

BUCKEYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

# Trailblazer



SHOULDER PATCHES  
SUBMITTED

FOUNDED 1959  
WINTER 2018 VOLUME 51 NO. 4

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## Trailblazer

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**Sally Sugar**  
Production & Editing

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## A Note From the Past About the Cover

The 10th Annual Meeting of the Buckeye Trail Association was held in Akron, April, 1969 and one of the actions taken at that meeting was the selection of a design for the shoulder patch to be the official symbol for the Association.

The Board of Directors (now called the Board of Trustees) had announced earlier that a contest would be held to encourage members to submit designs for a shoulder patch. The winner would be given a Life Membership in the Buckeye Trail Association.

There were 14 designs submitted and these were displayed at the Annual Meeting and the BTA members were asked to select the winner by ballot. It was an interesting display and the decision as to which was the winner was not easily made. It finally narrowed down to two designs, each of which was outstanding and each of the two had certain details which were liked by most of the 75 members present.

The concensus was that the two should be combined using the best features of each. The two persons whose designs were chosen were Robert E. Merkle and Jan Loks Sally, both of Columbus. Mrs. Sally offered to prepare the new design and her final art work is the current shoulder patch which has become so familiar in Ohio.

Present at that meeting was another friend and member, Frances Murphey staff member of the AKRON BEACON JOURNAL. She arranged the officers of the association around the display of designs and took the historic photograph above.

The officers were, clockwise from the left, Grandma Emma R. Gatewood, Thurman, Ohio, Director; John P. Bay, Columbus, Vice President; James H. Ucker, Logan, Director; Donald L. Vogt, Akron, President; Robert E. Merkle, Columbus, Treasurer; and Robert R. Paton, Worthington, Executive Director.

Robert R. Paton

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C O M M I T T E E C H A I R S**

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**Buckeye TrailFest 2019**

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**Trail Shop**

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**Scouting Liaison**

Rick Mark

**Scholarship**

Ruth Brown

**Blue Blaze Society**

Linda Paul

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**Trail Preservation**

Andy Haag

**Trail Preservation Fund**

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**Awards**

Andy Haag

**Membership**

Richard Saccardi

**Development**

Andy Haag

**Electronic Mapping**

James "Sunny" Sunyak

**Trail Management Team**

Richard Lutz

**C O V E R**

Folks pick out a new BTA logo during the 10th anniversary meeting of the BTA. For more info, check out the note on the opposite page.

# BT Reroute to North Coast Inland Trail a Highlight of 2018

Ruth Brown

After a long wait much of the Norwalk section of the Buckeye Trail has finally made a significant move off road onto the North Coast Inland Trail, Firelands Rails to Trails, Inc. in Huron County. On



August 18, 2018 in Wakeman a celebration event was held with the Firelands Rails to Trails to celebrate the grand opening of the Buckeye Trail onto the Firelands Rails to Trails, Inc. the Bruce L. Chapin Bridge, and the US 20 Wakeman East Bikeway.

The Buckeye Trail reroute onto the NCIT was made possible by the dedication and efforts of the volunteers of the Firelands Rails to Trails, Inc. who have worked endlessly for a number of years to get the trail completed through Huron County.

The Bruce L. Chapin Bridge is a double 60' x 54' stone arch bridge 273 feet long and approximately 80 feet high built by the Lake Shore and Michigan Railroad in 1872. Many Firelands Rails To Trails, Inc. volunteers spent much time to remove the accumulation of litter, debris, vegetation, tree growth, soil, old stone ballast, and organic matter. State Capital Funds were granted from the State to retrofit the railings on the Bridge. BT hikers along with bikers can pass over the Bridge and enjoy the beautiful view of the Vermilion River.

The opening of the Wakeman East Bikeway east of the Bruce L. Chapin Bridge was the last step in completing the NCIT in Huron County to connect it up to the NCIT in Lorain County. The Buckeye Trail follows the Wakeman East Bikeway east of Wakeman and then follows roads to connect back to Findley State Park.

The Grand Opening Celebration began with a welcome and an introduction by the president of Firelands Rails to Trails, Inc. Lance Franke. This was followed with brief comments by the Jim Ziemnik, Director of Lorain County Parks, which has helped FRTTI in many ways. The next speaker was 13th District State Senator Gayle Manning who was instrumental along with Wakeman Fiscal Officer Trish Summers to get State Capital Funds granted for the railings that were affixed to the top of the Bruce L. Chapin Bridge. Last to speak was the BT Executive Director, Andrew Bashaw. He emphasized how indebted the BTA is to FRTTI for all their perseverance and work over the years to make the trail possible along with looking forward to a great partnership in the future with FRTTI. Andrew recognized the presence of State Representative Dick Stein who is a member of the Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus. The celebration ended with a blue ribbon cutting on the Bridge to officially bring the BT onto the NCIT.

The movement of the BT onto the NCIT now makes it possible for hikers to go from Elmore to east of Wakeman. The trail now passes through Fremont, Clyde, Bellevue, Monroeville, Norwalk, and Wakeman which offer many amenities.

# President's Message

Steve Walker

The year 2018 is now in the books and it was a good year for the Buckeye Trail and the Buckeye Trail Association. In my short history with the Buckeye Trail, every year seems to be more successful than the last one and I believe that there's truth in that statement. All of the BTA's signature events were successful for 2018 and the trends seem to indicate continued growth for all of them.

Another area of growth is the equipment that our volunteers use to build and maintain the Buckeye Trail. In 2017 and 2018, we managed to add two DR Mowers paid for by grants from the NCTA Field Grant Program. In addition to these, that same Field Grant Committee helped supply the BTA with a DR Trimmer in 2018 for use in the Road Fork Section, a first for our organization. It looks to promise the possibility of easier maintenance of the Buckeye Trail in areas where a DR Mower may have difficulty. This effort to grow our equipment roster will be continued in 2019. There are plans to acquire two additional DR Mowers this year, stationing one in Northeast Ohio and the other in Southeast Ohio.

In December of 2018, the BTA began the process of developing an in-house sign making operation with the generous help of Chuck and Beth Hewett. The purchase of a CNC machine will give us the capability of producing our own signs, something that few trail organizations throughout the U.S.A. possess.

It also looks like we'll be dedicating a few more Buckeye Trail Towns in 2019. Deersville has long acted like a Trail Town by making hikers feel welcome but it is finally taking steps to become an official one. The Buckeye Trail has passed through Chardon for many years but that town has also begun this process. There are at least two other towns looking to achieve this status.

