



THE KEYSTONE HIKER

Preserving Pennsylvania's Footpaths since 1956

Contact us: 46 E Main St, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 / 717-766-9690 / info@kta-hike.org

MEMBER CORNER

Welcome to KTA's Newest Members: April

KTA is a membership-based organization. Since 1956, we have depended on contributions from hikers and hiking trail advocates like you to help us achieve our mission of providing, preserving, protecting, and promoting recreational hiking trails and hiking opportunities in Pennsylvania.

This year, we will be trying something new. Each month we will recognize the newest members of KTA in The Keystone Hiker.

In March, KTA welcomed 16 members and families to our hiking family:

Aggie Elisabeth Walton
Bruce Ewell
Colin Bailey
Curits Miller
Jason Miller
John Urbanik (Family)

Joseph Schmidt (Family)
Kathryn Ronan
Kay & Steve Owen (Family)
Kelly Arnold
Kim Marchi
Mike Dicello

Nathan Kutz
Stefanie Valar
Thomas Barnard
Tony James Arnold

SPRING HIKING WEEKEND RECAP

By Brynn Furnace, Program Administrator

Thank you to everyone who participated in Spring Hiking Weekend 2018! Gorgeous weather and a fantastic turnout made for good spirits all around. From what we've heard, Jim Thorpe, in Carbon County, is a location we should return to in the near future. The history, shops, and dining were a hit, but most important to the weekend's success were the incredible hikes. A huge thank-you goes out to the hike leaders, the Allentown Hiking Club, and Ed Ritter for all their efforts in organizing the hike schedule!

I truly enjoyed meeting our new members and seeing familiar faces. We couldn't have these weekends without you. I can't wait to see you at future events!

Pictures from the event and meeting information can be found at <https://www.kta-hike.org/news/spring-hiking-weekend-recap>

Register Now For These Events

Go to the links listed to check out these fantastic programs:

PHILADELPHIA, June 1-3: <https://www.kta-hike.org/philadelphia.html>

Prowl the Sproul, July 27-29: <https://www.kta-hike.org/2018-prowl-the-sproul.html>

KTA Trail Challenge, September 8: <https://www.kta-hike.org/kta-trail-challenge.html>

West Highland Way, Scotland, September 16-28: <https://www.kta-hike.org/west-highland-way-scotland.html>

Quehanna Elk Quest, September 28-30: <https://www.kta-hike.org/2018-qeq.html>

Fall Hiking Weekend, October 12-14: <https://www.kta-hike.org/fall-hiking-weekend-2018.html>

Join or Renew Your KTA Membership Today!

Memberships will extend to September 30, 2019. Most memberships expire 9/30/2018. Get it out of the way today! Renew online and save a trip to the post office or mail this form to our office.

Why be a member? There are several perks to joining Keystone Trails Association including discounts on merchandise, member-only events, updates/action alerts, and the knowledge that you are supporting PA's beautiful hiking trails.

CLASSIFIEDS

Experienced backpacker (age - late 60's) looking for companion(s) for leisurely backpack/fishing hike or Old Logger's Path. 27 miles in approximately 4 days. Sometime in June, July, or August.

Contact Chris - abcsd@verizon.net

Earth Day

Saturday, April 21, 2018

Don't let the empty table fool you! KTA reached out to many prospective members at the Mechanicsburg Earth Day Festival.

Thanks to everyone who stopped by!



17th Annual Art & Wine Walk

Saturday, May 12, 2018

KTA will be participating in Mechanicsburg's 17th Annual Art & Wine Walk. Stop by the office between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. for art, wine, and hiking!

VOLUNTEER / MAINTAINER'S CORNER

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR 10TH ANNUAL KTA TRAIL CHALLENGE

Saturday, September 8, 2018

Please sign up to volunteer for the 10th Annual KTA Trail Challenge. We have changed our volunteer registration form to be more accommodating of our volunteers. Now you have more choice in the times and jobs you want to perform.

