



Golden Triangle

American Youth Hostels, 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 50, NUMBER 1

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2000



Hostelling - International Pittsburgh PA



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....And MORE!!!

100 WOMEN ON TRIGLAV

by Blanche Asherman

Every year the newspaper Slovenske Novice (Slovenian News) organizes a climbing expedition in which a large number of mountain guides accompany 100 women (chosen from hundreds of applicants) to the top of Slovenia's highest mountain, Mt. Triglav - altitude 9396 ft. This is one of the best known and most frequent mass Alpinistic Event. This year's expedition was the 34th.

Slovenia was part of the former Yugoslavia and gained its independence on June 25, 1991. Mt. Triglav is in the northwestern province of Slovenia called Gorenjska.

In order to qualify for the event, you must have a Slovenian background. My Mother was born in Slovenia in September, 1895 and my Father in November, 1888. In those years it was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Because of my background I qualified to be chosen as one of the women. There were five of us from the United States chosen this year but only one other lady, Frances Fister arrived at the meeting spot. Frances is a Professor of English Language at the University of Tokyo in Japan. The other three women, as I later was informed, thought they were not in good physical condition to do the climb. Also although 100 women were chosen only 83 actually were in attendance. Possibly the weather forecast may have changed their minds.

As the ladies arrived at the meeting spot in Bled, Slovenia I carefully noticed that Frances and I were the only ones with day packs. All the other ladies had large internal backpacks. At that point, I decided we were misinformed about the preparation for the trek. We boarded the buses for our trip to the Sport Hotel in the Pokljuka area of Triglav National Park. At the hotel we were registered for the trip and also were assigned our rooms for the night. In the evening we were served a hearty and delicious Slovenian meal of ajmoht (veal stew), beef cubes over rice, salad, rolls and dessert. Being Slovenian I anticipated a large dessert of maybe strudel or some other sweet pastry. To my disappointment it was a banana. Oh well, I did need the potassium for strength anyway.

After supper we were given our instructions for the following two days and also we met our guides, who belong to an elite and dedicated mountain club and many have participated in various climbs throughout the world. All have done numerous climbs in the Himalayan Mountains. Then the announcement was made that I was the oldest participant in this year's expedition. I am 72 years old. The youngest participant was a 14 year old girl and her Mother accompanied her on the climb. I had to go up in front of the audience and I was given a standing ovation and had to make a small speech as to why I wanted to visit the symbol of Slovenia. I had to

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NEW 2000 MEMBER DISCOUNTS

HI members with valid membership cards are eligible for the following discounts. Full details can be found in the FREE 2000 North American Hostel Handbook.

Ace Athletic- 10% off any non-sale item, 1214 East Carson Street; phone: (412)381-2520

Alamo Car Rental- Various Discounts. Contact your travel agent or Alamo and request Rate Code BY and I.D. Number 19998.

Andy Warhol Museum- \$1.00 off admission; 117 Sandusky Street, phone: (412)237-8300

Big Bamboo- Free pack of 15 gram bag of Champa Incense with any purchase. 116 Meyran Ave., phone: (412) 802-8338

Bike Tek- 10% discount. 5102 Liberty Ave. Phone: (412)682-1410

Casbah- 10% off bill. Not valid with any other specials, discounts, or promotions. 229 Highland Street; phone: (412)661-5656; email:casbah1@bigburrito.com; website:www.bigburrito.com

City Books- 15% off all used books and 10% off on most new books. 111E. Carson Street; phone:(412)481-7555; email:citybooks@sprintmail.com

Climb North- 50% off climb time rates, rentals not included; 2468 Wildwood Road, phone: (412) 487-2145

Dairy Mart- Free 44oz. Fountain drink with \$5.00 purchase; 1125 Arlington Ave., phone: (412) 4122

(Continued on page 3)



Pittsburgh Council, HI-AYH is a United Way Donor Option organization. Our Donor Option number is: 436 .

1999 North American Hostel Handbooks can be picked up at the Travel Center, the Pittsburgh International Hostel, and the Activities Headquarters. Copies are free when picked up in person.

HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL

**PITTSBURGH COUNCIL-AYH
830 E. WARRINGTON AVE.
PITTSBURGH, PA 15210**

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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:

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or

HI-Pgh on the information super Highway. Point your browser to :
<http://trfn.clpgh.org/ayh/>
or you can email us at
ayh@trfn.clpgh.org



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NOTICE

Please note the deadlines for future issues of the **GOLDEN TRIANGLE**

April ISSUE
All copy, March 1
Binding/Mailing, March 15

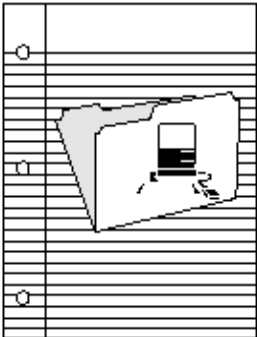
If your work is on computer,
Please contact Joel Platt at
joelplat@yahoo.com

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. You can also phone in changes to the office at (412) 431-1267.

About AYH

American Youth Hostels is a non-profit 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 travel programs. AYH is the US affiliate of Hostelling International (HI), (formerly named International Youth Hostel Federation (IYHF), which coordinates more than 5,400 hostels worldwide- the largest network of accommodations in the world.



**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 gram
- All Articles are to be, non-political and non-secular
- Above rules apply in addition to general rules for submission

General rules for submission

- No handwritten submissions
- Submissions Can be;
On computer disk (IBM / MAC), 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 1999.

Number 1 issue ->February / March: **Number 2** issue ->April: **Number 3** issue ->May: **Number 4** issue ->June: **Number 5** issue ->July: **Number 6** issue ->Aug. **Number 7** issue ->Sept: **Number 8** issue ->Oct: **Number 9** issue ->Nov: and **Number 10** issue ->December

Editor...

UPCOMING SLIDE SHOWS

February 3: Joyce Appel, "Traveling Through Four African Countries In The Back Of An Old Army Truck". Joyce and Paul visit South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. They hike and canoe, and they sand-board the highest dunes in the world.

February 10: Cheese and cider party.

February 17: Gail Gregory, "Turkey And Mediterranean Islands". Visit Capadocia, Malta, Corsica.

February 24: Mary Ruth Aull took part in the one-week Great Ohio Bike Adventure in 1999. She describes her experience, and shows a video of that 350-mile ride.

March 2: Bring your 10-20 best slides (or your own video) of sports, travel or nature. Soft drinks will be served.

March 9: Sally and Chuck Martin, "World Wander By Bicycle: Singapore, New Zealand and South Pacific". Swimming with seals at Kaikoura. Music of the Maori natives.

March 16: We show the 16 mm film "The England Of Elizabeth I". Daily life, views of forests and countryside. Art and architecture, maps and manuscripts, poetry and music. Power and prestige of Great Britain in the 16th century.

March 23: Pizza and juice party.

March 30: Joyce Appel, "African Travel, Part II". Joyce and Paul pole a dugout canoe into a disappearing underground river in the Okavango Delta. They explore the Great Zimbabwe Ruins.

April 6: Billie Woodland, "China Without Organized Tour". From the Silk Route and the northwest border to the northeast coast. Beijing and Great Wall. Travel by taxi, train, bus and rickshaw.

Slide shows start at 8:30 PM, at AYH 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.

Pittsburgh Council Hostels

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Ohiopyle State Park
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Ohiopyle, PA 15470
(724) 329-4476

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Pittsburgh, PA 15210
(412) 431-1267

Living Waters AYH Hostel
RD #1 (1 mile west on Rte 30)
Schellsburgh, PA 15559
(814) 733-4212



HOSTEL HAPPENINGS

Volunteer Opportunities:

Join the fun! We are always looking for enthusiastic and fun-loving volunteers to help make HI-Pittsburgh a HIP place to visit for international visitors, US visitors, and residents of ‘da burg alike. Call or stop by during hostel hours, either 8am-10am or 5pm-10pm every day....OR visit us at the Travel Store! The Travel Store is open Tuesdays-Saturdays, 12pm-5pm.

We are currently seeking volunteers to assist with and/or lead events such as:

Travel Workshops/Seminars

Help first-time travelers prepare for their journeys by giving tips on travel. Talk to them about things you have learned from your own experiences; about other cultures, travel safety, what to pack, how to save money, OR bring in pictures/slides to share, or just come and listen! We are planning monthly travel seminars at the hostel. See schedule below for dates in February/March

Open House Guides @ the Hostel

Lead a tour of the hostel! Show visitors around in our great facility here in Pittsburgh. Answer questions about hostelling along the way. Open Houses are a great way to show local residents what our mission is all about.

Walking Tours of the City

Lead a tour up to Mt. Washington, Oakland, the South Side, or your favorite spot in Pittsburgh. Walking tours are a great way to meet new people from all over the world. And the guests really appreciate being shown where “the locals” hang out. End your tour by stopping for eats at your favorite local hangout and chatting with your new friends.

