

The Golden Triangle

Pittsburgh Council

American Youth Hostels

Volume 41 Number 3

March 1990

Slide Programs for March

MARCH 1

To Be Announced

MARCH 8

To Be Announced

MARCH 15

To Be Announced

MARCH 22

To Be Announced

MARCH 29

To Be Announced

Programs are needed!
To volunteer call
Rodney Horner (339-0944)
or **Bob Goff (761-2837)**



Deadlines for April Issue

All Copy
MARCH 1

Binding and Mailing
MARCH 16

WORLD TRAVELER

by Jerry Slagle

Part I

Recently I returned to the United States, after traveling around the world for over four years. You may be interested in reading about some of the experiences I had while traveling through Europe, Africa and Asia.

My plans were to travel for about two months, up to maybe two years, then come home and go back to work. I could not visualize traveling for a longer period of time. But after one year, I found it so enjoyable and not expensive if you go "budget", that my trip was extended to over four years.

How? By staying at Youth Hostels which are inexpensive and where you can meet other travelers. They will usually give you current information on such things as cheap places to stay, inexpensive transportation, affordable restaurants and tourist sights to see.

Many of the hostellers were traveling for a period of two to six months. They would target one country or area and tour it extensively. This way they wouldn't be running around catching trains and looking for accommodations every day, but spending their time touring in a relaxed manner. They also would have the extra time to spend on discovering little-known tourist sights off the beaten path and developing friendships with locals. Of course, if you have only two weeks for a vacation and this is your first time to Europe, you probably want to see as much as you can. This can be hectic for you and the people you pump for information.

My luggage was a backpack

which left my hands free to carry other things. It was hard for me to choose which items to take and to pick items that had versatility. I got bored with wearing the same three sets of clothes over and over again and usually bought new clothes and threw the old ones away. If you are traveling for a short time or in a warm climate, you may want to take only a small travel bag with few clothes. Usually we take too much, which leaves one perturbed because we either have to send excess items home, throw them out or carry them along. It seems every hostel is located on top of a steep hill. With a heavy backpack, it's a long hike up there!

Some of the things I carried in my backpack were: a poncho, a small collapsible umbrella, a sweater, extra eyeglasses/contacts with your prescription, a small sewing kit with various sizes of buttons (your clothes take a beating), a Swiss army knife, sleeping bag (synthetic material), a sleep sheet (keeps the bag clean and you warmer and also is good for warm nights when a bag is too hot), a small scrub brush to clean your dirty clothes in the sinks, a long string to hang your wet clothes on in the room (in some places, if you hang your wet clothes outside, you will never see them again), plastic sandals (flip-flops) to wear in the showers, several plastic bags of different sizes to deep your clothes dry, a good strong pair of hiking boots with several pair of wool socks (if you are doing any amount of hiking), some paperback books to read or trade. Also, guide books, such as *LET'S GO EUROPE* and the *LONELY PLANET*. Cut out all the excess ads and unwanted chapters to

continued on page 6...



COUNCIL NEWS

Many of you know Bill Johnston and also know that Bill has been in Boulder Colorado for the last few months. Well, Bill has decided to make Boulder his home and sends this letter back to his friends at Pittsburgh Council. Bill, I'm sure I speak for all of Pittsburgh AYH in saying that we'll miss you, your leadership and your droll sense of humor. Best of Luck to you, Bill.

Larry Laude.

AN OPEN LETTER TO AYH

Was hoping to be able to stop by and go over a few things with you before I came back to Boulder, but just ran out of time to do so. I still have a couple of months work on Mark & Ellen's addition then I am going to look for work out here with the intention of staying. Therefore, this is my letter of resignation from the Board of Directors and an open letter to Pittsburgh AYH.

From the movie "To Sir With Love" came the song with the same name and this lyric: "how do you thank someone who has taken you from crayons to perfume?" It was posed by a young student whose teacher had helped in her transition from child to young woman. My own lifestyle transition was from the "crayons" creating the color of a Sunday afternoon football game on TV from the vantage point of a couch, to the "perfume" of vivid Fall foliage, under a golden October sky scented by nature's own and augmented by our own scents from the participation whether biking, hiking, climbing, paddling or skiing.

It was some time around 1982 that I got myself to my first Thursday night AYH meeting. It was a cold night in February and I was a witness to a bunch of people sitting around in down coats and tassel caps watching some slide show while canoes hovering overhead cast eerie shadows over this whole unlikely tableau. There were only three plausible explanations for this whole scene. It was either a Western Psych support group, a group that was on something, or one that was on to something. Among the announcements were a Steve Martin announcing volleyball and a Ray Yutzy announcing Kayak roll practice. That Friday night found me standing with a half dozen others in the snow outside the Carnegie Mellon swimming pool waiting for someone to open the door so we could get ourselves and the kayaks inside, and the next week at volleyball. . . . my AYH career had begun.

AYH picked me up (when I didn't even realize I was down) and helped me through the beginnings of middle age without

me realizing I was there. I got my feet wet (and sometimes more than that) with different outdoor activities, aided and abetted by proficient people willing to take time from their lives to help me participate in their particular outdoor passion. Strange new terms entered my sphere of being, like: TOSRV, Big Nasty, etc. along with the realization that people climbed rocks and didn't get hurt . . . well more power to them, NOT ME. Then the raft trip at Morgantown Weekend was full so I ended up at Coopers Rocks with the climbers, and my world view again was altered. I remember my first climbing trip to Seneca rocks as a beginner was one of those "it was a great experience, but I'd rather not have to do this again." Last summer marked my thirtieth climbing trip to Seneca and I was the one leading a beginner and sharing my passion.

