



Blackberry Juice

FEBRUARY 2012

BLACKBERRY MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION

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WEBSITE
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Galusha, President
Dave Teffeteller, Vice President
Carolyn Sewell, Treasurer
Norman Essner, Secretary
Barbara Ellis, Assistant Secretary

DESIGN COMMITTEE

Barbara Dunson
Norman Essner
Seth Hegert
Maxine Morris
Dave Teffeteller



Annual Meeting - February 25th



The entrance to Blackberry Mountain in the mid-1980s. Blackberry has changed with time, but remains physically and fiscally sound by adhering to the mission set forth over thirty years ago.

Included in the packet with this newsletter you will find the proposed budget for FY2012, a proxy and an opt-form for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid property inspection.

This year's annual meeting will be held on **Saturday, February 25, 2012**, at 9:30 am at the Gilmer Arts and Heritage Association (GAHA) building located at 207 Dalton Street in downtown Ellijay. See the website for directions and a map.

It is very important that you attend the annual meeting, but if you are unable, please take the time to assign your proxy to a property owner who is attending the meeting. This is a **general proxy** and gives the holder the authority to cast votes on your behalf on any matter that requires a vote at the meeting.

You may have heard from friends or read in the news, that many of north Georgia's private communities are in dire straits. Approaching thirty-years of age, these communities are faced with crumbling infrastructures, reduced incomes from a high foreclosure rate and the resultant need to saddle their remaining property owners with drastically-increased dues and special assessments.

Blackberry Mountain is also thirty years old, but unlike these other communities, it is physically and fiscally sound. Through the wisdom of its members and board of directors, Blackberry Mountain Association has maintained its infrastructure and created a reserve fund to help weather natural disasters and down-turns in the economy.

To continue on this course, BMA members must remember the purpose, role and responsibility of the Association. These are clearly defined in our governing

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Board of Directors Nominees

The nominees for the BMA Board of Directors provided the following biographical information.

Barbara Ellis (incumbent)

Born in Florida 1943. Father in USAF, lived on US east coast, Japan and England.

Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY – AAS, Fashion Buying & Merchandising - 1962 Reinhardt College – Associate Banking & Finance, 1993

Came to Ga. in 1962 to work at Rich's downtown Atlanta store. President Dick Rich instilled in all employees service and the belief that "The customer is always right." Customer service has since been of paramount importance in my life.

19 years in community bank marketing in Cherokee and Pickens counties, retired in March 2008.

Have served in leadership positions in the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club of Canton, Canton Tree City Commission, and Leadership Cherokee.

Member of the Episcopal Church of the Holy Family in Jasper, where I currently serve as a verger, on the altar guild, administration, communications and parish development ministries.

Member of the Rotary Club of Gilmer County and secretary of The Friends of the Gilmer County Library, Inc.

Married to Don B. Ellis for 48 years; we have three adult children and six grandchildren.

Purchased our home and moved to Blackberry Mountain as fulltime residents the summer of 2002.

Served on the Design Committee for two years prior to accepting BMA board position, filling balance of Jack Wheeler's term in November 2010.

Norman Essner (incumbent)

Born in the Bronx, New York – April 21, 1935

Baruch School of Business – City College of New York BBA degree – 1956
Brooklyn Law School – Bachelor of Law Degree- 1958

Brooklyn Law School – Juris Doctor Degree 1967

Admitted to practice of the law in states of Georgia and New York

Current legal practice in Georgia- Employed by Gilmer County Board of County Commissioners to provide legal services in Juvenile Court for deprived children and their parents. Court Appointed Guardian ad Litem and Court Appointed Special Advocate

I appear in Juvenile, Probate and Superior Courts of Appalachian District (Gilmer, Pickens & Fannin Counties
Current committee member of Design and Covenants committees of BMA.
Full time resident for the past 6 years.

Carolyn Sewell (incumbent)

With family ties in Gilmer County, I have been a frequent visitor to Ellijay since 1970 and a resident since 2006. My husband and I became full-time Blackberry residents in 2007, and in 2008 I was asked to serve out the term on the board seat left vacant by the death of Sara Lee. Before retiring from a business management consultant position in 2007, I worked in several industries, including construction and office equipment and as an IT project manager. During my term I have prepared the 2010-12 association budgets.

