

October 2009

# Sierra

North Alabama Group



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

**Severe Storms in the Tennessee Valley, Oct 15, Library Auditorium**  
**6:30pm**

**Tuesday Night Downtown Hikes**  
Meet at The Land Trust parking lot at  
6:00pm

## Severe Storms in the Tennessee Valley

Eugene "Bill" McCaul, a research scientist with USRA at the National Space Science and Technology Center in Huntsville, will present a photo lecture on severe storms of the United States and the Tennessee Valley, at the next Sierra Club meeting, Oct. 15, 2009, at the Huntsville Public Library.

McCaul, who has studied severe storms using both theory and field observations for nearly 30 years, will illustrate with photography some of the key processes and structural features of severe storm clouds. Because of differences in local geography and interactions of weather patterns with the geography, severe storms tend to display differing appearances in different parts of the United States. Severe storms in the Tennessee Valley are especially difficult to recognize and respond to, because of their rapid movement, tendency to occur at night, and tendency to occur in areas of poor visibility and complex terrain.

For the November meeting, Sandy Kiplinger, a member of the North Alabama group, will talk about her trip to Tanzania and show some of the wonderful pictures she took. Sandy is a great storyteller so you will not want to miss this meeting..

The North Alabama Sierra Club meets at 6:30 the third Thursday of every month at the Huntsville Madison County Public Library in the main auditorium. The library is in downtown Huntsville on Monroe St. just off Governor's Drive. Everyone is invited to attend.

- The Editor

## State Retreat Set for Nov 6-8 near Talladega

The annual retreat for the Alabama Sierra Club will be held November 6-8 at the Bagley Conference Center in Shocco Springs near Talladega. This is a great opportunity to get together with Sierra Club members from around the state and share ideas. Shocco Springs is nestled between wooded hills adjacent to the Talladega National Forest.

The scheduled speakers are:

- Dr. Joyce Lanning from the Climate Project
- Joe Cuhaj, author of A Guide to Alabama's Greatest Hiking Adventures
- Jim Lacefield, paleobiologist and author of Lost Worlds in Alabama Rocks: A Guide
- Dave Lindon, the City of Hoover's Biofuel program
- Jay Hudson, teacher and guide for the Pinhoti trail challenge
- David Pope, director of the Southern Environmental Law Center

There are a wide variety of outings scheduled:

- High/Low Ropes Challenge course
- Cheaha Mountain Hike

- Desoto Caverns tour
- Shocco Springs hiking trail
- Campfire
- Yoga with John

The cost for the retreat is \$120.00 for 2 nights lodging, 5 meals, snacks, speakers and recreation. There is an additional fee of \$10 for the Challenge Course or if they choose to go to Desoto Caverns, there is an admission fee of \$18 payable at entry.

For more information and to register, go to <http://alabama.sierraclub.org/> and click on Retreats.

## Trail Work Scheduled for Walls of Jericho

Come out to the Walls of Jericho the weekend of October 24-25 and help do some work on the trails. Many of us spend a lot of time hiking the wonderful trails around North Alabama, but we don't give much thought to who builds them or maintains them for our enjoyment. Have you ever been hiking on a trail that is a little rough and think to yourself "They need to fix this trail!" Ever thought about who "They" are? Once built, trails need regular maintenance to prevent erosion, clear vegetation and building back up where erosion has occurred. All it takes to help is a little expertise with a shovel or a rake. Trail work can be done by people of any skill and strength level.

The Tennessee Valley Chapter of the Alabama Hiking Trail Society recently formed to help maintain the trails in this area and currently they are working closely with the crew from Forever Wild on trails in the Walls of Jericho. Their web page is <http://www.hikenorthalabama.org/> Check the link for Announcements to find out when meetings, hikes and trail work are scheduled.

If you want to do some work a little closer to home, the Land Trust of Huntsville and North Alabama also uses volunteers to maintain trails on Land Trust property. On the Land Trust page <http://landtrust-hsv.org/> click on Get Involved, and then on Volunteers. There is also a wish list for tools to help with Land Trust trail maintenance. Check this link out as well, and if you happen to have any of these items lying around in your garage, donate them to help with trail maintenance.

If you spend a lot of time on the trails, please think about donating some of your time once or twice a year to help maintain them.

