



MAY 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 -

FALL MAINTENANCE BASECAMPS 2025

Plans are being formulated for this fall's series of maintenance basecamps. At this point, the dates and locations for two of the four are firmly locked in. However, until the dates for the other two have been nailed down, we're holding back on publishing information about the when and where of any of the four. What we can say is that the camping and other accommodations will be free, food will be on the OHTA, and, just as it was in 2024, there will be a warm shower for the Richland basecamp! Oh, yes . . . we're working to hold the basecamps on weekends from mid-September through the month of October. So, there it is for now! STAY TUNED!!

HARE MOUNTAIN HIKE-IN

Saturday and Sunday, November 1st and 2nd of this year may seem like a long time from May, and they are. Nonetheless, those two days will be here much sooner than may seem possible, and the dates are important to note in your planner because they are when the Ozark Highlands Trail Association turns 44! That means this organization is older than many of its members!! Of course, you don't have to be old to join the celebration. Yes, each member and their family, young and not so young, are encouraged to journey east along the trail from East Fly Gap trailhead or north from Morgan Fields trailhead to the top of Hare Mountain to participate in this event!

So, come one, come all! Just be sure to bring your own camping accommodations, stories you would like to share, and a dish for the top-of-the-mountain potluck that always proves to be a remarkable feast! Stay tuned, for there will be more info coming as we get closer to the big celebration!

- Looking Back on the Trail -

RENDEZVOUS 2025

Well, this year's Rendezvous is behind us, but it is not to be forgotten. Memories of the eight chilies still linger in the mouths of those fortunate folks who had the opportunity to taste the array of cuisine that included vegetarian, sweet, traditional, and chili mac varieties. It was a feast, and every pot was beyond delicious!! When all was said

and done and each person's belly was full, bowls and spoons were pushed aside, and a vote to determine the winner of the 2025 chili cookoff was held. As it turned out, the chili garnering the most votes was prepared by none other than Dave Richard. Congratulations, Dave!

Of course, a huge round of thanks goes out to each and every person who competed in the cookoff and to every person who brought side dishes and desserts. The abundance of food was astounding! THANK YOU ALL!!!

Naturally, the Rendezvous was about more than the feast. There was camaraderie, canoeing/kayaking, a group hike, some trail repair, and a brand new trailhead register installed on the Lemaster bridge that provides safe crossing of a ravine at Grinders Ferry. If you missed it or if you did not, here are some pics from the event . . .



REMEMBERING ONE OF THE 2023 AND 2024 OHTA MAINTENANCE BASECAMP LOCATIONS



On March 14, 2025, an EF-4 tornado carved a swath through a large section of north central Arkansas. One of the towns squarely in the path of the storm was Fifty Six. Why is this being brought up given the OHT does not pass through or even near that community? The answer is simply that in 2023 and 2024, one of OHTA's fall maintenance basecamps was stationed at Great Oaks Cabins in Fifty Six, Arkansas. The owners of the facility were very accommodating, and our organization would have very likely returned to that location in 2025 for another basecamp. Such will not be the case, though, for as the photos show, the cabins occupied during each of the basecamps were decimated by the

tornado's fierce winds. In fact, a drive-thru of the area on May 3, 2025, revealed that almost every square inch of Fifty Six was scarred in some way by the storm. The bright side is that there was no loss of human life.

The Ozark Highlands Trail Association sends its warmest regards to the owners of Great Oaks Cabins and to the residents of that area. May your spirits rise high and your restoration efforts move forward as smoothly as is possible.



– On the Trail –

JUST A REMINDER

OHTA's Board of Directors has committed to partially reimbursing maintainers and sawyers for the fee they pay to participate in the Wilderness First Aid/CPR course(s) offered by Tom Burroughs. Again, here's how it works:

- Submit proof to OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com that you completed the course(s), and you will be sent a \$100 reimbursement check
- To be reimbursed, you must be a sawyer and/or section adopter who has either:
 - attended and participated in one of OHTA's Maintenance Basecamps
 - reported sawyer hours anywhere on the trail and/or maintenance hours on your adopted section during the preceding 12 months.

The OHTA is committed to doing all it can to assure the safety of our sawyers and trail maintainers. So, if you're a maintainer, sawyer, or both, please take advantage of this offer! Notifications of the dates and locations of Mr. Burroughs' WFA and CPR courses scheduled to be held in north central and northwest Arkansas will be posted in upcoming editions of OHTA's monthly newsletter and on our social media sites.

– TRAILSIDE READS –

Wild Life: Finding My Purpose in an Untamed World—a Memoir – Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant

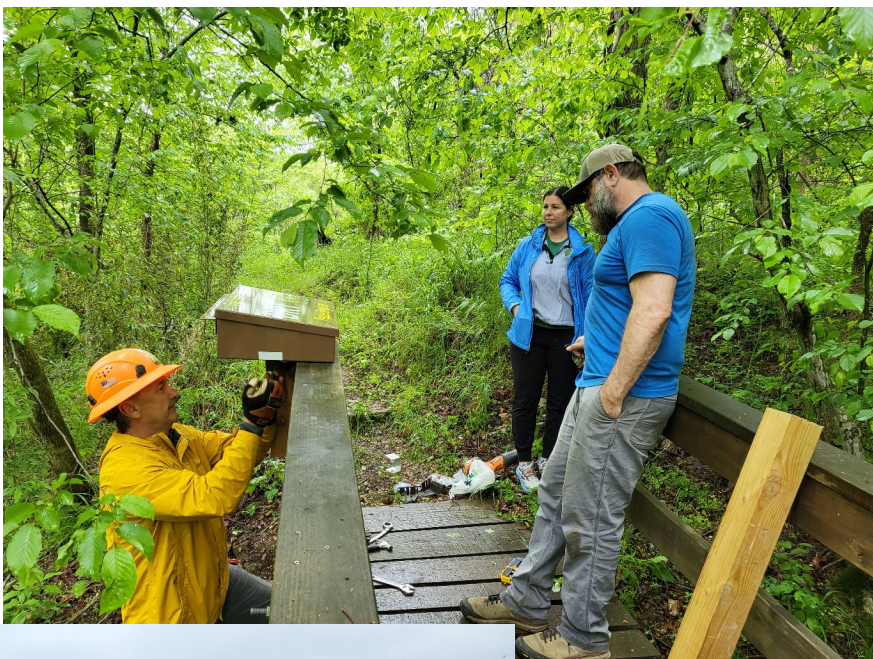
QUOTES FOR THE MONTH

“The wilderness holds answers to questions man has not yet learned to ask.” – Nancy Newhall

“You need special shoes for hiking – and a bit of a special soul as well.” – Terri Guillemets

Why not the trail? Now that’s an impossible question to answer.

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!!**