

BUCKEYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

# Trailblazer



FOUNDED 1959  
FALL 2025 VOLUME 58 NO. 3

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## Editor's Note

We apologize for the delay in delivering the Fall issue of Trailblazer Magazine. With so much happening along the Buckeye Trail, we wanted to ensure this issue captures every moment and update in the best possible way. Additionally, we recently identified a process issue in our database software that caused some print subscribers to miss their copies. We believe this has been resolved, and we hope everyone is delighted with the final product. Thank you for your patience and continued support of the Buckeye Trail Association!

If you have an idea for a story, or want to help create content, email us at: [trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org).



## Trailblazer

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Fall Issue - August 15th  
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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: Maumee Bay Board Walk  
Photo credit: Andrea Hayes-Bartel

# Hike into Fall

With Fresh new BTA  
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**BTA  
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Visit the  
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## Buckeye Trail Association

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Brandon Bates & Valerie Gardner

# A Thank You to Steve Walker

*Aidan Reagh*

Recently, the Buckeye Trail Association saw the departure of Steve Walker, a long-time leader and champion of the trail, in his role as President of the Association. Steve joined the Buckeye Trail Association in 2012 and was appointed to our Board of Trustees in 2015, bringing a wealth of political advocacy experience with him.

This advocacy experience was instrumental in advancing the project that we all eagerly await updates on - the advancement of the Buckeye Trail's efforts to be considered as a National Scenic Trail.

In addition to organizing efforts for a feasibility study to be launched, Steve also served as a longstanding leader of the Ohio Trails Partnership (OTP), an innovative group of outdoor recreation leaders collaborating to proactively develop and maintain our non-motorized trails across the state. These collective advocacy efforts have also led to generational improvements for the Buckeye Trail via capital funding initiatives.



*Ohio's First Lady Fran DeWine, Steve Walker, ODNr Director Mary Mertz and ODNr Assistant Director Mindy Bankey*



*Josiah Denson, Cleveland Metroparks, Representative Phillip M. Robinson, Jr., Steve Walker*

Beyond his advocacy efforts, Steve was a trailblazer for our chapter system. His organizing guidance has enhanced the Association's ability to empower our volunteers by creating a thriving ecosystem of ten chapters that are all rapidly growing.

In his leadership roles and authoring of our popular The Loop monthly newsletter, Steve consistently made space to recruit and celebrate new volunteers. His welcoming presence that introduced so many of us to the

BTA will sorely be missed, and I hope that we all, as members, can be inspired by Steve's efforts and be the new champion of recruiting and celebrating volunteers.

The entire Buckeye Trail Association is deeply grateful for Steve's dedication to the Buckeye Trail Association. Thanks for all of the fantastic memories, Steve! I wish you all of the best in your future endeavors, including the restoration of your pickup truck. Wherever the road takes you, the Blue Blazes will always be there to welcome you home!



*Randall Roberts, Connie Pond and Steve Walker*

# President's Message

Maureen Gatewood

Greetings Everyone,

I'm thrilled to introduce myself as Maureen Gatewood, the newly elected President of the Buckeye Trail Association. As the great-granddaughter of the legendary Grandma Gatewood (for those of you who might have been wondering), I grew up knowing about the Buckeye Trail my whole life. Great Grandma instilled in me a deep appreciation for nature's beauty, its restorative power, and the sense of triumph that comes from completing a trail. Her legacy fuels my passion, and I'm honored to carry it forward in this role, ensuring the Buckeye Trail remains a cherished resource for all who seek adventure, peace, and connection with Ohio's stunning landscapes.

I want to personally thank Steve Walker for his hard work and dedication over his many years with the BTA and wish him well as he pursues his other passions. Steve stated that the Buckeye Trail is in good shape and that he was confident it will continue to move forward and we couldn't agree more.

## Celebrating TrailFest & Welcoming new Leadership:

Recently, many of us gathered at Maumee Bay State Park for the 12th annual Buckeye TrailFest, hosted impeccably by the Lake Plains Chapter. The event was a vibrant celebration of our shared love for the trail, with perfect weather complementing guided hikes, engaging workshops, and lively conversations. It was a joy to reconnect with old friends, welcome new ones, and

share stories under the open sky, strengthening the bonds that make our community so special.

At the end of TrailFest, we held our although mostly in person, Annual Meeting, where we elected five board members, followed by the annual Board of Trustees meeting, where we elected our new officers for the year.



*A young Maureen destined to one day lead the BTA!*

## Board of Trustees Officers:



**President:**  
Maureen Gatewood,  
Central Ohio Chapter



**Vice President:**  
Mark Middleton,  
Central Ohio Chapter



**Secretary:**  
Lori Luken,  
Crooked River Chapter



**Treasurer:**  
Mark Augenstein  
The Wilderness Chapter

## Board of Trustees Members Elected for the 2026-2028 Term:



Mark Augenstein,  
The Wilderness Chapter



Sophia Llenos,  
Lake Plains Chapter



Lori Luken,  
Crooked River Chapter



Jill Moorhead,  
Central Ohio Chapter



Raman Ras,  
Crooked River Chapter

Photos by: Josh Reuck

## Embracing Autumn & Looking Ahead:

As autumn's crisp air and vibrant foliage arrive, I encourage you to savor Ohio's trails. The crunch of leaves underfoot and the golden hues of fall make every hike magical. Whether revisiting a favorite Buckeye Trail section or exploring a new one, share these moments with loved ones. The trail is more than a path—it's a place where memories are forged and connections grow stronger.

I recently visited our newest Trail Town, Peebles, ahead of its Proclamation Ceremony on October 1st. Its charming downtown and rolling hills embody the spirit of our trail communities. As our 22nd Trail Town, Peebles is a testament to the growing network of towns that embrace the Buckeye Trail. I invite you to visit and experience its warmth—you won't be disappointed!

The Buckeye Trail Association is evolving as we finalize our 2026–2030 strategic plan. This roadmap will guide our efforts to preserve and promote the trail, ensuring it remains accessible for future generations. We're exploring improved signage, expanded volunteer opportunities, and partnerships with local organizations to amplify our impact. Your countless hours as volunteers and staff are the heart of this organization, and I'm deeply grateful for your dedication.

As I step into this role, I'm filled with gratitude for the chance to serve this remarkable community. I invite you to share your ideas, stories, and visions for the Buckeye Trail—my trailhead is always open. Let's honor Grandma Gatewood's legacy

while blazing new paths together. Join us at an upcoming event, volunteer on a trail crew, or simply hike and share your experiences. Together, we'll keep the Buckeye Trail thriving.

Thank you,

*Maureen Gatewood*

Maureen Gatewood, President

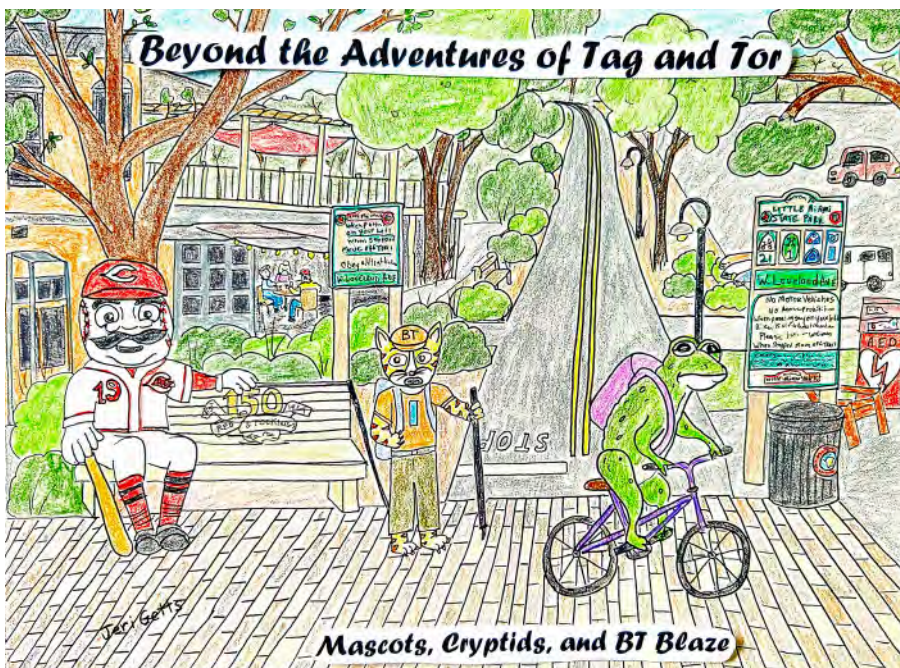


Mark Middleton and Maureen Gatewood rocked the 2025 E.G.S. 20 Mile Challenge!

