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BMTA Officers 2017-2018

President:	Tom Keene
Vice President:	George Owen
Secretary:	Joy Forehand
Treasurer:	Margaret Meadows
GA M/C:	Barry Allen
TN/NC M/C:	Vacant
Smokies Coord:	Larry Dumas
Hiking Director:	Ken Cissna
Store:	Ken Cissna
Membership:	Darcy Douglas
Publicity:	Jeff DePaola
Conservation:	Dave Ricker
Past President:	Bob Ruby
Newsletter:	Kathy Williams
State Rep GA:	Bob Cowdrick
State Rep TN/NC:	Rick Harris



BMTA Headquarters



President's Column

Super Summer for the BMTA and Why We Do It!

Let's start with why we do it! Hat-tip to Bob Ruby who spotted this testimonial from thru-hiker TrailPilgrim at Trailjournals.com:

What I learned – [the BMT] is a GREAT trail. The tread is the same as the AT. The people who keep this trail up to that standard are amazing. They don't have the budget, marketing or the numbers to maintain such a trail, but they do... Give them praise for their passion. You really need to hike this trail. It is a BETTER experience than the crowded AT.... I met 30 people in 287 miles! On the AT I met that many on the first night. You don't have to walk with the herd if you are truly interested in wilderness!

The BMTA's Busy Summer

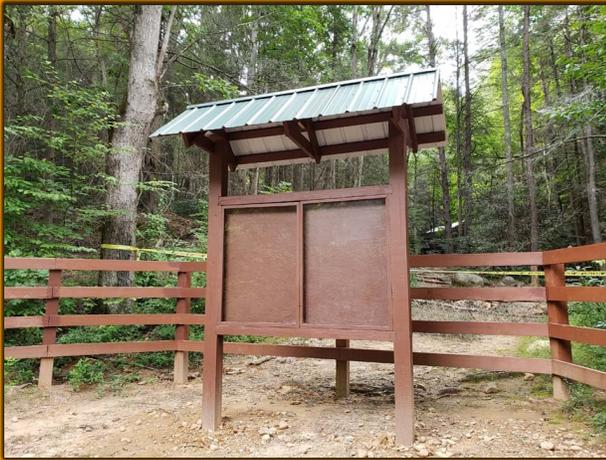
It's been a busy - and very productive - summer for the BMTA. I'll provide a quick rundown here, but check out the remainder of this newsletter for the details - and lots of great photos.

The Nominations Committee produces a slate of officers for 2019.

OK, it's routine stuff, but locating capable and willing folks to handle the association's back-office work, including coordination of our numerous activities, is vital. On page three this year's NomComm, chaired by **Ken Cissna**, offers a slate of officers for your consideration. Per our bylaws elections will be held at the annual meeting (Coker Creek Village, Nov. 3); additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time. Thanks to the NomComm members for their contributions to pulling this fine list together and special thanks to all the nominees for their willingness to serve the association as officers next year.

Continued next page

FBF Kiosk completed; Maintainer Recruitment Day at FBF – September 22



Larry Dumas has now completed construction of the new information kiosk at the entrance to the Fall Branch Falls approach trail. As you can see it looks terrific!

And what better way to put the newly completed FBF reroute and kiosk on display than a BMTA special event!

With an eye on future maintenance needs (manpower, tools, etc.) the Publicity Committee proposed holding Maintainer Recruitment Day at the Fall Branch Falls trail head, the most recent long-term project completed by BMTA. Thanks to the diligent work of the **Publicity Committee, Dave Ricker** and others, the Forest Service approved the proposal!

BMTA's festival tent will be at the FBF trail entrance all day Saturday, September 22. With large crowds expected, we hope some of the visitors will decide to join the ranks of BMTA maintainers.

For this event to be successful, BMTA needs volunteers to staff the tent / represent BMTA at the kiosk / and be ready to answer questions at the viewing platform for the falls.

So, come on out and join the fun! Walk the beautiful new approach trail and see the falls during a great time of year ... and ... Volunteer to Help! **To volunteer, contact Joy Forehand, jwfbgrg AT gmail.com.**

TN-NC Update:

July Work-Trips Assault the Heart of Darkness

SECC Crew Clears Blowdown Backlog Between Haeo Lead and Yellowhammer Gap

Two articles this month from **Barry Allen** and **Dick Evans** detail the tremendous progress made this past month in two key areas in TN and NC where the BMT has suffered from major maintenance backlogs. Huge thanks to Barry and all those who answered his call for volunteers (many of whom drove five hours or more to the work trips. Meanwhile Dick played a key role in coordinating arrangements for and personally assisting the Southeast Conservation Corps group that did fantastic trail clearance work farther north.

