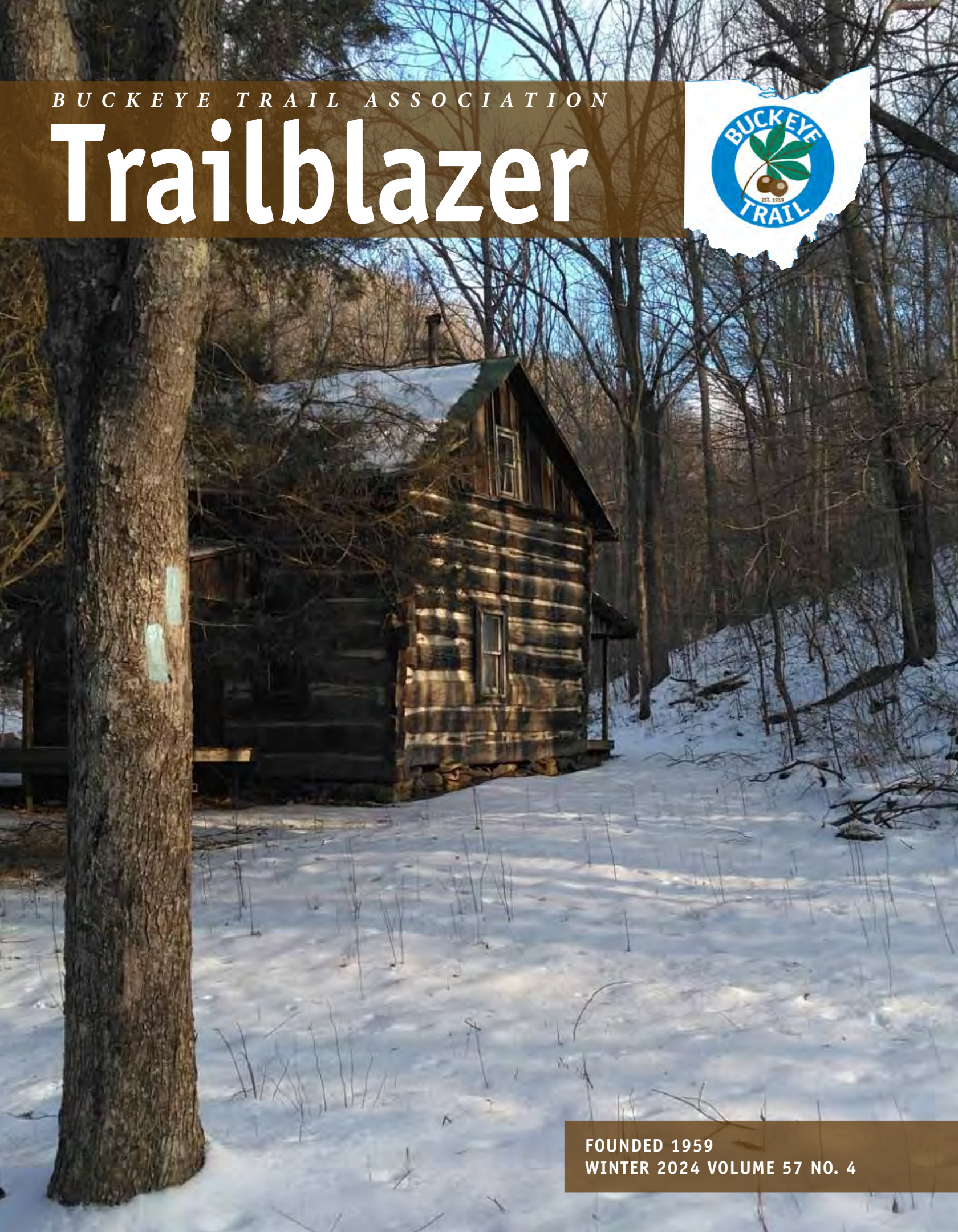


BUCKEYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Trailblazer



FOUNDED 1959
WINTER 2024 VOLUME 57 NO. 4

Buckeye Trail Association

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Shawnee Reroute:

Shawn Steinschreiber

On Sunday October 12, 2024, the Buckeye Trail hosted its annual Run for the BlueBlazes. Over 100 people, including runners, hikers, and Buckeye Trail enthusiasts, joined the event. This year's run was special because a section of the Amler Grant Project reroute was opened, and the trail officially passed through Shawnee, Ohio, right in front of the BTA office. Former Shawnee Mayor Bev Trovato and the Buckeye Trail Executive Director, Andrew Bashaw, were there to paint the last official blaze, marking the trail's entrance into Shawnee.



Pictured BTA Executive Director Andrew Bashaw and Former Mayor Bev Trovato painting the final blaze of the Shawnee reroute!



Members of The Shawnee Community and members of the BTA Little Cities of the Forest Chapter came together for a quick photo to celebrate all the hard work they've put in over the years!

Photo Credit: Scott Kreps

First Hikers on the fresh blazes!

Guess what? The first official hikers tread on the new reroute of the Buckeye Trail through the Village of Shawnee! Tom and Brenda Mooney, a local couple, were out for their weekly hike when they noticed something unexpected. Their usual side trail had been freshly painted with Sweeping Blue Blazes!



Hike into 2025 with brand new gear from the Official Buckeye Trail Shop!



Scan the QR code to visit the shop!



President's Message

Steve Walker

I hope that 2024 has been a good year for you all. In my estimation, it has been another good year for our favorite trail and trail organization. Of course, the usual things happen such as signature events, hikes and work parties and those are fun to hear about. The BTA Calendar of events has grown so big that it's hard to keep track of them all. When I first became active in the BTA over a decade ago, the only signature events were TrailFest and the EGGS Hike. Since then, MoreFest, the Little Loop Challenge, the Blue Blaze Festival and the Biggest Day Hike have become annual BTA events. Our members have always participated in the BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike as well as the Findley State Park Winter Hike. Who knows where the next BTA signature event will happen.

National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study:

In September, our Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study was started by the National Park Service team that was assigned to do it. On August 30th, we met with the new NPS study team leader, Jamie Hanson who seemed enthusiastic about the work and had suggestions to us on how we might help them with data for the study and other items that will help make the study an attractive document. The clock has been ticking since April and we were promised that it would take up to two-and-a-half years to complete. To me, that looks like sometime before the end of 2026. At some point between now and then, there will be a public comment period and that is when I'll be reaching out to you to be a part of that. It looks like there will be some public meetings around the State of Ohio for us to participate in and I hope that a lot of can be available for those meetings.

This year also had some success on the legislative front. With the help of State Representative Jim Hoops (a BTA Member and participant in Buckeye Trail Crew Work Parties in Northwest Ohio in years past) helped with funding for a statewide trails maintenance fund. The details for administering this fund through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources are still being worked out as I write this in early December.

Trail Preservation:

Outside work was happening this year as well. Progress continues on the West Branch Extension in Portage County in the Mogadore Section. That's the name it started out with many years ago and it's had a few different names since. In the end, it will just be another 25+ miles of new Buckeye Trail although it may have its own particular name when it's finally integrated into the Buckeye Trail. That day is coming and we will be celebrating.

Another large project that I've been talking a lot about lately is the Rapids Road Reroute Project in the Burton Section. A lot of BTA Volunteers under the leadership of Burton Section Supervisor (and current BTA Trustee) Tim Murphy managed to complete this 9.9 mile new trail project in just two trail building seasons. The only remaining trail structure to complete is a large bridge over a tributary of the Cuyahoga River and that is waiting on a funding solution. Brother Tim (a Buckeye Trail Completionist) took some time after all this to undergo hip replacement surgery on December 2nd (see accompanying

picture). It looks like we'll be celebrating the integration of the Rapids Road Reroute into the Burton Section of the Buckeye Trail some time in the first half of 2025 and Tim will be in good shape for that.



*"Tim Murphy back on the trail"
Photo Credit: Tim Murphy*

Full Steam Ahead:

Recounting these great developments that happened this year does not even come close to listing all that happened and it's only going to get busier in the years to come. I'll keep you posted.

Steve Walker
president@buckeyetrail.org

Have You Volunteered for the Buckeye Trail Association???

Report Your Hours Here!!!



* Hour reporting is extremely important for the BTA as we use these for grants and partnerships. Volunteer hours are not just hours spent on the trail, these hours also include time spent on committees/working groups and events.

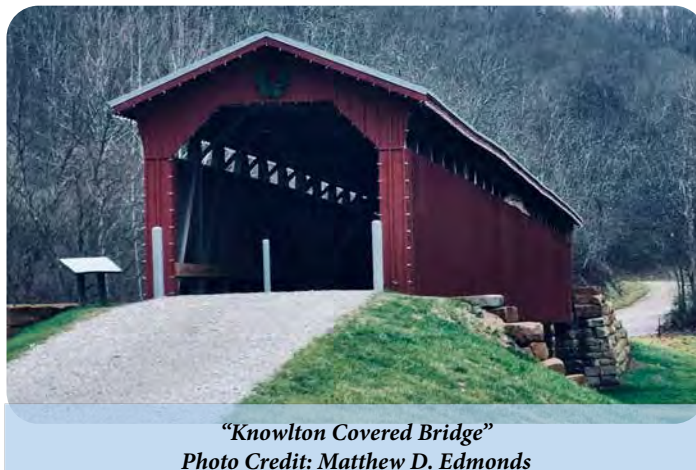
On the Trail...

Andrew Bashaw



Change, Adapt, Progress, Achieve

Over the course of 2024 your Buckeye Trail Association has been challenged by change, continually adapting, progressing, and achieving more than the sum of our parts. It is the time of year to look back at what we have accomplished, and look forward to what 2025 will bring. Here are some highlights of some of the many BTA volunteer leaders that have stepped up to carry the BTA forward, it is impossible to name them all.



"Knowlton Covered Bridge"
Photo Credit: Matthew D. Edmonds

Trail Projects:

The Trail Management Team continues to set the Pulaski aside for moments to focus on long term improvements on the tedious work of budgeting and assessing needs around the state in addition to developing a schedule of work parties around the state to engage volunteers in building and maintaining a better BT. Tom Rohr has stepped up to help support the BTA with more signage needs beyond the great work he has been providing designing and producing signage for the BT on our CNC router.

