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Suspension Bridge
 over the Toccoa River:
 By Ralph Heller



BMTA Headquarters



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American Hiking Society

National Trail Day... June 1, 2013

By Pam Sullivan

This year, GATC, BMTA, and MHH will have a joint celebration of National Trails Day at Vogel State Park on the first of June. The clubs have reserved Pavilion #2 on the lake and are contributing drinks, ice and tableware for a noon picnic. The clubs will all have displays. Festivities will begin in the morning and include a work detail in the park, two hikes, and a pot-luck picnic.

The work trip will be led by Don Hicks, Trail Coordinator of GATC, and tools will be provided. You need to bring gloves, wear sturdy shoes, and bring your own first aid kit, etc, for working. **Work trip departs from out pavilion at 9 AM.**

George Owen will lead a hike into the Coosa Backcountry which will DEPART from our pavilion at 9 AM. Hike the Coosa Backcountry about a mile to the 180 Rd. gap, then walk up the road a short distance to an old back way into the Bear Hair Trail...up that to the Vogel overlook, then back down over toward Wolf Creek and around - about 5+ miles, moderate hike at a moderate pace.

Picnic lunch will begin at 12 noon. Please bring a dish to share with the group. **Tables and seating may be in short supply so please bring a lawn chair for seating!**

Optional 2 mile hike after lunch around lake and up the nature trail.

Hikers are allowed to bring a guest. Feel free to bring a non-motorized boat, swimsuit and pool toys to cool off in lake. Pedal boats and mini golf are available for an additional fee.

We look forward to this American Hiking Society backed outing of three of the foremost trail clubs in the north Georgia region. So bring a dish to share, hiking/play toys and a lawn chair. See you there!!!

Fee area: Park pass or fee required for entrance to park

Ralph and Marge Heller Receive Conservation Hero Award

On **May 18th**, the Blue Ridge Mountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited awarded Ralph and Marge Heller, BMTA Board Members, with Conservation Hero certificates for their contributions to the City of Blue Ridge being named Benton MacKaye's Trail Town. The TU dinner event included a silent auction and raffle, with proceeds going to further education and preservation of trout waters and the improvement of the North Georgia Watershed and local economy.



Pictured are: Marge Heller, Ralph Heller and Ralph Artigiore of TU.

Trout Adventure Trail Brochure ...by Marge Heller

The Blue Ridge Mountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited is proud to announce the publication of their TROUT ADVENTURE TRAIL brochure. The Trout Adventure Trail (R) is a hiking and learning experience in the Chattahoochee National Forest in North Georgia. Individual hikers, families and organized groups are offered the opportunity to hike, learn and earn a free decorative commemorative patch as recognition of the commitment to outdoor education, conservation and accomplishment. Copies of this new brochure are available at BMTA Headquarters on Hwy 515 in Blue Ridge.

On **Saturday, July 6, 2013**, the BMTA and TU will hike together on the Trout Adventure Trail. Bring your kids and grand kids. Pre-registration required.

Trout.Adventure.Trail@gmail.com or call 706-851-4121



Upcoming Hikes...Ralph Heller: Hiking Director

June and July are full of hiking opportunities this year. I encourage our members to get outdoors and participate in some of our scheduled combined club activities in the next two months.

Saturday June 1 – American Hiking Society National Trails Day: This is a yearly event jointly sponsored this year by the BMTA, GATC and Mountain High Hikers. You can either do trail work, participate in a hike, or both. Meet at Vogel State Park Pavilion #2 on the lake by 8:45 a.m. for work trip or moderate 5-mile hike. Lunch at noon, drinks and ice provided, but bring a pot-luck dish for sharing with the group. There is an easy hike around the lake after lunch. Please plan to attend this event. It will be fun. You will get to meet a lot of interesting people. Let's have a good turnout of BMT folks!

Saturday June 22 – Hike to Turtletown Falls: This moderate/easy 3.7 mile loop hike has 2 waterfalls and also a nice section in view of the Hiwassee River. Meet at the Blue Ridge Home Depot parking lot at 8:30 a.m. where we will shuttle to the trail head which is about 14 miles from Ducktown, TN. After the hike, we can get a bite to eat at Brother's Copper Kettle in Duck Town, your option. Hike leaders Ralph Heller and Sara Bland. For more information and to register for the hike call [770-235-9760](tel:770-235-9760).

Saturday July 6 – Trout Adventure Trail Hike: This is an event sponsored jointly by the BMTA and Trout unlimited. There will be an easy 2-mile round trip hike from Three Forks and a 5-mile mostly down-hill hike from Springer Mountain. This is a child friendly event. For more information and to register for this event see article in this newsletter.