## Tag & Tor

Karen Power & Jeri Getts

Cartoon 30 Beyond the Adventures of Tag and Tor:



When Trailblazer editor and production manager, Shawn Steinschreiber, asked Tag and Tor to create coloring pages for children about the Buckeye Trail, Jeri Getts had an idea. Jeri, a 3-time, end-to-end BT circuit hiker, put her artistic talents to use and created BT Blaze, a kitten who has adventures on the Buckeye Trail.\*

This cartoon is in keeping with the theme of this issue, cryptids. The Buckeye Trail has much to offer not only in terms of history, but also pop culture and urban myths. The frog is the cryptid mascot of the Loveland section where a hiker can also find Mr. Red Legs, one of the mascots of the Cincinnati Reds.

BT Blaze isn't replacing the "Adventures of Tag and Tor," but serves in this issue to introduce the Buckeye Trail family to a new, creative way to engage the next generation of BT hikers. The hope is that BT Blaze will make the Buckeye Trail even more appealing to our youngest hikers.

\*See Victoria's travel blog in this issue on BT Blaze's backstory.

# On the Trail.....

Andrew Bashaw

## A Moment, Gathering, Wonder, and Gratitude:

### A Moment

Would you join me for a moment on the Buckeye Trail? It's finally Fall, and the blue blazes are calling us to follow them. Meandering along a favorite day hike through crisp leaves and ankle twisting acorns, Summer's humidity subsided, the angle of light through the changing forest canopy makes this same stretch a different trail experience than last time. My shoulders are a little sore from carrying my pack and I'm ready for a trail-side snack, including a Pawpaw picked right off the tree. It's time for a break, about halfway through my hike, my favorite part of the whole experience. I like to sit in a pretty place in the middle of nowhere, think or not think, but listen and look, and wonder where I am, where those I care about are, and where I'm going. I pull out my map to see how far and how fast or slow I've gone, and what's around me beyond the creeks, hills, or forest, I get my bearings, stand in the place where I live, think about direction, wonder why I haven't before, and plan for what's next.

It's a moment of peace and grounding. It's a moment of anticipation and awe, of a thunderstorm building or the cry of a Red-tailed hawk. It brings me joy. Now that I'm here the only regret I could have is who I have not brought along with me to share the moment, and now how to share the experience to let them know I was thinking about them.

### Gathering

Who else is sharing a Buckeye Trail experience with me all along the BT in their way in this moment? Some gather to celebrate the Buckeye Trail Association at Buckeye TrailFest on the shore of Lake Erie at Maumee Bay, thanks to the Lake Plains Chapter, or together with our larger community at Five Rivers Metroparks Outdoor Experience with 20,000 friends.



*TrailFest 2025 participants on a birding excursion. -- Pic by: Lena Dockery*

Some are exploring the forested lakeside at the BTA's Beall Farmstead looking for and learning about wild mushrooms at the Muskingum Lakes Chapter's Fall Mushroom Camp, or identifying a new to them milkweed partially eaten by Monarch caterpillars, now gathering for their journey south. Others are challenging



*Upper Rock Run, Wayne National Forest*

themselves through the rugged hills of the Wayne National Forest at the Little Cities of the Forest Chapter's Blue Blaze Festival trail runs or completing the Crooked River Chapter's Little Loop Challenge together. Some are getting to know each other by celebrating the love of the Buckeye Trail they have in common like the Appalachian Foothills Chapter members have organized with the Buckeye Trail Town community of Peebles near Serpent Mound.

### Wonder

Sitting on the side of the trail, watching hikers walk by, they're adjusting straps and saying hi, taking strides. I wonder if 700+ miles away on the other side of Ohio someone is completing the Buckeye Trail for the first time, if Richard Morgan and a BTA Circuit Hike will come around the bend towards me on his 6th or 7th time around, or if the next Ian Koenig will pass me up on our next Fastest Known Time. I wonder, if the stories are true, what would be the best habitat for the Ohio Grassman / Bigfoot around here, and what would a bobcat or bear think of them. I wonder if ahead I'll bump into experienced Buckeye Trail volunteers or our partners Boots on the Trail veterans training our next generation on how to properly dig a trail tread out the side of a hill.

## Gratitude

So much is possible on this one trail in one moment, I'm filled with gratitude and excitement for the possibilities. I'm thankful to all our partners that helped to preserve, create, and steward this landscape for me to traverse and for all the preservation projects to come. I'm thankful for the generations of those that created and maintain this trail tread to experience and for the miles left for us to build. I'm thankful for the volunteers that put this map as a guide in my hand and for the those that are creating our 2026-2030 BTA Strategic Plan to guide us through tomorrow. I'm grateful for those that have completed their commitment to the BTA like a BT completionist leading us to today, such as Trustees Emeriti; Stephen Walker, Erik Morris, and Randall Roberts, but also for the message from a family looking for our Backpacking 101 for their first adventure like the newly elected Trustees and Officers that have raised their hands to lead the BTA through tomorrow. I'm grateful for volunteer leaders that have gathered us together, like the TrailFest 2025 Team of Dane Miles, Valerie Gardner, Lena Dockery, and Sunny Sunyak, and for those coming together to

plan TrailFest 2026 at Salt Fork State Park with our friends of the North Country Trail Association and Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia.

I'm grateful that, thanks to the love of the idea of a Buckeye Trail, we are all able to share at least one thing in common, providing us with the opportunity for our own kind of joy, or satisfaction in a job well done. Thank you for putting whatever you can into the BTA so that we can all find our joy out on the Trail.

Thanks for spending a moment on the BT with me, see you on the Trail again soon,



Andrew Bashaw  
Executive Director, Buckeye Trail Association

## Trailblazer Prize Package



### Fall 2025 | Volume 58, No. 3 | Prize No. 3:

For this issue, we've got a cabinet of curiosities themed around "One Trail, Endless Tales!" (See article). Celebrate Ohio's rich tapestry of tall tales, urban myths, folklore, and strange wonders along the trail.

#### Prize Package:

- 1 (one), Autographed Copy of *Unnatural Ohio: Buckeye Cryptids, Legends & Other Mysteries* -- M. Kristina Smith & Kevin Moore
- 1 (one), Autographed Copy of *Monsters of Ohio* -- J.C. Raphael
- 1 (one), Ohio Cryptid and Folklore Map -- Starcruiser Studios
- 1 (one), Hand Crocheted Appalachian Ohio Sasquatch -- Theresa Harmless-Jenkins

#### Rules:

- Complete the crossword puzzle on page 15.
  - Follow the Buckeye Trail on OuterSpatial.
- To enter, please send an email to [trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org)

[buckeyetrail.org](http://buckeyetrail.org), providing the correct answers to the crossword puzzle, let us know you followed the Buckeye Trail on OuterSpatial and let us know what chapter you are a part of. All entries will be entered into a random generator to select a winner.

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

A big shout-out to all who took part in the Summer 2025 Volume 58 No. 2 contest! The prize winner was Tim Reimund from the Miami & Erie Canal Chapter! Congrats, we hope you enjoy the Night Stay + Breakfast for 2 (Two) at any of The Great Ohio Lodges!!

# 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! We appreciate you.

**MAY 2, 2025 - AUGUST 1, 2025**

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### **Miami & Erie Canal Chapter, In Memory of**

#### **BTA Volunteer Lenny Monnin**

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Douglas Peltier  
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Paul Staley  
Dale Wical  
Jack Yantis

### **In honor of Mike Halkovich's BT**

#### **miles completed**

Mari Halkovich

#### **Buckeye TrailFest**

Bickle Insurance Services  
Curtice Hy Flash Restaurant  
Everything Outdoor  
LoFaso Real Estate Services

#### **The Wilderness Chapter**

Matthew Edmonds

#### **Buckeye Trail Preservation Fund**

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William Schultz  
& Leslie Floyd

### **BTA's advocacy work with the**

#### **Ohio Trails Partnership**

Tim Murphy

#### **MorelFest**

John Kreptowski  
Laura Peters, Deersville  
General Store

#### **Crooked River Chapter**

Margaret Sondey &  
William Hines

#### **West Union Section, In gratitude to Jeff Kress for Trail Angel support**

Joseph Baldino

## ***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")

\$30.00

\$90.00

1/4 Page (3.75" x 5")

\$60.00

\$180.00

1/2 Page (7.5" x 5")

\$120.00

\$360.00

Full Page (7.5" x 10")

\$240.00

\$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.



