

BUCKEYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

# Trailblazer



FOUNDED 1959

SUMMER 2017 VOLUME 50 NO. 2



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# President's Message

Steve Walker

All of us have a unique story of how we became involved with the Buckeye Trail. Mine began in 2011. After finally putting to rest a failed marriage of 33 years, I was on the loose again and hoping for a new beginning. Through the modern phenomenon of social media, I met my future wife, Karen, and went from first meeting to vows in under 6 months. During our whirlwind courtship, one of the things that she wanted me to know about was something called the Buckeye Trail. I had vague recollections about this trail but did not really know anything about it. She had been a member of the Buckeye Trail Association since 1997 and was looking to finish hiking the BT in the next few years.



My introduction to the Trail was in October of 2011 at Caesar Creek State Park with Karen and her brother, Gordon. It's on the same piece of trail that the All Chapter Backpack Hike will take place on October 21st and 22nd of this year. As Joel Timmons, Caesar Creek Section Supervisor, will probably attest, the condition of the trail in 2011 was not too impressive. I wondered what I had gotten myself into after we passed the same blaze tree twice after two miles of hiking through mud. It was not an auspicious first encounter with the Buckeye Trail and I was pretty sure that I would find something else to do on the Saturdays when Karen and Gordon would be hiking.

Nevertheless, I went hiking with them the next time and the time after that and the time after that until the second Buckeye TrailFest came along in April of 2013. We tent camped at Red Oak Campground for that one and it went down to 29 degrees the first night, which was a Thursday. At early daylight, we got up to find frost on the inside of the tent and we made a breakfast of eggs and bacon on the nearby picnic table. Our breath was clearly visible as we ate breakfast to the sound of tent zippers opening all around us. In my mind, I entertained the idea of quickly packing all our stuff back into the car and zooming home to Navarre where indoor heat and plumbing were waiting.

It was a good thing that I resisted the urge to boogie on home. Once up and milling around, we met a lot of wonderful people and learned a lot of interesting things. I heard Darryl Smith talk about Isle Royale, got my first introduction to GPS use on the trail by Richard Lutz, and met a domesticated bat. My attitude toward the Buckeye Trail changed that day. I realized that it was all about the people. You can find solitude on the trail if



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**Sally Sugar**  
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August 1 for the Fall issue,  
and November 1 for the Winter issue.

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## **B T A   B O A R D   O F T R U S T E E S**

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Randall Roberts, Ted Lozier,  
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## **B T A   S T A F F   & C O M M I T T E E   C H A I R S**

### **Andrew Bashaw**

*Buckeye Trail Association Executive Director  
PO Box 5, Shawnee, OH 43782  
740-394-2008*

### **Buckeye TrailFest 2018**

*Cheryl Kreindler*

### **Awards & Recognition**

*Mary Hamilton*

### **BTA Century Barn**

*Mary Hamilton*

### **Budget, Finance & Long Range Planning**

*Steve Walker*

### **Bylaws**

*Mary Hayes*

### **Cartography**

*Pat & Mary Hayes*

### **Computer Service Coordinator**

*Steve Miller*

### **Nominations**

*Jeff Yoest*

### **AmeriCorps Member**

*Sally Sugar*

### **Sales Manager**

*Sally Sugar*

### **Scouting Liaison**

*Rick Mark*

### **Scholarship**

*Ruth Brown*

### **Trail Management Team**

*Richard Lutz*

### **Trail Preservation**

*John Knouse*

### **Trail Preservation Fund**

*Bill Schultz*

### **Trail Preservation Specialist**

*Richard Lutz*

### **Trail Town Coordinator**

*Angie Sheldon*

### **Volunteer Coordinator**

*Barry Unger*

### **Webmaster**

*Mary Hayes*

## **C O V E R**

**Tom Helbig addresses the crowd at the  
Yellow Springs Trail Town ceremony.  
Photograph by Sally Sugar.**

that's what you're looking for but the people are what give it real meaning. I decided to become a more active member of the BTA after meeting its members.

During the past year, I've worked with our Executive Director, Andrew Bashaw, and Bob and Ruth Brown to build the foundation for a political presence for the BTA. The fruits of that labor are beginning to show. The BTA was instrumental in the birth of the Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus, a bicameral, bipartisan committee of legislators in the Ohio General Assembly. This all began several months ago on March 2nd with an invitation letter from my friend, State Senator Sean O'Brien, that was sent to his fellow legislators requesting them to join the Caucus. To celebrate the beginning of the Caucus, the Ohio Trails Partnership sponsored the Ohio Trails Legislative Day and the Ohio Trails Reception on March 29th in the Ohio Statehouse. Once again, the BTA was instrumental in setting up these two events. There are 19 members of the Caucus at the time of this writing and the first Caucus meeting was held on May 9th in Columbus (see story page 5). Ohio has a unique standing in the United States as none of the other 49 states have a legislative caucus devoted to the promotion and development of non-motorized trails.

I look forward to helping build the assets and resources of the Buckeye Trail Association so that it can do the job of building, preserving, promoting and protecting the Buckeye Trail, Ohio's official hiking trail.



Representative Michael J. O'Brien, Steve Walker, BTA President, and Senator Sean O'Brien, Caucus Co-Chair with the Ohio House Resolution designating 2017 "Year of the Trails"

# On the Trail

Andrew Bashaw



Andrew Bashaw

What do you get for your \$25 Buckeye Trail Association membership?

Just between the beginning of April and May, about \$2 of your membership, here's what you received in return for your investment in one of Ohio's greatest ideas...

Three BTA Member Drives in Columbus, Logan and Yellow Springs, two Buckeye Trail Crew Work Parties – one at the 290 acre BTA Pretty Run Preserve

and one at Tar Hollow State Forest, Tom Foolery continuing his BT thru-hike and fundraiser for our volunteer program, Loveland and Yellow Springs designated as the two newest official Buckeye and North Country Trail Towns with a brand new campsite for hikers in Loveland, Buckeye TrailFest and all of its offerings surrounding Yellow Springs, Representative Perales announcing the state resolution of 2017-18 as Ohio's 'Year of the Trail' kicking off at TrailFest, celebration of the BT at the International Trails Symposium in Dayton, announcement of the next Warrior Expedition around the BT with Mei Ling starting her BT thru-hike at Eden Park on July 4th weekend, the donation of all the buildings of the Beall Farmstead on Tappan Lake to the BTA from the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District, collaboration on the first ever MorelFest at the BTA Barn with the Muskingum Lakes Chapter, Clean Ohio Greenspace Fund announcing approval for BTA acquisition of the 106 acre Imhoff property for a 3 mile BT relocation across the Wayne National Forest in southern Perry County, the first meeting of the nationally unique Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus. Not to mention all of the hikes lead by BTA Chapters around the BT and Jim Gilkey's Circuit Hikes.

