



NOVEMBER 2024

BLACKBERRY MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION

OFFICE MANAGER

Linda Black

CONTACT

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After Hours Water and Gate Systems Emergencies (leave name, phone # and brief message)

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WEBSITE

www.BlackberryMountainAssociation.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Galusha, President
Dave Teffeteller, Vice President
Doug Colburn, Secretary
Rich Baker, Treasurer
Rebekah Montgomery, Member at Large

DESIGN COMMITTEE

Barbara Dunson
Jennifer Fontenot
Dave Teffeteller



Annual Meeting - December 7th

Please take a moment to mark your calendar for Saturday, December 7, Blackberry Mountain Association's annual meeting. The meeting will be held at Victory Christian Center at 208 Victory Circle (off Maddox Drive). The doors will open at 9:00 am and the meeting will begin at 9:30 am.

RSVPs are required. Email or call the office if you plan to attend.

2025 Budget

Even with rising inflation Blackberry Mountain Association, continues to be fiscally sound with a well-funded reserve fund. BMA uses the Social Security Administration's annual COLA (cost of living adjustment) as a guideline for considering the impact of inflation in creating the budget. The Board of Directors is proposing an increase of 2.5%.

Gates, Roads and Bridge

Several of Blackberry's roads were repaired and paved this year. Additional roads in need will be repaired and paved in 2025. The improvements to the drainage system along some of Blackberry's roadways has proven effective. This work will continue as needed in 2025.

As part of the ongoing maintenance of Blackberry's roads, repairs and right of way *continued on next page*

PLEASE READ

Included with this newsletter you will find the proposed budget for FY2025 and your proxy. If you are unable to attend the meeting, **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT** that you take the time to assign your proxy to a property owner who will be attending or to Doug Colburn, the Association Secretary.

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. **THE PROXY MUST BE RETURNED BY 2 PM, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6.**

This year's annual meeting will be held on Saturday, December 7, 2024, at 9:30 am at Victory Christian Center at 208 Victory Circle (off Maddox Drive).

IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND, RSVP BY CALLING OR EMAILING THE OFFICE.



Blackberry Falls, also known as Stegall Falls, has been the site of sawmills, gristmills and a meeting place for the Cartecay community for over 200 years.

continued from front page

maintenance will take place throughout the year. The bridge, Blackberry Mountain Drive and Timber Falls Trail gates will also require periodic repairs and maintenance. Please use extra caution when the work crews are present. When possible, email and website notification will be given in advance of these repairs.

Wells

The 2023 drilling of a new well at the intersection of Blackberry Falls Lane and Blackberry Falls Court was unsuccessful. In 2024, another attempt was made at the intersection of Blackberry Mountain Drive and Blackberry Falls Drive. This drilling was successful, but necessitated new water lines and construction of a pump house.

Throughout the year, water quality testing, maintenance and repairs on the wells, pumps, water lines and several well houses have been performed. Pressure reduction valves and chlorinators have also been updated and installed as needed.

Ponds

The BMA ponds are maintained professionally throughout the year. The tops of the dams are cleared regularly as part of the common area maintenance. The faces of the dams are maintained annually in accordance with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division regulations.

Parking

Please remember that any vehicle parked at the office/mailbox area without a Blackberry windshield sticker or guest pass is subject to being towed. Please observe all NO PARKING signs and do not block any roadway. On-street parking is not allowed anywhere in Blackberry.

Speed Limits

For many of us, crossing the bridge into Blackberry has a calming and stress-

reducing effect. Ideally, this effect causes a reduction in vehicle speed as well. For your safety as well as that of other drivers, children, walkers, runners and workers, **SLOW DOWN** and observe the speed limits.

Rules

From time to time, owners question, challenge or ignore some of the rules of the Association. These rules are time-tested and are essential for Blackberry's continuation as one of the most desirable communities in north Georgia.

