

Trailblazer



FOUNDED 1959
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Milford, Ohio— BTA's First Official Trail Town

Chris McIntyre

Enjoy the best of Milford, BTA's first official Trail Town. I am happy to have played a part in the process of inaugurating the city of Milford as our first official Buckeye Trail Town. The Trail Town program recognizes communities on or near the Buckeye Trail that support hikers and promote the Buckeye Trail.

To consolidate BTA's recognition of our new Trail Town, the BT has been rerouted so hikers can enjoy many of Milford's amenities and interesting features. Milford without doubt meets all the criteria. It offers a variety of features including a charming main street, hiker-friendly shops and restaurants, attractive architecture, several camping locations for thru-hikers, an interesting history and the beautiful 130-acre Valley View nature preserve. Milford is also located at the intersection of eight of America's Long Distance Trails, which together total over 22,000 miles. The trails connect in Milford and wind through its streets, offering a great way to explore the many facets of Milford before hikers continue their trail adventures.

Buckeye Trail's reroute follows sidewalks through Milford, permitting access to the town, including a very trail-friendly outfitter store. The Buckeye Trail passes lovely historical homes as it wends its way to the woods and trails of the Valley View Foundation. There is plenty for the hiker to enjoy.

(continued on page 2)



Jenny Koester

The ceremonial ribbon-cutting on Buckeye Trail's reroute into Trail Town Milford. The Buckeye Trail now takes a hiker right through town, where everything a self-respecting could want is available, including diversion from the trail, if needed. Check out BTA's newest reroute here, in both the Loveland and Williamsburg sections.



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MILFORD (continued from front page)

Historically Milford is an abbreviated form of “mill ford”, so named because it was the first safe ford across the Little Miami north of the Ohio River. In 1818 a wooden bridge across the Little Miami was completed, making the ford obsolete.

Milford has been inhabited since prehistoric times. Its archaeological site, known as the “Gatch Site”, has yielded large numbers of artifacts and is believed to be the site of a Native American village of Woodland period.

The Valley View Foundation’s site is primitive, undeveloped farmland with water features, hills and ravines, wildlife and wooded areas. It is a nature preserve and education facility located close to the confluence of the East Fork and Little Miami Rivers. Valley View Foundation is a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation. The foundation was formed in 2002 by residents of Milford and others who were interested in preserving a historic farm and ecosystem for current and future generations to enjoy and learn from.

Before settlers entered the Milford area in the 1790s, the Valley View property was probably a mosaic of woodlands and grasslands. Over the years, the land was cleared for agricultural purposes and natural wetlands were drained. Since the Valley View Foundation took ownership of the property and active farming ceased the fields are slowly reverting to their natural state providing a habitat for local and migratory birds.

The East Fork of the Little Miami River runs through Valley View. For more than a mile, the river meanders through the woodlands. These riparian wetlands provide important environmental benefits and ideal habitat for amphibians and reptiles such as frogs and snakes. Ohio EPA, the City of Milford and Valley View cooperated on a grant to purchase the riparian area at Valley View for permanent conservation.

Thanks to the Valley View foundation. <http://www.valleyviewcampus.org/> BT hikers can now enjoy hiking through this beautiful property and avoid the busy and twisty South Milford Road.

BTA’s new display in the Valley View Foundation. Valley View is a nature preserve and education facility near the confluence of the East Fork and Little Miami Rivers in Milford. It was formed in 2002 for the preservation of a historic farm ecosystem.



Jenny Koester



Jenny Koester

Wooded trail on the Valley View Foundation makes for quiet, pleasant hiking. Bikes and horses are permitted only on marked trails, and Walk-in camping may be permitted with prior approval.



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Disclaimer: The articles and all information in this publication have been prepared with utmost care. However, neither the Buckeye Trail Association nor the Editor can guarantee accuracy or completeness of information. Opinions expressed in the articles, columns and paid advertising are not necessarily those of the BTA.



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on recycled paper.

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Annual Meeting

Debbie Zampini

Awards & Recognition

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BTA Century Barn

Mary Hamilton

BuFiLo

Debbie Zampini

Bylaws

Mary Hayes

Cartography

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OPEN

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Volunteer Placement

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The Long-Running— But Finally Complete— AEP Onion Run Relocation

Richard A. Lutz, BTA AmeriCorps

The Buckeye Trail relocation at Onion Run was a small dream come true and a project I was happy to have participated in. We moved the Buckeye Trail off-road for two miles and incorporated into it an overlook of the Onion Run valley and a small waterfall tucked back in a holler that will be a surprise to anyone hiking the Trail. It also has the potential to have a trail shelter on it.

The project for me started three years ago, and each year we would have one work party to try to get a little more of the Trail on the ground. A partial rainout last year made me determined to get the new trail open during a spring 2012's work party. However, even with all the work we did in spring 2012, we still had 1000 feet left to finish! That motivated me even more to see it done this year! After working with Section Supervisor Herb Hulls, we set aside a day during Herb's annual maintenance party to finish that last bit, but the unbearable heat was hard on all of us and still left us with the trail uncompleted. I was determined to make one last go at it. With the help of my fellow AmeriCorps from the Ohio StreamCorps program plus dedicated members of the BTA Trail Crew, we managed finally to finish the trail!

My fellow AmeriCorps loved the experience and are eager to know when the next Work Party is. (Okay, maybe it's because they want to get their fleece shirts as well.) At the end of the Work Party, I couldn't believe it was finally done. We completed work started in 1997, moving the Buckeye Trail onto all the available AEP Recreation Lands. This now makes possible a 26-mile off-road hike. It makes me proud to know I was involved in building a section of the Buckeye Trail that hikers will use for years to come. I encourage everyone to come out to a BTA Work Party and make a positive impact on the future!

Finally, special thanks to AEP for allowing us to build the Trail across the AEP ReCreation Lands. To anyone interested in maintaining this stunning new section of Trail, contact me at gis@buckeyetrail.org or Garry Dill at volunteer@buckeyetrail.org.



Richard Lutz

Schedule of Hikes & Events



Always check www.buckeyetrail.org/events.html for last-minute updates

DECEMBER

December 8 BTA Board Meeting at Command Alkon. Starts 10:00 AM.

Contact: Melissa Reed,
president@buckeyetrail.org

2013

JANUARY

January 1 Miami Rivers Chapter Annual New Year's Day Hike. Various starting times.