Join the 2025 BTA Bingo Challenge to celebrate the Buckeye Trail and support the BTA's mission! This fun and engaging challenge invites you to explore the trail, participate in activities, and earn chances to win exciting BTA swag. Complete tasks on your bingo card to mark off spaces and earn entries into a prize drawing by **December 31, 2025**. Prize details will be announced soon!

#### How to Play

- **Objective:** Mark off spaces on your bingo card by completing tasks related to the Buckeye Trail and BTA activities.
- Can be completed on your own or in a group but everyone must submit their own card. Get out and have fun!

#### Entries:

- 1 Entry:** Complete a straight line of tasks (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally).
- 5 Entries:** Complete the four corner tasks on your bingo card.
- 10 Entries:** Achieve a Full House (Blackout) by completing all tasks on your bingo card.
- Submission:** Submit entries to [hikeexperience@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:hikeexperience@buckeyetrail.org) (lines, four corners, or full house) to the BTA by **December 31, 2025**, to enter the prize drawing.
- Disclaimer:** Please note, images shared with the BTA may be used to help assist our mission to build, maintain, and preserve the trail. Please indicate if shared pictures may or may not be used in promotional material, whether in print and/or online.

B	I	N	G	O
Introduce the next generation to the Buckeye Trail!	Follow the Buckeye Trail on Eventbrite!	Share a selfie with a Blue Blaze on the trail. Let us know what section!	Selfie at the "Junction" sign.	Hike two miles & get a selfie at the Northern Terminus rock.
Register & attend a BTA sponsored event.	Get a pic at your favorite federally managed land on the Buckeye Trail.	Hike the Buckeye Trail by a body of water and take a selfie with it.	Like, follow & subscribe to the BTA on YouTube.	Join a circuit hike and share the experience!
Hike 5 miles on your favorite section of the Buckeye Trail.	Explore a Buckeye Trail Town and share your adventure!	 Membership!	Earn the BTA volunteer patch (If you have earned it, share it!).	Get a selfie at your favorite State Park's sign on the Buckeye Trail.
Share a selfie with a historical marker found on the Buckeye Trail.	Share a pic of your favorite mural along the Buckeye Trail.	Pick up trash along the BTA, then take and share a selfie.	Get a selfie at your favorite establishment on the trail and share it!	Get a pic of you in BTA swag, not on the trail!
Hike two miles & get a selfie at the Southern Terminus sign.	Like, follow & subscribe to the BTA on Facebook.	Attend a chapter meeting.	Share a pic of something you did not expect to see on trail.	Become a Buckeye Trail, trail angel!
<b>Hike, Join, Volunteer, Get Involved!</b>				

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# Buckeye Trail Association

## Tales from the trail: Member Spotlight



Trail Name: Coffee Hunter

Chapter Affiliation: Miami & Erie Canal

Name: Elizabeth Waters

Started the Trail:

February 18, 2023

Finished the Trail:

April 13, 2025

Footwear: Trail Runners

Hydration: Water Bladder & Coffee

Specialty: Knowing Every Coffee stop on the trail.



### Origin of your Trail Name:

My trail name is Coffee Hunter. It started when I was hiking along the Buckeye Trail. I'd spot coffee shops along the way and make sure to stop and grab a cup. But if I was hiking in an area without a coffee shop, I'd bring an emergency coffee with me. Usually, it was a bottled Starbucks Frappuccino Iced Coffee.

### When did you hike the Buckeye Trail?

I started section hiking the Buckeye Trail on February 18, 2023 in the Defiance section. I finished the trail on April 13, 2025 in the Massillon section.

### Trail Story:

My son graduated from high school and enlisted in the Marines, so I started hiking the Buckeye Trail. It was a way for me to process the emotions of becoming an empty nester. My first hike was by chance when I signed up for the Metroparks Toledo event Wintering the Towpath. I hiked from Providence Metropark to Bend View Metropark in the Defiance section. After the hike, I got a business card that said I had hiked 5 miles on the Buckeye Trail. That really piqued my interest, and in the first year, I mostly explored the Defiance section and parts of the Akron section that went through Cuyahoga National Park.

The second year I started exploring the trail further and meeting fellow hikers. It was an incredible journey filled with new experiences that kept drawing me back.

I've faced all sorts of weather conditions on the trail, from freezing temperatures and biting winds to severe storms and scorching heat. I've witnessed the stunning terrain change from vast plains to rolling hills and picturesque river valleys. I've hiked through glaciated areas with their rounded hills, contrasting with unglaciated areas with their steeper and rockier terrain. Along the way, I've been blessed with breathtaking sunrises, majestic arches, caves, intricate rock formations, and towering cliffs.

In addition to the physical challenges, I've also taken a walking history tour of Ohio, exploring the state's rich heritage, including the birthplace of aviation, canals, earthworks, and key sites from the War of 1812.

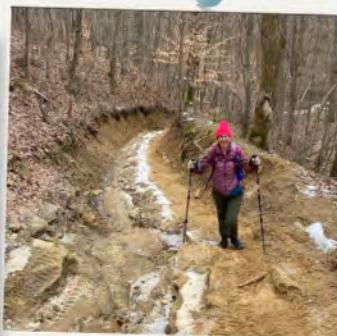
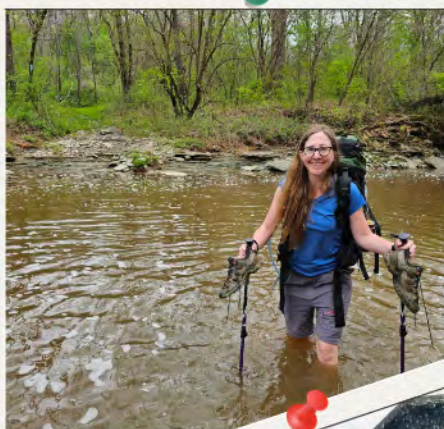


**Trail Story Continued :**

The fast-paced modern world can be overwhelming, but hiking offers a chance to slow down and connect with nature. It reminds us of the importance of resting and finding inner peace, as beautifully described in Psalm 23. I've often been guided by the interconnected rivers and lakes of Ohio, learning about the state's two major watersheds. Hiking through the beautiful farm country has been a delightful experience, with farm animals grazing peacefully. Some were so curious that they would come to greet me as I passed by. Shaded grassy lawns became my resting spots before continuing my journey.

To complete the Buckeye Trail, I've learned to embrace each day, no matter my mood, weather, or fatigue. The trail teaches us that we have control over our minds and bodies, while the rest is beyond our influence. It's incredibly rewarding to realize that we're often stronger than we think.

I've made the most of my hikes, turning miles into fun adventures. I've faced challenging days, pushing myself to the limits, but I always manage to smile. I've transformed back roads into thrilling Parkour courses and massive fallen trees into exciting jungle gyms. Not only did I complete the Buckeye Trail with determination and drive, but I did it with a joyful spirit.



Around it all with a smile and a friend!



# One Trail, Endless Tales!

Aidan Reagh

## Introducing the First-Ever Buckeye Trail OuterSpatial Challenge!

This year, the Buckeye Trail Association made the exciting decision to join OuterSpatial, a free-to-use app that is more than a map! OuterSpatial hosts the Ohio Trails+ Community, a community with over 30,000 people in just 2025! OuterSpatial provides an offline map for hundreds of trails across Ohio, including the Buckeye Trail, and allows you to join in on challenges, see upcoming events, check-in at your favorite spots, and interact with others through their social features!



Earn these  
badges on  
OuterSpatial!

### Defiance Section

This edition of *The Trailblazer* features a fantastic article about hiking with pets, written by Alyce Shane. If this article inspired you, but you don't have a dog of your own - then we have the cryptid for you! There is a catch though, this pup walks like you and me! Head to the Defiance Section to explore canal locks, rivers, and country roads with the Defiance Dogman - a 6-foot tall humanoid dog!

Head to your device's app store or visit [outerspatial.com](https://outerspatial.com) to sign up for free today!

Now, as a next step in our partnership with OuterSpatial, we are proud to announce our FIRST EVER OuterSpatial Challenge - **The Buckeye Trail Cryptids Challenge!**

Celebrate spooky season (October 1 -31) on the Buckeye Trail by taking part in the Buckeye Trail Cryptids Challenge! With over 1400 miles of trail to explore, the Buckeye Trail crosses many destinations of mystery and folklore. Beware, once you start exploring the Buckeye Trail, many can't stop!



