



Summer 2024 · Cumberland County, TN

# THE CUMBERLAND TRAILHEAD

The Voice of the Friends of the Trails

These nine-time marathoners want to see YOU on the trails for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cumberland County Hiking Marathon!

## Happenings

- July 8<sup>th</sup>—[Online Shop](#) is now open!
- August 15—Registration opens for the 10<sup>th</sup> annual marathon!
- July-Sept—100-mile Ultra Marathon
- September 1—10<sup>th</sup> Annual Hiking Marathon
- Sept 13-14<sup>th</sup>—Cumb. Trail Conference Volunteer Trail Maintenance
- Oct 10-12<sup>th</sup>—Cumberland Trail Summit

### Can you hike a Marathon?

Discover the beautiful Hiking Trails of Fairfield Glade and Cumberland County. Enter the 10th Annual Hiking Trail Marathon and complete 26.2 miles of trails in 30 days. Go at your own pace to complete 13.1 miles (Half-marathon) or 26.2 miles of trails (Full marathon) or a 10k on paved trails, during the month of September and receive awards at the Fairfield Glade "Hit the Trails" festival on Saturday, October 5th.

### Hit the Trails Fall Festival



If you are reading this newsletter, you are a trail/hiking fan. [The Friends of the Trails](#) works continually to build trails and offer hiking experiences. While we have dedicated volunteers, there is still considerable expense involved. The marathon costs over \$10,000 annually. Thank you for [considering donating!](#)

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# 10th Anniversary Cumberland County Hiking Marathon Gear

In addition to the t-shirt participants will receive at October's Hit the Trails Festival, hikers will be able to celebrate the marathon's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary by purchasing commemorative gear [online!](#)

You now can browse a variety of 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary t-shirts, hoodies, polos, jackets, hats, bags, and accessories. In addition, you can purchase [Salsa the Wonder-Doodle's new book](#), which is a retrospective of the previous nine years of marathon trails.

*See page 4*

[Check out the new online store!](#)



# Another Successful TENNGREEN Hike-a-Thon

BY JOHN MARTIN, FOTT AND TTA MEMBER

TENNGREEN, the Tennessee Land Conservancy non-profit, held their fourth annual Hike-a-Thon in April this year to raise funds for future land acquisitions. The goal was to raise at least \$200,000 during the month-long competition. 759 adventurers raised more than \$206,000 and hiked, paddled, climbed, ran, and biked more than 12,970 miles. Participants completed 2,694 outdoor adventures, exploring everywhere from neighborhood parks to the seaside bluffs of Yorkshire and the mountains of southern Thailand. The outstanding effort this year showed the power of Tennessee's outdoor community and its dedication to conserving land where people and nature can thrive.

For the fourth straight year, the Plateau Chapter participated and encouraged friends and chapter members to contribute. For this year's competition, chapter members Deb Westervelt, Evelyne and Elliot Kornreich, and Deb and John Martin signed up and created their own unique donation page, each of which summed to the chapter's page, shown here. Our goal was to raise \$500. As you can see from the final summary page, the chapter achieved that goal and then some. The total our members raised was over \$1,400, or 283% of our stated goal.

Our success was due to the many friends and chapter members who contributed. As TENNGREEN states, our effort this year showed the power of our hiking community and its dedication to conserving land where people and nature can thrive.



Hike-a-Thon 2024  
**TTA Plateau Chapter Hikers**  
May 1, 2024 12:00am - 12:01am

### We love hiking in nature's playground.

The Plateau Chapter of the Tennessee Trails Association, located in Crossville, is within easy reach of much of the Cumberland Trail as well as many other scenic and accessible naturalist areas. The chapter has over 90 local members and leads hikes every Wednesday and two Saturdays a month. We also have a program called Walk-in-the Woods Hikes designed for newer hikers to build up to longer hikes. The chapter maintains Black Mountain and Brady Mountain portions of the CT. The chapter organizes 2 Out-of-State Hiking Adventures each year and supports community events and holds chapter sponsored social activities. The chapter has participated in the Hike-a-Thon since its inception and fully supports the objectives of TennGreen.



