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Vice President:	Clare Sullivan
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BMTA Headquarters



VOLUME 40, ISSUE 4

APRIL 2023

If You Haven't Hiked the BMT in Tennessee The BMTA's 2023 Annual Meeting and Hike Fest Is the Event for You!

by Clare Sullivan with Photos by Rick Harris and Rob Burgess

Some of the most beautiful and unique sections of the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) are in Tennessee. You won't want to miss the Benton MacKaye Trail Association's Annual Meeting and Hike Fest to be held November 2-5, 2023, in Tellico Plains, Tennessee.

Hikers will enjoy hikes along the scenic Hiwassee River and strolling past the occasional cascades of whitewater along Lost Creek. Destinations with exquisite panoramic views include Bob Bald and Whigg Meadow. The hikes to Bald River Falls, Coker Creek Falls and Falls Branch Falls will not disappoint.

There are also plenty of non-hiking activities. Tour the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum followed by lunch at Pizzeria Venti Pizza. After lunch, tour the fort at Fort Loudoun State Park in Vonore, Tennessee. Visit the Charles Hall Museum and then enjoy a scrumptious lunch at Tellico Grains. The Fly-Fishing Class is a must for those who enjoy fishing.



Continued next page

New on the docket for Friday evening at the Alumni Center is a Complimentary Mexican Dinner – chicken/beef tacos, refried beans with rice, chips and salsa. After dinner, guests are invited to relax and socialize at the After-Dinner Social at the Retreat Cabin (complimentary snacks/BYOB).

Saturday's main events include:

- ◆ The Annual Business Meeting (including the State of the Trail Report and Election of Officers)
- ◆ A scrumptious catered banquet
- ◆ Featured speaker
- ◆ The traditional Awards Presentation

Rooms in Tellico Are Booked Six Months to a Year in Advance We Therefore Encourage You to **BOOK NOW!**

Retreat Cabin

Because there's no large lodge with event facilities in the area, the accommodations set up is a bit different. BMTA secured the 15-room Retreat that offers four king and 11 queen rooms. Decorated with custom-made chandeliers and furniture, the cabin features a game room on the lower floor, wrap-around decks on main and lower levels, and a huge common room with lots of sofas. There are three refrigerators for your food. With three floors, there's plenty of open space — you won't feel crowded at all. Plus, there's plenty of parking!

To reserve a room in the Retreat Cabin, contact Clare Sullivan, annualmeeting@bmtamail.org. Once Sullivan verifies the room of your choice is available, the room will be held for two weeks pending receipt of your check. Mail check to:

Lydia Burns
Benton MacKaye Trail Association
PO Box 6
Cherry Log, GA 30522

Other Cabins Rentals

Mountain View Cabin Rentals

To view these cabins, go to tellicologcabins.com.

Lodge at Tellico Plains

To view these rooms, visit lodgeattellico.com/.

Farmhouse Inn B & B

Visit tellicofarmhouseinn.com/ to view the Inn.

Camping

Mecca Camp Resort

View website at meccacampresort.com.

Top of the World RV

View website at topoftheworld.com.

*For Complete Lodging Information, go to the
Lodging Promo on [Page 5](#).*



The BMTA Blaze Team Has Two New Members!

by Darcy Douglas



On Sunday, March 26, new Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) members, Blake Godfrey and Bobby Fuller, passed their training with flying colors!

These gentlemen were eager to learn the skills needed and left at the end of the day noticing all the "less than perfect" blazes they saw.

I feel sure they will be valuable assets to the BMTA. One doesn't give a great deal of thought to blazes until they aren't there, but both Godfrey and Fuller know the importance of having sufficient blazes for the unfamiliar hiker who needs to find his or her way.

Thanks for being willing to go through the training guys. It was a very fun day!!! And, as ALWAYS, the trainer learned something new. I told them I always did, and they made it happen!

Thank you to all the members who choose to spend some of their maintaining time keeping our blaze system in excellent shape!"

Spring Begins to emerge!



