



## Backpacking the Mason-Dixon Trail **THEY TOOK THE CHALLENGE!** PART TWO

**W**e left our intrepid backpackers at the Boy Scout shelter in our last newsletter. Something large and in a hurry was crashing through the forest. Trying not to panic, Andrea and Robin snapped on their headlamps to view a bobcat crashing through the brush in the dark. Fortunately, he blew past their encampment, intent on other prey. Whew!

The next two nights were stealth camping: near Peach Bottom and at Glen Cove Marina. They made their campfire at a perfect halcyon spot on Glen Cove Point near some ruins. A gorgeous sunset blended into a full moon over the Susquehanna. They wouldn't have minded staying an extra night there!

Rise and shine...only to tackle the confusing trail system of the Susquehanna State Park. A bicycler observed their confusion and pointed them to the campgrounds. "Where are your bikes?" queried the ranger. Apparently, this campground is a popular overnight for bikers. "You're the first backpackers I've had here! I'll have to record this!" she exclaimed.

A ride from an MDT member across the Susquehanna on Route 40 brought them to Perryville Park and Furnace Bay. The final night of camping was at a rather kitschy place: Craft Haven. Robin and Andrea were fascinated to see all the seasonal campers with roofs over them. The two were warmly



*Sunset at Glen Cove*

welcomed and pitched their tent among all kinds of bizarre dwellings that were part camp, part house.

The second half of this adventure involved a mix of roads and woods...overnighting at hotels, a friend's house, an AirBnB. Navigating through Elk Neck was a bit tricky...again, let's just say that state parks have their own idea of trail blazing. Trekking along the Christina River near Newark was a scenic pleasant surprise. The White Clay portion of the trail took them past the tri-state marker: which, as we tri-state hikers all know, only has two states listed on it! Go figure. The women were disappointed to find no camping anywhere in White Clay... but plans are in the works.

### **THE FINISH!**

Andrea and Robin emerged victorious at Chadd's Ford the final day...near the Brandywine Museum. Their final note of advice: pack less nuts. ONuts are heavy!



*Eastern terminus*

## **Mason-Dixon Trail Quarterly Hike and Meeting**

**Saturday, May 11, 2019** See page 2 for more details



Peavine Island reroute

## Trail Maintenance Highlights

|| January – March 2019

### WESTERN SECTION

- The cleanup of Otter Creek Gorge has continued but work trips are now being organized and led by the land owner, Lancaster County Conservancy (LCC). Volunteers performed 136 hrs of cleanup over multiple trips. LCC will continue to hold cleanup events through the spring and summer. Check [www.lancasterconservancy.org/calendar-of-events/](http://www.lancasterconservancy.org/calendar-of-events/) for details.
- Work has also continued along Otter Creek to restore sections of the Red Trail that were damaged by flooding (44 hrs).
- Every section from Hellam Hills to Lock 12 has been visited by a maintainer during the quarter (75 hrs). There are some blowdowns and trouble spots left but the trail is in good shape.

### CENTRAL SECTION

- We've added quite a few additional trail markers in Susquehanna State Park and Elk Neck State Park. Look for the round blue trail markers. These should lead to less confusion at the various intersections of the many park trails. We've also cut paths around the two large log jams that developed over the winter on Peavine Island. Various blow downs have also been cleared making the trail easily passable. We're still hoping for the washed-out pedestrian bridge at Glen Cove to be replaced early this spring. Until then follow the detour marked with MDTS round blue markers.
- Work on the Lock 15 to Peavine Island reroute (see map) included building a bridge, installing posts and blazing the final route. This section replaces a mile-long road walk with a pleasant hike through interesting rock formations and river views.

## M-DT Quarterly Hike and Meeting

**Saturday, May 11, 2019**

**Hike:** 9:00 am

**Meeting:** 1:00 pm

The next board meeting of the Mason-Dixon Trail System will be held on Saturday, May 11 at 1:00 pm at the North East Public Library, 106 West Cecil Ave., North East, Maryland 21901. A pre-meeting work hike will begin at 9:00 am starting from the Ranger Station at 717 Irishtown Road, North East, MD 21901 (801 Irishtown Rd. works better in Google Maps). We will be clearing brush and hanging markers. Bring snacks/lunch, water and pruning shears or loppers if you have them.

