

## OLD TIMERS HIKING CLUB SCHEDULE—July-August-September 2021

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

### 30 Years of Hiking and Counting

	<b>Independence Day Weekend: Sat, July 3 – Mon, July 5</b>
Mon, Jul 5 (Federal Holiday)	<p><b>Steele Creek Park (4.6 miles easy, 4.2 miles moderate, or 8.2 miles moderate):</b> As our Independence Day celebrations continue, let's get out, stretch our legs and walk off those burgers, hotdogs and brats. Let's have some fun and wear some red white and blue! I'll offer three hikes, one easy, one short-moderate and one long-moderate. We'll all start together at the Rooster Front Parking area and hike the flat and easy Lakeside Trail 2.3 miles over to the visitor's center. We will have a quick snack at the picnic tables. You can turn around at this point and hike back for the 4.6-mile easy hike. The rest of us will continue across the long, fishing bridge. At this point, those that want the short-moderate hike can follow the Lake Ridge Trail 1.9 miles back to Rooster Front for a 4.2-mile moderate hike. The rest of the group, if you dare, can follow me on the Hemlock and North Ridge trails into Slagle Hollow. We will do some "exploring" on some trails I have not hiked before. The total hike will be about 8.2 moderate miles. There may be a steep climb or two... or maybe not... you never know what to expect when you follow me into Slagle Hollow.</p> <p><b>Meet the hike leader at Rooster Front Parking area at 8:30 am.</b> Take 11-E (Volunteer Parkway) out of Johnson City towards Bristol. Pass Bristol Motor Speedway. Drive more 3.4 miles, take a <b>left onto Vance drive</b>. (Look for the Brown sign in the median strip that says "Bark Park, Charlie Robinette Park, Rooster Front at Steele Creek Park." The turn is just before Sam Snead Tire Service.) Follow Vance drive about 0.5 mile. The road turns to the right. The parking areas are on the left and right, park in either one. Meet the hike leader in the left parking lot, restrooms are available in the right parking lot. Hike Leader: Dave Polon, 423-302-8368; DPolon123@yahoo.com</p>
Wed, Jul 7	<p><b>Chestoa to Temple Hill Gap and return (8 miles moderate):</b> This 8-mile hike on the AT has some steep climbs. However, it has exquisite views of the Nolichucky River and the mountains. And in late spring and early summer, the mountain laurel and rosebay rhododendron are prolific. Form your carpools at the church and leave at 8:00 am. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, Cell 901-351-1779; email jeannine21@bellsouth.net</p>
Mon, Jul 12	<p><b>Massie Gap to Thomas Knob Shelter and return (5.5 or 7.5 miles moderate):</b> Begin this hike at Massie Gap in Grayson Highlands State Park. We hike 0.5 miles to the AT then following it to Wilburn Ridge Tr. Hike this difficult 1 mile trail of fun boulder scrambling reaching 5,400' height (bring jackets?) and stunning views. If this is a "wimpy" day, you can stay on the AT and watch the others bouldering meeting us at the far end of Wilburn. Then rejoin the AT to reach Rhododendron Gap for the 5.5 milers lunch. Those wanting more good hiking continue to Thomas Knob Shelter &amp; lunch for a 7.5 miler in/out. Return to cars via the AT going thru</p>

	the tunnel known as "Fatman Squeeze" for more Rockin' fun. Expect wild ponies, much stony tread & steps, & good views. Park entry is \$10/car. (Possibly leave cars at Elk Garden and carpool the last few miles to reduce entry fees.) If it is rainy, expect date change. Form your carpools at the church and leave at 8:00 am. Meet the hike leader, Marcia Pruner (276-614-5504) at Exit #35/Chilhowie on I-81. Expect 2-hour drive.
Wed, Jul 14	<b>Devil's Fork Gap to Rice Gap and return (9 miles strenuous):</b> We will hike north on the AT from Devil's Fork Gap to Rice Gap. This is a long hike, about 9 miles round trip, a bit steep, but pretty and with good views. However, since it is an in-out, you can easily shorten your hike. Just let the hike leader know in advance. Form your carpools at the church and leave at 8:00 am. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, Cell 901-351-1779; email jeannine21@bellsouth.net
Mon, Jul 19	<b>Indian Grave Gap to Nolichucky Overlook and return (5 to 7 miles moderate):</b> A hike on forest roads and trails (not the AT) from Indian Grave Gap to the Nolichucky overlook and return. We have not done this hike in several years. Form your carpools at the church and leave at 8:00 am. Leader Wayne Jones, Cell 737-4852
Wed, Jul 21	<b>Sams Gap to Rice Gap and return (8 miles moderate):</b> We will hike on the AT from Sams Gap to Hogback Ridge Shelter for a shorter hike (about 4.5 miles, in-out) or to Rice Gap and back, about 8 miles, in-out). Form your carpools at the church and leave at 8:00 am. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, Cell 901-351-1779; email jeannine21@bellsouth.net
Mon, Jul 26	<b>Summer work day on the OTHC section of the AT:</b> Our work will focus on mowing, clearing the trail of debris, and removing blow downs. To aid in planning, please notify the leader by email that you plan to attend prior to the work day. Meet at the church to sign in and for work assignments. Leave the church at 8:00 am. Leaders: Rich Ritter 765-414-4253 and Dave Polon, 423-302-8368, DPolon123@yahoo.com
Wed, Jul 28	<b>Second Summer work day on the OTHC section of the AT:</b> If needed, this day is reserved for a second workday to finish our trail maintenance. See the July 26 write-up for the details. If all work is completed on July 26, a hike will be quickly scheduled.
Mon, Aug 2	<b>Shook Branch across Pond Mountain to Laurel Branch Trailhead (7 miles moderate to strenuous):</b> From Shook Branch, we hike up and across Pond Mountain on the AT, descending on the backside until we reach the Hampton Blueline Trail. We follow the Hampton Blueline Trail to the trailhead outside of Hampton, TN. We will then shuttle the drivers back to Shook Branch (2 miles) to retrieve their cars. The high elevation pond in the flats area is a rare phenomenon in mature topography and dries up at times. 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 8:20 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader Wayne Jones, Cell 357-4852
Wed, Aug 4	<b>Newfound Gap to Charles Bunion and return (8.2 miles, moderate to strenuous):</b> This hike, in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, begins with a 1,000-foot elevation gain over the first three miles. Not that intense a climb, but steady. Downhill from the summit of Mt. Kephart and the payoff at Charlies Bunion.

