



The Keystone Hiker - November 2021

Member's Corner

Welcome KTA's New Executive Director Brook Lenker



From my earliest years, I loved to hike. My father, a businessman and artist, welcomed me along on occasional Sunday forays to rural or rustic settings, preferred subjects for a landscape watercolorist. At times, the trail less traveled earned his interest. Mine, too.

I recall the Horseshoe Trail in Dauphin County. Up Blue Mountain and along Manada Creek. Yellow blazes, feathery hemlocks, and pine-fresh smells sealed a zest for adventure in this young mind.

Teenage rambling brought more familiarity to these same haunts, and broader geographies into the fold. Stony Creek Valley, Second Mountain, and the Appalachian Trail. Rocks, plants, wildlife, and water percolated my very being.

Formative college years fed more knowledge into a hungry brain -- precepts on the fine things in life: wilderness, nature, outdoor recreation, environmental stewardship. A backpacking phase followed -- expeditions in early adulthood to a sampling of some of the Commonwealth's greatest footways: Loyalsock, Midstate, Appalachian, Old Loggers Path.

My career path enabled ongoing interface with such magnanimous destinations, whether leading programs at the county parks and recreation department, restoring and exploring at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, communicating conservation at PA DCNR, or addressing the harmful impacts of oil and gas extraction at FracTracker Alliance. The rich experiences fortified my fortitude to educate and advocate, or, in the poignant words of the Lorax, to "speak for the trees."



I'm not as wise as my favorite Dr. Seuss character, but I care deeply about the fate of the wilds. Trails epitomize the "geography of hope" that Wallace Stegner professed. They allow us to move forward, to grow as citizens of earth, nurturing journeys beyond the perfect outing. Trails are catalytic, challenging us to connect, care, and conserve, with a can-do attitude.

I've come full circle. I'm a kid again at heart, excited to lead KTA. Together, let's elevate the legacy and cultivate a whole lot of good, for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.

[View the announcement here](#)

On the Trail



KTA held our Annual Fall Hiking Weekend, which took place on Saturday, Oct. 17th in Lock Haven, PA! The weekend consisted of daily excursions led by knowledgeable and experienced hikers, the annual KTA Council Meeting, and a dinner and evening program at the Sons and Daughters of Italy Lodge.

Congratulations to all who received a hiking award or volunteer recognition, and thank you to those who joined KTA for this special weekend of comradery. We look forward to seeing you again at the Spring Hiking Weekend in April in Carlisle.

Annual Hiking Award Recipients

The KTA Hiking Awards Program recognizes those hikers whose enjoyment of Pennsylvania's trails might serve as an example and inspiration to their peers. Over the years, hundreds of individuals have demonstrated their dedication to hiking and, in no small part, to preservation of trails by applying for and receiving the various KTA awards.

Visit kta-hike.org/hiking-awards to learn more and submit an application.

The following hikers were recognized at our annual Fall Hiking Weekend to receive their 2021 Hiking Awards.



Young Hiker Award
Parker Lingenfelter (left)
Everett Beaver

Western PA Award
Kathy Borrell (right)

Appalachian Trail Award
Joe Demarco
Michael Demarco





Justin Funck
Michael Kogelschatz
Chelsea Montagnese
Laurie Ohleger
Jack Raudenbush
Jodi Raudenbush
Josh Silverman
Marc Woolverton
Bradley Yeakel



Merit II Award
Henry Bonson (right)

*And a special congratulations to
Henry Bonson for completing his
final KTA hiking award and
earning the full set of six!*



DCNR Trail User Survey

With the increased interest in recreation and trails, DCNR is looking at ways that it can improve information about its trails for trail users. As part of this effort, DCNR has launched an [online Trail Users Survey](#) to gather feedback about the kind of information trail users seek before visiting and while on trails. DCNR will use this information to guide the creation of a more user-friendly online trails tool.

Please take a few minutes to provide your thoughts by Tuesday, November 30.

