



The Keystone Hiker - October 2019

Member's Corner

CCTC 50th Anniversary

50th birthday and anniversary parties are usually a big deal, so the Chester County Trail Club has decided to celebrate our 50th anniversary in 2020 in a big way. Right now, plans are still underway but may possibly include the re-creation of our very first hike, a 50-hike competition for members, and special gatherings and other events.

It all started in 1970 when two friends who were interested in finding company for Sunday afternoon walks ran an ad in a local newspaper; they were excited when 30 like-minded people showed up for the first hike. From there, the Chester County Trail Club was formed, expanded, and has continued to grow over the years.

Today, the 400-plus member CCTC has hikes scheduled almost every day of the week with some days offering two or three options. Besides hiking, the membership participates in maintaining more than 62 miles of trail and performs a quarterly Adopt-a-Highway clean-up. Although the club is based in southeastern Pennsylvania and many of the hikes are local, the group has hiked almost all of the trails throughout the Keystone state. In addition to daily hikes, there are weekend and longer hikes, backpacking trips, and an occasional overseas trip.

For more information, please visit the CCTC website at:
www.cctrailclub.org

Submitted by: Lori Kier

11th Annual Trail Challenge Results

Congratulations to all the runners and hikers who finished the Trail Challenge on September 7th, and thank you to all the volunteers who made the event possible.

The Trail Challenge is a rugged and difficult course. Whether you ran to the finish line with blazing speed or took your time over a rough hike, you should be proud of yourself for meeting the challenge. You can find the times for all runners at the links below and we hope to see you on the trail again next year.

[50k Race Results](#)



[25k Race Results](#)

It's all in a day's run

The Keystone Trails Association's (KTA) annual Trail Challenge returned for its 11th year, bringing people from far and wide to experience the trails of Lancaster and York counties. Whether in pursuit of personal goals or breathtaking views, the experience offered all participants, fledgling or expert, the chance to find their community.

"I think it's a great experience for people," says Joe Neville, president of KTA. "You have the comradery of hundreds of people doing this incredibly challenging event," which quickly creates a feeling of community over the miles endured together.

That community was palpable before dawn on Saturday. As trail cohorts assembled at the 50k starting line, smiles and laughter ran in all directions. Volunteers greeted returning traversers and newcomers with sincere smiles and encouragement. Travelers congregated together to review the trail, stretch and massage muscles, or pace impatiently. Some traded stories and tips, and some shared bug spray and helped pin numbers.

See the full coverage of the 11th Trail Challenge with some great pictures at: <https://theburgnews.com/burg-blog/the-annual-cta-trail-challenge-its-all-in-a-days-run>

And if you want to run next year, don't miss out!
[Get a reminder to sign up when 2020 registration opens.](#)

Volunteer's Corner

Upcoming Trail Care

October 5: Code Orange 1 day

Gifford Pinchot State Park

With the Friends of Pinchot S.P.

Leader: Steve Stroman, stevestroman@hotmail.com, 717-350-0437

A trail lunch, free camping and showers are available for participants.

October 24-27: Trail Care BTD

Donut Hole Trail

Sproul State Forest

Leader: Tony Robbins, tony.robbins.cta@excellservices.com, 570-437-0065

Camp: *Kettle Creek Adventures Lodge*

November 7-10: Trail Care BTD

Bucktail Path

Elk State Forest

Leader: Ed Lawrence, cemclaw216@gmail.com, 570-925-5285

Camp: Brooks Run

Fire Tower Cabin

Please note: Donut Hole Trail Care Base Camp Location Moved

Volunteers will meet at Kettle Creek Adventures Lodge, not Hyner Run State Park as originally scheduled. The new base camp is closer to the planned work site and gives participants a very snug and comfortable indoor venue to congregate in. The Susquehannock Trail Club will be providing breakfast Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings and dinners on Friday and Saturday nights for everyone. WOW. Be sure to contact leader Tony Robbins if you are planning to come and help with this project so that he can establish an accurate meal count.

The Kettle Creek Adventures Lodge is located at 22 Keeney Mountain Lane, Cross Fork, on the south side of Route 144 between Cross Fork and Ole Bull State Park just east of the junction with Osborne Road.

Rothrock Volunteer Day

Come join Friends of Rothrock State Forest and DCNR on October 5th, 2019 at 8:30 AM for a day of trail maintenance at Bear Meadows Natural Area, a National Natural Landmark. This trail work session will focus on brush cutting the trail corridor, tread improvements, and preparation for installation of puncheons.

