OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL ASSOCIATION

OHTA's Mission is to Build, Maintain, Promote, and ENJOY the Ozark Highlands Trail

FEBRUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

– Overseeing the Trail –

OHTA Board of Directors 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 membership building)
Miles Jandrasevic (Maintenance Director-West Section)

OHTA Board Meeting

- **Day, Date, and Time**: Saturday, February 11, 2023, 2 p.m.
- **Location**: Fossil Cove Brewing Company (old tap room), 1946 North Birch Avenue, Fayetteville, Arkansas

– Looking Ahead on the Trail –

A Celebration Is Brewin'

The Frost Fest of 2023 is just days away, and we're hoping you are planning to attend what is certain to be an extraordinary event. This is the first time since the onset of COVID that Arkansas' premier beer festival will be held, and it appears there are still some tickets available. The Ozark Highlands Trail Association is extra excited about this year's rain, snow, ice, or shine event because we have been designated as this year's recipient of a donation from the proceeds raised by the event. It doesn't get any better than this! Here are some of the particulars in case you want to attend the festivities:

- The 2023 Frost Fest will be held at the Washington County Fairgrounds, 2537 N. McConnell Avenue in Fayetteville on Saturday, February 4 from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- OHTA will run a booth at the Frost Fest as a way of promoting our fine organization and the Ozark Highlands Trail.
- More than 40 breweries have announced plans to have their brews available at this event.
- There will be live music featuring Fayetteville singer, yodeler, and songwriter, Nick Shoulders & OK Crawdad, and there will be other local rockers performing including The Phlegms and Vintage Pistol.
- Several local artists will be on hand selling their wares, and there will be food trucks, vendors, and more.
- Tickets to the festival are $80 for general admission, but that price increases to $90 on February 1. The $100 early-entry tickets for "beer enthusiasts" have sold out.
- To purchase tickets and to learn more, just go to https://www.fossilcovebrewing.com/frost-fest.
- And remember, the OHTA has been designated as this year's recipient of a donation from the proceeds raised by Frost Fest!

Hope to see you there!!

OHTA's Board Will Soon Be Changin'

What?! Yes, change is inevitable, and, indeed, that is true for OHTA's Board. The change we're looking at is that the term for each of three OHTA Board members ends on June 30, 2023. At this point, no one knows if any of them will nominate themselves or accept a nomination made by someone else to run as a candidate in the election to held in May 2023 (exact date is yet to be determined). Regardless, if you want to nominate yourself or some other OHTA member as a potential candidate to fill one of the three soon-to-be-vacated positions, now's the time to send your nomination to ohta@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. This year's deadline for nominations is Sunday, April 23, so there is no need for a snap decision. Give yourself some time to think about it, but please do give a run for a Board position some serious thought. If you decide you want to toss your hat into the ring, then please send a photo and a brief bio along with your announcement. Are you wondering if you're eligible to run for a seat on the Board? Well, wonder no more! If you are an OHTA member, that right there makes you a viable candidate. Hope to be hearing from you!

2023 Brewha Bushwhack

The OHTA will have a booth at this year's Brewha Bushwhack scheduled for Saturday, April 1, 2023. The exact details of the event are yet to be published, but here's the gist of what we know at this point:

- Brewha Bushwhack will take place Saturday, April 1st at Byrd's Adventure Center (people often arrive the day before and camp out)
- The race itself takes place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the festival and vendors setting up from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. Racers will be finishing around 5 p.m. and can then enjoy seeing the vendors and sampling or interacting with their products.
- There will be a dinner from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., and awards will be presented right after the meal. (these times are tentative and subject to slight changes)
- Please bring a reusable plate and utensils if you plan on partaking in the dinner Saturday night.

The Brewha Bushwhack is not a race in the traditional sense. Instead, it is viewed as a team-based adventure challenge: What you know is more important than how fast you are. While there are physical challenges that will test your endurance, the goal is to push the limit of the teams' diversity of skills and what can be accomplished together. Make your own path, and set your own pace – the Brewha Bushwhack is a challenge based on points, not time. Up to 150 racers or 45 teams will compete in this year's challenge. So if you believe you have a team together and are up for the competition, here's a link to the site where you can register:

https://packratoc.com/products/brewha-bushwhack-competitor-registration-2023?variant=40220797468770

Hare Mountain Hike-In Is Getting Closer

Really! We understand that this event is still several months off, but another month has passed as we inch our way closer to the Hare Mountain Hike-In. So mark your calendar for Saturday and Sunday, November 4 and 5. Again, as was the case in 2022, so, too, it will be in 2023: THERE WILL BE A POTLUCK DINNER. In addition, the winners for the Maintainer of the Year Award, the Dawna Robinson Member of the Year Award, and the Trail Ranger Award (a lifetime achievement award) will be announced (presentations will be made if the recipients are in attendance). We're confident we can make this year's event one for the record books. Hope to see you there!

