



July, 2012

THE KEYSTONE HIKER

Preserving Pennsylvania's Footpaths since 1956

MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS

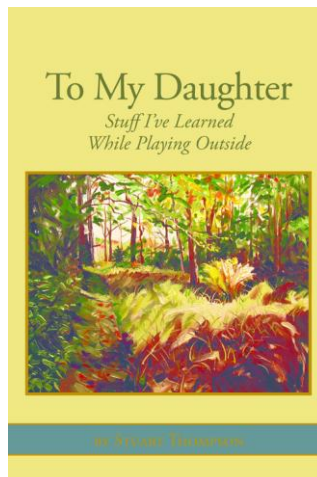
As a courtesy to our members who have indicated that they are unable to receive the digital version of the newsletter, we have formatted the content of the digital edition in a printer-friendly format. Because we will now be sending a newsletter *every* month, instead of only four times per year, each newsletter will be shorter, but with fresher and more timely content. In order to save on paper and postage, we may not include the full text of some of our longer articles in the print version. Nor will we include

some space-consuming pieces like our membership renewal form, merchandise order form, photographs, etc. However, all of this information may be accessed freely on our website, www.kta-hike.org, or, we are happy to mail you a printed copy upon request (just call KTA at 717-238-7017).

At any time, if you decide you would prefer to receive our newsletter by e-mail, please let us know.

TO MY DAUGHTER: STUFF I'VE LEARNED WHILE PLAYING OUTSIDE by Stuart Thompson

With the stories in this collection I directly address my adult daughter, as if writing her a very long letter. But as it turns out, the stories have universal application; they're addressed finally to all of us. I'm talking to anyone, actually, who has ever gotten sweaty and dirty and thirsty and heavily fatigued while engaged in outdoor adventure. I'm talking to anyone who, with their end-of-the-day tired, bruised, foot-blistered, rain-soaked, mud-coated body realizes that, "Hey! That was great!" I'm talking to anyone who, in spite of the fatigue and in spite of the aches, understands that something important was realized that day while they hiked, cycled, or climbed.



Shared in 279 pages, with 32 stories and 22 illustrations, are insights gained while engaged in outdoor activity, activities including hiking, cycling, canoeing, and rock climbing, with the bulk of the stories involving hiking. Some discoveries are easily absorbed and light-hearted. Some more challenging. Of interest to KTA members is that, within the 32 stories, 11 different Pennsylvania trails are either featured or prominently mentioned.

The book can be purchased either from Amazon.com or directly from the author, autographed, at www.stuart-thompson.com. Paperback: \$14.95; Hardcover: \$25.95

HE TOOK THE CHALLENGE. WILL YOU?

Markus Woodring, 38, from Mifflin, PA, has only been a hiker for four months. He is also one of KTA's newest 100-Mile Trail Challenge participants! He took the challenge because it acts as an incentive to get him on the trails, and he has set, as a personal goal, to finish the entire Appalachian Trail in Pennsylvania by the end. He also plans on hiking Old Loggers Trail and Flat Rock Trail. Marcus is being sponsored by friends and family, and working on getting his co-workers involved as well. Marcus says that a

good pair of boots is essential to any hiker because happy feet can take you far! Marcus hopes that his friends and family take advantage of the trails we have to offer and help ensure that they will be around for future generations to enjoy. Markus took the Challenge.

Markus took the 100-Mile Challenge. Will you? Challenge yourself, one step at a time. Call 717-238-7017 for registration information.

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MAINTAINER'S CORNER: NCT TRAIL CREW, by John Stehle

The Butler Chapter of the North Country Trail (NCT) hosted another Keystone Trails Association (KTA) Trail Crew week this year, from Tuesday, May 29 to Sunday June 3, 2012. The section of the NCT was in a beautiful boulder strewn gorge that follows the Slippery Rock Creek, from the McConnell's Mill bridge for 1.1 miles to Eckert bridge, in McConnell's Mill State Park. This is a very popular section of trail because of its proximity to the covered bridge and the grist mill at the state park, making it one of Pennsylvania's busiest sections of the NCT.

But its rocky beauty is also a major challenge for trail builders who want the trail to be accessible to the wide variety of hikers who venture on to it. That was the goal of Tom Baumgardner, Joe Hardisky, and Dick Boetner, who identified the sections most in need of improvement, and who put forth a plan to make it happen. The plan involved putting in over 40 stone steps to replace some particularly tricky sections that were a challenge to even the most nimble of hikers. A couple of the longer stretches involved working with a grip-hoist: a cool tool that is like having an overhead crane for lifting and placing heavy rocks. Andrew Bashaw, the Regional Trail Coordinator of the North Country Trail for Pennsylvania and Ohio, brought his grip hoist. He directed and aided in using it to move large

stones considerable distances, to place them precisely where needed.

