



THE CUMBERLAND TRAILHEAD

Friends of the Trails

February 2026

THIS ISSUE

- 3 [Spring Ultra Hike](#)
- 5 [Hike with Friends](#)
- 6 [Pioneer Loop Update](#)
- 8 [Trail Maintenance](#)
- 10 [Glade Crew](#)
- 11 [CT Cruisers and Bushwhackers](#)
- 12 [Report Trail Maintenance](#)
- 12 [Annual Meeting Slides](#)
- 12 [Newsletter Submissions](#)



Winter Beauty at
Meadow Creek, Monterey
Cover and above photos by Anna Groom

SPRING ULTRA HIKE

Hike 100 miles in 90 days

The third annual 100-mile hiking challenge is coming soon! [Registration](#) will be open from February 15-March 1. Hiking for this challenge begins February 15 and will continue through May 15. All registered participants have 90 days to complete 100 miles of hikes on approved trails. The trail list this year will be a bit more extensive than last year's selection, containing past marathon trails throughout the county as well as sections of the Cumberland Trail. Hikers can choose which trails to complete, can repeat any trail up to two times, and can omit any trail(s) they don't like.

Just like the fall marathon, hikers track their mileage online and will be able to print out a finisher's certificate once all 100 miles are done.

All Spring Ultra hikers are invited to the National Trails Day picnic to be held Saturday, June 6 where they will be treated to a free lunch and a participation sticker. All finishers will be awarded a commemorative enamel pin. In addition, finishers' names will be entered into a random drawing for some great prizes.



Custom designed 2026 t-shirts will be available for order when registering in February. There is an extra fee for the t-shirt, and no requirement to finish the ultra hike in order to purchase. Shirt pickup days, times, and locations will be announced, and all shirts not picked up by the end of the picnic on June 6 will be donated to charity.



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The Horony crew and Salsa!
Follow their journey to hike
the Appalachian Trail in 2027!
12polestrekking.com



SPRING ULTRA HIKE

Hike 100 miles in 90 days

- Register Feb 15 – Mar 1
- Pay for registration (\$20 adult, \$5 kids 12 & under)
- Pay for your optional t-shirt (\$25)
- Hike Feb 15 – May 15
- Choose your miles from list of approved trails
- Log 100+ miles online
- Earn a prize!
- Celebrate at National Trails Day picnic Jun 6, 2026



springultrahike.com

cchikingultra@gmail.com

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Unlike the annual fall hiking marathon, which is open and free for all, the Spring Ultra Hike is a fundraising event. Money raised from the registration fee will help Friends of the Trails continue to maintain, expand, and promote the trail system in Cumberland County.

For more information, visit springultrahike.com. Watch your email and [Facebook](#) for updates. Please email cchikingultra@gmail.com with questions. See you on the trails!



Event presented by Friends of the Trails,
a 501(c)(3) organization.

Proceeds support Friends of the Trails in its mission to construct, maintain, and promote the use of walking and hiking trails throughout Cumberland County.

HIKE WITH FRIENDS!

Want a guide, safety in numbers, or companionship? Check out these great groups!



Fairfield Glade

There are over 20 miles of natural surface trails plus 8 miles of paved sidewalks in Fairfield Glade that you can explore on your own using maps and descriptions downloaded here. If you prefer to hike in a group with an experienced guide, you will be welcomed regardless of your experience or fitness level.

gladetrails.com/hiking



Cumberland Forest Friends

Hike with your kids?
Check out Cumberland Forest Friends
to meet like-minded families
to plan hikes together!
CumberlandForestFriends@gmail.com



Tennessee Trails Association, Plateau Chapter

Come take a GUIDED hike with us. We offer a short 5 mile or less and a long 8 +/- mile hike every Wednesday and two Saturday's a month. For additional information contact the hike coordinator ttaplateauhikes68@tennesseetrails.org.

Cumberland Mountain State Park, *Pioneer Short Loop*

by Steve Gibbon

In the Cumberland Mountain State Park, the Pioneer Trail as well as the other trails in the park were created by the Civilian Conservation Corps as part of the New Deal program to help lift the area out of the Great Depression in the 1930's. A more detailed description of this program can be found in the museum near the Homestead Harvest Restaurant in the park. Since that time the trails have fallen victim to the effects of erosion, traffic, and other environmental impacts.

Not much has been done over the years other than fallen tree removal and trimming back of vegetation to keep the trails usable. The trail tread has suffered greatly and needs repair in many places. Some people have even stopped enjoying these trails due to the many tripping hazards.

