



Scribbles from the Ozark Trail

Random thoughts

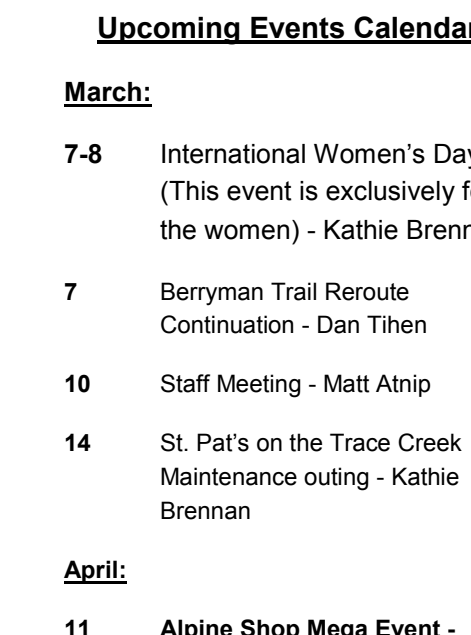
By R. Wolfram

This month, I will share random thoughts with you. Actually, most of my thoughts are random and very few really serve any purpose outside of entertainment!

Anyhow, I was perusing my March 2015 issue of Backpacker Magazine and discovered that a trail right here in our back yard is number 20 on the Backpacker "go list." The Bell Mountain Wilderness Trail is a recommended trip for its wild flowers and fall foliage. Read the article at <http://www.backpacker.com/trips/missouri/st-louis/weekends-bell-mountain-loop-bell-mountain-wilderness-missouri/> So much for keeping this one a secret!

Did you know that, although the region is often referred to as the Ozark Mountains, it's actually a high and deeply dissected plateau. Geologically, the area is a broad dome around the Saint Francois Mountains!

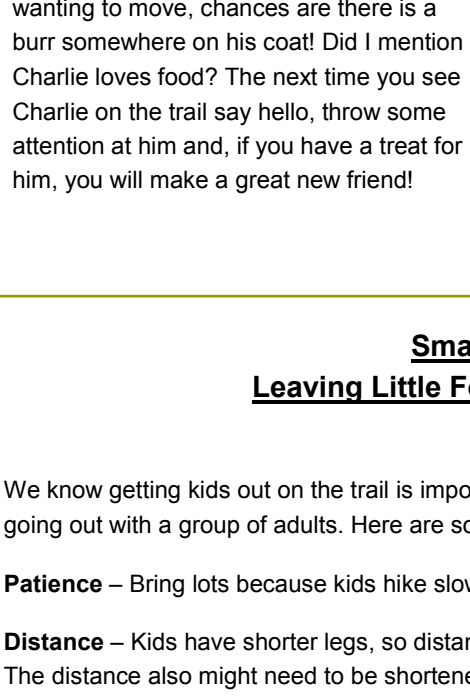
Recently, a canoe was donated to the Ozark Trail Association to be raffled. It is a gently used canoe and it will be on display at the Alpine Shop Mega Event this spring. It will be given away on or around National Trails day to one lucky person. Tickets can be purchased for \$10 each at the spring Mega Event and through the OTA website. A maximum of 500 tickets will be sold so your chances of winning this awesome canoe are pretty good. It is a ten-foot canoe, manufactured by Hemlock Canoes in Chippewa Falls WI. Come out and see this beauty and set yourself up with a ticket or two. All money raised will be used to support the Ozark Trail and the OTA.



