



The Trail Builder

Newsletter of the Ozark Trail Association Spring 2009

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The Ozark Trail Association is a non-profit group with the mission to develop, maintain, preserve, promote and protect the rugged natural beauty of the Ozark Trail

Breach reveals ancient beach Proffit Mountain in the Paleozoic

By Scott George

The Taum Sauk section of the Ozark Trail, destroyed by the breach in Ameren's Upper Taum Sauk Reservoir in December 2005, will be re-opened this year. Along the new trail hikers will have a chance to see the geologic structure of a 500 million year-old beach, complete with evidence of a shoreline, island and reef.

The Ozark Trail is undergoing a major reconstruction on Proffit Mountain including the Scour Loop Trail, which will have a trailhead at Highway N near the East Fork of the Black River. The Scour Loop gently meanders through the woods from Highway N to the now remarkable Proffit Mountain Scour where a short spur trail connects the loop to the Ozark Trail. Exposed by the torrent of water that rushed



A dip in the distant past: graphic representation of Ozark sea life 500 million years ago with multi-legged trilobites, a few inches long; cylindrical sponges, 1-2 feet high; and trailing seaweed (algae), which gave the water its green color in these early reefs

Drawing by Dr. Bruce Stinchcomb

The beach formed in the St. Francois Mountains, which at the time consisted of a small group of islands surrounded by warm seas

—*Scott George*

down the hill from the breach is a series of rock shelves. In these newly-visible rock layers, one can now see a "beach" formed before the age of dinosaurs. This beach can be found in what is known as the Scour Pool Area near the bottom of the scour where it meets the East Fork of the Black River (see figures below).

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The Ozark Trail Association Newsletter is published four times each year and is mailed to all members. If you would prefer to receive this newsletter electronically, please contact kathy.atnip@ozarktrail.com.

Contributions are welcome and may be emailed to the editor at the above address or mailed to:

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Scott George
John Roth
Robert Smith



Bloodroot blooms from March to May along the OT. Its red sap was used as a dye by native populations, but is now known to be toxic to the skin



This newsletter is printed on paper containing 30% recycled fiber content

President's Report

Line Shift!

Each year in January the OTA's Board meets to elect/re-elect Directors and Officers to set priorities for the coming year. This year marked my sixth Annual Meeting—four as a Director, one as ex-officio (having stepped down in 2006 to take the Interim Executive Director job), and one, this year as a Board candidate. On January 24th I rejoined the board on a slate that included the re-election of existing Directors Margo Carroll and Lisa Hollenbeck. At this meeting I was also elected as President of the OTA, filling the void left by Steve Coates, who has now taken on the position of Vice President.

If you've ever played or watched ice hockey, you're familiar with a line shift. During the game the action is furious, players zooming up and down the rink, the puck constantly in play, when suddenly one or more players hop the board into the bench while an equal number hop the board onto the ice. The game keeps going in near-seamless fashion as fresh legs join on the fly to reach the goal and score.

I think a line shift is a great analogy for our January Board meeting. Steve scored some major goals and now I'm giving him a well-deserved breather. I'm hitting the ice at full-speed, ready to score a couple of goals myself. We're both surrounded by a great team bent on success, and everyone, including YOU, is working to score for the Ozark Trail.

The last shift of the OTA scored mightily in 2008. Highlights include:

- Over 500 volunteers contributing over 15,000 collective hours on the trail
- \$250,000 in "in-kind" work in building and maintaining the OT
- \$131,000 in grant program awards
- Opening a new five-mile section of the Courtois Gap in Crawford County
- 150 maintenance outings covering 259 miles in our Adopt-A-Trail program
- New GPS data for over 200 miles of trail
- Over 100,000 visitors to www.ozarktrail.com including 5,000 map downloads
- Hundreds of trail users served by the OTA shuttle service
- Elected to chair the Ozark Trail Council
- Two Eagle Scout projects
- And more!

We have some great goals to score for 2009. For this year the Board of Directors set the following initiatives:

- Rebuild 4.5 miles of the Taum Sauk section with a summer opening

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In Memoriam

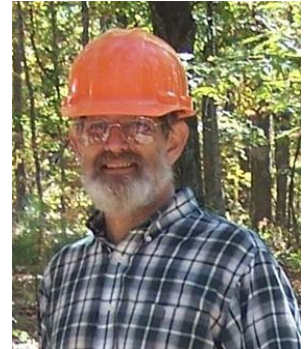
David W. Fuehring 1950 - 2009

By Robert Smith

The Ozark Trail community was saddened recently to learn of the death of Dave Fuehring. Dave passed away on January 29, after a two-year bout with cancer. He is survived by his wife Gwen.

