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Suspension Bridge
over the Toccoa River:
By Ralph Heller



VOLUME 29, ISSUE 7 JULY 28, 2012

Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition Conference at Fall Creek State Park

Never has SEFTC had a better planned conference for hiking folks than this one, nor a lovelier location (overlooking a large lake in the park's heart). A number of you have attended at least one previous SEFTC conference, and you know these events are full of informative workshops, hikes, good lodging/food, and wonderful fellowship.

Fall Creek Falls is a spectacular 25,000-acre state park (Tennessee's largest) located high on the Cumberland Plateau with the state's best tumbling waterfalls (one over 200 feet sheer drop), lots of woods and trails, and surrounded by much more state lands to explore. The large lodge, cabins, and campgrounds are great. (I was told yesterday the cabins are about gone.)

I hope you will be able to join us there. Hurry and register to attend now, because **beginning August 1** the state park can no longer hold any of its lodgings just for SEFTC, then you have to compete with the general public for a place at this popular park. Also, the prices go up on that date. So hurry and register now! (Remember that you can also come part-time.)

The information about the event and registration forms are on the official SEFTC website: southeastfoottrails.net

I surely hope to see you at the conference – bring family and/or friends. Contact me if you have any questions – just hurry – you need to be registered with our treasurer by July 31.

By George Owen-SEFTC Board Member

(706)374-4716 (Home) and (706) 897-3366 (Cell)



TN/NC BMTA Worktrip - July 7, 2012



By Rick Harris

Saturday, July 7, 2012 - BMT Section 16c - Sledrunner Gap to Bald River

Four of us drove to Beaverdam Bald, then we split into two groups of two. Rick and Tom walked down the man-way to Sledrunner Gap with a trail sign and the tools needed to plant the sign. We dug a hole about two feet deep, then stabilized the post with rocks and dirt. See the picture. Bill and Steve drove to the Upper Brookshire Creek Trailhead and from there down the BMT toward the Bald River. Their plan was to clear a big complex



downfall of several trees down the trail about half way. After finishing the post planting project, Rick and Tom hiked down the BMT to the intersection with the upper end of the Brookshire Creek Trail, left our post planting tools there and picked up our crosscut and headed on down. We cut a few small logs off the trail and brushed out the trail until we caught up with Bill and Steve about 2 miles down the trail a short distance below the big campsite. They were there working on the big complex of downed trees. We all ate lunch and then finished off this project. Then Bill and Steve headed back up to Bill's truck and Rick and Tom headed down toward the Bald River. Rick and Tom cut out another 3 trees which would have been difficult for horses to get over, but left the 15-20 logs on the ground which were easy to step over (another trip some time to get these). Rick and Tom hiked on out to Campsite 11 on Bald River Road, where Bill and Steve met them at 4 PM. It was a very hot day and we all were quite tired, but the job we planned to do was accomplished.

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TN/NC BMTA Worktrip - July 7, 2012



Saturday, July 7, 2012 - BMT Section 18a - Beech Gap to Pine Ridge Trail Intersection

Five maintainers drove to Beech Gap on the Cherohala Skyway, then up the closed FS road to Cold Springs Gap. From there, the 5 logged and brushed out the Fodderstack section of the BMT out almost to Cherry Log Gap. There was a lot of brushing out needed on this section. The maintainers then returned to their vehicles at Cold Springs Gap and returned to Tellico Plains. The day was quite hot and the maintainers were quite bushed by the end of the day. At a later date, we will go back and finish the job the rest of the way to the Pine Ridge Trail intersection. Some of us ended up at the Outpost afterwards for beer and pizza and calzones.



Maintainers: Rick Harris, Tom Smith, Bill Hodge, Steve Cartwright, Ken Jones, Phyllis Jones, Larry Dunn, Roger Taylor, and Ed Lay.

[Click For More TN/NC WorkTrip Pictures](#)

TN/NC BMTA Worktrip - July 17, 2012



July 17, 2012 - BMT Section 12e - Lost Creek Section

After we received reports of many trees down on this section following a recent strong wind storm, and to open up the trail before the Mountain High Hikers trip scheduled for July 18, three of us went out with chain saw and hand saws and cleared numerous trees off this section, including 3 big complex multi-limbed messes. The trail is now easily passable. This was a very hot and muggy day, a pretty miserable day for trail maintenance. After we got off the trail, a fierce storm hit the area, one of those summer late afternoon storms. Hopefully, no new trees fell in the midst of the fury of the storm.



