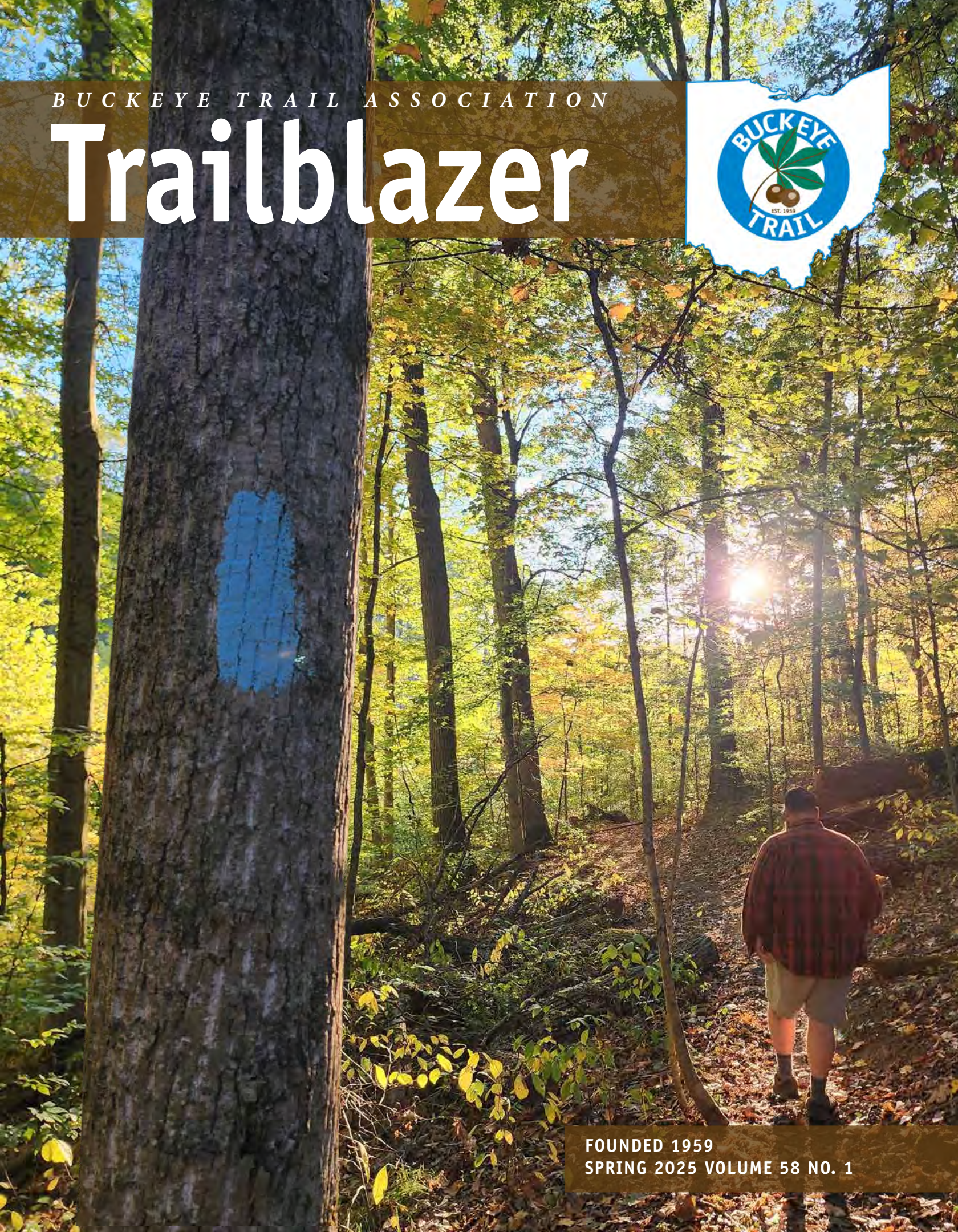


BUCKEYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

# Trailblazer



FOUNDED 1959  
SPRING 2025 VOLUME 58 NO. 1



## IN THIS ISSUE...

- 02 Tag & Tor
- 03 Blue Blaze Academy
- 04 Presidents Message
- 05 On the Trail
- 07 Trailblazer Prize Package
- 08 BTA Funds Report
- 09 Navigate the BTA
- 12 Finding the BTA on Eventbrite
- 13 Contact Us
- 14 ODNr's Buckeye Trail Anywhere
- 18 BNST Feasibility Study Update
- 19 Blue Blaze Society
- 20 Meg's Book Loop
- 21 Ohio's Gems
- 22 Ohio's Geauga County Maple Festival
- 24 Crossword Puzzle #2
- 24 Recipes For Happy Hiking
- 25 Events

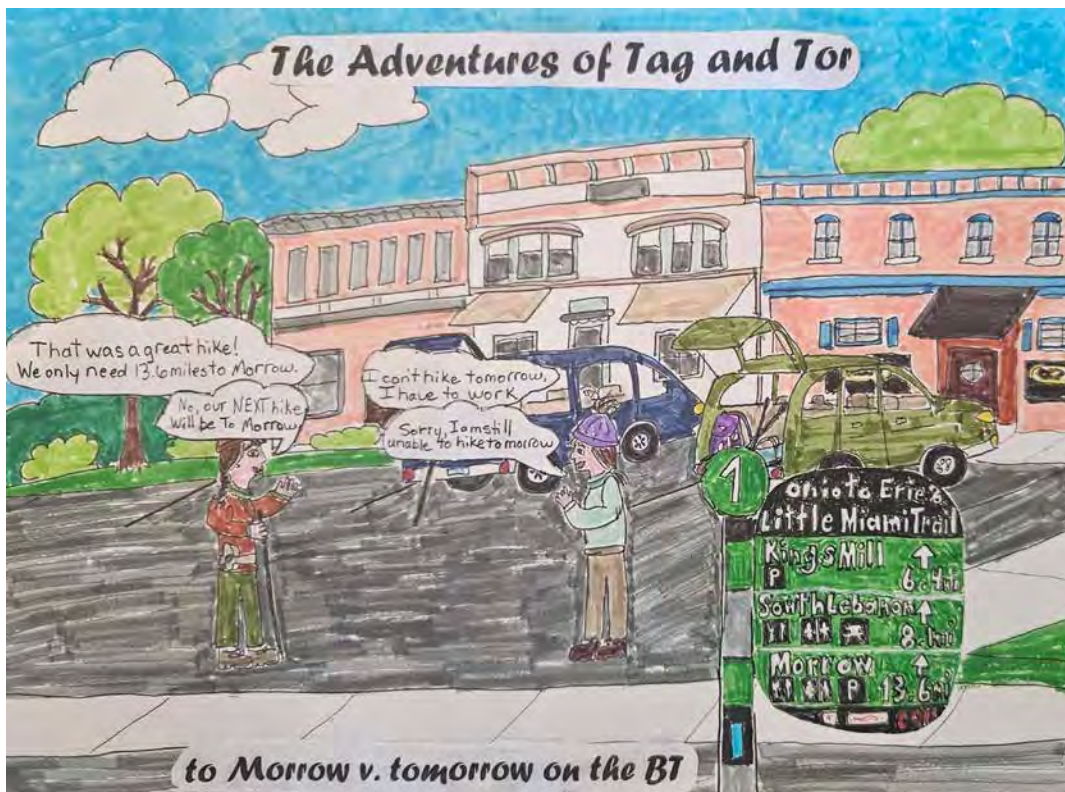
## Editor's Note

As the editor of the Trailblazer, I value your encouragement and attention to detail. In our last issue, Volume 57 No. 4, your prompt notifications helped us correct errors prior to printing. Your participation is vital as we strive to enhance the quality of the Trailblazer for our members and newcomers to the Buckeye Trail Association. Please continue sharing your insights to keep our publication a source of pride. Thank you for your support and collaboration. If you have ideas or want to help create content, email us at [trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org).

-Shawn

## Tag & Tor

Karen Power & Jeri Getts



This installment of The Adventures of Tag and Tor was inspired by CW Spencer (BT hiker and author of Hiking Without Dave and Safe and Secure in a Tippy Canoe). CW has a knack for spotting the funny side of a situation. On a recent hike with Jeri, he noticed that the meaning of the phrase “to Morrow” (a point in the Loveland section) can be changed for comedic effect by omitting the pause after “to”; thus, hatching the idea for “to Morrow v. tomorrow on the BT.”



## Trailblazer

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

Cover photo: Wayne National Forest  
Photo credit: Alyce Shane



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Jim "Sunny" Sunyak  
**Scholarship**  
Brandon Bates  
**Trail Preservation Committee**  
Brian Blair  
**Trail Promotion Committee**  
Brandon Bates & Valerie Gardner



# Blue Blaze Academy

May 3rd & 4th, 2025  
BTA Beall Farmstead

*The Blue Blaze Academy is designed to provide volunteers with hands-on experience and comprehensive training in trail construction and tool maintenance within a structured learning environment.*

Over the two-day training session, attendees will gain comprehensive knowledge on various topics, including project planning, trail tool maintenance, mechanized and non-mechanized trail clearing, trail sustainability, and much more. Additionally, the training will provide ample opportunities for attendees to network with other volunteers from across the state.



*Please watch the BTA Website for more details!*

*Organized by: Seasoned Trail Building Experts from all around the state!!!*

## Hike into Spring

*With new gear from the Official Buckeye Trail Shop!*



**BTA Membership has its Perks!!!**  
Visit the Trail Shop today to learn about your discount!!!



Scan the QR code to visit the shop!