### Our Team



John Martin Team Captain

Sort: Amount Raised 8  
**\$719.02**



# Fairfield Glade Trail Crew Updates

BY MARK RICHIE

On June 8, sixteen volunteers made a significant contribution toward finishing the Moss Creek Trail!



*Right:* New volunteer, Mark McKinney, took charge of a borrow pit for work on the Moss Creek Trail. They are used to obtain clean soil to be used on trail sections that need to be raised a few inches for drainage.



*Left:* Tammy, Doug, Danny, and Ken find the perfect rock to rebuild steps by The Canyon. Weighing around 150 pounds, it needed to be moved about 100 feet from where it was found.



*Below:* New volunteer Ken Snyder makes final prep work before a new step is moved into place. Water runoff from Chestnut Hill Drive is creating maintenance challenges for the FG Trail Crew.



*Above:* Jerry Brown brings a load of clean fill from a Borrow Pit to complete the bridge connector on the Moss Creek Trail.

*Left:* Ron uses a hand sledge to make crush rock to fill in chinks between step stones by the bridge. And, yes, he is wearing safety glasses.

*Below:* Tom and David rake in clean fill and tamp it down, finishing the stem from the Moss Creek Trailhead to the main loop.



*Below:* Dan and Amy Knowles take turns assembling plastic paver grids to stabilize the first 200 feet of the Rotherham trail. A dozen volunteers worked on the project prepping the ground, assembling the grid, moving and smoothing gravel.



*Above:* Jerry Brown, back to camera, directs his bridge crew for Moss Creek. Gary VanDeCarr, Dale Butson, Mike Durnwald and Joe Lucas put it together in about three hours. All the parts are measured and cut in Jerry's basement.



*Right:* End of shift beverages and socializing. Steve Braunschweiger, Jerry Brown, Tom Parker, Chris Gifford, Adam Zaleski, Mark Robinson, and Mark McKinney. Not pictured: Another Mark, Mark Richie.





# Cumberland Trails Conference

BY BRITTANI WODICKA  
OPERATIONS COORDINATOR



*New Trail Construction*

## Trail Talk:

Here at the Cumberland Trails Conference, our number one priority is to connect the Cumberland Trail segments together to have one linear trail. We aim to create a smooth hiking experience through the eastern escarpment of the Cumberland Plateau by constructing sustainable trails that will last for generations to come. Our organization has a professional trail crew working all year long to complete sections of the trail.

We currently have two crews working on separate sections of the Cumberland Trail. One trail crew is working on connecting the Graysville Mountain segment to the Snow Falls trail in Laurel Snow State Natural Area. This section will tie in at a steel bridge across Morgan Creek. This crew has completed almost half a mile of trail in the two months they have been working here. Our other trail crew is working on connecting the Piney River Management Area to the northern part of Laurel Snow State Natural Area. When finished, there will still be approximately 14 miles unfinished before Piney and Laurel are connected. Still, they have been working hard for the past two years to get 9 miles of new trail completed. Both sections of new trail being built are in steep gorges and highlight some of the most beautiful parts of Rhea County.

