KSA Editorial:

Hi lovely folks!

We kicked off 2017 with the reunion, filled with new friendships and laughter. Since then, we have worked quietly on our various roles within the leadership team. At the reunion, Misha facilitated a discussion around equality, diversity, and student relationships at Kroka. The relationship policy at Kroka was revised, and more work is being done with it. We would love more alumni involvement, as our core KSA team is scattered throughout North America at the moment. Please reach out with any questions or comments! And we look forward to seeing you at events at Kroka and in the community this summer!

-Shai Lev, ESP’12

Kraigslist:

Sofia Burnham, VSP ’14
Looking for cheapish-freeish gear. A lot of my stuff magically disappeared while I was at Standing Rock for a few months this winter, I am looking to replace a fairly large backpack (60-75 ltr) a 0ish degree down sleeping bag and a down jacket. Will pay money, or food, you choose.

Mayah Murchison, ESP ’15:
I'm looking for an internship for fall and/or winter 2017. Really, I'm just in search of good people, and meaningful work! Ideally it would be anywhere outside of New England, and a situation where I could work for room and board, in a community or with a smaller group of folks who are living sustainably. I would love any sort of farming/animal husbandry opportunity, homesteading, expedition support, sailing, or community teaching/outreach. I'm also interested in midwifery, I'm working on my doula certification at the moment, and I've been taking mostly creative writing classes throughout my first year of college. Any sort of theater or arts opportunity would be wonderful as well. Again, I'm in search of good people, and meaningful work! Midwest, West Coast, or international would all be great. Thanks!
Kevin and Polly, Mahoosuc Guide Service:

WINTER GUIDE APPRENTICESHIP

Mahoosuc Guide Service in Newry, Maine is looking for 1-2 winter apprentices. We run overnight guided dogsled, ski and snowshoe trips in the western mountains of Maine. The position begins in October and lasts until mid-April.

Excellent opportunities to learn/improve your winter skills and learn how to train, care for, and travel by dog team. Visit our website www.mahoosuc.com for more information.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Help with all aspects of operating a small but very busy winter guiding service:

- Daily dog care, feeding and maintenance chores
- Assist with training of dog teams
- Assist with guiding on trips
- Equipment repair, cleaning and maintenance
- Trail clearing work
- Setting up and maintaining 4-5 traditional winter camps (canvas wall tents, woodstoves, bough floors, etc.)
- Pack and unpack food before and after trips
- Meal prep & cleaning of lodge & farmhouse B & B
- One day off per week

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Winter camping experience helpful
- Strong work ethic, must be responsible & dependable
- Some experience trip leading helpful

BENEFITS:

- Room and partial board
- Small weekly stipend
- Winter Guide Training

CONTACT INFO:

If interested, contact Polly Mahoney or Kevin Slater at (207) 824-2073 or info@mahoosuc.com.
Calendar of Events:

April 18-24 (and beyond? Dates subject to change): Stolen Land & Hoarded Resources Redistribution, Decolonization & Community Reparations Tour, Lenape Territory (Manhattan) to Wampanoag Territory (Massachusetts)

I am SO excited for this tour! A group of 1st nations people, houseless people and others are coming to the East Coast to walk to neighborhoods with hoarded resources and offer to redistribute wealth. They want us ALL to walk with them, people with race and class privilege and people without. I'm trying to support them as much as I can--contacting universities to try to get speaking tours, fundraising, etc. If anyone wants to walk with us or help out, they should totally let me know (617-625-3822--please don't email!). They can stay with my family in Boston probably.

-Molly Katz-Christy, VSP ‘14
April 21-23: NEFFA Festival, Mansfield, MA
Contra dance festival, yay! It’ll be fun. [www.neffa.org](http://www.neffa.org).

April 28-30: Wilderness First Aid/First Responder Recertification, Mahoosuc Mountain Lodge, Newry, ME

Wilderness First Aid, April 28-29, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. $265 (commuter), $315 (includes food and lodging)
First Responder and Open Recertification April 28-30, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. $365 (commuter), $445 (includes food and lodging)
Location: Mahoosuc Mountain Lodge, 1513 Bear River Road, Newry, Maine
For more information or to register, contact Polly or Kevin at (207) 824-2073 or [info@mahoosuc.com](mailto:info@mahoosuc.com).

May 6: Kroka Spring Work Day, Kroka base camp, Marlow NH
Come to Kroka for some work projects to get base camp ready for spring. Plus great people and a potluck lunch.

