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## BMTA President's Column July 2015

### BMTA Officers 2014-2015

- President: Bob Ruby
- Vice President: Tom Keene
- Secretary: Joy Forehand
- Treasurer: Margaret Evans
- GA M/C: Barry Allen
- TN/NC M/C: Rick Harris
- Smokies Coord: Dick Evans
- Hiking Director: Ralph Heller
- Membership/Store: Ken Cissna
- Publicity: Marcia Lehman
- Conservation: Steve Bayliss
- Past President: David Blount
- Newsletter: Kathy Williams
- State Rep GA: Mark Yost
- State Rep TN/NC: Rick Harris

### Sponsored Volunteer in the Forests Agreement

BMTA is close to signing a Sponsored Volunteer in the Forests (VIF) Agreement with the U.S. Forest Service. The Agreement will replace the old Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) which were signed in 1982 and 2002. (Yes, they are that old!) I had hoped to announce their signing this month, but they are still tied up in Forest Service reviews.

Unlike the old MOUs, the Sponsored VIF will be a common agreement with all three Forests through which the BMT passes. This should facilitate consistency and flexibility since BMTA volunteers frequently work on trail maintenance and relocation projects in any of the Chattahoochee, Cherokee and Nantahala National Forests.

Importantly the VIF will provide Workers Comp and Tort protection for BMTA volunteers working on the Trail, as if they were Federal employees. Travel to/from the trailhead is not covered, but hiking between the trailhead and the worksite is covered. More details on this and other elements of the Agreement will be distributed and posted on [bmta.org](http://bmta.org) after the Agreement is finalized and signed.

### Thanks to BMTA Corporate Members & Partners

I want to recognize and thank our partners who sell our trail guides, promote the BMTA and serve BMT hikers in a variety of ways. Their contributions over the years have been instrumental in increasing awareness, visibility and usage of the BMT.

- Amicalola Falls State Park Visitor Center
- Blue Ridge Adventure Wear
- Blue Ridge Mountain Outfitters
- Bryson City Outfitters
- Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center
- Coker Creek Welcome Center
- Fannin Chamber of Commerce
- Kats Deli
- Len Foote Hike Inn

- Dawsonville, GA
- Blue Ridge, GA
- Blue Ridge, GA
- Bryson City, NC
- Tellico Plains, TN
- Coker Creek, TN
- Blue Ridge, GA
- Tellico Plains, TN
- Dawsonville, GA



**BMTA Headquarters**

<b>Little River Trading Company</b>	<b>Maryville, TN</b>
<b>Hike Inn</b>	<b>Fontana Dam, NC</b>
<b>High Country Outfitters</b>	<b>Sandy Springs, GA</b>
<b>Mast General Store</b>	<b>Knoxville, TN</b>
<b>Mercier Orchards</b>	<b>Blue Ridge, GA</b>
<b>Monroe County Dept of Tourism</b>	<b>Monroe County, TN</b>
<b>Mountain Crossings</b>	<b>Neel Gap, GA</b>
<b>Nantahala Outdoor Center</b>	<b>Nantahala Gorge, NC &amp; Gatlinburg, TN</b>
<b>North Georgia Mountain Outfitters</b>	<b>East Ellijay, GA</b>
<b>Ocoee Whitewater Center Gift Shop</b>	<b>Copperhill, TN</b>
<b>Outdoor World</b>	<b>Dawsonville, GA</b>
<b>Pink Pig</b>	<b>Cherry Log, GA</b>
<b>REI</b>	<b>Multiple locations, GA-NC-TN</b>
<b>River Sports</b>	<b>Knoxville, TN</b>
<b>Rock/Creek Outfitters</b>	<b>Chattanooga, TN</b>
<b>Sisson Company</b>	<b>Cherry Log, GA</b>
<b>Terra Outfitters</b>	<b>Blue Ridge, GA</b>
<b>USFS Cherokee National Forest Offices</b>	<b>Cleveland, Benton &amp; Tellico Plains TN</b>
<b>BMTA website store volunteers</b>	<b><a href="http://www.bmta.org/BMTA_store">www.bmta.org/BMTA_store</a></b>

(I am sure we have overlooked someone that should be on the list, and for that I apologize. If so, please let me know, and I'll include them next month.)