How do you thank someone who has taken you from crayons to perfume? I don't know, but I do know that Pittsburgh AYH as an organization is important and worthy of our time and support. In an era of a drug "epidemic" I don't think it is enough to "just say no" without some meaningful alternative lifestyles. AYH provides one such alternative whether it be for those who drop in and out as they pass through different phases of their life, or for those who use it as a way of life. In any case I am most appreciative of the efforts of those who created an organization that I could drop into and become a part of. One in which I learned, grew and hopefully added something to.

I would like to thank each of you for sharing part of your life with me and want to challenge each of you to collect on your IOU from me when you get out to the Rockies. I am not sure exactly what I will be doing or exactly where I will be, but if you can find me you can be sure of at least a warm welcome, a shared can of beans to eat, space on the floor to sleep, and a romp in the out-of-doors. Thanks for everything! Bill Johnston. Current address: % Mark & Ellen Chance, 435 Marine Street, Boulder, CO 80302. Phone: (303) 938-8819. ➡

WORLD ADVENTURE



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Switzerland

adventure

Discover

Go Places

Castles, Cathedrals and Palaces



London
GREAT BRITAIN

VENEZUELA



American Youth Hostels

World Adventure Trips

1990 Fact Sheet



Hiking

fun

THE ALPS

CAPE COD

ature

- International trips are "fixed price" -- not subject to currency fluctuations.
- New trips for 1990:
 - "Blue Grey Adventure" - 9-day interpretive cycling trip in Civil War country
 - "Maritime Meander" - 9-day interpretive cycling trip exploring Chesapeake Bay country
 - "Breezin' the Keys" - 10-day sailing trip, Miami to Key West aboard 40-foot sailboat
- Trips for all ages: teenagers, families, adults and persons 50 years plus.
- Trips are geared to all skill and stamina levels: beginner, intermediate, and experienced.
- World Adventure trips are budget priced and include lodging, group-prepared meals, transportation from the starting point of the trip to the ending point, a group activities budget, as well as administrative and leadership costs. International trip prices include roundtrip airfare on discount airlines (except on some Canadian trips).
- 39 different itineraries in 19 countries, including the U.S.
- Trip groups are small, usually 9 participants plus an AYH-trained trip leader who will ensure that you have a safe and enjoyable, fun-filled trip.
- Trips have flexible itineraries and agendas.
- Overnight accommodations are usually in hostels and may include camping or other low-cost lodgings such as inns, pensions, etc.
- Trips depart primarily in the summer. However, several fall, winter and spring trips are scheduled to a variety of locales.
- Groups can take World Adventure trips or arrange their own "adventure trip" with the AYH group travel planner.
- The 32-page, full-color 1990 World Adventure Trip Catalogue is available, free, by writing:

White Water Rafting

New Zealand

vacation



ADIRONDACKS

LLAMA
TREKKING



Ireland

MOUNTAINS
MEXICO
ISLANDS

FRANCE

Florida Keys
SAH

National Intern Bruce Ohlson Comes to Pittsburgh

The Council welcomes National AYH intern Bruce Ohlson to Pittsburgh. Bruce will be arriving in mid-February and staying until the end of March when he moves on to Sacramento to help develop a hostel there. Bruce will be working with us on several projects, including the Pittsburgh Hostel, a hosteling seminar at the University of Pittsburgh, the Travel Show at the Convention Center, and membership development. He will also have the opportunity to see how we work here as an all-volunteer council and as a Council with one of the stronger activities programs in AYH. Stop by and say hello at the Thursday open house. ➡

Activities Board Meeting ...

The March Activities Board meeting will be at 8 pm on Wednesday, March 7th, at Jan Bugby's home.

COUNCIL BOARD MEETING

There will also be a meeting of the Board of Directors at 7:30 pm on Tuesday March 20th, tentatively at Jane Swanson's office downtown.

YOUGH RIVER TRAIL MEETING

The Yough River Trail is marching on McKeesport! The trail is actively under development from Ohioptyle to Connellsville. The next step is to complete the segment from Connellsville to McKeesport (and eventually on to Pittsburgh). Ed Collins of the West Newton Development Corporation has announced that there will be an organizational meeting of a group to oversee the development of the Connellsville-McKeesport section in West Newton on March 27th. The meeting will be at the Community Building at Main and Water Streets in West Newton. ➡

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



PITTSBURGH HOSTEL: At the January Board meeting, we reluctantly decided to discontinue our efforts on the potential hostel in the Friendship area. While the building and the area were ideally suited to a first class hostel, we were not able to get neighborhood support for the project. We did not want to continue without that support for two reasons — first is that we feel local support is essential to a successful hostel, and second is that the necessary zoning approvals would be more difficult to obtain. We are not discouraged, however, and continue to look at other possibilities. This has been a valuable learning experience for us and I believe we will be able to proceed more quickly on the next opportunity as a result.

