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### BMTA Officers 2019-2020

President:	Barry Allen
Vice President:	Joy Forehand
Secretary:	Clare Sullivan
Treasurer:	Margaret Meadows
GA M/C:	Phil Guhl
TN/NC M/C:	Rick Harris
Smokies Coord:	Larry Dumas
Hiking Director:	Ken Cissna
Store:	Sue Ricker
Membership:	Frank Forehand
Publicity:	Jeff DePaola
Conservation:	Dave Ricker
Past President:	Tom Keene
Newsletter:	Kathy Williams
State Rep GA:	Bob Cowdrick
State Rep TN/NC:	Larry Van Dyke



**BMTA Headquarters**



## President's Column

*"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got."*  
Henry Ford

All organizations, no matter what their focus, should have this quote framed and hung in a conspicuous place for everyone to read. This same phrase has been uttered in different words, some perhaps a bit more eloquently, but it is all too often ignored by the masses. Each of us can find places in our home and workplace where shaking things up a bit might not be a bad thing. As a 'for instance', I recently had one of our section maintainers ask about trading his section of trail for something new! Do tell!

Now, I don't want to be sacrilegious here, but I have long thought that a program which encourages volunteers to swap sections every few years might not be such a bad idea. Granted, some people have good reasons for keeping the same section year after year: physical abilities and convenience to home are two perfectly fine reasons.

On the other hand, some folks may enjoy driving to a new location, seeing a new vista or working an unfamiliar piece of real estate. Let me state this point clearly: if you are a section maintainer who has done a great job on a section of the BMT for three years or five years - or 20 years - and you feel it is time for a new challenge, then please ASK for a new challenge. I promise that we will be able to work within our group to keep you excited and motivated about volunteering on a new section of the BMT.

Recently, Rick Harris published a list of Tennessee sections needing section maintainers. We had a few people respond to this request, but I'd like to see more. It would be great if a few more of our Georgia people would take a section in Tennessee (Thanks Steve, Connor and Lynette), especially if we can identify a section that works for you! Remember, *"If you always do what you've always done"* ..... So don't hesitate to let your maintenance director know if you would like a new challenge. It may take a little time, but we really want to make things work for everyone.

On another maintenance note, **I have some exciting news about volunteer opportunities in the Smoky Mountains.** Recently, Larry Dumas led a conference call with the Park's volunteer coordinator, Christine Hoyer. The focus of the meeting was signage, especially in the Big Creek area, to designate the beginning/ending point of the BMT. However, during the call we discussed additional opportunities for trail maintenance within the Park.

Currently, the BMTA is restricted to campsite clean-up, generally done a couple of times per year from a boat. In 2021, we expect to expand this role to include trail brushing and clearing on designated sections of trail within the Park. Typically, brushing and clearing will be done by a two - three-person team and should be planned with the idea of spending at least one night in the Park. If this type of challenge motivates you, send me a note and give some thought to assembling a team.

However, there is a very important point to consider here: should you take a section of trail within the Park boundaries, you will be working as a volunteer *for the National Park System*. This will require some additional training/orientation to ensure volunteers are familiar with National Park standards. Rather than working as a volunteer for the BMTA, people adopting sections of trail within the Park will sign an individual volunteer agreement with the Park. You will be representing the BMTA, but you will be working individually as a volunteer for the National Park. We have a follow up call next month to gather more information, but this is an exciting new challenge for the BMTA. I expect to show that we can be the best volunteer group within the Park boundaries!

I hope to see many of you at our *abridged* annual meeting at Vogel State Park next month as we bring on a new Board of Directors and vote on some important changes to our by-laws. We should be able to spread out, take care of business and recognize a few people for their contributions to the Association during 2020. Till next month.....

## BMTA's 2021 Membership Drive Begins Now!

by Frank Forehand, Membership Director

By joining or renewing your BMTA Membership, YOU can “*Leave a footpath for generations to follow*”!

Last year was a banner year for BMTA ... more than 533 BMT enthusiasts gave something back to the trail they love by becoming a member of BMTA!

- Membership fees and donations are BMTA's primary source of funds for preserving and protecting the BMT.
- For a donation of \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500, you will receive an Individual or Family Membership for 2021. Make 2021 even better – Join or Renew Now!

*\*Anyone purchasing a membership on or after October 1 will receive a membership good through December 31, 2021.*



**Join Now!**

Use this link to Join BMTA:

**Membership**

## Nominating Committee's Slate of Nominees for 2021 Board

*Nominating Committee:*

*Bob Ruby, Chair; Clare Sullivan; Dave Ricker; Sue Ricker and ex officio member, Barry Allen*

Position	Current	Years in Office	Nominee
President	Barry Allen	2	Ken Cissna
Vice President	Joy Forehand	2	Joy Forehand
Secretary	Clare Sullivan	2	Clare Sullivan
Treasurer	Margaret Meadows	3	Lydia Burns, CPA
GA Maintenance	Phil Guhl	2	Bob Cowdrick
TN/NC Maintenance	Rick Harris	1	Rick Harris
Smokies Coordinator	Larry Dumas	3	Larry Dumas
Membership	Frank Forehand	1	Frank Forehand
Publicity	Jeff DePaola	3	Cary Page
Conservation	Dave Ricker	3	Dave Ricker
Hiking Director	Ken Cissna	4	Tom Sewell
State Rep – GA	Bob Cowdrick	3	Presidential Pick
State Rep – TN/NC	Larry VanDyke	2	Presidential Pick
Immediate Past President	Tom Keene	2	Barry Allen

This year's Nominating Committee, chaired by Bob Ruby, compiled this slate of officers for your consideration. Per our Bylaws, elections will be held at the 2020 Annual Meeting, set for Vogel State Park in Blairsville, GA, on November 7. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the meeting. Thanks to the Nominating Committee members for their work to put this list together. And, a special thanks to all the nominees for their willingness to serve the association as officers next year.



