

The Keystone Hiker - August 2022

Member's Corner

Call for Nominations

Awards

The KTA Awards Committee seeks nominations to recognize outstanding members at the Fall meeting in October. Please submit nominations for the awards listed below to Barbara Wiemann, Awards Committee chair, at blwiemann@gmail.com by August 31st, 2022 with the following information:

- Name
- Approximate length of service to KTA's mission
- Brief description of contribution

The **KTA** Citation Award for Lifetime Achievement is presented to a person who has, over a period of years (not necessarily their entire lifetime), made significant contributions to the preservation of hiking trails and promoting hiking in Pennsylvania. Service may be in the form of volunteer efforts, publications, fieldwork, or any other pursuit that has furthered the mission of the KTA.

The **Thyra Sperry Volunteer of the Year Award** goes to a KTA member whose recent service to KTA's mission, especially in the preceding year, is most worthy of recognition. It is named in honor of former KTA president Thyra Sperry (d. 2017) and her devoted service to KTA.

Certificates of Achievement can also be awarded based on nominations from KTA member organizations for extraordinary work on projects that benefit hikers and/or trails in Pennsylvania. This award option allows clubs to nominate a volunteer who may not be an individual KTA member. The nomination should be based on recent service, especially in the past year, that serves the hiking public as a whole rather than primarily the members of the member club.

KTA Board

KTA members willing to serve on the Board may be nominated by petition

submitted to the Nominations Committee. Nominations may be made by a minimum of ten members of the Association and accompanied by written consent of the nominee. Petitions should be delivered to either the Nominating Committee or the Secretary no later than 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

To make a nomination, you can submit your petition to:

Wanda Shirk, Chair 1152 N. Brookland Rd. Genesee, PA 16923 814-848-7944 wshirk49@outlook.com Wayne Gross, Secretary 200 Lake Road Canadensis, PA 18325 570.656.3398 wegseg@msn.com

Another Reroute Completed on KTA's Section of the AT

The Appalachian Trail has been rerouted back onto the trail corridor just east of the Lehigh River between Palmerton and Walnutport, PA as of June, 2022. The 3.25 mile section was rebuilt by the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps and a crew led by professional designer and trail builder Peter Jensen. The work was supervised by Bob Sickley, Regional Manager of the Trail from the Susquehanna River to the Hudson River.



The accompanying slideshow shows the spectacular views of the Palmerton and Walnutport areas that are now visible from the A.T., as well as the excellent rock work done by the trail builders.

This reroute completes a process of remediation begun several years ago. This section of the A.T. goes through a federal Superfund site that was damaged by a zinc processing plant in Palmerton. The Trail was temporarily rerouted so that a team led by the federal Environmental Protection Agency could remediate the damaged soil and plant new trees and vegetation. More information on the remediation efforts can be found here.

Last October, KTA and other partners including ATC rerouted another section of the A.T., just west of the Lehigh River. The A.T. was rerouted onto the former North Trail, providing spectacular views of the Lehigh Gorge and surrounding area. More on that reroute **can be found here**.

KTA is grateful for the outstanding work performed by our volunteers and partners in making these relocations possible.

Exploring Gibralter Hill

Big thanks to the <u>Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club</u> for hosting a KTA Evening Ramble on Juy 14th. Participants enjoyed a 3.3 mile loop at the

William Penn State Forest's <u>Gibralter Hill Tract</u>, led by Brook Lenker and David Bailey, BMECC President. The forested landscape of Gibralter Hill offers glimpsing views of the surrounding hills and valleys. While the trail system is still in development, the site is bound to become an important hiking venue. Coincidentally, it's also near a great ice cream shop, providing a sweet finale to a summer hike.