Troy Section Supervisor John Smilek partnered with Beaver Creek Wetlands on the Spotted Turtle Trail to relocate and improve miles of the BT experience in the Troy and Ceasar Creek Sections. Tom Rohr and Matthew Dexter Edmonds of the Wilderness Chapter worked to relocate the BT across the beautifully restored Knowlton Covered Bridge over the Little Muskingum River in the Marietta Unit of the Wayne National Forest. Mogadore Section Supervisor Russ Flesher and team are completing the trail relocation and 26 mile loop around West Branch State Park. Tim Murphy, Burton Section Supervisor, led the effort to complete the Rapids Road relocation in partnership with the Akron Watershed. We continue to work with ODNr to incorporate the existing BT in the Appalachian Hills Wildlife area with their Straker Ridge Trail development to create a 40 mile backpacking destination in the Stockport and Belle Valley Sections. We are working towards the completion of a 100 mile backpack network funded by the ODNr AMLER grant primarily on the Athens Unit of the Wayne in the New Straitsville Section, while Appalachian Foothills Chapter volunteers continue to lay out miles of new BT through Shawnee State Forest.

Trail Advocacy & Preservation:

Because of the advocacy leadership of BTA President Steve Walker, our relationship with the Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus, ODNr, and the work of many advocacy volunteers, we have been able to secure a capital bill appropriation towards a Statewide Trail Maintenance Fund to the Ohio Trails Partnership as recommended in the Ohio Trails Vision/Plan.

The Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study began this year! After initial information sharing the National Park Service Feasibility Study Team is scheduling stakeholder (that's you!) input gathering meetings coming soon to a region near you. Meetings are being scheduled in Athens, Napoleon, Dayton, Cincinnati, and Cuyahoga Valley early in January 2025. Please stay tuned and think about inviting people, groups, and partners in your region that you think should be present and provide input on the current BT and

potential of a Buckeye National Scenic Trail.

Trail Preservation Chairperson Brian Blair has welcomed Isaac Smith and Gary Conley to join Paul Gagnon on our Trail Preservation Committee. In the year ahead we're looking forward to a series of trail preservation trainings for BTA volunteers to extend our permanently protected BT corridor all around the state, including deepening our relationships and partnership projects with regional and statewide land trusts.

Chapters:

BTA Chapters continue to grow more self-sufficient, increasing the capacity of the BTA around the state as envisioned over 10 years ago. The Crooked River Chapter set a good example in project and funding development for others, most recently the Appalachian Foothills Chapter volunteers, like Nikki Gerber working independently to submit grant applications for local projects that they want to see in their region, purchasing trail maintenance and construction equipment to build their capacity, and working on reconstructing an aging backpacker shelter to serve BT hikers. With all of our 10 Chapters we are realizing the vision of local volunteers owning the mission and vision of the BTA investing their time and energy in improving the BT experience closer to home.

Ann Furste and Little Cities of the Forest Chapter volunteers have stepped up to assist the immense amount of work to reflag and construct segments of the 16 mile project connecting Burr Oak SP to Shawnee, OH creating a 100 mile backpacking opportunity funded in part by an ODNr AMLER grant. They went above and beyond to help orient and work alongside AmeriCorps trail crews to build a significant portion of the project through some of Ohio's most rugged terrain, during one of the hottest, most yellow jacketiest, summers.

Membership Committee:

Membership Committee Co-Chairs Valerie Gardner and Brandon Bates were instrumental in developing our Holiday Member drive to grow our membership base and support of the BTA's mission.

Building upon the work of John Riggins and others, Aidan Reagh, BTA Marketing Coordinator, is supporting the development of a new and improved BTA business membership program coming in 2025.

Among many great initiatives in the works Caitlin Edwards and our Hiking Experience Working Group are developing strategies to engage organized and independent hikers to become more effective ambassadors of the BT and BTA. There is a great overlap between our needs for Buckeye Trail Town work with Kim Love-Ottobre, Buckeye Trail Town Coordinator, business membership, corporate engagement, and trail angel and hiker communications thanks to Matthew Dexter Edmonds. I am excited to give BT hikers a job to do as they walk around Ohio any day of the year.

Map Team:

Thanks to the leadership of Pat and Mary Hayes the BTA Map Team has welcomed additional volunteers to improve the efficiency of BT hiking map and app updates as well as data sharing with our land managing partners. Mark Anstaett, recently retired from ODNR, has stepped up as our new volunteer GIS coordinator and Jesse Dailey as our point person and Nancy Hoffner are focused on improving and updating our BT FarOut app.

129 Project:

Thanks to a recent donation we will be able to make significant renovations to our 129 West Main, Shawnee, OH property in 2025. In the months to come we will see how far we can stretch the funds to achieve our goal of moving our BTA office next door to an improved work space that serves volunteers better and welcomes visitors hiking along the BT, now on Main Street, better than we are currently able to offer.

Development Committee:

Thanks to Mark Middleton and Sophie Huss-Llenos for stepping up to lead as Chair and Assistant Chair of the Development Committee. Mark and Sophie have been diving deep to assess the BTA needs, past performance, and future goals to increase investment in one of Ohio's greatest ideas.

Sam Bonifas of the BTA Miami & Erie Canal Chapter and the Miami & Erie Canal Corridor Association have brought the BTA to the table to help Ohio celebrate the bicentennial of the beginning of Ohio's historic canal system. There will be more to come in 2025 up and down the M&E and Ohio & Erie Canals for 'canawlers' and BTA enthusiasts to participate in.

Special Events:

Thanks to all the BTA special event organizers who convinced hundreds of outdoor enthusiasts to come out, enjoy and

support the BTA. Thank you for the leadership of Brandon Bates for MoreFest and Mushroom Camp, Morgan Thomas for the Blue Blaze Academy, Byron, Shannon, and Jamie Guy for the EGGS Hike, Ted Shigley for the Blue Blaze Festival, the Crooked River Chapter for the Little Loop Challenge, the Central Ohio Chapter for hosting our 2024 Buckeye TrailFest, and Lake Plains Chapter for TrailFest 2025 at Maumee Bay.

Marketing:

The Marketing Working Group of our 2025 Strategic Plan has evolved into filling the BTA Board's vacant Trail Promotion Committee thanks to the recent appointment of Valerie Gardner and Brandon Bates to co-chair the Committee. Special thanks to Shawn Steinschreiber for stepping up to become our Trailblazer Magazine Editor and going above and beyond to expand the scope and reach of our flagship communication. Thanks to Brian Batchelder for stewarding the progress on our new BTA website to be launched in 2025. Thank you to BTA volunteers that represented us to current corporate supporters such as John Nemicik to SPAX and new partners such as Diane Wright of the Ohio River Chapter has developed with Cartridge Brewing!

Digital office:

While the BTA only has 2.5 full time equivalents currently, we serve a volunteer leadership corps of 15 Trustees, 26 Section Supervisors, 10-20 BTA Chapter leaders, committee, team, and working group members, and other key volunteer leaders. Arguably we have up to 100 people helping to run the BTA on a day-to-day basis who need access to the BTA's 'digital office'. Aidan Reagh and Brian Batchelder have led the effort to take better advantage of tools available to us to develop and reorganize our Google Drive folder system to better manage access and sharing of information in support of BTA volunteers.

It's been busy out there this year. Next year looks to have the same forecast. Everything written above is just a selection of the highlights of the massive amount of work BTA volunteers, staff, and partners are investing in the inspiring idea of Ohio's Buckeye Trail. This is the body of work that your membership dues, year end gifts, and volunteer work support. Thank you for helping us all get it done in 2024, and thank you for hiking Ohio's Buckeye Trail!

Hope to see you on the trail,



Andrew Bashaw

12th Annual TrailFest 2025



Save The Date
September 5-7, 2025!

Beautiful Maumee Bay Lodge & Conference Center

For more info, or to help out with program ideas please contact:
trailfest@buckeyetrail.org



Issue Contest #2:



Winter 2024 Volume 57 No. 4 Prize:

For this issue, we've got an incredible prize package for our contest winner! The winner of this contest will receive an 11oz Cedar Blaze Carabiner Camp Mug, a Cedar Blaze T-shirt, and a BTA Themed Wooden Tea Light Lantern. A big shout-out to the Buckeye Trail Shop and All Starr Custom Creations for generously donating these amazing items!

Contest Rules:

Throughout this issue of the Trailblazer, There are 8 (eight) Cedar Blaze Logos concealed, excluding the sample on the right. Additionally, there is a crossword puzzle on page 23 with ten questions. The first individual to send an email to trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org, providing the correct page numbers for all 8 (eight) logos, and also solves the crossword puzzle with the correct answers wins this awesome prize package. Good luck to all our cruciverbalist hiking HOPA aficionados!!!

Congratulations:

A big shout-out to everyone who took part in the Fall 2024 Volume 57 No. 3 contest! And the prize winners are Geoffrey and Kathy Price from the Shawnee area! Congrats to you both, we hope you enjoy the mugs!



Sample

We're thrilled to share that the Buckeye Trail Association and its Chapters are now using Eventbrite to keep everyone in the loop about upcoming events. Whether you're interested in what's happening with the BTA as a whole, want to join a circuit hike, or just want to know what's going on in your local chapter, simply scan the QR codes below for more info!

Buckeye Trail Association



Circuit Hikes



Miami Rivers Chapter



Miami & Erie Canal Chapter



Appalachian Foothills Chapter



Lake Plains Chapter



Muskingum Lakes Chapter



Central Ohio Chapter



Crooked River Chapter



Ohio Rivers Chapter



The Wilderness Chapter



Little Cities of the Forest



BTA Funds Report

Your contribution to any BTA fund is tax deductible. All contributions of \$20 or more are acknowledged. Thank you to all of our donors who have gone above and beyond to support the mission of the BTA during these challenging times! We appreciate you.

AUGUST 2, 2024 - NOVEMBER 1, 2024 GENERAL FUND

Mark Anstaett
Sandra Barlett
Andrew & Claudia Bashaw
Alex Cann
Peter & Kathleen Carels
Jelea Cleaver
Kathleen Clink
David Cox III & Family
Amy Dennis
Dennis & Susan Dew
Teresa Doughty

Matthew Edmonds
Grant Ely
Richard Feldmann
Thomas Fletcher & Family
Scott Gordon & Family
Misty Harmon
Jack Jaynes
Scott & Mary Anne Kamph
Stephen Kane
Chris & Stephen Kitsoulis
Barbara Kuhns

Matt Liggett
Robert Litt
Patrick Long
Terry & Nancy McCann
Tom & Brenda Mooney
Birgit Nazarian
Lori Post
Cassandra Pritchett
Raman Ras
Sandy & Alex Reed
William Schultz & Leslie Floyd

Vijay & Neeti Sharma
Donna Sigl-Davies
Margaret Sondey & William
Hines
James Sunyak
Carol Vought
Suzanne Webb
Peter Weiner & Family
Erik Welch
Gene Wimmer
Jack Winkler

In Recognition of John Nemcik's Tireless Volunteerism

Joseph Baldino

In Memory of Chris Anderson

Mary & Pat Hayes

In Memory of Dennis R. Hays

Mary & Pat Hayes

Buckeye TrailFest

Joe Carter & Petra Schmalbrock

Want to See your business or event advertised in the next Trailblazer?