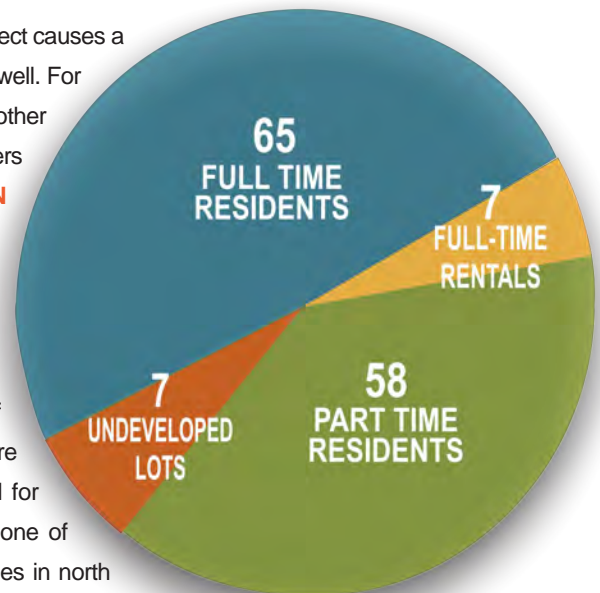
The use of recreational vehicles and motorcycles, outdoor fireplaces/burning, use of fireworks and feeding wildlife are all regulated by Association rules. Violators of Association rules are subject to fines.

The cutting of trees, paving of driveways, replacing of roofs, 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 for approval. **The Design Committee is also available for consultation and advice regarding landscaping, plantings and drainage issues. Don't hesitate to ask.**

Rental Property

Owners of homes that are being used as long-term 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 properties to make their tenants aware of the Association rules and restrictions. Property owners are responsible and liable for the acts of their tenants. The Association has the authority to evict any rental tenants for violations.



Animal Control

Remember, the Blackberry Mountain Association does not provide animal control. So, if you have a problem with a dog-at-large, a vicious dog on your property, or a dog disturbing the peace, call the Gilmer County Sheriff's Department Animal Control Office at 706 635-8911.

Past Due Assessments

When property owners' water services are interrupted due to non-payment of assessments, the owners will be charged the disconnection/reconnection charges incurred by the Association. The use of Blackberry's common areas is reserved for members in good standing only.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

Blackberry's hemlocks have been treated against the invasive Hemlock Woolly Adelgid.

During the spring and summer, you may occasionally find evidence of the adelgids on some of your hemlocks. Also, some of our hemlocks, particularly those in dense stands along the river, have suffered from fungal infections and blights.

If you have any questions or concerns about the health of your hemlocks, please contact the office.

continued on next page

continued from page 2

FY 2025 Proposed Budget

Wildlife

The deer over-population continues to be a major problem in Blackberry. **DO NOT FEED THE DEER!** For wildlife related problems, contact the Department of Natural Resources at 706 635-5060. **Hunting and the use of all weapons is strictly prohibited.**

Visitors, Guests & Workers

If you are expecting weekend guests or visitors to your home. Remind them to use the keypads located at the office and service gates, or meet them at one of the entrances.

Also, please remember that the office gate and bridge are not for use by service, repair and construction vehicles. **Drivers of those vehicles must use the Timber Falls Trail service gate.** Maps and directions to that gate are available in your property owners' manual, at the office and on the Blackberry website.

Fishing

Poaching of Blackberry ponds by non-residents continues to be a problem. To make enforcement easier, please obtain fishing permits for you and your guests at the office.

Firewise

Blackberry Mountain Association is an active Firewise Community. In April and November, the association conducted a clean-up and roadside chipping. Seventy of our residents participated in these events. Chipping projects will be planned in 2025 as well.

Applications will be made to Firewise to receive grants to help off-set the cost of the clean-up and chipping.

Below is the 2025 fiscal year proposed budget. The budget includes an assessment dues increase of 2.5%.

	2024 PROPOSED	2024 ACTUAL ¹	2025 PROPOSED
INCOME			
Reserve Assessments	\$41,195	\$40,879	\$42,569
Regular Assessments	146,060	144,934	150,927
Assessment - Other	0	0	0
Total Assessments	187,255	185,813	193,496
Interest Income	4,200	4,212	4,212
Miscellaneous ²	600	600	600
TOTAL INCOME	192,055	190,625	198,308
EXPENSES			
Bad Debt Allowance	0	0	0
Insurance	6,700	7,684	8,500
Miscellaneous ³	800	796	800
Office Expenses & Supplies	1,800	1,044	1,800
Professional Services	2,500	2,047	2,500
Gate Remote Controls	0	0	300
Repairs & Maintenance			
Gates	5,000	8,900	5,000
Bridge	1,000	90	1,000
Common Area	18,000	23,083	18,000
Hemlock Treatment	0	0	0
Mail House	270	56	200
Office	500	2,000	300
Ponds	4,500	3,904	4,000
Pond Renovation (dam repair)	0	0	0
Roads (and signs)	50,000	30,142	45,000
Wells	17,700	79,000	20,000
Salaries and Wages ⁴	27,000	29,050	27,000
Payroll Tax Expenses	2,000	2,148	2,000
Taxes	90	2,515	2,500
Utilities	13,000	15,320	17,000
Total Operating Expenses	150,860	204,989	155,900
Reserve Expense/Funding			
To Reserve Funds	41,195	40,879	42,569
Total Reserve Expense/Funding	41,195	40,879	42,569
(Over)/Under Total Income	0	(55,243)	(161)
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$192,055	\$190,625	\$190,625

