

# Trailblazer



FOUNDED 1959  
WINTER 2014 VOLUME 47 NO. 4

## The Colors of Winter

Mary Anne Kamph - Photo: Tim DeBraul

The brilliant colors of autumn have fallen and faded. How can winter compete? Winter's colors are both vivid and subtle.

The faithful evergreens provide a complimentary background to the red cardinals. Bright green winter wheat is an oasis of color among the gray-brown of harvested soybean and corn fields. Backyard birdfeeders draw many colorful birds, among them the noisy blue jays, black-capped chickadees, and kestrels in shades of russet and blue-gray.

The oaks have reluctant-to-fall rust colored leaves that gleam in the sunlight. Dark brown teasel heads and pine cones offer seeds to birds. Tall grasses in shades of tan will stay until spring, and fading leaves will curl and skitter across sidewalk and street. Vermillion rose hips decorate the leafless multi-floral rose bushes.

The white of the stars and planets as well as the International Space Station in its orbit shine bright in the black night sky. A silently falling snow covers all in white. The clear, sparkling ice from freezing rain coats all surfaces and is melted by a warming yellow sun.

Last but not least are the colors of the winter skies, from clear blues to the oranges, reds and yellows of sunsets. Sometimes we see a turquoise sky with orange-bottomed clouds topped by indigo. A blue-black sky gives warning of an approaching winter storm. Winter clouds also come in layers with many shades of gray - from light and fluffy to dark and menacing. Sometimes they travel slowly and other times they race by as if having some place important to go.

Winter can be a colorful feast for the eyes if we just pause and look. Make it a point to enjoy the colors this winter. You might be surprised at how many you can find.



Sunny winter day at Old Man's Cave

### IN THIS ISSUE...

- 2** Major Mileage
- 3** President's Message
- 4** Connecting the Past to the Present
- 5** On the Trail
- 6** Schedule of Hikes and Events
- 8** 2015: The Year of the Volunteer
- 9** New Muskingum Lakes Chapter
- 9** Trail News From the Troy Section
- 10** A Series of Remarkable Experiences and Hiking Life Lessons
- 11** Seeking BTA Trustees!
- 12** Trail Town Celebration: Piqua
- 13** Volunteer Corner
- 14** Sea Scout Ship Hanna
- 15** Buckeye Trail Association and Friends of Crowell Hilaka Working to Promote Buckeye Trail in Richfield
- 16** What's New at the NCTA
- 17** Work Party Updates
- 18** Buckeye Trail 5k Fun Run/Walk
- 20** Words From the National Park Service
- 21** Trail Fest
- 22** BTA Funds Reprt
- 22** Welcome New Members!
- 23** 2015 Work Parties

# Major Mileage

Jamie Abel & Jack Watkins

By the time most people pass the age of 90, they slow down quite a lot. Robert E. "Bob" Merkle admits to easing up a little at 92, but you can still find him regularly hiking trails across Ohio.

A longtime member of Central Ohio Hiking Club (COHC, part of the YMCA of Central Ohio), the lean, good-humored Merkle surpassed the 5,000-mile mark during a club hike he recently led at Infirmity Mound Park in Licking County. That feat represents nearly double the number of miles hiked by the next-closest club member.

For comparison, hiking the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine and back again would cover only 4,360 miles. Hiking the entire Buckeye Trail three and a half times would total 5,054 miles.

A former employee of the Ohio Fuel Gas Company, later Columbia Gas, Merkle was born in rural West Virginia and grew up in western Pennsylvania. "There, we learned to enjoy hunting, fishing and camping out," he recalled.

Bob's wife, Dorothy, was also an avid hiker. She was a member of COHC for several years before she talked him into joining her on his first club hike in 1958 at Mt. Gilead State Park, north of Columbus. Bob earned the club's high mileage award twice, and his wife, Dorothy, won the award herself once. Bob also earned the club's volunteer award, an award which he and Dorothy won together in another year.

Bob was a founding member and former officer of the Buckeye Trail Association. Bob has been on many BTA work parties, has been a section maintainer for many years, and was instrumental in building a hiker's shelter in the Hocking Hills area. Bob received a special award from COHC in 2006 for the extraordinary contributions he's made to the growth of the club.



Bob Merkle on a hike



## Trailblazer

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and November 1 for the Winter issue.

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# President's Message

Connie Pond

Our fall appeal is underway, and the theme is the Year of the Volunteer. I would like to highlight the volunteer efforts for the BT over just the past three months.

In early September, BTA members manned a relay station for the Market to Market Relay. This is a team relay event from Milford to Dayton that covers 76 miles on the Little Miami Scenic Trail, much of which is also Buckeye Trail. Teams of 6, 7 or 8 runners take turns running, using a van for transport between legs. The BTA hosted the checkpoint at the Green County Fairground. We were joined by Richard Lutz, our GPS coordinator; Mark Basso from Dayton Hikers; Terre Donoghue from Dayton Hikers; and Nan Allen from Xenia, who coordinated our group and was so totally organized. A second relay station was hosted by the Little Miami River Chapter which is led by Darryl Smith. Those attending were Mitch, Nancy, Jenny, Susan, Gregg, Carol, Yvonne and Dori. Each group that manned a station earned \$400 for their efforts. Plans are to run four stations next year.

The very next weekend, Herb and Susie Hulls organized the Run for Blue Blazes 5K in Nelsonville. Volunteers assisting were Tracy Anderson, Linda Paul, Richard Lutz, Bob Pond, Mary Hamilton, Ted Jacobson & crew, Darlene Karoly, Matthew McLain, Shannon Stewart, Jay Trate, Barry Unger, Ron Vore and Gina Young. Perhaps the most successful part of this event was the number of volunteers who rolled up their sleeves to help the BTA. Plans are now underway for a similar run to be held in February at Dawes Arboretum in Licking County.

I want to thank Debbie Zampini for her dedicated work as the BTA's Treasurer. Laura Ferrall from Athens will be handling the bookkeeping duties moving forward. Debbie and her Trail Fest committee (Linda Paul, Liz DeBaal, Sam Bonifas,



Connie Pond

Mary Hamilton, RoseAnn Kay, Ruth Brown, Darlene Karoly) are now going full steam ahead with plans for the 2015 Trail Fest to be held at the Retreat Center at Maria Stein, south of St. Mary's.

The mailing for the Fall Appeal letter was put together at the Shawnee office by Garry Dill, Dawn Assen, Susie Hulls, Richard Lutz, Barry Unger, Scott and Mary Ann Kampf. MaryAnn brought a great lunch and Dawn brought delicious pastries. It was a fun event.

Bob Morecki represented the BT at the recent unveiling of a new boardwalk in Mentor Headlands. The boardwalk is white-blazed from the northern terminus of the blue-blazed Buckeye Trail. At a similar event, Jamie Guy represented the BT at Hocking Hills. Gary Williams, Jim Gilkey and Charles Fitzpatrick represented the BT at Serpent Mound in July.

The BTA has participated in a number of Earth Share events where employees are encouraged to give payroll donations to charities of their choice. Melissa Shaw volunteered again this year to host our table for the Combined Federal Campaign event at Wright State University. Garry Dill pitched in at a Columbus event. There are not enough thank you wishes to go to all of these remarkable volunteers. This work is perhaps not as glamorous as making a trail from a path in the woods, but it is rewarding and vital to the success of the Buckeye Trail. THANKS.