The Susquehanna Rocks

Hikers like paddling, too. On July 24th, a group of KTA adventurers navigated the Susquehanna River from Fort Hunter to Wormleysburg, enriched by eagles, egrets, islands, and, more than a few, rock ledges throughout the voyage. The iconic water gaps and blue herons framed a stop at island 74a, a campsite on the Susquehanna River Water Trail - Middle Section. Participants each received a copy of the map and guide to the water trail which is promoted and maintained by the **Susquehanna River Trail Association**. who works cooperatively with PA Bureau of Forestry, manager of the commonwealth islands in this section of the river. Thanks to **Susquehanna Outfitters** for providing kayaks and shuttle services for this delightful outing.







Trail Gap Data Needed by DCNR

DCNR is partnering with the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) and will utilize the online <u>Trail Implementation and Management (TIM)</u> tool for the collection of all trail gap data.

To submit data for your trail gaps, we are asking trail managers to:

- 1. Visit the TIM tool.
- 2. Follow the instructions then complete the "intake form" for each of your trail gaps along the section(s) of trail your organization manages.
- 3. Once the basic information is provided through the intake form, the information will be processed within 7 to 10 days and trail managers will be emailed with instructions on how to access the TIM.

4. Complete Trail Gap Profile within the TIM.

Generally, we are seeking gap data for trails (non-motorized or motorized) that meet the following criteria:

- Trails that are a majority off-road or are planned to have a majority off-road alignment
- Trails that are planned to be at least 5 miles long
- Trails that connect multiple municipalities and/or counties
- Trails that are formally recognized in an official planning document

Currently, the data collection effort is expected to continue through September 30, 2022. If you have questions about the process, please contact Chris Corbran, PEC Program Coordinator at TIMTool@pecpa.org.

ATC Accepting Grant Proposals

The ATC is now accepting applications for the 2022 RPC Mini-grants program from the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions. The guidelines and application form were distributed by regional staff to club leaders in June. The deadline for applications is September 10, 2022 and awards will be determined by the Regional Partnership Committees no later than the fall meeting.



KTA Trail Care Schedule 2022

August 18-21: Trail Care

Thunder Swamp Trail System
Delaware State Forest
Leader: Ed Lawrence
cemclaw216@gmail.com

570-925-5285

Camp: Resica Falls BSA Camp

off Route 402 Bear Paw site

September 15-18: Trail Care

Bucktail Path Elk State Forest

Leaders: Shira Blady / Brian

MacNamara

bladysh@gmail.com

267-970-1280

Camp: Sizerville State Park Regular Camp Ground Sites # 3, 19, 20, and 21

October 1: Code Orange 1 day

Saturday Only event
Gifford Pinchot State Park
W/ Friends of Pinchot S.P.
Leader: Steve Stroman
stevestroman@hotmail.com

717-350-0437

Meet at 8:30 am at the campground office, off of East Camping Area Road.

Friends of Pinchot will provide a trail lunch for participants.

Free camping and showers available Friday & Saturday for participants in Group Camping Areas D, E, and F.

October 27-30: Trail Care

Pinchot Trail System
Pinchot State Forest
Leader: Jeff Mitchell
jmitchmitch@hotmail.com
570-441-2952
Camp: Pocono Mountain Bible
Conference Camp
191 Clifton Beach Rd.
Clifton, Pa. 18424
Meet: Manny Gordon Picnic Area off
Bear Lake Road at 8:00 a.m. each
morning

Visit https://www.kta-hike.org/trail-care-and-trail-crew for more info on volunteering with KTA

Conestoga Trail Saturdays

August 6 and 13 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

KTA is partnering with Lancaster Hiking Club and the Lancaster Conservancy to execute trail maintenance and development activities on the Conestoga Trail in sections that traverse the Conservancy's Clark, Tucquan Glen, and Pyfer Preserves along the Lower Susquehanna River Gorge.

Volunteers are needed to help execute this vital and

rewarding work towards the goal of a more sustainable Conestoga Trail. No previous experience required. Lunch, snacks, and beverages are provided each day in addition to the necessary tools, personal protective equipment, and training. Participants must bring their own water bottle and wear long pants and boots (or sturdy, closed-toe shoes). Be prepared to get muddy and dirty. If available, consider bringing your own shatterproof safety goggles and insect repellent. Meeting location (unless otherwise specified) is the main parking lot of Clark Nature Preserve, located at the end of House Rock Rd, Pequea, PA.



