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**BMTA Headquarters**



# Benton MacKaye Trail Association

VOLUME 38, ISSUE 4

APRIL 2021

## BMT to be a National Scenic Trail?

by Ken Cissna

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*

I have no idea whether Margaret Mead ever heard of Benton MacKaye or the Appalachian Trail, but the quotation attributed to her (though never verified) surely describes the process by which the Benton MacKaye Trail came to be.

Not long ago the Benton MacKaye Trail did not exist. But, in 1980, a small group of thoughtful, committed, and *very dedicated* people decided that our part of the world needed a first-class, medium-length trail that would honor the life of Benton MacKaye, the man whose vision brought into being the country's first long-distance trail, the Appalachian Trail. Thank you to all—past and present—who have contributed to making the BMT the enjoyable, well-maintained trail that it is today.

After 40 years, it is time for the BMT to move to the next step: Joining the Appalachian Trail, Pacific Crest Trail and nine others to become the 12th National Scenic Trail (NST). This won't be easy. We will need a great deal of local and regional support—including political support because the prestigious designation as a NST takes an act of Congress—literally!

We have a number of advantages compared to many of the existing National Scenic Trails when they were being proposed. First, our trail is already on the ground. Every mile actually exists. Hundreds, perhaps thousands have walked every one of its almost 300 miles. And more than 95% of those miles are already on protected federal land (either National Forest or National Park System). Equally important, a volunteer organization already exists that is willing to care for the BMT and has been for 40 years.

Of course, I'm talking about all of us—now *generations* of Benton MacKaye Trail Association volunteers and guests—who constructed and now maintain the Trail.

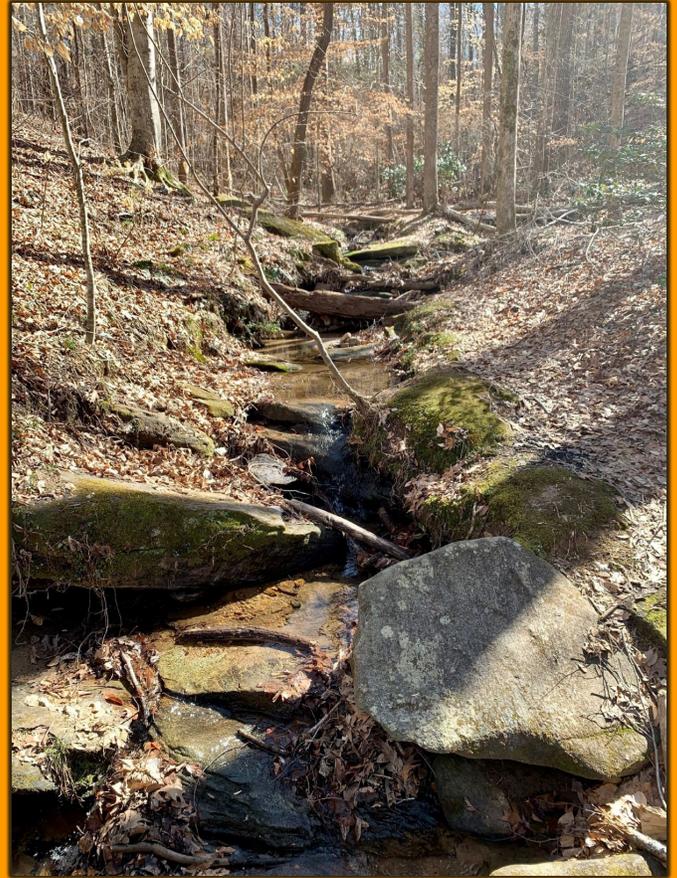
In subsequent issues of the *BMTA Newsletter*, we will discuss the advantages to BMTA and to the Trail itself in becoming a National Scenic Trail as well as the details of that process.

For now, just sit back for a second or two and consider the idea of our Benton MacKaye Trail being one of just twelve National Scenic Trails.

## Bucolic Day at the Buford Dam

by Howard Baggett

On a beautiful March Friday, Howard Baggett led nine BMTA members and one guest on the Laurel Ridge Loop at Buford Dam. The hike treated us to a good look at the dam from below, a pretty climb along a small stream and then a nice view along Lake Lanier. After the hike we lunched, capped with a delicious desert prepared by Evelin Yarns.



*Celebrate BMTA's 40th Anniversary!*

**2021 BMTA Annual Meeting & Hike Fest Nov. 11 – 14**

Unicoi State Park & Lodge, Helen, Georgia

**Great Hikes!**

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Mention the Benton MacKaye Trail Association!**

# The “Incredible Bulk”!

by Bob Cowdrick

The plan was to go after the nine reported trees on the BMT.  
The surprises were the 15 on the Jacks River Trail – including a 32” diameter blowdown!  
Incredibly, we were able to remove that big tree better than expected!

The numbers speak for themselves....

11 blowdowns removed on BMT Section 10a and b

15 blowdowns removed on Jacks River Trail

73 Volunteer Hours

“The Incredible Bulk” - largest tree: 32” Diameter - 95+ years old!

7 Hikers met on the trail

6 Merry Maintainers doing the work

2 Water Crossings - Across and back

1 Fantastic Day!

0 Injuries

Thanks to all of you for making this happen!



## The Fort Mountain State Park Diaries

photos courtesy of Tammie Smith and Mike Pilvinsky

### Entry: Ken Cissna

I regard the Gahuti Trail in Fort Mountain State Park as the hardest 8.3 mile trail in North Georgia. Maybe our hike leader Mike Pilvinsky did too. But isn't arranging to fall and dislocate his shoulder going to extremes just to get out of leading this hike?

