



FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL ASSOCIATION

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

- Overseeing the Trail -

OHTA Board of Director for 2023-2024

Phil Brown (President/Eastern Chapter Rep)
Adam Higinbothom (Vice-president)
Brent Umphlett (Secretary/Website Coordinator)
Todd Wells (Treasurer)
Chris Adams (Maintenance Coordinator)

Wade Colwell (Interim Boston Mountain Chapter Rep)
Miles Jandrsevick (Maintenance Director-West Section)
Tiffany Mallard (Social Media and Promotions Coordinator)
Peter Cooper (Interim Member)

- Looking Ahead on the Trail -

Frost Fest 2024

Yes, Frost Fest is suddenly just a few days away, and this year's event promises to be every bit as good as if not better than any of its predecessors!

As was noted in the previous two editions of OHTA's newsletter, Frost Fest 2024 is scheduled for Saturday, February 3, 2024, at the Washington County Fairgrounds in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Again, this year's event will host over 2000 attendees, well over 50 breweries from across the region, food trucks, bands and vendors for what will be a true celebration of craft beer, art, and community. And, of course, Frost Fest will take place regardless of the weather! In other words, it will not be canceled due to rain, snow, ice, cold, or shine.

Early entry tickets are sold out (early entry is from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.), but general admission (GA) and designated driver (DD) tickets (entry starts at 3 p.m.) are still available at <https://stubs.net/event/5664/frost-fest-2024-outdoor-beer-festival>. To purchase a designated driver ticket, you must be at least 21 years of age and possess a valid ID for entry. Designated drivers will be allowed to enjoy all things Frost Fest except beer sampling. There are a limited number of DD tickets available, and DD ticket sales end when GA tickets are sold out. Each GA ticket includes a sampling glass and access to all breweries, vendors, art, live music and more! All activities end at 7 p.m. sharp!

Fossil Cove Brewing Company of Fayetteville has put on Frost Fest since 2016 not just as a one-day outdoor beer festival but as a way of supporting organizations they believe make our region a better place to live. Ozark Highlands Trail Association is very honored to have the good fortune of being able to announce that for the second year running, it has been chosen to be among those organizations! Yes, that means each of you who has made this organization a part of your life is playing a key role in the OHTA becoming an organization deserving recognition!

So, a big, huge THANKS goes out to every single one of our members! And, once again, please step out of your door and with all of your might loudly express added appreciation by shouting:

THANK YOU FOSSIL COVE BREWING COMPANY!!!

Remember, this is a BYOP* event. We hope to see you all there!

* bring your own pretzels

Ozark Highlands Endurance Run

Since 2016 (there was no race in 2017), the Ozark Highlands Endurance Run has been one of this country's premier endurance events. Athletes ranging in age from 19 to 70 have come from no less than 14 states across our great country to participate in this event which is, for the most part, run on our very own Ozark Highlands Trail (OHT).

This year's race will feature two distances for runners—35K and 50K. All participants will start at Norfolk River Resort, proceed towards the Ozark Highlands Trail via 2.7 miles of rolling roads, and they will run the same route. The difference is that those running the 35K will turn around at Twin Creek Road Aid Station, while the 50K runners will make their turnaround at the 25K point on the course.

There will be three aid stations on the route, and we're proud to announce that OHTA will be staffing the one at Twin Creek Road. Tiffany Mallard has volunteered to lead the charge at this aid station and will gladly accept assistance from anyone who would like to help out. Volunteering will provide you a great opportunity to meet some very interesting and accomplished individuals and to learn more about OHT's Sylamore Section.

If you've been itching to do a little volunteering and believe this would be a good fit for you, here are the particulars on how to make this happen:

- Event: Ozark Highlands Endurance Run
- Day and Date: Saturday, March 2nd, 2024
- Meeting Place: Norfolk River Resort or contact Tiffany to make other arrangements
- Time: 7:30 am
- Aid Station Time Commitment: 8:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
- Contact Info: Tiffany Mallard at tmallard52@gmail.com or 479-461-9796

OHTA's Adopt-A-Highway Project

The Ozark Highland's Trail Association's Adopt-A-Highway project will soon launch a new season of trash pickup along OHTA's Adopt-A-Highway section of Highway 23. For years the project was overseen by Mike Lemaster, but he decided it was time for him to move on toward other pursuits in his life. Word was sent out to all of our organization's members asking if anyone would be interested in taking on this program, and as good fortune would have it, Randy Soeung stepped up to the plate. In fact, he has already scheduled the first project and is looking for volunteers to help make this a big success! So, if you would like to get out, shake off the winter chill, and play a big role in sprucing up one mile of roadway south of the OHT Cherry Bend Trailhead, here is some important information for you to have:

- Day and Time: Saturday, Feb 17, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.
- Meeting Place: Cherry Bend Trailhead on the Ozark Highlands Trail (OHT) on Highway 23
- Contact Info: Randy Soeung at Randyly80@gmail.com or 479-595-2281

NOTE: Please let our new Adopt-A-Highway coordinator, Randy Soeung, know in advance that you plan to participate. Doing so will allow him to have all the tools and necessary gear ready for the number of folks who will be there. This will be a great opportunity for you to meet and interact with like-minded folks, so come one, come all!

