



The Keystone Hiker - September 2019

MEMBER SQUARE

2019 KTA Board Nominees

President - Kathryn Barker

Treasurer - Rob Altenburg

Vice President - Bob Merrill

Secretary - Carl Davis

Kathryn (Katie) Barker's love of the outdoors began with family trips to National Parks and continued at Girl Scout Camps in Wisconsin. She served on the Board of Directors of the Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club for 14 years, including five as President, and chaired the Hikes Committee for the 2001 Appalachian Trail Conference held in Shippensburg, PA. She has served on the KTA council for over a decade as Club Representative and on the KTA board as Awards Committee Chair and, most recently, Secretary. She also teaches chemistry at Dickinson College and hikes with her husband Sam and children River and Hannah. Katie serves with KTA in appreciation for two valuable resources: Pennsylvania's beautiful trails and the volunteers who keep them open. She wants to help KTA advocate for hikers and work for the protection of Pennsylvania's natural beauty.



In Memory of Richard Hiemenz

We recently lost a passionate hiker and dedicated KTA member in Richard Hiemenz. "Rick enjoyed many things including a passionate, encyclopedic interest in traditional American jazz, vintage cars and excellent beer. But he was never more at home than when hiking outdoors and contributing to the health of national and state forests. In recent years he took joy on the dance floor and traveled widely throughout Asia, South America, and the Caribbean. Remembrances are most appreciated to the FSEEE (Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics) and KTA (Keystone Trails Association of Mechanicsburg PA), groups Rick actively participated in to the ongoing betterment of our forests, for which he will be remembered."

[View the obituary and share condolences here.](#)

VOLUNTEER/MAINTAINER'S JUNCTION

2019 Trail Care Schedule

September 12-15: Trail Care BTB

Tuscarora Trail
Cowans Gap State Park
Leader: Ben Auer
auer.ben@gmail.com, 608-772-1715
Camp: PATC Cabin at Little Cove

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.

September 26-29: Trail Care BTB

Pinchot Trail
Pinchot State Forest
Leader: Jeff Mitchell
jmitchmitch@hotmail.com,
570-441-2952
Camp: Manny Gordon Picnic Area

November 7-10: Trail Care BTB

Bucktail Path
Elk State Forest
Leader: Ed Lawrence
cemclaw216@gmail.com, 570-925-5285
Camp: Brooks Run Fire Tower Cabin

Email us at info@kta-hike.org
or visit us at www.kta-hike.org

September Trail Care Opportunities


KTA Trail Care continues to give PATC a hand with maintaining the Tuscarora Trail in Pennsylvania. Based out of PATC's very fine Little Cove Cabin, located on the eastern flank of Tuscarora Mountain south of Cowans Gap State Park, participants will again be helping to keep the trail corridor open. Work crews will disembark Friday morning, September 13 under the able leadership of Ben Auer, work Saturday and till noon of Sunday the 15th. The last weekend of the month, and the first of Autumn, September 27-29 brings volunteers back to the Pocono plateau where the Pinchot Trail will be the focus of a work weekend. KTA crews have been working for the past several years on improving the quality of the hiking experience with a relocation along Choke Creek and clearing overgrown sections of this popular loop trail. Jeff Mitchell will again lead this effort, based out of Manny Gordon Picnic area. See the Trail Care schedule for contact information. Trail Care events are about giving back to the trails and hiking community so that everyone can continue to enjoy the way of the footpath.



Trail Care Report

Everett Region of the MST

In all of Pennsylvania the Everett Region of the Mid State Trail has, without a doubt, the toughest sections to maintain. Access to the trail on the ridge tops of State Game Land 97, south of Everett, and SGL 73 north of Everett require volunteers to undertake a steep and challenging uphill pull even after being driven as close to the top as possible on nearly impassable jeep roads. Perhaps the closest rival in difficulty would be the southern end of the Tuscarora Trail where the aptly named 'Hells Hill Trail' takes you to the top of Tuscarora Mountain in SGL 124. Add to this the mix of briars, devil's walking stick, bar