Don't miss the article on page 17 by **Darcy Douglas**, describing the fine work of the Blaze Team she has pulled together. I can testify to the quality of their work. On a recent walk through my own section I was enjoying the beautifully refreshed blazes when I came to the point where the blaze crew had apparently ended work for the day. See the two photos to appreciate the contrast between my old and shabby blaze and the blaze team's crisp, clean diamond with proportions as perfect as the Parthenon!



The Blaze Team is recruiting! Check Darcy's article to join the fun!



And then there was one....

I am sorry to report that the Cherry Log Creek covered bridge that first greeted hikers (and drivers) coming into the Sissons' Cherry Lake community off GA515/US76 is no more.

Significant ongoing maintenance costs and difficulty accommodating large vehicles doomed the bridge, one of two covered bridges in the log home development that the BMTA has crossed for more than a quarter of a century. The new concrete bridge looks good, and we certainly appreciate that the Sissons have set aside a path across it for hikers.

Still, it's sad to see the old bridge go. At least the second covered bridge, about two miles trail-north at Indian Rock Lake, is still looking great.

BMTA Nominating Committee for 2019 Officers

Working Table

Nominating Committee Members:

Ken Cissna (chair), Joy Forehand, Debra Guhl, Phil Guhl, George Owen, Dick Evans, Tom Keene (ex officio)

Position	2018 Holder	Yrs. In Service	Nominee for 2019
President	Tom Keene	2	Barry Allen
Vice President	George Owen	1	Joy Forehand
Secretary	Joy Forehand	5	Clare Sullivan
Treasurer	Margaret Meadows	1	Margaret Meadows
GA Maintenance	Barry Allen	4	Phil Guhl
TN/NC Maintenance	None	0	John Zardis
Smokies Coordinator	Larry Dumas	1	Larry Dumas
Membership	Darcy Douglas	1	Darcy Douglas
Publicity	Jeff DePaola	1	Jeff DePaola
Conservation	Dave Ricker	1	Dave Ricker
Hiking	Ken Cissna	2	Ken Cissna
Past President	Bob Ruby	2	Tom Keene
State Rep: GA	Bob Cowdrick	1	Appointed by '19 Pres
State Rep: TN/NC	Rick Harris	5	Appointed by '19 Pres
Newsletter Editor	Kathy Williams	N/A (4)	Appointed by the Board

July Work Report

by Barry Allen with photos courtesy of Larry VanDyke

The Heart of Darkness. Two Work Trips. 55 Volunteers. Eight and a Half Miles. Four Timber Rattlers. And a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

July was quite a month for Benton MacKaye trail volunteers – those residing both in Georgia and Tennessee. The section of trail we chose to work is a notoriously difficult section of trail, called the Heart of Darkness by many in the Association. Hard to access and hard to work, Section 16 straddles the state line between Tennessee and North Carolina. In fact, the genesis of this section of the BMT was a hiking path called the State Line Trail in old Forest Service literature. Even 40 years ago, people were warned that the State Line Trail “was a remote and poorly maintained trail.” Every possible way of working this section has been tried. None are easy. The only way that makes sense is to clear the entire section with a lot of people and a lot of hard work. With two long, tough trips in July, the Benton MacKaye Trail Association did exactly that. Twenty-six volunteers on July 14th and 29 more on July 28th. I can honestly say the Heart of Darkness is now the best looking continuous 8.5 miles of trail on the entire BMT.

It wasn't easy. On July 14th, volunteers cleared about 3.5 miles of trail south from Sledrunner Gap and another 1.5 miles north from Sledrunner Gap – plus half a mile of trail from Beaverdam Bald. (The trail from Beaverdam isn't part of the BMT but is the only access point to the trail for miles). This is tough trail, with the true test of character saved for the hike out at the end of the day. Every one of the volunteers was oozing character, because they all made it out. One foot in front of the next. Four hundred feet of elevation gained in the last half mile up Beaverdam, and that seemed easy after a couple of other uphill stretches.



