“Service is the Rent We Pay for Our Space on Earth”

The Pine Mountain Trail…conceptualized, planned, constructed and maintained by dedicated volunteers.
No tax money is used to support the Pine Mountain Trail.

D. Neal Wickham
December 12, 1929-May 18, 2016

Just a few months ago we got word that Neal had cancer that was likely going to take his life in about six months. We had hoped to have a gathering of trail folks to all say hi to Neal and present him with a proclamation from the DNR that Tom Flournoy had requested. On May 3rd, Joe Skinner and I went to see Neal and we along with a couple more had a nice visit talking about trail stuff and showing him some old photos I found in storage. A planned reception to present the proclamation the next week was cancelled. His condition declined rapidly and he passed away at home on the evening of May 18. As most know, Chuck Williams of the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer “did good” with the article he wrote about Neal. Monday May 23rd hundreds gathered at St. Paul UMC here in Columbus to celebrate the life he lived, to truly live out our motto above. Neal thus paid his rent here on earth for his service in many ways. I dare say there was a dry eye when the singing of “GEORGIA” was played and sang. It was a wonderful service to reflect on Neal’s life. The most fitting tribute came from the words written by Col. Ralph Puckett.

The day before on Sunday May 22, there was a visitation time at Malon & Laura Wickhams home. It was a time to tell Malon and family and Neal’s wife Judith not only how sorry we were for his quick passing, but talk about things Neal had done with each of us and how he influenced our lives to continue to work on the PMT that he founded. He had put in thousands of hours over the years since 1975. Three members of the original “RED HAT GANG” had visited Neal the last week of April and they were at the visitation, looking over all the photos and trail things that Malon & Laura had displayed. The Red Hat Gangs legacy lives on with Neal inspiring them and others as volunteers to do trail work.

Jim Morpeth of Country’s BBQ posted a note on Country’s Facebook page May 19th saying that he was offering a “Neal Wickham pork rib sandwich” on his menu at his locations and that he was donating $2 from the sale of each to the PMTA in memory of Neal. Friday night the 20th, Helen and I went to Macon Road Country’s and Jim told us we were the 41st & 42nd persons to order a Neal’s sandwich THAT DAY! He ended up selling a couple hundred. This is just part of the proof, many loved and appreciated Neal for his legacy of founding the Pine Mountain Trail. We will miss him at the Pig Out this year, but when the Blue Bell ice cream is served, well we will all raise our Crunchy Cones as a toast of thanks to Neal. Oh, by the way I was concerned Neal would object to serving ice cream at the Pig Out back in 2000 when I first suggested it. Not only did he not object Neal ate four. He loved ice cream, he loved his family and he gave us the PMT.

Neal and Carl at the 2015 Pig Out
Three of the Red Hat Gang
If you misplace your membership card or just need a replacement, let us know via email from our website. Numerous volunteers from our membership have helped the PMTA grow and flourish for more than 40 years. We continue to grow. The scope and reach of our association in promoting and maintaining the Pine Mountain Trail will always be determined by our membership. Let’s all do our part to keep the association vibrant and to spread the word about our trail.

The Pine Mountain Trail Newsletter is a publication by the Pine Mountain Trail Association, Inc. The editor and board members of PMTA retain the right to accept and/or edit any material submitted for publication or posting on the website or the PMTA Facebook pages. Jim Hall - PMTA Newsletter Editor – 6743 Audubon Drive –Columbus, Ga. 31909.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We currently have 212 Current total Life members. They are 115 families, 80 individuals and 17 organizations. Annual members: 263 which is 136 families, 46 organizations, 80 individuals. That is 474 active memberships and we mail out some complimentary newsletters.

We welcome the following new members to the Pine Mountain Trail Association since last 11/20/15

Family Life
Ronnie & Tracy Heard- Gay GA
Lee & Brandy L’oste-Brown- Waverly Hall GA
Mary Lorenz-Halling & Jim Halling- Pine Mountain

Individual Life
Dan Godowns- Woodbury GA
John Mathews- Columbus

Family Annual
Glenn and Diana Anderson- Mineola FL
Robert Casteel- Columbus
Anthony & Shannon Ferguson- Merritt Island FL
Brian Banks- Zebulon GA
Chuck & Jane Hecht- Columbus
Todd and Shanda Wheeler- Griffin GA
Scott Burgess- Pavo GA
Robie Simmons- Griffin GA
Bobby Matthews- LaGrange GA
Timothee’ E & Erin Concort- Griffin