# Connecting the Past to the Present

Liz DeBral - Photos: Richard Lutz & Darryl Smith



BTA member Velda Vogt and Jane Nickerson visited the BTA Barn during the annual Board Retreat to present to the Board the plaque commemorating the completion of the southern leg of the Buckeye Trail on October 10, 1970. During the ceremony in 1970, State Senators Harry L. Armstrong and Ralph Regula painted the

“golden blaze” that connected the trail in existence at that time. The commemorative plaque was never placed after the ceremony, so Velda and her husband Don stored it for the BTA.

Velda Vogt has been a member of the BTA since its inception in 1959. She served as a section maintainer in the Mogadore Section. In 1970, her husband Don Vogt was the BTA Secretary. He also served as BTA President from 1973-1977. The Vogts were active in the Akron Hiking Club and hiked all over the United States and Europe. Velda said that she went on multi-day backpacking trips with her husband four times. For those trips, her backpack weighed 50 lbs. and Don’s pack weighed 75 lbs. Velda brought her hiking shirt, which was covered in patches from the many places she visited.

Now that we have this amazing piece of history, plans are underway to place it along the trail near the site of the October 1970 ceremony. In addition to the plaque, Velda shared her hiking patches from the BTA’s 10-year anniversary, 20-year anniversary, the 1970 ceremony, and slides that she and her husband had taken over the years. Looking at the map of the trail in 1970 compared to the full loop of the Buckeye Trail today, we can see how the Buckeye Trail has changed and grown over the past 55 years.



Velda Vogt and Connie Pond



The Vogt's pins



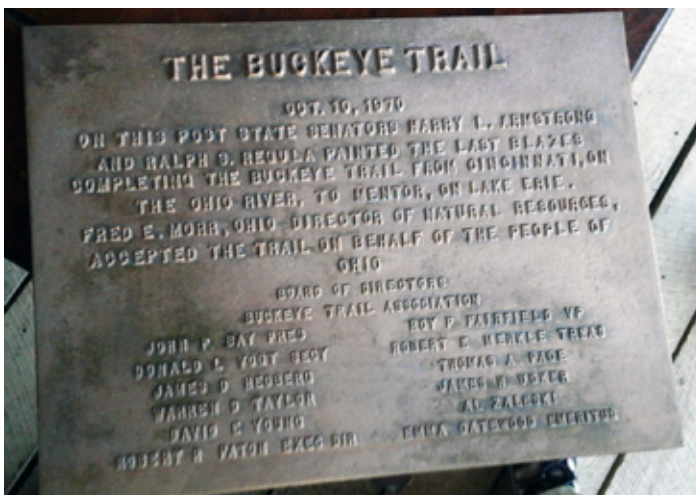
1970 Trail Dedication patch



10th Anniversary patch



20th Anniversary patch



Commemorative plaque

# On the Trail

Andrew Bashaw



Andrew Bashaw

While we wouldn't be here without all three groups we normally choose to focus on one audience at a time when we write. Whatever your support of the BTA looks like we are thankful.

We have named 2015 the Buckeye Trail's 'Year of the Volunteer' to focus our efforts on improving our recruitment, support, and celebration of BTA Volunteers—we couldn't hike it without'em!

Over the past year our volunteers have been very busy.... volunteers organized a multitude of events such as Buckeye TrailFest in the Hocking Hills, the Annual EGGS Hike at Burr Oak State Park, multiple Winter Hikes, the 1st Annual Miami Rivers Chapter Fort Ancient Campout and many more. They created the new Muskingum Lakes Chapter of the BTA in eastern Ohio. BTA Volunteers were instrumental in welcoming Xenia and Piqua as new Buckeye Trail Towns. Thanks to your support of the Buckeye Trail Story Project this spring, volunteers were able to produce the 2nd Edition of the *Follow the Blue Blazes*. After several years, BTA Volunteers have finalized the digital upgrade of all the BT Section Maps! Volunteers consistently organized and implemented many Buckeye Trail Crew events around the trail, notably creating 2.1 miles of trail at the Edge of Appalachia Nature Preserve and a new section of trail into Ottoville on the Miami & Erie Canal. Richard Lutz continues to work with us, now as Trail Preservation Specialist, and Barry Unger, in his second year as an AmeriCorps member, is devoted to improving the BTA Volunteer Program. We're rolling out our new volunteer management software to improve communication, reporting and recognition of volunteers. We also received awards from the Nature Conservancy of Ohio and the Friends of Ohio's Barns for the great work of our volunteers

on the Buckeye Trail Crew and BTA Barn restoration. With your ongoing support we'll be able to keep up the momentum and build our capacity to accomplish even more in the year ahead.

All of the effort of this year and the year ahead takes a lot of hard work by your volunteers and staff. We are always improving Ohio's Buckeye Trail and the Buckeye Trail Association itself, and when we do things well it makes it seem like we are a bigger and more professional organization. But, no matter what, we are still a relatively small and growing nonprofit organization that continues to stretch your investment in the BTA with a lot of donated volunteer hours and skills.

Both hiking on the BT and volunteering for the BTA provide memorable experiences. The volunteer experience is filled with the rewards of giving back, meeting and working with others, and creating something new and positive that wasn't there before. To keep that experience growing, we are focusing our attention on the growth of our volunteers in the upcoming year. We are working on growth in numbers, growth in hours recorded, personal growth, and growth in the quality of their experience. How do you run a statewide organization with 1.5 full time employees and an AmeriCorps Member? You don't. We use those resources to support the hundreds of volunteers who do. Consider joining the 2015 Volunteer Challenge to record 10,000 hours before October of 2015. Thank you for continuing to support the BTA so that many more hikers and volunteers can create their own memorable experiences out on the Buckeye Trail.

Happy Holidays, and I hope to see you out on the Trail this Winter!





# Schedule of Hikes & Events



Always check [www.buckeyetrail.org/events.html](http://www.buckeyetrail.org/events.html) for last-minute updates

## JANUARY

### January 2-3

#### Muskingum Lakes Winter Campout

Location: BTA Barn near Deersville

Description: Muskingum Lakes Chapter is hosting a New Year's winter campout and hiking weekend based at the BTA Barn near Deersville. Several different hikes will be scheduled. The Barn will be our base and will provide a warm room where we can gather to eat and chat. The Barn will be opened up on Friday afternoon for campers planning on spending the night and activities will commence on Saturday morning around 9:00 A.M. See website for updates.

Camping: If anyone is interested in camping on Saturday night, the Barn will stay open.