July 14 Work Crew.

Two weeks later, 29 people returned to finish the job. At least 12 of the 29 volunteers were repeat offenders - folks who decided they didn't get their fill of trail clearing two weeks before. Joining with volunteers who were new to this section, we managed to finish the final three miles of clearing by about 2:00 in the afternoon, with two teams of blazers working until after 4:00 to mark the fresh trail.



July 28-Team 1 Beaverdam Bald to Sandy Gap.



July 28-Team 2 Sandy Gap crew.



July 28-Crew was welcomed by this Timber rattler.



Thanks to you all. It is hard to single out individuals from among 55 volunteers on two trips. But I want to mention three names: Phil Guhl, Josh Pater and Bob Cowdrick. Phil not only worked both events, but he scouted trail and driving routes for both events. Phil made four trips to the work sites including the two work events. Bob Cowdrick and Josh Pater were the distance volunteers on both events. Bob worked with brush-cutters on the first trip and chainsaw on the second. Finally, Josh Pater brought his family to help on the first event and a young friend named TJ Pitts on the second trip. For two consecutive trips, Josh pushed out hard with brush-cutters and was a big part of ensuring we completed the entire section of trail to Sandy Gap. Everyone working these two hard events was indispensable – and don't think I didn't notice those who showed up for both trips – Dave and Sue Ricker, Larry Dumas, Larry Van Dyke, Dale Clark and Cary Page.

What a great group of volunteers we had on two dates in July!

Trail Clearing in Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness

by Dick Evans

Thanks to the US Forest Service this summer the Benton MacKaye Trail was selected to receive the assistance of a Trail Clearing Crew from the Southeast Conservation Corps (SECC), from Chattanooga, Tennessee. SECC is a publicly funded organization connected to AmeriCorps which hires summer crews to perform a wide variety of conservation projects in the area. Crew Members selected get a stipend, plus funding for further education while learning a variety of skills for natural resource protection.

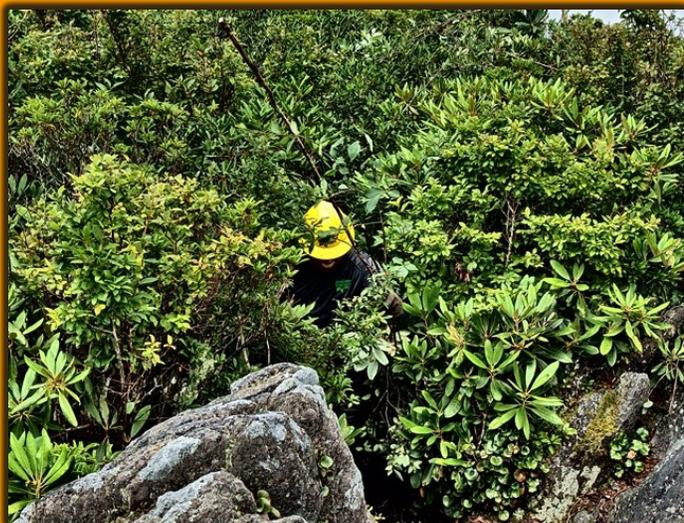
The BMTA hosted Crew #939, consisting of two co-leaders and six workers, for a total of eight. They work a nine day "hitch" of 80 hours in two weeks, with a rest period of five days between hitches. They spent four "hitches" in the Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness, clearing, brushing and maintaining the BMT between Haeo and Yellowhammer Gap. As BMT hikers know, this stretch of 7.2 miles is heavily overgrown with Rhododendron and briars, plus more than 70 fallen trees along the route.

The first two hitches, the crew camped at Big Fat Gap and worked the trail between Big Fat Gap and the Haeo and Hangover. Water diversions were added in many areas to help control drainage as well as extensive clearing of the brush. Comparing the "Before" and "After" photos shows the tremendous work that was done to clear this area requiring over 1,000 man-hours of labor to clear the 3.5 miles of trail in that area. On the Hangover Trail Section the clearing produced a brand new view of Fodderstack. Previously, the brush was so high that the view was impossible.