Our efforts in the legislative and advocacy areas are starting to show fruition. BTA members participated in a Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus Hike on the Ohio and Erie Canalway in Cuyahoga County in September of 2018. This was hosted by Canalway Partners and both Senators Sean O'Brien and Steve Wilson, Co-Chairs of the Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus hiked with us.

The BTA was one of five founding partners of the Ohio Trails Partnership in October of 2018 and this year, we will be helping to increase its influence with the Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio Department of Transportation. The OTP has already been influential in encouraging ODNR to produce the Comprehensive Ohio Trails Plan/Vision, the first trails plan for the State of Ohio since 2005. We've read some early drafts of this plan and the Buckeye Trail figures prominently in it. The BTA will be joining its fellow member organizations of the OTP in supporting implementation of the Plan/Vision in 2019 and coming years.



If it looks to you like 2019 is adding up to be a special year for the Buckeye Trail and the Buckeye Trail Association, you should not be surprised by all that will be happening this year. This is, after all, our 60th Anniversary Year for both the Buckeye Trail and its supporting organization. That includes you and me. I hope that some of your plans for 2019 include commemoration of that amazing fact. We're all standing on the shoulders of those who came before us and we're also making a way for those that come after us.

Please keep an eye on the BTA website Events Pages and the various Chapter Meetup and social media pages for opportunities to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Buckeye Trail. This year, we're having at least six signature events (More!Fest 2019, TrailFest 2019, the Tenth Annual EGGS Challenge, the Little Loop Challenge, the Central Ohio Challenge and the Run for Blue Blazes) as well as fourteen trail building and maintaining events managed by the Buckeye Trail Crew. Besides all this, every one of our five Chapters will be hosting numerous hikes and events in which you can participate.

All of this requires the long term effort of volunteers and staff to make happen. It should come as no surprise to any of you that I'm encouraging you to be a part of that effort and join in Chapter and trail maintaining activities for 2019. There's also numerous opportunities to help our staff with the daily work of managing the Buckeye Trail Association. We'll only have one chance to make our 60th Anniversary special and I hope that you'll join me and many others in making that happen. Happy New Year 2019.

# On the Trail

Andrew Bashaw



Andrew Bashaw

I hope I am the first to wish you many happy returns of the day, 2019 is the 60th anniversary of both the Buckeye Trail and the Buckeye Trail Association – So Happy Birthday to US!

I've notice that some of us are pretty bad at celebrating. BTA Volunteers often focus on working toward the next goal before giving themselves or anyone else a chance to give them a pat on the back. Many BT section hikers set their sights on their next adventure before

completing and sharing their latest hiking accomplishment with others. This year we'll try our best to toot our own horn and revel in 60 years of our trials and triumphs.

2019 is a year to look back with gratitude to the work of heroes like Merrill Gilfillan, Grandma Gatewood, Bill Miller, Dr. Roy Fairfield, Bob Paton, Bob Merkle, Ralph Regula, Emily Gregor and so many more. 2019 is a year to look around at the heroes among us like Jim Sprague, Mary Hamilton, Bob & Connie Pond, Herb & Susie Hulls, Pat and Mary Hayes, and again sooooo many others. 2019 is also an important time to look around at the next generation of leaders and hikers of the Buckeye Trail including young families, recent retirees, and our millennial generation. What will members of the BTA 60 years from now in 2079 say about our work today to improve and enjoy the BT?

I don't know that any of our heroes meant to do anything heroic. Mostly they seem like hard workers who wanted to do something positive, figured out a way to realize their idea for giving to the idea of a Buckeye Trail, and worked through frustrations to achieve something that satisfied something in themselves... but benefitted everyone for generations to come.

What do you think you could give to the BT and BTA during our 60th Birthday celebration? Myself, I'm going to work as hard as ever, volunteer at least a day with the Buckeye Trail Crew and hike 60 miles of the Buckeye Trail...

Wait a moment. I'm not sure you are excited enough about the BT before I start asking you to do stuff again. So, remember when there wasn't a BT to talk about? Some of you do. Remember when we laid out the first 20 miles in the Hocking Hills and Grandma Gatewood donated the blue blaze paint? A few of you do.

Remember when Ohio Senator Ralph Regula helped make the BT Ohio's State Trail in 1967 and his work to create the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail and Cuyahoga Valley National Park? Remember when Bob Merkle and Jan Lois Sally submitted ideas for the BT logo during our 10th anniversary in 1969 and earned a lifetime membership? Remember when the BTA had its office within ODNR with Bob Paton as volunteer Executive Director? Remember when we celebrated the completion of the 500 mile BT in 1970 at the Mogadore Reservoir? Remember when we celebrated the completion of the 1,200 mile BT at Deerlick Cave in Brecksville Reservation and accepted the route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in 1980?

Remember when Jim Sprague started the Buckeye Trail Crew and we accepted the route of the American Discovery Trail in the early 1990's? Remember when Chris Copeland, Russ Johnson, Mary Hamilton, Susan Stover, Rick Adamson and many more took on restoring the BTA Century Barn at Tappan Lake? Remember when we acquired the Bill Miller Trail corridor at Lake Logan, the Serpent Mound property, the Schmidt campsite and the Ballinger, Pretty Run, Imhoff Preserves? Remember when we opened an office in the historic Appalachian Village of Shawnee and hired that guy who made everything more complicated? I do. Remember when Byron and Jamie Guy led us to our first EGGs Hike, Andy Niekamp to our first Buckeye TrailFest, Herb Hulls to our first Run for Blue Blazes, Brandon Bates to our first MoreFest and Randall Roberts to our first Little Loop Challenge?

Remember when you first explained to someone else what those blue blazes were all about... that you could keep following them all around Ohio to return to the same spot you are standing in? There is a lot more to remember, and many memories yet to create! Most of the best memories are the personal ones that are just between you and the Buckeye Trail and company of your choice, all thanks to a relatively small group of Ohioans just like us who chipped in to make the difference they wanted to see in the world.

So, I don't know if you are excited or not, but it is celebration time! What gift, great or small, will you give the Buckeye Trail for its birthday? Your answer to that question is just between you and the BT, but I look forward to seeing it opened for all of us to enjoy.

Happy Birthday Buckeye Trail! And Happy Birthday to us BTA!