- Power equipment, hand tools, and lunch will be provided
- Please bring gloves, sunblock, bug spray, drinking water, and appropriate footwear for working in the woods
- This is a rain or shine event

[Click here for more information and to register](#)

Submitted by Jonathan Snyder | Recreation Forester, DCNR

Mid State Trail Named Trail of the Year Thanks to Volunteers

September was Trails Month and DCNR took the opportunity to highlight the important work that volunteers do to keep Pennsylvania's trails open and accessible. Watch the first short videos in a series to come recognizing the role that volunteers play in our state's vast and beautiful trails system

Trail of the Year



Keystone Trails Association



Hickory Run State Park Thanks KTA Volunteers

At their annual volunteer appreciation day ceremony held on September 7th, Hickory Run State Park volunteer coordinator Megan Fedor presented the Keystone Trails Association with a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of the outstanding volunteer service the [Trail Care Program](#) provided to the park at the May 2019 Trail Care Weekend.

This was the first time that a full weekend work event had been scheduled for a state park. Fifteen KTA volunteers came out for the event and put in 161 hours of work to improve the park's hiking trail system.

Also, scouts and leaders from troop 417 attended and logged an additional 42 hours on a project that was tailored to their skill set. Assistant Park Manager Mark Scarpitti, in his remarks, said that the work that the KTA volunteers accomplished was of "professional quality" and that all park visitors have benefited from the improved trail conditions.

Trail Heroes: the Critical Role of Volunteers

From DCNR:

Pennsylvania is home to thousands of miles of trails. Every year, hikers, bikers, paddlers, and more flock to parks, forests, and rivers to enjoy the great outdoors.

With so many miles of trails for so many activities, it would be a lifelong adventure to see them all.

However, with the abundance of trails across the commonwealth, things like maintenance and upkeep can become challenging. Keeping Pennsylvania's trails open and accessible is a difficult task, and it couldn't be done without the help of volunteers.

Behind many parks, forests, and trail systems is an army of volunteers who work tirelessly to help keep our trails in good shape and for all to enjoy.

KTA appreciates and echoes this sentiment. The importance of volunteers cannot be understated. You can read the [full article here](#). It includes quotes from Ed Lawrence, a tireless volunteer with KTA:

"Volunteers are always needed to help maintain the hundreds of miles of Pennsylvania's extensive system of hiking trails," explains Mid State Trail Association President Ed Lawrence.

"Clearing a trail corridor with loppers, repainting a blaze, digging sidehill to rebench the treadway; all of these 'hands-on' activities give the maintainer a deeper sense of connection and partnership with the trail, along with a feeling of quiet satisfaction that they are contributing to the quality of the outdoor experience of future hikers. This is the path all hikers should follow."

Hiker's Corner

**Tracy Ridge Mountain Biking on Hiking Trails
Project Officially Cancelled**

From the Friends of Allegheny Wilderness:

Good news everyone, the Tracy Ridge Mountain Biking on Hiking Trails Project, that we have been threatened with for almost four years now, has been formally CANCELLED by the USDA Forest Service!

As most of you are aware, the project was withdrawn in January of 2018 after withering criticism from FAW and our supporters. However, it had been formally listed as "on hold" since that time. This new development appears to finally, thankfully, put a fork in the matter.

For everyone who participated in the public participation process, commenting in opposition to this harmful project, THANK YOU! It was YOU who made it happen! You all deserve a HUGE round of applause.

It is just these kind of unrecognized, unappreciated heavy, heavy lifts that we must undertake all the time just to keep our natural areas natural. And few will ever know or remember what we did, but the important thing is that Tracy Ridge is still going to be kept natural and untrammelled...for now.

KTA Testifies for Hikers in Harrisburg

The Sunday hunting issue heated up this week when testimony was given at a public hearing held Tuesday at the State Capitol. Held by the Game and Fisheries Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, some testimony on SB 147 was so acrimonious that a few legislators considered changing their position on the bill.

KTA's Testimony

Good afternoon Chairman Gillespie, Chairman Kortz and members of the committee. I'm Joe Neville, Executive Director of the Keystone Trails Association.

Formed in 1956, the Keystone Trails Association represents and advocates for the interests and concerns of the Pennsylvania hiking community. We currently represent over 44 hiking clubs and conservation organizations as well as thousands of individual Pennsylvanians who hike and enjoy the Commonwealth's outdoor resources. We are NOT an anti-hunting organization, in fact, many of our members are hunters, but we do oppose any expansion of Sunday hunting.