HOSTELS ELSEWHERE: Although the Pittsburgh Hostel is engaging a lot of our attention, we cannot afford to lose sight of the other hostels in our area, both the ones we have now and the ones we would like to have. I'm hoping to find one or two people to "adopt" Point Park, Charleroi, Schellsburg and Ohioptyle. This would involve contacting the hostel managers once a month, by phone or, if possible, in person, just to see how things are going and whether there's anything the Council can do for the hostel, such as listing special events in the newsletter. I've also had a recent expression of interest in a hostel in Erie. How about it? Are there more of you up there in Erie willing to help find, develop or support an Erie hostel? If you can help or know of someone who can, please call me or write me at the Council address. *Larry Laude* (412) 476-5124 ➡

THE PITTSBURGH HOSTEL STORY

by Linda Smithyman

The Hostel Development Committee has continued its efforts to find an appropriate building in the Pittsburgh area to serve as a hostel year round. Due to zoning considerations residential areas are off limits and we will concentrate our efforts on commercially zoned areas in the near future. We hope to get some advice from neighborhood community groups to assist us in our search. Our next scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 13, at 7:00 pm at Larry Laude's home. Contact me at 531-1868 for information or if you would like to lend a hand. ➡

HOW TO HOSTEL SEMINAR

In March, Pittsburgh Council will present a seminar on hosteling and traveling abroad. The date and place haven't been finalized, but we expect it to be held in the evening in the Oakland area during the week of March 19th. We will use it to explain the ins and outs of using hostels when traveling, including information on the hostel pass, the strange sounding "sheet sack," Eurail passes, etc. If you have traveled using hostels and are willing to come to the seminar to share your experiences with others, please call Linda Smithyman at 531-1868. To check on the exact time and place, ask at Open House or call 362-8181 after March 15th. ➡

Trips in March

HIKING/BACKPACKING

3/4	Sun	Beg	Linda Smithyman	531-1868(h)
9:30 am at HQ. Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve.				
3/10	Sat	Int	Glenn Oster	364-2864(H) before 9 pm) 234-3967(W)
8:00 am at HQ. 8 to 10 miles, Quebec Run.				
3/11	Sun	Int	John Maiman	441-2306(H)
9:00 am at HQ. To be announced.				
3/18	Sun	Int	John Ritchie	828-0210(H) 624-1220(W)
8:00 am at HQ. Rachel Carson Trail, Springdale to Tarentum, 8 miles.				
3/24	Sat	Int	Tom Naveney	276-8044(H)
8:00 am at HQ. Ohiopyle State Park, 10 miles.				
3/25	Sun	Int	Ben Brugmans	736-2751(H) 736-0103(AM)
8:00 am at HQ. Ohiopyle, 6-8 miles.				
3/31	Sat	Int	Pete Srine	921-1238(H)
8:00 am at HQ. Bear Run Natural Reserve, 11 miles.				
4/1	Sun	Maint	Pete Srini	921-1238(H)
8:00 am at HQ. Baker Trail work hike.				

Annual canoe activity planning meeting, Monday, March 12, 7:30 p.m. at Jan & Gordon Buggy's home at 262 Cascade Road in Forest Hills. Anyone interested in the canoeing program is invited to attend.

VOLLEYBALL

ATTENTION ALL VOLLEYBALLERS!

Note : If Pittsburgh schools are closed for any reason, such as snow days or national holiday, there will be no volleyball that day. We play on MONDAY nights starting at 6:30 at PEABODY High School located at Highland and E. Liberty Avenues. Go in the main entrance, turn right, through double doors, and turn right into gym. Call Joel Platt at 521-5244(H) or 421-4446(W).

3/5	Mon	6:30 pm at Peabody School
3/12	Mon	6:30 pm at Peabody School
3/19	Mon	6:30 pm at Peabody School
3/26	Mon	6:30 pm at Peabody School



Pittsburgh Council Activity Chairs

Bicycling

Chuck Ejzak	466-6196
Dino Angelici	931-6651

Canoeing

Clare Bunker	244-9788
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Caving

Dan Martt	921-4638
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Climbing

Eric Bauer	687-0766
Rich Rosenberger	372-2806

Family Activities

Barbara Hanusa	441-7205
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Hiking & Backpacking

Ben Brugmans	736-2751
Pat Tieman	561-3286

Kayaking

Ray Yutzy	341-5682
John Gayler	421-1307

Mid-Week Trips

Cliff Ham	687-4520
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Rafting

Jon Maiman	441-2306
Linda Smithyman	531-1868

Sailing

Rick Tomlinson	963-8910
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Sea Kayaking

Mark Mistrik	521-7688
Ted Self	795-6286

Volleyball

Joel Platt	521-5244
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X-C Skiing

Fred Parker	856-4713
Rick Ulaky	422-0849

Tuesday Night Hikes in North Park



SAIL AWAY!

Some of us are meeting on Tuesday evenings to hike in North Park. This is not an AYH-sponsored activity, but all are welcome. We will meet at the boat house on Pearce Mill Road at 7:00 pm, put on our backpacks (obviously optional) and hike the hills of North Ridge Road, circling back to our starting point—an easy five miles. No reservations needed, just show up on time and join us. If you want to check on whether we'll be hiking for the evening, call Glenn Oster at work 234-3967 until 4:15 p.m. (don't phone him at home). ➡

Rick Tomlinson is skippering two eight-day live aboard sail cruises in southwestern Florida.

April 21-28 Cruise from Ft. Myers down the Florida coast to the Keys. Sail, swim and snorkle. End your cruise at Key West.

April 29-May 6 Sail from Key West to The Dry Tortugas. Snorkle the reefs. Cross the Gulf from Tortugas to Sanibel. Cruise Charlotte Harbor. End your cruise at Ft. Myers.

