



The Keystone Hiker - September 2020

Member's Corner

Member Spotlight - 100 Mile Challenge

Meet our newest participant taking on the [100 Mile Trail Challenge!](#)

Name: Jessica Pfennig

Hometown: Lancaster

Trail Names or Nick Names: Warrior Princess

How long have you been hiking?: Most of my life

What are your favorite things about hiking?

Love researching new trails to try out and then having a great time exploring!

What are some of your favorite hiking trails in PA?

My favorite trails are throughout Pennsylvania but I spend most of my time on those in the Lancaster area. Some of my favorites are: Lancaster Central Park (you can link several trails together to get the distance you want and you have a lovely covered bridge for some inspiration), Governor Dick's Observation Tower (great training for hill work), Money Rock (peaceful on an early Sunday morning with interconnected trails) and Middle Creek Wildlife (like practicing my night hiking there).

What is your most memorable hiking experience?

As a family, we have a goal to hike in all of the National Parks. There are 62 parks and I have been to 57 of them! We love Yosemite NP and spending time hiking on the Vernal Falls Mist Trail. One year, we decided to do the Panorama Trail (8.5 miles round trip) which starts at Glacier Point and you hike to Nevada Falls. This was mostly downhill until we had to climb up to Nevada Falls. We had our young daughter with us and my father-in-law. My husband decided to give hiking to Half Dome a try and we patiently waited for him near the top of the falls. After several hours of waiting, he returned (unfortunately unsuccessful) and we had to hike down to the valley floor as it got dark!



Certainly memorable!

Why did you decide to take the 100-Mile Trail Challenge?

I am doing an adventure in Zion National Park in 2021 with the non-profit group called the Project Athena Foundation. The training is intense for a 2-day, 40ish mile experience with significant elevation changes. I wanted to challenge myself to hike the 100 miles in training for this adventure.

What are some trails you plan to hike to meet your goal?

We have a RV van so we will be headed off to nearby state parks/forests. A few parks on our list: World's End, PA Grand Canyon and Ohiopyle.

Are you new to KTA and the 100 Mile Trail Challenge?

Yes, I found the details through the Lancaster Hiking Club.

Do you have any advice to new hikers?

My advice is to take some time to plan for your hike by reflecting on how long it is and the difficulty. It is important to ensure you have enough water, a snack, map of the trail, hiking poles and anything else you might need to have a good time.

What is one thing you'll never hit the trail without?

My Garmin watch -- I enjoy using Training Peaks for my hiking plan and then to track my hiking distance.

Do you have a favorite nature/ hiking quote that you can share with us?

If we wait until we're ready, we'll be waiting for the rest of our lives. -- Lemony Snicket

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

If you have an interest in following our adventures, you can check out our experiences on <https://thisvantasticlife.blogspot.com>.

Call for Award Nominations

The KTA Awards Committee seeks nominations to recognize outstanding members at the Fall meeting in October. Please submit nominations for the awards listed below to Katie at barker4trails@gmail.com by Saturday, September 12th, 2020 with the following information:

- Name
- Approximate length of service to KTA's mission
- Brief description of contribution

The **KTA Citation Award for Lifetime Achievement** is presented to a person who has, over a period of years (not necessarily their entire lifetime), made significant contributions to the preservation of hiking trails and promoting hiking in Pennsylvania. Service may be in the form of volunteer efforts, publications, fieldwork, or any other pursuit that has furthered the mission of the KTA.

The **Thyra Sperry Volunteer of the Year Award** goes to a KTA member whose recent service to KTA's mission, especially in the preceding year, is most worthy of recognition. It is named in honor of former KTA president Thyra

Sperry (d. 2017) and her devoted service to KTA.

Certificates of Achievement can also be awarded based on nominations from KTA member organizations for extraordinary work on projects that benefit hikers and/or trails in Pennsylvania. This award option allows clubs to nominate a volunteer who may not be an individual KTA member. The nomination should be based on recent service, especially in the past year, that serves the hiking public as a whole rather than primarily the members of the member club.