### Loveland Section

Our final destination brings us to where many begin their Buckeye Trail adventure. Home of our Southern Terminus, the Loveland Section of the Buckeye Trail is also home to a popular cryptid that features on a patch that you can earn when hiking with Pat Long and the Ohio River chapter. The Loveland Frog, or Loveland Frogman, is a four-foot tall frog that has been spotted many times over the years, including a reported sighting from a local police officer. As you explore the Loveland section, be sure to scan the area around any bridges you may traverse - the Loveland Frog might be there to join you!



## Buckeye Trail Cryptids Challenge Destinations

With countless examples of local legends along the trail, we couldn't fit all into this challenge - that's why we are starting with four popular cryptids for you to check out across Ohio in a month of peak fall foliage! To earn your badges, simply visit each section listed below and open your OuterSpatial app to check in!



### Burton Section

Our next check-in brings us to Northeast Ohio and the Crooked River Chapter for a particularly spooky tale. Local legends claim that, similar to Dr. Frankenstein, a doctor around Chardon Township conducted experiments that led to what we now call the Melon Heads. Known to live in the woods in Geauga County, these children with enlarged heads could be your next hiking companion in the Burton Section of the Buckeye Trail!

This first OuterSpatial challenge celebrates just a select few of Ohio's legends and mysteries - be sure to enter this edition's prize package for a chance to learn about even more, and let us know what intriguing character you might find along the way when you Follow the Blue Blazes.

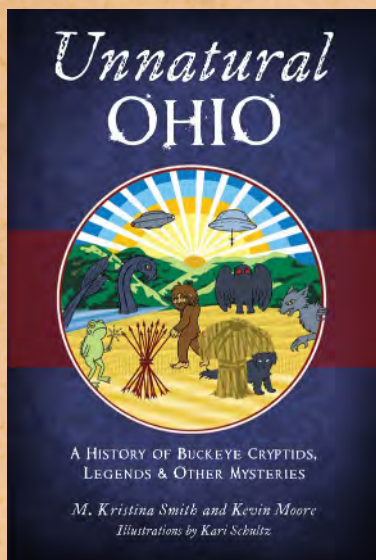
**SCAN THE CODE  
TO TAKE THE  
CHALLENGE!**



### Belle Valley Section

Perhaps the most well-known cryptid across America, this legend has many names. Whether you call it Bigfoot, Sasquatch, or even the Ohio Grassman, this famous cryptid is known to frequent the Belle Valley Section of the Buckeye Trail! As you explore the hills of Belle Valley, be on the lookout for the famous orange eyes of the tall and hairy Sasquatch family.

## More Resources to Fuel Your Curiosity:



### ***Unnatural Ohio: A History of Buckeye Cryptids, Legends & Other Mysteries***

*M. Kristina Smith & Kevin Moore*

#### **Strange things are afoot in the Buckeye State.**

Across city and country, Ohio echoes with tales of creatures, ghosts, and other unexplained phenomena. A monster that appeared to be half man and half dog and wielding a 2-by-4 terrorized a small Northwest Ohio town during the summer of 1972. Over the years, visitors to a quiet Cincinnati suburb claim to have been accosted by a human-size, leathery frogman lurking near the riverbank. For generations, hikers and hunters have reported seeing Bigfoot throughout forests across Ohio, and some of the most notorious and well-documented UFO encounters on record have taken place here.

Authors M. Kristina Smith and Kevin Moore parse urban legends from history as they explore the unnatural side of Ohio's heritage.

Want to get your hands on a copy? Just scan the link to the Ohio History Store!



### ***Monsters of Ohio***

*J.C. Raphael*

A large, black, prehistoric serpent that makes its home in Lake Erie. A titanic hairy humanoid with glowing orange eyes who spies on any teenagers brave enough to park near its lovers' lane home. A giant owl the size of a tree so adept at camouflage it can practically disappear. A nocturnal race of tiny, melon-headed feral humans who roam the woods looking for victims to feast on.

These are but some of the creatures of cryptozoology, folklore and urban legend that readers will meet in the pages of *Monsters of Ohio*, the first book of its kind to completely chronicle the state's population of mystery animals and the stories told about them.

In addition to thirteen Buckeye State monsters—from infamous ones like The Lake Erie Monster, The Loveland Frogs and The Grassman, to lesser-known local legends like The Crosswick Monster, Bighoot and The Defiance Wolfman—the book also includes a parade of mysterious creatures that were only sighted once before disappearing...if, of course, they were ever really there at all.

*A heartfelt thank you to the authors of Monsters of Ohio & Unnatural Ohio: A History of Buckeye Cryptids, Legends & Other Mysteries for generously donating autographed copies for our prize package!*

*See page 7 for details on how to enter for your chance to win!*

#### ***Monsters of Ohio***

Want to learn more or grab your own copy? Just scan the code!



# Crossword Puzzle

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

## Clues:

### Across:

2. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ Red Cross is a great resource for information on pet first aid!
7. Elizabeth "\_\_\_\_ Hunter" Water.
8. The Loveland \_\_\_\_\_
9. Tall Green \_\_\_\_\_
10. Mythical cryptid claimed to frequent the Belle Valley Section.

### Down:

1. The dedication for this Trail Town is October 1st, 2025.
3. The authors of "\_\_\_\_\_" presented at the 2025 Buckeye TrailFest.
4. The Buckeye TrailFest 2026 will be at \_\_\_\_\_ State Park!
6. \_\_\_\_\_, earned his name from being rescued on the trail.

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

Answers will be in next Issue!



## Answers from Summer 2025 Volume 58 NO. 2:

**Across:** 2. Paton, 3. Alexys, 4. Cuyahoga, 6. Applesauce, 8. Natural Resources, 9. Dave, 10. Maumee

**Down:** 1. Maintainers, 5. Coffeetree, 7. Shawnee

**Logo Hunt:** 3, 5, 12, 17, 19, 23, 27

# Recipes For Happy Hiking

## Frogman Fuel Bites

*The Loveland Frogman*

Leap into Ohio's cryptid lore with these quick no-bake energy bites, inspired by the legendary Loveland Frogman—a humanoid amphibian spotted along the Little Miami River—and The Ohio River Chapter Patch, from Pat Log symbolizing the region's mysterious waterways. Green-tinted for that slimy glow, they're packed with protein and quick energy for swampy hikes, fitting snugly in your pack

### Ingredients (Makes 12 Bite):

- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup almond butter
- ¼ cup honey
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds
- ½ tsp matcha powder (for green "frog" hue)
- Pinch of sea salt

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

[trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org)



### Instructions:

1. Mix oats, almond butter, honey, cranberries, seeds, matcha, and salt in a bowl until sticky.
2. Roll into 12 golf-ball-sized bites; chill in fridge for 30 minutes to firm.
3. Wrap individually and stash in your pack—ready for the trail!

### Directions:

- Portable and no-mess; lasts 1 week unrefrigerated.
- Swap matcha for spinach powder for extra nutrients.
- Fuel for Loveland trails—watch for frog-like shadows!



**Settlements:**

Alton - Wrenk - Redfox - Oldham's  
Cave - Basin Valley - Pennington  
Bowenston - Roadfork - Burton - St.  
Marge - Carter Creek - Solstar Trail -  
DeLance - Shawnee - Levenson -  
Sinking Spring - Troy - Medina  
Blackport - Manjillon - Whipple  
West Union - Morgans - Whipple  
New Startville - Williamsburg

**Chapters:**

Central Ohio - Central River  
Lake Placid - Little Falls of the  
Forest - Mount L. Lake Creek -  
North Woods - Rockingham Lake  
The Wilderness - Green River -  
Appalachian Highlands

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# 12th Annual Buckeye TrailFest 2025 A Review.....



## *A Buckeye Trail Celebration at Maumee Bay State Park* Valerie Gardner

This September, the BuckeyeTrail community gathered for the 12th Annual TrailFest, hosted for the first time on the shores of Lake Erie at Maumee Bay State Park. Over the course of the weekend, 150 attendees joined in hikes, programs, and campfires that celebrated the Buckeye Trail and the landscapes of Northwest Ohio.

### **Friday Fun: Wetlands and Wildlife**

The weekend began with Friday Fun activities, which drew more than 80 participants to two of Northwest Ohio's premier natural areas: Magee Marsh Wildlife Area and the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge.