Booth at Travel Fairs

Hostelling International is always attending travel fairs and seminars throughout the city. Help staff one of our booths, pass out flyers, answer questions about hostelling. Most of these events are 2-4 hours and are another great way to meet new people.

Work Parties

Work parties are a great way to become involved in the behind-the-scenes efforts in helping make H.I.P. a more beautiful place to visit. Help us clean up the neighborhood, use your green thumb in our community garden, or help plan future events. We are always in need of creative, positive feedback and suggestions. We look forward to hearing your input.

Shuttle to Fallingwater/Ohiopyle

It is oftentimes very difficult for travelers to find transportation to our Ohiopyle Hostel. If you are headed that way, why not make your trip more exciting by offering a ride to some travelers who otherwise might not have the opportunity to see this beautiful area? Carpooling is fun and a good way to share the costs of transportation!

FOR INFORMATION ON VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT THE PITTSBURGH COUNCIL, PLEASE CONTACT JESSICA CARPENTER AT THE HOSTEL. (412) 431-4910

The Travel Store has opened! Special thanks to everyone who attended the open-house and volunteers who worked behind-the-scenes to make the grand opening a success. Special sales at the store include t-shirts for \$2, half-price ’99 hostelling guides, and more! Come by the store and check out the new 2000 guidebooks!

New Travel Store Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 12pm-5pm

Special activities and events at the hostel:

Winter Movie Nights! Every Sunday, 8pm. FREE! Every week we will be featuring a different movie, and all movies are acceptable for family viewing. Come by and enjoy a cozy evening in our comfortable 4th floor lounge, sip hot tea/cocoa, and chat with other world travelers.

Art Gallery. The hostel is proud to offer space in our lobby to local artists. This is an ongoing event. Viewing hours are 8am-10am or 5pm-10pm every day. FREE!

Potluck Dinner! Saturday, February 5. 7pm Bring a favorite dish. Potluck dinners are one of our most popular events. Come by and see what all the excitement is about! FREE!

Budget Travel 101 Workshop! Saturday, February 12. 2pm-4pm
Going abroad? Would you like help planning your trip or advice on how to travel on a limited budget? This workshop is geared toward first-time travelers, and we are proud to have the information you need.

FREE!

Potluck Dinner! Saturday, February 26. 7pm Bring a favorite dish. Potluck dinners are one of our most popular events. Come by and see what all the excitement is about! FREE!

Potluck Dinner! Saturday, March 11. 7pm Bring a favorite dish. Potluck dinners are one of our most popular events. Come by and see what all the excitement is about! FREE!

Budget Travel 101 Workshop! Saturday, March 18. 2pm-4pm
Going abroad? Would you like help planning your trip or advice on how to travel on a limited budget? This workshop is geared toward first-time travelers, and we are proud

(Continued from page 1)

Danny K's Diner- 10% discount to hostelling members; 637 Warrington Ave., phone: (412) 381-7742

The Deli Express- 10% off total check amount. 1107 East Carson St., phone: (412) 381-4247

E-House- 10% off any purchase with valid membership card; 1511 E. Carson St., phone: (412) 488-7455

Eljays's Used Books- 10% discount on all books. 1309 E. Carson St., phone:(412)381-7444: email: eljaysbs@aol.com, website: www.abebooks.com

Eye of Horus- 10% off all merchandise, books, and tarot readings. 1305 E. Carson St., phone (412) 481-7887: email: eyehorus2LM.COM

Golden Triangle Bike Rentals- 10% discount on bike rentals. 416 Woodrift Lane; phone: (416)655-0835; email: goldentrianglebikes@yahoo.com, website: www.bikepittsburgh.com

Gray Line Trolley Tours of Pittsburgh- \$2.00 off admission on price on day schedule of Pittsburgh tours, April through October; 110 Lenzner Court, Sewickley, PA, phone: (412)741- 2720

Karakesh- 10% off final bill: 320 Atwood St., phone:(412)687-0533

Kaya- 10% off your bill. Not valid with any order specials, discounts, or promotions. 2000 Small-man Street; phone:(412)261-6565; email: kaya1@bigburrito.com; web-site:www.bigburrito.com

La Prima Espresso- \$0.50 off any coffee drink. 811 Liberty Ave., phone: (412) 471-4590; website: www.laprima.com

Mad Mex (NORTH HILLS)- 10% off your bill, not valid with any other specials, discounts, or promotions; 7905 McKnight Road / phone: (412) 366-5656; email: madmex-nh@madmex.com; website: www.bigburrito.com
Mad Mex (OAKLAND)- 10 % OFF your bill, not valid with any other specials, discounts, or promotions; 370 Atwood Street / phone: (412) 681-5656; email: madmex-oak@madmex.com; website: www.bigburrito.com

Mad Mex (PHILADELPHIA)- 10% OFF your bill, not valid with any other specials, discounts, or promotions; 3401 Walnut Street (The Shops at Penn). Phone: (215) 382-2221; email: madmex-philly@madmex.com; website: www.bigburrito.com

Mattress Factory Museum of Art- \$1.00 OFF admission, and 10% OFF merchandise in museum. 500 Sampsonia Way / phone: (412) 231-3169; email: info@mattress.org website: www.mattress.org

Monti's Studio- 10% discount store-wide; 844 E.

Warrington Ave. / phone: (412) 381-3240

Paisano's Pizza- 10% OFF final bill. We have pizza, hoagies, appetizers, chicken wings, salads, calzones, wedgies, gyros and more. 823 E. Warrington Ave. / phone: (412) 381-5530

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens- 10% OFF admission to conservatory and gardens throughout the year. Something's always blooming at Phipps - so visit today! ; One Schenley Park / phone: (412) 622-6914; email: phipps@phipps.pgh.pa.us website: www.phipps.conservatory.org

Pittsburgh Zoo- \$1.00 OFF admission with membership card, not valid for evening events. One discount per person. Phone: (412) 665-3639; email: connie@zoo.pgh.pa.us Website: www.zoo.pgh.pa.us

Pizza Outlet- 20% OFF regular price, or any current coupon discount. 1502 E. Carson Street; phone: (412) 488-7200

Premiere CD's- 10% OFF any purchase. 2336 E. Carson Street; phone: (412) 481-3641

Rachel Carson Homestead- Buy one admission, get one FREE! Take the 1A New Kensington or 20-minute drive from Pittsburgh. 613 Marion Ave. Phone: (724) 274-5459

Saint Elmo's Bookstore-20% discount on ALL novels. 2208 E. Carson Street, phone: (412) 431-9100; email: stelmoport@earthlink.com Website: www.saintelmo.com

Slacker- 20% OFF, except magazines. 1321 E. Carson Street / phone: (412) 381-3911; email: randall@slackernet.com website: www.slackernet.com

Soba Lounge- 10% OFF your bill. Not valid with any other specials, discounts, or promotions. 5847 Ellsworth Ave., Shadyside / phone: (412) 362-5656; email: soba1@bigburrito.com website: www.bigburrito.com

Southside Card & Gift- 10% OFF any purchase. 1717 E. Carson Street; phone: (412) 481-2500

Spice Island- 10% OFF final bill. 235 Atwood Street; phone: (412) 687-8821

Thoreau NM, a Production Company- \$1 OFF ticket prices. Please call ahead; 209 Moye Place Cottage, phone: (412) 431-8289; email: thoreaunm@juno.com website: www.trfn.clpgh.org/thoreaunm

Zenith Antiques & Tea Room- 15% discount. 86 S. 26th Street / phone: (412) 481-4833, website: www.concentric.net/~mamarama/zenith.htm

Zyθος, Inc.- NO cover charge...except for headliner, National DJ's. 2108 E. Carson Street phone: (412) 481-2234

to have the information you need.

FREE!

Potluck Dinner! Saturday, March 25. 7pm Bring a favorite dish. Potluck dinners are one of our most popular events. Come by and see what all the excitement is about! FREE!

All events held at the Pittsburgh Hostel, 830 E. Warrington Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15210. For more information, call (412) 431-4910.

Happy Hostelling!

AYH ACTIVITIES WITH BEN

On one of our most recent Sunday Ambles, nine of us met at Duff Park, to meet Veronique for an easygoing and sociable 5 mile winter hike. Like most of the outdoor people I know, the weekend outing is both to get some exercise and meet some pleasant company.

Surprise of surprises, there was my old friend Nick. As it turned out, he was at Duff Park not to meet us, but to hike on his own. He does volunteer work at the park and enjoys the outdoors. Nick used to come to the Shadyside meetings for many years, but said he is no longer a member.

