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BMTA Headquarters



Benton MacKaye Trail Association

VOLUME 39, ISSUE 6

JUNE 2022

The Benton MacKaye Scenic Trail Act

by Ken Cissna

On May 27, 2022, Representative Steve Cohen (Democrat from Tennessee) introduced **House Bill #7884, the “Benton MacKaye Scenic Trail Act,”** which, if approved by Congress and signed by the President, will designate the Benton MacKaye Trail a National Scenic Trail! See Representative Cohen’s [press release](#).

I am grateful to Representative Cohen as well as to Representative Jim Cooper (Democrat from Tennessee), Representative Scott DesJarlais (Republican from Tennessee) and Representative Chuck Fleischmann (Republican from Tennessee), who joined Representative Cohen as original co-sponsors, for their support of this bi-partisan legislation.

The National Scenic Trail (NST) designation was authorized by Congress in 1968. Only eleven trails to date have received the prestigious NST status – the Appalachian Trail (AT) and the Pacific Crest Trail were the first. It has been 12 years since Congress approved the last NST.

Before embarking on our quest for the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) to be designated an NST, the Board considered why becoming an NST would be good for the BMT:

- ◆ The trail far exceeds the criteria for length, scenic beauty, continuousness and being maintained by an active organization that is and will continue to be responsible for the trail.
- ◆ The NST designation will attract more hikers to the trail —day hikers, section hikers, backpackers, thru hikers ... hikers of every persuasion. Providing a trail that is well-maintained and open for hikers to enjoy is the very reason the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) exists.
- ◆ More hikers on the trail means local communities will benefit economically as hikers patronize restaurants, groceries, outfitter supply stores, lodging, pharmacies, laundromats, shuttle services and more.
- ◆ NST status will mean a closer relationship with the Forest Service that will make our trail even better. For example, a thorough “optimal location review” will reveal where and how the trail may benefit from a strategic reroute.
- ◆ The designation also may bring additional resources that will make it easier to acquire land that will allow us to move the BMT off some of the 15 miles of trail that remain on public roads or private land (just 5% of the BMT’s 288 miles).

The BMTA's quest began early last year. By April 2021, BMTA's Board of Directors unanimously authorized pursuing National Scenic Trail status for the BMT – an ambitious goal to say the least. The first step was to form a Working Group, which has included past presidents Barry Allen, Bob Ruby, and Dick Evans; then Secretary and now Vice President Clare Sullivan; long-time BMTA member and former CEO of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Ron Tipton; Joy Forehand, Communications Director and Coordinator of Electronic Media; and me.

Before I continue, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the members of the Working Group as well as to everyone who has assisted in this project so far. And thanks, too, to all the people over the years and decades who got the BMT and the BMTA to where they are today: the founding members; all the presidents and maintenance directors; the people who received maintenance, distinguished service, or other awards; and the hundreds, no, many thousands of people from 1980 to the present who through their time, sweat and generous donations helped to build this trail and this association. My most sincere and appreciative “thank you.”

The Working Group held monthly meetings to develop materials, to plan how to contact local representatives, and generally to develop and execute strategy and tactics to make this happen. We were making progress – good progress, considering our lofty goal and, frankly, lack of experience.

But a better approach was on the horizon. At the BMTA's Board meeting during last November's Annual Meeting and Hike Fest at Unicoi State Park, Maintenance Director Bob Cowdrick asked if the Working Group had considered hiring a lobbyist. We hadn't and the Board quickly approved a motion to search for one.

We were able to secure the services of Monument Advocacy, a top-line Washington DC government relations and public affairs firm, which has been working on our behalf since December – and for a fee BMTA can afford!

We have been meeting *weekly* with Monument's staff and having them on our side has made all the difference! We wouldn't be where we are today without them. Thank you, all of you.

Getting this far is an achievement we can celebrate!

But we still have a long way to go. HB 7884 (my new lucky number!) is just the first of many steps.

We need to enlist the support of more members of the House of Representatives for the Benton MacKaye Scenic Trail Act. We need the Natural Resources Committee in the House—to which HB 7884 has been sent—to hold a hearing on the bill. We also need to garner the support of Senators. Our expectation—our *hope*—is that HB 7884 will be rolled into a larger bill – one that deals with public lands or natural resources coming out of the Natural Resources Committee.

Our continued success, though, depends on YOU! Please email, or better yet, write to your representatives in the House and Senate to tell them why you believe the Benton MacKaye Trail should be designated a National Scenic Trail. Although the trail runs through only three states—Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina—the trail is used by people across the country and we need support from members of Congress *everywhere*. So, please, find your members of Congress below and ask them to support this endeavor. Ask your friends to do the same—and it's not a problem to wait a week or two and write again (use different language the second time).

[Find Your Representative's Contact Information.](#)

[Find Your Senator's Contact Information.](#)

And if your Congressional Representative is Steve Cohen, Jim Cooper, Scott DesJarlais or Chuck Fleischmann, please consider writing or even better, calling, to thank them for recognizing that the BMT is an exceptional candidate to be designated a National Scenic Trail!