Meals: Bring your own food and water

Contact: Steve and Karen Walker at 330-844-7901, [muskingumlakes@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:muskingumlakes@buckeyetrail.org) or on MeetUp at [www.meetup.com/muskingumlakeschapter/](http://www.meetup.com/muskingumlakeschapter/)

### January 17

#### Hocking Hills Winter Hike

Location: Old Mans Cave in Hocking Hills State Park

### January 19

#### MLK Winter Hike at Hueston Woods State Park

Location: Hueston Woods State Park

## FEBRUARY

### February 7

#### Findley State Park Winter Hike

Location: Findley State Park

### February 7

#### Burr Oak State Park Winter Hike

Location: Burr Oak State Park

## February 21

#### 5K Run at Dawes Arboretum

Description: The 5K Run 4 Blue Blazes goes through The Dawes Arboretum in Newark. Register today at <http://www.buckeyetrail.org/run4blue.php>

## MARCH

### March 7

#### BTA Board Meeting

Location: Command Alkon in Columbus OH at 10:00AM

Contact: President [president@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:president@buckeyetrail.org)

### March 28-29

#### Work Weekend in the Loveland Section

Location: Camp Kern

Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

## APRIL

### April 11-15

#### Work Week in the Road Fork Section

Location: TBD

Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

### April 25, 2015

#### Muskingum Lakes Chapter Wildflower Hike

Location: Clendenning Lake

Contact: Steve and Karen Walker at 330-844-7901, or on MeetUp at [www.meetup.com/muskingumlakeschapter/](http://www.meetup.com/muskingumlakeschapter/)

## MAY

### May 2-6

#### Work Week at Edge of Appalachia \*BTA

*Chuck Wagon Event\**

Camping: TBD

Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

## May 14-17

#### BTA TrailFest

Location: The Retreat Center at Maria Stein, near St Marys and Lake Loramie. For more details, see page 21 or visit [www.BuckeyeTrailFest.org](http://www.BuckeyeTrailFest.org)

## May 30-31

#### Work Weekend in the Old Man's Cave Section

Location: Pretty Run property

Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

## JUNE

### June 6

#### EGGS Hike Clean-up day

Location: TBD

Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

### June 13

#### BTA Board Meeting

Location: Command Alkon in Columbus OH at 10:00AM.

Contact: President [president@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:president@buckeyetrail.org)

### June 19-21

#### EGGS Hike

Location: TBD

Contact: Byron Guy at [omc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:omc@buckeyetrail.org)

### June 27- July 1

#### Work Week at Edge of Appalachia \*BTA

*Chuck Wagon Event\**

Camping: TBD

Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

## 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.

## Chuckwagon Reservations

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

[holwick@columbus.rr.com](mailto:holwick@columbus.rr.com)  
740-743-3813

## JULY

**July 11-12, 2015**

Work Weekend at the Ballinger Property  
Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

**July 11-12**

Work Weekend at Providence Park  
Location: Providence Metropark, Defiance Section  
Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

## AUGUST

**August 21-23**

BTA Board August Retreat  
Location: BTA Barn, Tappan Lake, Deersville  
Camping: At the Barn  
Contact: President [president@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:president@buckeyetrail.org)

**August 29-30**

Work Weekend in the Delphos Section  
Location: TBD  
Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

## SEPTEMBER

**September 12-16**

Work Week in the Whipple Section  
Camping: At the Barn  
Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

**September 21**

5K Run in Nelsonville  
Description: The Run 4 Blue Blazes returns to Nelsonville for its second year

**September 26-28**

Work Weekend in the Bowerston Section  
Camping: At the Barn  
Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

## OCTOBER

**October 10-11**

Work Weekend in the Burr Oak Section  
\*BTA Chuck Wagon Event\*  
Camping: TBD  
Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

**October 17-21**

Work Week at West Branch  
Camping: TBD  
Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

## NOVEMBER

**November 7-11**

Work Week at Boch Hollow  
Camping: TBD  
Contact: Trail Management Team [stc@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:stc@buckeyetrail.org)

## DECEMBER

**December 5**

BTA Board Meeting  
Location: Command Alkon in Columbus OH at 10:00AM.  
Contact: President [president@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:president@buckeyetrail.org)

## 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](http://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](mailto:etl@ctcn.net).

# 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](http://buckeyetrail.org/newsletter.html)





# 2015: The Year of the Volunteer

Andrew Bashaw - Photo: Robert Lutz



Clearing the trail corridor

Most of you have received a letter introducing the idea of 2015 as our 'Year of the Volunteer' and our Volunteer Challenge! In short, the Year of the Volunteer is our focus on improving our Volunteer Program and the support provided

"This year's goal is to have 10,000 hours recorded in the new system. I personally believe that collectively we can not only reach this goal, but leave it in the dust. The software will play an important role in reaching our goal and set a standard for the following year. Using this software to record hours will allow us better leveraging for future grants and fill our trail partners in on work that is being accomplished. While the reporting possibilities in this program are exciting, I am also happy to that it will provide the opportunity for likeminded volunteers meet each other. If you want to meet other BTA volunteers, you can search the software based on skills, interests, and county to find others who share your experience. If you have any questions about the program, please feel free to contact me at [volunteer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:volunteer@buckeyetrail.org). Otherwise, I look forward to seeing your logged hours in our new volunteer management software!"

to each BTA Volunteer. Our Volunteers working in the back room or backcountry are awesome, but we need many more, we'd like to make everyone's work a little easier, and we'd like to celebrate what everyone is accomplishing. It takes a lot of investment to recruit, engage and support hundreds of BTA volunteers, but many BTA Volunteer leaders are already devoted to these improvements and you all have been investing by sending in your contributions to the effort before the end of the year. Thank you!

Our next step is to meet our challenge of recording 10,000 volunteer hours in our new volunteer management software by October 1, 2015. This equates to a value of over \$200,000 donated from BTA volunteers to Ohio's hiking community! We have chosen October to October as our volunteer year so that we can work with the schedules of our federal partners, including the Wayne National Forest, Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the North Country National Scenic Trail. Join us to celebrate the culmination of the Year of the Volunteer by special invitation at the 2015 Midwest Outdoor Experience held on October 3, 2015 at Eastwood Metropark, Dayton, OH.

From Barry Unger - BTA Volunteer Coordinator:

"I am extremely excited to see the 2015 theme titled the 'Year of the Volunteer'! We have been working closely with our Board, community members and BTA volunteers to develop a better volunteer experience for everyone involved. I feel like the purchase and use of our volunteer management software has helped a lot in the process. The software allows hours being donated outside of a scheduled Buckeye Trail Crew event to be recorded more easily. For instance, now we are accounting better for important projects such as graphic design, fundraising, and outreach. I have been slowly inviting administrative volunteers into the system to help us work out the kinks first. At this time, with approximately 50 users in the system, we have already captured close to 1,000 hours of donated time that would have previously slipped through the cracks.

There are multiple ways that you can help our Volunteer Program grow this year:

- First, if you've made a donation, Thank You!
- If you give of your time volunteering for the BTA, Thank You! (don't forget to record your hours)
- If you find volunteering with the BTA rewarding - drag someone else with you!
- If you have ideas or skills to offer to build the program - the resources we offer to volunteers, improving our communication with volunteers, sharing our accomplishments, reaching out to partner organizations along the trail, and more - let us know.
- If you are donating your time or money to the BTA, check with your employer to see if they have a matching program.
- Lastly, have you heard of sponsoring a friend or family member while they run for a good cause? Similar to that concept we have an opportunity to sponsor a Volunteer in support of the BTA's Volunteer Program development beginning on January 1st, 2015....

We're experimenting with a clever "crowd funding" website called Crowdrise. Not only can Crowdrise accept donations towards our fundraising goal, it can also be used as a platform for an individual BTA Volunteer to create a 'Volunteer Challenge Team.' Creating a Team is a fun way for friends, family, and coworkers to sponsor that Volunteer and their personal commitment of time in support of Ohio's Buckeye Trail. It's like adopting a BTA Volunteer! Visit our 2015 Volunteer Challenge! webpage for details on how you can create a team and watch how other volunteers are helping us meet our goal of 10,000 hours for the BT.

Thank you for all you do to help the BTA Grow!