Preregistration is requested.

KTA took to the Conestoga Trail in Clark Nature Preserve on July 23rd for the first of three workdays in partnership with Lancaster Hiking Club and the Lancaster Conservancy to revitalize and reroute the trail. A dozen volunteers braved the heat and came out to help clear, widen, and level the trail into tiptop shape.

A huge thanks to all of our amazing volunteers, and we hope you can join us again as we continue on to the next sections.







KTA-Wildwood Trail Nights

Evening Trail Walk on the East Shore Trail at Wildwood Park Tuesday, August 9 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm Wildwood Park. Harrisburg Free

Trails need love, too! Join Brook Lenker of Keystone Trails Association (KTA) for a stroll on the East Shore Trail while discussing and discovering the nuances of trail maintenance. Learn about opportunities to assist Wildwood Park and KTA in trail care. Walk is approximately two miles in length. Please bring a water bottle, snacks, and insect repellent. Meet at the Olewine Pavilion near the Nature Center. Pre-registration required.

Register at <u>explorewildwoodpark.org/events</u>

East Shore Trail Work Night at Wildwood Park

Tuesday, August 30 5:00 pm - 7:30 pm Wildwood Park, Harrisburg Free

Help give Wildwood Park's East Shore Trail some TLC! Dinner will be provided for participants. Meet at the Olewine Pavilion at 5:00 pm for sandwiches and beverages, then lend a hand to improve this popular footpath. Tools, training and personal protective equipment are provided. Please bring a water bottle and insect repellent and wear long pants and boots or sturdy closed-toe shoes. Be prepared to get muddy and dirty. Participants must be 18 years or older. Pre-registration required.

Register at explorewildwoodpark.org/events

Trail Maintenance Training Rock Edition



Are you ready to take your trail maintenance skills to the next level?

KTA and the North Country Trail Association are pleased to announce the *Building with Rock* trail maintenance training workshop at McConnells Mill State Park in Portersville, PA, **August 26-28**.

Come learn about the tools, techniques and teamwork required to build trail structures out of rock. Building with rock can be a physically strenuous task, and a focus of the training will be on proper body mechanics. Tools,

personal protective equipment, meals, and campsites will be provided. Participation is limited to nine people. Participants must bring their own camping gear, boots or sturdy closed-toe shoes, long pants, water bottle, and, if available, shatterproof safety goggles and work gloves. The session begins Friday evening at 7:00 p.m. and concludes Sunday afternoon by 4:00 p.m.

Please <u>register</u> by August 15.

Trail Care Report

July 14-17 Allegheny Front Trail

The 2022 Trail Care season is flying by, with 7 events in the books and just 4 more chances to volunteer with KTA this year. The most recent event on the Allegheny Front Trail is proof positive that many hands make light work. We had reasonable weather for

mid-July; it was not too sweltering.

Thanks to scouting reports from AFT guidebook author Ben Cramer, Moshannon forester Zac Miller, AFT trail race director Norb Baier, and local hiker Susan Kerlin, we had a good handle on possible projects. On Friday, most of us headed to the most



overgrown section, armed with gas-powered brushcutters and loppers. 2 full days of work made this section much more easily traveled. There are still rhododendron tunnels, but now they're wider. Another volunteer set to clearing the access trail we used, while others chainsawed and DR mowed.

All told, the following was accomplished over the weekend:

- 1. From Moosehead Lane northwest to Shingle Mill Trail (2.3 miles): brushed and lopped
- 2. From Tram Road west to Meyers Run Road (~5.5 miles): cleared of blowdowns
- 3. mays Run Trail east to Underwood Road (1.7 miles): mowed
- 4. PA-504 north to Casanova Road (3 miles): cleared of blowdowns
- 5. Moosehead Lane access trail (.2 miles) brushed and lopped. Parking areas cleared at Benner Run and Meyers Run Roads.
- 6. Slide Hollow (~1 mile) and Halls Run to Tram Road (1.25 mile): lopped.

