

# Golden Triang

# Hostelling International-USA, Pittsburgh Council

**Hostelling International,** is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping all people, especially the young, gain a greater understanding of the world and its people through hostelling.

**VOLUME 53. NUMBER 4** 

**DECEMBER 2003-JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2004** 

# **HOLIDAY PARTY**

PITTSBURGH COUNCIL HOLIDAY PARTY SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY DECEMBER 18, 2003 AT 6:30 PM. BECAUSE OF CLOSURE OF THE PITTS-BURGH HOSTEL, IT WILL BE AT ACTIVITIES HEADQUARTERS, SHADY AVE. AT FIFTH AVENUE IN SHADYSIDE.

No reservations necessary. Extensive food. Bring a covered dish or snacks. We may go caroling.

# Message from the President / State of the Council Report

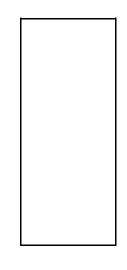
As we reported in the last issue of the Golden Triangle, both the Pittsburgh Hostel and the Ohiopyle Hostel have closed. We anticipate that these closures will be permanent. At the Pittsburgh Hostel, overnights had dropped dramatically since 9/11/03. This past year the Hostel was operating at less than 20% of its overnight capacity. The Board made several attempts over the past year to fundraise to cover the operating losses, but the grant requests were not accepted due to a drop off in foundation giving.

In the case of Ohiopyle, the National AYH was requiring major renovations in order to re-license the facility. Given our financial situation, we could not invest in the required renovations. As a result, we

(Continued on page 3)

**FERNATIONAL** PITTSBURGE P.O. Box Pittsburgh, HOSTELLING IN

Change Service Dated material-please





# **Hostelling** -**International** Pittsburgh PA



A 50 bed full service hostel in a commercial bank building. Free parking, travel store, handicapped



- Andy Warhol Museum
- Station Square
- Nearby Southside
- The Downtown Cultural District Riverfront Bike Trails
- Nearby Universities
- The Carnegie Science Center The Zoo & National Aviary
- Phipps Conservatory Historic Point State Park
- Heinz Field

# **INSIDE**

Message from the President: Page 1 Holiday Party: Page 1 Activity Chairs: Page 2 Slide Shows and Programs: Page 3 Rambles: Page 3

Rock Climbing: Page 3 Hiking/Backpacking/Trails: Pages 4-6 Canoeing: Page 6

Sea-Kayaking: Page 6 Cross-Country Skiing: Page 6

Other Outdoor Clubs: Page 6 Baker and Rachel Carson Trails: Page 7

> Bicycling: Page 7 Sailing: Page 7 Dragon Boating: Page 7

Wilderness Lodge Weekends and Registration: Page 8

Some Great Trails of the Deep South:Page 9

Easy Backpacking: Page 10 2004 HI Discounters: Page 11-12 PA State Parks Info: Page 12 Council Memberships: Back Cover

....And MORE!!!



# Pittsburgh Council, Hostelling International-USA

Serving Western Pennsylvania & West Virginia Panhandle Since 1948, Incorporated 1955

The Golden Triangle is published monthly
by the Pittsburgh Council of
Hostelling International-USA.
Contents are at the discretion of the editor.
All Material within is Copyrighted by
Pittsburgh Council,
Hostelling International-USA
All Rights Reserved

#### **Triangle Staff**

Managing Editor ... **Joel Platt** 412-521-5244 golden\_triangle@bigfoot.com

Copy Editor ... VACANT Mailing Labels ... VACANT Production ... Don Hoecker Advertising ... VACANT

#### **Council Officers**

President ... **Grant Ervin** (412.445.1564)

Vice-President ... Eva Mergner Secretary ... Ray Yutzy Treasurer ... VACANT

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Alida Baker
Amanda Charpentier
Genevieve Cook
Grant Ervin
Tom Hardy
Maureen Hogan
Eva Mergner
Eric Milliron
Neil Morrow
George Schmidt
Kevin Swenson
Wanda Wilson
Ray Yutzy

## 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:

HI-Pittsburgh Council The Golden Triangle

1632 Denniston St. Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Headquarters: (412) 362-8181 (Thursdays only 8-10PM) or

HI-Pgh on the information super Highway. Point your browser to: http://trfn.clpgh.org/ayh/ or you can email us at golden\_triangle@bigfoot.com



# PITTSBURGH COUNCIL ACTIVITY CHAIRS

Chairman of the Activities Committee

VACANT Canoeing

VACANT Cycling

VACANT

Family Activities
Barbara Hanusa ............ 441-7205
Hiking/Backpacking

Connie Black ......371-1062

Kayaking Ray Yutzy .....724-926-4646

Midweek Rambles Billie Woodland ....... 886-1603

Sailing
Bob Zavos ...... 241-0659

Sea Kayaking

Trail Systems VACANT

Headquarters Programs



# Free ads may not

# **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 pro
- 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 run 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 2004 Number 1 issue ->March/April/May Number 2 issue ->June/July/August

Number 3 issue -> September/October/November

Number 4 issue -> December/January/February

Editor...

# NOTICE

Please note the deadlines for future issues of the GOLDEN TRIANGLE

Mar-Apr-May ISSUE All copy, Feb 5 Binding/Mailing, Feb 19

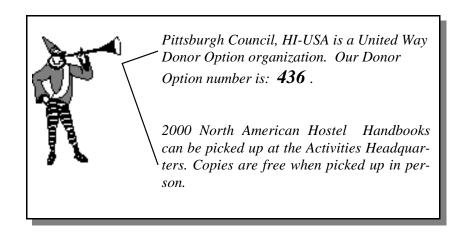
If your work is on computer, Please contact Joel Platt at golden\_triangle@bigfoot.com

#### Moving?

If you move, or have any subscription problems, please notify us right away. Returned mail costs 42 cents for each piece, so we can save money if you let us know about any changes in your address.

#### **About HI**

Hostelling International is a nonprofit organization which promotes international understanding, educational and recreational travel, good citizenship and an appreciation of America. HI does this by bringing travelers of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities together in hostels and by providing low-cost travel programs. HI-USA is the US affiliate of Hostelling International (HI), (formerly named **International Youth Hostel Feder**ation (IYHF), which coordinates than 4,500 hostels worldwide- the largest network of accommodations in the world.



# Sheet Sleeping Sack DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT ONE!

Required in all hostels, the sleeping sack serves as your top & bottom sheets, with a built-in pillowcase. Regular sleeping bags are not allowed at hostels due to public health regulations. Our nylon sleep sack is especially light, compact, and dries extremely quickly (handy on trips). The cotton/polyester sleep sack is a little heavier and bulkier, but feels just like your bedsheets. Order one today! See the order form on the back page for prices.

## Message from the President / State of the Council Report

(Continued from page 1)

had to end our lease of the facility from Ohiopyle State Park. The Pittsburgh Hostel closing is also a permanent closure, as the Urban Redevelopment Authority will assume ownership of the facility now that it is no longer a Hostel.

While the Board is disappointed with the closure of both Hostels, we are reminded of the thousands of people they served over the years. The Board is committed to the idea that a Hostel, or set of smaller Hostels, can be viable in the Pittsburgh region given the right set of circumstances.

With the dramatic changes that have happened in the past year, you may naturally wonder what is next for Pittsburgh Council AYH. The Board is committed to doing strategic planning about the ways in which we can meet the organization's mission in the absence of Hostel Facilities. We also need to hear from our members about your ideas. We had a good turnout and discussion at the Annual Meeting in October. If you would like to be involved in this process or to provide input please contact me via email at pittcouncil@hotmail.com.

We expect that organizational changes may result from the strategic planning process, but at this point we are not sure what those will be. At this point, the only organizational change is the closure of the Hostels. Other Council activities and programs will go on as planned until further notice.

The upcoming years will be challenging ones for Pittsburgh Council AYH, but they will also hold new opportunities. Our organization has a long history, and with the strength of our mission and those committed to carrying it out we have always been able to accomplish great things. It is in that spirit that we will continue.

