OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, ARKANSAS, INC.

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AUGUST NEWSLETTER

– Salute From the Trail –

On Friday, July 29, 2022, family and friends of Judith "Judy" Emily Woltjen gathered at the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks in Fayetteville to celebrate and pay tribute to Judy's life. If you never met her, you missed being in the presence of one of the most dynamic beings to ever set foot on this planet. She was someone who believed lessons could be learned best through hands-on experience, and this showed in her steadfast commitment to preserving and conserving our natural wonders and resources. As well, Judy played a key role in getting Congress to write and pass climate change legislation. Many in the OHTA may not know this, but Judy and her husband, Duane, spearheaded and guided the efforts to complete 32 miles of trail now known as the Sylamore section of the OHT. Thank you both!

Though intensely driven and devoted in making this world a better place for all, Judy was every bit as kind, compassionate, and caring for the well-being of others as could be imagined—she was one of a kind—and she is missed. Her husband, Duane, and all members of her family will be remembered in the prayers of the OHTA family.

Thank you, Judy, for the memories . . . Judith Emily Woltjen, May 18, 1939 – June 1, 2022

Salute to Mark Foust

Mark Foust, Superintendent of the Buffalo National River, has accepted an offer to serve as Regional Director for the Southeast Region of the National Park Service. This is a big step up for him, and he is wished only the best in his endeavors. The OHTA salutes him for his service to the BNR and for his efforts to advance the agendas of the organizations in Arkansas working to build, maintain, and promote trails for all to enjoy in this great state. Thank you Superintendent Foust!

Melissa Trenchik will serve as interim Superintendent.

(Thank you Kris McMillen and Duane Woltjen for submitting this important notice!)

– The Trail Ahead –

Board of Director's Meeting

The next Board of Director's meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 1, 2022, at 7 p.m., and it will be held by Zoom. If you have any questions about the meeting, please feel free to ask them by sending an email to OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. We'll do our best to answer your questions promptly.

There will be another Board of Director's meeting on Monday, August 15, 2022, at 7 p.m., and it, too, will be held by Zoom. If you have any questions about the meeting, please feel free to ask them by sending an email to OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. We'll do our best to answer your questions promptly.

Hare Mountain Hike-In

Grab your calendar, and enter these dates: Saturday, November 5 and Sunday, November 6. Yes, that's the weekend for the Hare Mountain Hike-In. It will be a great time for hiking, camping, socializing, and networking! For more information about this event, please send an email to OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. We'll get answers to your questions as promptly as possible.

(Thank you Bob Cable for the reminder about this event!)

Lee Creek Cleanup

Here's another worthwhile event to note on your calendar: The 2022 Lee Creek Cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, September 10, 2022, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Here's your chance to get together and spend some quality time with Devil's Den State Park officials and other folks interested in keeping our state parks pristine. This event affords you an opportunity to do something that is good not only for the environment but for your soul, as well. Lunch will be served and prizes will be handed out. All participants will meet at the Devil's Den Day Use Pavilion. If you would like to learn more about this event, please contact Justin Taylor at: jtaylor@bmswd.com

(Thank you Mike Lemaster for letting us know about this event!)

– A Look at the Trail –

New Ozark Highlands Trail Thru-Hike Distance

IT'S OFFICIAL! If you are planning a thru-hike of the Ozark Highlands Trail (OHT) and want an official OHT Thru-Hike Patch to commemorate your achievement (you can get the patch by contacting Mike Lemaster at: miker.lemaster@gmail.com), it is now important to add a couple or more days to your itinerary.

Say what?! Why?! The answer is simply that in an effort to bring greater recognition to the expansion of the OHT east of the Woolum Trailhead (located just beyond mile marker 164), the OHTA Board of Director's voted unanimously during its meeting on July 24, 2022, to increase the distance of what will, henceforth, be considered a thru-hike of the OHT. The new distance totals just over 206 miles (reference: OHT North map); the distance from Lake Fort Smith Trailhead to Dillards Ferry Trailhead (where Arkansas Hwy. 14 crosses the Buffalo River south of Yellville). The entire route can be planned using the Ozark Highlands Trail, Boston Mountains, West and the Ozark Highlands Trail, Boston Mountains, East maps, and each of these can be purchased through OHTA's online store. Just go to: ozarkhighlandstrail.com

Yes, one of these days there will be roughly 140 additional miles (most of which is already completed) of trail to the east of Dillards Ferry, but until that happens, 206 is the number! THE OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL IS GROWING!!