Individual Annual
Steve Bode- Grantville GA
Trenton Cannon- Newnan GA
Sandy Thomas- Columbus
Keith Bissell- Fortson GA
Pete McGuire- Columbus

Organization Annual
BSA Troop 858-Opelika AL
Iron Braid Adventures- Midland GA

National Trails Day Hike June 4, 2016

Our NTD hike went well. Not as many hikers as expected, but there was rain coming in reported that likely kept folks away. Chris Largent led the group on the Dowdell Knob Loop. As hikers came off the trail we had a treat for them. Larry Day, Mark Hughes and I had prepared homemade orange sherbet.
PMTA APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

Mail to: PMTA Inc., P.O. Box 5 Columbus, Ga., 31902

(Renew early to avoid missing a newsletter issue)

Date_____________ Name__________________________

Address________________________________________

Phone Number_________ Work number ____________ E-mail address__________________________

Membership Category: __renewing member ___new member

12-month Lifetime

__Individual   $25.00   ___ $200.00   * for families and organizations, list names that cards should be issued to
__Family*      $35.00   ___ $300.00
__Organization* $50.00   ___ $400.00

I wish to volunteer with the following: __membership __public relations __board membership __assist with monthly hike
__help with monthly workdays __newsletter contributions __Adopt-a-Trail section

PINE MOUNTAIN TRAIL LOGO STUFF

Map prices are higher at FDR park office, Outside World and Big Dog Running in Columbus. Photos of the items are on the website at PMTA STORE.

Maps-- (new 2016 edition)

Member Non-member
Maps-- (new 2016 edition) $4.00 $5.00
Kids Map (2015 40th Anniversary edition) $2.00 $3.00

Patches --The Pine Mountain Trail logo patch $2.00 $3.00

Medallion--Brass PMT logo hiking staff medallion. Photo of this item is on a hiking staff in the photo gallery section of the website.

PMT Pin - Brass with acrylic coating with a pin for your hat or vest ……... $3.50 $4.50

PMTA Car Tag—white, plastic tag with full color PMT logo (reduced; were $5) $4.00 $4.00

If ordering from the PMTA cost is as shown (includes shipping/mailing for maps, patches, and medallions.) Live in/near Columbus? Call Jim Hall at 706-569-0497.

Arrangements can be made to pick up items from his home.

NOTE: The 2015 map, we sold nearly 5,000 copies. The 2016 printing has a couple minor changes (one is labeling Combs's Crossing near Old Sawmill Campsite.) See “Map Changes” in this newsletter for more.

New bridges and crossings on PMT just east of Mile 21 and Slippery Rock Falls

As you may know, back in December the flooding rains widened the stream beds and washed away use of “steppin stones” for crossings in several places on the trail from Mile 22 to Cascade Falls. So on January 20, a group of 24 carried in over a mile the pre-cut and pre-stained parts of a 12’ bridge to just before Slippery Rock Falls along with pieces for a couple new walkways over muddy areas.

Then on March 16 we installed another new bridge just east of Mile 21 at another widened creek crossing. A group of Georgia Tech Students helped with PMTA volunteers. That group after helping carry in bridge pieces went with a couple of our PMT folks (Mike, Ed and Joe) to the January 20th bridge and put in more support beams due to stream bank erosion.

www.pinemountaintrail.org
2016 PMTA Board of Directors
Jim Pound ...........................................706-323-1783 Columbus
Chris Largent......................................706-580-9549 Columbus
**D. Neal Wickham, Member Emeritus .706-507-4230 Columbus
Sam Burke, Finance .............................706-563-1635 Midland
Jim Hall, Secretary ..............................706-569-0497 Columbus
Tom Berry, Treasurer ............................334-291-9568 Phenix City
Carl Carlson, Trail Maintenance .........706-628-5336 Pine Mtn. Valley
Jerry Brown, Membership Chairman ......706-323-9422 Columbus
Richard Ramey ..................................706-323-3925 Columbus
Craig Myers ......................................706-882-3886 LaGrange
Malon Wickham .................................706-563-5160 Columbus
Gus Callaway ....................................706-668-0187 LaGrange
Mike Riffle .......................................706-464-3136 Cataula/Columbus
Tom Flournoy ...................................706-324-4000 Columbus
Tommy Hadaway .................................334-705-6595 Opelika
Eddie Hall ..........................................706-327-3697 Columbus
Mark Hughes ....................................706-302-0118 LaGrange
Bill Vang .........................................706-568-0611 Columbus
Joe Wade ..........................................706-324-7296 Columbus

Mike Riffle is the newest member of our PMTA board.