It takes over 120 volunteers to pull off such a large event. Volunteers receive an official KTA Trail Challenge Volunteer t-shirt, access to the delicious Finish Line Picnic, and the awesome feeling that comes with doing good. Thank you so much for supporting Keystone Trails Association

WHITE MOUNTAIN RIDGE TRAIL OPENS TRAIL CARE SEASON

by Ed Lawrence, KTA Trail Care Coordinator

The White Mountain Ridge Trail, with its landmark Chimney Rocks formation and now part of the expanded Penns Creek Wild Area, flanks the creek to the south and offers a challenging hike in Bald Eagle State Forest. Four volunteers braved a sketchy weather forecast for the first weekend of April to devote 66 hours of work to improving the hiking experience on the mountain by removing blowdowns, brushcutting shaggy parts of the corridor, and reblazing over 3 miles of trail. The crew set out on Friday morning, after an overnight snow fall left a thin blanket of white on the forest, with tools in hand and a new appreciation for the wiles of April. This was just the most recent foray by KTA Trail Care to maintain this wild gem and the associated Reeds Gap Spur Trail. The entire White Mountain Ridge Trail and the Devils Elbow Access Trail are now in good to excellent condition for hikers who want to make the Weikert/Wesley area of Bald Eagle State Forest a hiking destination this spring. Thanks to Mary Ladish, Tony Robbins, Tom Bastian, and Ed Lawrence for their good spirits and great work.

KTA TRAIL CARE "TRAILHEADS" GET A HAT

by Ed Lawrence, KTA Trail Care Coordinator

Hikers know that a trailhead is that juncture point where a trail sets out from the parking area and the adventure begins. The KTA Trail Care Program defines Trailheads as the dedicated core of participants who consistently attend Trail Care Events, step up as leaders, and generally enjoy the experience, conviviality, and satisfaction of doing trail work. Anyone can be a Trailhead, and this year, the KTA Trail Care Program will be recognizing those volunteers who come to 5 Trail Cares with a specially crafted hat as a special thank-you. Check out the Trail Care schedule and become a Trailhead.

MAY TRAIL CARE EVENTS: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

by Ed Lawrence, KTA Trail Care Coordinator

If you've ever hiked the Chuck Keiper Trail Loop in Sproul State Forest, the challenging and scenic Black Forest Trail in Tiadaghton State Forest, or any trail in Hickory Run State Park, you know what it means to experience some of the best hiking in Pennsylvania. Now, take the next step and help keep these trails open and in good condition by attending one (or more) of the Trail Care Events scheduled for May.

Volunteers will gather on Saturday, May 12, at Hickory Run State Park, Carbon County, for a Code Orange workday. This will be KTA's first time helping maintain the trails at Hickory Run, so we want to make it a successful and enjoyable day in the park.

Both the Chuck Keiper Trail and the Black Forest Trail are regularly part of the Trail Care schedule because there are always maintenance needs on these footpaths. This year, members of the Middle Branch Camp, off Pennsylvania Route 144 south of Renovo, Clinton County, have graciously agreed to allow volunteers to base the Chuck Keiper Trail work weekend—May 3-6—at their cabin in the heart of the trail. The Black Forest Trail crew—May 17-20—will again be staying at the base of the Pump Station Fire Tower, off Pennsylvania Route 44 south of the village of Black Forest, Lycoming County.

The more people we have participating in these events, the more we can accomplish on behalf of the trails and hiking community. Also, participants will be well on their way to earning their KTA Volunteer Trailhead hat for 2018. For more information, see the work schedule or contact the event leaders.

YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE...

by Ed and Bernice Beck

As usual, we arrived at Trail Care on Friday evening. There was a young man there whom I'd never met, so I introduced myself, welcomed him to the gathering, and started talking. During the conversation, he said that he'd really like to meet someone who enjoyed hiking and the outdoors (as he did) but so far hadn't been successful in finding that someone.

The next morning, a young woman joined us—someone I knew from another life (yes, I do have another life). I didn't know she was coming, and she didn't know I was involved with KTA and Trail Care. She told me that the outdoors was something new and exciting to her and that her friends and family didn't understand her new interest. But, alas, she hadn't met anyone who shared her enthusiasm for the outdoors.

Do you see where this is going? Sometimes the stars are aligned and things just seem to work out. They met. They talked. They walked. They shared a table at dinner. They talked some more. They sat around the campfire and talked into the night, until the others at the campfire became aware of being in the way. She went home that night much later than planned.