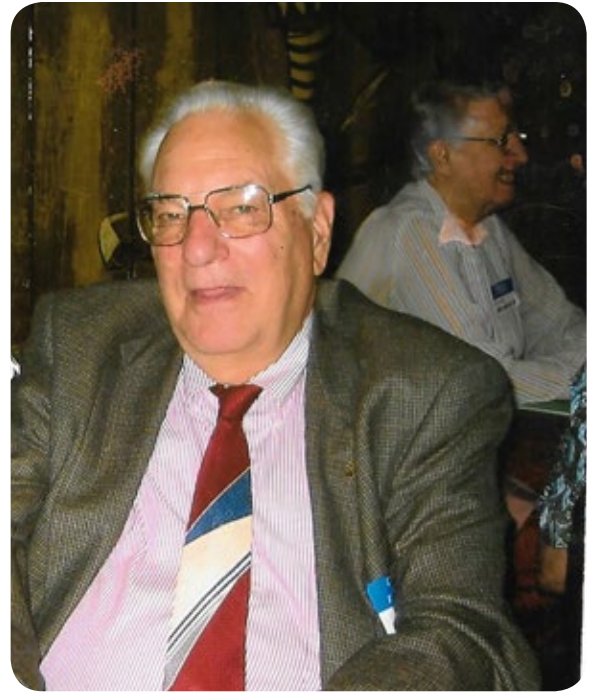
Andrew Bashaw  
Executive Director, Buckeye Trail Association

# Thanks to Andy Jones

Connie Pond

In early November, a plaque was installed at the shelter next to Serpent Mound in Adams County. This plaque is to honor a longtime member and hiker of the BTA: Andy Jones. Andy and wife Lynn became members in 1971. By 1976, they had become trail adopters of the Sagamore Creek Trail. Andy's enthusiasm for the trail led him to organize BT Hikes around the area, always concluding the hikes with ice cream, pot lucks or other dining events. It seemed the miles were not as important as the culinary adventures afterward.

In 1998, Andy created the first ever organized hike of the four BT sections (now known as the 'Little Loop') beginning at Brecksville, going north, making the loop to Crystal Springs and back to Brecksville. Local lore is that it was this group that tagged these four sections the "Little Loop". Andy had to organize more than 48 hikes and of course the required dining experiences. Instead of email, notice of the monthly hikes was sent by postcards. The monthly hikes usually consisted of 6 to 15 hikers. It took Andy and his group 4 years to complete the circuit. My how times have changed. This year for the Little Loop Challenge, 92 hikers completed the circuit in one day and 52 of them ate bar-beque at the end of the hike.



Besides Andy's involvement in the northeast sector of the BT, he and Lynn traveled around the state to work parties and trail events. They often backpacked the southern BTA trail and would have welcomed a shelter for the night. It is most fitting that the BT tribute to Andy is at the trail shelter in Adams County. Our thanks to you Andy.



# BTA Seeking Fundraising Volunteers

Andy Haag

The Buckeye Trail Association needs volunteers to not only maintain trails but also to raise needed funds to pay for trail maintenance equipment, bridges, trail materials, and other essential items.

This year fund raising activities have included trivia nights at local brew pubs, evenings at the Alex & Ani jewelry stores in Cleveland and Cincinnati, and a fashion show at Appalachian Outfitters in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

Fund raising opportunities are only limited by your imagination!

To get involved, contact board member and development chair Andy Haag at [cahaagbiz@gmail.com](mailto:cahaagbiz@gmail.com).

# 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.

## AUGUST 2018-NOVEMBER 2018

### TRAIL PRESERVATION FUND

Brian Blair  
Connie Myers  
Fred Tritschler

Jim Runk  
Joanna Swanson  
Mark Schwab

Richard Lutz

### IN MEMORY OF ALAN DEEMER, DEFIANCE SECTION SUPERVISOR

Diane Zeigler  
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Herb Hulls

Judy Fehlhaber  
Laurel Hopkins  
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Scott Doran, from the "Bridge Girls"  
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### IN MEMORY OF JAMES H BROWN

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Hanka Brown  
James Vlach

Joseph Brown  
Mariana Branch

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William Wershing

### CROOKED RIVER CHAPTER

Appalachian Outfitters

### MIAMI RIVERS CHAPTER

Feral Adventures LLC

### MUSKINGUM LAKES CORRIDOR PROJECT

Steve & Karen Walker

### BTA BEALL FARMSTEAD

Dale Wical  
Karen Walker

### RUN FOR BLUE BLAZES TRAIL MARATHON

Elmer Yoest  
Herb Hulls  
Jeff Yoest



# Around the State in Eight Weeks

Everett Brandt



“What is your greatest achievement?” I don’t like that interview question. It is an ambiguously subjective question that requires one to condense an impactful amount of time that may be deeply personal, emotional, potentially sensitive, and definitely complex into a promotional sound bite. I never felt my responses did the experience justice.

So how was my 8 week thru-hike of the Buckeye Trail? It was a little bit of everything.

I never thought I’d do something like this. I have never studied the AT, PCT, or any other long distance trail. I only had weekend trips in mind when I bought my gear and I certainly never considered averaging 31 miles a day on a 1444+ mile trek.

I got into hiking after college and didn’t hike more than 10 miles at a time until I met my now wife and used the mileage to lengthen the time our “not dates” lasted. She introduced me to the BTA’s summer EGGs hike and I attempted the 60 mile challenge, but bailed after a wet 40. The next year I went back and completed 80 miles in under 24 hours. Volunteering at last year’s hike set my mind on doing the entire trail.

I started planning and preparing for the trip and had to balance that with finding a job, moving, proposing, planning a wedding, and

getting married. I’ve had a big year but it’s been super rewarding.

Here are some of the lessons and thoughts that stand out in my mind:

1: Take care of it now. I learned that while I don’t relate to “a stitch in time,” it is a very true adage. Feet, water, and bathroom are the three biggest things that come to mind from the trail. Some discomfort is unavoidable but if there is an opportunity to prevent it, stop walking and take it, especially with topping off water. My feet appreciated it when I started switching into dry socks every 10 miles.

2: Be flexible when things don’t go to plan. Things will not always go your way and that’s ok as long as you keep going (if it’s safe to do so). Maybe the hardest part of my trip was taking zero days to heal blistered feet and a swollen ankle. During these times I was not always positive, but you don’t slash your other three tires when you get a flat. You do what you can with what you have and refocus your goal to what you can accomplish that day. Find and focus on the bright side. Not every day will be good, but there is good in every day.