And what would we have accomplished without the support of great members like you and the hard work of our volunteers achieving our mission? Nothing. At the recent International Trails Symposium I was humbled and honored to receive the state award for Outstanding Trail Leader. Lucky for them I was not able to make a speech. If I had the opportunity I would have let them know that the only way I can accept such an honor is on behalf of our volunteers and their achievements. Your contributions do support a small staff of four, two of them half time, but our hundreds of volunteers are always on the leading edge - we do our best to keep up with them in a supporting role. We offer guidance, support, best management practices and leadership when needed, but

it is safe to say that the BTA holds true to our 58 year tradition of volunteer leadership and accomplishment.

Another great thing about being a member of the BTA, besides the discounts you may receive at a local outfitter or BTA event, is the opportunity to follow your membership dollars to a trail project or event and find yourself celebrated here in the TrailBlazer magazine. As a donor to Ohio's Buckeye Trail it is easy to engage in the change you wish to see in the world right here at home. And you are making a difference! You are helping to change the face of Ohio, a steady improvement since 1959, providing life-changing experiences along 1,400+ miles of Ohio's story, our natural history and our cultural heritage.

Your continued support is essential to the BTA sustaining these types of accomplishments and growing our capacity for more. I am awfully proud to serve the greatest membership in the world, and I hope you appreciate how important you are. Not only that, I hope you share a sense of pride in our collective accomplishments and engage to help solve our limitations. When you are out in public explaining to a friend the expansive experience of the BT map on the back of your t-shirt, by all means let them know "You're Welcome!" for your part in making it all possible.

Thank you again for your investment in the BT for all to enjoy, I hope that you enjoy the dividends of a trail well loved this season.

I hope to see you on the Trail this Summer,

Andrew Bashaw  
Executive Director, Buckeye Trail Association



# Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus Has First Meeting

Steve Walker

On May 9, 2017, a historic event in the history of trails in Ohio happened on the 31st Floor of the Riffe Center near the State Capitol. The first ever meeting of the Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus was held, which began an era of collaboration between the non-motorized trails community and members of the Ohio General Assembly. The Caucus currently has 19 members from both parties and both legislative houses. In spite of the fact that budget hearings were occurring at the same time, 13 legislators and/or staff attended along with representatives from the Buckeye Trail Association, the Ohio Horseman's Council, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, the Ohio Travel Association and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.



Representative David Leland (second from left) speaking to the caucus.

State Senator Sean O'Brien, Caucus Co-Chair, suggested some first steps, including the development of a statewide map that shows the non-motorized trail systems in Ohio as well as help in developing vision and strategies for Ohio's non-motorized trails and how the Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus can help with the implementation of trail enhancements. There was also a discussion of an Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus outdoor event that is tentatively planned for the fall of 2017. Senator O'Brien also suggested that the Caucus should plan on meeting every other month or, at least, quarterly.

There was also a discussion regarding the recent Ohio House Resolution designating that 2017 is the "Year of the Trails" and what might be done to celebrate it.

The BTA has been working with Senator O'Brien for over a year in the creation of this caucus and the invitation letter to join the caucus went out on March 2nd to all Ohio General Assembly members. All BTA members are urged to contact their state representatives ( <http://www.ohiohouse.gov/> ) and state senators ( <http://ohiosenate.gov/index> ) and ask them to join the Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus. You'll need to enter your nine-digit Zip Code to look up your state representative and state senator.



## 3rd Annual Buckeye Trail Run

Full Marathon • Half Marathon  
• 10K Run • 5K Run

**Saturday October 7, 2017 at 8:30 AM**  
**Start and End at Shawnee, OH**

**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-registration before August 1: \$65 Full Marathon; \$45 Half Marathon; \$35 10K & 5K. Add \$10 after August 1. Race day registration from 6:00 - 8:00 am.



**PRE-REGISTER BY SEPT. 7 TO RECEIVE A TECH SHIRT!**



# Buckeye TrailFest Hike-In with Tomfoolery

Karen "Tagalong" Power



“LIVE ACTIVE! LAUGH MORE! INSPIRE ALL!” We shouted as loudly as we could as we hung out the windows of the covered bridge that crosses the Buckeye Trail just south of Yellow Springs. Our videographer, Tom, wanted to make sure that the words would be recorded with all of the clarity and enthusiasm we could muster. We were part of the happy entourage accompanying Tom Helbig, owner and founder of Tomfoolery Outdoors, as he walked his way to the Sixth Annual Buckeye TrailFest in Yellow Springs, Ohio. Tom is on an epic hike across Ohio on the Buckeye Trail and recording it with video. It’s a journey he began six weeks ago in the Massillon section.

Only a handful of people have thru-hiked the Buckeye Trail and even fewer have attempted to do it solo. I was intrigued with Tom’s adventure and the energy with which he embraced it. I pummeled him with questions as we walked, “Why are you hiking the Buckeye Trail? Do your feet hurt? Are you lonely? Have you found companionship on the trail? Do you feel isolated? Have you experienced trail magic? Do you worry about where you’re going to eat? Sleep? Shower? How do you manage the mental game of long-distance hiking? Your permanent residence back home is a what? A 12 x 8-foot trailer you call Tagalong? And you do what for a living? Live the life of an adventurer?”



There was no time for small talk. These were serious life questions.

Tom’s story began three years ago when he left his job as Dayton’s Five Rivers MetroParks’ Events Coordinator. He was about to turn 40 and wanted to commemorate this biological milestone in a uniquely celebratory way—with 40 adventures...40 local, long-distance adventures with 40 different people, 40 miles in length in a 40-hour time period. Among his 40 adventures, he rollerbladed, skateboarded, scooted, and paddle boarded into his 40th year. Tom is the first to stand-up paddle board the length of the Great Miami River. Tom’s 40 adventures were the ultimate in modes of travel—all human powered.



The year Tom turned 40, he also founded Tomfoolery Outdoors, a company that uses the outdoors to inspire a happy, healthy lifestyle. Just recently, the adventures promoted by Tomfoolery Outdoors have evolved into destination-level experiences, what Tom calls “adventure advocacy.” He adventures now in support of causes that connect people and enrich lives through the outdoors. It’s the reason he is hiking the Buckeye Trail. So far on this six-week hike around Ohio, he has helped to raise money, recruit new members, and increase awareness of the Buckeye Trail on behalf of the Buckeye Trail Association.

