

Hiking & Canoeing News

October, 1992

HIKING

GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN (Scheduled for Saturday, October 10, 1992)

Leader: Phil Gibson (Phone: 615-247-7061) 6322

Rating: Moderate

The hike will be 6-10 miles, depending on the group. Children are welcome. Bring your hang-glider if you want to take a short cut back to the cars. The weather can change rapidly on the mountain. Because the property is privately owned there is a small usage charge. Fall colors should be near their peak in the mountains. Contact Phil Gibson at 247-7061.

THIRD SATURDAY TRAIL MAINTENANCE TRIP (Scheduled for Saturday, October 17, 1992)

Leader: Joe DeLoach (Phone: 615-753-7903)

Rating: Moderate

For the October third Saturday trip we will be working on reroofing one of the shelters along the AT in the Watauga Ranger District. We have received a grant from the Forest Service for shelter maintenance in this district and we plan to spend the October and November third Saturdays on shelter repair. At this time the shelter which will be worked on in October has not been decided; please call Ted Malone (477-2222), Ed Oliver (349-6668), or Joe DeLoach for details. We will meet in Colonial Heights in the parking lot between Burger King and McDonald's at 8:00 am, and if anyone wishes to meet in Johnson City be at the Burger King on South Roan Street at 8:30. Bring lunch, water, and work gloves; tools will be provided. Please let one of us know if you plan to help so we will have the proper tools and know you're coming. If we have enough volunteers we will also work on trail maintenance, either at No Business Knob or Doll Flats.

SAND CAVE (Scheduled for Saturday, October 24, 1992)

Leader: Eric Middlemas (Phone: 615-282-6987)

Rating: Moderate

The Sand Cave is an interesting geological formation located in the Cumberland Gap National Historic Park at the Tn/Ky/Va. border. This moderately difficult hike is about 4 miles long one way with a gradual but steady elevation gain. We will also visit the White Rocks overlook which, on clear days, offers spectacular, panoramic views. We will meet at 8:00 am at the Food Lion (not to be mistaken with Food City) in Gate City. Bring water, lunch, and appropriate clothing. Contact Eric Middlemas at 615-282-6987 for additional information.

CANOEING

TACCOA OVERNIGHTER (Scheduled for Sat.-Sun, October 10-11, 1992)

Leader: Rick Culbertson (Phone: 615-239-9795)

Rating: Class I-III

Please note the change in date. I had to change from Oct. 17-18 to Oct. 10-11 due to a trip to Memphis. The Taccoa River starts in Georgia and then changes its name to Ocoee when it gets to Tennessee. The total trip mileage is 18 miles. We will probably cover 8 miles the first day. Most of the trip has no road access and the scenery is great. Most of the rapids are I-II with a class III rapid (easily portaged) at about mile 17. We will leave Kingsport at 7:30 A.M. from the Colonial Heights Burger King. Pre-registration with the leader is required as we will choose an alternate river if the water level too low.

NOLICHUCKY GORGE FALL COLORS TRIP (Scheduled for October 17, 1992)

Leader: Dewey Fuller (Phone: 615-764-7340)

Rating: Class III-IV

This trip was originally scheduled for October 24. This is a class III-IV whitewater run through the spectacular Nolichucky Gorge. In mid October we should have a brilliant display of fall colors to add to the scenic beauty. Contact Dewey Fuller (615-764-7340) for trip details.

WATAUGA RIVER TRIP, (BELOW THE DAM) (Scheduled for Saturday, October 24, 1992)

Leader: Ed Montgomery (Phone: 615-357-8721)

Rating: Class II

This river offers cold fast moving class II whitewater with a mini-gorge section that is quite beautiful. I once had a close encounter with a mountain goat on this section and almost lost it. We will put in at the Hunter bridge and paddle to the old steam plant. This is a easy run and can be fun for all skill levels. We will meet at the Burger King in Colonial Heights at 9:00am and combine boats. This is a dam controlled river and we may have to alter our meeting time based on the generating schedule. Please preregister by calling Ed Montgomery at 357-8721. Plan to bring standard safety equipment, cold weather gear and lunch. This trip was originally planned for the Lower Noli on October 10, 1992, but the trip leader once again changes both the river and date in order to confuse paddlers.