Thank you Maintainers.

## TN BMTA September Work Trip Section 16c

by Steve Cartwright with photos by Clare Sullivan

There were 23 volunteers who came out to work in the Upper Bald River Wilderness. Eleven of the participants were from BSA Troop 118 (the “Hogsnares”) from Athens. Troop 118 came out last September for our work trip on the BMT along the Hiwassee River. Troop 118 is near and dear to the trip leader, as I had the honor to serve as an Assistant Scoutmaster for eight years as my son made his way on the trail to Eagle Scout.

Due to the heavy rains that came in the 48 hours leading up to the trip, TN Maintenance Director Rick Harris recommended an alteration of the initial work plan to avoid the major crossing of Brookshire Creek approximately a half mile above the intersection of the Bald River. Thus, we started (after walking the road that leads to the large wildlife clearing) at the beginning of the Brookshire Creek Trail and continued to the BMT. Given the large number of participants, members of Troop 118 started their work of brushing out the trail corridor on the Brookshire Creek Trail, while the additional BMTA maintainers and guests continued to Section 16c working toward the major Brookshire Creek crossing. Most of the work was focused on brushing out with swing blades and loppers. Two downed trees were removed using a fancy Silky extra-large hand saw. The work progressed until about 2.5 miles from the start where the forward group, led by Tom Sewell, encountered two large trees obstructing the trail. It was a good place to make the return as time was getting late. All work was completed safely and no Scouts were left behind!



Scouts crossing the creek.



Well done!

A special thanks to Jason Bush, Scoutmaster, and Doug McCutcheon, Assistant Scoutmaster, for getting their Scouts to and from the work site and keeping them safe. A special welcome to guests Charles Smeltzer of Smyrna, GA, and Burgan Craig, of Chattanooga, TN. These two young men had hiked the trail, saw maintenance needs and decided to volunteer for this work trip. Hopefully we will see them on future trips as well! Also, a warm welcome to Gina Maresca, the new Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS) Wilderness Specialist for the Cherokee National Forest. She joined us to gain her first field experience in the Upper Bald River Wilderness. A special thanks to Rick Harris who took time away from visiting family to bring the tools and PPE. Good Scoutmaster that he is, he also helped with the tailgate safety session. I appreciate Ken Jones for his knowledge and guidance, as the trip leader had not been on this section of the BMT. Finally, thanks to Clare Sullivan for instructing the Scouts and thanks to her kind husband Ed who came to assist with shuttling if needed.



## BMTA's 2020 Annual Meeting

### \*Schedule

The Lake Pavilion at Vogel State Park  
Blairsville, Georgia / November 7, 2020

Entire Event to be governed by

[BMTA's COVID-19 Hiking Guidelines](#)

More Details to Come in the September Newsletter

9:30 AM	Board Meeting
10:30 AM	Annual Meeting
11:30 AM	Awards
12:00 PM	Lunch—Bring Your Own
1:00 PM	Hikes

To RSVP for the Annual Meeting and to submit your choices for a hike, go [HERE](#).

\*When the maximum number of park guests is reached,

**VOGEL WILL CLOSE THE PARK TO NEW ENTRANTS**

You should be OK if you arrive by 10:00 AM!



***Time to Renew!***  
Use this link to Renew Now:  
**Membership**



# BMTA's 2020 Annual Meeting

## The Lake Pavilion at Vogel State Park

### Blairsville, Georgia

### November 7, 2020

## Annual Meeting Hikes

### Wonderful Waterfalls

Hike Leader: Darcy Douglas / Under 3 miles, easy.

This short hike involves several waterfalls, two at DeSoto State Park and another at Helton Creek—both locations are just a short drive from Vogel.

### Wagon Train Trail—Brass Town Bald

Hike Leader: George Owen / About 4 miles, easy to moderate.

Out to the second overlook, from which position you can look back at Brasstown Bald and tower.

### Bear Hair Trail

Hike Leader: Steve Dennison / About 4 miles, moderate difficulty.

This hike departs from the parking lot adjacent to the Vogel Ranger Station. Requires more change of elevation (up and down) than hikes #A and #B. View of Vogel State Park's Lake Trahlyta.

### Swinging Bridge

Hike Leaders: Mike Pilvinsky & Ken Cissna / 5 miles, moderate.

From the parking lot on FS 816, hike up Toonowee Mtn to summit and beyond to where the trail starts down the other side. Then back and down to the Swinging Bridge over the

Toccoa River, and back to cars.