In July of 2025 a work session was held to begin refurbishing the trail tread on the Pioneer Short Loop which is likely the most heavily trafficked trail in all of Cumberland County. After that, Linda Klingerman stepped in and took the lead in this effort. She has held many work sessions and generally tries to do them twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00am. To date, they have repaired about one-quarter mile of the trail, and it is looking amazing.

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L to R Front... Linda Klingerman , Rita Senko, Marge Reagan, Stella Woodworth. Back.. Les, Cort Weidemeir, Joe Matlock, Ron Jewell and Ron Woodworth.

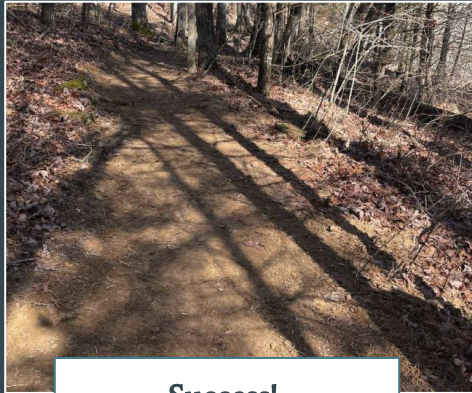
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Granted, the trail will be a little muddy at times because of the excavation work. But in a short time, the trail will settle down and be perfect. So please be patient with this process. It will benefit the hundreds of people who enjoy these trails, and more traffic will help the settling process.

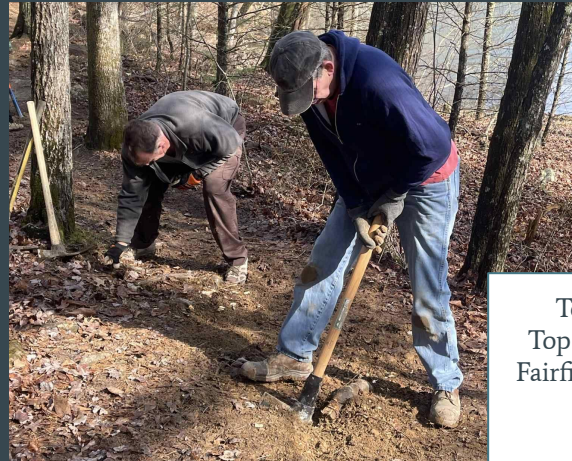
Many thanks to Linda and her team for stepping in to make these much needed improvements.

If you would like to join the team and be notified of the work sessions, please click the link ["Join Our Team of Crossville Trailworkers"](#)

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Success!



Top Left: Les, Cort and Joe are determined to remove this rock.
Top Right: Marge, an experienced trail worker, volunteers weekly in Fairfield Glade. Ron (in the back) works with a chisel to break a rock that we're unable to remove.
Left: Ron and Ron working hard!

Trail Construction and Maintenance

by Brenda Gibbon

Crossville Leisure Services – Keeping the Trails Cleared

We, Friends of the Trails, want to take this opportunity to recognize the amazing work done by the City's Leisure Services team. Director Ethan Medley is responsible for many things including keeping the City's hiking trails clear of obstacles. Ethan monitors the FOTT's trail maintenance reporting systems. Regularly, reported downed trees are cleared within 24 hours.

Ethan, thank you so much for the work you and your team do to keep our trails clear of debris, downed trees, and removing attacking Yellow Jackets. We appreciate your work and look forward to our continued partnership!

Scouting New Trails in Cumberland Mountain State Park

Friends of the Trails is partnering with management at Cumberland Mountain State Park to design or rehabilitate three trails in the park. No dates have been set for construction of these trails.

Homestead Trail

Recently, responsibility for the Homestead Tower moved to Cumberland Mountain State Park. One of the enhancements for the Park and Tower is a connecting hiking/walking trail. So far, FOTT has completed one scouting trip for the trail.

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Trail Construction and Maintenance

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Old CCC Trail

In the 1930's, the Civilian Conservation Corps built Cumberland Mountain State Park infrastructure and hiking trails. Along with the Pioneer Loops, Cumberland Plateau Nature Trail, and Byrd Creek Trails, the Corps built another trail from Old South Mail Road toward the Lake Tansi area. This trail has been undisturbed for many years.

Now, FOTT is working with the Park to rehabilitate this trail. There have been several scouting trips to mark the route and more will be scheduled. Mountain Laurel and fallen trees have made the trips more difficult than most.

Overnight Shortcut Trail

The Friends of the Trails team scouted and marked a shortcut route across the 6.2-mile Overnight Trail loop. This shortcut will be about a 2.5-mile loop for those who do not want to hike the full 6.2-mile loop.

