

Potential of area trail discussed

A group met last Tuesday, August 23, 1983 in the sanctuary of the United Methodist Church in Blue Ridge to hear Edwin Dale of Atlanta discuss the Benton Mackaye Trail and its potential in Fannin County.

Dale, a member of the staff of Emory University and a part-time resident of Fannin County, is currently president of the Benton Mackaye Trail Association. He described Fannin County as Georgia's best kept secret and noted Fannin's greatest assets are its people and recreation. "Lake Blue Ridge is the hub of the recreation potential," he said. "It is the drawing card for Fannin and North Georgia," he added.

Dale described the Benton Mackaye Trail (BMT) as an ideal place for hiking, backpacking, hunting, camping, bird watching, photography, wild flower viewing, rock hounding, walking, or just sittin' and watchin' the world go by.

Dale said the BMT is forty-three miles in length but is accessible by road at several points. This allows the opportunity for day hikes and camping expeditions.

The BMT, like the Appalachian Trail (AT), has its origin on Springer

Mountain. The proposed extension of the BMT will serve both to relieve traffic on the AT as well as being an important recreational resource in itself.

The Benton Mackaye Trail Association was founded to:

- construct, maintain and protect the proposed Benton Mackaye National Recreation Trail;

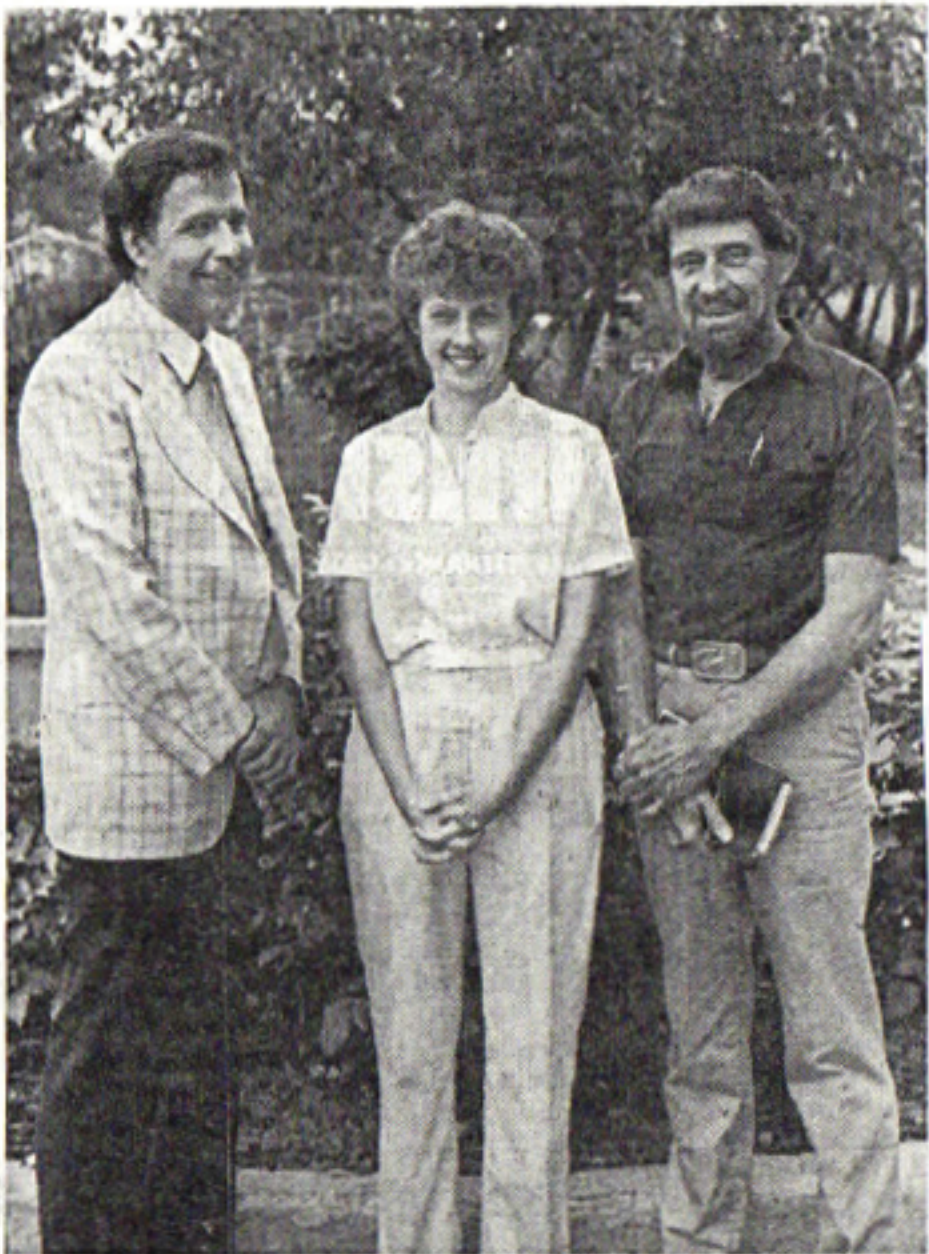
- inform its members and the general public of opportunities for outdoor recreation and public service;

- conduct workshops, seminars, and worktrips to foster skills in trail construction and maintenance;

- promote hiking, camping and a wilderness experience in the Southern Appalachian Mountains, and

- instill in its members and the general public a conservation ethic.

Anyone wishing to become a member of the association or learn more about its goals, write to Post Office Box 53271, Atlanta, Georgia 30305 or write Edwin Dale, Post Office box 734, Aska Road, Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513 or contact the Copper Basin - Fannin Chamber of Commerce in Blue Ridge at 632-5680.



Edwin Dale (at left) president of the Benton - Mackaye Trail Association was the guest speaker at the United Methodist Church in Blue Ridge last Tuesday evening. His lecture related to Fannin County's recreation potential and specifically the construction of the new

national hiking trail. Kay Kendall (center), chairperson of the Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee and H.V. Hardison, also a member of the Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee are shown with Dale.