OHTA Board of Director Election

In 2024, we have three board members whose terms expire on June 30: Wade Colwell, Brent Umphlett, and Miles Jandrsevici.

At this time, no date has been set for the election, but plans are in the works for holding it during the first or second week of April. Of course, there is always the possibility that some of those with expiring terms will choose to run for another three-year term, but no one has tipped their hand at this time. Regardless, if serving on the

OHTA board is something you'd like to take on, now is the time to get a brief bio prepared and a photo taken. Just as soon as the details for the election are finalized, we will be letting you know.

Proposed Bylaw Change

During the December 3, 2023, board of directors meeting, concerns were raised about the wording of **Section 7: Vacancies** of OHTA's Bylaws that were last revised on May 12, 2018. Section 7 reads as follows:

Section 7: Vacancies

Whenever a vacancy shall occur, by any reason, on the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors shall after the occurrence of such vacancy, at the next regular or called Association meeting, proceed to elect by a majority vote of the Association members, a Director to serve the unexpired term.

The following points supporting a change to Section 7 were presented:

- Section 7 is confusing in its wording, and calling an Association meeting to fill a vacated board position is not practical.
- It is more practical that the vacancy be addressed at the next scheduled board meeting or at a board of directors meeting scheduled solely for the purpose of addressing the vacancy.
- Proceeding to elect an interim board member (an OHTA member who can fill the vacated position for either the remainder of the fiscal year in which the vacated position occurred or the time left in the term being served by the board member vacating their position) would be most practical if done by the board of directors.

Below is Section 7, as it currently reads, followed by the proposed revision to the section:

Section 7: Vacancies

~~Whenever a vacancy shall occur, by any reason, on the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors shall after the occurrence of such vacancy, at the next regular or called Association meeting, proceed to elect by a majority vote of the Association members, a Director to serve the unexpired term.~~

Proposed revision: Whenever a vacancy shall occur, by any reason, on the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors shall, after the occurrence of such vacancy, at the next Board of Directors meeting or called Annual Association meeting, whichever comes first, proceed to elect by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, a Director to serve the unexpired term as an Interim Director.

The aforementioned proposed revision to OHTA's Bylaws will be discussed and voted on by the members present at the 2024 annual meeting/Rendezvous. At this time, no date has been set for the meeting, but planning for holding it in the latter part of April has commenced.

- On the Trail -

The media coordinator for OHTA, Tiffany Mallard, mentioned in December 2023 that she would like to initiate a series of posts on social media she is calling, "Name That Spot." Each post would consist of a photo taken at an iconic spot on the OHT. Those visiting OHTA's social media platform(s) would be able to comment on the photo and submit their best guess about the location of the spot shown in the photo.

For this project to be launched, photos are needed, so if you have a photo of a special place on the OHT and want to be a part of this exciting venture, please submit it to tmallard52@gmail.com. Here's the information that's important to include with each photo you send:

- name of the spot
- approximate mileage of its location along the OHT
- cool history/information about the location
- anything fun/relevant about the location

It's time to roll out the "Name That Spot" contest, so may the pictures start flowing in!!

OHT – Ozarks Keystone Trail (OKT) and Beyond

The Ozark Highlands Trail Association and our sister organization, the Ozark Trail Association, recently received an update from Jackson Rhoades, Chair of the Ozarks Keystone Trail Endowment, regarding a number of issues pertaining to progress being made toward completing the Ozarks Keystone Trail. The update started out in a somewhat discouraging fashion, but being the consummate professional he is, Jackson kept his determination alive and himself focused on the big picture. Here's the gist of what Jackson had to say:

The OKT Endowment (OKTE) did not receive the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grants from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or the Arkansas Trails Council/ARDOT.

While we are disappointed, it's worth noting that they are highly competitive, and we can celebrate the increased enthusiasm for trail building in Missouri and Arkansas!

Nevertheless, we are determined to continue enriching and expanding the OKT, focusing on the 40-mile Ozark Highlands Trail Lake Norfolk section from Panther Creek Bridge (CR 396) north to Missouri. We anticipate increased K-12 visits from local schools as our partnerships move beyond COVID complications. Our focus on well-being and encouraging an active lifestyle includes getting kids active, outside, and on the Trail for outdoor education and recreation. Additionally, the Baxter County Road and Bridge Department has agreed to help install school bus parking for easier and safer trailhead access!