# President's Message

Steve Walker

Here's hoping that 2025 has been a good year for you all so far. It's certainly has started off with a bang for the Buckeye Trail Association. Before the end of 2024, we were notified by the NPS Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study Team that their Public Meetings were going to happen in January along with the Public Comment period. Those Public Meetings took place from January 13th through the 15th along with a virtual one on January 23rd. Because of our efforts to rally the BTA Community, approximately 400 people in total attended these six meetings in spite of the cold weather. The Public Comment period ended on February 19th and I feel safe in presuming that the BTA Community has also responded in good numbers for that. The Feasibility Study Team now has a lot of the data that will help them to prepare a report to the U.S. Congress next year as to the feasibility and suitability of the Buckeye Trail to become a National Scenic Trail.

## Next Big Steps:

With that out of the way, we now have to begin the next segment along the path to having our favorite trail become the nation's twelfth National Scenic Trail. This next phase, which has now begun, will be the Buckeye National Scenic Trail Advocacy Campaign and it will last at least 22 months, if not longer.

## Public Awareness and Advocacy:

We'll be starting to build the grassroots organization among BTA Members and branching out to our partners and supporters. Some BTA Chapters have already signaled their willingness to set up a local Chapter advocacy committee. Even as that organizational effort is getting started, we can begin making the public aware of our quest for National Scenic Trail status. That can be via social media or word of mouth whenever you're out on the trail or in any public setting. The BTA National Scenic Trail Comms Team, an ad hoc committee created in December, has been working on the message and figuring out how you can share it with your fellow Ohioans.

## Advocacy Goal:

Concurrent with this program to inform all Ohioans will be a similar effort to engage with our elected officials to secure their support for NST status for the Buckeye Trail. This will be ongoing and regular. The local Chapter advocacy committees will want to begin reaching out to local city and village councilpersons and mayors, township trustees and county commissioners as well as state legislators

and officials. We already have the support of Governor Mike DeWine. State Senators and State Representatives will be the ones that we will want to focus on for the early part of this advocacy campaign. Even though the Ohio General Assembly will not be the decider on this designation, its support will be influential with U.S. Senators and Congressmen.

Our seventeen U.S. Senators and Congressmen will be the most important ones to convince. Once we convince them that the Buckeye Trail deserves National Scenic Trail status, at least half of the nation's remaining 518 federal legislators will have to be convinced as well. We may have to help them with this.

## Benefits of National Scenic Trail Status:

There are many advantages to becoming a National Scenic Trail. Recognition and resources are just two of them. Those advantages will need to be conveyed to everyone who would support this effort. As mentioned above, the BTA NST Comms Team will be developing resources to assist those of you who want to help advocate for NST status. If you think that you would like to help with this advocacy campaign, please let me know. My email address is below. Thanks for all that you do for the Buckeye Trail and the Buckeye Trail Association. Have a great Spring.

Steve Walker  
[president@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:president@buckeyetrail.org)



January 13th Public Meeting, Peninsula, Ohio  
Photo courtesy of Steve Walker



# On the Trail...

Andrew Bashaw



## Walk with me for a little down a virtual brand-new segment of the Buckeye Trail.



We parked on the gravel at the trailhead and notice license plates from all over the place, and many with Buckeye Trail stickers intermixed with other great adventures from around the country. Some cars have 'I am working on the BT' signs in their windows. We're looking over a new kiosk with a map of the local trail network, and a big map of the entire BT winding its way around the state. We hit the trail.



There's a fiberglass carsonite post with a BT sticker being installed by a BTA volunteer. I remember making the order for the posts recently... and I also recall when we got the post driver from the National Park Service – NCNST several years ago. The blue blazes on trees look freshly painted, and... I notice a new layer of blue on the hands and clothes of a couple more volunteers ahead. We keep walking past the smiling faces and ask if way may pass two volunteers finishing the trail tread with McLeods. And, then again, after stepping around

a broken Pulaski handle, we give four more volunteers a break from benching a level tread out of the hillside, removing small saplings by the root as they go. While they stop to rest at a side trail intersection, take a drink, and enjoy their 10 o'clock break, we move on toward whirring noises around the nose of the hillside. There's not really a trail any more to walk on, just a scraped blown out path through the woods with hanging ribbon tape decorating branches along the centerline of the BT to be.



Walking around the bend, two more volunteers are scraping the forest floor with fire rakes while another volunteer with the backpack leaf blower noisily blasts the leaf layer off up ahead. Across the stream valley we can see, in bright orange, a BTA chainsawyer and swamper bucking one more fallen tree off the new trails path before their well-deserved break.



*I wonder if they'll make it all the way out to the next road today, or tomorrow. What do you think?*







Let's turn round, on our way back, let's take that side trail back to the designated Buckeye Trail Town for lunch. On our way back I can't help but think about the next steps for this segment of the BT. We'll be processing all these volunteer hours, reporting the hours to partners, acknowledging and awarding volunteers. We'll be GPSing, mapping, and publishing this new gift for everyone to enjoy. We'll have to let people know about it through our printed, electronic, and social media. We'll have to recruit, train, and support new trail adopters to make sure this piece of the BT is maintained in good condition... forever. We need another DR brush mower! And, what about that next parcel of land across the road up ahead, how are those conversations with the landowner/manager going?

**Breaking it all down:**

It's been estimated that a mile of BT takes +/- 500 hours to plan and build. I feel that is an extremely conservative number when you include all of the required relationship building, the project proposing and reviewing, the adjustments to avoid a sensitive plant community, the land owner/manager agreements, the permitting from ODNR, State Historic Preservation Office, and/or Army Corps of Engineers, the recruitment, training, organizing and retention of skilled volunteers, and documentation and marketing of a new product. Turns out, creating access to Ohio's Great Outdoors is a lot of work!

While costly and time consuming, with everyone's help; BTA members, donors, volunteers, staff, and partners, we're able to invest in things that last beyond just this one virtual work party. We'll fix and use those Pulaski's and foster those relationships on other great projects for years to come. Our combined investments of ideas, relationships, skills, time, and money produce something of even greater value. The value of walking out a fresh mile of the BT with volunteers over a job well done... meeting a family of hikers ready to hike a brand-new segment of our Buckeye Trail.... Priceless.

Imagine if we had even more volunteers and support staff

time, more projects shovel ready, more materials and equipment, training and PPE, BWC coverage for all BTA volunteers, a larger audience engaged to promote Ohio's BT to, more and better Trail Towns and trailheads. More investments in the idea of the Buckeye Trail in all the ways touched on above are all targeted on providing more miles of the BT off roads through Ohio's greatest landscapes for that family to enjoy towards their goal of completing an adventure of a lifetime, all around Ohio.

Besides the acknowledgement of the BTA's accomplishments and the promotional value for Ohio's greatest outdoor experience, the potential investment in expanding and improving the BT experience is why the BTA is interested in National Scenic Trail designation for our trail. In 1958 Merrill Gilfillan wrote in the Columbus Dispatch Magazine that the Buckeye Trail "should be as endless and as boundless as the energy and the imagination of those who would use it."


Thank you for virtually hiking a mile of fresh BT with me and for supporting the work of the Buckeye Trail Association. I hope to see you on the trail this Spring... for real.

**Hope to see you on the trail!**

Happy Hiking,

Andrew Bashaw  
**Executive Director, Buckeye Trail Association**

**12th Annual  
TrailFest 2025**








**LAKE PLAINS**

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



# Trailblazer Prize Package



## Spring 2025 Volume 58 No. 1 Prize:

For this issue, we've got an awesome prize package donated by Gatewood Appalachia!

The winner of this prize package will receive:

- 1 Rare Limited Edition Gatewood Appalachia Patch
- 1 Black Blogilates Water Bottle Sling
- 1 Pair Large Gatewood Appalachia "Rascal the Raccoon" Socks
- 1 each Grandma Gatewood Tennis Shoe Pin, "Opie the Opossum" Pin, Glow in the dark Synchronous Fire Fly Pin, Cardinal & Carnation Pin, & Grandma Gatewood Pin

A big shout-out to the Gatewood Appalachia for generously donating these amazing items! Kindly visit their website by scanning the QR code located above.

### Rules:

Throughout this issue of the Trailblazer, there are 7 (seven) Silhouette BT Hiker logos hidden, excluding the sample on this page. Additionally, there is a crossword puzzle on page 24 with ten questions. To win, please send an email to [trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org), providing the correct page numbers for all 7 (seven) logos and also providing the correct answers to the crossword puzzle. All entries will be entered into a random generator to select a winner.



Sample

# \$100

Estimated Value!!!

*Submissions will be accepted until May 15th at 8:00am. 1 (one) submission per person.*

### Congratulations:

A big shout-out to all who took part in the Winter 2024 Volume 57 No. 4 contest! the prize winner is Brian Batchelder from the Central Ohio Chapter Congrats, we hope you enjoy the shirts and lantern!

## The Blue Blaze Society

# This is bigger than anyone of us, Consider taking that next big step!

**Your Support Makes History!**

Join the Blue Blaze Society,  
our dedicated giving circle  
protecting the Buckeye Trail  
for future generations.



To make YOUR contribution gift of \$500 or more TODAY, contact Mark Middleton at [development@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:development@buckeyetrail.org) or scan the QR Code to the right to donate right now!