One day just a few weeks ago, Buckeye Trail backpacker Tom was the show-and-tell for Sebastian, a new-found, four-year-old friend. When asked by one of Sebastian’s classmates why he was hiking the Buckeye Trail, Tom summed it up this way, “I love playing outside; I love the air, earth, sky, and water and want to protect them; I want people to know what a great place Ohio and the Buckeye Trail are.”

Tom is living his mantra to “live active, laugh more, and inspire all.” As we happy hikers walked into Camp Birch with Tom, we couldn’t help but feel his zest for life and appreciate his support for the Buckeye Trail.

To support Tom’s adventure, go to [buckeyetrail.org/tomfooleryoutdoors.php](http://buckeyetrail.org/tomfooleryoutdoors.php)



Tom Helbig (on the left in a white shirt) hikes with TrailFest attendees



# 2017 Schedule of Hikes & Events



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

## JUNE

### June 17-21, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew: Road Fork Section

Description: New trail construction, benching, trail maintenance, and blazing. This will take place at Lamping Homestead and other points in the Road Fork Section. We will leave for work at 8:00AM and quit at 3:00PM.

Camping: Camping will now be at the Little Muskingum Watershed Association building, located at SR26 and Thomas Ridge Rd (T 88) Hot showers and flush toilets are available in the building. Donations to the LMWA for use of the facilities are appreciated. Camping GPS coordinates 39.54184, -81.22484

Meals: This is now a Chuck Wagon event. Meals are free (donations accepted) for the first 20 volunteers to sign up with Jay Holwick at [jholwick@columbus.rr.com](mailto:jholwick@columbus.rr.com) prior to June 14, 2017 so he can plan meal quantities. Please note: if you are arriving Friday, the Friday night meal is NOT included - please bring your own.

### June 22-25, 2017

#### E.G.G.S. Hike

Description: The 8th Annual EGGS Hike will be held once again at Burr Oak State Park and Wildcat Hollow on June 22-25. We will have 5 challenges this year consisting of a 20 mile day, 20 mile night, 40, 60, and 80 mile challenge, and each challenge has a time limit to be completed in based upon mileage (12 hours for every 20 miles hiked). See you there!

Registration: Registration is \$50 for each participant and includes a free T-shirt, course map, and plenty of gifts from our sponsors. Register online for the event now. Online registration closes on June 1.

Camping: Camping for the event is free with registration and is at Group Camp located near Dock #3 at Burr Oak.

Visit the EGGS Hike page for additional information. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for new updates and information

## JULY

### July 1, 2017

#### Beginner's Guide to the Buckeye Trail

Location: Quail Hollow Park, 13480 Congress Lake Ave., Hartville, OH

Description: This presentation will give the history and evolution of Ohio's scenic hiking trail with an overview and characteristics of the trail's various unique sections. Also covered, will be basic tips for planning and hiking the trail either by selectively hiking parts, section hikes, or even a through hike, along with the advantages and challenges of each method. The presentation will be followed by a Q&A session with the Crooked River Chapter, Buckeye Trail Association members, volunteers, and hikers.

Come learn more about this amazing resource that is in our own backyard!

Contact: Randall Roberts at [bthikerrob-erts@gmail.com](mailto:bthikerrob-erts@gmail.com)

### July 8-12, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew: Whipple & Road Fork Sections

Description: Trail maintenance of the Road Fork and Whipple Sections' off road areas. This will include chain sawing of downed trees, mowing, weed whacking, pruning, and possible freshening of blazes for a little over 30 miles in the heat of July. We will need all the help we can get.

Camping: Camping will be at the Little Muskingum Watershed Association building, located at SR26 and Thomas Ridge Rd (T 88) Hot showers and flush toilets are available in the building. Donations to the LMWA for use of the facilities are appreciated. Camping GPS coordinates 39.54184, -81.22484

Meals: This is a chuck wagon event. Meals will be provided free (donations accepted) for the first 20 volunteers to sign up with Jay Holwick at [holwick@columbus.rr.com](mailto:holwick@columbus.rr.com) by July 2, 2017. Please note: if you are arriving Friday, the Friday night meal is NOT included - please bring your own.

### July 15, 2017

#### Little Loop Challenge- One Group, One Day

Information: Visit the Little Loop Challenge page for all the details.

Contact: Randall Roberts at [crookedriver@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:crookedriver@buckeyetrail.org)

### July 22-23, 2017

#### BT Circuit Hike - Belle Valley & Stockport Sections

Description: Saturday: Meet at Wood Grove Campground, Point 3 Stockport Section. Leave at 9:00AM to car pool to foot path on Chapel Drive (C-20) about one mile west of Point 27, Belle Valley Section. The hike is about 12.7 miles. Free AEP permit required.

Description: Sunday: Meet at foot path and McMannis-Riggs Road, Point 6, Stockport Section. Coordinates: (N39.63246 - W081.69874). Leave at 8:30AM to car pool to Point 3. The hike is about 12.0 miles. Free AEP permit required

Camping: Wood Grove Campground at 8605 Wood Grove Rd, McConnelville, OH 43756 (Point 3, Stockport Section)

Contact: Jim Gilkey at 614-879-9912 ahead of time or at 740-277-8749 on the hike weekend

## AUGUST

### August 12-13, 2017

#### BT Circuit Hike - Medina & Akron Sections

Description: Saturday: Meet in Richfield Heritage Preserve east parking lot at 4374 Broadview Road (SR-176) about .7 miles north of SR-303, Medina Section. Coordinates N41.24966 - W81.66415. Leave at 9:00AM to carpool to Old Weymouth School parking lot, west of Point 18. The hike is about 13.6 miles.

Description: Sunday: Meet in parking lot on Vaughn Road, just north of Point 2, Akron Section. Coordinates: (N41.28815 - W081.57331). Leave at 8:30AM to car pool to parking lot at 4374 SR-176, north of SR-303. The hike is about 12.2 miles.

Camping: Willow Lake Park at 2400 Substation Rd, Brunswick OH 44212

Contact: Jim Gilkey at 614-879-9912 ahead of time or at 740-277-8749 on the hike weekend

### August 12-13, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew: Mogadore Section

Description: This weekend we will continue to build trail at the West Branch State Park.

Camping: Camping is free for anyone attending this event. We will be camped out at the end of the road leading to the Horse Camping area (2 miles from the Bridle Trail day use parking lot). Coordinates for the road leading to the horse camp. N 410 8.901' W

## 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.



810 8.238'. If you want to camp out the entire weekend you can arrive as early as Friday night after 5:00PM. The gate leading to the camping area will be unlocked by then. We will also be able to use the regular campground showers to clean up each day.

Meals: Bring your own food and water.