## History of the Cumberland Trail

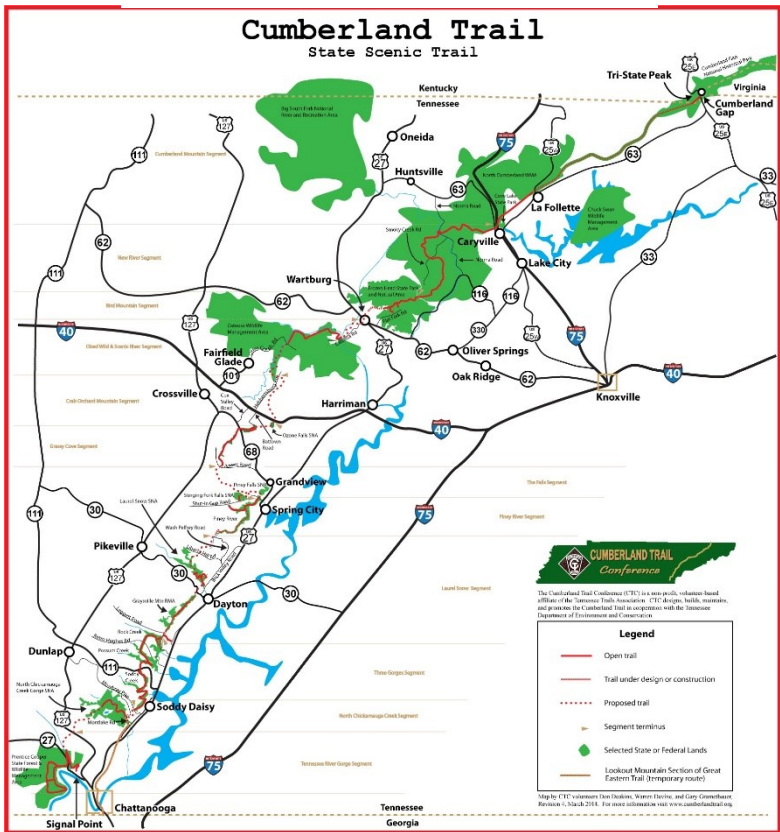
BY MARY DEWOLF

Established in 1998 as the state's 53rd state park, the Cumberland Trail, also known as the Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park, is actually a linear state park, the first such park in Tennessee. It comprises 33,500 acres and extends 300 miles from the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park on the state's northern

border to Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park on Lookout Mountain on the southern border. It passes through 11 counties along the high ridges and deep gorges of the eastern escarpment of Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau.

Plans for the trail began in 1965. The trail followed the success of the Appalachian Trail and the passage of the 1968 National Trails System Act. Evan Means and Bob Brown had a vision for the trail and Mack Pritchard, who was the naturalist for the Division of State Parks, spearheaded the effort for the creation of the Cumberland Trail.

*continued. . .*







## FOTT Recognizes a Dedicated Trails Volunteer

BY JOHN CONRAD

We all owe a big debt of gratitude to Friends of the Trails volunteer Shari Hahn. Shari moved to Fairfield Glade from California about seven years ago and after a couple of years I recruited her to help with the annual trail's festival.

For five years Shari has done an excellent job of managing the distribution of hundreds of T-shirts at the Hit the Trails Festival each October. She has recruited and trained a team of volunteers so that the Herculean task of distributing 1,800 shirts in a matter of hours goes smoothly. Each year the system becomes even more efficient as Shari refines her organization. In recent years, the software created by Kristin Knight has allowed Shari's helpers to use iPads to ensure each hiker gets the shirt size they ordered. Shari has repeatedly demonstrated that we can rely on her to get the job done with a minimum of fuss.

In addition to her work at the annual Trails Festival, for the past four years, Shari has also managed the National Trails Day Picnic at Meadow Park. Catering for nearly 100 hungry hikers on the first Saturday each June is challenging, but Shari makes it look easy. She recruits her own volunteers and sets them to work promptly serving guests the steaming fresh hot dogs and hamburgers prepared by her team of master grillers. This year Shari went the extra mile and recruited her husband, Bill, to smoke three large briskets as a substitute for the traditional burgers—a mouth-watering surprise that was much appreciated by all the hikers.

Any volunteer's donation of time, talent, and effort are appreciated, but an organized, efficient, self-starter like Shari Hahn is a real treasure. Thank you for all you do, Shari!