Ad Space is available in each issue of the Trailblazer magazine and is sent to people throughout the state of Ohio!

Ad Size:

For ONE Issue:

For FOUR Issues:

1/8 Page (3.75" x 2.5")
1/4 Page (3.75" x 5")
1/2 Page (7.5" x 5")
Full Page (7.5" x 10")

\$30.00
\$60.00
\$120.00
\$240.00

\$90.00
\$180.00
\$360.00
\$720.00

Submitted advertisements must be at a resolution of 300 dpi or greater. The BTA can provide some minimal graphic assistance for an additional moderate fee (email trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org for more details). The BTA reserves the right to decline ads that may conflict with our mission.

Want to share your photographs and stories of the Buckeye Trail? Send them to trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org! They might just show up on our social media or feature in the Trailblazer.



Photo by Alyce Shane

1,096

Members of the Buckeye Trail Association

\$92,836

Donated to the Buckeye Trail Association

6,731

Volunteer Hours Reported by BTA Members

Buckeye Trail Association 2024 Report

The Buckeye Trail Association saw plenty of accomplishments and great memories made on the Buckeye Trail in 2024, and we are excited to share these highlights throughout this edition of the Trailblazer Magazine.

Data as of 12.11.24

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meetup.com/pro/buckeye-trail-temp



youtube.com/user/BuckeyeTrailTV



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6,000 Miles on the Buckeye Trail: An Interview with Richard Morgan

Karen Power



Most of us who complete the 1,444-mile Buckeye Trail (BT*) don't consider an encore hike. We're happy to have had the time, energy, and motivation the first time. Richard "Pioneer Spirit" Morgan is the exception. On July 30, 2024, Richard completed his 4th Buckeye Trail circuit hike and is currently hiking the BT for the fifth time.

This accomplishment gives Richard the honor of holding the current record for the number of completed hikes around Ohio on the Buckeye Trail. This achievement is not only a Buckeye Trail record but also a world record; the latter we hope is certified as a world record in the near future.

How it all got started...in Richard's words:

I first officially set foot on the Buckeye Trail in September 2009. I traveled to a BT event that was held in a park in Milford where I met former organization president Pat Hayes.

I drove down to the south BT terminus at Eden Park. It took me awhile to find the trailhead one level higher up on Spencer Overlook. I walked 3 miles to a point on Erie Avenue and then walked back. The next day, I traveled to the Pemberville section and hiked several miles after being dropped off.

I've been hiking the BT ever since. I met up with the late Bruce "Poppy" Purdy who was also hiking the trail. The lack of communication methods made it more difficult to find other hikers. I hiked about half of the trail solo the first time around. Sadly, Bruce passed away from brain cancer before he could complete the trail.

Why Richard has hiked the BT four+ times:

I began my first hike in September 2009 and completed in

August 2012. I got word that Jim Gilkey was going to go around a second time with a group, so I decided, "Why not me?"

While working on hike #2, we picked up more circuit hikers along the way. By assisting others to catch up, I was able to fit hike #3 into the schedule. The same method occurred after Jim's group was done. I joined up with Jay Shutt's group early in 2023. Jay had joined Jim's group a few years before Jim retired as organizer/coordinator; he took over from Jim as hike leader after 2019.

I was able to assist others and was able to begin hike #4. I took over as hike organizer a couple months after Jay was finished. I was able to hike #4 and begin #5 simultaneously.

How long a circuit typically takes:

A circuit hike generally takes around 5½ years by hiking one weekend per month, as was the case with Jim Gilkey's 2014-2019 group.

I usually complete the trail in under 3 years. My first passage took 93 days over about 35 months. If you take advantage of other people's hike opportunities, you can complete the trail relatively quickly.

Planning for a hike:

Distance between safe parking opportunities is the major factor in determining hike length. I attempt to keep the hiking distance under 13 miles to accommodate the majority of the hikers. Some are capable of doing much more.

Trail changes Richard has seen:

Many sections of the trail remain relatively unchanged over the years. Some changes are routes that have been paved, but some landmark buildings disappeared.

Some areas underwent major changes. The Norwalk portion was moved from a zigzag of country roads onto a straighter route on the North Coast Inland trail.

New Straitsville has been moved multiple times in order to take advantage of off-road opportunities.

Another big change was the removal of the Springfield route in favor of a more direct course from Yellow Springs toward Dayton.



Hiking the good with the bad:

The best hikes are ones that take us through or near interesting locations or features. We have seen glider events at an

airstrip near Caesar Creek, a solar eclipse near Mariemont, the total eclipse of the sun near Akron, and we got a tour of the Goodyear Blimp Hanger in Suffield.

Other hikes find us visiting restaurants along the way. Many change hands, close or even burn down, as was the case with Granny's restaurant in Londonderry. A favorite restaurant in Bowerston also closed.

One bad experience was a confrontation with a large group of deer hunters near Mandale. One of them was disputing land ownership of a segment of canal right of way. It turns out the owner was one of the few people that did indeed own that section of canal. A lesson learned was not to have a circuit hike the first week of December during the shotgun deer season.

Hiking when it's fun and when it's not:

I really favor the straight-to-the-point trail sections. The Western and Northern section are easier and straightforward point to point.

The least favorite are sections around lakes that follow a convoluted path around each and every finger of the lake. I also dislike areas that can feel abandoned due to lack of maintenance. Nature is very impatient and will cover even the best maintained trails in a short time.

Hiking the seasons year-round:

I actually lean more in favor of winter hiking. No heat, no humidity, less traffic on bike trails, no bugs and no leaves hiding blazes.

We encountered extreme cold a few times. Last winter was a challenge along the Mogadore section on a particularly windy, frigid day. We walked the route backwards so we didn't face into the wind.

One memory was seeing the car-sized ice blocks piled up at the northern terminus at Headlands Beach on Lake Erie.

A hiker beyond the BT:

I've hiked the North Country Trail from Litchfield, Michigan to New York; I've walked from Indiana to near Washington DC on the American Discovery Trail; I've also completed the 323+ mile Sheltoewe Trace Challenge°, the Laurel Highlands trail and The Kanawha Trace.

The Sheltoewe Trace Challenge was the most difficult. It consisted of backpacking and camping in winter conditions on rocky terrain through snow and frequently through knee-deep stream beds in cold weather. I was sometimes in steep rock valleys with no other way out except on the trail. It was a backpack adventure that I

wouldn't want to repeat.

On my second circuit hike, I hiked the Sheltoewe Trace one weekend a month and the BT Circuit Hike the next weekend.

Giving back to the trail:

In addition to being the current circuit hike coordinator and lead guide...

I've taken on the task of being a co-supervisor of the 58-mile Stockport section with Karen Fisk who has completed the trail twice. Experiencing the trials and tribulations of clearing or building a trail tempers the irritations of passing through less than ideal footpaths.

A home-grown Ohio boy:

I was born in Chillicothe and raised in Vinton County; we still maintain the family farm although we never 'farmed' or raised animals.

I lived in the Columbus or the London area for over 40 years. I discovered I lived a few miles from Jim Gilkey, and across Refugee Road from Karen Fisk, just one of many coincidences. Six degrees of separation...

My ancestors were original settlers in Southern Ohio, one of them, Aquila Webb walked to Ohio from Charlestown, Virginia shortly after 1812. Perhaps I take my walking from him.

A few have landmarks named after them. Some family members were holding square dances in Ash Cave in the 1800's. You can find their name carved in the stone inside of the cave.

One ancestor left Vinton County and settled in California; his son became President of the United States, Richard Nixon.

The Vinton County archivist:

I was always around antiques, old documents and memorabilia since childhood. I've collected these items since the mid 1960's. With the advent of Facebook, I decided it would be nice to post each item occasionally on a group I created called The Vinton County Historical Archive. We have a membership of over 5,600 members that covers a county with an average of 13,000 people.

Richard's trail name:

I chose the trail name 'Pioneer Spirit' for a hobby called letterboxing. Letterboxing is a 150-year-old predecessor to geocaching that uses custom carved rubber stamps to mark finds.

I seldom use the name, but I sometimes use the letterbox stamp for logbooks on the trail.



A final word from Richard:

The circuit hike is always looking to have new folks join up. If 13 miles is too far for you, we can accommodate transportation to another spot to shorten the walk.

I would like to thank all of those people that I hiked with over the years--6,000 miles would not have been possible without them: Jacob Thompson, Bruce Purdy, CW Spencer, Karen Fisk, Jeri Getts, and Jim Gilkey are just a few.



*The BT is a 26-section, 1400+-mile circuit. Each section bears the name of a point on the trail. The name could be a city or town or as in the case of the Caesar Creek section, a state park.
*The Sheltoewe Trace Challenge is a once-a-month weekend section hike that completes the Sheltoewe Trace in 11 months. The typical hike is 20-25 miles over one weekend a month that typically starts in Kentucky and ends in Tennessee. The Sheltoewe Trace is currently 343 miles long.

Congratulations!!!

2024 Buckeye Trail Completionist



- Karen Fisk
- Bob Fox
- Richard Morgan
- John Kadle
- Ian "Rooster" Koenig
- Don Pattison
- Louie Agoston
- Nancy Hoffner



AMLER 2024 Progress Report

Ann Furste

Co-Authored by Aidan Reagh

Building Ohio's Largest Backpacking Destination

First envisioned in 2006, the 100-mile backpacking destination in the Little Cities of the Forest Chapter gained a lot of traction in 2024. Thanks to funding from a Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER) Grant with supporting funds from the USDA Little Cities Eco-Heritage Corridor and Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Power Grants, new segments of the Buckeye Trail were built by Buckeye Trail Association volunteers, Hocking-Athens-Perry County Community Action (HAPCAP) youth, American Conservation Experience (ACE), Appalachian Conservation Corps (ACC), and Student Conservation Association (SCA) crews.