# 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.

## NOVEMBER 2, 2024 - FEBRUARY 1, 2025

### GENERAL FUND

Georgia & Eric Adams	Paul Dittmar	Jim & Blenda James	Cathy & Jim Oda
David Baker	Michael Doherty	Jayson Jordan	Matthew Patterson
Jane Balbo & Family	Ruth & Dan Dorrough	Eben Kent & Family	Bob & Connie Pond
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### BTA Beall Farmstead

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### Buckeye Trail Management

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### In honor of Nancy Hoffner's

### BT Completion 2024

Elizabeth Goodrich

### In gratitude for volunteers, especially

**Elyria Little.**  
Sharon Stadtwald

### In gratitude for volunteers, especially

**James 'Sunny' Sunyak.**  
Laurence Grewe

### In memory of Polly Britten Cooney

Patrick & Mary Hayes

### In memory of Kimberly Freeland

Anne Furste

## **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](mailto: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](mailto:trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org)! They might just show up on our social media or feature in the Trailblazer.



# Navigate the BTA: A Beginner's Guide to Exploring and Contributing

Compiled By: Shawn Steinschreiber

New to the BT, or the BTA? Confused how to navigate the complex organism that is the greater Buckeye Trail Association? This guide is designed to help you navigate the complexities of the BTA and discover ways to contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the Buckeye Trail, both on and off the trail.

To start this off, maybe using the initials BT and BTA just might be confusing, it is to us at times. When we talk about BT, we're referring to the actual beloved Buckeye Trail, being the thing we're all here for. On the other hand, the BTA, or the Buckeye Trail Association, is the group of passionate individuals who take care of, maintain, and preserve the BT.



- **BTA VISION:** The Buckeye Trail Association is an organization reflective of the diversity of the trail. Working in close partnership with communities, organizations and agencies around the state of Ohio, the volunteers and staff of the Buckeye Trail Association administer overall coordination, management and support for a sustainable world class hiking trail that provides a safe and unique experience connecting Ohio's diverse resources, people, places and history; creating a legacy for present and future generations to marvel and enjoy.
- **BTA MISSION:** The Buckeye Trail Association builds, maintains, preserves, and promotes the use of the 1,400+ mile Buckeye Trail, Ohio's longest hiking trail, for our citizens, communities and partners. Since 1959, we have provided outdoor recreation, volunteer opportunities, education, economic benefits, and access to the natural and cultural resources of Ohio.

Chapter Map to the left.) that maintain and support their sections. Chapters tackle the BTA's mission locally, focusing on Ohio's Buckeye Trail. They help build, maintain, protect, and promote it in their regions, organizing work parties, hikes, and events. Typically, several BT Sections form a chapter, and there are ten chapters across Ohio. Check the list to see which one is nearest you!

**Chapter Leadership:** Each chapter is managed by a team of committed volunteers who provide essential support. Kindly contact your local chapter's leadership team to explore volunteer opportunities.

#### Typical Chapter Leadership Team:

- |                 |                              |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| • Chapter Chair | • TMT Chapter Rep            |
| • Vice Chair    | • Tools Cache Manger         |
| • Secretary     | • Social Media Manager       |
| • Treasurer     | • Promotional Assets Manager |

#### BTA Administration:

The BTA's daily tasks and special projects are managed by, passionate volunteers, and hardworking staff. They handle everything from the trail preservation, membership, finances, fundraising and much, much more..

#### BTA Board of Trustees:

BTA Board members serve for 3 year terms and are elected at the Annual Meeting. They guide the organization and contribute to the Buckeye Trail's shared mission and vision. Currently we have 15 members.

The current officers include President Steve Walker, Vice President Jim "Sunny" Sunyak, Secretary Lori Luken, and Treasurer Erik Morris. These individuals, along with the Executive Committee and the Trail Maintenance Team Chair, collaborate to preserve and enhance the trail.

Additional Trustees engage in committee work and contribute their skills to steer the organization's direction. The Board forms committees such as the Membership, Finance, and

#### The Buckeye Trail:

First imagined in the late 1950s, the Buckeye Trail was initially envisioned as a path connecting the Ohio River to Lake Erie. Over the years, it has become a sprawling 1,400+ mile loop, comprised of 26 sections (See the Chapter Map above.), showcasing everything from serene lakeshores to bustling urban landscapes. It can be easy for one to become engulfed in the trail's rich and amazing history, with its winding paths through every corner of Ohio, as you grow your appreciation for the beauty that countless volunteers have helped to preserve.

#### The Buckeye Trail Association: Be Part of Something Bigger:

The BTA is a passionate community of volunteers who maintain and promote the Buckeye Trail. More than just an organization, the BTA offers social events, workshops, and hikes that foster camaraderie among members. By joining, you'll contribute to the maintenance and improvement of one of America's longest and most diverse trails.

#### Chapters:

First and foremost the most important people with the greater BTA are the dedicated volunteers of our ten Chapters (See the



Trail Promotion Committees, addressing specific operational aspects and fostering a vibrant community of volunteers.

**Board of Trustees:**  
**President:** Steve Walker  
**Vice President:** Jim "Sunny" Sunyak  
**Secretary:** Lori Luken  
**Treasurer:** Erik Morris

Brandon Bates	Tim Murphy	Mark Middleton
Valerie Gardner	Nancy Hoffner	Jill Moorehead
Randall Roberts	Caitlin Edwards	Elyria Little
Nick Govelovich	Maureen Gatewood	

**BTA Staff:**

Managing the intricate web of responsibilities for the BT and the BTA, involves a mix of paid employees, contractors, and volunteers. They handle daily tasks and special projects essential to our mission, as well as providing support for our Chapters, Sections, and other volunteers

**Paid Staff:**

Andrew Bashaw, our Executive Director, guides the BTA's strategic direction, ensuring goals align with our mission. Connie Pond, our Clerk, manages financial and membership data entry to keep things running smoothly. Aidan Reagh, our Marketing & Office Coordinator, maintains our public image and manages internal operations, supporting our staff and volunteers.

**Specialized Roles:**

Mary Hayes, our Webmaster, keeps our web presence maintained, and along with Pat Hayes also dedicatedly runs the Map Team. Mark Anstaett, has been keeping everyone on trail managing the large GIS database for the BT. Kim Love-Ottobre, our Trail Town Coordinator, builds relationships in Trail Towns. Rick Mark, our Scouting Liaison, engages younger generations with trail activities. Shawn Steinschreiber, the Trailblazer Editor, produces our quarterly magazine, keeping the community informed about the Buckeye Trail. The Trail Shop is run and by Mark Heise.

**Staff:**

**Executive Director:** Andrew Bashaw  
**Clerk:** Connie Pond

**Marketing & Office Coordinator:** Aidan Reagh  
**Webmaster:** Mary Hayes  
**Map Team:** Pat and Mary Hayes

**Trail Town Coordinator:** Kim Love-Ottobre  
**GIS Coordinator:** Mark Anstaett

**Scouting Liason:** Rick Mark  
**Trail Management Team Chair:** Byron Guy

**Buckeye Trail Shop:** Mark Heise  
**Trailblazer Editor:** Shawn Steinschreiber

**Understanding the Committees of the BTA:**

The members of the BTA's committees are a vibrant network of passionate individuals dedicated to maintaining and promoting the BT. At the heart of these committees are its members, each playing a crucial role in ensuring the trail's success and sustainability. By understanding their functions, BTA members and potential volunteers can find ways to contribute their skills and passion to Ohio's

cherished hiking path. Want to learn more about the committees, or interested in volunteering please see the contact us page.

**Awards & Recognition Committee:**

They identify and celebrate the outstanding contributions of volunteers, recognizing the individuals who support the trail's mission with dedication and passion.

**Board Resource Committee:**

This group is responsible for providing resources and support to the BTA Board of Trustees. Their primary function is to ensure that the board has the necessary tools and information to lead effectively. Additionally, they handle nominations and elections to the BTA Board of Trustees.

**Development Committee:**

This committee is focused on expanding the Buckeye Trail's reach and influence. They work on helping to secure funding and partnerships to support trail development projects, ensuring that the trail remains a vital part of Ohio's outdoor recreation landscape.

**Finance Committee:**

Managing the financial health of the BTA, this committee handles budgeting, and financial planning to ensure the continued operation and preservation of the Association.

**Membership Committee:**

This committee focuses on growing the Association's membership base, ensuring that a diverse group of people are connected with the Buckeye Trail. They work to engage both new and existing members, fostering a community committed to the trail's mission.

**Scholarship Fund Committee:**

This committee handles the scholarship program, seeking qualified applicants and helping to further educational opportunities. They support the next generation of trail enthusiasts by promoting and managing The BTA Scholarship.

**Trail Preservation Committee:**

Charged with preserving a permanent corridor for the BT, this team works to protect the trail and its surrounding lands. They collaborate with conservation partners to ensure long-term trail sustainability and protection against incompatible uses.





### **Trail Promotion Committee:**

Focused on promoting the Buckeye Trail, this committee works on publicity through social media, the BTA website, newsletters, and special events like Buckeye TrailFest. They play a vital role in raising awareness and encouraging more people to engage with the trail.

### **Trail Management Team (TMT):**

Responsible for the “building and maintaining” aspect of the trail, they oversee trail construction and maintenance efforts. This includes coordinating volunteers, such as Section Supervisors and Trail Adopters, who ensure the trail remains accessible and well-maintained. The Trail Management team is overseen by a chairman and a committee, including a representative from each chapter.