2023 BMTA Annual Meeting & Hike Fest

Mountain View Cabins, Tellico Plains, Tennessee

November 2 – 5, 2023

Great Hikes!

- Bald River Trail
- Lost Creek
- Bob Bald
- Whigg Meadow

Non Hiking Activities

- Sequoyah Birthplace Museum
- Charles Hall Museum
- Fly Fishing Class



BMTA's Annual Meeting

- Awards Banquet
- Featured Speaker
- And More!



COME EARLY / STAY LATE
SEE THE LODGING PROMO FOR DETAILS!
 Lodge Rooms, Cabins & Campsites

Friday Nite Events

- Complimentary Mexican Dinner
- After-Dinner Social at the Retreat Cabin
- Complimentary Snacks—BYOB*



For reservations for the Retreat Cabin
 Contact Clare Sullivan, annualmeeting@bmtaemail.org.
 To reserve another cabin/room see the Lodging Promo



2023 Annual Meeting & Hike Fest Lodging

Mountain View Cabins, Tellico Plains, Tennessee

November 2 – 5, 2023

Retreat Cabin

This truly unique cabin has custom-made chandeliers and furniture. It features a game room on the lower floor, wrap-around decks on main and lower levels, and a huge common room with lots of sofas. With three floors, there's plenty of open space — you won't feel crowded at all. Plus, there's plenty of parking!

For the guests' breakfast, lunch and snacks, there are three double refrigerators in the community kitchen. Each room has a private bathroom and TV. ***3-Nite Stay Required!**

Queen	\$144 per night (includes taxes)	11 Queen Rooms available
King	\$170 per night (includes taxes)	4 King Rooms available

To reserve a room, contact Clare Sullivan annualmeeting@bmtaemail.org to confirm what is available. Once Clare verifies the room of your choice is available, the room will be held for two weeks pending receipt of your check. Mail check to:

Lydia Burns
Benton MacKaye Trail Association
PO Box 6
Cherry Log, GA 30522

Other Rentals Available

BOOK EARLY — CABINS/ROOMS USUALLY BOOKED 6 MONTHS A YEAR IN ADVANCE!

Mountain View Cabin Rentals — To view these cabins, go to tellicologcabins.com. To reserve a room, call (423) 519-2000. *Some of these cabins/rooms are within easy walking distance of the Retreat Cabin!*

Lodge at Tellico Plains — To view these rooms, visit lodgeattellico.com/. They offer a 10% discount for those who pay with credit card (guests pay the credit card fee) and a 15% discount for those who pay with cash. Hikers will like the "Grab and Go Breakfast". To reserve a room, book online (use code BMTA) or call (423) 253-2506. Be sure to mention BMTA!

Farmhouse Inn B & B — Three rooms available. The Inn offers a \$15/a night discount for staying multiple nights. Enjoy a hot breakfast served earlier than usual 8:30 AM so hikers can be ready to hike by 9:00 AM. Rooms are \$150. Visit tellicofarmhouseinn.com/ to view the Inn. To reserve a room, call (423) 253-3123. Be sure to mention BMTA!

Camping

Mecca Camp Resort — View website at meccacampresort.com. Call (423) 253-3513 to reserve a site.

Top of the World RV — View website topoftheworld.com, email topofworldrv@gmail.com, or call (423) 519-2967

All in a Day's Work - Section 14a

Photos courtesy of Clare Sullivan



Lynette Linn joined the work group to work on her Section, 14a, in Tennessee. She drove down from her new home in Washington DC. Now that's dedication!



Continued next page



Georgia March Maintenance Trip

by Bob Cowdrick with photos courtesy of Sky George

BMTA March Madness was the theme of today's maintenance trip. We hoped that if we could get a great team together, we could score a big win in the Rhodes Mountain Reroute Project.

Since they knew the reroute best, Darcy Douglas and Barry Allen led the team. They were joined by Kenneth Andrews, Sky George, Raymond Laws and Steven Wakefield. It was an absolute pleasure having them join us on their first maintenance trip.