¹Projected and Pending Accountant Review

²Construction Fees, Remote Sales, Debt Recovery, Late Fees & Interest, Insurance Claims

³Fees & Subscriptions

⁴Administrative, Contract Labor, Security

Board of Directors Nominees

The terms of two board members, David Galusha and Dave Teffeteller expire this year. They have agreed to serve another term. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the annual meeting.

David Galusha- President

David Galusha and his wife Lynn have been homeowners in Blackberry since 1998. He travels the world as a private practice conservator for museums and traveling artifact collections, but considers Blackberry Mountain the best place in the world to be. With more than 30 years combined experience as a homeowner association board member, corporation board member and business owner, David brings his unique skills to the Blackberry board.

David has been integral in Blackberry's transition from developer-owned property to a homeowner-owned property. He has also been involved with the many infrastructure maintenance and legal issues that face our community. David's knowledge and experience will ensure that Blackberry's property owners will continue to enjoy a financially strong and well-run association.

Dave Teffeteller- Vice President

Dave Teffeteller and his wife, Joanne Waddey, have been residents of Blackberry since 1999. During that time, Dave has designed and maintained the BMA website, members' handbook, community signage, and produces the association newsletter.

Dave coordinates and supervises many of the day-to-day construction, maintenance and tree service activities of the association's common properties, roads and ponds. He also serves on the Design Committee.

Dave is a creative consultant as well as a fly fishing outfitter in the US, Canada and Argentina. He is active in several local, state, and national conservation and waterway restoration organizations and currently serves on the board of Save Georgia's Hemlocks.

Dave is dedicated to continuing to serve the Blackberry community and preserving and enhancing the qualities and values that make it such a special place.

Welcome Our New Residents

Johnny Bateman
335 Misty Hollow Rd

Mario & Cat Benitez
95 Deer Lake Dr

Tom & Suzanne Berberich
834 Indian Cave Rd

Kevin & Katherine Collins
628 Indian Cave Rd

Glenn & Cindy Jackson
149 Deer Lake Drive

Doug & Kris Pellom
418 Misty Hollow Rd

John & Debbie Pierog
Misty Hollow Rd

Chip & Jennifer Rupured
45 Blackberry Falls Ln

Gwen Scarth
515 Indian Cave Rd

Earl & Kelley Sims
179 Blackberry Falls Ln



The term wildland-urban interface was first described in the context of fire and fire fighting. Fire managers noticed that as development moved into rural areas new problems were occurring that they were not trained for.

In 1985, after the loss of over 1400 homes in Florida and California fires, the U.S. Forest Service and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) met and the concept known as the wildland-urban interface emerged. A direct result of the meeting was the development of the National Firewise program. A basic concept of the Firewise program is that responsibility is shared between homeowners, planners, and developers as well as fire managers. Please visit **Firewise.org** to learn more about how to reduce the risk from wildfire for your home and your community.

If interested in a firewise risk assessment for your home, please contact Mason Turner, Glimmer County GFC Chief Ranger at 706 635-2363 or the Firewise Communities Coordinator at 706-897-1676 or georgiafirewise@gfc.state.ga.us

www.BlackberryMountainAssociation.com

Mark Your Calendar

BMA Annual Meeting	December 7, 2024
1st Quarter Assessment Due	January 1, 2025
2nd Quarter Assessment Due	April 1, 2025
3rd Quarter Assessment Due	July 1, 2025
4th Quarter Assessment Due	October 1, 2025
Apple Festival	2nd, 3rd Weekends October, 2025