Volunteers stayed in the Davis Hollow Cabin, which is operated under the auspices of the NCT in Moraine State Park. This is the second year in a row that the cabin was used for the KTA Trail Crew week, and it proved to be a very suitable place to provide overnight accommodations for the workers. Making it all the more satisfying were the meals prepared by Ceci Ramsey, who came in every morning and evening with something tasty, nutritious and filling. Nothing like a hearty meal after a day of trail building! By the end of the week, a total of 15 people had volunteered 48 hours on the trail. Thanks to everyone who worked on the project! And a big thank you to KTA for underwriting the room and board, and directing its volunteers to our project. Your support for our trails in PA is fantastic!

The next KTA Trail Care event will take place from July 13-15, on the Mid State Trail (Tioga Region). Contact Pete Fleszar, at 717.583.2093 for information or to register to volunteer! For the full 2012 Trail Care and Trail Crew schedule, please call KTA at 717-238-7017.

SUPER HIKE PREVIEW DRAWS 39 HIKERS by Paul Shaw, KTA Board Member

On June 17, 39 hikers participated in KTA's first preview of September 8th's Susquehanna Super Hike and Ultra Trail Run. The first of two preview hikes offered by KTA, this 15-miler focused on the west side of the Susquehanna River in York County, from Otter Creek Campground to Lock 12 via Urey Overlook. The leaders, Paul Shaw and Todd Lange, familiarized hikers with the route, terrain, water sources, and checkpoints along the way. The goal was to complete the hike in 6 ½ hours, the maximum time allotted to complete this section during the Super Hike. The goal was achieved, as the hike was completed in just under 6 ½ hours. A second preview hike is being offered on July 29 on the east side of the Susquehanna River in Lancaster County. This 12-mile section of the Super Hike, from the east side of the Norman Wood Bridge north to Pequea Creek Campground, is regarded as the most challenging part of the Super Hike with numerous steep climbs. Hikers will

meet at 9:00 am at the Pequea Creek Campground parking lot along Rt. 324 between Martic Forge and the village of Pequea. For more information, contact Paul Shaw at 717-215-8339 or at pshaw@ptd.net.

The 28.4 mile Susquehanna Super Hike and Ultra Trail Run is scheduled for Saturday, September 8. Approximately 400 people have registered to date, and hikers and trail runners are encouraged to register soon before registrations are cut off at 500. For a registration form, call 717-238-7017.

If a 28-mile hike in one day doesn't appeal to you, consider being a Super Hike volunteer! 100 volunteers are needed for the checkpoints, at registration, to direct traffic, to keep hikers on track, and many other tasks. To register as a participant or to help as a volunteer, call KTA at 717-238-7017.

YOUR HIKING ADVOCATE by Curt Ashenfelter, KTA Executive Director

Pennsylvania has 29 great long-distance hiking trails. Nine of those trails cross or lie near land that has been leased to energy companies. These trails have, or will soon face, major challenge to maintain their wilderness character. Gas pads require clear-cutting the forest and are typically three to five acres in size. When constructed, they resemble an industrial site.

The gas pads host a drilling rig for a number of months. Access roads of various lengths are built to the site, causing forest fragmentation. Pipelines are also built to the site, further widening cut through the forest. Compressor stations are built at intervals of varying distances along the pipelines, to move the gas. All of these infrastructure construction projects have major impacts on the forests, including, but not limited to, noise, dust, etc.

If you have hiked one or more of these nine trails this year, you may have seen evidence of gas development. If you hike on any of these nine trails, and you see any evidence of pollution or other impacts, please report the activity to FracTracker.

Keystone Trails Association has received reports of overzealous security guards chasing hikers off of hiking trails. Keystone Trails Association has reported those incidents to state government and the offending companies have changed their behavior. However, we cannot help you if you do not contact us with your problems.

Two weeks ago, I met with representatives of the Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources to better understand exactly where energy development will impact hiking trails. We specifically reviewed maps of state forest lands. We did not review state park land or privately held lands.

When state forest lands were acquired, on some of the properties the mineral rights were separated from the surface rights. Consequently, the state does not own all of the mineral rights on all state forest lands. The maps we reviewed showed areas that have been leased by the state under Governor Rendell (and previous administrations) and areas of the state forests where private owners of the mineral rights have leased tracts of state forest land to energy companies.

The most heavily impacted trails are the Chuck Keiper Trail, the Donut Hole Trail, the Mid State Trail, the Quehanna Trail, the Bucktail Path, the Loyalsock Trail, the Old Logger's Path and the Black Forest Trail.