Another gathering I went to was the monthly meeting of the sea kayak enthusiasts. A fun and dedicated group of people, they travel extensively, have an excellent program, and meet monthly at a different restaurant. They do not, as in years past, come to our Thursday meetings very much. I enjoyed meeting the group, over twenty strong and was impressed by their conviviality, comradery and wide age range. However more than half of the group did not even know about the AYH affiliation. And most have their own boats, so they really do not need the AYH equipment to have perfectly good and safe trips.

So the question begs to be asked, what purpose does the Pittsburgh AYH serve? Well the Washington, DC based national does provide insurance for trips. How much and for whose benefit is a question which is not clearly answered.

Several trip leaders have expressed uncertainty if liability insurance covers them as well as for example some other outdoor trip sponsoring organizations. A goodly number of former AYH leaders now lead with several other groups.

The AYH newsletter is an asset, but as I have seen, several of our activities are quite capable of boating, climbing, hiking, ambling or rambling on their own. And the volunteer efforts by our activity members: publishing, trail maintenance, substantial fundraising, new member registration, and publicity benefit the national hostel organization far more than than the national benefits those who do worthwhile local community and Western Pennsylvania regional work.

I believe the hostels to provide a worthwhile value, but I do not think our volunteers are a viable asset of a Washington, DC based corporation, no matter how noble their goals may seem to the national board of directors. Volunteers are members of the local community, who also would give time and money to a worthwhile national cause, but mostly do local worthwhile work to keep Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania a livable, pleasant community to be in.

Ben

OUTDOOR COOKBOOK FOR SALE BY LOCAL SCOUTS

Cadette/Senior Girl Scout Troop 83 have put together 400 recipes -- ideal for picnics, cookouts, camp and cabin meals. As avid outdoor enthusiasts who camp together three times a year, rappel, hike, and have completed outdoor survival training and high adventure programs, they've compiled favorite recipes from other scouts and campers across the US to created "A Taste of the Outdoors". This cookbook includes menu ideas from breakfast entrees to midnight snacks...and everything in between; and offers a variety of cooking methods -- foil, Dutch oven, campstove, box oven, campfire, grill, solar, etc. Most recipes can be adapted for cabin (indoor - with minimal equipment) cooking. Cost of the cookbook is \$12.50 and includes shipping and handing (in the US). You can visit their website at <http://members.aol.com/janed5/recipe/cookbook.htm> or send payment along with your name, address and phone number to: Troop 83, c/o Barb Koehler, 30 Center Ave., Pgh., PA 15202. Cookbook sales will be used to fund a 2001 trip to the Girl Scout World Center - Our Chalet in Switzerland.

Rambles For Winter

January	
January 26	Calvary Cemetary. Dick Fisher. 421-9215
February	
February 2	Grand View Area. Optional lunch at Station Square. Jim Hurst. 276-8014
February 9	Shadyside. Justine Carbonell. 362-6074
February 16	Walk from Vintage in East Liberty to the Highland Park Reservoir and return for lunch at Vintage. Make reservations with Earl in advance. Earl McCabe. 761-1844
February 23	Wilmerding and the Westinghouse Museum. Joan Roolf. 351-2061
March	
March 1	North Park. Earl McCabe. 761-1844
March 8	Rennerdale and the Panhandle Trail. Bill Phoennik. 279-5411
March 15	Bloomfield. Optional lunch at a restaurant. Marty Brigham. 521-1913
March 22	South Fayette. Panhandle Trail. Bag Lunch. Bill Phoennik. 279-5411
March 29	CMU Computaion Center and tnew Fine Arts Building. Optional lunch at food court. Luc Berger. 683-3131

Fall rambles begin at 10:00 AM. Meet in Mellon Park, upper parking lot at Fifth and Shady Avenues. Carpooling is encouraged. For trips over 10 miles, please pay driver \$2.00.

Call trip leader for more information, especially if you plan to meet us at the trail head.



CANOEING

Activity Co-chairs: Paul Henry (724) 347-3282
Brian McBane (724) 443-8972

Well, now that 2000 has arrived, it's time to start planning this year's AYH Canoeing Program. Some of us who don't SKI have been trying to get out on the water every month, taking advantage of the unseasonably warm, sunny weather. Others may be anxious to try out some new equipment as a result of holiday gift giving. All of us are looking forward to another season of paddling. Now is the time to come to the aid of the Canoeing Chairs, Paul Henry and Brian McBane to help plan the schools, events and camping trips for Y2K.

PLEASE JOIN THEM on Wednesday, FEBRUARY 16TH at the ELBOW ROOM, 5744 Ellsworth Ave., Shadyside (412-441-5222). Plan to arrive between 6 and 6:30 pm to place your dinner order. The meeting will follow dining. Please RSVP to Brian McBane at BMcbane@county.allegheny.pa.us or phone him at (724)443-8972. Come with any ideas or suggestions. Some photos will be available of this past year's activities, and Joyce Appel will be bringing her very large calendar on which to record the plans for this year.

A special THANK YOU to Laurie and Frank Bruns for hosting the Annual Holiday Paddling Party in December. Great food, company and stories were shared by all, and the musical entertainment and sing-a-long were spirited!!!

Shelley C. Nilson shelleycn@yahoo.com



ROCK CLIMBING

Rock Out with AYH!

Rock climbing trips from Pittsburgh Council of American Youth Hostels

The AYH Rock Climbing program is a great way to experience the thrill of rock climbing. Our Beginner trips are focused on teaching "never evers" the basics of rock climbing. AYH supplies the climbing gear plus a group of experienced climbers to set up the climbs and teach the course. All you need to bring is a bag lunch, water, and a sunny disposition. Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothes (shorts and T-shirts in the summer) and tennis shoes. It's not a bad idea to pack raingear in the event of a late-afternoon thunderstorm.

1999/2000 AYH ROCK CLIMBING TRIPS

No trips currently planned, as everyone is gearing up for cross-country skiing. Call Chuck Jones at (412) 242-6172 to see if anything comes up.



SEA-KAYAKING

Activity Co-Chairs: Vickie Gotaski 412-344-4929
Fran Fleming 412.363.1221

Paddler's Dinners are held at various local restaurants on the second Tuesday of every month. Everyone is welcome.

Don't have a kayak? That's okay we have extras. Call your trip leader for details.



SKIING

The Wilderness Lodge Ski Weekends are scheduled for the following weekends: Jan. 27-29 and Feb. 10-12. We have the full lodge for both weekends. See Page 7 for application.

Skiing/Skating/Sledding

Cross-country skiing, Ice Skating, Downhill Skiing, Sledding: If you are interested in any of these and want to be put on a calling list, call Jim Ritchie at (412) 828-0210 or send email to jimritch@aol.com. Throughout the months of December, January, and February, when the conditions are right, impromptu trips will be organized for these activities. **Cross-country skiing** will be at Harrison Hills Park or Laurel Mountain, depending on conditions. **Ice Skating** will be at North Park (outdoor) or BladeRunners in Harmarville (indoor), depending on conditions. **Downhill skiing** will be at Seven Springs, Hidden Valley, or the new Laurel Mountain Ski Area. **Sledding** will be at Indian Hill in Boyce Park. There are several sleds available for your use. Difficulty level will be easy to easy intermediate, suitable for advanced beginners and up. If you send email, be sure to include a telephone number, too.



BICYCLING

**CALLING ALL BICYCLISTS
WEDNESDAY, FEB 23, 2000 AT 7 PM
HI HOSTEL IN ALLENTOWN**

Would you be interested in gliding along a rail trail or country road, with the birds singing, the waterfalls rushing, and with the spirit of adventure within? Would you like to have like minded companions to share the adventure? Then let us make it happen!

Come to our bicycling planning meeting at the above date and time. The bicycling program will be what you want it to be. Some suggestions include one day bike rides in your favorite location. Please share your favorite ride with us and we will share out favorite rides with you. I purpose having longer weekend trips to different locations, once a month throughout the season (including mid week).

We would also like to try a bike maintenance session in the spring and possibly an effective cycling course.

But above all we need input from all of you. Refreshments will be served!
PLEASE COME! Call Joan Roolf at (412) 351-2061.

The following are WPW trips led by George Schmidt:

GROUND HOG STAMPEDE

Sunday, January 30, 2000, 11:00 AM

Connellsville Trail Station, Connellsville River Front Park, In honor of Groundhog Day the will be a ride from Connellsville to Dawson on January 30, 2000. Meet at the Connellsville Trail Station. That is the blue building by the trail leading out of the River Front Park at 11:00 AM. If the trail is clear we will bicycle 5 miles to Doris's Diner in Dawson for lunch. If it is snow covered we will hike or cross-country ski to the River's Edge Family Campground 3 miles out of Connellsville for light refreshments. This little event will wrap up the Regional Trail Corporation's Annual Retreat held on Friday and Saturday. For more information call George Schmidt at 412-521-1538. E-mail: wpwgeorge@aol.com.

