



The Keystone Hiker - September 2021

Member's Corner

New Nominee for Representative at Large to the KTA Council



Joanne Heimer, coordinator of the hikes for this fall's KTA hiking weekend based out of Lock Haven, has been nominated for Representative at Large to KTA's Council. A retired French teacher and somewhat of a world traveler and tour group organizer, Joanne has hiked trails from Italy to Peru's Machu Picchu. Back home in Pennsylvania, she is an avid hiker with hundreds of miles of PA trails under her boots. Joanne is an E2E (End to Ender) of the Mid State Trail, West Rim Trail, Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail, and Donut Hole Trail. Her completed PA circuit hikes include the Susquehannock Trail System and

Allegheny Front Trail, and she has hiked major sections of other PA trails, including the Quehanna and Mason Dixon. Joanne has also hiked some 220 miles of the Appalachian Trail, from the Hudson River north through New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts, and well into southern Vermont. A life member of the Susquehannock Trail Club, Joanne is also active as a hike leader who organizes many hikes for groups in her Jersey Shore-Lock Haven area. Joanne has participated in KTA trail care weekends and has attended spring and fall KTA hiking weekends. She believes in KTA's mission and wants to see KTA prosper.

Call for Nominations KTA Board

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.

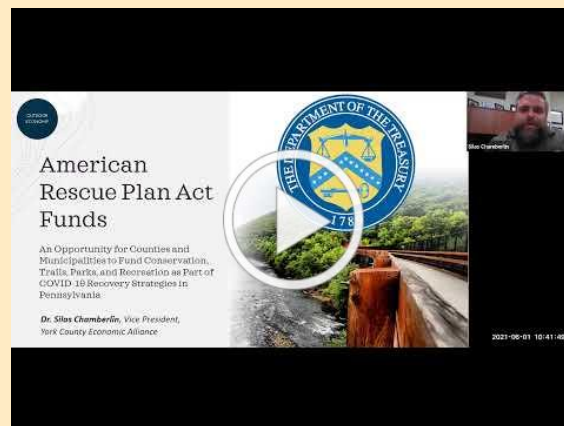
To make a nomination, you can submit your petition to:

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

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

Funding for Trails American Rescue Act

We currently have a historic opportunity to use county and municipal ARPA funding to support parks, trails, recreation, and conservation in every community across PA. The details of that opportunity are outlined in the video and memo below:



[Rescue Act Video](#) [Rescue Act Memo](#)

Although many municipalities and counties are currently discussing allocations to conservation projects, some municipal advisors had expressed doubt that this was an appropriate use of funds. Fortunately, the US Treasury recently provided an [updated set of FAQs](#) to provide further guidance on eligible uses for ARPA funds. The updated FAQs (as of July 19, 2021) make it very clear that investing in parks, open space, recreation, trails, and conservation are eligible uses for ARPA funds and that counties and municipalities have significant discretion in how to award funds to such projects. I have attached an excerpt of the relevant portion of the FAQs, which could be shared with stakeholders—including those who may be skeptical—when making the case of the use of funding.

-Silas Chamberlin

Jean and Gert Aron are synonymous with hiking in Pennsylvania. Lifetime members of KTA and founding members of the Mid State Trail Association, Jean has authored hiking books (***The Short Hiker***), served many years as Treasurer of MSTTA, and has served KTA in many capacities. Gert, a retired engineering professor at Penn State, is responsible for the design and construction of many hiking trail bridges around the state. For decades, Jean and Gert were fixtures at KTA spring and fall meetings. Jean recently stopped by the KTA office and left the following note:

"We are no longer hiking, but still enjoy greatest memories of years spent with KTA and others in our wonderful woods. Gert and I are both doing OK, still in our own home (and garden). "Hello" to any and all KTAers who may still remember us."

It's great to hear from Jean and Gert, and we wish them continued health and happiness in retirement!