We will have three options for hikers to start out the New Year! Location for this event is Twin Creek MetroPark, just 20 minutes southwest of Dayton <http://www.metroparks.org/>. Hikers can choose from a three-, six-, or eight-mile hike and start 2013 off with a great event.

You need to contact me directly or join the Miami Rivers Chapter group to participate.

Contact: Darryl Smith, 513-321-1539 or www.miamiriverschapter.org

January 4-6 BTA Winter Campout.

Location: TBD. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

January 7 Thru-Hiking the Buckeye Trail—A 1,400 Mile Journey Around Ohio.

6:30 PM-8:00 PM, Huber Heights Branch, Dayton Metro Library: 6160 Chambersburg Rd., Huber Heights, 937-496-8934

In 2011, Andy Niekamp set out on a hike from Dayton on the Buckeye Trail. His goal was to hike for as long as it was fun. Over 1,400 miles and 88 days later, Andy returned to Dayton. His presentation will take you on his Buckeye Trail thru-hike with beautiful photos of Ohio's backyard trail.

Andy Niekamp is from Kettering and has a passion for long-distance hiking. He has thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail three times. Andy is founder and leader of the DaytonHikers.Org group, the largest outdoor recreation group in Dayton. Andy is also

the lead adventurer for Outdoor Adventure Connection, specializing in backcountry adventures.

Contact: Andy Niekamp,
andyniecamp@gmail.com

January 12 Day Hike, East Fork State Park, Williamsburg Section. Leave 9:00 am from the trail access parking lot.

We will tackle the old backpack trail at East Fork Lake. This hike will be a lollipop loop as we head east along the Buckeye Trail and backpack trail to backcountry campsite 2. I have read that the backpack trail is anywhere from 12 to 20 miles long, but I believe it is only 12 (but you know how that can go). For those of you who have hiked at East Fork, this trail is in much better shape than the horse-shared perimeter trail and should offer a great long hike. Bring plenty of water, snacks and lunch.

Trail access parking lot: First gravel lane on the left after passing the park office.

You need to contact me directly or join the Miami Rivers Chapter group to participate.

Contact: Darryl Smith, 513-321-1539 or www.miamiriverschapter.org

January 21 Martin Luther King Day Winter Hike, Hueston Woods State Park.

Monday: Meet at Hueston Woods State Park Lodge, 5201 Lodge Road, College Corner, OH 45003. Hike will start at 9:00 am. Arrive early and have breakfast with other hikers at the Lodge at 8:00 AM. We will hike around Acton Lake, about 11 miles, on a variety of trails. A bean soup and/or chili and corn muffin lunch will be provided at the park office across from the Nature Center. Donations are accepted. For those wishing to hike only from the Lodge to the Nature Center, a shuttle back to the Lodge will be available. This is a free event.

Note: Dogs (all pets) are not allowed in the Nature Preserve portion of Hueston Woods. There is an easy route bypassing that section if you bring your dog.

Contact: Pat Hayes, patioh@woh.rr.com, 937-962-4884

FEBRUARY

February 2 Burr Oak Winter Hike, New Straitsville Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

February 2 Baden Powell Institute, Kent Stark Professional Education and Conference Center. Open to all Cubs, Webelos, Scouts, and Venturing Adult Volunteer Leaders.

Contact: Jim Holman, jholman.2@gmail.com; Tom Hughes, squadron22tfs@yahoo.com

MARCH

March 9 BTA Board Meeting at Command Alkon. Starts 10:00 AM. Contact: Melissa Reed, president@buckeyetrail.org

March 23-24 BTA Work Party, East Fork State Park, Williamsburg Section.

Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

APRIL

April 6-7 BTA Work Party, Tar Hollow State Park, Scioto Trail Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

April 22-25 2013 Buckeye TrailFest Backpack, Bedford Section. Approx. 38 miles. See day-by-day description on page 10.

Contact: John Rethman, 513-398-952 or ilovehiking3@cinci.rr.com

April 25-28 2013 BTA TrailFest. Save the Date! TrailFest in Northeast Ohio. Hosted by the Bedford and Burton Sections. We will be showing off Lake and Geauga Counties. The event will be held at Red Oak Camp in Kirtland. Additional information will be available on the Buckeye Trailfest web pages soon.

Contact: Deb Zampini, 440-567-1894 or half-marathoner@hotmail.com

Chuckwagon Reservations

For meal reservations for the chuckwagon at work parties (where available), contact Chuck Wagon Master, Jay Holwick at:

holwick@columbus.rr.com
740-743-3813

BTA Barn Directions

Take I-77 south to US-250 east (just south of New Philadelphia). Follow US-250 past Tappan Dam almost to the end of the lake. There is a causeway with a sign that reads "Tappan Lake Park". Turn right (this road also takes you to Deersville). Approximately 3.1 miles from the US-250 turnoff is Beall Rd. on the right. Follow this dead-end road 1.3 mi. It ends at the BTA Barn down a long gravel driveway.

Remember the house side of the driveway is absolutely and strictly off-limits. It is a private residence so please respect their wishes and stay on our side of the driveway and please do not block any roads.

BTA Funds Report

TRAIL PRESERVATION FUND 8/1/2012–10/31/2012

Travis Neely
Anastasia Birosh
Phyllis Devlin
William T. Schultz
Louise McDonough

GENERAL FUND 7/01/2012–9/30/2012

Dorothy and Don Anson
Battelle, *in memory of Ed Hilbert*
Thomas Bishop
David Campfield
P. Gregory Cross
Jeanette Desimone
Michael Dodge
Ruth Epstein
Mike Fanelli
GE, *matching gift from Richard Schmidt*
Eugene Kramer Trust
Kroger Community Rewards
Nancy McCann
Vertical Runner, Hudson
Chery Wenner
Deborah Zampini *in memory of Coco*

BARN FUND 7/1/2012–9/30/2012

Clara Jean Paryzek
Shauna Sergent

SCHOLARSHIP FUND 7/01/2012–9/30/2012

MAY

May 4–8 AEP Work Party Week, American Electric Power, Stockport Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

May 18–19 Newport Bridge Work Party, Miami Erie Canal, St Marys Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

May 24–27 Buckeye Trail Backpack, Fort Loramie to Delphos. Leave 10:00 am 05/24/2012. Ideal for beginner backpackers (but veterans are welcome). This flat, easy to hike trip will start use the Buckeye Trail along the Miami-Erie Canal. BT here is well maintained and easy to follow, offering both wooded and open walking. Do not think that a flat trip might be boring; it still offers plenty of interesting sites and quaint small towns, and very little road walking. Anyone interested MUST sign up on either the Friends of the Buckeye Trail, <http://www.buckeyetrailfriends.org> or Miami Rivers <http://www.miamiriverschapter.org>.