## History of the Cumberland Trail, cont.

BY MARY DEWOLF

In a series of meetings in the late 1960s, Prichard outlined 2,237 miles system of trails, and the proposed the Cumberland Trail was selected by the newly formed Tennessee Trails Association as a pilot project to demonstrate the feasibility of the state trails system.

Over the next few years, several people worked with the Tennessee Trail Association (TTA) and the Cumberland Trail Conference (CTC) to attain property and build trails. In the 1970s, TTA was instrumental in crafting legislation for Tennessee Trail System Act in 1971 and creating the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail. Other administrative names have since been attached to the endeavor—Cumberland State Scenic Trail, Cumberland Trail State Park, and Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park. Justin Wilson was a Deputy Governor and state Comptroller who championed the trail system. The park was named for him in 2002.

To date, volunteers have put in over 100,000 hours of work completing 302 miles. Work continues as you read this, with efforts in Cumberland County to extend the trail and link it to county trails with a suspension bridge over Daddy's Creek. A special annual event called "Alternative Spring Break" brings college students in each spring to work on the trail with master trail builders. Others who wish to help, either with work and/or donations, should contact the [Cumberland Trail Conference](#) or [The Friends of the Cumberland Trail](#). Hiking information is also available at the Cumberland Trail Conference website or their office on Fourth Street by Forte's in Crossville.

# Ten Year Anniversary of the Cumberland County Hiking Marathon

Where did the trails come from?  
How did the marathon begin?



## Trail Construction and Maintenance

BY BRENDA GIBBON

It is hard to believe, but the Cumberland County 2024 Hiking Marathon is just around the corner! In preparation for the Marathon, the Construction and Maintenance team will soon begin cleaning up the Crossville trails. If you are on our list of volunteer trail workers, watch your inbox for work session announcements or sign up [here](#).

Check [FOTT Facebook](#) for updates!

### New Trail Construction

#### Airport South Loop

Excavation at the new Airport South Loop trail is well underway. Volunteer work crews are clearing the trail bed of tripping hazards and preparing to install a bridge and work on the sides of the trail. We feel confident this great new trail will be included in the 2024 Hiking Marathon.

#### Meadow Park North

Work on this trail is still in progress. This work includes removing leaves, smoothing the sides of the trail, and moving small rocks. Future work includes installing boardwalks in several of the wet areas. Work session announcements for this trail will soon resume.



Airport South Trail: Steve Gibbon, Bob Hritz, Mary Doran, John Martin, Linder Klingerman, Danny Terry, John Partyka

## Anniversary Book Now Available!

BY MIKKI BETKER

Can you believe that the annual Hiking Marathon is celebrating its Ten-Year Anniversary? It is all because of the hiking enthusiasts in Cumberland County that the Hiking Marathon has grown from 425 to 3116 participants since 2015.

To celebrate this milestone, FOTT has created a brand-new Ten-Year Anniversary Book about the Hiking Marathon. You won't want to miss the details on all 37 trails that have ever been included in the Marathon. Not only will you be able to find every trail to hike on your own, but you will also learn the history behind how and when the trails were built. For example, did you know that majority of Cumberland County's 90 miles of hiking trails have been built in the last ten years?

As a bonus feature, Salsa the wonder-doodle takes you hiking on all the 37 Marathon trails. We think you will find it delightful and amusing to hike each trail with this energetic labradoodle as she offers her perspective on the trails and on hiking. You may even be inspired to hike all the trails yourself!

The Anniversary Book also gives you inside information regarding new trails that are being built right now! Plus, there is history about Cumberland Mountain State Park, the famous Cumberland Trail, and a special feature on volunteer trail building led by Fairfield Glade.

So FOTT is certain that the Anniversary Book will be of interest to hikers, local history buffs and of course, dog lovers.

The Hiking Marathon Anniversary Book is available in the [new online shop](#). A limited number of the books will also be available at the annual Hit the Trails Festival on October 5.