Receive a Free Map When You Pledge to Keep Trails Alive

KTA is pleased to announce a new donor appreciation program.

When you sign up or increase your [Keep Trails Alive monthly donation](#) amount by at least \$10, you will receive one complimentary copy of your choice of [Purple Lizard Maps](#) available for purchase in the KTA Book Store. Visit kta-hike.org/keep-trails-alive to sign up for recurring online payments, or contact the KTA office for information on direct ACH transfers.

We at KTA are very grateful for your contributions to our trails, As thanks, we hope these maps will help you explore the footpaths that your donations help to provide, protect, preserve, and promote.

Volunteer's Corner

Volunteers Needed

KTA Trail Challenge - September 11, 2021

It takes over 120 volunteers, working from 5 AM to 7PM to pull off the KTA Trail Challenge. [Sign up for a shift here!](#)

Volunteers receive an official KTA Trail Challenge Volunteer t-shirt, access to the delicious Finish Line Picnic, and the awesome feeling that comes with doing good.

Donut Hole Trail Work Weekend Ahead

Hyner Run State Park will again be the base camp location for the September

16-19 Trail Care working on the Donut Hole Trail. The Donut Hole Trail is a 90 mile end-to-end trail that goes through some of the most remote forested areas of the state. Bring your talent to the gathering of volunteers and help improve the trail experience for hikers. The KTA trail crew will be staying in sites 1, 2 and 3 at the park.

-Ed Lawrence

2021 Trail Care

Sept. 16-19: Trail Care

Donut Hole Trail

Sproul State Forest

Leader: Tony Robbins

tony.robbins.kta@excellservices.com

570-437-0065

Camp: Sites 1,2 & 3

Hyner Run State Park

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

Allegheny Front Trail Care Report

The volunteer crew of dedicated trail maintainers put in 100 hours of work on the Allegheny Front Trail despite the dodgy weather conditions that prevailed during the weekend. Our experienced sawyer team removed all blowdowns, of which there were a significant number, from where the trail crosses Meyers Road south to where it crosses Underwood Road, which covers about 1/3 of the 41 mile loop on its eastern side. We also brush cut and opened the trail corridor from Underwood Road, going north, to the south fork of the headwaters of Whetstone Run which entailed cutting back laurel that was overgrowing the trail, never an easy do. This is part the section that goes along the front itself with a series of views and vistas into valley far below. I would like to thank the participants who took the time to come work on the trail. They were: Wanda Shirk, Tom Bastian, Elwood Loudenslager, Tony Robbins, John Eveler and Ed Lawrence.

-Ed Lawrence

Long Mountain Trail Cleared

A massive thank you to the team of volunteers that came out to our last Conservation Volunteer Day, June 26th, on Long Mountain Trail. Sixteen volunteers and three DCNR staff worked throughout the day to cut back brush, remove debris, and cut downed trees to clear the trail corridor. Long Mountain, connecting Penn Roosevelt State Park to Alan Seeger Natural Area, is currently in the best shape it has been for several years and is ready for all trail users to enjoy.

Musser Gap Progress

While the trail design work we discussed in our last update will soon resume, there is currently some great trail construction underway in Musser Gap. DCNR is on the ground building a new 2,600-foot trail connecting the main access trail to Mountain Mist Trail. Led by Eric Berendsen, an experienced, professional trail builder and a recent addition to the DCNR staff, along with a number of volunteers, progress has been exceptional. Eric has previously worked with Dirt Artisans on local projects such as Colyer Lake, Harvest Fields Community Trails, and nearby Jake's Rocks.

Work is expected to continue, as conditions permit, with a hopeful trail opening later this fall. Until the trail is completed, we ask that everyone stay clear for the sake of safety.

If you are interested in helping out, please visit our [website](#) and stay tuned for the next workdays to be posted.

Cowanesque Lake Conservation CleanUp Day

Saturday, September 4th starting at 8am. Meet at South Shores boat launch or Tompkins Campground boat launch.