May 6: Spring Fling Old Fashioned Barn Dance with John and Ellen Gawler and Friends, Mahoosuc Mountain Lodge, Newry, ME

New to contra dancing? Come anyway! We teach all dances.
Schedule
- 5:30 p.m. Potluck dinner
  (Bring a dish to share.)
- 7 p.m. Concert
- 8 p.m. Dance
Accommodations available
No alcohol, please!
$10/person | Children under 16 half price
50/50 raffle
For more information, call (207) 824-2073.

May 26-29 or June 9-12: Epic Skill Swap, Camp Wilmot, Wilmot, NH
Epic Skill Swap is a participatory weekend festival where you can learn new skills, share the skills you have, and spend a couple days with an amazing group of people. They’re doing two weekends this year. [www.epicskillswap.org](http://www.epicskillswap.org)

June 10: Winter Semester Graduation, Kroka Base Camp
Come welcome the newest members to our alumni legion.

August 24: Ecuador Semester Start
Alumni always appreciated to be part of the opening ceremony and see them off.
Updates:

**Adrian Botran, VSP '14**
I am on a gap year in Vermont, living in Randolph with Cassandra. I am currently working with a glassblower (Michael Egan) in Granville. I'm taking classes and learning to work and craft with this amazing, hot medium. It's a beautiful experience. Next year I'll be attending a college (haven't decided which yet) and studying mechanical engineering.
Hope all is well at Kroka and it's large community.
Sending Love,
Adrian Botran, Vermont semester 2014

**Emily Hughes, Former Kroka outreach/alumni contact person:**
Joe, Journey, and I have settled in Harbor Springs, MI where we hope to grow and nurture our family. Joe's mom lives just down the road and his dad across the bay. Yes, we live "down by the bay". Watermelon has not started to grow, but it is on the list for our lawn-to-garden conversion project (see picture). With a few acres to work with, we are spending our non-working hours investing in the land: garden in the front, bike trails in the back. When it is raining or dark out I am reading about permaculture and companion planting. If anyone needs a comfy bed and fresh air near a Great Lake (Michigan), you are welcome to come stay anytime. We miss our Kroka family and are looking forward to seeing some of you at our wedding in May.
With love & joy,
Emily

**Shai Lev, ESP ’12:**
I am finishing nursing school, and looking forward to traveling this summer and rejuvenating after studying for the nursing board exam (NCLEX). If you are near Harlemville, NY or in Israel in July, please be in touch and we can travel/hike/adventure together.
**Zoe Myers, ESP ’12**
After four years of floor plan doodles and lots of daydreaming, I have purchased a trailer for a tiny house! I will start the construction this spring in Calais Vermont. This has sparked new inspiration!

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**Rachel Hemond, VSP ’15:**
A brief update on my life:
(Moments in the present tense)

I am standing in the bitter cold, listening to the chants of protesters inside, knowing that our efforts to silence white supremacy on the campus of Middlebury will echo through this campus. (And, as it turns out, through the country - Fox News, the New York Times, and VICE News are all, with varying degrees of accuracy, joining our discussion on free speech)

I am elbow-deep in a bucket of raw meat and dog food, dumping scoop after scoop into the bowls of the hungry sled dogs I'm working with.

I am curled up with a mug of tea in my dorm room, buried in readings for a queer theory course that make me reconsider the very foundations and structures I have formed my life on.

I am embracing discomfort in as many aspects of my life as possible, but it is the discomfort of a newly-used muscle, stretching in ways that will make me stronger.

(If anyone is in the Middlebury, Vermont area, and wants an adventure buddy, come find me!)

Much love, Rachel Hemond (VSP15)

I hope everyone is enjoying the beginning of spring - in upstate NY the crocuses have just started blooming, and I saw the cherry blossoms and tulips in Philly last week!
Misha Golfman, OG Krokite:
This is Misha
I just got back from two weeks in Park National De la Gaspesie with 2017 semester. We had great weather lots of snow (8 feet on the ground) and lots of great skiing. Lynne and I paddled in Everglades earlier this winter and got eaten by mosquitoes so eventually we opted out for Miami Beach. This winter I’ve been traveling to other organizations that embrace diversity and learning a lot for the future of Kroka. We are now getting ready for spring expedition down the Rogue River in Oregon with Lynne, Danya and Mathias.
Attached is picture of Igloo building in Gaspesie

