



Nantahala Hiking Club Newsletter

nantalahikingclub.org

September/October 2021

— Rev. A. Rufus Morgan, Club Founder —
“Keep ever clear the trails that lead to mountaintops.”

President’s Message

by Victor Treutel



Although we’ve all hoped for an end to this COVID nightmare, it seems to be hanging around a bit longer. It has disrupted our personal and club plans, leaving our mountain trails as one of the only safe havens. Sadly, following the lead of the Franklin Folk Festival, the Board canceled the club’s annual picnic. It was not an easy decision, but in the end a majority believed we are better safe than risking anyone’s health. We’ve all been making similar decisions about our own potential exposure to the virus since last March, and many of you, like me, have fluctuated our opinions. Thank you for understanding the Board’s decision and we hope that we can return fully to our social events without having to analyze the day’s trends.

Beyond COVID, the Board is working on a number of initiatives, including a refresh of the clubhouse. Our goal is to take the slightly tired interior and make it more usable and less cluttered. We have already begun organizing and cleaning, and in the next few weeks will be working with the St. John’s Church (our clubhouse benefactors) to assess any structural and moisture issues. Once that assessment is complete, we will then create a plan to resolve any possible issues. When those issues are resolved, we will begin our refresh with paint, new flooring, better lighting and improved security. We will likely be looking for a few volunteers to assist, so watch your email.

Lastly, I’d like to offer a personal invitation to our next Board meeting, which will be Thursday, September 9 from 5pm - 6pm at the St. John’s Cartoogechaye Episcopal Church’s Parish Hall (542 St. John’s Church Road, Franklin). The church and grounds are beautiful and are steeped in history that touches not only our community, but also our club. If you stick around after the meeting, I will give a tour and tell a few of the stories that have been shared with me.

<https://www.stjohnscartoogechaye.com/history.html>

Thanks for helping “keep ever clear the trails that lead to the mountaintops”.

[The above photo was taken at Laurel Falls, Nantahala National Forest. Pictured left to right: Austin Treutel (son), Kim Beatty (niece), Victor]

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Michelle Baker
Rochester, NY

Stephen Blackwelder
Cary, NC

Karen Carini
Glennville, NC

Will McAllister
Marietta, GA

Robert Reif
Snellville, GA



NHC Member's Photo Selected for 2022 ATC Calendar!!!

by Debi Gedling

Although many of us who know member Paul Dyer know him as a dedicated maintainer, he is also an excellent photographer. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) publishes a calendar for sale each year and solicits photographs for inclusion. Paul first submitted the photograph (below) taken at Siler Bald in 2016. Hearing nothing, he submitted it again in 2017. It wasn't until the end of March 2021 that the photo was selected for next year's calendar. I'm sure you will agree that it's a beauty, although this is nothing compared to how it appears in the actual calendar.



Paul has lived in Franklin for 26 years. When he first moved to Franklin he hiked by himself. However, he worked at Western Carolina University as a programmer and one of his co-workers was a section maintainer for the club. Paul began maintaining in January 2015 under trail manager, Don O'Neal. Don was the club's trail manager for 10 years and the point came when he was no longer able to get out on the trail. Nevertheless, Don continued to direct the maintainers and Paul became Don's eyes, telling him about trail conditions and the like. After failing to convince anyone to step up to fill Don's position and feeling incompetent himself, Paul became trail manager after only 3 years as a maintainer. He proved himself to be more than competent for the years that he served. He was followed by our current trail manager, Rich Corporon, in 2020.

Paul is extremely well-traveled. His favorite places include southern Utah, where he hiked in March of this year. He also particularly enjoyed the 9-day rafting trip he took in the Grand Canyon, rafting above the Arctic Circle in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, skiing and hiking in the Swiss Alps, and taking a group trip to Patagonia, Argentina. As I write this, Paul is hiking on the Teton Crest Trail in Wyoming. He was there 10 years ago but was unable to complete his hike due to snow and ice. I know you join with me in hoping he can complete his hike safely this time.

The ATC 2022 calendar, including Paul's and many other beautiful photographs, is available for \$14.99 at atctrailstore.org.

Upcoming NHC Programs

The next NHC General Meeting is scheduled for September 10, 2021 at 7:00 pm at the Macon County Public Library off of Siler Road in Franklin. The guest speaker will be Lamar Marshal whose presentation will be "Cherokee Trails". Lamar is an outdoor conservationist who founded Wild South. He has mapped 200 miles of the Trail of Tears in Alabama, where he is a member of the Echota Cherokee Tribe. He will speak about Cherokee trails of the Southern Appalachians. Please join us for what is certain to be an interesting program!