To view the text for HB #7884, go to the [Benton MacKaye Scenic Trail Act](#).

**CABINS & ROOMS ARE GOING FAST!
BOOK NOW!**

BMTA's Annual Meeting & Hike Fest Nov. 3 – 6
Fontana Village Lodge, North Carolina



Hemlock Three Bedroom



COME EARLY / STAY LATE

SPECIAL RATE APPLIES TO YOUR ENTIRE STAY!

Lodge Rooms, Cabins and Campsites



Azalea Two Bedroom



Lodge Rooms



Hickory Two Bedroom



Campground



Willows One Bedroom



For reservations call 800-849-2258
To receive your discount mention the
Benton MacKaye Trail Association!

Long Creek Falls to Wildcat Ridge

with a few stops in between...

by Bob Cowdrick

What an impressive Georgia trail workday!

Mike Pilvinsky with his fellow crew members John Oudin, Ly Eilering and Brian Eilering maintained water diversions from the Bald south to Long Creek. Their reward was a side trip to see the falls.

George Owen and Steve Hayden led the way north from the Bald with a brushcutter and string trimmer. No briars encroaching the trail survived!

Cary Page and Darcy Douglas left the others quickly behind as they attacked refreshing blazes from No Name Gap to Wildcat Ridge. Fantastic work!

Patrick Ward, on a January 2022 workday, noticed a steep section near No Name Gap needed some steps. He returned today with his merry crew of step builders, Barry Allen, Fred Allen, Art Kohlberg, Terry Martin and Jonathan Norton, to build an impressive, natural set of steps!

A new maintainer, Madison Martin, volunteered to tally the remediated water diversions from the Bald to Wildcat Ridge. Her count: 90 now free-flowing diversions. Help from her crew members Chris Behrens, Bill Cox, Bob Cowdrick, Whitney June, Daphne Martin, Kenny Martin and Bob Nelson made that possible!



“Rainbowed” safety briefing!



Step Crew: Jonathan Norton, Patrick Ward, Terry Long, Barry Allen, Fred Allen and Art Kolberg.

The numbers speak for themselves...

- ◆ 187 volunteer hours of effort.
- ◆ 96 water diversions maintained.
- ◆ 23 members and guests.
- ◆ Four new maintainers participated.
- ◆ Three trees removed.
- ◆ One mile of brushing.
- ◆ One impressive set of new steps.
- ◆ Zero injuries.



Crosscutting wilderness style. Photo by Daphne Martin

That Festival Time of Year

by Joy Forehand

Spring is in the air and the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) Information Tent has returned to the festivals!

We hit the jackpot at the new Georgia Mountain Trail Fest – 58 sign ups (second only to the 2019 Dahlonega Trail Fest and garnered three memberships to date!

This also marked the return of BMTA's popular Inter-Active Crosscut as guests took their turn with the saw. From young children to retirees, they enjoyed cutting their own piece of the pine – one guest even asked BMTA's crosscut specialist for the day, Darcy Douglas, to autograph the chip they cut off the tree.

The festival was held at the Talona Ridge RV Resort in Ellijay, GA , April 24-25, 2022. The featured speaker for BMTA, Larry Dumas, discussed the 'History and the Difference of Hiking the BMT vs. the AT'.

Many, many thanks to our volunteers: Sharon and Tom Atcheson, Deb Crowder, Jeff DePaola, Larry Dumas, Frank Forehand, Steve Kruep, Steve Pruet, Karen Steinberg, Jen Tindle, Kathy Williams and Vicki Yunker! Joe Cantwell, Ken Cissna, Darcy Douglas, Brendan Dowling, Patti O'Dell and Mike Seibert supervised the crosscut!



Vicki Yunker – photo courtesy of Kathy Williams



Deb Crowder – photo courtesy of Darcy Douglas

The next festival on the docket was Trout Unlimited's Trout Fest, held April 30, 2022, in Blue Ridge, GA.

BMTA's Inter-Active Crosscut made BMTA's booth a "must-visit" attraction at the event.

A number of guests signed up ... plus we gained a new Family Membership!

Our thanks go to volunteers: Sharon and Tom Atcheson, Adri and Rob Herman, Steve Kruep, Patty Masters and Vicki Yunker! Joe Cantwell was BMTA's Crosscut Specialist for the day!



Joe Cantwell instructing crosscutters.
Photo courtesy of Patty Masters



Rob & Adri Herman ... Joe Cantwell
Photo courtesy of Patty Masters

Volunteers like these help BMTA accomplish the portion of our purpose that pertains to: inform the general public of opportunities for outdoor recreation and public service; promote hiking, camping and a wilderness experience in the Southern Appalachian Mountains; and to instill in our members and the general public a conservation ethic.

If you would like to help at future outreach events, please contact Joy Forehand, jwfbgrga@gmail.com.