This time around you'll find:

- ◆ Random Thoughts
- ◆ Happy Tails
- ◆ Upcoming Events Calendar
- ◆ Small Tracks
- ◆ OTA Member Spotlight
- ◆ Hiking in Winter
- ◆ Readers Pics

Happy Tails



This month, the family companion leaving his footprints on the trail is Charlie McRaven. He will be celebrating his second birthday in March and if you've met Charlie, you know that he has the energy of a pup! Charlie is an Australian Shepherd and leads an exciting life with John and Susan McRaven, and Johnny too! The family was first united when Charlie was discovered hanging out at a humane society here in Missouri. Charlie is what some might call a "lucky dog" since he gets tons of trail time. One of Charlie's favorite things is food. Charlie loves his sleeping bag—yes, his own personal bag! Charlie also thinks he is a lap dog. If you ever see him standing completely still, not wanting to move, chances are there is a burr somewhere on his coat! Did I mention Charlie loves food? The next time you see Charlie on the trail say hello, throw some attention at him and, if you have a treat for him, you will make a great new friend!

Upcoming Events Calendar

March:

- 7-8** International Women's Day (This event is exclusively for the women) - Kathie Brennan
- 7** Berryman Trail Reroute Continuation - Dan Tihen
- 10** Staff Meeting - Matt Atnip
- 14** St. Pat's on the Trace Creek Maintenance outing - Kathie Brennan

April:

- 11** **Alpine Shop Mega Event** - Matt Atnip
- 14** Staff meeting - Matt Atnip
- 25** Whoopin' it up in Winona - Kathie Brennan

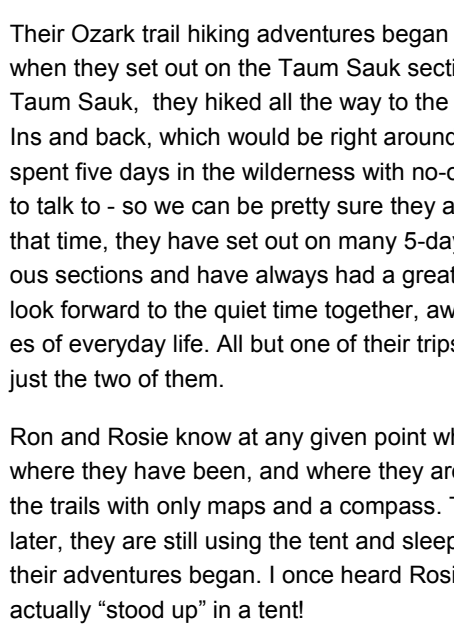
Small Tracks:

Leaving Little Footprints on the Trail

By C. Kelly

We know getting kids out on the trail is important, but hiking with kids is much different than going out with a group of adults. Here are some tips for success:

- Patience** – Bring lots because kids hike slower and stop more frequently.
- Distance** – Kids have shorter legs, so distance needs to be scaled back when hiking with kids. The distance also might need to be shortened mid-hike – refer to the first tip if this happens.
- Hike with features** – Try to find a hike that has a feature such as a lake, waterfall, or rock outcropping. It gives kids something to look forward to and also offers a great place to stop and play and enjoy a snack.
- Bring special snacks** – Telling younger kids that a special snack gives them extra hiking energy might be just the boost they need to get up a hill. Giving older kids a treat they normally wouldn't eat at home gives them something to look forward to. And having a special snack waiting in the car can help get kids (and adults) through those final steps.



Patience – Yes, it is previously mentioned, but it's sometimes one of the easiest things to forget. Kids often notice things in the world around them that adults take for granted. Take time to enjoy this.

Bring a friend – Just as it's often more enjoyable for adults to hike with friends, it's also more enjoyable for kids (especially older ones) to explore nature with their friends.

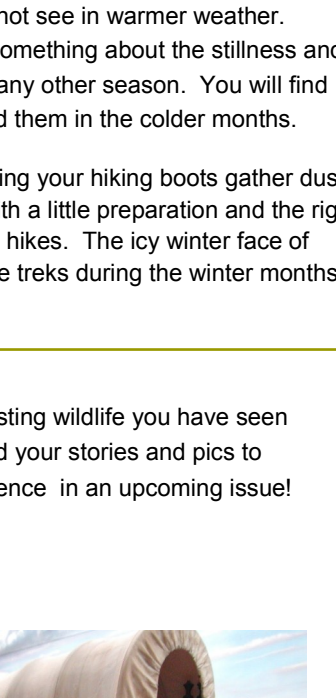
Be prepared – Bring extra clothing, water, and snacks to make the hiking experience as enjoyable as possible. Always remember the "ten essentials" and teach them to the kids.