David was an active volunteer for the Ozark Trail Association and avid outdoorsman. During the last four years, his real OT passion was sawing. He was a prolific sawyer who cleared deadfall on every section of the Ozark Trail in Missouri. Dave and Gwen were very active with the OTA since its inception in 2002.

Through the American Hiking Society's "Week-long Vacation" program, they sponsored several projects on our trail, including the construction of the foot trail around Barton Fen, the rock wall on Henderson Creek, and the construction of the trail between Asher Cemetery and Strother Creek. In 2007, Dave and Gwen were named recipients of the American Hiking Society's National Volunteers of the year. 🌿



President's Report

Continued from page 2

- Complete 4.5 miles of the Courtois Gap to create a 227.5 mile through-trail from the Meramec to the Eleven Point River
- Implement a new funding program with emphasis on corporate and individual grants and donations
- Increase our membership levels
- Work on trail promotion, including new maps of the trail, expanded shuttle providers and increased visibility with public agencies and legislators
- Creating a "roadmap" for the expansion of the Ozark Trail from St. Louis to Arkansas
- Build our volunteer staff to meet our growing needs

You'll hear more about these goals during the coming year. If you'd like take a "line shift" yourself, contact me at (573) 436-0540 or <mailto:john.roth@ozarktrail.com> to help make 2009 another championship season!

John



**In lieu of flowers,
contributions in
Dave Fuehring's
memory may be sent
to:**

The DeGreeff Hospice House
10024 Kennerly Road
St. Louis MO 63128
(314) 525-7390

OR

The Wellness Community
1058 Old Des Peres Road
St. Louis MO 63131
(314) 238-2000

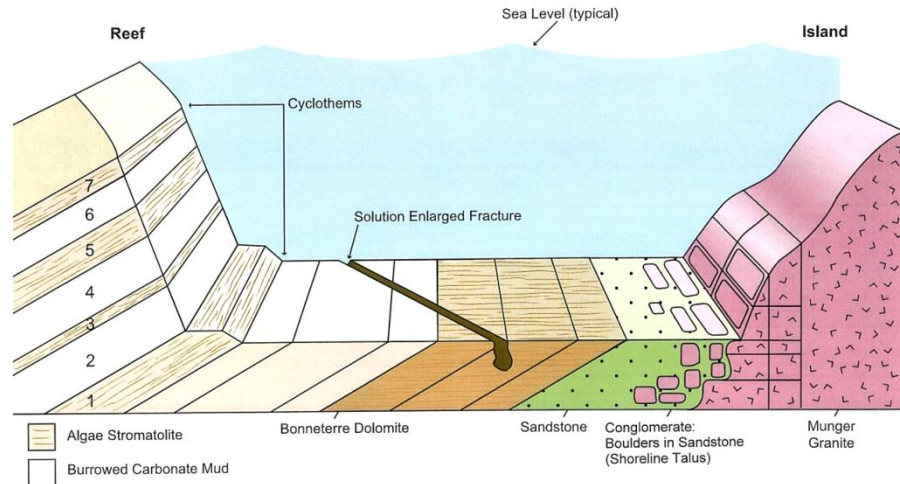
Breach reveals ancient beach

The bedrock outcrops include a complete sequence of the ancient shoreline made up of:

- Island remnant;
- Shoreline talus;
- Sandstone beach; and
- Reef deposits.

