



# Blackberry Juice

**OCTOBER 2021**

## **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)

706 889-5640

### **MAILING ADDRESS**

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### **EMAIL**

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### **WEBSITE**

www.BlackberryMountainAssociation.com

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

David Galusha, President

Dave Teffeteller, Vice President

Carolyn Sewell, Secretary

Rich Baker, Treasurer

Doug Colburn, Member at Large

### **DESIGN COMMITTEE**

Barbara Dunson

Jennifer Fontenot

Dave Teffeteller

### **FIREWISE COORDINATOR**

Rich Baker



## **Are You Ready for Winter?**

Now is a great time to take a few simple measures to lessen potential weather-related hardships this winter.

### **Fuel and Heat**

Check your propane tank fuel level. Don't rely on your propane company to routinely check your tank. During the winter months it's a good practice to keep your tank no less than 25% full.

It is not uncommon for portions of Gilmer County to be without electrical service for extended periods of time due to fallen trees brought on by wind, heavy rain, snow and ice. Remember your furnace must have an electrical source to operate.

Do you have an alternative heat source for your home? If you have a fireplace, make sure that it is functioning properly, the chimney is clean, and you have a good supply of dry, seasoned firewood, kindling and fire starters.

If you have a gas range, learn to light the burners manually. If you have a generator, make certain that it is functioning properly and that you have sufficient fuel for several days of continuous operation.

### **Water**

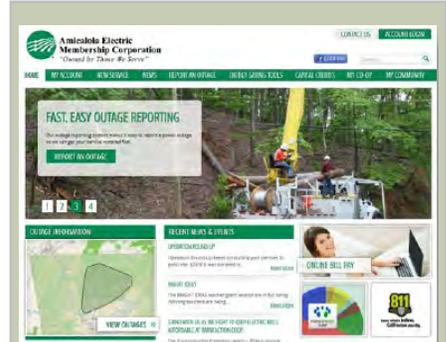
Blackberry's wells are equipped with electric pumps. When there is a community power outage, the pumps will not function and water will not be pumped to your home.

Make sure you have a supply of potable water for drinking and cooking. FEMA recommends the storage of a minimum of 1 gallon of water per family member per day for no less than 14 days.

Many residents collect gray water in rain barrels to use for flushing toilets. Filling bathtubs with water prior to a snow or ice event is also a good idea.

Also, protect outside spigots and water pipes with insulated covers.

If you plan to be away from your home, consider shutting off the water supply and draining the inside water lines. Set thermostats at 50 degrees or above and open cabinet doors where water pipes are located.



Please do not call the Blackberry office and emergency number to report a power outage. Instead call your utility company, Amicalola Electric Membership Corporation, at **706 276-0359**. AEMC provides power outage information at [www.amicalolaemc.com](http://www.amicalolaemc.com). On this site you can monitor the affected areas and power restoration progress.

### **Roads**

If you're concerned about getting out of your home due to ice or snow, make sure you have an accessible supply of ice melt to apply to your porch, sidewalk and driveway.

Blackberry's roads, as well as most of Gilmer County's secondary roads, are not plowed. If you think you will need to drive on Blackberry and county roads, ensure that you have a properly equipped vehicle. Four-wheel drive, snow tires and chains may be necessary.

In case of an emergency, remember that Gilmer County EMS and Sheriff's deputies will enter Blackberry, so don't hesitate to call 911.



*Blackberry windshield stickers are available at the Association office.*

## Annual Meeting Notice

The Blackberry Mountain Association Annual Meeting will be at **9:30AM, Saturday, December 11th** at Cartecay United Methodist's meeting room. The church is located at 7629 Hwy 52E at the corner of Hwy 52E and Roy Road.

Approximately three weeks before the annual meeting you will receive a packet containing the annual report, proposed budget, board candidates' profiles, and a proxy. 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.

If you choose not to attend the meeting this year, **please return your proxy**.

The terms of three board members, Rich Baker, Doug Colburn and Carolyn Sewell expire this year. They have agreed to serve another term. Additional nominations for these three board seats may be made. Written nominations must be received by the Association office manager no later than Monday, November 8. Please remember that all nominees must be members in good standing with the Association. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the annual meeting.



Observe the commonsense rules of the road. When entering and exiting any of the Blackberry Mountain connecting streets, keep right at all of the street dividers and islands.

## Blackberry Is Being Invaded

Blackberry Mountain's landscape is being over-run by Japanese stiltgrass, an invasive grass that threatens native plants and natural habitats. Stiltgrass is a dense, mat-forming annual grass that roots at nodes and is shade tolerant. It is found in a variety of habitats including creek banks, floodplains, forest roadsides and trails. Native to temperate and tropical Asia, it was introduced in Tennessee around 1919 and has continued to spread throughout the south.

It is very prolific with each plant producing up to 1,000 seeds that can remain viable in the soil for 5 years. The seeds are small and easily adhere to clothing, shoes and animal fur, which aid the spread along woodland pathways. Deer and other grazing animals further enable infestation by feeding on native plants and avoiding the stiltgrass. Additionally, overgrazing of the understory of a forest canopy by animals improves light conditions and removes plant competition for the invasion of stiltgrass. It seeds from July to December with seed stalks partially remaining during the winter.

### What Can We Do

**Hand-hoeing** and **hand-pulling** can be an effective means to control stiltgrass as long as it is done before it has dropped seeds. Recognize that hoeing or pulling stiltgrass early in the season disturbs soil which can stimulate germination of new plants from the seed bank. Stiltgrass is easiest to pull when the soil is moist.

**Constant trimming** will cause stiltgrass to grow at a lower height but it can still set seed. A more successful control strategy is to trim the flowering culm before seed matures. When trimming, slice it off at ground level to prevent resprouting.

For large areas, **spraying with a certified organic herbicide** is also an option. The problem with most herbicides, whether organic or synthetic, is that they kill not only the targeted plant but everything in the treated area, including plants you want to keep. The best time to spray is when the targeted plant is most vulnerable: late summer when the grass has expended a great deal of energy on growth and is just beginning to flower. The plant will not have enough reserve energy to make a comeback for the season.

**Heavy mulches** can be used to exclude light from the soil and keep stiltgrass from germinating.

In conclusion, it is best to treat small



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infestations of stiltgrass before it spreads by simply pulling or cutting. These two methods are most effective when you wait until later in the summer and finish before the seedheads emerge.

To control Blackberry's stiltgrass we all must be persistent. With repeated, annual effort we can effectively control Japanese stiltgrass and continue to enjoy beautiful, forested community.

## Mark Your Calendar

<b>4th Quarter Assessment Due</b>	October 1, 2021
<b>Proxies Due</b>	November 8, 2021
<b>BMA Annual Meeting</b>	December 11, 2021
<b>1st Quarter Assessment Due</b>	January 1, 2022