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Suspension Bridge
 over the Toccoa River:
 By Ralph Heller



BMTA Headquarters



VOLUME 30, ISSUE 3

MARCH 30, 2013

Blue Ridge Trail Town Celebration Saturday, April 13

BLUE RIDGE. GEORGIA will officially be named as a Trail Town for the Benton MacKaye Trail on [April 13](#), 2013. This designation is a cooperative agreement between the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA), the Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition (SEFTC), the City of Blue Ridge and the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce. This designation is the first in the SEFTC's desire to have named Trail Towns along major long distance trails in the southeastern part of the country. The purpose of this venture will be to highlight, through various media outlets, the services offered by local businesses to trail users and the various recreational opportunities for trail users who visit the area. For Fannin County and Blue Ridge, it will help promote tourism. For the BMTA, it offers increased recognition about our trail, who we are, and what we can offer to prospective members. Blue Ridge will be promoted not only as a hiking Trail Town, but also as a great destination for users of biking, and equestrian trails. Blue Ridge's Trail Town also will also feature the Trout Adventure Trail sponsored by Trout Unlimited, and a section of the Toccoa River that is designated as a canoe trail.



The Trail Town Celebration will be held at Mercier Orchards on Highway 5 north of Blue Ridge. Mercier is also the location of the finish line for the 16th Annual 2013 Blue Ridge Mountain Adventure Race on [April 13](#). **There will be a Trail Town Dedication at 10 a.m at the BMTA booth. There will be short speeches from members of the BMTA, SEFTC, the Mayor of Blue Ridge, the Chamber of Commerce and the Forest Service.**

Find Your Adventure in Blue Ridge Benton MacKaye's Trail Town



Immediately afterwards, there will be two hikes for BMTA members and previous hike participants, one easy and the other more challenging. See these hike descriptions on the Activities Calendar of this newsletter. During the day, there will be booths giving information about the BMTA, SEFTC, CoTrails, North Georgia Back Country Horsemen, Trout Unlimited, Save Georgia's Hemlocks, SORBA, and Chattahoochee National Forest. Additionally, the Chamber booth will have information about recreational opportunities and tourist related businesses in the area.

The BMTA will demonstrate chainsaw and crosscut techniques at various times during the day. We will have a demonstration on how to use the iPhone for GPS navigation and trail work. Trout Unlimited will give fly casting demonstrations. In addition, there will be two bands performing during the day. Food will be available at the bakery inside Mercier. In the afternoon, the Adventure Race contestants will be arriving at the finish line which is entertaining to observe.

The BMTA leadership strongly urges our members to attend the Trail Town Dedication at 10 a.m. and participate in the celebration. This is the first year of what is to be an annual event and we want it to be a success. We now have a large number of members who live near Blue Ridge, and we hope to see many of you there. If anyone would like to lend a hand call me at 770-235-9760. We can always use more help. See you on the 13th!

BMTA Merchandise, including shirts, hats, maps and trail guides will be for sale at our Trail Town Booth.

Ralph Heller, BMTA Hiking Director...

BMTA Hikes on April 13..Trail Town Celebration

Ralph Heller, Hiking Director

Fun Hike (more challenging) on Saturday [April 13](#), **BLUE RIDGE TRAIL TOWN DAY**, will be over sections 6b,c & d (Stanley Creek Road to Weaver Creek Road). This 6.2 mile hike is rated as moderately strenuous and has been selected due to its close proximity to the Trail Town celebration at Mercier. The hike leader will be George Owen. Persons planning to participate in this hike should contact George at (706) 374-4716. Plan to be at Mercier by 9:45 a.m. to participate in the Trail Town Dedication Ceremony at 10 a.m. before the hike. When you call George, he will give you instructions on where to meet after the ceremony to drive to the trailhead. Since this is not a loop hike, there will be shuttles to and from the trail heads. When the hike is over, please come back to Mercier to participate in the festivities, meet other trail users, and cheer the Adventure Race finishers. Mercier has the best fried pies to be found anywhere!

