

OLD TIMERS HIKING CLUB SCHEDULE

Jan – Feb – Mar 2024

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

33 Years of Hiking and Counting

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

Mon, Jan 1	Pinnacle Tower Trail (9.8 miles, moderate): Start off the New Year with a hike on the Pinnacle Tower Trail. You can hike as little as you want, or all the way to the top for a in/out hike distance of 9.8 miles. We will meet at the trailhead at 9:00 am. (Directions: Leaving Johnson City, take I-26 towards Asheville. Take the Exit 32 exit ramp. You will see the trailhead on your right). Hike Leader: TBD.
Wed, Jan 3	Buffalo Mountain Loop Trail (6 to 7 miles, moderate): We will start at the lower parking area and hike the Loop Trail including Tip Top. We will also visit White Rocks with its great views of the Johnson City area. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. Hike Leader: Lisa Milburn, 435-840-2685, lisa_millburn@hotmail.com.
Mon, Jan 8	Cross Mountain/TN 91 to Double Springs Shelter and back (6.0 miles, moderate): From the trailhead, we will hike north on the AT. During the first mile, we will cross the Osbourne Farm with its beautiful views before entering the forest. We will pass the beautiful homemade bench where some forest angels left their handiwork. We will finally reach the shelter which will be our lunch spot before returning. Please note later start time. Form up and leave Krogers at 9:00 am. We will make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 9:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leaders: Ruthie Edwards, 423-741-7149, akalisanby@gmail.com and Sharon Begley, 303-519-3969, sharonlbegley@hotmail.com.
Wed, Jan 10	Carvers Gap to Roan High Bluff (7+miles, moderate): We climb southbound on the AT up Roan Mountain. Tree cover should shield us from the winter winds and if we are lucky, the trail will be snow covered. We will be exposed to the elements as we cross Toll House Gap so be prepared. Roan High Bluff in the winter can be a very special experience. Form up and leave Krogers at 9:00 am. We will make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 9:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leader: Pat Kenney, (276) 791-8063 or patkenney28@hotmail.com.
Mon, Jan 15: Martin Luther King Jr. Day Federal Holiday	Iron Mountain Gap to Cherry Gap Shelter (6.0 miles, moderate): We will take the AT beginning at Iron Mountain Gap and walk south to Cherry Gap Shelter and return. This section has some good views of the surrounding mountains. Some years, we caught those views through some rather spectacular rime ice. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. Hike Leader: Jeannine Edwards, 901-351-1779, jeannine21@bellsouth.net.
Wed, Jan 17	Walnut Mountain Road to Bitter End and return (6.4 miles moderate): An out-and-back hike on the Appalachian Trail from Walnut Mtn Road to Bitter

	<p>End. This section of AT crosses bog bridges, parallels cascading Laurel Fork, and offers views to the south of Hump Mountain, Little Hump and Grassy Ridge. We will plan on having a delightful breakfast somewhere. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. We will make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leader: Rich Ritter 765-414-4253.</p>
Mon, Jan 22	<p>Shook Branch to Watauga Dam and return (6.0 miles moderate) or Wilbur Dam Road and return (8.0 miles moderate): From the Shook Branch trailhead, we will hike north on the AT to the dam and back for a 6-mile moderate hike. We can also go a bit further on the AT to Wilbur Dam Road for an 8-mile hike. In winter, the bare trees give a better view of the waters of Watauga Lake and the surrounding mountains. We can pause for snacks at the dam and have some wonderful views before returning or trekking on a bit further on the AT. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. We will make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leader: Jeannine Edwards, 901-351-1779, jeannine21@bellsouth.net.</p>
Wed, Jan 24	<p>Elk River Falls to Jones Falls and Splash Dam Falls and return (5.3 miles moderate): Starting at the Elk River Falls Trailhead, our first stop will be the majestic Elk River Falls. Then we will hike to the AT and on to beautiful Jones Falls. We will then backtrack on the AT to visit Splash Dam Falls before returning to the Elk River Fall Trailhead. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. We will make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leaders: Debbie Loudon, 919-539-6037, dlouden00@gmail.com and Jolene Yetter, 423-388-5131, aquasizer@aol.com.</p>
Mon, Jan 29	<p>Rock Creek Falls and return (5 miles, moderate): A winter favorite for the OTHC! With a little luck and cold temperature, we can hope to see some spectacular icicles along the way and at the falls. There are four creek crossings along the way so be prepared for some rock hopping. Bring an extra pair of shoes and socks just in case. This hike is a steady climb but well worth the effort. Form up and leave Krogers at 9:00 am. Hike leader: Pat Kenney, 276-791-8063, patkenney28@hotmail.com.</p>
Wed, Jan 31	<p>U.S. 321 to Laurel Fork Falls and return (5 miles, moderate): We will hike the blue blaze trail to the AT to these beautiful falls. Some easy spots, some strenuous ones, and a couple that are really tricky. On the way back, we can opt to return via the blue blaze high water trail that takes us by the Laurel Fork Shelter and possibly down to a lesser, but very beautiful, waterfall. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. We'll make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leader: Jeannine Edwards, 901-351-1779, jeannine21@bellsouth.net.</p>
Mon, Feb 5	<p>Indian Grave Gap to Beauty Spot (and maybe Beyond) and return (4.6 miles, moderate): In the winter, this site is often incredible, filled with rime ice and snow. This may require a later start time, so watch your email the night before. We will hike north on the AT to Beauty Spot, a bald that on a clear day</p>