Ice Cream Bribe for Section Check

by Kathy Williams

Neighbor text to Kathy "You have some trees down on your section." Hmm. The grandsons are coming. Hmm. Maybe they can move these trees off the trail. Hmm. Yes, swap ice cream for a hike on my section!



What lurks in the forest? Bigfoot? No, Bighair.



"Nanny, We can't move it. Can we still get ice cream?!"

Work Day at Coker Creek in Tennessee

Photos by Daphne Martin



**YOU Can Help Make the Benton MacKaye Trail
the 12th National Scenic Trail!**

Contact your Congressional Representative

*Let your representative know why you believe the BMT
should be designated as a National Scenic Trail.*

To learn more, go to [representative](#).



Calling ALL Volunteers! GA/TN/NC Work Trip - June 25, 2022

Sections 17a-b

FS 22B >> (Whigg Meadow area >> Pheasant Field Trout Hatchery)



We Need Your Help!

Seven Miles of trail to:

- ◆ Logout
- ◆ Brushout
- ◆ Refresh Blazes

There's plenty of work and a job for everyone.

Chow Time at the Trailhead

The day will conclude with Chow Time at the Sycamore Creek Trailhead — a scrumptious meal prepared by Chef Patty.



[Register Online for the GA/TN/NC Trip Now!](#)

Or Contact

Pam Mathews, pamelahallmathews@yahoo.com

Rave Reviews!!

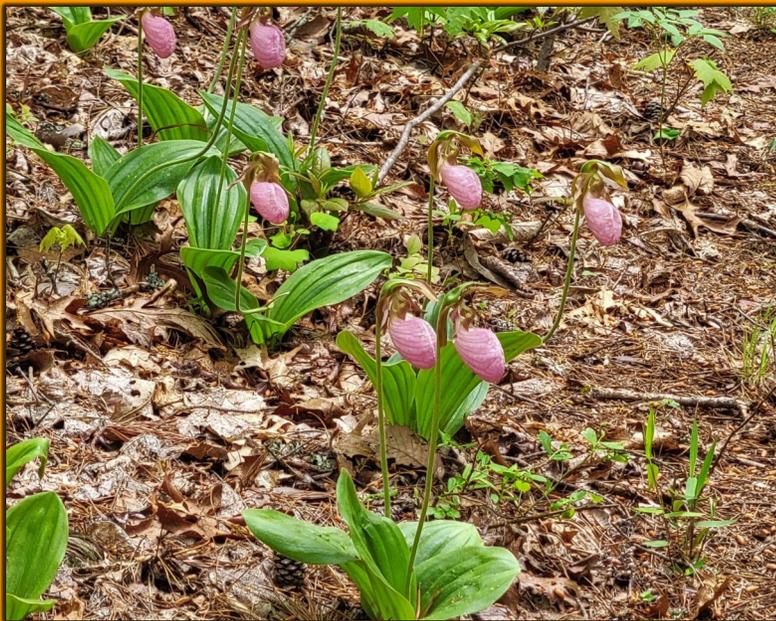
by Joy Forehand

The May 4 Lady Slipper Hike on the Weaver Creek Section of the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) received rave reviews! What more could hikers ask for – sunny skies, perfect temps and a forest pathway lined with pink lady slippers and wildflowers! Maintainers for the section, Susan and Don Burkett, had reported a bumper crop was on the way – and they made sure the trail was in perfect shape for the hike! Thank you Susan and Don!

The flame azalea, trillium, dwarf-crested iris and bear corn were spectacular. The lady slipper gardens had expanded since last year and the ladies' blooms were huge!



The star of the show was the one, snow white Lady Slipper. Although still classified as a “pink lady slipper”, these white beauties are extremely rare. There was one last year. Before that, no white ladies had been spotted since 2015.



A slow pace to enjoy the spring foliage made the usually challenging hike on the Weaver Creek section of the BMT an enjoyable trek in the woods.

Hikers included: Connie Dassinger, Michael Firment, Laurel Bowker, Michelle Turner, Sharon Brewer, Penny Strickland, Roger Roy, Glenn Bray and Martha Heffner.

Remembering Tom Wright

by George Owen

Eight old-timer BMTAers trekked a short distance on Saturday, May 21, from Thunder Rock Campground in Tennessee to the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) steps where the trail leaves the Ocoee River. The purpose of this trek and about an hour-long sit-in on the first steps of that steep climb was to share memories of Tom Wright, a longtime backbone member of BMTA. Tom, who died several weeks ago, installed much of the original wooden and rock steps at this location.



Front row: George Owen, Claire Broadwell, Row 2: Darcy Douglas, Ted Reissing, Row 3: Clark Cooper, Terry Miller
Back: Clayton Pannell. Photo by Ken Cissna.

Tom was a valued and busy BMTAer from the days of the BMT's original construction. He was key to building these steps going south from the Ocoee River. The original ladder-like steps going westward from Skenah Gap were his as well.