I saw her about a week later in that other life. I asked if they'd contacted each other. Had they? They'd hiked and planned other hikes; plus, he'd met her parents. At other occasions, people who were at the Trail Care commented on seeing "the couple." They were seen here, there, on trails, at events. They'd even discovered and hiked several trails together.

Possibly, they each met that special "someone" they'd been seeking. I hope so. They seem so happy together. You just never know where that someone may be waiting. Maybe even at Trail Care.

HIKER'S CORNER

Jeff's Jaunts: Appalachian Trail- PA 191 to the Delaware Water Gap

by Jeff Mitchell

On a cool, windy day I met up with Bryan to hike the eastern end of the Appalachian Trail in Pennsylvania, from PA 191 to the Delaware Water Gap, a distance of about 7 miles. After shuttling cars, we began the hike

along the ridgeline of bare trees with mist, passing showers, and a persistent wind. We took a quick break at the Kirkridge shelter and passed a nice view at a meadow, but it was covered in clouds.

The trail became more rocky as we reached another vista from an outcrop. The clouds began to lift, offering more of a view of the ridges and farmlands. The trail featured rolling terrain with occasional rocks. Some of the forests were comprised of stunted oak trees, about 20 feet tall. We dropped into a rocky gap and climbed back out under a communication tower. The trail brought us back to the ridge where we followed a forest road, making the hiking easier.

As we neared the top of Mt. Minsi there was a fine view to the south. The clouds had now lifted, offering a fine view as the Delaware River looked like a shining silver ribbon stretching off into the distance.

The Appalachian Trail left the old road and descended into the Delaware Water Gap along a more rugged trail with thick rhododendron jungles. It was a beautiful hike. A ledge featured a fine view of the water gap, over a thousand feet deep, with tiers of cliffs on the New Jersey side. It is an impressive place and was once a popular vacation destination over a century ago.

The steep descent continued and there was another view of the gap. We crossed Eureka Creek with its cascade and pool in the rhododendron jungles. The roar of the small creek filled the forest and its series of small waterfalls appeared from within the rhododendrons. The trail left the rhododendrons and featured a more open forest with another view of the gap. Ledges rose over the trail. We veered onto an old road, passed a pond, and then soon reached the car.

This was a beautiful hike and the Delaware Water Gap has a great system of trails in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

To view pictures from the trip, go to <https://endlessmountains.wordpress.com/2018/04/12/appalachian-trail-pa-191-to-the-delaware-water-gap/>

Walk with Gantz: Backpacking With Dogs

by Dave Gantz, KTA Board of Directors

Anyone who has ever been around a dog knows that dogs love exercise. Some dogs in fact need lots of exercise! Dogs also love exploring new places and smelling everything they possibly can. So it would seem that dogs would be the perfect trail companion. While this can be true, there are definitely a few things for dog owners to be mindful of before letting their dog run aimlessly down the trail.

Lesson One: Be considerate of other hikers along the trail. Surprisingly enough, not every human on earth loves dogs. I happen to love dogs, yet I've been bit by several dogs throughout the years while hiking. Your dog must be under complete control from your verbal commands at all times. If this isn't the case for your pet, then the only responsible alternative is to keep it on leash at all times. No matter how well trained your dog may be, some areas require pets to be on leash at all times, or at least during certain times of year. Be sure to read up on pet regulations before you let your dog roam around on public property.

Lesson Two: Dogs often let curiosity (and their noses) get them in trouble. Interactions with snakes, porcupines, skunks, bear, coyote, and other wild animals can cause serious problems for your dog, the wild animal, and even yourself. Be prepared for doggo emergencies such as porcupine quills to the face (I carry a pocket knife with pliers), snake bites, and other emergencies. And remember, your dog is a visitor in the home territory of

these creatures. It is your responsibility to ensure that your dog doesn't cause unnecessary stress to creatures attempting to survive in their natural habitats. My friend Indy De Lemon, was only ten yards ahead of me when she met her first porcupine on the Allegheny Front Trail one evening. Neither Indy nor the porcupine were pleased with the results of that meeting.

Lesson Three: Is your dog prepared for the weather? Some breeds do well in winter, but can overheat in summer. Other breeds need a vest in cool weather, and thrive in warmer weather. Your dog is loyal to you and will never let you down, but don't forget that comes with a responsibility of not overworking your dog or pushing it too far in inclement conditions. Also, always keep an eye on your dog's paw pads. Rocksylvaniana isn't friendly for dog pads; ice and snow can be dangerous too.

