

The Coot & Holler Gazette

Progressive News of the Old Timers Reunion

Vol 22 #2, Friday September 1st, 2023



Share the Shade

By AJ Kramer

In 1985 there were few trees on the newly acquired TRA/OTR site, and the soggy bottomland cried out for so many improvements that it wasn't until 2011 that an *Adopt-A-Tree* program finally allowed members to support a planting program. Now in its 2nd phase, *Adopt-A-Tree: Share the Shade*, there is a diversity of more than 60 maturing species. In 2017 John Rosenfeld (*Go Native Trees*, on vendors row) and Fang conspired to plant 10 American Elms around the Kiddie Korral. But the saplings didn't do well there, so six survivors were relocated to the bank of the Tygart River.

Why elms? From the days when they were cultivated by William Penn and George Washington, elms became the most extensively planted shade tree in the US. By the end of Prohibition in 1933, though, Dutch elm disease had begun a decades-long plague that stripped towns, roadsides, and homes of the stately trees. But there are occasional blight-resistant survivors. John's seedlings came from a six-foot diameter monster in Lancaster, PA. Unfortunately, they aren't beaver resistant and now only three remain on the riverbank. John suggests that we need more. He points out that the hearty seeds can float down the Tygart to the Ohio, then down the Mississippi. As they take hold along the riverbanks, they can begin to repopulate the Midwest with thousands of trees from the Old Timers Reunion. "I figure that the average elm tree cranks out 10,000 seeds per year. If 10% land in the water, and 1% of those germinate, you're talking the start of a significant geometric progression." Fang is a bit skeptical about that lengthy river voyage, pointing out that the seeds are "... favored by many species, including Carolina Chickadees and wild turkeys; it's quite possible that they could simply take flight." Either way, or both, it's something to think about.



Friday Schedule ***Please note: Paint & Sip has been cancelled due to illness

9am – 12 am, Registration Open

9am, Contests resume; individual contest times will be published in the Coot & Holler and posted on the bulletin boards

9am – 10am, Sauna closed for cleaning.

10am, Sauna Opens

10am, Cooters Pub Open

11am – 4pm, OTR Museum Open

Noon, The Raunchy River Jam!!, River Stage

1pm, 6th Almost Annual ROOTS & TOOTS Gathering, Cooters

3pm-5pm OTR Merch Sales open

4pm 1950 Society Reception at the Event Tent

5pm-7pm, Shanty Irish performs, Cooters Pub

7pm Lightning Talks at the Event Tent

8pm, Brew Crew opens the taps for OTR 2023, Pavilion

Dusk (around 8:30pm OTR time), Movie, Crawl-In Theater

9pm – Midnight Dirty Mae performs, Pavilion.

2am, Last Call at Cooters Pub (may close earlier)

2am, Last Call at Brew Crew

4am, Sauna Closes

Please take your camp trash to the dumpsters, not to the trash containers in the Pavilion and around the site*

Contraband Confiscation Alert

It may have been nearly 90 years since the Volstead Act (known as the National Prohibition Act-18th Amendment) was repealed by the 21st Amendment signaling the end of the tumultuous 14-year Prohibition Era. However, last evening the persistently assiduous Bawd Squad Special Forces demonstrated that they actively remain on the hunt for intoxicating spirits and associated offenders. Manning the entrance gate on Thursday's late-night shift at Old Timers, these snoops (playfully) inspected each incoming arrival and their dubious and highly perplexed occupants to check if their vehicle was packed to the hilt with possible violations. It was reported that no warrants were issued, not a single arrest or detention resulted, and mug shots identifying the usual suspects were not available for public or media consumption.

However, you'd be wise to keep a sharp eye out for these blue-capped, yellow-vested enforcers within our ranks ... they mean serious (batty and FUN) business!



New for OTR 2023

Read the daily Coot and Holler with that first cup of coffee without leaving camp and submit personals by scanning this QR Code! (Paper copies still are available at the boxes on the Bulletin Boards and a box for those personal quips will be at Cooters.)



Margaritaville on the River by AJ Kramer

Prohibition? Not a problem if you know the establishments and the passwords. Take, for instance, Sleazy Wheezie’s Speakeasy. As usual, there’s a story. Brian Cunningham’s wife Kimmie spent a good part of her 38 OTRs working on the Wild Side, but she passed away in 2019 just a month after OTR. Brian registers her ashes each year and now she’s a certified ROOT, one of her life goals. To mark the occasion, the Wild Side/Ground Crew camp is offering free frozen Margaritas. They have a commercial grade machine, jugs of tequila, and mix enough for over a hundred gallons—complete with cups, straws, coarse sea salt, and little umbrellas. After two days of careful preparation, they are open for business, “all weekend or until we run out.”



So, stop by Sleazy Wheezie’s if you can find it, and if you have been told “What is the password.” Consider strolling through the Wild Side garden and into the bamboo forest. Sit down by the river view and tip your cup to Kimmie the ROOT. She’ll be the last posthumous ROOT...

Pieces of the Puzzle by Joel Jacobs

The diversity of Vendor’s Row. Two giant burgers and a mammoth, loaded hot dog on the food truck. The startling, hippy brilliance of the Tie Dye shop. Puddles and more puddles. A pair of churning Margarita machines at Scumbury Heights with smiles all around. The big yellow and black happy face at the Kiddie playground.

Thursday Night...

After a touching Memorial Service where we remembered our caver friends and family who passed we welcomed our first-time OTR attendees before the Bonfire lighting. I lost count of how many guides I gave out but I think it may have been the largest group since we started this tradition in 2012. Thanks to all the sponsors of the newest OTR attendees!

Coots and Roots



What’s up? by Joel Jacobs

The OTR campsite sits flat and low in the flood plain of the Tygert River. It is surrounded by tall woods and small hills so that when you look up at night you are looking into a round bowl of stars crossed by the Milky Way, which will be harder to discriminate this year due to the brightness of the moon. Stars and planets near the horizon are hidden by the land forms and the vegetation. The circumpolar constellations revolve around Polaris, the North Star. These are the familiar groupings that never set and include Cassiopeia, a huge nighttime W, Cepheus, five stars that look like an old woodshed, Draco, the dragon, Ursa Major, the big dipper and Ursa Minor the little one.

Renew your NSS membership or join the NSS here onsite at Speleobooks on Vendors row. ~ Emily Davis

Renew or join the Northeastern Cave Conservancy at the NCC booth or Speleobooks, both on vendors row. ~ Mike Warner

Watch for signs for where to get prescriptions for Doktor Steve’s Clinic

Shorah, Jakooth...See new ages in the cavern ~ C1 and CW

Thanks to Debbie Mixon and crew for the wonderful wild flowers up at the Memorial Garden. It’s a-buzzing with bees and flutterbys! ~Ruth

Much appreciation to Larry for lighting up our nighttime visits to the Porta-potties! ~Fang

25 years ago, right here, I stepped out of that car up on the hill...The kind of love, you fall so hard, you never hit the ground...I am still falling. Love you more! ~Me