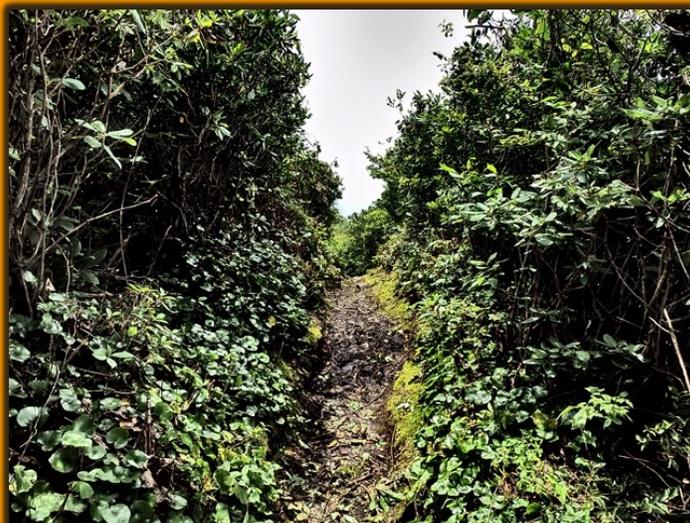


SECC Crew #939 on Hangover.

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Before - Hangover Trail before Clearing.



After - Hangover Trail after Clearing.



View of Fodderstack through cleared trail.

On their third hitch, the crew hiked in and camped at the Nichols Cove/Yellowhammer Gap Trail Junction and worked the section on Yellowhammer Gap Trail. This necessitated carrying in all food and camping gear for nine days, as well as tools, first aid gear and communications equipment. There are more than 60 downfalls along that 1.5 mile section of trail, as well as brushing and one major stream crossing that needed to be completely redone with steps.



Emily with part of the carry-in load.



Downed Trees - One of over 60 obstacles along Yellowhammer Gap Trail.

As this is being written, the plan for the fourth hitch is to have the crew again camp at Big Fat Gap and clear the Windy Gap and Nichols Cove Trails of the heavy brush, as well as address issues of social trails and switchbacks in that area.

When finished, this will be a major improvement to the condition of the BMT in that area.

We really appreciate the hard work of the crew.

Well done!!

Nov. 2-4 Annual Meeting Update: Housing Info Please Hurry!!

by George Owen, Chair, 2018 BMTA Annual Meeting Committee

When you see this, it's only about three months or less until the BMTA Annual Meeting at Coker Creek Campground. Autumn is a favorite weekend trip time in this area - so please hurry now and get your cabin or bunkhouse bed!! Of the four locations below, only the last, cabins at Tellico Plains, is more than a mile from our campground meeting place. Here below, slightly updated, is the latest data published in the last newsletter.

MOUNTAIN CREEK HIDEAWAY & GRILLE

Located just 6/10ths of a mile south of Coker Creek Campground, this location has several cabins with either one or two bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom. Cabin 10 has no kitchen or bathroom, but uses the nearby shower house. It's the only place in this part of the county licensed to sell beer and has a variety of short order foods, including pizza. See last month's newsletter for more details. Reservations: Contact Nadia Domrowski for info, reservations at 352-563-9824.

TWO ROOMS LEFT AT COCOBELL LODGE

Admittedly this is the "fanciest" housing we have for the annual meeting, just about a half-mile from the campground, and really, really super nice. To acquire one of these very lovely rooms with shared baths in some cases and kitchen privileges, contact George Owen on how to send your initial payment and other details. This is a hilltop, three-floor facility with very friendly owners. BMTAers have already signed up for other bedrooms.

BUNKHOUSE SPACE REMAINS AT CCC

It's basic, bunk beds, and sharing a nearby shower house only yards away, but the eight bunkhouses in the heart of Coker Creek Campground (CCC) still have plenty of space. Coker Creek has offered to make these available just about any way a "sub-group" would want them - couples together for some, or all men or all women for others. (The two genders just please go in opposite ends of the shower house when bathing or duty calls!) Contact CCC at 423-261-2310 for reservations.

