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Cherokee Programs Offered at Brasstown Bald Recreation Area

Brasstown Bald Recreation Area, GA – Mark Warren, owner and operator of Medicine Bow Wilderness School in Dahlonega, GA, will be teaming up with local nonprofit FIND Outdoors to give an intimate talk entitled *Through the Eyes of the Cherokee* on July 26 and August 15 at Brasstown Bald Recreation Area.

FIND Outdoors, a 47-year-old nonprofit based in Pisgah Forest, NC, manages Brasstown Bald through a special use permit with the US Forest Service and holds a mission of education and recreation through local partnerships and community involvement. Executive Director Natalie Britt explains, “We are thrilled at the chance to expand our educational opportunities at Brasstown with Mr. Warren. The site is so steeped in Cherokee history and these stories need to be told and understood by our visitors.”

Mr. Warren has been teaching wilderness survival skills as practiced by the Cherokee to thousands of students for more than 45 years and believes today’s society can learn some valuable lessons and skills from the Cherokee people. “While these native people led lives of daily interaction with their natural surroundings,” Warren comments, “most folks today have reduced nature to a backdrop of scenery.”

Warren owns and runs Medicine Bow Wilderness School in the Southern Appalachians of Dahlonega, GA where he teaches nature classes and primitive skills of the Cherokee. He has taught survival courses to thousands of schools and groups all over the Southeast and as far southwest as the Rio Grande in Big Bend National Park, northwest to Washington State and to St. Croix Scenic River Park in Minnesota. He has also taught a special course on survival/nature at Young Harris College as an adjunct professor.

Warren has written extensively for regional and national magazines including Blue Ridge Highlander, Mother Earth News, North Georgia Journal and Georgia Backroads. He has also authored a set of books on nature and primitive survival skills called “Secrets of the Forest” which will be available for sale and signing after the event.

Through the Eyes of the Cherokee will be an easy walk through the forests surrounding Brasstown Bald to learn about the gifts of nature that supplied the Cherokee with their everyday needs. Warren explains, "The great deficit in this scenario is our lack of understanding that we still depend upon nature. That dependency is largely hidden from us." With a little imagination, participants will take a step back in time to pre-Columbian days to gain a greater understanding about the crafts and lore of Cherokee life, including the use of wild plants for food and medicines.

When asked about the importance of learning about the Cherokee connection to nature, Warren exclaimed, "...Air to breathe, water to drink, energy to consume for our daily actions. These are commodities that are easy to take for granted. If taken for granted, humans will have no reason to respect and conserve the pieces of the puzzle we call ecology."

Talks will be held on July 26 at 1:00pm and August 15 at 11:00am at Brasstown Bald Recreation Area outside of Hiawassee, Georgia. Pre-registration is required for this very special event and the cost is \$5.00 per person in addition to the gate fee to enter Brasstown. Please visit www.cfaia.org to pre-register or call Brasstown Bald for more information – 706-896-4137.

About FIND Outdoors

FIND Outdoors, formerly Cradle of Forestry in America Interpretive Association, is a 47-year-old 501(c)(3) nonprofit headquartered in Pisgah Forest, NC at the entrance to Pisgah National Forest. FIND's mission promotes educational, recreational and interpretive opportunities about forest and water resources, natural history, and the Cradle of Forestry in America. FIND Outdoors serves approximately 800,000 visitors each year with over 150 educational and recreational programs, special events, and tours. It manages 21 recreation, education and camping facilities in North Carolina, Georgia and Indiana; offers to the public environmental education programs and forest-related gifts, educational books and other resources; and provides partnership opportunities for the health, safety and education of all forest users on local and regional public and private lands. Learn more at GoFINDOutdoors.org.