

OLD TIMERS HIKING CLUB SCHEDULE

Jul – Aug - Sep 2023

Founded August of 1991 by CB Willis and Don Frederick and named by Jim Widener

32 Years of Hiking and Counting

All distances on the Appalachian Trail are taken from the A.T. Guide, 2023 Edition

Sat, Jul 1 to Tues, Jul 4	Independence Day 4-Day Weekend
Mon, Jul 3	<p>Dennis Cove Recreation Area to Coon Den Falls to Dennis Cove AT Trailhead (5 to 6 miles, moderate): Since we are in the middle of the 4th of July celebrations, let's keep this hike short and close to home. Wear something patriotic!!! After dropping off a vehicle at the Dennis Cove AT Trailhead, we'll drive another mile down Dennis Cove Rd to the parking lot near the Dennis Cove Recreation Area. We'll begin by hiking up to Coon Den Falls, a 50-foot cascading waterfall. Afterwards, we'll continue hiking until we reach the AT, turn south, and hike another mile to a nice overlook and our lunch spot. We'll then hike north on the AT until we reach the Dennis Cove AT Trailhead. The drivers will then be shuttled to pick up their cars. Form up and leave the church at 8 am. We'll make a second stop at Food City in Elizabethton where the hike leader and signup sheet will be. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:25 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader: Dave Polon, DPolon123@yahoo.com.</p>
Wed, Jul 5	<p>Grayson Highlands State Park (3 trails, 6-7 miles, moderate): There is a \$7 entry fee per car. We will park at the Massey Gap parking lot for the first two hikes. First, we will hike the Rhododendron Trail to see the ponies and their babies followed by the Cabin Creek Trail for views of some waterfalls. Afterwards, we will drive to the visitor center and hike the Twin Pinnacle Trail for some beautiful overlooks. This is a beautiful place to picnic, put your feet in the water, sit at the Pinnacle, and shop and tour the visitor center. It's hard to rush this one. Plan your carpools accordingly. This is a 2-hour drive from the church. Form up and leave the church at 7:15 am. Meet the leader at I-81 Exit 14 Park & Ride in Abingdon. Leader: Maureen McCarty, 423-612-2730.</p>
Mon, Jul 10	<p>Indian Grave Gap to Chestoa (8.2 miles, moderate): Shuttle hike on the AT, mostly downhill, from Indian Grave Gap to Chestoa. About halfway through the hike, we'll stop by Curly Maple Shelter for lunch. Form up and leave the church at 8 am. We'll drop off cars at Chestoa, then drive to Indian Grave Gap to begin our hike. Leader: Lisa Millburn, 435-840-2685, lisa_millburn@hotmail.com.</p>
Wed, Jul 12	<p>Walnut Mountain Road to Bitter End and back (6.4 miles, moderate): This section of the AT, one of my favorites, has a great view of the Roan Highlands along with the Upper Laurel Fork greeting us along the trail. And the trail is a delight as it passes through many rhododendron groves. If there is interest, we can extend the hike on to Hardcore Cascades for those wanting some additional mileage (this would add four more miles to the hike making it 10+). Please let me know ahead of time if you want to hike to the Cascades so I can plan the</p>