At Magee Marsh, visitors witnessed live bird banding demonstrations, toured the recently renovated visitor center, and explored exhibits that showcase more than 150 species of Ohio's migratory birds. Others climbed aboard open-air trams for guided tours of Ottawa NWR, where federal and state staff—supported by 16 volunteers—brought the story of the Great Black Swamp to life.

The day also included a bit of trail magic. Strong winds drained the shallow section of Lake Erie where the paddle excursion was planned, making it unsafe to launch. Thanks to quick teamwork, the paddle was relocated to Magee Marsh, where participants still got time on the water and a firsthand look at how wetlands sustain both wildlife and people.

By evening, everyone gathered back at Maumee Bay Lodge for the official kickoff. The Meet & Greet in the Icebreaker Lounge set the tone with handshakes and hugs, while the first campfire at the lodge's ring gave new friends and longtime hikers a chance to swap stories under the stars.



Top: Maumee Bay Welcomes the 2025 Buckeye TrailFest. -- Pic by: Elizabeth Waters  
Bottom: Gorgeous Shores of Lake Erie & Maumee Bay Resort-- Pics By: John Davidson.



Visitors to Magee Marsh & Ottawa NWR enjoyed a live bird banding demo, Ohio migratory bird exhibits, an open-air tram tour, canoeing, and a guided hike.



Participants check out the Bird Banding demo and see the bird net on the trail used to safely catch birds!

An Eagle on the Magee Marsh Tram Ride caught its lunch and landed for a snack! -- Pics by: Josh Reuck

### Saturday: Programs, Hikes, and Inspiration

Saturday showcased the incredible diversity of the Buckeye Trail community. With 27 volunteer speakers leading sessions throughout the day, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

The morning featured talks on the National Trails System with the North Country Trail Association, local history with Heritage Sylvania, and wetland community building with Mad Scientist Associates. Naturalists from the Maumee Bay Nature Center guided birding hikes along the lakeshore, while others invited participants to dip nets into ponds for a macroinvertebrate study.

One milestone moment came from the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, marking the first time an internationally funded agency had presented at TrailFest. Their session on invasive sea lampreys, complete with live specimens, highlighted the international cooperation required to protect Great Lakes ecosystems across U.S., Canadian, and Tribal Nations.

Afternoon sessions broadened the scope even further. Participants learned about potential new Trail Towns identified through GIS research, trained in building endurance for hiking, and got a deep dive into Ohio's past in "History of Ohio Along the Trail." Meanwhile, naturalists introduced kids and families to snakes, turtles, and frogs during a lively Creature Feature.

Not all learning happened indoors. The Inland Lake Trail offered a 4.8-mile loop around Maumee Bay, while the 3.2-mile Boardwalk Trail showcased Lake Erie wetlands from an ADA-accessible wooden walkway. Families loved the half-mile Storybook Trail, which wound through a meadow filled with milkweed and pollinators.



Top: Stunning views of Magee Marsh.

Bottom: Bird Banding Instructors at Magee Marsh are eagerly awaiting a bird to cooperate!

-- Pics by: Josh Reuck



Top Right: The participants of the Friday Fun Day had a blast paddling around Magee Marsh.

-- Pic by Henry Krzemien. Bottom Right: A group pose for quick BT "Tramily" photo. - Pic courtesy of Elizabeth Waters.



Top: Kevin on of the authors of *Unnatural Ohio* presenting and their incredible display!

Bottom: Mad Scientist Associates and their hands-on display!

## Saturday Evening: Awards, Animals, and Auction Wins

As the sun set over Lake Erie, the TrailFest community gathered for a packed evening program. ODNR Director Mary Mertz delivered the welcome address, offering insights into Ohio's natural resources and sharing one unforgettable statistic: the Ohio Department of Natural Resources maintains 1,400 bathrooms across the state—a number that drew both laughter and admiration.

The keynote presentation came from Back to the Wild, a wildlife rehabilitation and education center. Their team introduced audiences to live animal ambassadors, including a tortoise, owls, and even raptors that soared just overhead. The program emphasized the importance of preserving native habitats and offered participants the rare opportunity to connect eye-to-eye with wild creatures.

Recognition followed inspiration as the Buckeye Trail Association honored those who give so much of their time and energy. Twenty-eight Volunteer Awards were presented, celebrating the trail maintainers, hike leaders, committee members, and behind-the-scenes helpers who keep Ohio's longest footpath alive and well.

The evening also marked a milestone for the Buckeye Trail Completionist community. Seventeen hikers in the Class of 2025 were honored for finishing the 1,444-mile trail. This class set records, including: 11 women, the largest number of female finishers in a single year, 2 women who completed the Buckeye Trail for the third time, and the second woman from Michigan to finish the trail.

The room erupted in applause for each name called, as Completionists were celebrated not just for their miles, but for their dedication, resilience, and passion for the Buckeye Trail.

The evening closed with the always-anticipated silent auction. Chapters donated 47 lots, ranging from handcrafted items to trail gear, raising \$2,300 for the Buckeye Trail Association. As winning bids were announced, cheers filled the room, and attendees left with both treasures and the knowledge that their generosity would support the trail.

The night ended, as it began, around the campfire. Beneath the glow of the stars, conversations and laughter continued late, echoing the bonds that form whenever the Buckeye Trail community gathers.

## Sunday: Reflection and Renewal

Sunday morning provided an opportunity to slow down. CW Spencer led a non-denominational service, providing space for



Left-Right: Olivia Davis (Back to the Wild), Director Mary Mertz (Ohio Department of Natural Resources), and BTA Trustee Emeritus Randall Roberts receives his plaque from BTA Executive Director & President. -- Pics By Jill Moorhead

reflection and gratitude. The weekend concluded with the BTA's Annual Membership Meeting and Board of Trustees session, where members heard updates on the state of the trail and looked ahead to future initiatives.

## A Team Effort

TrailFest 2025 would not have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of the Lake Plains Chapter TrailFest team—Lena Dockery, Valerie Gardner, Dane Miles, and James “Sunny” Sunyak—along with dozens of additional volunteers. From hike leaders to registration staff, from silent auction organizers to behind-the-scenes planners, each contribution made the weekend seamless and memorable.

## Looking Ahead

From four live animal encounters to a record-breaking class of Completionists, TrailFest 2025 at Maumee Bay was filled with moments that will be remembered for years to come. It showcased not only the natural beauty of Northwest Ohio but also the strength of the Buckeye Trail community.

As attendees departed, many carried with them memories of bird calls along the boardwalk, lessons from expert presenters, and laughter around the campfire. More importantly, they left with renewed energy to keep the blue blazes shining across Ohio.

TrailFest 2025 proved once again that the Buckeye Trail is more than a footpath—it is a living expression of connection between people, places, and purpose. As we look forward to TrailFest 2026 at Salt Fork State Park, we carry with us the spirit of Maumee Bay: wetlands alive with birds, stories shared by firelight, and a community committed to the journey.



Top Left: Maumee at Night. Check out Connie and Harvey enjoying the events and sampling Blaze, the official drink of TrailFest 2025! - Photo by Jill Moorehead.  
Bottom: The 2025 Sponsor banner.



12th Annual  
*Buckeye Trailfest 2025*

Maumee Bay  
Lodge & Conference Center

September  
5th-7th





The Buckeye TrailFest meals are always a blast! It's a great chance to meet new folks and catch up with friends and "Tramily".



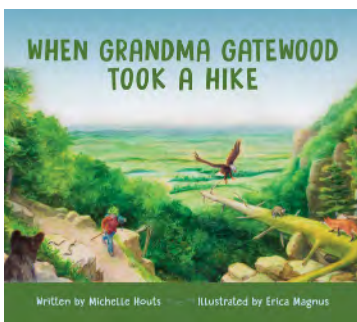
Left: Joe Carter Celebrates his 70th birthday with the BT! -- Pic by Jill Moorhead. Right: The Maumee Naturalist was there for both field and classroom presentations! -- Pics by Lena Dockery.



## Meg's Book Loop

Margaret "Meg" Sondey

### "When Grandma Gatewood Took a Hike"



Written By: Michelle Houts,  
Illustrated By: Erica Magnus  
Ohio University Press, 2016.

Many of us 'mid-century modern' folks must field questions from grandchildren or young friends as to "Why?" such an "old" person like

Grandma or Grandpa or Auntie Jane would think that they could "still" undertake activities like hiking! After all, we're SOOOOO old! (At least to your average youngster!)

"When Grandma Gatewood Took a Hike" is a lovely, illustrated book that even those not-so-old can share with children and grandchildren to not only highlight Grandma Gatewood's exploits on the Appalachian Trail but also to demonstrate that people of all ages can and do enjoy the outdoors. Recommended for ages 4 to 10 years old, all can enjoy the soft-focused illustrations and compelling story.