St. Patrick's Day Ride

Saturday, February 19, 2000

Harp & Fiddle Pub, 2329 Penn Ave, Pittsburgh's Strip District 11:00 AM

Meet outside the Harp and Fiddle on Penn Ave. in Pittsburgh's Strip District for a short ride around the 'Burg then do lunch at the Harp & Fiddle. If the weather is bad we will by-pass the ride and proceed to lunch via Guinness and Bass. Bicycle blarney will be the order of the day. For more information ring: George O'Schmidt at 412-521-1538 or use the infernal machine: wpwgeorge@aol.com.

VISIT YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD BIKE SHOP- NOW!!!

Now is the time for all good bicyclists to come to the aid of their bicycle. Beat the rush and visit your friendly neighborhood bike shop to have your bike checked out and perhaps overhauled before we break into the good weather. Despite catalog and on-line sales, nothing can replace a humanoid bike shop owner who can answer your questions about bicycle repairs and perform the magic that will make your bike ride like new.

The new revised Allegheny Trail Alliance website is out and ready for your perusal.
www.atatrail.org

Events and news courtesy of George Schmidt

The City of Pittsburgh Department of City Planning announces the availability of the final City of Pittsburgh Bicycle plan, The Executive Summary and the City of Pittsburgh Bicycle Route System Map. Copies of these documents are available:

Executive Summary	Free (in limited quantities)
Route Maps	\$7.50
Bicycle Plan	\$2.50
Plan & Maps	\$10.00

Checks should be made out to "Treasurer, City of Pittsburgh" and sent to:

Richard Meritzer
Department of City Planning
200 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

The information is also available on the City of Pittsburgh web site at:
www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/html/bicycling_plan.html

For more information contact Richard Merizer at 412-255-2102 or
richard.merizer@city.pittsburgh.pa.us

PPAC REPORT

"Another acronym," I hear you cry. "What the heck is it?" PPAC is PennDOT's Pedestrian and Pedalcycle Advisory Committee. Despite Bill Metzger's recommendation I was appointed to PPAC by Governor Ridge and attended my first meeting on September 14, 1999. The meeting was a complete shock to one who has attended meetings with PennDOT for years to advocate more bicycle facilities. Bicycling is now a high priority in the Pennsylvania transportation mix. While we have been babbling for years about the benefits of health, recreation and bicycle commuting, the Ridge administration has discovered that bicycles are good business. Improved bicy-

Ambridge Bike Shop

- LIQUIDATION SALE -

- Begins February 2000 -

These will be the lowest prices
Western Pennsylvania has ever seen !
Tell your friends - It will be worth the trip !

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<http://www.beavercounty.net/abs/>

cle facilities are relatively cheap and they draw big returns from tourism. When I mentioned the recent study that stated the Youghiogheny River and rail-trail bring in \$14 million a year in tourism money, people sat up in their chairs. Right now our major project is to establish six marked bicycle routes across Pennsylvania. (Please read the "A" Bicycle Route article.) I was appointed to PPAC to represent the interests of the WPW, the AYH, and other bicyclists in western Pennsylvania. I would like to form a sub-committee to gather information and issues to present at PPAC meetings and distribute information about the meetings. Anyone interested? Give me a call at 412-521-1538 or e-mail: wpwgeorge@aol.com. PPAC also has a web site under PennDOT's home page.

TAKE THE "A" BICYCLE ROUTE FROM MORGANTOWN TO ERIE

Governor Ridge wants six bicycle routes across Pennsylvania as soon as possible. And when the Governor talks, people listen. PennDOT's Pedestrian and Pedalcycle Advisory Committee (PPAC) has formed a sub-committee to layout the routes. They are two across the length of our state, three running north and south and one connecting Ohio and New York through Erie.

The "G" Route, running down the center of the state through Altoona, is complete, as is the "Z" Route from Ohio to New York.

Appropriately, the "A" Route is on our turf. It will run from the PA border near Morgantown, WV north to Erie, PA. PennDOT's District 12, based in Uniontown has the overall responsibility for posting route-marking signs. Local PPAC members Linda Boxx and Bill Metzger are heading the "A" Route Committee. Linda is President of the Allegheny Trails Alliance and lives in New Stanton. Bill Metzger is a legendary rail-trail advocate from Mt. Lebanon. Along with help from our own Ned Williams, they have laid out the route from Morgantown to Elwood City. They have asked me, the newest PPAC member from western PA, to help out and get the WPW involved to complete the route. As bike clubs already exist in these areas we intend to solicit the input of bicyclists and tourist agencies along the "A" route to achieve the best possible route.

You better sit down before you continue reading. PennDOT said the preferred routing is on state roads so they could make improvements to shoulders, perform maintenance and post signs without the red tape involved when dealing local and federal maintained roads.

This is an opportunity we can't pass up. The founders of the WPW dreamed of setting up a bicycle route system like this thirty years ago. Now it will be a reality. If you would like to become involved in the "A" Route Committee contact George Schmidt at 412-521-1538 or e-mail wpwgeorge@aol.com.



HIKING/BACKPACKING/TRAILS

February 6 Sunday Lorraine Johnson 412 829 0345
Hike the Plum Creek railroad grade to Oakmont, and have lunch at one of Lorraine's favorite restaurants in Oakmont. Meet at the Mellon Park H.Q. at 10:00 A.M. 5-6 miles.

February 13 Sunday Ben Brugmans 412 361 3623
Hike the new Pittsburgh city trail from Oakland to downtown and back. We will stop at a restaurant to have lunch. 5-6 miles. Meet at the Mellon Park H.Q. at 10:00 A.M.

February 20 Sunday Ben Brugmans 412 361 3623
Hike from old West Newton along the Yough hike bike trail. Bring a lunch. This is a good chance to stretch your legs on a nice flat trail with river views. 6 miles. Meet @ H.Q. in Mellon Park at 10:00 A.M.

February 27 Sunday Joan Rooff 412 351 2061
Joan will do a historical walk at Salzburg along the canal and through the scenic restored old town. 5 to 6 miles, have lunch at a local restaurant. Meet 10:00 A.M. at H.Q. at Mellon Park at the lower parking lot.

March 5 Sunday Judy Woodruff 412 828 9002
Hike at Home Pa, a 7 mile hike of moderate difficulty, ending at a local restaurant of Judy's choice. Meet at Mellon Park at the AYH H.Q. at 10:00 AM.

March 12 Sunday Jack Rearick 412 793 5381
Jack is leading a more challenging hike from Frick Park down Nine Mile Run to the Mon river. This is probably one of the last times you can see a piece of old Pittsburgh's lesser known areas before it is developed and made into an addition to Frick Park. Expect some challenge on this unimproved section of crosscountry trail. Notwithstanding rumors to the contrary, wild animals such as lions, tigers and seasonal polar bears are no longer roaming free there, but have all been captured and removed to the Pgh zoo. Bring a snack and Jack will lead the survivors to a Squirrel Hill restaurant afterwards. Meet at 10:00 AM at Mellon Park.

March 19 Sunday Tom Kaveney 412 276 8044
Tom will lead a 6 to 8 mile hike in the Pennsylvania woods, location to be adjusted for the prevailing weather conditions. Expect a moderately rigorous chance to stretch your legs. Definitely bring fluids and a lunch. Meet at 8:30 AM at Mellon Park.

March 25 Saturday Jim Ritchie 828-0210
Baker Trail, Mill Creek Gamelands. The first of a series of three hikes on the northern stretches of the Baker Trail. The hike starts just north of I-80 near Corsica, goes past the new Corsica Shelter, roller coasters along a gas pipeline right-of-way and then enters the Mill Creek Gamelands, about 10 miles in total. Dinner in Brookville optional. This hike is for experienced hikers who are accustomed to hiking 10 miles or more. It is not a beginner's hike. Rated intermediate or higher. Call Jim for more information and reservations. email: jimritch@aol.com.♦

March 26 Sunday Blanche Asherman 412 828 8158
A leisurely walk in Boyce Park, 3 to 4 miles. Go eat at a local restaurant of Blanche's choice. Meet at 10:00 AM at Mellon Park.

