



BENTON MacKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Volume 28 No. 6 September 2008

Proposed 2009 Slate of BMTA Board and Officers

The Committee on Nominations submitted a slate of BMTA officers for 2009, and it was approved by the BMTA Board for submission at the Annual Meeting on November 8, 2008.

President - Ralph Heller
Vice President - David Blount
Secretary - Margaret Meadows
Treasurer - Darcy Douglas
Conservation Chair - Denny Rhodes
Construction Chair - Eric Eades
Hiking Director - Bob Ruby (position to become effective if Bylaw revision is accepted)
Maintenance Director - GA - Tom Keene
Maintenance Director - TN/NC - Richard Harris
Maintenance Director - Smokies - Dick Evans
Membership Chair - Bill Hamrick
Newsletter Editor - Betty Petty
Publicity - Jeffrey Hunter

Three other positions, the state representatives of each GA, NC, and TN are appointed by the new president after he/she is elected at the annual meeting, and thus were not considered by the Committee on Nominations. This thus gives us thirteen elected positions, one ex officio, and three appointed by the new president.

The Committee on Nominations consisted of Steve Cartwright (Chair), Walt Cook and George Owen.

Annual Meeting Weekend

Please plan to attend the BMTA Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 8. All members should have received a notice of the annual meeting weekend and a registration form, along with the proposed bylaws change packet. This notice and registration form have also been placed on our web site www.bmta.org.

We plan to have hikes Friday, Saturday, and Sunday with the buffet dinner and annual meeting scheduled to start at 6 pm on Saturday.

Fill out the registration form and send with your check so that they are received no later than Nov. 1 in order to coordinate with the caterer. The board wants this meeting to have a good turnout for the approval of the bylaw revisions and election of new officers for 2009. Since our membership is so scattered, this is a once-a-year opportunity to get together, socialize, make new friends, ask questions and learn about future plans for the BMTA. We look forward to seeing you!

Bylaws Revision Proposal Goes to Members Vote at Annual Meeting Nov. 8

By Tom Keene, Chair, BMTA Bylaws Committee

At last year's annual meeting we agreed that our bylaws were due for a revision. President Betty Petty promised to appoint a committee from the Board of Directors to consider what changes were needed, and to input on any revision proposal from the Board and from the general member- (continued on page two)

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ship. The goal was to present a well vetted proposal for discussion and probable vote at the 2008 annual meeting on November 8th.

The draft currently posted on the BMTA website is the product of that process. (See the green "Attention Members" box at www.bmta.org) The draft was reviewed at two Board meetings, and approved unanimously at the last meeting for submission to the general membership. I want to thank Steve Cartwright, Ralph Heller, and George Owen, who served with me on the Bylaws Committee. Together we prepared the multiple drafts involved, and did our best to listen carefully to the Board input. Thanks also to Darcy Douglas who provided invaluable editing and proofreading assistance.

Now it is the turn of our general members. Take a look at the drafts on the web. One version shows the changes from the 2004 bylaws, text deleted is struck-through, text added is underlined. The second version posted shows how the bylaws would look if all the proposed changes were accepted. But that's a big if. The draft may well be amended before the final vote. That's your call.

To this point, some revisions involve little more than a change of titles, but some are significant. We have sought to refine the officers' job descriptions, sometimes realigning responsibilities, more often attempting to define more accurately and completely what the responsibilities really are. We also propose to add an Executive Committee and a Webmaster to the formal structure of the Association.

Your thoughts and suggestions are most welcome. Send them to any member of the Bylaws Committee or to contactBMTA@BMTA.org.

**October 18 (Sat.)
BMT (GA) Fall Color Dayhike:
Dally Gap to the Jacks River**

Rating: Easy or Moderate (your choice)
Distance: 5-6 miles

Leader: Tom Keene
Co-leader: Jane Keene

We will meet at 10 am near Blue Ridge, then carpool to Dally Gap, arriving about 11am. Then we hike 2.5 easy, beautiful miles down to the river via the Jacks River Trail, including about 200 yards the JRT shares with the BMT. We will walk along the river until we agree on a lunch spot. The peak fall color in north Georgia can occur between the second and fourth week in October. Here's hoping....

We will do a leisurely lunch. Hang out; explore a little. Bring the Texas and a walking stick if you want to ford the Jacks River. On the return hike, the ambitious will take the BMT trail north to Spanish Oak Gap and return to Dally via the Hemptop Trail. Those preferring to take it easy can go straight back to Dally Gap via the JRT, then break out the lawn chairs and await the return of the Type A folks.

To reserve a spot in this award winning hike, call 770-422-4838, or (after 3pm Friday the day before) 770-722-6016.

Max # hikers: 10 Sign up NOW!

