



September 2017

THE KEYSTONE HIKER

Preserving Pennsylvania's Footpaths since 1956

Contact us: 46 E Main St, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 / 717-766-9690 / bfurnace@kta-hike.org

MEMBER CORNER

KTA's Treks and Trails Trip: Iceland

by Joe Neville (KTA Executive Director) and Paul Shaw (KTA President and Treks and Trails International Co-Founder)

The 2017 KTA Treks and Trails trip to Iceland departed the U.S. on August 4 with 13 excited hikers. Arriving at 4:40 a.m. on August 5, at Keflavik Airport, our bright-eyed travelers were now a bit tired and sleepy, but ready to roll. After an early breakfast in the town of Keflavik, we stretched our legs at the nearby Krýsuvík geothermal area. Here, a boardwalk trail leads past steaming volcanic vents, boiling hot springs, and wildly colorful crater lakes formed by past volcanic eruptions. Then we were off to Reykjavík, Iceland's capital and largest city.

After a night in Reykjavík, we began our journey along Iceland's beautiful south coast. Our first stop was the wondrous Reykjadalur which translates as "Steam Valley". Our 7-mile hike led us past hot springs, bubbling mudpots, and fumaroles, belching sulfurous steam.

Along the way, we visited the beautiful, high and wispy Seljalandsfoss waterfall with a walkway behind the falls.

Back in our van, we continued along the coast to Landeyjahöfn where a ferry transported us to Heimaey in the magical Westman Islands. Heimaey was the site of a 1973 volcanic eruption that buried much of the town.

Heimaey has completely recovered from the 1973 eruption and is home to 4,200 people. On this day, we hiked a 3-mile loop through lava fields to the 725' summit of Eldfell volcano, where we witnessed incredible views of Heimaey and the Iceland coast. Then we hiked another 8 miles along cliffs and beaches for a close-up view of the largest puffin colony in Iceland. Surtsey Island, emerging from the ocean in another volcanic eruption in 1963, was visible offshore.

After breakfast the next day, the ferry returned us to the mainland. We continued on to the village of Skógar and the Skógar Trail, which many consider to be the world's finest waterfalls hike. The last 5 miles of this 10-mile loop parallel the Skógá river, descending amongst 20+ thunderous waterfalls. The last waterfall, Skógafoss, is ranked as one of the most beautiful in Iceland.

The following day began with a visit to the fascinating Skógar Folk Museum for a glimpse of life in rural Iceland before 1960. We continued on the Ring Road along the southern coast, stopping to explore the black sand beach and basalt columns at Vík. Our route led to the gorgeous Mýrdal district in southeast Iceland, a farmland area dominated by the enormous Vatnajökull glacier. This is Europe's largest glacier, covering 8% of Iceland with an average thickness of 1200 feet. Our comfortable cottages on a working farm featured stunning views of the glacier.

From our cottages, we enjoyed a 10-mile round-trip hike across flatlands to the very base of the Vatnajökull glacier where we reached out and touched it!

The following day we traveled to stunning Jökulsárlón lagoon, full of icebergs peeling from a tongue of the Vatnajökull glacier into the lagoon. Our 7-mile loop hike followed the shore of the lagoon where we observed the fantastical shapes of the floating ice and numerous seals swimming between them.

Lastly, we visited beautiful Skaftafell National Park, Iceland's premier hiking destination. We hiked to the famous Svartifoss waterfall and then continued on to complete a challenging 10-mile loop climbing through dwarf forest and tundra to a spectacular mountain vista overlooking the glacier. This is perhaps the best day-hike in Iceland!

A special thanks from KTA to a great group of people who participated in this fundraising trip. We had a tremendous time on a bucket-list, adventure of a lifetime!

Advisor: Thyra Sperry Has Passed Away

The Forest Coalition website is dedicated to deceased Advisors Cliff Dillman, Les Haas and Anne Harris Katz. All were valued individuals who contributed regularly to the mission of "Good Stewardship of our Public Lands.

On Wednesday, August 16, Thyra C. Sperry, one of the co-founders of the PFC in 1999, passed away and will be added to that list.

