



## DECEMBER 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 2024-2025

Phil Brown, *President* (Board term ends: June 30, 2026)  
Adam Higinbothom, *Vice-President* (Board term ends: June 30, 2025)  
Todd Wells, *Treasurer* (Board term ends: June 30, 2025)  
Brent Umphlett, *Secretary* (Board term ends: June 30, 2027)  
Chris Adams, *Maintenance Coordinator* (Board term ends: June 30, 2026)  
Tiffany Mallard (Board term ends: June 30, 2026)  
Wade Colwell (Board term ends: June 30, 2027)  
Peter Cooper (Interim—when approved as board member, Board term will end: on June 30, 2025)  
Randy Soeung (Board term ends: June 30, 2027)

- Looking Ahead on the Trail -

#### OHTA Board Meeting

**Day and Date:** Sunday, December 22, 2024

**Time:** 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

**Location:** Fossil Cove Brewing Company—Old Tap Room; 1946 North Birch Avenue, Fayetteville, Arkansas

This meeting is open to all OHTA members and their families, so we hope each of you will come! Of course, if you know someone who is considering joining this organization but first wants to learn more about what it's about, they're welcome, as well. We have a hearty meeting agenda, and, naturally, with it being held at Fossil Cove, there will be a very nice variety of frothy delights for your imbibing pleasure! Hope to see you there!!

#### 2024 Hare Mountain Hike-In

Yes, the big celebration of OHTA's 43<sup>rd</sup> birthday is behind us, but our organization is marching right along toward it's 44<sup>th</sup> year of existence.

This year's group of 15 or so celebrants were greeted by some soggy and chilly weather, but from all reports, the spirits of those in attendance were not at all dampened by what nature dished out. And as for the potluck, the food was plentiful, and everyone had the good fortune of eating to their heart's delight. Many stories and a few tall tales were shared, and when it was all over, each hiker had the good fortune of trekking out of the woods with a big smile on their face.





As you might recall, during the Norfolk basecamp, two plaques were awarded. One was the Dawna Robinson Volunteer of the Year award, and it went to Dave Weiss in recognition of the many ways he has stepped up for the OHTA during the past year. The second of the two awards was the Roy Senyard Maintainer of the Year plaque that went to the very deserving Stephen Lagasse. As we all know, 2024 has been an unusually challenging year from the standpoint of trail maintenance, and many folks stepped up to address the vast array of maintenance issues on the OHT. In fact, two maintainers stepped forward so noticeably that the decision was made to recognize the efforts of each.

That said, the second of the two Roy Senyard Maintainer of the Year plaques was awarded to none other than Mark Been (pictured to the left). Like his cohort, Stephen, if there was an issue on the trail requiring the attention of a maintainer, Mark was out there addressing it head on. Yes, we want to present to all of our members yet another example of excellence and dedication! To you, Mark, we extend a heartfelt

**THANK YOU!!**

One more thing: Hare Mountain Hike-In 2025 is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. We hope to see you there!

## Wilderness First Aid Course . . . and more

We just learned that there is a Wilderness First Aid (WFA) course coming to town. Well, maybe not to town, but to Byrd's Adventure Center, 7037 Cass Oak Road; Ozark, Arkansas 72949. This is not an OHTA-sponsored course, but we're letting you know about it in this newsletter because there's no course taught anywhere near this neck of the woods that will prepare you as well as will this one to address an emergency out in nature. And if you're a trail maintainer or sawyer, completion of a course such as this is a virtual necessity! One other HUGE plus is that this course will be taught by Tom Burroughs. Anyone who has ever taken part in a course taught by Mr. Burroughs will attest to there being no one who provides a higher quality, more thorough WFA learning experience than he.

So here is the basic information:

### **Days and Dates:**

- 16-hour WFA course: Saturday and Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025
  - 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day
- 3-hour CPR/AED course: Sunday, January 5, 2025
  - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

### **Prices**

- WFA course: \$215
- CPR/AED course: \$65

**NOTE:** Tom Burroughs is offering a Wilderness First Responder Recertification course, Saturday through Monday, January 4-6, 2025, with this Wilderness First Aid course being a part of that. If anyone is interested in this recertification, they can reach out to Tom at [Swiftwaterrescue@gmail.com](mailto:Swiftwaterrescue@gmail.com) for details.