Lesson Four: Sleeping outdoors with dogs. Dogs don't appreciate how much money you put into your backpacking gear, so you may not want them to sleep with you on your \$400 sleeping bag in your \$400 tent. On the other hand, forest noises and smells may lead your dog into trouble in the middle of the night. All dog owners find their own rhythm when it comes to camping outside, but I've found that an exhausted dog is the best kind of dog for sleeping outdoors.

Lesson Five: Yes, dogs can carry their own gear. Just like humans, most dog breeds can comfortably carry about 25% of their body weight. So go ahead and get your dog a well-fitted backpack and load it with food and gear up to 25% of the dog's weight. Of course be gentler on young and old dogs. Take notice if your dog lags behind from being overworked with the extra weight or just really hates the pack, and be prepared to carry the weight (pack and all) on your back if needed.

Hiking and backpacking with dogs can be an absolutely outstanding experience. But just as with every other aspect in life, preparation is key. Be sure that you and your dog are well prepared for an adventure before jumping out of the car and hitting the trail!

And always be sure your dog has a comfy place to rest after a hard day of work on the trail.

To view pictures from the article, go to <https://www.walkwithgantz.com/backpacking-with-dogs.html>

HIKING IN THE PROMISED LAND

by Gerry Rowan

Promised Land State Park and Bruce Lake Natural Area, both in Pike County, are places where I'd hiked a lot when I was just old enough to have a driver's license. Both are found on the Pocono Plateau, a high-elevation tableland characterized by thin soil and an abundance of large, glacially deposited rocks. This terrain—combined with a history of clearcutting, erosion, and fires—favors the growth of scrub oaks over large areas. Many parts of the plateau are now state game lands or state forest. The relatively flat surface of the plateau holds many kettle lakes, ponds, and wetlands (including peat bogs, which are rare in Pennsylvania).

The state park and natural area are in a region originally settled by a Shaker sect; hence place-names like Promised Land, Lords Valley, Egypt Meadows, and Blooming Grove. The hard winters and poor soil quickly drove the Shakers away, and the land was sold to logging companies and private hunting/fishing clubs. The state purchased much of the land early in the last century and established Promised Land as a state park. During the Depression, a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp was based in the park. The CCC planted trees to help reforest the park and surrounding area; it also built cabins, roads, a campground, and other park

infrastructure still in use today. The park's network of campgrounds is among the largest in Pennsylvania and, with around 550 camp sites, becomes a village of several thousand on summer weekends. Promised Land has evolved into a large modern park, with accommodations for RVs and all the services you would expect.

We chose to camp at the Pines Campground since it dates from the earliest years of the park. It might be labeled as a primitive camping area. No electricity, no water, and pit toilets. The campground is large and sprawling, with many sites having a view of the lake. Our plan was to pitch our tent, stay overnight, and begin our backpacking expedition early the following morning. We'd do a 3-day backtracking trek that entailed looping around Bruce Lake and returning to the Pines Campground, where we'd spend our last night before packing up and return home on Friday. One of our typical out-on-Monday-and-back-on-Friday trips.

Bruce Lake, within the Bruce Lake Natural Area of Delaware State Forest, is a glacial lake that is really deep at its east end and tapers off into a large bog area at its south end. In many places, the bog is inundated with water and is a floating mass several hundred feet from the real shore. Wild cranberry is among the most common plants in the bog. For this reason, the bog is a favorite hangout for bears from late fall through early winter.

The lake is defined on the east side by a low ridge and series of ledges rising from the lake's edge. A trail loops around the lake, but with the large wetland to the south, approaching the lake directly is a problem. The water depth keeps the north end and east side of the lake free from bog development. Launching a canoe from the north shore is fairly easy but may be problematic elsewhere. Many fishermen choose to either wade the lake or pack in an inflatable boat.

Visiting the lake as a teenager, among my favorite places were the campsites on the ridge overlooking the lake on the east side. In the late 1950s, there was a hand pump on a well and a pit toilet there. Tents were pitched in the woods near these utilities and close to the edge of the ledges that define the lake's east shore. We would sit in camp around a fire and watch the sun setting to the southwest over the bog. Our plan now was to pitch a tent at that site and spend 2 days exploring the bog and the nearby, man-made Egypt Meadows Lake and its surrounding wetland.