Pictures from the weekend can be viewed here.

Thank you to Tony for a scrumptious tuna noodle casserole, and others for bringing side dishes. Thank you to Black Moshannon State Park for the use of campsites and facilities, and to the friendly cabin owner for letting us park in his yard and play with this awesome dog. But most of all, thank you to the 11 hearty volunteers who contributed 168 hours of trail work: Shira Blady, Scot Bogert, Denise Chartrand, Ben Cramer, Tom Bastian, Martyann Gutierrez, Mary Ladish, Brian MacNamara, Tony Robbins, Donna Thompson, Jenn Ulmer. Thanks also for the most fun around the campfire that I can remember in a long time!

-Jenn Ulmer

What to Expect:

August 18-21 Trail Care: Thunder Swamp Trail System

The Thunder Swamp Trail System comprises 26 miles of hiking trails in Delaware State Forest in the southern end of Pike County. Up until the pandemic hiatus, KTA Trail Care volunteers had been helping to maintain the trail with a yearly event based out of the nearby Resica Falls Boy Scout Camp. This year we return to the Pocono plateau with a mission to pick up where we left off clearing the trail with loppers, brush cutting overgrowth and removing a backlog of blowdowns. There will be no shortage of work



available to willing hands of all abilities. We will again be based out of the Bear Paw site at Resica Falls BSA camp. This camp is conveniently located just a few miles south of the Thunder Swamp's southern gateway off Route 402. To get to the camp from Route 80, take the 209 North exit to the traffic circle where you will swing left following signs to Marshalls Creek and 402. Once in Marshalls Creek you will make a right and a second quick right to get on 402 heading north. Just over the bridge that crosses the Bush Kill, turn right into the camp entrance announced by prominent signage. Follow the road, slowly, straight back past the dining hall and the frog

with a tophat to the designated camp site. Volunteers will need to bring all their own personal camping gear and food needs. Two pavilions and showers will be available. As always, working to improve the hiking experience on this trail will be a personally rewarding experience and a benefit to the entire hiking community.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

KTA Trail Challenge

Our annual 25k and 50k trail run on September 10th in the lower Susquehanna Gorge takes over 100 volunteers to pull off. Please consider signing up to support this 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!



AmeriCorps Seniors are looking to place people 55+ to help out the local communities and organizations in Clinton, Lycoming, Union, and

Snyder counties. Their focus is environmental stewardship and helping with trails is of great interest. If you are interested in working with these volunteers, please contact the applicable county representative listed below:

Mike Vail –Clinton County <u>vailm@diakon.org</u> (570) 419-5941 Chris Barton- Lycoming County <u>bartonc@diakon.org</u> (570) 419-7858 Jenelle Longacre- Union-Snyder Counties <u>longacrej@diakon.org</u> (570) 419-8044

Hiker's Corner

Loop Hikes in Cornplanter State Forest



Latino Youth Explore Boyd Big Tree Preserve

Excelente! Chido! Indeed, excellent and cool are two words to describe a recent hike coordinated by KTA in honor of Latino Conservation Week. The trek was made possible through a partnership with the Latino Hispanic American Community Center (LHACC), based in Harrisburg. Twenty teens and adults investigated the lush forests of DCNR's Boyd Big Tree Preserve Conservation Area, learning about local flora and fauna along the way. Pawpaw, spicebush, pileated woodpeckers, and wood thrushes were among the many natural wonders that sweetened a memorable, multi-mile experience. The hushed grounds made a most special space to get to know one another and appreciate diversity - in both human and ecological contexts. KTA hopes that this is the beginning of many more adventures to come with our new friends at LHACC.