	<p>carpooling. Form up and leave the church at 8 am. We'll make a second stop at Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:25 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader: Pat Kenney, 276-791-8063, patkenney28@hotmail.com.</p>
Mon, Jul 17	<p>Rock Creek Falls (5 miles, moderate): Begin in Rock Creek Falls Recreation Area. Day Entry Fee is \$2 per vehicle, or \$1, with a National Parks Senior Pass. The beautiful trail runs along Rock Creek, which is itself showy, and this time of the year, there may be some wildflowers. There will be about 4 creek crossings each direction, so be prepared. Arrival at the falls makes it well worth the trip! Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, 901-351-1779, jeannine21@bellsouth.net.</p>
Wed, Jul 19	<p>Beech Mountain Rd to Bear Tree Lake Access Trail (7 miles, moderate): After prepositioning some cars, we will hike on the AT from Beech Mountain Rd to the Bear Tree Lake Access Trail. Afterwards, we will shuttle the drivers back to retrieve their cars. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. Meet the hike leader at the Damascus Caboose at 9:00 am where the signup sheet will be. Please notify the hike leader if you can bring the group from the church to the caboose. Leader: Marcia Pruner, 276-614-5504, pruner.mpruner@yahoo.com.</p>
Mon, Jul 24	<p>Beauty Spot to the Emerald Forest and back (6.4 miles moderate): Most of us have been to Beauty Spot multiple times, but when was the last time you have been to the Emerald Forest? The Emerald Forest is one of those special places where a combination of elevation and location has left Unaka Mountain crowned with an evergreen woodland. Spruce trees have taken over, giving the Emerald Forest a fairyland forest feel. We will start at Beauty Spot with its 360-degree views. We will hike the AT north to the Emerald Forest where we will enjoy lunch before returning. For those who want more mileage, hike further north on the AT, perhaps all the way to Low Gap (2.2 miles one way). Form up and depart the church at 8 am. Leader: Lisa Millburn, 435-840-2685, lisa_millburn@hotmail.com.</p>
Wed, Jul 26	<p>Little Stony National Recreation Trail (6 miles, moderate): We'll begin this hike from the Hanging Rock Picnic Area in Dungannon, VA. The trail follows Little Stony Creek through a 400-ft deep and 1700-ft wide gorge. Large outcrops, rock ledges, and boulders form the scenic edges along Little Stony Creek. After passing two smaller waterfalls, we'll reach the Falls of Little Stony Creek, a scenic 24-foot waterfall, which will be our lunch spot and turnaround point. Drive time is 70 minutes. Form up and leave the church at 8 am. We'll make a second stop at the Food City in Weber City at 8:30 am. Co-leaders: Debbie Loudon, 919-539-6037, dloudon00@gmail.com and Jolene Yetter, 423-388-5131, aquasizer@aol.com.</p>
Mon, Jul 31	<p>Gloseclose to Crawfish Valley (9.8 miles, strenuous): Hike the Appalachian Trail (6.8 miles) at Groseclose, Va. & Crawfish Trail. (3 miles) in Crawfish Valley doing a key swap. These 9.8 moderate to strenuous miles cross Little Brushy Mt. on the AT. Beautiful Crawfish Valley has a grassy, flat, sunny, old pioneer road running through it and we will walk 3 miles on road & trail. The 2 trails intersect at the Crawfish Valley AT camping area. In Crawfish Valley we should see yellow fringed orchids and maybe some edible chanterelles. We can</p>