...AND...THOSE CABINS AT TELLICO PLAINS

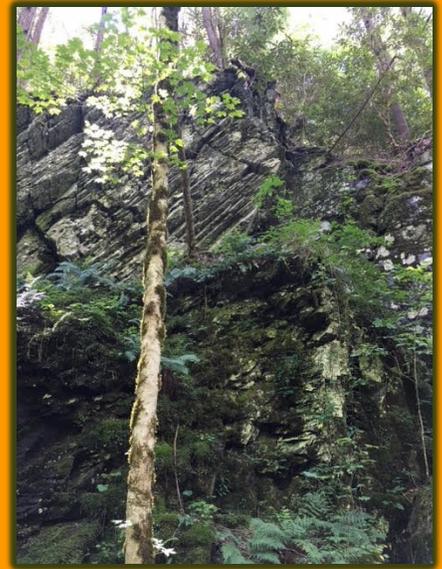
It may be significantly further from the campground - 10-12 miles - but these are mighty nice cabins, rather new, very reasonable. There are quite a few of these available right now. Various size cabins at low cost await your call - about twenty minutes from our three-day meeting location at Coker Creek. To rent one of these, contact Mountain View Cabin Rentals - www.tellicologcabins.com - 423-519-2000. These are all very clean, \$39 plus tax nightly and up.



Please Adopt Me! Section 12e

by Clare Sullivan

I'm Section 12e and I'm an outstanding section of the BMT. My northern end is at the Hiwassee River and my southern end is at Lost Creek Campground near Reliance, Tennessee. I'm only four miles long with restrooms and picnic tables at each end. I parallel beautiful Big Lost Creek through a deep limestone gorge with lovely cascading waterfalls. The sound of the creek is so calming. High, beautifully landscaped rock formations are on both sides of my creek. Doesn't this sound appealing? See my pictures below and think about being my regular maintainer. If you are interested in adopting this gorgeous section of the BMT [click here](#) and then Contact Us at the bottom of the page.



BMTA'S Larry Dumas to be featured guest speaker at Blue Ridge Adventure Gear.

Door Prizes and Exclusive Discounts.

Learn about the Benton MacKaye Trail Association from BMTA's Larry Dumas.

Tuesday August 7, 5pm to 7pm.

342 E. Main Street (beside the Fannin County Co-Op)
Blue Ridge, GA.

A percentage of sales will go to benefit the BMTA.



Ken's 70th Birthday Hike: Emery Creek Trail

by Ken Cissna

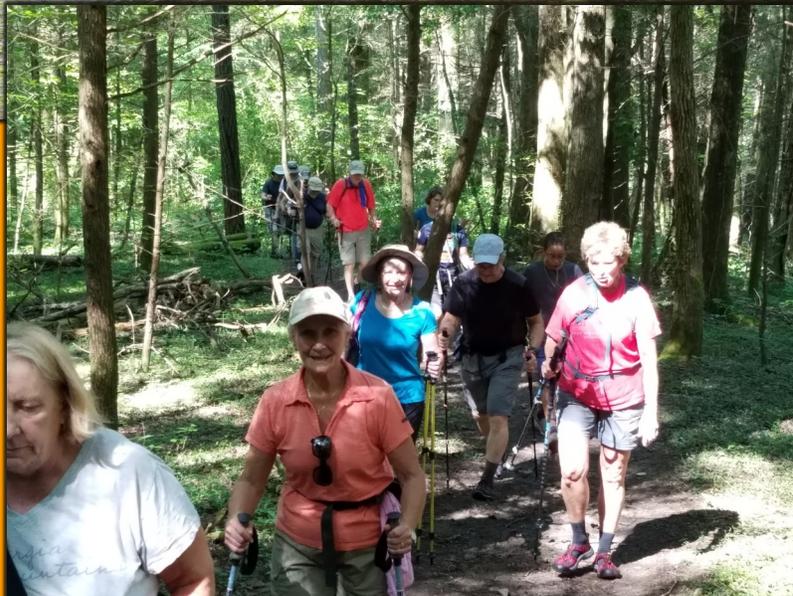
On July 10th, 14 of us set out with our water-safe hiking shoes for the Emery Creek Falls. Only a few had done the trail before. The biggest feature of this hike is the frequent water crossings—13 each way, or 26 in total. Most of them get your shoes wet. We started at the Holly Creek trailhead and hiked about half a mile to the spot where we had to cross Holly Creek in water close to our knees. *But first*, as they say, scrambling over the many big boulders tested our balance. All survived.

