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State Rep TN/NC:	Steve Barnes



BMTA Headquarters



Benton MacKaye Trail Association

VOLUME 39, ISSUE 5

MAY 2022

Volunteers Earn Interagency Volunteer Pass

by Barry Allen

‘Surprise, surprise, surprise!’ As a child of the ‘60’s, *The Andy Griffith Show* and the many characters that emerged from this sitcom left some wonderful and long-lasting memories. One of the most memorable was Gomer Pyle, known and loved for the many catchphrases that came out of his mouth: ‘SHAZAM’, ‘Gaahl-lee’ and of course, *‘Surprise, surprise, surprise!’*

When the Forest Service contacted me earlier this year about a new benefit offered to volunteers accumulating 250 hours of service, all I could think about was *‘Surprise, surprise, surprise!’* Thanks, Gomer.

The great thing about this new pass -- the Interagency Volunteer Pass -- is that it is valid for all Federal lands. *Shazam!* Read on for more benefits and display requirements:

Benefits:

- ◆ Honored nationwide at all Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation and US Fish and Wildlife Service sites charging entrance or standard amenity fees.
- ◆ Valid for 12 months from the month of issue. Expires the last day of the month punched.
- ◆ Admits pass holder and any accompanying passengers in a private non-commercial vehicle.
- ◆ At per-person fee sites, admits pass holder and up to three persons. Persons 15 and younger are admitted free of charge.

Display:

- ◆ At staffed sites, show your pass to the booth attendant.
- ◆ At unstaffed sites, use hangtag to display pass from rear-view mirror. Hangtags are available wherever you purchase a pass.
- ◆ At per-person sites, present pass upon request.

Forty-five members have already received their Interagency Volunteer Pass. *Gaahl-lee! (or golly.)* Well done to all of these folks! Go [HERE](#) to see who has qualified.

Everyone is eligible. For some folks, it may take five or 10 years to accumulate 250 volunteer hours. Others will accumulate 250 hours every two or three years. The important thing is to get out there and VOLUNTEER so you each get your ‘*Surprise, surprise, surprise!!!*’

Hope to see you soon at a forest near you!

2022 Friends of the Deuce – Hike for Heroes Fundraiser

by Joy Forehand with photos courtesy of Jessie King



James King, David Wilber, Jr. and Corbin May

Everyone enjoys a good hike ... the fresh mountain air, the camaraderie with other hikers ... the peaceful seclusion.

One group of thru hikers found a way not only to enjoy the hike themselves, but to help others at the same time.

Jessie King is the Assistant Scout Master for his son's Scout troop (Troop 2, the Deuce --Summerville, SC). The troop's activities tend to be high adventure and centered on hiking and camping, such as – hiking the Grand Canyon rim to rim where they had a snowball fight and experienced triple-digit temps – all in the same day!

King, his son, James and two friends, David Wilber, Jr. and Corbin May, discussed their desire for an early summer backpacking trek with their Scout Master and BMTA Corporate Member, Glen Justis. Justis thru hiked the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) last fall and thought a thru hike of the BMT would be a great choice for the foursome's hike.

As they began to make specific plans for their journey, their thoughts turned to ... ‘We’re really going to enjoy this hike. Is there a way to help others while we do it?’

Jessie's entire public service career has revolved around helping people and one of the aims of Scouting is to foster a commitment of service to others. Consequently, the answer was an easy one ... turn the hike into a fundraiser for a charity. Because Jessie is a former Marine, the Semper Fi and America's Fund was the perfect choice for a philanthropy.

“I'm personally familiar with the Semper Fi and America's Fund,” said Jessie. “I like it because ... once they help you, you become part of their family. They don't just hand someone a check and say ‘good-by’. Prosthetics will wear out and need to be replaced – more surgery may be needed. The Fund is there for the people it already has helped when they need that replacement or additional surgery. Plus 93% of the funds raised go to the people the Fund is intended to help.”

To support the 2022 Friends of the Deuce – Hike for Heroes go to:
<https://thefund.org/event/friends-of-the-deuce-hike-for-heroes-2022/> .



Arrival Hike

"Cemetery Hike"

Three miles 2.5 hours. Visit two cemeteries in the National Park.