### **Stop Brooding; Hike the BMT**

Vice-President Tom Keene spotted this interesting article in the NY Times. It applies to all of us, but especially to city dwellers. Even short hikes in natural green spaces can improve your psyche: <http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/07/22/how-nature-changes-the-brain/>

### **Farewell to Matt Henry**

Matt Henry has been the Dispersed Recreation Program Manager in the Ocoee-Hiwassee Ranger District of the Cherokee National Forest for several years. As such he has been our primary Forest Service contract for BMT maintenance and trail planning activities in that District. Most recently Matt has been instrumental in leading the Towee Creek relocation project. He has also been very involved with the BMTA Sponsored VIF Agreement mentioned above.

Matt is being promoted to a similar position in the much larger Boulder Ranger District of the Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forests. His friends in BMTA wish him well in his new position. Having attended graduate school at Colorado University in Boulder, I am confident that he will find his life there both professionally and personally rewarding.

## First Aid While Hiking and Camping

by Dick Hurd, MD

*(Doctor Hurd is a Silver Service Award (25+ years) recipient from ATC and has hiked the Appalachian Trail. He wrote a series of articles on backcountry first aid for the GATC Mountaineer and has graciously given us permission to reprint it for BMTA. Look for installments in future newsletters. He reminds us that he has compiled information from a variety of public sources, seasoned with common sense from his years and miles of backpacking. He is not giving medical advice, and this guidance does not create a doctor/patient relationship.)*

This is the first of three articles on this topic. When you leave the "civilized" world behind, whether for a day hike or a week long backpack, you should always be prepared for the possibility that something might occur requiring first aid, and you should have some knowledge and supplies to render it. To begin, I want us to think a bit about what we mean by first aid, beyond the obvious, and then what supplies we should include in a first aid kit.

First aid is what you do immediately when an injury has occurred or an illness becomes apparent, and is only meant to tide you over until more definitive care can be obtained, usually by evacuation to a formal medical facility. First aid is NOT meant to be the final treatment, although for minor problems it might be (i.e. minor abrasion, poison ivy rash, foot blister). You do not need a complex knowledge base or first aid kit as much as the ability to recognize the obvious and do some simple things to initiate treatment. The possible need to evacuate is always there, and the odds are better if you are in a group than if you are solo. A cell or satellite phone may be useful, but in the woods, help is still hours and miles away.

Giving CPR in the woods is a good example of the dilemma we face. The first mandate of CPR is to call 911, but in the woods that may not be an option. I'm told by wilderness medicine authorities that CPR is futile in this setting except in very limited situations, which I will discuss later. The first rule of rescue is that the rescuer should not put themselves in jeopardy. Giving CPR until you are exhausted would violate this rule.

**I want you to think about a strategy for evacuation: self rescue if you are solo, and helping an injured or ill party out if you are in a group.** I'm told it takes 16 people to effectively get one person out using a litter, and that assumes you can assemble a litter. The good news is that the need for any of this is rare. In 30 years of backpacking, I have had to render first aid to another person once, and maybe six times for myself for minor problems, but the risk and potential need is always there.

The contents of a first aid kit can be debated at length. Every 'how to' book on backpacking has a list of items, and there are several commercially available kits at your local hiking store, which may even include a small booklet about first aid. The rub comes because the long distance hiker accounts for every ounce carried, and with the trend to light weight and ultra-light weight hiking, weight and space are precious. In a group you have the luxury of having one kit for all and sharing weight of other items, but I often hike solo, so I pick and choose carefully. Based on my own experience, I don't think you need to have very much in your kit; mine weighs 6 ounces! Improvisation is critical in wilderness medicine, so you should consider how to make other things you carry and wear usable in a first aid situation.

Here is what I carry and why; you should inventory your own kit, and know what each item is, and how to use it! Everyone will have a slightly different idea of what to carry based on their own risk analysis, how much weight they are willing to carry, and how much space it will take.