Contact: Steve Latza at green.boonie@gmail.com

## August 18-20, 2017

### BTA Board Retreat

Location: BTA Barn near Deersville. See directions on page 8

Contact: president@buckeyetrail.org

## SEPTEMBER

### September 9-11, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew: St. Marys Section

##### - Newport

Description: Construction of box steps at the site of the Newport BTA Bridge washout on the Miami and Erie Canal towpath just west of point 10 on the March 2014 St. Marys Section map.

Camping: Camping will be at the Lake Loramie State Park Campground. Camping GPS coordinates 40.36043, -84.35867

Meals: Bring your own food and water.

### September 16-17, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew: Belle Valley Section

Description: TBD

Camping: TBD

Meals: TBD

### September 16-17, 2017

#### BT Circuit Hike - Stockport Section

Contact: Jim Gilkey at 614-879-9912

### September 23-27, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew: New Straitsville Section - Burr Oak State Park

Description: Trail maintenance week

Camping: Burr Oak State Park, group campground near boat dock 3

Meals: This is a chuck wagon event. Meals will be provided free (donations accepted) for the first 20 volunteers to sign up with Jay Holwick at holwick@columbus.rr.com by Sept. 18, 2017. Please note: if you are arriving Friday, the Friday night meal is NOT included - please bring your own.

## OCTOBER

### October 7, 2017

#### Run for Blue Blazes Trail Run

Description: A full marathon, half marathon, 10K, and 5K beginning and ending in the historic village of Shawnee, surrounded by the Wayne National Forest

### October 14-15, 2017

#### BT Circuit Hike - Akron Section

Contact: Jim Gilkey at 614-879-9912

### October 14-15, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew - Mogadore Section

Description: This weekend we will continue to build trail at West Branch State Park.

Camping: Camping is free for anyone attending this event. We will be camped out at the end of the road leading to the Horse Camping area (2 miles from the Bridle Trail day use parking lot). Coordinates for the road leading to the horse camp. N 410 8.901' W 810 8.238'. If you want to camp out the entire weekend you can arrive as early as Friday night after 5:00PM. The gate leading to the camping area will be unlocked by then. We will also be able to use the regular campground showers to clean up each day.

Meals: Bring your own food and water.

Contact: Steve Latza at green.boonie@gmail.com

### October 14-18, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew: New Straitsville Section

Description: Reroute trail off road in the Athens Unit of the Wayne National Forest from West Old Stone Church Trail Head.

Camping: TBD

Meals: Bring your own food and water.

### October 21-22, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew: Old Mans Cave Section - Pretty Run Preserve

Description: Vegetation management; hopefully building a privy. We will leave for work at 8:30am and quit at 3:30pm.

Camping: Camping will be at the Pretty Run property. Camping GPS coordinates 39.34987, -82.62431

Meals: Bring your own food and water.

### October 21-22, 2017

#### Caesar Creek Grand Re-Opening of the Buckeye Trail

Description: Come experience the "new" Buckeye Trail at Caesar Creek as we celebrate the conclusion of our 2 year plan to resurrect this trail. Historically one of the worst stretches of Buckeye Trail sections in the state, those who attend will find it to be near the top for its overall trail conditions and fabulous water views. Miles of trail have been reshaped and fortified to withstand years of traffic. Our 2 day celebration will include the option of backpacking the entire Buckeye Trail in the park (23 miles) or participating in section hikes on Saturday and Sunday. More details coming Summer of 2017!

Camping: Camping at the horse camp is available for registered backpacking and hiking participants.

Meals: Bring your own food and water

Contact: Joel Timmons at caesarcreek@buckeyetrail.org

### October 21-22, 2017

#### All Chapter Backpack Hike

Description: This event will be held in

conjunction with the grand re-opening of the Caesar Creek Section. More details to follow.

## NOVEMBER

### November 4-8, 2017

#### Buckeye Trail Crew: West Union Section - Edge of Appalachia

Description: Continue building new trail from where we left off in September of 2016.

Camping: Near the maintenance building at 3223 Waggoner Riffle Rd. Camping GPS coordinates 38.74836, -83.46397

Meals: This is a chuck wagon event. Meals will be provided free (donations accepted) for the first 20 volunteers to sign up with Jay Holwick at holwick@columbus.rr.com by Oct. 30, 2017. Please note: if you are arriving Friday, the Friday night meal is NOT included - please bring your own.

Note: The portable hot shower will be available on site.

### November 14-15, 2017

#### BT Circuit Hike - Sockport & New Straitsville Sections

Contact: Jim Gilkey at 614-879-9912

## DECEMBER

### December 9, 2017

#### BTA Board Meeting

BTA Board Meeting

Location: 10:00AM at the ODNR office at 2045 Morse Road, Bldg. E-1, Columbus, OH 43229.

Contact: President@buckeyetrail.org

### December 9-10, 2017

#### BT Circuit Hike - Akron Section

Contact: Jim Gilkey at 614-879-9912

Even more events  
with BTA chapters on  
**Meetup**

# Reflections on TrailFest 2017

Mark Heise

My daughter Morgan, who graduates from high school in two short weeks, once told me that no one should die without a story. I have many, but this is one I have lived for four years. Since my first TrailFest, I have worked to bring it home with me.

For the first time in the history of Buckeye TrailFest, a community asked to host TrailFest. I guess because I made the pitch, I would soon find myself chairing the event.

Yellow Springs is not exactly the most conventional community that has hosted TrailFest and even the timing was not conventional. Through some negotiations to make all parties happy, TrailFest would kick off two complete weeks of trail magic that spanned the Caesar Creek and Troy sections that included the Miami Valley Cycling Summit, followed by the International Trails Symposium. On our first night, we designated Yellow Springs as a Trail Town for the Buckeye Trail and the North Country Trail. State Representative Rick Perales joined us for the celebration, bringing with him the freshly signed document declaring 2017-2018 The Year of the Trail for the State of Ohio, joining the same declaration made by Greene County in February by Greene County Parks & Trails.

Tom Helbig of Tomfoolery Outdoors walked into TrailFest from just south of Cleveland on his through-hike of the Buckeye Trail, leading in some 15 hikers on a hike-in that some started 100 miles out with more joining along the way. Two hundred and fifteen people enjoyed TrailFest this year, braving the chance of rain in the forecast. And what a chance it was. We saw the parking lot become a flowing river and an amazing night-time light show. Even though some sought shelter in our conference building and dining hall, spirits were not dampened. Saturday morning hikes had to be cancelled because of flash flooding, but all other programming continued.