### **Buckeye Trail Town Program:**



Our Buckeye Trail Towns provide destinations around which you can plan your outdoor recreation. Head here for a weekend or more and set up your base camp at a local campground, or enjoy creature comforts at one of the local motels or bed and breakfasts. There are hometown restaurants, shops, and other in-town amenities to complement your outdoor forays on the Buckeye Trail. Get to know the backroads, byways and genuine friendliness of small town Ohio as you base your next outdoor expedition from a Buckeye Trail Town!

### **Special Events:**

Throughout the year, and around the state Volunteers and staff work together to host amazing special events that showcase

### **More ways you can get involved:**

#### **Working Groups:**

Various strategic planworking groups, such as the Hiking Experience and Advocacy, focus on enhancing specific projects of the BTA. They explore new ideas and strategies to improve the user experience and promote trail-friendly policies.

#### **Participate in Events and Gatherings:**

The BTA hosts several events throughout the year that are open to the public. Whether it's a hike, a workshop, or the annual three-day gathering, these events are an opportunity to learn, socialize, and immerse yourself in the trail community. Check out the events page on the BTA's website for upcoming activities.

#### **Volunteer and Make an Impact:**

From helping maintain trails to participating in the Trail Promotion Committee, there are numerous ways to volunteer and make a tangible impact. Whether you're handy with tools or have a knack for organizing events, your skills and enthusiasm are always welcome. Visit the BTA's website to discover volunteer opportunities that match your interests.

#### **Opportunities for Youth Groups with the BTA:**

Youth Groups can fulfill community service requirements by working with the Buckeye Trail Association (BTA), which helps them develop leadership skills. They can propose and develop projects with the BTA, hike the trail to identify improvement areas, and ensure their projects meet the trail's needs. The BTA, a volunteer-driven group, offers a supportive environment for Youth Groups, such as Scouts to contribute and complete their service projects.

#### **Experience Trail Magic:**

The Buckeye Trail is not merely a path through the woods but a community. Experience the generosity of Trail Angels, who offer shuttles, refreshments, and even places to rest. These unsung heroes add a dash of magic to every hiker's journey.

### **Final Thoughts:**

The Buckeye Trail and the Buckeye Trail Association await your discovery and contribution. By becoming a member and getting involved, you're not only exploring the diverse landscapes of Ohio but also joining a legacy of preservation and community. So lace up your boots, grab your map, and forge your own path on the Buckeye Trail!

all the amazing experiences the Buckeye Trail has to offer, for more events please see the BTA Website.

- **TrailFest:** Held annually all around the state celebrating the Buckeye Trail by showcasing experiences all around Ohio. Culminating in the BTA's Annual Meeting.
- **E.G.G.S. Hike:** Held annually the closest weekend to the summer solstice at the stunning Burr Oak State Park! This hike pays tribute to Emma “Grandma” Gatewood, a pioneering member of the BTA and the first woman to complete a solo thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail.
- **Little Loop Challenge:** Held annually in September to To Collectively Hike the 250 Mile Buckeye Trail “Little Loop” in one Day.
- **MorelFest:** Held annually by Muskingum Lake Chapter at the BTA Beall Farmstead celebrating Morel Mushrooms and the trail!
- **Blue Blaze Festival:** Held annually in the Trail Town of Shawnee, celebrating the Buckeye Trail with running, hiking and backpacking.
- **BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike:** Held annually at Burr Oak State Park, in partnership with Burr Oak State Park.
- **Biggest Day Hike:** Held annually on National Trails Day. With everyone pledging to hike a small segment of the trail, collectively completing all 1,400+ miles





# Finding the Buckeye Trail on Eventbrite

Valerie Gardner

The easiest way to find Buckeye Trail Association events is to visit their Eventbrite collection directly: <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/buckeye-trail-association-events-4030513> or <https://tr.ee/CXCCzgLiLq>. This page compiles all events hosted by the BTA and its local chapters.

If you'd like to search for specific events or explore events in your area, you can also follow these steps:

## 1. Visit Eventbrite's Website or Open the App

- Go to [www.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) or open the Eventbrite app on your mobile device.

## 2. Use the Search Bar

- In the search bar at the top of the page, type "Buckeye Trail"
- To narrow your results, you can include specific keywords like "hike," "volunteer," "work party," or the name of a location (e.g., "Findley State Park" or "Maumee Bay").

## 3. Set the Location

- Enter your city, state, or ZIP code in the "Location" field.
- Or select "Online Events" for virtual opportunities.

## 4. Filter the Results

- Use the filters to refine your search. For example,

select dates or event categories (e.g., "Travel & Outdoor").

- Helpful Hint: The majority of events are FREE. Using this filter will help cut down of the number of results.

## 5. Browse the Events

- Scroll through the list of events matching your search. Each result will display the event name, date, and location.

## 6. Select an Event

- Click on the event name to view details, including a description, schedule, and ticket information.

## 7. Get Your Tickets

- Follow the prompts to get your ticket and reserve your spot.

## 8. Follow the Chapter

- Click "Follow" next to the chapter's name hosting the event to follow them. This ensures you stay updated on future events and announcements.

If you'd like to host a hike or event in your area along the Buckeye Trail, reach out to [events@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:events@buckeyetrail.org) to get involved with the local chapter in your community!



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 River Chapter



The Wilderness Chapter



Little Cities of the Forest





# Contact US:



## Buckeye Trail Association

P.O. Box 5  
Shawnee, Ohio 43782  
740-394-2008  
www.buckeyetrail.org



Scan the Code  
for a Detailed  
list of Section  
Supervisors.



Scan the  
Code to Join  
a Chapter of  
the BTA . . .

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Scholarship Committee	Brandon Bates	scholarship@buckeyetrail.org
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Trail Promotion Committee	Brandon Bates, & Valerie Gardner	marketing@buckeyetrail.org

## Follow us on...



facebook.com/buckeyetrail



BuckeyeTrail.eventbrite.com



youtube.com/user/BuckeyeTrailTV



@buckeyetrailassociation





Department of  
Natural Resources

# Buckeye Trail Anywhere

## DISCOVER THE BUCKEYE TRAIL ANYWHERE

Embark on an incredible virtual adventure with the Buckeye Trail Anywhere guide. This fun activity allows you to “hike” Ohio’s legendary 1,440-mile Buckeye Trail from the comfort of your school, community, or anywhere you choose.

Whether you’re an educator looking to inspire students, a senior staying active, or anyone eager to explore Ohio’s natural and cultural treasures, this guide has something for everyone.

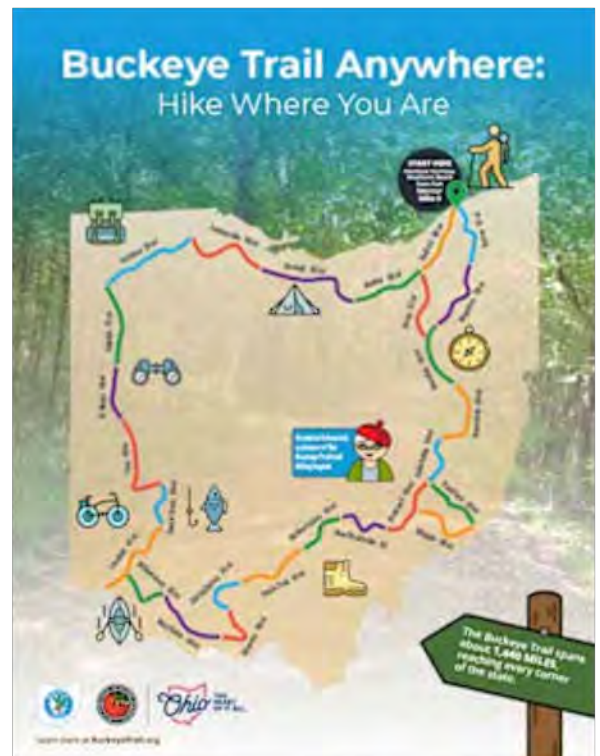
Learn about scenic trail towns, rich geography, diverse ecosystems, and fascinating historical landmarks while staying physically active through customizable activities.

### *Buckeye Trail Anywhere*

A fun activity exploring all Ohio has to offer while virtually traversing wooded footpaths, historic towpaths, abandoned railroads, diverse communities, and more. Buckeye Trail Anywhere’s primary audience is educators of elementary through high school students but it is also useful outside of formal education settings. The goal of Buckeye Trail Anywhere is to assist learners of any age to be physically active and gain knowledge of Ohio’s great outdoors. This activity engages participants in essential physical activity habits as they explore all of Ohio without leaving your school, senior center, or wherever you may be.

**This guide provides information that can be used to supplement learning as participants “hike” the entire Buckeye Trail virtually.**

- ◊ **Teachers:** This is your guide. How you use it in your classroom is up to you. However, we’ve provided some suggested activities to get you started. The activities address Ohio’s Learning Standards for Physical Education, Social Studies, Math, and other subjects, as outlined by the Ohio Department of Education.
- ◊ **Golden Buckeyes (Senior Citizens):** We are happy that you are here. Use this guide to learn more about the Buckeye State. Feel free to change any of the physical recommendations to fit your abilities and environment.



**Download Today!!!**

*Ready to explore?  
Download the guide now  
and start your Buckeye  
Trail journey today!*

[https://ohiodnr.gov/go-and-do/find-a-trail/  
ohio-trails/buckeye-trail-anywhere](https://ohiodnr.gov/go-and-do/find-a-trail/ohio-trails/buckeye-trail-anywhere)



# Buckeye Trail Anywhere

## SECTION TRACKER



The Buckeye Trail spans about **1,440 MILES**, reaching every corner of the state.