#### **UPCOMING SLIDE SHOWS**

December 4: Jim Wallace, "China". Jim takes you from Beijing in the north to Hongkong in the south. Memories of dynasties of the past, and the modern China of today. From Wuhan up the Yangtze River to Chongching, a distance of 800 miles. Experience the 3-Gorge Dam area, Guilin's unique topography, and cormorant fishing.

December 11: Ron Boone, "Free Style Canoeing: A Ballet On The Water". Ron attended the Northeastern Free Style Canoe Symposium at a Scout camp in Cuyahoga National Park near Akron, Ohio. He will show a video of demonstrations synchronized to music, by five different presenters. A song written by him was used in the symposium.

December 18: Christmas party STARTING AT 6:30 PM. Because of closure of the Pittsburgh Hostel, it will be AT ACTIVITIES HEADQUARTERS, Shady Ave. at Fifth Avenue in Shadyside. Extensive food. Bring a covered dish or snacks. We may go caroling.

December 25: Closed for Christmas holidays.

January 1: Closed for New Year holidays.

January 29: Pizza and soft drinks party.

January 8; Fruit pie, potato chips and soft drinks party.

January 15: Krista Reitz, "Traveling Through Uzbekistan". Dressed in Uzbek costume, Krista will show the culture of this former soviet republic in Central Asia, the crafts, the stunning Islamic architecture. Visit Tashkent and Bukhara.

In Samarkand, see giant stone structures built by Mongol astronomers. January 22; We show the 16mm film "The Living Planet: Building Of The Earth". How continents move, and how the planet became so varied. Visit of an erupting volcano in Iceland, of giant plants on Mount Kenya. Recolonization by wildlife of Krakatoa and Mount Saint Helen. Produced by the BBC.

February 5: Gerry Schmidt, "Touring Poland In A Polish-Built Fiat". Hiking in the mountains near Zakopane. See palaces and baroque churches in Warsaw and Krakow. Also Poznan, Auschwitz and Gdansk.

February 12: We show the 16mm film "The Louvre". Traces its history as a fortress, royal palace, theater and public museum of art, showing its connection with French history and culture. A detailed view of art treasures from each period of European history.

February 19: Cookies, pretzels and soft drinks party.

February 26: Alastair Stout: "A Journey Through Britain's Most Northerly Island: Shetland". We go from the southern tip of the island at Sunburgh Head to the capital city of Lerwick, then to the northern isles of Yell and Unst. The trip also incorporates local traditions, from fiddle music and knitting to Viking fire festivals

March 4: We show the 16mm film "Madrid". Sights of the city include flamenco dances, the Escorial Palace, the Plaza Major bullfighting arena, and the Prado Museum.

Slide shows start at 8:30 PM, at Council Headquarters, Shady Avenue at Fifth Avenue. Doors open at 8:00 PM. If you want to give a show, call Luc Berger at 412-683-3131.



## **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 iceskating 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 charlzjonz@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.

#### Rambles For Winter 2003 and 2004

#### **DECEMBER**

- **Dec. 3-** West End. Bob Kelly 412-921-7728.
- **Dec.10-** Oohmahnee Farm Sanctuary near New Stanton. **Call and reserve with Mary Ruth if you would like to have lunch that the farm owners will prepare.** You may bring a bag lunch. Mary Ruth Aull 412-795-7078.
- Dec.17- Whitehall Farms/Caste Village area walk followed by a Holiday celebration at Billie Woodland's home. Let's chip in and purchase prepared food! Former Ramblers and Old Time AYH hikers/party people welcome! Please reserve with Billie by Dec 13.- 412-886-1603.
- Dec.24 and Dec 31- Happy Holidays! No ramble.

#### JANUARY 2004

- **Jan. 6-** Schenley Park. Lunch at visitor's center (optional). Joanne Winwood. 412-371-3167.
- **Jan.13** Northside, guided by the man who grew up there!. Lunch at USA Gormet (optional). Earl McCabe 412-761-1844.
- **Jan 20** Duff Park in Murrysville . Eat in nearby restaurant (optional). Nick Broskovich 724-863-6707.
- **Jan 27** Walk to Frick Art and Historical Center. Jim Hurst 412-276-0447. Jim suggests that we have lunch in the Tea House and tour Clayton. Reservations required for each. 412-371-0600.

#### **FEBRUARY**

- Feb. 4- Historic Houses in Shadyside Area. Maureen Kelly 412-821-5707.
- Feb.11 -Historic Troy Hill. Teresa Honert 412-683-0253
- **Feb 18-** Downtown Pittsburgh. We will take the 10:05 A.M. bus from Fifth and Shady Ave., gather in upper lobby of One Oxford Center, and tour architecturally significant buildings.

  Optional lunch at a church lunch room. Billie Woodland 412-886-1603.
- **Feb. 25** Summerset at Frick Park. Let's walk around the community built on top of the slag heap on Brown Hill Road. This is Mariya Shenker's first turn at leading! 412-462-2147

**Rambles begin at 10 A.M.** Meet in Mellon Park upper parking lot at Fifth and Shady Avenues. Carpooling is encouraged. Please pay driver \$1 to \$4.00, depending on length of trip.

Rambles are subject to change due to weather or other circumstances. Call trip leader for more information if you plan to meet at trail head or to inquire about difficulty of the hike. Alternate phone number or for general information call Billie Woodland 412-886-1603.



#### HIKING/BACKPACKING/TRAILS

AMBLE HIKES ARE 4-6 MILES IN INTERESTING LOCATIONS AROUND PITTSBURGH. CONNIE BLACK HAS AGREED TO TAKE CALLS FROM THOSE WISHING TO

LEAD AN AMBLE AS WELL AS THOSE WISHING TO GO ON AN AMBLE.

CONNIE'S PHONE NUMBER IS 412-371-1062 AND HER EMAIL IS ceblack@libcom.com

#### Bedford Village - Sat. Dec.13

This is an old historical village that opens up for the Christmas season. We will carpool and eat at a restaurant before entering the

village. We will see a Christmas play and then roam around the village checking out all the historical buildings. People are dressed in period clothes. Artisans are inside showing how things were once made. Soldiers are in some buildings. An old tavern serves some sandwiches and drink. An old church has music, players and singers. Sleigh or wagon rides. Illuminaries are over the village grounds. Great way to get into the spirit of Christmas. Call to get prices and details and what date we are going.

Joyce Appel – 724-526-5407 or email joyceappel@arm-tek.net

#### "First Night" in Pittsburgh – Dec. 31

This is a great way to bring in the New Year. We go as a group and will meet in the afternoon at one of the theater entrances and again in the evening for those who can't meet earlier. You buy your badge at any Giant Eagle and that gets you into all events with a wide variety to pick from every half an hour or 45 minutes. (opera, jazz, singers, quartets, orchestra, tap dancers, comedians, movie, ballet, acrobats, variety shows, parade and fireworks are just a few examples)

Joyce Appel 724-526-5407 or joyceappel@arm-tek.net

# ALLEGHENY GROUP - SIERRA CLUB - OUTINGS THRU MARCH 21, 2004

Suggested carpool fees are based on 6 cents/ passenger-mile  $+\ a$  share of tolls.

(Unless stated, car-miles are one-way from Monroeville.) For more up-to-date listings, visit http://www.alleghenysc.org/ Hardcopy subscriptions to this list are \$2.50/ year (4 issues). Make check payable to Allegheny Group, Sierra Club and mail to Bruce Sundquist, 210 College Park Dr., Monroeville PA 15146-1532 E-mail subscriptions are free. Contact bsundquist1@juno.com

To join the Sierra Club (Allegheny Group, Pennsylvania Chapter, and the National organization), contact Membership Chair Barbara Goff at 412-655-1662 or bargoff@hotmail.com

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you wish to read the liability waiver before you participate in an outing, go to:

http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/, or contact the Outings Department at 415-977-5528 for a printed version.

