FEBRUARY 2025 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 Directors 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 –

2025 Board of Directors Election

Are you ready to run for a board position in the upcoming election? Well, then, now's the time to start preparing! Yes, at the end of each fiscal year the terms of three of our board members expire, each of those positions must be filled, and any OHTA member can toss their hat into the ring as a candidate! So, if your membership is up to date, and you find yourself wanting to try your hand at a governance position on the board of a dynamic non-profit organization such as ours, then here's the information necessary for you to know:

- **How to Become a Candidate**: Just send a picture and brief bio of yourself in which you outline what personal attributes and experiences make you the right candidate for a board position. Here's the email address to send all of that to: brown.philip9@gmail.com
- **Deadline for Candidate Submission**: Sunday, March 16, 2025
- **Days and Dates of Election**: Monday, March 31, 2025, through Friday, April 4, 2025
- **How to Cast Your Vote**: If the OHTA has your email, you will receive a link to click on and cast your vote
- **Voter Eligibility**: 1 membership = 1 vote (remember: Family memberships are good for just one vote. If more than one member of a family with a Family membership wants to vote, it will be necessary for each such person to get their own membership. Here's a link that can be used to join the OHTA: https://ozarkhighlandstrail.com/get-involved/

LET THE CAMPAIGNING BEGIN!!

Frost Fest 2025

Frost Fest 2025 is just a day away. One day, you say? Yes, it's coming to Washington County Fairgrounds in Fayetteville, Arkansas, on Saturday, February 1, 2025!

This year's event will be hosting about 2200 attendees, 57 breweries from across the region, and around 300 brewers/vendors/volunteers for what will be a true celebration of craft beer, art, and community. What's more, 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, and everyone is encouraged to dress for the weather because this is an outdoor event. Tickets are still on sale, so get yours while the gettin' is good by clicking here: https://stubs.net/event/6576/frost-fest-outdoor-beer-festival-2025. Note: Early Entry tickets are sold out!

Why is OHTA making such a big deal out of Frost Fest? The answer is that it is an event which, since 2016, has been presented by Fossil Cove Brewing Company of Fayetteville. Fossil Cove views Frost Fest not just as a one-day outdoor beer festival but as a way of supporting local nonprofits they believe make our region a better place to live. And we're beyond pleased that for the third year straight, OHTA has been chosen as one of 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, once again, a big THANKS goes out to all of our members! And, if you will, please step out of your door and with all of your might loudly express added appreciation by shouting:

THANK YOU FOSSIL COVE!!!

RENDEZVOUS 2025

In case you haven't heard, the dates and location for this year's Rendezvous have changed.
Yes, this year's Rendezvous will not be held in May.

OHTA's 2025 Rendezvous has a new location and dates!
Here are the particulars:

- **Location**: TYLER BEND CAMPGROUND on the beautiful Buffalo River
  - **Latitude** 35° 59' 12.0001" N – **Longitude** 92° 45' 50.0000" W
- **Days and Dates**: Friday through Sunday, April 25 thru 27, 2025
- **No fee for tent only camping** in the following group sites:
  - G3, G4, G5 (no electricity)
  - Check in time on Friday, April 25: 1 p.m.
  - Check out time on Sunday, April 27: 12 p.m.
- **Pavilion reserved for Saturday, April 26 from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.** (group shelter electric)
  - Saturday evening meal and the OHTA annual meeting will be held in the Pavilion
  - Evening meal served at or around 5:30 p.m.
  - Annual meeting starts at or around 7 p.m.
- Chili cook-off is planned for the Saturday evening meal. If you want to try your hand at putting together a pot of goodness that will warm hearts and souls, please contact us at: brown.philip9@gmail.com.
  - **Notification deadline for being a chili cook-off participant is February 15, 2025**
  - Pavilion where food will be served has electrical outlets, so slow cooker chili preparation is doable
- **Tyler Bend Campground**
  - Hiking trails galore
    - Buffalo River Trail/Ozark Highlands Trail (BRT/OHT)
    - Tyler Bend Trail System
    - Old River Trail (ORT)
  - RV sites (non-electric) – some sites are currently available for reservation – others available on a first-come basis
  - Shower and toilet facilities onsite

- **Lodging options nearby**
  - Sky Hawk Ridge, St. Joe, AR
  - Anna's Guest House, Gilbert, AR
  - Buffalo River Outfitters, St. Joe, AR
  - Triple D Cabin Rental, St. Joe, AR (it's right on Hwy 65 at the intersection of Hwy 65 and Hwy 333--the road that takes you down to Sky Hawk Ridge and Anna's Guest House)
  - Gilbertstore.com
- **Dining options nearby**
  - Ferguson's Store and Restaurant
  - Big Springs Trading Co.

- **Hike On Saturday Morning and Possibly Sunday Morning**
  - Saturday morning a group of common adventurers plans to shuttle over to Gilbert and hike back to Tyler Bend—everyone's welcome to join the hike
  - Sunday morning hike is yet to be determined

IMPORTANT NOTICE: If you plan to attend, please let us know as soon as possible so plans for how much food to prepare can be made. You can email us at: brown.philip9@gmail.com

Hope you can make it!!

– Looking Back on the Trail –

Sawyer Certification Class 2025

Classroom Training

The face of the OHTA maintenance machine has changed in a BIG way. Specifically, the sawyer certification class provided for the OHTA by personnel from the United States Forest Service (USFS) transformed this organization's sawyer program into something we've long wanted it to be. Yes, in one day it went from being composed of a handful of seasoned sawyers into a large, robust team of sawyers whose levels of experience run the gamut.

OHTA's maintenance coordinator, Chris Adams, has already begun the process of sending to each new sawyer the information that will afford them opportunities to hook up

with our veteran sawyers for on-the-trail, real-life chainsawing experience. Yes, it's a new day in OHT sawyer land! And thank you Steven Parker and the USFS personnel who helped make the training go so smoothly!

Hands-on Training

Wilderness First Aid Course

The Wilderness First Aid Course held on the weekend of January 4 and 5 was a great success and a superb learning opportunity. The mixture of classroom instruction with in-the-field, hands-on training was remarkable! Three OHTA members attended the course, and, consequently, each is better prepared for emergencies they may encounter while on the trail.

Ozark Highlands Trail Association is giving a big shout out to Tom Burroughs and his assistant, LeAnn, for making the course such a worthwhile experience. Additionally, a huge thanks is extended to the folks at Pack Rat Outdoor Center for putting together the event and arranging for it to be held at Byrd's Outdoor Adventure. A better location could not have been offered!

– Trailside Reads –

Entangled Life: The Illustrated Edition: How Fungi Make our Worlds – Merlin Sheldrake

Whispers in the Wilderness (Whispers, 1) – Erik Stensland

Quotes for the Month

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep / But I have promises to keep, /And miles to go before I sleep, /And miles to go before I sleep."

Robert Frost

"Beyond the very extreme of fatigue and distress, we may find amounts of ease and power we never dreamed ourselves to own; sources of strength never taxed at all because we never pushed through the obstruction."

William James – American psychologist and philosopher

Photo courtesy of Nancy Raven

At the fork in the trail, we're left to choose which path to take. Choosing one can be made simple as long as we walk forward assured there will always be a place to which we can return for, yet, another choice and new adventure.

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!!