	<p>This is a weather sensitive hike. Without clear views it's not worth the effort.</p> <p><b>PLEASE NOTE, we will form up and leave the church at 7:00 am.</b> This is a 140-mile drive each way so we need to start early. Hike leader: Pat Kenney, (276) 791-8063, patkenney28@hotmail.com</p>
Mon, Aug 9	<p><b>Iron Mountain Gap to Cherry Gap Shelter and return (6.2 miles moderate):</b> Unicoi, I-26, Exit 32 to 107 (at Jones Hardware) to Iron Mountain Gap. In-out. We will take the AT beginning at Iron Mountain Gap and hike to Cherry Gap Shelter and return, for a 6.2-mile moderate hike. This section has some good views of the surrounding mountains and occasional wildflowers. Form your carpools at the church and leave at 8:00 am. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, jeannine21@bellsouth.net; Phone: (C) 901-351-1779</p>
Wed, Aug 11	<p><b>Sams Gap to Big Bald and return (13.0 miles, strenuous):</b> Come celebrate the hike leader's 61st birthday with a nice 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 <b>Sams Gap to Street Gap and return (4.6-mile moderate hike)</b>, or a little further if you want. Form your carpools at the church and leave at 8:00 am. Leader: Dave Polon, 423-302-8368, DPolon123@yahoo.com</p>
Mon, Aug 16	<p><b>Shook Branch to Watauga Dam and return (5.4 miles or 7 miles, moderate):</b> This beautiful hike on the AT changes nicely with the seasons and is usually accessible. We will stop for snacks at the dam. Then hikers can choose to return or to continue the hike on the AT past the dam and up into the woods for a couple more miles. 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 8:20 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, Cell 901-351-1779, email jeannine21@bellsouth.net</p>
Wed, Aug 18	<p><b>Tanawha Trail on the Blue Ridge Parkway (5.7 miles, moderate/strenuous):</b> This hike is moderate, but very rocky, which is time-consuming. Some may find the rocky trail difficult/strenuous. After pre-positioning the vehicles between the two parking lots, we begin this hike at the Beacon Heights Parking Area (Milepost 305.5) on the Blue Ridge Parkway. First, we hike a 0.6 mile in/out on the Beacon Heights Trail to the overlooks on Beacon Heights. Afterwards, we start our hike north on the Tanawha Trail. After 1.5 miles, we reach the Linn Cove Viaduct Visitor Center where we will regroup. Gift shop and restrooms are available. We then hike under the parkway viaduct, through the forest, and eventually climb to the exceptional views from the lofty, jagged crags at Rough Ridge and the Rough Ridge Boardwalk. After a lunch break on the rocks, we continue hiking north to the finish at Raven Rocks Overlook Parking Area (Milepost 302.7). We will then shuttle the drivers 2.8 miles back to the starting trailhead to retrieve the vehicles. Driving distance/time one-way from the church is about 50 miles/1:15 hrs. <b>Form up and leave the church at 7:30 am; meet the hike leader at Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 7:50 am,</b> depart when the group from the church arrives. Hike Leader: Dave Polon, 423-302-8368, DPolon123@yahoo.com</p>
Mon, Aug 23	<p><b>Elk Garden to Buzzard Rock and return (6.6 miles moderate):</b> Steady climb up the side of Whitetop Mountain on the AT with a tremendous WOW view at Buzzard</p>