Kevin Smith and his associates, Sidney Silver, Matthew Parks and Cody Halloway from the The North Face (TNF) Dawsonville team, joined us in this effort. Not only are they great gear sales associates but they are excellent at digging new trails.

Ed Sullivan along with Kelly Motter's and Gilbert Treadwell's team came off the bench fresh from a Thursday workday and Friday hike day to help with Saturday's effort.

The veteran players, Bill Cox, Ken Cissna, Bill Blake, Will Kirchoffer, Art Kolberg, John Oudin, Steve Pruett, David Blount and Bobby Fuller are hard to keep out of the game and did an outstanding job of cutting out the new tread.

We sent Blake and Heather Godfrey on a thru hike of Section 3, scouting to be sure no obstacles prevented us from a great win.

Patrick Ward, Shane Morrison and David Watkins always are looking for a high score, so we sent them to cut out a few more blowdowns after the social.

Chef Patty supplied the post-game luncheon with entrée, salads, fruit and desserts. Bob Cowdrick served as waterboy and trashman.



Continued next page

Will our teams we selected Saturday morning win the tournament? That is yet to be decided. Did we score a big win on the Rhodes Mountain reroute? Absolutely yes! The stats prove it!

BMTA March Madness Rhode Mountain Reroute Stats:

- ◆ 1100 feet of new trail dug
- ◆ 38 feet of tread dug per person
- ◆ 29 members and guests participated
- ◆ 21 college teams selected to be added to the March Madness Bracket
- ◆ 14 Pulaskis used
- ◆ 13 hoes used
- ◆ 9 trees cut
- ◆ 3 loppers used
- ◆ 2 Silky saws used
- ◆ 1 unsung “Trail Tool Hero” – The Wire Brush
- ◆ 0 injuries

Our next GA maintenance trip will be Saturday, April 8, 2023.

Please consider joining us!





Hiking it Twice at Ocoee Whitewater

Photos courtesy of Kelly Motter and Martha Payne



Continued next page



Enjoying some sunshine on the Old Copper Road Trail at Ocoee Whitewater Center. Paula Laws, Ken Cissna, Martha Payne, Carlotta Morgan, Ralph Collinson and Bob Astley.



Marcus Wells, Ray Laws, Ralph Collinson, Laurie Music, Martha Payne and Paula Laws.



Things We Should Carry

Trail Saw

by Bob Cowdrick

A trail saw, also known as a folding saw or a pocket saw, is a type of portable hand saw that is designed for cutting branches, clearing trails and performing other outdoor tasks. Popular brands include Silky, Corona and Sven. Trail saws are typically smaller and more compact than traditional hand saws and are designed to be easily carried in a backpack or pocket.

These saws are typically made of high-carbon steel or stainless steel, with a blade that is designed to be sharp and durable. Some models have a blade that can be locked in place for safe storage while others have a locking mechanism that keeps the blade open during use. The teeth of the saw are usually fine-toothed for a smoother cut and the handle is made of wood, plastic or rubber for a comfortable grip.



Trail saws are typically lightweight, foldable and easy to pack, making them a convenient tool for trail maintenance.

The length of the saw blade will determine how large a tree or branch can be removed from the trail.

They are also useful for preparing firewood, cutting branches, and other tasks that may arise during a hiking trip.

My trail saw travels with me on every BMTA maintenance trip.

It gets a workout all year-round!

Hiking the Brumbles and Brambles

by Steve Dennison



Six BMTA hikers headed out on Section 14a from TN 68 southbound to Coker Creek Campground. Anne Anderson planned to paint blazes as needed. We encountered a tangle of trees about one mile in just nine days after the BMTA maintenance trip and bushwhacked to the right side to get around the obstruction. The remainder of the hike was in good shape. Many thanks to Doug Jones, Vicki Yunker and new BMTA member Greg Trotnic for clearing the trail!