1. **Small mirror for inspecting eyes, face, and other areas I can't see; doubles for shaving, etc.**
2. **Antibiotic ointment (Triple, Neosporin) in smallest possible quantity; honey also works.**
3. **Steroid cream: very small tubes at your Dermatologist, or OTC hydrocortisone such as Cortaid.**
4. **Betadine liquid: small sealed pledgets, or no more than one ounce in a container.**
5. **Moleskin in sufficient quantity to cover several blisters (duct tape may work in a pinch).**
6. **3 medium sized Band-aids (for small wounds).**
7. **3 medium safety pins (various uses).**
8. **3" Ace bandage: a luxury, but quickly deployed, and the elastic allows some compression.**
9. **2 4"x4" gauze dressing sponges. (a dressing covers a wound, a bandage holds it in place)**
10. **Steristrips or butterfly closures (or bandaid cut in strips, or duct tape) for wound closure.**

**Aspirin/Tylenol/Aleve/Advil: your choice; I carry Aleve (Naproxen).**

Next time I will discuss more specific use of these items, plus several ideas for improvisation, and then move on to specific treatment of common conditions.

## **Watch for Poison Ivy!!!!**





## SAVE THE DATE !!!

# BMTA Celebrates 35 Years

By Marcia Lehman

The BMTA 2015 Annual Meeting Weekend, celebrating our **35th** year, will be **Nov. 6-8**, with the celebratory banquet on the evening of Saturday November 7. The banquet will be held in the Community Room of the Community and Southern Bank, located in Blue Ridge near the Fannin County Chamber building at 150 Orvin Lance Dr, Blue Ridge, GA 30513.

The weekend will feature hikes on Friday afternoon, at least two hikes of varying length and difficulty on Saturday, and a final farewell hike on Sunday. More details on times, meeting places and hike leaders will be announced in upcoming newsletters.

The banquet Saturday evening will feature a catered meal (menu and price TBA), as well as a program tentatively titled "**35 Years of Benton MacKaye Trail Builders**" focusing on some of our earliest activists, as well as, on the notable achievements of the past year. Maintainer of the Year and other awards will also be announced.

**Special Request:** We need content for a humorous and, perhaps a bit personally embarrassing, PowerPoint presentation to be part of the "35 Years of BMT Builders" program. Anyone possessing photos showing prominent figures in BMTA history in comical disarray during or following a work-trip, or otherwise compromised, please share those images with Tom Keene, Darcy Douglas or George Owen.

Mark your calendars for a fun and exciting weekend!!



## **BMTA Maintainer Family Patriotic Promotion of the BMT at Atlanta's Peachtree Road Race July 4 2015**



Julia and Diana

Kudos to the Eric Winter Family on their completion of Atlanta's Peachtree Road Race while flying their Benton MacKaye Maintainer shirts. Eric and his wife Diana make this race a yearly tradition. This year's race was the third for their son Mark and the first for Julia, who is proudly running in her green BMT Maintainer shirt. Eric, Diana and their son & daughter maintain Section 2b-No Name Gap-Bryson Gap.

**WELL DONE!!!**

## How to Loose 20 lbs in 3 days or What You Don't Know Won't Hurt You

by Barry Allen with Photos courtesy of Marge Heller

When Taylor Hamilton with the USFS suggested there was an opportunity to bring in some young guns with the Youth Conservation Corps and finish up much of the heavy work at Fall Branch Falls, it was like manna from heaven. The last thing I wanted or needed was to expend our collective BMTA energy in the hottest part of the summer on a tough reroute; there was so much other work to be done. Teens. Young, strong backs and legs. PAID help, courtesy of the Department of Agriculture; youth to help the Forest Service deal with a backlog of trail and forest priorities during the summer months.

It all sounded good. I mean, eight or nine kids and a couple of experienced crew leaders. Check. A Forest Service Trails Tech to supervise and whip the young uns' along. Check. Plenty of hard digging at Fall Branch Falls. Check and Double Check. And best of all, a few days off work in Atlanta, spending time with some great BMTA volunteers to help DIRECT and SUPERVISE construction on a new section of trail. Check, Check, Check.... What could go wrong? Well, we all know the old saying "the best laid plans of mice and men....."

The first thing to go wrong occurred exactly 165 years ago, when California was admitted as the 30<sup>th</sup> state in the union. So, you ask, "how can California possibly affect a reroute on the BMT?" Well, I answer, "because it has been an exceptionally dry year or two in California and Taylor Hamilton, our A number one Forest Service Trails Tech and Youth Corps Whip Cracker was just shipped to California on Fire Detail. OOOKAY, so who is going to crack the whip on eight youngsters and a couple of crew leaders? Bet I can guess....

