



Newsletter of the  
**Benton MacKaye Trail Association, Inc.**  
Post Office Box 6  
Cherry Log, GA 30522

Special Annual Meeting Issue – November 11, 2011

**“Leaving a footpath for generations to follow.”**

## **Mitchell named “Maintainer of the Year - 2011”**



**Tom “T.O.” Mitchell was named Maintainer of the Year – 2011 by President Dick Evans at the 2011 Annual Meeting last weekend at Coker Creek Village. Tom has long been know as the BMTA Tool Man, maintaining our trail tools and equipment in top shape. In addition, this year, with the move to the new “World Headquarters” building in Blue Ridge, Tom designed and built the new tool room, organizing the Georgia tools in a way we only dreamed of before! The new tool room is a major asset to the BMTA and we really appreciate the extra effort on Tom’s part. Because he was not able to attend the Annual Meeting, Dick Evans, plus Vice President David Blount, Past President Ralph Heller, Publicity Director Marge Heller and Treasurer Kim Hainge surprised Tom at the headquarters building on this past Wednesday to present the Honorary Maintainer Pulaski.**

Additionally, at the Annual Meeting, a special Certificate of Appreciation was announced to Eric Eades, who could not attend, thanking Eric for all his contributions over the years to building and maintaining the trail.

We had great, albeit chilly, weather for the Annual Meeting Weekend. Early morning rain and clouds on Friday gave way to sunny weather for 19 folks to hike up Sycamore Creek towards Whigg Meadow. Hike Leader Ric Harris led a good pace and everyone enjoyed the late Fall colors. Afterward, most stopped at the bakery in Tellico Plains for a "reward" for their efforts.

Saturday morning, the indefatigable Rick Harris, accompanied by 8 folks or so, did some 8 miles on the ridge between Sandy Gap and Unicoi Gap, visiting the old Doc Rogers house and sanitarium. Liz Carter led a shorter hike to Turtletown Falls and Shinbone Ridge.

Sunday, two shorter hikes were enjoyed by the attendees. As before, we "sold out" at Coker Creek, since many of their facilities were winterized and not available, but most enjoyed the visit. Saturday evening after supper was billed as a "Hoedown", but due to scheduling, it did not start until 9:00 PM, so only a few of the "party goers" were able to join the youth group meeting there at the same time, but had a good time. I did not hear any reports of BMTA folks riding the "Bull" in the Rec Hall, but photos would be welcomed! Most of us enjoyed the bonfire and the hay ride thru the village under the moonlight.

The "formal" portion of the Annual Meeting lasted only a few minutes (as advertised), with the announcement of the Maintainer of the Year Award followed by the election of Directors. The results are below.

**Elected to the Board of Directors for the 2012 Season:**

**President – Dick Evans**

**Vice President – David Blount**

**Secretary – Sara Bland**

**Treasurer – Kim Hainge**

**Georgia Maintenance Director – Tom Keene**

**Tennessee/North Carolina Maintenance Director – Rick Harris**

**Smokies Maintenance Coordinator – Ernie Engman**

**Construction – Bill Hodge**

**Publicity – Marge Heller**

**Newsletter Editor – Gene Nix**

**Conservation – Betty Petty**

**Membership – Vic Fredlund**

The Hiking Director position remains open. The major duty of this position is the coordination of the "fun" or recreational hikes we have thru the year. Pam Sullivan has done a great job in the past, but we were unable to find someone willing to try to fill her "hiking boots." If you are interested, email "[President@bmta.org](mailto:President@bmta.org)" and let me know!

In addition, I appointed Bob Ruby to continue as Georgia State Representative. The Tennessee and North Carolina State Representative positions as yet to be appointed. Ralph Heller continues as Past President, as does Terry Miller as Webmaster.

I especially want to welcome Bill Hodge, Sara Bland and Gene Nix to the Board. Gene will be taking over the Newsletter with the issue at the end of November, and I really welcome that! I appreciate everyone's bearing with us getting thru the first year of an electronic Newsletter. In the issue at the end of the month, we will continue the Activities Email and link to the Newsletter. We will, in that issue, have the 2012 Calendar in a printable form so that you can schedule your BMT activities, as well as a 2011 Wrapup from myself.

Remember, we have a "Fun" hike on November 19<sup>th</sup> on the Tapoco Section, and a work Trip on November 26<sup>th</sup> with Rick Harris in the Coker Creek area. Check the Activities Calendar on the website for details.

Thanks for a great year.  
See you on the Trail,  
Dick Evans, President