We divided the gear. One took the tent; the other, the tent poles. One took the cookware; the other, additional food. Our target was to have a complete gear set and divide the weight equally and not have to pack more than about 40 pounds. I packed a breakdown combo fly/spinning rod with the hope of catching a few fish to supplement our backpacked foods. Both Bruce Lake and Egypt Meadows Lake contain a variety of fish: panfish, perch, catfish, pickerel, and bass. A fillet or two, a square of foil, and several bacon slices form the base of a good trail meal. I know a butcher shop that will still double-smoke bacon on request. By vacuum-packing and freezing bacon, I can have it ready for hiking and cooking beans. Vacuum-packed bacon keeps nicely for about a week on the trail, though of course the temperature can make a big difference on how long ant food lasts without refrigeration.

Our strategy was doing the trip during the week to avoid the crowds that were sure to materialize over the weekend, since it was the second week of June and school was already out for the summer in some areas. Soon there would be wall-to-wall campers in the park. So we arrived on Monday, spent Tuesday and Wednesday night at the lake, and returned to our base campsite late on Thursday. This base probably wasn't necessary, but it was a relatively safe place to leave the truck for a few days. If our plan worked, we'd be back home before rush hour Friday afternoon.

The area was originally part of the hunting grounds of the Lenape Indians. They hunted the area for deer and bear, fished the streams and lakes, and developed trails as travel and trading routes. Early European settlers built wagon roads through the area. In the mid-nineteenth century, when the lumber became economically valuable, a

network of logging roads and skidways was cut through the forests. Many of these Indian trails and logging roads became the hiking trails now crisscrossing the park and natural area.

The park location makes it popular with popular with campers and other visitors from within and outside the state. Add to this the large size of the park, and the trails get a lot of use. That's why we chose to use a number of different trails in our hike north from the park to Bruce Lake, skirting the village of Promised Land. Bruce Lake is somewhat isolated and not directly accessible from any road, making it less popular. The terrain is not challenging in term of vertical change, but it is rocky, and the rocks can be mossy and slippery. Even in the summer, the trails can be wet and boggy in areas and demand waterproof hiking boots. The forest is a mix of northern hardwoods (reduced to scrub in some areas), while the boggy areas are forested with dark groves of hemlock, spruce, tamarack, larch, and white pine. The boggy areas can be impenetrable, so bushwhacking should be left only to very experienced hikers. The area was always infamous for its numerous rattlesnakes, but the rattlesnake population has been down in recent years.

During our visit, most of the trees were fully leafed out, but the wetlands were still open to the full sun. The mountain laurel, swamp azalea, eastern redbud, and dogwoods were in bloom. In places, the blueberries and cranberries were still in bloom, too. Little splashes of color floating against a green sea. Below the understory of the woods, violets and jack-in-the-pulpit were blooming, and mayapple fruit was beginning to ripen. The fawns we saw were about 3 months old and still strongly spotted, but they were running with their mothers rather than hiding.

Those 2 days camped on the ledges overlooking the lake were transcendental, providing the same sense of magic I felt when I visited as a teenager. The water of the lake was so clear and deep, you could look down many feet into it. The encroaching bog had a combination of low sedges, cranberries, blueberries, scrub trees, tamarack, and larch. The tamarack had a special, unique green color—lighter and more pastel than the surrounding broadleaf and hemlock trees. Their needles gave the trees a soft, foggy look from across the lake—a kind of a light green froth surrounding the dark lake water. The woods had that special smell of spring transitioning to summer. Each night, the sun set over the southern end of the lake, where a small stream—Shohola Creek—drains it. This stream gathers more water and becomes much larger as it heads east, forming an impressive waterfall in State Game Land 180.

The sunsets were long and drawn out. We were approaching the summer solstice. As nature turned down the light level, she turned up the volume on the night sounds. Frogs emerged to their croaking ritual, hoping to attract mates. Birds, roosting for the night, were calling each other from their perches. I imagined their conversation:

“Where you at?”

“I'm over here in the oak. Where you at?”

