



The Keystone Hiker - March 2020

Member's Corner

In Memory of Cecil Dobbins

We say goodbye to a passionate hiker and life member and representative-at-large for KTA. Cecil L. Dobbins, 97, was an enthusiastic supporter of trails and a friend to many here in the Keystone Trails Association. In addition to his membership in many hiking clubs, Cecil started his own business, Alpine Adventure Trails Tours, and for 20 years led hiking tours in the Swiss Alps.



A Memorial Service celebrating Cecil's life will be held at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 7, 2020, at Billow Fairlawn Chapel, 85 N. Miller Road, Akron, OH 44333

[View the obituary and share condolences here.](#)

Take a Virtual Hike

Long time hiker and member of KTA, Greg Strine has documented his hikes across the state and beyond on video to look back on, and now to share with fellow KTA members. Last year he began posting his trail videos to youtube at [SleepyHeadOutdoors](#), a channel inspired by his AT Trail name, Sleepy Head.

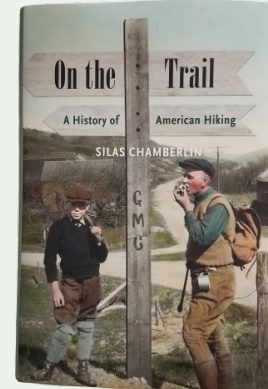


Greg has hiked almost every major trail in PA, so there's a good chance he has a video for a trail you would like to see.

Check out his Laurel Highlands Trail video linked here, one of his most popular videos, or visit [SleepyHeadOutdoors](#) at youtube to find more

Book Review by Wanda Shirk **of "On the Trail: A History of American Hiking" by Silas Chamberlain,** **speaker at the KTA Spring Hiking Weekend**

Can you give me a quote by Shakespeare about hiking? Or one by Ben Franklin? Ah... trick questions! Of course not. "Hike" wasn't even a word, back when people walked everywhere, every day, unless they had a horse. Taking walks in woods or rural areas for leisure pleasure didn't begin to happen until the mid-1800s, when the Industrial Revolution began to concentrate more and more people in cities, where they worked in factories and at jobs that confined them indoors. When they began taking walks just because they wanted to be outside, exercising in nature, they called it "tramping" or "taking a tramp." The term hike didn't become common until it gradually entered vocabularies in the 1920s-1940s.



Silas Chamberlin, a native of rural York County, Pa., spent the summer of 2003 as a college-student summer crew worker with the Adirondack Mountain Club. This accelerated his interest in hiking and trails and eventually led to his Lehigh University Ph.D. dissertation, which became the basis of the 2016 Yale University Press book *On the Trail: A History of American Hiking*.

Trivia in the book was of interest to me. For example, I had long known of the Philadelphia-area Batona Hiking Club, which is a member of KTA, and of the Batona Trail in New Jersey, but I had not known that the name "Batona" was short for "Back To Nature" or that the club, formed in 1928, was one of the nation's very first hiking clubs. I was also interested in learning that as the value of real estate pushed cemeteries out into the countryside and away from urban church yards, winding circular pathways were specifically designed – as opposed to straight grid lines – to encourage Sunday strolls among trees and grassy areas as early venues for weekend walkers.

The main thesis of the book, however, is that hiking in the 1900s evolved from a social, club-based activity to an activity more often undertaken by individuals or pairs or trios than by larger groups.

[Read the rest here](#)

Volunteer's Corner

West Rim Trail Open Season

On April 4th of 1860 Thoreau wrote in his journal:
"The birds sing quite numerously at sunrise ...
The birds are eager to sing, as the flowers to
bloom, after the raw weather has held them in
check". This year, eager Trail Care volunteers



can look forward to getting out on the West Rim Trail the first weekend of April (2-5) and stretching their wings. Work will focus primarily on cleaning up the winter debris on the lower half of the trail, south of the Bradley Wales Picnic Area. KTA Trail Care crews were last on the WRT in 2017, so there will be new growth to lop, blowdowns to remove and blazes to refresh.

In previous seasons, the Trail Care was based out of Colton Point State Park, which was conveniently situated to access the northern part of the trail, but offered only the very basic amenities. The 2020 crew will have upgraded accommodations, complete with shower capabilities and kitchen, located in downtown Blackwell, in a house known as the Ranger Station. It is the second building on the right after crossing the iron bridge over Babb Creek on Route 414 coming into Blackwell, across from Miller's Store. Participants will still need to bring sleeping pads along with all their own personal gear in case the beds are full and they need to roll them out on the floor. Volunteers can move into the Ranger Station starting Thursday afternoon, or by 8:00 a.m. Friday, Saturday or Sunday to join the crew.