Keystone Trails Endowment Fund

The Keystone Trails Endowment Fund was established by the Keystone Trails Association as a mechanism to provide for an ongoing revenue source from annual distributions to fund the programs that help achieve the mission of the organization. The principle donations remain intact in the endowment fund as a lasting legacy to those who contribute as a commitment to the mission of KTA.



At the 2019 Fall KTA Meeting the Board and Council established a Development Committee to research and make recommendations for establishing an endowment fund. At the January 4, 2020 meeting the Board established the Keystone Trails Endowment fund with the Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers using the initial \$100,000 contribution from the Richard Hiemenz Estate.

The Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers (CFTT) manages the endowment fund investments along with many other non-profit organizations. The Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers supplied a match of \$10,000 contribution in 2020 to the fund as part of the establishment of the endowment fund.

The following giving levels were established to recognize individuals and groups who have contributed to the Keystone Trails Endowment Fund. KTA organizational member clubs and other groups may also make contributions to the fund. Contributions may be given over a time period up to a five year period for Keystone Hiker and higher levels of giving.

Life Memberships - \$750
Keystone Hiker - \$1,000
Keystone Trails Sustainer - \$5,000
Keystone Trails Legacy - \$10,000
Keystone Trails Visionary - \$25,000
Keystone Trails Benefactor - \$50,000
Keystone Trails Guardian - \$100,000 +

The Keystone Trails Association is pleased to recognize the following individuals and groups who have contributed to the Keystone Trails Endowment Fund and for their ongoing investment in the future of Pennsylvania Hiking Trails. The following were recognized at the Fall KTA Membership Meeting:

Keystone Hiker - \$1,000

1. Wayne and Shirley Gross - 2020
2. Katie Barker - 2020
3. Wanda Shirk - 2021

Keystone Trails Legacy - \$10,000

1. Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers - 2020
2. Cecil Dobbins - 2021

Keystone Trails Guardian - \$100,000 +

1. Richard Hiemenz - 2020

We encourage you to consider making a contribution to the Keystone Trails Endowment Fund and leave a lasting legacy for hiking trails in Pennsylvania. Please consider making a contribution before the end of the year for tax benefits. An application is available at the KTA website:

kta-hike.org/keystone-trails-endowment

Respectfully Submitted,
Wayne E. Gross
KTA Development Committee Chair

Volunteer's Corner

KTA Recognizes Volunteers

Sherry Ferguson
Thyra Sperry Volunteer of the Year Award

Sherry has been a member of the Keystone Trails Association's Appalachian Trail Section Committee since its inception. The group cares for a section of the Appalachian Trail that had been rerouted decades ago due to environmental damage from the Palmerton zinc smelting plant at Lehigh Gap, a Superfund site. Her work with the committee contributed to a recent milestone: a section of the AT near Palmerton has been permanently returned to a path that now features wonderful views of the Lehigh Gorge.



Committee Chair Jim Foster noted that Sherry has attended every scheduled work trip and personally maintains a section of the Appalachian Trail. She recently agreed to be the “blaze- master” of the group, traveling up and down KTA's ten-mile section of the Appalachian Trail making sure the rectangular paint blazes are fresh and visible.

Curt, Tawnya, and George Finney
Certificates of Achievement

They have maintain the Tumbling Run shelters (1991) for 30 years. That would have been after the newly constructed were built by the PA YCC and Michaux SF Forest folk in the late 1980ss. They were appointed by Charlie Irwin our first district manager for the North Chapter. In the last three years I believe are maintainers of a section of the Tuscarora Trail (Rte 641 to Catholic Path) The last two years they have been helping on the AT. Tawnya and Curt do day hikes for the Greater Waynesboro Area AT Community. Tawnya now sits on the Friends of Michaux SF and is responsible for keeping track of volunteer hours for trails and campsites plus other events.

Joseph Kiczek
Certificate of Achievement

Since joining Chester County Trail Club in 2019, Joe has enthusiastically volunteered for many services that go above and beyond, and has served as Co-chair of Trail Maintenance since November 2019.