TN/NC BMTA Worktrip - July 19, 2012



July 19, 2012: BMT Section 19b - Slickrock Creek Section

Ernie Engman, section maintainer, and his two sons cleared 8 logs off their section and also did some brushing out.

Volunteer hours

Ernie Engman, total 7.5 hrs

William Engman, total 7.5 hrs

Matthew Engman, total 7.5 hrs

TOTAL, 22.5 hours



Georgia Watermelon Worktrip (Temporarily) Blocked by Big Oak Blowdown

By Tom Keene

A week of very welcome rain let up just in time for the July 14 Georgia worktrip. After an uneventful breakfast at the L&A Corner in Cherry Log, we headed to the worksite at Hudson Gap on beautiful, isolated Section 8. We were a happy party of ten once we met newcomers Ceri and Eric McCarron at the Bushy Head Gap trailhead. Oops! About 200 yards in from the Bushy Head Gap on the Forest Service road a 20" oak had fallen across the road, completely blocking our convoy. The trip leader (yours truly) had not brought his chainsaw. Lesson learned. So... on to Plan B. While two of us went for the chainsaw, the remaining eight walked the first part of Section Eight swingblades and clippers at work and then doubled back along the road to the sound of the chainsaw. Happily the chainsaw worked well. The big middle section dropped to the road with a thud. And... after much discussion, pushing, pulling, trimming of knobs, and employment of levers, we managed to roll the massive detached section of the oak off the road without injury. Then we were on to Hudson Gap without further incident. Happily the day stayed cool, breezy and bright. It was a great day to be in the woods. Swingblade work and water diversions were the order of the day. Summer growth was coming fast, so there was plenty to trim back. Likewise, the recent heavy rains left little doubt that water diversions were needed where the trail goes straight up and down the ridge beyond Hudson. We set to work, putting in six or seven major dips and diversions, doing our best to follow the principles Ranger David Kuykendall taught us on the May worktrip.

Despite the delayed start we got a lot done. That watermelon tasted mighty good at day's end! Thanks to all who made it happen.



Photo by John Franetic



Left to right: Tom Johnson, John Franetic, Connor Bayliss, Claire Broadwell, Steve Bayliss, Gracelyn Bayliss, Tom Keene. Photo by Ralph Heller. Had to leave early Debbie Tuten, Margaret Meadows, Ceri and Eric McCarron

August 11-Georgia Work Trip...Tom Keene



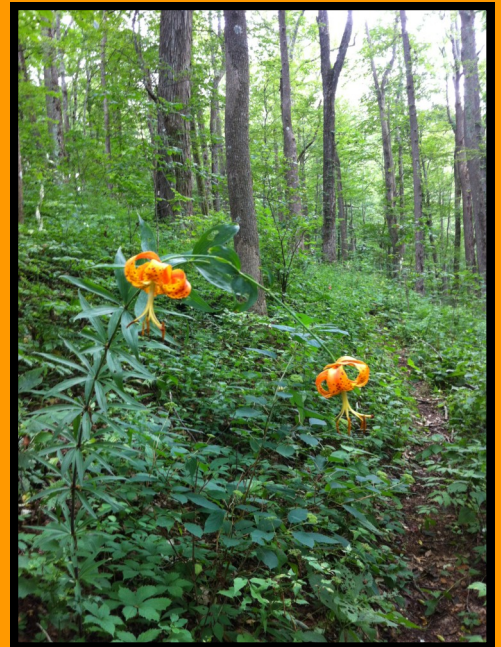
Heat concern? We'll be over 3000 feet and, we trust, enjoying those famous Hemptop ridgeline breezes. Make a note. It should be a great day in the woods. Here are the details:

August 11 - Georgia Work Trip: Joint trip with the Forest Service and Cohutta Wilderness volunteers. On Section Ten (Section Eleven in Homan's guide) from Spanish Oak Gap to Hemp Top Mountain. Mostly swingblade work. We meet at the Village Restaurant in Blue Ridge at 7:15AM. Note the time; it's 45 minutes earlier than usual. We must depart the restaurant at 8:00 AM sharp to keep our rendezvous with the Forest Service group. Trailhead meeting at Dally Gap at 8:50 AM. Trip leader is George Owen [706-374-4716](tel:706-374-4716) (home) or [706-897-3366](tel:706-897-3366) (cell).

