



The Keystone Hiker - December 2022

Member's Corner

Holiday Gratitude from Keystone Trails



Thank you, thank you, thank you. KTA's recent \$22 x '22 campaign appeal brought in critical revenue as the calendar year winds down and the new fiscal year ramps up. Seventy-seven (77) donors raised \$2,191.00 for the organization. A beneficial infusion, indeed.

As our forthcoming schedule of events will show, we have grand plans for 2023. KTA will offer a voluminous suite of exciting programs and volunteer experiences, enabling us to serve more people and service more miles of trail. Empowered by your generosity, we look forward to making a greater impact – whether bolstering

aid to local clubs or elevating our advocacy and education on key issues.

KTA is strong and growing stronger. I am humbled to be at the helm of this dynamic organization. Every path in the journey has been rewarding. Like the trails we celebrate, the people inspire, too – from the inquisitive first-time hikers to the outdoor sages on our board and council.

Pennsylvania is hiking heaven and KTA, with its community of clubs, members, and donors, are the evangelists.

May your holidays be cheery, bright, and peaceful. Let your trail spirit shine.

In Appreciation,

Brook Lenker
Executive Director

Two Trips to Wales on the Horizon



Last month, KTA announced a fundraiser trip along the **Wales Coast Path** between the towns of Aberystwyth and Newport.

We now have definitive dates to share, and thanks to overwhelming interest, we will hold a second trip! KTA heads to Wales on **Aug 15-26th** and again **Sep 26- Oct 7th**.

The route includes a total of 68 miles spread over seven days of hiking with a rest day in between. It is clifftop hiking at its finest, along Cardigan Bay and the Irish Sea on the country's southwest coast. Enjoy secluded coves, picturesque fishing villages, and quaint towns making your way to guesthouses and small hotels for evening lodging. Luggage is forwarded so participants need only carry a daypack.

This trip will be limited to 12 participants plus two leaders. Registration opens on December 15th.

Keystone Trails Endowment Fund

Please take this opportunity to make a year-end donation to The Keystone Trails Endowment Fund as a lasting legacy to the mission of KTA. KTA organizational member clubs and other groups may also make contributions to the fund. Consider making a donation in honor or memory of a club member who has made a difference in your club or the hiking community.

We want to recognize the following individuals or groups who have made contributions to the endowment fund since October 2021:



Henry Frank
Keystone Hiker \$2,000 (2022)

Wayne & Shirley Gross
Keystone Hiker (\$1,000 contribution) in memory of Tom Thwaites (2021)

Alan and Georgette Nelson
\$1,000 (Life Family Membership) (2021)

Wanda Shirk
Keystone Trails Legacy \$10,000 (2022)

KTA Board members and staff
Keystone Hiker - \$1,000 in memory of Maurice Forrester, Jr. (2022)



Please access the application at the KTA website to make your donation:
kta-hike.org/keystone-trails-endowment

Thanks for your continued support,

Wayne E. Gross
KTA Development Committee Chair

Volunteer's Corner

KTA Trail Care Schedule

Our scheduled trail care events have concluded for the 2022 season. The schedule for 2023 will be coming soon

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

Poem by Ed Lawrence

sickle moon
harvests the dark grain
of the night

Clubs, Please Report Your Volunteer Hours

Trail Maintenance is vital to keeping the incredible trail systems of Pennsylvania in good condition. Keystone Trails Association is justifiably proud of the work its volunteer crews and those of its member clubs dedicate to this important task.

We crow about it whenever possible, to whoever will listen! This includes the media, the general public, state agencies, and grant partners (some of which count the hours we dedicate to the trails of the Commonwealth as in-kind contributions for purposes of grant matching). So the more hours you devote to trail care translates to more money devoted to trails!

Thank you for all the work you do!

Volunteer hours should be compiled and reported by the member hiking clubs. Hours include round-trip driving time.

Wonderful Wildwood Workday

Wildwood Park is a Dauphin County gem, located less than a mile north of Harrisburg Area Community College. The park's East Shore Trail borders expansive wetlands and mature woodlands on its gentle route.

As part of the park's monthly volunteer day, KTA organized trail maintenance tasks along the East Shore Trail, including the installation of rock culverts for improved drainage and excavating sediments and organic debris that accumulated along the upslope of raised boardwalks (thus, impeding proper drainage).

A crew of ten made the work easy, fun, and fast. As is often the case with trail maintenance, there's more work to be done, but passers by and park personnel noted the difference – and complimented the effort. A big thanks to all that helped, and a special shout-out to KTA Board Member, Karen Lutz, for sharing her extensive trail tending expertise.

Learn more about volunteering for Trail Care at kta-hike.org/trail-care-and-trail-crew



HIKING TRAILS



Vox
by Design

Hiker's Corner

DCNR Announces New Reservation System for SF Campsites

Camping reservations in state forests are currently made by visiting a state forest district office and requesting a permit from district forest staff.

The new system will allow visitors to also make reservations [online](#), by phone (888-PA-PARKS), or [in app](#). This move to modernize will let visitors view real-time availability date and allow DCNR to access better campsite use data.

The number of camping permits issued has doubled in the past five years, creating a need for electronic records and reporting to help district forest staff effectively manage campsite conditions, perform necessary maintenance, and provide site alerts about site specific conditions that may arise, including road closures, flooding and other emergencies. The new system introduces a number of changes to [state forest camping policies](#).