April 30 Sunday Jim Ritchie 828-0210
Baker Trail, Fisher-Sigel Section to Cook Forest Fire Tower. The second in a series of three hikes on the northern stretches of the Baker Trail. This hike will begin near the village of Fisher in Clarion County and end at the Cook Forest Fire Tower, crossing the new Gravel Lick bridge, about 10 miles in total. You will see some early spring wildflowers. Dinner at the Farmer's Inn near Sigel optional. This hike is for experienced hikers who are accustomed to hiking 10 miles or more. It is not a beginner's hike. Rated intermediate or higher. Call Jim for more information and reservations. email: jimritch@aol.com.♦

May 14 Sunday Jim Ritchie 828-0210
Baker Trail, Cook Forest to the ANF (Allegheny National Forest). This is the last of three hikes to the northern terminus of the Baker Trail. The hike begins at the Cook Forest Fire Tower, traverses Cook Forest State Park including the Forest Cathedral, Brown's Run, the "secret" Hemlock Cathedral, Clear Creek State Forest, and finally the ANF—14 miles in total. This is a peak "wildflower weekend" in Cook Forest. Dinner at the Vowinckle Inn optional. This hike is for experienced hikers who are accustomed to hiking 10 miles or more. It is not a beginner's hike. Rated intermediate or higher. Call Jim for more information and reservations. email: jimritch@aol.com.♦

June 24 Saturday Jim Ritchie 828-0210
Leo Stember 681-1385

Rachel Carson Trail Challenge(?). If the Rachel Carson Trail Challenge gets all its permits and clearances, this is the date. The RCTC2000 will begin at Harrison Hills County Park at 5:50 AM and will end at 8:54 PM at the Beaver Shelter in North Park, 34 miles later. Watch for the April *Golden Triangle* for the final details. Trail guides are available for \$7.50 plus s/h and sales tax at (412) 431-4910 (AYH Travel Store).

To: KTA Member Clubs

From: Joe Healey
Keystone Trail Crew Coordinator

FOURTH YEAR OF THE KEYSTONE TRAIL CREW SET/COOK NEEDED

Keystone Trail Crew, sponsored by KTA, will be having three weeks of TrailCare in June. The work week runs from Thursday through Monday. The dates are June 8 through 12, Quehanna Trail; June 15 through 19, Chuck Keiper Trail and June 22 through 26, Mid State Trail Southern Extension. Meals and lodging will be provided. If you can spare a week, volunteer a weekend, or come for just a day or two, please think about signing up. No volunteer will be turned away. Forward all inquiries to Joe Healey, 93 Cedarwood Drive, Laflin, PA 18702 e-mail: jnlhealey@aol.com or feel free to call him at (570) 655-4979. Detailed information and a map directing you to the respective campsite/campsites will then be forwarded.

A cook is needed for the above time frames. This is a paid position and all pots, pans, etc., will be supplied, although the cook will be responsible for the purchase of the food. Cost of the food can either be reimbursed after purchase or given up front as a lump sum. If you are interested or know of someone who is, please contact Joe.

**AYH Sheet Sleeping Sack
DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT ONE!**

Required in all youth 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.

**REMINDER TO
TRIP LEADERS**

All trips and equipment usage must be approved by the appropriate activity chair or co-chair. Trip reports and fees should be turned in by the end of each month at either the AYH Activities Building or AYH Office or mailed to Pittsburgh Council, 830 Warrington Ave., Pittsburgh PA 15210

Official Rachel Carson/Baker Trail Website
is now live; the URL is <http://members.xoom.com/rachel-baker>.

Also, I discovered the following website, by accident; you may (or may not) enjoy it. I thought it was quite interesting.
www.bakertrail.com -jim ritchie

100 WOMEN ON TRIGLAV

(Continued from page 1)

speak in Slovenian and many comments were made as to my accent being from the Gorenjska area of Slovenia which made me so proud. I was presented with an embrella, key chain and T-shirt for the honor. After the speeches and presentations an evening of dancing and singing merriment lasted until the wee hours of the morning.

At about 4 AM Saturday we were awakened with a loud knock on our door and GREMO NA TRIGLAV (we're going to Triglav). After a large hearty breakfast we boarded buses to be taken to the starting point of our trip, Rudno Polje (4396 ft.) Even though it was dark, we walked thru a forest and into a cow pasture as daylight started to appear. At this stage I was ready to lie down with my friends, the cows, and enjoy the day. It wasn't very long and the trail became a series of short steep switchbacks and we started to gain altitude. It was the start of the famous everlasting phrase of the guides - DUHA! DUHA! (breathe deep) and it must have been repeated to me a hundred times the next two days. Unfortunately, the weather turned rainy and a thick fog started setting in. In all my backpacking experiences I never saw so many umbrellas being used. A very wise idea because their packs and bodies stayed dry,. I left my new umbrella back at the hotel. After the first series of switchbacks we came to a plateau, where a well deserved rest break was enjoyed. As I sat there I looked up at the trail ahead and couldn't believe what was ahead for us. The trail was a series of long switchbacks and we gained quite a bit of altitude. At the top, the path started a gradual decline to the Vodnikom Dom and all I could think of was - Why after all that altitude gain did the trail have to descend and lose some altitude? At the Vodnikom Dom we had a short lunch break. It was so crowded that all Frances and I had for lunch was a piece of goat's milk strudel and hot sweet tea.

Before leaving the Vodnikom Dom the guides roped us for a real rocky treacherous area, which was very slippery. After about a half hour we were released from the ropes. By now it was raining very heavily and became foggy and the visibility was nil. The rest of the day the trail was steadily upward and very rocky. By 2 PM we reached the Planika Hut (7900 ft.) and the guides decided it was too dangerous to continue onto the summit that day, so we spent the night there. I was so glad at that point because I was one, very soaked and cold hiker. At Planika I knew why the ladies had full packs because they carried a complete change of dry clothes. The hut was a newly constructed dormitory and each bed was equipped with flannel sheets and two wool blankets. After about an hour rest in a warm bed I joined the rest of the ladies at another building near the dormitory building.

For supper we had a choice of three different, stick to the rib meals, and I chose jesprenj (a thick barley soup), bread and hot Planika Caj (a sweet cherry flavored hot tea). The hut was so crowded and with all the body heat, my jacket and clothes dried within an hour. Quite a lot of people, especially the guides were concerned as to how I was feeling. The rest of the evening was spent singing Slovenian songs to the accompaniment of a man playing a button box and I drank a lot of Plankia Caj rather than the snops that so many were offering to me.

The next morning we were awakened at 4:45 and again (GREMO NA TRIGLAV) . To my surprise we would not be served breakfast, only hot tea was available. Most of the ladies brought sandwiches, bagels and rolls. My breakfast consisted of a Power Bar and hot tea. As I sat there thinking what was ahead of me, it didn't drown my spirits because everyone kept encouraging me to go na vrh (to the top). Outside it was pitch dark, very foggy and extremely cold. Everyone was being roped together in groups with one guide, equipped with a light, leading each group. In my group there were only three of us and we were the last group to begin the final climb. It was quite a sight with all guides wearing lights as we started the climb to the top. We followed the trail which was marked with a white bull's eye with a red circle around it. After we left Planika we never once stopped to rest and I kept eating my Power Bar and drinking Gatorade for strength and more DUHA! DUHA! The trail consisted of large boulders and rocks and the going was very difficult for me because I was not accoustomed to the high altitude. I knew when we approached the sedlo, the top was close. This is a very narrow saddle with cables aiding you as you climbed and everything was covered with a glaze of ice and the wind was blowing very hard. It also gave me an eerie feeling to view all the memorials going up of people who didn't make it. It took us about two hours to reach the summit. The landmark on Triglav is a tower building called Aljaz Tower which can be used as a shelter in inclement weather. When I reached the top, everyone cheered and someone started to play a button box to the tune of "Na Gorenjska". I got so many hugs, kisses and Cestitimos (Congratulations) that I felt like the Queen of Slovenia.

The trek back down the mountain was made in about eight hours. At first it was very slippery but as the day progressed it warmed up a bit but due to the wet rocks the trail was treacherous all the way. Thanks to a guide, Binne, who practically held my hand the whole way back, I felt quite secure. I also enjoyed his company because he kept asking me about my life and I got some practice in speaking Slovenian and he told me all about the surrounding areas.

When we got back to the hotel we were hosted to a Farewell Dinner that evening where each participant received a special diploma as a symbol of

My Life and Times in Rhododendron Hell

-by Moshe Zvi Marvit
august 23, 1998

Midway upon my year I was approached, or rather confronted, with the unique opportunity to hike a portion of the Appalachian Trail with my friends. The Appalachian Trail extends through 14 eastern states and, at over 2,160 miles long, is the longest continually marked trail in the world. The experience sounded like a lot of fun, trekking the unknown, hiking and camping, braving the torrents of the unpredictable outdoors, dealing with bears and snakes, and all that fun stuff. There was only one problem: I am a city boy. I am a novice hiker, have never been climbing, and the only bears or snakes I have ever seen have been behind the almighty fences of the Pittsburgh Zoo. In fact, if a bear were to approach me, I wouldn't know whether to play dead, drop my pack and run, or stare it down.

Hiking the trail with my idealistically naïve friends was out of the question, but there had to be an alternative. There had to be some way that I could hike and see the trail without experience, without knowledge of the outdoors, and without the possibility of these two deficiencies shortening my life span. With that in mind I began my quest for the "Alternative".