Harvey Brome, A Friend of Benton MacKaye

by Clare Sullivan

On March 14, 2023, two members of the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA), Kathy Anderson and Clare Sullivan, gave presentations at a meeting of the Harvey Brome Chapter of the Tennessee Sierra Club in Knoxville, Tennessee. Anderson spoke about thru hiking the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT). Sullivan gave an update on BMTA's quest to have the Benton MacKaye Trail designated a National Scenic Trail.

In her presentation, Anderson described everything she carries in and on her lightweight Zpack backpack. The attendees were especially intrigued with her lightweight sleeping quilt as well as her expandable pee bottle.

Anderson demonstrated how to use BMTA's website for planning a thru hike of the BMT. She also explained why she considers the FarOut app and Lighterpack.com invaluable for backpackers. The next trek on the docket for Anderson is a thru hike of the 485-mile-long Colorado Trail.

Sullivan summarized BMTA's efforts to become the 12th National Scenic Trail. The Sierra Club members indicated they will be ready to contact their Congressional officials once a House Bill and a Senate Bill are announced.

While chatting with members of the club after the presentations, the BMTAers learned the Harvey Brome Chapter of the Tennessee Sierra Club and BMTA share a "Benton MacKaye" connection. The BMT was named to honor Benton MacKaye, the renowned forester who first proposed the Appalachian Trail and the spur route which was to become the BMT. Knoxville native Harvey Brome collaborated with Benton MacKaye on conservation issues. MacKaye and Brome were two of the founding members of the Wilderness Society.

Sullivan and Anderson talked with another Sierra Club member ... well-known author Will Skelton. Skelton and BMTA's own Rick Harris are in the process of revising what will be the *Third Edition of The Cherokee National Forest Hiking Guide*.

Former BMTA Board member, Jeff Hunter was at the meeting. Hunter now is the Southern Appalachia Director of National Parks Conservation Association. He graciously offered to help with BMTA's quest for National Scenic Trail status for the BMT.

When Sierra Club members learned Sullivan and Anderson were planning on hiking the Townsend side of the Smokies the next day, several recommended the Middle Prong Trail – it was gorgeous!



Middle Prong Trail

Exploring and Exploring!

by Clare Sullivan with photos by Laurie Music and Clare Sullivan

Hikers who signed-up for the trek to the extinct Caney Creek Village hike knew they would be exploring artifacts – they had no idea they would be exploring ways to get down the trail!

The Southern Appalachian Backcountry Horseman group had cleared the trail to Caney Creek in January 2023. At first, it was extremely difficult for the hikers to believe that statement. Then they remembered the storms that occurred on March 3, 2023.

We had to climb over and under, around and through trees to find the trail to the historic community that existed from 1912-1941. Despite the arduous trek, this great group of joyful hikers laughed more than any group of hikers the leader has ever led!



Luckily, our sweep, Ed Sullivan, brought along a Silky Saw and Jaime Lozano brought his unique, Special Forces knife. Ed stayed back and worked on the trail while everyone else explored in the village.

Everyone had fun examining remains of the old shower, hotel, public works building, fishponds, sidewalks, homes, and the school/church. We were excited to see bear corn, spring beauty, star chickweed, dwarf crested irises, and yellow trillium wildflowers.



First sign of the city water system.



After visiting the Caney Creek hotel.



Laurie Music discovers the top to the water valve.



Exploring artifacts.

Near the end of the trek, the hikers realized if they had just brought their kayaks, they could have made the trip in 15 minutes instead of three hours! The hikers would have liked to throw stones at their leader had they not had such fun.

We were grateful to the Ocoee District of the Cherokee National Forest for their new wooden signs and the refreshed blazes.



Possible indoor shower from 1912.



In front of city works.

Welcome BMTA Corporate Members!

The Benton MacKaye Trail Association is grateful for the help and support provided by our Corporate Members. When you visit one of these businesses, please identify yourself as a BMTA member and be sure to thank them for their support!



ALDHA



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Appalachian Trail Kick-Off

by Clare Sullivan

The BMTA was well received at the annual AT Kick-Off held at the Amicalola Lodge Conference Center, March 3-5, 2023. On Friday, the visibility was extremely low – the lodge was enveloped by ominous storm clouds. Blowdowns had to be removed from the roads and doors had to be held closed due to the wild wind. But dedicated hikers and trail lovers continued to arrive.