Easy Hikes

Marina Stroll

Hike three miles from the Village to Fontana Marina along the BMT, shuttle required.

Twenty Mile Falls

Drive to Twenty Mile Ranger Station and hike one mile to Twenty Mile Falls.

Yellow Creek Falls

Hike three-eighths of a mile to see a pleasant waterfall.

Bear Pen Gap Section of BMT

Hike about two miles along one of the most scenic sections of the BMT down to Tapoco Lodge.

Longer Hikes

Nichols Cove Hike

Travel to Big Fat Gap and follow the BMT six miles to Tapoco Lodge. Moderate. Shuttle needed. Return at 5:00 PM.

Hangover Hike

Travel to Big Fat Gap and follow the BMT 5.2 miles to the Hangover, spectacular view. 6 plus hours — arrive back at 5:00 PM. Strenuous.

Yellow Creek Ridge

Drive to Old Fat Gap and hike the BMT eight miles over Yellow Creek Mountain and down into Fontana. Strenuous. Shuttle.

Twenty Mile Loop Trail

Drive to Twenty Mile Ranger Station and hike 7.6 miles over Loop Trail with 1,200 foot elevation gain and loss. Moderate.

Featured Trip/Hike

Take the Fontana Ferry from the Marina to the site of the town of Proctor on the BMT. Explore, visit old cemetery, learn some local history and hike part of the BMT. Mileage can vary, and there is a charge for the Ferry. Hike Leader - Dick Evans.



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

While on the trail....

by Ken Cissna



Shirley Crouch with husband Travis (trail name Odiferous) at the Thunder Rock Campground. Travis is now thru hiking the BMTA and ran into thru hiker Running Bear from Vermont at Double Spring Gap. They walked on to Thunder Rock Campground where Travis's wife Shirley was waiting to take him home and get him away from the next day's weather. This turned out to be Running Bear's lucky day because Travis and Shirley Crouch offered her a bed, shower, and home cooked meals/-and a ride back to the trail!



Andrea Wiggins and Martha Revelo, Outreach staffers for Senator Raphael Warnock, during their site visit to the BMT, in front of the kiosk at Big Stamp Gap parking lot, with BMTA companions of the day, Darcy Douglas, Gilbert Treadwell and Ken Cissna.

Karen Kept on Trekking!

by Steve Dennison



Anita Hoskin, Karen Steinberg, Lexi Candela and Kitty Murphy at Shadow Falls. At this point, Karen needed only five more miles to finish her section hike of the Georgia portion of the BMT.



Karen Steinberg achieving her personal goal of completing 81.8 miles of the Georgia portion of the BMT. Well done Karen!!!

Tennessee Work Day

by Clare Sullivan



Daphne Martin and Laurie Schatz prepare a blowdown for the sawyers on the TN workday.



Sawyers tackle the blowdowns.



Anne Anderson blazes the BMT.



Thru hiker Kathy Anderson met the maintenance crew just as she started up to Buck Bald.



Celebrating a great work day with fresh pork rinds and ice cream. Yum!



Wildflowers are a perk of volunteering!

National Trails Day Returns! Saturday, June 4!

by Darcy Douglas

Once again, the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club, Mountain High Hikers, Georgia Forest Watch and the Benton MacKaye Trail Association will join forces to celebrate National Trails Day at Vogel State Park in North Georgia. This year, we have additional help from the NextGen Forest Ambassadors, organized by Georgia Mountains Children's Forest Network, a partnership between Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Georgia Appalachian Trail Club and Greening Youth Foundation.

Activities planned between 9:00 AM and 11:30 AM include:

- ◆ A cross-cut saw try-out supervised by certified maintainers.
- ◆ A rock work demonstration.
- ◆ Several hikes of varying lengths - at least one just for families.
- ◆ A maintenance work trip or two.

Lunch will be from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM. Due to Covid-19 and concerns of some, we are changing things this year to: **BRING YOUR OWN BAG LUNCH** and we will provide **DRINKS, DESSERT AND PAPER GOODS** for everyone. Because we don't know how many people will attend, we'll just do our best!!

During lunch, a representative from each organization will take 10 minutes to update the group on what their club is doing, new initiatives and answer questions.

