



NOVEMBER 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 2025-2026

Phil Brown, **President** (Board term ends: June 30, 2026)
Adam Higinbothom, **Vice-President** (Board term ends: June 30, 2028)
Todd Wells, **Treasurer** (Board term ends: June 30, 2028)
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 (Board term ends: June 30, 2028)
Randy Soeung (Board term ends: June 30, 2027)

Ancillary Services

Website Development and Maintenance
Social Media Coordinator
Online Store Coordinator
Brochure Business Coordinator
Adopt-A-Highway Program Coordinator
Trailhead Register Data Processor
Arkansas Trails Council Representative
Trail Angels

Brent Umphlett and Leslie Wright Productions
Tiffany Mallard
Mike Lemaster
Elizabeth Granderson
Randy Soeung
Yvonne Liske
Yvonne Liske
Billy and Donna Hignite • Mike Lemaster

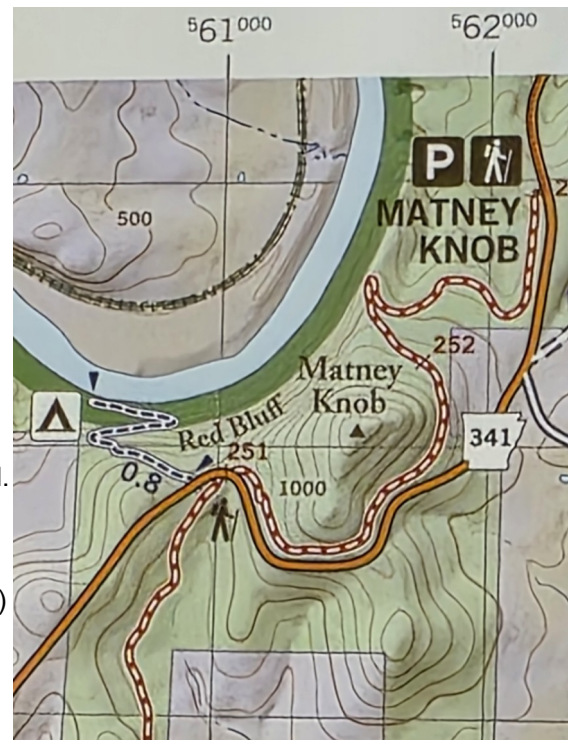
– LOOKING AHEAD ON THE TRAIL –

MATNEY CAMP RESTORATION CELEBRATION

Several years ago, Matney Camp was decommissioned by the Forest Service, and since then, time, neglect, and the elements have taken their toll on what was left of the camp. As some of you know, the camp itself is accessible by a spur trail and by boat from the White River. On the OHT North map, the camp is designated by only a 'basic camping' symbol as shown to the immediate right.

For months, Gordon King and a small group of recruits have devoted time to restoring Matney Camp, but the bulk of the effort devoted to the site came from Gordon. After all this time, the hard work everyone put into the camp has paid off—the camp is restored.

What all Matney Camp will or can be used for is yet to be determined, but three things are for sure: 1) It's a great place for family activities, 2) it's a nice site for bringing in the new year, and 3) Matney Camp will be the location of a Restoration Celebration on Saturday, December 6, 2025!!



Here are the details:

- Those wanting to hike roughly three miles from Matney Knob Trailhead (MKTH) to the camp can meet at MKTH at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 6, 2025.
- Food, water/soft drinks, and utensils for the celebration will be brought in from the river by Gordon King—byo adult beverages.
- Those not wanting to do the three-mile hike can be shuttled to the intersection of Matney Camp Spur Trail and Highway 341—the parking area near the intersection of the two is limited to four vehicles at the most.
- If you want to kayak/canoe yourself and/or family/friends to the event, you are encouraged to do so—children and fur babies are certainly welcome.
- If you have an instrument and want to play some music, please bring it along!
- Want to bring a board game—please do!
- The festivities will likely end somewhere between 2 and 3 p.m.
- If you want to turn this into an overnight backpacking event, please bring along your camping gear as everyone is welcome to stay through the night.
- The camp has picnic tables and an outhouse that are in very nice shape.

So we can make food and beverage plans, please send an email to OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. Be sure to include your name and the number of folks who are coming with you—their names are optional, but including them would be appreciated.