Among the people we represent, most of their activities during prime hunting seasons are focused on Sundays, days that are largely free of gunfire in Penns Woods. Safety is a paramount concern of these people, especially when on any Sunday, many thousands of Pennsylvania hikers, backpackers, trail maintainers, mountain bikers, equestrians, trail runners, bird watchers, geocachers, wildlife watchers and their families are in the woods...

[For the full 3 page testimony from the September 10th hearing click here](#)

Community Calendar

Mid State Trail 50 year 50k

Wow! The MST is 50 years old! Let's celebrate by hiking 50 kilometers (31 miles) on PA's Wildest Footpath!

This 2 night backpacking trip will showcase part of the Woolrich Region of the MST as we hike northbound from Ramsey Road to Blackwell. We will see some of the most remote regions of the MST on this trek with plenty of forested hills and streams to visit along the way. (Be prepared for possible water crossings that may be as high as your knees.) We will see a state park, wild area, and natural area along the way. You can even enjoy views of the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon climbing up the Pennsylvania Matterhorn to Gillespie Point on this trip.

Our Backpacking Trip Plan Details:

Friday, October 18—We will meet in Blackwell at the McCullough Parking Area at 5:30pm to park cars at the end point. Then, we will shuttle to the start point to begin hiking. We will hike 5 kilometers (3 miles) to the Parker Hollow campsite. Make sure you bring your headlamp as we might be hiking in the dark.

Saturday, October 19—We will continue travelling north on the MST 21 kilometers (13 miles) to camp near the Silver Branch. We will travel through Little Pine State Park early in the day's hike; if we're lucky, we might get to see one of the nesting pairs of bald eagles the park is known for. Later in the day, we will travel through the Bark Cabin Natural Area, a scenic seven acre tract of old growth hemlock trees. Throughout the day, we will get to see many of the streams and forested hills found in this remote region of the MST.

Sunday, October 20—We will continue working our way north on the MST 24 kilometers (15 miles) to the end point of Blackwell. We will travel through a small patch of the Wolf Run Wild Area, an extensive 6,900 acre plot in one of the most remote reaches of the Tiadaghton State Forest. We will pass by the 103 year old Brown's Fork Cabin along the way. Near the end of the day, we will climb to Gillespie Point for a scenic 600 meter (1900 feet) high view of the PA Grand Canyon before working our way back down to the parking area to complete the backpacking trip.

If you would like to be part of this backpacking trip, contact Kristin Joivell at kristinjean@hotmail.com. The backpack group will be limited to eight people (no dogs please) and spots are first come first served. Feel free to contact Kristin if you have any questions about the trip or need more details.

KTA Events

[Quehana Elk Quest – October 4-6th or 6-8th](#)

KTA hosts our 4th annual Elk Quest! Explore the Moshannon and Elk State Forests, hike with KTA staff and Board members, view the elk herd in the Benezette area, and complete your weekend adventure at Gunners - a quaint hotel/restaurant in historic St. Marys, PA.

[Black Forest Trail Slackpack – Sold out!](#)

Thruhike this challenging, but rewarding 42-mile loop leading through and above the west side of Pine Creek Gorge, in 4 days, without pitching a tent.

[Fall Hiking Weekend – October 11-13th](#)

KTA will be hosting the Fall Hiking Weekend in the Ramada State College Hotel & Conference Center, conveniently set on Route 322 off University Drive. Join us for the banquet or on a on various trails in the area including Rothrock State Forest, Mid State Trail, Mt. Nittany, and the Bald Eagle State

Forest. Hikes will be easy to difficult so there will be something for everyone!

Miss an event?

[Sign up to get notified](#) when registration opens for 2020

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 info@kta-hike.org.

Club Spotlight

Lancaster Hiking Club

Our mission is to provide a program of outdoor recreation through hiking, promote appreciation and stewardship of the environment, and maintain the Conestoga Trail System.

The Lancaster Hiking Club began in 1927 as a program of the Lancaster Recreation Commission. A constant over the years is that we love being in the outdoors, we share a passion for walking, and we enjoy the camaraderie of hiking as a group. Most of our hikes are within a 20- to 30-mile radius of Lancaster, but we occasionally explore new places further away.

You will find us to be an eclectic, friendly group of people who will make you feel welcome. We're all about staying active, experiencing the natural world, and getting plenty of fresh air and sunshine.

You are cordially invited to join us on a hike and check us out. See the **Schedule** for upcoming events.

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.