

CMC Annual Meeting on Zoom

Trying to Reason with the Covid Season

by Stuart English

CMC is approaching its centennial birthday in a few years. In a lot of ways our history reflects the history of Western North Carolina in the Twentieth century and into this century. But now in 2020 we are simply a part of the world around us. Recently, we had our Annual Dinner virtually on software called Zoom, which is becoming much too familiar to all of us due to the Covid19 Pandemic.

During the meeting, the proposed CMC budget for 2021 was presented for approval as well as the slate of CMC Council nominations for 2021 and minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting. Distinguished Service awards were presented and Trail Challenge Completers were acknowledged.

The first Distinguished Service Award goes to Bobbi Powers. Bobbi has been a member of CMC since 2007. She is a hike leader, has been an MST Section Maintainer, and has worked on the Communication Committee. But it is the way in which she participates that makes her special. As a hike leader, she gets to know the new hikers and is very welcoming, She imparts a wealth of information to her fellow hikers, whether it is the names of wildflowers or some little bit of history about the trail. Bobbie's hikes, like her articles for the eNews, are pure Bobbi and unique unto themselves.

The second award goes to Mike Fisher and the entire Conservation Committee.

For the past several years, members of this committee have worked endless hours with the Forest Service, stakeholders, and club members on the revision to the Nantahala Pisgah Forest Management Plan which was around five years in the making. The finalized plan will drive management decisions for years to come. They (especially Mike, Tish, and Ruth) have participated in meetings too numerous to mention, and always present ideas that are in keeping with responsible land usage and represent the CMC philosophy. They have shared the information gleaned, the challenges, and the options to be decided to state the wishes of the club. The current committee chair, Mike Fisher, has been instrumental in leading the process during the past couple of years, reporting to Council, and managing effective communication with the club's Council and its members.

As an organization, we have endured a lot for a long time. We will endure this too. Sorry, no pictures and I am already sick of Zoom!

All about My Buddy Bobbi

by Marcia Bromberg

You may have read in Stu English's article that Bobbi Powers is one of the recipients of this year's CMC Distinguished Service Award. The other recipient is the members of the Conservation Committee who have worked mightily for many years on the Nantahala Pisgah Forest Management Plan. Congrats and thanks to all for their hard work!

But this article is about Bobbi. I bet many of you know her, if not in person, by reputation. She is the CMC member often called on to help out where needed and opine on issues that come before the Club and the Council.

Bobbi has been a member of the CMC since 2007. She joined the CMC to hike and since that time has rarely missed a half-day Sunday hike. It didn't take Bobbi long to become a half-day hike leader and has led a half-day hike every quarter since. Bobbi also joined the CMC maintainers by adopting a section of the MST to maintain, which she did until just recently. And, she became a member of the Communications Committee. But many members lead hikes, maintain a trail section or belong to a trail crew, and work on a committee, so what makes Bobbi's service so special?

As a hiker Bobbi is a welcoming figure on half-day hikes. She gets to know new hikers, makes them feel like they belong, makes sure that if they haven't joined CMC they do so, and she remembers them when they come back for a second hike, even if it's many months later. In this respect she is a hiking ambassador for the Club.

Bobbi was not satisfied to just be a section maintainer, she wanted to be a very thorough one. So she asked for advice on how to best maintain her section and then suggested the Club make videos so that others could receive the teaching benefits she received. To that end she helped Les Love turn his help sessions with her into Youtube videos that could be shared on the website. Since their initial efforts, a number of teaching videos have been added to the portfolio. But it was Bobbi's efforts that got the ball rolling.

She serves on the Communications Committee and in that role is an active voice on how best to communicate to members and inform them of what's happening. She not only writes regular articles for the eNews but played an important role in the transition from using Let's Go as a newsletter to focusing all news articles in eNews and using Let's Go for a Quarterly Trail guide. She also plays an editing role that few know about—quarter after quarter after quarter she helps review and edit hike descriptions for the Let's Go and the website. And in doing so she helps identify problems and inconsistencies in hike write-ups. And this work is for all hikes, not just half-day hikes. Most recently Bobbi has been the "maven" of slide shows for the Annual Meeting and Hike-leaders dinner, coming up with themes and making sure members have an opportunity to show off their trail-related photos.

Through all her years of membership Bobbi has proven herself to be a reliable and dedicated member of the CMC—promoting the Club, reaching out to new members and old and providing

wise advice when asked. (And she is often asked for her opinions and advice). And best of all Bobbi is my friend and hiking partner. Congratulations to her for receiving one of the highest CMC recognitions!

