



Blackberry Juice

ANNUAL MEETING FEBRUARY 2010

BLACKBERRY MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION

MANAGER
Becki Bray

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WEBSITE

www.BlackberryMountainAssociation.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jack Wheeler, President
David Galusha, Vice President
Bill Henning, Treasurer
Carolyn Sewell, Secretary
Dave Teffeteller, Member at Large

DESIGN COMMITTEE

Barbara Dunson
Barbara Ellis
Norman Essner
Maxine Morris
Dave Teffeteller

Please Attend the Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Blackberry Mountain Association will be held on **Saturday, February 20, 2009, at the Cartecay United Methodist Church** located at 7629 Highway 52 East. This is the same location as last year's meeting. We will have refreshments at 9:00 am, followed by the business meeting at 9:30 am. Please set aside



this important date in order to attend.

At the annual meeting you will be given a form authorizing the association to send you assessment notices, newsletters and important updates by email. Please consider this option. In these economically stressful times, **it is important for us to reduce our costs wherever possible.** Eliminating some of our postage expenses is a very good way to accomplish this. Notifications and communications by email are also far more timely than having to rely on the postal services.

Snow and Ice

The recent snow and ice storm dealt all of Gilmer County including Blackberry quite a blow. The combination of packed ice and snow and temperatures remaining below freezing for several consecutive days found some residents unprepared for the winter driving conditions.

Blackberry's roads are not maintained by Gilmer County, Blackberry does not have ice and snow removal equipment, nor stockpiles of sand and salt. Sand supplies throughout the county were frozen and unable to be delivered and spread onto our roads. All attempts at removing and melting the snow and ice were met with re-freezing often making the road conditions worse. Blackberry was not the only community in the area facing these prolonged conditions. The condition of the county's roads did not improve until temperatures warmed.

This combination of ice, snow and extended subfreezing temperatures was an unusual occurrence in this part of the north Georgia mountains. According to the weather service, this area had not experienced a similar period of consistently low temperatures in over 30 years. The association must decide if, going forward, there

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Please Attend the Annual Meeting

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are measures that can be taken to deal with similar occurrences or just consider this as part of life in the mountains. **At the annual meeting, interested members will be asked to form a task force to address these questions.**

2010 Budget

The proposed budget for 2010 is on page 4 for your review. In keeping with the Board's recommendation of adjusting our assessment increases by the Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA), **the board is not proposing a COLA increase for assessments.** Furthermore, \$20,000 budgeted last year for well construction was unused. **Therefore, the Board proposes that each property owner's 2010 quarterly assessments be reduced by \$25.**

Election of Directors

The terms of Bill Henning, Carolyn Sewell and Jack Wheeler will expire at the annual meeting. Carolyn Sewell and Jack Wheeler have both agreed to serve another term if elected. Lauren Buckland, Norman

Essner and Brian Gracon have also been nominated. See the biographical information supplied by these nominees on page 3. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. Please remember, as required by the Blackberry CCRs, any nominee to the Board must be a registered property owner in good standing.

Proxy

Please remember, if you cannot attend the meeting, **please assign your proxy to another Blackberry property owner.**

Welcome 2009's New Members

Jim and Sara DesLaurier (SL20)
Barbara Fisher (LL05)
Joye Clayton and Lana Hawkins (HM05)
James and Cathy Young (LI19)

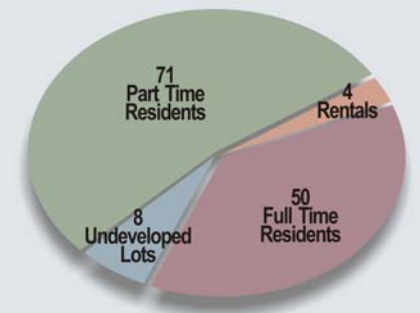
Sadly, since our last annual meeting, Blackberry has lost some very special residents. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with their families and friends.

Jack & Joyce Craft
Darrell Hipes
Bob Lee
Margaret Zaic

Remember to Winterize

Remember to winterize your home especially if you plan to be away for an extended time.

1. Protect outside spigots and pipes with insulated covers
2. Set thermostat at 50 degrees or above
3. Make sure heating system is in working condition
4. Open cabinet doors where water pipes are located
5. (Optional) Shut off water to house and drain lines



Blackberry's Membership

Common Area Maintenance

Roads As part of the ongoing maintenance of Blackberry's roads, portions of Blackberry Drive were repaved. Areas in the most need will be repaved in 2010.

Ponds Although this year's rains have resolved the low water problems in the ponds, siltation remains a problem. Siltation removal and the subsequent dam repair are expensive, and setting aside monies each year will offset their eventual costs. After sampling and testing of each associa-



tion pond, fish have been stocked to provide balance and to reduce unwanted plant growth.

In 2010, the ponds will continue to be monitored, tested and treated as neces-

sary. Also, attention will be given to the condition of the overflow pipes of the dams; repairing leaks and corrosion damage where necessary.

Signs The Blackberry street signs project was completed. Several signs destroyed by vandals have been replaced.