Saturday-Friday July 20-26: Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Deep South Region 39th Biennial Gathering: Open to all trail using groups, this 4-day gathering will feature numerous hikes each day, seminars, and social gatherings. You can come for a day or stay the whole period. For information and to register for this really big event....

[go to http://www.appalachiantrail.org/who-we-are/events/2011/07/26/atc-cullowhee-2013](http://www.appalachiantrail.org/who-we-are/events/2011/07/26/atc-cullowhee-2013)

Easy Trek Amicalola River Hike... May 8, 2013

On **Wednesday, May 8, 2013**, twelve joyful hikers gathered at the Food Lion Parking Lot in Ellijay and carpoled to the trailhead on Highway 53. When we arrived we got our gear together as usual and headed out along the river on a 1/4 mile boardwalk built by the Mountain Stewards for Handicap Access. This provides a wonderful opportunity to share the river and the rapids with those who have physical limitations. Before starting our climb, we stopped and walked out on a huge boulder in the river to marvel at the Class IV, Edge of the World Rapids. These rapids were created by the Brevard Fault Line.



During our 3-mile loop, we stopped to read the interpretive signs stationed along the way which gave us some interesting "factoids" about the woods. Other points of interest were an underground stream and the remnants of an old homestead. At the 1.7 mile point, we came to a picnic table and a monument dedicating the trail to Jason Funk, a Cumming, Georgia Boy Scout who died in 1991 at the age of 16. He built this trail for his eagle scout project. What a legacy!

This is a unique area that is owned by the City of Atlanta, the forest resources managed by the Georgia Forestry Commission, and the wildlife managed by the Department of Natural Resources. It does require a user fee which can be obtained on website GeorgiaWildlife.com. We highly recommend this fascinating hike.

We continued the day with delicious Mexican cuisine at the Fuego Grill and Tequila Bar located across from the north gate of Big Canoe. We celebrated another great day in the forest with sangrias and cervezas (in moderation of course!). Until the next one, this was the best ever!



Photos, by Joy Forehand, taken on May 8 Easy Trek ...



Ladies Slippers Hike...May 21st

Lady Slipper Hike by Ralph Heller

On [May 21st](#), I led a group of Easy Trekkers to view Lady Slippers on part of Section 6d. We saw hundreds of plants, some with flowers, some without. Definitely the largest grouping of Lady Slippers on the BMT. I believe we caught them just at the right time...at their peak.

Jerry Bland was sweep with Sara Bland doing her usual outstanding job of making everyone feel welcome!

Hikers were: Al & Martha Cash, Frank & Nancy Hosler, Wendy Knowles, Janet Rose, and new BMT Members - Don & Mary Bray of Talking Rock.



It's Official...Blue Ridge is BMTA'S Trail Town

Highway signs are in place, at city limits.



"Find Your Adventure in Blue Ridge...BMTA's Trail Town"

Put This On Your Calendar...



**BMTA Annual Meeting ...
November 2,**

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

Nominating Committee Appointed

The nominations committee will be working over the next few months to propose a slate of nominees for 2013-2014 Board of Directors. The committee includes Steve Bayliss, Darcy Douglas, Ernie Engman, Vic Fredlund, and Tom Keene. If contacted by a member of this committee please give due consideration to serving the Association by accepting a nomination for a seat on the board. If you would like to serve in this capacity or would be interested in serving on a committee, should the opportunity arise, please contact one of the above named directly or send a message through the Contact Us link on the BMTA website. The Nominations Committee will complete their work by summers end and the resulting slate of nominees will be voted on at the Annual Meeting of the Association on November 2, 2013. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the November Meeting. I would like to thank the committee members for their willingness to serve and all board members, past and present, for their service to the Association.

David Blount, President BMTA

BMTA TN/NC May Worktrips

Tennessee Work Trip – May 18 – Sycamore Creek

Saturday, May 18, 2013 - BMT Section 17a-b - Sycamore Creek Section Five Benton MacKaye members and 1 guest brushed the entire 5.8 mile section. We had one sawyer, one swamper who also used a hand lopper, and four swing bladers. One water diversion was cleaned in the upper section. There were two four-inch diameter trees cut with a hand saw and around 20 trees ranging in diameter from 4-18" were removed with a chain saw. Time and a busted boot prevented our sawyer, Rick Harris, from reaching three downed trees in the upper section. Hikers can easily step over one of the trees and walk under the other two. It was a beautiful mostly cloudy 70 degree late spring day. Sycamore Creek was raging alongside the lower 2 miles of the trail. Wildflowers were plentiful including the dwarf crested iris, many varieties of ferns, wild geranium, foam flower, cinquefoil, partridge berry, and a few remaining trillium. Many silverbell trees were visible from the Mud Gap Road area.