Learn more at [BuckeyeTrail.org](http://BuckeyeTrail.org)



# Buckeye Trail Anywhere Milestone Achievement

This certificate is proudly presented to

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

for completing **Buckeye Trail Anywhere: Hike Where You Are.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Mary Mertz*  
DIRECTOR MARY MERTZ  
Ohio Department of Natural Resources





***Congratulations on taking your first step to hiking the Buckeye Trail, wherever you may be!***



Ohio is home to many beautiful state parks and wonderful nature trails, giving all of us the opportunity to get outside and explore. With thousands of miles of trails here in our great state, Ohio truly is the Heart of Adventure!

This Buckeye Trail Anywhere Guidebook will lead you on an adventure through Ohio no matter where you live. Ohioans can use this guide to follow a winding path around the state connecting charming towns and natural wonders along the trail.

While this guide was primarily designed to be an easy-to-use educational resource to help school teachers get students moving, anyone can take part in this fun activity. As you navigate the trail, you'll explore many of Ohio's special and beautiful landscapes from the shores of Lake Erie to the rolling hills of Appalachia and some of the winding rivers and remnants of Ohio's canal past.

Hiking in Ohio is a special experience that is a great activity to share with friends or loved ones. I have made lifelong memories hiking with my family throughout our great state. Hopefully, reading this guide will encourage you to take a trip to a new part of Ohio for some hiking and sightseeing.

While you're there, be sure to stop at a local restaurant for a warm meal or window shop for some unique gifts.

I welcome you to the Buckeye Trail community and hope you enjoy all the wonderful things that make Ohio the Heart of it All!

***Very Respectfully Yours,***

Mike DeWine  
**Governor**

**Teachers and trailblazers**—to give a taste of reality, this guide is written as though trailblazers are on the ground traversing the Buckeye Trail. Use this guide to learn and teach about the geography, recreation, history, and wildlife of the Buckeye Trail. Ohio's state parks, forests, nature preserves, and wildlife areas are excellent starting points for your Buckeye Trail adventures. Many campgrounds sprinkle the trail and can serve as base camp for multiday treks. Or, if the comforts of home are more your style, the many historic and quaint Buckeye Trail Towns host warm and inviting lodging.

The trail towns officially designated by the Buckeye Trail Association, along with many other towns along the Buckeye Trail, are essential resources for many hikers on a long journey. These towns offer local restaurants for a well-deserved warm meal, convenience stores for resupplying food to carry on the trail for multiple days, local shops to purchase unique goods and collect souvenirs, and much more. Many Buckeye Trail Towns are much more than junctions for hikers, but hubs of activity for many outdoor enthusiasts.

**ODNR Director**

***Dear Trailblazers and Teachers,***



I invite you and/or your class on a "hike" of Ohio's Buckeye Trail from the comfort of your own gym, track, hallway, community—anywhere!

Buckeye Trail Anywhere is for everyone, from elementary students to older adults. For teachers, the best part is that buses and substitute teachers are not required to embark on this field trip around the great state of Ohio!

Did you know the Buckeye Trail provides a fascinating outdoor experience spanning over 1,440 miles around the state? Use the included map, informational guide, and mileage trackers to "hike" the Buckeye Trail.

This can be done as either an individual or group challenge and is a chance to explore Ohio's rich geography, ecosystems, and cultural heritage from anywhere!

Please use this fantastic resource as an educational tool to learn and teach others about local history and the major hiking trail that's right in your backyard. I hope this guide along Ohio's Buckeye Trail fosters a deeper connection to the natural world and communities around the state.

***Sincerely,***

Mary Mertz  
**Director**



# Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study Update

Andrew Bashaw



The Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study Acts of 2021 and 2022 passed within the Omnibus Bill towards the end of that year. As the process unfolded, the National Park Service was designated to conduct the study, a team was formed out of the NPS Denver Service Center, and they began work on the study in earnest with a 3-year timeline in October of 2023. January of 2025 saw the public stakeholder input phase of the study. In person stakeholder meetings were conducted by NPS staff in the Cuyahoga Valley, Napoleon, Dayton, Cincinnati, and Athens, OH as well as a virtual public meeting totaling over 400 participants in addition to all the comments submitted online before the deadline of February 19th. Thank you all for turning out in support of the BT on relatively short notice in inclement weather on weekday evenings!

## Public Engagement:

The BNST Feasibility Study Team has been in contact with the BTA, in person on January 17th at our headquarters in the Buckeye Trail Town of Shawnee, OH, as well as virtual meetings to fine tune the questions the team still must answer. The Team has solicited input from the public on these topics/ questions:

1. How do you use the Buckeye Trail? For example, do you have a favorite time of year to recreate on the trail? How often do you use the trail? Do you use it to commute, hike, bike, or enjoy other activities?
2. Do you have information you can share regarding places or amenities on or near the trail that are important to you?
3. How do you think proposed designation of this route as a national scenic trail would affect you and your community? Do you have concerns? What benefits do you see?
4. Is there anything else you want the study team to know about the Buckeye Trail route and sites associated or adjacent to it?

## Information Requests:

The Team is currently requesting more information from the BTA regarding the overlay with Ohio's geology, geography, and history, our trail preservation efforts, plans, and partnerships, our vast network of partnerships, our current and future trail maintenance processes and plans, as well as the current and potential economic impact of the BT to local our local communities.

If your BTA partner organization has not yet submitted a letter of support or interest to the team at [Buckeye\\_Trail\\_Study@nps.gov](mailto:Buckeye_Trail_Study@nps.gov) it may still be accepted as part of the Feasibility Study documentation. Of note, Governor DeWine and ODNR Director Mertz, as well as Ohio Senator Steve Wilson, Co-Chair of the Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus, are among many others who have submitted enthusiastic letters of support so far.

## Next Steps:

The Team has been clear that they are not providing a recommendation in favor or against the idea of a BNST, they are specifically providing the information to their superiors within the agency of the National Park Service and ultimately to the Secretary of the Interior about whether or not Ohio's BT meets the criteria of a



Athens, Ohio: National Park Service Open House National Scenic Trail Feasibility Public Hearings

National Scenic Trail as defined in the National Trails System Act of 1968, as amended. The results of the process will provide a finding to Congress. That is where the study will end, likely in the Spring of 2026. A potential next step would be an effort to introduce a bill to Congress to officially designate our Buckeye Trail as the 12th National Scenic Trail based on those findings.

I will share that the Feasibility Study Team has expressed that they are impressed with the quantity and quality of input that they have received so far from BT enthusiasts like you. They have enjoyed meeting you and have high compliments for you regarding your kindness, thoughtfulness, and passion for the Buckeye!

*Thank you for, as usual, being such great ambassadors of the BT and the Buckeye Trail Association!!!*

- **Feasibility Study Purpose:** The Team is providing information to the National Park Service and ultimately to the Secretary of the Interior about whether or not Ohio's BT meets the criteria of a National Scenic Trail.
- **Study Focus:** The study aims to understand trail usage, identify important amenities, assess the impact of national scenic trail designation, and gather additional information about the Buckeye Trail route and its surroundings.
- **Study Timeline:** The Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study began in October 2023 with a 3-year timeline, including a public stakeholder input phase in January & February 2025.
- **Public Engagement:** The National Park Service conducted in-person and virtual stakeholder meetings, receiving over 400 participants and numerous online comments.
- **Information Request:** The Team is requesting more information from the BTA regarding the overlay with Ohio's geology, geography, and history, trail preservation efforts, plans, and partnerships, trail maintenance processes and plans, and the economic impact of the BT to local communities.
- **Potential Next Steps:** Potentially introduce a bill to Congress to officially designate the Buckeye Trail as the 12th National Scenic Trail based on the Feasibility Study findings.



# BLUE BLAZE SOCIETY

Mark Middleton



Hello I'm Mark Middleton, Chairman, Development Committee and BTA Trustee.

### My BTA Story:

As a retired Army officer I've always enjoyed being outdoors and hiking. Being introduced to the Buckeye Trail and Buckeye Trail Association by a friend was a significant milestone. The physical challenges and wonderful areas I've hiked on the Buckeye Trail have been very rewarding. The story of

the BT is the story of Ohio to me, I get to personally experience all of Ohio; canal towpaths, forests, and country roads. Conquering the challenges of the hills and then helping out on work parties has been very satisfying and fulfilling.

I've waded through viney thickets, crossed older bridges needing repair and waded streams in January that needed a bridge. I realized that it takes more than just volunteering to make a successful work effort, it takes money for tools and supplies.

I joined the Blue Blaze Society to provide the extra resources that the BTA needs. The Blue Blaze Society was established to recognize people that are able to contribute extra monetary resources to the BTA.

**Purpose of the Blue Blaze Society:**  
Provide greater investment in the BTA

### The goals of the Blue Blaze Society are:

- To help secure the future of the Buckeye Trail
- To increase the Buckeye Trail Association's Greatest Needs Fund
- To increase the Buckeye Trail Association's Trail Preservation Fund

### Members of the Blue Blaze Society are Buckeye Trail Association members who:

- Annually make a contribution of \$500 or more, or
- Have informed the Buckeye Trail Association that they have named BTA as a recipient of a planned gift, or
- Have made a one-time contribution of \$5,000 or more (this can include a corporate match), or
- Have made a permanent donation of an interest in property of \$5,000 or more.

If you are interested in learning about giving back to the BT in any of these ways please feel free to contact me to discuss the BTA's Blue Blaze Society and how we all can help realize the vision of a completed and enjoyed Buckeye Trail. Mark Middleton, [development@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:development@buckeyetrail.org)

## Trailblazer



### For Social Media

Don't forget to check out our social media pages! We'd love to hear your Buckeye Trail Story.