Bridge The Blackberry bridge was spared any damage from the summer's flood waters. But due to settling, minor repairs were made to the apron areas of the bridge's roadway.

Board of Directors Nominees

The nominees for the Blackberry Board of Directors provided the following background information.

Lauren Buckland

J.D. Emory Law School, 1970

1971-1976 - Assistant Attorney General, State of Georgia, Revenue Division

1976-1981 - Partner, Goodman, Whitner & Buckland; Business law

1986-Present - Sole Practitioner; Business law

1976-Present - Hearing Officer, State Board of Education

1990-2003 - Hearing Officer, Department of Revenue

1991-1994 - Hearing Officer, Department of Technical and Adult Education

1992-1996 - Hearing Officer, Georgia Professional Standards Commission

1961 B.S. Business Administration, Montana State College (now Montana State University)

1961-1965 - U.S. Army, Infantry, Concluded service in Fort Benning, GA

1965-1968 - Haskins & Sells (now Deloitte Touche), CPAs, Atlanta, GA

1976-1982 - Volunteer Atlanta (Chairman - 1980-1982)

1989-1990 - President, Sandy Springs Lions Club

1989-1992 - Chairman, Civic Round Table

1994-2001 - Blackberry Mountain Homeowners' Association Board

Married, 2 grown children (1 boy; 1 girl)

Hobbies: Painting (oil - landscapes and portraits)

Norman Essner

Born in the Bronx, New York - April 2, 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 - Court Appointed Guardian ad Litem and Court 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 Blackberry Mountain Home Owners Association. Full time resident for the past 3.5 years.

Past president and secretary of Magnolia Bluff Homeowners Association in Palm City, Florida (served 6 years)

Brian Gracon

Brian and his wife Renee have been full-time Blackberry residents for over 2 years, and were part-timers for almost two years before that. They own two cabins plus one lot in Blackberry.

Brian received a Ph.D. in chemical engineering from the University of Illinois. Brian was Marketing Director - Training for the Stainmaster carpet business before forming his own training and consulting business. Brian develops customized sales, customer service, marketing and business management training courses for clients.

Brian is interested in taking his turn to help keep Blackberry the beautiful and valuable place it is, and will bring leadership and teamwork to the Board while emphasizing communications with property owners.

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 been assisting Bill Henning with the financial affairs of the association, and I prepared the 2010 association budget.

Jack Wheeler (incumbent)

I have been a resident of Blackberry for 10 years, and I have been honored to have served the community as a board member for 7 years. During this time we have seen many improvements in this community. We took over ownership of our community from the developer, rebuilt the front office and bridge, and are in the strongest financial condition in our history. All of this was possible with a hard work, a strong cohesive board and homeowner's support. I would be honored to continue serving on your board.

CCR Amendment

If you have not returned your signed, witnessed and notarized authorization to amend the Blackberry CCRs, you will have an opportunity to have the authorization form witnessed and notarized at the annual meeting.

BMA wells will be chlorinated the week of April 15. Notification of the exact date will be sent later.

2010 Proposed Budget

	2009 BUDGET	2009 ACTUAL	2010 PROPOSED
INCOME			
Assessments	153,500	148,014	135,000 *
Interest Income	3,000	1,814	3,000
Miscellaneous	1,000	2,367	1,000
Total Income	157,500	152,195	139,000
EXPENSES			
Bad Debt Allowance	0	2,774	3,000
Capital Improvements			
Water System	20,000	0	0
Insurance	9,000	10,232	11,000
Miscellaneous	3,400	3,757	3,400
Office Supplies	2,100	1,810	2,100
Payroll Tax Expenses	2,300	1,797	2,000
Accounting & Legal Services	12,500	15,011	10,000
Repairs & Maintenance			
Gates	700	567	700
Bridge	1,500	75	500
Common Area	14,500	14,666	17,000
Office	1,500	419	1,000
Ponds	10,000	3,453	10,000
Roads	15,000	15,225	15,000
Wells	15,000	15,230	15,000
Total Repairs & Maintenance	58,200	49,635	59,200
Salaries and Wages	35,000	34,762	33,000
Taxes	2,200	1,651	2,200
Utilities	13,370	11,060	13,370
Total Expenses	158,070	132,489	139,270
NET INCOME	-570	19,707	-270

*The 2010 budget assessment amount was derived by subtracting the \$100 refund per 139 assessments from the 2009 budget

Your Website



Blackberry Mountain Association's website is a great resource for members. On the website you can:

- check for upcoming events and meetings
- download the membership book which contains maps, Bylaws and CCRs
- 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

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Is Here!

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid has invaded the hemlocks of Gilmer County. Unchallenged, the Woolly Adelgid will forever change the landscape of Blackberry, as well as the property and resale values of our homes.

To kick off a discussion of how Blackberry will deal with this invasion, a short presentation will be made at the annual meeting that will explain the Woolly Adelgid, its effect on our hemlocks, available treatments and possible solutions.

Even if none of the other issues to be discussed at the annual meeting hold any interest for you - this one should! This is your opportunity to decide the fate of Blackberry's landscape.



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