Buckeye Trail Association Volunteers and HAPCAP

Buckeye Trail Association volunteers focused on two areas of the AMLER project this year - Lower Rock Run and Buckingham South.

Lower Rock Run's easement allowed for the Buckeye Trail to be re-routed into the Trail Town of Shawnee, home of the Buckeye Trail Association's office. The segment of BT on Lower Rock Run will also feature a new private campground!



Lower Rock Run Work!



Trail work by HAPCAP Youth!

The Lower Rock Run work was supported by HAPCAP, where young teenagers (with their counselor) have evolved from being extra hands helping to remove invasives and maintain the trail to become trail builders, as they helped BTA volunteers by actually doing rough clearing and establishing trail bed.

The Buckingham South easement was a trying build on hard slopes, but the result is worth it! The relocated trail brings you completely off Antle Orchard Road and through a beautiful route following a creek past multiple unique rock openings.

Contracted Trail Building Crews: ACE, ACC, and SCA

American Conservation Experience crews established 1.5 miles of new trail in the Wayne National Forest and ODNR's Wallace O'Dowd Wildlife Area along Johnson Run. ACE work crews were largely new to trail construction and came from across the country and had not been to Ohio before, but many fell in love with the dense woods that they worked in and expressed interest in coming back, not just to hike around the AMLER project area but to see all of Ohio

and its diverse beauty.

Appalachian Conservation Corps completed 2.8 miles of trail that has already enjoyed plenty of BT traffic. This scenic route relocated the trail west of existing trail around Salem Hollow and Salem roads and became a part of the route for the ½ marathon and 12 mile hikers at the Annual Blue Blaze Festival in Shawnee.

Student Conservation Association members braved the heat while building trail in the Buckingham Coal easement north of Antle Orchard Road. This trail build was especially challenging, as SCA members were faced with a clear cut logging area as their work site with ground bees and ticks making their presence known. SCA successfully built 1.5 miles of BT that connects with



ACC Trail Build



SCA Trail Build

existing trail.

Looking to the Future

As in all BT trail builds, progress is incremental but unrelenting. There is still plenty to be done to complete the AMLER project and finalize the efforts of turning a land devastated by past industrial work into a premier outdoor recreation adventure that is the 100-mile backpacking destination. 2025 plans to include a work week in August as well as Trail Tuesdays to inch our way forward. Keep an eye on social media to be aware of upcoming workdays. If you would like to support and be involved in these efforts, please contact newstraitsville@buckeyetrail.org.

Want to learn more about these awesome groups?
Just scan the codes or follow the links below!



<https://hapcap.org>



<https://appalachiancc.org>



<https://www.usaconservation.org>



<https://thesca.org/>



Rooster just starting to learn to crow!

Keep Moving Forward

The Fastest Known Time on the Buckeye Trail

Ian "Rooster" Koenig

On September 23rd, 2024, I took my 2,988,819th and final step on Buckeye Trail. Touching my hand on the Deer Lick Cave trail sign, I officially completed the 8th longest trail in the United States in 35 Days, 8 Hours, and 46 minutes. Having hiked the Appalachian Trail and Pacific Crest Trail, I was not unfamiliar with the emotions that come with completing a long-distance hike. But in this moment, I was overwhelmed with a mixture of relief, sadness, and pride. Relief that I could finally rest at home and see my family. Sadness that the adventure had finally come to close. And pride in the feat that I had just accomplished. As I spread my father's ashes for the last time on the trail that he and I had explored so many times before, I took my first steps off the clock as the first person to complete the Buckeye Trail self-supported and owner of the Fastest Known Time record.

Although I left the trail that day, I brought with me the stories and lessons the Buckeye Trail taught me. What I learned about competitive hiking, what I learned about my home state, and what I learned about myself. Being my first ever attempt at a Fastest Known Time record, this was incredibly different from any hike I had done before. While my other hikes were not bound by time limits or rules, this hike would constantly have me on the clock and bar me from accepting assistance from family or friends along the way.

Waking up before sunrise and hiking far past sunset is an exhausting endeavor. The thought of doing that for 35 days straight can be overwhelming. As I set out from Crystal Springs on August 19th, I told myself I would take it one day at a time. That quickly turned to one hour at a time, which quickly turned to one minute at a time, until eventually I was staring at my feet, telling myself to take it one step at a time. I learned to appreciate each moment of the day, big or small. Every sunrise and every sunset. The deep green foliage provided by sturdy oaks, swaying hemlocks, and flowing maple tree leaves. The expansive farm country, filled with corn and soybeans as far as the eye can see. And the beautiful cave and rock systems found throughout the entire state. When I spent my time focusing on the beauty of Ohio instead of the miles ahead, the days turned from "I have to do this" to "I get to do this."

My next lesson came from the people of Ohio. Growing up in the suburbs of Cleveland, it's not often you have to rely on the generosity of others for the simple necessities of life, like water, food,

or a place to sleep. As I meandered past people's homes in tattered clothes and one week out from my last shower, I was amazed by the hospitality I was shown. From offering water, to offering food, to even offering a bed to sleep in, the people of Ohio took me in without hesitation. Being self-supported entails only accepting help found along the way. I was pleasantly surprised to learn help was there in abundance. In fact, I often had to reject assistance from people who I had never met to be in compliance with FKT self-supported rules. Along with this, I woke up every morning to messages from people I had never met, cheering me on and wishing me luck on my journey. I learned how generous the people of Ohio can be to a total stranger.

My final lesson came in the form of illness. As I made my way through the southern part of the state, I fell incredibly sick to the point of losing consciousness while walking. As I made my way towards Logan and Hocking Hills, I sat down and had a conversation with myself about moving forward. I had fallen behind Fastest Known Time pace and didn't know how I'd be able to move forward. As I sat on the side of the road, figuring out my plan to get home, I began thinking of how far I had come. I thought of how important this journey had become to not only me, but my family and friends. I thought of how I would feel leaving the trail early. My father's favorite saying "Keep Moving Forward" replayed over and over in my head. I decided regardless of the outcome, I would not leave the trail without finishing. I decided to push myself to learn how far my body and mind will go to accomplish a goal. How to push through my lowest





Ian & Jim Rosengarten

moments to continue chasing a dream I had grown so passionate about.

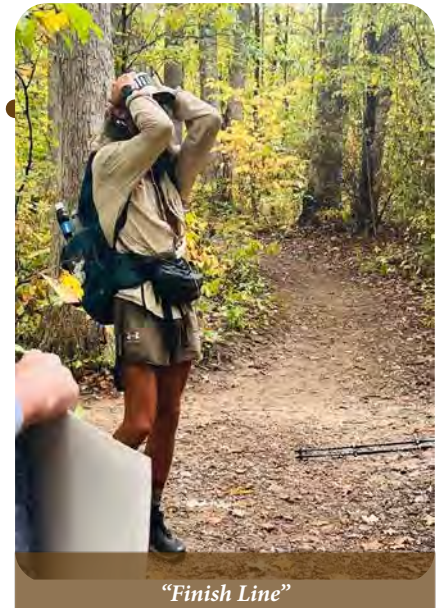
Setting the fastest known time for the Buckeye Trail was a challenge. A challenge I don't think I would be able to complete anywhere else. It was a perfect storm of determination and fascination. The entire trip was filled with reminders of how I became the person I am today. From Cleveland, to Akron, to Athens, to Cincinnati, to Dayton, to Toledo, the trail passed by cities that have shaped

and molded my entire family for generations. It was as if I was tying my whole life together in one nostalgic lap around the state I call home. While I continue to pursue more adventures away from home, I will always be drawn back to the Buckeye Trail, as it holds a special place in my heart.

The Buckeye Trail is an experience. It is a conglomeration of roads, biking trails, bridle trails and hiking trails all put together to become something larger than simply a "trail". It is a community. A community of people who strive each day and season to continue to build, care for, and promote the beauty that lies within Ohio and its people. From Lake Erie to the Ohio River, the Buckeye Trail will not give you a single day that is similar to the last. It does not hide from what it is, but rather embraces each and every community it passes through, and those communities embrace it in return. From gravel roads in southeast Ohio filled with barking dogs and more livestock

than people, to the gorgeous moss-covered ledges of Hocking Hills, to the cozy suburbs of Mentor, to the walk right down Bowery Street in Downtown Akron, the Buckeye Trail differentiates itself from any other trail I have hiked before. It beautifully dances the line of enriching and exploring Ohio's vast history, while continually being improved and maintained to offer a new look at this amazing state. I am proud to be a part of its incredible community and proud to be an Ohioan.

Ian "Rooster" Koeing



"Finish Line"



East Fork Lake State Park

Straker Ridge Trail

Mark Allen

Discovering the Straker Ridge Trail: A Journey Through Appalachian Hills

Nestled in the heart of southern Ohio, the Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area beckons outdoor enthusiasts with over 50,000 acres of diverse terrain, making it a prime destination for hiking, camping, and wildlife observation. Located approximately six miles east of McConnelsville, this rugged landscape unfolds across portions of Morgan, Muskingum, and Noble counties, providing a stunning backdrop for the eagerly anticipated Straker Ridge Trail. Currently under construction, the trail is set to become a hallmark of outdoor adventure in the region, slated for completion by the end of 2026.

The Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area

Characterized by its unglaciated region, the Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area features rolling hills and rugged terrain, interspersed with numerous small streams. The land, which has a rich history influenced by various forms of mining, comprises 68 percent forestland, 27 percent grassland, and 5 percent wetlands and ponds. This mix of habitats supports a vibrant array of flora and fauna, making it a paradise for nature lovers and birdwatchers alike. The area also envelops the picturesque Jesse Owens State Park, enhancing its recreational offerings.

The Straker Ridge Trail Experience

Once completed, the Straker Ridge Trail will stretch over 26 miles, weaving through the scenic beauty of the Appalachian Hills. Hikers will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the stunning landscapes that the region has to offer. One of the trail's unique features is its connection to the Buckeye Trail, allowing adventurers to extend their journey into a loop exceeding 40 miles. This connectivity opens the door to a multi-day backpacking experience, with convenient camping options at Sand Hollow and Maple Grove Campground at Jesse Owens State Park and at the Bicentennial Group Camp along the Buckeye Trail.

A Trail Built with Sustainability in Mind

What sets the Straker Ridge Trail apart is its design philosophy. The trail tread will be intentionally primitive, reflecting the backcountry characteristics of the Appalachian Hills. Constructed using natural materials, the trail will harmonize with its surroundings, ensuring a minimal impact on the landscape. Sustainable trail techniques will be employed to create a flowing contour trail that requires less maintenance over time. This commitment to environmental stewardship not only preserves the natural beauty of the area but also enhances the hiking experience, allowing adventurers to feel truly connected to the land.

