



August 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 2026-2027

Yvonne Liske	President	(Board term ends: June 30, 2029)
Randy Soeung	Vice-President	(Board term ends: June 30, 2027)
Todd Wells	Treasurer	(Board term ends: June 30, 2028)
Brent Umphlett	Secretary	(Board term ends: June 30, 2027)
Gordon Brown	Maintenance Coordinator	(Board term ends: June 30, 2029)
Tiffany Mallard		(Board term ends: June 30, 2029)
Wade Colwell		(Board term ends: June 30, 2027)
Peter Cooper		(Board term ends: June 30, 2028)
Adam Higinbothom		(Board term ends: June 30, 2028)

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	Mike Riker
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

– OVERSEEING THE TRAIL –

OHTA BOARD MEETING

The first board meeting of the 2026-2027 fiscal year has not been set. Stay tuned!

When:	August 23, 2026
Time:	2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Where:	Fossil Cove Brewing 1946 North Birch Avenue, Fayetteville, Arkansas 72703
Who's Invited:	All OHTA members
Primary Agenda:	Basecamp meals, Trail Maintenance changes

HOPE YOU CAN MAKE IT THERE!!

– ON THE TRAIL –

SAFETY

I hope everyone is staying safe during this latest heat wave. Please remember to stay hydrated, not with just water, but also with electrolyte drinks and avoid caffeine and alcohol. Even if we think we are acclimated to the heat, we need to remember to take frequent breaks and spend time in the AC. Please stay safe and keep an eye on your family and friends. Don't forget about the fur babies, my cat especially loves ice cubes in her water.

HEAT EXHAUSTION vs. HEAT STROKE: Knowing the Critical Difference HEAT EXHAUSTION (Warning) - BODY TEMPERATURE: < 40°C - MENTAL STATE: Alert, Clear-headed - SEVERITY: Reversible; A Warning Signal HEAT STROKE (Emergency) - BODY TEMPERATURE: > 40°C - MENTAL STATE: Confusion, Disorientation - SEVERITY: Permanent Injury or Death; Medical Emergency “In simple terms, heat exhaustion is a warning, heat stroke is an emergency.”	What to do in case of Heat Exhaustion: • Get to a cooler, air conditioned place, and rest • Drink water if fully conscious • Take a cool shower or use cold compress Heat Stroke • CALL 911 • Take immediate action to cool the person until help arrives
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HARE MOUNTAIN HIKE-IN

It is now just three 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. Don't forget . . . the big day is Saturday, November 7, 2026!!

Come one, Come all !

TRAIL LOG DATA UPDATE

As we are going through the wonderful dog days of summer, there are no new updates on hiker data. For the maintainers who have register boxes on their section, please bring them with you if you are attending any of the basecamps. If you cannot attend, please take a photo of the logs and send them to me at President@ozarkhighlandtrail.com. Please remove the trail register logs.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE CORNER

This is the first newsletter edition with a dedicated portion to focus on trail maintenance, health, sustainability, and responsibility. For those of us that maintain the trail we all have different experiences from each other. Some of our trail systems are less than a decade old while other sections may be over 40 years old. One section may follow a river or creek in the lowlands while another is on a ridge. My personal section is a buffet of it all. I have lowlands where I can't find a rock to nail up a new blaze and high sections where finding dirt to fill a pail is impossible.

Just about everything we do on the trail to keep it in good shape for others can be categorized into three things: Trees, Trimming, or Tread.

Trees: We are in a forest, they provide shade, leaf fall to help protect the trail tread, roots to stabilize the soil and trail repair material when available. They also constantly fall across our trail blocking the path or pull up the entire section of tread when a tree falls over and the root ball takes our trail with it. Trees also constantly seek sunlight by sending

branches into our trail corridor. Lopping is a constant out there. Cut as close to the source tree as possible. Saplings along the trail edge are not our friend, future shade trees or anything but a future complication. When possible, cut them flush with the ground.

Trimming: When trees fall and open up a canopy, weeds grow. Our trail corridor is 6' wide by 8' tall. Knocking back all growth from the center of the tread to three feet on both sides helps hiker safety, experience, and improves maintenance results. Snakes can't be seen if you can't see the tread, ticks are a big issue and that risk can be greatly reduced if we trim back growth a couple of times per year.

Tread: This is the heart of any trail. Trees gone, weeds trimmed, but an off camber, rock filled, eroded mess is not a pleasant experience nor is it sustainable. A trail suffering degraded conditions only gets worse over time. Catching issues early, making minor corrections, reporting of big issues, that is how a trail community stays in front of tread health concerns. Raking of loose rocks, removal of step overs that do not require a sawyer, keeping drains open are all ways to reduce nature's impact on the tread. There will be how-to links in future editions for installing drain features, cleaning of drains, step overs, etc.

Reporting issues: If you are unfamiliar or new there are several ways. You can text me, but the best way is email at ohmaintenance@gmail.com. Pictures go a long way if you are reporting trees down. Sawyers like to know how to prepare, if additional help is needed, or if it can wait for an additional reason to carry a saw out to the forest. Location, location, location, if any issue is reported keep in mind that carrying of tools, saws, supplies, etc. is hard enough without taking extra steps. GPS coordinates, a pin dropped on your trail app of choice then a screen shot, all helps us decide how to go after that reported issue.

CHANGES TO EMAIL ADDRESSES

If you haven't already noticed, there have been a few changes to email addresses. The new addresses will allow everyone to directly communicate with the various positions without having to remember personal email addresses. The other benefit is for ease of transferring information as members of the board change. This, of course, has come with a few learning opportunities when communicating with a large number of members, hence the possible multiple notifications of the board meeting you may have received. Please be patient while we work through this. Below is a list of the new, current and obsolete email accounts.

New Email Accounts

president@ozarkhighlandstrail.com
treasurer@ozarkhighlandstrail.com
secretary@ozarkhighlandstrail.com

Use this to contact Yvonne Liske
Use this to contact Todd Wells
Use this to contact Brent Umphlett

Current Email Address

ohata@ozarkhighlandstrail.com
orders@ozarkhighlandstrail.com
payments@ozarkhighlandstrail.com

Monitored by Yvonne
Monitored by Mel
Monitored by Todd

Email Addresses to be Deleted

admin@ozarkhighlandstrail.com
mel@ozarkhighlandstrail.com
webmaster@ozarkhighlandstrail.com
membership@ozarkhighlandstrail.com

Deleted
Deleted
Deleted
To be deleted. Please do not use.

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

HIKE ONWARD!!