After a six-week bout with advanced ovarian cancer, I held her hand from last Tuesday evening to Wednesday morning; I held her hand until she finally passed away at 9:40 AM.

She was my wife, mentor, lover, and best friend.

Per her wishes, there will be no obituary, no viewing.

Her years of work on the boards of the Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club, Keystone Trails Association, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and the Pennsylvania Forest Coalition are her legacy.

Please continue our mission in her memory.

Sadly,
Dick Martin

Tribute to Thyra Sperry

It was with great sadness that I learned of Thyra Sperry's passing. Thyra was the consummate volunteer, a strong leader during a transitional period for KTA, and a good friend.

I came to know Thyra well when I served as KTA's first Executive Director at the same time that Thyra served as chair of the recently constituted KTA board. We grew in our positions together. Thyra never wavered in her quest to make KTA bigger, stronger, financially secure, and an outspoken advocate for the hiking community. Her strong leadership, her volunteerism, and her philanthropy provide a great role model for us all.

Her volunteerism knew no bounds. When it came to helping to manage the Susquehanna Super Hike, helping to move the KTA office, interviewing board candidates, representing KTA at meetings, opening her house to board members, and much more, Thyra was always the first to volunteer. She would usually make sure that husband Dick Martin was the second. I can't recall a time that Thyra ever turned down a request for help, unless she was on a birding trip to some foreign land. Besides her husband, Thyra loved birds, ATC, and KTA, and devoted endless time to each.

Thyra's legacy is the growing, influential KTA that we have today. She will be greatly missed.

Paul Shaw
KTA Board President

KTA Nominations

Representatives-At-Large:

Joyce Appel, East Brady, PA
Diane Buscarini, Gouldsboro, PA
Jim Catozzi, Newton PA
Ben Cramer, State College, PA
Carl Davis, Shippensburg, PA
Cecil Dobbins, Akron, OH

Linda Enders Roxberry, Shillington, PA
Henry Frank, Philadelphia, PA
Wayne Gross, Canadensis, PA
Vicki Porto, Carlisle PA
Jennifer Ulmer, Millville, PA
Barbara Van Horn, Duncannon, PA

Officer Positions:

President: Ernie Werstler
Vice President: Bob Merrill
Secretary: Katie Barker
Treasurer : Rob Altenburg

Up For Re-Election:

Donna Thompson
Jack Hauler
Bob Merrill

New Board Member: Mark Crames, Great Neck, NY

Founder and CEO of Northern Group, a distributor, and ultimately manufacturer and licensee of fine fragrances, managing brands like Gucci, Givenchy, and Christian Dior, and the licensee for Pierre Cardin and Faberge.

In 2010, after a lifetime focused on building family businesses and a family, with my 6 kids moving along (the last one started college just days ago), I began a different journey. That journey led me to become a vegetarian, lose 50 pounds, and become a long distance day-hiker (the beauty of sleeping on the ground has just not come to me yet). It also exposed me to the beauty of nature, not just for the eyes, but the soul -- something I had not really experienced much as a dedicated city-dweller. Today, it is hard to imagine how I survived without the wild places to break up the stress.

Today, however, it seems to me our wild places are in greater danger than they have been for some time - not of disappearing, as much as a gradual decline from neglect. It appears predictable that less government funds will be available for trail projects, and we know there is not all that much to begin with. If we are going to protect the places we love for future generations, we are going to have to market the woods and hiking differently and more effectively. I believe I have something to bring to that part of the conversation.

Keep Trails Alive

The Keep Trails Alive monthly donor program helps sustain our work of preserving Pennsylvania's footpaths. We are a small organization with a big mission; as such, we need to find trail people who will

commit themselves to giving a regular, once-a-month contribution to put KTA on a stable and sustainable financial foundation.

Donations through the Keep Trails Alive program can be made in two ways:

The first option is to "Subscribe" to the program through PayPal using a PayPal account or via a credit or debit card at www.kta-hike.org

Another option is to set up recurring payments taken directly from the donors bank account through ACH transactions. Please contact the office at ktaadmin@kta-hike.org or call 717-766-9690 for more information about this option.