– The Trail Behind –

Adopt-A-Highway

The Adopt-A-Highway litter pickup scheduled for Saturday, July 16, 2022, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. went off without a hitch. Three individuals spent three hours each picking up litter along the one-mile stretch of the Pig Trail Scenic Byway (Hwy. 23) heading south from Cherry Bend Trailhead. The area certainly looks better and is cleaner because of the effort put forward by the three intrepid OHTA members who gave this endeavor their best. We all express sincere gratitude to everyone who participated in the event, and we want to extend to Steven Parker, the organizer of July's cleanup, a great big THANK YOU!!

We will do our best to notify everyone well in advance of the next cleanup event. Hope to see even more of you there!

– Overseeing the Trail –

OHTA Board for 2022 – 2023

Phil Brown (President/Eastern Chapter Rep)
Adam Higinbothom (Vice-president)
Brent Umphlett (Secretary)
Todd Wells (Treasurer)
Chris Adams (Maintenance Coordinator)
Wade Colwell (Interim Boston Mountain Chapter Rep)
Elizabeth Granderson (OHTA brochure manager)
Kerry Coe (OHTA business card manager)
Miles Jandrasevic (Maintenance Director-West Section)

As you may notice, the Board has four new directors: Kerry Coe, Miles Jandrasevic, Adam Higinbothom, and Brent Umphlett. Each of these individuals brings to the OHTA an abundance of energy, foresight, and a skill set that, together, are already producing substantial organizational growth and development! To each of you we say THANK YOU and WELCOME ABOARD!!

The Board would like to salute those who resigned their Board positions. They include (in order of resignation) Steven Parker, Rosie Koskovich, and James Hodges. We wish you all the best and are very pleased to know each of you will continue playing an active role in this organization! The OHTA benefits enormously from all each of you contributed to it through the years, and to each of you we want to say THANK YOU!!

– Refueling for the Trail –

Hankins Country Store has Reopened

Pulling a thru-hike, and today's journey takes you through Fairview Campground on Arkansas Hwy. 7? Need to pick up a few supplies or just need a break from the trail? Or, are you planning a day hike that ends near Fairview Campground? Want to grab an after-hike bite? You're in luck, because Hankins Country Store is open again for business. Located at the intersection of Highways 7, 123, and 16, just 1.5 miles south of the campground, the old general store has been in business almost continuously since 1922. And once again it is serving up homemade pizzas, sandwiches made with

Petit Jean meats, cheeses, pastries freshly baked every day, and many more gastronomic delights. If you have not checked it out, now's your chance. ENJOY!

(Thank you Michael Reed for this notice!)

– On the Trail –

From the Northeastern End

Roy Stovall attended a meeting with Corps of Engineers officials on July 21, 2022, and learned a great deal about the status of the efforts to 'close the gaps' in the Ozark Highlands Trail. Here's what he reported:

- About 289 miles of the OHT are complete. That's about 84 percent of the roughly 345 miles of trail that will exist when the gaps are gone.
- There are roughly 8 to 10 miles of gap between the Matney Trailhead and the Norfork Trailhead. Construction on this segment is awaiting final approval from state and federal agencies.
- Work on the 13-mile Norfork Trail (Norfork Lake Dam to CR1028) was started in 1992 and completed in 1998.
- Construction of the segment of the Ozark Keystone Trail running 17 miles to the north from CR1028 to Panther Creek is projected to commence in 2023 and to be completed in 2024.
- Construction of the 8-mile segment of the Ozark Keystone Trail running between Panther Creek and Robinson Point was completed in 2021.
- Construction of the 18-mile segment of the Ozark Keystone Trail known as David's Trail (Robinson Point north to Red Bank) commenced in 2007 and was completed in 2016.
- Construction of the 8-mile segment of the Ozark Keystone Trail running north from Red Bank to the Missouri border is projected to start in 2022 and to be completed in 2023.
- When completed, the Ozark Keystone Trail will run from Norfork Lake Dam to Dawt Mill in Missouri, a distance of 86 miles.
- The National Park Service has not given permission for work to commence on the connection between the OHT at Dillards Ferry to the eastern boundary of the Lower Buffalo Wilderness located roughly 1 ½ miles northwest of the Spring Creek Trailhead in the Sylamore section of the OHT. It is estimated the trail through the Lower Buffalo Wilderness will stretch close to 23 miles when completed.

Interesting Break Time Reads

Well, there were no submissions for a good trail read this time around. Sometimes, certain things do not make it into the pack. Oh well, if you have a read you'd like to share with others who enjoy trail time, please send the title and author's name to ohta@ozarkhighlandstrail.com, and it will appear in the September edition of the OHTA Newsletter. For now, we'll just kick back and enjoy a little solitude and the sounds of nature.

That's it for now! Again, here's wishing everyone a big ol' bunch of good health so we can all HIKE ONWARD!!