Questions regarding the West Rim Trail event should be directed to the Trail Care Leader via the contact information listed on the schedule.

Upcoming Trail Care

April 2 – 5: Trail Care BTD

WEST RIM TRAIL

Tioga State Forest

Leader: Ed Lawrence

cemclaw216@gmail.com

570-925-5285

Camp: Ranger Station Lodge Blackwell

April 23 – 26: Trail Care BTD

ALLEGHENY FRONT TRAIL

Moshannon State Forest

Leader: Ben Auer

auer.ben@gmail.com

608-772-1715

Camp: Organized Group Tenting Area, site 1, at Black Moshannon State Park

May 7 – 10: Trail Care BTD

CHUCK KEIPER TRAIL

Sproul State Forest

Leader: Tony Robbins

tony.robbins.kta@excellservices.com

570-437-0065

Camp: Middle Branch Camp 3 miles down Penn Rose Rd off Rte. 144 between Snowshoe and Renovo

Full 2020 Trail Care Schedule

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

May 14 – 17: BLACK FOREST TRAIL
May 28 – 31: MID STATE TRAIL, Tioga Region
June 6: HICKORY RUN STATE PARK
June 11 – 14: NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL
June 20: GOLDEN EAGLE TRAIL
June 25 – 28: MID STATE TRAIL, Woolrich Region
July 9 – 12: LOST TURKEY TRAIL
Aug 6 – 9: MID STATE TRAIL, Everett Region
Aug 13 –16: PINCHOT TRAIL
Aug 20 – 23: THUNDER SWAMP TRAIL SYSTEM
Aug 27 – 30: THE DONUT HOLE
Sept 18 – 20: TUSCARORA TRAIL
Oct 3: GIFFORD PINCHOT STATE PARK
Nov 5 – 8: BUCKTAIL PATH

More Volunteer Opportunities with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

March 28: Toms Run Nature Reserve (Allegheny Co.) – Trail construction. The reserve consists of over 300 acres located just 20 minutes from downtown Pittsburgh. Join us as we continue development of a new 2.5-mile long hiking trail, scheduled to be completed in May.

April 11: Toms Run Nature Reserve (Allegheny Co.) – Trail construction, continued.

June 6: Lower Elk Creek Nature Reserve (Erie Co.) – Trail maintenance/clean-up. The reserve consists of over 90 acres located on a major tributary to Lake Erie. The trail is a popular access route used by anglers.

July 25: Bear Run Nature Reserve (Fayette Co.) – Trail maintenance. Bear Run Nature Reserve consists of over 5,100 acres in the Laurel Highlands of SW PA. The reserve contains over 20 miles of hiking trails, as well as backcountry campsites.

Please contact Andy Zadnik to volunteer
412-586-2318, azadnik@paconserve.org
For more info visit <https://waterlandlife.org/>

Hiker's Corner

2020 Photo Contest

The 2020 Winter/Spring Photo Contest is now open! Get your cameras ready in the new year and share the awesome views you find with us.

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

Legislative Alert

HR 670

Pennsylvania is a leader among states when we consider annual consumer spending on outdoor recreational activities. Pennsylvania invites visitors to pursue their happiness as it advertises amazing outdoor recreation opportunities. People who live in Pennsylvania and who come to Pennsylvania from other areas or choose to staycation appreciate our natural resources. In order to maintain these attractions for those who visit our Commonwealth to enjoy our forests, mountains and other natural resources, we need an inventory. We all know that Pennsylvania is home for a magnificent diversity of plants and wildlife and a great array of ecosystems. Preserving and connecting high-quality habitat for plants and wildlife can create habitat strongholds so species can continue to thrive as they face stressors and changing environmental conditions. At present, the ownership and management of our natural areas is diverse as it exists in both the public and private spheres. A study and inventory will assist owners to make future decisions about new corridors and maintenance needs.

Understanding of the Commonwealth's habitat connectivity status and potential would benefit from consideration of all relevant data, including from federal and state agencies, including surrounding states, nonprofit organizations, universities, and private landowners. State agencies, nonprofit organizations and coalitions, as well as public-private partnerships that are interested in advancing connectivity across the Commonwealth could benefit from a science-based understanding of current and potential conservation corridors in the state, and non-state coalition partners can add value by helping to advance the habitat connectivity goals of state agencies that seek to advance conservation corridors.

This resolution would require a study to be conducted by the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, in collaboration and consultation with various state agencies, NGO's and private landowners. Specifically, the study would focus on the interconnectivity of our existing conservation corridors, their location, ownership and condition. The identification of existing and needed conservation corridors, riparian corridors, and potential crossings of transportation arteries will provide important information for legislators, administrative departments, state agencies and non-profit organizations. The study will benefit both the tourism and the outdoor recreation agendas with information to attract people to our beautiful state. In addition, the study would examine voluntary mechanisms, and provide for legislative recommendations. By using science, advocacy, education, and on-ground conservation, this study would provide a voice for the Commonwealth's various species of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and plants, as well Pennsylvania's 121 state parks and 2.2 million acres of forest lands.

New in the KTA Store

Golden Eagle Trail Patch

The Golden Eagle Trail is a rugged and beautiful loop trail that starts in the east side of Pine Creek Gorge and features a strenuous climb to pristine mountaintop streams and several outstanding vistas.



And Coming Soon
Guide to the Pinchot Trail System

Community Calendar

KTA Events

Spring Hiking Weekend - April 17-19

Join us in Wellsboro for a weekend of hikes and history at the historic Penn Wells Hotel. Choose from a variety of hikes, easy to rugged, long or short, in and around the beautiful Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania.

Registration ends soon.

Allegheny Front Trail Slackpack - May 15-18

Hike the AFT in 1 weekend, with transportation each day between the trailheads and the cozy Black Moshannon Lodge.

Registration ends soon.

Old Logger's Path Slackpack - June 12-14

Hike the 28 mile OLP that follows former railroad grades, logging roads, bark trails, and other remnants of old industrial transportation

Allegheny National Forest - July 24-26

Spend a weekend in Pennsylvania's only national forest. Stay in Groves Lodge as you explore the many trails and sights of the ANF.

Trail Challenge - Sept 12

Join us on September 12th for a one-day hiking event spanning 50 (or 25) kilometers of trails in Lancaster County

Fall Hiking Weekend - Oct 2-4

KTA hosts a weekend in Cumberland Valley south of Chambersburg with hiking opportunities on the AT, Tuscarora, Standing Stone Trails, and more.

Barcelona and Andorra - Oct 8-19

A 10 day hiking trip in Spain featuring the Pyrenees Mountains, Barcelona, and Andora. Package includes hotel accommodations and air travel.

Space is limited, call ahead before registering.

Black Forest Trail Slackpack - Oct 23-26

Hike through the 42 mile BFT in 4 days with just a day pack. Stay in

comfortable cabins at Pettecote Junction Campground.

KTA Board Meeting

March 17, 10:30am - contact office for call-in number

Annual Brandywine End-2-End Hike

Take on the Wilmington Trail Club's annual End-2-End hike, a 36 mile trail and road challenge through the beautiful Brandywine Valley. Hikers and runners will wander down the scenic Brandywine Trail through parks, farms, pastures, woods, and country roads.

For more information and to register for the event, head to <https://wilmingtontrailclub.org/about-wtc/wtc-events/brandywine-e2e-hike>

Warrior Trail Association Public Guided Hike

In conjunction with PA hiking week [the Warrior Trail Association](#) is leading a public hike. Meeting at our headquarters you will be shuttled to the trail head and with your guides enjoy some of Greene County's beautiful scenery along this ancient Native American trading trail. There will be shuttles to take you back to your car every one to one and one-half miles so you can tailor the day to suit you. So bring the family and friends and enjoy a day or morning in the woods. The trail is moderately difficult with some very steep areas. Long pants and sturdy footwear is recommended.

Meet: 9:30am at Warrior Trail Headquarters,
1346 Garards Fort Rd., Waynesburg, PA 15370

For more information contact Frank at 724-998-1386

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

North Country Trail Association

The mission of the North Country Trail Association (NCTA)



is to develop, maintain, protect and promote the North Country National Scenic Trail as the premier hiking path across the northern tier of the United States through a trail-wide coalition of volunteers and partners.

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.