Phoebe Carter ESP ’12:
I have spent a fruitful and fulfilling year in Ohio working on my senior thesis and looking forward to some big changes: I'm about to graduate from Kenyon College in May, with a degree in Modern Languages and Literature (Spanish and Arabic). Then I will be heading to Amman, Jordan, where I've received a Fulbright grant to spend the year teaching English and completing a project translating contemporary Arabic literature.
I also wanted to share with you all a book of poetry that I illustrated, written by another Kenyon graduate. Each of the poems has a colorful illustration, and can be ripped out of the book and sent as a postcard, so it doesn't have to end up just taking up space on your shelf once you've read it. Each poem/illustration is based on an "untranslatable" word from a different language. Here's the link if you'd like to check it out, or get a copy of your own: http://www.redflagpoetry.com/store/p8/The_Lovers'_Phrasebook_by_Jordi_Alonso.html
Sending lots of love and warmth to all, and wishing you many great and small adventures this year!
Paul Lang, VSP ’10:
Hi all,
I've been working for about a year as a mechanic for a logging company in the Connecticut river valley. It's a pretty unique company that's been a lot of fun to work for and I've been learning a lot every day. I work on forwarders and cut-to-length harvesters repairing breakdowns and performing maintenance on our fleet of fifteen full time machines. I hope everyone is well!

Ari Erlbaum, ESP ’07, VSP ’10:
I had a super exciting winter. In November I went to Standing Rock, in December I went to Bolivia, and in January I went to Israel. All three were amazing and thought provoking, and I'd tell you all the stories and interesting thoughts that they brought up if I wasn't already late putting out this newsletter. Now I'm back in Montpelier, doing some music and radio stuff, playing D&D, feeling like I should probably do something that makes real-ish money.
Give a holler if you’re ever in Montpelier!
Andy Staudinger, VSP '06:

dear friends,

I fear the city is slowly changing me. I ride my bicycle to the community garden, work nights at a local Thai restaurant and recently quit my job at a small time butcher shop to work for REI. When not listening to bands you've never heard of I can be found at the local dive bar playing D&D with other nerds. Yes, I even have a smartphone. I go to the mountains "sometimes" and recently bought a scooter to fix up and drive.
Adapt. Survive. Tacoma WA!

But seriously, if anybody is coming through the West Coast and needs a place to stay, we are only 45 minutes from the Seattle Airport.

Hannah Miller, ESP '09, '11, '13, '15

Hi everyone!

I am currently wrapping up my second semester of studying at Franklin University Switzerland. I've been living here, in the Italian-speaking section of Switzerland (Ticino) since last August, stemming from my desire to get back into academics and focus specifically on languages, culture, and how they affect and manipulate one another. My courses have been a mishmash of things, ranging from Distinctions in French Literature to Freshwater Conservation to English Language Teaching to Postcolonial Literature. It is incredible to live somewhere where the average person your run into on the street speaks at least three languages, if not four, five, six, or seven! I believe that living in a multi-lingual vs. mono-lingual place has major impacts on how we perceive and interact with the world.

I am returning to the U.S. in May, and will be leading the Maiden Voyage program for Kroka over the summer (http://www.kroka.org/programs/show.php?uuid=HmzdL6SiKu2b4A). After that I have decided to transfer back to COA in the fall, and am planning to finish up my degree by the spring! So to those COA-ers out there, see you soon! And to anyone who finds themselves in the downeast Maine region come fall, come visit!

Happy spring to all,
Hannah Miller

Elsbeth Pendleton-Wheeler ESP ‘14:

Hello Friends! I am currently doing Sea Semester in New Zealand. We spent the first 6 weeks in Woods Hole MA and then headed to New Zealand where we have been sailing around, doing some science and seeing this part of the world from the sea. I am loving living on a boat, exploring a new part of the world and meeting new people. This semester has reminded me of my semester with Kroka; living in a close community, exploring place and self, one of many reasons I spend so much time away from normal school. I will be home for the summer and then head back to school in September.
I hope all are well and that some of our paths cross again soon.
Sending love,
Elsbeth Pendleton-Wheeler
Ecuador Semester ‘14