A New Way to Give and Support KTA!

by Joe Neville, KTA Executive Director

KTA has now opened a brokerage account. This will enable our donors and supporters to increase their flexibility in giving. Donating long-term appreciated securities directly to KTA — rather than selling the assets and donating the cash proceeds — may be one of the best and easiest ways to give more. By taking advantage of the applicable tax incentives, you can significantly increase the amount of funds available for our trail care, advocacy, and hiking promotion efforts.

It's a win-win situation: KTA receives a nice contribution, while you, the donor can possibly write off the gift and avoid paying capital gains taxes on the stock. The strategy has been around for some time, waning during the financial crisis, but has regained popularity in recent years as the stock market has roared back to life. It makes the most sense for a donor because it's an easy, seamless transaction.

For more information please contact your financial advisor or Joe Neville for account information at 717-766-9690 or jneville@kta-hike.org.

YOUR INPUT NEEDED!

KTA prides itself on being a member driven organization. This means that your opinion is very important to us. To help guide us into the future we're asking you to take the following brief survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JRNHZ7S>

Only Days Remain Until The 9th Annual KTA Trail Challenge: September 9, 2017

Go to the Event Page for the registration form and mail payment to KTA or register online through Pretzel City Sports.

Registration Open for 2017 Quehanna Elk Quest: September 29 – October 1

Fall is mating season for elk. Bulls spar for their own harem of cows by announcing their presence with a bugle. The "bugle" is an unforgettable sound that begins with a bellow, advances to a squealing whistle, and ends with a series of grunts. The cows don't seem to mind the noise at all!

The KTA Quehanna Elk Quest combines hiking and elk viewing in an unforgettable experience!

Join KTA staff, Board members, Game Commission staff, and fellow hikers September 29 - October 1, 2017 in beautiful north central PA. Go to the Event Page for the registration form and mail payment to KTA or register online.

Register Now For 2017 Fall Hiking and Meeting Weekend: October 13-15

Join us for our annual Fall Hiking and Meeting Weekend, to be hosted at Wesley Forest Camp and Retreat in Weikert, Union County. Located in the beautiful forests of Central PA, this is sure to be a weekend of breathtaking colors, great hikes, and relaxation! Go to the Event Page for the registration form and mail payment to KTA or register online.



Perks of Membership

Keystone Trails Association Members now enjoy a 10% Discount when they shop at Appalachian Outdoors in State College.



\$20 OFF

Hyke & Byke is working to help eliminate poverty through interest-free microloans and we love giving back to the community and promoting the outdoors. KTA members use coupon code TAKE20OFF to get \$20 off any purchase of a Hyke & Byke product from their website: www.Hykeandbyke.com

Use Code: TAKE20OFF
www.HykeAndByke.com

YOUR HIKING ADVOCATE

DCNR Survey Hiker's Input Needed

DCNR is conducting a survey about the future of Pennsylvania State Parks. Make your opinions heard https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3JfAY7RCut7rcEZ

VOLUNTEER / MAINTAINER'S CORNER

It's Here! The 2017 Trail Care and Crew Schedule!

Before you go, please read our Trail Care and Crew page on kta-hike.org for helpful information and applications.

September 15 - 17: Trail Care

Tuscarora Trail
Leader: Ben Auer

auer.ben@gmail.com
608-772-1715
Camp: PATC cabin at Little Cove

September 29 - October 1: Trail Care

Reeds Gap Spur
Leader: Jenn Ulmer / Donna Thompson
hawk2373@yahoo.com
570-854-8316
Camp: Reeds Gap S.P. sites 8 -14

October 7: Code Orange

Gifford Pinchot State Park
W/ Friends of Pinchot S.P.

Leader: Steve Stroman
stevestroman@hotmail.com
717-350-0437
Meet: 8:30 at Quaker Race day use area off Pa. 177
Camping available Fri. & Sat.
Friends Group will host Sat. evening cookout for
volunteers

November 3 - 5: Trail Care

Bucktail Path
Leader: Rick Hiemenz
mustardgarlic@hotmail.com
814-706-8218
Camp: Brooks Run Fire Tower Cabin

We Want You!