Experienced or beginning sailors are welcome. Shared costs are about \$650 plus transportation, shore meals and shore lodging. Space is limited and the trip may be filled by the time you read this. Call Rick anyway at 963-8910.

Our next extended trips will be seven days on Long Island Sound and the Cape Cod area in July and along the Maine coast for two weeks in September. ➡

Bicycling

Regularly scheduled trips will start next month, but if the weather cooperates, we may have official trips going out in March. These trips will be announced at the Thursday open house. You may call me at 466-6196 to find out about trips or to volunteer to lead one.

Mon Valley Century Bicycle Tour

Mark Sunday August 19 on your calendar for the MVC. The planning and preparation for Pittsburgh Council's largest bicycling event have already begun. The committee is currently being formed and we are looking for volunteers. If you are interested in helping on this year's tour let me know. We have a variety of jobs available. Some involve work now and other's are not needed until much later. Many require no previous experience in running tours or even bicycling. Call Lynn or Chuck Ejzak at 466-6196. ➡

MID-WEEK ACTIVITIES

Rambles

If you are interested call Fred Mauk (361-6299) on a Monday or Tuesday any time between 7 am and 10 pm for walkinkg on Wednesday. ➡

DONORS TO PITTSBURGH COUNCIL

Pittsburgh Council gratefully acknowledges the recent contributions of these members. Your donations toward a Pittsburgh Hostel, Headquarters Renovation and the General Fund are helping AYH provide valuable services to its members and the hosting public.

Anonymous (2)

Dana Asherman

Debora Brooks

Ray Burdett

Stephen & Judith Downing

Richard Feder

James Fox

Mike & Marta Hurwitz

May Johnston

Martin Joyce

Lawrence Lynch

Ann Marz

John McDonald

Bill Obenaur II

Thomas Paskevitz

C. Grace Pischke

Amy Putkovich

Norman Ravensborg

Jerry & Billie Sherman

Norman Snyder

CLASSIFIEDS

For sale: AYH SOLO CANOE by sealed bid: Mad River Courier, 14' 7", red, center cane seat custom designed by Dave Marschik, self draining gunwhales, purchased September, 1981, good condition. Air bags not included. May be seen Thursday evenings at AYH Headquarters. Minimum bid \$275. Bids will be opened on April 20, 1990. Send bids to: Clare Bunker, Canoe Chairperson, Pittsburgh Council, AYH, 6300 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15232.

For sale: bicycle ski rack holds 5 pair of skis (downhill or XC) on top of a medium-sized car with rain gutters. It will fit on my Citation, but is too big for my Toyota. Put on or remove in one minute. Ski holders can be removed to use as a plain roof rack or replaced with fittings for bicycles, sailboards, etc. Yours for \$40. Call Jeff Campbell 422-0131.

Wanted: Last year's, 1989, *World Almanac* (don't ask). Call Don Hoecher 243-8298(H) or 256-1307(W).

continued from page 1

make them lighter to carry.

Later on in the trip I bought a short-wave radio that operated on two pen size batteries. I was in Singapore, and after "bargaining," it only cost \$39. The reason for the radio is that in some places it is hard to get any news or music in English and sometimes the governments use the radio and the newspaper for propaganda purposes. I've read a NEWSWEEK that was printed in South Africa in which parts of the stories were blacked out, even pictures. In China they print modern day fairy tales. So to get a better picture of what was going on, it was a necessary item for me.

Hong Kong merchants bargain with you, then wrap up your purchase and switch it with something cheaper with the same brand name on it. I understand they get away with it!

Duty free shops in Dubai airport, across from Iran, are supposed to be the cheapest in the world, but I was told to get back on the plane by a nervous guard, so I didn't buy anything there.

Anything you take with you could be lost or stolen, so don't take anything valuable or irreplaceable. You can't watch your belongings all the time, so just take things that can be easily replaced. My umbrella and socks were always walking off! It was fun sometimes to go into the markets and buy replacements for my missing clothes. You can find some weird clothes around the world.

I used the type of money belt that you wear around your waist because it's harder for someone to steal. A money belt hanging from your neck is easy to snatch away. I kept my passport, travel checks and cash in the money belt. The money I would use that day I kept in my front pocket, not in a wallet. It is a good idea to photo-copy the passport pages showing your picture and details, and keep this copy somewhere else in case you lose your passport. This copy may help speed up the process of getting a new one. Watch out for small children grabbing for

your pockets. Run away or get tough with them because they are trained to pick-pocket tourists.

In Malaysia, there is a problem with "reverse" pick-pocketing. This is where a person will plant drugs on you at the border without you knowing it, then pick-pocket the drugs back once you are over the border. The reason for all this activity is that in Malaysia they execute drug smugglers, unlike in Turkey where they just throw the smugglers in jail. Last time I heard, they hanged eleven foreigners. I watched my bags very closely and kept my distance from everyone in the customs line at that border.

I used a cheap 110 mm camera because I didn't want all the hassles connected with using a good one. I'd heard too many horror stories about cameras and had enough problems with keeping film that a cheap camera was good enough for me. If anything should happen to it, it was no big loss. Sometimes I regret my decision after seeing my prints. The thing about traveling cheaply is all the decisions you have to make. Sometimes they turn out to be bad ones.