Call for Board Nominations

KTA members willing to serve on the Board may be nominated by petition submitted to the Nominations Committee. Nominations may be made by a minimum of ten members of the Association and accompanied by written consent of the nominee. Petitions should be delivered to either the Nominating Committee or the Secretary no later than 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting. To make a nomination, you can submit your petition to:

Wanda Shirk, Chair
1152 N. Brookland Rd.
Genesee, PA 16923
814-848-7944
wshirk49@outlook.com

Dave Gantz
536 Hamilton St
Lancaster, PA 17602
814-574-7642
davegantz@gmail.com

Carl Davis
244 Big Pond Road
Shippensburg, PA 17257
717-532-3696
bldavis@kuhncom.net

Classified Ad - Looking for Hikers

Howdy,

I am a 79 year old Senior AT Section Hiker that has completed 11 of the 14 AT States including Maine along with 1927 AT miles underfoot. 80% of those miles have been road to road section hikes with other seniors along with limited overnight backpacking. At my age I prefer to carry the lightest weight possible. I have about 140 miles of PA left to hike from Wind Gap, PA 33 south to Duncannon and then from PA 850 north to Duncannon.

I am looking for 1 or 2 other Seniors who also prefer the road to road and staying in Campgrounds or Motels at night.

Depending on the weather October and November could work and then next spring early to mid April and into early May. I live in Annapolis and would like to slack from 3 to 4 days then head home for a break, then come back and hike again for 3 or 4 days.

If this is something you'd be interested in please email me at grandpaharveydennenberg@yahoo.com with your thoughts.

Sincerely,
Harvey Dennenberg, age 79

Favorite Hiking Trail Survey

KTA is conducting a member survey of our favorite PA hiking trails and we want to hear from you!

Visit kta-hike.org/trail-survey or email us listing a few of your favorite trails.

Please include location, brief description, approximate distance, and why you think it's special, and please include any rail trail or historic trails as well. We will compile a list of these trails for our membership and it will help KTA in promoting and protecting trails in the Keystone State. Thank you!

Volunteer's Corner

Pinchot Trail Care Report

The Pinchot Trail system, located on the Pocono Plateau east of Wilkes-Barre, is very popular with day hikers and backpackers. Like trails throughout Pennsylvania, lush undergrowth can overwhelm the trail corridor if it is not cut back and maintained on a regular basis. This year of Covid-19 KTA Trail Care volunteers were able to attend to the trail thanks to dispersed camping that was available at the nearby Pocono Mountain Bible Conference camp and the care participants took to protect each other's health status by following the social distancing and best practices protocols that this moment in time requires.

The PMBC base camp was a welcome upgrade from previous years when the crew stayed at a site without showers or running water. Lopping, brushcutting and blowdown removal were the main activities, although rebenching the treadway on a section of the trail was also part of the mix. Hikers that passed by the KTA volunteers were vociferous in their thanks for the trail work that was being done. Indeed, Ben Auer deserves kudos for leading the event along with Wanda Shirk, Brain MacNamara, Shira Blady, Dave Walp, John Jeffery, Rick Stibgen, Tony Robbins, Tom Bastian, Jeff Mitchell, Cathy McLaughlin and Ed Lawrence.

-Ed Lawrence

Tuscarora Trail Care Cancelled

The September 18-20 Trail Care on the Tuscarora Trail is cancelled. The beautiful PATC cabin at Little Cove does not lend itself to dispersed camping and KTA Trail Care does not want to give "cabin fever" a new meaning as we grapple with the practical logistics of protecting the well being of our volunteers during this pandemic.

2020 Trail Care Schedule

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

Sept 18 – 20: TUSCARORA TRAIL - Cancelled

Oct 3: GIFFORD PINCHOT STATE PARK - York County

Nov 5 – 8: BUCKTAIL PATH - Cameron County

Additional Opportunities

Forbes State Forest - Brushwork and Reblazing

September 26, 2020. 9AM – 3PM | Contact [Rachael Mahony](#)

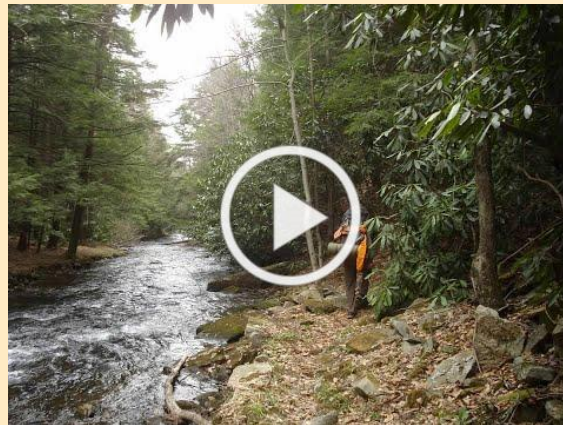
Workshop: Building Trails in Wetlands and Wet Areas

