

July 2007

# Sierra

## North Alabama Group



Visit our website  
<http://alabama.sierraclub.org/na.html>

### Picnic and Hike at Monte Sano State Park for July 19 meeting

#### Tuesday Night Hikes

Meet at 6:00pm at the Monte Sano Hiker's Parking lot.

#### **July Picnic and Hike at Monte Sano State Park**

For the July meeting, Thursday, July 19, we will meet for a picnic and optional hike afterwards at Monte Sano State Park. Meet at 6:30 in the south end of the picnic area at the overlook pavilion. There will be a hike afterwards

There will be some door prizes awarded at the picnic.

Our August meeting will be a pool party/picnic on the 16th at the Monte Sano pool. Please note that our summer meetings are on the third Thursday of the month, not Wednesday.

We are looking for alternatives to meeting in the Huntsville Public Library auditorium, such as in a restaurant with a meeting room, so if you have any ideas or know of a place for the club to meet in the fall, please bring it up at the next meeting.

- The Editor

#### **Pinhoti Trail Alliance Formed**

A new chapter in the Pinhoti Trail history was set into motion at the Alabama Hiking Trail Society conference as representatives from the Pinhoti Trail maintaining clubs in Alabama along with members of the Georgia Pinhoti Trail Association came together to form the Pinhoti Trail Alliance.

The mission of the alliance is to represent and market the Pinhoti Trail not as individual sections in Alabama and Georgia, but instead as one continuous trail running through both states. Members of the alliance include the US Forestry Service (USFS), Alabama Hiking Trail Society (AHTS), Alabama Trails Association (ATA), Appalachian Trail Club of Alabama (ATCA), Anniston Outdoor Association (AOA), Vulcan Trail Association (VTA), Horn Mt. Trail Club (HMTCC), Eastern Trail Association (ETA) and the Georgia Pinhoti Trail Association (GPTA).

The original concept for the Pinhoti Trail was to build it as a single trail running from Flagg Mt. in central Alabama and terminating at the Benton MacKaye Trail in north Georgia. The first meeting of the new organization was held May 12 at Cheaha State Park. Private funds have been pledged to cover 25% of the purchase of private in holdings along Rebecca Mt. if the United States Forest Service commits to the acquisition.

The management of the Pinhoti Trail should be enhanced by the formation of this new alliance. By pooling resources together as one but also being ever mindful of protecting the rights and autonomy of the individual founding organizations, the PTA will be a win-win situation for the trail, the organizations and the users of the Pinhoti Trail.

- Reprinted with permission – AHTS NEWS, 4/01/07 <http://www.alabamatrail.com>

#### **The Sewanee Perimeter Loop**

North Alabama Sierra Club members Tom and Judy Burley have been leading a series of hikes for the past couple of months exploring the Perimeter Trail around the University of the South campus in Sewanee, TN. The following article describes this unique trail. This month the Burleys will be leading a hike on the eastern section of the trail. See the Outings list for more details.

- The Editor

The Sewanee Perimeter Loop, a twenty-mile series of connecting paths surrounding the University of the South, provides a wide variety of natural beauty for the casual hiker. The trail can be accessed in many places, allowing it to be divided up into several short hikes. The northeast corner of the trail descends into Shakerag Hollow, an area known for the blooming of hundreds of spring wildflowers. Continuing westward, the trail provides several spectacular

views as it climbs out of the hollow onto the bluff. A cabin used by forestry students is situated in a pleasant meadow near a small lake.

The valley below the bluff is full of caves, most of which can only be reached with great difficulty. However, a side trail running north from the Perimeter Trail leads down to Solomon's Temple Cave and a thirty-foot rock chimney. These formations may be admired by hikers but should only be entered by experienced spelunkers.

The northwest corner of the trail can be reached by taking Brakefield Road until it reaches a dead end. Although this dirt road is accessible by automobile, drivers should use caution, due to numerous potholes. This section of the trail provides access to Brushy Lake along a short side path. This small body of water is particularly scenic on a misty day. Turning eastward, the trail once more provides several views into the valley below. Along the southern edge of the bluff, the trail passes near Audubon Lake. Chestnut Lake is not far away. Both lakes provide serene vistas surrounded by peaceful woods.

One side trail which no visitor to the University of the South should miss is the Bridal Veil Falls Trail. Descending from the bluff, the trail leads steeply to the falls, where a fifty-foot cataract plunges into a deep pit and seems to disappear into the Earth. Two smaller waterfalls can be seen along the Perimeter Trail itself. Not far away, the University's famous War Memorial offers another view into the valley.

The Perimeter Trail is an easy-to-moderate walk in most places, with steep climbing and scrambling over rocks required in a few locations. It is a suitable hike in all seasons. Although the presence of ice during the coldest weather requires added caution, it also adds a great deal of beauty to many parts of the trail. A detailed map of the trail and its access points may be obtained from the University.