Usually I traveled alone or with one other person. It was very easy to find people to travel with at the hostels. I did travel with a group of twenty all the way through Africa for nine months. After awhile, I felt I was married to these twenty people! When you travel with others, you lose some of your independence and have to make compromises. I feel it is your trip, so you should do what you really want to do not, worry about hurting other people's feelings. Sometimes a large group of tourists would overwhelm a small village, upsetting the locals, where a single tourist would have been very welcome. Unfortunately we have to go in groups because most people only get two or three weeks for vacation. I traveled like this before I left my job to go around the world.

(to be continued)

MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL News & Important Dates

March 1: Feasibility Study Task Force will have Concept Plans completed. With this information, the MTC will begin government contacts.

March 6 & 7: Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission will hold hearings to determine whether Montour railroad bridges which cross public highways should be dismantled. The Montour Trail Council will provide testimony in an effort to dissuade officials from removing any more bridges as they are vital to the trail. Richard R. Wilson, (of Vuono, Lavelle & Gray) will be representing MTC.

March 26: MTC meeting of the general membership and open house will be held Monday evening at 6:00 pm, Finleyville Moose Lodge, 3545 Washington Ave., Finleyville, PA (five miles south of Trax farm on Rt. 88). Meetings are being held in communities along the proposed trail in an effort to build support by attracting new members from those communities and to familiarize members with the types of areas where the trail will run.

Jenifer Barefoot, of Rails to Trails of Blair County, will share her organization's experiences in meeting the public head on with the Rail Trail concept. Some interesting anecdotes will be related.

Dino Angelici

HOT LINE FOR STATE PARKS

The Department of Environmental Resources has established a toll-free hot line to provide information on activities and facilities at state parks. The information can be obtained by dialing 1-800-63-PARKS between 8 am and 4 pm, Monday through Friday.



601 McKean Ave. Charleroi PA 15022 U.S.A.

THE HISTORY OF THE CHARLEROI YOUTH HOSTEL

by Terry Necciai

I think I first heard about youth hostels when I was at college and living in the big city, but I am not sure I knew at that point what they were. Then I graduated and moved back to my hometown of Monongahela City, about 30 miles south of Pittsburgh.

Late one summer afternoon in 1982 I was walking through Chess Park. It serves as sort of a town square to the quaint nineteenth century residential part of Monongahela's West Main Street. I noticed that at the gazebo in the center of the little park, a bicyclist was leaning on his handlebars, gulping down a drink from a canteen. But this was no ordinary bicyclist. Here in this hilly Pennsylvania town, bicycles are pushed uphill with loads of groceries and coasted downhill with one foot firmly on the pedal brake. This was a very darkly tanned Japanese guy leaning on a ten speed that seemed to be carrying a sleeping bag. I HAD to ask. . . .

His name was Akira something-or-other, he said in a very broken accent, and he had arrived in this country from Japan several weeks ago. In two weeks, he had bicycled from Los Angeles to Monongahela City. I asked if there was anything I could do for him. He asked me for directions to Mount Pleasant. He pulled out an International AYH handbook and showed me the listing for the Mount Pleasant Hostel. I gave the directions, and then got

this queasy feeling that somehow telling someone how to get to Mount Pleasant (former Laurelville Hostel) from Monongahela by bicycle at 6 pm wasn't the nice thing to do.

This guy bicycled all the way across the great plains in less than two weeks and he probably didn't realize that everything east of Monongahela is windy narrow roads leading right into the Appalachians. Alright, maybe I'm a wimp. But if I'd owned my own car at the time, I think I would have offered to drive him to Mount Pleasant. And if I'd owned my own home, I would probably have offered to put him up. Instead, I pointed toward Ellah Hollow, wished him well and strolled over to the newspaper office. In those days, Monongahela still had its own daily newspaper, including a column called "Coffee Talk" where people always looked to see what their neighbors were up to. Coffee Talk was the perfect place for sightings of UFOS, sasquatches and Japanese bicyclists.

It was five years later, when I accepted the position of Main Street Manager for the downtown merchants of Charleroi. By this time, I was a much more seasoned traveler, having encountered many hostellers while travelling to and from graduate school by train. One of the first things I did as Main Street manager was to meet with restaurateurs. Vicky Baxter, owner of Charleroi's best known downtown restaurant, told me she was looking for a way to advertise rooms in the hotel over her restaurant. Although I had eaten dozens of meals there I, like many other patrons, was completely unaware that

there were still overnight rooms in the turn of the century hotel. I said I would take it under advisement.

A few days later I ran into my good friend, the veteran hosteller and Pittsburgh preservationist, John Axtell. John told me about efforts to establish a hostel in Pittsburgh because of the lack of winter accommodations at the present one. The question now was how to get Vicky and the Pittsburgh AYH together? I contacted Joe Hoechner and told him I would send him a packet on Charleroi. I then drilled my brain for everything in town that might be of interest to the AYH crowd, such as river recreation opportunities (we have one of the only large marina/restaurant complexes in the Pittsburgh area), our 30 restaurants, our riverfront park complete with ballfields, tennis courts, etc., our hourly bus service to Pittsburgh, our local tourist program and many other things. I even sent him a full color Middle Monongahela Valley calendar.

Maybe I overdid it. I think Joe and the Council officers were sold on the project all along. I just had to wait until Joe finished the paperwork, finished his wedding preparations, finished the paperwork, finished getting married, finished the paperwork, etc. Well, maybe I had to wait a bit on Vicky, too. She is a former Peace Corp member who had seen a lot of things, but wasn't sure she would ever see hostellers in Charleroi.

