

THE CUMBERLAND TRAILHEAD

The Voice of the Friends of the Trails

Fall 2022

Cumberland County, TN

Hit the Trails Festival Planned for October 1

Submitted by Mary deWolf

Everybody loves a FESTIVAL! This year FOTT will celebrate the 11th annual “Hit the Trails” Festival on October 1, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. on The Square at the corner of Stonehenge Drive and Peavine Road in Fairfield Glade.

This festival has evolved significantly since 2012 when it was first offered to educate county residents about the development of new trails. The Cumberland County Hiking Marathon began in 2015 and the festival became the go-to event for marathoners anxious to pick up their t-shirts, patches, bandanas for the dogs, and backpacks for the kids. This year over 2700 folks (along with their dogs) registered for the Hiking Marathon and 10K Challenge. The hikers will be joined on The Square by new local residents, not yet familiar with the trails, who have wandered in to see what all the fuss is about.

Approximately 30 local clubs and organizations will be on hand to describe outdoor activities that all Cumberland County residents can enjoy. Attendees will learn about bird watching, gardening, recycling, trail building, kayaking, model sail boating, beekeeping, meteorology, and enjoying nature through art. Festival goers can sign up for interesting classes particular to our Cumberland Plateau location. Hiking for Hospice and Walk Across Tennessee will offer unique hiking opportunities. Crossville Parks and local police and fire departments will also attend. Kids can enjoy a barrel train ride!

The weather on festival day is (almost) always perfect, allowing participants to enjoy live music and fresh food from local vendors. This year may be the exception as we keep a wary eye on Hurricane Ian. Be sure to check your email and the [Hiking Marathon Facebook page](#) for any weather-related updates, which will be posted by 4:00 pm Friday.

For more information, visit <https://hikingmarathon.com/trails-festival/>



Numerous organizations will be on hand to share information about outdoor-themed activities.



*Above:
Hikers look forward to claiming their Hiking Marathon swag at the annual Hit the Trails Festival.*

HOW DO YOU ANSWER, “WHAT IS A MARATHON?”

Submitted by Norm Brinsley

The question, “What is a marathon?” usually gets a simple answer: “A marathon is a 26.2-mile race with its origins in Greece around 500 BC.” That is probably true, because history documents a runner being dispatched to travel 26 miles to report the results of a battle. A marathon is also linked to the Olympic games and is considered a demonstration of endurance by anyone who finishes the race.

Now, pose the same question to any number of people who participate in the annual Cumberland County Hiking Marathon and you will get a variety of answers. Some will tell you it is a chance to hike with a group of people and be outdoors. Others might say, “Oh, it’s done to get a T-shirt and bragging rights.” But regardless of the way you look at it, it is a way to enjoy the great system of trails throughout Crossville and Cumberland County.

Nancy Hull is a two-year member of the Plateau Chapter of the Tennessee Trails Association and a first-time Hiking Marathon participant. Nancy, an avid walker often accompanied by her four-legged companions Einstein and Sammy, said that for her, “It is a chance to explore new trails that I have known are here, see nature at work, and renew one’s energy just from being outdoors.” Plus, like many people new to the area, she finds it is a good way to increase self-confidence by hiking groomed trails in preparation to go on new and more challenging trails in the future.



Nancy started the Marathon with a dubious mind set about whether she could do all of the trails that comprise the event. While she walks regularly, she added that she, like other first-time Marathoners, was concerned about covering some of the distances on more irregular terrain. However, in no time, her initial successes instilled in her a confidence to “go where she had not gone before,” and she emerged as a veteran marathoner.



“Walking on water is
easy if you know
where to step.”

~Peter Tieryas

Regina Allen posted these photos to the Hiking Marathon Facebook page after a rainy hike on Crossville’s new Habitat Trail September 5. In the time it took her to hike just over a mile to the end of the trail and back, water in the stream had risen nearly six inches!! Always use caution at water crossings when hiking in the rain.



DON'T HANG UP THOSE BOOTS!