The wettest was Colin Ernst, age 13, who had no trouble with anything and enjoyed spending most of the day in either Holly or Emery Creek. Howard Baggett—nearing his ninth decade—had the second most fun, as he went all the way in at the pond at the bottom of the lower Falls. I only wish I'd been a little faster on the photo. Between the stream crossings and the dozens of downed trees that had to be negotiated, some of the hikers found the pace a little slow, and so four went ahead—they didn't get all that far because they were still at the Falls when the main group arrived. Howard's GPS measured the hike at 6.1 miles in total.

Hikers included: Sue Astley, Howard Baggett, Bob Brown, Ken Cissna (hike leader), Marion Crabb, Donna DesEnfants, Adrienne and Colin Ernest, Andy Meeks, Cindy Minick, Mike Pilvinsky, Steve Pruitt, Beth Roberts and Gilbert Treadwell.



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Hike from Hiwassee River to Lost Creek Campground

by Claire Sullivan

Eight Benton MacKaye members enjoyed the beauty of the BMT from Reliance, Tennessee, to Lost Creek Campground and didn't have a drop of rain! Splendid day! These folks are such dedicated members they trimmed the trail as they hiked. Three creek crossings cooled us off throughout the day. Lunch was enjoyed on picnic tables at Lost Creek Campground and the Hiwassee Outfitters Store welcomed us with air conditioning and ice cream at the end of the hike. A good time was had by all!!



Hikers: Larry Van Dyke, Ed Sullivan, Ken Cissna, Clare Sullivan, Carolyn Sewell, Andy Meeks, Cary Page and Tom Sewell.

Hiking the Cohuttas along Jack's River

by Tom Sewell

Monday, July 9, Tom Sewell led four hikers on a beautiful, no rain day on the BMT in the Cohuttas.

We started at Watson Gap covering a distance of two miles on the BMT. The BMT then intersects the South Fork Trail, which is also the terminus of the Pinhoti Trail. We continued on the BMT along the South Fork of Jack's River for 1.6 miles. We turned around where the BMT leaves the South Fork Trail heading to Dyer Gap and retraced our path back to our vehicles at Watson Gap.

This is a beautiful moderate hike on the BMT. There are nice spots for lunch and wading along the South Fork of Jack's River. We did have an encounter with Yellow Jackets. It's that time of the year.



Photo by Tom Sewell: Ken Cissna, Mike Pilvinsky and Cindy Minick.

Flat Creek Loop

by Howard Baggett

On July 7th, the coolest morning in July, Howard Baggett led six hikers on a casual hike on the Flat Creek Loop in the Aska trail system near Blue Ridge. Hikers were Ken Cissna, Paul McCord, Hank Baudet and Marion and Jim Crabb. What made the hike casual were Hank Baudet's frequent classic jokes for Jim who had not heard them. The rest of us endured!





Volunteer now!!!

for

*Benton Mackaye
Trail Association's*

*Maintainer
Recruitment Day*

at

*Fall Branch Falls
Saturday, September 22*

To help fill BMTA's need for Maintainers, a
Benton Mackaye Maintainer Recruitment Day
will be held at the beautiful
Fall Branch Falls.

9:00 AM — 4:00 PM Saturday, September 22.

Do your part to help us add to the ranks of
BMTA Maintainers ...

Volunteer to be a BMTA recruiter now!!!

Joy Forehand
jwfbarga@gmail.com

706.946.0336

Finding the Trail Gems in Canton's Boling Park

by Darcy Douglas

BMTA members John Cirami and Marion Crabb, joined John's guest Melinda Mundis and me for a quiet, meditative hike in this fascinating trail system in downtown Canton, Georgia. There was so much to see and hear, including the umbrella magnolia trees, the interesting bridges built by various Scout troops and Cherokee High School, as well as the creatures in the various creeks and other waterways along this trail. We met many runners on the portion along the Etowah River.



Bridges of New Friends!



Checking the mileage at the church.

We went as far as the church, taking some pictures there, checking out the baptism area and perusing the cemetery. We then returned via a different route, thus experiencing some hills and different flora. Two of us had devices which mapped the trail and kept track of our mileage. We walked 5.5 miles!! Afterward the group enjoyed ice cream at a nearby Bruster's. Marion is a most delightful new member, and hopefully, equally delightful Melinda, will be one soon! Thanks, John, for bringing her!