Seen Along the Trail...Tom Keene

The Turk's Cap Lily

Wow! That's about all you can say when you encounter the spectacular Turk's Cap Lily (*Lilium superbum*). I've seen them three times along the BMT in Georgia: First, about 10 years ago on the south face of Rocky Mountain (Section 6c) across from Rich Mountain. Another time on Big John Dick's Mountain. The most recent sighting was on this July 12th, while Jane and I were setting out flags for the July worktrip on Section 8b between Hudson Gap and McKenny Gap. As we headed up the last hill before the descent into McKinney the Turk's Caps were on the left, several as tall as we were. I took this photo with my iPhone. Quite a flower! And a great name for it! The Turk's Cap may be old hat (pardon me!) for folks who grew up in the Southern Appalachians. But I don't recall a woodland flower this showy in my home state, Pennsylvania.



Leaving A Footpath For Generations To Follow

By: Victoria Hausburg

In June, I hiked part of the Benton MacKaye Trail with Camp Glisson. We stayed on the BMT and AT a total of 3 days and 3 nights. Camp Glisson is a Christian, summer, sleep-away camp nestled in the mountain town of Dahlonega, Georgia. I attended the Outpost part of this camp where youth can hike, kayak, mountain bike, rock climb, cave, and do many more fun activities. I was in the hiking division and we hiked on Springer Mountain in Fannin County Georgia. My group and I, a total of 10 hikers, including camp counselors, slept in tarps, built fires, collected and filtered water. After we hiked the approach trail to Springer Mountain, we hiked another part of the BMT and the AT. We hiked a total of 12 miles on our trip. One thing that made the trip so enjoyable was the devotion and worship time we had each night. We prayed and gave thanks and sang praise to the One who made our world exist. On the

BMT part of the hike, we were all asked to be silent, as we passed the plaque honoring Benton MacKaye and to take in the beautiful surroundings. It was very neat to see how my group reacted to the wilderness. Some of the boys were a little anxious the whole time as we collected fire wood into nightfall. It had rained the night before so it took over an hour to start the fire for cooking dinner. We learned a lot and had an amazing time. I had the opportunity to see lots of hemlocks while on our hike. Sadly these trees were infested with the Woolly Adelgid. I was able to explain to my group and our counselors about the Adelgid killing those gorgeous trees (my grandfather volunteers his time for Save Georgia's Hemlocks and I did a school project on this subject). Camp Glisson is a wonderful experience. Thanks to the Benton MacKaye Trail Association for making it even better!



Victoria is a rising 8th grader, who enjoys ballet as well as hiking on the trail, with a goal of becoming a chemical engineer. She is the granddaughter of Ralph and Marge Heller.

Condolences To Edwin Dale ...



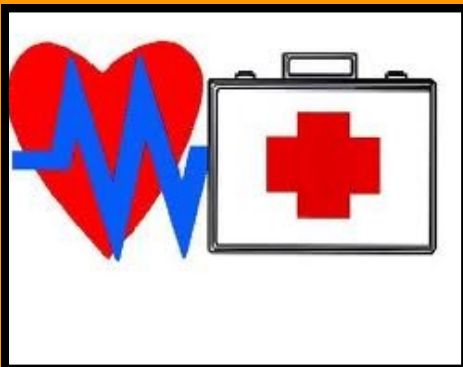
By Darcy Douglas

Condolences are offered from the BMTA to Edwin Dale on the passing of his wife Barbara on July 14, 2012. Edwin was Past President and much more with the Benton MacKaye Trail Association. Barbara stood behind Edwin for many years as he worked as a Research Professor for Emory University. Edwin kept the BMTA afloat almost single-handedly for years, while he worked for the US Forest Service. They enjoyed several years of "real retirement" together in Athens, Georgia. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Athens Humane Society, her favorite charity, or St. Mary's Hospice House in Athens. Online condolences may be made at www.bernsteinfuneralhome.com. There is also an Obituary Guest Book to sign at www.onlineathens.com. Barbara's wit, intellect, and love for her family will be remembered! A celebration of her life will be held in the fall.

