

More than 20 people joined the Carolina Canoe Club team on the Haw River Cleanup on Saturday, March 11.

This year, the club fielded crews from Chicken Bridge to Robeson Creek on land as well as water. We picked up at least 30 bags of trash, tires, scrap metal and other odds and ends.

In addition to finding four basketballs, many tennis balls and two softballs, Joe Berry said he "saw the biggest water snake in my life. Did a quick reverse boof of around 4 feet."

He spent four hours on the river between Bynum and U.S. 64 with Jeffrey and Sophie Hatcher and Mark Hoffman. They also paddled with Lynn Featherstone for part of the trip.

Joe added that he missed the correct channel for the U.S. 64 takeout. Again.

Matt Daniels and his wife Meg collected four bags of trash along the banks between the Bynum bridge and the U.S. 15-501 bridge. Their most unusual find was a 20-foot long, 5-inch diameter tanker truck hose. Sounds like the perfect accessory for Joe's giant snake!

Larry Ausley, Nancy Guthrie, Kurt Mckissick worked with HRA members and students near the Robeson Creek Canoe Access on Jordan Lake. This group cleaned both banks from the access to Gabriel's Bend. The CCC members contributed four bags, two tires, and a metal cooler to the total of 12 bags everyone had from the lower. Nancy and Larry added another three bags of trash from the area near the U.S. 64 access.

Bobby Simpson, Gil and Cheryl McNeill, Peter Anderson, Jeff Sailus and Brian helped a land-based group that worked upstream of the Bynum Dam. They collected 12 bags, three tires, some scrap metal, a grill top and a waterlogged PFD. This crew also helped clean up a small encampment that included a plastic swimming pool.

The paddlers also found several balls, including a Duke basketball that was presumably thrown in the river after the UNC game, Jeff said.

Alycia Hassett, Don and Madeline Bunch and I collected seven bags of trash, a fishing pole, scrap metal, a sign, a couple of tires and six feet of twisted rebar. I spooked one snake, while Don and Madeline discovered a few more in the water.

True to form, I flipped my canoe just upstream of the Bynum Bridge after running a two-foot drop backward. It looked like a yard sale for a few minutes, but Don and Madeline helped me recover most of the trash and gear. Too bad we don't have video!!

Thanks go out to the following paddlers:

Bobby Simpson
Gil and Cheryl McNeill
J. Mark Hoffman
Matt Daniels
Meg Daniels
Don and Madeline Bunch
Jeff Sailus
Ryan Gillespie
Craig Mackinnon
Jeffrey and Sophie Hatcher
Alycia Hassett
Larry Ausley
Nancy Guthrie
Kurt McKissick
Joe Berry
Peter Anderson
Scott Driscoll
Lynn Featherstone
Brian (??)

Special thank you goes out to Joe Jacob who provided six canoes for the effort. Joe runs the Haw River Canoe and Kayak Co. of Saxapahaw. The annual event is sponsored by the Haw River Assembly.

Bob Brueckner