Volunteers are needed for the 9th Annual Trail Challenge September 9, 2017

Please see the Event Page for the registration form to mail to KTA or sign up online. Volunteers receive the satisfaction of a job well-done, t-shirt, and picnic by Legends Catering.

HIKER'S CORNER

Jeff's Jaunts: Glacier Pools Preserve

by Jeff Mitchell

Located near Picture Rocks, the Glacier Pools Preserve in eastern Lycoming County is an ideal place for a hike. It covers 270 acres with a network of trails through beautiful woods, fields, meadows, and views of the Allegheny Front.

To view pictures from the trip, go to <https://www.flickr.com/photos/49239558@N04/sets/72157684549289133>

Walk with Gantz: West Rim Trail

by Dave Gantz, KTA Board of Directors

Dave recently dedicated himself to writing a monthly column about backpacking trails he's hiked in Pennsylvania.

The West Rim Trail (WRT) is an outstanding 30-mile backpacking trail that leads along the western side of the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon. The trail is well known, being highlighted in multiple national outdoor recreation publications throughout the years. Because of this, it is on the bucket list for many backpackers throughout the eastern US. Overall the elevation change is moderate, campsites are plentiful, and the vistas are unmatched!

The first lesson of the WRT: set up a shuttle. Unlike many backpacking trails in PA, the WRT is an end-to-end path. Pine Creek Outfitters is located only one mile from the northern trailhead in Ansonia, and offers multiple shuttle service options for a reasonable fee. Of course hikers with two cars can set up their own shuttles too.

Free overnight parking is available at the northern trailhead near Ansonia and the southern trailhead at Rattlesnake Rock Access Area.

Luckily, you don't have to hike the whole 30 mile WRT in one try, which brings us to lesson two: Shortcuts and day hikes. Most hikers prefer the grand views along the northern half of the trail. Luckily the trail crosses a few forest roads along its 30-mile journey, which may be used as drop-off points for shorter linear hikes. Bradley Wales Picnic Area is near the halfway point of the WRT, and is another popular drop-off point for hikers wanting to experience half of the trail (no overnight parking at Bradley Wales). Resourceful hikers who study local maps will notice multiple yellow blazed connector trails that can be pieced together to create one-day and multi-day loops.

Lesson three: Crowds. As mentioned above, this trail has received a lot of notoriety for its accessibility and beauty. With notoriety comes popularity. Even though you won't find crowds of hikers like the Appalachian Trail, don't plan to be alone on the WRT. Most backpackers hike the trail over a 2-3 day weekend, with the autumn leaf season being the most popular time of year. I suggest hiking the trail mid-week in spring or fall. Summer can be hot and a bit overgrown, late fall is popular with hunting, and cold winter temps can cause some difficult snow and ice conditions.

One upside to a busier trail is the frequency of campsites. Lesson four: Camping along the WRT. Most sites are located where the trail crosses streams that drain into Pine Creek. Since the trail is high above Pine Creek, some of these streams may be dry in the summertime. There are also several campsites near vistas of the canyon; be aware that these sites do not have a water source. Purple Lizard Pine Creek Map notes the most popular campsites on this trail.

Lesson Five: Did I mention the vistas? Get out there and check them out!

To view pictures from the trip, go to <http://www.walkwithgantz.com/west-rim-trail.html>

Blisters

by Gerry Rowan

Blisters are the bane of every hiker's existence. Painful in themselves, but a really serious problem if they get infected. A common reason that hikers get blisters is the wear and tear from putting a lot of miles on their feet—a problem compounded by ill-fitting boots, damp or wet feet, or simply wearing boots that aren't suited for the terrain.