# New Muskingum Lakes Chapter

Steve Walker

It's official! The Muskingum Lakes Chapter of the BTA is up and running. We received our charter on August 23, 2014, at the BTA Board Retreat that was held at the Barn near Deersville. The Chapter's focus area comprises the Massillon, Bowerston and Belle Valley Sections of the Buckeye Trail. Since then, the Chapter has scheduled several



Steve Walker, Muskingum Lakes Chapter Organizer, receives the chapter charter from Connie Pond, BTA President

events and developed its own MeetUp page. The address is <http://www.meetup.com/muskingumlakeschapter/>. The Chapter e-mail address is [muskingumlakes@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:muskingumlakes@buckeyetrail.org).

Some upcoming Chapter events include the Official New Year's BTA Winter Campout and Hiking Weekend on January 2-3 and a Wildflower Hike on Saturday, April 25 led by Scott Pendleton, Bowerston Section Supervisor. Both events will begin at the BTA Barn. More information about the Muskingum Lakes Chapter is available on the "Join a Chapter" page under the "Get Involved" listing on the BTA website homepage. Scheduled events are listed on the "Events" page under the "Follow the Blue Blazes" listing on the homepage or on the Chapter's MeetUp page shown above.



When CW Spencer lost his kid brother to suicide, he was devastated. Threatened with unrelenting guilt, he began his journey of healing by hiking the entire Buckeye Trail and journaling his experiences and thoughts to Dave. In *Hiking without Dave*, his journal writings are intertwined with stories from his 47 years with his brother.

<http://cwspencer.com/hiking-without-dave/>

# Trail News From the Troy Section

Andy Niekamp

A new segment of the Buckeye Trail and North Country Trail is now open between Troy and Piqua with the dedication of the Robert J. Shook Bikeway Bridge on October 3, 2014. The new bridge spans the Great Miami River and is part of the Great Miami River Recreation Trail. Buckeye Trail hikers no longer have to detour from the bike path and take a dangerous road walk to cross the river. This new bridge is near point 16 on the Troy section map. The Troy section is home to the longest off-road segment on the entire Buckeye Trail, a distance of 48 miles, between Fairborn and Piqua. This segment can be explored on bicycle, too—just follow the blue blazes.



Robert J. Shook Bikeway Bridge



*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](http://www.earthshareohio.org)



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

Barb Crompton (*Blue Blaze Bugsie*)

Having just completed the Bedford section of the BT, I headed back to Brecksville, the place where it all started for me. In my opinion, the city of Brecksville could be referred to as a “nature hub.” First, three different sections of the BT radiate outward from there like spokes on the wheel of a bike, and secondly, Brecksville is home to two separate park systems, the local Cleveland Metropark’s Brecksville Reservation and the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. This area is filled with trails, parks, preservation and education, all in the interest of nature. What a great place for any new hiker/adventurer to begin a journey! I am grateful I can say that from experience.

A natural place for me to begin the next section of the BT would have been at Deer Lick Cave where the three trails converge, but I had already exhausted all the BT trails in the nature hub. Although my journey would begin in the general area, the real question for me was from which of the other two trails I should choose, the Akron or Medina Section. I chose to go south and headed off toward Akron.

I stashed my bike at Lock 29 in Peninsula (Akron pt. 8) and drove back to Boston Store Visitor Center (between pts. 4 and 5) where today’s journey in this beautiful day began. I didn’t have time to look into the museum with its canal artifacts inside, but do take the time to do so. It will give you a heads up on what’s to come if you walk in either direction. Lesson Number 23: Take a minute to familiarize yourself with the next step in your journey. The BT maps are a great asset, but a whole interpretive center sitting there ready to explore should not be ignored. I pushed on, instead, and I later regretted not taking the time to go in while I was there. Lesson Number 24: Minimize your regrets. I would be spending a lot of time along the towpath and canal, but I never made the time to go back to that visitor center.

I started snapping the camera early on and never stopped; there was so much to see and the rich colors of the season made it all the more incredible. The paved path meandered under I-271, which distracted me by its sheer size, and the open valley gave me peeks of my not-too-distant hiking future: lots of walking in thick groves of multicolored trees. A horse trail signaled the start of a very colorful adventure. I was immediately struck by the incredible amount of light that penetrated the forest, despite how dense it was overhead. The trail and the trees, which were so thick that the clear blue sky appeared only in patches under the canopy, were awash in a brilliant golden color and that deep earthy autumn smell. I was heady with delight. Steep, exhausting climbs were often rewarded with breathtaking scenes, as time

after time I was brought to an overlook to take in the entire valley dressed in its multihued fall apparel.

Hours later I popped out at Pine Lane where I began my final descent into Peninsula. After being on soft trails for most of the way, it was striking when suddenly beneath my feet lay a long brick lane, just a few feet wide, wandering off into the distance. I did not see the signs describing what I was on at the time, as I was so preoccupied taking photos of it. Only later did I learn I was right above Route 303 and I wondered if this was the part of old Route 303 the BT map mentioned. I slowly made my way toward Lock 29, taking in all the historic buildings of Peninsula and the lock itself. Exhausted, but completely sated, I retrieved my bike and pedaled up Riverview Road toward Boston Store where I got to take in more scenes of the gorgeous valley I had just walked around.



Autumn colors



Bridge over the Cuyahoga River



# Seeking BTA Trustees!

Jeff Yoest

Just as the BTA needs maintainers and work parties to keep our trail in the best possible condition, we also need dedicated and competent trustees to guide our organization's administrative, financial, and business affairs to face the challenges of the present and future in building and supporting the BT, America's unique and longest loop trail.

Each year those Trustees whose terms expire need to be replaced by members willing to serve their organization. Do you have the desire, talents and background to advance the best interests of the Buckeye Trail? The nominating committee is actively seeking members who wish to serve the BTA in this capacity. Trustees must be members in good standing, be willing and able to attend pre-scheduled Board meetings (5 annually) and be appointed as a committee chairman by the President. Trustees serve a term of three years. Elections are held at the Trailfest Annual Meeting.

Please contact Jeff Yoest of the Nominating Committee if you have questions, have a desire to serve, or a suggestion of someone who would be an asset to the Board.

[jeffyoest@columbus.rr.com](mailto:jeffyoest@columbus.rr.com), 614-895-0808

## BTA Trustee


Qualifications: Must be a member in good standing of the Buckeye Trail Association. Must have a deep interest in the Association and be willing to devote time to Board meetings, committee meetings, and other activities which promote the purposes of the Association, as set forth in Article III of the Articles of Incorporation.

Function of the Board: The Trustees shall determine administrative policies, manage property and business of the Association, provide sound fiscal and long-range planning and control, and direct the financial affairs of the Association.

Duties: Serve as officer, if elected; serve as a committee member or chairman, if appointed; attend all meetings called by the President.

Term of Office: Elected Trustees shall serve a term of three years. Trustees are limited to three consecutive terms. After a period of two years off the Board a former Trustee may be re-elected.

Meetings: The Board meets quarterly. The Executive Committee meets as called by the president.



**Explore & enjoy Ohio!**

*Hiking Ohio* is your complete guide to 83 of the most scenic day hikes in the Buckeye State. From the shores of Lake Erie to the Ohio River, this handy guide will lead you to the best trails. And, the descriptions of nearby recreational and sightseeing destinations ensure you won't miss anything on your trip!

Available through [www.HumanKinetics.com](http://www.HumanKinetics.com), major online resellers, and your local bookstore

**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](mailto:membership@buckeyetrail.org)



# Trail Town Celebration: Piqua

*Kazy Hinds*

On a recent fall day, complete with a clear blue sky and noonday sun, Piqua had a celebration at one of our beautiful trailside parks to declare that Piqua is now a Buckeye Trail Town! Many leaders from our local community were there, including our Mayor Lucy Fess, who read a City Proclamation celebrating this designation. It was wonderful to have a number of representatives from the Buckeye Trail there to help us celebrate.