"We are grateful to the Keystone Trails Association for initiating and leading the hike and providing snacks and transportation," said Gloria Vazquez Merrick, Executive Director of LHACC. "Our sincere thanks go to the Association for including LHACC in this wonderful excursion which was a 'breath of fresh air' for our youth, and adult members who equally enjoyed themselves."

Thanks are also directed to the <u>Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation</u> for championing Latino Conservation Week in the keystone state and to <u>Susquehanna Outfitters</u> for providing transportation services.







Mid State Trail Maps Are Back

Maps and guides for the Mid State Trail are once again back in stock in the KTA Store.



DCNR Releases Draft E-Bike Policy

DCNR has unveiled its draft policy regarding the use of e-bikes on DCNR managed lands. According to the agency, the policy, when adopted, will allow e-bikes to be used on DCNR-managed trails where traditional bikes are allowed. E-bikes will not be allowed on Natural Areas; designated hiking trails (blazed with yellow or orange); or on trails or roads specifically marked closed for biking. The policy is intended to advance recommendations elevated in the Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan entitled Recreation for All and the Bureau of State Parks' Penn's Parks for All – A Plan for Pennsylvania's State Parks of Tomorrow).

The draft policy states that e-bikes will be treated equally to human-powered bikes by department staff, provided they:

- weigh no more than 100 pounds;
- do not exceed 20 mph using the motor functionality;
- are equipped with a motor no more than 750 watts; and,
- are equipped with fully functional, operable pedals.

The policy further qualifies e-bike use:

- On trails designated for non-motorized use, operators shall only use human power or pedal-assist power (motor assistance while pedaling) to operate e-bikes.
- Using the electric motor exclusively to move an e-bike for an extended period of time without pedaling is prohibited on nonmotorized trails.
- Operators shall adhere to advised speed limits along trails and not exceed 20 miles per hour while using the electric motor.

DCNR invites written comments on the draft policy until August 31. Comments can be submitted to RA-NR_PolicyOffice@pa.gov. Please consider sharing your opinions with the agency.

KTA will be developing and submitting formal comments on behalf of the organization.

Get to Know Your Forest:
Rothrock State Forest



Trail News

Conservation Heritage Museum Set to Open at Middle Creek

DCNR Undertaking Trail Investments In Cumberland County

What Can We Do About the Spongy Moth Outbreak?

DCNR Helps Celebrate Completion Of The Northwest River Trail

DCNR Seeking Comment On Draft E-Bike Policy

Hiker Survives Grizzly Bear Attack By Playing Dead

Appalachian Landscapes Protection Fund to Conserve Key PA Forests

Benefitting Pennsylvania hikers and hiking trails, the <u>Open Space Institute</u> announced on July 27th "a major new effort of its <u>Appalachian Landscapes</u> <u>Protection Fund</u> (ALPF) to conserve key forested areas in western and central Pennsylvania" A generous grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation will accelerate the Fund's efforts to protect land in these areas for carbon capture and wildlife habitat. The targeted area stretches from the Pennsylvania Wilds in the northern tier southward through the Allegheny Front, and from the Laurel Highlands to the Maryland border.

DCNR Secretary Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn recently received Pennsylvania

Environmental Council's (PEC) Lifetime Achievement Award for her outstanding contributions over the course of a career in the environmental, conservation, or outdoor recreation fields.

Throughout the years, Secretary Dunn has demonstrated a commitment to trail development in the state. Amongst many noteworthy accomplishments, she presided over the development of Pennsylvania's nationally-recognized Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, with the goal of ensuring equitable access to the outdoors for all Pennsylvanians.

A biologist by training, Dunn came to state government by way of the nonprofit sector, where she ran the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's Pennsylvania program for ten years.

She has also served as Executive Director of Audubon Pennsylvania, and most recently as President and CEO of PennFuture. She served on the PEC Board of Directors from 1999 to 2001.

See this **special video message**. created by PEC, about Cindy's legacy.

2022 Summer/Fall KTA Photo Contest

Submit your photos at https://www.kta-hike.org/photo-contest.html

The winner will be announced in January and will receive a free 1 year membership and KTA hat.