Easy Trek Hike on Saturday [April 13](#). Meet at Mercier at 9:45 a.m. for the Blue Ridge Trail Town dedication ceremony at 10. Immediately after the ceremony, Hike Leader Sara Bland will carpool with her Easy Trekkers to the hiking site on Stanley Creek Road. The hike will start at the falls, but to accomplish the 3.5 mile loop, the hikers will drive past the falls about a mile and turn right into the parking lot for the starting point. The first third of the hike is a gentle climb through the woods and then levels off until reaching the Stanley Gap sign. The descent begins at the sign and the hike will continue to the falls where the group will stop and enjoy the beautiful scenery. Lunch will be near the falls. After lunch, the hikers will cross the road and go through a DNR feeding plot and continue along Stanley Creek until returning to the road and a short walk to the parking lot. After the hike, everyone will carpool back to Mercier where Trail Town and Adventure Race activities will be continuing. Pre-register and learn of exact meeting location for Sara's Easy Trek via e-mail: jsbland at [windstream.net](mailto:jsbland@windstream.net) or 770-366-6053 cell or 678-493-2649 Home.

First Annual Benton MacKaye Blue Ridge Trail Town Celebration



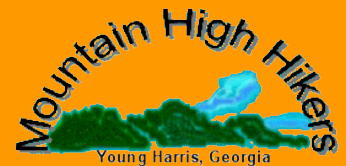
First Annual Benton MacKaye Blue Ridge Trail Town Celebration

- **Sponsored by Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA), Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition (SEFTC), City of Blue Ridge and Fannin County Chamber of Commerce**
- **When: Saturday, April 13, 2013**
- **Where: Mercier Orchard – GA Highway 5**
- **Finish Line of 16th Annual Blue Ridge Mountain Adventure Race**
 - Trail Town Dedication: 10 AM Saturday morning
 - Information on all types of trails in the Blue Ridge area
 - Information on accommodations, restaurants, shuttles and other services plus recreational activities available for thru hikers, day hikers and all types of trail users
 - Representatives from hiking, mountain biking, equestrian, and trout fishing organizations
 - Information on **CoTrails** – a new organization of all the trail user groups in the Chattahoochee National Forest
 - US Forest Service representatives
 - Save Georgia's Hemlocks will have an informational booth
 - Chainsaw and Crosscut sawing demos at the BMTA booth
 - Music all day – 2 Live Bands
 - Fly Casting demonstration by Trout Unlimited
 - Trail merchandise, including trail guides, data books and maps available for sale
 - **Find Your Adventure in Blue Ridge....BMTA's Trail Town**
 - www.bmta.org and www.southeastfoottrails.com

AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY'S NATIONAL TRAILS DAY®

JUNE 1, 2013

This year, the **BMTA** will join the **Georgia Appalachian Trail Club** and the **Mountain High Hikers** for a celebration of National Trails Day at Vogel State Park near Blairsville, Georgia, Saturday, June 1. Festivities will begin in the morning at 9:00 and include hikes, a pot-luck lunch, and a work detail in the Park. There will be something for everyone (bring family and friends), if you remember to bring a dish to share. We have already set up a few hikes, have assigned duties to the 3 clubs, and you need to bring a dish for the pot-luck lunch, to be held at 12:00 Noon. Paper goods and drinks will be taken care of by the club representatives, as are the fees for the pavilion. You will need to pay for your own park entrance with an annual pass or the daily fee of \$5.00. We have reserved the Pavilion #2, down by the creek next to the lake. Did I mention you need to bring an item for about 8 people to eat? Don Hicks, Trail Coordinator of GATC, will lead the work trip, and will have tools. You need to bring gloves, wear sturdy shoes, and bring your own first aid kit, etc, for working. Hikes will be led by George Owen and an as yet unassigned volunteer! Anyone wishing to do so may swim or rent a boat on the lake. Displays for the 3 clubs will be there. We look forward to this American Hiking Society backed outing of three of the foremost trail clubs in the north Georgia region.



