



- NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Several club members were thanked for their work and efforts this past year for helping the Club in a variety of ways. From left to right were Ruth Pannell, Jennifer Schroll, Rick Harris, and Jack Callahan. Not pictured yet mentioned were Margaret Callahan, Judy Price, and Randy Morris.



Our Annual Club Planning Meeting will be held on Sunday afternoon, January 9, 2022, at 2:00 pm. We will be meeting in the fellowship hall of the Wesley Memorial United Church in Etowah, TN. It is located at 923 Ohio Ave. It's just about a block off Hwy. 411. All Club members are welcome. This is the meeting where we put together our annual calendar of activities for the upcoming year. If you would like to lead a hike or activity, please list it on a sheet of paper and bring it to the meeting. Please include the following information: your name as Hike or Activity Leader, the specific hike/trail/activity, the date or dates you plan to offer it, and a description of the hike or activity. Include info such as how many miles to be hiked and whether it is easy, moderate or strenuous. By having this written down, it will really help us in getting the calendar typed up and put on our website. Also, please note that if you are not able to attend the meeting in person, you should email this information to James Anderson at jeandersonishere@gmail.com ahead of time so it can be discussed and included. Light refreshments such as water, soft drinks, and cookies will be served.

If you have any questions, please call or text me at [423-715-8824](tel:423-715-8824).

James Anderson, Club President

- CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Rick Harris! The Benton MacKaye Trail Association awarded Rick the BMTA Distinguished Service Award, and [The Advocate & Democrat recently ran an article](#) about this achievement! Be sure to check it out!



THE ADVOCATE & DEMOCRAT

- BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL

The Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) Board of Directors has announced they are seeking Congressional approval for the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) to be designated a National Scenic Trail. To date, only 11 long-distance trails have received the prestigious designation, the Appalachian Trail (AT) being the first. These trails epitomize the splendor, diversity and historical significance found in the wide array of the American landscape.

The BMT is named for visionary forester, Benton MacKaye. October 2021 marked the 100th anniversary of Benton MacKaye's treatise, 'An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning'. That essay was the initial blueprint for the AT. The route for the BMT closely resembles MacKaye's proposed southern spur route that would have extended the AT into north-central Georgia. Currently, the southern termini for both trails reside on Springer Mountain in Georgia.

Cherokee Hiking Club (CHC) members have enjoyed hikes to Whigg Meadow, Upper Bald River Falls and the remains of Doc Rogers' House as well as along the Hiwassee River to Lost Creek. Backpackers love the BMT loops on Big Frog and in the Cohutta Wilderness. CHC maintenance efforts include the BMT from Childers Creek to Big Bend, a delightful section beneath the Hiwassee River's towering river bluffs where birds and wildflowers abound.

With its glorious ridgeline views and the innumerable crossings of mountain streams, the 288-mile-long BMT comes by its reputation for beauty honestly. Nestled in the Southern Appalachian Mountains, the BMT has some of the most varied and abundant wildflowers of any temperate climate forest in the world – and – the variety of tree species is second to none. Whether it's the creek-side trilliums in the spring, the reddish orange of the fall sugar maples at the higher elevations or the unmatched 360-degree views in the winter, the BMT is a visual treat any time of the year – it truly is an awesome hike!

The BMT traverses 82 miles in Georgia and 206 miles in Tennessee/North Carolina. This includes the Chattahoochee-Oconee, Cherokee and Nantahala National Forests as well as 93 miles in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, making it the longest trail in the Smokies. Also known for its remoteness, a third of the trail lies in Wilderness areas where vehicular access and motorized tools are prohibited. Here, the hiker finds true peace and solitude.

The Benton MacKaye Trail Association was founded in 1980. When the trail crossed the border into Tennessee in 1987, BMTA celebrated the completion of 93 miles of trail. The grand opening for the entire trail was held in 2005. Today, approximately 95% of the route is on public lands managed by either the USFS or the National Park Service (NPS). The trail is virtually complete -- only 15 miles remain on private land or as short road walks.

“The BMTA’s all-volunteer work force first constructed and now maintains the BMT – our regularly scheduled work trips are the second and fourth Saturdays of the month,” said Ken Cissna, President of BMTA. “In fiscal 2021, BMTA volunteers turned in almost 8,000 hours maintaining the trail. And in October/November 2021 in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Zeta, BMTA volunteers removed over 300 blowdowns in just three weeks!”

BMTA’s 740 members are active volunteers in other endeavors as well. They are hike leaders for BMTA’s hikes, which are open to the public. At regional festivals and other events, volunteers staff the BMTA Information Tent to educate the public about hiking, camping and a Wilderness experience in the Southern Appalachian Mountains – and – to instill a sound conservation ethic.

The National Scenic Trail designation would enhance BMTA's ability to preserve the timeless beauty of the trail's corridor. The status would augment the BMT's already high value as a popular recreation destination for hikers as well as increase the trail's positive economic impact on local communities. It also would release additional USFS and NPS resources to help BMTA fulfill our mission to preserve, protect and maintain the trail corridor.

The BMTA needs to complete the trail – especially in North Georgia -- before new development encroaches on unprotected portions of the BMT's corridor. Having the USFS as an overseer of the BMT as a National Scenic Trail may make it easier for BMTA to do just that.

For additional information on the Benton MacKaye Trail Association, please visit our website www.bmta.org or email Joy Forehand, jwfbarga@gmail.com.

