

Benton MacKaye Trail Association

2021 Annual Meeting Packet



“...leaving a footpath for generations to follow.”



November 11-13, 2021
Unicoi Lodge
Helen, GA



Annual Meeting Agenda

Unicoi Lodge, Helen, GA
November 13, 2021

THURSDAY – NOVEMBER 11

Thursday Hike Fest

FRIDAY – NOVEMBER 12

Friday Hike Fest

Fireside Ballroom, Lobby and Patio

4:30 Board Meeting (Fireside Ballroom)

6:00 Friday Nite Social

SATURDAY—NOVEMBER 13

Saturday Hike Fest

Fireside Ballroom and Lobby

4:30—6:30 BMTA Store Open

4:30 – 6:30 Book Signing

5:00 Annual Meeting (Fireside Ballroom)

- ◆ President's Message
- ◆ State of the Trail Report
- ◆ Recognition Certified/Re-certified Sawyers
- ◆ Election of Officers
- ◆ Proposed Bylaws

4:30—7:30 Cash Bar

6:30 Awards Banquet (Fireside Lobby)

7:30 Featured Speaker—Larry Anderson (Fireside Ballroom)
(intro by Ken Cissna)

8:00 BMTA Annual Meeting Awards Ceremony

Blaze Team

Hike Leader Awards

30-Hour Awards

100-Hour Club Awards

Volunteer of the Year

Trail Worker of the Year

SUNDAY—NOVEMBER 13

Sunday Hike Fest



Annual Meeting Hike Fest Schedule

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Hikes for November 11 Thursday through Sunday 14: Hikers are to meet and depart at the outside porch on the second level of the Unicoi Lodge. Sign-up sheets will be available for participants starting in the afternoon prior to the following day's hike with the exception of Thursday hikes which will meet on the porch 15 minutes prior to departure. Please remember: on Friday some hikes should end by 3:00 so that BMTA Board Members may have the opportunity to participate. All hikes on Saturday must end by 3:30 so that hikers have time to get to the lodge/campground in order to prepare for BMTA events starting at 4:30.

NO ADVANCE SIGN UP FOR ANY HIKES.

Group size is limited to 12 participants. If you want to accommodate more hikers please be prepared to have a second Hike Leader and a plan to separate the group so that we follow best practices for limiting impact on the trail environment.

Thursday November 11

- ◆ Duke's Creek Falls. Short 2-mile round trip hike but it has a lot of stairs to maneuver. 7-mile drive from the lodge. **Hike Leader Michael Pilvinsky. Departs lodge at 3 PM.**
- ◆ Unicoi Lake trail. 2.5 miles easy. 100' elevation change. Meet at the Lodge. **Hike Leaders Tom and Carolyn Sewell. Departs lodge at 3:30 PM.**

Friday November 12

*Some participants will need to be here for an early start.
BMTA Board Meeting at 4:30 & Friday Nite Social at 6:00*

- ◆ Smith Creek Trail from Unicoi State Park to Ana Ruby Falls and return. A moderate/strenuous 10-mile hike. **Hike Leaders are Tom and Carolyn Sewell Departs lodge at 9 AM.**
- ◆ Raven Cliffs Trail. 7-mile drive from the lodge. A scenic 5-mile round trip hike along a cascading mountain stream to towering cliffs with two waterfalls. Some difficult footing due to erosion. **Hike Leader Bill Witherspoon.** Bill will focus on the Geology in this specific area. **Departs lodge at 11AM**
- ◆ Hemlock Falls: a great 4 easy mile hike to a beautiful hike at nearby Moccasin State Park. 17-mile drive from Unicoi Lodge. **Hike Leader Mike Pilvinsky. Departs lodge at 1 PM.**
- ◆ Unicoi Lake trail. 2.5 miles easy. 100' elevation change. Meet at the Lodge. **Hike Leader George Owen. Departs lodge at 3:30 PM.**