** NOTE: D. Neal Wickham’s name will remain on the board list in his honor and memory for the rest of 2016.

A MESSAGE FROM PMTA PRESIDENT Jim Pound

This is a time to reflect on how grateful we should be to Neal Wickham for his great foresight in 1975 to begin slowly and tediously building this trail. We are certainly glad that he had the vision the enjoyment that this trail would bring to all who use it. The volunteers who have helped to build and maintain the trail over the last 41 years have spent thousands of hours every year to provide a great resource to the hikers and campers who use the trail every day. Think about coming on a workday in the next few months too. We are also indebted to those select volunteers who are always working on the trail – whether planning workdays, coordinating projects, setting up the Pig Out, or any of the myriad other details that make the PMTA run effectively. A special thanks from me to each one of them.

Whether it is group hikes, work days, the Pig Out, a solitary hike or camping with friends, I hope that everyone will have a chance to enjoy the trail this year and as we do, remember Neal for making it happen.

Jim

Volunteers on the trail....

We need more volunteers to come out on regular workdays. We have been blessed with the large groups of folks showing up on short notice to help with flood damage to bridges and installing new bridges and walkways over the last year. However, monthly we have something to be done and the more we have the easier and more we can do. Last year we had a young lady show up for a workday who said her husband was in the US Army (recent West Point grad) and she wanted to get out and do something on our trail while he was “working”. Lindsay Pell is a joy to have around and has helped us several times. Joe Skinner has even encouraged her to use the power tools. Then our neighbors Capt. Stephen and Bryana Bruner we introduced to the trail on a hike. Stephen is deployed and Bry came with me twice this year to help with bridge projects and once on a hike. Bry is now in Maryland with family awaiting Stephens return from deployment and they will be stationed at Ft. Carson, Colorado for about a year and hopefully coming back here in late 2017. Thanks too for help from Nikki Coull, Tamara Hughes, Genny Altman, my wife Helen and others. We look forward to having Bry come back and we invite other ladies to help.

Lindsay and Bry

Bry

Nikki

Lindsay using driver, guided by Joe
Email addresses & phone numbers for PMTA members and FACEBOOK

Many email addresses and phone numbers we have for members are not the correct ones. PLEASE go to the PMTA website and email us back a message with your current email address (and phone numbers.) You may also keep up with the PMTA on our Facebook page. If you lose this newsletter or want to share it with a friend go to our website. We post a copy, and past issues.

Hiking is not just “a walk in the woods”. YOU NEED A MAP.....

With daylight savings time the days may be long but time for hiking each day can slip up on you. As the old saying goes, “Don’t plan more hike than light”, meaning plan your hike so you will be off the trail way before dark. Folks who carry nothing with them (besides not carrying any water they certainly don’t carry a flashlight) they are of concern. Then you have the folks who don’t buy much less use/carry a map and get turned around hiking even on the Dowdell Knob Loop. So as we have said several times, talk to folks you meet along the trails. If they are turned around (or just not sure where they are headed), show or offer them your map and let me know and I’ll replace it free. If you see a family with children and no water, offer the kids water if you have extra (with parents’ permission.) If for instance you are coming out from Cascade Falls 30 minutes to an hour before dark and meet someone going in to the falls, encourage them to turn around and try another day. If they refuse and go on, call the park office and report this so park managers who can be aware of a potential situation…..Our 2016 map edition is available. There were just a few changes to the map. On the FAQ section we put a link to a website that you can go to see when sunset is along the trail (and we suggest to be OFF THE TRAIL 30 minutes before sunset.) Also we refer to the legend on the map a lot. The LEGEND is the box on the bottom right of the map that explains things on the map. Lastly we put COMBS’S CROSSING on the map.

