



Mountain High Hikers Newsflash November 19, 2009

Trail Maintenance Meet Place Changed for November 19th

By: John Quinlan

The meeting location for the Georgia maintenance trip on November 19th has been changed to **the Dills Parking lot in Hiawassee at 8:45; or at Hardees Restaurant adjacent thereto.**

Updated Start time for Long Hike 12/8

The long hike for 12/8 **From Sandy Gap to Unicoi Gap on the Benton MacKaye Trail**, will now leave at **8:30am** instead of 9am.

SE corner of Hwy. 64 and 19/129 in, Murphy, NC. Due to the long travel and shuttle times we will need to leave a little early to get people back in time for that nights MHH Meeting and Elections. This is a Beautiful ridgeline walk along the NC/TN state line, with added attractions of seeing an old engraved stone marker on the ridge marking the state line, and "old" Doc Watson's TB sanatorium, in ruins, with rock walls over 3 stories high still standing, and ending at the historic Unicoi Gap in TN. If you have questions, please let me know.

Richard Sullivan 706-374-5281

Save the Date

Tuesday, December 8th Club Meeting and Election of Officers

The Holiday Covered Dish Dinner, Business Meeting and Election of Officers will be on December 8th at 6:00 pm at Sharp Memorial Methodist Church Fellowship Hall in Young Harris. The club will provide the traditional ham, turkey and drinks. Please contribute a covered dish to share. After all, our potluck dinners have a reputation as the best food in the mountain region!

Any questions contact:

Pam Sullivan

706-374-5281

Short Hike Change – Please Note:

From: George Jurand, Hike Chairman

December 22nd Short hike is changed to meet at Macedonia Baptist Church parking lot east of Hiawassee at 9:00. The hike that day will be from Helen to Unicoi State Park Lodge and return. It is rated as a B2 hike, an easy and scenic 5.6 mile roundtrip hike. Lunch at Lodge (bring your own or eat in the dining room. Carpool Amount \$5.00. Hike leader: Pam Sullivan 706-374-5281.

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Welcome New Members:

From: John Orr, Membership Chairman

Merle Flandermeyer
Bill and Melissa Sykes

Total members: 178

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Trail Maintenance Report

By: John Quinlan

"Wow; what a glorious day. The weather for our trail maintenance outing was just superb! The only thing to better it was the splendid attitude of nine volunteer members of our MHH team. Expecting a relatively easy day, I asked Dave Richardson and Don Chesbro to take the "easy" section at Fires Creek fully expecting that only 2-4 trees needed to be cleared from the Rim access trail where it intersects with the upper road (FS 6176) back down to Leatherwood Falls picnic area. I'll quote Dave's report so you can see how "easy" it turned out to be. 'We had a productive day on the Rim trail. Don C did a LOT of work, including with a hand saw [to conserve fuel] while I did the easy stuff like use the chain saw. The recent storms had put a LOT more trees down. We had to cut out 13 [yep, thirteen] trees on the road just to get in and even more on the trail; I lost count of the total # of trees we cut. . Several of the trees were large, up to nearly 2 feet in diameter and required multiple cuts. Ran low on fuel and oil at the end but got all but one of the blowdowns cut out. The one we did not cut out, we cut a partial step in so it is passable and safe.. The step is similar to the one that you and Steve cut into the tree a mile or so south of Tusquittee Gap earlier this year. The "step" tree is roughly half way between the upper and lower road crossings. I can get GPS coordinates to you later. This tree IS PASSABLE. Wanted to conserve our limited fuel and especially oil. ALSO, this tree is on a slope with a lot of air or open space under it so could be unsafe to cut out a section, i..e more steps may be the best answer. This tree does NOT warrant a special trip. Enjoyed (he really means it!) the day a lot. Leatherwood Falls was beautiful and a LOT of waterfalls not normally seen were visible from road on way up. Saw a couple of pig/ boar hunters walking in on road' they were nice guys and fun to talk with.' Well so much for "easy" Fully expecting this team to finish early, I was quite surprised to hear Dave call me from the trail at almost 3 pm still up on the trail.

The other seven went to Chunky Gal; we actually split up into two sub teams with Richard and Phyllis coming South from Perry Gap to rendezvous with the other group (Pam Sullivan, Jim Morgan, Bob Stone, Larry Zarefoss and John Quinlan). Enroute Richard had his hands full removing fallen trees with his chain saw ably assisted by Phyllis who helped clear and lopped overhanging branches too. Jim Morgan was one of our heroes of the day by driving his 4-wheel drive truck loaded with five of us plus a lot of gear up a rutted, grassy, wet and slick FS road. Part of the gear was as a result of Larry Zarefoss's magnificent effort to create four large, heavy-duty (made of 4x4s) trail signs which we carried (no small feat by itself) to place at the junction of the side trail to Boetler Peak (reading Boetler Peak Vistas), and two more at the top to

mark the path to a "Mountain View" and the other reading "Lake View". From the junction to the top Pam Sullivan cleaned and repainted the worn blazes with new bright orange paint. At the top while Bob and Larry dug in the signs Jim and John worked to improve the lake view by cutting several trees blocking the view (don't ask Jim about what it took to cut mine down!!) Phyllis and Richard joined us and she took some cool pictures some of which are on our web site. Richard went down into the "boonies" to assist Jim and John finishing up the needed cutting while Pam and what sounded like a group shouted directions down to us. Later that afternoon Richard, Larry, and Bob continued down the trail to the upper stairs to meet the other folks. Once again there was a large brushy tree that had fallen to remove from the trail. After all the work we enjoyed some cold refreshments along with cookies provided by Kathy Zarefoss. Thanks Kathy! All in all both groups had a wonderful day with much productivity to show for our collective efforts. These volunteers work so well together and team spirit is most evident. All pitch in and all work hard with a sense of accomplishment our reward. I did offer to "double their pay" though! My thanks to all."



Sign: Larry Zarefoss
Picture: Phyllis Loman
Cost: "Priceless"

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Love, Thoughts, and Prayers To:

Steve Jersey in the loss of his mother
Sue and Doug Reid
John "Chief Ten Bears" Bryant
Dorothy and Gene Roberts