We strongly suggest people carpool. Vogel State Park requires a daily parking fee of \$5.00 or a Georgia State Park Pass hanging from the car's mirror. All the venues in the park are currently booked, meaning there will be a lot of people and cars. We are considering a shuttle vehicle to help with numbers. In past years, people had to wait to be allowed into the park until someone left to open a parking space. Please carpool.

COVID-19 safety measures

- ◆ Full COVID-19 vaccinations required
- ◆ Event will be outdoors
- ◆ If you are sick or have been in contact with COVID-19 infected individuals, please stay home. Note that the park visitor center may have social distancing requirements inside.

Contact Darcy Douglas at hikeleaderDD@bmtamail.org if you have questions or suggestions to offer!



**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](#).

The Rest of The Story

by Bob Cowdrick

It would have been a boring work day without the rain, snow, sleet and sunshine. Georgia trail crews rarely get to experience all forms of weather in the same day but the April 9 work day was the exception. Add some chilly temperatures and it made for a great story to tell their friends and family after working Sections 11c-d along Rough Creek.

Three weeks ago, Andrew Carter, a BMT thru hiker, reported that there were “dozens of blowdowns” on the Rough Creek section. He was not too far off on his estimate.

We split into three crews. Barry Allen, Joe Cantwell, Nelson Ashbrook, Dale Clark, Ralph VanPelt, Steve Hayden, Dara Denning and Steve Dennison took the short cut into the BMT and Rough Creek via the Big Frog. They continued south, logging out to the Fork Ridge Trail.

Dave Ricker, Sue Ricker, Clare Sullivan, Whitney June, Daphne Martin, Bob Cowdrick and Laurie Schatz followed the BMT south from FS 221 through the green rhododendron tunnel, crossing three streams and logging out up to the Rough Creek Trail.

Gilbert Treadwell, along with his chainsaw crew of Ken Cissna, Art Kolberg and Mike Pilvinsky worked south from FS 221 and sawed out blowdowns up to the wilderness boundary.





First-time sawyers Laurie Schatz and Daphne Martin.



“Strong Man” Art!

The story the attendees told their friends and family included facts such as:

- ◆ 20 BMTA members and guests attended
- ◆ 162 hours of volunteer time expended
- ◆ 125 total miles hiked
- ◆ Two miles of brushing/lopping
- ◆ 47 trees removed
- ◆ 400 lops on the rhododendron green tunnel
- ◆ Three streams crossed – without anyone falling in
- ◆ Two new maintainers joined us.
- ◆ One “Incredible Chef” Patty made us lunch.
- ◆ Zero injuries reported

Now you know the rest of the story!

Please consider joining us on the May 14 BMTA Georgia Work Day so that you will have an incredible story to tell as well!



When we rendezvoused back at the Thunder Rock Campground we were fortunate to have Chef Patty Masters prepare an incredible lunch for us!!

Hike to the Extinct Caney Creek Village

by Clare Sullivan

Nine members and three guests enjoyed a beautiful 6.2-mile hike to the extinct Caney Creek Village along the Ocoee River in Tennessee. BMTA member, Judy Norton, joined us via a canoe ride across the river. Judy brought great photos of the “alive” Caney Creek Village, 1912-1941. She brought yummy ginger cookies, too!

Hikers had fun exploring the hundred-year-old remaining structures and artifacts from this amazing place. We found remains of the two-story hotel, tennis court, sidewalk, schoolhouse/church, dock, plumbing system, narrow gauge railway and fish ponds with air systems to store fresh fish.



Ready for an “Archeology Hike”!



Due to the pipe that protruded from it, folks thought this structure was either a shower base or a toilet base.



One of three fish ponds for holding fresh fish until it was time to cook them.



Marcia and Gary Stevens examine some of the interesting artifacts around a house foundation.



Judy Norton joined the group via her canoe, the short way to Caney Creek.



Crossing Big Creek on our way back up the mountain!