On the following Saturday, we took a hike on our part of the Buckeye Trail and were delighted to have folks join us from Xenia, another Trail Town, and our neighboring community of Sidney. Our local historian Jim Oda hiked along with us sharing some stories of wonderful Piqua history to carry us down the trail. All of this happened during our “Active Piqua” month that was full of many activities to invite folks in our community to get out and get active!

Buffalo Bill said, “I could never resist the call of the trail.” How true that is! Trails call to each one of us to get outside, to explore, to relax, and to expand our minds. Trails are important for the livelihood of our community, and you will find folks running, biking, and walking on our trails. The wonderful thing is that this can happen every day of the year, because our trails are open each and every day, rain or shine, holiday or not. If the day has dawned, the trails of our community are open.

For each and every one of us, whenever the pressures of life hit and numb our brains, relief can be found on the trails of our community. For me, when I set out by foot or bike, the cares and stresses of the day are soon left behind me. I move forward, happy and more grounded than when I started.

Henry David Thoreau said, “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.” How true that is. Many seek what Thoreau famously sought, and many do it by hiking on the Buckeye Trail.

Piqua is very proud of our designation as a Trail Town, especially since we are only the fourth community here in Ohio to attain Trail Town status! It was a small group of local citizens who got together over this past summer to do what was needed to make this designation a reality because we all know what an important resource the Buckeye Trail

is to our community, just as it is to the entire state!

Thoreau also said that “an early-morning walk is a blessing for the whole day.” How true that is and it is wonderful that we have so many miles of trails here in our community to walk on each and every day! We are proud to be connected to you through the path of the Buckeye Trail and look forward to meeting you out on the trail as we welcome you to our wonderful community. We are a community that invites you to hike on our trails and stay the night enjoying all that Piqua, where vision always becomes reality, has to offer.



# Volunteer Corner

Angie Sheldon

*Who are you?*

I'm a Dayton native who grew up spending time outside with my family. I graduated from Miami University where I was very active in the Outdoor Adventure Club and found my passion for backpacking. Upon graduating college I held various seasonal outdoor education jobs and in 2009, thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail with my husband, Shane. After that, I worked for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy for 3 years, focusing on education and community outreach. In 2013, Shane and I returned to the Buckeye State to be closer to our families as we started our own. I am now an Outdoor Recreation Coordinator at Five Rivers MetroParks and a trail adopter along the Troy section.

*What are you doing for the BTA?*

As the Buckeye Trail Town Coordinator, I work with BTA volunteers and communities around the state to continue to build positive relationships between the Trail and towns that it passes through. The Trail Town program recognizes those communities that provide amenities for hikers, promote the Trail to residents and tourists, and protect the Trail through land-use planning. Four Trail Towns have joined the network so far and I'm excited to use the information and experience I've gathered from working with these pilot communities to continue to grow and improve the program. Once a Trail Town is "officially designated," I'll continue to stay in touch with them and share ideas on how they can promote the trail and be great trail stewards. My favorite thing about the program is how well it ties into everything the BTA is doing! Engaging towns where many residents may not have heard of the Trail is a great way for us to gain new members, volunteers, and BT supporters. Whether they want to set up a booth at a local community event, lead a hike, advocate for the trail to community leaders, or dig in the dirt, this program allows them to get involved in a variety of ways on this amazing recreational resource right in their own backyard. My short-term goals for the program include creating a formal application process to help capture baseline town

information and search out funding opportunities to help make the program sustainable as it continues to grow.

*And most importantly... Why are you volunteering for the BTA?*

Volunteering for the BTA is a great way for me to give back to the trail community that has given so much to me. While I miss living in the Appalachian Mountains, I feel fortunate to live so close to the nation's largest loop trail and want to do my part to share it with the world and help to make it an even more spectacular trail to hike. I love being a part of a group of like-minded people and haven't met a BTA volunteer I didn't love being around!



Volunteer Angie Sheldon





# Sea Scout Ship Hanna

Donna Pendleton - Photos: Ray Ferrell

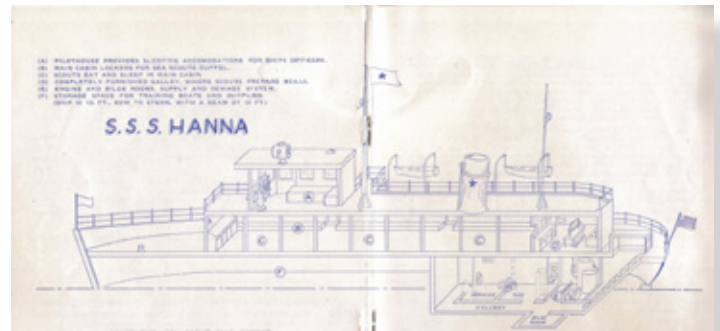


For 14 years between 1946 and 1960, travelers on US Route 22 would have seen a large white ship up on the hillside across from the roadside rest at Piedmont Lake: it was the Sea Scout Ship Hanna. On the old Bowerston Section map (point 24) it was described as a CCC camp. However, BT member Ray Ferrell knew otherwise. Since he camped there as a boy scout in the

1950's, he remembers it well and after working on the trail in that area he decided to see if any evidence of it still survived.

The SSS Hanna was a large wooden ship built on a concrete slab, 133 feet bow to stern, with beam width of 33 feet. The ship was designed to be fully functional in every way but floating. It had heads for "tars" and "mermaids" and boat storage on the ground level. Mid-deck was a functional galley and a bunk area that included hammocks. The top deck included a wheel house with sleeping quarters for the sea master. Also, the sea scouts could learn signaling using the functional fog horn, signaling light and masts for weather flags.

Hanna Coal Company graded the area, built parking, concrete, and the ship itself, at a cost of \$50,000. It was a large investment and Hanna wanted as much publicity as possible. On September 22, 1946 the SSS Hanna was commissioned in front of a crowd of well over 1,000 people. Presentation of SSS Hanna to the Huroquios Council, Boy Scouts of America was done by R.L. Ireland, Jr., President of Hanna Coal Company. An address was given by Rear Admiral Telfair Knight, Commandant of the United



Layout of the SSS Hanna

States Maritime Service. Christening was done by Miss Hanna, Ann Fiuten of Georgetown No. 12 Mine. The SSS Hanna was then open for inspection and later the attendees were invited to witness the Sea Scouts' Water Carnival, which took place between the SSS Hanna and the roadside park.

The life of the SSS Hanna, later called the SSL (Landship) Hanna and sometimes the Explorer Ship Hanna was short-lived. What began on that sunny afternoon in September 1946 with such hoopla ended only fourteen years later with the swing of the sledge hammer in the summer of 1960. A postcard from the early 1950's shows the ship in disrepair and need of paint. During the summer of 1958 the local Piedmont scout troop (Ray Ferrell being one of them) camped there, but the ship was in no condition for campers, and the troop spent the week in tents on the hill above the ship.

Fifty years after the ship was razed, Ferrell's search for evidence of the Hanna paid off; the mooring pin still stood proud and straight. After a little more searching, the sidewalk to the ship was

*continued on pg.15*



An early 1950s postcard of the SSS Hanna



# Sea Scout Ship Hanna

*continued from pg. 14*

found buried under several inches of leaf litter. Also, at the point where the BT leaves US 22 and enters the woods, there are the rusted metal bases of what once were two wooden replica light houses. These stood about fifteen feet high and were the anchors for the entrance gate.