Our meeting on October 8, 2021 will also be held at the public library at 7:00 pm unless otherwise announced. Our guest speaker will be Mark Ellison, who will present on "Nature Therapy".

Please remember that being a club member is not required to attend these programs.

If you have ideas for future programs or would like to be on the list to present a trip you took, please email or call

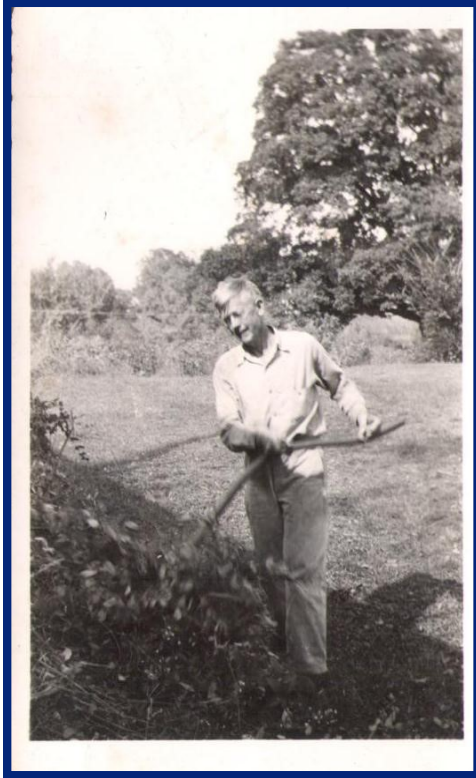
Katharine Brown, NHC Program Coordinator
828-421-4178 or KBtrailrunner@yahoo.com

Trail Maintenance is our Legacy

By Victor Treutel

In 1940, at the age of 55, Rev. Rufus Morgan returned to his childhood home of Franklin, NC. and immediately picked up his scythe and started clearing a 55 mile section of the Appalachian Trail that wound through the Nantahala Mountains. In 1968, after years as being known as the "one-man maintenance crew", Rufus formed the Nantahala Hiking Club, whose sole purpose was to maintain the A.T.

It was said that Rufus could clear an acre of land in an hour with his scythe, and when it came to trail maintenance, it was recommended that you not get in front of him. Even through his later years, when his eyesight was fading, he continued to perform trail maintenance, living by his own words to "keep ever clear the trails that lead to the mountaintops."



The Nantahala Hiking Club is now a group of 350 members, who rely heavily on our dedicated volunteer maintainers who trudge up our mountains every Wednesday morning following in Rev. Morgan's footsteps. I recently went out with our crew as they worked from Wayah Bald down toward Wayah Gap, clearing undergrowth, trimming fallen trees, and maintaining water bars.

The work was challenging, but so rewarding as every hiker that passed thanked them for their hard work. Hikers know that without our crew of volunteers they wouldn't be able to hike from Georgia to Maine or any destination in between.

Our club is always in need of volunteers to help with trail maintenance. The maintainers meet every Wednesday morning at 8:45 am at the Clubhouse (173 Carl Slagle Road). No experience is necessary. You will be trained on the job. Come prepared to hike, bring a backpack with your lunch and plenty of water and wear long pants (for safety). Our trail manager, Rich Corporon, assigns the work for the day based upon experience and physical abilities. The jobs range from clearing debris, painting blazes on trees, clearing water bars, cutting brush, or driving the crews to and from trail heads. If you would like additional information, send an email to Rich Corporon at nhctrail-crew@gmail.com.



Pictured from Daughdrill, Gail Lehman, Hydie Starr, Ed Sams, Rich Corporon, Tommy Smith, and Tom Marsh.

left to right: Stan

Trail Manager's Report

by Rich Corporon

This summer has been very busy for the maintainers. Recent work days have been filled with vegetation control: lots and lots of brush cutting. We have been doing our best to keep up with reported blowdowns. We have also been addressing some of our water control issues. We have had several new people join us on Wednesdays this summer. The club continues to support our efforts. We were able to purchase a new chainsaw, several new hand saws for our work in the wilderness areas and many new ground tools.

