



NOVEMBER 2023

BLACKBERRY MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION

OFFICE MANAGER

Linda Black

CONTACT

Phone 706 273.3100

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After Hours Water and

Gate Systems Emergencies

(leave name, phone # and brief message)

706 889-5640

MAILING ADDRESS

Blackberry Mountain Association

25 Blackberry Mountain Drive # 8101

Ellijay, GA 30536

EMAIL

blackberry@ellijay.com

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 9th

Please take a moment to mark your calendar for Saturday, December 9, 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.

2024 Budget

To ensure that Blackberry Mountain Association continues to keep up with inflation and remain fiscally sound with a well-funded reserve fund, the BMA Board of Directors is proposing an increase in the budget of approximately 5%. (See page 3 for the proposed budget).

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 2024. The improvements to the drainage system along some of Blackberry's roadways has proven effective. This work will continue as needed in 2024.

As part of the ongoing maintenance of Blackberry's roads, repairs and right of way maintenance will take place throughout the year. The bridge, Mulkey Road 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

A new well has been drilled at the intersection of Blackberry Mountain Drive and Blackberry Falls Drive. Well houses will be

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PLEASE READ

Included in this newsletter you will find the proposed budget for FY2024 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 8.

This year's annual meeting will be held on Saturday, December 9, 2023, 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.



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constructed, and water lines are being installed to transport water from this well to residents on Blackberry Falls Lane.

Throughout the year, water quality testing, maintenance and repairs on the wells, pumps, chlorinators and water lines and well houses will be performed.

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.

Gate Attendant

For several years, Blackberry and Rivers Edge jointly contracted a security company to patrol the office property and bridge on weekends and holidays during the summer months. In 2023, BMA and REE contracted directly with Gale Jerome to provide these services.

Please remember that any vehicle parked at the office/mailbox area without a Blackberry windshield sticker or guest pass is subject to being towed.

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.**

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.

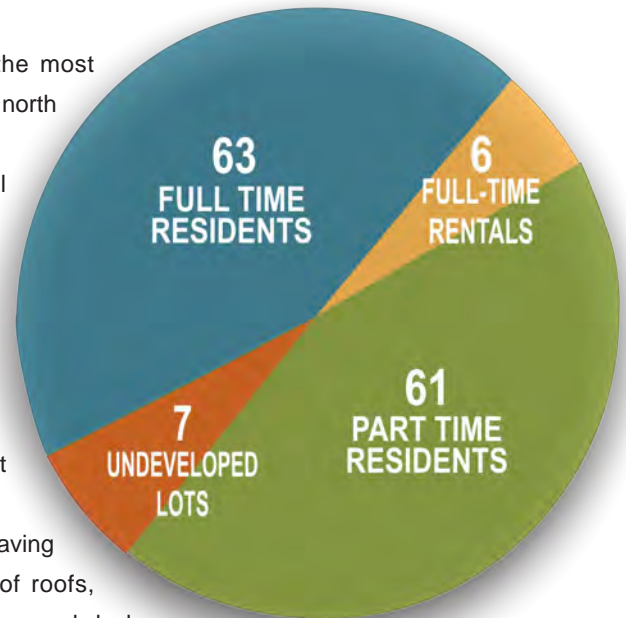
Past Due Assessments

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.

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, don't hesitate to contact the office.

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.

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Fishing

Please remember that fishing in the Blackberry ponds is restricted to Blackberry residents and their guests. This year permits will be issued and signs placed on the fishing platforms making enforcement easier.

Firewise

Blackberry Mountain Association is an active Firewise Community. In March, the association conducted a clean-up and roadside chipping. More than seventy of our residents participated.

Blackberry applied for and received a Firewise grant for \$5,000 to help off-set the cost of the clean-up and chipping.

Firewise Clean-Up

As in previous years, the Association plans to conduct a spring clean-up in 2024. Notice will be given in advance to allow property owners time to pile debris roadside. **Do not place debris on the roadsides prior to the notification.**

Property Owners' Handbook

If you are a new owner and have not received your copy of the Blackberry Mountain Association's Property Owners Handbook, please contact the office.

Who Do You Call?

Law Enforcement	911
Fire	911
Animal Control	706 635-2166
Report Power Outage	706 276-0359
Track Outages	amicalolaemc.com

Calling the Blackberry office instead of the appropriate agency will only delay the response.

FY 2024 Proposed Budget

Below is the 2024 fiscal year proposed budget. The budget includes an assessment dues increase of 5%.

	2023 BUDGET	2023 ACTUAL ¹	2024 PROPOSED
INCOME			
Reserve Assessments	\$39,717	\$37,937	\$41,195
Regular Assessments	140,815	134,502	146,060
Assessment - Other	0	0	0
Total Assessments	180,532	172,439	187,255
Interest Income	250	4,200	4,200
Miscellaneous ²	500	5,591	600
TOTAL INCOME	181,282	182,230	192,055
EXPENSES			
Bad Debt Allowance	0	0	0
Insurance	6,500	6,576	6,700
Miscellaneous ³	800	1,516	800
Office Expenses & Supplies	1,215	1,393	1,800
Professional Services	2,500	1,150	2,500
Gate Remote Controls	315	540	0
Repairs & Maintenance			
Gates	1300	5,077	5,000
Bridge	2,000	927	1,000
Common Area	20,000	17,582	18,000
Hemlock Treatment	0	0	0
Mail House	275	0	270
Office	1,000	138	500
Ponds	4,500	3,892	4,500
Pond Renovation (dam repair)	0	0	0
Roads (and signs)	30,000	45,036	50,000
Wells	18,300	38,509	17,700
Salaries and Wages ⁴	25,800	24,479	27,000
Payroll Tax Expenses	2,060	1,775	2,000
Taxes	1,000	1,289	90
Utilities	13,000	12,838	13,000
Total Operating Expenses	134,465	162,717	150,860
Reserve Expense/Funding			
To Reserve Funds	46,817	37,937	41,195
Total Reserve Expense/Funding	\$46,817	37,937	41,195
(Over)/Under Total Income	0	(18,424)	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$181,282	\$182,230	\$192,055