### **Camping and Lodging Options**

- Go to: <https://byrdsadventurecenter.com/>

## WFA Course Description and Details

This two-day course immerses participants in essential wilderness medicine procedures, preparing individuals to take immediate action when an outdoor activity doesn't go as planned and 911 responders are hours away. Time is split between interactive classroom sessions and hands-on field scenarios to prepare participants and help them quickly develop basic backcountry medical care skills. The course focus is on patient assessment, stabilization and emergency treatment of issues such as hypothermia and snakebites, as well as understanding when and how to attempt evacuation. Participants will emerge capable of calmly responding to a wide variety of emergency situations.

This course will be taught by Tom Burroughs, who is the head of the Washington County AR Search and Rescue team. Tom has been an emergency responder since 1990 and is a NREMT/WEMT and WildMed Instructor Trainer. Tom brings a background of many years of backcountry rescue experience and has been teaching these courses since 2006.

All participants will need to be dressed in clothing that can be stained and/or damaged, as the program is heavily hands on, and moulage will be used to promote training authenticity.

Participants will need to be prepared to be outside for many of the training hours, regardless of weather conditions, unless hazardous storms or extreme heat or cold occur. Participants should bring whatever items they commonly carry on their persons in the performance of their duties, as improvisational concepts are an important aspect of this course.

All program supplies and a waterproof field guide, which becomes property of the participant, are provided by Ozark Safety and Rescue Educators (OSRE) as part of the program cost.

Successful completion of the entire program will result in a three-year nationally recognized Wilderness First Aid Certification through Sierra Rescue International that meets the requirements of BSA, NICA, and the American Camp Association for Wilderness First Aid Training.

Here is the link for registration:

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/OSREIntrepid/PROCWFAJan452025WildernessFirstAidCourseAtByrdsAdventureCenterOzarkARCPRCourseWillBeOfferedSeper>

## - Looking Back on the Trail -

### Trans-Ozark Trail (TOT) Is For Real

It has been done! There are claims that a handful of others previously traversed the 700+ miles of what will be the Trans-Ozark Trail—the Ozark Highlands Trail (OHT) in Arkansas and Ozark Trail (OT) in Missouri—but the OHTA has, until now, received no confirmation of those claims. So, who did it? Elias “Oklahomie” Driskill of Yukon, Oklahoma! And it took him a mere 51 days to add this jewel to his collection of completed thru-hikes. Not bad! One more thing, how to properly recognize his accomplishment will be a topic at the upcoming board meeting.



## New Trailhead Register Boxes

Hey, check it out! Thanks to Chris Adams, OHTA's Maintenance Coordinator and his team of volunteers, each trailhead in the Sylamore section of the OHT has a new trailhead register box! So the next time you're on the Sylamore, give 'em a look. Also, we want to express our appreciation to the USFS personnel for their assistance in making this project come to fruition! And, finally, thank you Wade Colwell for overseeing the development and construction of these boxes! JOB VERY WELL DONE BY EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU!!!



*We've said it before, and we're saying it again because nothing is truer: The Ozark Highlands Trail Association is nothing without its volunteers. Yes, this organization would cease to exist were it not for dedicated individuals such as YOU! So, to each and every one of you, we are shouting out a very heartfelt*

**THANK YOU!!**

**- Trailside Reads -**

*This is Gonna Hurt: Thru-Hiking the Appalachian Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, Continental Divide Trail, and Arizona Trail in a Calendar Year* – Brandon Weis

*Back to the Trees and Caves: A Wilderness Journey* – Jonathan Klein

### **Quotes for the Month**

*"Sometimes you find yourself in the middle of nowhere, and sometimes, in the middle of nowhere, you find yourself."*

Anonymous

*"The wilderness holds answers to more questions than we have yet learned to ask."*

Nancy Wynne Newhall



*Campfire Gathering – Hare Mountain Hike-In 2024*

***Walk however far you will, and with each step, carry warmth in your heart and become one with the universe.***

Till 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!!**