

Golden Triangle

VOLUME 63, NUMBER 4

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2013

Obituary -- American Youth Hostels - Pittsburgh Council

The end of an era - and a long era at that! The last weekly meeting of AYH was held on June 3, 2004 to a packed house, including members dating back to the 1950s. The first weekly meeting was held in the 1930s and, except for a several-year lapse during WWII, had been held weekly ever since.

The cause of death was bankruptcy caused, in turn, by its Pittsburgh hostel on the south side. It was a Black Hole for money as it turns out, pretty much like its Ohiopyle hostel. Below is a bit of history and a biopsy.

AYH's main (and sizeable) contribution to the quality of life in this area has always been its outings program - a lively mix of hiking, bicycling, flatwater canoeing, whitewater canoeing, kayaking, caving, climbing, ski-touring, backpacking and a few others (kite-flying??), plus countless schools in many of these activities. AYH built the Baker Trail and the Rachel Carson Trail that could take one from Pittsburgh to Allegheny National Forest. AYH published numerous editions of numerous guides to hiking and canoeing in the region. Its extended trips in the summer took many of us on unforgettable trips such as backpacking on Mt. Rainier, the Olympic Rainforest, the Olympic Seashore, the North Cascades and Rocky Mtn. National Park, cycling hostel-to-hostel in New England, hut-hopping in the White Mountains, white-water canoeing and sail-canoeing on the streams and lakes of Wisconsin and countless others. No one will ever know how many multi-decade-long friendships came out of the delights, camaraderie, trials and tribulations of all those thousands of trips. Calamity Rock in the Cheat Narrows was named for a terrifying rafting episode on an AYH trip. White water canoe trips have been known to arrive, still cold and wet, back in Pittsburgh around 4 AM. There was a broken back on a bicycle descent off of Pittsburgh's Mt. Washington, and a nasty altercation between a bicycle and a pickup truck.

AYH always had its ups and downs. At times its weekly Thursday evening meetings saw people packed shoulder-to-shoulder watching slide shows of past adventures and listening to 8-10 trip leaders advertising the adventures they had planned for the weekend. At other times the organization was held together by 3-4 people struggling to get the club back on its feet. A lot was learned about the dynamics of "volunteer associations" (as such organizations are called). One example of many: A preoccupation with social aspects and beginner-oriented trips foretells an impending collapse. A focus on substantive outdoor-oriented adventures and pleasures means another growth spurt toward a membership size that tends to attract the purely socially oriented.

AYH was always a down-to-earth, low-budget operation that attracted people of like mind. Its headquarters/ meeting room was a former Mellon estate chicken coop built on the property line with the Marshal mansion (now Arts Center), apparently as a result of some sort of feud. Outings had always been profitable, even with trip fees of \$0.25 to \$1/day, canoe- and bicycle rentals of a few dollars per day, and sales of modestly-priced trail guides. This combination of profitability and frugality might well have been AYH's undoing. The several hundred thousand dollars in savings generated over the decades was perhaps too much of a temptation to the hostel-oriented faction of the club. (AYH always had an uneasy split personality.) They grabbed control of the club, abolished the Activities Board (that had always handled the day-to-day operations of the club) and sunk everything into a highly leveraged hostel. The rest is history.

Bruce E Sundquist



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Submissions Policy: Golden Triangle

Classified Ads:

- ? Classified ads are free to Current members of HI-International
- ? All requests for classifieds must be made in writing via the Council Office. Request must include full name, address, phone number and membership number of member. Members are not permitted to place ads for non-members.
- ? Free ads may not be for commercial gain.
- ? Above rules apply in addition to general rules for submission

Trips

- ? All trips must be approved by authorized co-chair
- ? Trip leader must be a council approved leader
- ? Trips must be submitted through co-chair, for that activity. Trip leaders, are not to submit trips directly to editor or office, any trips improperly submitted will not be listed.
- ? Above rules apply in addition to general rules for submission

Articles

- ? Members are encouraged to write articles, about travel abroad and in the states, and about activities and outdoor sports in which the council has a program
- ? All Articles are to be, non-political and non-religious
- ? Above rules apply in addition to general rules for submission

General rules for submission

- ? No handwritten submissions
- ? Submissions Can be;
 - On computer disk (IBM), E-mail (Internet/compuserve), Type written material double spaced, faxed. NO EXCEPTIONS. Call if you have questions.
- ? Submitted before the deadline of the issue that submission needs to be in. (See Editors Golden Rule)
- ? All Submissions are on a first come first serve basis, The GT makes no promises to print material received and all material received becomes the property of the GT.
- ? Standing Deadline; Deadline for the GT, has always been, and will continue to be the First Thursday of the month, prior to the month of the issue.(See Editors Golden Rule)
- ? Please always check in advance with office, to confirm schedule.