Kathy Anderson, Whitney June, and Ed and Clare Sullivan were the volunteers for BMTA's booth at the event. They also enjoyed shopping at the vendors' booths that showcased the latest hiking equipment, clothing and other unique hiker items.

There were 12 presentations ranging from the "History of the Appalachian Trail" to "DIY Backpacking Food"; "A Guide to Walking as a Sacred Path", by BMTA member Collin Chambers; and "Who, What, Where, When and Why of the Benton MacKaye Trail" by BMTA's Vice President, Clare Sullivan.

Throughout the weekend, AT Hiker registrations and Leave No Trace workshops were available for those beginning their 2,150-mile trek. Many soon-to-be thru hikers were seen walking up the 604 steps in front of the stunning Amicalola Falls with clean gear!

Chris Phillips (Mischievous on the Trail) stopped by the BMTA booth to say "Hello". You may remember him as the first double amputee to thru hike the BMT.

The weekend was an outstanding success for BMTA. We acquired five new members, one corporate member and lots of contacts interested in trail maintenance and hiking.

The magnificent vista and spectacular sunset were a welcome sight the day after the storm.



**Your Membership Dues Help Us
Preserve, Protect and Maintain the BMT**

Please Join or Renew Your Membership Now!

[MEMBERSHIP](#)

...leave a footpath for generations to follow!

Upcoming Hikes and Work Trips

Kelly Motter, Hiking Director

Guidelines for Our Hikes

COVID-19 Concerns - If you believe you are in a high-risk group, please evaluate whether going on this hike is worth the potential risk.

April

April 7 (Friday) Flat Creek Loop. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog) Moderate 5.6 miles. Nice loop hike featuring Flat Creek.
Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org



April 8 (Saturday) GA Maintenance Trip. Section 3c – Rhodes Mountain Re-route.

April 10 (Monday) BMT GA Hwy 60-Wallalah- Licklog-Rhodes Saddle and return. Strenuous 7.2 miles.
Contact Hike Leader Steve Dennison at hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org.

April 11 (Tuesday) [Project Chimps Trails](#). Moderate 2.5 to 3 miles depending upon how many of the trails we go on. Other: \$2 donation appreciated for each parked car. Contact Hike Leaders Clare Sullivan and Kathy Williams at hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org.

April 12 (Wednesday) BMT – From the Craddock Center just immediately north of the Sisson Property in Cherry Log, Georgia. We will cross the highway (carefully), to a gravel road following Laurel Creek to a meadow. Easy/moderate 5 miles with two creek crossings.
Contact Hike Leader Darcy Douglas at hikeleaderDD@bmtamail.org.

April 17 (Monday) BMT - Hudson Gap, out and back. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog.) Moderate 4 -5 miles. Come out to see spring wildflowers.
Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.



April 22 (Saturday) TN/NC Maintenance Trip.
Section 18d/e- Yellowhammer Gap
Contact Nelson Ashbrook at tn-ncmaintdirector@bmtamail.org.

April 24 (Friday) Picken's Nose Overlook on the AT. Moderate 4 miles out and back. Hike begins a short distance from the Standing Indian Campground.
Contact Hike Leader Ralph Collinson at hikeleaderRC@bmtamail.org

April 25 (Tuesday) Trails of Cooper Creek. Moderate 4-mile hike starting on FS 39 on the Shope Gap Trail to the Yellow Mountain Trail Connector to the Mills Shoals Trail to FS 236 and the Cooper Trail Creek Loop. This is a shuttle hike. Contact Hike Leader Ralph Collinson at hikeleaderRC@bmtamail.org

April 26 (Wednesday) Lady Slippers! Mulky Gap. Blairsville. Easy/moderate 1.5 miles. Before embarking on the hike, hikers will go across the road to see a huge garden of thousands of pink lady slippers. The hike itself begins on an old logging road. Trillium, showy orcus, wild geranium, wild iris and dutchman's pipe are just a few of the spring beauties to be seen. For the return, we'll switch to the Duncan Ridge Trail where there are flame azaleas as well as some super-sized pink lady slippers. Note: this will be the second hike after the 2021 controlled burn. Some of the ladies had returned ... hopefully more will be back this year topped off with the elegant pink blooms. Contact Hike Leaders Joy and Frank Forehand at hikeleaderJF@bmtamail.org.