Areas of gas development on the **Chuck Keiper Trail** include almost all of the trail east of Route 144, and some of the trail to the west of Route 144 in the Yost Run area. On the **Donut Hole Trail**, gas development is occurring south of Hyner Mountain Road and west to Dry Run Road. The southern part of this section is under review for a hiking trail relocation. Additional areas to the west that will see gas development are north and south of the trail to Kettle Creek State Park, and then south of the trail to Jericho. On the **Mid State Trail**, gas development has occurred to the east and west of the trail between Big Spring Road north of Woolrich to Bark Cabin Natural Area southeast of Okome. On the **Quehanna Trail**, gas development will occur on the northern side between Parker Dam State Park to Red Run Mix Road and on the southern side between Wallace Mine Road and Lost Run Road. On the **Susquehannock Trail**, lands have been leased on the west side (between Cherry Springs Road and McConnell Road south of Conrad) and on the south side (near the proposed Hammersly Wild Area and the junction with the Donut Hole Trail). On the east side, various small leases exist sporadically from Route 144 south of Olena to South Cherry Springs Road. Larger leases exist north of South Cherry Springs Road to Route 6. On the **Bucktail Path**, gas development leases are held just north of Driftwood to just south of Sizerville State Park. On the **Loyalsock Trail**, gas development leases are held on the west side (between the start of the trail on the Loyalsock Creek and Little Bear Road) and on the east side (between Ketchum Run and Route 220). On the **Old Logger's Path**, the entire trail is on nearby lands with gas development leases. On the **Black Forest Trail**, gas development leases are held north and west of Slate Run.

We encourage hikers who hike these trails to report any problems they observe to Keystone Trails Association via FracTracker. Hikers can be the eyes and ears, the "boots on the ground" for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Together, we can work to preserve our wonderful hiking trails.

AROUND THE CLUBS: WAMPUM CHAPTER NCT by Dave Brewer

The Wampum Chapter of the North Country Trail (NCT) has dedicated a new mile of the North Country National Scenic Trail in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, to the memory of Army Specialist James Earl Hupp, who lost his life in Vietnam in 1970. On May 19, 2012, Chapter members presented a plaque to Mrs. Carol Kirkwood, Hupp's sister, honoring him.

Mrs. Kirkwood had granted permission for the chapter to build the new mile of trail across her farm property, replacing a mile of road walk with a walk along a wooded hilltop overlooking the North Fork of Little Beaver Creek.

During his discussions with her about the trail and the proposed route, Wampum Chapter Vice President Dennis Garrett noted that although James's death in service to his country occurred over forty years ago, he is still very much on Mrs. Kirkwood's mind.

Funding for the plaque was arranged by chapter member Sher Eiler who obtained a grant from her employer, the Eaton Corporation. The plaque was installed on the Kirkwood property, adjacent to PA State Gamelands 285, in a serene spot overlooking the Little Beaver Creek and Painter Run.

KTA MEMBERS COMPLETE NE111, by Linda and Bob Steiner, KTA Members

We are KTA members who live in Cooperstown, in northwestern Pennsylvania. We also hike the Adirondacks of New York and throughout New England. We wanted to let you know that we completed our hikes of the Northeast 111 high peaks last year.

We received our scrolls for that hiking achievement at the annual reunion of the AMC Four Thousand Footer Clubs (White Mountain and New England Four Thousand Footer Clubs) on April 14, 2012, in Exeter, NH.

Only 19 people finished the NE 111 last year, and we were the only two non-Winter finishers present at the reunion meeting. As NE 111ers, we are number 652 for Linda and

653 for Bob. We started our Northeast mountain hikes with Mt. Jefferson in the Whites in 1999, then concentrated on the Adirondack High Peaks to complete the 46R requirement, and finished our NE 111 on Mt. Whiteface in New Hampshire in 2011. The journeys to each and every peak were, indeed, the real destinations.

Above: A photo of Linda and Bob Steiner with Eric Savage of the AMC Four Thousand Footer Committee, who presented the scrolls at the annual ceremony.

Do you have news to share with Pennsylvania's hiking community? Please let KTA know!

SAVE THE DATE!

July 29, Super Hike Preview Hikes
July 20-22, Prowl the Sproul, Renovo, PA
September 1, 100-Mile Trail Challenge ends
September 8, Super Hike & Ultra Trail Run
September 13-23, KTA Trip to Ireland
October 12-14, Fall Meeting & Hiking Weekend, Clearfield, PA

UPCOMING TRAIL CARE EVENTS

July 13-15, Trail Care, Mid State Trail, Tioga Region
July 28, Code Orange Trail Care, Laurel Hill State Park
August 10-12, Trail Care, Mid State Trail, Woolrich Region
August 18, Code Orange Trail Care, Colonel Denning S.P.

For information about meeting places, camping availability, or crew leader contact information, please call 717-238-7017.