Editors Golden Rule

- ? @Lack of planning on your part, does not constitute an emergency on my part@

Please note, the Golden Triangle frequency of publication for 2010

Number 1 issue ->January/February/March

Number 2 issue ->April/May/June

Number 3 issue ->July/August /September

Number 4 issue ->October/November/December

Editor...

Triangle Staff

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NOTICE

Please note the deadlines for
future issues of the
GOLDEN TRIANGLE

JAN-FEB-MAR ISSUE
All copy, DEC 18

If your work is on computer,
Please contact Joel Platt at
golden_triangle@bigfoot.com

Oops...

If you find an error, please notify the editor. See the address for the *Golden Triangle* below.

Mail regarding the Newsletter
should be addressed to:

The Golden Triangle
1632 Denniston St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

golden_triangle@bigfoot.com





SEA-KAYAKING

Kelleys Island, Cape Henlopen and Presque Isle are just a few of the interesting and exciting places we visited last summer. Whether you are a beginner or an experienced paddler, we have a trip for you. So grab your paddle and sunscreen and we will see you on the water.

ActivityCo-Chairs Vickie 412-344-4929
Russ 412-331-2073

See
Sierra Clubs Hikes, at end.



ROCK CLIMBING

Important Notice / Rock Climbing

We regret to inform our members that the Pittsburgh Council is no longer able to sponsor any rock climbing activities for insurance reasons. Our liability insurance is provided through the National AYH organization. After lengthy discussions with National’s insurance carrier, we have been notified that a number of activities classified as “high risk” have been excluded from our coverage effective 1 April. While National was successful in negotiating the removal of several activities (such as ice-skating and cross country skiing) from the initial list of exclusions, they were ultimately unsuccessful in being able to have rock climbing covered. While we are disappointed with this exclusion, we have no choice but to stop sponsoring all rock climbing activities. Thank you to all of the volunteers who assisted in the organization and operation of the rock climbing activity over the years. It would not have been possible without you. Discussions are underway with other activities organizations that may be able to sponsor rock climbing activities. For more information, please contact Chuck Jones at charljonz@excite.com or (412)766-4036 or Annie Jones at (412) 303-1793. Please call before 10 o'clock at night. <http://www.wpfi.org/>

While it is unfortunate that we will no longer be able to sponsor rock climbing, we would like to remind both members and non-members of the great activities that we sponsor, and encourage everyone's continued participation.



BICYCLING

IMPROMPTU BICYCLE RIDES EMAIL LIST

Our bicycle email list is up and running. We have been enjoying some good rides. The biggest need now is for people to announce rides.

If you would like to get on our bike email list our address is:
letsbikenow-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

HELMETS ARE REQUIRED FOR THE PROTECTION OF ALL. YOU RIDE AT YOUR OWN RISK

Glenn Oster continues to ride and report on various trails across the USA. Visit his website at <http://www.intellweb.com/trails/oster.htm>

UPCOMING SLIDE SHOWS

Rambles For Fall 2013

October

- October 2** Squaw Run Park-Hike along creek-lunch at pavilion-Ed Divers- 412-828-5154
- October 9** TBA-Martha Raak-412-802-7266
- October 16** TBA-Alan Fowler-412-421-0765
- October 23** Hartwood Acres-Jim Ritchie-412-828-0210
- October 30** TBA-Patty Hopkinson-412-781-9338

November

- November 6** TBA- Janet Hartz-412-889-7561
- November 13** Riverside walk Fox Chapel Plaza Light House Plaza Development- Park at Squaw Run Park-Ed Divers-412-828-5154
- November 20** TBA-Nancy Crago-412-877-5745
- November 27** Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank-Mon River walk- Brown Bag lunch-Margaret Laske- 412-421-5219