3: Appreciate the people in your life. Many hands make light work and I could not have accomplished this without the help



of others. Period. Full stop. My wife, dad, and family were amazing throughout the trip with resupplying food and providing all kinds of support. Their investment in helping me finish my journey still overwhelms me with gratitude and love.

4: People are kind, caring, and want to help. Besides my family, BT section supervisors, maintainers, and members met me on the trail to see how I was doing and if I needed anything. Strangers yelled from their porch or cars asking if I needed water and was even offered a shower on an especially hot day. I consider you, me, and the random people along the way more of the Buckeye Trail than the ground itself. The experiences I had with the people I met shine more vividly in my memory than any physical part of the trail. Their thoughtfulness and generosity will always be a highlight of my experience.

5: Communication is important. As of this writing I've been married 4.5 months and have spent two of those on the trail. It was not easy being away from my wife and I was exhausted whenever we got the chance to chat or see each other. Being specific and choosing the right words while being careful with tone are massively important in communicating what you want or need and keeps people from getting frustrated with you for not being clear enough (sorry and thank you).

6: When in doubt, double check. I ran into avoidable problems with navigation, weather, and gear that could have been averted if I had listened to the little doubting voice in my head. The most memorable example resulted with me slackpacking off trail deep into Shawnee State Forest Backpack Loop. The section of trail that should have taken me an hour to get through took three. Taking a minute to double check the map would have saved me two hours and my dad, who was waiting for me, a lot of worry.

7: Go for it! It's amazing what people are capable of. I ran into people who were biking across the country and met several people and dogs who were section hiking the BT. The trail in East Fork State Park is dedicated to an Ohio native who walked around the world. All these individuals had a goal and set out to do it. It's incredible what a little will power and planning can accomplish, but you won't know what's possible until you try. It may take a while, but progress is progress no matter how fast it's going.

These seven thoughts are not profound. They are standard pieces of wisdom that were further cemented in me by my time on the trail. I have already seen them at work in my everyday life and, as a result, I feel more connected to the trail. I want to see it grow and prosper so others can find their own reason to love the trail.

Not everyone has the same reason for being a part of the Buckeye Trail. For me, it started out as a way to spend time with my wife and grew into so much more. Others enjoy the solitude hiking brings or simply getting boots on the ground (the best trail maintenance)

and connecting with nature. For a wonderfully fantastic (though currently small) group of people, it's building or taking care of the trail. One adopter I met combined time cleaning up the trail with his bird watching and photography hobbies "in a beautiful part of the state with free camping." If you enjoy biking or car rides I suggest looking into adopting a portion of on-road trail. Whatever your reason for connecting with the trail may be, I encourage you to embrace it and go for it.

Echoing Mr. Bashaw's thoughts from the Summer Trailblazer, I hope that in going for it we can get more people involved and help make the trail and the association even better. I plan to attend as many work parties as I can. A while ago my wife and I made it out for one day of a work week in the Whipple section and had a blast! Double check the website to see if there are events or other avenues that may help you strengthen and enjoy your connection to the trail.

Contact a section supervisor or the office to see if they can help you help the trail. Chat with your friends, neighbors, and random people you meet. Communicate what you wish to do with the trail and invite them to join you and help you do it. It may take a bit of persuasion and you might not get everyone you had hoped, but be flexible and welcome the opportunity that awaits!

A larger Buckeye Trail community can only mean that good things will come. We can make it happen, in probably less time than you think, and the trail will be better for it. Don't wait for others to do it, let's take care of it now!



# Have You Explored The New BTA Trail Shop?

Mark Heise

We have been working hard to get your maps, books, and other merchandise to you pretty quickly and it seems to be working.

We have added some cool new swag to the trail shop as well! You can get printed hoodies and t-shirts (in adult, ladies, kids sizes!), along with embroidered flannel shirts, hats, daypacks, and jackets. We have brands like Sport Tek, Backpacker, and Eddie Bauer, as well as some more economical choices. And have I mentioned we have chapter patches?

Looking for some holiday cheer? Look soon for Christmas Tree ornaments along with other gift ideas like dog tags, lapel pins, license plate frames, and more! These will all be up before Thanksgiving.

Want to know what could be better than that? We have the membership discount figured out. All you have to do is go to <http://shop.buckeyetrail.org> and register as a customer, then take a picture of your membership card with your phone and send it to [mheise@yellow-springer.com](mailto:mheise@yellow-springer.com). I will flip a switch and your membership discount will be visible.

Do you know a local outfitter that you would like to see carrying our maps and swag? Send us a note at the email above and I will hit them up between now and Spring. We have also improved the site for outfitters to order directly from the web at wholesale prices.

It has never been easier to support the BTA and get cool stuff at the BT Trail Shop.



# The Buckeye Trail: Hike Ohio!

Pam Leonard

Meet at the Brown Family Environmental Center at 9781 Laymon Road, Gambier, Ohio 43022 on Thursday, April 4, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. to hear Pam Leonard talk about her Buckeye Trail experience. Pam Leonard celebrated her 50th birthday by taking a little hike – 1,442 miles - a hike that circled Ohio. The Buckeye Trail, founded by Grandma Gatewood, is a nationally recognized loop trail highlighting much of Ohio's rural beauty. Pam is one of the few women to have completed the entire trail. Join Pam and representatives of the Buckeye Trail Association to learn more about the trail and to hear some of Pam's tales from the trail. Here is part of Pam's story, in her own words.

What do two best friends do while contemplating turning fifty? They decide to take a hike, a very long hike. An approximately 1440 mile hike around the state of Ohio on the Buckeye Trail.

Karen Pavlik, my two large dogs (to carry food and beverages), and I began our first hike on December 14, 2005. We took our first steps on the BT in our new boots in Burr Oak State Park. The cold December day was overcast and 26 degrees with 4 inches of snow on the ground. It started snowing within the first mile. By mile 3, our new boots were wet and a wet snow was continuing to fall. When we finally reached our shuttle car (we always drove separately as we didn't want to backtrack), we were cold, wet, and tired, but knew we had embarked on a beautiful and satisfying journey.