Hike #1 will be led by George Owen and will DEPART from our pavilion at 9 a.m. This will be a bit over 5 miles, a moderate hike at a moderate pace, very scenic.

Hike #2 will DEPART from our pavilion at 10:30 a.m. This will be an easy hike around the lake and over to the Byron Reese Nature Trail, for about 2 miles.

Please contact me if you'd like to lead this one!

Work Trip - Don Hicks will lead this effort, with details to be provided later.

See you there!!!

Submitted by Darcy Douglas, bmtadarcy@yahoo.com

My AT Walk, Heart's Awakening

I'm sitting at my computer, remembering my Appalachian Trail walk. Into my mind pops a film scene with Meryl Streep as Izaak Dinneson in ***Out of Africa***. Wrapped in a shawl, gazing out her wintry urban Denmark window, she reminisces, "I had a farm in Africa..." In the same way, I'm gazing out my spring urban Georgia window, sighing, "I had a walk on the Appalachian Trail." Her story unfolds into a saga of adventure, extreme downsizing, cultural adjustment, emotional and economic ups and downs, and surprise love. Her short years in Africa enriched her life and utterly changed it. Well, except for the economic ups and downs, the plot of my Appalachian Trail thru hike fairly parallels hers. The enrichment and dramatic changing are similar. Hers is a compelling story!



I hope, for your sake, dear reader, that mine is as well! Here goes!

Let me set the stage for my walk. In spring of 2007, I was approaching my 52nd birthday. My youngest of three sons, whose raising I had chosen as my second career, had just turned 18. I was in excellent health and had trained thoroughly for the walk over the previous four years. During that time, my husband of 28 years and I had walked, in sections of increasing length, 693 miles of the southern portion of the Appalachian Trail. Our longest section had been 293 miles in Virginia from late April to late May in 2005. I had honed my wilderness camping skills, experienced sending a mail drop, prepared a room full of nutritious, lightweight trail foods, and pared down my gear, with some items I had made myself, to 14 pounds without food or water. I had meticulously studied Wingfoot's Thru-hiking guide, calculating a detailed itinerary for every day from Maine to Georgia for my southbound walk. I was prepared!

I was prepared, yes, for the physical ardors of the trail. I was prepared for the general logistics of a thru-hike with its rhythm of 5-day walks and resupply stops. I was prepared for the general social fabric of the trail, weaving in and out with a group of hikers I would meet on the trail.

What I was NOT prepared for is what made my walk a transformative pilgrimage, a blossoming of a deep longing that I had masked, hidden, and starved during my years of homemaking and family nurturing. I was not prepared for what would rekindle in me and find expression during my seven-month journey, what I now see as a journey of my heart's awakening.

My heart awoke to magnificent, overwhelming beauty!

Here's just one example from my trail journal. It was my birthday:

July 13, 2007

"I had hiked most of the day alone, stopping on the peak of Little Bigelow Mountain. The trail led up an 1800 foot climb to the summit of Avery Peak, one of Maine's highest at 4,037feet. After two hours of stepping up rocks (in Maine, the trails go straight up and straight down!) I was within sight of the summit when a wind blew up. Within minutes, the summit was concealed with clouds and the wind was whipping! I thought my poncho would blow away as I pulled it out of my pack!

Realizing it would not be safe to summit in the wind, I hunkered down and waited. In the next hour, I saw a fantastic sky show! The clouds swirled on my left, jumping up and over the ridge.

The sun beamed on my right! I thoroughly enjoyed the show and rose to start up the peak when the sun came out about 50 minutes later. There was one more treat in store for me, though. I turned and looked back down the ridge and saw a COMPLETE rainbow arching over the ridgeline! Since no one else was up there, I decide that it was my own personal, birthday rainbow!"

My heart awoke to honoring and loving myself as a hiker!