#### **Note for Ski-Tourers:**

- (1) In the winter of 2002-03, snow conditions on the ridges were excellent. At times there were 6 ft. of snow on both Chestnut and Laurel Ridges. In the winter of 2001-02 there was hardly any snow, so we mainly hiked. In the winter before that snow conditions were so good that people had a hard time finding a source of ski-touring gear. Our winter trip plans attempt to deal with this uncertainty. (See below.)
- (2) Allegheny Group offers a 26-page (8.5x11") booklet Ski-Touring in Western Pennsylvania that discusses equipment, clothing, places to go, technique, etc. It is available for \$2.00 + \$1.50 for book-rate postage from Bob Roth, 80 Roseleaf Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15220. Make checks payable to Allegheny Group, Sierra Club.
- (3) Gear rentals are no longer available at Laurel Mountain, but they are available in Ligonier at the Thicket (724-238-6455) just off US30.

**SKI-TOURING** (January through Mid-March): Decisions on where and when to go ski-touring depend so much on snow conditions that advance trip planning earlier than a day or two before the trip is impractical. Therefore the list below gives only the name of the leader who has agreed to lead any ski-touring trip on the weekend indicated. Call that leader around mid-week if you want to be notified of any trip going out on the coming weekend. State your experience level and whether you need to rent gear. For weekends for which no ski-touring leader is listed, call

Bruce Sundquist at 724-327-8737. If you are interested in intermediate-level mid-week trips, call the same number.

#### **EVENING CONDITIONING WALKS**

South Park (year-around). Thurs. evenings, 6:15 PM. Locations vary. Call Bonnie Thomas, 412-833-1068, for meeting time and place.

#### **DAY- AND WEEKEND TRIPS**

**Sun. Oct. 26** - Easy 4-mile hike along Plum Creek in Dark Hollow Woods near Oakmont. See tombstones and ghosts in the woods at Halloween. Call Luc Berger, 412-683-3131

Sun. Oct 26 - Hike about 10 miles on J. P. Saylor trail in Gallitzen State Forest; includes Clear Shade Wild Area; intermediate; meet at 8 AM. \$10.00 carpool- 83 miles. Call Jim Ritchie, 412-828-0210.

**Sat.-Sun. Nov. 1-2** - Backpacking on the Laurel Highlands Trail - one of a series of trips to cover the entire 70 miles of the LHHT. Call Harold Kotchig, 412-341-1196

**Sun. Nov. 2** - Hike an intermediate 12 miles on the Laurel Highlands Trail from Maple Summit Road to Ohiopyle State Park. \$8.50 carpool - 65 miles. Call Donna Allen, 412-372-2993

**Sun. Nov. 2** - Llama walk, an easy 4-5 miles, in Blue Spruce Park in Indiana County. \$6.00 carpool - 50 miles. Call Diane Neely, 724-459-3012

**Sun. Nov. 2** - Hike - Strenuous - Hike from Laurel Ridge State Park north and return on the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail. We'll go about 19 miles at about a 3 mph pace on the trail. \$8.00 carpool-60 miles. Call Dave Mottorn, 724-327-7582

**Sat. Nov. 8** - 7-8-mile loop hike near Mill Run PA- past abandoned farms with exceptional views. Meet at Monroeville Middle School at 10 AM. \$8.00-60 miles. Call Ed Divers, 412-828-5154

**Sun. Nov. 9** - Hike - strenuous and exploratory - in areas of Mc-Connell's Mill State Park downstream of Hell's Run and Grindstone Run, along both banks of Slippery Rock Creek. \$4.50 carpool-37 miles from Shadyside. Call Dick Pratt, 412-362-5567

**Sat. Nov. 15** - Caving, intermediate, in Lemon Hole Cave on Chestnut Ridge. \$4.25 carpool-35 miles. Call Norm Snyder, 412-351-4068

**Sun. Nov. 16** - Biking - moderately strenuous - on the Ghost Town Bike Trail from Dilltown north to Nanty Glo. Potentially 32 miles with a substantial grade for about 5 miles. Barbecue at Clems on the way home is an option. \$6.00 carpool-50 miles. Call Dave Mottorn, 724-327-7582

**Sun. Nov. 23** - Hike an intermediate 8 miles in Harrison Hills County Park. \$1.25 carpool - 10 miles from Harmarville. Call Judy or Don Ziegler, 412-826-0519

Fri. Nov. 28 -- Visit Harlansburg Cave for restoration and/or mapping work. Harlansburg Cave, Pennsylvania's longest mapped cave (4+ miles, some mapped, some not). Meet at Scott Township Fire Hall for cleanup and mapping work. Other dates: Jan.1 and March 27. If possible, e-mail our cave preserve manager, John Nestor, at harlansburgcave@karst.org to sign up for a specific day(s) for either mapping or cleanup work. (A sign-up will be necessary.) \$3.50 carpool- 30 miles from Scott Twp. Fire Hall. Also contact Kim Metzgar at 724-325-2985 or KimMAKC@aol.com (Tell Kim if you need to borrow caving gear.) The cave management plan is at http://www.karst.org.

**Sun. Nov. 30** - Hiking - strenuous - on the northern end of Rachael Carson Trail. We'll go 15-20 miles at about a 3 mph pace on the trail. Call Dave Mottorn, 724-327-7582

**Sat.-Sun. Dec. 6-7** - Backpacking on the Laurel Highlands Trail. Stay in trail shelters. This is another in a series of trips to cover the entire 70 miles of the LHHT. Call Harold Kotchig, 412-341-1196

**Sun. Dec. 7** - 6-mile level hike from Connellsville to Pechins - Half is on the Yough River Bike Trail. Spend 1 hr. at Pechins. Shuttle for the

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

return trip. Meet at Monroeville Middle School at 11 AM. \$6.50 carpool-50 miles. Call Ed Divers, 412-828-5154

**Sun. Dec. 7** - Hike about 8 miles on Rachel Carson Trail, from Freeport to Bull Creek Road; strenuous, meet at 10 AM. \$3.25 carpool-25 miles. Call Jim Ritchie, 412-828-0210

**Sun. Dec 14**. Hike - strenuous and exploratory - from Burgettstown Game Lands to Raccoon Creek State Park via the Hillman Game Lands, across the unusual and disconcerting terrain of little visited reclaimed lands, lakes and the unique model airplane field. \$3.50 carpool fee - 30 miles from Shadyside. Call Dick Pratt, 412-362-5567

**Sun. Dec. 14** - Ski touring at Laurel Ridge State Park or Laurel Mountain (US30 area). If there's no snow we may be able to hike somewhere. \$8.00 carpool-60 miles or \$7.00 - 57 miles. Call Dave Mottorn, 724-327-7582

**Sat. Dec. 20** -- Hiking or ski-touring somewhere on Laurel Ridge. Call Norm Snyder, 412-351-4068

**Sun. Dec. 28** - Ski touring at Laurel Ridge State Park or Laurel Mountain (US30 area). If there's no snow we may be able to hike somewhere. \$8.00 carpool-60 miles or \$7.00 - 57 miles. Call Dave Mottorn, 724-327-7582

**Thurs. Jan. 1** - What better way to start the New Year than a hike in the winter greenery and streamside scenery of Slippery Rock Creek Gorge, Hell's Hollow and Alpha Pass in McConnells Mill State Park? Nothing like a fast-paced 8.5-mile hike there to help you shed some of your Holiday excesses and indulgences. \$3.25 carpool - 27 miles from Cranberry Mall. Call Judy or Don Ziegler, 412-826-0519

**Sat. or Sun. Jan. 3 or 4** - Ski-touring for beginners at Laurel Mountain or Laurel Ridge State Park. Hike in Duff Park if snow conditions are not good. Date depends on weather and snow. Call Nick Broskovich 724-863-6707

**Sat.-Sun. Jan. 3-4** - Backpacking on the Laurel Highlands Trail. Stay in trail shelters. This is one of a series of trips to cover all 70 miles of the LHT. Call Harold Kotchig, 412-341-1196

**Sun. Jan 4** -- Hike - strenuous and exploratory - in the large west side of Raccoon Creek State Park, including historic Frankfort Mineral Springs and its large icicle formations, beaver activity along Traverse Creek, the far north end lands, and the beautiful valley of Little Service Run. Call Dick Pratt, 412-362-5567