Play games – There are some fun games to keep kids entertained and engaged while hiking the trail. Look for some cool ideas in an upcoming issue of Scribbles, and feel free to share your favorites at otscribbles@ozarktrail.com!

OTA Member Spotlight

This month, our volunteer OTA member spotlight shines on two people. We feel this to be appropriate since February is a month associated with love, relationships and all that other mooshy junk! Our couple is Ron and Rosie Koskovich. If you happen to be talking to one of them, the other is not far away. These two make a terrific team whether they are hiking, building trail or simply hangin' out around the campfire.

Their Ozark trail hiking adventures began in October of 1999 when they set out on the Taum Sauk section. Beginning at Taum Sauk, they hiked all the way to the Johnson's Shut-Ins and back, which would be right around 30 miles! They spent five days in the wilderness with no-one but each other to talk to - so we can be pretty sure they are in love!! Since that time, they have set out on many 5-day trips along various sections and have always had a great time. They always look forward to the quiet time together, away from the stresses of everyday life. All but one of their trips have included just the two of them.



Ron & Rosie sporting their Association jackets

Ron and Rosie know at any given point where they are, where they have been, and where they are headed and hike the trails with only maps and a compass. To this day, 16 years later, they are still using the tent and sleeping bags with which their adventures began. I once heard Rosie say she had never actually "stood up" in a tent!

So after the various outings and adventures, you might be wondering; Have these two hiked all of the Ozark Trail yet? Well, to answer that, they have only 16 miles on the Victory section to tackle and they can say they have hiked all of the OT!

Even with all of the hiking they have done, they have found time to "give back" to the trail by joining the Ozark Trail Association in 2007. The first trail building event they attended was the Courtois re-route and they have been coming back ever since!

If you happen to bump into these two, be sure to thank Ron and Rosie for all they do and all they have done! My hat is off to them. KUDOS to you kids!!!

Hiking in Winter

By Sparkles

Many people put away their hiking boots for the winter. They spend the colder months being depressed and pining for spring. As long as you prepare, there are many reasons to keep hiking throughout the winter.

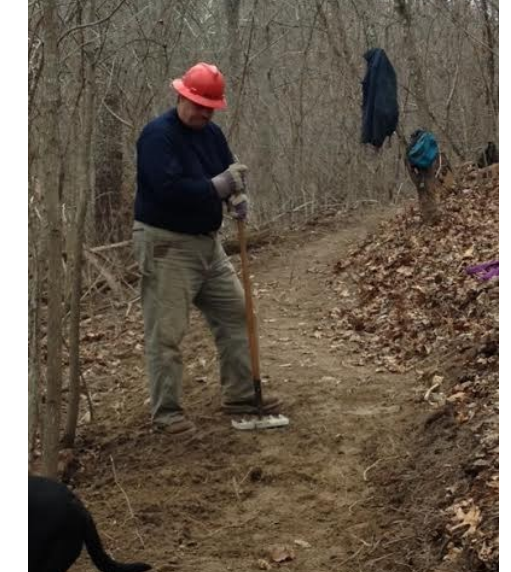


It is important to prepare for winter hiking. The right layers will keep you warm. Avoid cotton because it does not insulate when it gets wet. It also takes heat away from the body and can cause hypothermia. Use a base layer that will wick moisture away from your body. Your second layer should be fleece for warmth. Wear a shell for your top layer to keep you dry and stop the wind. Also, make sure to have a hat, gloves, a scarf, wool socks, and an extra pair of clean dry socks. You should feel a little cold when you first start your hike. It only takes about 10 to 15 minutes of walking for your body to start generating heat so you will warm up quickly. Make sure you shed layers as you warm up - before you start to sweat. Use your best judgment. Going out in brutally cold weather or when ice is expected is dangerous unless you are experienced and well equipped.