Community Calendar

KTA Events

Conestoga Trail Days

Saturdays, August 6th and 13th

Join KTA for a day work of volunteering on the Conestoga Trail in partnership with Lancaster Conservancy.

Allegheny National Forest Weekend

August 26 - 28th

Take a trip to Pennsylvania's only National Forest and stay in the beautiful Olmstead Manor in Ludlow for a weekend of amazing and wild hikes.

Trail Maintenance Training: Rock Edition

August 26-28th

Take your trail maintenance skills to the next level! KTA and NCTA are pleased to announce the Building with Rock trail maintenance training workshop at McConnells Mill State Park in Portersville, PA

KTA Trail Challenge

September 10th

Take the challenge to conquer our 25k or 50k trail run, based out of Pequea Creek Campground and Susquehannock SP in Lancaster County.

Quehanna Elk Quest

September 23 - 25th

Explore the Moshannon and Elk State Forests, view the elk herd in the Benezette area, and complete your weekend adventure at Gunners - a quaint hotel/restaurant in historic St. Marys, PA.

Barcelona and Andorra

September 25 - October 5th

Barcelona, on the Mediterranean Sea, is one of Europe's most vibrant cities, a world center of art, culture and sport and a wonderful city for walking. Andorra, nestled in the nearby Pyrenees Mountains between Spain and France, is one of the world's smallest countries but packed with excellent hiking opportunities.

Contact KTA to join the waitlist.

Black Forest Trail Slackpack

September 30 - October 3rd

Take advantage of this incredible opportunity, to complete in ONE WEEKEND the trail that everyone talks about: The Black Forest Trail. Shuttle between the trail and a cozy cabin with a home-cooked meal every night.

Fall Hiking Weekend

October 14 - 16th

KTA heads to central Pennsylvania for a weekend getaway filled with great hikes and fellowship. From rail trails to river trails and backcountry hikes, we are looking forward to a weekend of awesome excursions.

Rambles

Join the Executive Director, Brook Lenker, for short (< three mile) hikes and get to know KTA's new leader and the trail of the day. Meet special guests from our partnering organizations and agencies. Afterwards, if you wish, enjoy a meal (on your own) and conversation at a nearby diner. Reservations are not required and there is no cost to participate (although donations are welcomed). Consider bringing a friend or co-worker.

August 4 - "Dog Days" of Summer Evening Canine Hike at Boyd Big Tree Preserve

For dog owners and their well-behaved, well-socialized dogs In partnership with Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club Meet at the pavilion by the parking lot at 401 Fishing Creek Valley Rd, Harrisburg, PA 17112

Dogs must be kept on a six-foot (or shorter) leash as per DCNR regulations

August 10 - Morning Hike at Mt. Gretna

In partnership with Day Hikers of Central PA
Meet at the Education Center at Clarence Schock Memorial Park, 3283 Pinch
Rd, Manheim, PA 17545
Optional lunch meetup after the hike

Community Events

Leave No Trace Trainer Course

September 15-16

The Leave No Trace Trainer Course emphasizes the skills and techniques essential to Leave No Trace minimum impact outdoor recreation practices and education.

2022 National Trails Workshop

November 2-4

Three days of learning, collaboration, and networking amongst seasoned trails and tourism professionals, emerging leaders and people who are interested in getting involved with trails in their communities and across the nation.

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 ktaadmin@kta-hike.org.

Club Spotlight

Appalachian Mountain Club Delaware Valley Chapter



Since 1876, the Appalachian Mountain Club has promoted the protection, enjoyment, and stewardship of the mountains, forests, waters,

and the trails of the Appalachian region. AMC is the nation's oldest outdoor recreation and conservation organization. The organization is built on the pillars of conservation, outdoors education and outdoors activities.

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, Casey Schneck, at ktaadmin@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.

Please reference our **Editorial-Style Guide** while you compose your piece.



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