"I'm over here. Have you seen Hank and Bertha?"

“We're over here, high up in this sassafras.”

So went the calling, at least until the birds tucked their heads under their wings as darkness overtook them.

Other than an occasional vapor trail high in the stratosphere, we saw no signs of civilization. At times, the landscape seemed to be a stage set rather than a real place. Being in nature at the right moment is a magical experience. Interstate 84 was just to the north of the lake, but the topography and forest cover buffered the traffic sounds. The park campgrounds were several miles to the south, but by the lake, there was nothing but trees, leaves, and water.

There was about a 3-hour delay between nightfall and moonrise. A magical time between the heavens and the earth. The fireflies were rising out of the grass, floating up to the trees and, all the while, flashing to attract mates. The stars emerged slowly in the darkening sky—a deep blue at first, then purple fading to black until the stars shown brilliantly. The heavens and earth seemed to be a continuum from the sparkling grass to the polar stars.

Creamy Mushroom Soup Mix

1 cup dry whole milk powder
¼ cup coffee creamer powder
6 tablespoons cornstarch
¼ cup dried shiitake mushrooms, finely chopped
2 tablespoons vegetable bouillon granules
1 tablespoon parsley flakes
1 teaspoon dried onion powder
½ teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Combine and mix well. Store in an airtight container (a ziplock bag works well).

To make, add 5 tablespoons of the mix to each cup of water. Bring to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes. The soup is done when the mushroom chunks are tender.

Substitutions: All-purpose flour for the cornstarch; chicken bouillon for the vegetable bouillon.

Additions: 1 to 2 tablespoons butter.

Suggestions: Try sautéing 1 onion in 2 tablespoons of butter and then adding the water to make the soup. Reduce the amount of water to create a mushroom sauce.

Falls & Views Hike: Exploring the Wildness of Loyalsock State Forest and Worlds End State Park

by David Kowalewski, Ashley Kowalewski, and Ruth Rode

Looking for an upcoming, unique, and challenging Pennsylvania hike? The unofficial Falls & Views Hike (not endorsed by any group or state agency) is a 75-mile loop, passing over 30 waterfalls with 15 views. Additionally, you'll pass through remote and scenic areas, infrequently visited by the casual hiker.

Divided into four sections with a detailed guide, maps, and sketch maps, it utilizes portions of the Loyalsock Trail, Link Trail, state park and state forest trails, abandoned and unmaintained trails, and requires some bushwhacking.

Nearing completion, if you're interested, have questions, or just want to stay updated, contact Dave and Ashley at fallsandviews@gmail.com or Ruth at 570-322-5878.

CLUB CONNECTION

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND CAMPOUT

by Donna Allen

Very many of us have LOVED the Outdoor Extravaganza and owe Joyce Appel a huge thank-you for all her years of hard work!

Rather than having a complete void on Memorial Day weekend, we're offering a group campout at Black Moshannon State Park, located in Centre County west of Bellefonte and State College and less than 10 miles from Interstate 80 (exit 133: Philipsburg/Kylertown/Pennsylvania Route 53). The park has 3,394 acres of forests and wetlands and is surrounded by more than 43,000 acres of Moshannon State Forest. Many miles of hiking trails—short, long, and of varying difficulty—are found in the park, and many fishing options are available to those with a Pennsylvania fishing license. The 250-acre Black Moshannon Lake features a swimming beach. Boating on the lake is offered with non-gas-powered motors and non-powered boats having a Pennsylvania boat registration displayed. Boat rentals are available seasonally. The park is also near the West Branch Susquehanna River, which offers kayak/canoe exploring, and near bike trails offering different opportunities.

We've reserved all 3 group sites, which are next to each other. There is a large pavilion with a fireplace, bathrooms with flush toilets, sinks, and electric. (Showers are available nearby in the park.) Each group site has a fire ring. RV campers may reserve sites nearby in the park. Some have hookups. The number to reserve is 888-727-2757. (Group sites that we've reserved are for tents only.) Everyone is responsible for their own meals, but we will plan a potluck dinner for Saturday night at the pavilion.

You can do many things on your own in the park and nearby, but we're seeking volunteer leaders so that we can offer an organized hike, bike, and water trip each day. Please call Donna Allen at 412-372-2993 if you're willing to lead a trip. In any case, there are plenty of recreational options in the park and nearby to keep everyone entertained on their own.