We are always looking for new maintainers. We meet every Wednesday at our clubhouse between 8:30 and 8:45 in the morning. If you are comfortable taking a 4-5 mile regular hike, you would be physically able to work with us without any problem. We range in age from early 60's to 80+. We ask maintainers to only do what they feel comfortable with. There is always something for everyone. We enjoy meeting new people and we will do our best to make you feel welcome. If you have any questions, please email me at NHCtrail-crew@gmail.com.

Any Hiker Can Help: We are asking for everyone's help. It takes maybe 10 minutes. If you are hiking on the A.T. and pass a shelter, please stop. Go to the privy and look inside. There should be two buckets for leaves. Take the buckets, fill them with leaves and return them to the privy. That's it! It is a simple thing, but it is an incredible help to the maintainers. Our privies work by composting. One side of the privy composts for a year while the other side is open for business. We ask hikers who use the privies to toss in a handful of leaves after they have finished. If enough leaves are mixed in with the poop it works incredibly well. Most people are really good about it if there are leaves in the buckets; if there are no leaves in the buckets, not so much. So if you go by a shelter, help us out! Fill a bucket! The NHC maintainers thank you.

Volunteers Needed for The Naturalist Trail Race on October 2nd!!!

With the exception of last year, this extremely challenging (read brutal!) race has been organized by local outfitter, Outdoor 76. Runners leave from downtown Franklin at 8 am and travel to Wallace Branch on the Bartram Trail. Here runners start the climb that ultimately leads to Wayah Bald. From the Wallace Branch trail head to the top of Wayah Bald is approximately 11 miles. After over 5500 feet of climbing, this is where the 25K racers finish. This is also the turn around for the 50K racers who will circle Wayah Bald, resupply, head back down the Bartram Trail and, after over 8,500 feet of climbing, finish back at Outdoor 76.

The race is being held on Saturday, October 2 this year and volunteers are badly needed. The NHC has a history of strongly supporting this race and we hope to do so once again. Volunteers are particularly needed for the following:

1. Shuttle drivers, using their own vehicles, are needed to make the trip to Wayah Bald, pick up 25K finishers and take them down to Outdoor 76. This will probably involve making just one trip.
2. One individual is needed from approximately 1-3 pm to help at the turn around to make sure that 50K runners don't miss it.
3. Workers are needed to assist runners at the Wallace Branch aid station from noon to about 2:30 pm and from 2:30-5:30 pm. Those helping on the later shift will also assist in taking down the aid station.
4. A sweep, capable of hiking 6 strenuous miles, who will hike from Wallace Branch to Harrison Gap, after all of the runners have come through.
5. One person, capable of hiking 3-5 miles, to roam the Jones Property and Mica Mine to be sure no one gets lost in those areas.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Rob Gasbarro by calling his cell (828-550-2579), writing to his email address (outdoor76@gmail.com) and putting "Race Volunteer" as the subject, or calling Outdoor 76 (828-349-7676).

Volunteering for this race is inspiring and a heck of a lot of fun, in addition to providing a much-needed service. Moreover, Outdoor 76 will provide a gift to each person who volunteers! What more incentive do you need? Please contact Rob at your very earliest convenience.



Phillip Rogers clearing a large blowdown on Rufus Morgan Falls Trail

Discover Church Volunteers Support

Eleven members of the Franklin Discover Church performed maintenance on the A.T. on Sunday, August 22 as part of the “I Love My Hometown” initiative. The group, led by three of NHC’s maintainers, brushed, lopped and cleaned water bars from Winding Stair Gap north to Moore Creek campground. Bill Van Horn said, “it was so good to see young families out in nature and performing A.T. maintenance.”

School Outreach Program: Through NHC's education and outreach work, we continue to ensure the Appalachian Trail's relevance to younger and more diverse audiences. Volunteers are needed to support NHC's school hiking program. Typically we do 2-3 hikes a year to Siler Bald for its great long range views and visit Siler Bald Shelter. East Franklin Elementary School 4th grade has requested our support for early October. If interested contact Sharon or Bill Van Horn at 828-369-1983 to be put on the email list for information.



Trail Skills Workshop

Lake Winfield Scott, GA

September 25 - 26, 2021



Registration opens Monday, July 26, 2021!

Make plans to attend the annual Trail Skills Workshop at Lake Winfield Scott September 25 – 26, 2021. This will be a great event, with beautiful weather, to learn skills and reconnect with old friends and make some new ones.