	gives a near 360-degree view of the surrounding mountains. Anyone wanting a longer hike can continue with us on the AT for an 8-mile round trip hike. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. Hike Leader: Jeannine Edwards, 901-351-1779, jeannine21@bellsouth.net.
Wed, Feb 7	Low Gap to McQueen's Knob and return (6.6 miles, moderate): From Low Gap we will hike on the AT north to the Emergency Shelter near McQueen's Knob and return. If there is snow, this part of the AT can be beautiful. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. We will make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leader: TBD.
Sun, Feb 11	Feb 11: Super Bowl Sunday
Mon, Feb 12	Open Date/TBD: We will keep this date open to shift hikes around or to re-schedule a postponed hike. If neither occurs, a hike will be provided ahead of time.
Wed, Feb 14: Valentine's Day	Roaring Creek to Big Yellow Mountain and return (8 miles, moderate): Hope for a clear day which will give us breathtaking views of Grassy Ridge and the Roan. Just after our start at the trailhead, we will get a look at the former site of the Overmountain Shelter which has been torn down. Hold on to all those pictures you took of the "red barn," they are now classics. After a short, steep climb out of Yellow Mountain Gap, we will then do mostly ridge walking. Always a special hike. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. We will make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike leader: Pat Kenney, 276-791-8063, patkenney28@hotmail.com.
Mon, Feb 19: President's Day Federal Holiday	Special Event: Chili-cookoff: We will meet for a pot-luck brunch with several different types of chili and refreshments. More details and the start time of this event will be announced beforehand. Leader: Rich Ritter 765-414-4253.
Wed, Feb 21	Doe River Gorge (5 miles, easy to moderate): Our annual rock ice adventure at the Doe River Gorge Christian Camp in Hampton. We will hike 5-miles in/out on the original Tweetsie railroad line to the first rail trestle. Hopefully, there will be giant icicles formed along the rocky cliffs. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. We'll make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leader: Lisa Milburn, 435-840-2685, lisa_millburn@hotmail.com.
Mon, Feb 26	Hughes Gap to Ash Gap and return (6 miles, moderate to strenuous): We've had some spectacular winter hikes up this side of Roan Mountain. Steady climb up and over Beartown Mountain before our arrival at Ash Gap. With snow, Ash Gap can be a winter wonderland. Form up and leave Krogers at 9:00 am. We'll make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 9:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike leader: Pat Kenney, 276-791-8063, patkenney28@hotmail.com.
Wed, Feb 28	Polecat Hollow to Murray Branch Picnic Park (6.4 miles, easy to moderate): This is a level and mostly downhill shuttle hike starting on a forest service road in Polecat Hollow in Madison County, NC. We will hike to the Jack Branch Trail (299) to the Murray Branch Picnic Park. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00

	am. We will meet the leader for breakfast at Ma and Pa's. (Directions will be provided ahead of time). Hike Leader: Rich Ritter, 765-414-4253.
Mon, Mar 4	Lone Oak Trail to Tip-Top and return (4 miles, moderate) or Lone Oak Trail to White Rocks and return (7 miles, moderate): Choose where you turn around for a 4-to-7-mile moderate hike. Like switchbacks? Then this trail is for you. See another side of Buffalo Mountain on this trail, which is usually impeccably maintained. Follow switchbacks until we reach Buffalo Mountain's Tip-Top. Those who want a shorter hike can turn around here. For the longer version, we will descend Tip-Top and hike to the White Rocks overlook, then return. Due to very limited parking, please form car pools. Do not drive directly to the trailhead without a full car. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. Hike Leader: Jeannine Edwards, 901-351-1779, jeannine21@bellsouth.net.
Wed, Mar 6	Paint Mountain Loop (6 miles, moderate): We will start at the Moses Turn Parking Lot and hike the Paint Creek Campground Trail and Paint Mountain Trail #7. Then we will take a forest road to the Lower Paint Creek Road by Kelly Falls before completing our loop at the parking lot. Form up and leave Krogers at 9:00 am. Hike Leader: Rich Ritter, 765-414-4253.
Sun, Mar 10	Daylight Savings Time Begins. Set Clocks Forward 1 Hour
Mon, Mar 11	Open Date/TBD: We will keep this date open to shift hikes around or to re-schedule a postponed hike. If neither occurs, a hike will be provided ahead of time.
Wed, Mar 13	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 will stop by Curly Maple Shelter for a break/lunch. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. We'll drop off cars at Chestoa, then drive to Indian Grave Gap to begin our hike. Hike Leader: Lisa Millburn, 435-840-2685, lisa_millburn@hotmail.com.
Sun, Mar 17	NASCAR Cup Race at Bristol Motor Speedway. Expect very heavy traffic around BMS and surrounding roads.
Mon, Mar 18	Open Date/TBD: We will keep this date open to shift hikes around or to re-schedule a postponed hike. If neither occurs, a hike will be provided ahead of time.
Tues, Mar 19	First Day of Spring
Wed, Mar 20	Carver's Gap to Grassy Ridge and return (7 to 8 miles, moderate): Let's celebrate our first hike of Spring! This in/out hike on the AT takes you over Round Bald, Jane Bald, then veering off the AT to summit of Grassy Ridge. Absolutely phenomenal views for most of the hike. Form up and leave Krogers at 9:00 am. We will make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton where the hike leader and signup sheet will be. Be ready to depart Food City at 9:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leader: Dave Polon, 423-302-8368, DPolon123@yahoo.com.
Mon, Mar 25	Wilson Creek Area Loop Hike (4.5 miles, moderate): This hike is in the Wilson Creek area. We will follow a creek for a while before looping back along Little Lost Cove Cliffs. Form up and leave Krogers at 9:00 am. We will make a second stop at the Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at