NANTAHALA RIVER TRIP / GUEST APPRECIATION WEEKEND (Scheduled Sat.-Sun. (October 31-November 1, 1992)

Leader: Dave Ingram / Charlie Le Blanc (Phone: 615-245-6623)

Rating: Class II-III

This trip is purposely scheduled for this weekend so that people who plan to attend can paddle the Nantahala River Class II-III on Saturday and Sunday and also take advantage of the activities during the Guest Appreciation Weekend which is put on by the Nantahala Outdoor Center. The major event of the weekend is the used equipment sale that takes place on Saturday morning. On Saturday evening there is usually a dance and many other family/children activities scheduled over the weekend. The meeting time to paddle the river is 1:00 pm at the put-in. An early afternoon put-in has been scheduled so that people can attend the used equipment sale and can also have lunch before putting in on the river. The Sunday meeting time will be determined on Saturday based on the water release schedule. For the canoe trip, appropriate equipment as well as safety equipment (helmet, life jacket, throw rope, extra paddle, and baler) is necessary. For those who wish to camp on Saturday night there should be sufficient camping spaces available around the local area. Call Dave Ingram at 282-5856 or Charlie Le Blanc at 245-6623 to preregister.

FOR THE RECORD

FAMILY BACKPACK, AUGUST 1-2, 1992 (*Collins Chew reporting*) - Three adults and eight children really enjoyed the short backpack across the top of Roan Mountain. The weather was pleasant to cool and foggy. It was an ideal way to introduce the youngsters to backpacking in a short trip that didn't tire them but gave them a deep woods experience. One throughhiker (Mark) shared the Roan High Knob Shelter with us. Around the campfire, Jud and children told ghost stories and Mike gave a magic show. Attending were Mike, Drew (9) and Elizabeth (7) McGinn, Jud, Sam (8), and Emily (6) Barry, George (8) and Peter (5) Privon, and Collins, Matthew (14) and John (9) Chew. Several are already planning next year's trip and Mothers have promised younger siblings they could go soon.

NANTAHALA RIVER CANOE TRIP - August 20-22, 1992 (*Ed Montgomery reporting*) - We arrived at Lost Mine campground on Thursday evening (8/20) with rainy weather not far behind us. It rained that night and most of the weekend. We were lucky on the early bird special Friday run and had a fairly dry day except for the swims at Lesser Wesser (LW) and a couple of play spots. Molly had a very nice run at LW, Dale had his traditional collision with a lackadaisical LW surfer and Chad and Mary took a swim. Friday night the rain picked up and the Saturday run was all showers except for the boat loading at the take out. No swims on Saturday and a good wet time was had by all. Rick made a text-book LW run and caught the eddy on river left. Tracy (youngest & first time on LW) had a great day tandem paddling and may be ready for solo in the near future. Thanks to Brad for his river expertise on Saturday. It is rumored that Brad was a raft guide and canoe outfitter in a previous life.

This was not optimal camping weather and the camp wives complained a little. Rick reported that several stayed over for a Sunday run and it was also wet. Those enjoying a few days of wet paddling include Rick Culbertson, Tom "T" Pridgen, Brad Dayvolt, Bob & Shawn Tonnies, Mary & Dale Mathis Chad & Tracy Hoopingartner, Earl & Raymond Brown, Keith "Snake" Swift, Molly & John Teilhet, Cindy & Burchel Pierce and Ed "Brace" Montgomery. (Special thanks to the camp wives for their patience on this wet trip!)

HARE BRUSH - August 22, 1992 (*Darrol Nickels reporting*) The Unaka District (Erwin, Tenn.) of the Cherokee National Forest received a grant to improve the habitat of the New England Hare, *Silvalagus transitionalis*, on Beauty Spot. The Forest Service wanted to spend as much money as possible cutting brush, so they asked for volunteers to pile the brush to make dens for the rabbits.

Eleven of us, eager that Beauty Spot be bald but not hareless, piled the bare brush to make hare pens to afford protection from well know harriers such as owles, eagles, hawks, and falcons, all of the above are known for hare splitting. The hare brush is mounded into piles arranged in a zigzag pattern, a hare line with short spaces between adjacent piles. It seems that once a harrier spots a hare, he can make a hare trigger descent and perform a hare cut. The community of dens with easily traversed open spaces could be called a hare net. If this works, each den should soon have a harem of harebells.