It was quite a week, four days to be precise. And I am positive it was the hardest four days most of those kids spent while on duty with the Forest Service. We accomplished quite a bit, but the best part was learning the history behind some of the youth doing the heavy lifting. We had folks from California, Nevada, Florida, South Carolina, Georgia. Not only was the Youth Conservation Corps represented in our work crew, but we also had folks working under a couple of other Dept. of Agriculture summer job programs. We had a young Marine who had been given a medical discharge, regained his health, and was looking to rejoin the Corps in the fall. We had an incredibly bright college student from Tuskegee, serving as a crew leader. We had a recent high school graduate who was working her fourth summer for the Forest Service. We had several kids who were working their first jobs, period. We had at least one who planned to make the Forest Service his career. And we had another who quite honestly said the work was very hard, and probably would not be his first choice for another summer job. It takes all kinds.

A little bit of information on the Youth Conservation Corps: The Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service along with the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service/Fish and Wildlife Service manage the program. The YCC is a summer works program intended to provide a work, earn, and learn setting for youth to help in our National Parks and National Forests. Typically, the job involves trail work, cleaning campgrounds, thinning undergrowth, etc. – work desperately needed, especially in the summer months. (We lost half of our work force on the final day when a wildlife biologist asked for help with a black bear density study in the Blood Mtn Area; the crew that drew the short straw stayed with us!) Crew members in the YCC jobs program generally are paid minimum wage, are between the ages of 15 and 18, and are made up of equal numbers of young men and women, coming from highly diverse backgrounds. Our kids stayed at Young Harris College during their work stint, and in fact, agreed to help clean the campus and dorms as part of the fee for staying on campus. Just a great program that works for everyone involved.

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BMTA member George Owen and YCC volunteer



Elma Ettman, Marcia Lehman, Joy Forehand and Marge Heller-the Lunch Bunch!!



A special thanks to Ralph Heller, George Owen, Mark Yost, and Bob Ruby for all of the hard work and effort during the week; those four men made the week a true success. Marge Heller and her group of Elma Ettman, Joy Forehand, and Marcia Lehman did an absolutely fantastic job with lunch each and every day.



**No match for BMTA Chain certified member Mark Yost!**

So, how do you lose 20 pounds in three days? July. 90 degrees. Jeans. Boots. Hard Hat. Long sleeve shirt drenched by 10:00 every morning. No Forest Service supervisor. 10 kids who have never dug trail the way we dig trail. I loved every minute of it, but I didn't know what I was getting into when I told the Forest Service to 'bring 'em on'. Alas -- It didn't hurt, not one bit. At least not as much as the hornets on the trip into the Heart of Darkness!



### Scenes from YCC work





## TN/NC Work Trip Report - June 28, 2015 - Moss Gap to Round Top

By Richard Harris

The monthly BMTA work trip focused this month on the very brushy section from Moss Gap to Round Top. We hoped to get the entire 2 miles brushed and logged out, but we were unsuccessful. Eight of us hiked in from Sandy Gap to Moss Gap to begin our work. We had 5 gas powered brush cutters and two chain saws. We were able to clear the vegetation with brush cutters almost to the gap north of Hazelnut Knob, and we logged out the trail to Nit Top. But we had to quit before getting all the work done due to time constraints. At the end of the workday when we got back to Sandy Gap, we encountered Ernie Engman (SGTRock) with his son William and a hiking friend. They had been re hiking sections of the BMT so Ernie could fine tune the data for the next edition of his **BMT Thru-hiker's Guide**. **Rick and Brenda Harris, Jack Callahan, Barry Allen, Bob Ruby, Angela Berry and Jerett Berry participated.**