So Mike stayed at our lakeside campsite while fellow campers Gilbert Treadwell, Tammie Smith and I drove over to the Visitor Center at 9:00 AM to meet the other hikers, Tom and Carolyn Sewell, and Jane Harrison. We all drove to the Cool Springs Overlook, parked our cars, and headed counterclockwise on this loop hike.

The weather was cool but not raining and the hiking warmed me up enough to drop a layer. When we stopped for lunch along the way at one of the empty campsites, I put the layer back on so I wouldn't cool off.

Eventually, the trail loops around near the lake on the opposite side of Mike's and my campsite. Thinking maybe Mike had the right idea, I decided hiker dog Artie and I would bail out on the hike a couple of miles early and join Mike to relax and read for the rest of the afternoon. Tom, Carolyn, Jane and Gilbert completed the hike without incident.



### Entry: Tammy Smith

We arrived Monday to an almost empty campground. It seemed most people canceled due to the forecasted bleak weather. Our crew included Mike Pilvinsky, Ken Cissna, Gilbert Treadwell and myself.

We had a lake view and nice bathrooms practically to ourselves – albeit, the bathroom nearest our site was closed for repairs. Monday night was by far our coldest - at least that was our opinion, no matter what the temperature indicated. We did gather for a fire, cocktails, snacks and socializing.

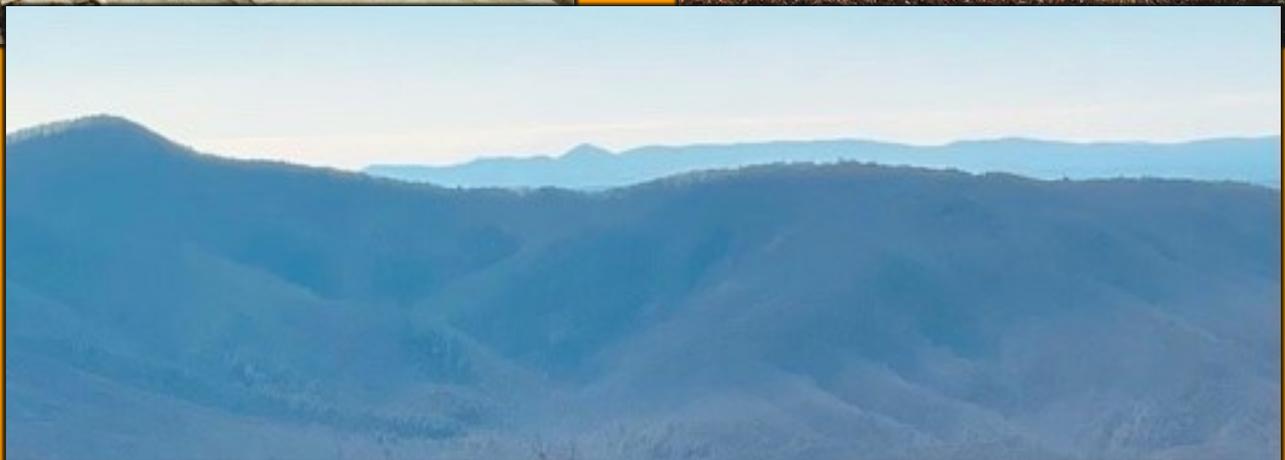
Tuesday we hiked the Gahuti Trail - 8.5 miles total. With a temperature of 33 degrees, all of us were eager to get moving. Gahuti proved to be a test in endurance and balance as there were many rocks and downed trees. All were excited to go and felt accomplished when it was over! A few other members who were not camping also joined us.

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Tuesday night, the “Fire Master” built a fire none of us would leave alone. Thanks to Gil for putting up with that. We gathered again for drinks, snacks, jokes and reminiscing about our previous adventures.

Wednesday we met non-camping BMTA members at the office and began our journey. In comparison to the day before, Wednesday’s hike was a more leisurely walk in the woods with Carolyn Sewell as our leader. It was a very beautiful, sunny and warmer, six mile hike around the lake, part of the Gahuti and the old fire tower. The Sewell’s and Jane joined us after hiking for drinks and snacks. What a lovely day of hiking complete with good weather with even better company. Our usual social hour(s) came to an end at nine.

I’m a night owl. I was able to stay up for a couple of more hours and read a book next to the campfire. The bright and reflective moonlight gave the appearance of glitter dancing on the lake. This sight and the peacefulness I felt caused me to pause and reflect upon how grateful I feel to be here and the friendships I’ve made over these last five years. A lovely place and serene moment for me.