[facebook.com/bta.trailblazer](https://facebook.com/bta.trailblazer)



[@BTA.Trailblazer](https://@BTA.Trailblazer)



Remember to Report Your Volunteer Hours

*Buckeye Trail Volunteers  
Maintaining and Promoting the Buckeye Trail since 1959*



# Meg's Book Loop

Margaret "Meg" Sondey

**"Follow the Blue Blazes,"**  
By Bob & Connie Pond,  
Ohio University Press, 2014.

## It Started with a Question

"Mommy – why does that tree have blue paint on it?" My young son, on a group hike at a local park system, pointed to a tree and then looked at me. I didn't know a lot, but I did know... "That's for the Buckeye Trail."

A while later, I purchased the first edition of "Follow the Blue Blazes: A Guide to Hiking Ohio's Buckeye Trail," by Robert J. Pond but it wasn't until the second edition was published in 2014 (with the addition of Connie Pond as an author) that I looked at the book!

## Don't make that mistake!

Whether you intend to hike the entire Buckeye Trail, or just want to learn more about the trail and hike certain sections, the information, maps, and photos in the 2014 edition will help you to appreciate what you can see and do on the trail.

Before diving into the individual chapters, a quick review of "How to Use This Guide" will help you to understand how to get the most out of the eleven geographically defined chapters as well as the chapters entitled, "Hiking the Buckeye Trail," and the final chapter which discusses the history of the trail. An index at the back of the



book enables you to quickly find specific information....very helpful if you are on the way out the door to a hike!

## How to use the guide:

For a quick overview of how each geographically defined chapter is organized, I'll use the example of "Chapter 7 – The Great Black Swamp." The chapter opens with a highlighted Buckeye Trail map indicating the area the chapter will cover as well as the relevant BTA section maps. The distance, as well as Ohio counties covered, are also indicated, along with a more detailed map on the next page. The overview discusses the history, geography, and highlights of the area, and includes several color photographs. Three featured hikes are then discussed, once again including maps and photographs. The chapter concludes with a list of websites of "Local Contacts" and the Waypoint ID's along with their descriptions, latitudes, and longitudes!

Whew! A lot of information packed into one chapter! Each of the other geographically defined chapters are similar. Although many hikers use the BTA physical maps or FarOut/Avenza or other apps, the details packed into these chapters just can't be reproduced by those resources.

## Information Updates:

Of course, like any published work, information changes... as does the trail. The Ponds remind readers to check for more current information at the BTA website, or the websites of specific organizations or local contacts mentioned.

## Closing:

My son only hiked bits and pieces of the Buckeye Trail when he was a child, but his simple question led to his parents hiking the entire BT.

**Never underestimate the influence of an inquisitive son!**



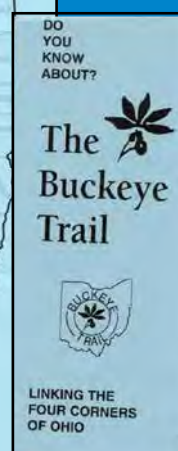
Bob & Connie Pond Signing Books at the BTA office. (Note: Pictured top Andrew Bashaw Executive Director of the BTA with The Ponds



Above: Autograph from Bob Pond inside the front cover, with the inscription: "Happy Trails, Bob Pond"



Right: long with the book recipients of the 2014 edition received a Follow the Blue Blazes Bookmark, and a Brochure with the Old Map Logo. Note the old Worthington office and no wilderness loop!



"Follow the Blue Blazes"



# Ohio's Gems

Anthony Small

that await! If you would like to contribute, please email [trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org).

## Introducing:



My name is Anthony and I run the Native Plant Nursery for Rural Action. I have had a lifelong love for the outdoors, stemming from a passion for propagating native flora from my home state of Ohio. I started growing perennial wildflowers when I was 15 and have diversified into growing native trees, shrubs, and everything else under the sun. The goal of

Rural Action's nursery is to create a sustainable model for growing trees for the Appalachian region. The nursery team and I work with local landowners to locate native tree populations to source seed from. Currently, the seeds are collected and raised into seedlings at Rural Action's plant nursery. We are beginning to work with select local producers to grow trees for future planting projects, helping to provide economic opportunity to the region. Many of these planting projects are happening in Rural Action. Our Watersheds team has been working on restoring quite a few properties across Southeast Ohio. Many of these properties are critically important for watershed health.

## Ohio's Gems: The Trailblazer's New Adventure

Welcome to "Ohio's Gems," the latest addition to the Trailblazer that will take you on an enlightening journey through the rich tapestry of our state's natural wonders. Each installment, we will dive deep into the captivating flora, fauna, and geological features that grace the landscapes of our beloved trails. Whether it's the vibrant bloom of the Downy Service Berry or the elusive call of the native whip-poor-will, "Ohio's Gems" promises to be an engaging exploration into the wild heart of our region.

In this exciting series, we are thrilled to bring you insights from guest experts and knowledgeable BTA members who are passionate about Ohio's natural heritage. These seasoned trailblazers will share their expertise and stories, helping you to connect with the environment in a profound way. Whether you're a seasoned hiker or a curious nature enthusiast, "Ohio's Gems" invites you to discover the hidden gems that make our trails unique.

Join us on this adventure and explore the wildness that makes Ohio truly remarkable. Let's hit the trail and uncover the wonders

## Downy Service Berry (*Amelanchier arborea*)

One of my favorite native plants is the Downy Service Berry (*Amelanchier arborea*). There are quite a few Service Berry species native to the state, with the Downy being the most commonly abundant. They are small trees found growing in meadows, old agriculture fields, and forest edges. They are popularly known for producing small, flavorful plum-colored berries. In my honest opinion, they are the best-tasting native fruit in Ohio. You just have to beat the birds to them first, which is tough for the birds, also realizing just how tasty they are!



Serviceberry fruits

Photo: M. Talabac University of Maryland Extension\*



Flowering *Amelanchier laevis* 'Cumulus'.

Photo: M. Talabac University of Maryland Extension\*

\*Photo Sourced From: <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/serviceberry-early-flowering-maryland-native-tree/>



# Ohio's Geauga County Maple Festival: Sweet Treats on the Buckeye Trail.



Victoria Livingston



When I discovered that the Buckeye Trail passes through Chardon, Ohio, the home of the Geauga County Maple Festival, I was filled with anticipation. I was intrigued by the idea of hiking it during the festival and indulging in the delectable treats and festivities. Seeing as I grew up in Geauga County, the fondest of memories poured in. As a child, I recall the joy of attending the festival, being handed a dish of hot maple syrup and a wooden spoon, and stirring the sweet syrup until it magically turned into a creamy, golden piece of candy. I also wanted to go to the festival as a tribute to my father, whose passion was making maple syrup.

## **Geauga County Maple Festival:**

The Geauga County Maple Festival is an annual event that celebrates the region's rich tradition of maple syrup production during the last full weekend in April. Founded in 1926, it's the oldest maple festival in the United States and one of the largest. It takes place in the picturesque Chardon Courthouse Square District. Visitors can indulge in a unique 'maple stir' at Heritage House, witness the award-winning maple syrup displays, and enjoy an array of maple products from local producers. A highlight is the pancake breakfast, served with sausages and real maple syrup. The festival also features a parade, entertainment, and crafts, making it a delightful experience for all ages.

## **The Plan:**

After consulting the calendar and events schedule, I spread the Buckeye Trail map on the table. It's always harder to plan than you might think because you have to find parking places for the number of miles you plan to hike. If you are hiking with others, you can stage a car at the end, but we decided to go solo that day, so my brother agreed to pick us up.

We usually plan a 10-mile hike, but parking spots only gave us the option of 8 or 14 miles. I searched for different options and found a place close to the square, but I worried it would cause traffic congestion or require us to pay ten bucks for a space.

A hiking friend, Rebecca, suggested Claridon Woodlands parking. It's a short jaunt up the road to reach the Maple Highlands Trail, a scenic 21.1-mile pathway that traverses Geauga County and is part of the Buckeye Trail.



## **Our Adventure:**

When the day arrived, we drove to the appointed parking place and headed out on the Maple Highlands Trail. As bicyclists sped by, we soon concluded that walkers were outnumbered. Still, the friendly cyclists alerted us to their approach.

Along with the trail's natural beauty and peaceful atmosphere, we passed through award-winning covered bridges, adding a touch of historical charm to the scenic route. We hiked almost three miles along the Maple Highlands Trail to reach downtown, where we passed charming historic houses and buildings before reaching the rides, booths, and more in the square.

As we made our way to the Heritage House, where they sold





maple stirs for \$2 each, I felt nostalgic. Stirring the syrup, I felt joyous to relive that childhood memory and recall my dad's lifelong pursuit of making maple syrup.

My dad began with a makeshift boiling pan when we were young and progressed to a more sophisticated production after he retired. He won many awards for Rick's Pure Maple Syrup. I cherished his delicious syrup, which retails for \$25+ per quart. Many people associate maple syrup with Vermont, but I can vouch for the high-quality maple syrup produced in Geauga County, Ohio.

Not only did my dad instill the love of maple syrup, but he also taught me the joys of hiking. Back in the 80s, he and my brother section hiked the Buckeye Trail from the Northern Terminus to Akron—long before the BT was on my radar. I'm sure he'd be thrilled to know Dave and I are continuing that quest.