It wasn't long into the search for my summer before I stumbled across the 3 letters that provided some relief: ATC. ATC stands for Appalachian Trail Conference and is comprised of the friendliest bunch of misfits, weirdoes, vagabonds, and intellectuals this side of the Mississippi.

Knowing little about the Appalachian Trail, and even less about the ATC, I began to fill out the application form. It was pretty standard: height? weight? experience? goals? and length of time desired? "Please circle the week(s) you wish to work...six week maximum." Well...5 has always been a lucky number for me, so I chose 5 weeks.

I was quickly accepted, packed my pack, and started down to Sugar Grove, Virginia, the home of the Konnarock Crew of the ATC. After a 9-hour drive and many wrong turns, I found myself at "Base Camp". Upon arrival I was quickly greeted by Janet, the resident coordinator, cook, and mom; and Don McDougal, fondly referred to as the "Head Guy" and the only administrator I have ever known to do manual labor.

Then comes the sneak barrage of names, "Hi I'm Lara ... Cynthia ... Josh ... Meagan ... Kent ... Katy ... and of course the seemingly endless Johns and Matts." Generally by the end of the week, you cease to call Andrew "Josh" and Meagan "Hey You!".

After feeding time, where everyone instinctively runs to the sound of ringing bells like Pavlov's puppies, comes the amateur's relief: an explanation. I was seated at a table with what will be my 7 best friends for the next week while Cynthia, the crew leader, and her assistant began to tell us why we are here. They explained to us where we would be going, what we would be doing, a short history of the Pulaski, and the desired color and frequency of our urine-"Clear and copious...on demand" or "Yellow and stinky? Take a drinky."

Now that I knew that I would be digging sidehill on a mountain called "Jump Up"-named so for obvious reasons-in North Carolina, I went straight to bed.

The next morning, after a restful night in a rustic cabin call a "Pod", one is awakened to the sound of bells. Camp Konnarock is now officially in session. A quick breakfast is had, the van is loaded, and off we go to Jump Up, with the inevitable wrong turn in Asheville.

On arrival a group effort is made to set up camp and within minutes we have a fully functioning kitchen (propane powered stove under a big blue tarp), bathroom facilities (a large deep cathole), and each his/her respective abode (tent). But rather than stare in awed amazement at our creation, we must go to work.

This particular project was a relocation of an existing portion of the Appalachian Trail. Due to erosion and constant use, this portion was washed out and is possibly very dangerous. So we, a brave band of 10, have 5 days to create new trail and cover the old one.

When originally explained to me, the task did not sound horribly difficult. To me new trail is 10 people stomping back and forth on a wooded area; once packed down, the trail is done. I was soon to discover the error of my thoughts.

After a several mile bushwhack up the mountain carrying pic-

(Continued on page 8)

having conquered Triglav. Unfortunately, my friend Frances stayed at the Planika Hut and didn't go to the summit.

Even though I had previously been up there on that mountain in 1990, this expedition with all the ladies was an experience I will never forget. I shed a lot of tears for I felt so fortunate to be able to do this in honor of my Mother and Father and all their friends who came from this beautiful area which is the Gorenjska province of Slovenia. As a popular song in Slovenia states LJUBIM TE SLOVENIA (I Love You Slovenia) .

My Life and Times in Rhododendron Hell

(Continued from page 7)

matics, pulaskis, rockbars, firerakes, loppers, saws, and then all of our personal safety gear, food, and water, I was confronted with the project at hand. We all stood there staring at this dense forest which we must clear and have trailworthy in five short days. All was silent as we stared in denial and I could hear the whisper from in back as someone mumbled "Rhododendron Hell!" in horror.

"All right, let's have some fun!" the crew leader yelled. This of course is an euphemism for "All right, let's get to work."

The first day of work started with a 10 minute demonstration by Josh, the assistant crew leader, on how to dig sidehill. Josh-a man whose sole means of sustenance and nutrition comes from all things brown, honey, apple cider vinegar, and beer-made the process seem surprisingly simple. "Remove the duff (Appalachian slang for organic matter), find mineral soil, even it, pack it down, voila, piece of trail is done."

This seemed simple enough, so off I went in search of a perfect spot that I could clear. The process of searching was like looking for a house to live in. I want a spot that is easy, not a fixer-upper, has lots of shade, in a good neighborhood where it is close enough to people, but far enough for solitude. After about 5 minutes of searching I found the perfect plot of land. Nestled between two oak trees in a relatively flat area, a sole ray of light leaded through the branches as the rest was covered in serene tranquillity. It was truly beautiful, so I went there with my tools to dig it out.

On my first swing into the dirt, I made a few sudden but profound realizations. One is, I realized why no one else had taken this spot. Trees have roots, roots extend underground through the duff, which I must cut, and through the mineral soil, which I must restore; and double the trees means double the roots. I also realized why so many pieces of expensive furniture are made from oak: it is hard, very very hard.

My grandfather always said that if something is difficult it builds character. I would, at this point, like to point out that my grandfather was wrong. I did not gain character, I got blisters.

After a few hours of playing and experimenting, I found my forte: stumps. I became the Stumpman. I abandoned sidehill and focused all my energy on the removal of stumps, and sometimes the occasional boulder.

After work, we still had a lot of things that needed to be done that were manual, but not work like in nature. We had to bushwhack back to our newly constructed camp, make dinner, and share in all the rest of the communal duties. After that we could hike or take a swim if we wished, but sitting around and talking was about all we had energy for.

The next day, one is awakened at 7:00 A.M. to get back to work. And it continues like this for 5 long or short days. Some days you feel like Sisyphus., rolling a boulder up the mountain only to see it roll back down again; some days you feel like Cool Hand Luke, working on a chain gang and tempted to report to the crew leader on your every action; but deep within one knows that his/her personal contribution is no less valuable than Benton MacKaye's, the man who mapped out and created the idea for the Appalachian Trail.

The reasons people volunteer are very diverse. Some come to test their own personal adaptability and strength. While others feel it is their duty to give something back to nature, not through monetary means, but via sweat and tears. Then there are those that come for fun. It may seem odd, but it is an enjoyable experience. The camaraderie and simple natural freedom greatly overshadows the times when the work becomes tedious and one questions his/her reason for being there.

After five days of working on Jump Up Mountain, something amazing happened; we made trail: 1,725 feet to be exact. But rather than sit around and stare in awe, we had work to do. Hike back, pack up camp, prepare to leave, and hike out.

The weeks following we did stints at Humpback Rock, Firescald Mountain, and a two week trek into the Great Smoky Mountains. The living arrangements were never the same; from tents and a large blue tarp, to shelters and old cabins, where we dropped our pack was home. The work too was never the same; from digging sidehill to building rock cribbing, from building steps to carving steps directly into the mountain, or even belaying off of a mountain to quarry rocks.

At the close of five weeks, with many miles and an odd rash under my belt, it was time to leave. Good-byes are said, addresses exchanged, and it is time to hitch a ride back to Pittsburgh. As I am leaving, I hear someone yell, "Hey, are you comin' back next year?" I walk away muttering the words "five weeks", but I don't think he heard me.

Moshe Zvi Marvit is a member of the Pittsburgh Council, AYH who wrote his story of hard work as a volunteer on the Appalachian Trail in the summer of 1998. He currently attends St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland. I wonder if Moshe went back for five more weeks in 1999?

HAVASU CANYON - THE ETERNAL MAGNET

By Glenn Oster

There have been places in our beautiful country that cried out to me, places I just had to visit. One of the loudest of such cries has been from Havasu Canyon in Arizona. I silenced that cry this Autumn, and it lived up to its billing as a marvelous and beautiful part of our country.

Why is this place so special and where is it? One answer at a time - special because of the unusual travertine pools that form at the base of the canyon's magnificent waterfalls. I'll develop that aspect later in this narrative. As to where, it is located about 65 miles west of the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. To get there you must approach it from super highway I-40, leaving it on Arizona Route 66 at either Kingman, Arizona (and traveling Northeast) or Seligman, Arizona (and traveling Northwest). When Indian Route 18 is reached (from either direction on Route 66), turn Northeast for 62 miles to Hualapai Hilltop, the end of the route and the roadway. Now, you know why to go there and how to find it.

I arrived at Hualapai Hilltop at dusk on October 20, 1999 and was overwhelmed. The drive across Coconino Plateau to reach the trailhead at the Hilltop had been flat and covered with pinon pine trees. It gave no hint of what was ahead. As I drove the final quarter mile, the landscape exploded into a huge canyon area. I wasn't prepared for its immensity and was in awe when the reality of it struck me. Whew! My next astonishment was the number of vehicles parked at the trail head. There must have been at least one hundred, with room for more. There was a trailer set up at the side that appeared to be used for administration, and on a lower ledge I saw structures that most likely facilitated livestock use. There was no obvious water source and no washroom. However, there was a single his/her composting toilet with walls - but without a door or roof. Privacy didn't seem to be of much importance.