Submitted by Bob Obohoski

If you found, renewed, or continued a love of hiking during September's annual Hiking Marathon, don't let that love die. There are numerous opportunities each week to join group hikes. The Friday hiking group completed the county marathon trails in September, and hopes to hike the tentative trails listed below during the fall. Final details for the week's hike will be posted each Monday in the Friday Hikes section at gladetrails.com/hiking

- Middle Creek from the Sawmill TH 5.5 mi
- Lilly Bluffs Point Trail 5 mi
- Grand Gap Loop in BSF 6.5mi
- A ranger-led hike in historic Oak Ridge
- Fall Creek Falls hike TBD
- Pogue Creek Canyon in Pickett State Park 5.5mi.
- Rock Creek Loop in BSF



Walk Across Tennessee Cumberland County

Walk, run, hike or bike in this 6 week challenge. Compete as a team of 4 individuals, and try to walk across TN, approximately 537 miles, by going above and beyond normal activity! Challenge runs October 2, 2022, through November 12, 2022. Each team captain reports mileage online weekly to be eligible for incentives. To join, grab 3 friends and choose a team captain. Then the team captain will sign everyone up online through the following link



FOR MORE INFORMATION
CRYSTAL BLANKENSHIP
CBLANKE3@UTK.EDU

KELLI ROBERSON
KROBERS1@UTK.EDU

SCAN ME



CAN YOU LEND A HAND?

Even if you think you are “just a hiker,” your actions have a huge impact on the trails and the environment in general. Passing on your knowledge of good stewardship helps to educate others. Keep reading below for two simple ways you can save our trails and native wildlife.

Rocks Block Drains—Don’t Alter Rock Step-Overs on the Trails

Submitted by Mark Richie

Trail crews spend enormous amounts of time planning and building drainage features to get water off the trail as quickly as possible. One example is a step-over drain. This type of drain provides hikers with comfortably placed stepping stones on either side of a drainage ditch. A well-built step-over will clean itself of leaves, twigs, and similar debris during heavy rains. The ditch must remain clear to allow water to flow freely.

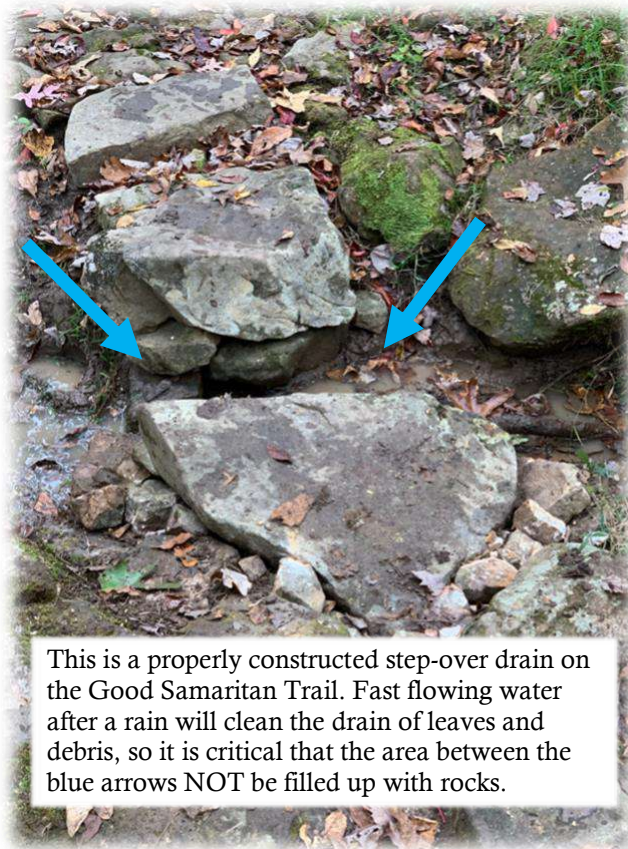
Some well-meaning hikers are damaging step-over drains by placing additional rocks in the drains. The added rocks catch sticks and leaves and block the drain, causing water to overflow and erode the trail. In some cases, many feet of trail have been damaged; this causes inconvenience and safety issues for hikers, and forces trail crews to invest valuable hours on avoidable repairs. It is imperative that these crucial drainage ditches not be altered except by qualified crew members.

If you notice a blocked or damaged step-over in Fairfield Glade, please report it using the appropriate “Report a Problem” button at the bottom of the Glade Trails maintenance page.

<https://gladetrails.com/maintenance/>

Issues on other county trails can be reported here:

<https://crossvilletrails.com/maintenance/>



This is a properly constructed step-over drain on the Good Samaritan Trail. Fast flowing water after a rain will clean the drain of leaves and debris, so it is critical that the area between the blue arrows NOT be filled up with rocks.