As the trail meanders through the rugged terrain, hikers will encounter exposed rock bluffs, expansive vistas, and the soothing sounds of nearby lakes and streams. The journey promises not just physical exercise but also a sensory feast, with opportunities to observe the diverse wildlife that calls this area home. From the chirping of

birds to the rustling of leaves, every step will be accompanied by the symphony of nature.

Looking Ahead

While the Muskingum portion of the trail is nearly complete, the remainder of the Straker Ridge Trail is planned for completion by the end of 2026 and will elevate the Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area as a premier hiking destination in Ohio. Whether you are an experienced hiker looking for a challenge or a casual walker wanting to reconnect with nature, this trail will cater to all levels of outdoor enthusiasts. As you traverse the rugged landscape, you will not only witness the beauty of the Appalachian Hills but also become part of a story that intertwines nature, adventure, and sustainability.

The Straker Ridge Trail is on the horizon, and it promises to be an unforgettable journey through one of Ohio's hidden gems. With its pristine trails and rich wildlife, the Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area invites you to explore its wonders and create lasting memories in the great outdoors.



Want to stay up to date on Straker Ridge Trail or other ODNR Projects? Just scan the code to the right or follow the link below!



<https://ohiodnr.gov/go-and-do/find-a-trail/ohio-trails>

BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike

The Buckeye Trail Association is holding its 12th annual Brrr Oak Winter Hike in partnership with Burr Oak State Park, Burr Oak Lodge and Conference Center, Burr Oak Alive! and Burr Oak Getaways.

Saturday February 8th, 2025

Join fellow hiking enthusiasts for a great day of hiking!

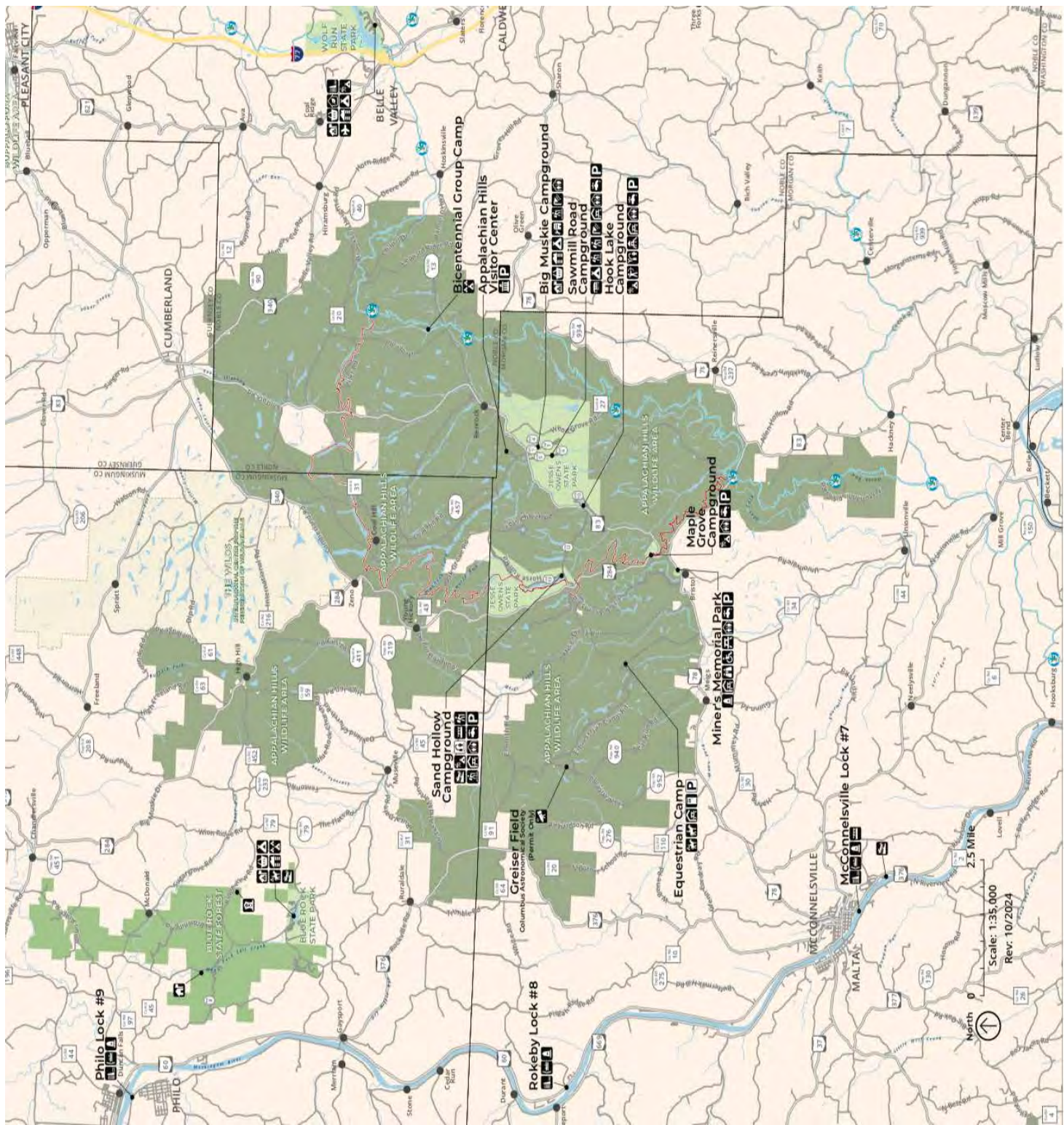
Four hike One-mile interpretive hike: leaves at 10:30A.M.
lengths Three-mile hike: leaves at 10:20A.M.
include: Five-mile hike: leaves at 10:10A.M.
Eight-mile hike: leaves at 10:00A.M.

All hikes meet at the Burr Oak State Park Shelter by the lodge. Free bean soup, corn bread, and hot chocolate will be provided at the shelter after the hikes. There will also be a warm fire for attendees to gather around. Wear sturdy footwear and dress for the weather. The event is free and leashed dogs are permitted.

For more information about the event, contact the New Straitsville Section Supervisor at NewStraitsville@buckeyetrail.org.



- ADA Friendly Fishing Access
- Airport
- Archery Range
- Boat Ramp
- Bridle Trailhead
- Cabin Area
- Camp Store
- Camper Cabin
- Campground Check-In Station
- Campground/Campsite
- Courtesy Boat Dock
- Covered Bridge
- Dam/Spillway
- Dump Station
- Equestrian Camp
- Flush Toilet
- Group Camp
- Lock
- Maintenance Building
- Monument/Historical Marker
- Nature Center
- Parking Lot
- Picnic Area
- Playground
- Primitive Camping
- Scenic Overlook
- Shelter House
- Showers House
- Spigot
- Trail Access
- Trailhead
- Youth Fishing Pond
- Fire Tower
- Forestry Office
- State Park
- State Forest
- Wildlife Area
- The Wilds (Non-ODNR Property)
- Unincorporated Area
- Regional Trail Systems
- Straker Ridge Trail (Completion By Dec. 2026)
- Buckeye Trail
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road



Scale: 1:35,000
 Rev: 10/2024
 2.5 Mile
 North

Sawyer Training 2024

Bill Hines & Morgan Thomas

Have you ever been hiking and found a tree down across the trail? Do you wonder who will remove that tree? Depending on the landowner it could be park personnel, a municipal employee, or it could be a Buckeye Trail Association sawyer. The BTA sawyers are trained and certified through the National Park Service (NPS).

Introduction:

In early September, the Buckeye Trail Association, the North Country Trail Association, and the National Park Service joined forces to host a Sawyer Training session at the Pretty Run Nature Preserve (Old Man's Cave Section Point 25). If you've never been to Pretty Run, it's an awesome spot to camp. It's maintained by BT volunteers led by Jamie and Byron Guy. The volunteers who take the training are provided all course material, safety equipment including all personal protection equipment totally free.

To be ready for the class, Sawyer volunteers have to do a few things. First, they have to be totally crazy to give up all their free time to volunteer and go out into the woods carrying 70-80 pounds in sometimes hazardous situations. But they also have to take some online Trail Safe training and get certified in Red Cross First Aid/CPR certification or equivalent. After that, the volunteers have to convince their loved ones to let them give up their weekend so they could get certified. For some of us, it was our first campout in over three decades, and to make it even more challenging, we had to brave the freezing nighttime temperatures!



In-class demonstrations taught students equipment maintenance and worksite safety.

The Class:

Seven brave souls signed up for this year's class, including some seasoned veterans who needed to recertify. We've got Tim Murphy (Burton Section Supervisor), John Nemcick (Defiance Section Supervisor), Kurt Heollrich, Bill Hines (Bedford Section Supervisor), Morgan Thomas, Doug Cisan from the Crooked River Chapter, and Joseph Moosbrugger from the Little Cities of the Forest. Let's give them a big round of applause for their commitment to taking on the additional responsibility of helping to keep our trail clear! Our brave instructor Nathan Stanford of Forest Safety Instruction, who drove an incredible 14 hours from Wisconsin to come down and teach us chainsaw maintenance, safety, and usage.

Our volunteers, decked out in multiple sweatshirts and jackets, got hands-on with their saws. We learned how to take them



Nathan, our instructor, demonstrates techniques for binding various forces exerted on downed trees.

apart, check for damage, and sharpen the chains. We also discussed different types of binds and the forces acting on a downed tree. Nathan stressed the importance of using proper PPE, including how chaps work by releasing fibers that can jam up the saw if they're cut. He also talked about effective communication in the field, safe operations, and situational awareness. He shared some examples of injuries, mishaps, and close calls he's seen in his 20+ years of experience. With everyone silently promising themselves, that they wouldn't become one of Nathan's examples, we all broke for lunch.

After the classroom part of the training, we spent the rest of Saturday afternoon in the woods above camp. Nathan cut down one of the many beech trees that have grown up since the area was selectively cut years ago. We took turns making plunge cuts into the stump. Since the tree was blocking the road up to the only spot at Pretty Run where we had cell signal, we started clearing it using everything Nathan had just taught us. It was an awesome experience to put what we had just learned to use.