We observed historical signs as we wandered along the bustling square. The loudspeaker blared as an auctioneer sold maple syrup to the highest bidder. The aroma of delectable food filled the air, so we purchased lunch and ambled through tents where commercial products and crafts were for sale.

We still had miles to go, so we headed out of town, leaving the hubbub behind. The Buckeye Trail led us down sidewalks past historic houses and families reveling in the warm weather. At the edge of town, the trail reconnected with the Maple Highlands Trail and ran parallel to Route 44, a busy road. Then, the trail ducked back into the woods and continued past Tupelo Pond, forests, Big Creek,

and wildflowers.

We completed a little more than planned—almost 13 miles. In retrospect, we could have parked closer—the festival is mostly confined to Chardon Square.

You could undoubtedly hike this any time of year, but the Maple Festival can provide extra enjoyment. Here are some events you might want to attend: the Sap Run, Bathtub Races, Lumberjack Competition, the Grand Parade, and other entertainment. Visit The Maple Festival for the schedule of events and shuttle services. Have a sweet hike!



*This Hike brought back so many great childhood memories! Me at the Heritage House with a Maple Stir.*

*Rick Payne, my father, won many awards for his pure maple syrup.*



**Parking Options:**

If you want a shorter hike, you could search for schools, churches, or gas stations and call to ask if you could park there. There is parking at #14, and you can find places to park along side streets. The festival uses a shuttle from Sheetz, so that is another option. (The festival website has information on this).





# Crossword Puzzle

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

**Clues:**

**Across:**

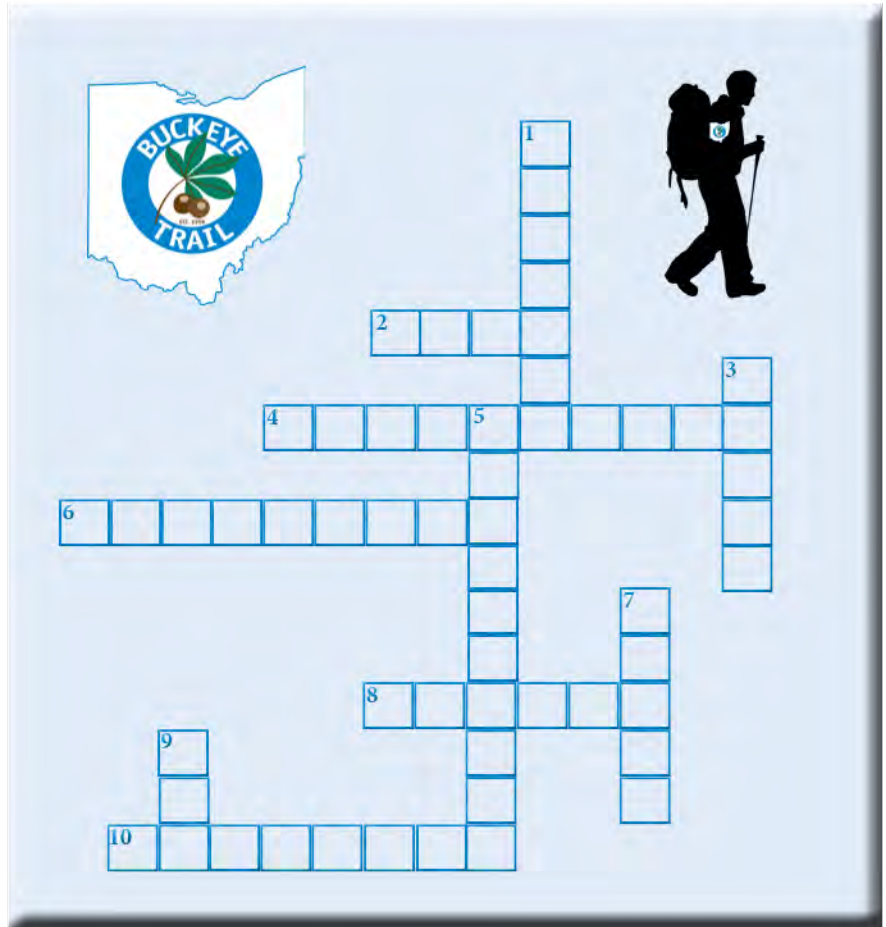
- 2. Author (s) of "Follow the Blue Blazes"
- 4. Salmon \_\_\_ is one of Byron Guys favorite trail meals.
- 6. A Fiberglass \_\_\_ post that displays BT blaze sticker.
- 8. To \_\_\_ and Tomorrow can be confusing, after a long hike!
- 10. The Buckeye Trail \_\_\_ is a new program developed by The ODNR to encourage Ohioans to Experience the Buckeye Trail in their own way.

**Down:**

- 1. The Geauga County Maple Festival is held in what Trail Town?
- 3. ODNR Director
- 5. \_\_\_ is a new Platform the BTA and Chapters use to keep members up to date on events.
- 7. \_\_\_ Service Berry, a native tree, found growing in Meadows.
- 9. How many Chapters make up the BTA?

Please Submit your answers to [trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org).

Answers will be in next Issue!



**Answers from Winter 2024 Volume 57 NO. 4:**

**Across:** 2. Morgan, 4. Sweeping, 7. Pioneer Spirit, 8. Rooster, 10. AMLER **Down:** 1. Cruciverbalist, 3. Forward, 5. Swamper, 6. Turn, 9. Sawyer

# Recipes For Happy Hiking

Share your recipe, trail meal, or cooking hack and get featured right here!  
[trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org)

## Salmon Florentine

Byron Guy



Salmon Florentine is maybe one of my favorite backpacking meals, although before this I hadn't had a chance to make it in 14 years. The last time we made this was Shannon's first backpacking trip! This meal is an awesome ultralight, first-night meal; all you need is fresh, vibrant spinach, one pack of ramen, a pack of cooked salmon, a few personal condiment packets, and you have a delicious meal for two!



**Ingredients:**

- 1 package ramen (no spice pack)
- 1 pack cooked salmon
- 1 8oz ziplock fresh spinach
- 2 oz grated Parmesan (2 pc packets)
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes (1 pc packet)
- 1 oz olive oil (2 pc packets)

**Preparation:**

For convenient transportation on backpacking trips, pre-crush the ramen noodles and store them in a ziplock bag. You can either discard the spice packet or set it aside for a future meal. Additionally, obtain your preferred cooked salmon packet and 8 ounces of fresh spinach in a ziplock bag. You can consider acquiring personal condiments from a sub or pizza shop, or pre-measure the ingredients if you prefer.

**Directions:**



Add ramen to 1 cup boiling water. Stir until tender. Add oil, pepper flakes, salmon, stir. Add parmesan and spinach, stir to wilt spinach and enjoy.. Enjoy!



# 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*

## 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 Eventbrite at <https://buckeye-trail-ohio-river.eventbrite.com>

**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 Eventbrite at <https://buckeye-trail-ohio-river.eventbrite.com>

**April 11-14, 2025**

### **Sinking Springs Work Party**

**Description:** Work will consist of major trail cleanup in the Sinking Spring Section from Points 9 -11. We have been shut out of this section for three years so we'll need an army of support to whip it back into hiking shape. More details to follow.

**Camping:** Camping will be available at Cave Lake Campground, 1132 Bell Hollow Rd, Latham, OH 45646

**What to Bring:** Wear sturdy boots, bring work gloves, insect repellent, and rain gear. Dress for the weather.

**Meals:** Bring your own food and water.

**Registration:** Please sign up for the work party at <https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/BuckeyeTrailAssociationInc/volevent2025.html>

**Contact:** Sinking Springs Supervisor at [sinkingspring@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:sinkingspring@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

**April 25-27, 2025**

### **Muskingum Lake Chapter's — Morelfest**

**Description:** Morelfest is the Muskingum Lake Chapter's signature event held every spring at the BTA Beall Farmstead and Century Barn

in Deersville, OH. Join us for a weekend-long celebration dedicated to the morel mushroom, featuring guided and solo foraging hikes, live music, campfires, potluck meals, and various outdoor activities. This year's theme is GLOW. All skill levels are welcome.

**Meeting Details:** Visit the BTA Morelfest page for all the details.

**Location:** BTA Beall Farmstead, 83949 Beall Rd Cadiz, OH 43907

**Signup:** Register on Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1224891245689>

**Contact:** The Morelfest Team at [morelfest@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:morelfest@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

**April 26, 2025**

### **Ohio River Chapter — Ohio River Chapter April Hike Loveland Section**

**Description:** Mathers Mill before Loveland pt25 to Morrow Trailhead near Loveland pt 20

**Meeting Details:** We will meet at the Morrow Trailhead parking near pt20, then group shuttle to the ODNR access at Mathers Mill off Corwin Rd and will walk back. Length is about 7 miles perhaps a bit more. Expect a relaxed and easy pace. This hike is fully on the Little Miami SP bike path. We will pass Morrow- the train station now a brewery and the caboose, Morgan's Canoe and Campground, nearest point to Ft Ancient on trail, go under the Jeremiah Morrow Bridge, Mathers Mill Nature Preserve

**Meeting Location:** 9:00AM at Morrow Trailhead near 240 Main St, Morrow, OH 45152 there is also street parking here.

**Signup:** Register on Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1224891245689>

**Contact:** Patrick Long at [patrick.long@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:patrick.long@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

**April 26-30, 2025**

### **Medina Section — Richfield Heritage Preserve Work Party**

**Description:** We will reroute the BT off the road and into the forest at Richfield. The goal of the work week is to create a new trail parallel to, and south of, the main entrance driveway for safety reasons. The work will consist of chain sawing downed trees, pruning and grubbing shrubs, and creating a stable trail tread. The terrain is relatively flat with a couple of small drainages. The finished trail will be around .55 miles in length, starting at the public parking lot and finishing near the main gate entrance to the park.