BLAZE TEAM for the BMTA

by Darcy Douglas with photos courtesy of Judy Wade

This is a shout-out to my spectacular crew who are trained blazers!!!! I was asked earlier this year to be responsible for blazing the entire Benton MacKaye Trail, something others have considered doing over the years. The hope is that with a trained group, we will have consistent, well-done and fresh blazes throughout the trail so hikers will be able to find their way.

As we began, I shared the pamphlet of our blazing guidelines written years ago with a few folks who indicated interest. Then I came up with some simple procedures. Contacting regular maintainers came early on as some enjoy and take pride in that part of their maintainer duties. Then came the training! That's been fun and educational for all of us. I learn something every time I am out in the woods with blazers and the trainees do too.

A couple of people began to think as I did in a dream one night that perhaps they might "adopt" certain sections of the BMT as the blazer. I couldn't believe that was brought up by two people the morning after my dream. Some prefer to do "on-call" blazing, some to be assigned some sections and some do both.

There is also an Excel file with all the sections, the trailheads, the maintainers and the blazing information. I am working on keeping it up now. There's been a lot of activity since it is summertime and I've been out in the woods more and on the computer less. But we'll get there.

Would those regular maintainers who are no longer using their templates please get them to me????? We have a dearth of good templates, but Gilbert and I made about 30, so I know they are out there somewhere! It is so difficult to get them exactly 5 X 7, and we want the best ones to be used.

If you are interested in being part of this TEAM, contact me at 404-431-3614 or bmtadarcyATyahoo.com.

Thank you so much to the current **AWESOME TEAM MEMBERS: Janice Lankford, David Lankford, Cary Page, Keith Mertz, Ellie Doughty, Judy Ward, Ken Cissna, Kim Murrell, Jason Murrell, Cheryl Kacher and Clare Sullivan.**



AUGUST WORK TRIP-Sections 10a, 10b and 10c

By Barry Allen

- ◆ **Where:** Sections 10a, 10b and 10c.
- ◆ **When:** Saturday, August 11, 2018.
- ◆ **Meet:** 7:30 at the Village Restaurant in Blue Ridge, GA (4131 East 1st Street, Blue Ridge, GA) or 8:30 at Watson Gap on Old GA Hwy 2/USFS 64.
- ◆ **Plan for the Day:** Tree and brush removal, Storm clean-up.
- ◆ **What to bring:** Minimum two liters of water, long pants, boots, gloves and snack.
- ◆ **Contact:** Barry Allen at bmtabarryATgmail.com or 770-294-7384

Please join us on Saturday, August 11 as we work the Cohutta Wilderness Section of the BMT. As many of you know, the Forest Service closed the BMT – and all trails – in the Cohutta Wilderness about two weeks ago after an extreme wind and rain event. We have not yet been able to survey the damage, but we will prepare for the worst and hope for the best!

My plan for the day is to split the group into teams as we work Section 10a from Watson Gap and Section 10b from Dally Gap. If we have enough volunteer help, we will also send a team up Hemp Top Mountain on Section 10c to survey the trail and handle some clearing and brush removal.

To make this plan work, we need plenty of help. **I would like to have at least one certified cross cut sawyer on each team. The balance of each group will be made up of volunteers carrying loppers and sling blades. Remember, these sections are primarily in Wilderness areas and are closed to any power equipment.**

Trail access and parking is fine at both Watson and Dally Gap. We'll park a few vehicles at Watson, but each team will end the work day at Dally – where there is parking for over 20 vehicles. I need volunteers somewhat familiar with these trails to help lead the groups. Group one will start at Watson, hiking to the Jacks River Trail and out to Dally. Group two will start at Dally and hike up the Hemp Top Trail to Spanish Oak Gap and then take the BMT out to the Jacks River Trail and out to Dally. Team Three will hike the Hemp Top all the way to Hemp Top Mountain and then turn around and come back to Dally.

My guess is that teams one and two should finish about 2:00 to 2:30, and team three will likely be about 30 minutes later.

Hope to see you there!

Five Reasons

by Bob Cowdrick

You Know Your BMTA Trail Section is in Trouble When:



1-The trail is lost in a sea of green – time for some swing blading to remove the undergrowth. Try to make a four-foot corridor through your sea of green.



2-Mother nature has blessed you with some Olympic hurdles – A BMTA chain saw crew can visit your section and make quick work of these hurdles.



3-One trail has become three-Try to let the side growth move in toward the center of the trail to make it one again.



