



The Keystone Hiker - October 2021

Member's Corner

KTA Meets in Lock Haven

The 2021 Fall Hiking Weekend commences on October 15-17. The KTA Board, Council, and members will gather for a weekend of comradery to share in our love of hiking, discuss goings on at KTA, and celebrate prodigious hikers and volunteers. Registration is still open to attend the group day hikes and Saturday evening banquet.

At Saturday's meeting, KTA board officers for the coming year will be approved. The slate of nominees is:

- President - Katie Barker
- Vice President - Bob Merrill
- Secretary -- Wayne Gross
- Treasurer - Cynthia Krom

Nominee for Representative at Large to the KTA Council



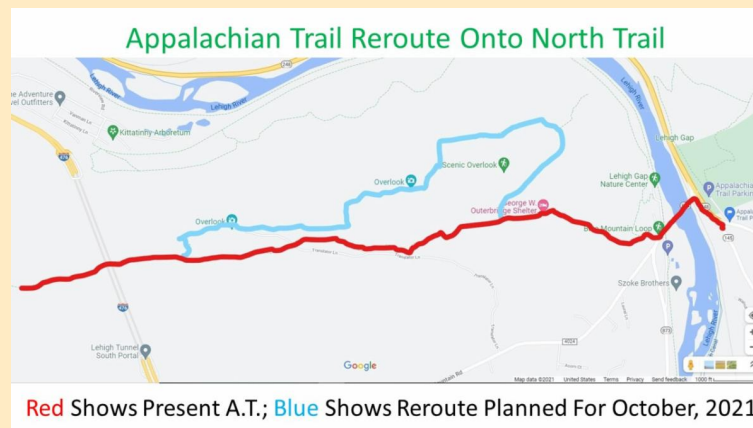
Christine Brubaker of Lancaster has been nominated for Representative at Large on the KTA Council beginning this October. Should you wish to find Chris, you probably will not catch her at home! Chris has been passionate about the outdoors since her early years, rising from camper to counselor to director of sailing for a Michigan girls camp and leading ventures ranging from a canoe trip on the boundary waters in Minnesota for a YWCA to service team projects for the Penn Laurel Girl Scout Council. A certified backpacking instructor, canoe instructor, and American Red Cross WSI - Water Safety Instructor -- Chris also has dual bachelors and dual masters degrees in fields ranging from literature to media communications to administration and school guidance.

Cris has done extensive volunteer work, including serving on the DCNR grant advisory board, the Little Conestoga Watershed Alliance, the Lancaster

County Drug and Alcohol Commission, and the state board of mental health for the Wernersville hospital. As president of the Lancaster Canoe Club, Chris is often found on the water in the summer, while in the winter she may be found on cross-country ski trails with the Kickers and Gliders X-C ski club. As a hiker, Chris's ventures include hiking Katahdin's Knife Edge twice.

Chris has worked hard to put trails on nature preserves and created the Turkey Hill Trail loops and the Blue Rock Trail along the Little Conestoga in Lancaster County. She was one of the founding volunteers and organizers of KTA's annual Superhike, for which she has raised sponsorships and even done the transport of the donated drinks from Turkey Hill. You might also find Chris volunteering at a KTA trail care weekend in the summer. Her dedication to trails and the outdoors will continue with her involvement on the KTA Council..

Reroute Planned For Appalachian Trail Near Lehigh Gap



The Appalachian Trail Section Committee of Keystone Trails Association is announcing a reroute of the Appalachian Trail onto the present route of the North Trail. This A.T. reroute will take place in eastern Pennsylvania just west of the Lehigh River and approximately three miles southwest of Palmerton, PA, along the border of Lehigh and Carbon Counties. It is planned to take place in October, 2021. The path of the reroute is shown on the enclosed graphic of a Google Map. The reroute will be 2.2 miles in length.

Jim Foster, Chair of the KTA A.T. Section Committee, said: "We're excited to announce this portion of our reroute. Hikers in the Lehigh Valley have long known about the spectacular views of the Lehigh Gorge available on the North Trail. Now, hikers from all over the world who hike the Appalachian Trail will be able to see it. Our group has made several improvements to the North Trail during 2021. We think it's time now to show off this great trail to the world, rather than waiting for the entire rerouted Trail to be completed."

The rerouted trail will be a return for the A.T. For many years the current North Trail was the path of the A.T. It was moved to the present path because of the environmental damage caused by the former zinc processing plant in Palmerton. Much of that damage on both sides of the Lehigh River has been remediated under the federal Superfund law. The portion from which the A.T. is being rerouted will be maintained as a side trail.