Darkness was setting in rapidly; so, I hustled to check out the area and determine where my starting point would be in the morning. The adrenalin was starting to kick in. I'm rarely excited, but I was at that moment in time, the eve of a dream come true. I made dinner by moonlight, washed (using water I had brought with me) and stretched out in the back of my minivan. It was early for me to be turning in, and it took me a while to drift off, the adrenalin slow to dissipate..

Morning. Breakfast. Hit the trail. The day had finally come, after years of anticipation and, more recently, 2600 miles of driving. I had tried at different times to get a permit from the Native Americans to enter the canyon and was not successful, but this time all systems were go. I strapped on my backpack and started down into Havasupai Canyon. The trail was well switch backed, but the walking surface quickly heralded what was to come - a granular tread way, into which your boots sink, punctuated by lots of rocks to stumble on. You seem to drop for an eternity alongside enormous Wescogame Point, but it is only about a 2000 foot descent. At first, the shadows were long and dark. The overpowering desire for picture taking had to be bridled. Even so, my slides of the hike down show some long, strong shadows. I must not have controlled my urge as well as I thought. However, the sun soon rose in the sky, and the colors of the massive canyon walls became resplendent in an array of earthtones ranging from beige to tan to brown to maroon and to deep red. I hadn't realized how greatly the angle of the sun affects the color of these rocks until I was hiking out two days later. It was mid-day then as I hiked out, but at that hour the canyon walls appeared drab, with little contrast to accentuate the color. Seeing the canyon at its best is one significant advantage of starting early in the morning. The other is beating the worst of the day's heat.

The walking surface continued to be a problem, but it's one with which you have to deal. The village of Supai, my intermediate destination, is eight miles along the way - the only way, and I was on it. Accordingly, Indians on horseback and mules use the trail to carry in most of the food, supplies and mail. Some of the visitors also use it to travel in and out (for a substantial fee) on Indian supplied horses. (Presumably, but I don't know for certain, visitors could use their own livestock.) Moreover, some of the campers have their backpacks transported in and out on horses, again, for a fee. I saw probably fifty horses and mules pass me on their way up to Hualapai Hilltop. Needless to say, they keep the trail tread loose and a bit difficult to walk on, especially with a heavy backpack. There is still one more way that supplies and visitors reach Supai - by helicopter. On the day I hiked out, a helicopter seemed to shuttle back and forth from Hualapai Hilltop to Supai continually. Returning to discussion of the hike, after making the initial steep 2000 foot drop, the trail descends quite gradually some six miles to Supai and for the next two miles beyond, finally dropping steeply some 200 feet to the campground.

As you first enter Havasupai Canyon, the distance between its walls is substantial, perhaps a half mile wide. However, as you hike farther, the canyon walls close in, and eventually they are only about twenty feet apart. There are

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interesting rock formations all along the route. Disciplining my picture taking became useless. Fortunately, I had lots of film. One of the concerns hikers have to be alert to when in this canyon is that of Indians galloping the trail on horseback. It's obvious that the horses are very familiar with their rider's favorite routes (there are places where more than one path is evident). You must get out of their way - they are not about to slow down. Horses and mules have the right of way, and their riders exercise that right. Toward the bottom of the canyon, water begins to appear alongside the trail for a short distance, then disappears underground for a mile or so and reappears to form small pools. Two of them seemed especially enticing, and I had a bathing suit, but I resisted the temptation.

After about six and a half miles, a large side canyon joins Havasupai Canyon from the right, none other than the famous Havasu Canyon. Havasu Creek races down the canyon floor from an underground stream that gushes from the side of a monstrous rock wall many miles east of Supai. The fascinating aspect of this stream is that it is high in calcium content that reflects the color of masses such as the trees or the sky. It appears colorful even when coursing through a narrow bed shaded into darkness by eavy tree coverage. As the story of the trail plays out, next comes deep sand to trudge through. Your feet sink in with each step, even more so than into the granular surface of the trail to this point. Soon after reaching Havasu Canyon you begin to see houses. Then, your view is captivated by two rock formations high above that are topped by large knobs resembling heads. These formations, called "The Wigleeva," are sacred to the Havasupai Tribe. They believe that if they tumble, the entire canyon will collapse and spell the end of the tribe.

The houses and other buildings are all single story structures. There is a business office where you pay a \$20 entrance fee and contract for lodging, the campground and transportation of persons and/or gear. In addition, there is a store, church, school, community building, cafe and a modern lodge. They all play a major role in the lives and welfare of Supai's 700 residents. Tourism is apparently the main source of income for the town. The only engine powered vehicles that I saw or heard of were a tractor and trailer used in collecting trash and an off road vehicle to enable the doctor to move quickly. Presumably, they were brought in by helicopter or dissembled.

I arrived at the business office just at noon, but a sign told me the attendant who runs it would return at 1:00 p.m. She actually showed up about 1:20. I don't think that timeliness or causing inconvenience is of much importance in their way of life. Might as well use the time to have some lunch, myself. I no sooner began to eat when I had two visitors, a girl of nine years and a boy of eleven, whose names I couldn't understand. They had large dark eyes and were keenly curious about everything that I had, especially what I was eating, i.e., Wasa Bread spread with Cheez Whiz. I asked them if their mother would approve my giving them each a Kudo bar, which I did after enthusiastic responses. (They almost nodded their heads off.) Thereupon, without a thank you, they turned and left on the run. Not long afterwards, they were back to resume their questioning. Other hikers had arrived while I was eating, and, when I finished, they insisted that I take my place at the head of the registration line. I paid my entry fee and the \$10 per night camping fee and resumed my trek to the campground.

As mentioned, the campground is two miles farther down the trail, but that seemed a very short two miles. Perhaps it was a result of the variety of points of interest along the way, the first of which was making my way out of the village with its special attractions. Next to intrigue me was the stream with vividly green plant life that coats the rock over which the water flows. Farther along, the stream splits to form two 75 foot high waterfalls a hundred yards apart. They most likely are beautiful, but are so obscured by trees that views of them are not especially rewarding. I climbed down a steep side trail to get a better look at them, while still carrying my 40-some pound backpack. That doesn't sound very astute, but I didn't care to leave my pack on the trail unattended and wanted to take advantage of the sunlight at that time of day. I didn't want to take a chance on what the sunlight might be like when next convenient to see these falls. As it turned out, I didn't return - my pictures confirm why - they don't show much.. Eventually, I heard the unmistakable sound of a major waterfalls. It had to be Havasu Falls. How long I've waited to see this waterfalls.

The trail is about 200 feet to the left of the falls and affords a great view. Except for the fact that the sun wasn't shining on the water, the scene was everything I had anticipated and more. There it was! A large rock at the crest of the falls splits the flow into two water columns. As I watched the water dance its way down the 150 foot drop, I came to realize that it didn't matter that the sun wasn't shining directly on the falls. It was shining on red rock nearby, in turn borrowing the rock's color and bouncing it onto the waterfalls. This had the effect of giving the water a curious, but beautiful pink cast - breathtaking. I dawdled as I continued my descent past the falls and onward to the campground. I wanted to see this falls in every different light phase and couldn't

wait until I returned to drink in all of its enchantment.

A ranger checked to make sure I had my permit in order and pointed me toward the campground not far beyond. I found a suitable campsite easily - few sites had been taken. When I hiked down the canyon the following day, I discovered that the campground seemed to go on forever - probably over a mile and a half. Considering the large number of campsites and small number of campers, I wondered why permits were so hard to obtain. I learned why on my way out, but that's a story for later. There may have been few campers to greet me, but what was on hand was the corps of camp canines. Five dogs welcomed me and immediately took up residence next to or under my picnic table. They were well behaved, rarely barked, and didn't beg, but they were in my way whenever I moved away from the table. One would even wriggle its head between my ankles as I sat at the table. I could imagine fleas of all types hopping on me for a different tasting meal. Pleased to admit that my fear was unfounded. The dogs scratched a lot, but their fleas apparently preferred a diet of dogs rather than campers and, obligingly, ignored me. During the night, some large creature came through my campsite and brushed against my backpack on the picnic table, knocking it to the ground. Well! That aroused my body guards, whereupon they let out a barrage of woofs, yelps, snaps and snorts, the likes of which I've seldom heard. That large creature bounded away on a dead run with my buddies hard on its heels. No one in the campground could have slept through that episode. My guess is that it might have been a wild burro. Whatever critter it was, the sound of hoofbeats racing away was unmistakable.