### Tesnatee Gap to Wolf Laurel Top

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**Hikes to be governed by  
BMTA's COVID-19 Hiking Guidelines  
Social Distancing / No Shuttles / Hikes Limited to 10 Hikers**

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**DEADLINE FOR HIKE REGISTRATIONS IS OCTOBER 31.** Go [HERE](#) to register for hikes & for the Annual Meeting ... or ... you can email your first, second, and third choices to [hikeleader@bmtaemail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtaemail.org). Use subject line "Annual Meeting Hike Preferences" and put your choice(s) in the body of the email. Assignments will be made first come, first served. "Hikes are BMTA Members Only"!



## Time to Join BMTA Now!

—*Leave a footpath for generations to follow.*—

To Join or to Renew your membership, go to [Membership](#).



- ◆ Membership fees & donations are the primary source of funds for preserving & protecting the BMT.
- ◆ For a donation of \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500, you will receive an Individual or Family Membership for 2021.

*Memberships purchased after October 1 will be good thru December 31, 2021.*

[\*\*Donate Now.\*\*](#)

# Upcoming October Georgia Work Trip Section 10

by Phil Guhl

- ◆ **Where:** Section 10/Dally Gap to Double Spring Gap.
- ◆ **When:** Saturday, October 10, 2020.
- ◆ **Meet:** 8:30 AM Home Depot (10012 Blue Ridge Dr., Blue Ridge, GA 30513) parking lot (near Dairy Queen) or 09:15 AM Dally Gap.
- ◆ **Plan for the Day:** Brushing and possible sign installation.
- ◆ **What to bring:** Minimum two liters of water, long pants, boots, gloves and lunch/snack.
- ◆ **Contact:** Phil Guhl at [bmtaphil@gmail.com](mailto:bmtaphil@gmail.com) or [770-548-5590](tel:770-548-5590) (Please RSVP so we can plan on the number of tools and helmets.)

Yes, that's right! The second Saturday of the month is creeping up on us...and you know what that means? TRAIL MAINTENANCE! Woo-Hoo!!! Being the 10th month, we will be working Section 10 in a Wilderness designated area (no power tools)....

## **COVID-19 concerns:**

If you believe you are in a high risk group, please evaluate whether going on this maintenance trip is worth the potential risk.

Individuals should consider whether carpooling is increasing his/her personal risk.

Masks are optional, but social distancing should be maintained as best as possible.

We will not have food at the conclusion of the work trip.

Crews must have a maximum of 10 (including the leaders).

Multiple crews can operate at the same time, but they have to be working in different locations.

**The size of teams will depend upon the number of volunteers we get.** This is how we will split up:

**Team 1: (LOOP)** Work from Dally Gap down the Jack's River Trail to the Benton MacKaye Trail.

Turn right (north) and continue working to Spanish Oak Gap. Turn right (south) and work the Hemp Top Trail back down to Dally Gap.

**Team 2: (OUT/BACK)** Hike in from Dally Gap on the Hemp Top Trail and start working at Spanish Gap. Work up to Penitentiary Branch. Stop and hike back to Dally Gap.

**Team 3: (OUT/BACK)** Hike in from Dally Gap on the Hemp Top Trail and start working at Penitentiary Branch. Work up to Hemp Top Mountain, or, as far as is possible. Stop working at 1:30 PM and hike back to Dally Gap.

**Team 4: Sign installations.** If you have an interest in working on sign installation, let me know in your RSVP. The Sign Team will group up and leave from Home Depot.

Tools for the day will be sling blades and loppers. Each team will have a token digger in case the need should arise to clean/install a water diversion or repair the tread.

Come one...come all...I look forward to working alongside each of you!

## Rocktown and Lost Wall Trails

by Steve Dennison

Monday, September 28, we started about 90 minutes later than usual because seven hikers drove from 90 minutes to two-plus hours for a different hiking experience to a place with odd names for trails involving different kinds of hikes.

Ok, I didn't Google strange trail names or read reviews of numerous hikes on *All Trails* to come up with something different. I actually hiked Rocktown Trail about three years ago en route to Cloudland Canyon State Park. Boulder Trail seems a more apt description than Rocktown. There are at least 30 very large stand-alone structures anywhere from seven to 25 feet high. The most odd was an upside-down structure resembling an ice cream cone. Another resembled a turtle's head. Another looked like a large mushroom. All in the span of 1.1 miles of almost flat trail.

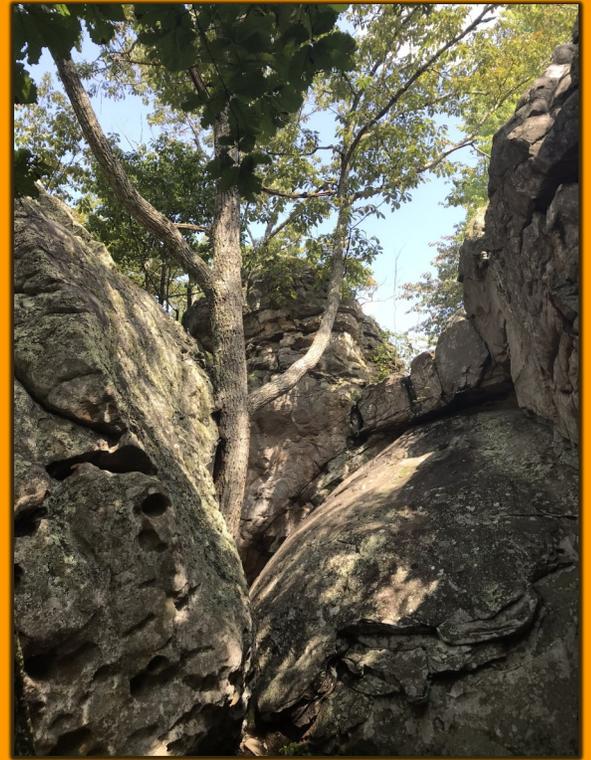
Long-time hiker Clayton Webster exclaimed "amazing" numerous times. Long-time hiker Dale Higdon, my wife Nancy and I, had hiked Rocktown Trail once previously but discovered additional formations during this hike.