Leave Stones Untouched: Why You Shouldn’t Stack Rocks



By Katie Wisniewski in [The Tennessee Conservationist](#)

There’s a good chance you’ve seen an obviously man-made stack of rocks along the side of a hiking trail, or perhaps rising up out of a trailside stream. Rock cairns have traditionally been built as navigational aides in places where there are no trees or other structures on which to place trail markers. However, in this area, cairns are often built for artistic purposes by hikers who do not consider the consequences of what they view as harmless outdoor fun. Read [Katie’s article](#) in the Jul/Aug 2021 issue of The Tennessee Conservationist to understand how stacking rocks threatens many native plants and animals already fighting for survival.



They're Getting Stuff Done on the County Trails

Submitted by Brenda and Steve Gibbon, Photos by John Conrad

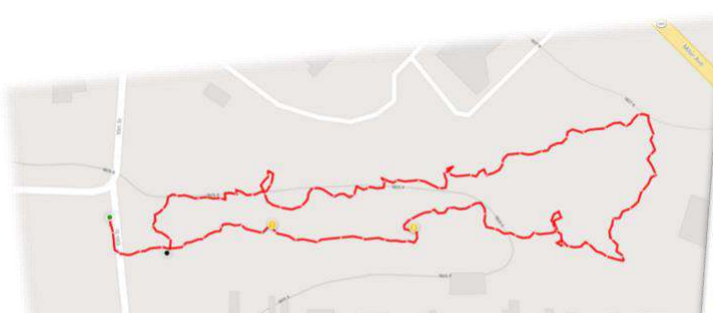
The new Habitat Trail was completed in time to be added to the 2022 Hiking Marathon. Items completed for the trail included a stone "bridge" at the Town Branch crossing. The informational signs, E911 markers, and trail blazes were installed as well. The volunteer crews also completed grooming the Town Branch Spur, off of the Habitat Trail, near the Hilltoppers Bridge. Feedback indicates the trail is a great addition to the other great trails in Cumberland County.

Work over the summer was dedicated to getting the 2022 Cumberland County Hiking Marathon trails mapped and groomed.

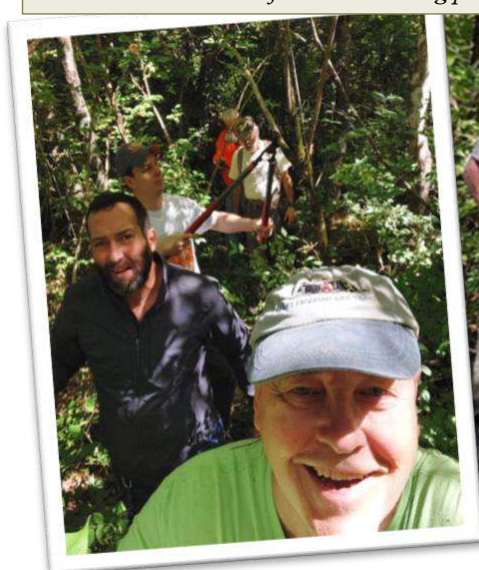
The Woodlawn Loop Trail had suffered damage from the City's excavation work. Our crew of volunteers redefined the damaged section, cleared weeds, and raked the full loop. At the Maryetta trail, several downed and low-hanging trees were cleared from the trail. A tree on the Meditation Trail was cleared after another storm.

Now that the weather is getting cooler, we look forward to getting back to regular work sessions. Several new potential trails have been surveyed and, when approved, we'll have plenty of work to do!

If you would like to join our work sessions, please send an email to fott.tcm@gmail.com with your name and preferred email address. We appreciate everyone who joins us in creating and keeping these hiking trails special!



Clockwise from top left: The map shows a potential route for a new half-mile loop trail on TCAT property. Brazilian visitors Lucas Coelho (L) and Leandro Telles assist with bush-whacking and flagging the route. L to R: Steve Gibbon, Mike Crowley, Brenda Gibbon, Danny Terry, Howie Peebles, Lucas Coelho, Mark Richie (behind), Tom Parker, and Leandro Telles pause in their scouting mission so John Conrad can snap a group photo. John Conrad takes a selfie as the scouting party makes its way through the woods near TCAT.