**Sat. Jan. 10** - Ski touring at Laurel Ridge State Park or Laurel Mountain (US30 area). If there's no snow we may be able to hike somewhere. \$8.00 carpool-60 miles or \$7.00 - 57 miles. Call Dave Mottorn, 724-327-7582

**Sat. Jan. 17** - Hike an easy 8 miles on the Kiski Bike Trail past Roaring Run. Meet at Harmarville Ames at 10 AM. \$3.50 carpool-30 miles. Call Ed Divers, 412-828-5154

**Sat. Jan. 17** - Ski-touring, moderate, in the Laurel Mountain (US30) area. Hike in the same area if snow conditions are not good. \$7.00 carpool - 57 miles. Call Diane Neely, 724-459-3012

**Sun. Jan. 25** - Ski-touring, intermediate at Laurel Ridge State Park or Laurel Mountain (US30 area). If there's no snow we may be able to hike somewhere. \$8.00 carpool-60 miles or \$7.00 - 57 miles. Call Dave Mottorn, 724-327-7582

**Sun. Jan. 25** - Hiking or ski-touring on Indian Creek Valley Bike Trail near Champion - an easy, level 8 miles. \$5.75 carpool - 41 miles. (NOTE: ICV Trail is at the base of Laurel Ridge, so hiking is more likely.) Call Donna Allen, 412-372-2993

**Fri. eve - Sun. Jan. 30 - Feb. 1**-- Ski-touring, intermediate, in Canaan Valley, Blackwater Falls State Park and Canaan Mountain. The elevation (3200-4100') produces more snow than Laurel Ridge. Scenery in West Virginia's Highlands insures great hiking if snow conditions aren't favorable. Rental units must be reserved well in advance, so reserve

early. Limit: 20. \$22.00 carpool-150 miles. Call Monika or Bob Dalrymple, 724-863-4163

**Sun. Feb. 1** - Hike an intermediate miles in McConnell's Mill State Park from Alpha Pass to Hell's Hollow. \$3.25 carpool - 27 miles from Cranberry Mall. Call Mike Robertson, 412-678-4039

**Sat.- Sun. Feb. 7-8** - Backpacking somewhere in Allegheny National Forest

(weather permitting) \$20 carpool. Call Harold Kotchig, 412-341-1196

**Sun. Feb. 8** - Ski-touring at Laurel Ridge State Park or Laurel Mountain (US30 area). If there's no snow we may be able to hike somewhere. \$8.00 carpool-60 miles or \$7.00 - 57 miles. Call Dave Mottorn, 724-327-7582

**Sun. Feb. 8** - Hike a fast-paced 7.5 miles in Deer Lakes County Park a few miles from Harmarville. Call Judy or Don Ziegler, 412-826-0519

**Sat. or Sun. Feb. 14 or 15** - Ski-touring for intermediates at Laurel Mountain or Laurel Ridge State Park. Hike if snow conditions are not good. Date depends on weather and snow. Call Don Stone, 412-441-2027

**Sat. Feb. 21** -- Hiking or ski-touring somewhere on Laurel Ridge. Call Norm Snyder, 412-351-4068

**Sun. Feb. 22** - Ski-touring at Laurel Ridge State Park or Laurel Mountain (US30 area). If there's no snow we may be able to hike somewhere. \$8.00 carpool-60 miles or \$7.00 - 57 miles. Call Dave Mottorn, 724-327-7582

**Sat. or Sun. Feb. 28 or 29** - Ski-touring for beginners at Laurel Mountain or Laurel Ridge State Park. Hike in Duff Park if snow conditions are not good. Date depends on weather and snow. Call Nick Broskovich 724-863-6707

**Sun. Feb 29** -- Hike - strenuous and exploratory - in a Meadow Run (cascades) /Cucumber Run (falls) loop from the great falls at Ohiopyle, perhaps also including the views from Tharp Knob. \$9.50 carpool - 72 miles from Shadyside. Call Dick Pratt, 412-362-5567.

**Sat.-Sun. Mar. 6-7** - Backpacking on the Laurel Highlands Trail. Stay in trail shelters. This is one of a series of trips to cover all 70 miles of the LHT. Call Harold Kotchig, 412-341-1196

**Sat. or Sun. Mar. 6 or 7** - Ski-touring for beginners at Laurel Mountain or Laurel Ridge State Park. Hike in Duff Park if snow conditions are not good. Date depends on weather and snow. Call Nick Broskovich 724-863-6707

**Sat. or Sun. Mar. 13 or 14** - Ski-touring, intermediate, wherever snow conditions are good. Hike if snow conditions are not good. Date depends on weather and snow. Call Bruce Sundquist, 724-327-8737

**Sat. or Sun. Mar. 20 or 21** - Ski-touring for beginners at Laurel Mountain or Laurel Ridge State Park. Hike in Duff Park if snow conditions are not good. Date depends on weather and snow. Call Nick Broskovich 724-863-6707.

**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 03/01/04-05/31/04 should contact Bruce Sundquist, 724-327-8737, bsundquist1@juno.com by 01/15/03.

#### SIERRA CLUB MEMBERSHIP INDUCEMENT

If you join the Sierra Club on one of our outings, your \$25 introductory membership will get you a free hip pack (while supplies last). Call Bruce Sundquist (724-327-8737) for application form and pack.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

#### **HELP WANTED:**

Allegheny Group's Outings Chair (Bruce Sundquist) has held that post since 1976 -- much too long. Running the outings program involves 32 well-defined tasks. Most are done quarterly; some monthly. About 12 could be done without any experience, and could be divided among several people. If you are willing to share some of these tasks, please contact Bruce at 724-327-8737 or bsundquist1@juno.com

#### **ALLEGHENY GROUP MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Monthly meetings of Allegheny Group are now held at Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center on Shady Avenue just south of Fifth Ave. Driving south on Shady from Fifth, turn left at the second driveway into a parking lot in front of the Scaife Unit of the Arts Center. Parking there is metered (quarters only - 25 cents per hour). Follow the cobblestone driveway back to the Garden Center. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM. The first 30 minutes is a business meeting, the main program begins around 8 PM. A social hour follows. We must vacate the building by 10 PM.

**Wed. Dec. 10 - END-OF-YEAR CELEBRATION** For our annual holiday event, members are invited to participate in a pot-pourri slide show. Let Peter Wray pjwray@telerama.com know if you wish to present up to 8 slides.



#### **CROSS COUNTRY SKIING**

Cross Country Ski weekends coming up. Yes, winter will be approaching soon and then it will be skiing time! It truly is "winter wonderland" at Wilderness Lodge near Wattsburg, PA. and Allegany State Park

near Salamanca, NY. Ask anyone who has gone. You will feel like you are in fairytale land in the middle of an unforgettable snow scene. It is for beginners or experienced, snow shoeing or skiing, and rentals are available, or bring your own. Reserve early because the weekends fill up fast.

(However, watch out for the one big tree on a turn on the road to Wilderness Lodge. It loves to jump out and grab cars as they go by. Ask Dave Adams.)

Joyce Appel

Weekends:

Jan. 23-25 (Fri.- Sun.) Allegany State Park Feb. 20-23 (Fri.- Sun.) Allegany State Park

Hike, snowshoe or cross country ski. (Ski rentals available) I have rented 3 cabins for each weekend. They are basic cabins with heat, refrigerator, stove, counter and table. Bring covered dish to share for "pot luck" dinner on Sat. Warming hut has a few snacks and hotdogs. Otherwise, bring your own snacks, breakfast and lunch. \$30 per person for the weekend. Space for 18 people each weekend, so call early to reserve and get details.

 $Joyce\ Appel-724\text{-}526\text{-}5407\ or\ email\ joyceappel@arm\text{-}tek.net}$ 

Feb. 6-8 (Fri.-Sun.) Feb. 13-15 (Fri.-Sun.)

Wilderness Lodge Cross Country Ski Weekend. (Hike, Ski, or Snowshoe) Rentals available. Dinner included Sat. night. See Information on Page 8!