JUNE

June 1–2 BTA Work Party, Independence Dam Shelter, Defiance Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

June 8 BTA Board Meeting at Command Alkon. Starts 10:00 am. Contact: Melissa Reed, president@buckeyetrail.org

June 15–19 Work Party Week, Edge of Appalachia, West Union Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

June 22–23 Emma “Grandma” Gatewood Solstice (EGGS) Hike, New Straitsville Section. Hike all day in Burr Oak State Park. Contact: Byron Guy, oldmanscave@buckeyetrail.org

June 29–30 RT 35 Trail Rebuild Work Party, Scioto Trail Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

JULY

July 13–14 Work Party, Pretty Run, Old Mans Cave Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

July 20 BTA Picnic, BTA Barn, Bowerston Section. Contact: Deb Zampini half-marathoner@hotmail.com, 440-567-1894

AUGUST

August 23–25 BTA Board Retreat, BTA Barn, Bowerston Section. Contact: Melissa Reed, president@buckeyetrail.org

August 31–September 2 BTA Work Party, Pretty Run/Tar Hollow, Old Mans Cave Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

SEPTEMBER

September 14–18 BTA Work Party Week, West Branch State Park, Mogadore Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

September 28–29 BTA Work Party, Next to Serpent Mound, Sinking Spring Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

OCTOBER

October 12–13 BTA Work Party, Burr Oak State Park, New Straitsville Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

October 26–30 BTA Work Party Week, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Akron Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

NOVEMBER

November 9–10 BTA Work Party, Hocking Hills State Park, Old Mans Cave Section. Contact: Trail Management Team, stc@buckeyetrail.org

Moved or Moving?

Send the BTA Your Change of Address!!

The *Trailblazer* will NOT be forwarded to your new address AND the BTA incurs 70¢ charge for each undeliverable *Trailblazer*. Mailing labels are generated 3 weeks before the *Trailblazers* are mailed, so send in your change of address right away!

Email your change of address to: membership@buckeyetrail.org

Go Green! Get Your Trailblazer Online!

An interactive edition—with bookmarks to each story and active links—can now be sent to you.

Have more of your membership \$\$ go into the Buckeye Trail!

Get the electronic version of the *Trailblazer* earlier than the mailed version!

Sign up at buckeyetrail.org/newsletter.html



On the Trail . . .

Thanks to you, yes you, Ohio's Buckeye Trail has experienced a great year. 'Tis the season for giving thanks, counting our blessings, and celebrating the best of the year past with friends and family. Why do you deserve thanks? This year you gave \$20

to the Buckeye Trail Association, not just because of the benefits you receive through membership, but because you believe in the Buckeye Trail. This year you volunteered somewhere between 1 and 2,000 hours of your time on exciting or tedious projects that built, maintained, protected and promoted the BT. This year you mentioned the BT and the BTA to a friend or family member, building a sense of intrigue in something that many consider Ohio's greatest idea. This year you put your boots somewhere along the 1,444 miles of the BT, the greatest compliment you could give to our visionary founders and devoted volunteers since the 1950s. Because you have given to the BT, others have been able to do more and the vision grows ever more real.

This past year we celebrate 1,444 miles worth of accomplishments by members like you working together. To name a few, the BTA donated thousands of volunteer hours to the BT for all Ohioans, resulting with the completion many trail projects like the multi-year 25-mile portion of the BT in AEP's ReCreation Lands. We completed major renovations to the BTA Century Barn and built the connection of the BT to the Barn on the shores of Tappan Lake. We launched a new look to the BTA website and many other materials to our new brand standard. We finished GPSing the entire BT, which improves our BT section maps and allows for the creation of products like our new Hiker on the Go! map series. We hosted a well-received first annual Buckeye TrailFest near Fort Ancient. We organized our successful Emma 'Grandma' Gatewood Solstice Hike, challenging hikers over 40 miles in 24 hours around the Burr Oak and Wildcat Hollow trail systems. We launched a fledgling Buckeye Trail Town program with Milford, dedicated as the first official Buckeye Trail Town. We created our new BTA Miami Rivers Chapter serving SW Ohio to achieve our mission locally. We continued to support a part-time Executive Director to serve BTA members, volunteers and partners and an AmeriCorps member focused on program development. We created a Buckeye Trail Preservation Fund and Buckeye Trail Greatest Needs Fund with the Columbus Foundation to grow our investments and reach out to new donors beyond the

current BTA membership. We've taken a more active role in advocating for the protection of the Buckeye Trail on public lands. We supported our latest BT Thru-Hiker, and first female solo thru-hiker, Denise "Ladybug" Hill, as she kept following the blue blazes. And those are just some highlights!

All of these accomplishments are thanks to specific individuals doing what they can with their time, but they would not have been possible without your support. We have a lot to be thankful for and celebrate this season, and like a gift that keeps on giving; all of these accomplishments are things that we can build upon in 2013. I hope this selection of moments to celebrate gives you pride in the BTA's progress and excites you about the potential in the year to come. I know I am excited. The BTA has decided to increase my employment from part-time to your full-time Executive Director beginning in January. I have always felt honored to serve you, BTA members and volunteers, and with the increase in time devoted to the BTA I hope that I am able to serve you even better. Thank you for day-by-day teaching me how to become a better Director. While I was involved in each of the accomplishments listed above it has always been the heroic effort of volunteers deserving all of the credit and that is the way it should always be.

Another reason we have been so successful this year is because you, the Buckeye Trail Association, generously met and exceeded our 2011 BTA Member Challenge. Success begets success. Everyone contributed what they could and look what value has come from investing in the BTA. To build upon all of these successes, a small group of BTA members have banded together to challenge BTA members again. Please consider investing in the BTA again this season so we can continue to celebrate realizing the vision of Ohio's Buckeye Trail together. Thank you for all that you do for Ohio's Buckeye Trail, I hope you find the time to celebrate by putting your boots on the Trail this winter.

