

Revised Minutes of the Ouachita Mountain Hikers Members Meeting
January 15, 2015

Executive Board members present: Debbie Van Veghel, Marilyn Hall, Jeannie Eichler, Rick Ericson, Ralph Butler, Pat Miller, Tom Calhoun

Call to Order: 6:00 p.m., Garland County Library, Hot Springs. Approximately 30 attending

President's Remarks

Happy Birthday to Ben Glazer (Debbie tactfully omitted reference to age)!!

Newly officiating president, Debbie Van Veghel, convened the meeting by welcoming attendees and new member Lance Sullenberger. Cliff Harrison was not able to be present, but, Debbie lauded his performance as past president, and the humorous style that often punctuated his tenure. She then recognized Glen McClain, who was also unable to attend, as having done a credible job over several years as past Web Master. Debbie also recognized Tom Calhoun, who as newly appointed Web Master, had already designed and posted a new website.

Debbie thanked those present who supported Lake Ouachita State Park on New Year's Day by attending First Hike programs in the park.

Debbie reminded the audience that Anita Moore would vacate the Hike Chairman position at the end of this hiking season, and that the Executive Board is looking for a replacement. She pointed out that the duties are not difficult and that a great deal of support is available from past hike chairs as well as the Board. She sincerely hoped that a volunteer would step forward to fill this important vacancy.

Vice President – See Program, below

Treasurer/Membership

Jeannie Eichler reported the following:

Current balance of OMH Checking Account: \$3870

Current Membership: 288 paid members, of which 38 are hike leaders, 81 are Lifetime members, and 39 have completed the Ouachita National Recreation Trail.

Jeannie reminded us that the club roster is continuously updated, and is easily accessible on the OMH website. She also pointed out that the Treasurer's books would be audited shortly, and a report would be forthcoming in the near future.

Secretary/Historian - No report.

Hike Chairperson

Debbie reported for Anita. The following are scheduled hikes for January and February:

January hikes

Shady Lake, led by Ben Glazer and Anita Moore this coming Saturday

A Flex Hike on the Lake Ouachita Vista Trail, led by Cliff Harrison

The Little Blakely Comprehensive Hike of 15 miles, organized by Marilyn Hall

Fern Hollow Trail, White Oak Lake State Park, led by Jeannie Eichler in late January

In February

Another Flex Hike, this one on Hot Springs Mountain, led by Debbie

The regular Ouachita Trail Thursday hike, this one in Section 8

Hawksbill Craig and Smith Creek, Buffalo Nat'l River, led by Glenn Wortham

The February overnight will be in Oklahoma, on the McGee Creek Trail System, and led by Anita Moore. Special Hike Flash to be published soon.

Another Little Blakely Trail System hike, this one on Morgan Hollow and Glade Loops

A Lake Catherine Flex Hike

The annual Dawn to Dusk hike in Hot Springs National Park, ending with dinner at Rolando's

March: Look for a mini-trip to Palo Duro Canyon State Park in Texas led by Rick Ericson

Debbie also pointed out that Hot Springs Village will hold its second annual Golf and Recreation Expo. OMH will again man a booth at the Expo, and volunteers are needed to man it.

Trail Maintenance

Ralph reported the following:

Joy Linker has completed 50 hours of trail maintenance service on the OMH adopted section of the Ouachita Trail. Ralph awarded Joy her "Lop 'em, Chop 'em" recognition T-shirt.

A special work day was held on December 1, 2014, supporting the Hot Springs Village Audubon Society (led by Carolyn Minson), in its removal of invasive Privet Hedge plants on the HSV Cedar Creek trail. The work party was well attended, and included many OMH members who are Friends of the Village Trails: Marilyn Hall, Rick Ericson, David and Carol Tedrahn, Cliff Harrison, Glenn Wortham, Jim Gifford, Joy Linker and Ralph.

A work day on December 18 was cancelled due to inclement weather.

On January 15 (today), Ralph supervised several volunteers for the regularly scheduled OT maintenance day, from MM 175 to MM 176, with Glenn Wortham and John Burns working with a brush trimmer in the vicinity of FR 124, from MM 168.8 westward to MM 167.4. Ralph stated that these segments of the Flatside Wilderness OT were in relatively good condition. Other participants included Joy Linker, Marie Michalets, Don Petersen, Jim Gifford, and Jerry Harris.

Ralph reminded us that the remainder of this season's trail maintenance schedule can be found on the OMH website.

Publicity Chairperson - No report

Old Business – None

New Business - None

Evening Program

Marilyn Hall introduced Dr. Larry Price. Doctor Price is an ER physician, performing surgery in three hospitals. As an avid outdoors person, he has become somewhat of an expert in diagnosing and treating injuries and illnesses due to what he calls "Environmental Hazards in Arkansas' Outdoors,"....ticks, chiggers, and poisonous plants, spiders and snakes.

He detailed the types of ticks and tick-borne illnesses that are unique to this state, including those that are particularly dangerous (potentially fatal), their symptoms, how they present, and typical treatment.

Chiggers, according to Dr. Price, are mites, related to ticks, which produce larvae that can't be seen with the naked eye. It is the larvae that feed on the skin surfaces of mammals, producing an allergic reaction resulting in the well-known itchy bumps. They do not burrow in the skin.

Poison ivy and sumac are abundant throughout Arkansas. Humans are the only mammals that react to the oils of these plants.

The only dangerously poisonous spiders in the state are the Black Widow and the Brown Recluse. The small Black Widow is readily recognizable by the red hour-glass marking on its abdomen. The Brown Recluse is a medium size brown to beige spider. Both introduce a neurotoxin which results in a painful bite area which can grow to two inches in diameter, and cause strong abdominal cramping. It may take two or more weeks for the bite area to heal.

Tarantulas are not considered dangerous, nor are the small scorpions in Arkansas.

There are several venomous snakes in the state, including the Timber, Pigmy and Diamondback Rattlers, Copperheads, Water Moccasins, and Cottonmouths. Water Moccasins are the most aggressive and can strike a distance of up to two-thirds their length. Cottonmouths have the most toxic venom. Dr. Price stated that someone bitten by a snake could expect the wound area to blanch (whiten), bleed, and be quite painful. Anti-venom is extremely expensive...up to \$2,000 per vial, and treatment may require several vials.

Conclusion

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Ericson
Secretary/Historian