

Mountain High Hikers Newsflash July 13, 2009

One Club, Many Parts

Toccoa Tubing Friday, July 17th

Want to escape the heat? Come tube the scenic Toccoa River in Blue Ridge. No skill required on this shallow, sunny river that snakes through the Aska Adventure Area. \$7 rents a colorful yellow tube and shuttle for a 2 hour float from Sandy Bottom to Shallowford Bridge.

We will leave from the Marathon gas station at Hwy. 515/60 in Blue Ridge at 1pm. Guests are welcome to join us for this summer experience. If you're running late, we will be at the Toccoa Outpost by Shallowford bridge on Aska Rd.

If you have your own tube and want to run your own shuttle, that's fine. Life jackets are required by DNR. Only kids under 8 have to wear them. The rest of us snap them on the tube.

If you have your own tube & life jacket and want their shuttle, it's \$5.

Bring hat, sunscreen, water shoes, water to drink and a change of clothes.

Listen to Bluegrass and enjoy a cook-out on the Sullivans' porch afterwards.
(H) 706-374-5281 (C) 478-361-1369

They're Baaccckkk! Yellow Jackets are here!

Dreaded Yellow Jackets , the little fellows that look like honey bees without the fuzz, are back and will be around until the first frosts of fall. Be alert and carry bee sting kits equipped with Antihistamines like Benadryl and sting eze products in an easy to reach place in your backpack. Persons with a known allergy to bee stings or those who have experienced a delayed reaction to a sting should always carry a physician prescribed epi-pen like product while in the backcountry and let fellow hikers know of your allergy.

If you're hiking with a person who is allergic to bees, get them to train you on how to use the kit too. A person complaining of difficulty in breathing, has slurred speech, has huge swelling around the sting site, seems confused, may be having an allergic reaction. Immediate medical care may be needed. Severe allergies to stings may cause anaphylactic shock and there should be no delay in preventing this type of deadly reaction.

If you have any questions, please be sure to talk with your pharmacist and/or physician to insure that you are protected. These little creatures may be the most dangerous thing encountered in the hiking community.



Trail Report

By: John Quinlan

"Thursday, 2 July once again saw an incredible number of motivated trail maintenance volunteers. Fourteen MHHers participated; the second highest number ever-only exceed by the turnout for celebration of National Trails Day. I am likely known as a bit verbose but I confess that I am running out of superlatives to describe these fantastic folks. The committment, dedication, and spirit is just superb! And I am not taking about one or two but each one! Each individual brings his or her talent along with a spectacular attitude. Each is more than willing to do what is asked and their whole attitude is simply "over the top". Thanks to one and all.

Workwise this day saw these 14 tackle various sections of the Chunky Gal Trail. We divided into three teams.

Richard "Chainsaw" Sullivan led team one, a "few good men" Bob Stone (our Marine makes me say that; anything for a few bucks Bob), Larry Zarefoss (who is to lead his future hike here), and Gary (Moon Hike Guru) Thompson from Bob Allison Campground North to the "Big Buckeye Tree"; then returning to assist another team coming from Tusquittee Gap.

Dave (Engineer) Richardson led our second team composed of Jack (Surveyor) Dugger, Bobbi Lehoullier (Newflash Editor and Publicity Chairperson-see recent articles in the local papers), and Darlene (Super Worker) Rothenay. This team departed from Tusquittee Gap and travelled South in the direction of Tate Gap with the goal of finishing up a section from a 5 March 09 trip. Dave also promised me that, since he envisioned getting back before I did, he would ensure the vehicles were taken back to meet us at Bob Allison thus avoiding a long shuttle; and then come up my way to meet and help us (Third team). Now let's talk dedication and the lengths Dave will go to keep his promise. After working hard South and uphill he realized that time was running out so he elected to complete his team's mission by himself!! And sent his three teammates back to help as he had said he would earlier that morning. All I can say is WOW! Mission accomplished and promises kept to assist others. Thanks Dave!!! This man gets the "Dedication Award" for the day; what a trooper and colleague.

The third team Bob (Chainsaw Swat) Lehoullier, Rod (Brushcutter Strongman) Whitefield, Steve (Geocache Searcher) Jersey, Jean (Most Trail Knowledgeable) Caputa, Tom (Mr. Pulaski and now Chief Equipment maintenance Corrdinator) Shope, and John (Humble Leader) Quinlan left Tusquittee Gap and went North for the "longest distance award" to Bob Allison Campground. Steve Jersey also brought his own brushcutter to supplement our equipment. Thank you Steve-it was a great help. This team was admirably assisted by the three from Dave's team and Richard's crew as they formed a combined group to come up South From Bob Allison to help the third team. In this effort Richard cut the biggest fallen tree of the day; great job as usual from Richard.

