

# FEATURES

## RETREAT

(continued from page 2)

are aware of Pulaski, a type of rake which several had never heard of, and feel that they should follow their guide up the mountain.

"Some parts of the trail were very narrow and I was afraid I was going to fall off the mountain," said Janine Lankford of Spruce Pine.

"At many points the branches were at eye-level," said Tripp Green, from Greenville, S.C. "So I went ahead with a hand ax and knocked the branches back. Fortunately there were not any snakes hanging from the bushes," he added, with more of a grimace than a grin.

Although many had concerns about snakes, bees were the main problem. Richard Hoffman, professor of political science and assistant to college president, was stung several times. David Brackens, of Ledger, was chased by bees when he accidentally disturbed a nest. But he escaped uninjured. One bee flew up the pants leg of Bobbi Jean Harrel, of Bostic; she came to attention very quickly, but handled the situation well.

Divine intervention was frequently called for: "Lord, take me away from here!"

One young lady sat down on a rock, not caring if there were snakes underneath or bees above, and said, "I'm not going any farther." But after a few jokes, some encouraging words and several smiles, she continued on.

The last day the group worked on campgrounds, digging a new campsite and painting picnic tables. "Shoveling the rocks was not one of the easier jobs, so the guys got stuck doing that," said Phil Turner of Raleigh.

"Painting the tables was probably the easiest job I did, but it ruined my jumper," said Ronda Evans, through gritted teeth. "If it hadn't rained," said Harrel, "it wouldn't have been so bad. I had to re-paint a whole table!"

"There are several purposes for the retreat. One is that it creates a bond among the scholars," said Tom Plaut, professor of sociology and coordinator of the retreat.

"At the beginning the students do not know each other but by the last day they do. They have lent a helping hand to one another when it was difficult to take the next step up the mountain and seen each other at their low points," Plaut said.

"It also makes the freshmen

more sensitive to different people's needs. If someone thought physical labor was beneath them, their outlook has probably changed. They respect the people who do this type of work."

"It helps each person see his or her own capabilities. They do things they previously thought they couldn't. This also helps train them for the classroom. Many courses they take will require the scholars to put forth an all-out effort, just like climbing a mental mountain," Plaut said.

"And it gives students the opportunity to see the beauty of the area and see the needs of the people," he said.


Many said they had never done manual labor before -- they have now. "My body felt as if I had been whipped and drug over that mountain," said Asheville's Lynn Miller.

But all the scholars had a common comment at the end of four days in the mountain wilderness: "I can't wait to get in a hot shower!"

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## CRICKET STREET