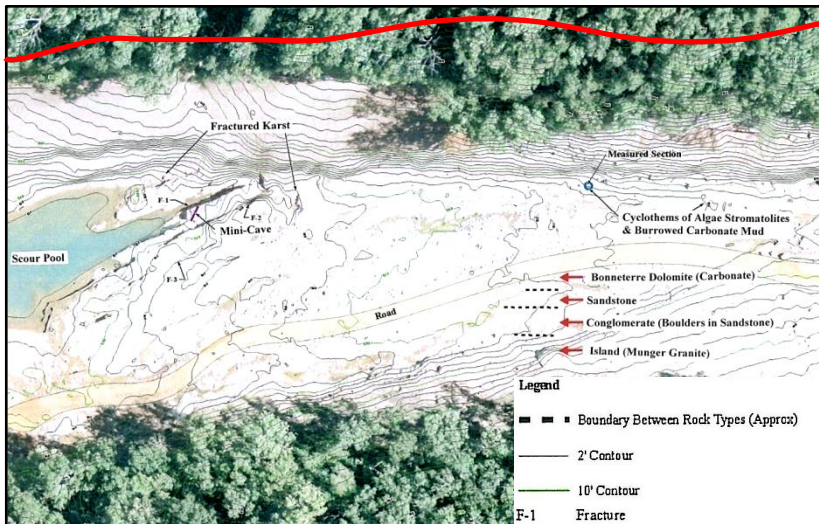
The island remnant consists of the pink Munger Granite, which formed approximately 1.2 billion years ago. As the granite weathered, it formed “talus”: an accumulation of angular boulders at the foot of the mountain. Similar talus is visible at Johnson’s Shut-Ins today. These boulders were incorporated into the green sandstone forming a conglomerate. The “sandstone” is a mixture of sand, silt, gravel and clay sized sediments washed down from the islands. These materials were reworked by the seas forming the green sandstone beds.

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Generalized geologic cross section of the Proffit Mountain Scour Pool area with reef, sandstone beach and island indicated (January 2009)

Geologist: Scott George
Graphic Artist: Dave Buck



The reef deposits formed in tropical or subtropical seas. Life was simple in these early seas, consisting of algae and a few hard-shelled creatures such as trilobites, and brachiopods which look similar to today’s clams; these are among the oldest life forms preserved in the fossil record. The domed structures of the algae mats are clearly visible in these outcrops, which are composed of dolomite, a mineral often brown in color, commonly found in sedimentary rock formations of the Ozarks. The dolomite beds consist of a repeating sequence of shallow and deeper water deposits, called cyclothem. Climatic change, similar to that of the recent Pleistocene ice ages, were likely responsible for the alternating sea levels.

The scour pool outcrops also show several interesting aspects of karst, formed by the dissolution of carbonate (dolomite/limestone) bedrock by groundwater. These include preferential dissolution along fracture zones, and the influence that resistant beds (such as thin shale layers) have on groundwater movement. A small cave is also present, which likely formed at the groundwater table. See the photo above for an aerial view of the area. The approximate location of the Scour Loop Trail is shown by the solid red line at the top of the photo. The park has constructed a small shelter near the scour pool where hikers can pause to view the rock below on their way up Proffit Mountain to the Ozark Trail, and perhaps imagine the scene those millions of years ago. 🌿

Scott George is a Registered Geologist in Missouri. He works for PSC Environmental Services in Columbia, Illinois and is an avid hiker and caver in the Missouri Ozarks. Thanks to Steve Coates for contributing to this article. And thanks to Dave Buck for the Scour cross-section graphic and to Bruce Stinchcomb for the drawing of pre-historic Ozark sea life!

Greg Iffrig: Missouri's Professional Conservationist of the Year

By Kathy Atnip

The Conservation Federation of Missouri annually recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations who contribute significant effort to the conservation of our air, water, soil and wildlife resources. On February 27, OTA supporter Greg Iffrig was honored as 2008 CFM Professional Conservationist of the Year.

Among the accomplishments leading to this award, Greg's work on three major trails is notable for representing a significant shift in trail design and use in Missouri. The Clifty Creek Natural Area Loop Trail in Maries County, the Devils Well Loop Trail and the proposed Current River Trail from Round Spring to Bee Bluff, both in Shannon County, emphasize the finest examples of geologic, scenic and terrestrial communities in the Ozarks. All three of these trails had major milestones in 2008 and Greg has been the driving force behind their design, construction and progress toward completion.

Moreover, Greg's diplomatic and dedicated work helped secure the recent Missouri Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trails program grant to the Ozark Trail Association for the Current River trail.

In addition to his work on behalf of the OTA, Greg was co-editor of a landmark report, *Pioneer Forest, A Half Century of Sustainable Uneven Aged Forest Management in the Missouri Ozarks*. Also in 2008, Greg was again the principle author and editor of the Leo A. Drey Foundation's *Annual Report*.

