



THE CUMBERLAND TRAILHEAD

Friends of the Trails

January 2025

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Cover Photo by Anna Margaret Groom

Lace Up Your Boots for the 2025 Spring Ultra Hike!

Last fall, as part of the 10th anniversary celebration of the annual Cumberland County Hiking Marathon, hikers were invited to take on an extra challenge: hike 73.8 miles on past marathon trails in the months of July and August, then add on the usual 26.2 miles of the September marathon to complete 100 total miles over three months.

The turnout for the 2024 challenge far exceeded expectations, and post-challenge feedback made it clear that hikers were disappointed by FOTT's original plan of making the 100-miler an every-ten-year anniversary event.

Therefore, FOTT is pleased to announce the imminent arrival of the second annual 100-mile challenge, which will be known going forward as the Spring Ultra Hike. Registration will be open from February 15 through March 1, and hikers will be able to hit the trails as soon as they have registered. All 100 miles must be completed on approved trails and logged online by May 15. All participants are invited to the annual National Trails Day picnic on the first Saturday in June, where finishers will receive their prizes.

Further details on registration, fees, dates, and trails will be published shortly. Please watch your email and Facebook for more information. Questions can be emailed to cchikingultra@gmail.com



Glade Crew

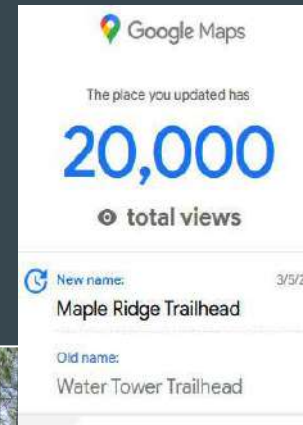
TOP LEFT: A volunteer waits for the chainsaw crew to clear an blow down across the route of the Camp Branch Trail. November 2024.

TOP CENTER: Multiple retaining walls are required to fit the trail between a rock outcrop and the creek. Glade trail crew have become very skilled at building rock structures.

TOP RIGHT: After the Water Tower trailhead was moved, the information on Google Maps was updated changing the name to Maple Ridge Trailhead. This report from March shows the number of views on-line. The number is now over 37,000!

BOTTOM RIGHT: This is a 27 percent side slope under the bluff on Camp Branch. Two different contractors were able to rough in nearly 2,000 feet of trail in rocky and challenging conditions.

BOTTOM LEFT: Camp Branch was dry most of the Fall. A crew member does final grooming while others beyond assemble a retaining wall.





Mark Robinson has "retired" after five years as Trail Boss for Fairfield Glade. He has over 2,000 hours trail experience, is a Certified Master Trail Builder and started with the Crew in 2016—being involved with every trail since then. As Trail Boss he managed the new Overlook extension that opened in 2023 plus the St George and Moss Creek neighborhood trails. The most unusual project was the installation of revetments and rock structures to stabilize Lick Creek and prevent loss of the trail to erosion. Mark served twice on the Trails Committee and will continue with the Trail Crew as a valued advisor and help train new volunteers.



Outgoing Chair of the Trail Committee, **Mark Richie**, sits on his namesake feature along the Camp Branch Trail. Mark served on the Trails Committee for six years, four as Chair. Since 2005, he amassed over 4,000 hours of trail work in The Glade, in Crossville and on the Cumberland Trail. He is a Certified Master Trail Builder, Certified Trail Equipment Operator and Wilderness First Aid trained. He participated in the design and construction of every trail in Fairfield Glade since 2012. In addition to formal design training, Mark participated in over 25 miles of Cumberland Trail design outings. Like Mark Robinson, he will continue work with the Trail Crew.



John DeVinney takes over as Trail Boss in Fairfield Glade. He inherits the aggressive, three phase Camp Branch Trail project from Mark Robinson. John brings to bear project management skills and a passion for trail building only discovered in retirement. Within a week of joining the Trail Crew he enrolled in the four day Master Trail Builder course!

This is what a 30 percent slope looks like. Green shows the eventual route of a side trail to the top of the bluff on the Camp Branch Trail.