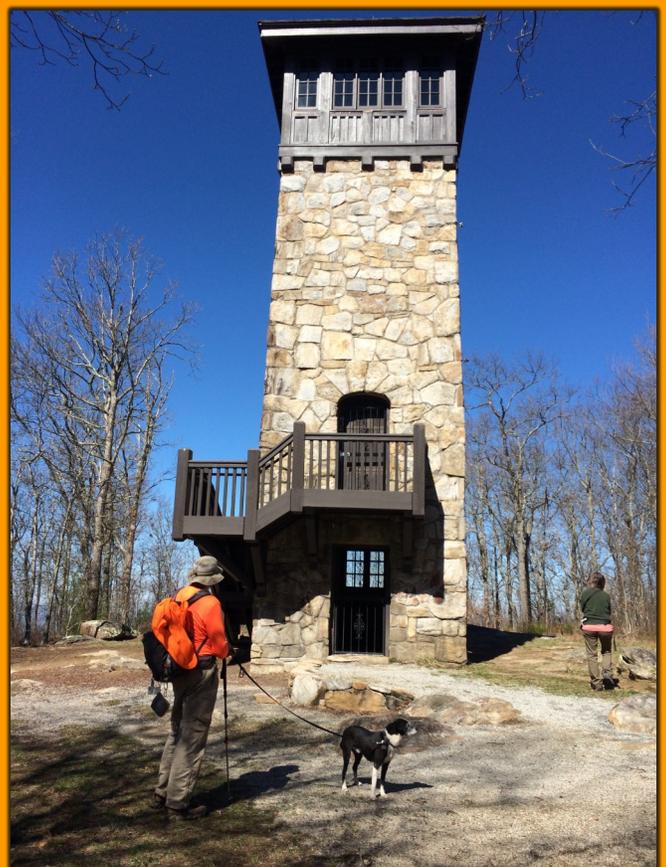
**Entry: Carolyn Sewell**

Fort Mountain State Park was the place to be on this wonderful spring-like day. After a strenuous hike on the Gahuti Trail Tuesday, the nine hikers were glad to have a less challenging walk in the woods.

We started on the Gahuti Trail but then took the Red Trail down to the lake. After going halfway around the lake we took the Big Rock Trail Loop to view the waterfall and then proceeded back to finish the walk around the lake.

On the second leg of our hike, we visited the Overlook and Fire Tower where we learned some of the history of this beautiful park.

Thanks to Mike Pilvinsky for setting up this three-day event!



## Healing Beauties

It's the time of year when the forest floor is covered with lush green plants and colorful blossoms. Today, we treasure these plants for the colorful landscape they provide. Native Americans appreciated these spring beauties for a much different reason. They valued a plant's blossoms, stems, leaves and/or roots for the plant's medicinal properties.



The **Azalea** blooms are spectacular, ranging from pale yellow to flaming red. Native Americans used the plant for treating an upset stomach, sore throats, burns and other wounds.



An easily overlooked plant, the **Bellwort Lily** has a delicate narrow flower that usually "hangs down". The plant is a member of the genus *Uvularia* which is derived from the Latin, *uvula*, meaning "little grape". Early Americans used the plant as a poultice for boils.



The prolific **Dwarf Crested Iris** had a number of medicinal uses — as a laxative tea, an ulcer remedy, a treatment for the liver and as an amalgam for sores. However, caution was of the upmost importance. Larger quantities of the plant could be toxic!



The small, but elegant, burgundy blossoms and pleasant aroma of the **Sweet Bush** or **Sweet Shrub** are a rather unique addition to the plants along the trail. The slender branches of the bush range from three feet to well over eight feet in height. The plant has a myriad of medicinal uses. As an antiperiodic, it prevents the recurrence of symptoms. It acts as an emetic/diuretic for the kidneys and bladder. Eye drops derived from the plant treat failing eyesight. The plant also has been used as a treatment for hives and as a strong depressant for the heart.



A wide array of **Trillium** gardens line the forest pathways — Catesby, *Trillium Luteum*, Round Robin, *Grandiflora*, etc. The medicinal values are numerous — gynecological issues, diarrhea and as an expectorant.



A relative of the Hibiscus, the turban-shaped **Turk's Cap Lily** is sometimes called the "sleeping hibiscus" because its petals never fully open. It was used as an emollient for digestive issues and for gynecological problems.



For early Christianity, the **Violet** was a symbol of modesty. It also represented the venerable traits of wisdom, faithfulness and humility. Whatever the skin issue ... dry skin, bee stings, varicose veins and abrasions ... violets were used as a poultice, salve or compress.

# BMTA Georgia Workday

by Bob Cowdrick

An incredible amount of work was needed on Sections 2 and 3. Fortunately, BMTA's Georgia March workday was well staffed. We had six crews in the field on a wonderful spring day.

**Crew 1** with Barry, Sean, Joe, Shane, Patrick and Gilbert hiked in from Skeenah Gap to the Duncan Ridge Trail. They cut blowdowns, cleaned water diversions, rehabbed the campsite and improved access to the spring.

**Crew 2** with Ken, Janice, David, Steve and Ed worked north from Hwy 60 on water diversions and a few bothersome blowdowns.

**Crew 3** was root ball restoration at Bryson Gap. Mark, David, Dave, Bob and Steve did an incredible job of resolving that challenge.

**Crew 4**, with Phil as a honorary Scout leader, teamed up with 10 Scouts and leaders from Troop 675 to sidehill, de berm, and remove some dangerous roots south of Hwy 60. What a wonderful, enthusiastic, and hardworking group of Scouts he had with him!

**Crew 5** was the "Swinging Bridge Gang". Mike, Harrison, Art, Rob and Larry did cleanup at the parking lot and campsites at the bridge. This heavily used site always requires some extra effort.

**Crew 6** probably had the most fun. Debra, along with Clare, Sue, Ann, Nancy, Janie and Collin, hiked north and south from the bridge cleaning out briars and improving the tread.

The numbers speak for themselves. A record number of members and guests attending, three hundred five hours of volunteer effort, six crews and zero injuries!

Please mark your calendars for our next Georgia workday on April 10, when we will be working on Section 4 from Skeenah Gap to GA Hwy 60.