May

May 3 (Wednesday) Lady Slipper Hike. BMT at Weaver Creek in Blue Ridge. Moderate/strenuous 3.8 miles. This will be a SLOW, LEISURELY hike to enjoy the wildflowers. Initially we'll pass by beautiful mountain laurel groves peppered with flame azaleas. Stop for lunch at the water cutoff beside some of the largest lady slippers on the section. As we stroll back to the trailhead, we'll pass numerous gardens of the pink beauties. Contact Hike Leaders Joy and Frank Forehand at hikeleaderJF@bmtamail.org.

May 5 (Friday) BMT - From Thunder Rock Campground, up Thunder Rock Express Trail, across Chestnut Mountain Trail and down the BMT. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Moderate 5.2 miles. Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.

May 6 (Saturday) Hike Inn Trail. Moderate 10-mile round-trip to the Hike Inn and back. For a small donation, coffee, tea and dessert are available! We can enjoy sitting on the porch and eating our lunch while looking at the amazing views. Contact Hike Leader Kelly Motter at hikeleaderKM@bmtamail.org.

May 7 (Sunday) Nottely Dam Trail. Easy/moderate 2.5 miles with excellent views of the lake. Contact Hike Leader Kelly Motter at hikeleaderKM@bmtamail.org.

May 11 (Thursday) Cohuttas - Dally Gap Hemp Top Trail, joining the BMT at Spanish Oaks, then on to the remains of the old fire tower at Hemp Top Mountain. Moderate 8 miles round-trip with about 1,000 feet of elevation change each way. Contact Hike Leaders Tom and Carolyn Sewell at hikeleaderTS@bmtamail.org.



May 13 (Saturday) GA Maintenance Trip. TBA
Contact Bob Cowdrick at gamaintdirector@bmtamail.org.

May 19 (Friday) Amadahy Trail. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Easy/moderate 5 miles along the shore of Carters Lake. Lunch at the marine campground. Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.

May 22 (Monday) BMT- Bushy Head to McKenny Gap and return. Moderate/strenuous 8.2 miles. Contact Hike Leader Steve Dennison at hikeleaderSD@bmtamail.org.



May 27 (Saturday) TN/NC Maintenance Trip. TBA
Contact Nelson Ashbrook at tn-ncmaintdirector@bmtamail.org.

June

June 2 (Friday) Brush Creek Trail. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Easy/moderate 7 miles with a shuttle. Almost all gently downhill. Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.



June 3 (Saturday) GA Maintenance Trip. TBA
Contact Bob Cowdrick at gaintdirector@bmtamail.org.

June 9 (Friday) Standing Indian on the AT. Five-mile round-trip hike to the best views in North Carolina! This trip is rated moderate, although we will take a slow easy pace up to Standing Indian to enjoy lunch on the summit. Contact Hike Leader Kelly Motter at hikeleaderKM@bmtamail.org

June 17 (Saturday) Watch the water arrive! Start at the Ocoee Whitewater Center and then hike the BMTA from FS Road 221 to Thunder Rock and see the rhododendrons in bloom. Easy 3.4 miles. Contact Hike Leader Clare Sullivan at hikeleaderCS2@bmtamail.org.

June 23 (Friday) Turtletown Creek Falls. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Moderate 5 miles. Turtletown Creek plus two of the most beautiful falls you'll ever see on a short hike. Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at hikeleaderKC@bmtamail.org.

To access our website calendar, go [HERE](#).



**The deadline for the May Newsletter is Wednesday, May 3.
Thank you!**