## President's Message

At the last two board meetings we've discussed issues with the website. The goals are to make the website easier to navigate, easier to understand, and easier to get usable information. For example, the Trail Status Report, which lists temporary detours, and the Map Updates, which lists permanent reroutes are on separate webpages. If you wanted to check a section of the M-DT before hiking it, you'd have to check both. Then if you found a detour or reroute, what were you going to do with the webpage. Saving webpages in a file can lead to a confusing mess and you might not have service to view them from the trail.

So, the plan is to combine the two webpages into one with both detours and reroutes. When you click on a detour or reroute a PDF file will be displayed on the website which you can either download to your smartphone or print out and take with you. So far, we've modified the 2016 Map Updates webpage so that all the reroutes provide a PDF file with a map and trail descriptions (both West > East and East > West). The next step is to do the same thing for the detours and combine the two webpages into one.

We have a similar situation with the Backpacking Info webpages; the Camping and Lodging are on separate

pages. These two need to be combined and provide the information as PDF files.

There are several other areas that need to be reviewed and improved including Membership, Map & Clothing Sales, and Suggested Hikes. Another area that needs improvement is better integration of the website and the Facebook page.

We could use your patience and help with all of this. We ask for your patience as things on the website change over the next year or so. We'd also appreciate your help by identifying problems and suggesting improvements. Just go to the Contact Us webpage and submit the problem or suggestion to the Webmaster.

### THANKS FRANK!

Frank Kempf retired as Treasurer after almost 6 years of service. During his tenure, Frank transferred the financial system to Excel spreadsheets allowing him to present quarterly reports which showed trends in map sales, memberships and expenses not only by quarter but also from one year to the next. Frank also implemented a combined contributions-membership spreadsheet which replaced two separate files which were often out of sync.

## MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM LEADERSHIP

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## Upcoming Events

### Saturday, June 1

#### National Trails Day at Conowingo Dam

Help us clear the M-DT and build benches for scenic spots.  
More details at [www.mason-dixontrail.org](http://www.mason-dixontrail.org).

### Saturday, August 3

#### 10 am ~ 4 pm

#### Shank's Mare Art & Outdoor Festival

It's right on the M-DT! More details at [www.shanksmare.com/group-outings.html](http://www.shanksmare.com/group-outings.html) and [www.mason-dixontrail.org](http://www.mason-dixontrail.org).

### Saturday, September 7

#### KTA Trail Challenge

The Keystone Trail Association's annual 25/50K event on the M-DT & Conestoga Trail. You can participate in the event or volunteer to support it. More details at [www.kta-hike.org/kta-trail-challenge.html](http://www.kta-hike.org/kta-trail-challenge.html) and [www.mason-dixontrail.org](http://www.mason-dixontrail.org).

### Saturday, October 5

#### KTA Code Orange Trail Care at Gifford Pinchot State Park

An annual, one-day, trail maintenance work trip on the M-DT co-sponsored by M-DTS, KTA, PA DCNR and the Friends of Pinchot State Park. More details at [www.kta-hike.org/trail-care-and-trail-crew.html](http://www.kta-hike.org/trail-care-and-trail-crew.html) and [www.mason-dixontrail.org](http://www.mason-dixontrail.org).

## MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM

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## Backpacking the Mason-Dixon Trail

### THEY TOOK THE CHALLENGE!

*Read the second part  
of Andrea and Robin's  
journey on the  
Mason-Dixon Trail*

The M-DTS Newsletter is published about four weeks in advance of each of the four M-DTS board meetings held annually. Submissions are welcomed.

The Mason-Dixon Trail System, Inc. is a non-profit all-volunteer, service-oriented association of trail clubs and individual hikers that has as its purpose the use and conservation of the backcountry through the development of new trails in the mid-Atlantic states. The nucleus of M-DTS is the 199-mile Mason-Dixon Trail which passes through historic and scenic areas of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware.

New members are welcome. To join, send \$20 (which covers initial membership as well as the M-DT maps) to:

**Mason-Dixon Trail System, Frank Kempf, 2174 Esbenshade Road, York, PA 17408**

Thereafter, the annual fee is \$7. Life membership is available for \$250.

**Visit the Mason-Dixon Trail web site at: [www.mason-dixontrail.org](http://www.mason-dixontrail.org)**

**Visit the Mason-Dixon Trail Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/theMDTS](http://www.facebook.com/theMDTS)**