Here are some tips to help you avoid blisters while on the trail:

- Choose the right boots. Your choice should be a mix of personal preference and the demands of the terrain you want to conquer. Running shoes are not appropriate for class 3 and 4 terrain. The seasons also put demands on your feet. Winter generally dictates heavier boots than summer. I know, there are barefoot hikers, but you need the protection of good boots against the rigors of the trail, insects (like ticks), snakebites, and skin-irritating plants (like poison ivy and stinging nettle). Your choice of boot height is personal, but over-the-ankle boots offer good protection and help stabilize ankles and feet.
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- Make sure your boots fit correctly. This means trying them on wearing the weight of socks you plan to hike in. If you're in an outdoor gear store, walk around for several minutes in the boots and test them on the inclined plane most of these stores have.
- Make sure you replace your boots when they've gotten so much wear that they no longer provide good foot and ankle support. If your boots are wearing out, so are your feet.
- Choose the right socks. Generally, heavy merino wool socks with a small amount of spandex fiber are best. A heavy sock acts as a shock absorber between you and your boots. Many hikers prefer an 18-inch length (knee socks). They can be folded down in warm weather; the sock roll created will keep debris out of your boots. They can be pulled up for winter hiking or when brush and briars are a problem. Spray the top 6 to 8 inches of your hiking socks with tick repellent. This will help repel the critters before they can find a site to burrow.
- If you plan to hike for more than 4 hours, bring along a second pair of socks. When you take a break for lunch, pull off your boots and socks to let your feet breathe. Put on the fresh pair, and hang the damp pair from a short bungee cord from your daypack to dry. Always inspect your feet carefully before putting on your socks and booting up to continue your hike.
- Many hikers like a generous sprinkle of baby powder or foot powder in each sock. This acts like a lubricant between your feet and the socks. The ingredients in foot powder help protect your feet against fungus and bacteria.

Now blisters. Always carry a trail-sized first aid kit. Add to it some moleskin and a pair of small scissors. If you sense a sore spot on a heel, don't wait until you have a full-blown blister. Take a break to deal with the sore spot. Pull off your boots and sock and let your feet dry; meanwhile, cut an appropriate-sized piece of moleskin to cover the sore area. Place the moleskin over the spot; then put your socks and boots back on. You don't want your skin to blister. A blister will eventually break, creating an open sore. Given the lax state of personal hygiene on many hikes, this sore can get infected, causing a whole bunch of new problems. Don't prick a blister; instead, cover it with moleskin, and it will eventually dry out on its own. Hand sanitizer is a good antiseptic if you have a blister that does break. It burns a bit since most hand sanitizers contain alcohol. Small, travel-sized containers of hand sanitizer are ideal for hikers and backpackers. Hand sanitizer is good to treat insect bites, too.

Blisters are not limited to feet. Backpack straps against bare skin can also cause blisters. You can either add padding to those straps or cover the affected skin with moleskin.

CLUB CONNECTION

PATC – North Chapter Request For Donations

August 7, 2017

Dear North Chapter Member,

As many of you know, Charlie Irvin passed away last week at age 94. He was a founding member of our PATC North Chapter and PA District Manager for many years. Charlie's presence is felt in almost everything we do. See Kathy Seiler's wonderful tribute to Charlie on the PATC website http://www.patc.net/PATC/News/Charlie_Irvin_Memorial.aspx.

We are seeking donations for a memorial for Charlie to be included in the Appalachian Trail Tribute Garden.

The AT Tribute Garden is located at ATC headquarters in Harpers Ferry. The garden is a permanent public memorial honoring those who have hiked, helped protect, or been inspired by the AT. Groundbreaking will occur in Fall 2017. For more information on AT Tribute Garden memorials, see <http://appalachiantrail.org/tributegarden>. Small bricks cost \$300 and large bricks are \$500.

If you would like to donate to an AT Tribute Garden memorial for Charlie, send a check made payable to PATC-North Chapter and mail to:

David Trone
PATC North Chapter Treasurer
1090 Center Mills Road
Aspers, PA 17304

Please mail your check on or before Friday, August 25, 2017. If you have any questions about this donation in memory of Charlie, please email David Trone at tronefam@comcast.net.

We appreciate all that you do for the North Chapter!