Then there was the really big project. He suggested and headed up the project to establish the Benton MacKaye Memorial Plaque on the BMT's southern terminus at Springer Mountain. Almost all the wording is his. Originally it would have been much longer if we had approved his original tome honoring MacKaye! Tom, being a stout and strong guy, did much of the manual labor hauling the monument up Springer and oversaw the installation into its permanent rock location.

We reminisced about the many fun and special things about Tom. He was a joyous, outgoing, fun guy with a big laugh and quick sense of humor. Above all, he was a very hard worker who never seemed to tire. A tribute, written by David Blount, who was unable to attend, was read and shared with the group.

We fondly remembered his devoted love for his wife Sondra and their two children, one of whom died in an automobile accident when a teen. Tom was a U.S. Navy veteran from the Vietnam War, serving through some hazardous duty along the south coast of Vietnam.

Years ago, Darcy Douglas and George Owen started these special BMT services for people who died after putting in many years of BMT work and leadership. They pick a site with particular significance for the deceased and readily accessible to the attendees. Darcy and Claire wore two of the very first BMTA t-shirts which were designed and marketed by Clark's wife Lyn, who also was unable to be present at our gathering.

After the service of memories, we hiked back to our vehicles and then headed to McCaysville for lunch on the Ocoee River at the Burra Burra Restaurant.

Disappointment Gave Way to Wonderful Display

by Joy Forehand / Photos courtesy of Bruce Roberts and Suzanne Zuckerman

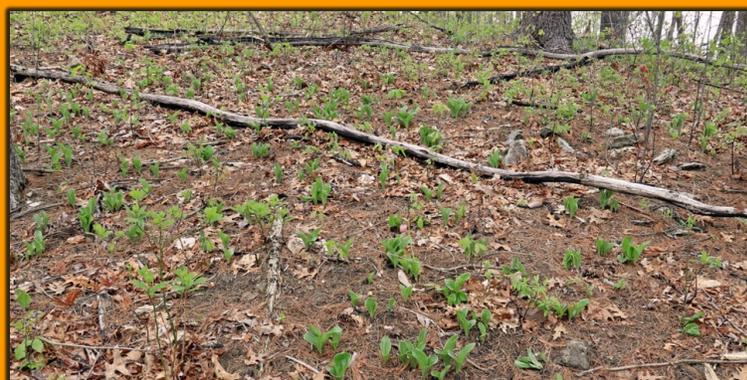
Hike leaders Joy and Frank Forehand were ambivalent about planning the April 27 Lady Slipper/Wildflower Hike at Mulky Gap. The week before last year's hike, a controlled burn was done in the area – while the pink lady slippers (a wild orchid) were blooming. The understory was charred, not a speck of green left. Would the large gardens of pink ladies and wide array of wildflowers be back?

Previously, there were so many ladies on the lower reaches of Akin Mountain— “large, pink wheat fields” where everywhere. This year, several ladies were coming up ... BUT ... not nearly as many as in past years. If they are going to bloom, they have a bud shortly after “popping up” – sadly, 90% or more had no bud. They were not going to bloom.

The good news – some of the ladies had returned and will have the opportunity to populate the area once again.



Mulky Gap in 2018.



Mulky Gap (same area) in 2022.

Representatives from the Forest Service (FS), Georgia Botanical Society and others concerned by last year's burn checked the area May 2, 2022. An assessment of options to exclude the orchid populations at Mulky Gap from future growing season burns when orchids are in leaf and/or flowering resulted in the following:

- ◆ Conduct a dormant season burn treatment before the orchids are up to isolate site from growing season burns.

Blow line/burn around the orchids when doing growing season burns to keep fire away from sprouting orchids.

Working with FWS on possibly conducting a burn after the orchids have finished blooming later in the growing season.



Sadly, no buds.

- ◆ Consider longer return intervals – say every five years as opposed to every three, just at the orchid site.

This may require mechanical/targeted direct herbicide treatments to control vigorous maple and poplar sprouting.

The FS is open to working with volunteers on mechanical/herbicide treatments, as appropriate.