But at last, it came to pass, and the Charleroi Hostel is off to a booming start. If you haven't been there, it's your loss! I am sure Akira would have loved it. And when you get there, don't forget to try a bowl of the spaghetti! ➡

DO THE RACHEL CARSON TRAIL IN 1990

by Jim Ritchie

Last summer, my relatively modest hiking project was to hike the Rachel Carson Trail (RCT) from end to end. I've been carrying around my RCT guidebook for going on ten years now. The only hiking I had done on the RCT was at the eastern end within Harrison Hills Park.

Living in Oakmont, I have become very conscious of the rapid urbanization of the North Hills suburbs and the Allegheny Valley corridor. Hiking on the North Park end of the RCT last November, it occurred to me that this trail was being assaulted by urbanization at every turn. I marveled at the effort it must require to keep the trail open. I determined that if I ever wanted to explore the RCT in its entirety, I had better do it soon or else I might lose the chance to do so forever.

So in March I began, going from North Park to Shaler Junior High School and then in April from the Junior High to Route 910. The first leg revealed the trail passing just beyond the property lines of several new houses that were being built. Some of the plusses include the hollow leading out of North Park from the Rocky Dell shelter where I spooked a small herd of deer, Crouse Run Hollow following the interurban line, the small town of Sample and the small pond hidden in the trees at the high point of the climb. Near Middle Road, I was chased uphill by two very aggressive geese.

Each segment was only about 4-5 miles, but given my lack of familiarity with the trail and the difficulty sometimes in finding the next blaze, these short runs each took me the best part of a Sunday afternoon.

In June, I did the piece from Rich Hill Road back to Route 910 as an in-out trip. The hills along this stretch, especially near Rich Hill Road, are real lung

busters. It amazed me that parts of Allegheny County were so untouched by residential development. This stretch was the beginning of some of the finest hiking I have done. In spite of the hard use the land has seen, for mining mostly, there is a kind of rugged beauty to it.

In August, I went from Rich Hill Road to Cheswick and back; and in September from Cheswick to Glassmere. I lost the trail twice along here, improvised a little in each case and then joined up with it further down the line. The views and the climbs had me hooked. Even though I would search for as long as an hour to find the next piece of the trail, the rewards were worth it.

It was at this time that I began coming to AYH meetings seeking information from others using the trail. I didn't know if it was really open the rest of the way to Harrison Hills. At AYH I met Blanche Asherman and Cliff Ham who assured me the trail was open. Blanche had been hiking west from Harrison Hills this same year and Cliff, one of the founders of the RCT, had done some trail maintenance earlier in the year.

I finished up in two more pieces, one in October from Glassmere to Tarentum, and the last in November from Tarentum to Harrison Hills. The highlights were the spectacular views of the Allegheny River from the bluffs on the western bank, the spectacular fall colors and walking along in the crisp autumn air. The minus was seeing one area being bulldozed and marked for development. It was probably the site of a newly proposed shopping mall in Fawn Township.

I want to mention that I probably learned the origin of the term "bush-wack." I found the trail blocked in several places, especially in early September, by ironweed, pokeberry, brambles and other weeds that came up over my head. I had to use my trusty hiking staff to whack the bushes down. The longest such episode took nearly 30 minutes of whacking to move only about 50 feet.

In 1990, I would like to hike the RCT once again with interested members of

AYH. I will be leading a series of four hikes. In March, April, May and June covering the entire 34 mile length of the RCT across northern Allegheny County. Since I now know where the trail goes, we should have no trouble covering the whole thing in four shots of roughly 8 or 9 miles each.

I also want to mention that Glenn Oster led a group in February along the first 12 miles or so moving west from North Park. To avoid immediate duplication, I will be starting at Springdale and going to Harrison Hills Park, also in two pieces.

I would like to enlist the assistance of someone handy with a camera who would be willing to take slides along the trail. I am willing to share the cost of film and developing. If you are interested in being the official trip photographer or you are just interested in joining the group, give me a call at 828-0210 (H) or 624-1220 (W). ♦♦

Pittsburgh Council Hostels

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HOSTS AND DELEGATES NEEDED FOR SOVIET EXCHANGE

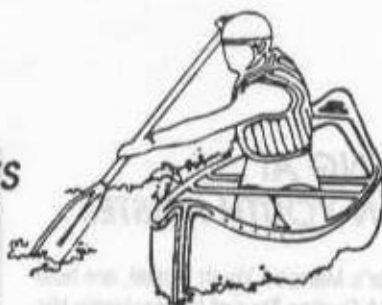
Last summer about a dozen Pittsburgh area people spent a great two weeks touring Moscow, visiting the homes of their Ukrainian hosts and backpacking in the Carpathian Mountains. This was the first half of a U.S.-Soviet exchange that was arranged over the past few years by a committee in the Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club and their counterparts.

This summer the second half of the exchange takes place for two weeks in late June and early July. Fifteen Soviets will be coming here to tour Pittsburgh, spend a few days in Pittsburgh area homes, raft the Youghiogheny, backpack and hike in Monogahela National Forest, tour Washington, D.C. and spend a few days in Washington D.C. homes. The purpose of the exchange is to help Soviets and Americans get better acquainted on a significantly more personal level than what might be accomplished by the ordinary "guided tours" that tourists usually take. To facilitate this, we need to get more Americans involved, specifically as:

- Hosts to put up one or two Soviets in their homes for several days in late June while they are touring Pittsburgh.
- Delegates to accompany the Soviets on their various tours and activities.