For example, the acronym OHLEC helps sawyers to ensure we have a safe and effective plan. "O" stands for Objective - where do we want the log to end up? "H" stands for Hazards - is the log rotted, where are people in relation to the work site, could the log move as it is cut, ...? "L" stands for leans and binds - will limbs bind or will spring poles release as they are cut? "E" is for Escape Paths - determine which side is the safest to work from and how to escape the site safely. "C" stands for Cut Plan - determine how the log will be cut to ensure safety and communicate this with swampers. This gave us a great insight into how important it is to communicate the cut plan with swampers (people who help move the cut segments) and make sure the area is clear before starting to cut.



Students practice going over cut plans in the field.

Wrapping up the class:

With day one over, and what we like to call a success! We all headed back to camp and decided that we were too tired to cook. The



Nathan demonstrates proper work site safety.



Nathan demonstrating proper cut techniques.

entire class head out to town and had a great dinner together. Little did we know that an Open Burn Ban had been put in place on Friday. But hey, since we were all so tired from the day's work we were all tucked in bed by 9:30 pm. Sweet dreams!

Sunday dawned colder than Saturday, but we almost immediately headed out to do our evaluations. Nathan evaluated how each of us used what he had conveyed to us in the classroom sessions. His evaluation determined the level of certification each of us obtained. Most of what the BTA certified sawyers will do is called bucking, i.e. cutting up downed trees. Through out the evaluation Volunteers described 5 points of safety, the forces on the saw as it cuts, and judged top, bottom, side, and end binds. Kurt Hoellrich dropped two more beeches (certifying to Class B Felling in the process), and

we demonstrated proper bucking technique to remove them from the road.

With evaluations over, we were now NPS Sawyer certified, which is good for three years. We made our way back to camp, packed up our tents and saws, said our goodbyes to Nathan, and began the journey home to excitedly await the call that somewhere out there on the BT, a tree was down and we were needed!!!!

Want to know how to become a sawyer or how to volunteer on the Buckeye Trail? Just scan the code to the right or visit the link below!



<https://www.buckeyetrail.org/involved.php>

Tim's Trail Maintenance Tips!:

Want to know how you can help keep the trail clear? If you come across a tree blocking the Buckeye Trail send an email to the section supervisor with the location on the trail. You can find their email address here: <https://www.buckeyetrail.org/contact.php>. Send a photo too if you can.



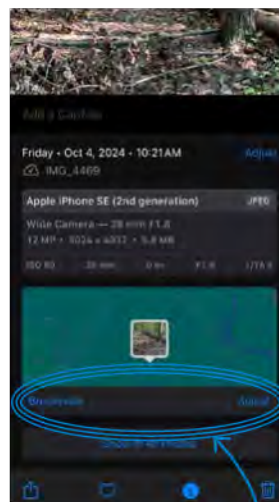
1. When taking a photo of a fallen tree on the trail, it's a good idea to have a hiking buddy stand next to it or put a water bottle on the tree for scale. This will help our Sawyers get a better perspective of the size of the tree in the photo.
2. Ensure "Allow Location" is turned on for photos. This will place a Geotag on the photo providing GPS Coordinates.



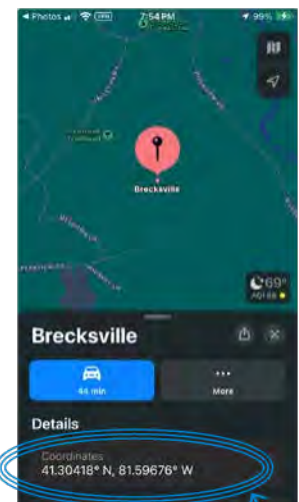
If you have "allow location" on for your iPhone's camera, you can provide GPS coordinates by taking a photo and clicking the information button at the bottom of the screen. This will open a map with the location name at the bottom left. Click on it for a detailed map with the GPS location. You can take a screenshot or record the GPS information and email it to the section supervisor.



Information Button
"i" in a circle



Information Button
"i" in a circle



GPS Coordinates
to record.

Meg's Book Loop

Margaret "Meg" Sondey

"How to Suffer Outside: A Beginner's Guide to Hiking and Backpacking,"

By Diana Helmuth,

Illustrated By: Latasha Dunston

A: Mountaineer Books, 2021.

Welcome to Megs Book Loop! We hope you enjoy this book review and that it becomes a new addition to the Trailblazer. If you have any book suggestions or want to add more insight on a book, please send all comments and suggestions to trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org.

I'll admit it... I've had my moments of suffering on the Buckeye Trail. Some were mine (think faceplant on an asphalt road), but others were watching my hiking compatriots do things like wearing cotton socks or new shoes, or almost knocking themselves out by hitting their head on a tree overhanging the trail.

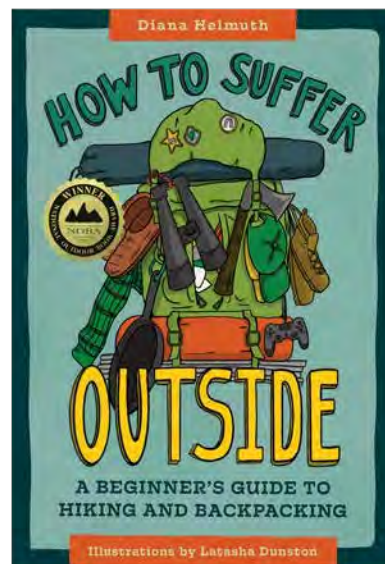
If you can identify with those momentous occasions... you'll thoroughly enjoy Helmuth's sometimes PG-13 book. Who can resist such chapters as "Clothes: How to Not Get Killed by Your Jeans" or "Shelter: Bury Yourself Alive in Hot Green Nylon." She

manages to wrap honest-to-goodness helpful information in true stories that will have you shaking your head... and possibly remembering when you experienced something similar!

Helmuth isn't shy about giving her opinion about various types of gear, and you may disagree with her at times, but she always explains how she came to make the decisions she did. Boxed sections of text address specific topics such as "Sleeping in Ditches" (don't!) and "A Note on Wet Clothes" (take them off!)

Latasha Dunston provides colorful illustrations that complement Helmuth's wry sense of humor. A brief list of resources for hikers and backpackers concludes the book.

A 2022 National Outdoor Book Award Winner in Instructional Outdoor Adventure Guide, "How to Suffer Outside" was also named one of "50 Best Hiking Books of All Time," by Backpacker Magazine. So, if you're looking for a good read on those days you can't be on the trail, I highly recommend "How to Suffer Outside." Hopefully, it will help you not to do that!



Recipes For Happy Hiking

The Buckeye Trail Oatmeal Coffee

Shawn Steinschreiber

Share your recipe, trail meal, or cooking hack and get featured right here!

trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org



I usually fast and have a very strict time frame that I take in calories. (But lately, I've been a bit more lenient on my diet, and my waistline is reminding me.) However, one of my favorite guilty pleasures, especially when I'm working on the trail, is this coffee. It's something I look forward to as a little reward for the hard work we put in out there!



Ingredients:

- 1/2 Cup Quick Oats
- 1/4 Cup Nestle Nido Dry Whole Milk
- 2Tbsp Ovaltine Chocolate Malt
- 2Tbsp PB Fit
- 1 cup of coffee



Directions:



After you've made the tough choice of which coffee to pick, I suggest a good dark roast or a smoky blend. Now, let's get brewing! Start by preparing 8 ounces of coffee. Next, add all the dry ingredients to your favorite camp mug. Once the coffee is ready, pour it into the mug and give it a good stir. Let the drink cool to your preferred temperature. Enjoy!



Preparation:

For ease of transporting while backpacking mix all dry ingredients in a Snack Bag size Ziploc bag. As for the coffee this is where the real choices begin. If room for weight and size allows it I normally prefer a good decent cup of coffee utilizing fresh grounds & a French Press. However, if limited by space and weight I will opt for an alright Folgers Instant packet.

Morgan Country Club

Kim Love-Ottobre



An Ohio Historical Marker was revealed at Wakeman Community Park on September 21 honoring Garret A. Morgan and the Wakeman Country Club.

Inventor and Entrepreneur

Garrett A Morgan was a famous inventor and entrepreneur. Two of his most famous inventions were the development of the triple signal stop light and his breathing device.

In 1914, Morgan patented a breathing device, or "safety hood" which provided a safer breathing experience in an environment of smoke and gases. His breathing device became the prototype and precursor for the gas masks used during World War I.

Testing the Safety Hood

It was used to rescue construction workers trapped in a water intake tunnel underneath Lake Erie in 1916. Some of the initial rescue workers, encountering the toxic fumes from an earlier explosion that trapped the workers, were killed. Morgan and his brother donned the hoods and brought survivors to the surface. The publicity that followed the heroic rescues under Lake Erie actually hurt his sales of his safety hood once it was discovered that an African American had invented and manufactured the device.

After witnessing a horrible crash between an automobile and a horse-drawn carriage at an intersection, Morgan invented and patented a three-position traffic signal in 1923. He was responsible for adding the yellow "Caution" light which that is still in use around the world.

A Village of our own:

He sold the patent rights to General Electric for 40,000 dollars and used the proceeds from the sale to buy 200 acres in

Wakeman, Ohio.

That purpose was summarized in a single phrase: "Help us to have a village of our own."

Morgan felt a "village" was necessary, because although 1920s Cleveland was a better environment for African-Americans than the American south, discrimination and racism were still a problem. Morgan himself, despite his financial successes and reputation as an inventor, still faced race-based obstacles at every turn.

The Wakeman Country Club

The Wakeman Country Club was the first recreation club for African Americans in the area.

Membership in the club was dependent on purchasing one of the 247 deeded lots, which ranged from \$60-160. More than 100 lots were sold. These lots could be used to build a house, garden, or camp.

The Wakeman Country Club offered outdoor recreation, including camping, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, and swimming in the nearby Vermilion River. There was also a dance hall and a small restaurant called "The Chicken Shack". Music and dancing attracted African Americans from several northern counties throughout the state.

Boxers were also trained and put on exhibition fights at an amphitheater near the river. Morgan often told Clevelanders looking to come to the club to "take Route 20 to Wakeman." There was also a passenger train that stopped in Wakeman, just one mile north of the club.

Activities at the club began to wane during World War II. Morgan and his wife, Mary Hasek Morgan, along with their family, continued to enjoy spending their time at their cabin in Wakeman. They tended to their vegetables and orchard garden until Garrett's death in 1963.