Here's my journal excerpt from the day I reached the point where my section hiking had ended two years earlier:

November 15, 2007

"This section has also brought a mileage landmark for me. At VA 624, near Catawba, VA, I unofficially completed my 2005 - 2007 section hike of the entire AT! Except for 10 miles south of Pearisburg which I'll be hiking tomorrow, I've now hiked the entire Trail! I didn't know what I would do when I reached the road at 4:30 p.m. on Nov. 15. Surprisingly enough, when I caught sight of the road at the foot of a hill, I started CRYING! Hiker John got some good pictures of me in a victory stance, and I felt so happy to have completed this goal.

Now, I'll be looking forward to hiking familiar areas in the remaining 622 miles of the trail for a 2007 Thru Hike. Again, I am blessed to have this opportunity to hike the entire Trail in one trip. On this Thanksgiving eve, I am thankful for my family, friends, hiking community, and all of the trail angels and Trail Journals readers to make this hike a most momentous time of my life."



My heart awoke to companionship and realizing that even

though I CAN walk solo, it's much more fulfilling with friends and eventually a hiking partner.

Here's what I wrote in my journal about companionship:

August 8, 2007

"I've arrived in Hanover, NH! The White Mountains and Maine are behind me. I miss the rocks, the climbs, the mountaintop views, and hiking above treeline! What a difference in the terrain once we passed Glencrif, NH! I've been hiking pretty consistently with a group of 6 other southbounders which makes the days interesting. Lots of laughter and sharing the beauty we see every day.

Yesterday, hiking from Hexacuba Shelter to Hanover, we had our first rain in over a week. Just when the rain started, I arrived at a shelter that used to be a fire warden's cabin. It was cozy and

dry. Shortly after, other southbounders started arriving. As the rain poured, we had a fine time together, singing Raindrops on Roses and Whiskers on Kittens, waltzing, and playing a game of "I'm going on a backpack trip and my pack I'm taking..... we named outrageous things for all 26 letters! What fun. The rain let up and we all continued. This was one of my favorite days hiking because I got to hike along with each of my southbound friends one one.

It's hard to explain how much I loved hiking in the high mountains of NH! I hadn't realized how magnificent they were until we left them. Sure, the hike was consistently rocky and steep, but so beautiful with magnificent views! I'm having a fantastic time, loving the time in nature, and making friends the trail!"



And also from my journal:

November 21, 2007

"Since writing last I've hiked 205 miles from Maupin Field Shelter at Reeds Gap, VA to Pearisburg, VA at 1551.9 miles from Mt. Katahdin. The days have shifted from warm Fall days to blustery, wintry days and back again to gentle fall days.

I've also shifted hiking partners again! My husband, John, joined me from Reeds Gap to Daleville but decided to shorten his three week hike to 10 days, saving a week of vacation to visit his 90 year old mom in Houston. I loved the short time with him, though! We hadn't hiked together on the AT since our last long section in Virginia in 2005. When John decided to go home, I contacted Hiker John and told him that I'd be hiking alone after Daleville. He had just arrived at the Relax Inn at Rt. 11/I-81. He decided he would come BACK to Daleville and hike with me - repeating the 190 mile stretch from Daleville to Atkins! Now that's a hiking partner to treasure! So, on Tuesday, Nov. 13, Hubby John was hitching a ride south to Roanoke to catch a bus home and Hiker John was hitching a ride north to Daleville! Whew! I was relaxing at the Howard Johnson's in Daleville, sending them both good energy for a safe and quick journey. They both arrived at their chosen destinations in good time and I revelled in my blessings of having these two fantastic Johns in my life! I am blessed!"