Mary Anne – 412-665-9554



#### **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

Outside Adventure Learning of Western Pennsylvania above and with Sierra Clubs Hikes, at end.



Activity Co-chairs:

## **CANOEING**

Paul Henry (724) 347-3282 Brian McBane (724) 443-8972

AYH Canoe 2003 Planing Meeting

January TBA

We will probably choose a meeting place and time by the second week of January. Call Brian McBane (724-443-8972) for details.

#### **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 Saturday at 6 PM (except June-August) at Community Presbyterian Church, 7501 Church Av., Ben Avon. Contact Chuck Tague, 412-488-8760 or 432 Olympia Rd, Pgh. 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 yoree@sgi.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: 724-230-0237 or 412-968-0310.

Outside Adventures Sea-Kayaking Program "Sea-Kayaking Taught From Scratch"

Outside Adventure Learning of Western Pa. is a non-profit educational organization committed to introducing individuals to safe and enjoyable recreational outdoor pursuits. The sea-kayaking program specializes in teaching all levels of sea-kayaking skills and organizing trips from our evening introductory classes for new paddlers up to advanced expedition tours. Outside Adventures welcomes participation from individuals, families, youth organizations and outings clubs. Sea-kayaks, or touring kayaks are versatile, fun, human-powered watercraft that enables us to do all these things and more. They are sleek and fast, more efficient than canoes, more comfortable and stable than whitewater kayaks, have hatches to swallow loads of gear, and steerable rudders that enable even beginners to control the boat with ease.

# Baker Trail and Rachel Carson Trail Trail Maintenance Opportunities for 2003

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. Meet behind Sheetz just at the end of the exit ramp for Route 28 North exit 13. The date is **Saturday**, **December 13**, 2003. Please contact Don Erdeljac at DonErdeljac@comcast.net or call 412 486 9292 for details.

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.

#### Baker Trail/Rachel Carson Trail Resources

Rachel Carson Trail website: www.rachelcarsontrail.com; 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.

## **SAILING**



The major sailing organization in this area is the Moraine Sailing Club which holds most activities on Lake Arthur in Moraine State Park, about 35 miles North of Pittsburgh just off of I79 near Portersville. See the MSC Web site for their latest activities at morainesailingclub.org.

The "Regatta at Lake Arthur" is set for the weekend of August 23-24and is one of the areas premier outdoor events with a wide variety of water activities. They will have 12 mile Canoe and Kayak races on Saturday at 8am and sailboat races on both days starting at 10:30 at Watts Bay. They also have Naturalist Canoe Tours, Helicopter Tours, a Boat Parade, Skydivers, Hot Air Balloons and a wide variety of entertainment. The complete detailed schedule on the Web at: http://www.visit-butler-county-pennsylvania-pa.com/

#### Pennsylvania State Web Sites

Moraine State Park www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/morain.htm PA DCNR Contacts www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/keycont.htm PA DCNR Press Releases http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/polycomm/pressrel PA Fish & Boat Commission: www.fish.state.pa.us Commonwealth of PA: http://www.state.pa.us/PAPower/PA Governor: sites.state.pa.us/PA\_Exec/Governor/organization.

#### **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

#### **DRAGON BOATING**

The dragon boats have been in Pittsburgh for two years, but many people are still unaware of this growing international water sport that is over 2400 years old! The dragon boat is an over 40 foot long colorfully painted vessel with a dragon head and tail. It is propelled by 20 paddlers who stroke in time to the drum beats (the heart of the dragon) and directions given by the drummer who is seated behind the head of the dragon. In the rear, an oarsman stands to provide steering.

Steel City Rowing Club in Verona is the home of the Steel City Dragons. We have traveled to Toronto, Cleveland and Philadelphia this year and placed extremely well. We came in 6<sup>th</sup> out of 80 boats in Philadelphia, only 2 seconds behind the winning team! Locally we have won all the competitions at the Boaters Regatta and the Pittsburgh Dragon Boat Festival.

Plans for the 2004 season include expanding the program. We hope to field competitive traveling mixed and women's teams, as well as local competitive teams for women, mixed, seniors (over 40), and men. A mixed youth team for ages 11-17 will be organized, and there will be a recreational team for those not wanting to compete.

Qualifications are minimal—youth and adults interested in improving their physical condition, in reasonable health and looking for fun and camaraderie on the water should give us a try. A trained coaching staff is available to teach all that is needed. No previous paddling experience is necessary.

Currently the team is in winter training, with the new season to start in the spring. For more information please contact:

Jw Schoyer jschoyer@sprynet.com 412-371-5136 Larry Wentzel larry@nauticom.net Dori at Steel City Rowing 412-826-1167

#### AYH Wilderness Lodge Cross Country Ski Weekends

February 6-8, 2004 February 13-15, 2004

Greetings to all! Hope this finds you healthy and hope your summer has been fun.

If the precipitation of this past summer is any indicator, we are in for a snowy winter. We usually have decent to great conditions at Wilderness Lodge and even if we don't we manage to have a lot of fun anyway.

The weekend package includes Friday and Saturday night lodging and Saturday night family style supper. Breakfasts and lunches are available for a modest additional cost but feel free to bring your own food or snacks. The Lodge has a bar so you cannot bring your own and drink it in the common area (state law). The package does not include transportation. Ski rentals are available and there trail fees required for the lodge property.

Double rooms are few and go fast so book early (these include linens as part of the fee). Singles are hostel style with three to six beds to a room and those people should bring their own linens (sheets and towels) or get charged \$3 extra by Nansi upon check in.

Reservations will be firm only when I receive your check in the mail. Due to the closing of the AYH office, we can no longer accept credit cards. Please make checks out to Pittsburgh AYH. There are no refunds within 2 weeks of the weekend that you have registered for but you may find a same sex replacement for yourself. We have a \$10 cancellation fee at other times.

If you have any questions, call Marianne Kasica at 412 665-9554, evenings or email me at marianne@pitt.edu (or Larry at larry.laude@usa.net).

Wilderness Lodge is at 13488 Weeks Valley Road, Wattsburg, PA 16442, east of Erie and on the NY state line. Telephone is 814-739-2946. If you need directions contact Marianne or check the Wilderness Lodge website (http://thewildernesslodge.net/). If you are going to be in late on Friday or not arrive 'till Saturday, please call and let us know.

Please make sure you fill out a form and sign a waiver, it is a necessary evil.

any such services and is not a waiver for any of the any of the said parties of any right hereunder.

\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_

Singles:	\$69	per	person	

Doubles: \$75 per person or \$150 for two people for the weekend

Hope to see you there this year!

Marianne and Larry
Wilderness Lodge 2004 Registration
Name
Address
City, State, Zip
Phone Fax
Email
Payment by check only no credit cards. Singles \$69 per person and Doubles \$75 per person (or \$150 total for the weekend)
Weekend: () Feb. 6-8 () Feb. 13-15
() Men's single () Women's single () Double
For doubles, list name and address of second person. Both must sign the release.
Mail to: AYH Wilderness Lodge, c/o Marianne Kasica, 210 S. Atlantic Ave./ Pittsburgh, PA 15224. <b>Make checks payable to Pittsburgh Council AYH</b> . Signatures below are required.
In consideration of your acceptance of my application for participation in the Wilderness Lodge Weekend, I, the undersigned, for myself and for may heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, waive and release any and all claims for damages for death, personal injury, or loss of property I may or which may accrue to me as a result of my participation. I discharge and release the Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels, Inc., the local trip coordinators, Wilderness Lodge and their respective agents, boards, commissions, employees, representatives, and volunteers from all liability arising out of or connected in any way with my participation, whether or not caused by the negligence of the above parties.
I acknowledge that there are inherent risks and dangers that may arise at any time during the Weekend. My participation is voluntary and is done at my own risk. I voluntarily assume all risks of loss, damage, or injury that may be sustained while participating. I attest that I am physically fit and sufficiently trained for participation in this event. I understand and agree that medical or other services rendered to me by or at the insistence of any of the above parties is not an admission of liability to provide or continue to provide

8

# SOME GREAT TRAILS OF THE DEEP SOUTH

by Glenn Oster
The deep south has some dandy rail trails. One
of my western Pennsylvania fellow bicyclists
decided to follow the sun and moved to the
Florida panhandle. Says he, "Come on down and try
'em; you'll like 'em," rail trails, that is. I
had previously done Florida trails, including
the Withlacoochee, but Walt Ebbert, the gadfly
in this matter, pushed for us to sample others
in the south. But, Walt, that's a "fur piece"
from Pittsburgh.