	<p>Rock. Another weather sensitive hike, we want clear skies for the best views.</p> <p><b>PLEASE NOTE, we will leave the church at 7:30 a.m. because of the drive time.</b></p> <p>Hike Leader: Pat Kenney, patkenney28@hotmail.com or (276) 791-8063</p>
Wed, Aug 25	<p><b>Profile Trail Trailhead to Calloway Peak (8.1 miles strenuous) or Profile View (4+ miles moderate):</b> From the Profile Trail parking area, this trail crosses the Watauga River and travels under a hardwood canopy for much of its length. Beginning around Foscoe View (1.7 miles), the trail gets steeper. We reach the Profile View at just over 2 miles. Grandfather's famed face-like outline is visible from the overlook, a sinister-looking, jagged outcrop visible through the trees. This is a good turnaround point for those that want the shorter hike. The upper section is steep and rocky until we reach the Grandfather Trail at Galloway Gap. At this point, the forest makes the transition out of the hardwoods and into the Canadian fir zone. We will turn left, following the Grandfather Trail to Watauga View and Calloway Peak. To get to the summit, we must climb several short, wooden ladders. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am; meet the hike leader at Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader: Dave Polon, 423-302-8368, DPolon123@yahoo.com</p>
Mon, Aug 30	<p><b>Open Date.</b> No hike scheduled as of yet. We can reschedule a hike that may be cancelled.</p>
Wed, Sep 1	<p><b>Roaring Fork to Hump Mountain and return (9 miles strenuous):</b> From the Roaring Fork Trailhead we hike up the access trail to the AT at Yellow Mountain Gap. Going north on the AT, we'll cross over the bald of Little Hump &amp; climb to Hump Mt. @ 5,500' high. This in/out hike will have glorious views and colorful late flowers. Parking is limited, so car-pooling is recommended at your comfort level. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am; meet the hike leader at Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Hike leader: Marcia Pruner 276-614-5504</p>
<b>Labor Day Weekend: Sat, Sep 4 – Mon, Sep 6</b>	
Mon, Sep 6 Labor Day (Federal Holiday)	<p><b>Pinnacle Tower Trail (9.8 miles moderate):</b> Hike to the tower via the Pinnacle Trail at Unicoi. Exit 32 off I-26. Lots of switchback take you up and back for a total of 9.8 miles. As this is an in-out, with well-marked miles, it is easy to go for a shorter hike if you choose. Meet the leader at the trail head at 8:00. Leader: Jeannine Edwards, Cell 901-351-1779; e-mail jeannine21@bellsouth.net</p>
Wed, Sep 8	<p><b>Overmountain Victory Trail (7.5 miles moderate to strenuous):</b> From Hampton Creek Cove, we climb the historic Overmountain Victory trail to Yellow Mountain Gap, then to the Overmountain AT shelter for lunch before hiking back to our cars. Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am; meet the hike leader at Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader: Tim Richardson, 423-747-6352</p>
Mon, Sep 13	<p><b>Old Timers Hiking Club Annual Picnic:</b> Come celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Old Timers Hiking Club with a pot-luck picnic at Doe River Gorge. We will also hike the gorge (5-miles). More details to follow.</p>
Wed, Sep 15	<p><b>Devil's Fork Gap to Shelton Gravesite and back (11.8 miles, strenuous)</b> Hike on the AT south from Devil's Fork Gap to the Shelton Gravesite and return. For those that want a shorter hike, you can hike to Flint Mountain Shelter and return for a total hike of 5.4 moderate miles. Or you can hike a little further to Flint Gap and return</p>

	for a total hike of 6.0 moderate miles. Form your carpools at the church and leave at 8:00 am. Leader: Tim Richardson 423-747-6352
Sep 16-Sep 19	For Your Awareness: NASCAR Weekend at Bristol Motor Speedway. Expect heavy traffic around BMS Thursday to Sunday, especially Saturday noon to midnight.
Mon, Sep 20	<b>Bear Branch Rd (19E) to Buck Mtn Baptist Church and return (6 miles moderate):</b> We will hike the AT from Bear Branch Road on 19E to the church and return. Along the way, there is a beautiful clearing with views both east and west for a break and pics! Form up and leave the church at 8:00 am; meet the hike leader at Food City in Elizabethton. Be ready to depart Food City at 8:20 am, depart when the group from the church arrives. Leader: Tim Richardson, 423-747-6352
Wed, Sep 22	<b>Open Date.</b> No hike scheduled as of yet. We can reschedule a hike that may be cancelled.
Mon, Sep 27	<b>Open Date.</b> No hike scheduled as of yet. We can reschedule a hike that may be cancelled.
Wed, Sep 29	<b>Sams Gap to Devils Fork Gap (8.5 miles moderate):</b> A 8.5 mile key swap or shuttle between Sams Gap and Devil's Fork Gap. We haven't done this one in a couple of years. Form your carpools at the church and leave at 8:00 am. Leader: Wayne Jones, Cell 737-4852

**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. Those that meet there will **be ready to depart at 8:20 am and leave as soon as those from the church arrive.**

Bring lunch/snack, PLENTY of water, and gas money. 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 [Richieritch1.0@gmail.com](mailto:Richieritch1.0@gmail.com). Phone: 765-414-4253.

Secretary/Hike schedule: Dave Polon, 423-302-8368; [DPolon123@yahoo.com](mailto:DPolon123@yahoo.com)

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

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

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