See you on the Trail,

Andrew Bashaw
BTA Executive Director
director@buckeyetrail.org
740-777-6BTA (6282)



Bits & Pieces

2nd Annual BTA Olympics Results

Photo Contest: On the BT
1-Darlene Karoly; 2-Bob Kurtz; 3-Darlene Karoly

Photo Contest: Animals
1, 2 & 3-Deb Zampini

Photo Contest: Structures
1 & 2-Deb Zampini

Photo Contest: People
1-Bob Kurtz; 2-Barb Kurtz

Drawing Contest
1-Ryan Kleinhenz, age 6; 2-Sarah Kleinhenz, age 5

Poetry
1-Margie Delong

BTA's Scholarship continues to grow! We are looking for people to apply for the funds. We hope to give two \$500 scholarships each year. Check www.buckeyetrail.org/scholarship.html for information and deadline for applying for the scholarship. Don't pass up this opportunity to get some financial assistance with your higher education. If more information is needed you may send Elmo Layman, BTA Scholarship Chairman, an email at etl@ctcn.net.

April 4, 2013 is the deadline for TrailFest Awards Nominations. Please refer to the categories on page 10. We have many people out there who do so much for the BTA and they need they to be recognized for all their hard work. Please consider nominating a deserving person or organization. BTA needs to recognize and reward hard workers for their generosity to the BTA. Nominations come from BTA members who've experienced the generosity of people or organizations to the BTA.

Future Off-Road Buckeye Trail in Norwalk and Pemberville Sections



Ruth Brown, Norwalk Section Supervisor

In 2013 or early 2014, the BT will be moved off-road onto the North Coast Inland Trail through Huron and Sandusky counties. The NCIT through Huron County is on Firelands Rails to Trails, open from Norwalk (west) to Bellvue, along with some parts east of Norwalk. When FRTT is completed into Norwalk, the BT will be moved off road. The BT is currently on the NCIT from Fremont to Elmore. FRTT is excited about having the BT share their trail and forming a partnership with the BTA. To learn about FRTT, see www.firelandsrailstotrails.org. For anyone living near Huron County, FRTT has work days on the first Saturday and third Sunday of each month 8:00 AM-noon; check their website for information. Currently the BT's Norwalk Section is mostly on roads from Findley State Park to Fremont, so this move off-road is a big plus for the BT in this part of the state. Look for updates about this trail move in future *Trailblazers*.

BTeasers

Pat Hayes

Q What Buckeye Trail Section runs through the 1860 Cow Run Oil Field and what county is it located in?

A The 1860 Cow Run Oil Field is located in Washington County and is generally south of the Buckeye Trail between points 5 and 6 in the Whipple section.

References: The Washington County Ohio Highway Map and the book Images of America—Ohio Oil and Gas by Jeff A. Spencer and Mark J. Camp



BuckeyeTrailFest.org

April 25–28, 2013
Red Oak Camp
Kirtland, Ohio

The Buckeye TrailFest offers a long weekend packed full of hikes, workshops, presentations, speakers and social opportunities



Sponsored by



Marino Family • Perotti Family

For more information and to register, visit:
BuckeyeTrailFest.org

Mark Your Calendars for the 2013 Buckeye TrailFest

Are you ready for the second annual Buckeye TrailFest, April 25-28? It's at Red Oak Camp in Kirtland. We will be ready for you. This event will be held in northeast Ohio—very northeast. Come prepared for all types of weather, but even if it rains or snows, you will have a great time.

We are busy working on a wide range of programs, hikes, field trips, speakers, classes and workshops showcasing the history and beauty of Lake and Geauga counties and hiking as much of 100+ miles in this corner of the state.

What is the definition of a trail? It is a marked or beaten path, as through woods or wilderness. It is a destination, a way to get from one place to another. What is the definition of a festival (fest)? It is any occasion for a celebration, especially one that commemorates an anniversary. Put these together and you have the theme of this year's Buckeye TrailFest: to celebrate the Buckeye Trail, the people who use it, and the ways they use it.

Buckeye Trail Association's mission statement refers to the "scenic hiking trail." The Buckeye Trail is a trail of many uses. Included are day hikes, weekend hikes, backpacks, family togetherness, health awareness, birding, education, geocaching, orienteering, winter sports, dog walkers, equestrian, biking, trail runs and cross-country skiing. The list is endless. The 1444 miles of trail travel through many different places and upon many different surfaces, providing a great experience for everyone.

2013 Buckeye TrailFest wants to invite everyone who uses the Buckeye Trail and makes the Trail possible through hard work, donations and support. If you have been curious as to who is the Buckeye Trail Association, come check us out. Enjoy speakers who have traversed many trails, see what they saw and hear what they experienced. Learn what it takes to build a trail (hands-on experience!) and protect it for generations. What are land management, easements, land conservation and trail maintenance? Find out here.

Learn technical skills such as GPS, smart phones and how are they can enhance the trail experience. Learn to use your camera for better pictures. Learn basic wilderness first aid. Learn orienteering for when the batteries run down in other equipment. Learn backcountry cooking.

Hike in areas not open to the public, go birding and enjoy trails for their beauty. Take a field trip to learn history of the area. Learn everything from the rock beneath your feet to the birds above. Maybe we will throw in a little astronomy. Learn about the people who made history in the area.

We don't want to give all our plans away so please check out www.buckeyetrailfest.org. Registration opens January 1, 2013. Hope to see you all at the 2013 Buckeye TrailFest.

GET HIKING

Join us for led and self led hikes on the Buckeye Trail and other trails. All skill levels—easy, moderate, difficult.



GET DIRTY

Join a trail crew and help build a section of trail. Learn from the best.



GET INVOLVED

Attend the Buckeye Trail Association business meeting. Learn how you can help.



GET CONNECTED

Meet hikers and trail maintainers from around the state. Never hike alone again!

Buckeye Trail Association

Awards and Recognition Nominations

I would like to nominate _____ for the following award (check one):

AWARDS

____ **BOB PATON AWARD (Meritorious Service)**

Honors members who have contributed exceptionally meritorious services to the Association for at least fifteen (15) years. Such services may pertain to trail maintenance, trail utilization and/or administrative or management functions. Recipients must be living at the time of nomination.

____ **PRESIDENT'S AWARD (Volunteer of the Year)**

All active members of the Association are eligible for this award. The nominee shall have either shown exceptional commitment to an assignment(s), or have made some major contribution of special benefit to the Association during the past year. Nominees who would be eligible for a certificate of appreciation can be considered for the President's award.