	eat lunch when the 2 groups meet. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. Meet the hike leaders at the I-81 Exit #14 Park & Ride to divide into your key swap group. Teresa's group will go to Exit #60 and Marcia's group will go to Exit # 54 to start hiking. Co-Leaders: Teresa Pickett 423-552-4126, teresapickett@yahoo.com; Marcia Pruner 276-614-5504.
Wed, Aug 2	Tanyard Gap to the French Broad River (5.5 miles, moderate): This is a shuttle hike from Tanyard Gap to Silvermine Creek Road next to the French Broad River outside of Hot Springs, NC. For those who wish, lunch in Hot Springs afterwards. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. Leader: Lisa Millburn, 435-840-2685, lisa_millburn@hotmail.com.
Fri, Aug 4 to Mon, Aug 7	Appalachian Trail Vista 2023 Hiking Conference August 4-7 at ETSU in Johnson City
Mon, Aug 7	Elk Garden to Buzzard Rock (6+ miles, moderate): Rain forced us to turn back the last time I attempted this hike, so I'm trying it again. We'll hike south on the AT from Elk Garden and climb White Top Mtn. (second highest peak in Virginia). Once we clear the woods, the views can be spectacular. We'll take our break on or below Buzzard Rock. NOTE EARLY DEPARTURE: We will depart church parking lot at 7:30 a.m. If others need a pickup along the way to Damascus, please contact the hike leader. Leader: Pat Kenney (276) 791-8063, patkenney28@hotmail.com.
Wed, Aug 9	Sams Gap to Big Bald and return (13.0 miles, strenuous): Come join the hike leader on his annual stroll to Big Bald. From the trailhead at Sams Gap on the NC/TN border, the AT gradually ascends through maple and oak forest for 6.5 miles to the expansive summit of Big Bald with its 360-degree views. After lunch, we will return for 13.0 total miles. For those that want a shorter hike, you can hike from Sams Gap to Street Gap and return (4.6-mile moderate hike), or a little further if you want. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. Leader: Dave Polon, DPolon123@yahoo.com.
Mon, Aug 14	Hickey Fork Loop (7 miles, moderate to strenuous): This hike is on lesser used trails in the Hickey Fork watershed in the Shelton Laurel Back Country of the Pisgah National Forest. We will ascend West Prong Hickey Fork and pass two significant waterfalls and rise to Seng Gap. We will continue on the NC-TN crest and descend toward East Prong Hickey Fork back to the trailhead on an old forest road. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. Leader: Teresa Pickett, 423-552-4126, teresapickett@yahoo.com.
Wed, Aug 16	Grayson Highlands/Mt Rogers, VA: Massie Gap to Rhododendron Gap OR to Thomas Knob Shelter and return (5.5 or 7.5 miles, moderate to strenuous): We'll begin this hike at Massie Gap hiking 0.5 miles to the AT, then follow the AT to the Wilburn Ridge Trail. This trail is a difficult 1-mile trail of fun boulder scrambling reaching 5,400 ft elevation (bring jackets?) and stunning views. For an easier route, you can stay on the AT and watch the others bouldering, meeting us at the far end of the Wilburn Ridge Trail. Then we rejoin the AT to reach Rhododendron Gap. Those hiking 5.5 miles can have lunch, then return on the AT. Those doing the longer will continue to Thomas Knob Shelter for lunch and return for 7.5 miles. Return to the cars via the AT going thru the tunnel known as "Fatman Squeeze" for more Rockin' fun. Expect wild ponies,

	<p>much stony tread & steps, and good views. Park entry is \$7/car on weekdays, \$10/car on weekends. If it is rainy, expect date change. Expect 2- hour drive. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. Meet the hike leader for car pool at Exit #14 Park & Ride on I-81 & reduce entry fees. Leader: Marcia Pruner, 276-614-5504.</p>
Mon, Aug 21	<p>VA 603 to Dickey Gap (8.5 miles, moderate): This AT section winds around and over Hurricane Mountain and past Comer Falls near Mt Rogers National Recreational Area. Along the way, a short spur trail leads to Hurricane Mountain shelter. There is a short car shuttle between the two trailheads. Driving time from Johnson City is about 2 hours. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. We'll make a second stop at the I-81 Exit #14 Park & Ride about 8:40 am to pick up more hikers. Leader: Teresa Pickett, 423-552-4126, teresapickett@yahoo.com.</p>
Wed, Aug 23	<p>Clinch Mountain Loop (8 miles, moderate): A loop in Russell County, Va. starting at Hidden Valley Lake dam. We will climb 0.5 mile to the Brumley Tr., taking it to a fantastic lunch spot on an outcropping of rocks overlooking VA, KY, and Bays Mountain, and maybe Eric and Judy's farm (visibility allowing), Then we will continue to Low Gap, hike a short section of road to hike around the back side of the lake returning to the dam. Those preferring a 6-mile hike can leave vehicles at Low Gap on the way in. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. We'll make a second stop at I-81 Exit #14 Park & Ride to pick up more hikers. The hike leader will be at Low Gap and take you to the dam. If you are willing to lead the group to the trailhead, contact the leader. Directions to the trailhead can be provided ahead of time. Hike Leader: Marcia Pruner, 276-614-5504.</p>
Mon, Aug 28	<p>Wilbur Dam Road to Vandeventer Shelter (9.2 miles, strenuous): A 9.2 mile strenuous in-out hike on the AT from Wilbur Dam Road to the shelter and return. This trail follows the spine of Iron Mountain and parallels Watauga Lake for much of the way, At the shelter are some excellent views of the lake. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. We'll make a second stop at Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:25 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, 901-351-1779, jeannine21@bellsouth.net.</p>
Wed, Aug 30	<p>Sand Cave and White Rocks (9-10 miles, moderate to strenuous): A stunning hike near Ewing, Va. (85-90 miles from Johnson City). Steady climb from the trailhead to the top of the ridge where we will descend to the breathtaking Sand Cave. This mammoth cave is truly one of nature's wonders. And it has a steady stream of water coming off the top that can afford a refreshing shower to cool a hot hiker way down. We'll then move on to White Rocks where we will climb to a location that seems like the top of the world. If we're lucky and get a clear day, it will be a lunch you'll not soon forget. NOTE EARLY DEPARTURE: Because of the distance to Ewing, we will leave the church at 7 am. There will be a stop at Food City in Weber City at approximately 7:30 for those who want to rally there. Leader: Pat Kenney (276) 791-8063, patkenney28@hotmail.com.</p>
Mon, Sep 4 (Labor Day)	<p>Pinnacle Tower Trail (9.8 miles, moderate): A moderate hike to the tower via the Pinnacle Trail in the Cherokee Forest at Unicoi. Lots of nice switchbacks can take you to the tower and back for a total of 9.8 miles—or less, if you choose. As</p>