Chainsaw/First Aid CPR Class Offered

By Ralph Heller

Last year this course was offered and you folks expressed an interest. We managed to get 9 folks trained in the class, but the rest of the slots were full. This year they are asking if we have more folks who want to take the course. Let me know if you still would like this training. As before, no guarantee there will be room for everyone. Let me know if you need CPR/First Aid as well as chainsaw. No date has been set for the training, but will be late summer or fall.



Ralph Heller

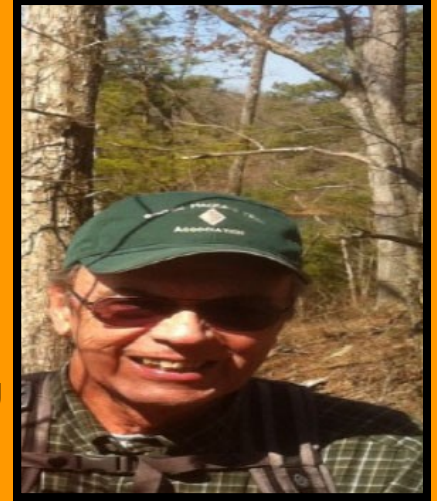
Ph: 770-235-9760

BMTA Member in 27th Peachtree Road Race

By Marge Heller

Jerry Bland is a retired Civil Engineer and lives in Waleska, Georgia with his wife Sara. He has participated in the renowned Peachtree Road Race in downtown Atlanta since 1985. Sara, BMTA Secretary, has accompanied him for the last five years...finishing "slightly" behind him. Jerry has been an active BMTA hiker since his first Fun Hike in 2010. This year you will often find him acting as "sweep" for the new Easy Trek category of hikes. In addition to hiking and running, Jerry and Sara enjoy bicycle adventures. In December 2011, they biked in New Zealand where Jerry finished his trip with 200 miles. This October, they will head to Italy for another biking vacation.

Which all goes to prove: retirement can be fun and **very** active.



Replacing The Second Bridge on Sisson Creek

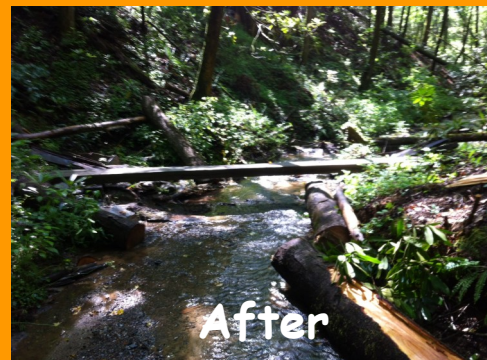
By Tom Keene

The second bridge up Sisson Creek on Section Seven does not get the same attention as the first bridge – the one with a view of the creek's beautiful cascade. But the second bridge has a claim to fame too: the stream banks at the two ends of the second bridge have a beautiful stand of Giant Nodding Trilliums.

Some time during June the second bridge collapsed. Crossing the creek on it was treacherous. The section gets a lot of traffic; we needed to move before someone got hurt.

As usual Joe Sisson was remarkably generous with materials. He and a grandson delivered three 20 foot 6"x 6" treated timbers to the site on Thursday July 19th. The next afternoon four BMT Maintainers, Mark Yost, Larry Dumas, Ralph Heller and yours truly provided the labor. Shockingly, we had assembled all the materials and tools we needed. In less than three hours we removed and cut up the old bridge, removed an enormous hemlock blowdown that loomed overhead and installed the new bridge.

Thanks to Mark, Larry, Ralph, and especially Joe Sisson for all the help.



It's Not All About The Overnighters...



By Laura Nix



Recently, my husband introduced me to Section 7 C of the BMT. It is located past a friend's house on Boardtown road where it just turns to Sugar Creek at the Fannin county line. While it is easy to miss if you don't know where to look, I highly recommend it for anyone looking to do steady hill training.

The portion we favor is a 2 mile roundtrip that takes us up to gravel roads on Sisson property. We climb until we crest at the first gravel road and then continue on the trail as it dips back down to a second gravel road. Turn around and you hike back up the steep climb; all the while feeling the strength build and your heart getting a workout. And of course, there's copious amounts of sweat.