Rumblings of Spring Maintenance Base Camps

Yes, rumors persist that we may see some more maintenance base camps this coming spring. Given the huge success of last October's three base camps, there have been some rumblings that more are on the

way. There's no firm information about these at the moment, but you can rest assured that as soon as anything becomes certain about these, ya'll will be hearing about it. So stay tuned!

− Progress On the Trail −

Ozark Keystone Trail

Progress continues being made on the Ozark Keystone Trail (OKT), the nearly 100 miles of trail (once fully completed from Norfork Dam in Arkansas to Dawt Mill in Missouri) that will connect the Ozark Highlands Trail (OHT) with the Ozark Trail (OT) in Missouri. Two additional miles of trail headed north from Red Bank to the Missouri border have been completed, and this leaves just six miles of trail to be constructed before this particular section is finished (projected completion date is 2023).

For the time being, though, the focus of the work has shifted from construction to maintenance of the 18 miles of the OKT known as David's Trail. What many may not understand is that the grants that fund construction of the OKT also fund maintenance of the trail. This is due to the brilliant grant writing that has been performed through the years by one of OHTA's members, the man behind the plan, the founder of the non-profit, Ozark Keystone Trail Endowment (OKTE), Jackson Rhoades. Great work, Jackson!!

And while we're at it, seems only fitting to give a few more big shout-outs to some folks working behind the scenes on the OKT. The first bit of recognition goes to two more of our members who have been working tirelessly behind the scenes to assure completion of this wonderful trail: Roy Stovall and James Hodges. Since James relocated to Colorado, Roy has assumed the position as the point person assisting Jackson in his endeavors. It is my understanding that Roy consults with James on a fairly regular basis about the intricacies of navigating the world of trail construction. In addition, Jackson has a point person who, without a doubt, is indispensable. Her name is Becca Martin, and any time information about the OKT is needed, Becca is but an email, text, or phone call away. We couldn't ask for a more knowledgeable and positive person with whom to communicate! Thank you, Becca! Finally, few of us have ever heard of this individual, Ted Weichselbaum. He is the individual who performs virtually all of the OKT construction. The proposed course of the trail gets flagged, and from that point on, Ted turns the proposed route into actual trail. To you, Ted, we say thanks!

− On the Trail −

Aftermath of January's Snowstorm

As you head out on the trail in the days and weeks ahead, please be careful by taking a little extra time to scan the world around you, especially that in the tree tops above your head. Reports of the damage to trees along almost the entirety of the OHT have been rolling in, and it appears the toll taken by the storm is substantial. Notice has already gone out to all maintainers to do their best to get out to their adopted sections and survey the damage, remove as much of the carnage from the trail as possible, and to report the location of the deadfalls (e.g. entire trees, broken treetops and limbs) that are too big to remove with a handsaw or sheer muscle power. Sawyers have been informed of the conditions, and many of them have already headed out or are making plans to hit the trail soon to remove the big stuff. We have a very capable team of maintainers and sawyers, and a team approach is what is needed to clear the nearly 240 miles of completed trail impacted by the heavy snowfall. With that noted, we can all chip in and be team players by removing small limbs and other debris from the trail as we're out hiking and backpacking. A little done by each of us can and will go a long way toward restoring the navigability of the OHT corridor.

There is one more thing each of us can do as we set out on our journey down the trail, and that is to make sure our vehicle does not block the vehicles already parked at the trailhead. Yes, some of the trailheads may be a little more congested than usual due to the increased presence of maintenance crews. So let's all do our best to make everyone's efforts to maintain and enjoy the trail as pleasant and doable as possible.

− Relaxing Trailside −

Interesting Breaktime Read

- *Ditties: Whispers, Shadows, and Sunshine* by E. B. Eberhart (Nimblewill Nomad)

PLEASE NOTE: If you have a read or two 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 next edition of the OHTA Newsletter.

To each and all, here's wishing you amazing health, fantastic journeys spent with those who are very special to you, a plethora of unforgettable memories of those journeys, and trail time in abundance!

Quote for the month: May the forest be with you! -- author unknown

Until we have the pleasure of meeting again,
HIKE ONWARD!!

THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING A PART OF THE OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL ASSOCIATION!!