P.S. we have a blog if anyone is interested!
http://www.sea.edu/sea_currents/all_robert_c_seamans
Adam Hodges-Leclaire, VSP ’12:
Hello! Nearly finished with my history degree here in Scotland, and psyched to return at last to full-time New England (well, Ticonderoga NY) in July! Adventures in the meantime include giving outreach programs on the history of Scottish fishing, guiding Highland outdoor trips in vintage clothing, weekend busking in Edinburgh, and forays into Europe whenever I can muster. Missing wood-smoke and all my outdoor folk - but I'll be home soon. Lots of love - Adam.
Oliver Mednick, VSP ’10, ’14, and ’15:

Tuppence a bag

Anna Soltys-Morse, VSP ’10:
I am still in Quebec studying in a circus school, and after years of having to put things on hold for various reasons, this winter I have finally gotten to: go skiing, finish craft projects, visit old friends, travel, take classes, learn to cook and bake new things, and plan more than month in advance! Good for the soul. Highly recommended. Happy winter everyone! (I've attached photos of the quilt I might even finish soon.)

Mary Kate Norton, ESP’14:
Hey Everyone! I'm finishing up my sophomore year at the College of Wooster and looking forward to working at Kroka again this summer. Lately I've been busy with my school's environmental group pushing for the college to increase sustainability, and planning for a group of students to go to DC for the climate march later this month.
Lots of love! Mary Kate Norton
Ezra Fradkin, ESP ’11:

Still working at Kroka where life is good! Come visit and say hi when you're in the area. I'm looking to plan an alumni expedition sometime late fall - November/December - hopefully someplace warm. Let me know if you're interested in helping to get this project off the ground. Kroka will fully support the project! Until that next time that I run into you, keep on doing the awesome things that Kroka alumni do!

P.S. These pictures were taken this spring on the Kroka pond! The amateur bald eagle attempts to make away with the "ducks" on the pond - a strange and beautiful sight.
Poetry:
Mayah Murchison, ESP ’15:
Happy spring, Kroka community! Here is a tiny poem I recently wrote for a class at College of the Atlantic:

Winter
I woke
to the endless pop
and sigh
of a forest thawing out.

Musings:
Tashi Diamondstone-Kohout, ESP ’16:

For Justice, with Love

What happens when life is suddenly overrun with disturbing facts about our new governing body? If you’re anything like me, you are trying to balance your sanity scale between the dreaded truth and ignorant bliss. On one side, there is political awareness that generally causes incredulity and outrage. And on the other, there is guilt for enjoying day to day life, while knowing that people all over the world are feeling the wrath of this country's actions. I believe that many of you can relate.

During the election and inauguration of Donald Trump, many people, myself included, were in a slight coma caused by shock. Picture this; you’re driving down the road then slam on the brakes, and stare dumbfounded, as a spray tanned dwarf zebra in a sundress and toupee reclines on the dotted lines drinking a pina colada. The only thought that flashes through your head is “You’re kidding me, this is impossible”. But, as nominee after nominee, the second more ignorant and corporate minded as the first, were sworn onto our governing cabinet, a tsunami of truth hits, shattering the comatose. Yes, the world continues to turn, and this “Zebra” in it.

In the midst of the horrors and injustices I am trying to be proactive, but it’s easy to slip into a place of despair and powerlessness, I have a sense that coming from hopelessness will be futile, but how then to forge on? I’m demonstrating, making calls to Republican senators (though it terrifies me like nothing else), and writing letters of welcome to syrian refugees. But in my peaceful home with luxuries like family dinners, I wonder how can I permit myself to indulge in this way when there are fellow humans who are starving, torn, and homeless due to the actions of my country's leaders...or INactions.

I recently read an excerpt from from a wise woman’s view on deforestation in the jungle that I feel pertains to the current situation. She wrote “It is only possible for us to injure them [the trees] because we are capable of injuring ourselves...we have lost our self esteem as a human race...the beginning of healing the planet is in each HUMAN BODY..acknowledge what walking miracles we are, we are magnificently crafted.”

I think that this is key; continue to demonstrate and to be aware of current horrors around us, protect our human and constitutional rights for ourselves and for those of us who do not have voices like ours (~Nature itself!~) we are all in jeopardy. Yet, start from love of self, from the swollen buds bursting forth, from the sound of a
forest at night, from the smile on your neighbor’s face, from the miracle of love and
from your own Breath! It is with this consciousness that we can create the change we
wish to see in ourselves, the humans of Planet Earth.