We are pleased (and excited!) to announce the OKT has three more miles of Trail, extending to the ArkMo state line from the US-Army Corps of Engineers (COE) Niles Landing Gate off CR44 near Gamaliel, Arkansas. This achievement reflects our team's dedication, hard work, and partnerships with you and our communities. Our collaboration with the Ozark Trail Association (OTA) in Missouri and Ozark Highlands Trail Association (OHTA) in Arkansas provides tangible progress towards our Trans-Ozark Trail (TOT) aspirations! The Arkansas Master Naturalists, North Central Chapter, is a keystone partner for maintenance, signage, fun, and enthusiasm. And they are leading the way with tree tags and blazes for the OKT and Spur Trails.

Furthermore, we are happy to report that we are working on the steep and narrow two-mile section from Bean Bluff to Niles Landing, aiming for spring completion, weather permitting. Once finished, this offers a pleasant Red Bank (CR41) to Niles Landing (CR44) 6-mile section hike (or a shorter out-and-back from Niles) to experience Bean Bluff, an especially scenic place (ESP) with a big vista (BV).

Please note NOBO (northbound) section hikers can find many ways to segment the OKT's completed 40 miles; however, while the ArkMO state line has an interesting architectural shoreline concrete marker, there is no public access other than the 3-mile hike from the gate at Niles.

The ongoing development of this trail section is a testament to our commitment to providing an enriching outdoor experience that promotes well-being, healthy lifestyles, and educational opportunities.

We have heartfelt gratitude for your ongoing support and encouragement. Although RTP grants can accelerate our Missouri and Arkansas thru-trail progress, we are optimistic about the next 50 miles of the OKT and hope to find funding to complete and maintain the 90-mile Dam-to-Dawt northern end of the Ozarks Highland Trail and the southern end of the Ozark Trail.

We'll keep you periodically updated on our trail development initiatives. We sincerely appreciate your continued partnership as we strive to begin work on the Panther Creek to Buzzard Roost section later this year.

Thanks again for your support!

Jackson, Becca, and Roy
OKTE, an IRS 501c(3) public charity [EIN 33-1175617]

P.S. TOT = OHT + OKT + OT. [David's Trail is the 20-mile center of the OKT, from COE's Robinson Point Campground to Red Bank Boat Launch]

Jackson, Becca Martin, and Roy Stovall, thanks to each of you for your hard work, dedication, and determination to fill the remaining gaps in the northern sections of the OHT! It is through efforts like yours that the OHT and OT will one day be joined and become the Trans-Ozark Trail! Our hats are off to you all!!

– A Farewell Wave From the Trail –

The OHTA recently received word of the passing on January 19, 2024, of Sally Stone. Sally was a Life Member of the OHTA who, along with her good friend and fellow Life Member, Betty Brown, maintained for years the section of the Ozark Highlands Trail between Fane Creek and Highway 23. During those years, there were many among us who had the good fortune of meeting her and being warmed and motivated by her abundant energy.

Sally was in her 90s when her spirit departed from the trail. She is survived by her son, Ron Stone, and her many friends in the Ozark Highlands Trail Association and the Ozark Society.

It is with a heavy heart that the members of the Ozark Highlands Trail Association wave farewell to Sally one last time. We wish only the best for those closest to her who remain behind.

– Getting and Keeping Yourself on the Trail –

So, you're a member of the OHTA but cannot remember whether your membership is current and don't have records of when you last paid membership dues? Our board wishes to apologize to you for not having a way of notifying you of the approaching expiration of your membership. It is an issue we're working on, but a quick fix has not been found. Nonetheless, if you're not a Life Member of our organization, your one-year membership may be expired, and if you want some help figuring this out, simply ask us to do it out for you by clicking on: ohata@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. We'll get back to you promptly with the information necessary for you to determine whether your dues are current or past due. If it is the latter, and you want to renew your OHTA membership, just click on: <https://ozarkhighlandstrail.com/membership/>. Renewing your membership will assure that you continue receiving all communications sent by the organization to its members. We want to continue growing with you!

– Relaxing Trailside with Interesting Breaktime Reads –

They Said It Would Be Fun: A Hilarious Journey Learning to Hike the NH 48 – Kenneth Bosse

Talking to Crows – Stefan T. Wong

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, and it will appear in the next edition of the OHTA Newsletter.

Whether hiking the dark, frozen depths of an Arkansas holler or standing tall on the cold, windblown summit of a Colorado 14er, may each vantage point bring to you an energy and a meaning for your existence you never before realized.

Quotes for the month

“And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years.”

Abraham Lincoln

“The climb speaks to our character, but the view, I think, to our souls.”

Lori Lansens



photo courtesy of Zina Brown

Until the trails we travel alone become the trail that brings us together,
HIKE ONWARD!!

YOUR ASSOCIATION WITH THE OHT MAKES THIS THE ASSOCIATION IT IS!
THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING A PART OF THE OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL ASSOCIATION!!