I researched the driving directions from nearby LaFayette, GA and found a very short Dickson Creek Falls trailhead en route to Rocktown Trail. The actual trail name is Lost Wall trail. We saw a very high wall above us on this short 0.30 mile round-trip trail and also saw a waterfall with some limited flowing water. This waterfall had a sheer drop rather than a slope and had already shed the water from overnight rains with water seeping as evidence.

Pictures contributed by Nancy Dennison, Clayton Webster, Dale Higdon, Howard Baggett and Rod Jude capture the highlights of these two hikes better than any words I can ascribe.



The Wall was formidable.



Between a rock and a hard place!



Do boulders grind their teeth at night? Hmm.



Evidently they have been working out!!

## Significant Seniors in the BMTA... That Ralph Heller... He Just Never Stops!

by George Owen with photos courtesy of Marge Heller

New BMT signs are everywhere in Georgia and now we wish to share with you the legend behind those signs popping up on the BMT— Ralph Heller, aka past BMTA President, Vice-President, GA Maintenance Director, Hiking Director and Membership Director. Whew! And that's not all!

Ralph continued his support of the BMTA as the chair of the Corridor Protection Committee which seeks to reduce the amount of roadways the trail travels upon. During his tenure trail roadways went from five percent to about four percent. Since retiring from that committee chair position, he has devoted himself to another special interest of his, our BMT trail signs. When Ace Hardware in Blue Ridge, GA, developed a new shop where signs could be machine-made to order at reasonable prices and quick production, Ralph saw an opportunity we did not have before. Until a couple years ago we were often dependent on our signs being made by a few others on routers - often one or two at a time over months' delivery from first request. Now the signs system with Ace that Ralph has set up is providing us multiple signs within days of submission. Also, Ralph has developed the fine art of finishing the signs and attaching them securely in a special way to the signposts. All this is meant to last for years - and securely. So first, this story's author and Ralph, as now co-chairs of our new Signs Committee, seek out where signs are needed - new or replacement - then, between the two of them, the contents right down to "pointing arrows" are drawn for and submitted to Ace Hardware. When Ralph picks up the signs a few days later he spends hours, sometimes days, sanding, painting the lettering, staining and finishing the signs and then attaching them to posts. At times, the post attachment is done in the field on location of the post's ground installation.



**Healing Heller Helps Hikers** - Just after coming home from hip surgery and slowly walking, Ralph Heller quickly is busy again providing thousands of trail hikers the signs they need to secure their treks.

In mid-September Ralph, a curb, his dog and an untied shoe came together and Ralph landed on the pavement fracturing part of his femur on his right side. When he was taken to the Piedmont Hospital emergency room, Marge, his wife of over 50 years, told the nurses that "he was a hiker and trail maintainer and NOT to treat him as old." In the course of all this, Ralph ended up with a new titanium hip, allowing him to go back to life as usual.

Four hours after surgery the doctor wanted Ralph to see if he could walk 200 steps; he walked 300 and was ready to keep going but the therapist stopped him. The next day he was home and right back to doing what for hours?

Yep, HOURS DOING TRAIL SIGNS. THAT'S Ralph! His devotion to the BMTA NEVER STOPS! As Marge recently put it, "Ralph loves hiking and the BMTA almost as much as his wife!" (For those of us that have known him a long time, his children and grandchildren are also atop Ralph's ranking ahead of BMTA.)



Ralph's idea of rehab!

Ralph, this man who plans to be back on the trail again, spent some of his childhood growing up in Brevard, NC, where Marge says he first found his hiking legs. Here he belonged to a local hiking group. Ralph met Marge on the beach during Labor Day in 1967 when he was an airman stationed in Florida.

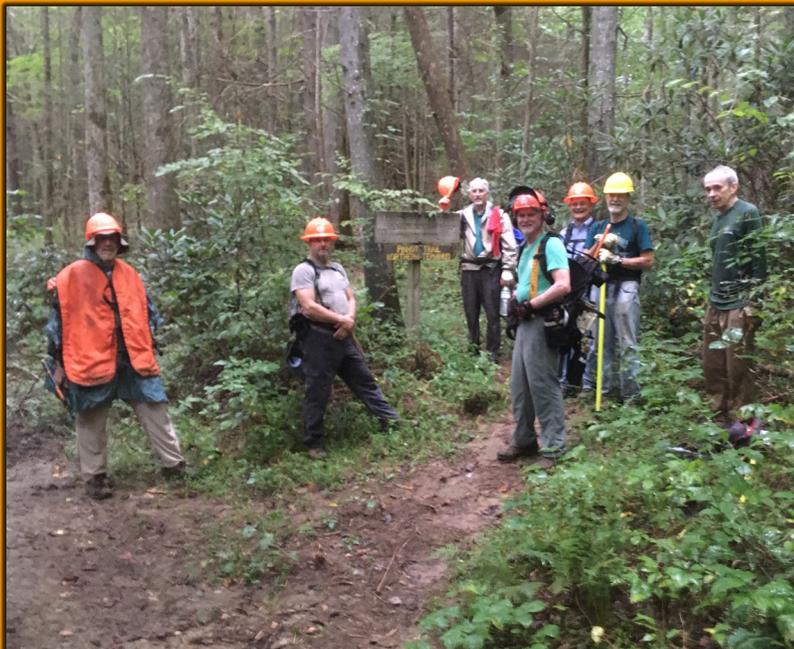
Marge, not incidentally, was once a BMTA board member and publicity chairperson who, with a terrific background of an advertising career, secured for several years some of our best publicity. She saw to it that the BMT was featured in publications of wide circulation nationally, regionally and in the immediate area.