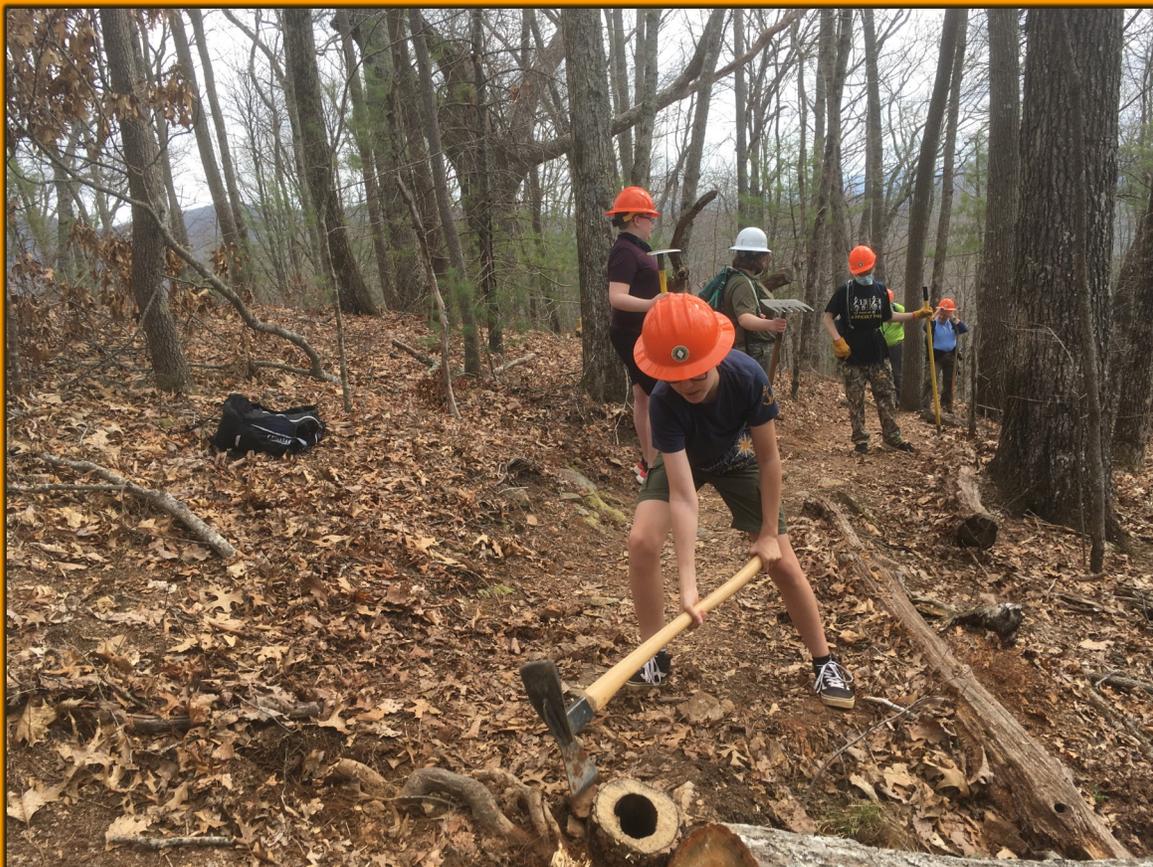
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Root ball before.



Root ball after!



Scout Skills!

## Rocks at Thunder Rock?!!

by Tom Sewell



March 10 was one of those perfect early spring or late winter days we love to have and be able to hike. Five ladies joined Tom Sewell as he had to step in at the last minute due to the planned hike leader having a vehicle emergency on the way.

We met at Thunder Rock Campground. This moderate 5.4-mile hike is a great loop utilizing a short walk on FS 42, Thunder Rock Express, Chestnut and the BMT to return to the campground.

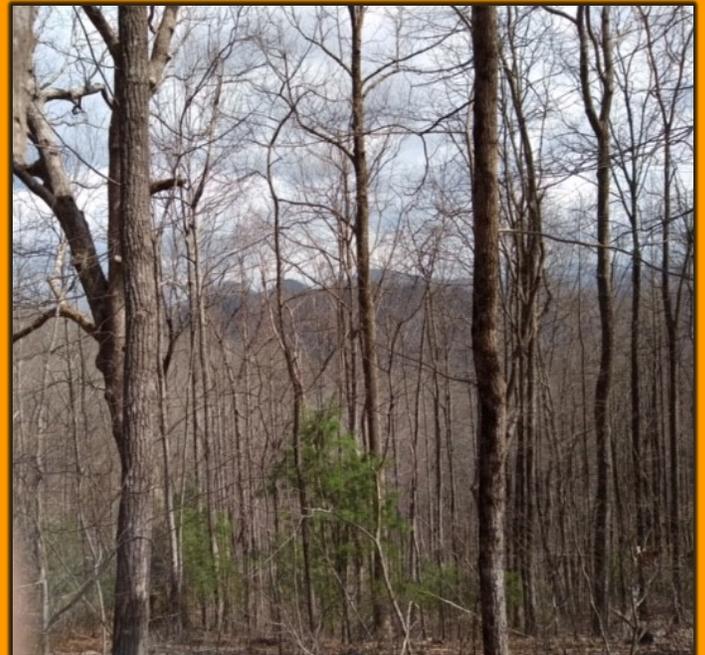
On the BMT section we came across a pile of rocks that just leads one to wonder where did that come from? Well it's rumored that a group of college students at nearby Lee College had a ceremony there and later a USFS truck had a slight altercation with the pile. Who knows? But we often find things along the trail to speculate about.

## Skeenah Gap to Licklog Mountain

by Steve Dennison



**BMATA hikers Jan Hitt, Susan Paul and Vickie Yunker enjoying lunch on trees recently cut by Bob Cowdrick near Licklog Mountain. Thank you Bob for the excellent "lunching accommodations"! The "diamond décor" enhanced the experience!**



Three mountain tops peek through the forest.