Hope to hear from you and to see you at the Restoration Celebration!!

- LOOKING BACK ON THE TRAIL -

OHTA's Maintenance Basecamps for 2025 are in the record books. If you were among the fortunate who attended, you likely returned home with some great stories to tell and a mind full of very pleasant memories.

As we all know, the basecamps are organized for the primary purpose of assuring the Ozark Highlands Trail is one that all hikers, backpackers, runners, and outdoor lovers can thoroughly enjoy and will want to return to over and over. And based on feedback we've received from those who hiked or ran various sections of the trail following the days of the four big events, our efforts paid off. Numerous messages of appreciation have poured in, and the comments have all been very positive. The impact the basecamps had on the trail and on its image cannot be overstated.


The attendance at each of 2025's basecamps was phenomenal with the daily rosters showing anywhere from 30 to over 50 volunteers in attendance. The weather this year was, as a whole, cooperative, and, as usual, the food was plentiful and superb. In fact, despite the calories burned during each day's trail work, word has it that most folks walked away from each of the four basecamps with the scales showing they weighed more going out than they did coming in.

Yes, this was one heck of a year, and the thank yous owed by the OHTA are too many to list individually. However, there are three folks who deserve very special recognition, for their efforts made 2025 a basecamp year to remember. Topping the list of those to whom we cannot give enough praise and recognition is OHTA's Maintenance Coordinator extraordinaire, Chris Adams. What you do for this organization, Chris, is beyond compare and will be a thing of legend well beyond your tenure! And then there are Billy and Donna Hignite. You two are more than remarkable! How you do it time and again and again leaves us all scratching our heads! You're both just too good to be true! Chris, Billy, and Donna, **THANK YOU!!!**



Photo courtesy of Betty Krumweide

As for this year's numbers, they did not disappoint. Nearly 189 of the 325 miles of the OHT received a visit by more than one volunteer team. More was accomplished than anyone could have imagined, and to prove that, here are the basecamp totals:

2025 Basecamp Totals					
			# volunteers	Miles of Trail	Volunteer Hours
September 18-19-20	Mulberry Mtn Basecamp		110	64.9	833
October 3-4-5	Richland Creek Basecamp		96	63	704
October 10-11-12	Fifty Six Basecamp		72	36.5	413
October 18-19	Norfolk Lake		57	24.5	291
			335	188.9	2241

The OHTA wants to say THANK YOU to each and every one of you who volunteered for 2025's basecamp events. You are all very, very special, and we hope to see you all again in 2026!