berry and various vines that thrive in this tilt rock habitat and you must give the 11 participants of the August 9-11 Trail Care a lot of credit for the amount of good work that they accomplished during the event clearing the trail. A mile of trail corridor was brushcut in both of the Game Lands previously mentioned along with blowdowns that were cut and removed all the way from the old fire tower location in Buchanan State Forest, the highest point on the MST, north to the Biddle Place access trail and for two miles north of the Blue Triangle property. Special thanks, appreciation and kudos must be given to Deb Dunkle and Ray McCann for the work they did opening access roads prior to the beginning of the Trail Care. Deb and Ray, along with Henry Bonson, Donna Thompson, Jenn Ulmer, Tony Robbins, Mike Calabrese, Dave Caloui, Pete Fleszar, Tom Bastian and Ed Lawrence put in a total of 154 hours of work on behalf of the trail during this KTA sponsored event. As usual the crew enjoyed the conviviality of Tenley Park, the showers available at the nearby church and the evening forays into the local community to appease their thirst and hunger. Hikers give this section high marks for its many views and rugged outcrops, but help is always needed to keep the thorns at bay.

Thunder Swap

Beautiful weather with moderate daytime temperatures greeted the 9 participants who came to work on the Thunder Swamp Trail System the weekend of August 23-25. KTA Trail Care volunteers have been working to clear, blaze and reopen the trail corridor for this 45 mile network of hiking trails in the Poconos since 2016. This year the focus was on the last section of the main loop that needed to be maintained as well as cutting blowdowns and deadfalls that were reported to be on other parts of the trail system. Crew members brushcut and/or lopped both ends of the trail north of Snow Hill Road and west of Route 402. There remains the interior 2 miles of trail that is overgrown and will be the subject of the 2020 work project. Also, KTA sawyers cleared all obstructions from the trails and loops in the northeast part of the system leading to and in the Stillwater Natural Area and Big Bear Swamp, as well as from Lake Minisink counterclockwise to the bridge east of the Southern Gateway Trail Head. Special thanks goes to Wanda Shirk for providing the fixings for a Friday night cookout that was heartily enjoyed by the hungry crew members. Volunteers put in a total of 128 hours of work on the trail and, once again, left the trail in much better shape for future hikers. Crew members were: Jenn Ulmer, Wanda Shirk, Shira Blady, Brian Macnamara, Mary Ladish, Woody Loudenslager, Tony Robbins, Tom Bastian and Ed Lawrence. The Resica Falls Scout Camp once again proved to be an excellent base camp for the event.

Cook Forest Woodsy Owl Workday! – Hosted by DCNR

Saturday, October 19th, 2019

8:00 AM to 1:30 PM

Please consider joining us, as well as Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl, for the day to help maintain the park through various work projects. Work projects may include invasive species removal, trail maintenance, litter pickup, painting, wood stacking, etc. Free camping Friday and/or Saturday nights will be available for volunteers, with prior notice received by Monday, October 1st. If you are planning to join us for the day, please contact the Park Office (814)744-8407 at least two weeks in advance so that we can have a

volunteer project assigned to you. Lunch will be provided at Shelter #1. Hope to see you there!



Name: Coordinator, cookfcx

Email: cookforestsp@state.pa.us

Phone: 814-744-8407

HIKER'S CORNER

Jeff's Jaunts

Roadside Vistas of the Pine Creek Gorge



"The Pine Creek Gorge is one of the largest in the eastern U.S. It is 50 miles long and 1,450 feet deep at its deepest point. It was formed by glacial meltwater, and later, but the redirected Pine Creek. Pine Creek is famous for its beauty. It was one of the original rivers considered to become a national scenic river, and it is currently a state scenic river. Pine Creek is home to a vast network of trails, several state parks, and the famous Pine Creek Trail, one of the finest rail trails in the country."

Take in the natural beauty of the Pine Creek Gorge with Jeff Mitchell's fantastic photo series from its many scenic vistas.

[Click here to see more.](#)

Black Forest Trail in National Spotlight

The 'Play List' section of the Sept./Oct. issue of BACKPACKER magazine recommends hiking the 42-mile Black Forest Trail in Pennsylvania. Calling it "a long and winding route" through "forested, emerald hills" made up of a "series of climbs and descents" with many stream crossings.

Recognition should go to Tiadaghton Recreational Forester Ben Sands for his work to improve the trail and install new signage, and to the many KTA Trail Care volunteers who have worked on the trail under the leadership of Donna Thompson and Jenn Ulmer over the last several years in partnership with Ben. BACKPACKER got it right.

Trail Completion at Jim Thorpe

The Mansion House Bridge crosses opened in Jim Thorpe earlier this month across the Lehigh River in Jim Thorpe. The new pedestrian bridge closes a gap on the Delaware and Lehigh Trail to connect 58 miles of continuous trail from North Haven to Cementon.