## TN/NC Heart of Darkness Work Trip July 13, 2015

by Rick Harris

Thirteen hard workers, and gluttons for punishment finished up the work on the Heart of Darkness between Sandy Gap and Round Top on a hot, rainless, July 13. We met at the Coker Creek Welcome Center at 8:30 AM and drove to the Nennstiel's cabin off Burrell Mtn Rd to meet up with the Nennstiels and two friends, the section maintainers. We left two vehicles at their cabin then 7 of us carpoled to the manway off Copper Creek Rd/FS 80 up to Round Top. The Nennstiels went in via Sandy Gap. The Round Top Crew climbed with brushcutters and chain saw in hand the 1200 feet up to the top of Round Top, pushing through lots of undergrowth. This is a grueling climb, very steep, climbing this height in a little over one mile. After reaching Round Top we were worn out and broke into our lunch. Once we had recuperated, we headed south on the BMT toward Sandy Gap. Tazz Reid used the chainsaw to clear trees off the trail between Round Top to a little south of Nit Top. The other six of us (Rick Harris, Ken Jones, Phyllis Jones, Bill Lundin, Greg Crays, and Barry Allen) used brush cutters to attack the high annual growth and brambles. We cleared the 1.2 miles to meet up with the Nennstiels on the north slope of Hazelnut Knob. The Nennstiels had worked their way up from Sandy Gap clearing vegetation and logs off the trail between Sandy Gap and Moss Gap. We all then walked back to Sandy Gap and retrieved our vehicles. The section between Moss Gap and the north slope of Hazelnut Knob had been cleared and logged out on our previous regular monthly work trip. So now the entire distance between Sandy Gap and Round Top is in great shape, at least for now.

The next project is to clear and log out the section from Round Top to Sledrunner Gap to meet up with where the SAWS crew cleared and logged out the Brookshire Creek section about a month ago. **Thank you Greg Crays, Bill Lundin, Ken Jones, Phyllis Jones, Tazz Reid, Barry Allen, Dan Nennstiel, Debbie Nennstiel, Carson Nennstiel, Gatlin Nennstiel, Eric Mueller and Emily Mueller for your many many hours of hard work on this section of trail.**

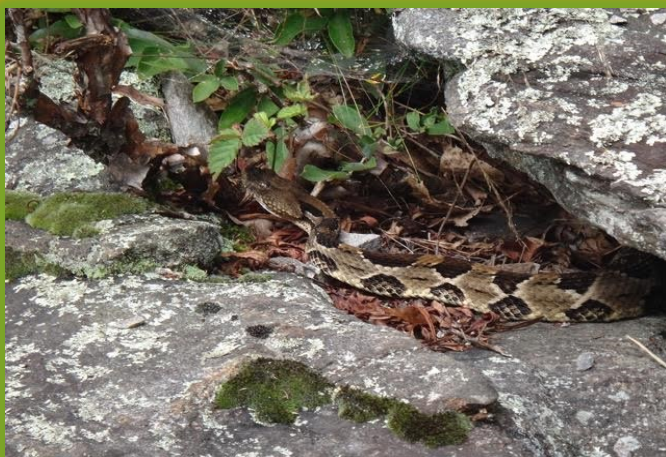
## Snake Season Beware!!!!

By Mike Pilvinsky

On July 15th, while hiking on the Appalachian Trail, BMTA member Mike Pilvinsky and several others sat down to lunch on a rock at Wolf Laurel Top. After finishing his lunch Mike stood up and saw this large Timber Rattler about **2 feet from where he had been sitting!** Just 30 minutes earlier, more than 10 hikers were sitting and walking thru this area. This beautiful, deadly snake was estimated to be more than 4 feet long!



Pictured are Tom Sewell and an unidentified AT hiker from St. Louis, MO





## Another Kind of Work Trip Help Needed

by Barry Allen

There are times when the most pressing challenge in planning a work trip comes down to figuring out the best way to get people to and from the actual work. Do we walk in and then back out the same way? Do we park at each end of the work area and then work the trail so as to meet in the middle? Do we meet somewhere and consolidate vehicles due to limited parking space? Do we need high clearance vehicles to access the trailhead? **I am hinting at a need for volunteer shuttle drivers, trail chauffeurs if you will.**

Some of our most difficult sections of trail could be made a little easier to work with a good corps of enthusiastic people to help position cars or to drop off workers at one end of the trail so we can work to the other end. We need folks who are still willing and able to help out with the task at hand – that is maintenance on the BMT ---**but need to help in a way that is less demanding on knees, hips, and joints!**

We are looking for names and contact information for volunteers that can help organize and drive shuttles as work events dictate. **Please contact Barry Allen for Georgia shuttle volunteers at [bmtabarry AT gmail.com](mailto:bmtabarry@gmail.com) or Rick Harris for Tenn/NC shuttle volunteers at [harrisri AT ol.com](mailto:harrisri@ol.com) . You may also click on the ‘contact us’ page on the [bmta.org](http://bmta.org) website and let us know you are interested in helping with the shuttle.**