After the Air Force and a degree at Florida International University, in Miami, Ralph's career led him to three airlines over the years. The latter part of this time he was involved with the flight simulation program of Delta Airlines in Atlanta from which he eventually retired. He first met this author and Darcy Douglas in the autumn of 2000 and quickly volunteered for the BMTA. Notes Marge, "The BMTA and friendships he has made have brought him much happiness through the years."

So when December 2020 comes, note two important occasions after Santa's big trip. **This December 26, Ralph will turn 80 and on December 27 he and Marge will celebrate their 51st wedding anniversary. HOORAY and CHEERS!** So the next time you pass one of those fresh new signs on the BMT, think "Hey, that's like a personal autograph of that trail rock star, Ralph Heller!" Yes, but don't try to figure out Ralph's new attachment technique and take the sign home for your outdoor memory collection! Please!

## GA Section 9 Work Trip

by Bob Cowdrick



## This Hike is for the Birds

by Tom Sewell

Tom Sewell led Pat Hill, accompanied by her faithful companion Daffy and Larry Jarkovsky on the BMT from the Cherohala Parkway to Whigg Meadow to visit the “birders” during their annual bird banding event. The two mile hike from Mud Gap is a moderate but very rocky hike. We started with an elevation at Mud Gap of 4600’ and ascended to the meadow at 5100’. We met Charlie Muise, who was the master birder in charge that week. He is also a full-time firefighter in Macon, Georgia. One of the great things about visiting here is that the volunteers at this annual month-long event love to share with you information about the birding program. One of the interesting stories was about a bird tagged last September 26 who flew to Peru, only to be killed by a cat on December 15. That’s a 3,100 mile trip in 79 days!

This is the fourth year I have led a hike to Whigg Meadow in September. I would encourage you to visit this area near Tellico Plains, Tennessee. The Indian Boundary Campground nearby is one of the best Forest Service campgrounds with plenty of hiking trails. I recommend including a trip to the fantastic Tellico Bakery to finish out your day!



## Orange Up!! Hunting Season is Upon Us!!!

We recommend wearing bright safety colors when in the woods during hunting season!

Click on the following websites for more detailed information:

**Georgia:** <https://georgiawildlife.com/2020-21-ga-hunting-regulations-available>

**Tennessee:** <https://www.tn.gov/twra/hunting/big-game/deer.html>

**North Carolina:** <http://ncwildlife.org/Hunting/Season-limits>



## Emery Creek Trail

by Ken Cissna

To beat the predicted rain, five of us got an early start on the Emery Creek Trail in the Southern Cohuttas. We met in Ellijay, caravanned to the parking lot, and were on the trail by 8:50 am on Wednesday, September 16, 2020. The trail is still as beautiful as ever. And so are the waterfalls. After taking time to enjoy and photograph the first/lower one, we scrambled up to the second/upper one where we sat on the large boulders and enjoyed our lunch while listening to the music of the water.

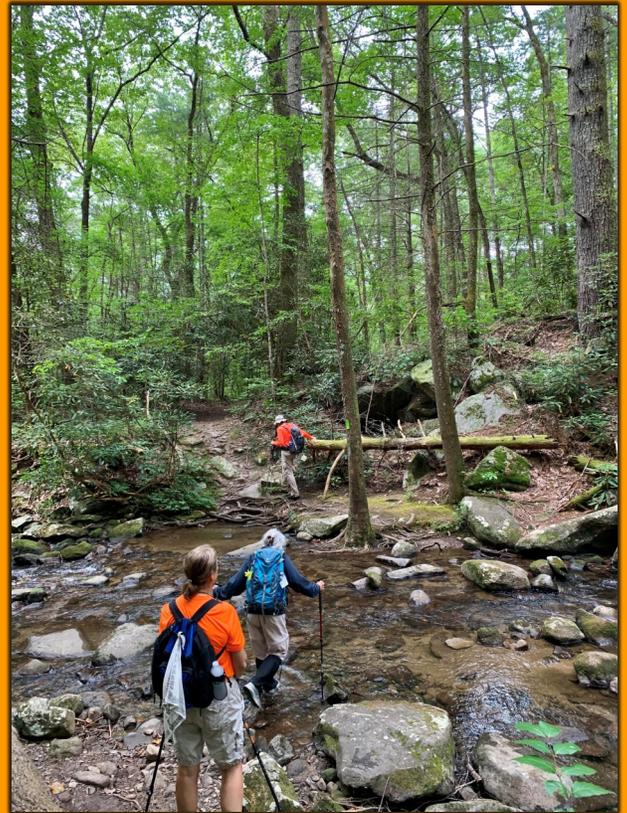
Besides the nearly ubiquitous Partridge Berry ground cover, we saw White Wood Aster, Hearts-a-Bustin, Purple Dewdrop, Downy Yellow False Foxglove, and of course the Cardinal Flower. Our hikers included a self-identified “bird nerd,” Suzanne Zuckerman, who could be heard from time to time calling out the names of the birds we were hearing - the Hooded Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Ovenbird, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Acadian Flycatcher, Tennessee Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Wood thrush, Veery, Carolina Wrens, Northern Cardinals, Easternwood Peewee, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Crow, Chestnut-sided Warbler and a few others.