Annual Meeting

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documents: the Rules, Bylaws, Restrictions, Covenants and Conditions and Design Committee Rules. BMA is neither a benevolent nor a social organization, its responsibility is to protect and preserve the value and desirability of our mountain property.

Adhering to this mission and employing sound business principles and conservative fiscal management, your board of directors has continued to operate within the budget established at last year's annual meeting. While several of our Association's members have abandoned their properties through foreclosure, and Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have chosen not to make good on paying Association assessments, we have been able to control our expenses and hold the course.

Over the past several years, BMA has increased its assessments by the same percentage as the federal cost-of-living adjustment. However, your board is **not** recommending an increase in assessments for 2012.

In the past year, a few, new property owners have questioned, challenged or ignored some of the rules set forth by the Association and enforced by the Design Committee. These rules are time-tested and are essential for Blackberry's continuation as one of the most desirable communities in north Georgia.

The cutting of trees, paving of driveways, adding of structures, fences and decks are all governed by the Design Committee Rules. It is incumbent on all property owners to be aware of these rules and to submit the appropriate applications to the Design Committee for approval. The Design Committee is also available for consultation and advice regarding landscaping, plantings and drainage issues. Don't hesitate to ask.

FY 2012 Proposed Budget

	2011 BUDGET	2011 ACTUAL	2012 PROPOSED
INCOME			
Maintenance Assessments	\$26,995	\$26,148	\$25,600
Regular Assessments	121,120	122,227	121,499
Assessment Refunds (\$8/Assmt)			-1,032
Total Assessments	148,115	148,375	146,067
Interest Income	2,000	302	300
Miscellaneous	1,200	3,612	1,200
TOTAL INCOME	151,315	152,289	147,567
EXPENSES			
Bad Debt Allowance	3,000	2,624	1,500
Insurance	10,400	10,285	10,400
Miscellaneous	2,200	1,558	1,700
Office Supplies	1,750	1,859	1,900
Payroll Tax Expenses	1,860	1,710	1,700
Professional Services	10,000	10,002	20,000
Gate Remote Controls	0	1,180	0
Repairs & Maintenance			
Timber Falls Trail Gate	325	1,239	750
Bridge	325	449	750
Common Area	14,750	12,673	13,000
Mulkey Road Gate	735	341	3,500
Office	525	295	300
Ponds	4,500	3,516	4,500
Roads	15,000	4,188	5,000
Snow Removal	2,450	2,599	0
Supplies	225	306	315
Wells	14,000	12,626	12,750
Salaries and Wages	30,500	29,797	30,000
Taxes	1,000	687	750
Utilities	13,225	13,009	13,150
Total Operating Expenses	126,770	110,943	121,965
Reserve Expense/Funding			
To Reserve Funds	24,545	26,148	25,600
Total Reserve Expense/Funding	24,545	26,148	25,600
(Over)/Under Budget	(2,450)	15,198	2
TOTAL EXPENSES	151,315	152,289	147,567

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid continues to spread throughout north Georgia, Gilmer County and Blackberry Mountain. The hemlocks in our common areas are being monitored and treated. Several property owners have treated their hemlocks as well. Design Committee members, Dave Teffeteller and Seth Hegert are trained to detect and treat the woolly adelgid, and they are available to consult individual property owners regarding the status and treatment of their hemlocks. At this time the board is not recommending budgeting for the treatment of Blackberry's hemlocks. This does not mean that our hemlocks are safe from infection. Eventually, all of the hemlocks in our community will be infected and, if untreated, will die.

If you have not signed an opt-out form allowing qualified inspectors to go on your property from time to time to look for evidence of the woolly adelgid, please do. A form is included in this packet. Only return the form if you do **not** want your hemlocks inspected for the HWA.

Snow and Ice Removal

What a difference a year makes. By this time last year, north Georgia had been hit by two major snow events. Of course, our winter is not over yet. The Association has contracted with a snow/ice removal service in the event of debilitating weather.