100 Favorite Trails of the Smokies and the Carolina Blue Ridge

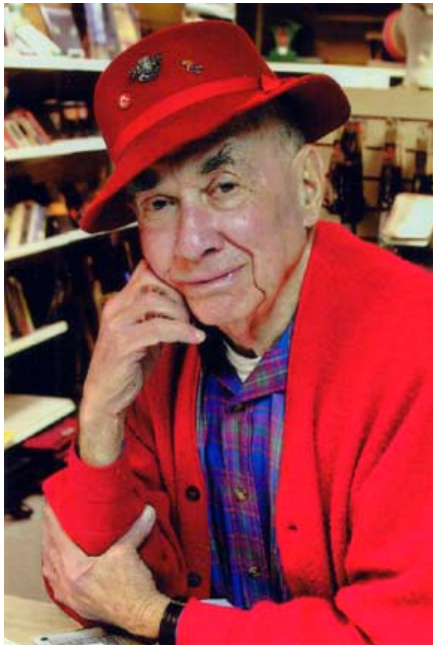
by Danny Bernstein

Carolina Mountain Club and Great Smoky Mountains Association (GSMA) just published a map of 100 favorite trails of the Smokies and the North Carolina Blue Ridge. The map, published on waterproof paper, is available in the Smokies stores and online. See <https://www.smokiesinformation.org/100-favorite-trails-map>

The map was a long time in coming. Steve Kemp, the former publications director, proposed this map to me in 2013 when I was on the board of the Great Smoky Mountains Association. Though I jumped into it with both feet and got CMC a publishing contract, I was never able to get a group together to work on this. But I knew who could: Steve Pierce, an active and strong CMC leader.

History of the map

Steve Kemp had been head of GSMA publications for decades. He had seen board members come and go. One of his favorite members was Bernard Elias, a giant of a man in terms of hiking accomplishments. Elias had created a 100 favorite map. From my CMC interview with him in 2005, I wrote:



Bernard considers the 100 Favorite Trails of the Great Smokies and Carolina Blue Ridge as his greatest accomplishment. He first developed the map in 1966. According to Bernard, five or six people from CMC and the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club divided up the trails to consider them for the map. After that first effort, Bernard took over the project completely and updated the map 13 times. "I re-walked 10-12 trails a year to check them."

"You could scan the map without having to read five or six pages in a trail guide for each hike." Both the National Park Service and National Geographic used the map as a reference. The map sold for a dollar. "Now, 12 years after its last publication, those lucky enough to still have one have been offered upwards of \$300 for it," Elias said.

But hikes change. Several of the original hikes were on private land, which is no longer acceptable. I gave Steve Pierce a list of hikes that I had developed; Pierce and others modified the list. He then called out to hike leaders who started walking with GPS in hand. Pierce edited the descriptions and asked others to check for accuracy.

The committee looked for variety, from short hikes to strenuous challenges.

Short – Oconaluftee River Trail – can't get much easier than that.

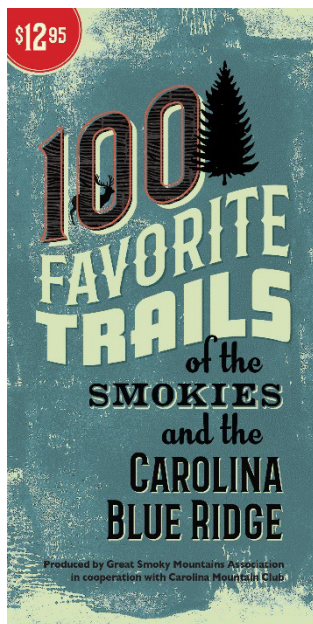
Moderate – Abrams Falls from Cades Cove, a 5.0 mile out-and-back from Cades Cove. Bridal Veil Falls from Fawn Lake in DuPont State Recreational Forest is another example.

Strenuous - Mt. Sterling via Baxter Creek Trail. 12.4 miles with a 4,200 feet of elevation gain. I'd say that's strenuous.

After two years, Pierce handed over 100 map and trail descriptions to GSMA and they took it from there. As with any publication, there was some back and forth as GSMA had questions and wanted some descriptions streamlined to 100 words. Many hikes were taken from the online CMC database where there were no word count limits.

By this time, GSMA had new leaders. Laurel Rematore became the Executive Director of GSMA and Frances Figart replaced Steve Kemp as Publications Director. There were delays as the new management settled in. But now the map is out and available to the public

CMC challenge



"This would be a good CMC challenge," Pierce says. He calculated that all the hikes put together would be 669 miles. He will pursue making it an official CMC challenge. Since so many hikes were taken from the CMC data base, the challenge will have the CMC hike number.

In case you're wondering, CMC did get a little compensation from this project – not much considering all the work and number of CMC members involved. But CMC is proud to have created the map and continue Bernard Elias' legacy.

"I am grateful that so many people stepped up and got their boots on the ground. Good, dedicated folks in the CMC." Steve Pierce, the editor of the map, said.

So, are we up to the 100 Favorite Trails challenge?