The ideal host or delegate would be in the same age range (20s and 30s) as the Soviets, speak Ukrainian, and have an adventure/outdoor/environmental/bridge-building outlook. However we may not be able to find hosts and delegates that satisfy all these conditions. Some Soviets will be able to speak English. Delegates are being charged \$500 each to help defray costs of the exchange. It also covers their meals, admissions and transportation. Details of the exchange are still being worked out. If you are interested in being a host or delegate, contact Walter Vaux (327-7770) or Esther Petrilli (881-8725) who will fill you in on more details and send you an application form.

Bruce Sundquist



THE EDITOR'S FANCY

Several times a year at the Thursday night AYH meeting I am approached by an individual who comes on like a potential paddler. They usually start by saying that this season they are really going to make a concerted effort to attend the canoe schools and get into the sport. Then they go on to say, "I was down at Ohiopyle last weekend. Those guys really make it look like fun. I even saw one run the falls!" At this point I shriek, no!, no!, no!, that's not canoers, that's kayakers.

Many of the AYH paddlers and instructors enjoy a variety of rivers and streams, seldom if ever the lower Youghiogheny River.

Ever wonder what all that WW I, WW II in the canoe activities write-up stands for? No, we are not playing World War I and II navy games. To learn that and all about the AYH canoe program you should mark your calendar right now for the annual canoe activity planning meeting.

The Canoeing Group will meet at our home on Monday, March 12 at 7:30 to plan the canoeing program for 1990. We will review problems, explore new options and opportunities, prepare the schedule, staff trips and schools with leaders. We will review the publicity plans and discuss new business. We are located at 262 Cascade Road, Forest Hills; Telephone 371-4233. From the Parkway East take exit 10, go East on Ardmore Blvd. (Rt 30) two traffic lights, turn right onto Bevington, go two blocks to Cascade and turn right again. 262 is on the left. All interested persons are invited to attend.

Jan Bugby

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ELDER-HOSTELING AT IRONMASTER'S MANSION YOUTH HOSTEL

Joan and Bob Bread, houseparents at Ironmaster's Mansion Youth Hostel, are hosting an Elder-hosteling course. The trip is called "A Cycling Tour of Pennsylvania Historical Sites" and will cycle through Pennsylvania's beautiful countryside. You will visit the historical Gettysburg Battlefield where Abraham Lincoln delivered his inspirational address. Then travel to Carlisle to tour the Carlisle Indian School where Jim Thorpe, one of its students, won fame as the "greatest athlete in the world". While there, tour the U.S. Army War College and hear about its military history and famous military graduates. On your cycling journey, stop to take pictures and to experience the community. Well-maintained bicycle and safety helmet are a must. Trip dates are May 13-19; cost, \$245. Write to Joan and Bob at Ironmaster's Mansion Youth Hostel, RD 2, Box 397B, Gardners, PA 17324. ➡

ELDERHOSTEL

For more on news, features and up-to-date information on what's going on at Elderhostel contact them at 80 Boylston St., Suite 400, Boston, MA 02116



THE AYH CANOING PROGRAM

Pittsburgh Council offers a wide variety of canoeing activities during the canoeing season from May to October. These vary in difficulty from family trips on quiet rivers to Class III whitewater. Trips may be day trips or canoe-camping trips several weeks in length.

The Council has canoes, life vests, paddles, and poles for use on AYH trips at a modest rental fee. While Council policy prevents the equipment from being used on higher class rivers, some members paddle their own canoes on more difficult water.

Pittsburgh Council runs several canoe schools to allow new members to get started in canoeing or improve their skills. You may choose to develop your skills as a solo or tandem paddler. A number of our instructors are ACA nationally certified whitewater canoeing instructors.

The number of schools and types of trips each month reflect the wishes of the membership. If you do not see the type of trip you feel is needed, contact Clare Bunker, the canoeing chairperson.

Most of the leaders and instructors were developed through the AYH canoeing program. New members with previous experience are usually asked to attend a whitewater school to see how council trips are run.

CANOE SCHOOLS

BASIC CANOEING introduces canoeing on flat and moving water. Steering and maneuvering strokes are taught along with the proper method of getting into and out of a canoe. Also how to load, unload, lift, and carry a canoe.

WHITewater I (WW I) reviews the basic strokes used on whitewater rivers. These are taught on still or quiet water. Progress to moving water follows, and downstream and upstream ferrying skills are taught and practiced. Other skills taught are river reading, safety, rescue, river etiquette, and scouting procedures. The school is taught on Class I rivers.

WHITewater II (WW II) quickly reviews the skills learned in WW I and moves on to eddy turns, peel outs, surfing, rescue, safety, and tactics for river running. WW II is taught on a Class II river.

POLING is taught on flowing streams. This is an interesting variation to the sport, and not nearly as difficult as it may seem.

RIVER CLASSIFICATIONS

AYH uses the International Whitewater Association classification system. Under this system navigable rivers are divided into six classes from Class I (easiest) to Class VI (extremely dangerous). AYH trips vary from Flat water to Class II, with

life vests required on **ALL** trips.

FLATWATER: Lakes, ponds or slow flat rivers with no apparent current. No rapids or riffles are encountered and there is no problem in navigating.