Saturday November 13

Participants return by 3:30 BMTA events start at 4:30

- ◆ Smith Creek Trail from Unicoi State Park to Ana Ruby Falls. A moderate/strenuous 5-mile hike. This hike has a shuttle required. **Hike Leaders are Brenda and Rick Harris. Departs lodge at 9 AM.**
- ◆ Smithgall Woods State Park Chunanee Falls trail. - We will first gather on arrival at the nature center to view interactive exhibits, gift shop, restrooms then to the trails: Tsalaki trail to Chunanee Falls trail. 6.8 moderate miles. Come enjoy this state preserve of over 5,500 acres. Our trekking distance will be about five miles. 7-mile drive from the lodge. **Hike Leader Barry Allen. Departs lodge at 9:00 AM.**
- ◆ Yonah Mountain Trail -This climb of some 1,700 ft. features awesome views from atop the rugged rock-hewn summit trail portions. Overall hike is some over five miles. In & out. 10 miles south of the lodge. **Hike Leader Michael Pilvinsky. Departs lodge at 9 AM.**
- ◆ Indian Grave Gap to Tray Mountain and back. 5.0-mile moderate hike on the AT to Tray Mt. The trail passes Indian Grave Gap (3,113'), a fabulous hillside of Galax, the "cheese factory" turnoff, and a viewpoint just before Tray Mt. (4,430'). Drivers need a 4-wheel drive or high clearance vehicles since a 6-10-inch-deep creek crossing is required). **Hike Leader is Jess Riddle from Georgia Forest Watch. Jess will focus on Georgia Forest environmental issues and introduce you to some tree identifications. Departs lodge at 9:30 AM.**
- ◆ Brasstown Bald: First will be a visit to the Observation deck atop the bald. Then we the Upper portion of the Wagon Train trail and travel northward to the second overlook that finally looks back at the Brasstown tower. Total mileage 4.2. 20-mile drive from the lodge. **Hike Leader George Owen. Departs lodge at 9:30 AM.**
- ◆ Unicoi to Helen – The hike is an easy, almost 3-mile trail from Unicoi Lodge to Helen, GA. Enjoy shopping in downtown and then meet at the downtown park and hike back to Unicoi Lodge total 6 miles round trip. **Hike Leaders Carolyn & Tom Sewell. Departs lodge at 10:00 AM**
- ◆ Waterfalls Tour A: Hidden along Forest Service Roads: High Shoals Falls and Horse Trough Falls both have hikes to reach. Drivers need a 4-wheel drive or high clearance vehicles since a 6-10-inch-deep creek crossing is required. Hike round trip to the High Falls is 2.5 miles. Hike to Horse Trough Falls is 1-mile round trip. **Hike Leader Larry Jarkovsky. Departs lodge at 10:30 AM.**

Sunday November 14

Departure day, no scheduled events planned

- ◆ Testnatee Gap to Levelland Mt. on the AT and return. This 7.6-mile hike has spectacular view from Cowrock, Wolf Laurel Top and Levelland Mts. 12-mile drive from the lodge. **Hike Leader is Jess Riddle from Georgia Forest Watch. Jess will focus on Georgia Forest environmental issues and introduce you to some tree identifications. Departs lodge at 9:30 AM.**

- ◆ BMT Swinging Bridge: Hwy 60 to Swinging Bridge over Toccoa River and back. 7 miles moderate hike. Parking space is limited to max 7 vehicles, we can't reserve space and there is no nearby parking, no room for trailers etc. Distance from Unicoi to the trailhead is 45 miles. **Hike Leader George Owen. Departs lodge at 9:30 AM.**

- ◆ Anna Ruby Falls, trail up and back to spectacular Anna Ruby double falls (1-mile round trip). Drive from lodge is 4 miles and \$3 admission fee. **Hike Leader Bill Witherspoon. Bill will focus on the Geology in this specific area. Departs lodge at 9:30 AM.**

- ◆ Hogpen Gap on the Richard Russell Hwy. To Sheep Rock and return. A moderate 7.5 miles. hike on the AT 1,100' elevation change. 11-mile drive from the lodge. **Hike Leaders Carolyn and Tom Sewell. Departs lodge at 10:00 AM.**



Annual Meeting Non-Hiking Recommendations

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Below are suggestions for nonhiking events.

[Shop Helen, GA!](#)

[Trout Fishing](#)

[Sautee Nacoochee](#)

[Yonah Mountain Vineyards](#)