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Trail Bikes Threaten Public Lands In North Carolina

By Jim Dean

A significant and disturbing change is being wrought on the public lands of this state, particularly in western North Carolina, and the near wilderness quality of these lands is seriously threatened.

No, it's not pollution or forest fires. It's not encroaching development. It's not anything that anyone is likely to suspect, and certainly nothing anyone would have predicted a decade ago.

The culprit is the motorized trail bike--or more accurately, the people who are using them.

VISIT TO PISGAH FOREST

On the first weekend in June, a friend of mine and I took my eight-year-old son Scott into the Pisgah National Forest to camp and fish. For weeks prior to the trip, Scott could hardly sleep.

"Are we really going to hike back into the wilderness like Daniel Boone and see all those creeks and everything?" he asked not more than a couple of dozen times.

"You bet," I told him. "Do you think we might see a deer?" he asked excitedly.

"I wouldn't be at all surprised," I told him, and I was telling the truth.

When the long planned-for trip finally materialized, we packed up our camping gear and headed west on a Friday evening. We camped out that night and got up early the next morning to hike into a rugged trail. Scott was so excited he couldn't even tie his shoes.

TRAILS ARE ERODED

When we arrived at the trail, we parked next to the road and began to walk. I was surprised to see how badly rutted the trail had become in a few short months. In place, it was little more than a quagmire, and every few hundred yards, you

could see where new trails had been cut by spinning wheels up and down the side of the mountain. The rain had washed them badly, pushing silt down the slope to the stream.

We walked for about two miles before Scott said anything. "What caused all these other trails?" he asked finally.

"People riding special kinds of motorcycles," I told him. "Why?" he asked.

"I guess it's because it's fun," I said.

BIKERS SCOURGE HILLSIDES

We spent most of the day up that trail, walking a total of about five or six miles. It could have been a very nice experience. Instead, after the first hour, we were never out of hearing of the persistent buzz of trail bikes. We actually saw 18 trail bikes during the day, and that was probably not an accurate total since we heard many pass while we were off the trail.

The hills were alive with the sound of trail bikes.

At one point, some idiot drove a trail bike into the creek behind us and came roaring up the middle until he was right in the pool below us. His bike finally flooded out in mid-

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Bloodmobile To Visit Here

Sponsored by the Yancey County Rescue Squad, the Bloodmobile from the Asheville Regional Red Cross Blood Center will be in Burnsville on Wednesday, June 26. It will be operating at the Armory from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Blood is still urgently needed for Mitchell, Avery and Yancey, the three counties served by the Mayland Red Cross Chapter. A quota of 100 pints has been set.



Herb Allen, Teacher, And Tony Eubanks



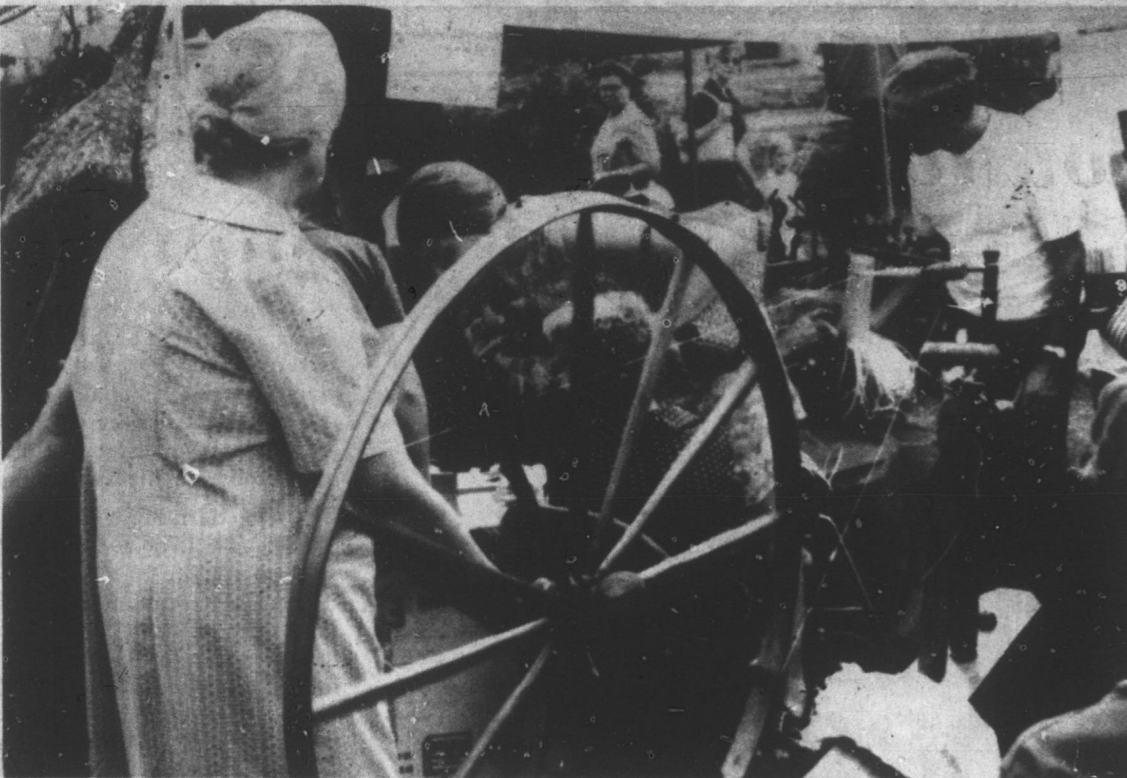
William Long, Royce Hunter, David Gibbs, Randy Crowder

East Yancey FFA Places First

Members of the East Yancey Future Farmers of America organization won first place in major events at the 46th State Convention held at Scott Pavilion in Raleigh, on June 12, 13 and 14th. The Tool Identification team scored consistently high to edge some 40 Federation team winners in the Agricultural Tool and Material Contest. Receiving a plaque and a check for \$100 were the following members: William Long, David Gibbs, Royce Hunter and Randy Crowder.