Join the Team

If you would like to join our team and experience these adventures, [sign up here.](#)



Above: Steve & Brenda Gibbon along with John Conrad and Joe Lucas
Below: Danny Terry





Sustainable Trail Maintenance

By John DeVinney - FFG Trail Crew Supervisor

A critical component of the Fairfield Glade Trail Builder Team is hiker safety. Injuries can't be completely avoided, but thoughtful design and construction techniques can help minimize hazards on our trails. This also improves the trails to remain welcoming and manageable for the people who use them the most.

Our trails welcome walkers and casual hikers of all ages, from youth to seniors, as well as those who want to spend outdoor time with their dogs. Other areas on the plateau and all around East Tennessee offer rugged and much longer hikes, so we build the Fairfield Glade Trails for easy access and shorter hikes.

We recently completed a typical refurbishment of our Red Loop Trail which is a 3.1 mile loop in a very scenic area. Foot traffic, erosion, freeze/thaw, and tree growth have all taken their toll on the trail tread. This trail is a collection of building efforts over the last 13 years from hobbyists' social trails, sections built by large equipment, and some modern methods.

Our recently completed effort was to improve the trail tread by removing hazards such as exposed roots, large rocks, loose small stones, and tipping pavers. We also repaired drainage and erosion problems.

[Sign up here to join us in our efforts!](#)

Mark Richie and Dan Coats
repositioning and leveling a large
pavers step on the rock pile.

THE CT CRUISERS & BUSHWHACKERS TACKLE THE LAUREL SNOW STATE NATURAL AREA

by Pat Buckner & the CT Bushwhackers

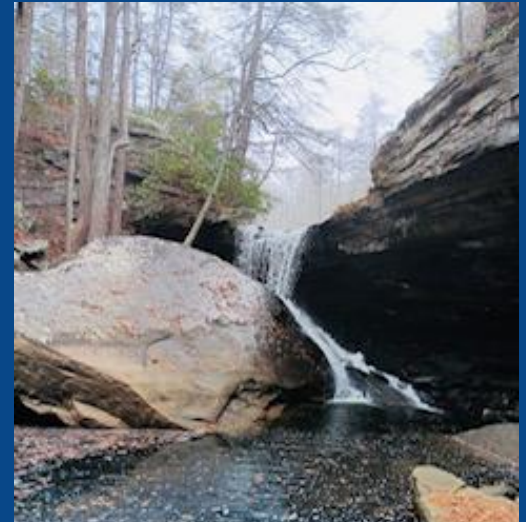
The Cumberland Trail (CT) Cruisers – Bill Park, Rac Cox, and Mark Reeves plus the CT Bushwhackers- Jim Darr, Chris Love, and Pat Buckner joined forces in November 2025 to hike from the Laurel-Snow State Natural Area Trailhead to Dunn Overlook, Snow Falls, and Buzzard Point out and back completing 10 miles. Members of these groups reside in Knox and Cumberland Counties. This pocket wilderness is famous for waterfalls, steep gorges, large rock formations, historical remains from early 20th century logging & mining operations, and the location of the Laurel-Snow and Morgan Creek CT Sections.

Members of both groups completed the finished segments of the Cumberland Trail in October 2025. This first joint hiking excursion provided an excellent opportunity for the Cruisers and Bushwhackers to share CT experiences and learn from one another. The groups also discovered shared goals of promoting the CT and inspiring others to explore this regional treasure.

Right: Laurel Snow Richland Ck
Chris, Jim, Bill, Mark, Rac, & Pat

Below: Mark in Cubby Hole

Bottom Right: Laurel Snow
Richland Ck Bridges
Chris, Jim, Bill, Mark, Rac, Pat



2026 Hiking Marathon

Do you want to be on the planning committee and one of the many volunteers needed to make this event a success? Email hike@hikingmarathon.com

Trail Repair Requests

The fastest way to get a trail issue resolved is to submit a request for trail maintenance. To submit the request, [click here](#), select the name of the trail, complete the form, and click the Submit button. Please be as detailed as possible. Including the number of the nearest 911 emergency marker and photos will be extremely helpful for the trail crew.

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FOTT Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of Friends of the Trails was held on Wednesday, January 7th, from 5:00pm to 7:00pm.

JOHN CONRAD'S PRESENTATION ON FOTT ACTIVITIES

**JOHN DEVINNY'S PRESENTATION ON FAIRFIELD GLADE
ACTIVITIES**

Newsletter Submissions

Have something to share? Email annamargaret.tn@gmail.com 300 words or less, typed directly into an email, with 1-4 labeled images. Title the subject line FOTT and your subject. Please include author credits.