OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL ASSOCIATION

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

APRIL 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 2023 Annual Meeting

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

– Looking Ahead on the Trail –

OHTA's Board Is Changing

The 2023 election of individuals to fill the three board of director positions being created by the expiration of the terms of three current board members is underway! In fact, it started on Monday, March 27, 2023, and it will run through Friday, April 7, 2023. If your membership was current at the start of the election and the OHTA had your current email address, then you almost certainly received an online ballot. For each member who has not supplied OHTA with an email address, a paper ballot has been sent to their home address. Each member has until midnight on Friday, April 7, 2023, to cast their vote online or to mail in their vote for up to three of the five candidates running for a board position. The winners of this year's election will be announced during the OHTA 2023 Annual Meeting. Hope to see you there!

2023 Brewha Bushwhack

The Ozark Highlands Trail Association is staffing a booth at this year's Brewha Bushwhack scheduled for Saturday, April 1, 2023. Here's what it's all about:

- Brewha Bushwhack will take place on 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 to partake of 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 your team's diversity of skills and ability to work together. Archery, fire building, canoe paddling, knot tying, climbing, rappelling, and identification of local plants and animal tracks are among the skills to be demonstrated by each team. So a team with varied skill sets is a must! Make your own path; set your own pace – the Brewha Bushwhack is a challenge based on points, not time.

Registration for teams composed of adults is closed, but it appears that children can still be registered for the "Kid's Quest 2023." So, if you want to learn more about this year's Bushwhack, simply go to the following link: https://packratoc.com/collections/brewha-bushwhack-2023-registration

Let's All Rendezvous

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

- Group Area 1 (the group campground) 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. We were informed that those camping in tents can pitch their tent anywhere in the group site, and many of the tent sites have picnic tables. It is first come, first served. Check-in time is 4 p.m.
- Pavilion Area 1 has been reserved by OHTA for the catered meal scheduled for 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 22. The meal is open for OHTA members only, and it is free to those who attend. Please note that if you want to take part in the meal, please let us know as soon as possible at ohta@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. We have to report the total number of meals necessary to prepare to the caterer by April 14. 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 at Norfork Brewing Company on Friday evening, April 21, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. for all who want to attend. The brewery is located at 13980 Hwy. 5 in the town of Norfork, Arkansas.
- A hike is scheduled for Saturday, April 22, at 9:30 a.m., and it is open to everyone. Everyone will meet at Matney Trailhead, and from there we'll hike to Matney Camp on the bank of the White River. Remember to bring a sack lunch and/or snacks to devour while at the camp, and then we'll all hike back to Matney Trailhead.
- A hike is scheduled for Sunday, April 23, at 9:30 a.m., and it, too, is open to everyone. Everyone will meet at Group Area 1. The hike will be along the two sections of the Norfork Trail that run from Sycamore Highlands to Norfork Dam, a 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 14 at ohta@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 Norfork River), you may want to reserve a spot as soon as possible.
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

Count ‘em down . . . seven months. That puts you into November and on the trail to the Hare Mountain Hike-In scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, November 4 and 5. Again: THERE WILL BE A POTLUCK DINNER. In addition, the recipients of OHTA’s annual awards will be announced, and each will be presented with their award if they are in attendance. We remain confident we can make this year’s event one for the record books. Hope to see you there!

Rumblings of Spring Maintenance Base Camps

Okay, sometimes rumors are just that . . . rumors. Indeed, it has been confirmed that the faint whispers of there being maintenance base camps this spring were nothing more than rumors. However, it was heard from a reliable source that strong consideration is being given to putting together one or more maintenance base camps this fall! So stay tuned!

− On the Trail −

Addressing the Aftermath of January’s Snowstorm

Volunteers from the Ozark Highlands Trail Association (OHTA) have come from near and far and worked diligently to clear the miles and miles of trail that were blocked by the debris left on the forest floor by January’s snowstorm. And because of the dedication to the trail shown by our volunteers (and by the many hikers who removed debris as they journeyed along the OHT), we can proudly say that nearly 95 percent of the OHT is now unobstructed and fully navigable. We have but one thing to say about this remarkable accomplishment, and that is:

THANKS TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU!
YA’LL ARE AWESOME!

Calling All Hands to Cherry Bend

Great news!! Ozark Highlands Trail Association has approval from the United States Forest Service to reopen the Ozark Highlands Trail from Cherry Bend to Fly Gap! It will take some rerouting around the landslide and some cleanup work, but the trail can be reopened to hikers. So it is time for volunteers to organize and get to work on the job that needs doing!