Greg Iffrig is the official liaison to the Board of the L-A-D Foundation and manager of the St. Louis office. He also coordinates all recreational, natural area and endangered species work for the 140,000 acres of Pioneer Forest conveyed to L-A-D in 2004 by Leo Drey. Greg was the founder of the national quarterly publication the *Natural Areas Journal* in 1981 and served as its editor until 1991. He graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia with an MS Degree in Wildlife Conservation in 1978. 🌿



Greg Iffrig at the Ozark Trail Opening Ceremony, celebrating 200 miles of through-trail, April 29, 2006 at Council Bluffs Lake

Notes from the field Construction and Maintenance Committee Column

By John Roth

"Another OTA Project delivered on time as promised!" The Department of Transportation has similar signs placed at completed road construction sites. I'm half-tempted to put up a sign to crow about the great work our OTA volunteers performed during the first two frigid months of 2009 as they completed a 1 ½ mile connector trail from the new Highway N trailhead to the existing Taum Sauk section in Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park. I suppose I should wait until we complete another three miles of trail this spring to officially reopen the Taum Sauk trail during our April and May MegaEvents!

We started this Taum Sauk rebuild on January 3rd with a great crew of 50 volunteers that put in a half-mile of trail in a single day. During the following weeks, we remembered why some trail groups in the region take a break in the winter, as temperatures dipped into single-digits while snow and sleet pelted the St. Francois Mountains. With every Wednesday forecast we considered canceling that weekend's outing. But then we'd get an email from Ron, Rosie, Jyll, John, Bruce, Paul (the list goes on) stating that if we brought the tool trailer, they'd show up. These volunteers are a tenacious group. How could we say no?

You're going to LOVE this trail. The path winds along steep slopes lined with pines and through rocky outcroppings dotted with cedars, making its way past a new pavilion and deck overlook before connecting into the "old" Ozark Trail. We've started clearing the corridor for our next push to complete the rebuild by Memorial Day. Sign up quick for the spring events; they're certain to fill fast and should be fantastic fun.

For every mile of trail we complete, it's another mile that needs eventual maintenance. In March we take a break from building to host two annual events at Winona and Powder Mill. As of this publication we've completed the Winona outing—the largest and most successful weekend maintenance event on the OT along with the Blair Creek maintenance outing. Many thanks to everyone who helped saw, lop, sign and clear trail on the Eleven Point, Current River and Between the Rivers sections.

And speaking of thanks: a special "tip of the hat" to our Adopt-A-Trail volunteers who received certificates of service:
Trail Blazer Award: Anthony Lounsbury, Art Lind, Candace Hale, Don Massey, Felts family, Jack Waterbury, Jim and Wendy Davis, Linda Meade, Rob Cofer, STL Ultrarunners
Bronze Lopper Award: Bruce Hadley, John Brett, Will Armon, Steven Warble, Kimberly Haag
Silver Lopper Award: John Wieland, New Haven Crew
Gold Lopper Award: Dick and Charlotte Kay, Jon and Sara Crockrell
Platinum Lopper Award: Ed Kindley, Jeff Goetter, Robert Smith, Danny McMurphy 🌿

Making of a Mega

By Greg Echele

A few years back, John Roth and I were deeply engrossed in one of those meandering conversations about our favorite subject, the Ozark Trail. We began dreaming out loud about what the OTA might achieve in coming years if we could just recruit the right volunteers, in the right numbers, with the right dedication and skills.

We did a little math. We concluded it would take a long, long time to finish a significant amount of new trail given the pace we were on using small groups of dedicated weekend trail builders. I said, "John, why don't we try a mega event?" The idea seemed to resonate with both of us right away. The OTA MegaEvent was born on 9-27-03 at Council Bluff Lake when REI agreed to sponsor our maiden voyage. To our delight, 45 people showed up. They built ¼ mile of fresh trail after the hand-tools training that John provided. Wow! We were hooked! Next, Alpine Shop jumped aboard by sponsoring their first Mega on May 15, 2004. Sixty-nine eager volunteers arrived to build ½ mile of trail in one day. Terrific!



