contact persons for the following hikes: Turtletown Falls, Warrior's Passage, Scenic Spur Trail, Piney River, BMTA work trip North of Sandy Gap, and the John Muir Cleanup which is April 4.

**Next meeting:** The Annual Joint Meeting with the Hiwassee Club will be at Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church in Etowah on April 9 at 6:30 p.m. **Everyone is to bring a potluck item for the meal.** The church is on the corner of Ohio St. and Tenth St. Directions will be in the April newsletter. Guest speaker is Joyce Baker, Chemistry and Math Professor at TWC in Athens. She will speak on her visit to the Galapagos Islands. Drinks and ice will be furnished by the Hiwassee Club and tableware will be furnished by the Cherokee Club and the church. The church will request donations to their Food Pantry at the meeting.

The May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting will be at the home of Brenda and Rick Harris following the Fall Branch Falls hike. Details will appear in the May newsletter.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Jane Bohannon, Secretary

**Upcoming hikes:** See Above.

**Hikes completed:** See Below

## **Recent Hike & Event Reports**

### **March 7, 2009 - Big Frog Moonlight Hike. Leader: James Anderson**

It was about 3:15 pm on a Saturday afternoon when Don Bennett, Randy Morris, Bill Kamm, Brenda Harris, James Anderson the hike leader, and Brenda's faithful dog, Jake, set out for the top of Big Frog. The air was a bit smokey at times as the forest service had been doing a controlled burn someplace fairly close by. However, the sky was sunny and the temperature was great for hiking.

On the way to the top we meet several day hikers and two others who had been doing some maintenance on the trail. Despite the fact that it was quite warm at the trailhead, it grew considerably colder and windier as we climbed to the top. In one place there was still a bit of ice from the snow and ice that fell earlier in the week. It was undoubtedly remnants of the Great Big Frog glacier!

We made it to the top about 6:30, just a few minutes before sunset, and were able to enjoy the afternoon colors of the sky as the sun sank below the horizon. After spending a few minutes talking and looking around at the top, we hiked a few hundred yards to find a spot out of the wind and with a log to sit on. There we fired up the stove, heated some water, and enjoyed hot chocolate and a snack. By the time we were finished it was dark and so we headed down. Although the moon was out, we hiked with our headlights

on. On the way down we were able to enjoy the moon and the stars, as well as see the many lights to the west out past 411 and toward Cleveland, and the lights to the east of Ducktown and the Copperhill area. On the hike down we were asked by an owl to identify ourselves because he kept asking, "Who, Who, Who?" Shortly after 10pm we were back at our vehicles with all saying they greatly enjoyed the experience. *This report prepared by James aka "Moses" Anderson.*

### **March 14, 2009 – Mini-Tour-de-Cohutta. Leaders: Bill and Diana Ristom**

*Hike cancelled due to a severe weather forecast. A good call...*

### **March 15, 2009 – Turtle Town Falls. Leader: Marc Bernatti**

Four brave hikers were rewarded with the perfect day on a great hike. Sunday, March 15, '09 started rainy but turned to just being overcast by mid-day. A little mist (probably a low cloud) hit my windshield on the way to Turtletown Creek Falls, but before I and Percy got there, it too quit. Gary, a neighbour of mine up here in Coker Creek and his dog Buddy were already there. Jane and her friend Sheri, another Hiawasse Club member came afterwards and completed the small group. Turtle Town Creek was roaring and the trail showed signs of having been swamped. There were still a few wet crossings which, with a little log walking and rock hopping, presented no problems. The volume of water coming over both sets of Falls was the most I've seen; well worth the hike. There are a few photos of both on our web site. While the group was small it was extremely well organized and protected. Gary and I with our dogs spearheaded the hike and Jane and Sheri did an excellent job of "trailsweeping".

Our return on the backside road provided some nice views of the Hiawassee from the bluff. The trees were just starting to bud up so, the view was still unrestricted. To reward us and spite those less brave who passed on the hike, the sun came out briefly on our last leg of the hike before arriving back at our cars. Marc

### **March 21, 2009, Saturday - Warrior's Passage National Recreation Trail, 6.2 miles, Leader: Rick Harris**

Nine hikers went on this beautiful hike on a cool crisp spring day. We were worried that the trip would be smoky from a controlled burn, but we lucked out because the wind was blowing the smoke away from us. We left our shuttle cars at the Old Furnace Road trailhead, then drove to the top of Waucheesi Bald to

start the hike around 10AM. The 360 degree view from the top were fantastic. We could see the Cumberland Plateau, the White Bluffs on Starr Mountain, Big Frog, Little Frog and the mountains along the state line far to the northeast. We headed down the mountain first on the old Fire Tower Road, then headed steeply down the west flank of the mountain on a series of switchbacks to Mule Pen Gap and Tobe Creek, where we stopped for lunch. From there we crossed Bald River Road, then headed over the burned-out area and crossed Wildcat Creek Road. We then reached Wildcat Creek where we changed into river shoes and carefully crossed the deep water. Jake played in the creek for at least a half hour, chasing minnows and whatever. After drying our feet and putting our hiking shoes back on, we climbed the valley up to our cars on Old Furnace Road. We then retrieved our cars and finished the day off by eating supper at Nut'n Fancy in Tellico Plains. Hikers included Rick and Brenda Harris with Jake their golden retriever, James Anderson, Liz Carter, Pam Sullivan, Kenneth Johnson, Marc Bernatti, Esther Nunley and Al Rymer.

**March 22, Sunday - Scenic Spur Trail – Leader: Randy Morris**

Fifteen hikers and two dogs turned out for a hike on the Scenic Spur Trail along Rock Creek just off Hwy. 64 on an absolutely beautiful spring afternoon. There was sufficient water in the creek to make the falls and cascades beautiful without making the creek crossings overly difficult. It was possible to “rock-hop” without getting wet, but some chose to take the safest way across and wade. It was almost like being in the Smokies for a hike with all of the people in the area—both hikers and bikers as I have never seen the trailhead parking lot so full! In fact, we met club members Bill and Carol Kamm along with some out-of-state visitors on our return trip. Everyone enjoyed the relatively easy hike up to the cascades and small, but beautiful waterfall. Four hikers and Jake made the “bushwhack” trek up the side of the ridge to view the upper falls which are larger with a greater vertical drop. Please see pictures on the club’s website at [www.cherokeehiking.org](http://www.cherokeehiking.org). Hikers making the trip were club members Jane Bohannon, Ann Gray, Rick & Brenda Harris (and Jake), Jolynn & Kenneth Johnson, Al Rymer, Aggie Scott, Mickey Walls, Karen Young, Debbie Zuidema, and Randy Morris, hike leader. Guests were Elaine Allman, Ray Seaton (and Jack) and Sherri Stewart.

**March 28, Saturday. *Piney River Trail hike cancelled due to weather conditions.***

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