



JUNE 2026 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	Brent Umphlett and Leslie Wright Productions
Social Media Coordinator	Tiffany Mallard
Online Store Coordinator	Mel Zabecki
Brochure Business Coordinator	Elizabeth Granderson
Adopt-A-Highway Program Coordinator	Randy Soeung
Trailhead Register Data Processor	Yvonne Liske
Arkansas Trails Council Representative	Yvonne Liske
Trail Navigation Partner	FarOut – https://faroutguides.com/
Ozark Keystone Trail, Buzzard Roost Gap Lead Developer	Yvonne Liske
Trail Angels	Billy and Donna Hignite • Mike Lemaster

- OVERSEEING THE TRAIL -

OHTA BOARD MEETING

The final board meeting of the fiscal year is less than one month away. Here are the details:

When: Sunday, June 28, 2026
Time: 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: Fossil Cove Brewing Company, Old Tap Room – 946 N Birch Avenue,
Fayetteville, Arkansas
Who's Invited: All OHTA members
Primary Agenda: Board will elect its new officers for the 2026-2027 fiscal year

HOPE YOU CAN MAKE IT THERE!!

- ON THE TRAIL -

OZARKS KEYSTONE TRAIL – BUZZARD ROOST GAP

If you're asking yourself where the progress on the 19-miles of new single track trail through the Buzzard Roost Gap along the western shore of Norfolk Lake stands, the answer is simply that there is no progress. Of course, what is progress? If you view it from the standpoint of there being a measurable amount of trail being built each day, then no progress is exactly how things stand. There is progress, though, in the form of a review that will eventually be undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Specifically, the Corps ordered a halt to all trail-building efforts that started back in April. What the halt will do is give the Corps' personnel an opportunity to review all tracks that had been laid out and how each track veered from the exact location of the "approved" track that Corps personnel say must be followed. Given peak season for park use along the lake is upon us, the personnel whose responsibility it is to oversee all matters pertaining to the lake and its surrounding properties have their hands full. That said, those same personnel will probably not be able to get out to the Gap to perform the review till fall, so stay tuned!

- Cruising Another TRAIL -

In the May 2026 OHTA Newsletter, we highlighted the journey across America's Historic Route 66 by one of our very own, Brent Umphlett. Well, if he's not reached Chicago, the northeastern terminus of the Route, he'll be there within a handful of days. As a celebration of his feat, here's a montage of pics from his well-pedaled trek:



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

It's time once again to give a special thanks to everyone who has renewed their Ozark Highlands Trail Association (OHTA) membership! A lot of our members have stepped up and inquired about the status of their membership, and your diligence and desire to be a part of this organization is greatly appreciated! If you're wondering about the status of your membership, please drop us an email at OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com. We promise to respond quickly.

For almost 45 years, the OHTA has brought people together to build, maintain, and enjoy the Ozark Highlands Trail (OHT). From its start, the board has relentlessly looked for alternative funding sources and contributions, and those efforts have yielded some remarkable results. Despite those efforts, though, one reality remains: The OHTA cannot exist without the support of its members. You are our lifeblood!!

As a reminder, for everyone but those with "Life" memberships, renewals are required annually. While we aim to send annual reminders to each person whose membership is about to expire, but getting those notices out remains a daunting task. So, please check your status and renew if it is time to do so.

We truly appreciate your continued support in preserving the beauty of the OHT and in assuring the viability of the OHTA.

HARE MOUNTAIN HIKE-IN

It is now just five months away! So get your gear ready, gather together your family members, call all of your friends, and start deciding on a great dish you can bring for a top-o'-the-mountain potluck. You might even give some thought to some of the tall tales you could share with all the folks who will join you around the campfire near the summit of Hare Mountain for this year's Hike-In. Remember, we're celebrating OHTA's 45th anniversary, so let's make the very special weekend a very memorable event! One more thing . . . the big day is Saturday, November 7, 2026!!

Come one, come all!



TRAILSIDE READS –

Soul of Nowhere: Traversing Grace in a Rugged Land – Craig Childs

Deep Survival: Who Lives, Who Dies, and Why – Laurence Gonzales

QUOTES FOR THE MONTH

“The only Zen you find on the tops of mountains is the Zen you bring up there.” Zen saying

“I felt my lungs inflate with the onrush of scenery—air, mountains, trees, people. I thought, ‘This is what it is to be happy.’” – Sylvia Plath



Photo courtesy of Wade Colwell

False summits abound and may stand between you and your proposed destinations. Whatever may be, knowing you've reached one presents an opportunity to move forward with a renewed sense of determination and confidence. All the while, know there actually are true summits, and you will reach your destination just prior to the one that will follow.



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



Photo courtesy of Zina Brown

**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!!