A "School Library Journal" Best Picture Book of 2016, Houts has included a photograph of Grandma Gatewood as well as source notes and additional history about her life. Don't miss the references to the Grandma Gatewood Trail in the Hocking Hills in the section "Grandma Hiked On" ... this might just be the information that would encourage your young friend to want to join you on a hike there.

And who knows where that first hike might lead? (Might I suggest more of the Buckeye Trail?)

Children ages 4-10 will delight in this narrative nonfiction work as they accompany Emma Gatewood on the adventure of a lifetime and witness her transformation from grandmother to hiking legend, becoming "Grandma" to all. -- Ohio University Press.

*\*Note : The BTA received a screener's copy of "When Grandma Gatewood Took a Hike" from Ohio University Press for this review. All opinions expressed are our own. Thank you to Ohio University Press for providing the opportunity to review this book!*

# Tales from the trail: Lost on Ohio's Buckeye Trail—And Found by Us



Victoria Livingston

The cry was so faint we almost missed it. Somewhere in the brush, a high, thin mewling cut through the rustle of leaves. We froze mid-step on the Buckeye Trail.

Then it came again—desperate, insistent.

Roxanna spotted it first. “There,” she whispered, pointing toward a shallow trench. Out of the tangle of weeds emerged a scrap of orange fur, all ribs and wide eyes.

She tore off a corner of her ham sandwich and tossed it gently. The kitten sniffed, inched forward, and devoured it like he hadn’t eaten in days.

“We’ll mark the spot,” Roxanna said, nodding toward a yellow road sign visible through the trees. “When we get back to the car, we’ll see if there’s a farmhouse nearby.”

As we hiked on, that tiny face wouldn’t leave my mind. It wasn’t the first time a cat tugged at my heart. In fact, my life has been punctuated by feline rescues—each one arriving at moments of upheaval or transformation.

## A Life of Rescues:

Back in the ’80s and ’90s, when my children were young, cats always seemed to find us. My son Ramon had a knack for saving injured or neglected ones, a gift my twins quietly inherited after he left for California.

One day, neighbors asked if an orange stray was ours. I said no—unaware my twins had been feeding him. Soon, he was at our door every morning. His size earned him the name Brutus. A year later, a tabby digging through our garbage became Lady Cat. She was affectionate, just when I needed it most.

When my twins graduated in 2004, I divorced my husband and moved to Columbus, cats in tow. Money and time were tight, but my oldest son helped. Brutus and Lady Cat were aging, but they were my constant thread.



*Brutus & Lady Cat!*

In 2008, Dave came into my life. He loved me, but not my cats. Complaints about cat hair in food and phantom smells became routine. When their health failed in 2014 and 2018, I made the painful decision to

ethanize them. I cried harder than I had at most funerals.

Life without cats was simpler. No vet bills, no litter boxes, no friction with Dave. I thought that chapter was closed. The Buckeye Trail had other plans.

## Back to October 27, 2024:

When we reached Roxanna’s car, there were no farms or houses nearby. The kitten had almost certainly been dumped.

We drove back to the road sign where we’d seen him. Roxanna’s husband is severely allergic, so she couldn’t take him. Dave surprised me: “Let’s bushwhack to the trail and see if he’s still there.”

The mewling guided us straight to him. I hesitated to pick him up, so Dave did. The kitten burrowed into his jacket, purring.

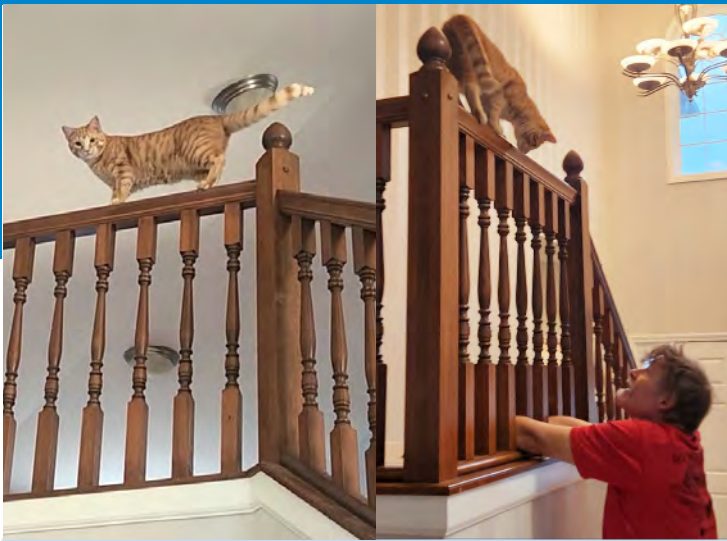
We still had miles left to hike, and on Sunday, none of the animal shelters were open, so I said I’d contact my friend who works for



*Blaze living Dave’s boyhood dreams in a tree!*



*Dave fetched the kitten*



*Dad, don't fret! I've got this. Blaze is showing off his impressive acrobatic skills.*



*Boys will be Boys... Blaze in the Chandelier and Checking What's for Dinner in the Fridge*

the Humane Society on Monday. So, we bought a carrier and food. Roxanna, ever resourceful, made a water bowl from her bottle and a tiny harness from spare cord so he could pee. "A coyote would have gotten him," she said. "Let's call him Blaze in honor of the Buckeye Trail."

Before the next leg of our hike, we left the cat in the carrier inside our car, cracked the windows, and continued on the trail. But all I could think about was the kitten. Should I take him to the shelter? If I wanted to keep him, would Dave complain?

After our hike, Dave drove, and I let Blaze out of the carrier. He swatted my ponytail, licked my hand, purred, and curled up asleep in my lap. With each swat of his tiny paw and each purr that rumbled from his chest, I knew I couldn't give him up.

### **Dave's Change of Heart:**

On the way home, Dave bought a litter pan and litter.

When we arrived home, we set the litter pan and carrier in the bathroom. I was dumbfounded when Dave picked up the kitten, stroked him, and then said, "We need some cat toys."

I thought he hated cats. Did Dave have a change of heart? I doubted it.

The next day, I asked my friend who works for the Humane Society what to do. She told me drop-offs require an appointment and fee, and the shelter was already full. "Tell Dave it's not that easy."

So, I did. I told Dave I'd take the kitten to the vet on Tuesday to get him checked out.

When the vet announced, "It's a boy—about nine weeks old," I texted Dave. He replied, "I finally got a boy!" Did that mean we were keeping the kitten?

That night, to my amazement, a package of cat toys arrived. Dave scooped Blaze into his arms and asked, "What else do we need?" I smiled. Maybe rescuing Blaze had rescued something in him, too.

How lucky we were to be hiking that stretch of the Buckeye Trail on that day, at that hour. It brought us the joy of unexpected companionship and the fulfillment of a rescue mission. The Buckeye Trail is full of surprises—and sometimes gives you more than you ever asked for.

### **Epilogue: Boys Will Be Boys**

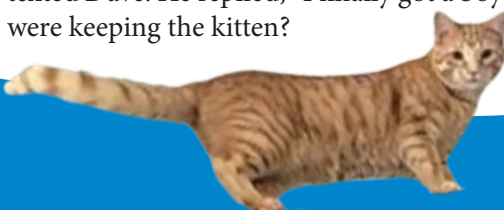
Blaze turned out to be a whirlwind: digging in flowerpots, scratching my recliner, splashing in the toilet, and climbing the Christmas tree to knock ornaments—especially a felt angel—onto the floor.

Dave bonded with him instantly. As a boy, he'd been just as mischievous—climbing roofs, dismantling clocks, pouring water into a car's gas tank. Blaze's curiosity felt familiar. When Blaze darts outside, Dave takes him to climb our weeping cherry, recalling how his grandmother once tried to keep him grounded by cutting the lower branches. It didn't work on him either.

By August 2025, Blaze had grown from a two-pound scrap to a twelve-pound bruiser. He and Dave play tug-bag, peek-a-boo, and "tree time." Oddly enough, Dave now spends more time with him than I do.

### **Rescue Kitten: The Sequel**

When friends said Blaze needed a playmate, Dave resisted. Then fellow Buckeye Trail hiker Kim persuaded us to adopt a gray kitten born to a feral mother—too affectionate to be released back into the wild.



My oldest son, who often visits with my granddaughter, has always been a devoted cat lover, laughing hysterically at cat videos, which his daughter viewed with disdain. Still, she asked to hold and play with the affectionate gray cat, and suggested we name him Cosmo. Would wonders ever cease?