The rock scramble is still as challenging as ever and there are still quite a few downed trees to go over, under, or around, so this hike is not for the faint hearted. And of course, there are 13 water crossings—each way!—only one of which is up to one’s knees. I can’t say we all stayed completely dry, but it didn’t rain, and a good time was had by all.

Hikers were all BMTA members and included Howard Baggett, Darcy Douglas, Martha Fowler, Suzanne Zuckerman and Hike Leader Ken Cissna.

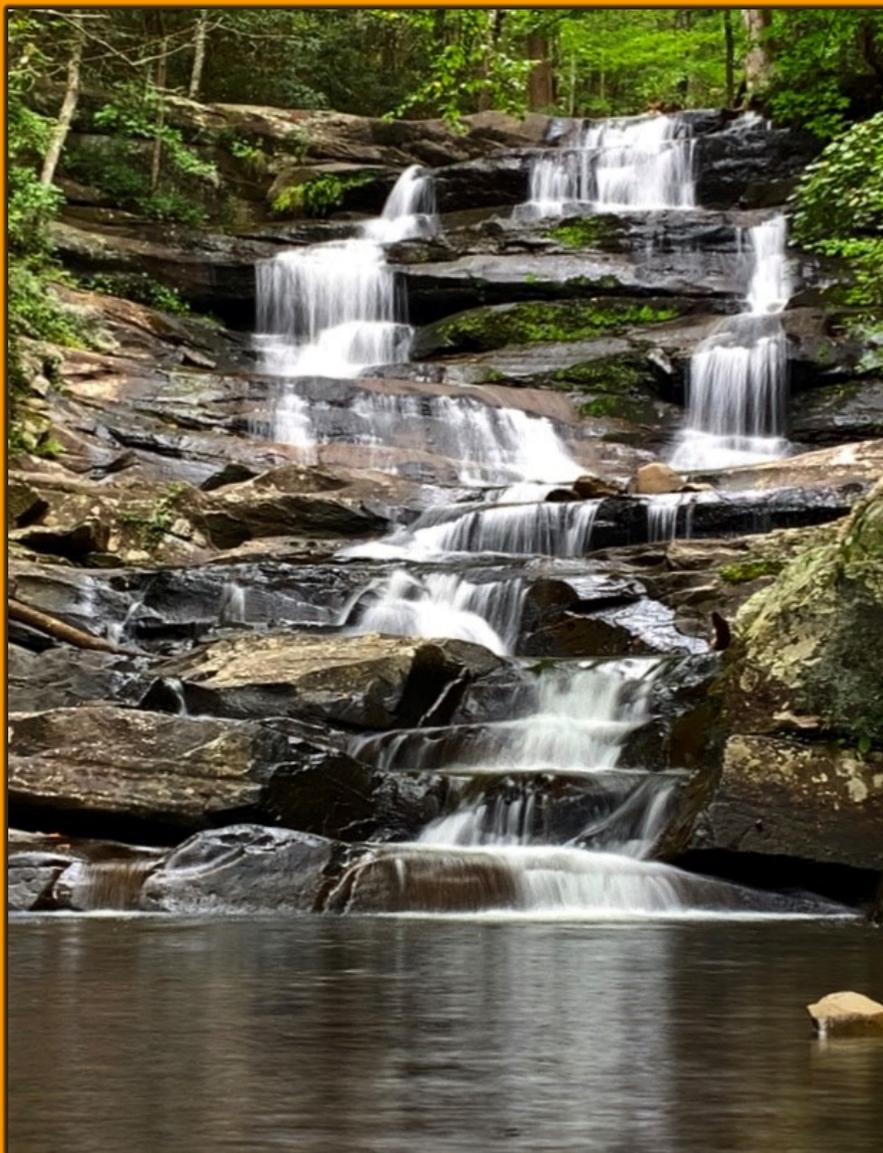


The first/lower falls.



One of the many stream crossings.

Continued next page



The second/upper falls were worth the effort!



The Cardinal Flower delighted!



Hearts-a-Bustin is bustin!



Smiles all around!