By Michael Peralta

- Reprinted with permission from the Friends of the South Cumberland State Recreation Area <http://www.friendsofscsra.org/newsletters.htm>

#### **Alabama 46th in Energy Efficiency**

In June, the nonpartisan American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy released a state by state scorecard grading and ranking states on various policy actions taken to become more energy efficient. Alabama ranked 46th nationally, receiving just two (2) points out of a maximum 44 points. Only Mississippi, North and South Dakota and Wyoming placed lower in energy efficiency.

Among the factors contributing to Alabama's poor ranking: no statewide building energy code, no policy to encourage better fuel economy and no ratepayer-funding to invest in electric energy efficiency programs. The State Energy Efficiency Scorecard for 2006 can be found at <http://www.aceee.org>

- Reprinted with permission from BEN, June 10, 2007 #286 <http://www.BamaNews.com>

#### **TVA Approves Green Power Plan in Huntsville**

Last month, Huntsville Utilities was given the go ahead to develop a Green Power Program that would allow customers to sell solar generated electricity to the TVA power grid. Participants must sign a 10 year agreement to supply the supplemental energy. The utility company will pay 15 cents per kilowatt hour. Today, residential customers pay on average 7 cents per kilowatt hour for electricity coming into a home.

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# North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

## July – August 2007

### 2007 ExCom Members

Chair	Liz Poleretzky	461-5819
Vice-Chair and Treasurer	Sam Denham	539-1033
Conservation chair	Doug Horacek	772-6788
Fund Raising	Helga Sowa	534-5656
Membership	Dave Kostowny	325-2296
Newsletter	Jack Drost	880-2644
Outings	Lee Hollingsworth	461-3060
	And Tom Burley	883-4267
Publicity	Sandy Kiplinger	498-1023
Programs	Judy Burley	883-4267
Secretary	Linda Griffin	772-8653
Tuesday Hikes	Nancy Dudley	882-9408
Web Page	Steven Baty	489-0990

### July 19 - Picnic and Hike at Monte Sano State Park

#### Hike Ratings

**General Note:** Saturday outings may take all day and last into early evening.

**Easy**-Less than 5 miles, no serious elevation changes, no trail obstacles.

**Moderate**-5 to 10 miles, some elevation changes or rough trail (rock hopping), or trail obstacles such as creek crossings.

**Strenuous**- Over 10 miles, substantial elevation change (1000 ft or more), trail may be rocky, obstructed or nonexistent.

**Exploratory**- event the leader has not experienced before, may fit any class.

#### Saturday, July 14 - Sewanee Day hike.

**Moderate.** 8 to 9 mile southwest section of the 20 mile Perimeter Trail around the Sewanee Domain. Beautiful overlooks and interesting geological formations. This section features Elliot, Otey, Polk, and Armfield Bluff. This is one of a series of hikes to complete the entire perimeter trail. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet at the Publix on Winchester Road at 8:00 am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@knology.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@knology.net)

#### Tuesday, July 17, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.

3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Leader: Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.

#### Saturday, July 21 - Greeter Gulf

**Creekwalk and Swim. Strenuous.** Walk through Tennessee's Garden of Eden. Rated strenuous because of slick rocks and walking through water up to waist deep. Must wear boots or shoes for ankle support--river sandals are NOT okay. Bring water and lunch, sunscreen, and dry clothes for return trip. Meet at 8:30am at Garden Cove, Pratt Ave/ Meridian St. For more information, Sam Denham 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w).

**Sunday, July 22 – Elkmont rails to trails. Moderate.** Meet at 1:00pm at the Southern Family Market (former Brunos, where Highway 72 West and Wall Triana intersect). We will walk around 6 miles on this historic trail. Optional dinner afterwards. Please bring plenty of water! Liz @ 461-5819 or [hiker@knology.net](mailto:hiker@knology.net)

#### Tuesday, July 24, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.

3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at Monte Sano Hiker's Parking lot. Leader: Judy Burley, 883-4267.

#### Excom Meeting

**Thursday, July 26, 5:30.** Linda Griffin, 772-8653.

#### Saturday, July 28 – Sewanee Day hike.

**Moderate.** This 10 mile hike is the east

section of the 20 mile Perimeter Trail which encircles the Sewanee Domain. The features beautiful overlooks and interesting geological formations. This section features Morgan's Steep, the Memorial Cross, and Shakerag Hollow with optional side trips to Piney Point and Greens View. This hike completes the entire perimeter trail. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet at the Publix on Winchester Road at 8:00 am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@knology.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@knology.net)

#### Tuesday, July 31, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.

3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at Monte Sano Hiker's Parking lot. Leader: Helga Sowa, 534-5656.

#### Saturday, August 4 – Buggytop Trail to Buggytop Cave. Strenuous.

This 4 mile hike is located in the Carter State Natural Area. The trail climbs to the top of Spur Ridge and follows the ridge until it descends into Lost Cove. The entrance to the cave is one of the most impressive cave mouths in the state. It is 100 feet wide and 80 feet high. There will be an optional cave exploration led by Joette Carter. If you plan on doing the cave tour bring two light sources, head protection, and a change of clothes as the cave is muddy and will involve some crawling. Bring snacks and plenty of water. Optional dinner afterwards. Meet at the Publix on Winchester Road at 8:30am. Contact Judy Burley at 883-4267 or [jcburley@knology.net](mailto:jcburley@knology.net)

#### Tuesday, August 7, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.

3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at Monte Sano Hiker's Parking lot. Leader: Virgil DeStefano, 539-0348.