**Location:** The address for the event is 4374 Broadview Rd, Richfield, OH 44286 or GPS waypoints 41.249857° -81.662622° for the entrance driveway. The parking lot is about 1/2 mile in from the entrance.

**Camping:** Camping will be available at existing structures in the park. The gate for the park is open from dawn to dusk.

**Meals:** The Chuck Wagon has been requested for this work party.

**What to Bring:** Wear sturdy boots, bring work gloves, insect repellent, and rain gear. Dress for the weather. The project is rain or shine. Training and equipment are provided.

**Registration:** Please sign up for the work party at <https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/BuckeyeTrailAssociationInc/volevent2025.html>

**Additional Requirement to Participate:** The Richfield Joint Recreation District requires all volunteers to fill out a waiver release to be able to volunteer at Richfield Heritage Preserve. Here is the



# 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

link to the waiver: <https://www.rjrd.org/uploads/3/8/7/1/38712131/rhp042118volunteerwaiverrelease.pdf> Please print the form, fill it out and bring with you it to the work party.

**Contact:** Email Medina Section Supervisor, Pat Hayes, at [medina@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:medina@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

## MAY

**May 3-4, 2025**

**Blue Blaze Academy — at the Buckeye Trail Barn**

**Description:** More details coming soon.

**May 17-21, 2025**

**Stockport Section**

**Description:** Come join us for heavy vegetation control and trail repair. If you like DR mowing (or want to learn) this is the work party for you!

**Location:** We will start work from Campground H.

**Camping:** Camping will be available at Campground A, Hook Lake. Water available.

**Meals:** The Chuck Wagon will be there.

**What to Bring:** Long sleeved pants, shirts, tools if you have them, gloves, insect repellent, rain gear AND your own water.

**Registration:** Please sign up for the work party at <https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/BuckeyeTrailAssociationInc/volevent2025.html>

**Contact:** Email Belle Valley Section Supervisor at [bellevally@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:bellevally@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

**May 22, 2025**

**Chapter Leadership Summit**

**Description:** 7:00 P.M. - Virtual using Google Meet

**Contact:** Email BTA Board of Trustees President, Steve Walker, at [president@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:president@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

**May 24, 2025**

**Ohio River Chapter — Ohio River Chapter May Hike Loveland Section**

**Description:** Foster Trailhead near pt15 to Morrow Trailhead near Loveland pt 20

**Meeting Details:** We will meet at the Morrow Trailhead parking near pt20, then group shuttle to the Foster Trailhead near pt15 and the Monkey Bar then walk back. Length is about 9.5 miles perhaps a bit more. Expect a relaxed and easy pace. This hike is fully on the Little Miami SP bike path. We will pass the Monkey Bar, possibly some views of Kings Island, Cartridge Brewing- formerly the Peters Cartridge Factory, Middletown Junction, South Lebanon, Ending in Morrow and the Train Depot now a Brewery.

**Meeting Location:** 9:00AM at Morrow Trailhead near 240 Main St, Morrow, OH 45152 there is also street parking here

**Signup:** Register on Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1227074124739>

**Contact:** Patrick Long at [patrick.long@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:patrick.long@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

**May 25, 2025**

**Ohio River Chapter — ADT (Non BT) Reily Community Center to Governor Bebb — ADT OH North 3**

**Description:** As part of an effort to hike all of the American Discovery Trail in Ohio this year, our focus 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 Reily Community Center and walk back. The walk is about 9.3 miles perhaps slightly more and mostly on roads, some sidewalk.

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

**Liability:** Read the BTA Liability Waiver here.

**Signup:** Register on Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/adtnon-bt-reily-community-center-to-governor-bebb-adt-north-3-tickets-1118963512989>

**Contact:** Patrick Long at [patrick.long@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:patrick.long@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

**May 29, 2025**

**BTA Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Description:** 7:00 P.M. - Virtual using WebEx

**Contact:** Email BTA Board of Trustees President, Steve Walker, at [president@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:president@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

## JUNE

**June 8, 2025**

**Ohio River Chapter — ADT (Non BT) Reily Community Center to Hueston Woods — ADT OH North 3**

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

**Meeting Details:** We will meet at at Hueston Woods Archery Area. We will then shuttle with as few cars as possible over to parking at Reily Community Center and walk back. The walk is about 13 miles perhaps slightly more and mostly on roads, some sidewalk.

**Meeting Location:** 9:00AM Meet at Hueston Woods Archery Parking, gps location 39.55707, -84.74059.

**Liability:** Read the BTA Liability Waiver here.

**Signup:** Register on Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/adtnon-btreily-community-center-to-hueston-woods-adt-north-4-tickets-1118965418689>

**Contact:** Patrick Long at [patrick.long@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:patrick.long@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

## JULY

**July 12-16, 2025**

**Road Fork and Whipple Sections**

**Description:** Join The Wilderness Chapter and the Buckeye Trail Association for its Annual work party covering the Road Fork and Whipple Sections. This project will focus mostly on widening segments of the off-road trail in the Wayne National Forest in the Ohio Valley region (Marietta Unit).





## Interested in Chapter-specific events/hikes?

Go to [buckeyetrail.org/chapters](https://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.

**Location and Camping:** Little Muskingum Watershed Association property at 9 Thomas Ridge Rd, off OH 26, New Matamoras, Ohio 45767 beginning on the evening of Friday, July 11th. The daily plan and safety meeting is daily after breakfast at 7:30am.

**Meals:** The chuckwagon will be there to provide meals.

**Camping:** RV's are welcome, but boondocking should be anticipated. There is room for many tents. Showers and toilets are provided, but drinking water isn't. Fill water tanks before you arrive.

**What to Bring:** Long sleeved pants, shirts, tools if you have them, gloves, insect repellent, rain gear AND your own water.

**Registration:** Please sign up for the work party at <https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/BuckeyeTrailAssociationInc/volevent2025.html>

**Contact:** The Wilderness Chapter Leader at [matthew.edmonds@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:matthew.edmonds@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

### July 19-20, 2025

#### BTA Board of Trustees Retreat

**Description:** Located at the BTA Beall Farmstead on Tappan Lake - Live and Virtual using WebEx.

**Contact:** Email BTA Board of Trustees President, Steve Walker, at [president@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:president@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

### July 19, 2025

#### Chapter Leadership Summit at BTA Board of Trustees Retreat

**Description:** Located at the BTA Beall Farmstead on Tappan Lake. 7:00 P.M. - Live and Virtual using Google Meet

**Contact:** Email BTA Board of Trustees President, Steve Walker, at [president@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:president@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

## AUGUST

### August 2-6, 2025

#### New Straitsville Section Work Party

**Description:** This project is part of the Amler and Forest Service grants for building new trail. The Trail Crew leaves camp at 8:00am to head out on the trail.

**Location and Camping:** Burr Oak Cove Campground is located a half mile E of Highway 13, via Burr Oak Rd to Wayne National Forest Rd. Drinking water and toilets available.

**Meals:** The chuckwagon will be there to provide all meals.

**What to Bring:** Long sleeved pants, shirts, tools if you have them, gloves, insect repellent, and rain gear.

**Registration:** Please sign up for the work party at <https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/BuckeyeTrailAssociationInc/volevent2025.html>

**Contact:** The New Straitsville Section supervisor at [newstratsville@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:newstratsville@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

## 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!

### September 7, 2025

#### BTA Board of Trustees Meeting During TrailFest

**Description:** About 10:00 A.M. at Maumee Bay Lodge & Conference Center - Live and Virtual using WebEx

**Contact:** Email BTA Board of Trustees President, Steve Walker, at [president@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:president@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

### September 26-27, 2025


#### Fall Trail Festival in Shawnee, Ohio

**Description:** The Village of Shawnee, will be hosting the Buckeye Trail "Blue Blaze Festival" bringing together many in the outdoor recreational community.

On Saturday, there will be a full day of activities. Since 2015, the Buckeye Trail Association has held a trail run in the Wayne National Forest on the Buckeye Trail. The previous runs included a marathon, half marathon, 10K and 5K distances. In 2021 the planning team restructured the event to include a day hike as a way to encourage more people to get out and enjoy the trail. The event now includes the 8-mile hike, plus the 5K, 10K and Half Marathon trail runs on the Buckeye Trail, all starting and finishing on Main Street.

**Registration:** Registration is open at <https://runsignup.com/Race/OH/Shawnee/RunForBlueBlazes>


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



Emma Grandma Gatewood Solstice Hike  
EGGS. BUCKEYE TRAIL

# 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/>



**Buckeye Trail Association**

*P.O. Box 5  
Shawnee, Ohio 43782*

*CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED*

Not a member of the BTA, yet? Just scan the QR code to get to the website's membership page and join today!



## Ohio's Trail. A Global Treasure. Your Legacy.

The Buckeye Trail is bigger than any one of us. This is our history.

How will you be a part of this legacy?

So many have given, in so many ways, to make Ohio's BT and the BTA what we are today. Please share your Buckeye Trail adventures, why you give, and questions about leaving a legacy for tomorrow through the BTA's Blue Blaze Society today.

Join us in sharing our gift to the world for generations to come!



development@  
buckeyetrail.org