Cumberland County Trail Maintenance Submitting Work Requests

How lucky we Cumberland County residents are to have so many beautiful hiking trails near where we live! Within a few miles, there are a little more than one hundred miles of hiking available to all of us. Those miles are distributed across forty-one trail locations in five areas. If you want more information on trail locations, please visit www.crossvilletrails.com/Trails. Maintaining these trails is an ongoing process split across multiple organizations.

Now is the time of year when weather introduces more problems on hiking trails. The trails become easy “victims” to damage from lightning strikes, high winds, heavy rain, floods, ice storms, and snow. The damage from these weather events can result in difficult or impassable trail sections. To minimize the down time, our Friends of the Trails website has a quick and straightforward way to report any level of issue online.

To file a maintenance request, go to www.crossvilletrails.com/. At the top of the home page, select Trails & Hiking and choose “Maintenance Reports” to create a request. At the “Maintenance of the Trails in Cumberland County” page, scroll down to Trail Locations. The trails are arranged within the areas responsible for the trails. Find the location for the trail that needs work and click on the “Report Issues” button. For Fairfield Glade trails, click on the “Glade Trails Maintenance” button.

Enter the information requested on the Maintenance Report form. Being specific helps the maintenance team understand the types of tools and skill sets needed for the work. Include an estimated distance from the trail head, direction (clockwise/counterclockwise or left/right) if the problem is on a loop. Also, including the location between 911 markers will help the team go directly to the problem. If possible, include a photo of the damaged area. Send photos to fott.tcm@gmail.com for Crossville Trails or, for Fairfield Glade Trails, GladeTrailMaintenance@gmail.com

After the information is entered, select Submit to send the request to the maintenance team. To review the request status, return to Trail Locations, find the trail name, and select the “Review Recent Issues” button or, for Fairfield Glade, “View Recent Reports.”

You may have noticed another reference to Maintenance on the Crossville Trails home page. About halfway down the Home Page is a small section titled “Maintenance, Work Sessions”.

Clicking the “REPORT A PROBLEM ON THE TRAILS” button will also go to “Maintenance of the Trails in Cumberland County” page. The button titled “VOLUNTEER WORK SESSIONS” leads to our volunteer page. There you can see a few of the volunteers who help build and maintain the trails in Cumberland County. And, you can join our team of volunteers, sign up for the next work session, or see the list of workers for the next Crossville work session.

Brenda Gibbon, Trail Maintenance & Construction
fott.tcm@gmail.com

Friends of the Trails Annual Meeting

Tuesday, January 7, 2025

FOTT Board Elections

Current terms are ending for John Conrad and Ethan Medley. Both agreed to serve another term. Valerie Hale has resigned, Nathan Clouse agreed to join the board.

Membership unanimously approved the 2025 board members as follows:

- Levonne Hubbard, Beth Davis, and Mary deWolf – expiring 12/25
- Ethan Hadley, Heather Mullinex – expiring 12/26
- John Conrad, Nathan Clouse, Ethan Medley – expiring 12/27

2025 Slate of Officers

- John Conrad (President), Nathan Clouse (Vice President), Mary deWolf (Secretary), Ethan Hedley (Treasurer). Unanimously elected for a 1-year term.



John Conrad – reported on completed [trail activities for 2024](#) and plans for 2025. Report included updates on the Crossville Greenway, Meadow Park and Airport trails, as well as the 10th annual marathon. Plans to repeat the Ultra marathon are in the works and members were invited to attend a planning meeting on January 9 at noon at Common Grounds.

John DeVinney, FFG trail boss, updated the group on the [activities of the Fairfield Glade trails](#) committee and current projects/maintenance in Fairfield including the development of the Camp Branch Trail which is expected to be completed in time for the 2025 marathon.



Marshall Scott offered an update on trail building activities in Uplands, noting the effort to provide more parking. There are plans for a potential bridge on the Lake Alice trail which would represent an important safety improvement for hikers exiting the trail onto West Lake Road.

All speakers applauded the activities of the volunteers in all of these trail building efforts.