Showy orchis

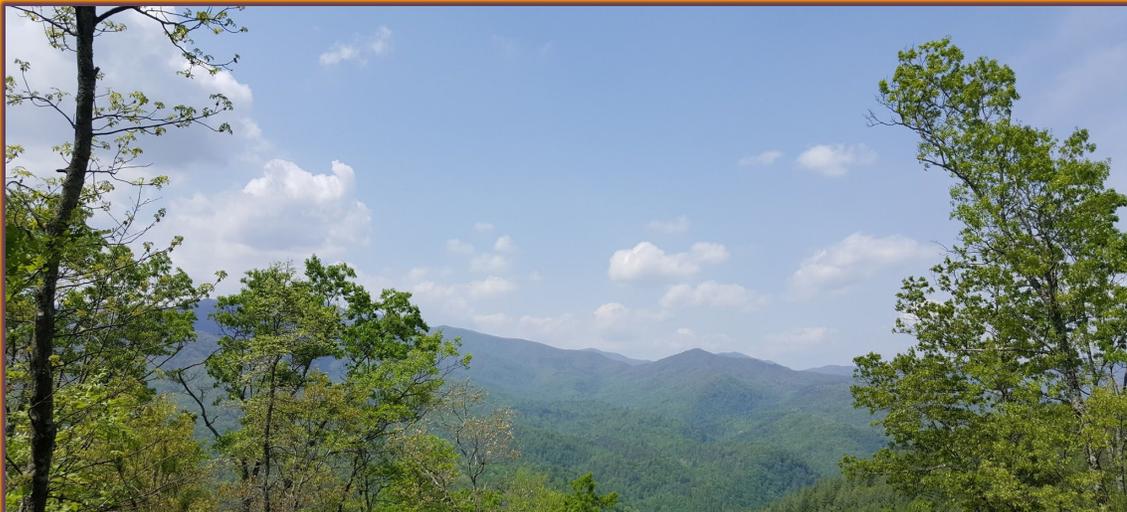


Grandiflora trillium

All was not lost for the stalwart hikers: Ralph Collinson, Connie Dassinger, Michael Firment, Diane Knoke, Ted Knoke, Douglas Piette, Judy Piette and Michelle Turner. As we strolled down the old logging road, we found a pristine area untouched by the fire. One hillside was littered with bear corn, another with grandiflora trillium. Seven showy orchis peaked through the lush undergrowth of violets, a wide array of ferns, false green hellbore and more!

Notice to Hikers in the Fontana Area Possible Trail Closure of the BMT May Begin June 13, 2022

by Dick Evans/Photo by Rob Burgess



Possibly starting as early as June 13th, the TVA will be upgrading powerlines in the Fontana Village area. Minor disruptions might be experienced at various times and locations. Best suggestion is for hikers to take the Fontana Village Shuttle from Fontana Lodge to Fontana Marina and avoid any of these issues.

BMTA TN May 28 Work Trip

Section 14c Unicoi Gap to Buck Bald Road Crossing

by Steve Cartwright with photos courtesy of Brenda Harris

There were 16 volunteers who participated in this work trip. The primary tasks accomplished:

- ◆ Brushed out the entire trail corridor of this section.
- ◆ Removed a downed tree that had blocked the trail for a prolonged period. A well-worn path around the tree had developed over time.

Thanks to Barry Allen for leading a group in from Buck Bald Road to meet my group that went in at Unicoi Gap. Our special guest was Phoenix Anderson (Anne Anderson's granddaughter) who is a wildlife and forestry major at Cleveland State Community College. Phoenix participated to gain needed volunteer hours for the Tennessee Promise, a financial aid program assisting students at community colleges and colleges of applied technology. We certainly hope she will encourage her fellow students to look to us for opportunities to gain their required volunteer hours.

Finally, those participants who were able to stay at the conclusion of the trip were treated to a delicious meal by "Chef" Patty Masters. We were able to enjoy the meal against the majestic views from Buck Bald. "Chef" Patty is already planning a meal for the June 25 work trip – certainly a great incentive to come out and lend a hand in keeping our trail in top shape!



Crosscut Sawyer Certification

by Bob Cowdrick

Congratulations to Rick Harris who completed his Level C Crosscut Sawyer certification course at the Wilderness Skills Institute in Pisgah! He was among eight other individuals who practiced instructing 25 other sawyers who were becoming Level B Certified Sawyers. One of his students was BMTA's Steve Bayliss, who successfully completed his B Crosscut Certification at the weeklong institute.



Section 5b Maintainer Needed

by Bob Cowdrick

After over 30 years of maintaining the BMT as both maintenance director and the section maintainer of Section 5b, Jim Hamblen has decided it is time to pass the baton to another maintainer. This is a short 0.9-mile section from Ledford Gap to Brawley Mountain and is easily accessible by a forest service road.

If you are interested in maintaining this section, or know someone who would, please contact Bob Cowdrick at bcowdrick@comcast.net for more details.

To see all sections in need of a maintainer, go to [Sections Available](#).



Hike a Class

by Kathy Williams

When I discovered that George Owen was going to conduct a class on *Hiking in the Southern Appalachians* I knew that I did not want to miss out. The class was held at Young Harris within the Institute for Continued Learning spring offering. Most of our classes were followed by a short hike.

Each class began with a quote that George felt appropriate for our subject. Interjected into the class were some musical moments, among them one where George regaled us with his harmonica skills! We were entertained with many cartoons from *The Far Side* and *The New Yorker*. Handouts of the area's parks, trails and trail clubs gave us long-lasting references to keep. I believe that George spent hours "robbing" ...er... accumulating these.

Our first session featured guest speakers Chuck Logan and Cathie Stallings. Chuck spoke on his section hiking of the Appalachian Trail (AT) while Cathie astonished us with how her hiking helped her recover from a massive stroke. It seems that Chuck is also known as "Sir Woodchuck" and is part of the notorious "Old Pros" who are "Often Wrong but Never in Doubt." Best I can gather "The Old Pros" are something like a Biker Club for Hikers... hmm. Only the Shadow knows. Cathie completed the AT alone and met "Sir Woodchuck" on the trail as well as a naked man and a Peace Corp Volunteer! George's part was very informative giving us the background and structure of America's Forest Lands and their various managements.