We usually did one or two hike/bike trips per month. Karen and I preferred winter hiking with better views, no bugs and no



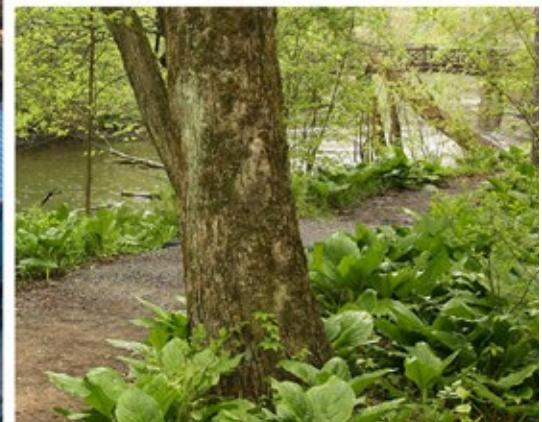
Pam Leonard and Karen Pavlik

poison ivy, and Karen not having to worry about snakes. We spent most of the summer months biking the road sections allowing us to accomplish 30 to 40 miles per trip.

The Buckeye Trail encompasses a variety of terrain as it follows rivers, farm fields, deep woods and small towns. We always attempted to include the "local flavor" while doing each trail section, which included buying eggs, visiting historical sites, eating ice cream and drinking cold beer in small town bars.

Over the next 5 1/2 years, we hiked and biked our way around Ohio and by June 20, 2012, we finished the Buckeye Trail. We had accomplished one of the most beautiful, exhausting, and satisfying experiences of our lives.

Save the Date!  
Buckeye TrailFest 2019, May 16-19  
Camp Widewater on the Maumee  
River and Miami & Erie Canal



# 2019 Schedule of Hikes & Events



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

## JANUARY

### January 12, 2019

#### Discover the BTA - Discover the BTA - Book Presentation by Chuck and Beth Hewett

Location: The Wagnalls Memorial Library, 1:00PM,  
150 E. Columbus Street,  
Lithopolis, OH  
Contact: Sarah Mayzum at 614-837-4765 ext 126

### January 13, 2019

#### Cabin Fever Hike - Lockkeepers Winter Canal Hike

Sunday: Register between 1 and 3 PM at The Lockkeeper's House, New Bremen. Sponsored by the New Bremen-New Knoxville Rotary Club, the Heritage Trails Park District, and the Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association.

Contact: [www.nbnkrotary.org](http://www.nbnkrotary.org) or [www.htparks.org](http://www.htparks.org)

### January 13, 2019

#### Discover the BTA - Book Presentation by Chuck and Beth Hewett

Location: Shale Hollow Preserve, 2:00PM  
6320 Artesian Run,  
Lewis Center, OH 43035  
Contact: Contact: Rich Niccum at 740-973-6989

### January 26, 2019

#### BTA Board Meeting (10 AM)

Location: The Wilderness Center, 9877 Alabama Avenue SW, Wilnot OH 44689. Lunch will be provided by The Wilderness Center..

### January 26-27, 2019

#### BTA Circuit Hike - Scioto Trail Section

Saturday: Meet at the junction of Nippen Rd (C-34) and SR-772, Point 30. Coordinates (N39.19103 - W083.14917). Leave at 9:30AM to car pool to the S-curve on Prussia Road, C-46, Point 26. The hike is about 11.1 miles.

Sunday: Meet at the Pike lake State Park parking lot on Pike Lake Road, Point 36. Coordinates: (N39.15845 - W083.22034). Leave at 9:00AM to car pool to Nippen Road, C-34 and SR-772, Point 30. The hike is about 9.2 miles.

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

## FEBRUARY

### February 2, 2019

#### Findley State Park Annual Winter Hike

Description: Hikes start at 10:00AM and will be on the Wyandot & Hickory Trail, Moderate. Meet at the Campground Picnic Shelter. Dress for the weather. Hiking sticks, sturdy

shoes, weather appropriate clothing and water are suggested during winter hikes.

Contact: Questions regarding the hikes:  
Contact Naturalist Richelle Gatto 330-402-691

### February 5, 2019

#### Discover the BTA - Book Presentation by Chuck and Beth Hewett

Location: Kate Love Simpson Library, 5:30PM  
358 E Main St.  
McConnelsville, Ohio  
Contact: 740-962-2533

### February 10, 2019

#### Cabin Fever Hike - United Way Hike for Health

Sunday: Register between 1 and 3 PM at City of St. Mary's Utility Building, Canal Room. Sponsored by the United Way of Auglaize County and the Heritage Trails Park District

Contact: [www.auglaizeunitedway.org](http://www.auglaizeunitedway.org) or [www.htparks.org](http://www.htparks.org)

## MARCH

### March 10, 2019

#### Cabin Fever Hike - Spring Forward Hike

Sunday: Register between 1 and 3 PM at Noble Township Hall. Sponsored by the Heritage Trails Park District

Contact: [www.htparks.org](http://www.htparks.org)

## APRIL

### April 6-10, 2019

#### Work Week at the Edge of Appalachia - West Union Section

Description: Camping at the house - 1190 Long Lick Road, Stout, Ohio 45684.  
Meals provided by the BTA.

### April 14, 2019

#### Cabin Fever Hike - April Showers Hike

Sunday: Register between 1 and 3 PM at Noble Township Hall. Sponsored by the Heritage Trails Park District

Contact: [www.htparks.org](http://www.htparks.org)

### April 27-May 1, 2019

#### Work Week in Old Man's Cave Section

Description: Camping Location TBD.  
This is a Chuck Wagon event

## MAY

### May 16-19, 2019

#### Buckeye TrailFest

Location: It is a Birthday Celebration for the Buckeye Trail! Join us at Camp Widewater, on the Maumee River and Miami and Erie Canal, in northwest OH to celebrate the BT's 60th birthday.

### May 19, 2019

#### Buckeye Trail Annual Membership Meeting (9:00 AM)

Location: The Annual Membership Meeting will be held during TrailFest at Camp Widewater, near Liberty Center OH.

Contact: Steve Walker, President, at [president@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:president@buckeyetrail.org)

### May 19, 2019

#### Buckeye Trail Board Meeting (10:00 AM)

Location: A BTA Board Meeting will be held immediately following the Annual Membership Meeting.

Contact: Steve Walker, President, at [president@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:president@buckeyetrail.org)

### May 25-29, 2019

#### Work Week at AEP in Stockport Section

Description: Details to come. This is a Chuckwagon Event.

## JUNE

### June 8-9, 2019

#### Work Weekend at Burr Oak State Park

Description: Help us prepare for the annual E.G.G.S. Hike

### June 13, 2019

#### Discover the BTA - Book Presentation by Chuck and Beth Hewett

Location: Putnam County Library  
6:30PM  
136 Putnam Pkwy  
Ottawa, OH 45875,  
Contact: Pat Meyer at 419-523-3747 x210

## JULY

### July 20, 2019

#### 3rd Annual Little Loop Challenge

Description: More to come

### July 27-28, 2019

#### BTA Board Meeting

Location: This BTA Board Meeting is the annual Board Retreat and is held at the Beale Farmstead on Tappan Lake near Deersville OH. The meeting starts at 10:00AM on Saturday and 9:00AM on Sunday.