After a short period of Q/A, the meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

Submitted by Mary deWolf

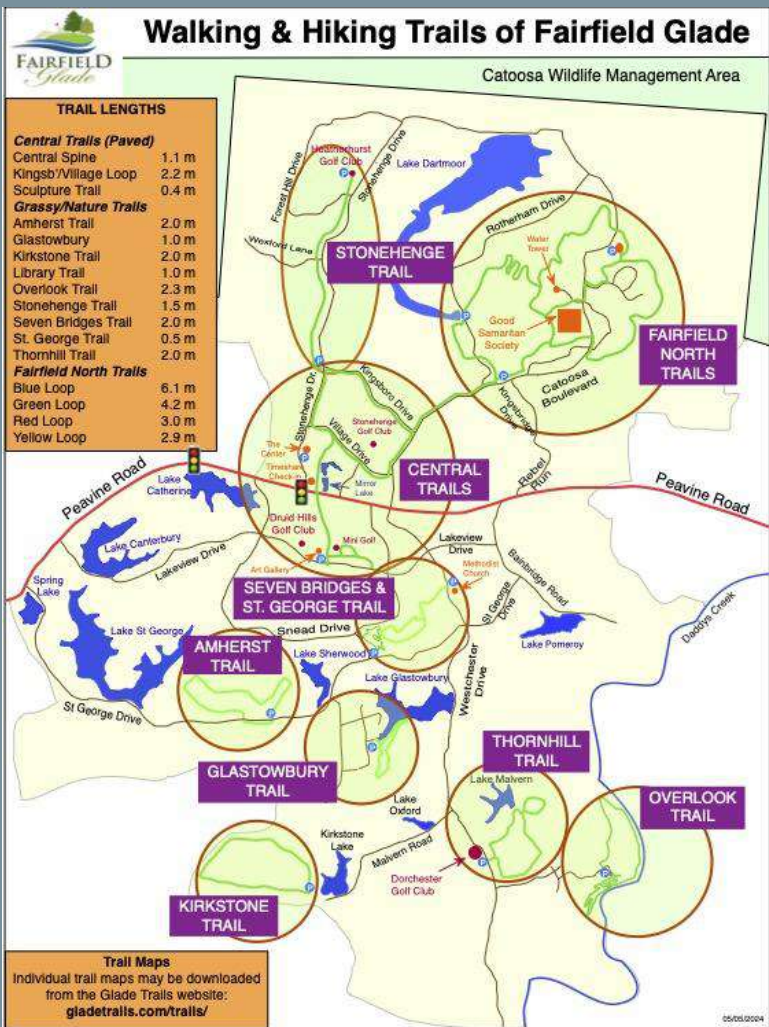
Fairfield Glade

The Cumberland County area was initially known to white men as “the Wilderness.” Native Americans, most notably the Cherokee, used the wildlife-rich area for their hunting grounds. White settlers were few and far between with most folks passing through the area from the Cumberland Gap, on their way to points further west. By the late 1770s some began to settle. The next few years were punctuated with violence between the native hunters and white settlers. In 1805 the “Treaty of Tellico” was signed to guarantee safe passage to folks travelling from Washington, D.C. to Nashville.

Early development of the area included coal mining and lumbering operations, with accompanying railroads. When the mining and lumbering ended, parts of the land, surrounded by woodland deciduous forest and natural beauty, were cleared exposing rolling land that became known as “the glades.” The property was purchased as an investment by Plateau Properties Inc. who built two of FG’s larger lakes now called Lake Catherine and Lake St. George.

The property was sold in 1969 to the Fairfield Bay Corp. who wanted to develop the property into a resort like the successful Fairfield Bay resort formed in Arkansas in 1966. By January 1970, construction was underway for the Fairfield Glade project. The \$20 million project was intended to be a master-planned retirement vacation resort community. Construction projects in 1970 included a restaurant, administration building/information center, 18-hole golf course, stables, and another lake, Canterbury.

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History of the Trails, cont.