Here’s the announcement of the first workday scheduled:

Date: Friday April 7 (this is a one-day event)
Location: Ozark Highlands Trail west of Cherry Bend Trailhead (by pipeline section)
Type of Work: Mainly sidehilling, widening the tread, and possible step building
Tools: Loppers, Pulaski, McLeod, Fire Rake (all tools will be provided)
What to Bring: Gloves, sturdy boots, plenty of water, lunch/snacks, small backpack (safety helmets and gloves will be provided, if needed)
Meeting Time and Location: 8:30a.m. - Meet at the intersection of Hwy. 23 and West Fly Gap Road. This is about 1 mile north of Cherry Bend Trailhead, on Hwy. 23. From there we will carpool, drive down West Fly Gap Road for about a mile, and then turn south onto a Forest Road to get closer to the OHT.

If you’re interested in pitching in and getting this project going in good fashion, please contact our OHTA Maintenance Coordinator at ohtmaintenance@gmail.com. The more volunteers we have, the more trail damage we can repair, and the sooner we’ll finish!

More questions? Please feel free to also contact Miles Jandrasevic at Mjandras@yahoo.com or Pulaski master, Wade Colwell at wadeccolwell@gmail.com.

− Appreciation from the Trail −

All too often it is all too easy to overlook the hard work done for our trail by groups outside our organization. And when it comes to the personnel of federal agencies like the United States Forest Service, many of us are quick to diminish the importance of what they do for the trail and the surrounding terrain by viewing the role they play as something they "should" do. After all, they work for 'we the people,' don't they?

Well those of us who have spent time in the Sylamore Ranger District, the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, have become quite aware that the personnel of the Sylamore Ranger District are working for the betterment of the OHT and our organization, the Ozark Highlands Trail Association. If you've hiked on the Sylamore section of the OHT recently, you may have observed some of the most glaringly obvious examples of what they are doing for our trail. For instance, a new Matney Trailhead sign has replaced the old sign that was demolished a few months ago by an out-of-control vehicle. Then, USFS personnel installed two signs guiding users of the trail to the Cripple Turkey Trailhead. Out of sight of the trail but nonetheless beneficial to the trail is the provision of training for OHTA sawyers seeking sawyer recertification. In addition, there are plans in the works by the USFS to provide instruction to OHTA maintainers seeking first-time certification as a sawyer. The list goes on and on, of course, and with all of this firmly in mind, it is clearly important for we the members of the OHTA to pause for a moment and express our appreciation to the personnel of the Sylamore Ranger District. They are their for us all, and to them we want to say . . .

THANK YOU USFS PERSONNEL!
YOU ROCK!

− Relaxing Trailside −

Interesting Breaktime Read

- *Brackish* by Nicole Bethune Winters

Nicole wrote brackish over a period of four years, during which she moved across the country. This collection of poems is a compilation of memories, dreams, and explorations. It contemplates relationships, and functions as a processing of everyday life, while weaving its own narrative, and serving almost as an ode to nature. In this collection, Winters navigates the mixing and combining of all of these facets - the way that *Brackish* is a mix of fresh and salt water - and how that essentially amounts to the human experience.

Praise for *Brackish*

In her debut collection *Brackish*, Nicole Winters calls forward the natural world with fractured and compounding registers of exaltation. These poems, like the speaker whose "palms open to constellations," seek a confluence of mysteries within and beyond the self. Through meditations on recurring lunar cycles, churning ocean currents, and the falling bodies of ospreys cast high above surging rivers, Winters skillfully channels a music that is, above all, celebratory and resounds with a powerful and insistent desire to listen as "the whole earth sings." — Jon Pineda, author of *Little Anodynes*

In Nicole Winters' debut collection, *Brackish*, we wade into a meditation of a life told through the sea. Each poem in this collection carries the myth, mystery, and beauty of the ocean, but also the personal—I'm anchored to/a piece of me buried/between sea & sand;/it pulls the moon. Place and persona weave

together to create precise postcards rich with images and story that make you feel the sand on your fingertips, your skin salted/by rough waves. These are poems that were written to be dived into; Winters' words are like sweet prayers reminding us, the sun buries us in light.
— Kelli Russell Agodon, author of *Dialogues with Rising Tide*s (Copper Canyon Press)

"Brackish reads like a literary photo album of minimalist snapshots that freeze the reader in time and nudge her into a meditative state. Sometimes it is an intimate glance at the quotidian rituals of family life; sometimes it is a contemporary landscape rendered with the light touch of a voice that feels as though it came from a more ancient civilization; but always the love of language is there, beckoning."
— Kathleen Balma, librarian at New Orleans Public Library and author of *What the Traveler Knows*

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, may your journey rejuvenate the spirit within you, may your health be cooperative and the world comfort you along the way, and may you trek with those most special to you by your side. 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

"Several small clouds drifted through the sky. When one of them passed before the moon, the world's filter changed. First my hands were silver and the ground was black. Then my hands were black and the ground silver. So we switched, as I walked, from negative to positive to negative, as the clouds passed before the moon." — Robert Macfarlane, *The Wild Places*

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

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