The camping fee for all 3 nights is only \$10 per person. To reserve your spot at the group camping area, call Donna at 412-372-2993. Space is limited at the group sites, and reservations will not be confirmed until payment is received. Checks can be sent to Donna at

107 Echo Springs Circle
Trafford, PA 15085

The deadline is May 15, which will be here before we can blink!

8th Annual Iron Run Half-Marathon & Charcoal Challenge 5k Run/Walk

Saturday, June 9, 2018

The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park will hold these two races starting at 7:30 and 8:30 a.m.

Click below for more information:

Iron Run Half-Marathon: <https://www.runreg.com/7757>

Charcoal Challenge 5k Run/Walk: <https://www.runreg.com/7758>

Butler Outdoor Club's Muddy 5k

Muddy 5K Foot Race at Coopers Lake Campground - Sunday, June 10

Price: \$25 for age 12-17

\$30 for age 18 +

The race course will challenge people to perform as well as a tricked-out Jeep and will feature even more mud and fun than last year. Obstacles will include: tires, cargo nets, steep hills, wooded trails and the Jeep Playground itself (hint - the mud pit!!!). Medals will be awarded to the top three finishers in each age group plus top male and female finishers.

Participant Pre-Registration

Pre-registration is available until May 6, 2018.

Minimum age is 12 years. Pre-registered participants will receive a tech t-shirt, refreshments and admission to the Festival on Sunday.

Participants must register by May 6th to receive a shirt.

On-Site Registration

On-site fee: \$35

On-site registration is on Sunday, June 10th from 7- 7:45 a.m.

Spectators: \$10 for Adults, \$3 for kids

Cash or credit accepted.

COORDINATED BY:

Butler Outdoor Club

Plan to stay after the race and enjoy all the Festival offers!

Registration and more information: www.BantamJeepFestival.com

The Longest Day: Hike for a Cause!

June 21, 2018

On the summer solstice, The Longest Day of the year, people across the world will do what they love—or what those affected by Alzheimer’s disease love to do. Hiking is among the most popular of The Longest Day activities! Teams have rallied to climb a favorite mountain, adopted local trails and “named” them for The Longest Day, and challenged one another by scheduling multiple individual hikes or climbs at the same time.

Alzheimer’s disease is a global health crisis. Worldwide, there are an estimated 47 million people living with Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia, including 5.5 million in the United States and 400,000 here in Pennsylvania.

On The Longest Day, creativity is welcome as we work together to raise funds and awareness for the care and support of people with Alzheimer’s, while advancing research toward finding the first survivor of the disease.

For more information or to register, visit www.alz.org/thelongestday.

Questions? If you live in southeastern Pennsylvania, including Berks County and the Lehigh Valley, contact Sue Wronsky of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association at 1-800-272-3900 or swronsky@alz.org. If you live elsewhere in Pennsylvania, contact Sara Giammarise of the Greater Pennsylvania Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association at 1-800-272-3900 or sgiammarise@alz.org.

Want your event featured on the community calendar?

KTA will promote your club/organization's major events through The Keystone Hiker, Facebook, and our website. It's a perk of membership!

Just submit a list with date, time, location, and link to web page for only those events that the public should see, to info@kta-hike.org.

2018 UPCOMING EVENTS

To learn more about each event, visit our home page to explore event listings, or the Trail Care and Crew page for the full schedule and more information. Thank you!

May 3-6: Trail Care BTM - Chuck Keiper Trail

May 12: Code Orange 1 Day - Hickory Run State Park

May 11-14: Black Forest Trail Slackpack

May 17-20: Trail Care BTM - Black Forest Trail

May 31 - June 3: Trail Care BTM - Donut Hole Trail

June 1-3: Philadelphia: An Upscale Urban Hiking Experience, Philadelphia, PA

June 9: Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park's Annual Iron Run Half-Marathon & 5k run/walk