As matters unfolded, George Gerben, a bicyclist from Pittsburgh and I were already planning to head to Florida to ride the Bike Florida event in March, 2003. Moreover, we intended to travel down ahead of time for a special reason, special? George's 80th birthday, that is. He bicycles the number of miles that equals his age on March 3 each year, and his  $80_{th}$  birthday was truly a special one. The Withlacoochee Trail was perfect for meeting that goal. Before I get into the trails that Walt was enticing us to ride, I have to say that George did indeed ride the 80 miles on March 3. However, we miscalculated and did 81, which left one for good luck or to rail bank for next year's ride on his  $81_{\rm st}$  . Cheri Fitzgerald and Bob Prouix, friends from Florida, also rode with us and provided dinner and champagne for the celebration. What a day! Getting back to the gadfly, his enticements were more compelling now that we were no longer such a "fur piece" from home. So, "Walt, you're on." He had in mind the Longleaf Trace in Mississippi, the Tammany Trace in Louisiana and the West Orange Trail in Florida. Let's look at them, but first, the Withlacoochee.

#### The Withlacoochee Trail

The Withlacoochee Trail has been written up in Rails to Trails Conservancy=s magazine and is well worth riding. It is wide, paved and extends 46 miles from the hamlet of Trilby at its southernmost point to Gulf Junction near Citrus Springs and Dunnellon. An easy access point is from Florida Route 50, about one mile east from I-75. Watch for signs to the parking area (restroom facilities, drinking water and lots of parking space). If you are a purist and want to do the entire trail, go south over the bridge that crosses Rt.50 for about six miles to the end just beyond Trilby.

The trail passes through Withlacoochee State Forest and parallels much of the Withlacoochee River, but the closest thing you get to seeing it is a side trail that leads through the trees an indefinite distance to the river. But you=re there to bike, not to swim or see alligators.

George has made beau coups trips to Florida and would gladly have taken that side trail if we could have promised he=d see an alligator. The trail continues past Silver Lake Campground and the communities of Nobleton, Floral City, Inverness, Hernando, Holder and Citrus Springs.

Toilet facilities along the trail are sparse, but others as well as restaurants are not far off the trail, and. there are a couple bicycle shops along the way as well. By all means ride it, but much of the route is in the open; so, it might be well to avoid it in summer. We didn't have that problem. It rained and was most chilly.

To check it out online, the URL address is much too long to record here. Instead, type "Withlacoochee Trail State Park" in your search engine. This will put some "meat on the bones" of what I've provided so far. When the home page opens, click on the link "Rails to Trails of the Withlacoochee," and, on the resultant page, click on the "See Map" link to get a better feel for its route.

The Longleaf Trace

It was a day's drive from Crystal River, Florida to reach Hattiesburg, Mississippi, the southeast end of the Longleaf Trace. What's a longleaf? a type of pine tree with long needles. So much for the mystique. I've ridden rail trails over much of our nation, and consider this to be one of the best. It's 36 miles long and extends from Jackson Road, near the city of Hattiesburg, and, traveling northwest, passes the towns of Sumrail, Bassfield, and Carson and ends at Prentiss. Walt joined George and me and served as our tour guide. He's ridden the Trace several times, despite its being a long distance from his home in Florida. He had better join us. He's the enticer who was responsible for our driving over 500 miles to Hattiesburg. I'll describe the trail momentarily, but first I want to comment on lunch. We rode into the town of Prentiss to the Kuntry Kitchen. It's a buffet with so many delicious selections that none of us could sample even a little of each. I couldn't control myself and found the return trip to be the struggle of a glutton. The trip into Prentiss added a few more miles to the day, 76 in all. Walt and his wife, Kathy, have motelled in Prentiss to make a two day ride of the Trace. And, what's the Trace like? In a word, super. It's a wide, smoothly paved multiuse trail that mostly is tree lined and shady. Its amenities are impressive. It has several restroom facilities that are attractive buildings with drinking fountains, lavatories and flush toilets. Some are landscaped; others are still being built. Along the way are pull offs with wooden floors, railings and benches. At one location overlooking a large beaver pond, the observation point is a series of five fenced platforms, complete with benches, at successively lower levels reaching almost to water

Soon after we began riding from Jackson Road, the current eastern terminus, we came upon a shelter/restroom facility built and maintained by an adjacent land owner as his own special project to benefit the Trace users. The Trace is essentially flat, but not completely so. There are climbs, but they are so gradual that they should be of little trouble to anyone. To dig into this more deeply, type Longleaf Trace in your search engine and voila a page opens with links to everything you might think of - well, not everything. But its links take you to interests such as directions to the Trace, camping, fishing, rest rooms, souvenirs, events held on the Trace, weather forecasts and an e-mail contact.

Other than for making a pig of myself in Prentiss, and riding on another rainy day, this was a marvelous bicycling experience. We enjoyed the coolness of the time of year and the absence of insects. In the warmer months, it might be a different story.

#### The Tammany Trace

The Tammany Trace is only a couple hours' drive farther west into Louisiana. Its southeastern terminus is the Slidell/Carollo Trailhead (parking, restrooms and water) from which it runs 31 miles northwest past Bayou Lacombe (cypress kneed wetland), Fontainebleu State Park (on Lake Pontchartrain - parking, restrooms, water, camping, swimming, ruins of a sugar mill), past the Mandeville Trailhead (converted and modernized train station with parking, restrooms, water, historical photos, and a conference hall), past the Trace headquarters in its Green Caboose (parking, rest rooms, water, children's playground, picnic tables), Abita Springs (parking, restrooms, water and artesian well springs) and on to Covington. As the website describes it, "Today, this artists' haven offers eclectic shopping and trendy sidewalk cafes without losing its turn-of-

the-century charm." However, we never saw any of that.

The Trace led us directly to a micro brewery

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

(perhaps that's why we never saw the cafes and trendy shops) and restaurant. Not cheap, lunch for me was crawfish etufe plus a pint of suds and tip at a cost of \$16.

We were not able to experience the entire Trace because a key bridge was being replaced and only rode a total of 42 miles. The Trace is older than the others described in this article; the original section was constructed in 1994. Its edges are showing age, but the Tammany Trace Foundation will most likely improve it ere long. It has wetlands on both sides for a number of miles that would most likely be home to a few billion mosquitoes in warmer weather. So, as

with the other trails mentioned herein, it might be better to ride the Trace in the cooler months before the sun is hotter and bugs make their appearances, lean and hungry. Guess what. For a change, (tongue in cheek) we rode the Trace in the rain. Walt took the pictures in this article, which would have had more sparkle if the sun had been shining.

To get more detail, go to "Tammany Trace" in your search engine. Several links are available to tell all.

#### West Orange Trail

The West Orange Trail, also recently highlighted by the Rails to Trails Conservancy, is an excellent 19 mile paved trail in the vicinity of Orlando, Florida that affords views of huge Lake Apopka. Its southwest trail head is at County Line Station (modern facility with bike rental, parking, restrooms, water and a children's playground). It passes through the communities of Oakland (water, parking), Tildenville (water, butterfly garden), Winter Garden (larger city with

all amenities; beautiful park runs through the center of town), Chapin Station (virtually all amenities), Ingram Outpost (parking), Apopka - Vineland Outpost (parking, picnic shelter, water) and on to Apopka.(modest town-trail isn't finished to the trailhead; so, I'm unsure of facilities).