Brush Creek Large Loop Trail – Cherokee National Forest

Photos by Barbara Christopher

Ed Sullivan and Tom and Carolyn Sewell thoroughly enjoyed hiking with new BMTA members Barbara Christopher and Ruth Callahan on their first Tennessee hike. The group bonded quickly, chatting amicably with one another about hiker stories and the BMT. The hikers were treated to spring's delicate beauty of the native wildflowers. There were great views of Ocoee Lake that are only visible from this trail. Following the hike, they enjoyed lunch at Rod's Rockin' Rolls in Ducktown.



Tiny, but stunning Red Capped Lichen commonly referred to as British Soldier Lichen.



Handsome, Dwarf Crested Iris.



Small, four-lobed Bluet that lay in striking patches along the trail.



Beautiful, ancient Running Cedar.

Trail Skills Workshop News Release

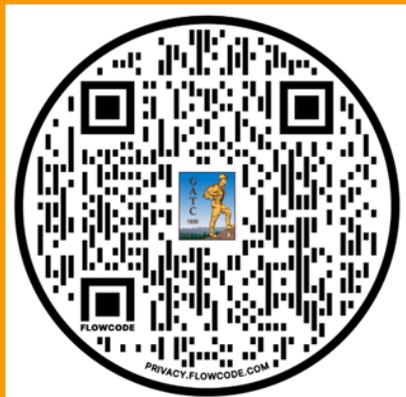
The annual Trail Skills Workshop (TSW), will be held at Lake Winfield Scott (Suches, GA) September 24-25, 2022. This training event is focused on teaching the most current trail construction and maintenance methods for Eastern landscapes. It is applicable for all skill levels. Expert instructors are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

Scouts Brave the Elements to Work on the Trail!



Welcome Our New Georgia Maintainers !

by Bob Cowdrick



Steve Pruett



Carol Nufer

Steve is a veteran trail volunteer who has worked on the Saturday work crews as well as some special trail projects. Steve will be maintaining Section 2c, Bryson Gap to the Toccoa River. Carol Nufer recently joined the BMTA. She has years of experience as a horticulturist and trail hiker. She will be maintaining Section 5a, Wilsco Gap to Ledford Gap.

If you are considering becoming a Section Maintainer there are a few sections still needing an adoption. Contact Bob Cowdrick at bcowdrick@comcast.net or 678-215-5276 for more details.



GA Work Trip—May 14, 2022

Section 2b—No Name Gap

- ◆ Water diversions
- ◆ Brushing & Lopping
- ◆ Step Installation

[Register for the Georgia Trip Now!](#)

Manhattan Associates Women in R&D Work Day

by Bob Cowdrick



Many thanks to the Manhattan Associates women who recently volunteered to spend a day working on the BMT! Their company is an Atlanta based Information Technology and Software company with offices in Europe and India. Well done ladies!!!

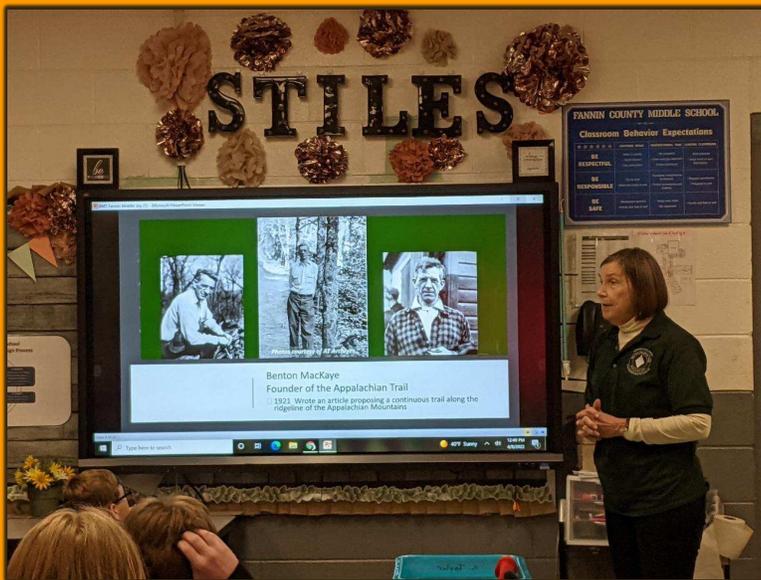


BMTA Goes to School

by Joy Forehand

Fannin Middle School teachers were searching for a way for their students to apply the concepts they learned from Georgia State Standards in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). Believing an outdoor activity would be a good fit, the teachers contacted Marci Harper, a retired teacher and avid BMT section hiker. Harper thought pairing the Fannin Middle School teachers and students with members of the BMTA to apply the concepts would be perfect.