He has participated in or co-led 21 Trail Maintenance Work Hikes and 6 Adopt-A-Highway Work Hikes. Joe participated in the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation Trail Workers Sawyer Workshop in April 2021. The skills acquired have been put to use safely to buck and clear fallen trees along the Horseshoe, Brandywine and Mason Dixon Trails. In addition, Joe has served as the Hike Leader on 37 hikes since December 2019 and has hiked 1100+ miles from October 2020 thru August 2021.

Bill Erwin and Ben May
Certificates of Achievement

They work as a team, and have been very active for many years. But this year

they took it upon themselves to do maintenance on every single mile of the Conestoga Trail, including dealing with bad blowdowns, removing yellow jackets, installing new signs, and more, a heroic and thankless job.

Paul Shaw Citation Award for Lifetime Achievement



Paul has been active with the Keystone Trails Association for over forty years and has served in roles including trail maintainer, conservation committee chair, representative-at-large, vice president and president. He also served as KTA's first executive director beginning in 2006, establishing KTA's office in Harrisburg and leaving a legacy of advocating for Pennsylvania's hikers that has been carried on by his successors. He established the KTA Trail Challenge, a 25K and 50K hiking and trail-running event which immediately became KTA's biggest fundraiser. Later, he used his business, Treks and Trails International, to lead international trips for KTA members and donated the profits to KTA. Most recently, he returned to his role as executive director to fill in during a staff vacancy and directed another successful Trail Challenge event.

KTA's volunteer Trail Care leader Ed Lawrence presented the award at the non-profit's annual meeting at the Sons and Daughters of Italy Lodge in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania on October 16th. Board president Katie Barker said, Paul steps up when he is needed and does the job right. So many people have had a good experience on a hiking trail because of Paul Shaw."

The award has been presented annually since 1963 and is KTA's most prestigious.

Report your 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, and the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (which has agreed to use 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!

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

Report hours using the online or downloadable form at kta-hike.org/volunteer-hours submit, mail, or email to Casey Schneck at ktaadmin@kta-hike.org by December 1, 2021.

Reeds Gap Spur Trail Care Closes Out the Season

A total of 12 volunteers brought their unique talents to Reeds Gap State Park to participate in the final KTA sponsored Trail Care of the 2021 season. Repainting of trail blazes was carried out both in the park and on a section of the White Mountain Ridge Trail. Clearing the trail corridor of overgrowth using power brush cutters and/or loppers was undertaken on the Reeds Gap Spur Trail south of Longwell Draft Road, on the Devils Elbow access trail and on the White Mountain Ridge Trail between the Devils Elbow Trail and Chimney Rocks. Blow downs were also cut and removed as needed. Although Saturday was a soggy stew of fog, drizzle and periodic rain the crews accomplished their goals and returned to the park in good spirits to enjoy hot showers and an evening meal under a clearing sky. It is always a pleasure to stay at Reeds Gap State Park and we thank the Park Manager and DCNR staff for letting us base our Trail Care out of the camp ground. I would like to thank the following participants who contributed to a total of 174 hours of volunteer work during this weekend event. They are: Martyann Gutierrez, Christine Brubaker, Shira Blady, Brian MacNamara, Olivia Barber, Alex Mauriz, Walker Gosrich, Tosin Oniyide, Tony Robbins, Tom Bastian, Jenn Ulmer and Ed Lawrence. Their dedication to maintaining hiking trails is very much appreciated.

-Ed Lawrence

The KTA trail care season has wrapped up for 2021. Stay tuned for the 2022 calendar to come. Visit <https://www.kta-hike.org/trail-care-and-trail-crew> for more info on volunteering with KTA

Hiker's Corner

2022 Trail of the Year

Each year, the [Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee](#), designates a Trail of the Year to help build enthusiasm and support for trails and raise public awareness about the value of Pennsylvania's Trail network.