Sincerely,
PATC North Chapter Officers

Appalachian Mountain Club Campaign

Delaware River Means is a campaign consisting of four photo and story entry contests focused on spreading awareness of the great resources surrounding the Delaware River. Those who enter a photo and story, or sign up for more information, have the chance to win prizes like Tshirts, an outdoor gear package, an original painting, a tent, a weekend getaway, or our grand prize: a stand up paddleboard. Go to <https://delawarerivermeans.com/> for more information.

Submit Events to the Club Calendar

Would you like KTA to promote your club/organization's major events with The Keystone Hiker, on Facebook, and on our website? It's a perk of membership. Please submit a list (ideally with date, time, location, link to web page) of only those events that the public should see, to info@kta-hike.org.

Thank you and happy trails!

2017 UPCOMING EVENTS

To learn more about each event, visit our home page to explore event listings, or the Trail Care and Crew page for the full schedule and more information. Thank you!

September 9: KTA Trail Challenge 25k and 50k
September 15 - 17: Tuscarora Trail Care
September 29 - October 1: Reeds Gap Spur Trail Care
September 29 - October 1: Quehanna Elk Quest
October 7: Gifford Pinchot State Park Code Orange

October 13-15: KTA's Fall Hiking Weekend, Weikert, PA
November 3 - 5: Bucktail Path Trail Care

Shop the KTA Bookstore

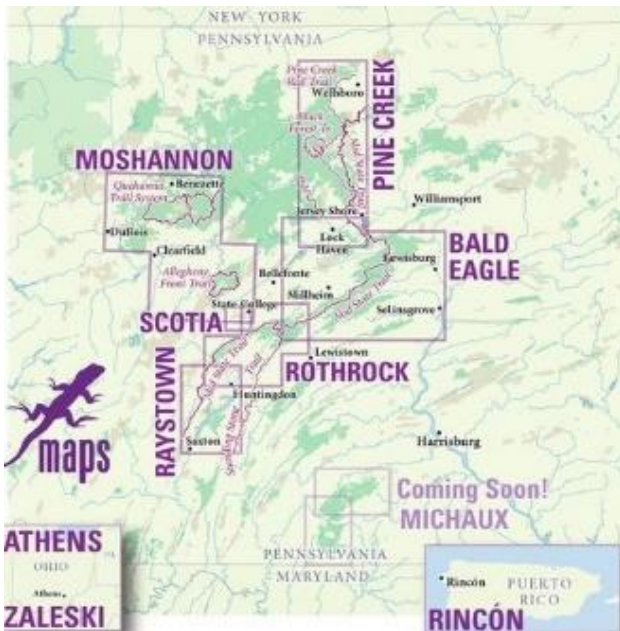


Check out KTA's latest additions: Hiking the Susquehannock Trail, The Black Forest Trail Patch, and The Laurel Highlands Trail Patch. Now available online or in the office.

KTA publishes and sells maps, guidebooks, and patches related to hiking trails in Pennsylvania. Members receive at least a 10% discount! Click the link to check out our online bookstore.

<http://www.kta-hike.org/ktas-bookstore.html>

Introducing: Purple Lizard Maps



Purple Lizard Maps is dedicated to making beautiful maps of special places. Designed for those who want to make the most of their outdoor recreation, Purple Lizard's expanding line of "Lizard Maps" includes some of the best hiking destinations in Pennsylvania. The maps are waterproof, durable, and easily fit in your back pocket or backpack. Lizard Maps offer hikers all the info they need for short or long distance adventures, including elevation, camping info, and contour lines.

Purple Lizard's "PA Adventure Series" includes: Rothrock, Bald Eagle, Moshannon-Quehanna, Raystown Lake and Trails, Pine Creek-Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania, and the Scotia Trails and History Map. Want to explore PA with Lizard Map? Check out the KTA bookstore.

Looking for new adventure ideas on Lizard Maps? Check out the Purple Lizard blog.

Amazon Smile

The next time you shop online, use Amazon Smile and choose Keystone Trails Association. It doesn't cost you any extra: Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Keystone Trails Association.

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, Brynn Furnace, at bfurnace@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.