- PAST EVENTS

THE NARROWS OF THE HIWASSEE RIVER NOVEMBER 26, 2021



With Benton MacKaye Trail Association. A Hike with Adventure! The 4.5-mile hike to The Narrows, a gorge through which the old riverbed flows on the Hiwassee River, was full of adventure. It is a spur trail off the BMT's Section 13d and definitely worth seeing. Nine hikers enjoyed exploring a tiny cave, crossing logs and hugging rocks beside the river on our way to The Narrows. Once there, we hiked through the underbrush onto humongous rocky beds shaped by the river. We maneuvered under the outcrops and over boulders to view interesting potholes and colors. Hikers were Hike Leader Clare Sullivan, Gabe Strand, Tilly and Kelley Quinn, Karen Petrillo, Leah Harris and Jasper, Mimi Anderson, Ken Cissna and Artie, and Evelin and Doug Yarns. - Clare Sullivan



**WORK DAY ON CHILDERS CREEK SECTION OF BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL/JOHN MUIR NRT
DECEMBER 1, 2021**

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY DECEMBER 11, 2021



We were certainly glad that we were able to return to having a Club Christmas Party this year. It was great to have 23 Club Members in attendance to enjoy a dinner together, installation of new officers, and the very popular Dirty Santa Gift exchange. It certainly didn't disappoint this year with many gifts being "stolen" from others. Here are a few photos to highlight the evening's activities. - James Anderson



WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND GREENWAY

THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST

- UPCOMING EVENTS

NOTE: Event schedule subject to change according to guidance from governmental agencies and offices regarding COVID-19, weather, or other conditions. An email will be sent to members if an event is canceled.

ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING

JANUARY 9, 2022 SUNDAY 2 PM WESLEY MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH ETOWAH TN

Our annual Club Planning meeting will be held on Sunday afternoon, January 9, at 2:00 pm. We will be meeting in the fellowship hall of the Wesley Memorial United Church in Etowah, TN. It is located at 923 Ohio Ave. It's just about a block off Hwy. 411. All Club members are welcome. This is the meeting where we put together our annual calendar of activities for the upcoming year. If you would like to lead a hike or activity, please list it on a sheet of paper and bring it to the meeting. Please include the following information: Your name as Hike or Activity Leader, the specific hike/trail/activity, the date or dates you plan to offer it, and a description of the hike or activity. Include info such as how many miles to be hiked and whether it is easy, moderate or strenuous. By having this written down, it will really help us in getting the calendar typed up and put on our website. Also, please note that if you are not able to attend the meeting in person, you should email this information to James Anderson at jeandersonishere@gmail.com ahead of time so it can be discussed and included. Light refreshments such as water, soft drinks, and cookies will be served. If you have any questions, please call or text me at [423-715-8824](tel:423-715-8824). - James Anderson

DISPLAY BOOTH AT WESTMORE CHURCH OF GOD OUTDOOR DINNER

JANUARY 21, 2022 FRIDAY

WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND GREENWAY

Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland Greenway, meeting at the lower end of the parking lot across from Perkits and the Gondolier restaurant adjacent to Keith Street. Meet time is currently 4:30 pm. A note on the walk is sent out the beginning of each week on Messenger. Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you want to be included in the messages.

THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST

Join us for conversation over breakfast at 8:30 am at Old Fort Restaurant on 25th Street in Cleveland. For more information, contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

· NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

LOOKOUT WILD FILM FESTIVAL

JANUARY 14 – 16, 2022 FRIDAY – SUNDAY TIVOLI THEATER CHATTANOOGA TN

See the calendar for upcoming events.

TELLICO/OCOEE VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW

Check the Facebook page for future work days.

BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

See the calendar for upcoming events.

As always, go to the specific sponsor web page for more information on these events if you plan on attending.

· MINUTES

HIKING CLUB MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 11, 2021

The meeting was called to order by the President James Anderson. A motion was made by Jack and seconded by Carroll to approve the minutes as included in the newsletter. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Treasurer's report was read since Randy was not present. It was as follows: The checking account balance as of November 11 was \$2,103. We had expenses of \$132 for November and income of \$45 leaving a balance of \$2,016 as of December 10. A motion to approve the report was made by Jack and seconded by Carol. The motion passed unanimously.

James announced the annual planning meeting will be held at the Wesley Memorial Methodist Church at 923 Ohio Ave. in Etowah, TN on Sunday January 9 at 2pm. All are invited to attend and bring suggestions or offers to lead hikes/activities.

James also mentioned that he will email the booth planning committee to see if they can meet either on Thursday January 6 or Tuesday January 11 at 6pm to work on the display for the Westmore Outdoor Dinner.

James also mentioned that he intends to order a t-shirt for him and Phyllis that has a hiking scene and Cherokee Hiking Club on it to wear the night of the event. He said he would be willing to order other people one if they want it and told them of how to sign up on the list. It is a unisex size and a cotton poly blend. If we have more than 8 order the cost is \$18 per shirt. If less than that it is \$21 per shirt.

At this time James asked the following persons to come forward and he presented each with a gift card from REI for their work this past year on behalf of the Club. Those persons recognized were: Jennifer, Judy, Ruth, Randy, Margaret, Rick, and Jack.

At this time Jennifer had an installation ceremony for the new and returning officers for the 2022 year. Those were as follows:

James Anderson-President/Secretary

Jack Callahan-Vice President

Jennifer Schroll-Treasurer

Judy Price-Newsletter

Rick Harris-Webmaster.

After the installation the business meeting portion was concluded, and the members participated in a Dirty Santa gift exchange. After this, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

James Anderson