December

- December 4** Mellon Park - Aladdin's Restaurant - Linda Binstock - 412-244-1332.
- December 11** Holiday Party-RE Club Sharpsburg- Host Patty Hopkinson-412-781-9338
- December 18** TBA-Margaret Laske-412-421-5219
- December 25** TBA-Margaret Laske-412-421-5219

Rambles begin at 10:00 AM . Meet at the parking lot of Phipps Garden Center on Shady Avenue at the corner of 5th Avenue. Carpooling is encouraged. Please pay driver about .07/mile. Picnic lunch if weather permits, otherwise go to a restaurant. Call leader if you plan to meet at trailhead. For information call Mark Le Schack at 412-271-7950 or Coordinator Billie Woodland 412-886-1603, cell phone 412-889-7048.

Trip changes will aslo be noted at hipittsburgh.org



HIKING/BACKPACKING/TRAILS

ALLEGHENY GROUP ~ SIERRA CLUB ~ OUTINGS ~ July 2012 thru September 2012.

- * Suggested carpool fee: 7 cents/ passenger-mile + a share of tolls.
- * All trips begin and end at the trailhead. Carpooling is your choice - not part of the trip.
- * (Unless stated, car-miles are one-way from Monroeville.)
- * For more up-to-date listings and revisions, visit <http://www.alleghenysc.org/>
- * E-mail subscriptions are free. Contact Dianne Ciccarelli at Dianne.ciccarelli@hotmail.com
- * All participants on Sierra Club outings must sign a standard liability waiver form at the trailhead. If you wish to read it well before you are asked to sign the form at the trailhead, go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at 415-977-5528 for a hardcopy.

THE SIERRA CLUB IS NO LONGER HOSTING TRIPS. GOTO MEETUP.COM TO FIND TRIPS.

NOTES: Ask the leader for names and phone numbers of trippers for you to arrange a car pool. Reserve at least 36 hours in advance. If you leave your phone number on the leader's answering machine, give it slowly and clearly. Notify leader to cancel your reservation. Bring lunch, rain gear, water, first-aid kit, small flashlight and extra clothes for changes in weather. If you have a cell phone, bring it along. Cell phones have saved the day on several trips when accidents have required evacuation of trippers. Sierra Clubbers planning to lead outings during 1/1/10 - 3/31/10 should contact Bruce Sundquist at 724-327-8737 or bsundquist1@windstream.net by 12/15/10.

Other Outdoors Clubs

Butler Outdoors Club

BOC runs the same sorts of trips as Allegheny Group. Contact Dave Adams, 724-453-1685 DaveEAdams@aol.com or Bob Tait, 724-287-3382
BobTait@zbzoom.net or visit <http://www.butleroutdoorclub.com> Some trips by BOC and North Country Trails Assn. (NCTA) are listed below.

WISSAHICKON NATURE CLUB: If you enjoy nature lore, look into the meetings and field trips of Wissahickon Nature Club. They meet every other Thursday at 7 PM (except June-August) at Fern Hollow Nature Center, 1901 Glen Mitchell Road, Sewickley, PA 15143 (412)741-6136 <http://www.fernhollownaturecenter.org>
Contact Chuck Tague, 412-488-8760 or 432 Olympia Road, Pittsburgh 15219

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania

BSWP offers field trips in spring, summer and fall to look at and learn about the enormous variety of plant life that western Pa. offers. Everyone is welcome on field trips; amateurs, professionals, non-members, and anyone who is curious about the natural world. Trips are often at a leisurely pace, but may require hiking and traveling through wet/muddy areas. For information, e-mail your address for sample newsletter and membership information to mousemapper@verizon.net, or call Loree at 724-872-5232.

WPW (Western Pennsylvania Wheelmen) Bicycle Club

Home Page: <http://wpwbikeclub.org> Ride Hotline: 412-422-2234
Various length and difficulty rides scheduled each weekend and some during the week. Monthly meeting usually the 2nd Monday at 8pm at the Frick Environmental center on Beechwood Blvd in Squirrel Hill. See home page for details.