The pain of reality is incredibly real, even if it doesn't seem to affect our daily
lives, but it is my intention to move forward with as much open mindedness and love
as one can muster under the current circumstance. I invite you all to join me. I look
forward seeing each one of you on the streets, shouting for justice, with LOVE in
your eyes. What are your thoughts? Peace, Natasha

Ari Erlbaum, ESP ’07, VSP ’10:

Hola, amigos. Here are my most recent thoughts on humanity and what we can do to
make it work better. Influenced mainly by insights from traveling, and generally being
gEEKy about evolution:

Back in the day, say 10,000 years ago, small tribes were generally the M.O. of our
species. Things under that structure, things weren't perfect, but we generally weren't
careening towards destruction in the way our species seems to be these days. The
reason for that, best as I can tell, is that people were more connected to the effects of
their actions.

In small tribes, your fate and the fate of the tribe are completely intertwined. If you
help the tribe out, then you benefit. There are stronger social pressures to be kind,
useful, and generally a mensch. It's an economy of social capital instead of monetary
capital. There are closer social bonds, and the tribe becomes more like family, so you
feel compelled to help them. This all may sound familiar from Kroka trips, which in
many ways, recreate some conditions of tribal life. You can also see this social capital
in action in poorer areas. In Bolivia, there are no nursing homes, because it's
unthinkable that old people won't be taken care of by their family or community.

In the modern industrialized world, we are so much less connected to our actions. In
such a globalized world, we can't even conceive of all the people our actions affect.
For example, we know intellectually that driving cars is harmful. But we don't see
firsthand the ecological and social effects of that oil being extracted, and won't see the
disasters of climate change soon enough to viscerally link it in our minds. Likewise,
national politicians never have to see or deal with all the people whose lives they
destroy.

We also have some lingering evolutionary impulses that don’t serve us too well in
modern society. We are evolved to think of our tribe as our "in-group", that we care
about, and outside people as the "out-group", which we put behind the in-group's
needs. Unfortunately, when our culture's systems cover the entire world, we need to
value the entire world as our in-group. This is tough for our evolutionary
programming to wrap itself around. That's why you see police brutality at Standing
Rock, or Israeli/Palestinian conflicts, the current scares about Muslims and
immigrants, and why my mom makes sweeping dismissive statements about Trump
voters. People can turn off their empathy because they don't deeply know people on
the other side, and can just think of them as stereotypes, statistics, or whatever other
reductive preconceived notions they have.
Okay, so what do we do? We're probably not de-industrializing and going back to paleolithic hunting and gathering tribes any time soon. But here are some ways to connect people (including yourself) more strongly with their actions:

- **Build community**-- Bring your community together to form strong social bonds with each other, and get invested in each others' well being. Tribes based on common interests are great too (e.g. this Kroka alumni group), but I would argue that geography based tribes are especially important, since it keeps people from falling through the societal cracks. There are some hurdles to get over with ingrained independence in our culture, which makes people resistant to offer or accept help. But especially as big systems fail us more and more, it's important. These more cohesive community groups are also easier mobilize when under threats from bigger systems, or in solidarity with other groups.

- **Storytelling**-- Through stories, we develop empathy for others. We see our similarities, and can imagine doing the same thing in their situation. That breaks down the dehumanizing barriers we put up, and brings them closer to the in-group. By taking people that would normally be abstract statistics, and making them relatable characters, we start caring about them. For good examples, see This American Life, and other podcasts of that ilk.

- **Get to know people who are very different from you**-- This allows you to be added to each other's in-group. Please listen to the episodes The Silver Dollar and How to Argue, from the podcast Love and Radio, for a concrete example of this.

- **Instituting policies that emphasize connections, or create artificial ones**-- On an issue like climate change, for example, we're probably never going to directly see the effects of our actions. They are dire, but not as immediate as our day to day needs (which often involve burning carbon). So we can simulate this with money. If polluting is expensive, that makes it a lot less abstract. Other action-connecting policies would include requiring all energy to be generated locally, or making a state bank.

That’s about the state of my thoughts these days. I’m still working on cohering these brain drippings into concrete personal actions, and would love to brainstorm with anyone about it.
Jokes:

Homesteading Humor from the Knapps:
"Is the bucket half full or half empty? Depends how bad you need to poop."
(We sure feel lucky to have a group with which to share such a joke. How lucky you feel depends on how funny you thought the joke was...Be well, all! -the Knapps)

That’s the newsletter. Have a lovely time with life, wherever you are!