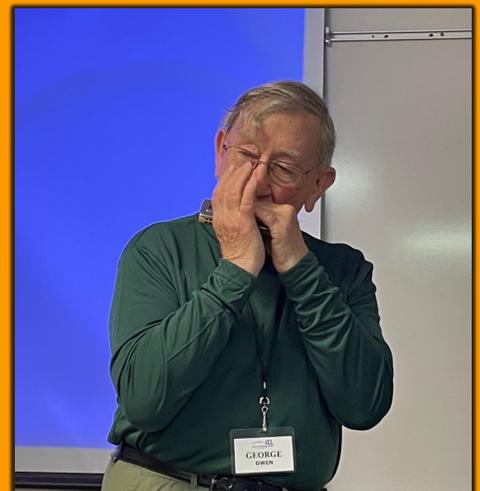


"Sir Wood Chuck" and "Curmudgeon George"



The inspirational Cathie Stallings and "Curmudgeon George"

The second session featured Joe Boone, who talked about the four long-distance interstate trails in Georgia-the Bartram, the AT, the Benton MacKaye (BMT) and the Pinhoti trails. We watched the film he had produced giving us in depth information on the background and development of the trails. George discussed blazes and brought books to recommend (as well as a handout on books he recommended for further reading) on hiking, wildflowers, data as well as discussing the use of apps. Music was always part of our program and we learned that Joe Boone is part of a band that regularly performs at Reece Farm where you can access many trails.



Continued next page



Joe Boone



After class hike on Miller Trek at Brasstown Valley Resort.



George offered a tour of Brasstown Valley Resort after our Miller Trek hike.



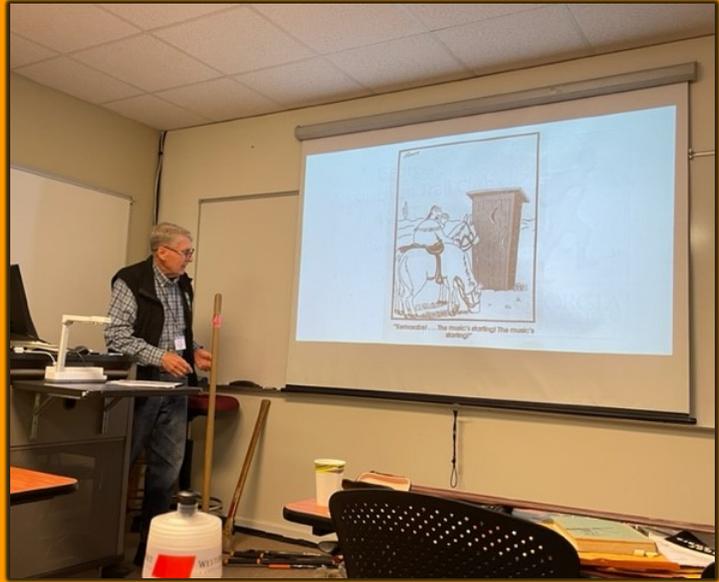
Georgeanna Seamon gave invaluable advice on the gear necessary for a safe and enjoyable hike.

Georgeanna Seamon, the owner of Mountain Crossings, a hiking equipment store that the AT goes through, discussed hiking equipment. They have a free store service that evaluates a thru hiker's backpack and makes recommendations as to how necessary or unnecessary the gear is. She brought examples of gear and gifted us all a Keen sandal keychain! George covered Leave No Trace.

Next, we learned about things that bite. This was covered by George and included snakes, ticks, bees etc. and what to do in an emergency. It was interesting that the quote that day from Aldo Leopold was *"There are some who can live without wild things and some who cannot."* Maybe there are some wild things we would like to avoid! Christine Ramsey, who maintains trails, brought some of the tools she uses to keep the trail in hiking shape. This included a Pulaski, a rogue hoe, a McLeod, loppers, saws and PPE for safety. Dayton Miller gave a presentation on the AT. It was interesting to hear how challenging maintaining the privies and shelters can be.

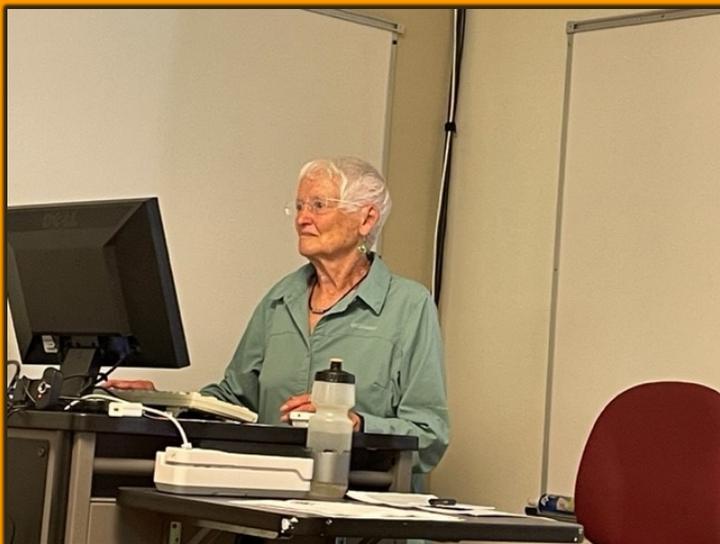


Christine Ramsey demonstrates tool use.