[Read the full story here.](#)

Volunteer's Corner

Trail Care: It's Not Magic

Like the uroboros we will return to Reeds Gap State Park, where the 2021 season began, for the final Trail Care weekend of the year. Over a decade ago, the KTA Trail Care Program made a commitment to Bald Eagle State forest that our volunteers would keep the Reeds Gap Spur, which connects Reeds Gap State Park to Poe Paddy State Park and the Mid State Trail via the Bear Gap Picnic Area in Treaster Valley, open and accessible to hikers. It is a challenging 14 mile jaunt that can be made into a weekend overnight by leaving your camping gear at one park and hiking to it from the other park, then returning the next day. In April, KTA crews cleared most of the trail. In October (21-24) we will finish up what remains to be done on the Spur, then shift our focus to the White Mountain Ridge Trail, a side trail off the Reeds Gap Spur and probably the most isolated and remote trail in Bald Eagle State Forest. It is also the trail that by passes the Chimney Rocks geological formation overlooking Penns Creek. In order to accomplish this work volunteers are needed to brushcut and lop. The crew will be based out of Reeds Gap State Park, with all the amenities, both physical and spiritual, that camping in a beautiful wooded setting in the shadow of a full moon has to offer. Come and make new friends while you help to enhance the experience of future hikers.

-Ed Lawrence

2021 Trail Care

October 21-24: Trail Care

Reeds Gap Spur Trail

Bald Eagle State Forest

Leader: Ed Lawrence

cemclaw216@gmail.com

570-925-5285

Camp: Reeds Gap State Park
camping area

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

KTA Lehigh Gap AT Reroute

We're going to have a group workday on Saturday, October 16, beginning at 9 am. The alternate day in the event of bad weather, etc. will be Saturday, October 23. We will meet at the Lehigh Gap East A.T. parking lot, off PA Route 248. [HERE](#) is a link to a map showing the location.

• Please send an email to ktalehighgapat@gmail.com if you wish to come. I will send you a confirmation. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, please don't come if you haven't sent an email and received confirmation.

Do not come if you have been exposed to COVID-19 or do not feel well.

- We will follow ATC's guidelines for trail work during the pandemic found [HERE](#). Please review this page, especially the poster "COVID-19 Guidelines For A.T. Volunteers". You can download and print a copy there. If you need a mask, let us know in the "Comments" when you register.
- Before resuming any work on the A.T., including this workday, you MUST watch the COVID-19 Safety Training Video and complete the "Re-Engagement Acknowledgement - COVID-19". Links to both of these can be found on the webpage shown above.

We will be rerouting the A.T. onto the North Trail and turning the section of the A.T. being replaced into a side trail. We'll be painting the blue blazes white and the white blazes blue, plus putting up some temporary signs. Please bring a mask or bandanna, water or other drink, snacks, etc. Bring clothes suitable for working outside and that you don't mind getting paint on. If you have small brushes (about 1 inch), bring them, but we will provide some. If you have containers for paint like plastic milk containers with the tops cut off, bring them, but, again, we will provide some.

As always, THANK YOU for your support.

On your next hike, spare a thought for the trail builders who made it possible

You don't see them as you kick through the leaves on your hike. You won't see them as you squeeze through an inviting crevice between two boulders to discover what's beyond. Don't look for them as you pedal toward a perfectly placed berm or you may tumble off your bike. Just know that the people responsible for the thrilling ride and the beckoning passageway, the people who plan where you will step and what you will view — they see you. These trail workers are the unseen architects guiding your interaction with the great outdoors.

In North America, trail designers and maintainers come from public and private groups, government agencies and community programs, and sometimes, they're simply private landowners. Combined, their work over the past century has resulted in nearly 200,000 miles of trails on federal lands alone as of 2015. That is four times the mileage of the American interstate highway system.

"They are weavers when they weave a trail around this rock and that tree and over that hill," said Erik Mickelson, an independent trail consultant who hosts Trailism, an informational website for trail users. "They are sculptors when they carve a long, drawn-out, twisty bench from dirt or masons or exterior designers in the way they move or shape stones just so."

[Read the full story from the Washington Post](#)

Learn about Trail Care



Ever wonder what goes into maintaining a trail?

Learn the basics with a video from KTA produced by film students at Messiah University. You can visit <https://www.kta-hike.org/trail-care-and-trail-crew> to learn more and volunteer to help with KTA Trail Care and try it out for yourself on a trail near you!

Hiker's Corner

Mt. Davis Natural Areas Loop Forbes State Forest



Jeff's Jaunts Sinnemahoning Canyon Vista - Elk State Forest

The PA Wilds are a special place, and one that I enjoy visiting. Its isolation, rugged terrain, countless trails, parks, streams, and wild elk make it an ideal destination. One of the most scenic places in the PA Wilds are around Sinnemahoning and Driftwood. Here, towering plateaus and deep canyons rise above the large Sinnemahoning Creek. This hike leads to one of the most stunning vistas over the Sinnemahoning Creek, and one of the finest views in all of the PA Wilds.



