

Cherokee Hiking Club Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2016
Stadium BBQ, Delano TN

We met at 6:00 and ordered and ate dinner. The meeting was called by President Leon Bates at 6:51 p.m.; 23 members attended. Becky read the minutes from the March meeting and Randy gave the treasury report. The amount was \$1881.62. The club had approved the expenditure of club funds for the business cards, in the amount of \$61.95. When Randy reimbursed Jack for the printing of the cards, this brought the final amount down to **\$1819.67**.

Old Business:

- Jack Callahan brought the club business cards to the meeting for dissemination to the club members. He had spearheaded the effort to design and print up the cards. The club members had taken a vote at the March meeting to approve the expenditure of club funds to pay for the cards.
- Leon Bates commended Rick Harris on his long continued role as webmaster for the club. Rick stated that the pictures from many old and recent club hikes and other events are posted on the website, as well as on the club's Facebook and Meetup sites.
- Rick Harris announced that the year-long process to get the official volunteer agreement signed between the Club and the U.S. Forestry Department was finally complete. Leon Bates recently signed for the club. This will negate the need for individual agreements for each club trail maintenance activity in a federal forest from now on. The Cherokee Hiking Club is now an official Trail Maintenance organization, as recognized by the U.S. Department of Forestry.

New Business:

- Neither Leon Bates (club president) nor Jack Callahan (club vice president) will be able to attend the May meeting. The next officer in charge to lead the meeting is the club secretary, Becky Levings, and after that the treasurer, Randy Morris. Becky will therefore lead the May meeting with backup assistance from Randy, if needed.
- Randy Morris announced that the roster will be updated in May, based on those that have paid their dues for 2016. Those that are not paid up by that time will be dropped from the roster and the email list. He urged all unpaid members to pay as soon as possible.
- Each club member picked up a share of the business cards to pass out. Rick Harris has already passed some out to hikers on his recent Bald River Hike, at the Starr Mountain Outfitters and other venues; Margaret Callahan has dropped some off at the Gardeners' Market and the Cleveland Library. Leon Bates suggested to members other venues such as Ocoee Rafting, the Chamber of Commerce on Highway 64, the White Water Center, etc. Becky Levings said that she would check out some venues in the Blairsville Georgia area for card dissemination.
- Leon announced that the June and/or July club meetings may or may not be held, as summer meetings are sometimes skipped. A decision on these meetings will be made sometime in May most likely.
- Jack Callahan mentioned the unfortunate possibility of someone having a medical

emergency on a hike or worse, a death. Rick Harris reported that some members of the Mountain High Hikers came upon a lone deceased hiker on one of their hikes recently. So this happens at times. Jack recommended that someone that he knows could give an informative talk to the club about how to deal with such a possibility happening on a club hike. Richard Taylor is an expert in search and rescue, performing many acts of mercy and teaching these skills as well. Mr. Taylor could come and give an hour long Power Point presentation to the club at a state park office such as the one at the Hiwassee/Ocoee State Park. We would need to bring in a projector. The club members sounded interested.

Activities Conducted:

- Pigeon Mountain Wildflower Walk/Rock Town Trail Hike, 3/26: Ann Gray led this event, which consisted of a brief wildflower walk, lunch at a local restaurant and the hike. The wildflower walk featured a walk on a boardwalk built above a wet area near Pigeon Mountain. Many flowers were blooming including yellow poppies, Virginia bluebells, bloodroot, trilliums (getting ready to emerge), painted buckeye (rare) and many more. Then the group went to the nearby Pigeon Mountain Grill, which served great food. Although there was only one restroom in the restaurant, which was in an old farmhouse, it was kept very well cleaned and supplied. On the drive to Rock Town, the group encountered some beautiful mountain scenery, although part of the road had fallen off, so they had to go down a long detour. The group was amazed at the number of huge boulders along the Rock Town Trail. It was a beautiful day, and there were many young people on the Rock Town Trail, and several bicyclists and other outdoor enthusiasts at the restaurant.
- Bald River Trail Hike, 4/2: Rick Harris led the hike with 12 people, the limit for a designated wilderness area. One half of the hiking group consisted of club members and the other half were non-members who had signed up via Meetup. He was going to run this as 2 hiking groups since the original number of interested people was higher, but since several cancelled, he only needed the one group. The group hiked to the upper waterfall, 4 ½ miles each way. Most of the group went to the Tellicafe afterwards and helped themselves to the excellent food. Several wildflowers were seen on the hike, and pictures were taken and posted on the club's Meetup site.
- John Muir Trail Cleanup, 4/9: Clayton Pannell led this hike and 5 people attended. They filled one garbage bag with trash, filled a large hole and rerouted some water that was sitting on the trail, picked up an old tire that had been dumped, and otherwise cleared the trail of brush and overgrowth.
- Gee Creek Hike, 4/14: Al Rymer led this hike that started an hour before the club meeting at the nearby Stadium BBQ restaurant in Delano. There was some confusion as to where to meet, with Al and his party meeting at the office of the Hiwassee-Ocoee State Park and Rick Harris meeting at the Gee Creek Trailhead. Rick walked alone to the falls and back, and took some pictures, and Al and his party took one of the loop trails that began near the park office.

News:

- Ocasawsee Festival, 4/16: There will be several hikes led; Leon Bates will lead one of them. There is a sunset watch on Starr Mountain.