Gates, Roads and Bridge

The Mulkey Road gate is scheduled for repairs in the near future. This will necessitate the closing of the entrance for 3-4 days. The Timber Falls Trail and Rivers Edge entrances will not be affected. Email, website and phone notification will be given in advance of the repairs. Also, some minor bridge and road repairs will take place this year. Prior notifications of those repairs will be made as well.



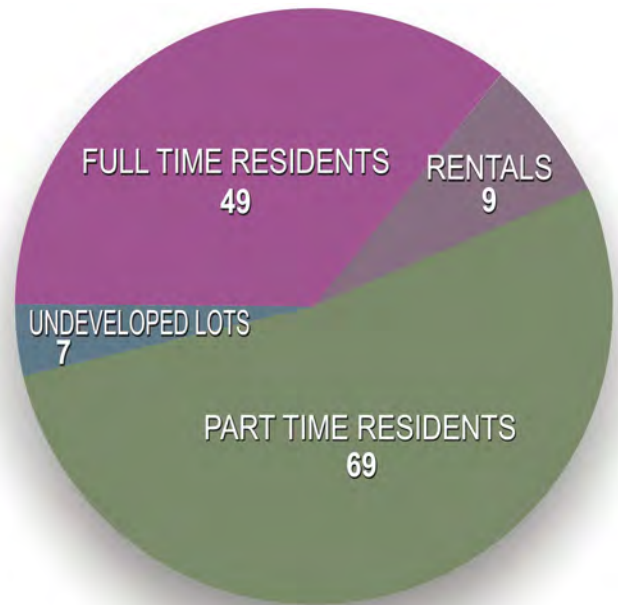
The Blackberry Mountain windshield stickers will be available at the annual meeting. All property owner vehicles should have one of these stickers adhered to the lower driver side portion of their windshield to allow Association personnel to easily identify Blackberry residents. Any vehicle parked at the office area without proper identification is subject to being towed.

NEW PROPERTY OWNERS

Jack & Neva Anderson - LL32
 William & Barbara Blaschke - SS21
 Barry & Jill Brock - SS15
 Hugh & Donna Burnes - LL42
 Debbie Cornell - SS15B
 Mike & Rhonda deGraauw - LL54
 Mike & Pam Hamby - BF27
 Frank & Barbara McCollum - LL39
 Larry & Karen Stepp - BF20
 Bill & Janet Weber - HM01

DEATHS

Sadly, since our last annual meeting, Hilma Cook, a Blackberry resident since 1993, has passed away. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with her family and friends.



Your Website



The BMA website is maintained as a resource for property owners. On the website you can:

- check for alerts, upcoming events and meetings
- download the membership handbook which contains maps, Bylaws, CCRs and Rules
- download Design Committee rules, forms and applications
- download current and past issues of the *Blackberry Juice*.

Pay your website a visit at:

www.BlackberryMountainAssociation.com

Ponds

The five BMA ponds are being maintained professionally, and the dams are being cleared and maintained in accordance with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division.

Gate Attendants

This past summer, Blackberry and Rivers Edge employed off-duty, uniformed Gilmer County deputies to patrol the office property. This combined with the rules set forth by the river outfitters dramatically reduced the problems of noise, vagrancy and vandalism experienced in past summers. BMA and REE will continue to employ the services of the Gilmer County deputies this summer.

Rental Property

Owners of homes that are being used as rental properties are responsible for notifying the Association office with contact information for all of their tenants. The Renter Information forms are available on the BMA website and at the office. It is also the responsibility of the owners of rental property to make their tenants aware of the Association rules and restrictions. Property owners are responsible for the acts of their tenants.

Past Due Assessments

If property owners' water services are interrupted due to non-payment of assessments, the owners will be charged the disconnection charges incurred by the Association. The current shut-off charge is \$45.

Mark Your Calendar

Saturday, February 25, 2012	BMA Annual Meeting
Week of April 15	BMA Well Chlorination
Saturday, April 21, 2012	BMA Earth Day Clean-Up
Saturday, October 6, 2012	BMA Annual Picnic