Volunteer hours are below:

Name	Travel Hours	Work Hours	Totals
Rick Harris	2	7	9
Brenda Harris	2	7	9
Pam Mathews	4.5	7	11.5
Kent Mathews	4	7.5	11.5
Ronnie Carter	2	7.5	9.5
Bill Lundin	4	7	11
Totals	18.5	43	61.5

5-12-13 members worked on section 14a clearing brush and removing light blow downs. There is still one tree that needs sawed out by a chainsaw on this section.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Travel Hours</i>	<i>Work Hours</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Zoe Zardis	1.5	4	5.5
John Zardis	1.5	4	5.5
Totals	3	8	11

5-13-13 members worked on section 13d clearing vegetation and light blow downs. There are multiple trees that will need cleared and we are planning a maintenance trip June 22nd to clear these. The maintainer hiked the section of the John Muir Trail from the Appalachian Powerhouse to Wildcat Creek and reported 2 large blow downs and some parts of the trail underwater. This section also needs some vegetation cleared and some trail bed repaired. This is the section we are looking at for re-route from the Towee Picnic area.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Travel Hours</i>	<i>Work Hours</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Bil Lundin	3	6.75	9.75
Totals	3	6.75	9.75

5-16-13 members worked on section 14b clearing brush and light blow downs.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Travel Hours</i>	<i>Work Hours</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Zoe Zardis	.5	3	3.5
Totals	.5	3	3.5

5-17-13 members of the BMTA worked section 13a-13b to remove blow downs noted on our walk through.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Travel Hours</i>	<i>Work Hours</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Ernest Engman	2.5	2	4.5
William Engman	2.5	2.	4.5
Totals	5	4	9

5-18-13 two teams worked separate sections to fix issues identified during our annual walk through. One group cleared spring growth from the trail in section 11a – 11b. The sign at the intersection of Trail 67 is missing, and the sign on top of Big Frog at the intersection with Trail 66 is damaged and not much use.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Travel Hours</i>	<i>Work Hours</i>	<i>Totals</i>
David Blount	5	9	14
Ernest Engman	1.5	9	10.5
William Engman	1.5	9	10.5
Totals	8	27	35

Another group worked Sycamore Branch 17a-17b clearing brush and cutting out numerous blow downs. The sawyer had to quit with 3 blow downs left to cut out, but the trail is passable around them. See complete work summary and hours report on page 8.

5-19-13 a team of BMTA members worked section 17d to clear blow downs and brush. The area was badly grown over in places and weather prevented us from finishing.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Travel Hours</i>	<i>Work Hours</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Rick Harris	2	4	6
Gene Roll	4	3	7
Ernest Engman	3	3	6
William Engman	3	3	6
Totals	12	13	25

The Mother of All Work-trips Plus a Picnic ...Georgia Worktrip May 11

The day, May 11, began badly. It was pouring rain at the Springer Mountain parking lot. The forecast was even worse – thunder and lightning was promised for after lunch. But we were working within a few yards of the parking at Big Stamp Gap; we could easily bolt for the vehicles if it got hostile. So we decided to work as long as we could.

Then another Second Saturday Miracle occurred. The rain let up while we moved the vehicles from Springer to Big Stamp. For the rest of the day, we had nothing worse than a few light showers, not merely for the worktrip, but a post-work picnic hosted by David Blount.

Twelve good workers and true braved the nasty conditions and scary forecast. We got a tremendous amount done, modernizing many badly deteriorating water diversions from Big Stamp Gap trailsouth to the top of Bald Mountain. We moved a lot of duff and dirt! In the event, the over-night soak proved a benefit, making the digging much easier.

The picnic, at nearby Possum Poke Pavilion was as a Mother's Day weekend treat. The First Mom, David Blount's mother, Sally, was on hand to provide some gracious supervision of her son and his unruly friends. Special thanks to all the Blount family for a delightful time.

And thanks also those who contributed so much good work on Section 1a: Claire Broadwell, Darcy Douglas, Kyle Atkins, David Blount, Wes Clonts, David Dunn, Bill Hamrick, Ralph Heller, Doug Kleiber, George Owen, Mike Pilvinsky -- and your humble scribe, Tom Keene.



Lunch at Owen Overlook...

From left, Claire Braodwell, Ralph Heller, David Dunn, Bill Hamrick.

TN/NC Work Trip Plan For June ...

TN/NC WORK TRIP PLAN FOR JUNE

The June 22 work trip will take place on Section 13d clearing blow downs and seasonal brush. The section is 2.6 miles long running between Towee Creek and Wildcat Creek near the Hiwassee River. Plan to meet up at the Towee Creek Picnic Area at 9 AM. A National Forest Parking Pass or \$5.00 parking fee is required so carpooling is encouraged. <https://maps.google.com/maps?daddr=35.194599,-84.449984&hl=en&sll=35.192784,-84.451218&sspn=0.00555,0.011362&mra=mift&mrsp=1&sz=17&t=m&z=17>

Certified sawyers are needed to clear the reported 20 blow downs on this section and we will need swampers to assist each sawyer

What to bring: Work gloves, hard hats, day pack with water, food, and seasonal clothing. There is no water along most of this section, so 2 liters of water minimum is recommended. Snips and loppers are always good this time of year for those growing spring plants – so if you have some available, please bring them. This is not wilderness area, so power tools can be used.