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 three board members, Rich Baker, Doug Colburn and Rebekah Montgomery expire this year. They have agreed to serve another term. Nominations may be made from the floor at the annual meeting.

Rich Baker

Rich has been a member of the Blackberry community since 1999.

He graduated from Washington State University with a BS in Mechanical Engineering. He worked 15 years for General Electric as a member of the commercial nuclear power startup organization and at the Institute of Nuclear Operations in Atlanta for 7 years.

He served as the senior Westinghouse representative at ENWESA in Madrid, Spain and was a member of the ENWESA Board of Directors.

Rich spent two and a half years as a consultant to Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in Kobe, Japan as a member of their nuclear engineering organization.

He worked as a consultant at NuScale Power, a company pioneering small, scalable pressurized reactor technology, engineered with passive safety features.

Doug Colburn

Doug and his wife Leigh have been homeowners/full-time residents of Blackberry Mountain since 2016. They moved here from Marietta, Georgia where Leigh was the principal of Marietta High School and Doug worked for United Health Care.

He is an active member of the Ellijay community and has served as the Presi-

dent of Gilmer County Optimists. He has also served recently as the chair of the River Advisory Committee for the Gilmer County Board of Commissioners.

Doug is an avid sportsman and loves the outdoors. He is dedicated to conservation and preserving the environment for future generations.

Doug currently serves as the Detective for the City of Ellijay Police Department. His career spans work at the local, state, and federal levels. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Public and Social Services and a Master of Science in Conflict Management from Kennesaw State University.

Rebekah Montgomery

Rebekah and her husband Joe have been Blackberry residents since 2004, but prior to that have enjoyed many good times on Indian Cave Road at her father's cabin, which he built in 1983.

A graduate of Stetson University with a degree in education, she worked as an elementary school teacher for many years and retired in 2012.

In her home town of Rome, she is an enthusiastic community volunteer serving on non-profit boards and as an active volunteer for many others. She is a graduate of Leadership Georgia, class of 1999.

Blackberry is the favorite gathering place for her three daughters, their husbands, and six (soon to be seven) grandchildren.

These days she enjoys cooking, needlepoint and traveling with Joe.

Blackberry Welcomes Our New Residents

Eric and Jeanne Crawford
118 Spring Lake Lane

Fred and Michelle Damerow
375 Blackberry Mountain Dr

Randy & Janice Durden
714 Indian Cave Rd

Harry and Melissa Hames
345 Indian Cave Road

Rex and Tori Smith
19 Blackberry Falls Lane

Jeremy and Heather Soukup
755 Indian Cave Road

Margaret Williams
834 Indian Cave Road



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](https://www.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, Gilmer County GFC Chief Ranger at 706 635-2363 or the Firewise Communities Coordinator at 706-897-1676 or georgiafirewise@gfc.state.ga.us

Mark Your Calendar

BMA Annual Meeting	December 9, 2023
1st Quarter Assessment Due	January 1, 2024
2nd Quarter Assessment Due	April 1, 2024
3rd Quarter Assessment Due	July 1, 2024
4th Quarter Assessment Due	October 1, 2024



GENERAL PROXY

Blackberry Mountain Association, Inc.
Annual Membership Meeting
Saturday, December 9, 2023

I, _____, the undersigned owner of lot # _____,
hereby appoint _____ to vote in my absence at the
Blackberry Mountain Association Annual Meeting on Saturday, December 9, 2023.

(You can assign this proxy to any BMA member in good standing.* If there is no one to whom you can assign this proxy, you may assign it to the Association's Board Secretary, Doug Colburn, who will vote in the best interest of the association.)

I understand that this is a general proxy, unrestricted in scope, and that the proxy holder may vote on any or all of the issues presented at the meeting at his or her discretion. Following are my recommendations to my proxy holder.

1. Nominees for Board of Directors (Select 3):

Or write in nominee(s)

Rich Baker (incumbent)

Doug Colburn (incumbent)

Rebekah Montgomery (incumbent)

2. Proposed 2024 Budget

Approve Reject

PROPERTY OWNER SIGNATURE

DATE

This proxy must be signed, dated and returned no later than 2:00pm on Friday, December 8, 2023, to be considered valid. Proxies not filed by this deadline cannot be counted.

Mail: Blackberry Mountain Association, 25 Blackberry Mountain Dr. # 8101, Ellijay, GA 30536

Email: blackberry@ellijay.com

**Per the Declaration of Restrictions, Covenants, and Conditions of Blackberry Mountain (Article I Section 6) the Association shall suspend the voting rights of any owner for which any assessment remains unpaid for more than thirty (30) days.*