CLASS I: Moving water with riffles and small waves. Wide clear channels that are obvious without scouting.

CLASS II: Rapids vary from clear obvious channels to narrow twisting channels. Waves may be up to 3 feet high. Maneuvering is required, and some scouting may be required. Flotation is needed.

CLASS III: Rapids with high, irregular waves often capable of swamping an open canoe. Narrow passages that require complex maneuvering. Usually requires scouting from shore. Flotation is needed.

CLASS IV: Long difficult rapids that require precise maneuvering in very turbulent waters. Scouting from shore is necessary, and conditions make rescue difficult. Generally not possible for open canoes.

CLASS V: Extremely difficult, long and very violent rapids. There is significant hazard to life in the event of a mishap.

CLASS VI: Nearly impossible and very dangerous. A severe risk of life is present.

Terry Bicycles - fit for a woman

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

All articles of interest to our members are welcomed - subjects relating to our trips and activities, the environment, the outdoors, etc. Articles submitted should be neatly typed and double spaced (at least a 12 point font), on disk or can be sent via modem when prior arrangements are made. Sorry I cannot accept more than one or two short paragraphs of hand-written copy. Poor spelling and punctuation are risky, they can turn into anything I want them to be. The use of material will be limited to available space. Place articles in the Editor's box at AYH Headquarters or mail to The Golden Triangle, 6300 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15232. *Jan Bugby*, Editor

American Youth Hostels is a nonprofit organization which promotes international understanding, educational and recreational travel, good citizenship and an appreciation of America.

AYH does this by bringing travelers of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities together in hostels and by providing low-cost and National Office. AYH is the U.S. affiliate of the International Youth Hostel Federation (IYHF) which coordinates more than 5,400 hostels worldwide - the largest network of



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- The Knapstock, National AYH travel newsletter.
- The Golden Triangle, Pittsburgh Council's newsletter of trips and activities.
- Open house Thursday nights at Council headquarters.
- Access to National travel programs and Leadership Training courses.

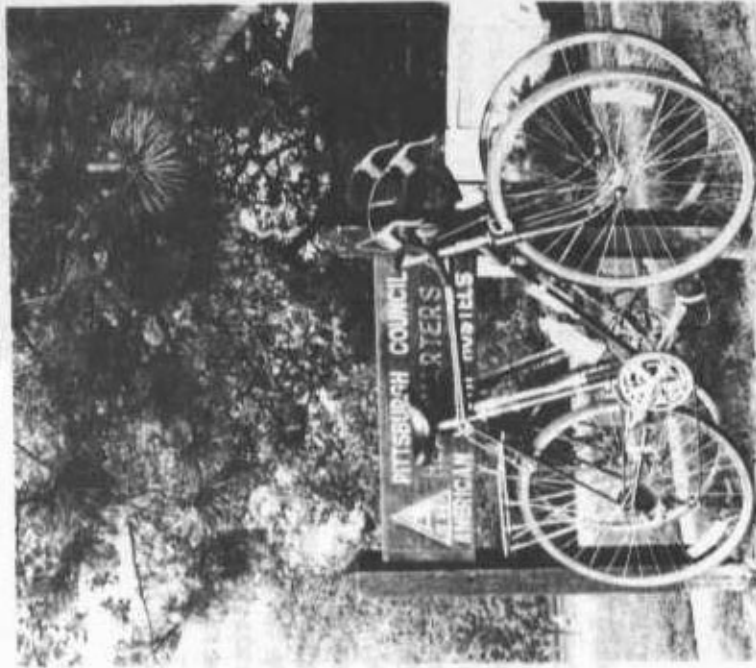
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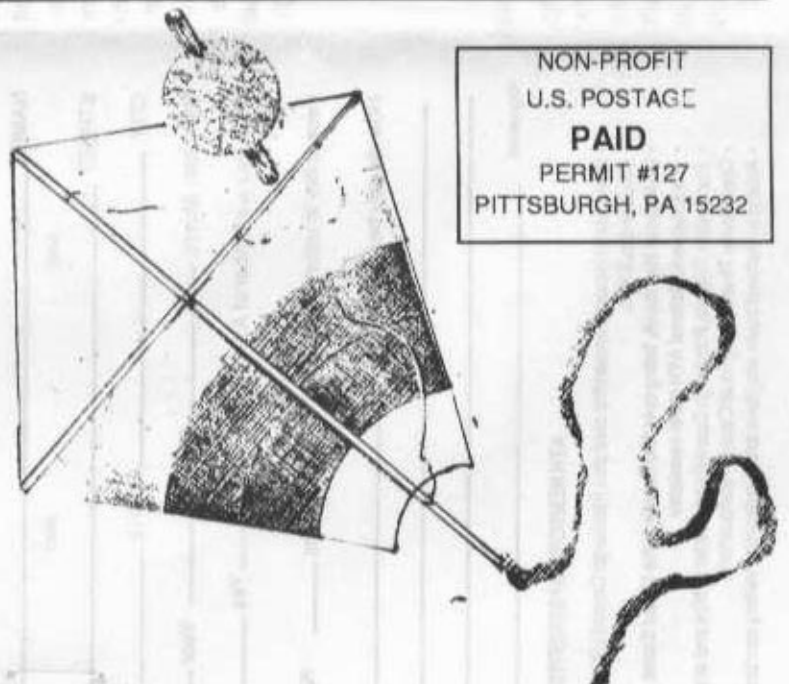
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