TrailFest was an amazing success. But I did not do this. We had 34 people travel in from all over the world to lead hikes, entertain, and inform us. In all, group hikes covered at least 150 miles, some of which to the local brewery. More than \$2000 was raised in the auctions to support the trail crews. Tom Helbig not only told us about his through-hike, he took Tomfoolery Follows the Blue Blazes to the Glen Helen Association Annual Meeting as their keynote speaker to help them better understand the importance of the trail. Stacey Kozel took a few zero days from her PCT through-hike to inspire us to do even more, and hopefully inspire others. Over the course of a weekend, we learned how to better record our hikes in pictures and Google Maps. We centered ourselves with Yoga for Hikers, we learned how to spread peace on the trail, how to get back to our cars, and we sang around the campfire when there was no fire to be had.

There is not enough room here to relive TrailFest and all its inspiration and successes. By latest account, TrailFest closed well into the black. This is money that will be put back into the trails in one way or another. I could not have done any of this, without key

volunteers. People who did entirely more than they were asked. Some were on the committee that led TrailFest, and still others just jumped in when it was needed to lend a hand doing dishes, driving people from point A to point B, or making projectors work. We also grew some fantastic new relationships that will be with us for some time to come.

I am humbled by the people who stood by me for this long almost 2-year journey. My co-chair, Cheryl Kreindler handled programming with ease. Brandon Riggins coordinated the auctions and his father, John Riggins, was part of the planning and ground game making sure no one got lost between the camp and Yellow Springs on the trails, even though their sister/daughter was getting married that weekend. John Smilek negotiated with the Boy Scout Council to get that amazing facility at an even more amazing price. Tina Spencer handled PR, while Matt Patterson took over coordinating hikes. My dear friends from Michigan, Steve and Debby Wilkinson, came down from Lapeer to handle all of our on-site registration. I would have been lost without Mary Hayes' experienced hand and fresh set of eyes on the web site and we all would have been hungry between meals without Mary Hamilton's ever-present hospitality. Mary Hamilton and I would have secret meetings up at the dining hall LONG before anyone else was stirring in the camp.

Lastly, I have the greatest admiration for our staff. They are some of the most dedicated professionals I have ever worked with in the many non-profits I have been a part of. It was Cheryl's and my goal to make sure the staff would not be over-taxed with this year's TrailFest, and I have been assured by Andrew, Sally, and Richard that they were not.

I know this has been long, but let me leave you with this... We had a winning team with a great attitude that put TrailFest 2017 together. I am proud, and once again humbled that as Cheryl takes the mantle of TrailFest 2018, she tells me that almost everyone on our core committee this year volunteered to help lead TrailFest 2018. I know that they (and I) will be there to support her as we sow seeds of continuity between TrailFests from this point forward.

And so, I raise a pint of Captain Stardust from the Yellow Springs Brewery as I toast you all for helping make TrailFest 2017 a success. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you and happy trails, until we meet again.









# Citizen Science on the Buckeye Trail

Joe Brehm

I am grateful for the Buckeye Trail not only for the hiking opportunities it affords, but also for the access to nuanced beauty it provides. In Southeast Ohio, I use the Buckeye Trail to look for birds, wildflowers, summer caterpillars, salamanders, and the many other components of the region's biodiversity. It is important to me not only to see these wonders, such as American Redstarts and Northern Parulas zooming around the trailhead at Wildcat Hollow, but also to document them. Scientists are now sourcing research from everyday people, a partnership that is described as "Citizen Science." When I see birds on the Buckeye Trail, I report them to ebird.org using an app on my phone, and so can you. Another website and app, iNaturalist, gives me a chance to upload photos of the Buckeye Trail's biodiversity. Peer-reviewed scientific papers are published nearly every day using the data from apps like eBird and iNaturalist.

It is important to document these creatures to inform their stewardship and preservation. That is why I worked with BTA Director Andrew Bashaw to create a citizen science project on iNaturalist.org called "Buckeye Trail Flora and Fauna" that gives everyone who hikes the BT an opportunity to help keep track of the trail's natural wonders. We will give bonus points to those who can include a blue blaze in their photos of plants, birds, insects, lichens, mushrooms, and anything else found along the BT. Please join me in celebrating the trail's diversity by snapping a few photos along your hike and uploading them to the project. If you have any problem finding the project, email me at joe@ruralaction.org (I will also gladly accept cool nature photos of mysterious creatures.)

## Buckeye Trail Scholarship Recipients

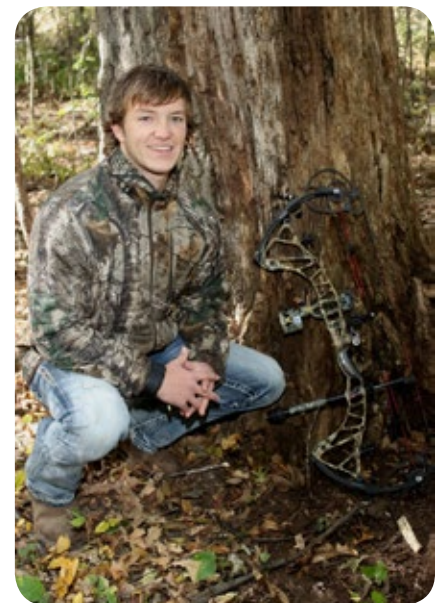
Ruth Brown

This year the BTA awarded two scholarships. Students who are BTA members or whose parents or grandparents are BTA members are eligible to apply for a BTA scholarship for college. Two \$500.00 scholarships are available each year. Details can be found on the Buckeye Trail website under the scholarship section at [www.buckeyetrail.org/scholarship.php](http://www.buckeyetrail.org/scholarship.php). The application must be received by the first of April.



Andrew Popa will be attending Kent State University to work toward a degree in Political Science, which will be useful in today's environmental protection politics. He will get to spend a summer in Washington, D.C., during which time he would like to engage with those who lobby for our national parks. Andrew will also spend a semester in Geneva, Switzerland with a goal to find out about how other countries approach environmental protection. Andrew has helped his parents do trail maintenance and build bridges in the section of the BT they have adopted.

Brock Brubaker will be attending Hocking College to pursue an Associate's Degree in the Wildlife Management program. After he completes his degree he plans to obtain a position with a public entity or an organization that will give him the opportunity to protect our land, wildlife, and environment. Brock has always had a passion for the outdoors. He has done many activities involved with the outdoors, including volunteer work and work with outdoor organizations.





# Mei Ling Liber, Warrior Hiker

*Mei Ling Liber, with Bob Litt*

Meet Mei Ling Liber, an extraordinary person, Air Force veteran and soon to be a through-hiker on the Buckeye Trail. Mei Ling plans to begin her BT through hike clockwise from Eden Park on July 3rd. You may follow her on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/mei.liber](http://www.facebook.com/mei.liber) or “Mei Aka Superfly Love Everybody Liber”) or other social media. Better yet, get out and meet Mei Aka Superfly when she hikes the BT in your area; she currently has no specific dates or special events but anticipates VFW visits along the way. The Warrior Hike organization is currently seeking Mei Ling’s hiking partner, so consider joining for a day, section, or as much time and distance as possible.