My journey opened my heart to Beauty, to Self-worthiness, and to Companionship. Perhaps being prepared for the physical aspects of the trail had allowed me to expand into another realm of growth – *growth on the inside!*

In the fall of 2006, I interviewed for a position that would have been a logical career path for me. I had started my adult life as a naturalist and program director at an outdoor education center in Ohio. My 20-year sabbatical for homemaking and childrearing could seamlessly unfold into a second round of nature center work, right? There I was, imagining myself as the next Education Director at the Dunwoody Nature Center. I was perfectly qualified for the job! I was ready to work full time. I had already worked seasonally for the director. And yet, there was something strained in my enthusiasm. What slipped out and pivoted my career was my simple statement, "You know, one of my life dreams is to complete the Appalachian Trail." The director responded, "Well, we wouldn't want to stand in the way of a life dream." I knew I had blown the interview. And yet, I also felt a glow in my heart. On my way home from that interview, I said, "Yes. I'm going to hike the AT. NOW! Before finding another job!" The following spring I climbed Mt. Katahdin to begin the journey that I had hoped would "Get hiking out of my system."

On January 25, 2008, standing in an unleashed celebration of accomplishment, I realized that I did *not* get hiking out of my system. Hiking IS my system! Springer Mountain, southern terminus of my walk from Maine to Georgia, was not an end. It was just another summit on my new career as a hiker.

And *that*, my dear reader, is where the next chapter begins! Walking the Pacific Crest Trail.

AT Data for Regina "Mssnglnk" Reiter

I did a southbound thru-hike June 27, 2007 to January 25, 2008.

My gear weighed 12-14 lbs. I started with a full pack of 32 lbs with 14 lbs of food for the 100-mile wilderness! By TN, I always kept my pack at 27 lbs or less.

I used a Ray-Way Products homemade tarp for my shelter

I started with a Ray-Way Products sleeping quilt through Pearisburg. In Pearisburg, I picked up a "Versalite" 10 degree bag from Western Mountaineering.

My pack was a stripped-down REI Valhalla that weighed about 4 lbs.



BMTA Members... All Hands On Deck...



Time to get ready for the heavy hiking season by taking a snapshot of the entire trail on a single day - or close to it.

The 2013 Annual Walk-thru is set for **Saturday 20 April**.

Even if you are not able to walk a section you can help, and get in on the fun, by servicing as a shuttle driver for those who do walk. The BMTA needs YOU!

What It Is

Once each year, the BMTA members hike and report on trail conditions on a single day of hiking (or at least within a week of that day). We cover all 200 miles south of the Smokies. The information gathered on problem trail conditions is collected by Maintenance Directors, used to determine future work-trips, and relayed to section maintainers so that repairs can be made.

It's a vital audit of trail conditions. It's also a rewarding way to enjoy a hike in the woods on the BMT at a beautiful time of the year!

To Participate

The BMTA welcomes all to take part in the Annual Walk-Thru. If you'd like to help but prefer not to hike, car shuttles are needed and this is a great way to contribute. Shuttle drivers free up the hikers so that more trail can be covered. This valuable service is much appreciated. Please contact a Maintenance Director (see below) to volunteer.

For hikers, we ask that you hike in pairs. One person from each party is asked to download and review an [Annual Walk-Thru Report Form](#), fill it out, and return it via either email to (walk-thru@bmta.org) or US mail to (PO Box 6, Cherry Log, GA 30522) within one week of completing the walk thru.

Thank you for helping us gather this important information on trail conditions.

Questions? For Georgia sections, contact Tom Keene at 770-548-4935; for North Carolina and Tennessee, contact Ernie Engman at 865-924-5992. Either can also be reached by sending an email to (walk-thru@bmta.org). Direct your question to them by name.

TK & EE

--

Tom Keene
Georgia Maintenance Director
and

Ernie Engman
TN/NC Maintenance Director

I'm pleased to report that all Georgia sections as of **March 22 have been claimed. I'll be sending out a reminder closer to **April 20**.....**

Tom Keene.....

Dyer Gap-Flattop Mountain Reroute Completed ... ----- where's Darcy?

GA March Work-trip

By Tom Keene

Twelve volunteers, including two hard working first-timers, showed-up Saturday 9 March to make history -- that is, to put the finishing touches on the Dyer Gap reroute begun on our November worktrip.



Doug Kleiber (left) and Eric Hedden make full use of a lunch log near Dyer Gap.