[Read the full story here.](#)



Mid State Trail featured in SUSQUEHANNA LIFE magazine

An article titled 'Hike the Mid State Trail: A Spiritual Experience', by Carrie Pauling, in the summer issue of SUSQUEHANNA LIFE nicely depicts, from the ground up, the many aspects of the trail available to hikers of the MST. The piece takes stock of the trail at a time when it is celebrating its 50th year anniversary and has been designated DCNR's Trail of the Year. Pauling ends the article with an anecdote about hiking with Tom and Barb Thwaites, relayed to her by Jean Aron, that gives added meaning to the oft heard assertion that you will meet more bears than people on the MST.

[Read the full article here.](#)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

[KTA Trail Challenge - September 7th](#)

Registration closes September 3rd!

The KTA Trail Challenge is an event for adventurous trail runners and hikers on the wild river hills of the lower Susquehanna Gorge. This daunting trail challenge event on the Conestoga Trail, State Park trails, and the Mason-Dixon Trail System, alternates breathtaking vistas with steep descents into dark, scenic hollows followed by strenuous climbs to the next vista. Prepare yourself for the steep hills, rocky terrain and deep ravines of the KTA Trail Challenge, an arduous, undulating and demanding course.

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

Join us on 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.

[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!



**PA GREENWAYS & TRAILS
SUMMIT**
SHIPPENSBURG | SEPT 22-24, 2019

For information on the event: <https://greenwaysandtrails.org/2019summit/>

For Registration: <https://greenwaysandtrails.org/2019summit/register/>

To volunteer: <https://greenwaysandtrails.org/2019summit/volunteer-opportunities/>

For volunteer information: <https://greenwaysandtrails.org/volunteerinfo/>

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

Philadelphia Trail Club

The Philadelphia Trail Club is a non-profit organization that has been in existence since 1931. We lead hikes most Saturdays and Sundays throughout the year; hikes are less frequent in July and August. The Club also hosts some bicycle rides. Aside from hiking, the additional purposes of the club include:



1. Encourage interest in the outdoors,
2. Support development of facilities for outdoor activities in the Philadelphia area,
3. Encourage appreciation and outdoor-related education and
4. Support outdoor trail maintenance.

PTC currently has over 200 members. We are a casual and friendly hiking club, meaning that the pace of our hikes is typically between 2 and 3 mph and it is our policy to not leave anyone behind while we are hiking. Our hikes are mostly local, but we sometimes enjoy an excursion (could be a long weekend within driving distance or an over seas trip). We welcome non-members to try a few hikes before joining the Club.

Some hikes with an added social component have become annual favorites. These include the *Pie Hike*, *New Years Day Hike*, *Weenie Roast* and the *Summer Philly Beer Garden Hike*

[See the PTC schedule of upcoming hikes here.](#)

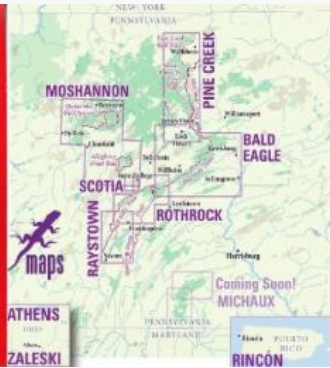
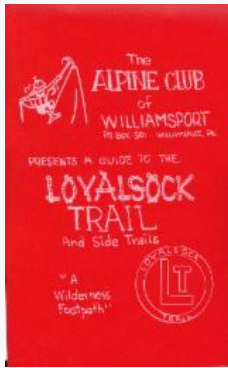
SHOP

New in the KTA Store

[Trails in & around Worlds End State Park](#) by The Friends of Worlds End State Park
Worlds End State Park is a gorgeous, 780-acre park surrounded by the Loyalsock State Forest in northern Pennsylvania. With almost 100 miles of trails, this map explores many great sites, with turn-by-turn guides to the most popular trails and features you'll see along the way.

Check out KTA's Bookstore: your one-stop shop for trail guides, maps, apparel, patches, and more!

Check it out [HERE](#).



SUPPORT KTA

Click below to learn more about ways to give back to the organization dedicated to preserving your hiking experience.



[Amazon Smile](#)



[KTA Brokerage Account](#)



[Keep Trails Alive](#)

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 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](#) when you are composing your piece.

Keystone Trails Association | 717-766-9690 | info@kta-hike.org
www.kta-hike.org

Follow us for more hiking photos & insight!