DCNR recently honored the [D&H Rail Trail](#) as the 2021 Pennsylvania Trail of the Year and department officials are eager to see nominations for 2022.

"Pennsylvania is home to some of the most beautiful trails in the world and DCNR is proud to recognize the impact of one of our top trails each year," Dunn said "Whether it is the gentle pathways threading through miles of preserved greenways or rugged trails scaling the state's magnificent mountains, the commonwealth has it all. We want to hear from those who enjoy our wonderful trails and help spread the word about the top trail of the year."

The winning trail will be recognized publicly by the advisory committee and DCNR and through a commemorative poster for statewide distribution, a trailhead marker along the trail, promotion on [ExplorePATrails](#), and a grant for educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection on the trail.

The Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee is charged with implementing the development of a statewide land and water trail network to facilitate recreation, transportation, and healthy lifestyles for all.

Pennsylvania is home to more than 12,000 miles of trails.

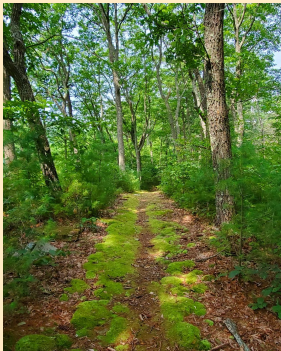
If you know of a trail that provides unique opportunities, encourages and celebrates diverse user groups, or enhances your community, please nominate it for the 2022 Trail of the Year.

To submit a nomination, fill out the [2022 Trail of the Year Nomination Form](#) and provide the required supporting materials by November 12, 2021.

[James Buchanan's Birthplace State Park](#)



[Jeff's Jaunts](#) [Stone Cutter and Tiadaghton Trail Loop -](#) [Tiadaghton State Forest](#)



This is a great dayhike loop in the Pine Creek Gorge, offering views of the creek, rail trail, two fine views, rock outcrops and a small stream. It is about five miles long. Parking is at two places in Ramsey, and both have limited parking for about four or five cars.

From the parking area, follow the rail trail to the left or south and cross Pine Creek on an old steel bridge. Enjoy views of the creek and surrounding canyon. Continue on the rail trail and look for a discreet trail juncture to the right. Take it and follow the yellow blazes. Continue straight up the hill on the Tiadaghton Trail. Reach an old quarry site, and the climb becomes steeper; avoid the trails that join from the left. The climb remains steep as you ascend

the ridge, passing some rock outcrops. Reach the ridge with more unique rock outcrops and ledges. Another climb brings you to a stunning 180 degree view of the Pine Creek gorge from rock outcrops. Enjoy the superb scenery.

Continue on the yellow Tiadaghton Trail as it climbs up the ridge; however, this climb is much more gradual. Moss and pine trees often adorn the trail. Descend gradually along the narrow ridge. In winter, expect extensive views through the bare trees. The yellow Turkey Vulture Trail joins from the right. Reach a second view looking down the gorge, another beautiful sight. Turn left onto a trail and leave the Tiadaghton Trail. Descend to the Stone Cutter Trail which follows an old forest road above Bonnell Run, a small, babbling creek with some small cascades. Follow the Stone Cutter Trail down, enjoying views of the creek and the valley. The trail does not get very close to Bonnell Run.



Reach the orange Mid State Trail, and you can go either way. Left will take you along an old grade that will descend to the rail trail. Right, or straight, will take you down Bonnell Run and you can connect to the rail trail at the bottom; just be sure you do not continue following the Mid State Trail up the mountain.

Hike the rail trail to the left with many wildflowers. Pass a camping area and some shelters. Cross the bridge over Pine Creek and retrace your steps.