Contact: Steve Walker, President, at [president@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:president@buckeyetrail.org)

## AUGUST

### August 3-7, 2019

#### Work Week at Tar Hollow in the Scioto Trail Section

Description: Camping TBD

## August 10-14, 2019

### Work Week at West Branch State Park in the Mogadore Section

Description: Camping at the Horse Camp on the North Shore

## August 24-28, 2019

### Work Week at Independence Dam State Park in the Defiance Section

Description: Camping at Independence Dam State Park

## SEPTEMBER

## September 7-11, 2019

### Work Week at Camp Tuscazoar in the Massillon Section

Description: Camping at Camp Tuscazoar.  
Meals Provided by the BTA

## September 21-25, 2019

### Work Week in the New Straitsville Section in preparation for the Run for the Blue Blazes Marathon

Description: Camping TBD. This is a Chuck Wagon event

## OCTOBER

## October 12-16, 2019

### Work Week at Clendening Lake in the Bow-erston Section

Description: Camping at the BTA Barn.  
Meals provided by the BTA at the Barn.

## October 26-27, 2019

### Work Weekend at Pretty Run

Description: Camping at Pretty Run.  
Meals Provided by Byron.

## NOVEMBER

## November 2, 2019

### BTA Board Meeting

Location: TBD

Contact: Steve Walker, President, at president@buckeyetrail.org

*Even more events  
with BTA chapters on*

*Meetup*

## CABIN FOR RENT



Located less than 10 miles from BTA Offices in Shawnee, Perry County, Ohio.

Modern Kitchen, Dining Area, Bath/Shower, Sleeping Loft (two rooms with full beds), Fireplace, TV and foosball table! Very private setting with pond (fishing). Miles of hiking on the property, and very close access to the Buckeye Trail with shuttle services that can be arranged. Perfect for a quiet getaway or a nice place to stay while day-hiking the BT. Why pay expensive Hocking Hills rates?

For info or reservations, contact Jeff and Gina McLean, 740-347-4385 or 740-621-6553.

Also, mcleangina68@yahoo.com

# BTA License Plates Could Be Coming Soon

Mark Heise



Have you ever wondered why every other organization in Ohio seems to have their own license plate to promote their organization, but the trail we so love has been left out in the cold?

Me too! I mean, I understand that we are a hiking organization, not a driving organization. But here is the thing...everyone with those special plates? They are donating part of their license plate fees to those organizations every year!

And if you were a hiker and someone stopped on the road to offer you a bit of trail magic, wouldn't you feel a little better about that if they had an OFFICIAL Buckeye Trail Association license plate, on both front and back?

Of course you would! All I need are another 75 signatures or so and the Senators on the Trails Caucus have agreed to take it to the floor for us. You too could be a rolling advertisement for this organization you love so much! Check out the design below and get ready to order YOUR tags soon!

## Welcome New Members!

Bev and Jerry Starcher

Georgia Adams and Family, Hudson  
Deby Auerbach-Brown, Cleveland  
Dennis Betts and Family, Liberty Township  
Sarah Blakely, Cuyahoga Falls  
Ryan Brown, Nelsonville  
Paul Byler, Chambersburg, PA, Gift From  
Steve Walker  
Tina Costarella and Family, Hammondsville  
Clive Fetzer, Strongsville  
Ed Gallatin, Ashtabula  
Darrell Gammon, Alliance  
David Gentzer, Crooksville  
Lianna Gott, Bluffton  
Lori Guzzi, Painesville

Michael Hayes, Cambridge  
Tom Hess, Lakewood  
Nathan Hilliard, Tremont City  
Jake Hochstettler, Columbus  
John Keller, Mentor  
Julia Kimball and Family, Fresno  
Gary Kutsko, Brecksville  
Michael Laufersweiler and Family,  
Maineville  
Roxanna Lehman, Logan  
Adam McManis, New Straitsville  
Mark Okey and Family, Dublin  
John Proffitt, Dublin  
Eric Rau, Galloway

Ryan Richards, North Canton  
Anne Smith, Oberlin  
Stuart Smith, South Euclid  
Shane Somers, Byesville  
Jo Swanson, Two Harbors, MN  
Thomas Tokar, Mayfield Hgts  
Chance Ware and Family, Orient  
Paul Warner, Elida  
Katie Wolfert, Woodmere  
Kathleen Wollyung, Munroe Falls  
Ronald Young, Columbus

# The Adventures of Tag and Tor



**Signs you see on the BT: Fact or Fiction?**

By: Karen Power + Jeri Getts



Photo by Dale Wical

**Tag and Tor  
in real time in  
Tar Hollow!**

# Biodiversity on the Buckeye Trail! Welcome Ohio's Snowbirds

Ryan Brown



Photo by George Blankenhorn

Winter is here on the Buckeye Trail and seasonal changes continue to shape the natural world. As I'm sure is the same for many of you, one of my favorite activities while hiking is to do a little bit of birdwatching. Now conventional wisdom might tell you that the winter is a time void of much bird activity. Everybody knows that many species of birds fly south for the winter. Indeed the warblers, vireos, tanagers, and orioles have bid us farewell for the year and are soaking up the sun down in the tropics. Even most of the blackbirds, waterfowl, and waders are now in a southern state of mind. Not all birds however, head south for the winter. Our cardinals, chickadees, titmice, goldfinches and Carolina wrens never leave; they tough it out and keep us company over the long winter months. There is another category of birds however, that only show up in Ohio during the wintertime. These are our snowbirds; they spend the breeding season and summer months up in Canada before vacationing down to balmy Ohio when the weather becomes too harsh up in the North Country. Some of these birds we know well, being frequent visitors to backyard birdfeeders. The dark-eyed junco and white-throated sparrow are two that come to mind right away. Juncos are mostly gray colored with a white belly. They often flock together and have white outer tail feathers that are exposed when in flight. Whitethroats are another species that like to stick together. Look for them foraging in groups on the ground underneath a bird feeder or flitting through a dense thicket. Like other sparrows, whitethroats are primarily mottled brown in color but they have a white or tan stripe over their eye and have a white throat, believe-it-or-not. You will often hear whitethroats before you see them, singing a wispy high-pitched ode to their homeland "Oh sweet Canada, Canada, Canada". Other winter visitors though, don't frequent our yards so often and getting out in the forest is the best way to find them. This is one of my favorite things about our trail system; it connects people to the beautiful wild spaces that exist throughout Ohio. Here in Southeast Ohio, we are lucky enough to have some of the most expansive tracts of forest in the state, the perfect place to find our next 5 snowbirds.