Mei Ling provided the following autobiographical information to share in the Trailblazer.

“I was born in Savannah, Georgia in July 1986 when my dad was stationed at Ft. Benning. Two years later, my dad got out of the army and moved myself, my mom and my sister to Alexandria, Virginia. I grew up in the Washington, DC metropolitan area before I was selected for an Air Force ROTC scholarship at Florida State University. At the time, I wanted to be a pilot in the Air Force and decided to study mechanical engineering in case I wanted to become a test pilot. I graduated FSU in 2009 with a BS in Mechanical Engineering and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Air Force.

I served on active duty for a total of 7+ years as an aerospace engineer in the Air Force, first stationed at Los Angeles Air Force Base and then Wright Patterson AFB. I held several engineering jobs that ranged from working on the Delta IV rocket (we launched several military satellites like GPS, Wideband Global Satcom, etc), to working on hypersonic technology at the Air Force Research Lab and software modernization upgrades for the B-2 aircraft. I received my Master's degree in Aerospace Engineering from the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright Patterson AFB in March 2013. I was also deployed to Afghanistan from August 2015 to March 2016, where I was assigned to a special operations Joint Task Force. We flew small unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions in support of combat operations.

After my deployment, I felt a need to take more time off to enjoy the outdoors and connect with others who shared my interests. I thought about doing a long-distance hike. I had always dreamed about doing the entire Appalachian Trail when I was a young girl and thought about making that dream a reality while I was still below retirement age. I started doing anything I could to plan for that hike, like going to backpacking workshops, reading about the trail, going to lectures, and day-hiking long miles. I also started talking about it during work; one of my coworkers told me about the Warrior Hike program for military veterans. The program would provide gear, food and some logistics for veterans on a long-distance hike; all I had to do was apply! I applied the next day and was actually shocked when the founder of the program told me I was selected for the Buckeye Trail. He broke the news to me on New Years Day as I was driving back home to Ohio from my parents house in Virginia. The first thing I did when I found out was call my parents and couldn't stop smiling the whole time I was on the phone.

In preparation for the BT, I'm currently doing a series of section hikes on the Appalachian Trail until July 3rd (when my thru hike on the Buckeye Trail is scheduled to start). I just completed a 166-mile stretch from Amicalola Falls to Fontana Dam with my two Dobermans, Bruno and Leila. They are seriously the best trail dogs ever. I'm also currently in the middle of a section hike with my dogs from Standing Bear Farm in Tennessee to Damascus, Virginia, and will finish on May 19th for Trail Days. Although I'd be happy to take my dogs on the Buckeye Trail, I think it would be wiser to leave them with my parents for this hike (more flexibility with camping and equipment).”



# Welcome New Members!

Bev and Jerry Starcher

Darlene Aguilar, Centerville, gift from Sterling Deck  
Laurie Allen and Family, Hudson  
Teri Anderson, Parma  
Patricia Aubrey, Sugar Grove  
Marsha Bazzoli and Family, North Canton  
Ron Bender, Akron  
Stanton Boyce, Medina  
Greg Bromley and Family, Thornville  
Linda Brown and Family, Hudson  
Mike Brown and Family, Greenville  
Chad Brubaker and Family, Napoleon  
Kelly Brunswick, Hilliard  
Patrick Buffington, Akron  
Jorene Burgess, Eaton  
Pam Burton, Columbus  
John Chappell, Wadsworth  
Kathleen Chicoine, Cuyahoga Falls  
Karen Cook, Lancaster  
John Corral, Akron  
Shelli Craver, Wooster  
Jennifer Daus, Chagrin Falls  
Christopher Davis and Family, Lebanon  
John DiNicola and Family, Tallmadge  
Fred Donelson, Gahanna  
Dottie Dorn, Columbus  
Gary Dugan and Tracy Passage, Dover  
Deanna Filkins, LaBelle, FL  
Ann Furste, Columbus  
Rollin Gagnon, Medina  
Mel Rae Gagnon, Medina  
Blaine Geary, Brunswick, gift from Keith Geary  
Carolyn Gilbert, Lyndhurst  
Tony Gosmer, Kent  
Loretta Graham and Family, Columbus  
Phil Grimm, Dalton  
Roger Gross, Elmore  
Jennifer Hanselman and Family, Cuyahoga Falls  
Donna Hart-Miller, Norwalk  
Russell Hattery, Powell, gift from Gary Hattery  
Kevin Haught, Jenera  
Jason Henry, Kettering  
Eileen Herihy, North Royalton

Doug Hershman, Chagrin Falls  
Kevin Hirsch, Norwood, gift from Charles Fitzpatrick  
Robert Hodges, Akron  
Mary Hohman, Peninsula  
Pamela Holiday, Chagrin Falls  
Nate Hoover, Cleveland  
Terry Howdyshell, New Plymouth  
Pete Howe, Columbus  
Dina Iacobucci, San Jose, CA  
Rosemary Isabella, Seven Hills  
Patty Jackson, Cincinnati, gift from Drake Jackson  
Brian JC, Independence  
Lyle Jenkins, Akron  
Nathan Johnson, Columbus  
Dana Kalchoff, Sagamore Hills  
Rob Kaminski, Oberlin  
Holly Kaskey, Peninsula  
Jenean Kazmir, Hudson  
Megan Kennedy, Hudson  
Wes Kirgbaum, Akron  
William Knox, Euclid  
Michael Kohr, Columbus  
LeAnn Krosnick, Sagamore Hills  
Karen Kurak, Brecksville  
Tom Kurak, Brecksville  
Brian Lamm, Hartsville  
Karen Leffler, Stow  
Roxanna Lehman, Logan  
Dolores Lenczewski, Garfield Hgts  
B. Scotia MacKay, Kent  
David Martien, Tiffin  
Sandra Maxwell, Cuyahoga Falls  
Scott McCarty, Akron  
Richard McMeechan, Brecksville  
Cheryl McQueen, North Canton  
Cynthia McWilliams, Hinckley  
Janet Michal, Oberlin  
Joy Miller and Don Wallbaum, Logan  
Scott Mondak and Family, Valley View  
Rob Moormann, Sunbury  
Alex Murphy, Willoughby Hills, gift from Bob Morecki  
Michael Nees, Lima  
Laura Nein, Columbus

