

# OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL ASSOCIATION

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

## MARCH 2023 NEWSLETTER

### – Overseeing the Trail –

#### OHTA Board of Directors for 2022-2023

Phil Brown (President/Eastern Chapter Rep)  
Adam Higinbotham (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 Jandrsevich (Maintenance Director-West Section)

#### OHTA Annual Meeting

- **Day, Date, and Time:** Saturday, April 22, 2023, approximately 7 p.m.
- **Location:** Quarry Pavilion-1, north end of the dam on Norfolk Lake (very near the shore of Norfolk Lake and within walking distance of the group camping area)

### – Notable Achievements on the Trail –

#### Awarding Lovers of the Trail

Most of those who spend a good deal of time on the trail do so because it is their passion. They seek no recognition for what they do, and their reward for putting one foot in front of the other while nature looks on is something unique to the individual. Now and then, though, one's passion gets turned into a goal to achieve what very few, if any, have. When that happens, there may be a reward beyond personal satisfaction, and for one of our members, such has been the case. That member is Wade Colwell, and the goal he hiked many miles to achieve was the Sassafras Hiking Award. The organization bestowing this award is The Ozark Society, and 2023 marks the first year this award was handed out. And as it turns out, Wade is the very first recipient of the award!

So, what's it take to earn the Sassafras? Here are the criteria:

- Hike the following 4 trails:
  - Ouachita Trail (Talimena State Park to Pinnacle Mountain State Park)
  - Ozark Highlands Trail (Lake Fort Smith State Park to Woolum and Spring Creek to Matney Knob)
  - Buffalo River Trail (Boxley to Pruitt and Woolum to Dillard's Ferry)
  - Ozark Trail (Western Trailhead of Eleven Point Section to Onondaga Trailhead)
- Completion of all four trails is accomplished as thru hikes or section hikes
- The hikes can be conducted on different trails at different times and in any direction
- Previously completed hikes qualify for the award

Wade, YOU DID IT, and the OHTA wants to recognize what you accomplished with a great big CONGRATULATIONS!!! Thanks goes out, as well, to The Ozark Society for coming up with a way of giving special recognition to those whose achievements go above and beyond!

If you would like to learn more about the Sassafras Hiking Award, please direct your questions to [stewartnoldand51@aol.com](mailto:stewartnoldand51@aol.com). To learn more about The Ozark Society, just go to [www.ozarksociety.net](http://www.ozarksociety.net). It is a great organization that is all about conservation, education, and recreation!

## – Looking Ahead on the Trail –

### OHTA's Board Will Soon Be Changin'

Yes, changes to OHTA's board are coming, and so, too, are changes to the deadline for nominating someone or for announcing your own candidacy. Why the change in the deadline? Well, it is during the annual meeting of our organization that the newly elected members of the board are announced. And it is on Saturday, April 22, 2023, during this year's Rendezvous that the annual meeting is scheduled. That having been noted, the deadline is now midnight, Sunday, March 19, 2023. That's just three weeks away! So, please, if you want to contribute to this organization by being on the board of director's, send a brief bio of yourself along with your picture to [ohata@ozarkhighlandstrail.com](mailto:ohata@ozarkhighlandstrail.com).

And before we forget, the election commences on Monday, March 27, 2023, and will end at midnight, Friday, April 7, 2023.

### 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 (if any spots remain open):

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

### Let's All Rendezvous

The 2023 OHTA Rendezvous is on for April 21, 22, and 23 at Quarry Park (located near the dam of Norfolk Lake). Here are the particulars:

- Group Area 1 has been reserved by OHTA for those who want to camp there on Friday night and/or Saturday night, April 21 and 22. Group Area 1 will support up to 120 people with tent and RV (limited) camping allowed. Also, there is a restroom in the group area.
- Pavilion Area 1 has been reserved by OHTA for the catered meal (no charge for those in attendance) scheduled for the evening of Saturday, April 22. The OHTA annual meeting will follow the meal, and we're hoping to have a speaker or two for the meeting.

- There will be a get-together for all who want to attend at Norfolk Brewing Company in the town of Norfolk on Friday evening, April 21, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- A hike is scheduled for Saturday morning, April 22 (start time to be determined). The hike will start at Matney Trailhead, and we'll travel to Matney Camp on the bank of the White River. We'll have lunch at the camp and then return to Matney Trailhead.
- A hike is scheduled for Sunday morning, April 23 (start time to be determined). The hike will be along two sections of the Norfolk Trail that run from Sycamore Highlands to Norfolk Dam for a total distance of about 5.2 miles (if the group prefers, we can cut the distance in half).

## **IMPORTANT NOTICES**

1. If you are planning to attend this year's Rendezvous, please contact us as soon as possible and no later than April 1 at [ohata@ozarkhighlandstrail.com](mailto:ohata@ozarkhighlandstrail.com) so we can make arrangements for catering Saturday evening's meal. Please let us know the number of folks who will be in your group.
2. If you're planning on camping in a travel trailer or motorhome at Dam-Quarry Campground (the campground that is adjacent to Norfolk River), you may want to reserve a spot as soon as possible. A quick check today of site availability on April 21 and 22 revealed there are only 3 sites left that provide both water and electricity. There are still several sites that provide electricity (you'd have to fill your tank at the water station).
3. If you'd prefer not to attend the Rendezvous but would like to join either or both of the hikes, you are very welcome to do so!

We hope to have a record-breaking turnout this year for the Rendezvous, but even if we don't, it will be complete as long as you are there!

