MARCH 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 Jandrasevic (Maintenance Director-West Section)
Tiffany Mallard (Social Media and Promotions Coordinator)
Peter Cooper (Interim Member)

– Looking Ahead on the Trail –

Board of Directors Election for 2024

Are you considering a run for a position on OHTA's Board of Directors? Well if you are, please send a photo of yourself along with a brief bio to: brown.philip9@gmail.com. To be on the ballot, it is necessary for you to be an OHTA member, for your membership status to be current, and for you to submit a picture of yourself along with your bio by no later than Sunday, March 10, 2024. If you make sure those boxes are checked, we will announce you to all OHTA members, and your name will be on the ballot. It's that simple!

What would I do if I held a position on the board? The answer is, simply speaking, just about anything you could identify as being something that would advance the causes of the OHTA and help it fulfill its mission of building, maintaining, enjoying, and promoting the organization. One way of doing that, of course, is to run for a board position (i.e., president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer) whenever one of those comes open. Or you can attend meetings and learn what all the board is doing to grow the organization and decide where your talents, your skill set could best be put to use. The amount of time you'd commit to whatever endeavor you'd decide to pursue would be up to you. It's you deciding what and how much you want to contribute to assuring the vitality of the OHTA. Does this sound at all interesting and doable to you? If so, please let us know prior to March 10 that you want to be a candidate!

Voting will start on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, and it will end on Sunday, March 24, 2024, at midnight.

We certainly hope to hear from you!!

OHTA Spring Fling 2024

Come one, come all!! Bring the entire family or just bring you! Whatever you do, don't miss OHTA's Spring Fling! This event is an opportunity to enjoy some good, clean fun outdoors (indoors, perhaps, if the weather does not cooperate) with all sorts of fun-loving folks!

Here are the details:

- Date: Saturday, March 16, 2024
- Time: 9:00am - 2:00pm
- Location: Lake Fort Smith State Park - Pavilion

- Group Hike: Meet at the pavilion at 9 a.m. Group hike will begin at 9:15 a.m. This hike will be time-based. We will hike out on the OHT for approximately 40-45 minutes, take a quick break on the trail, and hike back to the pavilion. The will be a family-friendly hike, so all are welcome!
- Lunch: Main Course will be provided. Please bring a side to share if you are able and willing to do so.
- Games: The pavilion is located next to a playground for the kids. There will be several outdoor games set up for all to enjoy.

This event will include easy hiking, food, socializing, and games. Come for some or all of the events. Bring the whole family out for the opportunity of getting to know some fellow OHTA members!

If you plan to attend, or if you have any questions, please contact Tiffany at tmallard52@gmail.com.

Hope to see you and your family there!

OHTA Rendezvous 2024

The weekend of OHTA's 2024 Rendezvous and Annual meeting is fast approaching. As it was in 2023, this year's extravaganza will be held at the dam on Norfork Lake.

Here is the information on the event as it exists at this point:

- Group Area 1 has been reserved by OHTA for those who want to camp there on Friday night and/or Saturday night, April 26 and 27. 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. Warm showers can be found in the Dam Quarry Campground just down the hill to the south of Dam-Quarry Campground.
- 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 27, from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The meal this year will be catered by Whispering Woods, and it will be superb! The OHTA annual meeting will follow the meal, at about 7 p.m., and we're hoping to have a speaker or two for the meeting.
- Here's this year's menu:

Dinner rolls and butter & signature salad

Mixed Greens with apples, blue cheese & candied walnuts

Red wine vinaigrette sliced beef tenderloin with sauteed mushrooms & creamy horseradish sauce

Pan seared salmon with avocado salsa & wild rice

Sauteed zucchini and yellow squash

Sauteed green beans with shallots

Chef's choice assorted desserts

Water and iced tea station

- Get-together for all who want to attend at Norfork Brewing Company in the town of Norfork on Friday evening, April 26, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

- Group hike: Saturday, morning, April 27, 2024. Meet at Moccasin Springs Trailhead (MSTH) at 9:30 a.m. Group hike leader is yet to be determined, but if you're interested in leading this hike, please contact Phil Brown at brown.philip9@gmail.com to volunteer and to learn the particulars.
- Group hike: Sunday morning, April 28, 2024. For those camping at or near Norfork Dam, we will meet at Group Area 1 at 9 a.m. We will caravan from there to the Walmart parking lot (Mountain Home) and meet anyone who would prefer to meet there (if you're facing the store, at the left corner of the lot farthest from the store) at about 9:45 a.m. Those who want to pile into a vehicle with anyone willing to haul passengers, can do so at the Walmart lot, or you are welcome to drive your car in the caravan out to Niles Landing Trailhead (NLTH). From NLTH (limited parking), we will hike in a northerly direction to the AR/MO border—the terminus of the OKT/OHT. This will be an in-and-out hike with a total distance of 6.8 miles. The difficulty is moderate due primarily to the number of miles. If you have seen the west end of the OHT and desire to see the north end, THIS IS YOUR CHANCE! DON'T MISS IT!
- Overnight group backpacking experience: Friday, April 26, 2024. All participants will meet at Moccasin Springs Trailhead (MSTH) on Highway 341 (Push Mountain Road). We will hike west from there on the OHT and set up camp for the night along the bank of Spring Creek about one (1) mile west of MSTH. We will hike out to Rand Road on Saturday morning/early afternoon in plenty of time to make it back to camp for the catered meal and annual meeting. This group backpacking experience is for all ages and experience levels. Please let us know if you plan to take part in this experience by emailing us at ohta@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. The more the merrier!
- If you believe your skill level is not quite up to snuff to pull off an overnighter but would like to learn the basics of backpacking, please let us know at ohta@ozarkhighlandstrail.com when you sign up. If there are at least five (5) novices who voice a desire by April 2 to learn how to backpack, we will put on a clinic (time and location to be determined).