Much of the work on the March trip involved adding knicks and other water diversions to the side-hilling done on previous trips. The big final challenge was the installation of an "entrance ramp" to scale the 12 foot high bank that separated Forest Service Road 64 from the newly relocated trail. The impressive result, engineered by trip co-leader Barry Allen and a crew of four, can be seen in the accompanying photo.



Late winter view east toward Brasstown Bald from FS Road 64 near Dyer Gap. Blue Ridge tucked in the valley.

The final task, the painting of the iconic white diamond blazes, was completed with massive care and precision by Darcy Douglas assisted by Claire Broadwell. Or at least we understand it is completed. Darcy worked with such attention to detail that nearly all the workforce, including your humble scribe, had abandoned the scene before she had finished. We take it on the good authority of project organizer George Owen that the last blaze is in place and the new section is officially open for business.

Thanks to all who helped us finish the job: First-timers Russell Johnson and Eric Hedden, (great job, guys); familiar faces Bill Hamrick, Bob Ruby, Doug Kleiber, Gerrit Voogt, Kyle Atkins; and the aforementioned, Claire Broadwell, Darcy Douglas, Barry Allen, George Owen - and your scribe.

Full props, by the way, to George, for shepherding this project from start to finish. George's regular "nudges" hastened the Forest Service approval process. Then, before each of the three work trips, George did significant site preparation work, either with a small crew or by himself. Well done!



George Owen (back left) and Kyle Atkins finish the "Entrance Ramp."

February 23, 2013 - Monthly BMTA TN/NC Work Trip - BMT Section 12e - Lost Creek Section "The Re-route and Repair"

This month's work trip was to repair the trail on Lost Creek which has been undercut and partially collapsed from recent flooding. The task was to build about 140' of trail further from the bank. What was left of the current trail was still collapsing into Lost Creek due to the creek undercutting the bank.



Workers met at the trail head on FS 103, aka Lost Creek Road, at approximately 9:00 am on 23 February. The walk to the maintenance point is about 1.9 miles from the Trail Head, which is mostly flat walking, and passes through the area referred to as the "Lost Creek Gorge" which is beautiful.

Most of the work involved chainsaws along with brush cutters, loppers, pulaskis, McLeod, and fire rakes which were needed for clearing the trail bed and some side hill work.

The trail is now open and restored. It should last a few years before anything else happens to it.

1



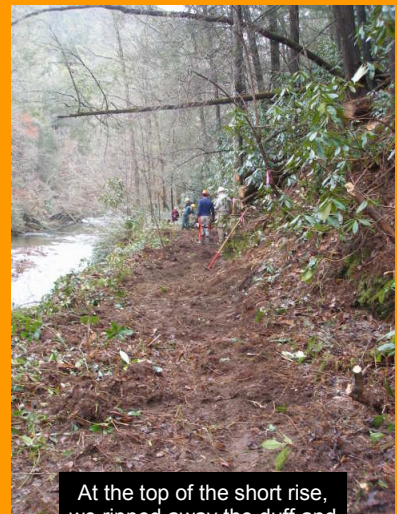
The Collapsed Trail

2



The Tread Had To Be Relocated About 50' On Either Side Of The damage To make a Seamless Reroute.

3



At the top of the short rise, we ripped away the duff and created an open tread. Earlier this was covered with rhododendrons and deadfall.

4



Once the corridor was open, we began to side hill cut to move the tread even closer to the wall and began removing roots

5



While the middle section was still being repaired, the upper section was opened up so the new trail could rejoin the main tread.

6



The old logs were moved to block and steer hikers away from the old route.

7



Duff was moved closer to the widened tread to steer hikers away from the creek's edge while others walked the tread to smooth it out as much as possible.

8



Another half hour saw the trail opened, trimmed of roots, smoothed and walked back down to the original trail tread.

Thanks to Shawn Basil for the pictures and the captions.