Plans are in place to extend the trail another 11 miles north eastward from Apopka. Moreover, one day it will be a segment of the 200 mile regional connection known as the Central Florida Loop. We missed having Walt along to take pictures. The gazebo and flowered walkway in Winter Garden would have made a nice addition to this exposition. But, would you believe, we finally had a day to ride in sunshine. What a difference good weather makes. If you make it to Walt Disney World, rent a bike and give this marvelous trail a few hours of your day. You will be rewarded handsomely.

This trail, too, has a website. Go to "West Orange Trail" in your search engine and links will provide lots of useful info.

Along with these trails, we rode the week-long Bike Florida event, as mentioned above. Also, I enjoyed four days of backpacking in Ocala National Forest on the Florida National Scenic Trail with my hiking and biking friend, Donna Stowe of Cocoa, but that's another story. Come to bicycle the deep south in the cooler months. What a great way to get away from snow shoveling!

GLO 4/23/03

http://www.intellweb.com/trails/oster.htm

## EASY BACKPACKING

By Glenn Oster

Want to get away from winter weather – next year that is? Want to try backpacking but not so interested in climbing hills? Well, have I got a deal for you! Try hiking the Florida National Scenic Trail (the Trail). It is still a long way from being completed, but there are major segments that are ready to hike.

In Mid-March, 2003, I had a gap of a few days between bicycling programs that I had traveled to Florida to participate in. Can't let an opportunity like that go to waste and decided to nibble on the Trail. Moreover, I knew that Donna Stowe lives nearby and would also be interested in hiking an additional sector. We connected by e-mail and worked out a plan.

We decided on the Ocala National Forest, and a great decision it was. The Trail is table top flat with a couple gentle rises that Pennsylvania hikers would not even notice. In Florida, they refer to them as "hills." It is well laid out and maintained. My only problem with it is that its flatness enabled me to walk so fast that one of my unconditioned soft feet (didn't get much long distance hiking in Pittsburgh over the winter) blistered in no time at all. Donna hikes at a more comfortable pace and had no blister trouble at all. Once my blister announced itself, I found Donna's pace to be just fine.

The Trail goes through dense tropical vegetation - lots of palmettos, various types of oaks and palms and plants that I couldn't begin to identify. It also threads its way through open prairies and past numerous ponds and lakes. One of my biking friends in Florida is terrified of snakes and wouldn't consider hiking in Florida – no way! His concern was unjustified because we didn't see even a garter snake, let alone a diamond back rattler or a cotton-mouth. Other than little critters like squirrels, we only came across one of note – a huge turtle. Its shell was arched modestly and was black with the usual turtle reticulation. Its shell had to be nearly 20 inches long and 15 inches wide. I've never seen a land turtle so large. I'm told it is a gopher turtle because of the way it burrows to make its nest. We were entertained at one campsite by a chorus of coyotes several times during the night. I estimated that each of a dozen of them were doing their best to outdo all the others. It's an eerie sound the first time you hear them.

We were prepared for insects. Happily, we never encountered a mosquito. Donna picked up four little ticks but received no bites. I believe, though, that we were just plain lucky. There had been much colder weather than usual and the mosquitoes were smart enough to delay their appearance until it got warmer. It seems to me that the Trail needs to be hiked during the period between the first frost of autumn and mid-February (earlier if the season warms appreciably before then).

The Florida Trail Association is building and maintaining the Trail. I recommend that you buy their trail guides before hiking. I used the Ocala National Forest map, which is marginally sufficient. We turned from the Trail on a blue-blazed side trail that appeared from the map to be the campsite we wanted (in a driving rainstorm to boot). Sorry, Charlie. We most likely would not have made that mistake with the official trail guide.

Check out their website at www.florida-trail..org. You'll be glad you did.

# HI-PITTSBURGH 2003 DISCOUNTERS

	HI-PITTSBURGH
2003 Discounters	type of discount offered
E House	10% off bill
1511 E Carson St	
Pgh PA 15203 412.488.7455	
ehouseco@citynet.com	
East End Food Co-op	10% OFF PURCHASES, NOT VALID WITH
7516 Meade St	OTHER DISCOUNTS OR SPECIALS
Pgh PA 15208	(PITTSBUGH'S ROCKING' CO-OP AND VEGE-
412.242.3598 eastendfoodcoop.com	TARIAN CAFE!)
•	
Eljay's Used Books 1309 E Carson St	10% DISCOUNT ON ANY PURCHASE
Pgh PA 15203	
412.381.7444	
History Bood Trading Co	100/ off regularly priced items
History Bead Trading Co. 406 South Craig St	10% off regularly priced items
Pgh PA 15213	
412.681.2090	
Jester's Court Tattoos	20% OFF ANY TATTOO, PIERCING, T-SHIRT,
1410 E Carson St	ETC
Pgh PA 15203	
412.488.TATS	
Juice Stop	10% off any smoothie juice drink
119 Oakland Ave Pgh PA 15213	
412.683.8343	
K & M Pub	20% off any food item
200 Mt. Oliver St	2070 Sir diriy 1000 itSiri
Pgh PA 15210	
412.431.9655	
Kaya	10% OFF BILL, NOT VALID WITH OTHER
2000 Smallman St	DISCOUNTS, COUPONS OR PROMOTIONS
Pgh PA 15222 412.261.6565	
412.201.0000 www.bigburrito.com	
Kiva Han Café	2 for 1 coffee, tea & specialty drinks. Excludes
3533 Forbes Ave	fruit based drinks & bottled beverages.
Pgh PA 15213	
412.682.5354	
Kiva Han Café	2 for 1 coffee, tea & specialty drinks. Excludes
420 S Craig St.	fruit based drinks & bottled beverages.
Pgh PA 15213	Ŭ
412.687.6355	
La Prima Espresso	50 CENTS OFF ANY COFFEE DRINK
811 Libery Ave	50 CENTS OFF ANT COFFEE DRINK
Pgh PA 15222	
412.471.4590	
www.laprima.com	450/ DIOCOLINIT
<b>Little Chicago's Pizzeria</b> 1728 E Carson St	15% DISCOUNT
Pgh PA 15203	
412.431.1450	
Mad Mex	10% OFF BILL, NOT VALID WITH OTHER
370 Atwood St Pgh PA 15213	DISCOUNTS, COUPONS OR PROMOTIONS
412.683.6486	
www.bigburrito.com	
Mad Mex	10% OFF BILL, NOT VALID WITH OTHER
7905 McKnight Rd Pgh PA 15237	DISCOUNTS, COUPONS OR PROMOTIONS
412.366.5656	
www.bigburrito.com	
Mad Mex	10% OFF BILL, NOT VALID WITH OTHER
Robinson Plaza #2	DISCOUNTS, COUPONS OR PROMOTIONS
Rt. 60, Park Manor Dr	
Pgh PA 15205 412.494.5656	
www.bigburrito.com	
Mandala	10% OFF QUARTZ CRYSTAL SINGING
211 South Craig St	BOWLS (ALSO AVAILABLE BY MAIL-CALL
Pgh PA	FOR DETAILS)
412.682.2703	
Mattress Factory Museum	STORE ADMISSION
500 Sampsonia Way	
Pgh PA 15212	
412.231.3169	
www.mattress.org	
National Aviary	\$1 off admission for up to 4 people. Not valid
Allegheny Commons West Pgh PA 15212	with any other discounts. Not applicable for special events.
412.323.7235	
info@aviary.org	
www.aviary.org	
	<u>I</u>