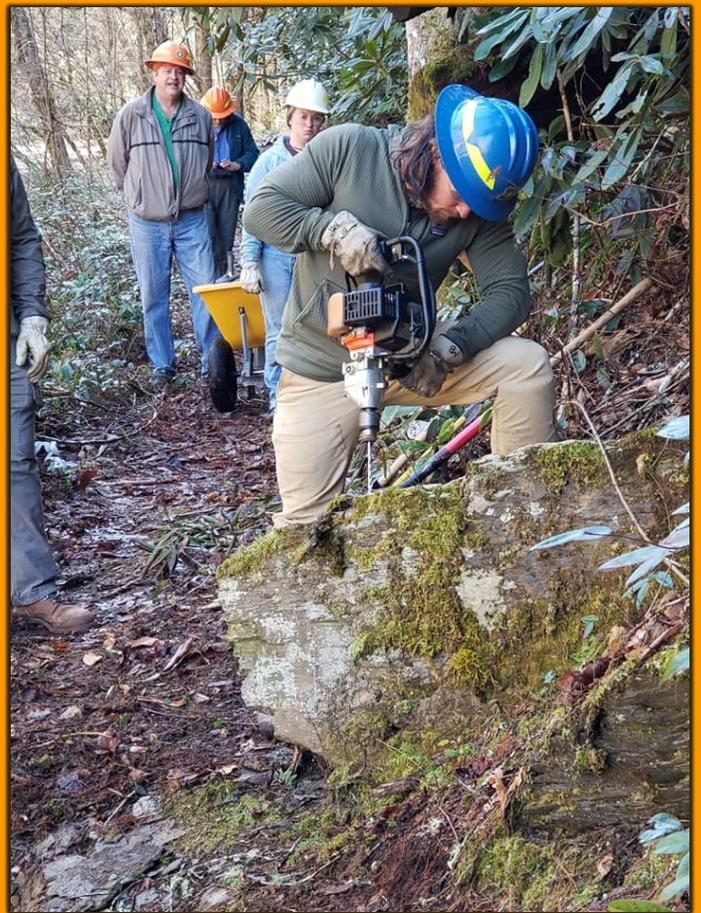
## Tennessee Work Trip-March 20

by Steve Cartwright

A long-time problem area on section 12e (Lost Creek Campground to Reliance) was finally remedied. Just before the crossing (traveling north) of Little Lost Creek, the trail narrowed down to a dangerous width due to erosion into the bank from Big Lost Creek.

In order to widen the trail, a large rock had to be removed. In cooperation with U.S. Forest Service personnel, and BMTA volunteers, the task was accomplished. Mason Boring, Chris McTaggart, Jennifer Lamb and James Ogles, from the Ocoee Ranger District (Cherokee National Forest), joined Barry Allen, Ken Cissna, Rick Harris and Steve Cartwright for the work trip.

This work trip was not publicized - the work area was small and cramped and thus just a small group was needed. Mr. Boring arranged to bring in a rock drill and micro-blaster to aid in removing the rock. Several hand tools designed for rock busting and removal were carried in via wheel barrel (thanks to Mr. Ogles). In addition, Mr. McTaggart was the designated sawyer. He sawed out several problem logs, brushed out the work area and felled a small tree to serve as cribbing. In the able hands of Mr. Boring the micro-blaster cracked up the rock making it easier to remove with hand tools. Using other digging tools, the segment of trail was widened to a safer width. Some additional feet of trail beyond the dangerous segment were refreshed and stabilized with log cribbing. Finally, on the way-out Ken, Rick and Steve dug out some low spots on the trail to improve drainage.





## Another Membership Milestone!!

by Frank Forehand

I'm pleased to announce that as of April 2, we have **536 Members!** We didn't hit the 500 mark in memberships until July last year. The numbers are going up for our Facebook pages as well. We now have:

Benton MacKaye Trail Association **4,669 followers**

Benton MacKaye Trail Maintenance **424 followers**

Benton MacKaye Trail Hikers **1290 members**

When shopping, going on a trip or looking for a service; please check our Corporate Members first.

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[\*\*THE HISTORIC TAPOCO LODGE\*\*](#) is a great place to stay when hiking the trail in Robbinsville, NC.

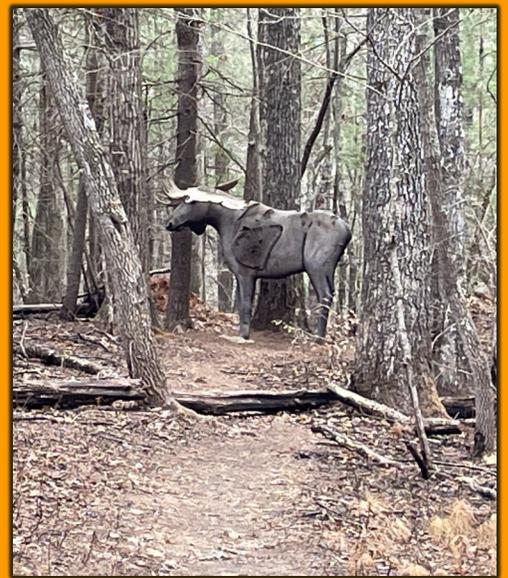
[\*\*WILDWOOD MAGIC\*\*](#) offers unique hiking packages including Wildwood Walks and Wildwood Backpacking excursions.

Whether renewing a membership or becoming a member for the first time, I invite you to join BMTA now to "... leave a footpath for generations to follow." Go to [\*\*MEMBERSHIP\*\*](#).

