Fall 2019 Message from our President
Welcome Back!

I hope everyone had many wonderful summer adventures. For some of us, tales of these adventures will be gratefully appreciated to take our minds off the pain as we start to get back into hiking shape.

Bill Stanley, our Hike Chair, did a superb job of putting together an excellent Fall hike schedule for your consideration.

Bill has stated that the club is on track to finish the three year OT Hike Cycle by the end of the Spring 2020 hiking season. There will be make up OT hikes for the ones that were canceled this past season due to intense weather. In addition to the three individual OT hikes scheduled, the November Overnight will cover Section 1 of the OT from November 12-14.

For our two other overnight hikes, Bill has scheduled a possible October Overnight at the Cossatot River and hopefully a December Overnight at the Wichita Mountain Wildlife Refuge & Broken Bow in Oklahoma. If you are interested in organizing/leading either these two events or other possible locations, please let Bill know.

The OMH has 3 planned parties this fall: Welcome Back Hike & Picnic on September 14, Hunt’s Loop hike and Halloween Picnic on October 26, and our Christmas Party on December 5.

Bill, to many of the hiker’s delight, has brought back the OMH Lo-vista-thon (Lake Ouachita Vista Trail) this November. It covers the entire Vista Trail built by the Trail Dogs and is 40 miles long. The trail is a single track hiking and IMBA Epic mountain biking trail along Arkansas’ Lake Ouachita. Bill has found volunteer hike leaders to cover the entire trail starting at the Denby Bay TH to Avery Park. Of course there is a party at the end on Saturday at Avery Park Pavilion! The hike starts on Tuesday, November 19, and finishes at Avery Park on Saturday, November 23. The shortest hike is 5 miles and the longest hike is 10.9 miles. Hopefully you will be able to hike each day, but if not, you can sign up for as many as days as you would like to.

Please review the entire Fall 2019 Hike Schedule that is on our OMH Website. There are hikes that we have done in the past and enjoyed and flex hikes that gives hikers a choice on how far they would like to hike.
Remember to mark your calendar and join us in the **September** and **November club meetings**. For your convenience, the September meeting will be held at the Welcome Back Hike & Picnic and the November meeting will be held at the Garland County Library in their auditorium.

**Important Reminders:**

**ALWAYS CONTACT THE HIKE LEADER** (email or phone) in advance if you intend to hike. Proper planning requires knowing how many people to expect. As a courtesy, make contact as early in the week as possible. The Hike Leader may cancel a hike due to weather or unforeseen circumstances. Cancellation notice will be made only to those who indicate they intend to participate. All phone numbers in the schedule are area code 501 unless indicated otherwise.

**ANNOUNCE TIMES ARE DEPARTURE TIMES.** When meeting for a hike, be courteous to the hike leader and your fellow hikers. Arrive a few minutes early to arrange carpools and organize your gear. Don’t get left behind.

**BE PROPERLY EQUIPPED.** Start with plenty of WATER. Good foot wear is of primary importance. Depending on the hike and weather, each hiker should have a lunch or trail snack, foul weather gear, and a first aid kit. Depending on the season, you may also need insect repellent, hat, sunglasses, blaze orange (hunting season), or extra layers for warmth. See the “Hikers Corner” section of the OMH website for a list of other useful items.

**CARPOOLS** typically operate from Hot Springs and HSV. Riders are expected to contribute to the cost and wear-and-tear on the car—which can be significant when forest roads are used. The mileage rate for carpool share is currently 10 cents per mile, rounded to the nearest dollar, payable to the driver. Carpool share is announced in the Hike Flash; please bring correct change if possible. Due to a new policy carpool fee will not be charged on trail maintenance days.
ON-LINE SCHEDULE: The Hike Schedule may be viewed or down-loaded in Google Calendar (hikersnews@gmail.com) via a link on our web page (https://omhikers.net) The web page also has a printable copy of this schedule.

WEEKLY HIKE FLASH. Current information, including schedule changes is promulgated using the weekly “Hike Flash” message. If you do not receive your weekly email, the Hike Flash is also available in OMH Web site. If you do Not use email, you may receive the Hike Flash by providing the Membership Chairman with stamped self-addressed envelopes.

PHOTOGRAPHS taken on hikes may be of interest to others. Please share your photos with the OMH Webmaster, Tom Calhoun (tom.calhoun3@gmail.com) and the club Historian, David Blankenship (dbblank@sbcglobal.net) for inclusion in the yearbook and the photo gallery on the web site. If you keep your photos in albums on Google Photos or a similar location you may send the link to your albums rather than the individual photos. If you post photos on Facebook, be sure to send them to David and Tom too as there are members who are not on Facebook and would love to view your photos also.

Dogs: Please check with your hike leader if dogs are allowed on the trail of the chosen hike.

FIRST TIME HIKERS: Please participate in Two Saturday hikes before trying the longer, more difficult Thursday Hikes.

See you on the Trails!
Joy Linker, President