TRAIL REBLAZING

Re-blazing along the trails is a slow process, but we are working on it. It takes 3 volunteers about 2 hours to reblaze one mile of trail. We are over to Mile 16.5 now and have the Beaver Pond and White Candle Trails redone. Here is one “blazing crew”…..Ed Jones, Jim Hall and Joe D. Skinner. Others who have helped are Larry Day,Mike Riffle, Helen Hall & Lindsay Pell.
Pig Out 2016 is coming Saturday, October 22th!  The 41st Pine Mountain Trail Association annual dinner (Pig Out) will again be held at the rock shelter at the Liberty Bell Pool on GA. 354. If you are new to the PMTA, you will not want to miss this event. Meet and eat with other PMTA members at the 2016 Pig Out on October 22th. There will be a moderately rated 3.2 mile pre-Pig-Out hike from the Park RV Campground Trading Post Lot on the Mountain Creek Trail starting at 1 p.m. (so arrive earlier than that to sign the roster). Help us celebrate another great year and our 41st anniversary!  Hikers who come to the 1 p.m. hike are welcome at the Liberty Bell Pool area just after the hike. The sign-in table will be set up by 4 p.m. Relax and visit with other PMTA members and guests. The price of the Pig Out dinner is $15.00 for adults, and still $5.00 for children 3-12. We will mail out another newsletter with reservation form the first of September. Put the date on your calendar. Photos below are from last years (2015) Pig Out.

Mark and Emma  
Jim and Mary Beth  
Larry, Barb and Shannon

D. Neal Wickhams’ last Pig Out......

Joe D. Skinner and Mike Riffle

MAY 6 FLOWER HIKE! We had a great May hike from Mile 23 back to Rocky Point PL. 32 hikers. Flowers were awesome!

Helen, Bry, Shilpa and Genny at Cascade Falls
FLOOD along trail December 2015

For those of you who haven’t been on the trail from Mile 23 to Old Sawmill Campsite this year, the creek beds look entirely different. The flooding rains early last December dumped a bunch of water. We had the trail sections checked and found that ALL the bridges from Combs’s Crossing east to the large one near Mile 22 had been displaced/washed downstream somewhat. On Wednesday December 23rd I put out the word for HELP and thankfully on the following Sunday afternoon some 24 folks showed up to help. We used come-alongs, straps and some big ole’ boys to move the bridges back in place. None were damaged much, just pushed downstream by the estimated 5 FEET of rushing water. Cascade Falls had about the same amount going over it and it washed all the leaves out of the pool below, washed away the sign and several feet of dirt along the edge then swept down the stream beyond the falls depositing new rocks and lots of sand (as it did up stream about half a mile). The flooding washed lots of limbs and such from along the creek banks, “pressure washed” the rocks clean and left the creek banks more open. The flooding also washed deeper and wider two creek crossing that required bridges to be installed. With the added water flow, we also had to add some 12 more walkways to keep hikers out of new muddy areas. Below are before and after photos of several locations.
Check the **RENEWAL DATE** on the address label (above your name). Don’t miss a newsletter--**RENEW** early. Thanks!

**UPCOMING EVENTS for the PINE MOUNTAIN TRAIL ASSOCIATION**

**HIKES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Meet At</th>
<th>Hiking</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2 Sat</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>PMTA Board</td>
<td>Country Store</td>
<td>PMT to FDR Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 6 Sat</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>PMTA Board</td>
<td>FDR Office</td>
<td>PMT &amp; Pool Trail to Pool</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 3 Sat</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>PMTA Board</td>
<td>Molly Hugger Hill</td>
<td>Sawtooth Trail to Fox Den Cove</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 15th</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>Jim Hall &amp; Mark Hughes</td>
<td>FDR Park Office <em>(email Jim for reservations at <a href="mailto:Pinemountaintrailassoc_jim@msn.com">Pinemountaintrailassoc_jim@msn.com</a>)</em></td>
<td>OVERNIGHT backpacking trip to Turtle Hollow Campsite*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 22 Sat</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>PMTA Board</td>
<td>RV Trading Post</td>
<td>Mountain Creek Trail</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5 pm.</td>
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**WORKDAYS** *(Bring work gloves, water and your lunch. We furnish all tools and fun.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meet Carl Carlson at:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 9</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>FDR State Park Office Parking Lot</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 13</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>FDR State Park Office Parking Lot</td>
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<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>FDR State Park Office Parking Lot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>FDR State Park Office Parking Lot</td>
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*(All workday meeting places start at Park Office.....Dates subject to change—especially if bad weather....Keep checking the website each month prior to a workday)*

*For all hikes and workdays, it is a good idea to bring water and a snack (a lunch if the hike or workday starts at 10 a.m.)*

FOR INFORMATION ON WORKDAYS, CALL **CARL CARLSON** at 706-628-5336 or Jim Hall at 706-569-0497