A complete write up of this trip can be found at:

<http://hikinghq.net/forum/showthread.php?7286-Work-Maintenance-Trip-on-the-BMT-the-Heart-of-Darkness!&p=309237#post30923>

Name	Travel Hours	Work Hours	Totals
Steve Biatowas	0.5	4	4.5
Clare Sullivan	2	4	6
Ed Sullivan	2	4	6
Shawn Basil	2.5	4	6.5
Fabian Hensley	14	4	18
Matthew Engman	3	4	7
Ernest Engman	3	4	7
William Engman	3	4	7
Totals	30	32	62

John Muir Trail Reconstruction ...June 1st

This message is from Steve Biatowas, Ocoee-Hiwassee Trails Tech with the USFS, Cherokee National Forest. Please consider participating and put this on your calendar now:

Efforts are underway to repair and revitalize the John Muir Trail. This trail is a National Recreation Trail and it has a direct historic connection to the famous naturalist, John Muir.

Workers are being recruited who are willing to do reconstruction work, basically use of pulaskis to dig and rakes to level and smooth tread. We also need a cadre of experienced trail construction leaders to help provide guidance for new volunteers. Truly, it will be very hard to be successful without experienced trail maintainers to provide support to new maintenance crewmembers.

Please contact

Jeff Hunter
423-322-7866
jeff@wildsouth.org

Or

Steve Biatowas
sbiatowas@fs.fed.us
423-338-3328



Date: **June 1st**

Time: 9:00 am

Section of work: John Muir Trail #152 Coker Creek to Hwy 68

Meeting Place:

For anyone coming from Chattanooga/Cleveland, meet at the Ocoee/Hiwassee District Office @ 0800

From Tellico Plains/Ducktown, meet directly at the camping area where John Muir intersects the Coker Creek trail (bottom of Duckett Ridge Road) @ 0900.

BMTA DISPLAY AT Appalachian Trail Kick Off

By Marge Heller

The BMTA display was well attended during the Appalachian Trail Kick Off held at Amicalola Falls State Park, [March 8-10](#). Hiking Director Ralph Heller and Marge Heller, Publicity Chair, represented the Trail there all weekend and received help from President David Blount and Bob Ruby, Smokies Coordinator. Pictured are Ralph and Laretta Dean, Interpretive Ranger at AFSP.



Put This On Your Calendar...

BMTA Annual Meeting ...

November 2, 2013...

November 2013						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Blue Ridge Ranger District scheduled a chainsaw class on [March 23rd](#). Due to weather, the class was cancelled and has now been rescheduled to Saturday, [April 27th](#). This is primarily a one-day recertification class. However, we can accommodate a few first time certifications. This is a limbing and bucking only class.

I am expecting some of the scheduled attendees on [March 23rd](#) will have a conflict and be unable to attend the [April 27th](#) class. If anyone is interested in attending, please have them contact me.

Thanks.....

Chainsaw Class...April 27, 2013

Regards, Jim

Richard T. "Jim" Holland
 175 Hells Hollow Drive
 Blue Ridge, GA 30513
 706-258-2830
lanconn@tds.net
www.threecreeksarabians.com
 Amateur Radio Callsign KI4BEN



Milestone for BMTA

On [March 2](#), 2013, the Benton MacKaye Facebook page reached 1,000 Likes!



May 3-5 (Friday-Sunday)

Rainbow Springs Car Camping and Dayhikes

Leader: Bob Ruby

Co-leader: Stacy Bredendieck

BMTA members are invited to participate with GATC for this car camping and hiking weekend at the former Rainbow Springs Campground. GATC member Stacy Bredendieck and her friend, Greg, purchased this formerly commercial Campground near Standing Indian for private use. It has all the amenities of the USFS Appletree Group Campground and more! The 10-acre property is located near US 64 between Franklin and Hayesville, NC, off the road to the USFS Standing Indian Campground. It has a large pavilion with a stone fireplace overlooking a grassy camping area sloping down to the Upper Nantahala River. They also have several hookups for camper vehicles. The bathhouse has flush toilets and hot water for showers and sinks. All this luxury and at no fee!