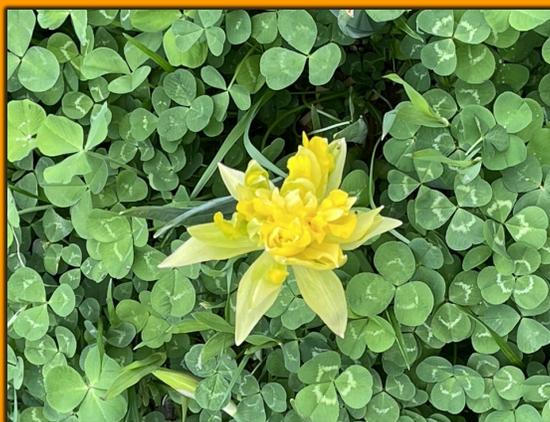
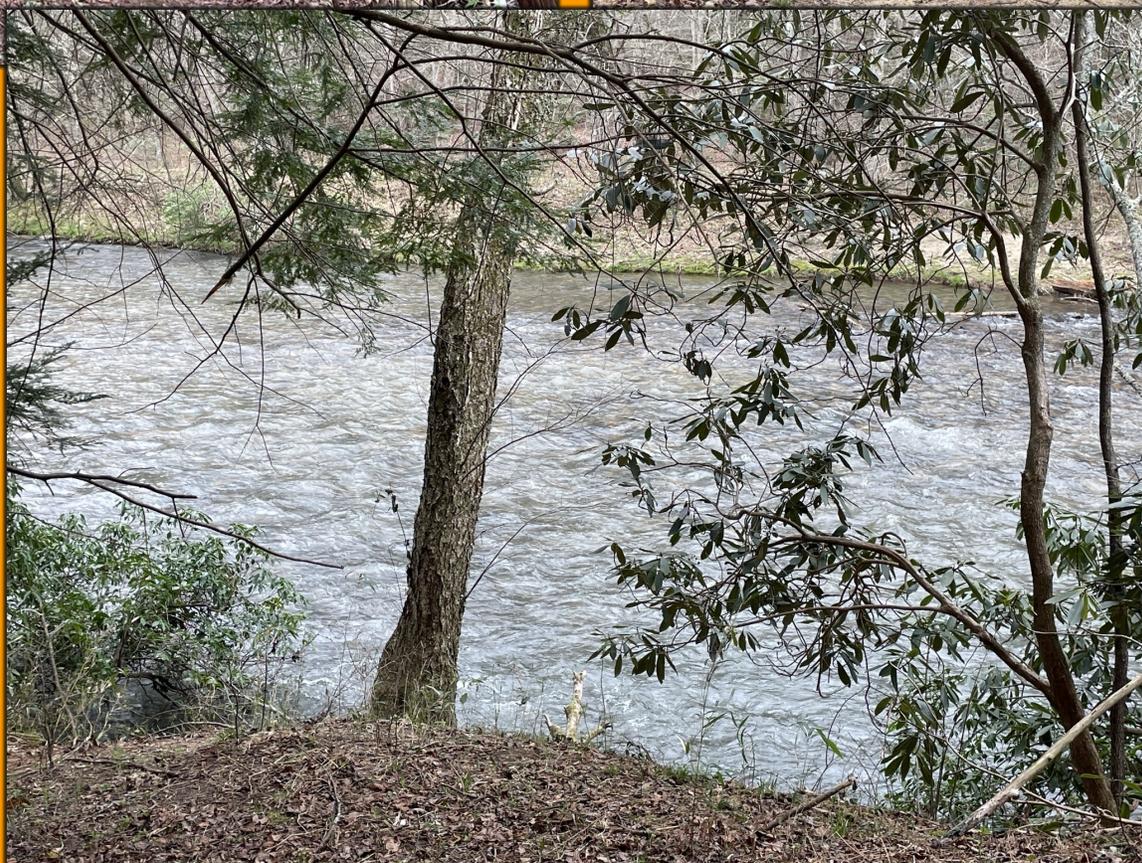
## Cartecay Tracts and Treats

by Carolyn Sewell

Fortunately the weather for the Cartecay Tract hike was cooperative and we were spared any rain showers. Our group of 10 hikers began with a trip to the archery range where we tried to discern exactly what animal was the intended target at each station. For sure there were deer, bears and a hog or two, but there seemed to be a few that were very strange. The hike continued to the new trail that had been recently blazed and then joined the River Trail Loop for our final leg back through a DNR wildlife feed plot and back to the trailhead.



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**Join or Renew Your BMTA Membership Today!**  
*Leave a footpath for generations to follow.*

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## Duncan Ridge

by Steve Dennison



Views were hard to find in the fog on the Duncan Ridge Trail between Mulky Gap and Sarvis Gap.

Despite the cold weather we did see two other hikers and ran across three GATC trail maintainers. Near the start of the hike they had cut a large blowdown that had been there about six or seven years.

We thanked the maintainers and eventually were able to discover a vista or two peeking out in the mists.

# 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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**From the BMTA Store:**  
**No orders April 7 - 14 will be processed as Store Manager on vacation.**  
**Thanks!**

Dear Tom and Carolyn Sewell, Thank you for stepping in and leading my hike at the Whitewater Center when I had a fender bender. **You guys are the BEST!** Evelin Yarns

# Upcoming Hikes and Work Trips

by Tom Sewell, Hiking Director

## Guidelines for Our Hikes

- ◆ Only hikes that do not require shuttles are allowed under the auspices of BMTA.
- ◆ All hikers must drive to the meeting place and trailhead in their own cars -- no carpooling except among family members.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ All hikes are limited to a maximum of 10 participants—hike leaders may impose even lower limits.

Before, during, and after a hike, participants must maintain an appropriate distance from one another (an absolute minimum of six feet—but 10 or 15 or 20 is much better).

## April



**April 10 (Saturday) GA Work Trip** Sections 4a,b. Skeenah Gap > Wilscot Gap. Logout, brushout and tread repair. For more information contact Bob Cowdrick [GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org](mailto:GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org).