But there was still the question: Would Blaze accept Cosmo? At first, Blaze was wary and puzzled, but after a week, he was eager to play-fight, a skill Cosmo had taught him. It's especially comical when Cosmo, the scrappy three-pound undercat, pounces on the Blazin' Beast. Cosmo can be stealthy, striking when least expected—during nap time.

They now share the window seat, the cat tower, food, and toys—but they wrestle for possession of the Christmas angel.

Years ago, I said goodbye to my last cats and thought that chapter of my life was closed. But the Buckeye Trail had other



*Cosmo & Blaze soon became pals!*

plans. On one hike, it gave us Blaze. Soon after, it nudged us toward Cosmo. Now, our house is filled again with the sound of paws racing down the hall—and the reminder that rescues work both ways.

The Buckeye Trail is full of surprises, and sometimes the most remarkable treasures you find aren't on the map.



*Victoria and Blaze*

If you enjoyed Victoria's writing, you'll love her travel stories and adventures. Just scan the code to check out her blog! Discover breathtaking destinations, fascinating cultures, and inspiring experiences on the Buckeye Trail and more!

Victoria's  
Travel & Tribulations



## Ohio's Gems

*Anthony Small Rural Action*

### **Tall Green Milkweed (*Asclepias hirtella*)**

No one can deny that this growing season has been a wet one. Looking back to spring, large swaths of rain would frequently sweep throughout Southeast Ohio. Water was abundant and there seemed to be more than enough to share across all of the towns. On occasion large rain showers would dump inches of rain within minutes. This would often escalate into overflowing waterways and frequent flash floods. At those times, sheets of water would flow across the landscape. It's been a great year for those of us who don't enjoy hand-watering their gardens. However, It's been an unfortunate year for many local growers. Water saturated soils drowned plants and encouraged the growth of harmful fungus that would damage the roots of crops.

As I reflect, it seems that the wildlife benefited the most from this year's growing season. Nature this year seemed to be making up for last year's debt. In June, roadsides exploded with beautiful white umbels on elderberry bushes. In July Spicebush promised a twofold harvest of berries to come in the Fall. Now in August I see tall stands of ironweed, trumpetweed and milkweed overtaking roadsides. One of the milkweed species I am seeing a lot of is a bit of an uncommon one; Tall Green Milkweed (*Asclepias hirtella*).

It's often considered a subspecies of the Longleaf Milkweed (*Asclepias longifolia*). The main difference between the two is that the subspecies often produces more flowers with larger inflorescences. It's considered uncommon across much of its range and In Ohio it's known to be most abundant in the Southeast portion of the state. It prefers growing in grasslands and hayfields in full sun with good quality soils. This year I have found it growing in various hayfields around Albany, OH. I believe this year it has exploded in growth with many individuals towering well above the tall fescue. The monarch butterflies have surely appreciated this year's growth as Tall Green Milkweed is a preferred host plant for monarch caterpillars.



*Tall Green Milkweed growing in a hayfield  
South of Albany, OH [Athens County, July 14th]*

# Pets On The Trail

Alyce Shane



The Ohio landscape offers a vast variety of activities for equestrians, anglers, recreation motor vehicle users, boaters, cyclists, and of course, hikers! So many of us are getting out there and enjoying what the state has to offer, and we're taking our pets along.

The Buckeye Trail is no exception. Being a pet friendly trail, it's a great way to spend that extra quality time with our best buddies. Whether they are equipped with their own pack, or we carry the full load, we are sure to include all of the essentials like snacks, water, and waste bags. But what about first aid? And how does this apply to our pets?

## Building a Pet First Aid Kit

I spoke to Dr. Jesyrae Lawther, a veterinarian in Athens, Ohio, who suggests having a pet-specific first aid kit for any emergencies that may arise while out on trail. "I also advise clients to take a canine CPR/first aid class as well, to be sure they are prepared to perform it properly if needed." The American Red Cross offers courses for pet first aid/CPR.

### Check out:

[www.redcross.org/take-a-class/first-aid/cat-dog-first-aid](http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/first-aid/cat-dog-first-aid)

Putting a first aid kit together for your pet isn't as daunting as it may seem. Many of the items suggested for these kits are already present in your own kit, so there won't be a lot of extra items for you to add. However, keeping items like a nylon leash and a muzzle will come in handy in many cases.

For guidance on what to include, Dr. Lawther suggests these resources:

[www.aspcapro.org/resource/how-make-pet-first-aid-kit](http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/how-make-pet-first-aid-kit)

[www.stinevet.com/site/blog/2024/05/15/pet-dog-first-aid](http://www.stinevet.com/site/blog/2024/05/15/pet-dog-first-aid)

### Book:

*Pet First Aid* by Barbara Mammato, DVM, MPH.



## Sharing the Trail with Loved Ones



Have a list of veterinarians that are located near the section that you are hiking before you head out. Buckeye Trail Chapters will be familiar with their section and could help you find information for veterinarians in the area so you have the contacts that you need before your hike begins.

Being sure that you have a way to carry your pet, should the need arise, is an important practice, too. Making a sling and training your pet to be carried in it will make hauling them out of the woods easier on you both. Slings can be made from most items that you may already be carrying. A shirt, a jacket, or even your backpack may work in an emergency. Also be aware that the Buckeye Trail does go through some private properties that may have animals of their own. Keeping furry hikers on a leash will increase their safety, and the safety of those that you may encounter on your adventure.



The best lives lived are the ones shared with loved ones and best friends. Ohio's Buckeye Trail is the perfect place to share! Go take a hike.

Have you seen these cool QR Codes from The American Red Cross, ASPCA Pro, and Stein Veterinary Hospital?

They've got pet first aid and CPR courses, and even guides on how to make your own pet first aid kits. Check them out!



Red Cross  
Pet First Aid/CPR



ASPCA Pro  
Resource Guide



Stein Vet Hospital  
Resource Guide

# Schedule of Hikes & Events

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

## OCTOBER

**October 1, 2025**

### Peebles Trail Town Celebration

**Description:** The Buckeye Trail Association will welcome Peebles OH as the 22nd Buckeye Trail Town on Oct. 1, 2025 at 11:00AM at a celebration in McCoy Park on Simmons Ave near the Village Clerk's Office.

Peebles is a village in the Sinking Spring Section of the Buckeye Trail and is nestled in the Appalachian Foothills of Ohio. This is the first Trail Town for the Appalachian Foothills Chapter of the BTA.

Peebles is home to the National Landmark site of The Great Serpent Mound. The Great Serpent Mound is a 1,348-foot-long (411 m), three-foot-high prehistoric effigy mound. The mound is the largest serpent effigy known in the world.

The village was platted in 1881 by Isaiah Custer at the junction of Zane's Trace and the Cincinnati & Eastern Railway, and named after John G Peebles, who was instrumental in bringing the railroad to the settlement. The village was incorporated in 1886.

**October 4, 2025**

### ADT (Non BT) Concord Church to Stone Valley Church-ADT North 6

**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. We will meet at Stone Valley Church, then shuttle with as few cars as possible over to parking at Concord Church. This walk is mostly country roads that are less traveled, but I do expect some traffic near the end of the hike as we near Richmond. Hike is about 10.5 miles, maybe a bit more.

**Meeting Location:** Stone Valley Church, 3945 Wernle Road, Richmond IN, 39.80598, -84.84878

**Time:** 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM Saturday

**Sign up:** Eventbrite

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

**October 4 — 5, 2025**

### 2025 Wagner Subaru Outdoor Experience

**Description:** Wagner Subaru Outdoor Experience is the Midwest's premier outdoor adventure festival, which began in 2005, now attracts over 15,000 people each October to Dayton, Ohio, "The Outdoor Adventure Capital of the Midwest!" where you can camp, connect, compete, and experience dozens of outdoor activities. FREE and family friendly, including the dog!

**Volunteers Needed:** Miami Rivers Chapter will have a booth at the Wagner Subaru Outdoor Experience Saturday October

4th, 11am to 10pm and Sunday October 5th, 11am to 5pm. To sign up to volunteer and select a suggested shift: visit the Eventbrite page

**Location:** Eastwood MetroPark, 1385 Harshman Rd., Dayton, Ohio

**Camping:** Camping is free and is available from Friday at noon and ends at Sunday at 5pm. View detailed camping information here (<https://outdoorx.metroparks.org/venue/campground/>).