#### Newsletter Labeling

**Wednesday, August 8, 5:30pm.** Down South Condominiums clubhouse. South Mem Parkway. Entrance on right between Big Ten Tires and Schlotzsky's. Judy Burley, 883-4267.

#### Saturday, August 11 – Monte Sano

**Wildflower hike. Easy.** We will be looking for Spider Lilies on this hike. Meet at 9:00am at the hikers parking lot. Bring water and bug spray. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 for more info.

#### Saturday, August 11 - Little River Canyon Rockhop/Swim/Dayhike.

**Strenuous.** Two separate hikes: Wolf Creek and the mile below Hwy35. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen, hat, and be ready to get wet. Meet at Garden Cove downtown 8:00am. Sam Denham, 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w).

#### Tuesday, August 14, 6:00pm -

**Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at Monte Sano Hiker's Parking lot. Leader: Nancy Dudley, 882-9748.

#### Fri-Sun, August 17 - 19 Big Hill Pond

**Car Camp. Easy.** We will drive to this state park in West Tennessee Friday afternoon and camp out Friday and Saturday nights at the park campground. A dayhike is planned for Saturday. Park highlights include an eight-tenths of a mile long boardwalk through the Dismal Swamp; a 70 foot refurbished fire tower that offers a panoramic view of Travis McNatt Lake and the swamp; Civil War Earthworks - a railroad guardpost built by Union Soldiers. Return to Huntsville Sunday. For more information and meeting time/location contact Liz Poleretzky. [hiker@knology.net](mailto:hiker@knology.net)

#### Tuesday, August 21, 6:00pm -

**Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet

at Monte Sano Hiker's Parking lot. Leader: Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819.

**Fri-Sun, Aug 24-26 - Mt. Roger's backpack. Strenuous.** Travel to Virginia's Mt. Rogers for some high elevation backpacking among the East's most scenic grassy balds. Encounters with wild ponies are likely as we backpack approx. 12 miles. Blueberries should be in season for our grazing. Drive time approx. 6 hours. Departure Friday 10:00am. Self sufficient backpacking gear required. For info call Lee Hollingsworth, 461-3060 day or 520-6659 evening.

#### Tuesday, August 28, 6:00pm -

**Mountain Evening Hike. Easy.** 3-4 mile hike. Different location each week. Meet at Monte Sano Hiker's Parking lot. Leader: Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.

#### Other Outings / Events

The following activities are not sponsored or administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of such activities. They are published only as a reader service because they might be of interest to the readers of our newsletter.

#### Tennessee Mid-State Group

##### Wednesday, July 18 - Longhunter

**State Park Dayhike:** We will hike the Volunteer Trail. Bring your lunch and water and pack a swim suit if you wish to take a dip in the lake during our hike. We will determine how far we wish to hike. Total distance 5-10 miles. Rated moderate. For additional information and to register contact Katherine Pendleton at [Katherine.pendleton@sierraclub.org](mailto:Katherine.pendleton@sierraclub.org) or 615-943-6877.

##### Tuesday, July 24 - Bryant Grove

**Dayhike:** Explore the Bryant Grove Trail at Long Hunter State Park. Rated easy to moderate. Total length 4-8 miles depending on how far the group wishes to hike. For additional information and to register contact [Katherine.pendleton@sierraclub.org](mailto:Katherine.pendleton@sierraclub.org) or 615-943-6877.

#### Alabama Cahaba Group

##### Saturday, July 21 - Day Hike and Swim

**Chinnabee Silent Trail.** This trail winds through part of the Talladega National Forest and along Cheaha Creek. Enjoy a cooling dip at Devil's Den, a swimming hole and falls at the end of the 3-mile hike. Bring lunch, water, some shoes and clothes for swimming if you wish to do so. Optional dinner after hike. Meet Kmart Parking Lot (corner of Crestwood Blvd and Montclair Road (Eastwood Mall) at 9 a.m. For more, contact Sonja Mathis, 205-556-3330 or [smath2casa@aol.com](mailto:smath2casa@aol.com).

##### Sunday, August 5 - Short hikes to waterfalls (and swims) in the western Bankhead National Forest area.

Possibilities include Caney Creek Falls, Parker Branch Falls, Maxwell Branch Falls and Kinlock Falls as well as Rocky Ravine Park in Haleyville. Total hiking distance less than three miles. Bring lots of water, lunch and bug dope; optional dinner afterward. Rated moderate due to possible heat stress. Meet 9:00am in the parking lot in front of McDonald's on Hwy 78 West in Jasper or 10:00am at the Jack's on Hwy 278 in Double Springs. Call trip leader, Carroll Wilson, at 205-221-6196 for more info or E-mail at [mountain-man@mindspring.com](mailto:mountain-man@mindspring.com).