Continuing the legacy:

Today, there are no remaining buildings from the club. Garrett Morgan III, his grandson, built his home in 2007 on a portion of the original property. He was able to purchase back all but one lot that was owned by the families of the original club members.

On September 21, 2024, Garrett Morgan IV served as the master of ceremonies for the dedication of an Ohio Historical Marker for Garrett Morgan's Wakeman Country Club. As no original buildings from the country club remain, the marker is located instead in Wakeman Community Park at 9 East Main Street in downtown Wakeman.

The Wakeman village council, Mayor Chris Hipp, and members of the Oberlin African-American Genealogy and History Group (OAAHG) and the Morgan family believe Garrett Morgan's Wakeman Country Club for African-Americans should be remembered and celebrated.

This will be the second Ohio Historical Marker for Morgan. There is a marker erected in honor of him and his inventions at E. 55th Street and Harlem Avenue in Cleveland.



The Art of Road Walking (or On the Road Again—Dodging Traffic)

Victoria Livingston



Buckeye Trail hikers have strong opinions about the road-walking portions. Some love them, while others hate them.

What is road walking?

First, Dave, my husband and hiking companion, wants to clarify that it is not street walking, which has a whole different vibe. To connect the dots around Ohio, you won't always have a serene forest, convenient rail trail, or sidewalk. Even if there is a forest, it may belong to a private owner who refuses access. So, the trailblazers had to incorporate roads as part of the BT.

Road Walking Requires Strategy

Sometimes road walking is easy--like walking on a forest trail except the path is wider. You don't have to worry about poison ivy, briars, or hazards such as rocks, animal holes, or broken branches hiding under the dense leaf cover just waiting to trip you.

It's fun to stroll down a remote country road with friends, chatting and laughing. We also count how many couches have been pushed down the embankment, and how many Sasquatch silhouettes or wishing wells we see.

But when you're on a road with a lot of traffic, you must keep assessing the situation.

Perfecting the Road Walking Wave (according to Dave)

You might see one or two cars every five minutes, and that's not bad. They'll move over four or five feet, and you'll wave at them.

When you run into a lot of traffic, and it's a dry, decent berm, you get over, wave at all of them as they drive by, then get back on the road.

Or you can pull the lever down and get all lemons. The side of the road is thin as a toothpick, and five cars and a pickup are barreling toward you, so you have to jump down into the ditch and



hope it's not full of stinky water.

It's aggravating when there is a string of cars. Do you have to wave at all of them?

After an hour of this, I feel like the queen. I stick my palm up and do a little twist of the wrist. Then, I get tired of lifting my arm, so I give them the Fonz thing like, "Ehhhh." Later, I just stick my palm up in a gesture of thanks for not running my butt over.

How far off the road is far enough?

I walk left of the white line, but Dave plods along in the ditch. When he beckons me to do the same, I roll my eyes. It greatly hinders my speed to stumble along in a ditch with mud or clumps of weeds and rocks.

I compromise and walk part way down, but if it slants like a rooftop, I hobble along like a one-legged pirate.

When there are guard rails, Dave climbs over to the other side. He follows along until he reaches a ravine or interstate with cars and trucks racing below, at which point he has no choice but to climb back over.

I complain about Dave's insistence on road walking with extra obstacles as if the 1,444+ miles aren't challenging enough. Still, I'll admit Dave's way ensures his self-preservation.

*Stay alert, assess your situation, and have a plan of action.
Happy Road Walking!*



SAFETY MEASURES FOR ROAD WALKING

1. Wear bright colors or orange vests.
2. When you're on an inside curve, a vehicle won't see you until it's too late, so move over to the outside curve and watch for traffic behind you.
3. Hills are dangerous because cars move over, or they'd risk a head-on collision. So, walk in the ditch/field/grass or move to the other side.
4. Notice whether there are double yellow lines or if they can pass. If you're on the side facing traffic on a thin berm, a passing car behind you may whiz past and barely miss you. (Learned that lesson, scared the crap out of me).
5. It's essential to be aware of your surroundings and traffic. On a country road, you can hear the gravel crunch.
6. Realize when the car is driving into the sun, he can't see you.
7. Beware of dogs: This subject could be a whole blog post. Briefly: On country roads, dogs might be on chains or fenced or may be on the loose and run out onto the road. Some owners call the dogs back, but not all dogs obey. Sometimes, the dogs are friendly and follow you with wagging tails, but other times, they will bare their teeth and growl. You need to research ahead of time to prepare yourself. We usually carry bear/pepper spray and hiking poles for defense.



Celebrating
65 Years of Memories
on the Buckeye Trail

Want to tell your story?
Email trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org

Crossword Puzzle #1

All questions can be answered from articles and submissions in this issue. Happy Solving!

Clues:

Across:

2. The "Safety Hood" was developed by?
4. What is the color of the Buckeye Trail Blazes "___" Blue
7. What is Richard Morgan's Trail Name?
8. Ian "___" Koenig, current BTA FKT Record Holder.
10. "The "___" Grant helped to bring the BT into the Village of Shawnee and right past the BTA office.

Down:

1. Someone who is skilled at creating or solving crossword puzzles.
3. Keep Moving "___"
5. A Sawyer assistant who assists to remove debris off the trail.
6. New Years Wish from Tag and Tor: "May you never miss a "___"
9. Someone trained and certified to carry and utilize a chainsaw for trail maintenance.

Please Submit your answers to
trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org.

Answers will be in next Issue!



Schedule of Hikes & Events

Always check [buckeyetrail.org/events.php](https://www.buckeyetrail.org/events.php) for more information and last-minute updates, and to register for the work parties and the chuckwagon meals

DECEMBER

December 28, 2024

Ohio River Chapter, West Union Hike!

Description: Join us for a 15-mile hike at a relaxed pace along the West Union section of the Buckeye Trail, starting at Blacks Run Rd Trailhead in the Edge of Appalachia preserve. This hike features a mix of road walking and off-road trails before ending in Bentonville.

Meeting Details: Meet at the Bentonville Community Church at 7613 State Route 41, Bentonville, OH 45144 at 9:00am and shuttle from there with as few cars as possible to the Trailhead in the Edge of Appalachia.

What to Bring: Wear orange or bright colors for safety on roads. Bring any items that should be expected for a hike of this length - if questions please ask.

Additional Details: Be prepared for a mix of terrains at a relaxed pace. This is a great opportunity to explore a beautiful section of the trail and enjoy the outdoors. This hike is weather dependent and could be rescheduled in the case of inclement weather.

Registration: Register on Meetup at <https://meetu.ps/e/NGFPI/Zsyt1/i>

Contact: If you need further details contact williamsburg@buckeyetrail.org.

JANUARY

January 1, 2025

Ohio River Chapter First Day Hike - Mariemont/Loveland!

Description: Join the Ohio River Chapter of the Buckeye Trail for a first day hike. We can meet in Mariemont and shuttle with as few cars as possible to 50West and then walk over to Avoca Park along the Loveland section of the Buckeye Trail, mostly using the bike trail. We'll see what the progress looks like in some new off road trails being built.

Then we'll walk back to 50West on mostly bike path or Mariemont on side walk after 50West as needed to cars. If you want a shorter hike just help shuttle or drive over with the shuttle group, but we need to be mindful of the business here. Total hike from 50West to Avoca to Mariemont is 3 miles. Weather permitting.

Meeting Details: 10:00AM — Meet at Marielders, 6923 Madisonville Rd, Cincinnati, where there is a parking lot available. Hike should be done by 1:00PM

Signup: Register on Meetup at <https://meetup.com/buckeye-trail-ohio-river-chapter/events/304310124>

Contact: If you need further details contact loveland@buckeyetrail.org.

January 4, 2025

13th Annual Buckeye Trail Winter Hike & Potluck Feast

Description: Get ready for the 13th Annual Buckeye Trail Winter Hike & Potluck Feast! Join the Dayton Hikers group on January 4, 2025, at Caesar Creek State Park for a fun-filled day of hiking and feasting! Choose from four guided hikes ranging from 3 to 13 miles. All hikes use a portion of the Buckeye Trail for their route. The hikes have varying start times and will end in time for the 2:00 pm potluck feast. Bring a dish to share. This event is free and open

to all BTA members, courtesy of Dayton Hikers. Be part of the oldest winter hike on the Buckeye Trail in southwest Ohio.

Meeting Details: The event runs from 9:00 am. to 4:00 pm. at the Caesar Creek Lake Visitor Center at 4020 N Clarksville Rd, Waynesville, OH

What to Bring: Come dressed for winter hiking and bring a dish to share.

Additional Details: For the hike schedules, more information, and to sign up, visit www.winterhike.com.

Contact: Andy "Captain Blue" Niekamp at andyniekamp@gmail.com.

January 4, 2025

Winter Campout at Pretty Run Preserve

Description: The BTA Annual Winter Campout at Pretty Run is always a highly anticipated weekend by some die-hards. Join us at the Pretty Run Preserve for camping, hiking, fire, and camaraderie. Stay the night or just come down for the day for a hike or hanging out by the fire. We hope to see you there.

Camping: We will be camping at the BTA's Pretty Run Preserve. Note: dog friendly, no electric, high clearance vehicles are recommended - creek crossing with high entrance/exit.

Location Info: Pretty Run Preserve is on Macedonia Church Road (T-35) off of Macedonia Road (C-47).

- From US-33 take OH-664 southwest towards South Bloomingville
- Take a left on OH-56 and an immediate right onto Goose Creek Road (CR-249)
- Turn right on Lowery Road (T-234) which will become Macedonia Road (C-47) after crossing the county line
- Macedonia Church Road (T-35) is on the left at a sharp right turn in Macedonia Road (C-47). Macedonia Church Road (C-47) is not marked
- On Macedonia Church Road (C-47), bear right at the junction with North Branch Road after passing the Macedonia Church.

Meals: Everyone is responsible for their own meals and drinks, but feel free to bring food to share.

RSVP: Sign up on Eventbrite here. If you plan to camp, please email Old Man's Cave Section Supervisor at OldMansCave@BuckeyeTrail.org by January 1st as space is limited.

Contact: Email Old Man's Cave Section Supervisor at OldMansCave@BuckeyeTrail.org with any questions.

January 11, 2025

Circuit Hike Massillon Section

Description: Meet by 8:30 a.m. at Camp Tuscazoar Boy Scout Camp lot at 6066 Boy Scout Rd NE, Dover, OH 44622. 40.564357, -81.396505. We will carpool to a parking lot at 6639-6649 Dolphin St SW, Bolivar, OH 44612. 40.654679, -81.484944. Hike is 10.4 miles. Distance determined by safe parking opportunities. Massillon Map points 20 to past 24.