- the Editor

# North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

## October - November 2009

### 2009 ExCom Members

Chair	Mirko Rakigijja	772-8548
Vice-Chair	Judy Burley	883-4267
Treasurer	Sam Denham	539-1033
Conservation	Doug Horacek	772-6788
Fundraising	Charlotte Buening	772-7348
Membership	Dave Kostowny	682-1233
Outings	Michael Stewart	656-5836
Political chair	Joe Imhof	858-3626
Publicity	Sandy Kiplinger	498-1023
Secretary	Linda Griffin	772-8653
Tues Hikes	Michael Stewart	656-5836
Newsletter	Jack Drost	drostj@bellsouth.net
Web Page	Steven Baty	489-0990

### Bill McCaul on Severe Storms, Library auditorium, Thursday, October 15, 6:30pm

#### Hike Ratings

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

encourages carpooling to save fuel, but please be prepared to drive your own car on club outings.

**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** - any event where the leader has not experienced the event, may fit any class above.

### Sat-Sun, Oct 10-11. Sandy & Michael's Awesome River

**Adventure! Moderate.** Let your woes fly, breath the tranquility, take Facebook worthy photos and enjoy the ride as we paddle down 13 miles of the scenic Elk River in TN. After a day on the water, we'll park our tents under the trees and share fish tales and gossip by the campfire. Contact Sandy Kiplinger [sandykip@juno.com](mailto:sandykip@juno.com) or Michael Stewart

[athikerstew@yahoo.com](mailto:athikerstew@yahoo.com) for more info on canoe/kayak/shuttle/camping fees and what to bring. Reserve your spot by October 1. \$15 non-refundable deposit .

### Saturday, Oct 10 - Walls of Jericho

**hike. Strenuous.** The Walls of Jericho is a large natural amphitheater that shoots water out of cracks in the canyon wall during times of high water flow. This unique area of more than 21,000 acres of rivers, forested uplands and caves spreading across the AL and TN state line has an extraordinarily diverse array of plants and animals. We will enter at the TN trailhead and exit on the AL side with a side trip to the Mill Creek blowhole 10 mile hike with a 1000ft elevation gain. Bring lunch and we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at 8:30am at the Publix in Hampton Cove.

Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

### Tuesday, Oct 13, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet in Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Michael Stewart, 656-5836.

### Tuesday, Oct 20, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet in Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Nancy Dudney, 882-9408.

### Saturday, Oct 24 - Signal Point

**hike. Moderate.** Signal Point is the highest point on Signal Mountain. The hike from Signal Point to Edwards Point is part of the Cumberland Trail with striking overlooks of the Tennessee River. The hike follows the top of the Tennessee River Gorge and covers some rocky terrain and requires some climbing. The area includes the Julia Falls Overlook, Edward's Point , a view of Rainbow Falls on the trail to Middle Creek across the suspension bridge and Lockhart's Arch. 7 mile hike. Bring lunch and we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at 8:00am at the Publix in Hampton Cove. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

### Tuesday, Oct 27, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet in Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Ken Shrider, 772-9442.

### Saturday, Oct 31 - Guntersville

**State Park hike. Moderate,** 8 1/2 miles. Wear your hiking costume and bring your broom stick for a walk on the more spirited trails of

Guntersville. We'll leave the Super Wal-Mart gas station parking lot (11610 S. Memorial Pkwy, HSV) at 8:30am. Also bring snacks, water, lunch, ghost stories and sturdy hiking shoes. Sandy Kiplinger, [sandykip@juno.com](mailto:sandykip@juno.com).

### Saturday, Oct 31 - Monte Sano

**Hike. Strenuous.** We will hike 10-12 miles around the west side of Monte Sano. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot on Bankhead Parkway at 8:00am. Bring lunch and water. Charlie Cohen, 837-3622 hm, 961-7901 wk.

### Sunday, Nov 1 - Hayes Preserve

**Hike. Easy.** Get out early and start your day with a hike to the Duck Weed Basin. We'll hike approximately 2 hours on level terrain. Meet at the Hayes Preserve parking lot (Hwy 431 South) at 8:30am. For directions or questions contact Michael Stewart, 256-656-5836 or [athikerstew@yahoo.com](mailto:athikerstew@yahoo.com)

### Tuesday, Nov 3, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet in Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Alan Greene, 534-7849.

### Tuesday, Nov 10, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet in Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Judy Burley, 883-4267.

### Tuesday, Nov 17, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Virgil DeStefano, 539-0348.

### Tuesday, Nov 24, 6:00pm -

**Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet in Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Michael Stewart, 656-5836.