What is so great about hiking in the cold? First, the crowds are gone. You will see fewer people, if any, on popular trails when it is colder than when the weather is warm. Also, you get to see frost flowers, frozen waterfalls and other icy formations you do not see in warmer weather. These frosty treasures are amazingly beautiful! Plus, there is something about the stillness and starkness of winter that feels much different than hiking during any other season. You will find that your favorite trails seem new to you if you have never hiked them in the colder months.

If you are among those who have always passed the winter letting your hiking boots gather dust, consider getting out on your favorite trail while it is still cold. With a little preparation and the right clothing combinations, you can be warm and safe during winter hikes. The icy winter face of your favorite warm weather trails may become your new favorite treks during the winter months!

Question Of The Month: What is the most interesting wildlife you have seen while hiking, biking or horseback riding on the OT? Send your stories and pics to otscribbles@ozarktrail.com You may see your experience in an upcoming issue!



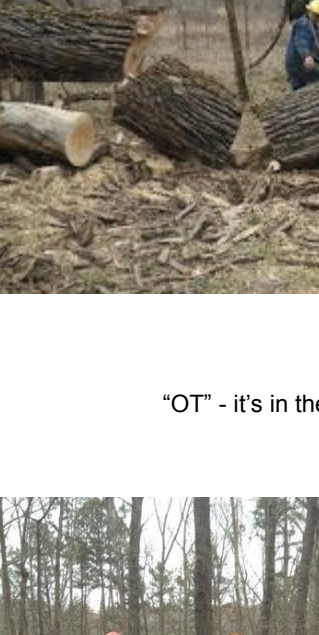
Calvin Brennan taking his family on their first camping trip!



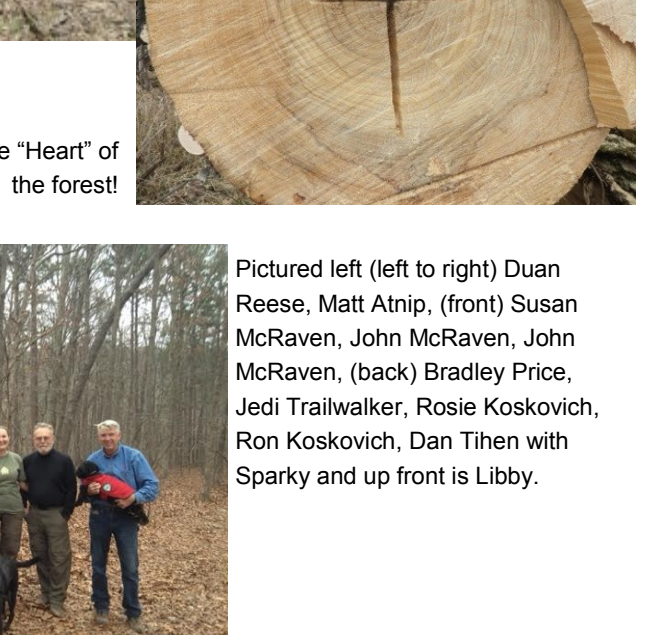
Kathie Brennan and Susan McRaven dressed to kill at a recent outing!



Matt Atnip just finishing up a section of new tread



Ron and Rosie...in January??



Mark Goforth had his work "cut out" for him as he cleared this debris from the trail near Powder Mill



"OT" - it's in the "Heart" of the forest!



Pictured left (left to right) Duan Reese, Matt Atnip, (front) Susan McRaven, John McRaven, John McRaven, (back) Bradley Price, Jedi Trailwalker, Rosie Koskovich, Roni Koskovich, Dan Tihen with Sparky and up front is Libby.



Pictured right (left to right) Kathie Brennan, CKK, Matt Atnip, John McRaven, John McRaven, Susan McRaven and Charlie, our Happy Tails companion this month

Send your photos to otscribbles@ozarktrail.com to see them in future newsletters. Please include the month you took the pic and the location. Your name will be printed with the pic unless you request otherwise!