4-Moss have chosen your blazes to become their new home – With some scraping and a new coat of paint, the blaze will be as good as new.



5-Someone stole your blazes – highly unlikely but making sure blazes are present and visible to hikers makes your section more enjoyable.

Upcoming Hikes

by Ken Cissna, Hiking Director

BMTA normally schedules a minimum of two hikes per month, one of five to eight miles and moderate difficulty, and one that is shorter and easier. In addition, we have occasional backpacking hikes and more difficult ones that might be called “hardy hikes.” Occasionally we co-sponsor hikes with other organizations. Although more hikes are in Georgia than the other states, you will find hikes in all three BMT states: Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

If you are interested in leading a hike or have a hike you’d like to see us offer with someone else leading, please contact me at kcissna AT usf.edu or 706-636-1741.

The hikes for the next couple of months are listed below. We have late summer and early fall hikes in today’s list. We still have some “water” hikes that you’ll want your water shoes and hiking poles for stream crossings. More hikes will be forthcoming, so check the Activities Calendar of the website and next month’s newsletter for updates. Enjoy.

August

August 10 (Friday) BMT – Highway 60 to Suspension Bridge and back.

7.4 miles, moderate. Lunch on the bank of the Toccoa River (bring your own!)

Contact hike leader Ken Cissna at kcissna AT usf.edu or 813-310-6084

August 16 (Thursday) Clemmer Trail Hike.

4.3 miles, moderate. Gradually uphill. Ocoee area.

Contact hike leader Clare Sullivan at clare7982 AT gmail.com.

August 17 (Friday) Talking Rock Nature Preserve Trails.

6 miles, easy to moderate.

Contact hike leader Darcy Douglas at bmtadarcy AT yahoo.com

August 31 (Friday) BMT: Beech Gap (4400’) to Whigg Meadow (4,940’).

6.4 miles, moderate difficulty. Cherohala area. Option to camp or hotel overnight in Tellico Plains for those interested in Friday/Saturday combo.

Contact Hike Leader Tom Sewell at SewellTom AT yahoo.com or text to (706)669-6406

September

September 1 (Saturday) BMT: Whigg Meadow (4940’) to Fish Hatchery at Tellico River (2120’).

7.3 miles, moderate. Virtually all downhill. Long shuttle.

Contact Hike Leader Tom Sewell at SewellTom AT yahoo.com or text to (706)669-6406

September 12 (Wednesday) Cartecay Loop.

4 miles, easy to moderate mostly along the Cartecay River.

Contact hike leader Sara Bland at jsbland AT windstream.net

September 28 (Friday) BMT: Patterson Ridge Plunge.

Approximately 5 miles, easy plus; approximately 2.5 hours on the trail.

This leisurely hike samples the great views (and posh houses) along Patterson Ridge in the Sisson Cherry Lake community and then follows a little used section of the BMT for a long downhill to Boardtown Road. After a break we will hike back to the ridge at a leisurely pace. Much of the trail follows a nice stream with excellent stands of Creeping Cedar and Galax. With luck we will enjoy some early fall color. After the hike, those who wish will head to Blue Jeans Pizza in Blue Ridge for a recovery ale and lunch.

Contact hike leaders Tom and Jane Keene at tkbmta AT gmail DOT com or 770-548-4935 (text ok).

October

October 3 (Wednesday) Talking Rock Nature Preserve

4 miles, easy.

Contact hike leader Sara Bland at jsbland AT windstream.net

October 6 (Saturday) BMT: Highway 515 to Weaver Creek and return.

5 miles, easy. Mostly dirt roads.

Contact Hike Leader Tom Sewell at SewellTom AT yahoo.com or text to (706)669-6406

October 30 (Tuesday) Big Frog Mtn. via Big Frog Mtn. Trail and BMT trail and return.

11-12 miles total. Moderate to strenuous difficulty; 1300' elevation change. Uphill first half, downhill last half. Hiking time about 7 hours. Beautiful views along the ridge lines along the way.

Contact Hike Leader Tom Sewell at SewellTom AT yahoo.com or text to (706)669-6406

The BMTA Annual Meeting is November 2-4 at Coker Creek

Don't Miss Out!!

We will have the hikes for the Annual Meeting in the next newsletter.

The deadline for the September Newsletter is August 29, 2018. Thank you!