____ **BILL MILLER AWARD (Conservation)**

Honors any person or group responsible for actions that have notably preserved or restored the natural ecology or beauty of a locality by the Trail, or have brought under control a major threat to utility of the Trail in some locality.

____ **SUPER STAR (Superior Service over Time)**

Awarded to person(s) who have exhibited superior service in appointed or volunteer tasks.

RECOGNITIONS

____ **TRUSTEE EMERITUS (Board Members Only)**

This is the only recognition that is set aside for members of the Board of Trustees. The nominee should have accumulated at least (10) years as Board Member and must have demonstrated consistent commitment and continued service to the Board, the Association, and the Trail, through exceptional diligence at their assignments and at least one notable achievement to their credit.

____ **2000 KM**

For hiking the entire trail on foot and completed in the year 2011 for this year's award.

____ **CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION**

This is presented to any individual, city, agency, business, or organization that has demonstrated exemplary cooperation and diligence to perpetuate and improve the Trail and Association, and must have helped in some significant way to aid the Association attain an important objective.

____ **STAR PERFORMANCE (Leadership Excellence)**

Presented to person(s) who have exhibited leadership in appointed or volunteer tasks.

____ **TRAIL ADOPTER AWARD**

Presented to person(s) who have exhibited superior service to their adopted segment of the Buckeye Trail. These individuals maintain their segment so that it is always ready and a pleasure to hike. They maintain their records and report hours, travel, and any problems to their supervisors, or State Trail Coordinator when needed.

Please write a brief statement of your reason for nominating this person or group. Include name, address and phone numbers for both nominee and nominator. If either has an e-mail address, please include it also, in case we have any questions.

All nominations must be postmarked by April 4, 2013. This nomination form can also be found on the Buckeye Trailfest web site, buckeyetrailfest.org, or send nomination form to Mary Hamilton, hamilton.3310@roadrunner.com or 717 E. Third St., Dover, OH, 44622.

Backpack into the Buckeye TrailFest

Explore the spring beauty of the Bedford Section and backpack 38 miles April 22-25 into TrailFest! Hike on all types of terrain: gravel, dirt, paved and some roads; there are some hills, but the grade is mainly flat overall.

Day One: Shortly after starting the hike, you will enjoy Tinker's Creek, where beaver, blue heron, ducks and geese are common. You'll hike through Brecksville Reservation and enter South Chagrin Reservation. Shortly before ending the day's hike, you will be just above the legendary Squaw Rock, where Henry Church sculpted primitive figures into a boulder more than 100 years ago. Feeling the demise of the American Indian, Church would steal down to the rock at night to create his work by lantern. Just follow the signs to see his beautiful artwork.

Day Two: You will reach Look About Lodge, built in 1938 by the Cleveland Natural Science Club as a place to discover and experience nature. Enjoy bridge trails along the Chagrin River; keep an eye open for migrating birds. Walk through Gates Mills, and after a few more miles your hike will end for the day and you will enjoy your second night in the Cleveland Metro Parks.

Day Three: You will see Little Church in the Vale, and hike into North Chagrin Reservation. You will pass Patterson's Fruit Farm and have the option of getting a bear claw; this will give you all the energy you will need to finish the day at Chapin Forest. Enjoy a peaceful night in this lovely park.

Day Four: Enjoy the rock formations of Sharon conglomerate, where on a clear day you can see downtown Cleveland from the overlook, 17 miles away and at eye level with the hawks. Shortly you will enter Penitentiary Glen Reservation, named for the deep gorge. Enjoy the views of the gorge from above and the breeze blowing through the Canadian hemlocks. Stop by the nature center to say hello. In about one mile you will hike into Red Oak Camp and Buckeye TrailFest 2013!

Contact John Rethman at ilovehiking3@cinci.rr.com or 513-398-9527 for details and to reserve a spot. Limit is 12. There is no fee for this event.

A Series of Remarkable Experiences and Other ~~Hiking~~ Life Lessons

Barb Crompton (*Blue Blaze Bugsie*)

The maps I ordered had come quickly, but a hiking injury and weather kept me off the trails for a few weeks. With much amusement, and a touch of embarrassment, I have to share my initial thoughts about the maps. “They were not what I expected ...wordier than an actual map, talking pretty much about distance, section by section, big jogs in the trail, crossing major roads, etc. The maps are not very detailed [on how to get to a trail].” I laughed when I reread my journal. **Lesson #17: Let experience speak for itself.** Give something plenty of tries before giving up on it altogether. It is obvious to me today that I just was unfamiliar with the maps, but as I got used to them they became a true blessing over these many hikes. I still spend a great deal of time figuring out how to get to a new segment, where to park my bike and car and how to get back and forth between them, but once I am there at the trail, there are few secrets about where to go, just plenty of opportunities for adventure.

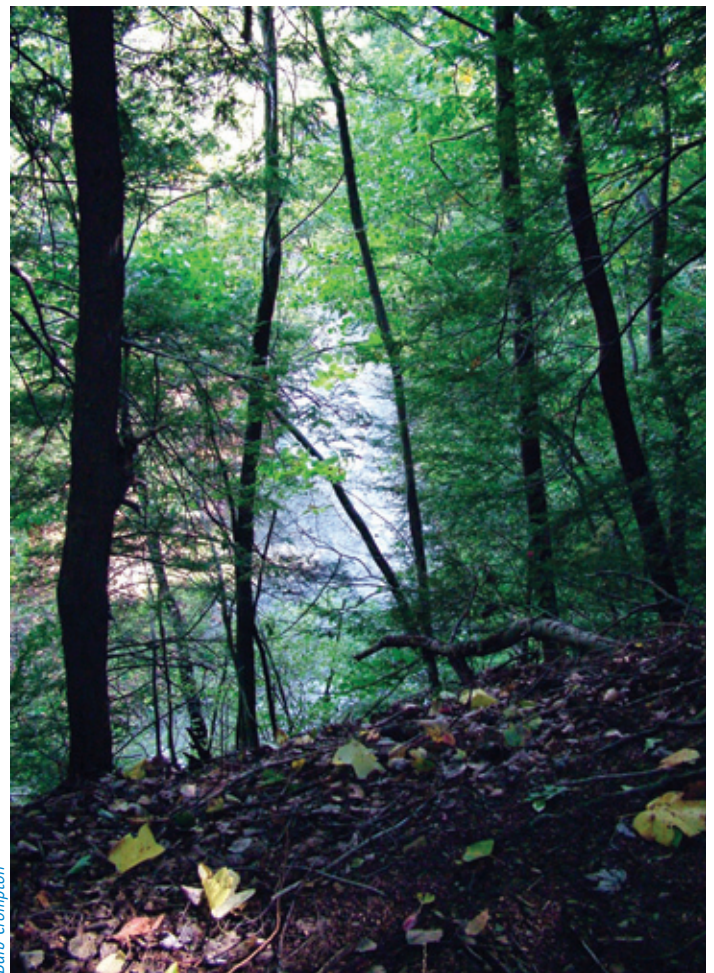
Although the sun was out, dark clouds were hovering low in the fall sky, even my son had commented on them as I drove him to school for his birthday, so I dressed warmly adding a hoodie under my “park uniform” to protect myself from the cold and wind. This hike, segment 4, Bedford section, actually started last hike when I crossed the towpath in front of the Frazee House on Canal Road. Using my Google directions, I drove directly to the end of my hike, dropped off my bike and scouted out the route I would later take back.

