

Trail Talk

Armuchee-Cohutta Ranger District

September 2006



“ANNIVERSARY ISSUE”

Seventeen years strong – A small band of volunteers began working on trails in the Cohuttas in June of 1990. Now as we have entered our seventeenth year several hundred volunteers participate in our district programs annually. Thousands upon thousands of hours have been donated to our precious natural resources. Your first newsletter came out in December of 1990 and it has been a greater success than we ever could have imagined. But the fact is if it weren't for your hard work and dedication we would have little to write about. So “**Thank You**” for all that you continue to do. We continue to see new faces join us from time to time and we still have a number of “regulars” who have been with us for years, some as many as **15!** Whether you're someone who came out for one or two days during the year or one of those who are out several times a month we appreciate all of you. Our sixteenth Annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic is scheduled for Saturday, October 21st at Fort Mountain State Park. Invitations will be coming out soon. Now that most of the trail contract work is finished we expect the coming year to be a busy one for our volunteers.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS –

September 23rd – **Beech Bottom Campsite Rehabilitation** – 9 am at the Beech Bottom Trailhead. This will be a very important work day as it is related to the recent closure of the Beech Bottoms area to camping and fire use. If you are available let us know.



We look back at July to see who did what: **Bob and Shirley Poole** served as campground hosts at Lake Conasauga over three separate weekends... **Tom and Tannis Blackwell** began the swingblading project at Hemp Top Trail... **Debbie Crowe, Humberto Izquierdo, Sr, Bobby and Joanne Mitchell, Rick Moon, Jim McGarvey, and Larry Wheat** did weed, brush, and tree removal along the Pinhoti at John's Mountain... **Jeff and Linda Ridley** held the fort down at Lake Conasauga for a weekend... The annual swingblading job at Hemp Top saw **Mike Lancaster, Dave Long, Scott, Janet and Zack Jordan, Larry Wheat, Tom Owens, Jeff Krivo, Mark Schadl, Gail Milner, Charlie Crider, Jim McGarvey, Larry Jones, John Harris, Tom and Tannis Blackwell, Estes Dennis, Mary Ann Sellers, Amos Burrell, Jack Garber, Jim Bishop, Troy and Wanda Brown, Jim Cullen, Phillip Bradshaw and Helen Chamberlain** join district employees Mike Davis and Drew McCarley on a perfect day that saw us complete this remote section of wilderness trail... **Jim McGarvey** completed bushhogging a section of the Pinhoti Trail near Strawberry Mountain using his tractor... **Tom and Tannis Blackwell** began swingblading Rough Ridge Trail to close the month out. **Team Armuchee-Cohutta** cranked out 624 hours of work in July. Great job everyone!

August saw the return of **John Carey** to Lake Conasauga as campground host... **Troy and Wanda Brown, Amos Burrell, and Bob Korch** continued the swingblading on Rough Ridge Trail over two consecutive weekends... **Mark Voykovic** spent a day with Drew McCarley on a foot patrol of the Beech Bottoms area... **Troy and Wanda, Bob Korch, and Tom and Tannis Blackwell** began swingblading operations on the East Cowpen Trail. Volunteers were wearing out some swingblades in July and August. August saw 476.5 hours donated to the cause. Way to go folks!



"For me and for thousands with similar inclinations, the most important passion of life is the overpowering desire to escape periodically from the clutches of a mechanistic civilization. To us the enjoyment of solitude, complete independence, and the beauty of undefiled panoramas is absolutely essential to happiness."
Bob Marshall



It's been another solid year for safety. We appreciate your positive attitude in regards to safety.

Remember **Safety First** - We become that which we tolerate.

As always remember that for trail work hardhats and gloves are the norm. Be careful out there.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

In May of 1992 the district recruited a couple to help out as Volunteer Campground Hosts at the Lake Conasauga Campground. **Bob and Shirley Poole** have become an important part of that program since then. The Pooles have served well and done an awesome job as hosts over the past fifteen years. Often when we have been in a pinch for a host, especially on holiday weekends, they've always been there at a moment's notice. Individually they contributed over 2,500 hours each as campground hosts. Over the years they have seen almost everything happen that could happen at Georgia's highest lake. The last time they were up in late July they told me "we consider it a privilege to be here", so we think they still enjoy this volunteering thing. Always a joy to see, this month we celebrate our eldest TEAM Volunteers at 80 and 79 years young, **Bob and Shirley Poole**.



Upcoming events:

**October 21st – 16th Annual Armuchee-Cohutta Volunteer Picnic
Fort Mountain State Park, Chatsworth, GA
By Invitation Only.**

November 18th – To be announced.



Seasonal Wilderness Ranger Drew McCarley has left us for now as he has begun his studies at the Warnell Forestry School at the University of Georgia in Athens. He is doing well and as he told me recently he spends “every waking hour studying”. Drew did an outstanding job for us during his three years here and he will definitely be missed. We hope to see him as a full time employee for this agency down the road. Best wishes from the “TEAM” Drew!



District Volunteer Coordinator Mike Davis on the Caddo II Fire east of Abilene Texas. This is why we don't plan a lot of big trail events locally from mid- July to mid- September.