**April 12 (Wednesday)** Caney Creek Historical Community. Moderate 7 miles. Hike to the abandoned historical community of Caney Creek on the Ocoee River (one large creek crossing). See lots of artifacts. This tiny town had mass transit, bathtubs, electric streetlights, concrete sidewalks, a tennis court, hotel, telephones, school and a church, but no stores. It existed from 1918-1941. No automobiles ever travelled there. For more information Google Caney Creek, TN. Be prepared for an hour's drive on FS 221 in the Cherokee National Forest. Hike Leader Clare Sullivan. For more information contact [hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org).

**April 13 (Tuesday)** Go Forth Creek near Ducktown, Tennessee. Easy 3.7 miles out and back. It follows along a pretty creek the whole way and there should be lots of wildflowers to spot. The parking is very limited so only five or six cars can fit in. If you are coming with someone in the same car, let me know so I can allow for more people to come. The trail is 4 miles from the Ocoee Whitewater Center so when we finish Go Forth Creek, we can hike the one-mile rhododendron trail if we have time. Hike Leader Martha Fowler. For more information contact [hikeleaderMF@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderMF@bmtamail.org).

**April 15 (Thursday)** Hike to the Southern side of "The Narrows" on the Hiwassee River via the abandoned community of McFarland. Moderate 6 miles. Four miles will be along railroad tracks. Prepare to drive 6 miles on a FS road. See the extinct town of McFarland, TN, established in 1895. It served as a section headquarters for maintenance on the Old Line Railroad. The town had a post office, general store and a two-story home. Many railroad workers lived there. FS personnel working the newly created Cherokee National Forest stayed in the hotel. Two large, interesting concrete structures built in the 1940s to support the Appalachian Dam and powerhouse construction remain. Hike Leader Larry Jarkovsky. Coordinator Clare Sullivan. For more information contact [hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org).

**April 16 (Friday)** Deep Gap to Fall Branch Falls on the Stanley Gap and Benton MacKaye Trails. Strenuous 10.4-mile round-trip with 1,200 foot elevation change in both directions. Hike Leader Steve Dennison. For more information contact [hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org).

**April 19 (Monday)** Cloudland Canyon State Park. Moderate to strenuous 6 miles. Each hike has 400' elevation change. It's a little bit further drive than most of us do but the 2-mile round-trip Waterfalls Trail and 4.8-mile West Rim Trail that includes one additional waterfall at Cloudland Canyon are impressive in the spring. Hike Leader Steve Dennison. For more information contact [hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org).

**April 19 (Monday)** Caney Creek Historical Community. Moderate 7 miles. Hike to the abandoned historical community of Caney Creek on the Ocoee River (one large creek crossing). See lots of artifacts. This tiny town had mass transit, bathtubs, electric streetlights, concrete sidewalks, a tennis court, hotel, telephones, school and a church, but no stores. It existed from 1918-1941. No automobiles ever travelled there. For more information Google Caney Creek, TN. Be prepared for an hour's drive on FS 221 in the Cherokee National Forest. Hike Leader Clare Sullivan. For more information contact [hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org).

**April 23 (Friday)** Wildcat Creek-Turner Trail Loop with side trip to Rocky Ford cascades. Approximately 7 miles with brief steep segments. A few lady slippers were found on the trail in 2020. Hiking poles recommended. Trail located in GA Wildlife Management Area. Involves carrying a free GA Lifetime Sportsman license for Georgia residents over 65 or obtain a permit through the GA Department of Natural Resources. Hike Leader Steve Dennison. For more information contact [hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org).



**April 24 (Saturday)** TN Work Trip Sections 15b,c. Tate Gap to Sandy Gap. Log-out, brushout and refresh blazes.

For more information contact Rick Parks [Rickafur1@gmail.com](mailto:Rickafur1@gmail.com).

**April 26 (Monday)** Park Creek/Park Ridge Trails, Standing Indian area near Franklin, North Carolina. Moderate 5 miles with several creek crossings. There will be beautiful spring flowers to admire. Hike Leader Evelin Yarns. For more information contact [hikeleaderEY@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderEY@bmtamail.org).

**April 28 (Wednesday)** Lady Slippers! Mulky Gap, Blairsville. Easy to moderate 1.5 miles. Before embarking on the hike, hikers will go across the road to see a huge garden of thousands of Pink Lady Slippers. The hike itself begins on an old logging road. Trillium, Showy Orcus, Wild Geranium, Wild Iris and Dutchman's Pipe are just a few of the spring beauties to be seen. For the return, we'll switch to the Duncan Ridge Trail along which are Flame Azaleas as well as some super-size Pink Lady Slippers. Hike Leaders Joy and Frank Forehand. For more information contact [hikeleaderJF@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderJF@bmtamail.org).

**April 30 (Friday)** Four Season Hike Series – Spring: BMT - Hudson Gap, out and back. Dog-friendly hike (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Moderate 4-5 miles. We're going to offer this relatively short and fairly easy hike during each season this year. Come out to see spring wildflowers this time. Hike Leader Ken Cissna. For more information contact [hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org).

## May



**May 1 (Saturday)** TN Work Trip Brookshire Creek Tail Section 16c. Annual log-out and brushout.

For more information contact Rick Harris, [tn-ncmaintdirector@bmtamail.org](mailto:tn-ncmaintdirector@bmtamail.org).

**May 3 (Monday)** Bald River Falls Trail off the Cherohala Parkway in Tellico Plains, TN. Moderate 9.8 miles round trip. We will hike this incredibly beautiful trail to the last waterfall a short distance from Bald River and eat lunch there, then return to our vehicles. There are numerous impressive waterfalls in the first 2 miles of the trail, then the trail flattens out somewhat with some great campsites and swimming holes. This trip is listed as moderate due to its length and the rockiness of the trail. Hike Leaders Brenda and Rick Harris. For more information contact [hikeleaderBH@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderBH@bmtamail.org) or [hikeleaderRH@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderRH@bmtamail.org).