Even in the harey weather, fog, cold rain, and high winds, we had combed Beauty Spot of all the available hare brush in a couple of hours. The Hare Brushers were Bill Berry, Dee Drinkard, Ray Hunt, Bob Miller, Gordon Newland, Darrol Nickels, Steve Perri, Hugh Thompson, Shelton Thompson, Paul Worsham, and Jack Young.

83-MILE MAINE/NH AT BACKPACK - August 28 - September 7, 1992 (*Gether Irick reporting*) - This hike started at Maine Rt 17, near Rangely, ME and ended at Pinkham Notch on NH Rt 16, crossing some of the most rugged terrain on the AT. Climbs over Old Blue, Bemis, Moody, Hall, Wyman, Baldpate, Old Speck, Goose Eye, Carlo, Success, Lethe, Carter and Wildcat Mtns. involved over 28,000-ft of vertical climbing and included many very steep descents down into the notches. All present agreed that this was the most rigorous section of the >90% of the AT we had hiked thus far. Mahoosic Notch, one of the two most-feared sections of the AT (along with the Kennebec River crossing), was exactly as advertised, namely 2-miles of house-sized boulders to climb over, under and around, but while exceedingly strenuous, this was actually a lot of fun. Climbing over one of the peaks of Goose Eye we encountered a near-vertical slab of granite that was not much fun...there were no hand or foot holds and it required lying prone on ones stomach, hoping to generate

To contribute an article or hike notice to the TEHCC News, contact the editor, Eric Middlemas, B-231, TED (Home Phone: 615-282-6987). All contributions should be received by the 12th of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter.

enough friction to permit crawling 75-feet straight up without falling off the mountain (one through-hiker had done so earlier and broken a few bones). While we were climbing gingerly down the wet rocks of Old Speck Mtn., we met a male specimen of the *humanus-crazyus* species jogging up the mountain and then running full-tilt back down, leaping over the rocks and ledges with a wild look on his face...we saw him again later that day grazing peacefully with his family at the bottom of the mountain. Temperatures were below 50 for the first 5 days and warmed into the upper 60's the last two days with beautiful views of the presidential range from Wildcat and Carter Mtns. Enjoying all or part of the 6.5 days of hiking and 2400 miles of driving was Don Baker, Emmett Dougherty, Owen Holbrook and Gether Irick.

NOTE - Owen's hike was cut short by the unexpected death of his father; Emmett also left early to take Owen to the airport and drive his car back to Bristol.

SOUTH BEYOND 6000 HIKE, SHINING ROCK

WILDERNESS - August 29, 1992 (*Joe DeLoach reporting*) -

August 29 turned out to be the kind of day that you always hope for when you plan a hiking trip. When the beautiful, October-like day was coupled with the scenery of Shining Rock Wilderness and good company you have all the ingredients for a great trip. Garry Luttrell, Lowell Toof, and Joe DeLoach headed down from Kingsport and were met by Zane Perry, a TEHCC member from West Virginia. Our goals were to reach the summits of Cold Mountain, Shining Rock, Grassy Cove Top, and Black Balsam Knob, four of the 40 peaks that comprise South Beyond 6000. Hikers strive to reach the true summits of each peak by challenging routes where minimum climbs and distances are required. We parked Zane's truck where the Art Loeb Trail crosses the spur road from the Blue Ridge Parkway and drove down to the Daniel Boone Scout Camp. The first 3 miles involved climbing through pretty woods to Deep Gap on Shining Rock Ledge. Once again the trip leader showed his skill in immediately heading off in the wrong direction and paid for it by stepping in a yellow jackets' nest (three stings). Trails within Shining Rock Wilderness are not marked or blazed. After lunch at Deep Gap we left the Art Loeb Trail for the Cold Mountain summit. Cold Mountain is infrequently visited and we had some difficulty finding the summit, once again due to the leader charging off in the wrong direction. However, it is a beautiful mountain with nice views and camping spots and we eventually found the benchmark at the top. We backtracked to Deep Gap and proceeded south along the Art Loeb Trail to Shining Rock. Shining Rock Gap at the base was overrun with Boy Scouts but some heavily used camping spots have been closed to allow them to rehabilitate. We walked up the Old Butt Knob Trail to the true summit, which is above the shining rocks that most people visit. The Art Loeb Trail no longer goes to Grassy Cove Top but we took the old trail to the top. From there we left Shining Rock Wilderness at Ivester Gap, which resembled a town meeting, and continued up the Art Loeb Trail to Black Balsam Knob. This was the highest point of the trip (6214') with magnificent views in all directions. We finally made it back to Zane's truck after about 15 miles of walking. It was a long day trip; we left Kingsport at 7:00 and returned near midnight, but the fantastic scenery of this highly recommended

