

THE MOUNTAINEER



Newsletter of the Georgia Mountaineers chapter of FMCA

JULY 16 - 19, 2008
HAPPY HOLIDAYS – CHEROKEE, NC
Unofficial Hosts: Whites, Swansons, Hardisons

Members camping: Jack & Chris White, Willard & Sue Swanson, Don & Lois Hardison, Charles & Rachel Bargainnier, Dean & Joyce Gilleland, Ken & Barbara Cook, Truett & Elaine Swanson, Earle & Jean Seaverns, John & June Huffman, Bob & Eva Bielemeier, George & Dorothy Silver, and Van Armstrong

Guests camping: 1st time: John & Diane Franklin from Lawrenceville, GA; Jim & Barbara Kobacker from Sky Valley, NC; and 2nd time: Sherold & Jean Salmon from Rome, GA; Carl & LaVerne Abbott from Kennesaw, GA; John & Carol Dubac from Ellijay. Both the Salmons and Abbotts have now joined our chapter. WELCOME to the Georgia Mountaineers.

Bobtailing and staying in a motel: Luke & Linda Callas, Herbie & Elinor Wilson. Also, Joe & Connie Gallagher spent the day on Fri. and went to dinner with us.

Wednesday, many had already arrived so we went to the Smokehouse BBQ & Creamery in Cherokee for a good buffet lunch then scattered for touring, visiting, playing at the casino, and preparing for our potluck sandwich at the club house, where we played Hand & Foot afterwards. Jack White welcomed and introduced all our guests.

Thursday, the majority of us went on a tour of the Big Cataloochee Valley in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This was a tour designed and conducted by Don and me at the request of several members. Although I was born in Maggie Valley, because my father became a Park Ranger in Cataloochee, we moved there when I was three. I showed the group where we lived, where our garden had been, our school, and other buildings that are still standing, and an overlook that Dad had insisted on being created. We even saw elk. My only regret is that the video in the museum had broken and no one got to see it. It has interviews with several of the former residents and is definitely worth the time to watch. (See the two emails on page three for more information on this trip). The round trip was approximately 60 miles. On the return trip to Cherokee, we ate dinner at various places then gathered at the clubhouse for more card games.

Friday, there was a lot of visiting in the cooler part of the campground (under the trees or awnings) before and after lunch. Dinner was at Smacker's Sports Grill (between Maggie Valley and Waynesville), where 34 of us enjoyed good food and service. Sue Swanson had gathered some information on Folkmoot USA and the majority went on to the performance at the Stompin' Ground in Maggie Valley, where folk dancers from ten countries performed in their native costumes. A good show, as usual. Folkmoot is an annual event and highly recommended especially for anyone who has never seen it.

Saturday, lots of relaxing and visiting took place between trips to Harrah's Casino, flea markets, and sightseeing. Lunch and dinner was varied from leftovers to local buffets. Music was provided by the campground's entertainers, playing instruments and singing at the pavilion outside, while we played Dominoes and Hand & Foot in the clubhouse.

Sunday, Danish and coffee were followed by devotional led by Jack White.

SUNSHINE REPORT

Van Armstrong received some very bad news while at Cherokee. His friend, Beverly, was expected to join him there. Here is a note from Van. Our hearts and prayers are with you all.

"Lois, it would be very nice of you to mention that Beverly was unable to meet me for the weekend as her oldest daughter was killed in Jacksonville, Fla early Wednesday morning. This was a terrible head on collision caused by a woman going the wrong way on I-95; she was also killed. Beverly could use a lot of prayers for her son-in-law who could lose his legs and her grandson who suffered a broken neck. I spoke to Beverly tonight and she sounds very tired however so far her grandson is responding well from the first operation and Scott goes in for surgery in the morning as they try to save his legs. Thank you Lois"....Van