**November 1-2 (Sat - Sun)
BMT (TN) Unicoi Gap to Childers
Creek Backpack**

Rated: Moderate
Leader: Bob Ruby
Co-leader: Sandi Still

This is a 18-mile backpack on the Benton MacKaye Trail north of the Hiwassee river near Reliance, Tennessee. On the first day we will hike 10 miles down the Unicoi Mountain Trail from Unicoi Gap (located on the Cherokee Trail of Tears at the TN/NC border). On the second day we will follow the BMT as it joins the "other" John Muir Trail, a National Recreation Trail, along the beautiful river and in the hills above it. On the second day we will hike the newly relocated portion of the JMT. Afterward, we will celebrate with Mexican food in Copperhill, TN.

To register, contact Bob Ruby at hikingchair@bmta.org or 404-252-8888, or Sandi Still at 404-248-9585.

**John Muir Trail Relocation
TN Workday - August 9
By Ken Jones**

We had great weather for the regular monthly BMTA work trip for Tennessee. The temperature started out in the low 60s, so it took a bit of the uphill trail grade to work up a sweat. We completed another **170'** of new side hill tread construction for the day. This work finished the construction of the 4th major side hill segment into a gap on the ridge. We also made a start on the 5th and final major side hill segment that ties into the old woods road. There is also a short (<100yards) side hill segment to make the tie in from the old road into the John Muir Trail at Rock Island.

Gary Smith worked two extra days by himself this past week, completing about **120'** of new trail. If he keeps up this kind of additional work, we are going to have to double his salary! The hours below reflect the work for today, plus the extra two days work for Gary.

We had a large work crew of 8 today to continue tread construction on the 5th major side hill segment. We completed another **500'** of new tread for the day. Gary Smith has worked 4 additional days by himself this week to dig in another **400'** of new trail.

The following participated: Steve Biatowas, David Flowers, Ken Jones, Clayton Pannell, George Pannell, Otis Pannell, Jim Runyan, Gary Smith. Travel Hours: 28, Work Hours: 104, Total Volunteer Hours 132

Maps of JMT Relocation

A map and profile of the JMT relocation may be viewed at:

<http://www.cherokeehikingclub.org/profile%20JMTReRoute.pdf>

**TN/GA BMTA combined Work Trip
- August 23
by Eric Eades**

BMTA and other regional hiking clubs, along with the USDA FS, have been working for several months on a relocation of a section of the BMT/John Muir Trail to eliminate a short road walk and a problem section of the trail along the Hiwassee River between Towee Creek and the Unicoi Mountain trail. The hope for a tremendous leap forward on the relocation project came to fruition on a day that was to have been a regular Georgia work day. A fine turnout of both Tennessee and Georgia trail volunteers met at the Hiwassee River on Saturday, August 23, to carpool over to the start of the relocation at the Towee Creek Overflow Parking Area, just off Powerhouse Road, near Reliance, TN.

A total of 20 trail workers made their way up the trail to where work was left off earlier in the week by Ken Jones, Gary Smith, Clayton Pannell, and Steve Biatowas (of the Forest Service). All workers had hand tools, except for two with brush cutters (aka "nuclear weed eaters"). Side hill digging was completed on the 5th and final section of the relo by the end of day, as was most of the brushing on an old roadbed which leads back to the existing BMT/JMT north of the powerhouse.

As this article goes to press, all that remains is a bit of "fine tuning", in the way of blazes and water turnouts. Thanks to all who turned out for this very successful work day, especially to the Georgia folks for devoting their work day to Tennessee. Those attending were: Ken Jones, Eric Eades, Clayton Pannell, Betty Petty, Ralph Van Pelt, Donald Box, Judy Spivey, Verna Townsend, Joanne Jackson, Jane Bohannon, Cletus Benton, Al Rymer, Diana Baird, Darcy Douglas, Ralph Heller, Doug Kleiber, George Owen, Jim Quail, Bob Ruby, and Rich Rusk. A total of 53 travel hours, and 98 work hours were reported to the Forest Service.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sept 13 - Tennessee Work Trip...contact: George Owen 706-374-4716

Sept. 13-14 - Backpack, 6-Mile Gap to Tellico River - contact: Bob Ruby - 404-252-8888

Sept 27 - Georgia Work Trip..Complete relocation on Licklog Mtn..contact: George Owen-706-374-4716 or 706-897-3366

October 11 - Tennessee Work Trip

October 18 - Fun Hike-Dally Gap to Jack's River (see article) contact: Tom Keene - 770-422-4838

October 25 - Georgia Work Trip... contact: Tom Keene - 770-422-4838

November 1-2 - Backpack Unicoi Gap to Childers Creek (see article) - contact Bob Ruby 404-252-8888

November 7-9 - ANNUAL MEETING (see articles!!!)



Benton MacKaye Trail Association

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