Through Ferrell's efforts, the trail crew rerouted the BT off the road, to now turn left down the sidewalk and past the mooring pin before looping around the hill. He then began an effort to mark the spot, so future hikers would know exactly what had once adorned this piece of land. In 2013, Seth Keller, son of Jody and Heather Keller of the Cadiz area and member of Cadiz Troop 269 of The Boy Scouts of America, was looking for an Eagle Scout Project. He was invited by the Harrison County Historical Society and the BTA to view the old Hanna site. Soon after, he decided that this was a perfect fit for his project.

Because of the time it took to secure permits from the Army Corps of Engineers and Muskingum Watershed and the remote location, the project took more than a year to complete. However, on Sunday, September 21, 2014, one day shy of the 68th anniversary of the commissioning of the SSS Hanna, an Eagle Scout Ceremony was held at the site. Nearly 70 family, friends, hikers, well-wishers, and his fellow troop members honored Seth and his project. At the once overgrown and forgotten site there now stands a stone monument with an image and facts about the SSS Hanna. Seth also built picnic tables and benches overlooking the water for people to once again enjoy the beauty of Piedmont Lake from this site.



Mooring pin, plaque, and benches at the former site of the SSS Hanna



Seth Keller receiving his Eagle Scout badge

## Buckeye Trail Association and Friends of Crowell Hilaka Working to Promote Buckeye Trail in Richfield

*Corey Ann Ringle*

Connie and Bob Pond joined members of the Friend of Crowell Hilaka on Sunday, June 22 at Richfield's Food Truck Rodeo. Together they manned a booth that promoted the Buckeye Trail in Richfield. Folks visiting were able to learn more about the amazing Buckeye Trail, see pictures of beautiful Crowell Hilaka, and make an "I-Heart-Buckeye-Trail" book mark. Crowell Hilaka, a 336 acre property, was home to pioneers who helped settle Richfield and inventor James Kirby before being sold to the Cleveland Girl Scouts. The Girl Scouts have recently put the property up for sale and members of the community have been working to purchase the property to be used as a public recreation area. The community of Richfield (Township and Village) passed two ballot issues, one

for a bond to purchase and improve the property, and the other for a levy to operate the RJRD. The Richfield Joint Recreation District (RJRD), created in July 2014, will be working with the community to develop a plan for the purchase, improvements and usage of Crowell Hilaka. Among the projects to develop the property, the Buckeye Trail could be re-routed through Crowell Hilaka, as it currently circumvents the entire property. Crowell Hilaka is located in the Medina section of the Buckeye Trail near Medina County Line Road & West Streetsboro Road and Broadview Road & Brush Road (points 32-33).

# What's New at the NCTA

Andrea Ketchmark

The North Country Trail Association is proud to announce the adoption of a new strategic plan. I won't bore you with all of the details but I did want to share my favorite part, our initiative to better equip our volunteers with the skills needed to build, maintain, promote, and protect the Trail. We plan to do this through improved resources on our website, webinars focusing on specific topics facing volunteers, and on-the-ground training programs to bring the skills to where they are needed most.

We are continuing to build our Volunteer Resources Center, a clearinghouse for the reference material and guides needed to effectively manage the trail. This year, we were happy to announce a new video series: Introduction to the North Country National Scenic Trail, Trail Adopter Basics and Trail Design and Layout. Each one offers a quick but informative session on a specific topic. This is just a small part of the expansion of the resources we provide. If you have a moment, check out the Volunteer Resources Center. We've added new things to almost every page. Dig into the sections below and you'll find:

- In Trail Management, you will find our new videos, National Park Service handbooks, US Forest Service guides on bridge designs and structure specifications, safety information as well as links to many other resources like the National Trails Training Partnership and the Professional Trailbuilders Association.
- In Member and Volunteer Management, you will find our new volunteer hour forms, lots of Membership Recruitment and Retention ideas and links to great sites like Meetup and Volunteer Match.
- In Trail Protection, you'll find the new NPS Optimal Location Review Guide, our Volunteer Guide to Trail Protection, landowner brochures, sample easement documents and information about our new Trail Protection Fund grant program
- In Outreach and Communication, you will find our new

video An Introduction to the North Country Trail, NCTA's brand standards and logos and learn more about hosting trail events

- Education and Research offers links to conservation and advocacy organizations.

In 2015, we have more in the works:

GPS/GIS training program – the NCTA is working with Michigan State University's Center for GIS and Remote Sensing to develop a guide for our volunteers called Using Garmin GPS Devices for Collection of North Country Trail Features. It will guide the volunteer step by step in the use of GPS in the field, including what attributes we want collected, and will instruct them how to use ArcGIS online to transfer and review the data with our GIS Coordinator.

Trail Town Guide – A comprehensive handbook that explains what it really means to be a Trail Town and guides our volunteers through the steps to build a successful program in their town. We hope to get BTA's input so we can build our Trail Town programs side by side.

Webinars – We are working on webinars for Chapter Leadership Basics, one that discusses the ins and outs of working with the US Forest Service and one to introduce the training materials for GPS/GIS mentioned above. These webinars are available to all and designed to focus on specific topics in need of more in depth discussion. If you have suggestions for topics you'd like to see, I'd love to hear them.

In summary, these resources are not just for the volunteers of the North Country Trail Association. Whether you are working on the NCT, the BT or the AT, the best practices and guides you will find in the volunteer resources center will be of value to you to help us all achieve our mission. Better resources leads to more skill in the field and better trail that will last a lifetime.

Check it out now at [www.northcountrytrail.org/members/volunteer-resources/](http://www.northcountrytrail.org/members/volunteer-resources/)

## Learn new skills

NCTA's new training videos are here.



Trail Adopter Basics – taught by Bill Menke



Trail Layout and Design – taught by Jeff McCusker

Find them online at [vimeo.com/northcountrytrail/videos](http://vimeo.com/northcountrytrail/videos)



# Work Party Updates

Richard Lutz

## Whipple Section

During this work party, BTA volunteers worked between points 1 and 6 to clear the trail of fallen trees and weeds and re-blaze where needed. The group also improved the trail at the rock face just east of point 3 (Big Run Rd.).

## Cuyahoga Valley National Park

A small crew took a day in September to do some trail maintenance by building drainage to remedy some water issues. The small crew worked on over 1200 feet of trail to make improvements.

## Ottoville, Delphos Section

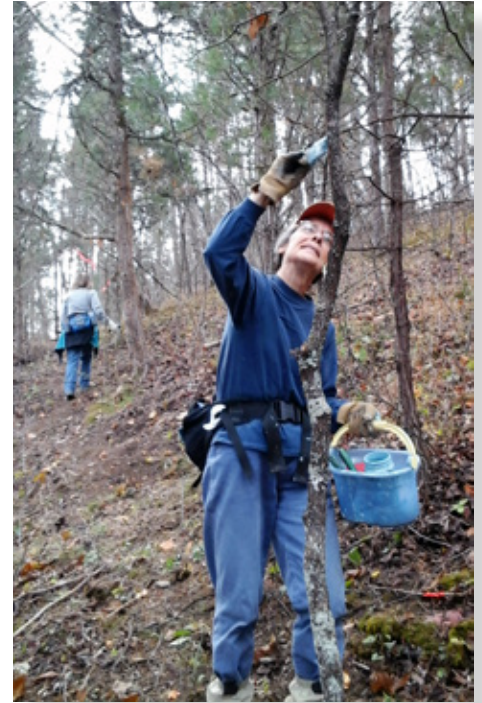
The BTA Trail Crew opened a new 1.1 mile section of trail between West Third Street in the Village of Ottoville and Road P in Putnam County. After we finished that project, some of us continued north to Paulding County where we worked on clearing and reopening a half mile of trail.