Dayton Miller amused all with “Kemosabe, the music's starting, the music's starting.” This fit in well with his information regarding privies and shelter maintenance!

Marianne Skeen discussed the youth outreach programs that she has been involved with. The purpose is to expose youth who may not have any opportunities to get out and hike to do so. This could be anything from a short day walk to an overnight experience at the Len Foote Hike Inn. Her programs integrate with Atlanta youth mentoring programs, Scouts, Georgia Mountain Research and Education, Children's Forest Initiative, refugee organizations from the Atlanta area and more. George gave an in-depth presentation about Wilderness Areas and the act that created them and saved them “in perpetuity.” The quote for the day was from the late John Lewis, *“Walking through fields, smelling the wildflowers, touching the ancient oaks, poplars and pines, I learned wonder. Drinking from a fresh water spring, I learned purity. Fishing with a simple cane pole, I learned contemplation and patience. Feeling the dirt and pine straw between my toes, I learned the wilderness is a part of me-I cannot and never will separate myself from its beauty and peacefulness.”*



Marianne Skeen inspired us to reach out to a new generation of hikers.



After class hike on the Jackrabbit Trails.

Basic first aid was covered along with a discussion on hypothermia and hyperthermia. George shared a story about hiking during the summer when his group encountered a young hiker who was suffering hypothermia. This was initiated after encountering some colder than expected temperatures at a high altitude. Ken Cissna gave a presentation on the BMTA, its founding and building. Ken brought us up to date on the organization's pursuit of National Scenic Trails designation and the Land Acquisition Fund. Then we were dazzled with the photography of Mike Wilson. Mike went into some of the techniques that he learned photographing nature.



BMTA President Ken Cissna gave updates on seeking National Scenic Trails designation.



Mike Wilson gave us many tips on getting great photos even using phones!

Our last class was a mix of questions and discussion. It began with Thoreau, *"In wildness is the preservation of the world."* The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was explained and how two parts, a botanical study and an archeological survey comprise its body. A NEPA study determines what you can do on National Lands. We covered Scoping (events held in National Forests) and how some forests are multi-use while others are not. Climate change was also on the menu this day. This last session instead of a hike we followed up with dinner at the Brasstown Valley Resort!

Trails at Ocoee Whitewater Reopen After Devastating Fire



All trails are now open at the Ocoee Whitewater Center.

A fence has been placed around the burned-out hulk of the Whitewater Center. You can access the large parking area at the north area beside the bridge.

To get to the Old Copper Road Trail you will have to cross the river at that bridge, hike to the other bridge, cross and access the Copper Trail.

2022 BMTA Corporate Members

The Benton MacKaye Trail Association is grateful for the help and support provided by our Corporate Members. When you visit one of these businesses, please identify yourself as a BMTA member and be sure to thank them for their support!



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2022 BMTA Corporate Members

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**Don't Wait
Join Now!**

Use This Link to Join:

[Membership](#)

Upcoming Hikes and Work Trips

by Tom Sewell, Hiking Director

Guidelines for Our Hikes

Because hiking in the outdoors is good for one's mental and physical health, we encouraged BMTA members and others to continue hiking during the COVID-19 health crisis *and to do so safely*. Thus, we continued our hiking program during 2020 - 2022.

Due to the availability of COVID-19 vaccines, we have further modified our hiking program:

- ◆ We have resumed allowing shuttle hikes but caution that (a) no hikers should ride with another or have another ride with them if they are concerned about their safety and (b) unvaccinated hikers should not assume that others will want to ride in vehicles with them.
- ◆ Carpooling is permitted but not required.
- ◆ Any potential hiker who is feeling ill or has been exposed recently to a person with an active case of COVID-19 must not come on a hike.
- ◆ Hikes are limited to a maximum of 10 participants in Tennessee and North Carolina and 12 participants in Georgia. Hike leaders may impose lower limits.
- ◆ Masks are optional, but hikers should maintain an appropriate distance from one another.

June

June 6 (Monday) Warwoman Dell to Pinnacle Knob near Clayton, Georgia. This out and back of 7.8 miles goes north on the Bartram Trail into a dense mountain laurel and rhododendron forest and includes a visit to Martin Creek Falls. Hike Leader Kelly Motter.

For more information contact hikeleaderKM@bmtamail.org.