Ken Earley: "Good news. Ken's cat scan showed no cancer anywhere else except the spine area. They need to do a biopsy, but don't want to put a needle in his spine unless they have to. So, he had a full body bone scan Friday. We hope to have those results Monday. They are thinking if there is a tumor on his hip or rib, they can biopsy that. If not, it's on to a neurologist and the needle in the spine. God is answering prayers. They aren't finding a primary cancer yet." Ken & Dea

Vance Boring: "Vance is doing better. He is off the antibiotic now and goes to the dr. tomorrow. We missed doing your trip. Had looked forward to that. We appreciate all the cards and calls." Phyllis

Larry Martin: "Went to see my Surgeon late afternoon and he has me scheduled for Jul 24 @ 10AM. He only does this type surgery on Thursday's and I tried to get him to squeeze me in this Thursday but he couldn't do it. He is just going to take the node out of the upper lobe on the left side along with my lymph glands. He gave us a whole bunch of variables because he said he couldn't tell much until he gets started on the surgery. For example, he said the surgery could take from 20 min to 3 or 4 hrs. I could possibly be released by Jul 29 (5 days). I also have a couple of nodes in my right upper lobe and as soon as I heal up; he is wanting to biopsy them because he doesn't like the looks of them; even though they didn't light up on my PET Scan. So we sit here and wait another week which is killing us. The surgery will be in the Redmond Hospital in Rome. Will keep you all updated." Love, Larry

Chuck Conner: "I am in Atrial Fibrilatipon again. I have started back on coumadin and they have me on too big a dose and blood is too thin at this time 5.6. They want it at 2.5 - 3. Otherwise I am feeling pretty good. Thanks for asking." Chuck

Lois Hardison
Corresponding Secretary – Newsletter Editor

Thursday's trip to Cataloochee (here are two emails I received about our trip):

Lois, I hope you will include this with the July newsletter for our Thursday outing. I know you won't toot your own horn, but you and Don deserve applause for this tour:

Words cannot express how much we (and I'm, sure I speak also for the group) enjoyed the caravan and picnic at Cataloochee Valley. I am sorry that those who were not there missed it and hope they will go sometime. I think some of us wished we could stay, at least until dark to see more of the wildlife.

The white rhododendron was in bloom, the weather was beautiful, we had a good crowd of 8 filled vehicles. Some saw two cow elk and a nursing calf. Others of us spotted only the rear of one in the trees, but we found a lot of real sticky evidence that they were nearby, (right Diane??? She thought it was bubblegum on her shoe.)

I think it was a first for us to picnic away from our own camp and that alone, under the huge trees in the beautiful grounds of the Palmer house, was a treat. The history lessons and you Lois, a local resident here when growing up, as our tour guide made it very special. The Hannah's (Lois' ancestors) may have been the first settlers in the valley, moving there in the 1830's . We visited her two-room school house and, where else is the world can you go thru 10 miles of gravel road, hit a paved double lane highway with yellow lines and all, and then find gravel road at the other end of it, too?? I heard that the US Parks Service was planning to build up the park from the center, started with the road, and met so much opposition from local folks that it was halted.

I won't go into more of the wonderful history of the place here, for I think this might become an annual treat and I don't want to spoil it for those who are putting it on their calendar for next time.

Lois and Don, it was outstanding!!! Hugs and Kisses.....

Linda Callas

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The tour of Cataloochee was great and caused me to think of the great times I had growing up on a farm in Mississippi, also some problems.

We lived with drafty houses, Outhouses (toilets), no electricity, wood for heat and cooking, wells with hand pumps for water, mules and horses for plowing and riding and wagons for transporting goods.

One of my thoughts on the road in was how you got heavy loads in and out of the valleys, we had a farmer with a team of oxen at the top of a bad hill who would come down the hill and hook his team to your wagon and help your team pull it up the hill he also kept poles available to lend you to put under your wagon through the spokes of the rear wheels to lock them to help get a heavy load down the hill. I can't imagine this with the distance you had to travel.

It was a great tour and brought back many fond memories.

John Huffman