## New Straitsville Section

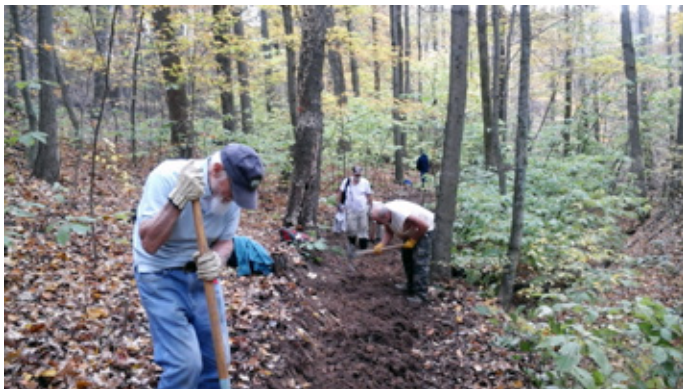
The Trail Crew worked on trail-clearing throughout Burr Oak State Park and the Wayne National Forest. Several sections between Rock Run Road and State Route 93 received improvements.

## Edge of Appalachia Preserve System

We continued our work to move the trail onto Nature Conservancy property. We started work this time at Black Run Road and continued to work back towards trail we had built in the spring off of Waggoner Riffle Road. By Tuesday afternoon we completed the connection. A new 2.1 mile section of trail is open for the public to use.



Suzie Hulls painting blazes



Benching the trail



Work crew clearing the brush







## BUCKEYE TRAIL 5K FUN RUN/WALK

*The Buckeye Trail Association is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization dedicated to building, maintaining, protecting and promoting use of Ohio's longest scenic hiking trail for the health and fitness of our citizens, communities and partners.*

*All money raised is tax deductible and goes to protect the trail.*

**WHEN: Saturday, February 21, 2015**

**WHERE: The Dawes Arboretum**

**TIME: 5K starts at 10:00am sharp  
Race Day registration begins at 8:00am**

**ENTRY FEE: \$20 pre-registration; \$25 after February 14**

**VOLUNTEER: Email [volunteer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:volunteer@buckeyetrail.org)  
to sign up to help on race day!**

**INFORMATION & REGISTRATION: [www.buckeyetrail.org/run4blue.php](http://www.buckeyetrail.org/run4blue.php)  
or Herb Hulls at [run4blue@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:run4blue@buckeyetrail.org),  
740-787-2416**

**PRE-REGISTER TO RECEIVE A FREE T-SHIRT!**



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**WHEN:** Saturday, February 21, 2015

**WHERE:** The Dawes Arboretum, 7770 Jacksontown Rd, SE, Newark, OH

**TIME:** 5K starts at 10:00am sharp; Race Day registration begins at 8:00am

**ENTRY FEE:** \$20 pre-registration; \$25 after February 14. On-site registration and packet pick-up starts at 7:30am, February 21. *If the race is canceled or a participant is unable to attend, there will be no refunds.*

**POST-RACE:** Light refreshments will be available at the finish line.

**AWARDS:** Top 3 male and female in each age group. 19 & under; 20-29; 30-39; 40-49; 50-59; and 60+

**CONTACT:** For more information, contact Herb Hulls at [run4blue@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:run4blue@buckeyetrail.org) or 740-787-2416 or visit: [www.buckeyetrail.org/run4blue.php](http://www.buckeyetrail.org/run4blue.php)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Male  Female |  Run  Walk | Shirt Size:  S  M  L  XL  XXL

**MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO:** Buckeye Trail Association Inc.

**MAIL FORM AND PAYMENT TO:** Buckeye Trail Association, c/o Byron Henry, 16373 Brushy Fork Rd., Newark, OH 43056  
or pay by **CREDIT CARD or PAY PAL ONLINE** at [www.buckeyetrail.org/run4blue.php](http://www.buckeyetrail.org/run4blue.php)

**WAIVER:** I know that running a road race is potentially hazardous. I certify that I have trained sufficiently for this event. I agree to abide by any decisions of race officials relative to my ability to safely complete the run or walk. I assume all risks associated with the event, including but not limited to: falls, contact with others, traffic, and the conditions of the road; all such risks being known and appreciated by me in consideration of the acceptance of this entry. I do hereby for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, waive and release and discharge from all claims and liabilities of any kind arising from my participation in this event, Buckeye Trail Association and any and all sponsors and volunteers connected with the operation and running of this event. I am aware that, because of insurance limitations, no roller skates or blades, etc., will be permitted on the course. The undersigned also agrees to release rights to and allow the use of any photographs or results information in which they appear in connection with this event. *If the race is canceled or the participant is unable to attend, there will be no refunds.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

(PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST SIGN IF ENTRANT IS UNDER THE AGE OF 18)

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Words from the National Park Service

Mark Weaver



Greetings everyone. Andrew suggested I drop a short note to you all to introduce myself. My apologies for not having written sooner.

I'm originally from Oscoda, MI on the shores of Lake Huron. I'm a Michigan State University and Virginia Tech grad (Bachelors and Masters in Landscape Architecture). Professionally, I'm a Landscape Architect and I worked

for a few years in southern California, Arizona, and Ann Arbor, MI (apologies to you OSU fans). I also taught at Auburn University. In the NPS, I worked at Ozark Riverways in southern Missouri, served in the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program for NPS in Wisconsin, followed by 4 years as Superintendent of Nicodemus National Historic Site in Kansas, before coming home to Michigan and the North Country Trail. My wife, Stephanie, and I have two boys, Sam and Ben, ages 24 and 19. We live in Lowell, MI.

Following Tom Gilbert's footsteps in this job has been more than a bit humbling. I have only recently begun to truly realize what progress Tom made and the struggles he endured, starting from an "empty" map thirty years ago, to get to where we are today. We have partnerships among the NCTA, BTA, and FLT (Fingerlakes Trail), as well as other federal and state partners, miles and miles (and miles) of trail on the ground, standards developed, and in between it all, all the necessary bureaucratic concerns addressed!

So where do I see the trail going in the future? We're dangerously close to completing the Foundation Document, which is sort of a "dusting off" of the Comprehensive Management Plan that outlines the nature, purposes and significance of the trail, issues confronting progress, and action to be taken. From this document I see developing an interpretive strategy to help tell the

story of the Trail. The Certification process has been reviewed and refined. Trail Manager Jeff McCusker has developed the Optimal Location Review process to help with filling in the gaps between established trail segments. Recent authority to secure land via willing sellers will help us protect the trail for the long run. Jeff has taken the lead on this as well. Administratively, we are now working on ensuring all information, agreements and data resources are easily retrievable and well organized, so when there

is a question, we can answer it quickly and correctly. (We're not there yet, so please be patient!)