**PS – Georgia Maintenance needs to work section 12a (Dry Pond Lead) next month. It would be nice to work this section with a shuttle from Thunder Rock to Kimsey Hwy. Dry Pond Lead is a 4 mile section of trail, but the work from Kimsey is all downhill to Hwy 64 and Thunder Rock – much better than the alternatives in working this section.**

Some of the scenery we have the privilege of enjoying **thanks to the efforts of our Maintainers and shuttle drivers.**





## July 18 Hike at Ocoee Whitewater Center Area

by Ralph Heller – Hike Leader  
Photos courtesy of Walter Polk

We had 16 participants on this Easy Trek Hike. We met at the Blue Ridge Home Depot and shuttled to the Whitewater Center parking lot where we left two cars. Then everyone shuttled up FS45 to FS221 and turned east for .4 miles to where the BMT crosses the road and Section 11e starts. The hike started from this location and went 3.4 miles, mostly downhill, partially following old forest roads to Thunder Rock Campground.



At the campground we had lunch using a couple of camp site picnic tables. Then we continued upstream along the Ocoee River for 1 mile following the Rhododendron Trail.



Continued on next page





We were challenged by a very recent tree fall but everyone successfully scrambled around it to reengage the trail. This kind of encounter only serves to remind us how valuable and necessary our Maintainers are. We also noted some somewhat disgruntled yellow jackets in the vicinity of the felled tree.



Since we hiked on a Saturday, this section of the river had high water flow, due to the scheduled release from Ocoee Number 3 Dam. We had the pleasure of seeing kayakers and rafters negotiating the rapids.



Several of our hikers had never been to the Whitewater Center and expressed interest in returning to participate in the river sports. From the Rhododendron Trail, it was a short hike across the bridge to where the shuttle car was parked. Everyone agreed that this was a nice-easy hike in a very scenic location





## Upcoming Hikes

by Ralph Heller-Hiking Director

### Friday, August 14 – Waterfall trail hikes (Dukes Creek Falls and Raven Cliff Falls)

**Length:** Dukes Creek 2.2 easy miles in and out, Raven Cliff 5 miles in and out – easy to moderate Hike

**Hike Description:** On this day there will be multiple waterfalls. We will warm up with an easy hike on a paved trail to Dukes Creek Falls, a 250 ft. drop. From the Dukes Creek parking lot, it is a short drive to the Raven Cliff trailhead. The Raven Cliff Trail provides four waterfalls, an unnamed 10 footer, an unnamed 35 footer, and upper and lower Raven Cliff Falls. The lower falls, called Raven Cliff Grotto is a cleft in the cave like walls where the water tumbles 40 ft. At the falls area there is also the impressive Raven Cliffs, which are up to 125 feet above the creek. Bring water, bring lunch and bring your camera. Even though both of these hikes are through shaded areas, hikers should bring at least 2 liters of water due to hot and humid conditions.

**For information on this hike and to register for meeting time and location, contact Hike Leader Mike Pilvinsky (mikepilvinsky AT hotmail.com) or call 706-889-5254. \***

### Friday, September 18 – Emery Creek Falls - in and out

**Length:** 5.4 miles in and out – moderate

**Hike Description:** Very scenic hike to stay cool in summer is along Emery Creek deep in the Cohuttas. Involves about 12 stream crossings and ends at a pair of waterfalls, the first 40-50 ft. high and the second about 25 ft. high. Expect to get wet, at least one crossing is knee deep. Water shoes are recommended. There is not much elevation gain, but the footing is rough, and the trail climbs over some large boulders at the confluence of Holly Creek. For those who would like to take a cool dip, there are some swimming holes along Holly Creek. Bring lunch and at least 2 liters of water due to summer heat.

**For information on this hike and to register for meeting time and location, contact Hike Leader Mike Pilvinsky (mikepilvinsky AT hotmail.com) or call 706-889-5254 \***

\* Note both these hikes are considerable driving distances. Please contribute gas money to your driver when you carpool.

Swinging Bridge Road Closures –The USFS is conducting closures of Forest Service Road 816 off Hwy 60 that leads to the popular swinging bridge over the Toccoa River. The closures are every Monday through Wednesday through July 1, 6am until noon. There may be additional closures in the future. The closing are part of a logging operation in the area. For more information contact the Chattahoochee National Forest in Blue Ridge 706-745-6928. While the road is being closed the **bridge and trails remain open.**

**Deadline for articles for our next newsletter is Wednesday August 26, 2015. Thank you!**