There will be nightly fees of \$10 for Pennsylvania residents and \$15 for non-residents, with a \$6.50 transaction fee to cover costs of operating the systems. The new system will allow use of credit cards for camping and other permits, such as fuelwood and ATVs.

There will continue to be no fee for trailside, backpack camping, and water trail camping.

Fees may be waived for volunteers during work projects.

According to DCNR, revenue generated from the fees will be directed towards maintenance, improvement, and conservation of sites and associated recreation opportunities.

[For more information please view this FAQ from DCNR](#)

Hunting Season Continues

Hunters wear orange to keep safe, and so should you! Be aware of [hunting seasons](#) during your outings.

Orange apparel to stay safe and visible is [available from KTA!](#)



DCNR Seeks Public Comment On Catawissa Recreation Area Master Plan

DCNR is seeking public comment on the master plan to create the Catawissa Recreation Area in both Schuylkill and Luzerne counties. DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn and State Forester Ellen Shultzabarger, are asking the public to weigh in on the plan which gives off-road enthusiasts a public place to drive.

Tentatively set to open in the summer of 2023, the Catawissa Recreation Area is a 5,541-acre parcel of land that will be developed into a motorized recreation area in the Weiser State Forest in Schuylkill and Luzerne counties. DCNR is working with the Larson Design Group and The Markosky Engineering Group to develop the master plan for the recreation area.

KTA has voiced concern over the ATV Connector Pilot in northcentral Pennsylvania, noting that the resource degradation caused by ATVs and UTVs is incongruent with sustainable management values of the state forest system. The Catawissa Recreation Area is being developed on land that was previously a privately-operated park for ATVs and other users. This prior use makes it a preferable site for ATV activity. Nevertheless, it is part of the state forest estate, magnifying the conundrum of this kind of recreation on state forest land, and bringing new management burdens to the Weiser State Forest staff.

Learn more about this project at [DCNR's website for the master plan](#) and click the "Survey" tab or email OHVinput@larsondesigngroup.com with your thoughts. The survey will remain open until Friday, December 16, 2022.

[Outdoor Recreation in PA Worth \\$14 Billion in 2021, up 22% from 2020](#)

[New Garmin data reveals hikers make up vast majority of emergency calls](#)

[Smokies AT Thru-Hiker Permits to Double in Price in 2023](#)

[Most Beautiful Canyon in America is Here In PA, It isn't The Grand Canyon](#)

[Try Night Hiking Once and You'll Fall in Love With it Forever](#)

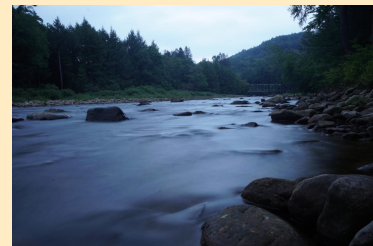
[Enola Low Grade Rail Trail Bridge Dedicated in Lancaster County](#)

[The SP Where You Can Hike Across A Swinging Bridge](#)

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](#)

Registration Opening Soon!

**Spring Hiking Weekend
April 21-23**

Penn Wells Hotel in Wellsboro, PA

**Hiking the Wales Coast Path
Choose August 15-26
or September 26 - October 7
International**

**Prowl the Sproul
July
North Bend, PA**

Allegheny National Forest Weekend

August 25-27

Olmstead Manor in Ludlow, PA

Trail Challenge 25k/50k

September 9

Susquehannock SP and Pequea Creek Campground in Pequea, PA

Fall Hiking Weekend

October

Johnstown, PA

More to come!

Community Events

Mid State Trail Association Winter Meeting

January 15, 2023

At Rock God Brewing in Danville, PA, or a Zoom virtual option will be available. Come learn about accomplishments in 2022 and plans for 2023! Free pizza at noon; beer, etc. available for purchase. Meeting 1-3pm.

RSVP and more information on [Facebook event page](#). Any questions, secretary@hike-mst.org.

SkiDance 2023

February 17-20, 2023

[Ski Dance](#) has been held annually on Presidents' Day weekend for over 35 years in the Laurel Highlands of Pennsylvania. It is a weekend of live music, singing, and contradancing in the evening and cross country skiing (downhill skiing is also an option) or hiking (as well as other activities) during the day. Singles, couples, families and friends of all ages are welcome. No experience skiing or dancing is required. Lessons for contra dancing and xcounrty skiing are both included.

Hike the Hill 2023

Februrary 12-17, 2023

Celebrating its 26th year, [Hike the Hill®](#) is a joint effort between [American Hiking Society](#) and [Partnership for the National Trails System](#) to bring together the trails community to advance shared trail priorities with congressional and federal agency leaders including: trails funding, public lands management and conservation, equitable access, and other top priority issues that sustain trails and improve access to public lands.

A.T. Vista 2023

August 4-7, 2023

Mark your calendars. The 2023 conference will be held in Johnson City, TN. More information to come.

**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

Susquehanna Trailers Hiking Club



The Susquehanna Trailers Hiking Club was organized in 1932 by the Playground and Recreation Association of Wyoming Valley. In 2002 we celebrated our 70th Anniversary. We are based in Wilkes-Barre, PA. But our members come from as far away as Nicholson, Tunkhannock, and Bloomsburg.

Anyone is welcome to join us on our hikes. There is no charge and club membership is optional. Since we hike all year round please dress appropriately for the weather, wear proper foot gear and always carry water.

The group is varied - men, women, old, young, married, single and there are many vocations represented. But we all have one aim out on the hiking trail, to enjoy the outdoors

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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