**Map of Event:** Visit this page for a map of the event. Details of the event schedule will be presented at this link, too, as they are made available.

**Contact:** The Caesar Creek Section Supervisor [caesarcreek@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:caesarcreek@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

**October 11, 2025**

### Intro To Trail Building

**Description:** Interested in learning about trail building on the Buckeye Trail? We will have trail work training for all new volunteers that want to learn.

Here's your chance to volunteer with the Buckeye Trail Association. This is the perfect opportunity if you are new to volunteering — we are providing the tools and the training to introduce you to trail building on the Buckeye Trail. Safety is our number one concern, followed closely by providing an enjoyable Buckeye Trail Crew experience.

**Details:** We will have trail work training for everyone looking to learn. Our project will be on the New Straitsville Section, finishing a new segment of Buckeye Trail between Antle Orchard Road and Oakdale Road.

**Meeting Location:** We will meet at Tom Jenkins Dam (23500-23598 Jenkins Drive; Glouster, OH 45732). Meet there at 8:30am. The Safety Talk will begin at 8:45am and we will head out on the trail at 9am.

**Time:** 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM Saturday

**What to Bring:** Lunch, snacks, water, gloves, work boots/shoes, work clothes.

**Sign up:** on Eventbrite

**Contact:** Email the Central Ohio Chapter [CentralOhio@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:CentralOhio@BuckeyeTrail.org) with any questions.

**October 13, 2025**

### Crooked River Chapter Fall Hike

**Description:** Details: This 11-1/2 mile hike goes through Girdled Road Reservation and Cascade Falls Lake Metroparks. We start and end at the shelter at Skok Meadow, 12415 Concord-Hambden Road, Concord Township, Lake County, so there is no shuttling! There is an option to do a seven mile hike. Leashed dogs are welcome and you do not need to be a

# 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*

member of the Crooked River Chapter to attend.

**Meeting Location:** Skok Meadow, 12415 Concord-Hambden Road, Concord Township, Lake County, OH

**Time:** 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM Monday

**Sign up:** Eventbrite

## October 17-19, 2025

### Backpacking the BT Around West Branch, Mogadore Section

**Details:** We will backpack at West Branch State Park on the expanded BT. Meet up at 1 pm @ archery / disc golf parking lot, right outside of the main campground. Water sources are limited, plan accordingly. This event happens, rain or shine.

**Contact:** Russ at [redfeather1bta@gmail.com](mailto:redfeather1bta@gmail.com) for additional information.

## October 18, 2025

### Crooked River Chapter Meet 'n Greet at Restoration 44 Coffee Company

**Description:** Come on out to Buckeye Trail Town Mantua to meet members of the CRC leadership, ask questions, and get informed about Ohio's Buckeye Trail.

On October 18, 2025 from 9:00 AM to Noon, members of the Crooked River Leadership Committee will be on hand to discuss all things Buckeye Trail. We want to put faces to all our wonderful CRC members and welcome any who aren't. Bring your questions, bring your stories, meet other hikers, and have a great cup of coffee.

Make a day of it and hike the Buckeye Trail or enjoy shopping in Trailtown Mantua! It's all good!

**Meeting Location:** Restoration 44 Coffee Company, 10675 Main St, Mantua, OH 44255

**Time:** 9:00 AM to Noon

## October 18, 2025

### Ohio River Chapter October Hike Caesar Creek Pt 15 to Pt 12

**Description:** We will meet at Gladys Spur parking lot near Caesar Creek pt15 at 9am and shuttle to parking near pt12. The hike is about 10 miles. This hike is on dirt trail in the wildlife area, road, and then we return to the bike path.

**Meeting Location:** Gladys Spur parking lot, 39.660400, -83.967680

**Time:** 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM Saturday

**Sign up:** with Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ohio-river-chapter-hike-october-tickets-1661345823079>

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

## October 19, 2025

### Ohio River Chapter October Hike Loveland Pt 11 to Pt 15

**Description:** We will meet at the trail parking near the Monkey Bar by Loveland pt15 at 8am and shuttle to Miamiville at pt11.

The hike is about 10 miles. This hike is fully on the bike trail.

**Meeting Location:** Trail parking near the Monkey Bar at Loveland Pt 15

**Time:** 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM Saturday

**Sign up:** with Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ohio-river-chapter-hike-loveland-tickets-1708635016329>

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

## October 30-Nov 3, 2025

### West Branch Work Party, Mogadore Section

**Description:** Last work party of the year! We will do lots of bridge work — place and build one bridge, replace one bridge that is falling in, and finish removing a bridge and reroute the trail at that location.

**Details:** Come after 2:30pm on Oct 30 to set up camp. We have camp sites 6 - 10 (site 9 reserved for the camp kitchen) at the 1st Horse Camp. Meals will be provided by the Crooked River Chapter. Showers are at the main campgrounds. Crews will work Fri through Sun from 8 am to 4 pm. Mon will be a short day, hopefully only 5 hours.

**Contact:** Russ at [redfeather1bta@gmail.com](mailto:redfeather1bta@gmail.com) for additional information.

## NOVEMBER

## November 1, 2025

### Crooked River Chapter — Mogadore

#### Little Loop Circuit Hike

**Description:** The Crooked River Chapter is planning to circuit hike the Little Loop by sections. We completed the first series of hikes taking place in the Burton Section. Now we are moving on to the Mogadore Section. There will be one hike a month.

**Meeting Details:** Meeting times will be 8:30 am. We will meet at the endpoint, then take half the cars to the start point. We will hike back to the endpoint, when those that left cars there will shuttle the others back to their cars. Be prompt. We will leave for the start point at 8:30.

#### Future Hike Dates:

Dec. 6, 2025 - Mogadore Pts 5-10A, 10.2 mi

Jan. 3, 2026 - Mogadore Pts 10A-10E, 10.2 mi

Feb. 7, 2026 - Mogadore Pts 10E-13, 11.7 mi

Mar. 7, 2026 - Mogadore Pts 13-17, 10.3 mi

Apr. 4, 2026 - Mogadore Pts 17-21+, 11.0 mi

**Registration:** Registration is required on our Eventbrite site at [little-loop-circuit-hike-7-mogadore-1-to-5-tickets-1515796711769](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/little-loop-circuit-hike-7-mogadore-1-to-5-tickets-1515796711769)

**Contact:** Additional information is available on the EventBrite site listed above. If you need to contact the leader, please email the Crooked River Chapter at [crookedriver@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:crookedriver@BuckeyeTrail.org)

## 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.

### November 6, 2025

#### Chapter Leadership Summit

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

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

### November 13, 2025

#### BTA Board of Trustees Meeting

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

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

## DECEMBER

### Dec. 6, 2025

#### Crooked River Chapter — Mogadore Little Loop Circuit Hike

**Description:** The Crooked River Chapter is planning to circuit hike the Little Loop by sections. We completed the first series of hikes taking place in the Burton Section. Now we are moving

on to the Mogadore Section. There will be one hike a month.

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#### Future Hike Dates:

Jan. 3, 2026 - Mogadore Pts 10A-10E, 10.2 mi

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Mar. 7, 2026 - Mogadore Pts 13-17, 10.3 mi

Apr. 4, 2026 - Mogadore Pts 17-21+, 11.0 mi

**Registration:** Registration is required on our Eventbrite site at [little-loop-circuit-hike-8-mogadore-5-to-10a-tickets-1515836671289?aff=erelpanelorg](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/little-loop-circuit-hike-8-mogadore-5-to-10a-tickets-1515836671289?aff=erelpanelorg)

**Contact:** Additional information is available on the EventBrite site listed above. If you need to contact the leader, please email the Crooked River Chapter at [crookedriver@BuckeyeTrail.org](mailto:crookedriver@BuckeyeTrail.org)

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

eventbrite

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



# tickets start at \$5\*



## ridegobus.com

\*one-way, plus taxes and fees

**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!



Buckeye Trail Association's  
**Everyday  
Trail Heroes**  
Quiet work. Lasting miles.

The Buckeye Trail Association's fall campaign features stories and portraits from the people who mark, mend, teach, and welcome along 1,400+ miles, making every mile easier to follow and a joy to hike.

Your gift supports BTA's full mission:

- people that produce
- protection that preserves
- systems that support



development@  
buckeyetrail.org

Power our work at [buckeyetrail.org/donate.php](https://buckeyetrail.org/donate.php)  
or contact [development@buckeyetrail.org](mailto:development@buckeyetrail.org)



Vicki Proctor • Cindy Somers • Richard Morgan  
Raman Ras • Diane Wright

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