Signup: Register on Meetup at <https://www.meetup.com/buckeye-trail-circuit-hike/events/304731533>

Hikes & Events (continued)

Always check [buckeyetrail.org/events.php](https://www.buckeyetrail.org/events.php) for more information and last-minute updates, and to register for the work parties and the chuckwagon meals

January 12, 2025

Circuit Hike Massillon - Bowerston Sections

Description: Meet by 8:30 a.m. at a pull off along Dawn Road NE. 40.511748, -81.283464, 8934-9376 Township Rd 320, Mineral City, OH 44656. We will carpool to Camp Tuscazoar Boy Scout Camp lot at 6066 Boy Scout Rd NE, Dover, OH 44622. 40.564357, -81.396505 Massillon map approximately points 24 1/2 to Bowerston 3 1/2. Hike is 11.2 miles. Distance determined by safe parking opportunities.

Signup: Register on Meetup at <https://www.meetup.com/buckeye-trail-circuit-hike/events/304731614>

FEBRUARY

February 8th, 2025

BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike

Description: The BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike is sponsored by ODNR and the Little Cities of the Forest Chapter (LCOF) of the BTA and takes place at Burr Oak State Park. There will be multiple loop hikes available beginning at staggered start times. Burr Oak State Park will provide beans and cornbread and drinks after the hikes. There will be a campfire with S'mores! Each hiker will receive a raffle ticket. Prizes this year include a one night's stay at the lodge and a BTA membership provided by LCOF chapter.

What to Bring: Comfortable walking clothes and shoes. Dress appropriately for the weather.

Hike Details: Hikers should arrive at the Burr Oak State Park picnic shelter by the lodge at 9 am. The 8 mile hike will start at 10:00, 5 mile hike at 10:10, 3 mile hike at 10:20. All of these will have a volunteer hike leader and sweep. The 1 mile interpretive hike will be at 10:30 and led by Elizabeth Goglin, the Burr Oak naturalist.

Contact: Email New Straitsville Section Supervisor at newstraitsville@BuckeyeTrail.org with any questions.

February 22, 2025

Central Ohio Chapter — Buckeye Treat Trail Urban Hike

Description: Come join us for a fun and exciting urban hike along the Buckeye Treat Trail in Columbus. The Buckeye Treat Trail is a collection of locations in Columbus to try Ohio's iconic buckeye candy. We will be visiting four stops in German Village (Winans Coffee & Chocolate, Chocolate Café Express, Schmidt's Fudge Haus, and Schmidt's Sausage Haus Restaurant), which will earn everyone a free "It's More than Meets the Buckeye" T-shirt from Experience Columbus. Some people may stop for lunch at Schmidt's Sausage Haus.

What to Bring: Comfortable walking clothes and footwear. Dress for the weather.

Meeting Details: Meet at 11:00AM at the Schiller Park Recreation Center parking lot at 1069 Jaeger Street; Columbus, OH 43206. Meet at the parking lot at 11am. We will head out on the trail at 11:15AM.

Signup: Register on Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/buckeye-treat-trail-urban-hike-tickets-1107196477469>

Contact: Email CentralOhio@BuckeyeTrail.org the Central Ohio Chapter with any questions.

MARCH

March 22, 2025

Ohio River Chapter — ADT (Non BT) Eden Park to Devou Park Hike

Description: As part of an effort to hike all of the American Discovery Trail in Kentucky, we will again offer the ADT from Eden Park through KY and back to Ohio in 2 hikes.

Meeting Details: We will meet at Devou Park in Covington Ky at the parking lot in the middle of loop that is Park Ln. between Drees Pavilion and Volpenhein Pavilion, where there should be plenty of parking. We will then shuttle with as few cars as possible over to Eden Park at the Buckeye Trail southern terminus and then walk to Devou Park. The walk is expected to be about 5.5 miles at an easy pace. Hike should be finished by 12 noon. This will be hike 1 of 2. Meeting Location: 9:00AM Meet at Drees Pavilion, 790 Park Ln, Covington, KY.

Signup: Register on Meetup at <https://meetup.com/buckeye-trail-ohio-river-chapter/events/304308543>

March 23, 2025

Ohio River Chapter — ADT (Non BT) Miami Whitewater Forest to Elizabethtown OH- ADT OH North 1

Description: As part of an effort to hike all of the American Discovery Trail in Ohio this year, our focus on is the North route from Elizabethtown.

Meeting Details: We will meet in Elizabethtown OH near the sign at the Elizabethtown Hall parking. We will then shuttle with as few cars as possible over to parking at Miami Whitewater Forest and walk back. Walk is about 10-11 miles and mostly on roads or some sidewalk. Hike should complete by 12:30PM.

Meeting Location: 9:00AM Meet at Elizabethtown OH Townhall 3586 Wayne Ave, North Bend, OH.

Signup: Register on Meetup at <https://meetup.com/buckeye-trail-ohio-river-chapter/events/304368735>

APRIL

April 5, 2025

Ohio River Chapter — ADT (Non BT) Devou Park KY to Fernbank Park OH Hike

Description: As part of an effort to hike all of the American Discovery Trail in Kentucky, we again offer the ADT from Eden Park through KY and back to Ohio in 2 hikes. This is the 2nd of the two hikes.

Meeting Details: We will meet at Fernbank Park in Ohio - Tecumseh Area. We will then shuttle with as few cars as possible over to Devou Park where the last hike ended. The walk is expected to be about 12.15 miles - last year was 13.27- perhaps a bit longer at an easy pace. Hike should be completed at 2:00PM.

Meeting Location: 9:00AM Meet at Fernbank Park, Tecumseh Area

Signup: Register on Meetup at <https://meetup.com/buckeye-trail-ohio-river-chapter/events/304313375>

Hikes & Events (continued)

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April 6, 2025

Ohio River Chapter — ADT(Non BT)Miami Whitewater Forest to Governor Bebb - ADT OH North 2

Description: As part of an effort to hike all of the American Discovery Trail in Ohio this year, our focus on is the North route from Elizabethtown.

Meeting Details: We will meet at Governor Bebb MetroPark - see details in registration link for precise location in park. We will then shuttle with as few cars as possible over to parking at Miami Whitewater Forest and walk back. Walk is about 11 miles perhaps slightly more and mostly on roads, some sidewalk. Hike should complete by 12:30PM.

Meeting Location: 9:00AM Meet at Governor Bebb MetroPark, 1979 Bebb Park Ln, Okeana, OH.

Signup: Register on Meetup at <https://meetup.com/buckeye-trail-ohio-river-chapter/events/304368796>

JUNE

June 19th-22nd, 2025

16th Annual E.G.G.S. Hike

Description: Located at Burr Oak State Park and Wildcat Hollow, the E.G.G.S. Hike is a multi-day hike challenge that honors Emma Grandma Gatewood, a founding member of the Buckeye Trail Association. The event consists of hiking challenges of either 20, 40, or 80 miles.

Signup: Registration TBA. Follow us on facebook for more updated information: <https://www.facebook.com/eggshike/>

SEPTEMBER

September 5-7, 2025

Buckeye TrailFest 2025

Description: The 12th annual Buckeye TrailFest is scheduled for September 5-7, 2025 at Maumee Bay State Park on the shore of Lake Erie. Save the Date!

More online at [buckeyetrail.org/events.php](https://www.buckeyetrail.org/events.php)



16th Annual Emma Grandma Gatewood Solstice Hike

Online registration TBA!!!
June 19th-22, 2025



20 Mile, 40 Mile, & 80 Mile Challenges!

Keep an eye on the Facebook Page for more details!

<https://www.facebook.com/eggshike/>



Looking to make weekend plans?
Follow your local chapter on Meemup!



Crooked River



Muskingum Lakes



The Wilderness



Little Cities of the Forest



Appalachian Foothills



Ohio River



Miami Rivers



Miami & Erie Canal



Lake Plains



Central Ohio



Circuit Hikes

Interested in Chapter-specific events/hikes?

Go to [buckeyetrail.org/chapters](https://www.buckeyetrail.org/chapters) to find your local chapter. You may find Chapter-led events and hikes posted on Chapter social media (Facebook, Meetup, or Instagram) or shared via Chapter newsletters.



The Buckeye Trail Association

Change, Adapt, Progress, and Achieve!

The Buckeye Trail, adorned with those majestic blue blazes, presents a dynamic hiking experience that fluctuates with the seasons, weather conditions, and ongoing trail enhancements. This trail's transformation mirrors the natural forces shaping the surrounding landscape, resulting in an awe-inspiring and ever-changing outdoor adventure.

As an Association the BTA relies on collaborative partnerships and dedicated volunteers to maintain and expand this trail. As they near the end of their strategic plan for the upcoming year, they urgently seek support to achieve their objectives.

The BTA has identified several impactful projects for the year ahead, including finishing the development of a new website and the expansion of volunteer training programs. The Buckeye Trail not only enhances the beauty of Trail Towns but also offers breathtaking scenic views. The support from the community has made these experiences truly enjoyable for everyone.

We have a special opportunity today that you can help with. A generous BTA member has committed to a one-time gift of \$30,000 this season and is inviting us to join them in supporting the BTA's growth in the year ahead. Will you help us leverage their gift to help us adapt to change, progress through challenge, and achieve in 2025 with a gift of any amount to the BTA today? Will you help plant the seeds of future blue blazed trees all around our 1,400+ mile State Trail today?

Will YOU help your BTA Progress and Achieve!



Donate Today!



Yes! I want to help the BTA Progress and Achieve!!!

Annual gifts at this level will include you in our 2025 Blue Blaze Society!

Please accept my gift of: \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other _____

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Buckeye Trail Association

PO Box 5,

Shawnee, OH 43782,

online at www.buckeyetrail.org/donate.php, or

Buckeye Trail Association

P.O. Box 5
Shawnee, Ohio 43782

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You can also scan the
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MEMBERSHIP FORM (for new members only)

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- \$40.00** two years
- \$55.00** three years
- HOUSEHOLD..... **\$35.00** one year
- \$50.00** two years
- \$70.00** three years
- STUDENT..... **\$15.00** per year
- ORGANIZATION..... **\$50.00** per year
- SUSTAINING..... **\$75.00** per year
- BUSINESS..... **\$50.00** one year
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- \$130.00** three years
- LIFE INDIVIDUAL... **\$500.00**
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