Hiking was an important activity in the early days of Fairfield Glade. Historical documents mention a Friar Tuck trail and a Little John trail. Early maps show an Antioch trail and Chestnut Hill trail. Recreation directors in the early years of Fairfield Glade took hikers on a trail to the “peak” of Peavine Mountain (approx 2117 feet elevation) located slightly NW of the North Ridge Drive/Catoosa Blvd. intersection.

In the 1970s, the newly formed Community Club built a paved Central Trail with a tunnel under Peavine Road. The Overlook trail was also initiated as a means to take prospective buyers to the breathtaking views across Daddy’s Creek and entice them to invest in property among the natural beauty.

A hiking club was formed in 1980. After a delay of over a decade, trail activity began to pick up in 2012, when Don Hazel, a new resident, began to open up access to the woods behind his home on North Ridge Drive.

With resident surveys constantly naming hiking as a prioritized amenity, the Community Club decided to form a Trails Committee that March, agreeing to fund volunteer efforts to build more trails. Around the same time, John Conrad had joined the effort and proposed a Friends of the Glade Trails which would later expand the trails effort throughout the county.

McGinnis, Hemlock, Overlook, Thornhill, Kirkstone, and the Sculpture trail were all completed in 2012. The first trails festival was held on October 13, 2012, to introduce new trails and trail building activities to the residents. 2013 saw the completion of the Library, Amherst, Good Samaritan, Stonehenge, Rotherham and Canyon Trails. The Seven Bridges Trail was built in 2015 and the first Hiking Marathon also occurred that year – bringing new interest to hiking in Fairfield Glade and across the county.



The work of dedicated Fairfield Glade trail building volunteers continues without pause. New developments have led to major re-routings of existing trails. New trails are introduced regularly, with the current focus on building smaller neighborhood trails within walking distance of local residents. Maintenance and repair are ongoing efforts.

Residents are encouraged to help with the trail effort. Using the trails is the simplest way to keep them viable. Folks are welcomed to join the builders, whether they are able to use clippers, rakes, shovels, or chainsaws! Crews are lead by certified Master Trail builders, and opportunities exist for more folks to receive that designation. Folks can “adopt” a trail and agree to hike it once a month looking for any maintenance needs. Donations are always welcomed.

Find out how to be a part of the Fairfield Glade trails at gladetrails.com

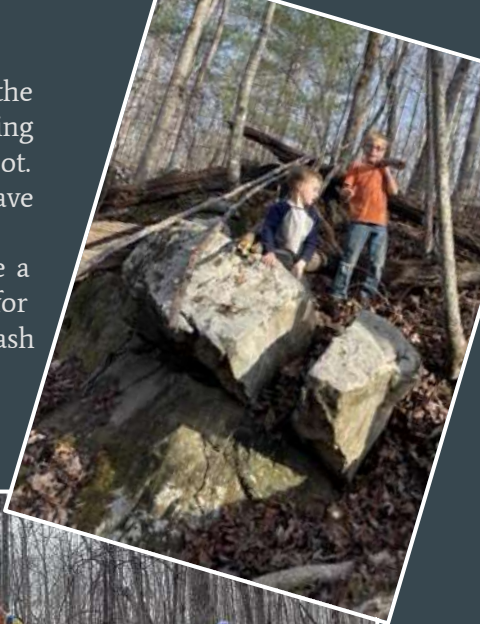
Searching for Bigfoot



Cumberland Forest Friends, by Anna Margaret Groom

Our youngest hikers have not been deterred by the colder weather, but continue climbing every fallen tree, scaling every boulder, and searching for the ever elusive Bigfoot. Whether or not he is out there is not a debate you want to have with my seven year old.

We learned that the road to Black Mountain can be a bit d-ICY in the winter, Meadow Park North trail is perfect for fort building, we will soon need to buy harnesses and crash pads, and every footprint leads adventure.



FOTT

Friends of the Trails

Newsletter Editor Opening

Do you have a desire to assist Friends of the Trails from home? Once a quarter, we gather articles from contributors, briefly edit them, and insert them into a newsletter template to be distributed. Think you have the skills to help?

Email annamargaret.tn@gmail.com