September 17 – 18, 2020 | Audubon Greenway

September 24 – 25, 2020 | Kings Gap Environmental Education Center

Hiker's Corner

Allegheny Front Trail



Perhaps my favorite long distance trail in the state of Pennsylvania...I hiked the 42 mile AFT clockwise in less than 48 hours in early May of 2014. Being on the Allegheny Front...leaves had not yet begun to bud...but still the scenery was spectacular.

by Greg Strine (SleepyHeadOutdoors)

Jeff's Jaunts - Fork Hill-Stone Quarry Run

This is another enjoyable hike you can do from the village of Blackwell, which is surrounded by great hiking whether it be Gillespie Point, Bohen Run and Jerry Run Falls, or the West Rim Trail. This loop follows a recent re-route of the Mid State Trail up Fork Hill, offering a nice view from Johnson Cliff. You can extend the hike with a spur to another view over the PA Grand Canyon.

From the parking area in Blackwell, walk up the road and turn left onto the Pine Creek Trail, a rail trail. Then turn right at an impressive wooden staircase on the Mid State Trail (MST) which is blazed orange. This is also the Great Eastern Trail, stretching from Alabama to New York. Begin the climb up Fork Hill with a mixture of sidehill, switchbacks, and walking up the spine of the mountain. Along the way, pass an old quarry and some unique rock outcrops. The climb is tough, but the trail levels and you reach Johnson Cliff and the fine views to the south. The MST now follows an old jeep road and passes an old communication antenna. The terrain is level and rolling. Reach an open meadow, where the MST turns left and gradually descends to Stone Quarry Run with some large pine trees. Also reach an intersection with the Stone Quarry Run Trail, blazed yellow. If you only want to hike the loop, turn left here. If you want to see the additional spur, continue straight on the MST.



The MST explores large hardwoods. Reach a yellow trail to the left, follow it. It is a spur that ends at a nice view on the east rim of the PA Grand Canyon. There was a second view just further, which looked south, but it is mostly overgrown. Return the way you came.

Descend on the yellow Stone Quarry Run Trail, with a steep gorge below. It was beautiful to have views of the gorge through the trees. At the bottom, the trail switchbacks and becomes steeper right before ending at the rail trail. Here, there is a falls for you to enjoy. I've read there is another falls upstream, but I have not seen it. Hike the rail trail back to Blackwell and your car.

The loop is about 5-6 miles, and about 7-8 miles if you include the spur to the other view. I recommend doing this hike when Stone Quarry Run is flowing so you can enjoy the falls. Park at 41.556211, -77.381873.

Pine Creek Gorge has so much great hiking. Explore it.

[by Jeff Mitchell](#)

Your Hiking Advocate

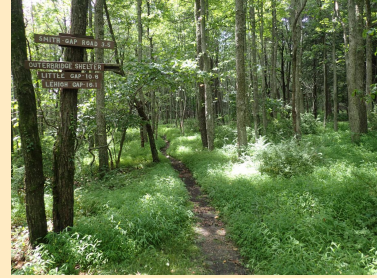
We're exploring working with PA Land Trust Association on a new PALTA model document and guide project: creating a simple, short, friendly model license for landowners to sign with trail groups and an accompanying one-page guide targeted to landowners explaining how the license lets people pass through the property while protecting the landowner.

We ask any hiking organizations or individuals with trail access or use agreements with landowners to send copies of any relevant documents to KTA to help us develop this model document.

2020 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 - Oct 2-4

More Hotel Rooms are available

KTA hosts a weekend in Cumberland Valley south of Chambersburg with hiking opportunities on the AT, Tuscarora, Standing Stone Trails, and more.

Black Forest Trail Slackpack - Oct 23-26

Hike through the 42 mile BFT in 4 days with just a day pack. Stay in comfortable cabins at Pettecote Junction Campground.

Club Events

Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club Banquet - Nov 14

Heidelberg Country Club, Bernville, PA

[Click here for more info and a form to RSVP](#)

Cancellations

To protect the health and safety of our members and help reduce the spread of COVID-19, KTA events have been cancelled through June. Later events are set to go on as normal and will be reevaluated closer to the date.

Many events from member clubs and outside organizations have also been cancelled or postponed. Please check for the latest information from event organizers before attending.

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

BATONA Hiking Club



BATONA (BAck TO NAture) is a Philadelphia based hiking club providing hiking and trail maintenance activities in Philadelphia; surrounding counties of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware; and beyond.

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.