**May 5 (Wednesday)** Lady Slipper Hike: BMT at Weaver Creek, Blue Ridge. Moderate to strenuous 3.8 miles. This will be a SLOW, LEISURELY hike to enjoy the wildflowers. Initially we'll pass by beautiful Mountain Laurel groves peppered with Flame Azaleas. Stop for a leisurely lunch at the water cutoff beside some of the largest Lady Slippers on this section. As we stroll back to the trailhead, we'll pass numerous gardens of the pink beauties. Hike Leaders Joy and Frank Forehand. For more information contact [hikeleaderJF@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderJF@bmtamail.org).



**May 8 (Saturday)** GA Work Trip Wilscot Gap >Dial Road. Logout, brushout and tread repair. For more information contact Bob Cowdrick [GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org](mailto:GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org).

**May 10 (Monday)** Naked Ground, Haoe and Hangover via the BMT and back with possible side trip to Bob Bald off the Cherohala Skyway. Difficult 7 to 9 miles. We meet at the Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center in Tellico Plains, TN, then drive to the Wolf Laurel Trailhead, about an hour drive. We will hike up the Stratton Ridge Trail 2 miles to the intersection with the BMT, then go north to Naked Ground, Haoe and the Hangover with its 360 degree views of the Smokies and the surrounding mountains in TN and NC National Forests. After eating lunch at the Hangover, we will return with a possible 2-mile side round trip to Bob Bald. For more information. Hike Leaders Brenda and Rick Harris. For more information contact [hikeleaderBH@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderBH@bmtamail.org) or [hikeleaderRH@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderRH@bmtamail.org).

**May 12 (Wednesday)** Fires Creek Trails near Hayesville, NC. Moderate/strenuous 7 miles. Phillips Ridge to Rim and return via Phillips Ridge. Beautiful Laurel Creek and along the Rim Trail are Rhododendron and spring wildflowers, such as Trillium, Lady Slipper and Solomon's Seal. Grouse, warblers, deer, bear, Russian boar and hawks roam the area. It's a beautiful wilderness not frequently visited. Hike Leader Steve Dennison. For more information contact [hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org).

**May 14 (Friday)** Rocktown Trail near Lafayette, GA – Moderate 4 miles. Maze of large, oddly shaped sandstone-conglomerate boulders atop Pigeon Mountain and a short waterfall trail enroute. Waterfall more likely to have water in the spring. Rocktown Trail is located within a GA Wildlife Management Area. Involves carrying a free GA Lifetime Sportsman license for Georgia residents over 65 or obtain a permit through the GA Department of Natural Resources. Approximately 4 miles total depending on how many boulders you want to climb. Hike Leader Steve Dennison. For more information contact [hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org).

**May 19 (Wednesday)** Talking Rock Nature Preserve utilizing the various loops in the Talking Rock Nature Preserve. We plan 5 easy miles but you may decide to add more if you wish after the hike. Hike Leader Howard Baggett. For more information contact [hikeleaderHB@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderHB@bmtamail.org).

**May 21 (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](mailto:hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org).



**May 22 (Saturday) TN Work Trip** Sycamore Creek Trail. Section 17a-b. Annual logout and refresh blazes. For more information contact Pam and Kent Mathews [pam-elahallmathews@yahoo.com](mailto:pam-elahallmathews@yahoo.com).

**May 24 (Monday)** Turtletown Creek Falls near Farner, TN. Moderate 4.5-mile round-trip hike to two of the prettiest waterfalls in the area. Hiking poles recommended. Hike Leader Steve Dennison. For more information contact [hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org).

**May 29 (Saturday)** Upper Springer Mountain Loop. With two lovely vistas this 4.6 mile loop provides visits to the southern terminus of both the Appalachian and Benton MacKaye trails. Some history of these two trails is included with this moderate trek. Hike Leader George Owen. For more information contact [hikeleaderGO@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderGO@bmtamail.org).

## June

**June 7 (Monday)** Quartz Loop at the Whitewater Center in Ducktown, TN. Moderate 4.7 miles. Hike Leader Evelin Yarns. For more information contact [hikeleaderEY@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderEY@bmtamail.org).

**June 9 (Wednesday)** Bolling Park Trails Canton, GA. Easy 5-6 miles in this great preserve. Hike Leader Howard Baggett. For more information contact [hikeleaderHB@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderHB@bmtamail.org).



**June 12 (Saturday) GA Work Trip** Fall Branch > Weaver Creek Sections 6 b,c,d and 7a. Logout, brushout and tread repair. For more information contact Bob Cowdrick [GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org](mailto:GAMaintDirector@bmtamail.org).

**June 13 (Sunday)** Easy to moderate 4 miles at the Ocoee Whitewater Center to see the water release arrive from two miles upriver. See rafters and kayakers on the raging rapids. Learn about the 1996 Olympic competition for kayaks and canoes. Hike one of the trails past the tasty wild raspberries and through the lovely Rhododendrons back to the Thunder Rock parking lot. Hike Leader Clare Sullivan. For more information contact [hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org).

**June 14 (Monday)** BMT: Lost Creek section. Dog friendly hike (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Easy 6 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](mailto:hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org).

**June 19 (Saturday)** AT/BMT double loop hike west from Three Forks. This moderate 6-mile hike covers the lower north flank and top of Rich Mountain. Hike Leader George Owen. For more information contact [hikeleaderGO@bmtamail.org](mailto:hikeleaderGO@bmtamail.org).

To view more events from our website go [HERE](#).

The deadline for the May Newsletter is Wednesday, April 28.  
You may email your articles to Kathy Williams [HERE](#).  
Thank you!