Anna O'Donnell, New London  
Mark Pottschmidt, Columbus  
Skye Powers-Kaminski, Oberlin  
Michael Quayle, Akron  
Thomas Ramsey, Kirtland  
Bryan Rethman, Cincinnati, gift from John Rethman  
Marilyn Rhoades, Shaker Hgts  
Brandon Riggins, Enon  
Almuth Riggs, Shaker Hgts  
Kelly Rout, Columbus  
Jennifer Russell, Powell  
Steve Schultz and Kathy, Valley View  
Kay Senft, Columbus  
Laura Siska, Lakewood, gift from Corey Ringle  
Chris Smith, Columbus  
Sarah Smith, Columbus  
Kevin Sprague and Family, Bowling Green  
Shirley Stalzer, Broadview Hgts  
Patricia Stanley, Mogadore  
Hilliary Sullivan, Hudson  
Dana Suttles, Brookfield  
Christopher Tabler, Piqua  
Lisa Thomas, Cleveland  
Kynslie Thorndike, New Philadelphia  
gift from David Thorndike  
Jay Tolloti, Dover  
Sandie Trask-Tyler, Columbus  
Don Turpin, Seven Hills  
Nancy Tuttle, Cleveland Hgts  
Tia Tyler, Columbus  
Tim Vandersall and Family, Hartsville  
Abigail Wall, Hilliard, gift from Monte Wall  
Michael Weiss, Canton  
Harold Wheatley, Sagamore Hills  
Michael Yeo, Findlay  
Becca Zak, Stow  
Richard Zappata and Family, Twinsburg  
Gwen and Karl Zoeller, Chesterland  
Melanie Lewis, Logan  
The Outdoor Source - Todd Altfater, Columbus  
REI - Abby Rhodebeck, Columbus



## 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:  
[ssugar@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:ssugar@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.

### FEBRUARY 2016 - MAY 2017

#### TRAIL PRESERVATION FUND

Keith Boesel

#### GENERAL FUND

Anonymous  
Barry & Deborah Mancz  
Batelle Always Giving  
Bob & Connie Pond  
Bryon Staib  
Carroll County Chapter of Ohio Horse-  
man's Council, Inc  
Charles Dressler  
Cheryl Kriendler  
Chilicothe Convention Bureau  
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Christa Abood  
Dr. Scott Pendelton, Cadiz Animal Clinic  
Frederick Silver  
Hank Trimble

Harriet & Elwood Ensor  
James & Alicia Meyer  
Jeff Yoest  
Jeffrey Swords & Lisbeth Blaney Swords  
Kathleen Fix  
Kroger Community Rewards  
Larry & Margaret Smith  
Margaret Johnson  
Maria Elena Phillips  
Marianne Gabel  
Marie & Maurice Maddock  
Mary Hamilton  
Mary Ruth Green  
Michael Kohr  
Miner Dickason

Ohio Horseman's Council  
Owens-Illinois, Inc.  
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Robert & Shirley Burris  
Stephen Walker  
Susan Garber  
The Bashaw Family  
TheHikingFamily.com  
Trey Webster  
Yellow Springer Tees/OH Adventure

#### BUCKEYE TRAILFEST 2017

Wagner Subaru  
Hocking Hills Tourism Association

#### EMMA GRANDMA GATEWOOD SOLSTICE HIKE

Buffalo Wild Wings

#### RUN FOR BLUE BLAZES TRAIL MARATHON

Brown Quarter Horses  
Peoples Bank

#### GRANTS

Patagonia; thanks to Appalachian Outfitters

## ATTENTION! The Trailblazer is going green!

We will soon be primarily distributing the Trailblazer electronically so that more of your membership dollars can go to accomplishing the mission of the Buckeye Trail Association. With your next renewal letter, you will be able to opt-in to continuing to receive the Trailblazer by mail on the renewal form.

If you have any questions about this transition, please contact Sally Sugar at [ssugar@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:ssugar@buckeyetrail.org) or 740-394-2008.

Also, don't forget that the BTA mailing address has changed to:  
PO Box 5, Shawnee, OH 43782



# How the BTA Helped Save Crowell Hilaka/Richfield Heritage Preserve

Lynn Scholle Richardson, Historian, Friends of Crowell Hilaka

*At the BTA annual meeting, first time attendee Rob Richardson stood up to thank the BTA for their crucial role in saving Crowell Hilaka. Then it turned out that not many people know what Crowell Hilaka is, why it's important, and how BTA's contribution made a difference.*

Crowell Hilaka in Summit County (or as it was recently renamed, "Richfield Heritage Preserve") is probably best known as "the old Girl Scout camp in Richfield." But before it was a camp, most of the land was the estate of inventor Jim Kirby.

Kirby's mission in life was to "eliminate the drudgery of housework." After making his fortune with the invention of the first wringer-less washing machine, Kirby constructed his home on the most inherently beautiful property he could find. Its spring-fed streams creating waterfalls and scenic valleys were part of the headwaters of the Rocky River. Its hilly fields were dotted here and there with majestic old trees. On this land Kirby engineered the world's only known patented lake, a mill to generate electric power, a house air-conditioned with spring water, and a dance hall built on springs salvaged from old streetcars. Upstream, the Neal family built their fairytale-worthy houses and operated a thriving fruit farm. The Neals and the Kirbys both sold their Richfield property to the Cleveland Girl Scout Council. When the Girl Scouts came in, they added tent sites, shelters, outhouses, parking lots, more hiking trails, a dining hall and a boat house. And so it remained for seventy-five years.

## What came next: The tangled web of politics and partnerships

In 2012, as part of a nationwide restructuring of the Girl Scout program, several camps including Crowell Hilaka went up for sale. The Western Reserve Land Conservancy, with their commitment to protect and preserve land, was the highest bidder for Crowell Hilaka and Camp Lejnar in Lake County. The Conservancy was not seeking direct ownership of the land. They wanted to retain the development rights to the land through conservation easements, and find third parties who would be interested in actually purchasing the properties. By the following year, the Conservancy had not been able to find such purchasers. They withdrew from the Camp Lejnar deal in June 2013.

Friends of Crowell Hilaka ( FoCH ) was a group formed in 2009 to promote and improve Crowell Hilaka as a Girl Scout camp. When the sale of the camp went through anyway, we were at least comforted by the belief that the Conservancy would protect the land. The Conservancy's withdrawal from Camp Lejnar was both a shock and a wake-up call to us. We began meeting with the Conservancy. That was when we found out that what we thought was a sale was really only a limited time option, and the option was soon to expire. Deciding to buy the camp ourselves was pretty much a "Hail Mary play," since we had spent any money we had raised in the past to promote Crowell Hilaka as a Girl Scout camp. The Conservancy told us the purchase price was "in excess of four million dollars." We set up a pledge campaign and got endorsements from the Richfield Historical Society, Richfield Township, and Richfield Village. An additional challenge was that very few people who lived near the property knew it existed. Girl Scout security kept out the neighbors, and the camp had belonged to the Cleveland GS council, not the Summit County GS council. But when you are out of all reasonable options, what can you do but go ahead and attempt the impossible?