	<p>this is an in-out hike, with well-marked miles, it is easy to set your own goals. Trailhead is located I-26, Exit 32. Meet the leader at the trailhead to sign in at 8:20 am. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, jeannine21@bellsouth.net, 901-351-1779.</p>
Sep 6 to Sep 20	<p>Switzerland Hiking Adventure Sep 6 to Sep 20, 2023</p>
Wed, Sep 6	<p>Appalachian, Iron Mountain and Feathercamp Trails Loop near Damascus. (8+ miles, moderate): We will park at Straight Branch on the Virginia Creeper Trail and then proceed South on the AT to Cuckoo Gap where we will transition to the Iron Mtn. Trail and follow it 4 miles to Sandy Flats where we will access Feathercamp Trail. There are several water crossings on Feathercamp so be prepared to rock hop. NOTE EARLY DEPARTURE: Form up and leave the church at 7:30 a.m. If others need a pickup along the way to Damascus, please contact the hike leader. Leader: Pat Kenney (276) 791-8063, patkenney28@hotmail.com.</p>
Mon, Sep 11 (Patriot Day)	<p>Sams Gap to Hogback Ridge Shelter to Rice Gap and back (8 miles, moderate): This in-out hike follows the AT along the Tennessee/North Carolina line. We will hike to the summit at High Rock (4460'), then on about half a mile to the blue blaze trail to the shelter for those who want a little reprieve. Those who want a shorter hike (4.6 miles) can return by their same path from this point. Those wanting a longer hike, we will continue to Rice Gap, then return the way we came, for about 8 miles. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, 901-351-1779, jeannine21@bellsouth.net.</p>
Wed, Sep 13	<p>Holston Mtn. to Flint Rock (7+ mile loop, moderate): We'll drive up Holston Mtn. to near the old fire tower and then proceed on the Holston Mtn. and Flint Mills Trails to Flint Rock for snacks and fellowship. Great views of South Holston Lake and points West. We'll return on a forest service road to the trailhead. NOTE EARLY DEPARTURE: Form up and leave the church at 7:30 am. We'll make a second stop at Food City in Elizabethton for 7:50 departure. Hike leader: Pat Kenney (276) 791-8063, patkenney28@hotmail.com.</p>
Sat, Sep 16	<p>NASCAR Night Race at Bristol Motor Speedway Expect heavy traffic/road closures around BMS</p>
Mon, Sep 18	<p>Walnut Mountain Rd to Splash Dam Falls and back (7 miles, moderate): Let's go to Splash Dam Falls from the other direction that we usually go. On this hike on the AT, we will pass Mountaineer Falls and Mountaineer Shelter. Parking is limited at the trailhead, so let's try to carpool as much as possible. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am. We'll make a second stop at Food City in Elizabethton where the hike leader and sign-up sheet will be. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:25 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader: Willie Tyree, 757-374-2233, gpawillie@gmail.com.</p>
Wed, Sep 20	<p>Shortoff Mountain/ Linville Gorge, NC (6 miles, strenuous): Soak in some views of Lake James and Linville Gorge Wilderness area, the Grand Canyon of the East. Hike 6 miles round trip, with an uphill elevation gain of 1,300 ft in the first couple strenuous miles. We will walk the ridge (easy) enjoying several panoramic views. It is a two-hour drive one way so plan on a long day. Weather will be key, so watch your email for a change of hike. Depart from the Church at 8:00 am, we'll make a second stop at Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to</p>