Join experts of Rock Work, Mechanical Advantage and Trail Work in this weekend of learning and experience. This will be an outstanding opportunity to explore the latest in trail building and maintenance techniques. In addition there will be short presentations on Orienteering and Crosscut Sawyering Saturday afternoon.

If you can't make the whole weekend, plan to come for the Saturday afternoon session and dinner. The fee is \$30.00 which includes all the courses, dinner, two nights camping and a T-shirt!

For more information and to register go to <https://forms.gle/rb6ZprXkAW4AToEC8> , direct questions to tsw@georgia-atclub.org.

Save Our Ash (Trees)

by Victor Treutel

Our ash trees are in trouble! They are being killed at an alarming rate by the emerald ash borer, which lays eggs in their bark. The larvae feed underneath the bark for one to two years before emerging as an adult, leaving infected trees no longer able to transport sufficient water and nutrients to the leaves to survive.



This pest is killing our ash trees! Click the link below if you'd like to read more about the emerald ash borer:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emerald_ash_borer

This invasive species was brought to the U.S. via wooden shipping pallets, first arriving in Detroit and then making its way to the Great Smoky Mountains by northern visitors who brought infested firewood with them.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is making an effort to treat as many trees along the A.T. as possible before they disappear like the American chestnut, which in the early 1900's filled our forests, but were devastated by a fungal disease from Asia. The treatment process is expensive, time-consuming and difficult, but worth the effort. It consists of locating a stand of ash trees, drilling multiple holes in their trunks, inserting plastic ports, and then injecting them

with insecticide.

On July 28, I worked with a great crew treating our important ash trees. We worked between Wayah Gap and Siler Bald treating 57 trees. It was backbreaking work and I had a hard time keeping up with the youngsters, but it was extremely rewarding knowing that we made a difference and that the ATC is fighting for our forests.



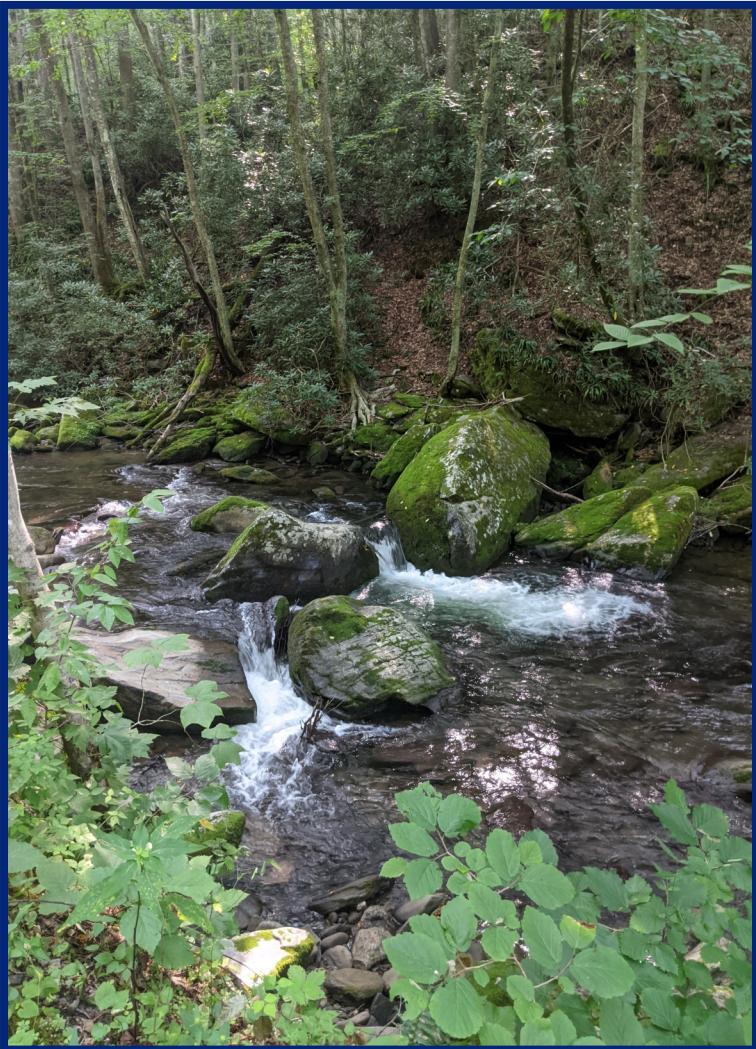
Pictured from left to right above are: Matt Drury (Appalachian Trail Conservancy), Stephen Elsen (Appalachian Arborists), Shira Zaid (videographer), Victor Treutel (Nantahala Hiking Club), and John Kelly (Mountain True).