	9:20 am, depart when the group from Krogers arrives. Hike Leader: Rick Culbertson, 423-579-8508, culbertsonrick@gmail.com.
Wed, Mar 27	Porter's Creek Trail in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (7.4 miles, moderate): This beautiful trail is in the Greenbrier section of the GSMNP. It offers hikers a wooded hike with an old cemetery, creek views, historic buildings, and a 40-foot cascading waterfall. Hopefully, there will be plenty of Spring wildflowers. The drive distance is about 82 miles and takes about 1 hour 45 minutes to get there. Form up and leave Krogers at 7:00 am. Meet hike leader at Ingles in Jonesborough at 7:30 am. Hike leader: Joy Cook, 423-913-2220.
Sun, Mar 31	Easter Sunday
Mon, Apr 1	Devil's Fork Gap to Rocky Fork State Park (7 miles, moderate): After pre-positioning cars at Rocky Fork State Park, we will start the hike at Devil's Fork Gap. We will hike on the AT past Flint Mountain Shelter to Flint Mountain Gap. We will then turn off the AT and hike down thru Rocky Fork along the beautiful creek with its cascades and waterfalls. Once we reach the parking lot, the drivers will be shuttled back to their cars. Form up and leave Krogers at 8:00 am. Hike Leader: Dave Polon, 423-302-8368, DPolon123@yahoo.com.
Wed, Apr 3	Old Settlers Trail to Campsite #33 and return in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (13.2 miles, strenuous): This beautiful trail is in the Greenbrier section of the GSMNP. It is rated strenuous due to the mileage. Since it is an in/out hike, you can turn around and shorten the hike anytime you wish. Lots of traces of 19th and early 20th century mountain community life along the way, walking in the heart of the Greenbrier community, also known as Partontown (Dolly)! A few creek crossings will be made. We will finally reach and turn around at campsite #33 one of the prettiest campsites in the park. The drive distance is about 82 miles and takes about 1 hour 45 minutes to get there. Form up and leave Krogers at 7:00 am. Meet hike leader at Ingles in Jonesborough at 7:30 am. Hike leader: Joy Cook, 423-913-2220.

Upcoming Special Events/Overnight Trips

Sun, May 19, 3:00 pm	Grandma Gatewood Takes a Walk at the Barter Theater, Abingdon, VA. POC: Marcia Pruner.
Wed, May 22 – Fri, May 2024	Cumberland Falls, KY: 3 days, 2 nights adventure to see the “moonbow.” This fairly rare phenomenon requires a number of weather and astronomical conditions to align perfectly. When those conditions are just right, you will see a white moonbow arcing across the night sky. Cumberland Falls is one of only two places in the U.S. where you can see a moonbow. POC: Lisa Millburn.
Spring 2025	Virginia's Triple Crown: (Postponed from Spring 2024 due to closure of McAfee Knob Trailhead): 3 days, 2 nights adventure to visit Virginia's Triple Crown (Dragon's Tooth, McAfee Knob, Tinker Cliffs). We'll do 3 hikes in 3 days. POC: Dave Polon.

Come join us! On most hikes, we leave Krogers, 112 Sunset Drive, Johnson City, TN (near the Flying Pig BBQ) 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, Food City in Weber City, VA or the Park & Ride, Exit 14 on I-81, VA. Those that drive to these second stops will be **ready to depart at the time on the hike description and leave as soon as those from Krogers 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!!!

When leaving the trailheads, please ensure all cars that are leaving start, especially in the winter. No one wants to be left behind with a dead battery and no cell service.

Everyone is welcome, member or not. Everyone will treat each other with the dignity and respect that every person deserves. Any personal conduct adverse to the best interests of the Old Timers Hiking Club and its members will result in suspension and or dismissal from the club and all its activities.

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, 423-302-8368; DPolon123@yahoo.com

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

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

Webmaster: Dave Polon 423-302-8368; DPolon123@yahoo.com