Moraine Sailing Club

MSC offers sailing opportunities for new and experienced sailors at Lake Arthur in Moraine State Park. They have an active education program for all ages, numerous sailing related social events, Day Sailing at Lake Arthur, and a very active sailboat racing program. For more information see the MSC Web Page at www.morainesailingclub.org or contact Chris Neuwirth 412-441-5590, email to: cmn@andrew.cmu.edu

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA FIELD INSTITUTE -- TRIPS

For information on WPFI events, contact Sean Brady sbrady@wpfi.org 412-255-0564 or visit <http://www.wpfi.org/> All events open to the public.

Fridays, Noon-12:50 PM Nature Walks starting in Market Square, Downtown Pittsburgh, Cost: Free

Outside Adventure Learning of Western Pennsylvania

Outside Adventures 2002 Paddling Schedule
Call 724-230-0237 or 412-968-0310 for information or to sign up for any event.
www.outsideadventures.org or www.outsideadventures@Yahoo.com
More outings continuously offered. Call for Updates: 724-230

**Baker Trail and Rachel Carson Trail
Trail Maintenance Opportunities for 2006**

The Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels, conceived and built the Baker Trail in the late 1940's and dedicated the Trail in 1950. It was built by returning war veterans who envisioned a network of "youth hostels" along the Trail where the youth of the world could find safe, inexpensive shelter while touring rural America on foot. Today the Trail is 141 miles long and extends from Freeport, PA to the Allegheny National Forest, and traverses Cook Forest State Park, several State Game Lands, Kittanning State Forest, the Mahoning and Crooked Creek Army Corps of Engineers projects, and several local recreation facilities. All AYH members are asked to spend one day a year helping us maintain the Trail. The Baker Trail is 100% volunteer-supported. We use no Federal, State, or Local government funding. Right now the trail needs AYH members who would like to participate in trail crew maintenance activities. Please contact Steve Mentzer SGMentzer@TrueCommerce.com

Adopt-a-Trail Volunteers needed. We also need volunteers to become trail stewards who are willing to adopt a 3-5 mile long section of the Baker Trail. Trail stewards will be independently responsible to work on their section of the trail on their own schedule. Responsibilities include painting yellow blazes on the trail once a year, picking up debris and trash off the treadway, and trimming vegetation away from blazes. Optional skills include chain saw work, shelter repair (we have 10 overnight shelters on the trail that require yearly maintenance—adopt a shelter as your own personal project) and/or you can build bridges, sidehill supports, benches, and other trail amenities. Regardless of the level of your effort, you would be expected to walk your trail section twice a year, preferably once in the spring (April, May) and once in the fall (September, October). All expenses for supplies-paint, brushes, etc.-are reimbursed.

Pennsylvania State Parks
Reservations & Information

Call Toll Free
1-888-PA-PARKS

Reserve up to 11 months in advance
Cabins - Pavilions - Camping

Mastercard www.dcnr.state.pa.us Visa

Baker Trail/Rachel Carson Trail Resources

Rachel Carson Trail website: www.rachelcarsontrail.org; **this website has information about the Rachel Carson Trail, the Baker Trail, and the Rachel Carson Trail Challenge.**
Baker Trail website: www.geocities.com/bakertrailpa; **this website has some abbreviated information concerning the Baker Trail.**
Hostelling International website: <http://trfn.clpgh.org/ayh/>; **general information about the BT/RCT sponsor organization.**
Keystone Trails Association: <http://www.kta-hike.org/>; **has information about all Pennsylvania hiking trails**
“Guide to the Rachel Carson Trail”; **this is a trail guide, with topographic maps, and some interpretive information about the 34-mile long trail, available from HI-Pittsburgh for under \$10, including postage and handling. Call 412-431-4910 to order.**
“Baker Trail Guide Book”; **a trail guide with topographic maps, and interpretive information about the 141-mile long Baker Trail. Available from HI-Pittsburgh for under \$10, including postage and handling. Call 412-431-4910 to order.**

*******HIKER ALERTS*********Current hiker alerts for both the Rachel Carson Trail and the Baker Trail may be found at www.rachelcarsontrail.com.**

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