If you are interested in joining our team of volunteers who are identifying and dealing with invasive, non-native, and protecting rare plants along the A.T., send me an email and I'll keep you in the loop.

Victor Treutel

president@nantahalahikingclub.org

Photos From NHC Hike on July 31, 2021 at Straight Fork in Great Smoky Mountains National Park



Photos from NHC Wesser Bald Tower Full Moon Hike on August 22, 2021



Another Photo From Wesser Bald Tower Full Moon Hike



News About Other Trails in the Region.....

Member Buddy Sanders advises that, as of August 23, the Blue Ridge Parkway remains closed between miles 276 and 215 after the heavy rains of last week. Engineers are looking at rock faces and slide damage. The road to the Boy Scout camp and the start of the Art Loeb Trail on the North Side was heavily damaged and may not be passable right now.

Also as a result of heavy rainfall, many parts of Panthertown Valley were impacted and visitors are encouraged to use caution on the trails, especially around creeks and waterfalls.

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER HIKE SCHEDULE 2021

FRI SEPT 3 Standing Indian Mountain. Hike the AT from Deep Gap to the summit 5435'. Views to the west and south into Georgia. The trail is rocky and rooty. Total Hike Distance: 4.5 Rating: M – S Elevation: 1100' Meeting Place: Westgate Plaza Time: 8 am R/T Driving: 50 miles Leader: Katharine Brown. Must call for reservations 828-421-4178

SAT SEPT 4 Kimsey Creek in the Standing Indian Recreational Area. Beginning at the Back Country parking lot. We will cross the Nantahala River, skirt the Campground and follow this lovely creek to an old apple meadow. The trail is rocky and wet. Total Hike Distance: 5 miles Rating: M Elevation: 300' Meeting Place: Westgate Plaza Time: 10 am R/T Driving: 26 miles Leader: Gail Lehman. Must call for reservations 828-524-5298

SUN SEPT 12 Whiteside Mountain between Highlands and Cashiers. This is a spectacular monolith with views into South Carolina and Georgia. Rocky road up, spectacular views of the Chatooga River Valley. May see peregrine falcons and then many stairs down. Parking fee of \$5/car. Total Hike Distance: 3 miles Rating: M Elevation: 400' Meeting Place: Food Lion Time: 1:30 pm R/T Driving: 44 miles Leader: Gail Lehman. Must call for reservations 828-524-5298

SAT SEPT 18 Standing Indian Mountain. Hike the AT from Deep Gap to the summit. Views of Lake Burton in Georgia and Lake Chatuge at Hayesville. The trail is rocky and rooty. Total Hike Distance: 4.5 miles Rating: M-S Elevation: 1100' Meeting Place: Westgate Plaza R/T Driving: 50 miles Time: 9 am Leader: Robert Barnable. Must call for reservations 828-369-1565

SUN SEPT 19 Yellow Mountain Fire Tower Full Moon. From Cloudcatcher Lane in the Cashiers area. Hike recommended for experienced hikers. Beautiful 360 degree views. Bring snacks, cameras and headlamp. Hike limited to 5 people. Total Hike Distance: 2.4 miles Rating: S Elevation: 800' Meeting Place: Exxon Sta. 6241 Highlands Rd. Time: 5:30 pm R/T Driving: 40 miles Leader: David Heck. Must email dheck.linuxmail@gmail.com. Include your phone# in your email.

MON SEPT 20 Full Moon (harvest moon) **Hike to Siler Bald** on the AT. Moon rise is 7:55 pm. This hike is for those familiar with this hike or experienced night hikers. We will go up the AT and return by the forest service road. Bring snacks and headlamp. Total Hike Distance: 4.5 miles Rating: M – S Elevation: 700' Meeting Place: Westgate Plaza Time: 5:30 pm R/T Driving: 26 miles Leader: Katharine Brown. Must call for reservations 828-421-4178

SAT SEPT 25 Long Ridge in the Mulberry community. Hike 3 steep climbs through rhododendron to the Rock House. Steep climb down to the Rock House. Experienced hikers and well-behaved dogs welcome. Total Hike Distance: 4 miles Rating: S Elevation: 800' Meeting Place: Piggly Wiggly in Dillard, GA. Time: 9 am Carpool to 294 Mulberry Rd. Leader: David Stearns. Phone: 828-349-7361