In the winter, birds are especially fond of flocking together. Why? There's safety in numbers! When the leaves fall off, the forest canopy becomes open and small birds are more exposed to predators like cooper's hawks. If you're in a group of 20 and someone gets eaten what are the chances it's you? Look closely for our next snowbird in these mixed winter flocks foraging through the forest. It will be tiny, approximately chickadee sized, and gray with two white wing bars and yellowish primary feathers. Above their eye is a black stripe and above that stripe a bright yellow cap. This is the golden-crowned kinglet, a bird that survives remarkably cold temperatures for its size. Listen for its high pitched "ti-ti-ti" call and look for a little bird that never seems to sit still!

Another usual member of these mixed flocks is the resident white-breasted nuthatch. These birds also frequent backyards and birdfeeders and can be seen climbing down the trunks of trees, always headfirst! However when you see a nuthatch in the wintertime, look closely. You might be seeing the close cousin of the white-breasted nuthatch, the red-breasted nuthatch. These birds look very similar to



the white-breasted, however, have an orange-red colored breast and bold stripe through their eye that is lacking on the white-breasted. Of the 5 forest snowbirds mentioned here, these will be the most likely to visit your birdfeeder, particularly suet feeders.

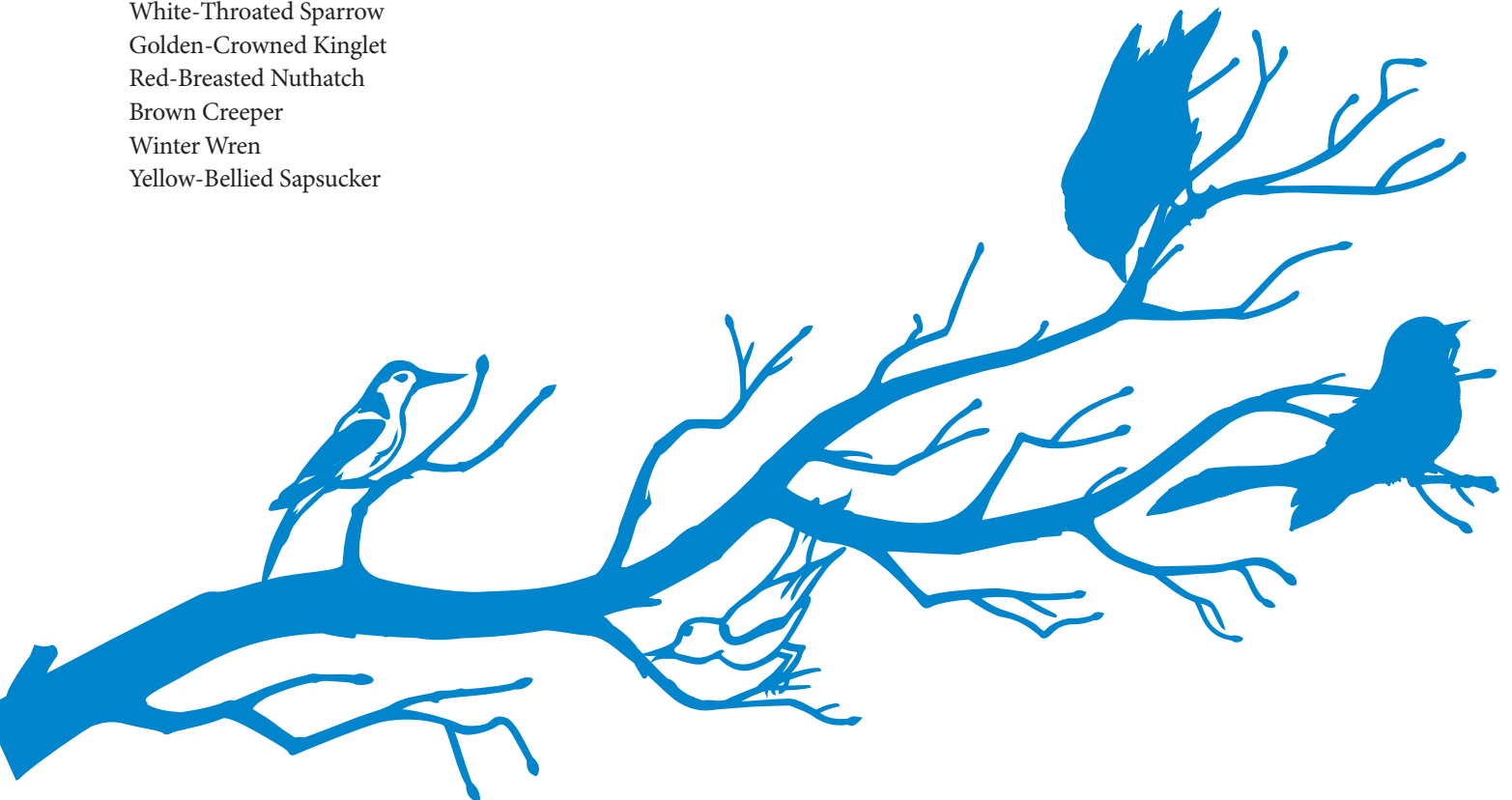
If the trail takes you into some more mature open forest look out for our next snowbird. A relative of the nuthatches, the brown creeper too makes his living on the vertical trunks of trees. Cryptic and mottled brown with a white belly this tiny bird can be hard to spot as he scours up the tree trunks looking for insects hiding in the bark; insects that this bird is able to pry out with its elongated curved bill. Unlike the nuthatches that typically climb down tree trunks headfirst, the brown creeper will often forage by climbing up the tree.

To find our next bird you must first find its habitat. Take a hike on a trail that winds you along a small stream or run and look for brush-piles, thickets and logjams. You will find this antsy little brown bird moving quickly from cover to cover along the stream banks. This is the winter wren, a cousin our resident Carolina wrens. Winter wrens are only about half the size of their cousins but this little bird can bring a great amount of joy if you are lucky enough to spot one.