Retracing my steps to where I ran into my good Samaritan on Sagamore Road, I bumbled around for a few minutes trying to figure out where the next blaze was hiding, which was just on the other side of the guard rail (as indicated on the BT map), but it was obscured by all the trees so I hesitated until I finally spotted it well up the hill. I immediately started up a steep incline through a thick forest, mixed with fir and deciduous trees. Here and there through the thicket I would catch a glimpse of moving water, how far down I wasn't certain. There were mammoth trees with their thick exposed roots as long as they were tall clinging to the sides of the hill to keep from sliding off into the abyss. Once on top the trail ran close to the edge on this woodsy ridge. When I would pop out into a bare rock clearing I could see where the ground fell away dizzyingly, its sheer drops giving birth to plenty of falls where water was left to helplessly tumble on down into these deep, moss and leaf-covered ravines so steep that no matter how I tried my photos could not capture the depth I saw with my eyes nor the awe that I felt standing at the edge. This was the scenery that went on forever as I wound my way back and forth through this forest and as I went from one set of mini gorges to another I would cross through their feeder creeks and storm drainage tunnels, neatly stacked with sandstone.

The many images and colors of this fall day's palette captured my imagination and my heart as I roamed through envisioning it

as an early day pioneer might have experienced it while making their way on foot up into the next county. I spent a great deal of time taking photos and videos of the most varying scenery which before I would have thought impossible to have in one small area. There is a lot of really beautiful country up through here and I hope if one thought hiking the entire BT would be too much of a trial that they would at least hit this one segment. Maybe I was able to notice because I was calmer, with trusty BT map in hand, or perhaps it was just too gorgeous to miss. Either way this section was the most beautiful of the Buckeye Trail hikes I had taken to date and to this day still remains one of my favorites (and I had only gone half way!)

...to be continued



Barb Crompton

Hilly Hike in the Bedford Section Leaves an Impression

Barb Crompton worked to capture the depth she saw on her Buckeye Trail hike in the Bedford Section. This hike was one of her favorites for its beauty.

Towpath Trek

Franchot Ballinger Franchot will speak about his hike at 2013 TrailFest. Don't miss his presentation!

The first time I heard about the Miami-Erie State Trail between Delphos and Fort Loramie, a trail following the Miami-Erie Canal towpath and bordering or joining the Buckeye Trail (MEST-BT), I knew I wanted to solo backpack it.

Still, I had reservations about attempting it. At 72 I hadn't backpacked for more than 20 years, although I had done some fairly rigorous day hikes during that time. I also have some mildly arthritic joints. A more serious issue was sleep apnea that keeps me tethered at night to a CPAP machine. However, my sleep specialist said I'd be OK without the CPAP for a few nights, and occasional aches and pains notwithstanding, I am reasonably healthy. I figured a hike along an old canal towpath couldn't be too strenuous, so I decided to do the hike over a long weekend in June. Online information told me that I'd be hiking about 40 miles.

Concerned about campsites, I contacted Andrew Bashaw, BTA Executive Director, and Neal Brady of the Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association. They told me the town of Spencerville allows thru-hikers to camp in Acadia Park with permission of the town administrator.

Planning my second night was more challenging. The towpath is Ohio State property, and therefore, camping is permissible anywhere on the towpath. However, there are few places suitable for camping. The only site recommended by a state park employee was at Lock Eight, south of St. Marys. I was hesitant to camp there because I had no helpful information about the site. Camping at Grand Lake/St. Marys State Park or the commercial campground east of St. Marys would have added significant mileage to my hike. Having no idea how I would fare on my first backpack in years and considering my apnea, I found neither option desirable. So I made a reservation at a motel in St. Marys. This was a wise decision, for my sleep in Spencerville was disturbed by loud traffic until well after midnight. I did finally sleep but awoke at 5:30 Saturday morning. As it turned out, a real bed felt good Saturday night.

In any event, on June 22, my wife Henrietta and I drove to the MEST northern terminus outside of Delphos. Shortly after our picnic lunch, I donned my pack, kissed Henrietta goodbye, and headed south.

As I left Delphos a while later, a blue heron flew south from the canal. As I left the towpath at Spencerville that afternoon, another heron flew south from the canal. Blue herons appeared on each of the next two days at the beginning, during and at the end of my day's hike. Clearly my hike was blessed by my favorite bird. In fact, I saw more herons than people on my hike.

Some of the MEST-BT goes through towns, but the majority traverses farmland. Portions of the canal and towpath are a mere remnant of the original. The canal was constructed 28 feet wide at the bottom and 40 feet at the top, with a cut about five

feet deep. Erosion and sedimentation have significantly altered sections of the canal. In the northern part of the MEST, the canal banks and bed are often covered by cattails, wildflowers or shrubs. Much of the trail is dirt and grass with some graveled sections. In a few places, the towpath embankment (originally ten feet wide) has deteriorated so that it is narrow and uneven and inclined toward the fields. Early in my trek, I saw many ground-hogs. They are clearly fond of towpaths, for there were many burrow holes awaiting the inattentive hiker. Poison ivy is abundant along the towpath (especially on the last leg into Ft. Loramie State Park). Nevertheless, most of the trail is flat and easy walking.