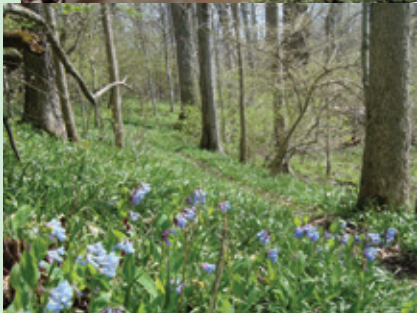
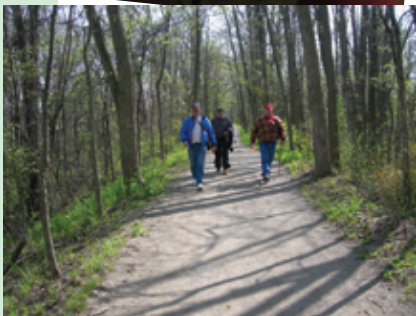
Just this morning I was pulling together photographs for the Foundation Document and came upon photos from Ohio: the Old Mill at Stockport Dam, Old Man's Cave in the Hocking Hills, Yellow Springs, and many, many photos of people having a great time. My Smokey Bear hat is off to you for all the hard work you do to ensure that all those beautiful places across Ohio are threaded together along the Buckeye Trail. Many thanks for letting us be your partner.

My best wishes to you all and I hope to see you "live" soon. If you have any questions or comments, please give me a call (616 430 3495) or drop me an email ([mark\\_weaver@nps.gov](mailto:mark_weaver@nps.gov)).



Mark Weaver





**WEBSITE  
CONTINUOUSLY  
UPDATED!**

[BuckeyeTrailFest.org](http://BuckeyeTrailFest.org)

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

**May 14–17, 2015**

**The Spiritual Center of Maria Stein  
“the retreat house”**

**2365 St. Johns Rd. • Maria Stein, OH**

***Come for the whole weekend or come for the day!  
There is something for everyone!***

**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 CONNECTED**

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



**GET INVOLVED**

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

**For more information visit:  
[BuckeyeTrailFest.org](http://BuckeyeTrailFest.org)**

The Buckeye TrailFest is sponsored by The Buckeye Trail Association, [www.BuckeyeTrail.org](http://www.BuckeyeTrail.org)



## BTA Funds Report

Your contribution to any BTA fund is tax deductible.  
All contributions of \$20 or more are acknowledged. We hope to include  
your name in the list of contributors in the Trailblazer.

### GENERAL FUND - 08/01/2014-10/31/2014

Ron Aitken  
Rodney Anderson and Family  
Dawn and Johannes Assen  
Hazel Bashaw  
Peter and Irmgard Bletzinger  
Kenneth Bordwell  
Martha Brown  
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Cleveland Hiking Club  
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Rodney Vest  
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Jeff and Sarah Yost

## Welcome New Members!

*Bev and Jerry Starcher*

Shannon Atkinson-Farcus, Athens  
Michelle Benedum, Nelsonville  
Charlie Brandes, Aurora  
Jamie Bridewell, Miamisburg  
Pat Brooker, Beverly  
Jordan Brown, Granville  
Tina and Jim Callahan, Jackson  
Gary Carter, Nelsonville  
Marc Carter, Nelsonville  
Mary Clifton, Grove City  
Becky Dalton, Nelsonville  
Joseph Elfgen, Taylorsville KY  
Beverly Enold, Leesville  
Robyn Gehovak, Athens  
Lisa Georges, Remindersville  
Carolyn Goldberg, Cincinnati  
Scott Goodman, Columbus  
Matthew Hanson, Albany

Tim Hardesty, Cincinnati  
Stanley Hirtle, Dayton  
Hudson Family, Hamilton  
Christin Kilkenny, New Plymouth  
Shannon Kiser, Athens  
Ryan Krapf, South Euclid  
Catherine Leininger and Family, Dayton  
Jon and Linda Little, Cadiz  
Yan Ma, Columbus  
Leanne Malcolm, Middletown  
Terri Marchioni, Miamisburg  
James Marlow, Macedonia  
Joseph Mattson, Athens  
Isaiah McCombs, Nelsonville  
Greig McDonald, New Concord  
Robert Mencia and Family, West Carrollton  
Christina Poulter, Painesville  
Randy Rapin, Dayton

Linda Remmertt, Somerset  
Edward Saraniero, Columbus  
Susan Schnittke, Malta  
Tim Scholl, Lancaster  
Steve Swackhammer & Family, Circleville  
David Thorndike, Garrettsville  
Jack Turner, Athens  
Stephanie Ward, Columbus  
Brittney Watson, Nelsonville  
Crystal Watson, Scio  
Judy Welch, Hilliard  
Molly Wilson, Cortland  
Hali Woods, Norwood  
Shellie Woods, Beavercreek

# 2015 Work Parties

- Mar 28-29 --- ① --- Loveland Work Weekend at Ft. Ancient
- Apr 11-15 --- ② --- Roadfork Work Week
- May 2-6 --- ③ --- West Union at Edge of Appalachia (*Chuck Wagon Event*)
- May 30-31 --- ④ --- Old Man's Cave Work Weekend at Pretty Run Preserve
- Jun 6-10 --- ⑤ --- Belle Valey / Stockport Work Week at AEP  
(*Chuck Wagon Event*)
- Jun 27 - Jul 1 --- ⑥ --- West Union at Edge of Appalachia (*Chuck Wagon Event*)
- Jul 11-12 --- ⑦ --- Shawnee Work Weekend at the Ballinger Property
- Jul 11-12 --- ⑧ --- Defiance Work Weekend at Providence Metropark
- Aug 29 - Sep 2 --- ⑨ --- Delphos Work Weekend at Ottoville
- Sep 12-16 --- ⑩ --- Whipple Work Week in Wayne National Forest
- Sep 26-28 --- ⑪ --- Bowerston Work Weekend
- Oct 10-11 --- ⑫ --- New Straitsville at Burr Oak State Park (*Chuck Wagon Event*)
- Oct 17-21 --- ⑬ --- Mogadore Work Week at West Branch State Park
- Nov 7-11 --- ⑭ --- Old Man's Cave Work Week at Boch Hollow



## MEMBERSHIP FORM (for new members only)

- ADULT \$25.00 per year
- FAMILY \$30.00 per year
- STUDENT (full-time) \$10.00 per year
- ORGANIZATION \$35.00 per year
- SUSTAINING \$50.00 per year
- BUSINESS \$50.00 per year
- LIFE- INDIVIDUAL \$400.00

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 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
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If gift membership, name of donor \_\_\_\_\_  
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**MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO & MAIL TO:**  
**Buckeye Trail Association**  
 P.O. BOX 254, WORTHINGTON, OHIO 43085

**OR JOIN ONLINE AT:**  
[www.buckeyetrail.org/membership.html](http://www.buckeyetrail.org/membership.html)



**Buckeye Trail Association**

P.O. Box 254  
Worthington, Ohio 43085

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The label shows expiration date of your membership. Please renew before the date indicated.

## The Buckeye Trail is now on Cafepress!

We have been working hard to expand the official Buckeye Trail merchandise that we offer. We are happy to announce that a full line of new products ranging from childrens clothes to license plate covers can now be purchased at [www.cafepress.com/buckeyetrailassociation](http://www.cafepress.com/buckeyetrailassociation). Our trail shop found at <http://buckeyetrail.org/store.html> will still offer maps, books, and many of the other products found there in the past, as well as some new additions in the future.

*The holiday season is right around the corner, we invite you to stop in and check out some of the great new products that are now available at [www.cafepress.com/buckeyetrailassociation](http://www.cafepress.com/buckeyetrailassociation).*



**AND MORE!!**