As I mentioned, the trip is 2 miles in and back out. After a mile hike, we turn around to retrace our steps as time is often limited by work commitments and school pick-ups for our sons. The full trip takes us 40 minutes and leaves me feeling as though I've worked out without the monotony of familiar paved walking paths or the dreaded treadmill.

On my first foray on this trail, I discovered several orange and red-speckled salamanders. They looked so vibrant as to be mistaken for a child's toy. The cool air of early summer left them nearly immobile as they warmed themselves in the sun. Only the slightest movement indicated they were living creatures. More recently, Gene disturbed a romantic interlude between two snapping turtles (the male even directed a chastising hiss at Gene before slowly crawling away)!



This portion of the trail is one of my favorite as it is stunning from start to finish and allows me to have a peaceful and shady workout without having to dedicate my entire day to preparing for and undertaking the hike. Find your favorite portions and remember that hiking doesn't need to be saved for special occasions or perfect opportunities; it can be a simple deviation from the gym or well-worn walking paths in your neighborhood.

BMTA President... Dick Evans

Dick is from New England, living for a while in Shirley , Massachusetts. Shirley is the home of Benton MacKaye; details can be found in the June's Special Edition. His family moved to Cape Cod where he enjoyed outdoor recreation and attained the rank of Eagle Scout. After attending the University of New Hampshire, where he studied Zoology and Electrical Engineering, he entered the US Army Signal Corp., was stationed in Germany and attained the rank of Captain. Later, while residing in Orlando FL, he was very active in the Florida Trail Association and served as President. After marrying Margaret in 1985, they moved to Iceland, Chicago, Japan and Hawaii before retiring, in 2003, to Robbinsville NC.



Dick is currently Secretary of the Partners of the Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness, a group that assists the Forest Service in issues involving that wilderness. He and his wife are Trail Maintainers for the Tapoco Section of the BMT. Dick also leads the "Mountain Goat" hikes during Fontana Village Hike Weeks and enjoys giving tours of the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest to school groups and interested parties.

Dick and Margaret have one son, Jason, a Captain in the US Army Signal Corps, currently deployed to the Middle East . Daughter-in-law Karyn and the three grandchildren live in Clarksville TN. A favorite trip for Dick is taking the grandkids hiking at the Dunbar Cave State Park. Dick is an avid model railroader, centering his model layout in the Shirley area.

Editor's Note: Look for more BMTA Board Members and Members to be featured in upcoming Newsletters. It's a great way to know your Board. By Marge Heller

BMTA Vice President...David Blount

David Blount is the current vice president and a past president of the BMTA. He is a native son of Georgia, having been born, raised, and attended college all within Cobb County. Growing up in a family that spent a lot of time outdoors, David camped and hunted in many areas of North Georgia through which the Appalachian Trail, and later the Benton Mackaye Trail, wound on their respective paths north. This early indoctrination into the beauty and wonders of the Southern Appalachians has fostered a great appreciation for our National Forests and National Parks and the access and opportunities that they provide. Having spent a few years wandering the Rocky Mountain States and Alaska before completing college, David's work career has meandered as well. It has included work in a power plant, construction, equipment finance, disaster loans, land surveying, and for the past several years, accounting at his son's business. Having participated in his first BMT work trip in 1988, David ranks the volunteer hours spent on the trail as rewarding as any job to date. David and wife Linda moved to Canton, Georgia in 2009 to be closer to their daughter, son, and grandchildren. Other interests include music, gardening, and travel.



BMTA - GA Maintainers ...By Tom Keene

Are you reporting your work hours? Please do. An impressive record of volunteer work gives the BMTA credibility with the Forest Service -- and, in turn, gives the Forest Service credibility with the Department of Agriculture (of which it is a part).

Last year all maintainers with 30 or more reported hours (including travel time and combining individual reported hours and participation in monthly work-trips) got a t-shirt. Another shirt (different color) will be awarded for 2012.

So get out there and check your section; take a swing blade and cut back that mid-summer growth. And then be sure to send your hours in to Ralph Heller and me by mid-October. Folks who work in TN/NC sections, be sure to send in your hours to Richard Harris, if Richard was not working with you.

T-shirts will be distributed at the annual meeting in November.



Tom Keene