## **Hare Mountain Hike-In Is Getting Closer**

Yes, there is no doubt that November remains a long way off, but with each passing day, the Hare Mountain Hike-In grows closer and will be here before we know it. So be sure and mark your calendar (if you haven't already) 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**

Indeed, rumors continue echoing about the possibility of there being more maintenance base camps scheduled for this coming spring. Given the huge success of last October's three base camps and the fact that there is still a great deal of debris clearing to be done on the OHT, rumblings of more base camps coming persist. Though there is no firm information about these at the moment, please be patient because the OHTA Maintenance Coordinator has been cutting through debris up over his sawyer chops in an effort to get the OHT back into full, unimpeded operation. So stay tuned!

**- Looking Back on the Trail -**

## **A Celebration of Brewin' to be Remembered**

Fossil Cove Brewing Company's Frost Fest of 2023 has come and gone. This year's event, the first Frost Fest to be held since the onset of COVID, was a spectacular celebration of brews and food enjoyed by several thousand brew enthusiasts. As we announced in the February 2023 Newsletter, the OHTA was designated as one of this year's recipients of a donation from the proceeds raised by Frost Fest! Well, Fossil Cove meant business and did nothing less than make a remarkably substantial donation to the

OHTA. What we'll receive will make it possible for our organization to assure the viability of the OHT for years to come.

### **Thank you Fossil Cove Brewing Company!!**

You're superb, and we'd encourage everyone to stop in and try each of your brews!  
Please, though, take a DD with you or call an Uber to pick you up.  
They have a lot of very tasty brews!

#### **- On the Trail -**

### **Addressing the Aftermath of January's Snowstorm**

The Ozark Highlands Trail Association (OHTA) wants to thank every single person who has gone out on the OHT since the snowstorm and reported back to the OHTA Maintenance Coordinator the trail conditions they encountered. Yes, the information has been coming in, and as long as there is debris of any sort blocking the trail we want to hear about it. We've also had tons of reports from hikers about them taking matters into their own hands and removing what they could by hand as they navigated the trail. To them, we say THANK YOU, as well.

In response to the plethora of trail condition reports that have streamed in, OHTA maintainers, sawyers, and swampers (sawyer assistants) have been hitting the hot spots with diligence every weekend since the storm. We are very pleased to announce that the debris-free sections of trail are steadily increasing in length, but the work is not complete. There are sections where the debris has, as yet, not been cleared, and as long as the reports flow in, there will be folks out there to assure that hiking the OHT can be done as hassle free as possible.

Once again, here's a little reminder of the importance of making sure our vehicles do not block the vehicles already parked at the trailhead. That some of the trailheads may be a little more congested than usual due to the increased presence of maintenance crews remains a possibility. So let's all chip in and do our best to make everyone's efforts to maintain and enjoy the trail as pleasant and doable as is possible.

#### **- Something Other Than the Trail -**

### **Mulberry River Cleanup**

It may be a little late to work this into your schedule, but if you have some spare time on Saturday, March 4, 2023, and you're itching for something to fill the void, the annual Mulberry River Cleanup is right around the corner. This is a very worthwhile, fun event in which many folks from the trail community participate. If you want to learn more, here's the link: <https://www.turnerbend.com/Mulberry-River-Clean-Up.html>

#### **- Relaxing Trailside -**

### **Interesting Breaktime Reads**

- *Dirt Work: An Education in the Woods* by Christine Byl
- *Ramble On: How Hiking Became One of the Most Popular Outdoor Activities in the World - Second Edition* by Jeffrey J. Doran

Here's a press release on *Ramble On – Second Edition*

"*Ramble On: How Hiking Became One of the Most Popular Outdoor Activities in the World*" expands on the first broad historical overview of hiking.

KNOXVILLE, TN - How did hiking evolve from the upper-class European sport of alpinism and the publication of an English travel guide, into an activity that now has millions of participants all over the world? What roles did the Industrial Revolution play in the development of hiking as a major pastime?

Jeff Doran answers these, and many other key questions. The second edition of his book, *Ramble On*, chronicles hiking's roots in alpinism and mountaineering, the societal trends that fostered its growth, some of the early hikers from the nineteenth century, the first trails built specifically for recreational hiking, the formation of the first hiking clubs, as well as the evolution of hiking gear and apparel. The book also includes several anecdotal stories of trail development in some of our oldest and most iconic national parks, as well as the peculiar traditions of some of the early hiking clubs. The book also discusses the mores of the Victorian Era, which dictated what women could and could not wear while hiking. In fact, Doran remarked that "One of the most compelling stories I found was the apparel women were forced to wear during the Victorian Era, and the danger those fashion standards posed to women who dared to venture into the mountains."

Praise for the first edition: "Doran weaves the social, cultural, industrial, and political milieu into this fascinating history. Amusing, astonishing, and sometimes alarming anecdotes . . . make this a fascinating and significant account of the history of hiking." - Priscilla Estes, *Appalachian Footnotes*, Winter 2018-2019, Delaware Valley Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club

**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 [ohata@ozarkhighlandstrail.com](mailto:ohata@ozarkhighlandstrail.com), and it will appear in the next edition of the OHTA Newsletter.

**To each and all, may your journey be both fulfilling and exhilarating, may your health and the world be kind to you along the way, and may you travel with those most special to you. Move forward down the trail of life and return with nothing less than an abundance of joy and very special memories!**

Quote for the month: *A walk in nature, walks the soul back home.* -- Mary Davis

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

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