Of course, history abounds along the MEST. Signs identify historical and lock sites, and a few locks and aqueducts have been reconstructed. The canal is very much a presence in downtown St. Marys with walkways and park space bordering it. New Bremen has reproductions of Lock One and of a water control structure. There is also a visitors' center on the site of the original lockkeeper's house. Along the way are Deep Cut Historical Park and Bloody Bridge (whose history befits its name). Occasionally, I paused long enough to imagine the sights and sounds during the canal's heyday.

Fortunately, fatigue on my second day and poison ivy were my biggest challenges. My arthritic joints were sometimes sore and stiff; however, I was never miserable. It was a good hike in different ways: the sights, the history, the people I'd met, and particularly the times of solitude. I glad I didn't let my reservations stop me.



Franchot Ballinger

Franchot's hike along with Miami-Erie Canal took him by this lock near point 8 on the Delphos map. He found the canal along the Buckeye Trail to be in all conditions, variously flowing with water, or dry and overgrown.

Welcome New Members!

Bev and Jerry Starcher

Jessica Boll, Reynoldsburg
Donald Burchfield and family,
Mineral City
Peter Burge and family, Millersport
Ellen Cali and family, Cleveland
Shannon Chaney, Groveport
Tom Choquette and family, Cincinnati
Michael Coconis and family, Columbus
Timothy Crowley, Olmsted Falls
Bob Daub and family, Circleville
Joyce Dupont, Norwalk
Julie Garrigan and family, Springfield
Shannon Giesige, Napoleon
Keith Hamilton, Youngstown
Richard Kauffman, Brunswick
James Ketchaver, Garfield Heights
Jeffery Lewis, Chillicothe
Gregg MacMillan, Milford
Dustin Mahrt, Peoria, IL
Kyle Markel, Columbus
Matthew McLain, Oxford
Kenneth McOwen, Ottawa Hills
Mary Miller and family, Medina
Jane Mitchell, Medina
Marty Moseman, Dayton
Dave Poppenhouse, Silver Lake
Greg Pugh, Columbus
Joy Salberg and family, Mogadore
Lowell Satre and family, Youngstown
Janet Scaggs, Beaver Creek
Barry Schroeder, Minster
Tim Spaulding and Jennifer, Mogadore
Jerome Thomas, Reynoldsburg
Jane Tidwell, University Heights
Darrell Trebec, Euclid
Erich Walentschak, Powell
Harold Watson and family, Kettering
Peter Weiner and family, North Canton
Ashley White, Kent
Steve White, Fairfield
Carol Yegerlehner, Fairborn
Gina Young, Wellston



Comment Received from Shelly by New Straitsville Section Supervisor Jay Holwick

On a planned backpack at Burr Oak State Park, Shelly and two friends experienced an injury nine miles into their first day. Their backpack was now over, but they still to get to their campsite for the night, and to get back to their car. It was then that they met “Jim” and had their first encounter with Buckeye Trail magic.

“Jim is our ANGEL. He got us to a safe place where he and the [Buckeye Trail Crew] group immediately made us feel so welcomed and helped us get our car. It was a long drive around the lake (and a lot of gas!) but he never hesitated; he just offered to help. ... Jim explained the idea of “trail magic” and we are believers. We were invited to stay in the group camping area with all of them and join their evening campfire, but the three of us were exhausted and feared that we couldn’t be good “new friends” that night.

“As we drove home from our adventure, we all agreed that we would like that night over again to sit at the fire and hear the tales and experiences of all those hikers of the Buckeye Trail group. It was easy to feel the connection those folks felt for each other and the work that brought them together. ...I can’t remember Jim’s last name. But I hope that you will make sure that he gets this. He was the game changer that made our trip have the awesome, positive feel it ended with. THANKS JIM!!

“Jay, you already know what a great crew you have in those people—so this is just one more story of how they have impacted lives on and off the trails of Ohio.”

Where in the Blazes ...

Trailblazer Pat Hayes visits Old Faithful on a trip out west to attend the American Discovery Trail Society annual meeting in Sacramento. Along the way Mary and Pat visited seven state capitols.



Mary Hayes

Maintainers' Corner

Jim Sprague, Maintenance Supervisor

Ordinarily, I do not talk about the efforts of the Buckeye Trail Crew in the Maintainer's Corner. However, this year, I am pleased to report that the Trail Crew has held Work Parties in several areas that were relatively poorly maintained. Some of our less forgiving members have suggested that those areas had never been maintained. Whatever, those same areas will need additional help going forward. Each of these sections is located in the more remote areas of the state—Whipple, Sinking Spring, Road Fork, Bowerston. If you have the time, do not mind driving a few extra miles and enjoy camping, these locations offer an extraordinary opportunity for maintaining a segment of off-road trail. Contact Garry Dill at volunteer@buckeyetrail.org. Tell Garry that you want to work in one of these remote sections. Garry will be happy to put you in touch with one or more Section Supervisors to explore further where you can help in a segment that meets your needs. I emphasize the need to tell Garry that you want to help in a remote location. Otherwise, he will put you in touch with a Section Supervisor near your residence where your help may not be urgently needed. While BTA never gets enough help, all too frequently, the essential connection between a local Section Supervisor and “just another”, a failure in perception made by the Section Supervisor who is also a Volunteer and is rarely thrilled by supervisory details, volunteer is not made.

In the most recent Work Party that maintained in the Whipple Section near Marietta, Don Jacobs of Wooster, a new volunteer, joined the Trail Crew for the first time to help him evaluate a segment within Whipple that he might maintain. Don has already found something that satisfied him. Isn't that great? One of my wishes has long been that all prospective volunteers who wish to adopt a trail segment would come out with the Trail Crew. In that way, the new maintainer learns about trail construction in a way that supports better maintenance practices. I believe that Garry Dill, BTA's Maintenance Coordinator, may have been the first volunteer to learn maintenance from the Trail Crew. And Garry has served a long time in a variety of capacities.

Why did I mention camping above? That is simple enough. When you live several hours from your adopted trail segment, you can waste a lot of time and money driving back and forth. That time could better be spent on more interesting or productive pursuits. For BTA purposes, I keep a record of all time reported by a maintainer from the time that he/she leaves home until he/she returns home. In addition, I also record his/her work time each day that he or she is away from home. That number is important to the person or organization that permits the trail on the property on which you work. In many locations camping may be available free to maintainers. In the Bowerston Section, you can camp at the BTA Barn. Contact Mary Hamilton (hamilton3310@roadrunner.com) to arrange details. At the state

parks through which the trail passes, free camping can often be arranged in the park campground if you make arrangements with the park manager at least 30 days beforehand. State forests are a bit more difficult because any arrangements made will often be at locations without facilities. American Electric Power offers free camping on a first-come/first-served basis at various campsites throughout the ReCreation Lands. Some county park districts also maintain campsites that may be available to volunteers. It pays to ask.