EXPLORE THE MANY WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT CTC

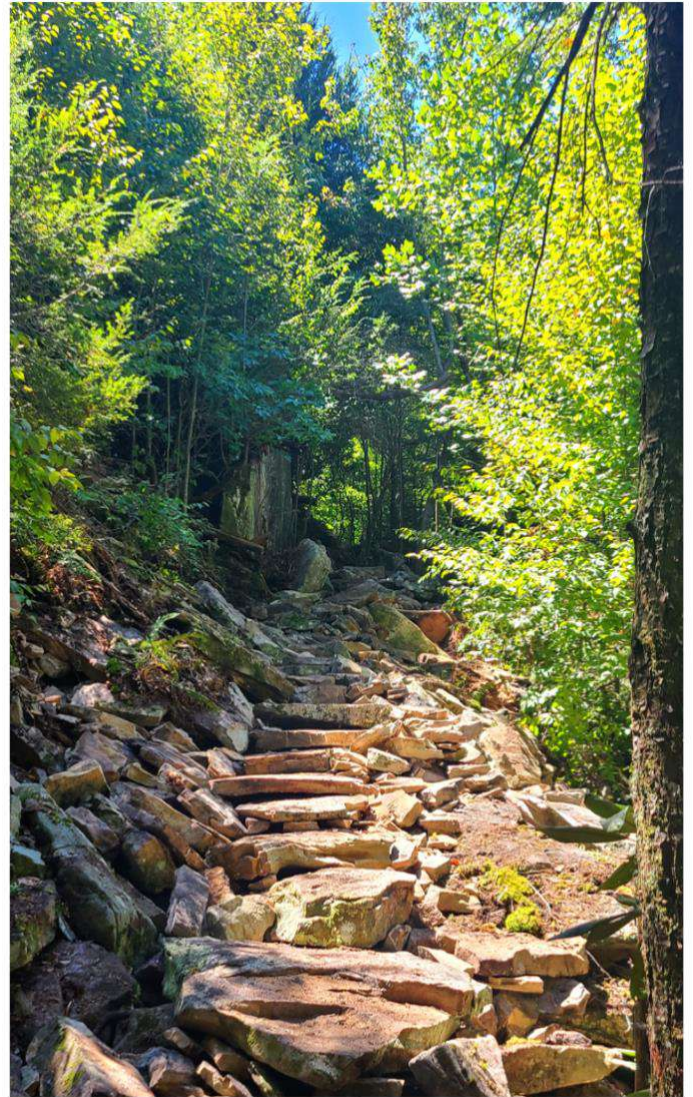
Submitted by Savana Keeton

The Cumberland Trails Conference (CTC) trail crew continues to work on the Upper Piney section near Spring City, TN. We plan to have three miles of trail completed by December of this year. The Piney River Gorge is quite rocky, so progress is slow as our trail crew has to place each rock step to make a safe path for hikers. They have placed over 1000 rock steps in this section so far!

CTC will have a booth set up at the Hit the Trails Festival in Fairfield Glade so stop by and say hi to us. We also continue to host monthly trail-building volunteer events to help complete the Upper Piney sections. These events are typically held on the second weekend of the month. CTC provides breakfast and lunch to all volunteers. You can check out our website at cumberlandtrail.org for more details or go on to our social media pages which keep up-to-date posts on our events and progress. Our October volunteer event will be held on October 7 and 8.

The CTC is holding a September fundraiser! Our goal is to raise \$30,000. If you would like to help us reach our goal, you can go to our website to donate with a credit card or mail a check to our office at 409 Thurman Avenue, Suite 102, Crossville, TN 38555. We are located right next door to Forte's restaurant. All donations are tax-deductible, and every dollar donated goes directly to the construction of the Cumberland Trail.

More exciting news from the CTC, we are proud to partner with Rock Creek Outfitters in Chattanooga, TN who have generously agreed to host Shopping Days in October for us! Every Tuesday through the month of October, 10% of proceeds at select Rock Creek Outfitter locations will be donated to the CTC. The locations are as follows: October 4 at the Riverside location in Chattanooga, October 11 at the Hamilton Place location in Chattanooga,



Stone steps built along the Upper Piney section.

October 18 at the Cleveland location in Cleveland, TN, and October 25 at the Northshore location in Chattanooga. If you have some outdoor equipment you planned to purchase, come to Rock Creek Outfitters on Tuesdays in October when 10% of your purchase will go to the CTC!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Savana Keeton at ctcoffice2014@gmail.com or 931-456-6259.