Cowanesque Lake and picnic areas have trash floating in the water, on the shoreline and on land. The clean up will focus on south shore debris removal.

If you can spare a couple of hours or stay all day, your clean up efforts will be appreciated. We will supply plenty of trash bags and please don't forget to bring durable gloves.

Hope to see you there!
Thank You

[Friends of Tioga-Hammond and Cowanesque Lakes](#)

Learn about Trail Care

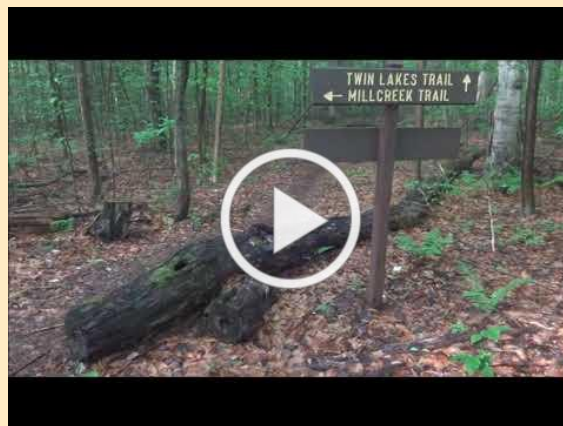


Ever wonder what goes into maintaining a trail?

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!

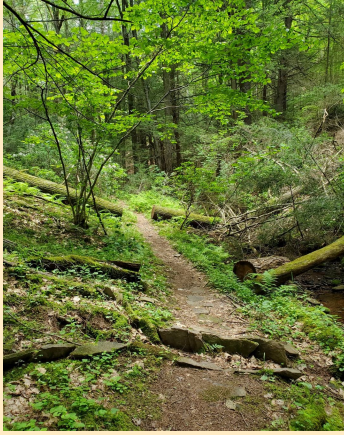
Hiker's Corner

Twin Lakes Trail Allegheny National Forest



Jeff's Jaunts Golden Eagle Trail - Tiadaghton State Forest

I met some friends from college to hike this excellent loop, totaling 10.3 miles. It follows the classic Golden Eagle Trail and the fairly new Dragon's Back Trail featuring several views, rock outcrops, and cascades. It is considered one of the finest dayhikes in the state. I recommend adding the Dragon's Back



Trail as I feel it is more scenic than the Golden Eagle Trail along Bonnell Run, which is still very scenic with a gorge of open hardwood forests.

From the parking area, we crossed PA 414 and began on the GET as it climbed up a gorge. We turned right to begin the loop as falls tumbled below us to the left. We made the long climb up to the ridge, which steepened as we neared the top. It was getting warm and the sunlight filtered through the forest. We reached the ridge and enjoyed the breeze as we descended passing a fine view to the left that

looked up Wolf Run and then shortly thereafter, the classic view from Raven's Horn and its unique rock outcrop. The view was stunning as we looked into the Pine Creek Gorge as green mountains surrounded us.

Our descent continued along the ridge, passing more unique rock outcrops. The trail then followed Wolf Run, which was flowing low, but has many cascades and small falls in a deep gorge. We passed outcrops of flagstone, with sheaths of rock that looked stacked. The trail along the creek was beautiful, and we crossed it several times. When flowing well, Wolf Run is truly beautiful. As we neared the top, there was an old growth forest of giant pine and hemlock. We reached our first view and then hiked through the laurel to an old forest road, which we took to Beulahland Vista, a gorgeous view looking over the fields and mountains of northern Pennsylvania.



We continued on the grassy road, passing another excellent view, Bonnell Run Vista. The GET then turned left, but we continued straight on the grassy forest road to hike the Dragon's Back Trail. We soon entered the woods and followed the yellow blazes along the forested ridgeline that narrowed with steep slopes on both sides. We enjoyed another view, Webber's Vista, looking down on Slate Run. We made another short climb, and then descended on a series of grades that switchbacked down to PA 414.