- Ramp Festival at Ball Play this weekend, 4/16. Crafts for sale and food served at a reasonable price, including dinner cooked with ramps.
- Trails and Trilliums Weekend, 4/15-17 at South Cumberland State Park, sponsored by the Friends of the South Cumberland; this is a wonderful way to see all the beautiful wildflowers currently blooming on the Cumberland Plateau if one can't go on the Club's Shakerag Hike on April 30. See www.trailsandtrilliums.org for more info.
- GSMNP Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage, 4/19-23: this is the premier annual spring wildflower events of eastern Tennessee. It occurs in Gatlinburg and the surrounding Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and features classes and educational hikes. Club President Leon Bates, our resident wildflower expert and botanist, will be leading several hikes. Registration will be at the Gatlinburg Convention Center and online. See www.springwildflowerpilgrimage.org.
- Ramp Tramp in Polk County, 4/20-23. Takes place near Reliance TN at Camp McCroy. Website is <http://ramptrampfestival.com/>.
- Wilderness Wildlife Week, 5/18-21. Leon Bates had some brochures to hand out. There will be a lot of hikes on offer for this event as well.
- Mount LeConte offers a daily blog on weather conditions in that area. <http://www.highonleconte.com>
- A good weather site for a mountain hike is <http://www.mountain-forecast.com>. It gives a 6 day forecast for every high elevation, designed for mountaineers and climbers.

Activities Planned:

- Sandy Gap Hike, 4/16: Jack Callahan will lead the Sandy Gap hike this Saturday 4/16, no matter the weather as this hike had to be cancelled twice already for bad weather. The weather prognosis for Saturday looks good so far. His limit of 10 people has been reached, so no new people will be able to sign up unless there is a cancellation between now and then.
- Cow Camp Trail Hike with the Sequoyah Hiking Club (not a CHC event, but SHC is our "sister" club), Friday, 4/22: Rick Harris will lead. This trail is a 4 mile loop.
- Bald River Trail Cleanup, 4/25: Rick Harris will lead a work trip to clear logs on the Bald River Trail that he just led a hike on earlier this month. The work trip will be held on 4/25 Monday. The trip will consist of a 2-mile walk in to the work area, and a 2-mile walk out. There are several trees down on the trail, including one very large one that will need a cross cut saw crew (wilderness area; no chainsaws allowed). One person in the cross cut saw crew will need to be certified with the U.S. Forestry Department, but the rest do not need to be. It would be a good learning opportunity for anyone who is willing to learn how to operate a cross cut saw.
- Shakerag Hollow/Perimeter Trail/Beckwith's Point Trail Wildflower Hike at Sewanee U of the South, 4/30: Leon Bates will lead. The group will meet at the Hardee's in Monteagle at 9:00 a.m. EST (our time). Anyone carpooling from the Cleveland area should arrange his/her own carpool to Monteagle, and should prepare to leave this area around 7:00 a.m. The Hardee's in Monteagle can be reached by going through Chattanooga on I-24, heading west for several miles and going up Monteagle Mountain, where one should turn off the exit to route 41A. Turn left onto

41A, go over the overpass and then turn left into the Hardee's. After a cup of coffee at the Hardee's, the group will then leave to go the few miles to the trailhead. The trail loop is billed on the brochure as "3 miles" but it is more like 5 miles overall. The trail is fairly easy except for some large boulders one has to scramble down or up. The group will be scrambling up on this trip. The hike is overall a wonderful experience with all the lovely wildflowers in bloom. Those interested in attending should call Leon at 256-710-5508 cell. Randy Morris, whose son has attended Sewanee U of the South, advised the group to get on the trailhead early, since lots of people go there to hike and park at the trailhead. This trail is part of the 13,000 acres of the University's "Domain".

- Cleveland State Community College Trail Cleanup, 5/7: Becky Levings will lead this work trip on the 3.5 mile loop-d-loop trail at CSCC. She will be meeting with the college officials that are in charge of the student volunteers on 4/29, to coordinate the club's trail maintenance efforts with those of the students.
- Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Campout, 5/9-13: led by Jack Callahan. The campout will cost \$20 per person (\$10 for seniors with a National Park Pass), and includes warm water showers and a campsite. The group will probably visit the Hensley Settlement, which was built all by hand back in the day, and used no electricity. The park services office offers to take groups up there in a shuttle. This campout will also offer the opportunity to go on as many as 4-5 day hikes.
- Warrior's Path Trail Cleanup, 6/11: Rick Harris will lead this cleanup near Kingsport TN. The trail was build by the Knoxville Boy Scouts in the 1960's. An arsonist destroyed much of the forest in the area some years back, and the trail was closed down for 8 years or so. After the forest had a chance to regrow somewhat, the trail reopened and is currently in good shape overall. This cleanup will involve the Boy Scouts, who will need leadership from those experienced in trail maintenance, so Rick is inviting all experienced Club trail maintainers to assist them. This cleanup will be part of the Tellico Plains Trail Town events.

Next meeting:

- The next meeting will be held at Charleston Park in Charleston TN on Thursday, May 12. It will be a pot-luck. Leon Bates and Jack Callahan won't be able to attend, so Becky Levings (secretary) will lead the meeting, with assistance from Randy Morris (treasurer), if needed. The dinner will start at 6:00 p.m., with the meeting afterward.

The meeting concluded at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Levings, Secretary