In the Public Speaking contest, Tony Eubanks amazed the entire assembly with his forceful delivery of his own prepared speech, "The Remarkable American Farmer". Tony received the state trophy and a check for \$100 and will represent North Carolina in the Tri-state Contest to be held in Virginia during July. He is a part time announcer at WKYK in Burnsville.

In related events, two members, George Powers and Tony Eubanks received the coveted State Farmer Degrees with George Powers also receiving a \$30 check and plaque for outstanding work in Farm Electrification from Carolina Power and Light Company.



Crafts, Entertainment Featured At Fair

Work has begun on the 18th annual Mt. Mitchell Crafts Fair, sponsored by the Yancey County Chamber of Commerce and scheduled for August 2-3 on the Town Square, Burnsville. There will be many craftsmen from Yancey, surrounding mountain counties, other places in North Carolina, and several other states who will show their handmade crafts and actually be doing craft work along with selling in the two-day event which attracts hundreds of people to Burnsville. Opening on Friday morning, the Fair will end late Saturday. During both days there will be entertainment, games, and refreshments. A bicycle race is being planned, along with buttered corn-on-the-cob. The traditional chicken barbecue will be on Saturday when well over a thousand barbecued chicken plates will be sold to hungry fair-goers. Along with the Fair will be the 7th annual Yancey Youth Jamboree, also sponsored by the Yancey County Chamber of Commerce and presenting folk music, singing, and dancing staged by Yancey County young people of school age. The Jamboree will begin in the auditorium of East Yancey High School on Thursday night, August 1 and will run again on Friday night, August 2.



Vo-Ed Grant Announced By Taylor

Congressman Roy A. Taylor Wednesday announced the approval of a \$390,600 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to aid in the construction and equipping of the vocational wing to the new Consolidated Yancey County High School in Burnsville.

The new facility will enable the County to consolidate their two present high schools into one school of 825 students. The existing two vocational curriculums will be consolidated and expanded into 50 vocational/occupational sub-courses which will be taught in 10 major curriculum areas. The project will include \$128,000 worth of equipment for the vocational courses.

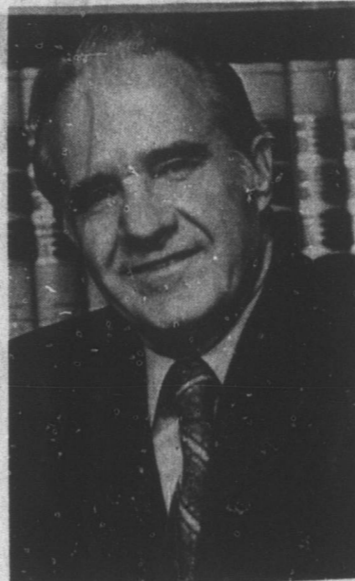
The total cost of the construction-equipment project will be \$706,700. Local resources will supply \$226,700 and Vocational Education Act of 1968 funds of \$89,400 will round out the funding program.

Special Song Service Here

There will be a special song service at Covey Rock Free Will Baptist Church, Green Mountain, N.C. on Sunday night, June 23, at 7:00 p.m. according to pastor Rev. Holt Herrell.

The "Covey Rock Church Youth Choir", Little Lesia Joe Potter of Bakersville will be featured as will the "Gospel Tones" of Marion; the "Silvers Chapel Trio" from Bandana; the "Walsh Family" from Elizabethton, Tenn.; the "Laws Quartet" from Green Mountain; the "Rainbow Quartet" from Radio Station WMBS, Black Mtn.; the "Gospelaire Quartet" from Spruce Pine.

Also there will be a Bible School program Sunday morning, June 23 at 11 a.m. The theme is "Good News for Jesus", under the direction of Mrs. Holt Herrell. Everyone is invited to attend both of these services.



Roy A. Taylor

Council Plans Community Center; Needs Local Support

A special meeting, sponsored by the Yancey County Council will be held Thursday, June 20 at 7:30 p.m. in Room 3 of the Courthouse. The subject of this meeting will be planning for a Multi-Purpose Community Center for this county.

The need for such a center to hold meetings and activities is felt by every group and agency in this county; the need for a place to go for socialization and recreation is felt by every citizen, according to a report by Shirley Anne McAllister,

Chairman of the Council. A member of the Resource Mobilization and Planning Staff

Flea Market

The Women's Organization of the First Presbyterian Church will sponsor a Flea Market Sale on the parking lot of the church on Saturday, June 22 from 10:30 to 4:00 p.m. The public is invited to come by and see the fine collection of "treasures" and "fleas".

of W.A.M.Y. Community Action will meet with the group to hear ideas and to share with them the work she has already done towards raising money for this important project.

Local community support is vital at this time, says Miss McAllister. Foundations and State and Federal agencies who will be approached for funding must see local support before they will give theirs. If you are interested in your county and community, you are urged to be present at this meeting.



Yancey Men Receive Awards

The Division of Highways of the North Carolina Department of Transportation presented awards recently to six employees of Division 13, Yancey County, for their combined 145 year service to the State of North Carolina. Mr. Joel Mashburn, Division Personnel Officer, presented 20 year awards to Wilbur Burdett Carroll and

Fred Harvey Phoenix. Byrd Metcalf, Charlie H. Miller, and Frank Black were presented 25 year awards. Troy J. King was honored for his 30 years of service. Pictured (left to right) are, Mr. Mashburn, Wilbur Carroll, Fred Phoenix, Byrd Metcalf, Charlie Miller, Frank Black, and Troy J. King.