Our final winter visitor of the forest is a very unique member of the woodpecker family, with an equally unique name to match. The yellow-bellied sapsucker is not just a snowbird in Ohio but a very rare resident, with several small breeding populations existing throughout the state. Most sapsuckers however, do not arrive here until wintertime. A beautiful woodpecker the sapsucker looks yellowish from afar. They have a red cap and red throat on the males that is outlined in black with a black bib and stripe through the eye. A large white patch is visible on the wing when the birds are at rest. The yellow-bellied sapsucker gets its name from a feeding strategy that involves drilling holes in the trunks of trees, usually in impressive evenly spaced rows. The sapsucker then leaves and returns later to feed on the sap that drips out from the tree. Insects are also attracted to the tree sap that the birds then feed on. Sapsuckers can also be seen eating the berries of fruiting trees and bushes in the winter and on rare occasion will visit a suet feeder.

One thing in common between all of these birds is that they rather secretive forest dwellers that likely will not be noticed if you are not looking for them! Bundle up and take a brisk winter hike. You will not be disappointed if you come catch a glimpse of some of these snowbirds that can only be seen this time of year. Below is a list of the birds mentioned in this article, including the two that commonly visit feeders (junco & white-throated sparrow). See how many you can spot this winter on your travels down the Buckeye Trail!

- Dark-Eyed Junco
- White-Throated Sparrow
- Golden-Crowned Kinglet
- Red-Breasted Nuthatch
- Brown Creeper
- Winter Wren
- Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker



# Trials & Tribulations with Uncle Tim on the Buckeye Trail

Marisa Pahoulis

My name is Marisa Pahoulis and I volunteered on the Buckeye Trail for my high school senior project. I got involved in volunteering on the Buckeye Trail because I needed one-hundred volunteer hours to graduate from high school. When I was fifteen, my uncle Tim and I decided that I would work on the trail to fill my volunteer hours. I started by delivering pamphlets with my uncle Tim in my sophomore year. During my senior year, I picked up sticks and began learning how to prune. I had to complete another sixty hours of volunteer work during my senior year. I kept journals, which my uncle Tim and my teachers said were hilarious. The journals were a pain in the neck to fill, though.

I volunteered on the Buckeye Trail for two weeks for my high school senior project. During my senior project, I had to work for six hours a day, five days a week for two weeks. Some days it would rain and we would have to postpone my suffering until a later date. During those days we would ride around and deliver pamphlets and check blazes. We had to refresh blazes a few times, one of which was at a busy intersection in Chardon after someone replaced a pole, thereby making off with our blaze. My uncle Tim had me running back and forth while he yelled at me that I was burning daylight. I felt more like I was burning in daylight, but I didn't tell him that.

During my first week on the trail, I delivered pamphlets and pruned the trail. I learned how to identify trees commonly seen on the little loop. There were so many maple trees I thought they were all there was to see! But no, there were birch and oak trees, too. I encountered the rare tulip tree later, having identified it by its' oddly-shaped leaves. That week we started at Skok Meadow, which my uncle Tim calls "Uncle Timmy's Terrible Trail", which was pretty accurate - that trail grows like a jungle. We finished Skok Meadow during the first day, then we went next door to Hell Hill, which is at Girdled Road Reservation. That lasted most of the week. After that we went to Satan's Staircase, which is also at Girdled Road Reservation, where we spent the rest of the week. By the end of Saturday, my legs were sore and I wouldn't stop whining. My uncle Tim had taken to threatening to fire me.

Sometime during the project, I picked up a lot of trash at Headlands State Park and Greenway Corridor near Harvey High School. Predictably for the area, we found a lot of cans and candy wrappers. We also found some discarded packaging from a pizza restaurant. Neither of us liked the ditches.

During the second week I pruned a few more trails and built pamphlet boxes. I learned that I was talented with carpentry while I was sanding the boards for the pamphlet boxes. My family says I got that from my grandfather, who was a carpenter. My uncle Tim told me he would be able to tell I had sanded those boards because they were so smooth. I didn't want to know how rough his boards would look. Sanding the boards was relaxing enough that two hours felt like thirty minutes. Usually when I work with my uncle Tim thirty minutes feels like



two hours. We replaced a pamphlet box at Camp Asbury, where I had to hike across open fields so my uncle Tim could readjust multiple Carsonite blazes. I learned about the flowers and trees present on the Buckeye Trail. I saw critters! At Skok Meadow, I saw a pilated woodpecker - it was louder than the siren of a fire truck. Uncle Tim jumped ten feet in the air! I thought someone had died or the forest was on fire. I remember my uncle Tim telling me I sounded like that when I scream. So apparently I have the voice of a pilated woodpecker. I also saw a bard owl that a couple photographers were observing in its natural habitat at Big Creek Park. They had to point it out to us because we couldn't find it. I stared at it in unending awe until my uncle Tim told me we had to get moving.

During my last day on the trail I finished pruning the trail and delivered pamphlets. After we delivered pamphlets we went to the Holden Arboretum to identify trees and flowers. We used tickets we had been given by Meg and Bill, who my uncle Tim hikes with. I got to go up on the Observation Tower and stare at the lake while a little boy talked about gravity. I still haven't gotten over how that Obedient Plant didn't jump when my uncle Tim told it to. Somebody needs to teach that plant some manners. It's probably still sitting there, acting like it owns the place. After that we went to Brennan's Fish House to eat dinner. Then I finished writing my journals.

I learned about the three most common invasive species of plants in Ohio: tall hedge, wild rose and garlic mustard. My uncle Tim calls tall hedge "crap tree" because it grows everywhere and is near-impossible to completely remove. He had a run-in with it when he was young and he never really got over it. It still gives him nightmares. I learned about garlic mustard when we walked by a field of it by the side of the trail. My uncle Tim had to point it out to me three times for me to actually see it. Once I saw it, it was everywhere. It had lurked in the distance, watching me the whole time I was on the trail and I had never even seen it.

I also spoke with Mr. Walker, the president of the Buckeye Trail, after volunteering one day. My uncle Tim had to rush me home like a rotten pumpkin so I'd get there before Mr. Walker called. Mr. Walker told me about his job and invited me to join a Buckeye Trail youth group once he got it started. I especially like the idea that I can help get other youths involved in trail-work.

Nowadays, I still deliver pamphlets. My uncle Tim said he would take me back out on the trail when the weather cooled off. We're still waiting for the weather to stop trying to cause the apocalypse. Then I won't have him hanging over me like an angry old goose all the time.



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