	depart Food City at 8:25 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader: John Treece, 919-961-1560, john.treece@gmail.com.
Mon, Sep 25	Sam Knob, Devil's Courthouse, and Black Balsam Knob (~10 miles, ~2500' climb, strenuous): This is a loop hike using portions of the Mountain to Sea Trail (MST), Art Loeb and other trails with gorgeous mountaintop views in the Pisgah Ranger District of Pisgah National Forest. We'll start at the Black Balsam Knob parking lot (end of paved FR 816 off of Blue Ridge Parkway mile 420) and climb the double summit of Sam Knob to the cliff overlooks where we will see our next destinations at Devil's Courthouse and Black Balsam Knob. It's then off to Devil's Courthouse for our lunch stop followed by beautiful woods, mountain meadows and cliff views. Our final climb will be to Black Balsam Knob with its 360-degree views. From there it is a short descent back to our cars. This is a long drive (almost 100 miles), but well worth the trip, so we will need to start early. Form up and leave the church at 7:00 am. Please note this hike requires good weather conditions, so it may be postponed or changed, if necessary, for the enjoyment and safety of the group. Leader: Bob Fuller, 423-773-3051, refuller99@hotmail.com.
Wed, Sep 27	Old Timers Hiking Club Annual Picnic: Come celebrate the 32nd Anniversary of the Old Timers Hiking Club with a pot-luck picnic at Doe River Gorge. We will also hike 5 miles in the gorge. More details of this event will be provided ahead of time.

Come join us! On most hikes, we leave Covenant Presbyterian Church, 603 Sunset Drive, Johnson City, TN each Mon and Wed at 8:00 am. **Showtime is 7:45-7:50 am** so we can sign hikers in and form carpools if needed. **We leave at 8:00 am sharp!** Please check the hike descriptions for the meeting times. Some hikes we may depart earlier or later. On some hikes, we also have a second stop at Food City in Elizabethton, Ingles in Jonesborough, or Food City in Weber City, VA. Those that meet there will be **ready to depart at the time on the hike description and leave as soon as those from the church arrive.**

Bring lunch/snack, PLENTY of water, and gas money. We suggest that 10 cents per mile per person should be the approximate rate. Make sure your driver is properly compensated for his/her expenses and effort. Each person should carry a small first aid kit, you should also carry a little extra food just in case. Bring raingear (it may rain where the hike is even if the weather here does not say rain). Most important, bring yourself and a smile and come enjoy our hikes!!!

Everyone is welcome, member or not.

We are an alcohol/drug-free activity. Drinking alcohol is prohibited before the hikes, during the hikes, or at any trailhead. Participation in club activities carries with it the obligation to hold the club and its representatives free of liability for individual safety.

Treasurer and person to give your membership dues (per year/per family\$10.00): Rich Ritter, 1125 Biltmore Dr, Piney Flats, TN 37686; 765-414-4253; Richieritch1.0@gmail.com

Secretary/Hike schedule: Dave Polon, DPolon123@yahoo.com

Trail Work Coordinator: Alan Liggett, 423-926-4391

Website---<http://oldtimershikingclub.weebly.com>

Webmaster: Dave Polon, DPolon123@yahoo.com