I want to single out Tom Shope for taking on the task as the Coordinator of Equipment Maintenance Activity. Thank you very much, Tom!

As it turned out each team, while on different sections of Chunky Gal, did the same type work: cutting out blowdowns, lopping much overgrowth, and brushcutting the vegetation encroaching into the treadway. Thank you to each; you all worked very hard, covering over 7 miles of trail and the **best news** is that all arrived back safely. I am proud of each one!"

Welcome New Members

Larry Cooper, Atlanta

Darcy Douglas, Atlanta

Kathleen Nolte, Murphy

Jean Boeggeman, Hayesville and Largo, FL

Publicity for Rim Trail

By Bobbi LeHoullier

Check out a recent article which appeared in The Smoky Mountain Sentinel on the front page. The same article also appeared in The Clay County Progress and is supposed to appear in The Cherokee Scout. So far, no pictures were run although I supplied several for consideration to each paper.

[Fires Creek Rim Trail receives grant | www.smokymountainsentinel.com](http://www.smokymountainsentinel.com) | [Smoky Mountain](#)

Apparel Coming to a "Trunk" Near You!

<http://wilderness.org/content/hooked-saving-north-carolina-forest>

Article posted by The Wilderness Society

Hooked on saving North Carolina forest



POSTED BY [BRENT MARTIN](#) ON JULY 2, 2009 - 1:20PM

A decade or so ago a friend suggested to me that instead of my normal spring backpack into my favorite north Georgia trout fishing hole that I instead try the [Fires Creek watershed in Clay County, North Carolina](#). I had seen the mountains that make up this magnificent watershed for years as I drove to various spots along the nearby Appalachian Trail for hiking, but knew little about access to the area, or developed trails. I took his word on it, borrowed a map, caught some great fish, and have been hooked on this wild roadless area ever since.

What I soon learned was that the [Fires Creek](#) watershed is within the largest inventoried roadless area in the state of North Carolina. Its 13,000 acres, known as the Tusquitee Roadless Area, was once part of a larger 17,000 acre roadless area, but was carved down to its current size by two decades of Forest Service road building and logging. Tusquitee, which in Cherokee means “land where the water dogs laughed,” is located in the [Nantahala Mountains](#) in the far southwestern corner of the state, and is a core part of a larger conservation area totaling over 100,000 acres.



The rich cultural and natural landscape of the surrounding area includes 15,000 acres of adjacent National Forest land, the Southern

Nantahala Wilderness, the [Boteler Peak](#), Cheoah Bald, and Wesser Bald roadless areas, and other important wildlands. It is in the heart of ancient Cherokee country, and to this day the region remains replete with Cherokee place names and cultural heritage sites.

One of my favorite trails in the area is the 26 mile long [Fires Creek Rim Trail](#), which traverses the unusual horseshoe shaped bowl of mountains, crossing over Tusquitee Bald, which lies at 5,240 feet. It is part of an extensive trail system that is heavily used by hunters, fishers, backpackers, and horseback riders, and which highlights the area's important recreational values.

Almost all of western North Carolina's national forests were logged at the turn of the last century, but 4,000 acres of verified old growth forest have been surveyed in the Tusquitee Roadless area. The area is currently managed as a bear sanctuary and as a North Carolina State Heritage Area, and is an important conservation area for neotropical migratory songbirds.

Threats abound with surrounding development on private lands, as well as potential road building and logging projects. With only 178,000 acres of inventoried roadless areas in the 1.1 million acres that make up North Carolina's Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest, and only 78,000 acres of designated Wilderness, the permanent protection of areas such as Tusquitee is critical. Further highlighting the need for protection is the 2007 Forest Service report, [National Forests on the Edge](#), which ranked the Nantahala-Pisgah fourth in the nation for threats from development on adjacent private land.

photos:

Stewartia in Fires Creek, North Carolina. Photo by Hugh Irwin.

Fires Creek. Photo by Hugh Irwin.

Tags: [forest](#), [Forest Service](#), [Forests](#), [Nantahala](#), [North Carolina](#), [Tusquitee Roadless Area](#), [Roadless Forests](#)