area was well worth it. Our only regret was that we didn't have more companions to enjoy the hike. There are three other South Beyond 6000 peaks in the immediate vicinity that can be reached with shorter trips and TEHCC members are encouraged to come along!

SOUTH FORK NEW RIVER CANOE CAMPING -

September 5-6, 1992 (*Tom Pridgen reporting*) - The final week of preparation for this trip involved about 70 changes in plan but Saturday morning arrived and all important decisions had been made. Unfortunately, we had been unable to control the weather and on-again/off-again showers plagued us as 10 people and 5 canoes headed to North Carolina. We arrived at the river to find much more traffic (canoes) than we expected for such a soggy day. Apparently some people are just as foolish or headstrong as we!

The section of the river we paddled is designated wild and scenic - both federally and by the state of NC. In addition, NC has purchased some adjoining land and formed "New River State Park". The river is scenic but not wild. There are several houses, farms etc. along the banks but surprisingly little trash. I remember only one junked auto in the river and some of the residences were immaculately manicured. We also spotted several Osprey (or the same Osprey repeatedly).

We paddled through intermittent rain easily reaching our campsite (part of the State Park lands) by 3 pm. The rain let up long enough for us to set up camp and Bill Tindall's amazing self-draining dining fly offered us respite during the one 30 minute hard shower. Dinner was prepared with little rain and the weather improved from this point on - despite the visiting ranger's news that there was a flash flood warning until 4 am. Speaking of dinner, our group severely castigated Ed Montgomery for being so cruel to his children. Ed was eating on a "dinosaur plate" obviously designed for someone 30 years his junior. How many people will steal their own children's dinnerware? Disgusting! And we never did figure out what Ben Becker was drinking from his fuel bottle but we think it could have been used as fuel.

The camping area has only 8 campsites but they are huge (our group of 10 used only 3). The camping area in general is very nice. I tip my paddle to the NC state park system on this one. Others thought so also. The camping area eventually filled to near capacity. Considering the only access is by canoe (or walk in about 200 yards) and it was raining, this is a testament.

The river was ripe with novice boaters. Our group was one of very few who actually wore PFD's and the outfitters in the area do not even provide flotation in rental canoes. The State Park merely "recommends" that personal flotation be worn. Granted, it is all class I water with a few exceptions but it is nevertheless moving water. One neophyte couple discovered this in an expensive way after capsizing. The Tindalls helped them recover most of the outfitter's gear but their camcorder is somewhere on the bottom of the river. Later, as they paddled by the campsite they were still breaking every rule in the book - paddling alone, not wearing PFD's, no flotation....natural

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selection still at work.

The Tindall's also picked up more items from the river. What they originally thought to be trash turned out to be the hat that Judy Tindall needed. But that's not all! Ironically it was emblazoned with her alma mater - Syracuse University!

The trip leader awoke to the call of nature at 3:58 AM and was greeted by stars! The flash flood warning had broken two minutes early (HAHA). Although clouds rolled back in we were once again given a break while we prepared breakfast. The campers had been amazingly quiet (even Dave Ingram was able to sleep). Ed Montgomery for some reason had a rough night. It must have been guilt feelings about stealing plates from children. Nevertheless, we were on the water shortly after 9 and the clouds ultimately gave way to bright sun for our 17 mile day two. The water was up a little and the New has good current so we made good time and some arrived at the take-out before 3 PM. For future reference, I thought the last 5 miles we paddled was the most scenic - especially near the Alleghany County Access area (more of the New River State Park). Paddlers were: Ben Becker/Dave Ingram, Bill Tindall/Judy Tindall, Tom Pridgen/John Faust, Ed Montgomery/Steve Cook and Cindy Pierce/Burchel Pierce.