[-Jeff Mitchell](#)

Trail News

[New proposed trail would run 4.3 miles through Northeast Philadelphia](#)

[Many Take to PA Forests for the 5th Annual Walk in Penn's Woods](#)

[Biden signs support for 9/11 trail, which encompasses C&O Canal, GAP](#)

[Schuylkill River Trail Celebrates Opening of Bridge in Union Township](#)

[DCNR Dedicates Trail Connector Project At Canoe Creek State Park](#)

Hiking Safety

PA has opened select Sundays to hunting; the 2021 dates are November 14th, 21st, and 28th. Stay safe in the outdoors during hunting season. Be sure to wear fluorescent orange when sharing the woods with hunters.

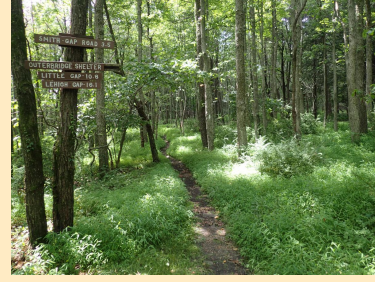


If you need some orange apparel KTA has you covered. Orange and classic khaki caps are available in the [KTA store](#).

2021 Summer/Fall 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

Save the Date! Registration opens soon

Spring Hiking Weekend

Apr 29 - May 1, Bongiorno Conference Center in Carlisle

Allegheny National Forest Weekend

Aug 26 - 28, Olmstead Manor in Ludlow

KTA Trail Challenge

Sept 10, Pequea Creek Campground and Susquehannock SP

Community Events

Virtual National Trails Workshop - November 1-4

Join us from the convenience of your home or office for presentations and interactive sessions focused on Conserving Trail Lands, Collaboration and Engagement, Strengthening Organizations and Partnerships

Sessions will include trainings, topical discussions and presentations on emerging land conservation policy, advancing land conservation on trails (with separate tracks for beginners and more advanced participants), working with Corps programs, moving beyond land acknowledgments, ethical storytelling, and more.

Pennsylvania Forestry Association Symposium November 2 & 4

The Pennsylvania Forestry Association will hold its Annual Symposium virtually on November 2 and 4, 2021, 6–8pm. This year's symposium theme is "New Ways to Work with Your Woods." Learn about forestry apps, drones, consulting foresters (they are generally not drones!), Story Maps, and using remote sensing technology during these two information-packed evenings. The annual awards will be presented and PFA election results will be announced. Sign up

now at www.paforestry.org, and join us in November.

Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club Banquet - November 6

Guest Speaker Jay Leutze, author of *Stand Up That Mountain: The Battle to Save One Small Community in The Wilderness Along the Appalachian Trail.* He is a Trustee and Acquisition Specialist for Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy. The banquet will be at Heidelberg Country Club in Bernville, PA

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary: Meet Eagles Up Close - November 6

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary visitors in Berks County will have a guaranteed opportunity to see both a bald and a golden eagle up close during the Eagle Day event. The one-day-only eagle programs will be presented by Carbon County Environmental Education Center at Noon and 2:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary's Amphitheater. The program is free for Members or with a trail pass. Eagle Day coincides with the peak of golden eagle migration at Hawk Mountain. The golden eagle is rare to see throughout the northeast, but during the autumn, an average of 134 are spotted at the Sanctuary.

Hawk Falls Clean-up - November 13

Head down the trail with a trash bag and gloves to tidy up our busiest, most popular trail. Equipment will be provided. Registration is required, please use the green registration button. 9:30 - 11:00 AM at Hickory Run State Park.

AT Museum - Hall of Fame Banquet - November 20

Each year, we honor outstanding legends of the A.T. at our Hall of Fame Banquet. The Tenth Hall of Fame Banquet will be held on November 20, 2021. We will again be at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, located just outside Carlisle, PA.

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

Berks Community Hiking Club

BCHC is a hiking club that is located in Berks County, Pennsylvania. The club was first organized in the Fall of 1921. This is the official club site. We list weekly hikes that range from short easy strolls to strenuous mountain hikes. The type of hike is dependent on the leaders that volunteer to fill our quarterly schedules. This site lists some of the recent scheduled weekly Saturday hikes.

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.