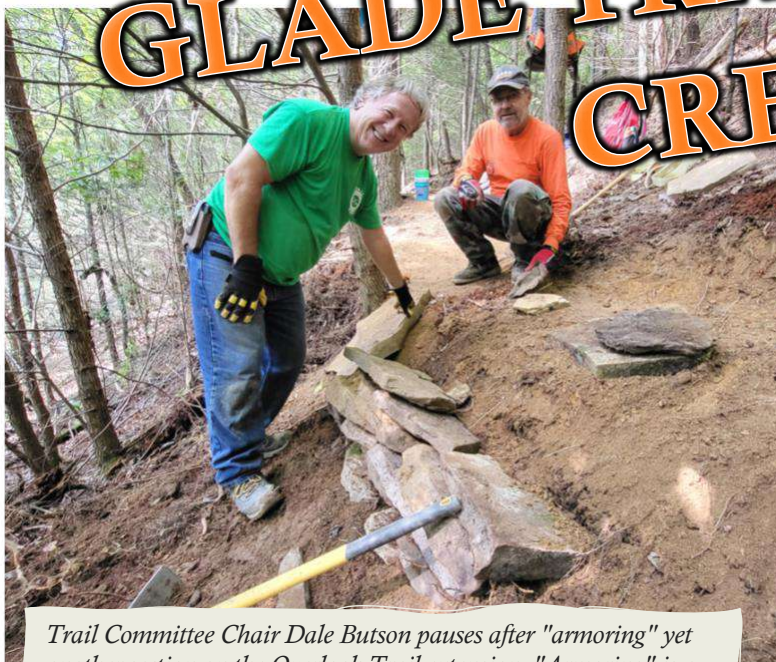


In preparation for the Marathon, the Trail Crew made repairs on the Canyon Trail, because water runoff from Chestnut Ridge is a continuing problem. Nearly 100 feet of trail was rebuilt and a deep channel dug to keep the water off the trail.

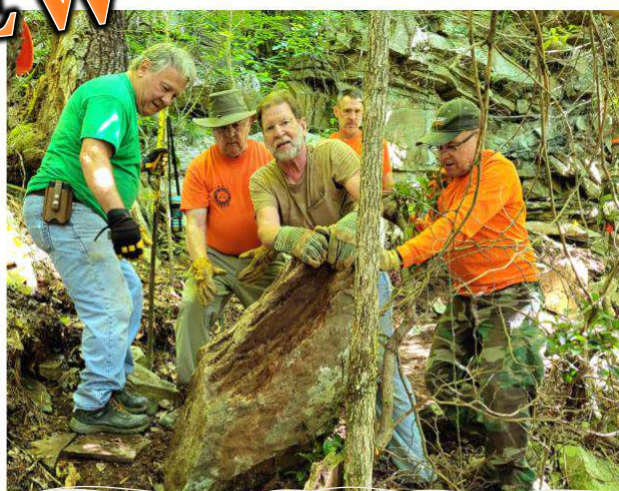


The Trail Crew needed to clear a large dead fall in the creek by Bridge 7 of the Seven Bridges Trail. The tree changed the water course and began to undermine the bridge. It took several rock bars and six people to manhandle it out of the creek bed.

GLADE TRAIL CREW



Trail Committee Chair Dale Butson pauses after "armoring" yet another section on the Overlook Trail extension. "Armoring" is a technique to reinforce the outside of a trail tread where the soil can't be compacted to make a stable surface. Once complete, the rocks are covered with soil and most hikers will never know they exist.



The 3,100' Overlook Extension reached the 1,000' point in September! Along the way the crew has moved hundreds of rocks and boulders to create the trail. Here, a huge slab rock is maneuvered into place as a paver on the trail. Expected opening of the extension is "before the next marathon."

Submitted by Mark Richie and Mark Robinson

The Fairfield Glade Trail Crew paused its work on the Overlook Extension during August in order to focus on maintenance and repair of the Hiking Marathon trails. In September, work resumed on the Overlook Extension, and the new trail is approximately 1/3 complete. The crew hopes to have the stacked loop (a loop added to an existing loop trail) completed in time for next year's marathon.

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Thank you!

As of September 2022, Amazon has donated **\$1058.23** to Friends of the Trails because you started your Amazon order at <https://smile.amazon.com>