The Conservancy received permission from the Girl Scout council to allow us to give tours to a limited number of influential people. FoCH president Corey Ringle invited a delegation from the Buckeye Trail Association on one of these tours. Cecilia Hartman, Pat Hayes, Jim Sprague, and Melissa Reed arrived and went with Corey on an extensive tour of the property while I went with the Conservancy to show Richfield officials around.

At that time, the Medina Section of the Buckeye Trail skirted the camp on three sides. Evidently the possibilities for having the trail go through the camp were considered, because the next thing we knew, the BTA let us know that they were pledging \$23,000 to our campaign. THAT got everyone's attention.

The significance of the BTA pledge went far beyond the dollar value. It was the turning point that validated the project. It said to the whole world that the BTA, a well-known and respected organization, had made an objective judgment that Crowell Hilaka was valuable, and that FoCH would be trustworthy stewards. The Conservancy started to think that there was hope after all and asked the Girl Scouts if FoCH could host an open house for the public. Girl Scouts granted the request. The public arrived and fell in love with the place.



We fell far short of our goal by the time the Conservancy's option expired at the end of 2013. But citizens of Richfield had been to the open house and had seen it with their own eyes. Soon afterwards, a request went up the chain of command: residents of Richfield asked Village Council to ask the Conservancy if they could ask Girl Scouts for an extension. A couple of months went by while the Girl Scout board pondered the question. The answer came back down the chain: Yes.

The Village, Township, Historical Society and FoCH began a new series of meetings with the Conservancy to set up a structure that would place purchase of the camp on Richfield's ballot in November of 2014. The BTA made it known that they were still committed to the project. Connie and Bob Pond came up to Richfield to hold a joint display booth with FoCH. With their help, we attracted the attention of yet more influential people in the Richfield community.

The vote passed.

In 2015, plans were made to take the Buckeye Trail through the camp instead of around it. The route laid out by Pat Hayes and Buckeye Trail GIS coordinator Richard Lutz incorporated two of the old Girl Scout paths: Pine Lake Trail along the west shore of Lake Linnea and Deer Leap Trail along the creek. The BT also blazed a brand new route over the hillside beyond the dance hall and along the ridgetop overlooking the Wild Ravine. Camping options for through-hikers were approved. In 2016, teams led by Pat Hayes built the new trail. It is arguably the most popular path in the park today.

When the BTA contributed to the newly formed Richfield Joint Recreation District, you weren't just building a new trail. You helped preserve a unique, historically significant site. Kirby left examples of science and engineering that are approachable, understandable, and fun - located in a beautiful natural setting. The trail goes through the heart of the estate, and the BTA was at the heart of keeping it in existence.

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# BTA Annual Awards

Mary Hamilton

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

Randall Roberts, for his creation of the Crooked River Chapter of the BTA, his presentations of “Beginner’s Guide to the Buckeye Trail,” and his continual talks about the BTA to all he meets.

Beverly Starcher for her excellent way of maintaining membership services. She quickly gets membership packets, renewal letters and other mailings out to those who have joined or renewed. She has been a great help to Sally at the BTA office with any questions regarding membership.

## **STAR PERFORMANCE (Leadership Excellence)**

Jan Geho and Tim Murphy, who serve as co-section supervisors of the Burton section. Their ability to coordinate with Lake Metroparks and the Geauga Park District, as well as completion of trail improvements, reflect great credit on themselves and their area in keeping with the mission and vision of the BTA.

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

Liz DeBraal, for all her hard and excellent work in the production of the Trailblazer.

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

Larry and Sophia Morton, for their many years as maintainers in the Medina Section. They first served as Medina Section supervisors, then as age caught up with them, they maintained a segment of trail until they finally gave up maintaining in the fall of 2016.

They wear BTA gear and talk up the trail with anyone they encounter who seems interested.

Jim Runk: Over the years, Jim has worked, designed, stored, hauled, built, transported equipment and supplies and tools, and led the work crew in building trail, backpack shelters and everything in between. He also served on the BTA board for a number of years.

## **TRUSTEE EMERITUS AWARD**

Connie Pond: Connie has served the Board for many years in many capacities such as Treasurer, VP, and most recently, as President. She, along with her husband Bob, walked the BT and have written and published *Follow the Blue Blazes* about the BT and its many historical aspects. She along with several others were instrumental in raising funds to insure the bronze plaque commemorating the completion of the BT in 1970 finally found its place of honor at the northern terminus at Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve. This is just brief list of all the things Connie has done for the BTA. We wish her well as she resigned her post as President during this past Trailfest.

## **BILL MILLER AWARD (Conservation)**

The Nature Conservancy of Ohio, for hosting the BT at Strait Creek Prairie Bluff Nature Preserve and Edge of Appalachia in Adams County. They have also welcomed the development of the BT on their preserves.

## **BUCKEYE TRAIL THRU-HIKERS**

Sterling Deck

Martin Strange

Chuck and Beth Hewitt



# Campsite/Shelter Development Update

Richard Lutz

As a quick note for this issue, we are still moving forward on campsite development. We have picked up one new campsite along the trail thanks to the generosity of a private landowner. The newest site is in the Whipple Section just south of Whipple, Ohio. There is a restriction of no camping in the month of November at this site, so please keep this in mind. More details will be issued as a Map Update on the BTA website.

The BTA's Trail Preservation Fund helps in finding new properties for the BTA to purchase to develop campsites and protect the trail through easements and property purchase, build trail and keep it open for everyone. If you would like to contribute towards the fund, visit our website at [buckeyetrail.org/preservation.php](http://buckeyetrail.org/preservation.php) and click on the "donate" button. If you would like to help in the camp site development process, please feel free to contact the Trail Preservation Committee at [preservation@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:preservation@buckeyetrail.org). Stay tuned, as we continue to develop campsites along the trail!



To all wonderful Buckeye Trail members,  
There are a million ways to say thank you  
for the kind expressions of appreciation as I  
leave the Buckeye Trail Board after so many  
challenging years. But I can only afford a  
quarter page ad.

# THANK YOU



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**Buckeye Trail Association**

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Do not share my name with other groups

**PAY BY:**  Check  Credit Card

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**Please tell us where you got this Newsletter:**

Friend: \_\_\_\_\_  State Park: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Buckeye Trail Association**

P.O. BOX 5, SHAWNEE, OHIO 43782

**OR JOIN ONLINE AT:**

[www.buckeyetrail.org/membership.php](http://www.buckeyetrail.org/membership.php)