IMPORTANT NOTICES

1. If you are planning to attend the Rendezvous 2024 meal and annual meeting, please contact us as soon as possible and no later than Friday, April 2 at ohta@ozarkhighlandstrail.com so we can know how many will be in your party and can then let the caterers know how many meals to prepare for the Saturday evening meal.
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. The sites go quickly once spring comes around.
3. If you'd prefer not to attend the Rendezvous but would like to join either or both of the hikes and/or the overnight backpacking trip, 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!

Pack Rat's Brewha Bushwhack 2024

We're very pleased to announce that Ozark Highlands Trail Association will be superbly represented at this year's Brewha Bushwhack scheduled for Saturday, April 6, 2024. Steven Parker is leading the charge in getting together a crew to assist in staffing a booth for this remarkable team-based adventure challenge. He has assembled a very capable group comprised of Peter Cooper and Tiffany and Evan Mallard, and to you all, the organization gives a big shout out, so THANK YOU!!

To learn more about his unbelievable event, just go to: https://packratoc.com/pages/brewha-bushwhack.

Ozark Highlands Endurance Run

It is just around the corner—this coming weekend, in fact. If you missed the information on this event that was published in the February Newsletter, here it is again:

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 Norfork 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: Norfork 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

− Looking Back on the Trail −

Frost Fest 2024

Another year, another Frost Fest, and what a fantastic event it was! There was wind and rain, excellent food and music, and need we mention, beverage? Despite the weather, this year's event went off without a hitch which is a testament to the quality of planning the crew at Fossil Cove devoted to assuring Frost Fest does nothing but get better with each passing year. Our hats are off to all who worked so hard to pull of yet another remarkable event. You all are unbelievable, and we're looking forward to next year's extravaganza! And we are honored again to have been chosen as one of the five non-profit organizations to which Fossil Cove generously donated proceeds from Frost Fest! What they do at Fossil is unbelievable!

Speaking of next year, we've received word that a date for Frost Fest 2025 is already set. In fact, it will take place on Saturday, February 1 in Fayetteville, Arkansas. As we learn more about it, you'll hear it first! Hope to see you there!

THANK YOU FOSSIL COVE BREWING COMPANY

FOR THE SECOND YEAR RUNNING!!!

OHTA's Adopt-A-Highway Project

The Adopt-A-Highway Project scheduled for February 17, 2024, was a huge success made possible by a small but very dedicated group led by Randy Soeung. The weather did its best to pull the stopper on the project, but the team of Randy, Sarah Johnston, and Mike Riker rose to the occasion, did a stand-up job, and, once again, OHTA has a mile of roadway that is looking good! For that we send to each of you a humongous THANK YOU!!! Job well done!!

− On the Trail −

If you've paid any attention to OHTA's official Facebook page, you've probably noticed that the "Name That Spot" contest launched by Tiffany Mallard is very much alive and generating an abundance of interest. Several photos of have been submitted, and it is amazing how many folks have identified the locations of the 'spots' shown in the photos. It's a fun thing to do, and we say thanks to you, Tiffany, for coming up with this idea and overseeing its progress!

Now if you are unaware of what this "Name That Spot" thing is about, here's some information. It is a contest whereby OHT hikers are asked to submit photos of an iconic spot along the OHT that can be posted on OHTA's social media platforms. Those visiting our social media platform(s) are then encouraged to comment on the photo and give their best guess about the location of the spot shown in the photo. It's that simple! So if you want to participate in this endeavor, please submit a photo of your special spot on the OHT 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 that simple, so let's keep the pics coming! And if you're on OHTA's Facebook page, check it out! You may be the one who successfully names that spot!

− Getting and Keeping Yourself on the Trail −

With the election of board members being just around the corner, it is more important than ever to make sure your membership is up to date. Why? Well, so you can run for a board position or so you can simply vote. What's this? You say you cannot remember whether your membership is current and don't have records of when you last paid membership dues? If this is the case, just click on: ohta@ozarkhighlandstrail.com, and we'll help you figure it out. And what if you're not an OHTA member but want to become one? You can achieve this by clicking on: https://ozarkhighlandstrail.com/membership/. In fact, the website location you can use to join the organization is the same one that can be used to renew your membership. Remember, renewing your membership will assure that you continue receiving all communications sent by the organization to its members and that OHTA continues growing with your support!

− Interesting Trailside Read −

Rude Pursuits and Rugged Peaks; Schoolcraft's Ozark Journal 1818-1819" H. Schoolcraft and Milton D. Rafferty

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.

As you wind your way along the trail in the depths of the wilderness, listen carefully, and you will hear nothing . . . and everything . . . past and present.

Quotes for the month

"A walk in nature walks the soul back home."
Mary Davis

"If you think adventure is dangerous, try routine; it is lethal."
Paulo Coelho

MO/AR Border Monument at Northern Terminus of OKT

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!!