I first did this hike over a year ago, when I looked for a view that turned out to be quite nice. Little did I know a really spectacular view was on a ridge just to the west. Suspecting there was such a view, I returned to explore more. I parked at a pull off along Montor Road and walked around a gate, heading south on an old forest road. No trails have blazes or signs. The old road soon joined a grassy pipeline swath, which I followed for several hundred feet. Watch for a discreet turn to the left through some pine trees. Follow the old road through laurel and open hardwoods with ferns. The old road is easy to follow, although it is a little brushy in places. I hiked on a bright sunny day, which illuminated the forest with a fluorescent green. Ferns waved in the wind, just turning yellow as Autumn approached.



The old road descended gradually and ended at an open meadow. I headed west, off any trail, crossing some springs and walked through the open woods at the edge of the plateau. A strong wind blew down the canyon. I then reached an area, several hundred square feet in size, of uninterrupted moss carpeting the forest floor. I then dropped down this ridge, which became steep over some ledges. The ridge leveled and brought me to a stunning, incredible view of the Sinnemahoning Canyon. This was a 180 degree view of the 1,300 foot deep canyon, with ridges, plateaus, and gorges. The view would be incredible for sunrise or sunsets, and would be amazing above the mist and clouds in the morning. The view is from a towering, reddish rock outcrop. One rock at the view looked like an anvil. I sat here for a while, amazed by the beauty. The shadows of clouds sailed across the mountains. I could see up the gorge of another creek, where a long, sloping ridge looked ribbed from the drainages of small side streams. I called this view the Sinnemahoning Canyon Vista.

I then headed west, off trail, along some old deer paths through the laurel. I hiked to the next ridge to the west to look for another rock outcrop. I found it, but the view was largely overgrown. I retraced my steps and hiked down to the Sinnemahoning Spine, a very narrow ridge with views, ledges, overhangs and outcrops. It is a unique and beautiful feature. Wooded slopes plummeted from both sides of the narrow ridge. The ridge had small grassy meadows and twisted pine trees. The spine ended at a nice view and some large rock overhangs. The spine would be beautiful when the leaves are off the trees.

I then hiked over to the "original" vista from my first hike here; noted as "vista" on the map above. The view and rock pedestals make this a beautiful

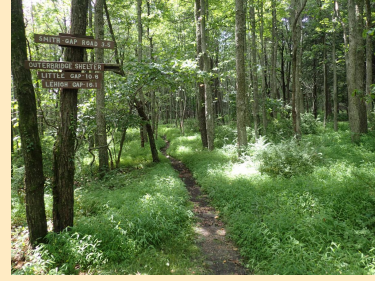
spot. From there, I returned to the meadow and hiked back out to Montour Road. Montour Road is in good shape and a car can handle it. However, do not drive on it if there is snow or ice. This hike is about six miles long.

-Jeff Mitchell

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

Fall Hiking Weekend - October 15-17

KTA heads to Lock Haven for a weekend of hiking and camaraderie in the Pennsylvania Wilds.

Community Events

Walk in Penn's Woods - October 3

We hope you are continuing to get out in Penn's Woods and creating your own woodland adventures. Get out and make your own woodland adventure and report it to us to receive some Walk in Penn's Woods swag and resources.

ALDHA Gathering Hiker Fair - October 8-11

The 39th annual Gathering of long-distance hikers, friends and A.T. dreamers will reconvene on Columbus Day weekend, Oct. 8-11, 2021 at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon, Va.

Exploring Forest Carbon - October 12

Interest in natural carbon storage is growing. Join our expert panelists to learn how carbon storage aligns with forest management goals. Panel and Q&A presented by Citizens' Climate Lobby.

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.

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.

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

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club



The Potomac Appalachian Trail Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, formed in 1927 to build a key section of the 2,190-mile Appalachian Trail. The over 8,000 member Club is governed by volunteer officers supported by a professional staff.

PATC maintains the 240-mile AT section from Virginia's Shenandoah National Park to Pine Grove Furnace, Pennsylvania, the entire 250-mile Tuscarora Trail, and 650 miles of other trails across Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Washington, DC.

We manage 42 rental cabins, a hostel, and 45 trail shelters. We own, manage, and protect related lands. More than 1,000 volunteers contribute over 90,000 work hours on average annually, largely in trail and facility maintenance

Our regional Chapters - South Shenandoah Valley, Charlottesville, North, and Blue Ridge - as well as the Ski Touring and Mountaineering Sections - provide

additional opportunities. Our store sells PATC's renowned books, maps, and gear.

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.