<u> </u>	
2003 Discounters	type of discount offered
Paisano's	10% DISCOUNT ON ANY PURCHASE
824 E Warrington Ave	
Pgh PA 15210	
412.381.5530	
Phipps Conservatory and	10% OFF ADMISSION
Botanical Gardens	
One Schenley Park Pgh PA 15213	
412.622.6914	
www.phipps.conservatory.org	
Pickel Barrel	BUY ONE PITTSBURGH DOG, GET ONE
1301 E Carson St	FREE(PITTSBURGH DOG: FOOT LONG HOT
Pgh PA 15210	DOG, SHREDDED GOLD CHEESE, BLACK
412.461.1114	OLIVES, HONEY MUSTARD)
Pittsburgh Symphony	25% OFF CLASSICAL OR POPS CONCERTS,
Orchestra	BASED ON AVAILABILITY. (some restrictions
Heinz Hall, 600 Penn Ave	apply, not valid on previous purchases) OFFER
Pgh PA 15236	VALID ONLY VIA PHONE RESERVATION.
412.392.3320	MAKE SURE YOU SAY THAT YOU ARE A
www.pittsburghsymphony.org	HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL MEMBER. NO
	WALK-UPS. lemail Melissa Trifaro at
	mtrifaro@pittsburghsymphony.org
	aro epittobargrioyinphony.org
	lat off Admicsion Maria Maria
Pgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium	\$1 OFF ADMISSION MONDAY THRU FRIDAY,
One Wild Place Rd Pgh PA 15206	EXCLUDING EVENING EVENTS. ONE DISCOUNT PER PERSON. OPEN YEAR
412.365.2533	ROUND.
www.pittsburghzoo.com	TROUTE.
Senator John Heinz	\$1 OFF ADMISSION WITH MEMBERSHIP
Regional History Center	CARD, VALID EVERY DAY. THE PLACE
1212 Smallman Št	WHERE HISTORY LIVES—VISIT TODAY!
Pgh PA 15222	
412.454.6403 www.pghhistory.org	
	PA DISCOUNT ON TOURS #4 0
Sightseeing USA 110 Lenzner Court	\$2 DISCOUNT ON TOURS #1, 2, or 3
Sewickley PA 15143	
412.741.2720 or	
1.888.565.3963	
www.coachride.com	
Slacker	20% OFF ALL PURCHASES, EXCEPT
1321 E Carson St	MAGAZINES
Pgh PA 15203	
412.381.3911	
Soba	10% OFF BILL, NOT VALID WITH OTHER
5847 Ellsworth Ave	DISCOUNTS, COUPONS OR PROMOTIONS
Pgh PA 15232 412.362.5656	
www.bigburrito.com	
South Side Card & Gift	20% DISCOUNT ON ANY PURCHASE OVER \$5
Shop	
1717 E Carson St	
Pgh PA 15203	
412.481.2500	LISOV PLOCOLINIT
Swank Gear	15% DISCOUNT
73 1/2 South 13th St Pgh PA 15203	
412.381.1037	
www.swankgear.com	
The Bead Mine	15% DISCOUNT
1703 E Carson St	
Pgh PA 15203	
412.381.8822	
Tan Natal Art C	200/ off the regular raise of a trace "
Top Notch Art Centre	20% off the regular price of art supplies
411 S Craig St Pgh PA 15213	
412.683.4444	
Wind and Water Boat-	10% OFF ALL ACCESSORIES AND HARD-
works	WARE FOR SAILBOATS, KAYAKS AND
455 Pittsburgh Rd	CANOES. NOT APPLICABLE TO SALE ITEMS
Butler PA 16001	
724.586.2030	10% discount on all purchases
Yesterday's News - Vintage Clothing	10 /0 discount on all purchases
1405 E Carson St	
Pgh PA 15203	
412.431.1712	

## **HI-PITTSBURGH 2003 DISCOUNTERS**

	ni-rii i sbukun
2003 Discounters	type of discount offered
#1 China House 823 E. Warrington Ave Pgh PA 15210 412.488.7780	FREE ICED TEA OR 10% DISCOUNT WITH \$5 PURCHASE
Andy Warhol Museum 117 Sandusky St Pgh PA 412.237.8347	\$1 OFF ANY ADMISSION (offer not valid with other discounts or coupons)
<b>Bar 11</b> 1101 Bradish St Pgh PA 15203 412.381.0899 www.bar11.com	50 cents off well drinks, 50 cents off domestic bottles
<b>Beehive</b> 1327 E Carson St Pgh PA 15203 412.488.4483	15 min. free internet w/ purchase of any drink
<b>Café du Jour</b> 1107 E Carson St Pgh PA 15203 412.488.9695	10% off bill
<b>Casbah</b> 229 South Highland Ave. Pgh PA 15206 412.661.5656	10% OFF BILL, NOT VALID WITH OTHER DISCOUNTS, COUPONS OR PROMOTIONS
Chiarina's Restaurant 901 E Carson St Pgh PA 412.390.0744	15% OFF BILL, NOT VALID WITH OTHER DISCOUNTS, HOLIDAYS, OR SPECIAL EVENTS
<b>City Books</b> 1111 E Carson St Pgh PA 15203 412.481.7555	10% OFF MOST BOOKS
City Theatre 57 South 13th St Pgh PA 15203 412.431.CITY www.citytheatrecompany.org	\$10 TICKETS FOR AGES 25 AND UNDER WITH STUDENT ID OR HOSTEL CARD. \$5 DISCOUNT FOR ALL AGES OVER 25 WITH HOSTEL CARD

Climb North 2468 Wildwood Rd Wildwood PA 15091 412.487.2145 www.jewarts.com	\$3 OFF UNLIMITED CLIMBING WITH 1/2 PRICE RENTALS
Dairy Mart 1125 Arlington Ave Pgh PA 15210 412.481.4122	FREE 32 OZ. FOUNTAIN DRINK WITH \$5 PURCHASE
Dave's Music Mine 1210 E Carson St Pgh PA 15203 412.488.8800 www.davesmusicmine.com	15% OFF ALL USED MERCHANDISE, %10 OFF ALL NEW MERCHANDISE
Dave's Music Mine 3710 Forbes Ave Pgh PA 412.687.1234 www.davesmusicmine.com	15% OFF ALL USED MERCHANDISE, %10 OFF ALL NEW MERCHANDISE

continued on page 11



# Pennsylvania State Parks eservations & 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

Ordering A	/ HI-USA	Hostel	Membersh	$\mathbf{iip} \; \mathbf{A}_{]}$	pplication
------------	----------	--------	----------	----------------------------------	------------

Include \$1.50 for postage

Mail to:

Memberships and merchandise also available at Headquarters and the office (see below). Discover, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. Please allow two weeks for delivery of mail orders. Priority or

Overnight shipping is available; call for information

HI-USA, Pittsburgh Council P.O. Box 53067

Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Name: Address: **Phone:** 

Sex (M/F): Birthdate:

For hostellers: I need my hostel pass by: [] I need a free copy of the USA Hostel Directory

[] MasterCard[] Visa[] Discover[]

(day)

Signature

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_
Date \_\_\_\_ Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_

#### **HI-USA Memberships (No Tax on Memberships)**

Valid for 12 months from date of purchase. Renewals valid for 12 months from expiration of current pass. Provides access to 4,500 Hostelling International hostels around the world. Includes free handbook of USA hostels upon request (see below) and 12 month subscription to Pittsburgh Council newsletter.

\$28.00

**Adult** (18-54) \$28.00 **Adult Renewal** 

Youth (17 and under)

**Senior** (over 54) \$18.00 Life (all ages) \$250.00

**Application for Complimentary** Group Membership (not-for-profit organiza-**FREE** tions).....call for application

**Student/Teacher ID Cards** 

**Student ID Card (ISIC)** \$22.00 Teacher ID Card (ITIC) \$22.00 GO 25 ID Card (IYTC)

Universal student identification card issued by STA Travel (formerly Council Travel) earns you discounts worldwide.

Qty	AYH Membership	Unit Price	
	(Type: )		
		Total	

#### **Pittsburgh Council Weekly Open House**

Pittsburgh Council has a weekly Open House every Thursday evening from 8 pm to 10 pm at Fifth and Shady Avenues in Shadyside. Look for us next to Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. A slide show at 8:30 pm is followed by announcements of the weekend's trips. Hostel Passes, guide books and more available.

### **Council Office and Travel Store**

The Pittsburgh Council Office and Travel Store is currently closed. but all passes, ID cards, rail passes, and books are available at the weekly Thursday Open House meetings. Call 412-362-8181 between 8PM and 10PM on Thursday for more information or directions, or email to pittcouncil@hotmail.com