We crossed the road, walked down to the rail trail, and turned left on it. The rail trail had great views of Pine Creek, wildflowers, and even an old cemetery. It was a great way to end the hike. We reached our cars and went to Slate Run for a meal.

Pine Creek Gorge has dozens of excellent hiking trails for any ability. However, hiking here generally means climbing. The views make it more than worth it.

[-Jeff Mitchell](#)

Hiking for Science

HikerNet Connectivity Study

Have you ever experienced poor connectivity on hiking trails? Introducing

HikerNet, a mobile app that allows you to record, view, and analyze cellular connectivity on your hikes. *HikerNet* is part of a research project at the Georgia Institute of Technology focused on exploring internet access in rural areas and investigating new methods for measuring cellular connectivity. *HikerNet* has officially launched to the public, and we're actively recruiting users to interview for the project! We'd love for you to be involved. Go to our website, <https://hikernet.rnoc.gatech.edu>, to download the app and sign up for an interview. Happy hiking!

Trails Survey

Dear trails, outdoor recreation or conservation community member,

You are invited to participate in a research study on trail use and trail building practices as they relate to stewardship ideology, sense of place, and community identity. We are reaching out to communities and individuals with an interest in trails. We define trail building as including both paid and volunteer activities related to constructing new trails or maintaining existing trails. Your participation will help us develop a more participatory and nuanced understanding of trails and trail work in the United States and elsewhere.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may stop the survey at any time. Participation involves completing a 15 minute long survey. There are no known risks or benefits associated with participating in this study. Participation is anonymous and individual responses will be kept anonymous.

The survey is open to all adults living or working in the United States. Please share with your networks and others who you think would be interested in taking this survey. The survey will remain open, but we are hoping to gather the bulk of responses by July 30th, 2022.

If you would like to be contacted about participating in a follow up interview you may optionally provide contact information which will be stored separately from your responses to the survey.

Questions and contact information:

If you have any questions about this study, please contact [Dr. Madeline Brown](#) or [Nic Galloway](#) at the University of Maryland, College Park.

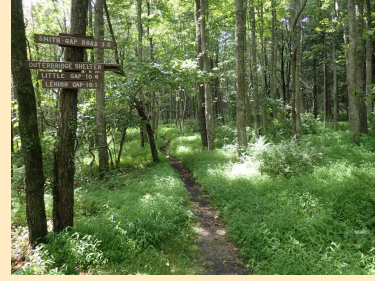
If you would like to receive follow-up information about our survey results, please email or follow our project page on [Open Science Framework](#).

Follow this link to the Survey:
[Take the Survey](#)

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

Black Forest Trail Slackpack **September 24-27**

Take advantage of this incredible opportunity, to complete in ONE WEEKEND the trail that everyone talks about: The Black Forest Trail.

KTA Trail Challenge (25k and 50k) - September 11

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, alternates breathtaking vistas with steep descents into dark, scenic hollows followed by strenuous climbs to the next vista.

Fall Hiking Weekend - October 15-17

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

Community Events

PA Greenways & Trails Summit - September 19-21

The Summit seeks to inspire improvements and expansion to Pennsylvania's trail system, build peer networks, and celebrate successful projects connecting the public to land and water trails throughout the state. Over the course of 3 days, the summit will offer dozens of educational sessions, mobile seminars, keynote presentations, discussion panels, and various social and networking opportunities to our attendees. The summit will be held at Bayfront Convention Center in Erie, PA.

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

Lancaster Conservancy



Since 1969 the Conservancy has been working to save important natural places for people and wildlife. As more land is lost each year to development, it's our mission to protect and maintain carefully selected habitat in its natural state as a balance to our growth.

Each conservation project is as unique as the property itself, and we are grateful to work with wonderful partners who allow us the flexibility necessary to save nature however possible!

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.