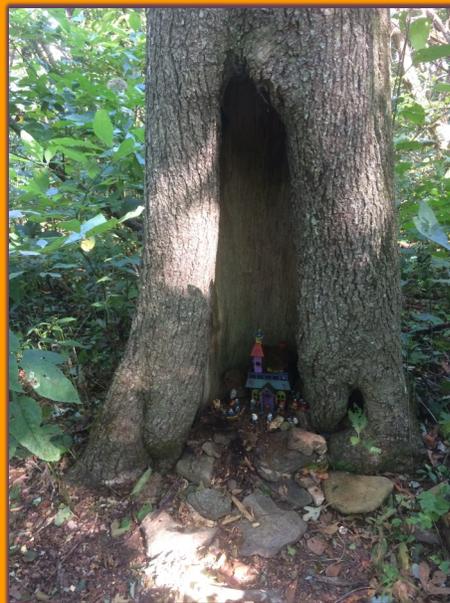
The elegance of the Purple Dewdrop.

# First Day of Fall on Top of Mount Oglethorpe

by Martha Fowler with photos courtesy of Suzy Downing and Kathy Williams

Debbie Tew, Kathy Williams, Bruce Rosenblum, Sara Bland, Suzy Downing, Jennifer and Jeff Shey, Kathryn Fillman and Martha Fowler (Hike Leader) decided to celebrate the first day of fall by hiking the trails of Mount Oglethorpe.

It was 47 degrees and very blustery at the start but soon warmed up. This used to be the southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail (AT) until the trail was moved to Springer Mountain due to overdevelopment in and around Mt Oglethorpe. It was here that Grandma Gatewood, the first woman to hike the AT in one season, began her "hike in the woods." At an elevation of 3288' the views are stunning. We were able to see Atlanta and Stone Mountain in the far distance. There is a privy that boasts of its stellar reputation and if you look carefully you can spot gnomes and Smurf villages as you wind your way around the mountain. At the top there is the shape of an eagle created with stone and marble. There were a lot of late summer wildflowers still blooming, most notably White Snakeroot and Yellow Crown Beard. It was the perfect way to welcome fall!





## 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!

**ALL CORPORATE MEMBERS ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS NOW!**



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TAPOCO LODGE  
[www.tapoco.com/](http://www.tapoco.com/)



THE DUCKTOWN COPPER INN  
<https://www.theducktowncopperinn.com/location>

## Upcoming Hikes and Work Trips

by Ken Cissna, Hiking Director

BMTA normally schedules four or five hikes per month, some “leisure” hikes that are shorter and easier and some five to eight miles and of moderate difficulty. 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. Some, but not all, of our hikes are “dog friendly.” Although more hikes are in Georgia than the other states, you will find hikes in all three BMT states: Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee.

These, however, are not normal times. Because hiking in the out-of-doors is good for one’s mental and physical health, we encourage BMTA members and others to continue hiking as much as possible during this national health crisis *and to do so safely*. To that end, we are continuing our hiking program and welcome people to hike with us. In the interests of safety, we have instituted some modifications that you need to know about:

1. **Only hikes that do not require shuttles are allowed** under the auspices of BMTA.
2. All hikers must drive to the meeting place and trailhead in their own cars -- no carpooling except among family members.
3. Any potential hiker who is feeling ill, has traveled within the past 14 days to a location with a significant number of cases of the novel corona virus (COVID-19) or has been exposed within the past 14 days to a person who has been confirmed as or is even suspected of having COVID-19 must not come on a hike.
4. All hikes are limited to 10 participants —hike leaders may impose even lower limits.
5. Before, during and after a hike, participants must maintain an appropriate social distance from one another (an absolute minimum of six feet—but ten, fifteen or twenty is much better).

We have had to make more adjustments than usual to our hike schedule—dropping some hikes, substituting others, revising hikes to avoid shuttles, etc. Please forgive the inconvenience.

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 [hikeleader@bmtaemail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtaemail.org).

The hikes for the next couple of months are listed below. We’re entering the beautiful fall/leaf color season for hiking, maybe the most beautiful of them all. You should find plenty to enjoy in the hikes below. More hikes will be forthcoming, so check the Activities Calendar of the website, BMTA’s Facebook page, our various email alerts and next month’s newsletter for updates. Enjoy.

### October

**October 3 (Saturday) Bob Bald. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE** (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). 8 miles, moderate.

Hike Leaders: Rick and Brenda Harris. For more information, contact [harrisri@aol.com](mailto:harrisri@aol.com).



**October 10 (Saturday) GA Work Trip Section 10.**  
To RSVP contact Phil Guhl, [bmtaphil@gmail.com](mailto:bmtaphil@gmail.com).

**October 12 (Monday) BMT:** Bushy Head Gap to McKenny Gap and return.  
8.2 miles, moderate. More up then down going out, reverse returning.  
Hike Leader Steve Dennison. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**October 16 (Friday) Jarrard Gap Trail.**  
6.8 miles, moderate.  
A loop hike from Lake Winfield Scott up Jarrard Gap Trail to Bird Gap and then back down to Slaughter Creek Trail.  
Hike Leader: Larry Dumas. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**October 17 (Saturday) Hangover. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE** (adult humans may bring a leashed dog).  
7 miles, difficult.  
Hike Leaders Rick and Brenda Harris. For more information, contact [harrisri@aol.com](mailto:harrisri@aol.com).

**October 21 (Wednesday) BMT/AT Two Upper Loops.**  
6 miles, moderate.  
Hike Leader: George Owen. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).



**October 24 (Saturday) TN/NC Work Trip Sections 13c 13d – Big Bend to Wildcat Creek.**  
To RSVP contact Keith Mertz, [keithmertz@hotmail.com](mailto:keithmertz@hotmail.com).