June 10 (Friday) - Rock Creek Trail / BMT Loop - 7.5 miles with short shuttle, moderate with about 1500' elevation climb. We will meet at Thunder Rock Camp Ground, shuttle to Rock Creek Trail Head and hike up the Rock Creek Trail, partly paralleling the creek, 5.5 miles to the intersection with the BMT/Dry Pond Lead Trail and return downhill in 2.0 miles to the Thunder Rock Camp Ground. There is one significant creek crossing at mile 4. We suggest bringing wading shoes, dry socks and hiking poles. Dogs on a leash attended by well behaved humans are welcome. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and bug repellent. Bring water and a snack for your dog as well. Hike Leaders Rick and Brenda Harris. For more information contact harrisri@aol.com or call 423.253.6358.



June 11 (Saturday) The TN crew really needs our help this month. We cancelled the GA Work Trip and are asking workers to attend the TN/NC Work Trip 6/25/22.

June 17 (Friday) BMT: Lost Creek Section. Dog friendly hike (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Easy six miles. Beautiful walk along Big Lost Creek. One stream crossing will probably get your feet a little wet so come prepared. Hike Leaders Ed and Clare Sullivan.
For more information contact hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org.

June 18 (Saturday) BMT Section 11 E - Forest Service Rd. 221 to Thunder Rock Campground 3.4 miles EASY hike. Meet at the Ocoee Whitewater Center to watch the water release "arrive" and learn about the river preparations for the 1996 Olympic Kayak and Canoe Competitions. After the special at the bridge we will travel to the Thunder Rock parking lot then shuttle to the top of the mountain and hike back to the parking lot - 95 percent of the hike is downhill. Perhaps we'll see the rhododendron in bloom, perhaps we'll find the wild raspberries ripe! Hike Leaders Ed and Clare Sullivan.
For more information contact hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org.

June 20 (Monday) BMT/Whigg Ridge Trail Loop - Moderately Strenuous - 10.5 miles, elevation climb 2100'. Tellico Plains, TN. We will hike 6 miles up the BMT/Sycamore Creek Trail to Whigg Meadow Road. This is a fairly gradual climb. Then we will hike .5 mile down the road to the trailhead for the Whigg Ridge Trail, then down this trail about 4 miles to the intersection with the BMT and the parking lot. No significant creek crossings. Dogs on a leash attended by well behaved humans are welcome. Bring lunch, plenty of water and bug repellent. Bring water and a snack for your dog as well. Hike Leaders Rick and Brenda Harris.
For more information contact harrisri@aol.com or call 423.253.6358.



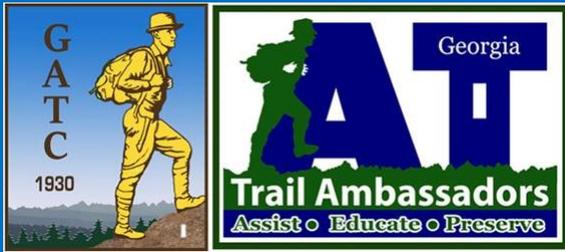
June 25 (Saturday) TN/NC Work Trip Sections 17a-b (Whigg Meadow area >> Pheasant Field Hatchery)
For more information contact Pam Mathews pamelahallmathews@yahoo.com.

July

July 15 (Friday) Cartecay River Loop Trails. Dog friendly hike (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Moderate five-six miles, much of it along the beautiful Cartecay River. Hike leader Ken Cissna. For more information contact hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.

July 18 (Monday) Benton MacKaye and Jacks River Trails in the Cohutta Wilderness. Moderate five-mile hike starting at Dally Gap on the Hemp Top Trail to the intersection of the BMT then down the BMT to the Jacks River Trail to the first crossing of the river. We will have access to the river for some relaxation and splash time. We will return to Dally Gap on the Jacks River Trail. Requires a five-mile drive on a USFS road to Dally Gap. Hike Leaders Carolyn and Tom Sewell.
For more information contact hikeleaderTS@bmtamail.org.

July 25 (Monday) Turtletown Creek Falls. Dog friendly hike (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Moderate five miles. Turtletown Creek plus two of the most beautiful falls you'll ever see on a short hike. Hike Leader Ken Cissna. For more information contact hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.



Trail Skills Workshop News Release

The annual Trail Skills Workshop (TSW), will be held at Lake Winfield Scott (Suches, GA) September 24-25, 2022. This training event is focused on teaching the most current trail construction and maintenance methods for Eastern landscapes. It is applicable for all skill levels. Expert instructors are from the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club (GATC), the United States Forest Service (FS) and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC).

In addition to introductory and advanced trail maintenance, this year's offering includes courses on rock construction, log cribbing and sawyering. The courses are offered so participants can attend different classes each day or dig in on one track for in-depth knowledge.

For more information and to preregister scan the QR Codes, or Contact: Jay M Dement, 404-731-1901, tsw@georgia-atclub.org.



Preregister



Brochure



**Deadline for the July Newsletter
is Wednesday, June 29.
Thank you!**