The A.T. passes within a mile. We'll plan a variety of day hikes of 5-10 miles in length for Friday afternoon, [Saturday](#), and [Sunday](#) morning on the A.T., Chunky Gal, and other trails in the nearby Standing Indian Mountain complex. Wildflowers should be near their peak. We'll have coordinated pot-luck dinners on [Friday](#) & [Saturday](#) evenings for those who wish to participate. There is plenty of room, so let us know if you want to bring family or friends to join the activities or to just hang out and relax at camp or in the area.

To register, contact Bob Ruby at bmtabob@gmail.com (404-252-8888)

or

Stacy Bredendieck at stacyantje@yahoo.com.

Open To All BMTA Members And Family

April 25 - Fun Hike in the Joyce Kilmer



We'll meet at 1 PM in the parking lot of the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest in Robbinsville to hike the two mile loop and see the Spring Wildflowers, probably at the height of their bloom in that area. After that, we will travel up the Cherohala Skyway to hike Huckleberry Knob ("The easiest 5600 foot mountain you will ever climb!"), about 2 miles round trip. That evening is a Full Moon, and the Knob has a spectacular view. Bring supper or let me know and we will put together a cookout at the top. You can camp there for the evening, or come back down after moon-rise. Easy hiking and great views on both sections.

Contact Dick Evans at dick.evans@frontier.com or call 828-479-2503.



3rd Saturday Fun Hike...

March 16, 2013...by Vic Fredlund



On Saturday the sun rose into a clear blue sky and brought with it the promise of great day to walk in the woods. 21 of us met at the BMTA Headquarters, had our sign-in and a good time greeting old friends and meeting new ones – half of the attendees were first time BMTA “Fun-hikers”. We took the opportunity to acquaint our visitors with our Headquarters and the history of the BMTA. We then carpoled to the trailhead of Section 8a at Bushy Head Gap and divided into a fast group and a “not so fast” group. Past President Dick Evans, who had



agreed to lead the fast group, gave a great presentation to the assembly on the history of Benton MacKaye, the origin and development of the BMT and a comparison with the AT. The weather continued to be as good as the dawn had promised. The round trip, in and out, on Section 8a proved to take a bit longer than was originally anticipated but considering it was the first hike of the year for many participants, it was a good day. Along the way we encountered two other groups enjoying the day and our trail.



We returned to the BMTA Headquarters after the hike and about half of us then reassembled at the Pink Pig to reward ourselves for some good exercise.



Crosscut Sawyer Recertification...

Saturday, April 6 & 7 ...

There will be a crosscut sawyer – recertification only – class on [Saturday, April 6](#), and [Sunday, April 7](#). Classes will be at the Blue Ridge District Office. For those who need First Aid/CPR there will be a course [Saturday, April 6](#), in the morning and the cost is \$30. Sawyer classes will be [Saturday](#) afternoon and field work [Sunday](#). This course is for GATC and BMTA members and is open only to those who have been previously certified. Space is limited so first come-first enrolled.

To register contact Gary Monk : gmonk@bellsouth.net).

Also, please send a photocopy of your crosscut, chainsaw, and FA/CPR cards to Ralph Heller at rshbmta@gmail.com (if GA BMTA worker) or Ernie Engman sgtrock@hikinghq.net (if TN/NC worker). We need to keep your records up to date and also to give this information to the local USFS districts so you will be covered under their disability insurance plan should you be injured while working on the trails in the forest. Remember, to be legal to use your chain saw or crosscut saw within the forest and to be covered under their disability insurance, you must

- be certified and a copy of your certificates need to be on file in the district offices
- be a card carrying and current member of the BMTA (or have signed a separate individual agreement with the USFS)
- follow the rules of the USFS (helmet, chaps, eye protection, etc).

If you have not renewed your BMTA membership, please do so very soon. Go to the BMTA website and renew online www.bmta.org.

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