If we get enough help, then we will have some workers start from the Wildcat Creek end and work up from that side. The distance from the Powerhouse parking to the Wildcat Creek end is only about 0.7 miles of mostly flat walking. After the trip, we may gather at Reliance Fly and Tackle for a meal. The Tackle Burgers are pretty good.

If you can come, please let us know in advance, although people unscheduled showing up at the last minute are always welcome. Point of contact is Ernest Engman at sgtrock@hikinghq.net , or 865-380-9107 (H) and 865-924-5992 (C).

Franklin Hiker April Fool Bash...

On March 30, 2013 Ernest Engman set up a booth at the Franklin Hiker April Fool Bash trail / hiker celebration in Franklin NC. There were numerous other hiking organizations and trails represented there, including the ATC, ALDHA, The Batram Trail, and the Wilderness Society. Interested hikers were generally people that had completed a long hike such as the AT, and were looking for another long trail that wouldn't require a multi-month investment in time. There were also other hikers that were preparing for an AT thru-hike and saw the BMT as a good place to prepare for this upcoming hike. This year I saw a lot more hikers that were local to that part of North Carolina that were interested in section hiking information and were mostly interested in our TN/NC and GSMNP section guides. Included are some pictures from the event. I didn't keep a count, but I would say that about 100 people came through and talked trail in one form or another including some past BMT thru-hikers. I sold about 10 thru-hiker guides and at least one TN/NC section guide and one GSMNP section guide. Last year there wasn't as much walk-through traffic due to a change in the set up by the city. This year the set up was similar, but I think it is starting to catch on.



Leave No Trace ~ Trainer Course



SOUTHEASTERN FOOT TRAILS COALITION

Presents

Leave No Trace ~ Trainer Course

August 2- 4, 2013

News Release

The Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition will be conducting a Leave No Trace Trainer Course for those seeking to learn the seven principles of outdoor ethics for personal enrichment or to teach others. The course features a short backpack and overnight campout in the Chattahoochee National Forest. The course fee includes food and educational materials.

The Trainer Course is a vital component of the nationwide Leave No Trace program, to help recreationalists minimize their ecological impact while enjoying the outdoors. The Trainer Course assists the participants in learning more about the seven principles of Leave No Trace and techniques for disseminating these low impact skills to others.

The goals for this Trainer Course are to prepare the attendees so they will understand and be able to teach the value of minimal impact on the environment and the Leave No Trace Ethics.

Date: August 2-4, 2013 (soft start on Friday)

Time: 9:00 am Saturday to 4:00pm Sunday

Cost: \$85.00/ including materials

Place: Chattahoochee National Forest

Presenter: Jay M Dement, Leave No Trace Master Educator

More information: <http://southeastfoottrails.org/SEFTC-LNT-Workshop.htm>
jay@jayDphotos.com, 404/731-1901

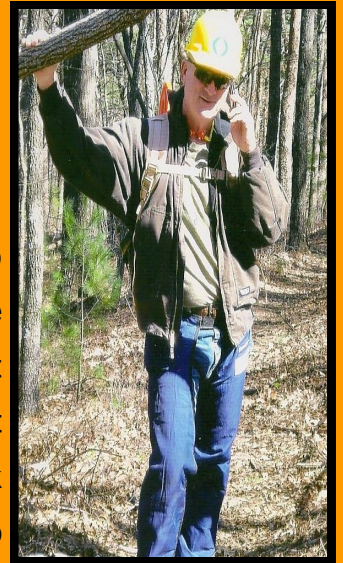
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Sawyer At Work

By: Ralph Heller

Photos provided by Kathy Yost

While on a short hike on Section 6b, Marge and I came upon a large, fallen tree. When we got home, I contacted Mark Yost and asked for his help to clear the trail. Along with his wife, Kathy, the next day Mark hiked out to the fallen tree. In the photo, Mark is on his cell confirming with me that he was at the correct spot. As you can see, the tree didn't have a chance once Mark put his sawyer skills to work. A member since 2011, Mark came on a few work trips first then earned his chainsaw certification. He recently was upgraded to a Class B Sawyer.



Mark & Kathy are Florida natives and, after retiring, moved to Morganton. They have two daughters and, in April, became first time grandparents to a baby boy.

Thanks, Mark, for donating your time and talent to the BMTA.