An Exploratory Field Trip on the BMT's Fall Branch Falls section was held April 8, 2022. As the six graders hiked the trail, they identified trees and determined a tree's growth-rate and age. Students performed chemical assessments of Stanley Creek and Fall Branch Creek as well as searched for macroinvertebrates such as Stoneflies and Water Pennies in the creeks. BMTA members, Darcy Douglas and Gilbert Treadwell, shared the history of the Fall Branch Falls section and what it takes to maintain the trail.



Later that day, BMTA Vice President, Clare Sullivan, presented a slide show on the BMT to a seventh grade class. Elements of the show included: the principles of Leave No Trace, the definition of a Wilderness Area and how it is maintained, tools used for trail maintenance and what are blazes and why they are used.

Students also refurbished a half-mile trail around Fannin Middle School's property.

BMTA Section Maintainer, Joe Cantwell, met with Fannin teachers, Tori Arp and Althea Gobble, to make recommendations for renovating the trail.



TN/NC Work Trip—May 28, 2022

Section 14c—Buck Bald Road >>Unicoi

- ◆ Logout
- ◆ Brushout
- ◆ Tread Repair

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

Welcome 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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***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.

May

May 9 (Monday) BMT from Thunder Rock Campground, up Thunder Rock Express Trail, across Chestnut Mountain Trail, and down BMT. Dog friendly hike (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Moderate 5.2-mile loop.

Hike Leader Ken Cissna. For more information contact hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.



May 14 (Saturday) GA Work Trip Section 2b >> No Name Gap.
Contact Bob Cowdrick bcowdrick@comcast.net.

May 20 (Friday) Amadahy Trail. Dog friendly hike (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Easy to moderate 5 miles along the shore of Carter's Lake. Lunch at the marine campground.

Hike Leader Ken Cissna. For more information contact hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.

May 21 (Saturday) Memorial Hike for Tom Wright. Thunder Rock Campground near the Ocoee River.

Contact Darcy Douglas at hikeleaderDD@bmtamail.org or George Owen at hikeleaderGO@bmtamail.org.

May 27 (Friday) Gooch Gap to Woody Gap on the AT and return for a total of 7.4 miles. Enjoy great vistas on this moderate hike with some short climbs. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Hike Leader Kelly Motter. For more information contact hikeleaderKM@bmtamail.org.



May 28 (Saturday) TN/NC Work Trip Section 14c (Buck Bald Road >> Unicoi Gap) Contact sedcmc@comcast.net.

June

June 3 (Friday) Brush Creek Trail: Dog friendly hike (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Easy/moderate seven miles almost all gently downhill. This hike will have a shuttle. Hike Leader Ken Cissna. For more information contact hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.

June 4 (Saturday) National Trails Day. Vogel State Park. For more information contact Darcy Douglas hikeleaderDD@bmtamail.org.

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 11 (Saturday) GA Work Trip
Contact Bob Cowdrick bcowdrick@comcast.net.

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 Leader Ken Cissna. For more information contact hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.

June 18 (Saturday) BMT Section 11 E - Forest Service Road 221 to Thunder Rock Campground. Easy 3.4 miles. Meet at the Thunder Rock hiker's parking lot. We'll shuttle to the top of the mountain and hike back to the parking lot. Ninety-five 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 25 (Saturday) TN/NC Work Trip
Contact sedcmc@comcast.net.

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.



BMTA President Kenneth Cissna met BMT thru hiker "Goodnow" from Deltona, Florida on the trail near Three Forks on a beautiful spring day. Good luck "Goodnow"! We're all good now when we're on the trail!

Photo courtesy of Mike Pilvinsky



Congratulations to Greg Redman who completed the Georgia Sections of the BMT on May 1. Well done Greg!!!



**Deadline for the June Newsletter is
Wednesday, June 1.
Thank you!**