SUN SEPT 26 Mud Creek Falls in Sky Valley, GA. Starting at the overlook on the Dillard Road, pass an old covered bridge and then follow an old logging road along Mud Creek to this beautiful waterfall. Very little climbing. Total Hike Distance: 2 miles Rating: E Elevation: 300' Meeting Place: Smoky Mountain Visitor Center Time: 1:30 pm R/T Driving: 30 miles Leader: Kathy Ratcliff. Must call for reservations 828-526-6480

SAT OCT 2 Cove Forest Trail and Anselm's Trail on Betty Creek in Georgia. Do this leisurely hike and then go to **Barker's Mill** for lunch and see how the mill runs. Total Hike Distance: 2 miles Rating: E Elevation: 200' Meeting Place: Piggly Wiggly in Dillard, GA. Time: 10 am R/T Driving: 16 miles Leader: David Stearns. Must call for reservations 828-349-7361

SAT OCT 9 Charlie's Bunion in the GSMNP. Starting at Newfound Gap, hike the AT north passing the Boulevard Trail, Icewater Springs shelter along the way. Lunch at Charlie's Bunion See great views including Mt Le Conte. Total Hike Distance: 8 miles Rating: S Elevation 1500' Meeting Place: Food Lion Time: 8:30 am R/T Driving: 90 miles Leader: Robert Barnable. Must call for reservations 369-1565

SUN OCT 10 Winding Stair Gap to Rock Gap on the Appalachian Trail. Enjoy some long-range views into the Cartoogechaye Valley and hopefully some fall colors. This hike will involve a key swap. Total Hike Distance: 3.8 miles Rating: M Elevation: 600' Meeting Place: Westgate Plaza Time: 1 pm Leaders: Bill and Sharon Van Horn. Must call for reservations 828-369-1983

THURS OCT 14 Beginner Hike on Shope Fork at the Coweeta Hydrologic Lab. Hike along this lovely creek. Total Hike Distance: 2 miles Rating: E Elevation: 450' Meeting Place: Smoky Mountain Visitor Center 441 S Time: 9 am R/T Driving: 20 miles Leader: Katharine Brown. Must call for reservations 828-421-4178

SAT OCT 23 Sawmill Gap to Rocky Bald Ridge. Follow FS. Rd. 7134 to Rocky Bald Ridge to Wine Springs on the AT. Hike to the Bartram Trail and down to Sawmill Gap. Total Hike Distance: 6 miles Rating: M Elevation: 800' Meeting Place: Westgate Plaza Time: 9 am R/T Driving: 40 miles Leader: Gail Lehman Must call for reservations. 828-524-5298

SUN OCT 24 Frolic Town Falls and Ganny Burrell Falls in Panthertown Valley. We will go in from the top of Bald Mountain on the Deep Gap Trail. We will cross one brook on the rocks or, if the water is high, take off shoes and wade across. Children over 10 and dogs are welcome. Total Hike Distance: 3.5 miles Rating: E Elevation: 250' Meeting Place: Sapphire Community Center (on the left) Time: R/T Driving: 10 miles Leader: Robin Lurie. Must call for reservations 954-632-7270

THURS OCT 28 Shope Fork to FSRD 7276 with rolling grassy path, footing is easy. We pass through a lovely pine forest in watershed 1 in the last mile. Total Hike Distance: 4 miles Rating: M Elevation: 700' Meeting Place: Smoky Mountain Visitor Center 441 S Time: 1 pm Leader: Katharine Brown Must call for reservations 828-421-4178

SAT OCT 30 Fairfield Lake Loop. We will hike around the lake passing through Camp Merrywood, go by the golf course and back to the lake. Total Hike Distance: 3.5 miles Rating: E Elevation: Very little Meeting Place: Sapphire Valley Community Center (on the left) Time: 10 am R/T Driving: 1 mile Leader: Robin Lurie. Must phone for reservations 954-632-7270

SUN OCT 31 Onion Mountain near Holly Springs community. Walk along the ridge and see long-range views. Friendly dogs are welcome. Total Hike Distance: 3 miles Rating: E Elevation: 300' Meeting Place: KFC Time: 1:30 pm R/T Driving: 10 miles Leader: Kathy Ratcliff. Must call for reservations 828-526-6480