REPORT YOUR VOLUNTEER TIME!

This year for the first time, you can report your time online at <http://www.buckeyetrail.org/volunteerhours.html>. And the report cycle changed from the calendar year ending December 31 to a cycle more convenient for government agencies, September 30. Please make a note for the future. For next year, the reporting cycle began October 1, 2012 and will end on September 30, 2013!

Is reporting a pain? Yes! I think that we can all agree on that. But, while we as a group do agree that reports are a nuisance, I hope that we can also move past that obstacle and do what we need to do. The electronic form makes one huge change—the website permits recording monthly or quarterly. You may report all types of *volunteer* work donated to the BTA—Barn construction and maintenance, trail maintenance, preparation of submissions to *Trailblazer*, etc. Note that an annual record is not accepted on the website! As far as trail maintenance is concerned, you may continue to submit an annual report if you use the paper report. Drop me a request at jimsprague4135@att.net.

The report on the BTA website is quite complex. Please bear with the complexity. We do not ask for unnecessary details. The data is less useful if it cannot be broken out into the various categories that interest our various partners, such as state parks, state forests, American Electric Power, Nature Conservancy, North Country Trail, or American Discovery Trail, to name a few. In addition, management time is considered more valuable than work time. Please read the form and note that you can summarize within similar parameters, i.e., all state parks can be considered equal. But the report is less useful if your management time is lumped with work time. Those times should be reported separately. Note also that time at Buckeye Trail Crew events, work events at which you signed a Volunteer sheet, whether advertised as Maintenance Party or Work Party, has been reported already. You do not need to report that time again.

If you so choose, you may itemize various tasks and locations under the category, “In a few words, tell us a little more about what you did for the Buckeye Trail?”

I choose not to go further into this subject just now. It is as new to me as it is to you. And it is at least as painful to me as it is for you. I have told you about the website. I have introduced you to the new reporting cycle. I have alluded to the breadth of volunteer activities for which time will be collected. If you have specific questions, contact me at jimsprague4135@att.net or Andrew Bashaw at director@buckeyetrail.org. Either of us will answer either directly or in a subsequent *Trailblazer*.

Highlights of the BTA Board Meetings—August 25–26

Ruth Brown, Secretary and Melissa Shaw, BTA Board Member

VACANT POSITIONS AND VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT RORY ROBINSON, FACILITATOR

- Fill vacant positions. List the tools the BTA currently has to recruit new needed volunteers. List possible additional things the BTA could do to enlist volunteers.
- Vacancies include State Trail Coordinator and Treasurer.

TRAIL MANAGEMENT TEAM PAT HAYES

- If you need stickers for BTA's carsonite trail markers, see Pat. The 1-800# will be removed from all carsonite stickers.

CARTOGRAPHY AND AMERICORPS RICHARD LUTZ

- The Volunteer Handbook is a new document to be used for reference by volunteers and agencies.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANDREW BASHAW

- Andrew has been working on the Burr Oak ATV issue.
- *Celebrate!* Richard Lutz and team GPSed the entire Buckeye Trail. BTA will make data available within BTA, to ODNR, ODOT and other interested parties.
- Reminder: if you have a problem with as horseman or mountain biker on the trail, contact Andrew.

Barn Talk

Mary Hamilton

This past year has been quite productive at the Barn. In the spring, a group of hard workers spent 4½ days completing the last three rooms at the Barn, building two more bunks for sleeping plus a room for all the memorabilia that has been given to the BTA. We made improvements to the showers, and placed poles on the grounds for the last six bat boxes. We completed the trail from the Barn to the camping area at Tappan Lake last summer, making the trip to Tappan a nice walk. We also purchased a new mower last summer.

We have had several groups of visitors to the Barn to camp and enjoy the area. BTA hosted a group led by Andy Neikamp in the spring; they spent the weekend there without running water due to a rupture in the water filter system, which has since



been repaired. Several other groups have been visited the Barn (under better circumstances) and have been pleasantly surprised with the accommodations.

As of this printing, the Barn will have been winterized, which means no running water. The warming room will be in place for winter campers. Water will have to be brought in from the pump for cooking and flushing of the downstairs toilet. We recommend that the upstairs bathrooms not be used.

Activities scheduled for 2013: the Annual Membership Picnic plus a possible three-day work camp for youths and adults in July, and the Board retreat in August.



Deb Zampini

Amber Matheson, Bryan Wiandt and 19-month-old Parker ended their November 2012 hike of the entire Burton section at Headland Beach State Park. Amber is a writer for Lake Erie Living magazine whose assignment was to do something she has never done before; she chose to hike a whole section of the Buckeye Trail! They hiked with BTA Section Supervisors Patti Cook and Debbie Zampini. Read her article in the spring issue of *Lake Erie Living*.

Buckeye Trail Association

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April 25–28, 2013
Red Oak Camp
Kirtland, Ohio



*One Environment...
One Simple Way to Care for It.®*

Earth Share of Ohio is a great way to donate to the Buckeye Trail Association. ESO represents dozens of local, national and international groups working to preserve, protect and defend Ohio's and the world's environment. ESO's beneficiary organizations are some of the most respected and responsible environmental and conservation nonprofits in the country. You can designate your gift to ESO to benefit the BTA. There are two ways for you to do this:

- First is through your workplace giving program. More than 79 workplaces in Ohio now partner with ESO to offer their employees an environmental choice in their annual workplace giving campaign. Employees can check with their payroll offices or with ESO to determine if they have the option to contribute to ESO. If your workplace already partners with ESO, you'll just need to fill out a pledge form when your campaign runs! If your workplace does not have a giving program or does not include ESO in an existing one you can ask your employer to do so. ESO will help you.
- Secondly, you could give through your United Way Campaign. If your workplace offers a United Way giving drive and your local United Way includes ESO in its list of charities, you can select it from the list.

Using Earth Share Ohio is an easy method for giving to the BTA through payroll deductions.

www.earthshareohio.org