First MegaCrew: volunteers from REI, Gateway Off Road Cyclists, Washington University's Outings Club and others at the inaugural event, September 2003

OTA board members began to think about "customer service". We made a list of fun things we thought might bring in loyal Mega followers if we could offer them at little or no cost to our volunteers. So the notion of giving FREE STUFF became a part of our culture, followed by the idea of being FAMILY FRIENDLY. Next, we thought it would be appealing to our volunteers if they could LEAVE A LEGACY - a nationally recognized trail that would grow in popularity over time, and be seen as valuable for their children and grandkids. Lastly, FRIENDSHIP became the final organizing theme in the MegaEvent story.

Well, things have come together nicely. What started with 45 attendees is now approaching 200 volunteers per event. Work outings that used to produce a couple hundred yards of finished trail are now generating a mile and a half per day. Since Mega's birthday, nearly 2000 people have signed on to participate, consistently adding to OTA's trail mileage

odometer reading. So what happened to that small-group trail construction and maintenance model upon which the OTA was founded? Well, folks, it continues week after week, during at least three seasons of the year. By combining the small and large group approaches, the OTA has 36.5 miles of finished trail to its credit. Truly awesome! Very satisfying!

My friends often ask me why people from all ages, professions and walks of life come together in this labor of love. In my opinion there are three reasons: First, it's just plain fun to accomplish so much working together as a team. There is a real, physical sense of accomplishment when you change the Ozark Forest into a welcoming place for yourself and future generations. Secondly, it's because the OTA is now seen as a well-run and family friendly organization of non-paid people who have earned a reputation for high quality events. Finally, it doesn't hurt that our volunteers receive a lot in return for their time and energy - in the form of FREE: trail lunches, BBQ dinners, tent camping in beautiful places, trail shuttle services, T-shirts, SmartWool socks, gear demonstrations and awesome bluegrass music around the famous OTA bonfire on Saturday nights. There is a comfort, warmth about it all: a true culture of friendship that nearly everyone enjoys. Just ask them. 🍷

Greg Echele serves as OTA MegaEvent coordinator, master-minding myriad details from food planning to firewood. Thanks, Greg!



"Trails that connect people to nature, to each other and to our shared histories and cultures": the marker identifying the OT as a National Recreational Trail is now appearing on the Courtois and other sections.



It's time to renew your Ozark Trail Association Membership

Support the **OTA's mission to develop, maintain, preserve, promote and protect the rugged natural beauty of the Ozark Trail.** New members receive an OTA patch and membership card, weekly updates via Email, and a subscription to the OTA newsletter, *The Trail Builder*. Plus, you get the satisfaction of helping out a great cause.

All funds go toward trail construction and maintenance, maps and brochures, web site maintenance and other administrative costs. The OTA is a volunteer-run organization!

You may **use the form below** to begin or renew an OTA membership **or pay via PayPal**. If using the form, please check the membership option below and fill in the blanks.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual (\$20/year) | <input type="checkbox"/> Family (\$35/year) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime (\$250 one-time) | <input type="checkbox"/> Student (\$15/year) |

OTA Member # (if renewing membership) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

(Please use the checkboxes below to indicate your preferred means of contact)

- Daytime Phone _____
- Evening Phone _____
- Alternate Phone _____
- Email _____

Other Information--include any special skills, experience, or resources you can share with the OTA and include all family member names here to receive individual membership cards:

- Check here to receive your OTA Newsletter via Email and save some trees!

Mail completed form with payment to: Ozark Trail Association
406 W. High Street
Potosi MO 63644

If paying via **PayPal**: go to <https://paypal.com> and send your payment to OTAmembership@OTA.com. This account can accept **credit card** payment or payment by **check**. Use the "Send Money" feature and enter your OTA member #, name, address, membership type and other information requested above in the "Notes" area.

Volunteer with the OTA!

For general volunteer information or to become a certified Trail Leader, contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Jeff Goetter at OTA.Volunteer@gmail.com

Members Welcome: OTA Meetings

The Ozark Trail Association meets at **7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month**. Check out the web site at www.ozarktrail.com for exact times and locations. If you can make it, stop in. The meetings are open to the public and input is welcome. Meetings are professionally run so you can count on finishing at 9:00 p.m. But the group usually goes out for a late snack and some great camaraderie afterwards. So join in the fun; we'd love to see you!



Ozark Trail Association
406 W. High Street
Potosi MO 63664

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED