



The Keystone Hiker - May 2023



Thank you, Joe.

Our thoughts are with the family of Joe Neville, previous Executive Director of KTA for six years, who passed away on April 5, 2023. We're grateful for the contributions Joe made to further the mission of KTA.

Share condolences with his family

MEMBER'S CORNER KTA News & Updates

Spring Hiking Weekend 2023 is a wrap!

Thank you to all the clubs and hikers who attended our Spring Hiking Weekend in Wellsboro, PA. Collectively, our groups covered 15+ trails near the PA Grand Canyon that totaled over 60 miles! We heard from special guests including Tom Keller of the PA Game Commission who shared about reintroducing the American Marten to PA; Nathan Reigner, PhD, PA's first Director of Outdoor Recreation; and Ta Enos, Founder & CEO of PA Wilds Center. Our team even completed a trail care event before heading home!







New! Themed Photo Contests

We're adding a twist to our Photo Contests by introducing themes! Our first themes of the year are:

- Birds In recognition of World Migratory Bird Day (May 15)
- Water In recognition of National Rivers Month (June)

Rocks - In recognition of International Rock Day (July 13)

Submit your photo on our website by July 31, 2023. Incorporate at least one of the above themes to be eligible for our May through July contest. Entries will be judged by KTA staff and posted to the KTA instagram for public viewing. The winner will be announced in August and will receive a free 1-year KTA membership and KTA hat.

Enter the Photo Contest Here!

New Member Welcome: Adventure Explorations

Adventure Explorations, owned by Cody Meassick, is a multi-disciplined guide service and outfitters focused on providing opportunities for self-discovery through outdoor adventures of the body, mind, and soul.



They use adventure to assist people, teams, companies, communities, and the world become the best version of themselves. Trips are offered every day of the week and are primarily both guided and private.

Learn more here!



Congrats to Elizabeth P. for completing KTA's 100-Mile Challenge!

KTA's 100-Mile Trail Challenge recognizes hikers that complete 100 miles or more of eligible Pennsylvania hiking trails between September 1 and August 31 and secure sponsorship for each mile of their journey (at least \$1 per mile hiked). Every dollar raised supports hiking trails throughout PA.



Hometown: Ocean City, NJ (lives in Johnstown, PA)

Age: 25

Why did you decide to take the 100-Mile Trail Challenge?

I decided to take the 100-Mile Trail Challenge to challenge myself and to give me motivation to tack on more miles!

What are your favorite things about hiking?

I love being out in nature and spending time with friends, all while getting a good workout in!

What are some of your favorite hiking trails in PA, and what makes them your favorite?

Gallitzin State Forest has some of my favorite trails! County Line Loop trail is probably my favorite because the vistas are incredible!

What is your favorite / most memorable hiking experience?

My most memorable experience was my first time out on the County Line Loop trail in Gallitzin. My friend and I ran right into a black bear sow and her cub. It was terrifying, but eye-opening. My favorite hiking experience was just recently when my friend and I decided to hike in the fog and rain. It was beautiful, but so cold and we were drenched!

Do you have any advice for new hikers?

It doesn't matter how long it takes you to get to where you're going. I'm still working on getting my stamina up and it's definitely a struggle when you're first getting into it, but don't give up!!

Do you have a favorite nature/ hiking quote that you can share with us

(either your own or someone else's)?
"The very basic core of a man's living spirit is his passion for adventure. The joy of life comes from our encounters with new experiences, and hence there is no greater joy than to have an endlessly changing horizon, for each day to have a new and different sun." - Chris McCandless

Learn More about the KTA 100-Mile Trail Challenge

Comment Now on the Proposed Duke Low Altitude Military Operations Area (MOA)

The Maryland Air National Guard (MD ANG) has released the draft final documents for the Duke MOA and announced a public comment period that ends May 17th.

The MD ANG is seeking to expand its use of Pennsylvania's airspace over six counties in northern Pennsylvania, known as the PA Wilds. The establishment of a new Low Military Operations Airspace (low MOA) over the area will permit various military units to fly A-10 Warthogs, F-16s and possibly other military aircraft as low as 100 feet Above Ground Level (AGL) and as often as every other day.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP:

- 1. Watch a recorded webinar from PA Wilds on this issue
- 2. Review the details of the proposal and links to several documents, including the Draft Final Environmental Assessment and Draft Final FONSI, can be found at Duke MOA Low (af.mil).
- 3. Send your comments to the following email address: ngb.a4.a4a.nepa.comments.org@us.af.mil.

In December 2021, KTA authored a comment letter, signed by numerous members and member clubs, on this proposal and submitted it to the MD ANG. Our concerns were mirrored by scores of organizations and elected officials from the PA Wilds region. In addition to inquiring about specific environmental and experiential threats, much of the correspondence requested a full environmental impact statement and rigorous public involvement process. Our wishes were not accommodated.

KTA plans to submit further comments before the May 17 deadline and we ask you to do the same. We believe that routine training flights as described threaten to despoil a truly wild and bucolic respite, an iconic region home to several beloved hiking trails.

"Protect our Forests from ATVs" Mini Documentary is Now Available to Watch and Share!

ATV riding has become a popular form of recreation in Pennsylvania over the years, creating concerns for hikers including: degradation of resources, noise and air pollution, ground and water pollution, disruption of local wildlife, forest fragmentation, invasive species spread, and generates conflicts with those who utilize our public lands for guieter, non-motorized use.

With support from the PA Public Natural Resources Trust and the Sierra Club's Huplits Wildlife grant program, Keystone Trails Association commissioned this short <u>12-minute documentary film</u> (produced by Stony Creek Films, a PA-based organization) about ATV/UTV effects on our public lands (watch below and share with your friends and family to help your voice be heard).



Club members can apply for KTA Grants-to-Clubs Program beginning July 2, 2023

KTA's Grants-to-Clubs program offers funding to KTA member organizations for projects beneficial to trails, the vitality of their organization, and the practice of hiking (e.g., giving people a positive trail experience).

Sample project expenditures might include:

- Tools for trail maintenance
- Materials for trail improvements (e.g., lumber for a bridge)
- Trail signage
- Van rental (e.g., van to shuttle participants or volunteers)
- Facility rental costs (e.g., for club events, exhibit space, etc.)
- Food (e.g., for volunteers or club events)
- Promotional materials or activities (stickers, brochures, advertising, t-shirts, etc.)
- Insurance costs

We're excited to announce that the second round for our <u>Grants-to-Clubs program</u> will be opening July 2nd, 2023. We invite our member organizations to apply!

Blue Mountain Eagle Hiking Club: Founder Inducted into the AT Hall of Fame and New Club President Appointed

Harry Rentschler, BMECC founder, built a 100-mile stretch of the Appalachian Trail between the Susquehanna and Lehigh rivers. In April he was named in the 2023 induction class by the Appalachian Trail Museum in Adams County, southwest of Harrisburg.

KTA was pleased to meet and spend time with BMECC's newest President, Howard N. Reid Jr., during our Spring Hiking weekend andCouncil Meeting. His enthusiasm for the club's future is contagious! Congrats, Howard!

Hiking Club Management Training Opportunities

The following online events are being organized through the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and are open to any hiking club! Learn from each other, improve the club volunteer leader experience and club sustainability.

Volunteer Leadership Development Within Clubs: Tuesday, May 2 at 6 p.m. *Great for: Club Board Members*

How are leaders recruited, trained, and supported in your club? Is this a topic that your club is seeking new ideas to implement? Have you found a way to successfully fill volunteer roles? This conversation is an open discussion to share your experiences and learn about strategies from other clubs.

Promoting A.T. Club Volunteerism: Tuesday, June 13 at 6 p.m.

Great for: Volunteer Coordinators, Trail Supervisors, Any Volunteer
Learn how organizations are promoting A.T. volunteerism, followed by
discussions from participants around their shared stories or questions about
promoting A.T. volunteerism.

Celebrating (Club) Anniversaries: Thursday, August 24 at 6 p.m.

Great for: Board Members, Membership, Events Coordinators

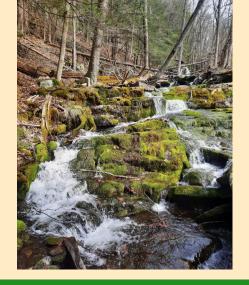
Join this roundtable discussion for A.T. Club volunteers on ideas for celebrating your club's next anniversary, whether 65 years, 90 years, or 100!

AROUND PA Featured Hike

Featured Hike: Pinchot Brook Waterfalls-Delaware State Forest

- Length: less than a mile
- **Blazes:** this hike is completely off trail, there are no blazes or signs
- **Parking:** 41.356149, -74.850831
- **Difficulty:** Moderate
- Highlights: Several beautiful waterfalls, cascades and pools

Read more about this trail on the Endless Mountains Experience Blog!



VOLUNTEER'S CORNER 2023 Trail Care Schedule

The Trail Care Team had a great time at the Spring Meeting/Hiking Weekend in Wellsboro last weekend! On Saturday evening I presented a slideshow of trail care-type activities as an introduction to attendees, then some lucky trail work newbies had the chance to wield some tools on the Trail Care 101 hike Sunday. After some brief "on the trail training", we brushed, lopped, painted, and sawed our way to Barbour Rock Vista on a clear, cool morning. Encountered hikers were appreciative!





We are super excited for the beginning of the 2023 KTA Trail Care season in May!

We look forward to meeting a lot of newbies and welcoming back our dedicated veterans. The first event is May 4-7 on the Mid State Trail in the smack dab center of the state. We'll be camping at R.B. Winter State Park in Union County, west of Lewisburg. Please consider joining in the fun for a day or all three. This event debuts a new feature — a fun hike on Sunday! And Amy and Kristin will be providing meals! Check out the Mid State Trail — State College event here for many more details on camping, amenities, parking, directions, etc. If you want to possibly discover Crocodile Spring, Hairy John, or the Cherry Run Tunnel, join us in sprucing up a section of the venerable, wildest and wooliest footpath in the state, the 320 mile/527 km Mid State Trail.

Also coming up in May are opportunities to improve the West Rim Trail, southern Mid State Trail, and then the Elk Trail on the first weekend in June. The West Rim offers astounding views of Pine Creek Gorge, and the MST views off Tussey Ridge are well-earned (long pants recommended). We're hoping to spot some Elk while working on the underrated Elk Trail (or I've seen pictures of them in the campground!), plus the Volunteer Leaders are offering a fun hike on Sunday on the awesome Fred Woods Trail.

If you would like to volunteer for a day or a weekend and are uncomfortable or unable to sign up online, please email or call me. If you have ANY questions, check out the <u>FAQ page here</u> or contact me: Jenn Ulmer, Manager of Trail Maintenance and Training, at ulmer@kta-hike.org / 570-854-8316.

Upcoming KTA Trail Care Events

#1 - May 4-7: *Hybrid*Trail Care

(work Fri/Sat, hike Sun)

MID STATE TRAIL - STATE COLLEGE REGION

Bald Eagle State Forest

Leaders: Kevin Busko / Jason Davis Camp: R.B. Winter State Park

#2 - May 11-14: Trail Care

WEST RIM TRAIL

Tioga State Forest Leader: Wanda Shirk

Camp: Twin Streams Campground, Morris

#3 - May 18-21: Trail Care

MID STATE TRAIL - EVERETT REGION

Buchanan State Forest Leader: Chad North

Camp: Tenley Park, Everett

#4 - June 1-4: *Hybrid* Trail Care

(work Fri/Sat, hike Sun)

ELK TRAIL

Elk State Forest

Leader: Joanne Heimer et al Camp: Hicks Run Campground

#5 - June 8-11: Trail Care

MID STATE TRAIL - TIOGA REGION

Tioga State Forest Leader: Pete Fleszar

Camp: Hills Creek State Park Organized Group Tenting Area

#6 - June 22-25: Trail Care

BLACK FOREST TRAIL

#8 - August 10-13: Trail Care

TRACY RIDGE TRAIL SYSTEM Allegheny National Forest

Leader: Joe Hardisky

Camp: Tracy Ridge Campground

#9 - August 24-27: Trail Care

THUNDER SWAMP TRAIL SYSTEM

Delaware State Forest

Leader: Shira Blady & Brian MacNamara

Camp: Resica Falls BSA Camp

#10 - September 21-24: Trail Care

GOLDEN EAGLE TRAIL
Tiadaghton State Forest
Leader: Jenn Ulmer

Camp: Little Pine State Park

#11 - Sept. 27-Oct. 1: *Hybrid* TC

(work Thurs/Fri, hike Sat)
OIL CREEK STATE PARK
Leader: Jenn Ulmer

Camp: Wildcat Hollow Group Tenting

#12 - October 7: Code Orange 1-day

GIFFORD PINCHOT STATE PARK W/ Friends of Pinchot S.P. Leader: Steve Stroman

Camp: GPSP Group Tenting Area

#13 - October 12-15: Trail Care

HICKORY RUN STATE PARK

Leader: Jenn Ulmer Camp: Hickory Run SP **Tiadaghton State Forest** Leader: Jenn Ulmer

Camp: Pump Station Fire Tower

#7 - July 6-9: Trail Care

CHUCK KEIPER TRAIL Sproul State Forest

Leaders: Ted Ligenza / Jenn Ulmer Camp: Hyner Run State Park

#14 - October 26-29: Trail Care

PINCHOT TRAIL SYSTEM **Pinchot State Forest** Leader: Jeff Mitchell

Camp: Manny Gordon Picnic Area

Community Trail Care Events

Alpine Club / Loyalsock Trail Work Hike -May 7

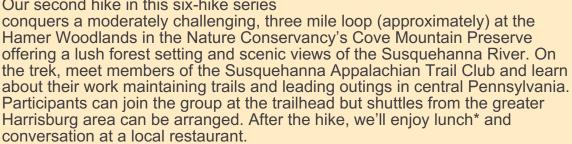
The work hikes are open to everyone (not just club members). Essentially, this is a 3-4 mile walk in the woods over 3-5 hours. If you have a chain saw (and know how to use it), bring it, otherwise loppers are good. We also need volunteers to drag brush etc. off the trail. We have loppers available for those that don't bring tools. For those that have limited time to help, we usually need drivers to shuttle volunteers. Best to have a small daypack, plus your lunch and water. Prior to each date, you will receive a follow up email to confirm attendees. You will then receive one more email closer to the work dates (about 7 days prior) with details such as when everyone will meet. Please email Trail Co-Chairs David Dahl (dahldave@gmail.com) or Matthew Gutberlet (msgutberlet@gmail.com) if you can attend or with any questions.

HIKER'S CORNER • WHAT'S HAPPENING **Upcoming KTA Events**

Kittatinny Rambles Hike #2: Cove Mountain Trails with Susquehanna **Appalachian Trail Club**

Friday, May 19, 2023

Our second hike in this six-hike series



Itinerary:

- Group gathers at trailhead 10:00 a.m.
- Hike ends 12:00 p.m.
- Lunch at area restaurant* 12:15 p.m. *Lunch costs are covered by the participant

Registration Fee:

With arranged shuttle* \$10 per person



Meet at Trailhead** \$5 per person

These hikes are made possible through a Kittatinny Ridge Conservation Landscape (KRCL) mini-grant, funded by PA DCNR, and administered by Audubon Mid-Atlantic. The series is designed to showcase the sub-landscapes of the amazing Kittatinny Ridge and the organizations that care for it.

<u>PHOTO CREDIT:</u> Cove Mountain: Cove Mountain and the Susquehanna River viewed from the Appalachian Trail on Peters Mountain in Dauphin, PA. © Matt Kane/TNC

Learn More & Sign Up!

Old Loggers Path (OLP) Backpack

Coming soon! Stay tuned.

The OLP features many revealing cuts on the railroad grades; Rock Run, one of the prettiest streams in PA; and vistas over McIntyre Wild Area, Pleasant Stream, and the Loyalsock Trail region. The trail takes advantage of the engineering expertise of the early logging



railroaders by following the moderate grades up and down the rugged landscape.

Allegheny Front Trail Slackpack

June 2-5, 2023

The AFT is a 41.75 mile loop trail through Moshannon State Forest that roughly encircles Black Moshannon State Park. The trail provides a wide variety of forest environments, including views over valleys to the east, trout streams, and marshlands.



Learn More & Sign Up!

Issue Outing #1: ATV Impacts on PA Trails and Forests - Black Forest Trail Hike

June 10, 2023 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. FREE EVENT

Join retired forester Bob Merrill for an easy hike on a

portion of the beloved Black Forest Trail. Explore approximately four miles afoot while learning about the growing threat ATVs and UTVs pose to Pennsylvania's public lands. Pack a lunch and plenty of water plus rain gear (just in case).

Meeting location is the upper parking lot at the Tiadaghton District Office
10 Lower Pine Bottom Road
Waterville, PA 17776.

After our meetup, we will caravan to the trailhead.



Sign Up Here!

Kittatinny Rambles Hike #3: Boyd Big Tree Preserve Conservation Area/Spangler Preserve/Hocker Park Birding with Central Pennsylvania Conservancy

June 11, 2023

Enjoy a leisurely paced, moderately challenging four and a half mile birding hike with the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy through three contiguous areas of protected land – the Boyd Big Tree Preserve Conservation Area, Spangler Preserve, and Hocker Park. Observe the avian life and learn about the regional land conservation efforts of the Conservancy. Participants can join the group at the Boyd parking lot trailhead or board a KTA shuttle van in Carlisle and ride to and from the outing. After the hike, we'll enjoy lunch* and conversation at a local restaurant.

Itinerary:

- Van departs Carlisle* 8:15 a.m.
- Group gathers at trailhead** 9:00 a.m.
- Hike ends 11:30 a.m.
- Lunch at area restaurant*** 12:00 p.m.
- Van returns to Carlisle 1:45 p.m.

Registration Fee*:

- With shuttle from Carlisle \$15 per person
- Without shuttle/Meet at Trailhead \$ 5 per person

Registration fees will be donated to the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy

Register Here!

^{*}Giant parking lot, 255 S. Spring Garden Street, Carlisle, PA 17013

^{**}Trailhead: Boyd Big Tree Preserve, 401 Fishing Creek Valley Rd, Harrisburg, PA 17112

^{***}Lunch costs are covered by the participant

Prowl the Sproul

July 14-16, 2023

Explore Sproul State Forest on daily excursions for all ages and skill levels. Camp out at the Western Clinton Sportsman's Association and enjoy entertainment by Vinny Curtis, education by DCNR, and catering by Twisted Whisk.



Learn More & Sign Up!

Black Forest Trail Slackpack

July 28-31, 2023

The BFT is a challenging but rewarding 42-mile loop leading through and above the west side of Pine Creek Gorge. The trail features many outstanding vistas in all directions, steep ascents and descents, plenty of stream crossings, and an unforgettable experience.



Learn More & Sign Up!

Meet us at these summer festivals!

Mason-Dixon Appalachian Trail Outdoor Festival June 10, 10am-4pm

<u>Duncannon Appalachian Trail Festival</u> June 17, 10am-4pm

Future Events

KTA Events

<u>Allegheny National Forest Weekend</u> August 25-27 Stay at Olmstead Manor in Ludlow, PA for a weekend of hikes and adventure in Pennsylvania's only National Forest. Knowledgeable, local hike leaders and speakers will guide your excursions and provide evening entertainment.

Trail Challenge 25k

September 9

***Don't miss out on early bird pricing now through June 30!

Are you up to the Challenge? The KTA Trail Challenge returns! Take on 25K of rugged trails on the rolling hills of the lower Susquehanna Gorge. Whether you're a seasoned trail runner or a determined hiker, this event is for you. Push yourself to complete this strenuous hike with steep climbs, rocky terrain, and stunning vistas.

NEW FOR THIS YEAR: Finishers of the KTA Trail Challenge who also complete the Ironmaster's Challenge 15K or 50K will receive a collaborative Iron Mettle Medal.

Wilderness First Aid Training September 23-24, 2023

Halifax. PA

Save the date! Registration coming soon.

Keystone Hike Fest 2023: Fall Hiking Weekend October 21-23

Johnstown, PA

Save the date! Registration coming soon. Make your hotel reservation here or reserve your campsite at Quemahoning Family Recreation Area by calling (814) 233-9512.

Hiking the Wales Coast Path

August 15-26 or September 26 - October 7

Both Trips Filled - You May Join The Waitlist

Hiking adventure on the renowned Wales Coast Path. Following the sweeping crescent of Cardigan Bay, this section, the Ceredigion Coast Path, has perhaps the most varied landscape and terrain of the entire 870 mile path.

Community Events

Women's Only Backpacking Weekend

May 14 - 15

This DCNR hiking event covers 14+ miles of the Laurel Highlands Trail. Cost to register is \$50/person and covers all food, equipment, shuttle, and shelter.

Lancaster Conservancy Happy Hiker Series

May 19 - October 19

Six evening programs with basic lessons on how to be a happy hiker, including first aid, map reading, choosing the right gear, and natural history.

Hawk Mountain Summer Nature Camps

June 19 - August 11

This summer, kids can grow their connection with nature at Hawk Mountain's 2023 Summer Nature Camps. Campers can choose from eight fun and educational themes or attend for multiple weeks. The Summer Nature Camps

are designed for young nature enthusiasts entering grades 1st – 6th.

A.T. Vista 2023

August 4-7, 2023

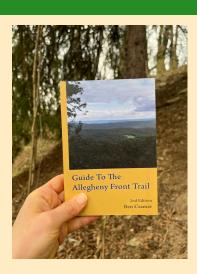
Mark your calendars. The 2023 conference will be held in Johnson City, TN. More information to come.

Want your event featured on our 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 webpage for only those events that the public should see, to tritt@kta-hike.org.

HIKING ESSENTIALS Featured from the KTA Store

Guide to The Allegheny Front Trail

In preparation for our upcoming AFT Slackpack trip (June 2-5), we're featuring our official Guide To The Allegheny Front Trail! This book by Ben Cramer provides detailed guidance with turn-by-turn instructions, photos, and maps to provide you with the information you need to enjoy the trail and the scenery of the Moshannon State Forest and the Allegheny Front.



Shop Our Store!

READING LIST Trail News

<u>Local hiker overcomes partial paralysis</u> and climbs 900-foot-long trail to the summit of Hawk Mountain

PA Game Commission Announces <u>Hunting Season Schedule, Including Sundays</u>

Manada Conservancy Protects 97 Acre Kittatinny Ridge Property on Peters Mountain

The Nature Conservancy Receives \$4.25 Million in Combined Investments for Appalachians Conservation from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, Including Along Kittatinny Ridge [Read via WeConservePA]

Lancaster Conservancy Announces Plan to Acquire Over 300 Acres Along the Susquehanna River in York County [Read via Lancaster Conservancy]

What is a Micro-Hike? Find out how incorporating micro-hikes into your day can help you stay connected to nature - even when you can't get out on the trail! Watch this video by Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center.

Keep a look out for these ten species, each considered to be a potential invasive threat to Pennsylvania's economy, environment, or human/animal health.

Hungry Goats Munch on Invasive Multiflora Rose at the Erie National Wildlife Refuge [Read via iMapInvasives]

Audubon's Lights Out program helps provide billions of bird safe passage between their nesting and wintering grounds. Find out how you can help!

<u>AskNature</u> is a field guide to the natural world, designed to draw your eye to what we can learn from nature (not just what we can learn about it). Get your bearings and get ready to explore.

Have you ever hiked in Rothrock State Forest? Check out this sneak peek video from SleepyHeadOutdoors of Lower, Shingletown, Old Laurel Run, and Bald Knob Ridge Trails!







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 Manager of Communications & Membership, Holly Tritt, at tritt@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.

World's End



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