

# In Memory of Nancy Shukaitis



## Remembering the Life and Work of Nancy Shukaitis

By Senator Scavello

**PEN ARGYL** - Nancy Shukaitis, of Smithfield Township, passed away on March 4, 2021. It is only fitting that this community minded woman passed during Women's History Month. Nancy was a celebrated conservationist, author, and former county commissioner.

Born on March 3, 1925, she grew up along the Delaware River in the Shawnee River Valley. Her family's lineage there goes back to 1794. When the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposed the Tocks Island Dam project in the 1960s, she became actively involved in fighting the project. The proposed 160-foot-tall earthen dam would have created a 37-mile-long and mile wide reservoir. To complete the project some 600 families and property owners whose land would be affected, would have been displaced.

A group of local residents, led by Shukaitis, formed the Delaware Valley Conservation Association. She and the association attended hearings, collected signatures for petitions, and organized coalitions, gaining support for their platform. Through Nancy's leadership, what began as a few voices grew to a massive uproar by 1971 when the Delaware River Basin Commission voted to shelve the project.

Following the victory, which in part gave us the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Nancy continued her service as a Monroe County Commissioner, becoming the first woman to hold the office. She would serve in that role for 4 terms (16 years), for which she was Chairperson during the last eight years, retiring in 1983. Among her many accomplishments as a Commissioner are installing solar panels on the courthouse, initiating the county bus system, laying the groundwork for the county jail, and implementing flood protection along the Brodhead Creek.

In 2011, Nancy was interviewed by the Monroe County Historical Association and that interview is available here. It is well worth a listen to hear Nancy speak about her life in her own voice.

Nancy will always be remembered for her extensive and unwavering community involvement. Her mark on Monroe County and the surrounding region will not be forgotten and we are grateful for her engagement, foresight, and community impact.



## Hike Healthy: Avoiding COVID-19 infection on the Appalachian Trail



COVID-19 (commonly referred to as "Coronavirus") is a highly contagious respiratory virus that has been diagnosed in the majority of the states along the Appalachian Trail (A.T.). Initial symptoms of COVID-19 appear between 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. However, some may experience more severe symptoms, including difficulty breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion or inability to arouse, and bluish lips or face. Those who experience any of these symptoms should seek immediate medical attention.

In order to minimize your risks of contracting COVID-19, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy recommends that all hikers follow the guidelines below, which are based on recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization.

- **Wash your hands** frequently with biodegradable soap at least 200 feet from water sources. When soap is not available, use hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol.
- **Avoid sharing food.** Do not eat out of the same food bag, share utensils or drink from other hikers' water bottles.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.**
- **Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing.** Use a tissue and dispose of it using Leave No Trace Principles
- **Keep some distance between you and other hikers whenever possible,** especially if anyone shows signs of being sick. Avoid shaking hands or other close contact — instead, elbow bumps or waving are safer ways to greet others.
- **Avoid congregating in groups along the Trail.**
- If you are an older adult or have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes or lung disease, you are at a higher risk of serious complications from COVID-19 disease. Hike and camp away from others to minimize the likelihood of infection.
- If you begin feeling sick, stay away from others and get off the Trail until examined and cleared for return to the Trail by a medical professional.
- If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 while on the A.T., please submit a report to the ATC with as much detail as possible using the form at <https://appalachiantrail.org/report-covid-19>.

For more information about COVID-19 and prevention tips, please visit [cdc.gov/covid19](https://cdc.gov/covid19).

For additional information on how the COVID-19 outbreak is affecting Appalachian Trail facilities and ATC visitor centers, please visit [appalachiantrail.org/updates](https://appalachiantrail.org/updates).

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