In the morning, I treated myself to a leisurely start for the day. I knew the light would not be good at Havasu Falls until after 10:30 a.m., but I arrived earlier - just in case. The sun wasn't shining on the falls, but I was determined to stay there until it did, presumably sometime between 11:00 a.m and 1:00 p.m. At least, that's what the ranger had told me. What I learned afterwards was that the sun doesn't actually shine on the falls at all, except in late May and early June when it is in that season's special orbit. I would have had a long vigil - seven months. However, the sun did shine on the water at the base of the falls, and what a rewarding scene it highlighted! As I mentioned earlier, the calcium in the water enhances reflectance, making the water exposed to the sky an unbelievably beautiful shade of blue, while nearby the sun shining on the trees gave the water in that area a wonderful green hue such as I've never seen. I had read about this phenomenon for years and here I was actually experiencing it. One of the most highly touted reasons for visiting Havasu Canyon is the travertine pools which form in the outflow. The calcium in the water, referred to in this context as travertine, builds up irregularly formed walls, partitioning the area into pools. The pools take on the colors that I mentioned and are remarkable indeed. If you have ever seen Mammoth Hot Springs at Yellowstone National Park, you can visualize what I'm describing because of its similarity of formation. The end product is unusually beautiful undulating pools.

Swimming is permitted at the base of the falls, and several women appeared expecting to swim. They had their swim suits under their outer clothing and were quick to shed the outer layer and head for the water. I'll leave it up to you to guess what the reason was, but none ventured in deeper than their knees. I was glad, not that I don't appreciate women in swimsuits. They would have detracted from the beauty of the falls. And I had gone to great lengths to see the falls. The men who accompanied them also waded but didn't wet much of themselves, either. Incidentally, while mentioning swimming, literature about Havasu Canyon states that swimming is permitted, but NO NUDE BATHING. I consider it my duty to report that I did not observe anyone violating this dictum.

My next Havasu Canyon exploration was to check out Mooney Falls, farther downstream. I wanted to do this by 1:00 p.m., again in the hope of seeing it in sunlight shining directly into the canyon. That, too, turned out to be wishful thinking - only May and June. The sun's path and the deepness of the canyon make direct sun rays a bit scarce. I hiked past the seemingly endless campsites, some of which are accessed by adventuresome campers' walking across fallen trees that span Havasu Creek. The stream never ceased to be eye catching. Again, as when approaching Havasu Falls, I heard the sound of the falls growing louder as I made my way toward it. When I reached Mooney Falls, I breathed a low "Wow." This is a single column of water, but nearly fifty feet higher than Havasu Falls. Unfortunately, but more excitingly, there is no convenient path to take you to the bottom for a better view. At first there is a tread way to a limited extent, but steep. I had been warned that descending the canyon at Mooney Falls was not for the feint of heart and felt a false sense of security when climbing down this tread way. I soon learned why the warning. Two sharply descending tunnels had been hacked out of the canyon wall. Hikers have to go down backwards. A person who experiences claustrophobia would not do well there. Once, again, I felt smug in managing the tunnels' steepness without much difficulty, Then, I got my comeuppance. For the next sixty feet, you descend the rock face, straight down. Again, you have to do so backwards. A few steel pegs are embedded in the rock to provide hand holds. What got my attention were the chains you must use to lower yourself

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while trying to locate someplace to plant your feet. At one point, I could find no foothold. Resorting to blind faith, I lowered myself with only my arm strength, letting the chains slide in measured amounts through my hands. I'm writing this, which attests to the fact that I did find a foothold before I lost my grip. Unquestionably, I was convinced. Whoever said descending that canyon wall was not for the feint of heart knew whereof they spoke. I had to hang my camera down my back. I needed both hands for climbing and would have damaged the camera had it been in front of me.

Once I reached the canyon floor, I gazed up the falls at length, mesmerized at the patterns the water fashions while falling. When at last I was able to break away, I hiked farther down the canyon and took pictures, too many pictures, but why not. When would I get there again. The water flowing over Mooney Falls created travertine pools, but they weren't as picturesque as at Havasu Falls. What was fascinating, though, was the rock on the canyon walls. I never saw a geological explanation of their appearance or heard what it might be called. It reminded me of smooth ocean waves, just before they crashed. Only these waves were reddish stone that extended down the side of the precipice. My slides show this far better than I can describe them, truly a case where a picture is worth a thousand words.

The time came too soon when I should climb out of that canyon. I wasn't apprehensive about climbing up the canyon wall, but I was cautious. Turned out that going up is much less challenging than going down. I moved well and was at the top in short order. I was now a veteran of Mooney Falls and qualified to warn others as others had warned me.

Back in camp, more tenters had arrived, and I found interesting people with whom to share stories. I sat with them and enjoyed shelling and eating peanuts by the light of a big moon in a clear sky. There were campers from all over the USA and from other parts of the world as well. My most interesting acquaintances were Heinz and his daughter, Kirsten, from Switzerland. Heinz is in his sixties and suffers from macular degeneration. Nonetheless, he can outwalk me. His eyes won't permit him to drive a car or ride a bicycle, as he used to do in competitions, but he is still a super hiker. Kirsten is married to a mountaineer and is a strong outdoors person herself.

Next day meant an early rise for me. I intended to hike out that morning to avoid some of the sun's heat in Havasupai Canyon where it becomes wide and open. I was quiet as I made breakfast and struck my tent in the dark, so quiet that even my canine guardians didn't notice my departure. The sky was just coming to life as I climbed up the trail alongside Havasu Falls. I was startled to realize that a dimly lit human form was ahead, that of a young woman. We talked for a quarter hour. She simply could not get enough of the beauty of the falls and wanted to absorb as much of it as she could before having to depart, a remarkable person with well-defined values. Everything appeared rather sleepy as I walked through Supai. However, all that was to change as I continued my climb out through the canyon. Dozens of horses and mules plodded or thundered past me throughout the morning kicking up clouds of dust. Mule trains carry mail in and out of the canyon five times a week. Reflecting back to my hike into the canyon, I had somewhat expected the horses and mules. Notwithstanding, I wasn't prepared for what I encountered as the morning became closer to afternoon. On the way down the canyon, I neither caught up to another hiker, nor did any pass me. However, during my climb out hikers in jubilant spirits, some in groups of thirty-five, were descending the trail, ultimately to the campground. I quit counting at one hundred fifty. I made poor time, because most of the hikers had not been there before and many quizzed me extensively. Other than for avoiding direct sunshine, I had no schedule to dictate my timing; so, I didn't mind providing answers as I went along.

I made it to my van by 12:30 p.m., washed and ate lunch. I sat contentedly looking over Wescogame Point and Havasupai Canyon, savoring the experience I had just concluded. As I've said so often in my writings, we in America are truly fortunate. There is so much scenic grandeur to enrich one's being. It's there for the taking if we will only stir ourselves into seeking it out. Admittedly, this particular trek called for more than just "the will to stir" myself. I feel blessed to have been physically able to answer the cry of Havasu Canyon with its waterfalls and travertine pools and to experience the myriad sights, sounds and smells that greeted me. I wish you had been there to enjoy it with me.

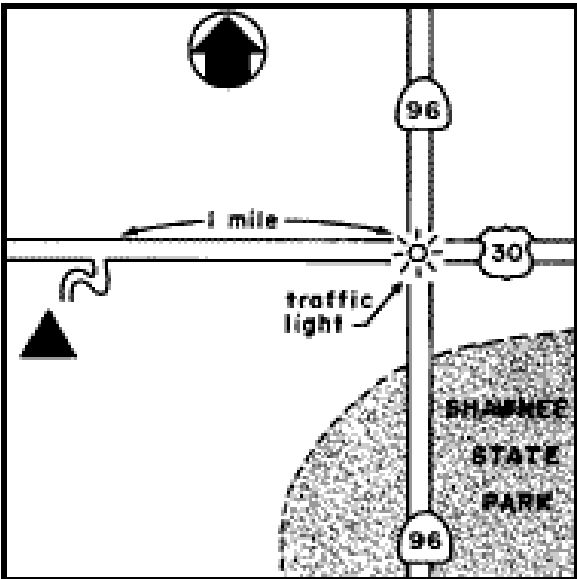
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Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide describes more than 160 Forest Service trails in 1,350 square miles of the Mon National Forest - one of the best areas for hiking, backpacking and ski touring in this part of the country. Published by the West Virginia Conservancy. 320 pages , 60 maps , 39 photos. 6th Edition (1993)	\$12.95
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AYH 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 Travel Store is open Tuesday through Saturday 12 to 5 pm effective Dec 10th. Hours are subject to change, so it's a good idea to call the office at 412-431-4910 before coming in. We're in the Pittsburgh Hostel at 830 E Warrington Avenue in Allentown. All passes, ID cards, rail passes, and books are available.