**October 26 (Monday) Four Season Hike Series – Fall:** BMT - Bushy Head Gap to Hudson Gap. **DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE** (adult humans may bring a leashed dog).  
4 miles, moderate. We're going to offer this relatively short and fairly easy hike during each season for the next year. Come out and see fall colors, great views in winter, wild flowers in spring and who knows—just get hot in the summer.  
Hike Leader: Ken Cissna. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**October 30 (Friday) BMT:** John Muir Trail to the Narrows.  
5 miles, moderate.  
We'll start with a beautiful view from the swinging bridge that crosses the Hiwassee River at the Appalachia Powerhouse. The hike will be to a treasure, The Narrows, a deep narrow gorge through which the old riverbed flows. It's full of fascinating rock formations and Ruth's Golden Asters (in the fall). You'll want to drop your pack and explore! Be prepared for water crossings. Hiking sticks recommended. Bring snack/lunch and water.  
Hike Leader: Clare Sullivan. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

## November

**November 2** (Monday) Tanasi Trails at Ocoee Whitewater Center: Across Rhododendron, up Bear Paw, across Chestnut Mountain and down Thunder Rock Express Trails.

7 miles, moderate.

Hike Leader: Evelin Yarns. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**November 7** (Saturday) Annual Meeting Hikes at Vogel State Park. **HIKES ARE LIMITED TO 10 HIKERS PER HIKE (members only).**

- A. Wonderful Waterfalls. Under 3 miles, easy. Hike Leader: Darcy Douglas.
- B. Wagon Train Trail. 4 miles, easy to moderate. Hike Leader: George Owen.
- C. Bear Hair Trail. 4 miles, moderate. Hike Leader: Steve Dennison.
- D. BMT: Swinging Bridge Section. 5 miles, moderate. Hike Leaders: Mike Pilvinsky and Ken Cissna.
- E. AT: From Tesnatee Gap to Wolf Laurel. 4.6 miles, moderate to strenuous. Hike Leader: Tom Sewell.

Go [HERE](#) to register for the Annual Meeting AND to register for a hike.

**November 10** (Tuesday) Selected Trails at Talking Rock Nature Preserve.

About 4 miles, easy to moderate.

Hike Leader: Martha Fowler. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).



**November 14** (Saturday) GA Work Trip Section 11.

To RSVP contact [GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org](mailto:GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org).

**November 16** (Monday) Amadahy Trail.

4-5 miles, easy-moderate.

Hike Leader Darcy Douglas. For further information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**November 18** (Wednesday) BMT/AT: From Three Forks southbound up AT to first crossing with BMT, back on BMT. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog).

4.2 miles, moderate (option to go to second BMT/AT crossing—adds 1.7 miles)

Hike Leader: Ken Cissna. For further information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**November 20** (Friday) Benton Falls.

3 miles, easy. To a gorgeous 65 foot waterfall.

Hike Leader: Larry Dumas. For further information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).



**November 21** (Saturday) TN/NC Work Trip 17c-d Whigg Meadow to Beech Gap.

To RSVP Contact Ed/Claire Sullivan [clare7982@gmail.com](mailto:clare7982@gmail.com).

**November 21** (Saturday) Rabun Bald.

3.3 miles, moderate.

Hike Leader: Barry Allen. For further information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**November 22** (Sunday) Selected Sections of the Unicoi Turnpike and BMT near TN 68.  
4-6 miles, easy to moderate.  
Hike Leader George Owen. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**November 30** (Monday) AT: Dicks Creek Gap south to Kelly Knob and return by way of Deep Gap Shelter.  
9 miles, moderately strenuous.  
Hike Leader Steve Dennison. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

## December

**December 5** (Saturday) BMT: Bushy Head Gap to Hudson Gap to High Point towards McKenny Gap, and return.  
6.7 miles, moderate. Elevation change total 1376'. Beautiful ridge hike.  
Hike Leader: Tom Sewell. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**December 7** (Monday) AT: Woody Gap to Gooch Gap and back.  
7.2 miles, moderate. Two nice viewpoints.  
Hike Leader: Steve Dennison. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**December 8** (Tuesday) Selected trails of Boling Park (Canton).  
5-8 miles, easy to moderate.  
Hike Leader Darcy Douglas. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**December 11** (Friday) Piney Knob Trail.  
5.5 miles, moderate.  
Hike Leader: Evelyn Yarns. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).



**December 12** (Saturday) GA Work Trip Section 12.  
To RSVP contact Bob Cowdrick [GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org](mailto:GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org).

**December 14** (Monday) BMT/AT: From Three Forks northbound up AT to just past Hickory Falls Cemetery and back. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog).  
5 miles, moderate.  
Hike Leader Ken Cissna. For further information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).

**December 16** (Wednesday) Benton Falls.  
3 miles, easy. Beautiful 65' waterfall.  
Hike Leaders: Clare Sullivan and Judy Price. For more information, contact [hikeleader@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleader@bmtamail.org).



**December 19** TN/NC Work Trip Section 16d-e. Brookshire Creek to Tellico River.  
To RSVP contact Ralph Van Pelt [RVanp45246@aol.com](mailto:RVanp45246@aol.com).

**The deadline for the November Newsletter is November 11.**