Photo courtesy of Jean Sayers at Richland Basecamp ↑



← Photos courtesy of Jean Sayers at Richland Basecamp ↑

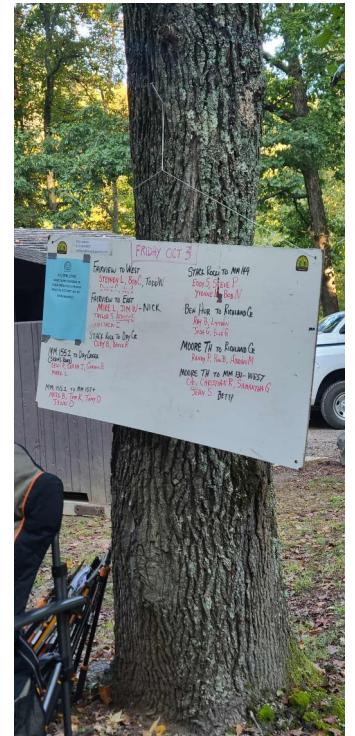




Photo courtesy of Betty Krumweide at Richland Basecamp

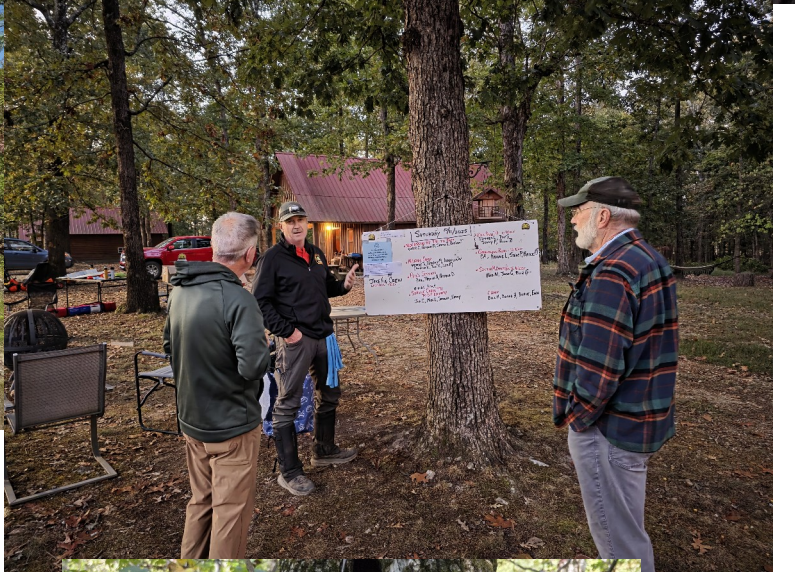


Photo courtesy of Mike Lemaster at Richland Basecamp



← Photos courtesy of Jean Sayers at Richland Basecamp





All photos on this page were taken during the Fifty Six Basecamp





↑ Jake Anderson receiving one of the two Roy Senyard Maintainer of the Year Awards

All photos on this page were taken during the Norfolk Basecamp

HARE MOUNTAIN HIKE-IN

The hike to the top of Hare Mountain for the celebration of OHTA's 44th birthday has come and gone. Altogether, 26 enthusiastic folks made this year's event a spectacular success. Though rain was in the forecast, Mother Nature relented and kept it to a minimum. The mountaintop potluck buffet was divine. In fact, the food was so plentiful, those dining on it Sunday morning failed to finish it off. The event was just plain fun, and we hope more of you can make it up there next year for the big 45th!



Most of this years Hare Mountain Hike-In revelers ↑



Jennifer and Tony receiving the second of the two Roy Senyard Maintainer(s) of the Year Award ←



Mark Larmoyeux receiving the Dawna Robinson Volunteer of the Year Award →

– ON THE TRAIL –

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

For the past 44 years, the Ozark Highlands Trail Association has been about bringing people together to build, maintain, and enjoy the OHT. The trail offers those who step on it a place where they can hike, backpack, run, and simply enjoy the enormous and bountiful beauty of nature.

Since its inception, the Ozark Highlands Trail Association has been supported through memberships as well as through contributions. For all but the 'Life' memberships, renewal is necessary each year. For some, a renewal reminder gets sent out annually, but such is not true for everyone. Therefore, we encourage each of our members to check the status of their membership, and if it is time to renew, please do so. If you are unsure about the standing of your membership, please feel free to contact us at OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. We will gladly update you about whether it is time to renew your membership.

DOING EVEN MORE FOR OHTA

If you had a chance to read the September and October 2025 newsletters, you're probably aware we will be electing candidates in April 2026 to fill three OHTA vacancies that will be created on June 30, 2026. April may seem a long way off, but it will be here before you know it.

It important to note that our board is comprised of nine members, and if you would like to get more involved in this organization, serving on the board is a great way to do it. So, please give some thought to running for a position on our board. Doing so could result in you making a big difference in this organization's future. If you have any questions about serving on the board, please feel free to inquire by sending an email to: OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. The more candidates, the better! Let's keep the OHTA alive and thriving!!



– TRAILSIDE READS –

The Impossible Journey: An incredible voyage through every contry in the world without flying – Thor Pedersen

Life Lived Wild: Adventures at the Edge of the Map – Rick Ridgeway

QUOTES FOR THE MONTH

“Don't ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive..” Harold Whitman

“The Universe is not outside of you. Look inside yourself; everything that you want, you already are.” Rumi

← Sunday morning at the Hare Mountain Hike-In



Photo courtesy of Sofia Merriman—Mulberry Mountain Basecamp

We're all here on the OHT, the full 325 miles of it, because, quite simply, we're not all there!



← Gravity heals all after a long day's work at Fifty Six ↑ Dedicated volunteers during Richland

Till the trails we travel alone become the trail that brings us together . . .



Photo courtesy of Jean Sayers at Richland

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

HIKE ONWARD!!