June 10: Butler Outdoor Club's Muddy 5k

June 12-17: Trail Crew Week - Mid State Trail, Everett Region

June 21-24: Trail Care BTM - Mid State Trail, Tioga Region

June 26 - July 1: Trail Crew Week - Baker Trail

July 12-15: Trail Care BTM - Tracy Ridge Trail System

July 26-29: Trail Care BTM - North Country Trail, Butler County

July 27-29: 15th Annual Prowl the Sproul, Renovo, PA

August 2-5: Trail Care BTM - Pinchot Trail

August 23-26: Trail Care BTM - Thunder Swamp Trail System

September 8: 10th Annual KTA Trail Challenge, Lancaster & York Counties

September 13-16: Trail Care BTM - Tuscarora Trail

September 16-28: Treks & Trails International Hiking Trip: West Highland Way, Scotland

September 28-30: Quehanna Elk Quest, St. Marys, PA

October 6: Code Orange 1 Day - Gifford Pinchot State Park

October 12-14: Fall Hiking Weekend, Williamsport, PA

October 25-28: Trail Care BTM - Joe Gmitter Trail

October 26-29: Black Forest Trail Slackpack

November 1-4: Trail Care BTM - Bucktail Path

November 2-4: Gettysburg Hiking Weekend, Gettysburg, PA

KTA's Bookstore

As April's showers bring May's flowers, hikers get the itch to hit the trails. Time to stock up on items for this season's adventures! Look no further than KTA's Bookstore: your one-stop shop for trail guides, maps, apparel, patches, and more!

Check it out at <http://www.kta-hike.org/ktas-bookstore.html>

Exclusive KTA Membership Perks

Keystone Trails Association Members now enjoy a 10% Discount when they shop at Appalachian Outdoors in State College.

Hyke & Byke is working to help eliminate poverty through interest-free microloans and we love giving back to the community and promoting the outdoors. KTA members use coupon code TAKE20OFF to get \$20 off any purchase of a Hyke & Byke product from their website: [www. Hykeandbyke.com](http://www.Hykeandbyke.com)

Use promo code KTA10 to receive 10% off your order and FREE shipping when you shop at Out Gear Recreation.

Support KTA!

Here are just a few ways to give back to the organization dedicated to preserving your hiking experience:

AmazonSmile: Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service. Support **Keystone Trails Association** by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com

KTA Brokerage Account: Donating long-term appreciated securities directly to KTA — rather than selling the assets and donating the cash proceeds — may be one of the best and easiest ways to give more. By taking advantage of the applicable tax incentives, you can significantly increase the amount of funds available for our trail care, advocacy, and hiking promotion efforts.

Keep Trails Alive: The Keystone Trails Association's KTA-Keep Trails Alive monthly donor program helps sustain our work of preserving Pennsylvania's footpaths. We are a small organization with a big mission; as such, we need to find trail people who will commit themselves to giving a regular, once-a-month contribution to put KTA on a stable and sustainable financial foundation.

For more information, please contact KTA at info@kta-hike.org or call 717-766-9690.

Do You Care About Trails?

Dear Fellow Hiker,

If you're reading this, odds are you've experienced some of your greatest days while hiking Pennsylvania's trails. Think about one of those times. Think about how it broadened and enriched your world, how it changed you. Now imagine that it never happened.

If that alarms you, good. It's time to act.

Winter is hard on our trails. Storms cause everything from blowdowns to ruts to washed-out bridges to silt-filled water bars to leaning signposts. Every year we go through the cycle of maintaining our magnificent trail system only to see Mother Nature return it to a state of chaos.

Each spring, KTA trail crews and individual maintainers cut out the logs that have blown down, rebuild the washed-out trails, note the bridges that must be rebuilt, and perform the mandatory maintenance our trails need. Will you help KTA today?

We're asking for your help. A monetary gift of any amount will be greatly appreciated, or you can gift your time and give back to our trails by volunteering for trail care. Either way, your generosity will help KTA rebuild and rejuvenate our trails for the 2018 hiking season and beyond.

Sincerely,

Joe Neville, Executive Director

Newsletter Submissions

This newsletter is published monthly by Keystone Trails Association. Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis. Opinions expressed are those of the listed authors. The Editor encourages submissions reflecting all viewpoints, but reserves the right to edit material. You are encouraged to submit material (even just a trail closing or care alert!) to the Program Administrator, Brynn Furnace, at bfurnace@kta-hike.org. The deadline for newsletter submissions is the 15th of the prior month. Submissions received after that time will be considered for the next month.