

# THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE

The Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels

Volume 42 Number 3

March, 1991

## CAR CAMPING IS SOMETHING ELSE!

by Glenn Oster

### March's Programs

**February 28**

*An Introduction to Diving  
(National Association of  
Underwater Instructors)*

**Darin Clark**

**March 7**

*X-C Skiing in The Tetons and  
Yellowstone*

**Bob and Bev Dodson**

**March 14**

*The Soviet/Sierra  
Environmental Exchange:  
Soviet Hikers in  
The Allegheny Mountains*

**Walter Vaux**

**March 21**

*More Surprises on Our  
Film Projector*

**Joel Platt**

**March 28**

*Having a Wonderful Vacation  
in the ALPS (Part 2)*

**Jack & Blanche Asherman**

**Headquarters opens at 8:00  
Programs begin at 8:15**

**We need shows. To Volunteer  
Call Rodney Horner  
(339-0944)**

This is an account of a car camping trip to hike two sections of the Appalachian Trail (the AT) in Virginia over the weekend of December 7-9, 1990. Sounds simple doesn't it. That's what I thought, too, as I planned the trip, and it had the potential of being a good trip (especially considering that we didn't have to carry heavy backpacks). The available space was filled up very quickly. First, I'll tell you who went along with me, and I'm sure many of you will be able to decipher the unnamed persons who, true to form, did certain things - Charlie Forbes, Lori Prucha, Jacki Short, Mark Mistrik, Helen Coyne, Clare Bunker, Bill Lindgren, Pat Tieman and Gerry Gogol. With a group like that how could you miss.

Everyone was reasonably close to being on time at Headquarters. And there the fun began. There were to be seven persons riding in my mini-van and we've done this before, so it's possible to get seven people and their gear aboard without much strain. But you should have seen what they brought. Talk about everything but the kitchen sink, I was looking for someone to show up with the living room sofa! Thank goodness that Gerry Gogol was driving separately and gave us a hand. Finally, off we went only to learn that one of our young ladies left her food at home resulting in a fifteen minute stop at the food coop at The Factory. On the trip she kept thinking about that forgotten food spoiling in her kitchen.

Our destination was Big Meadows Campground on the Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park and we made

it uneventfully (no one even snored on the way) by 1:00 am or so. And we had no rain on the way, contrary to most of our Friday night departures over the past several months. Super!

Morning came quickly and I rattled all the tents at 7:30 am with the good news that the sky was becoming clear and that the temperature had only dropped to 29 degrees F (thought it might be much colder). It took us until after 9:00 am to get under way. We still had a long drive south on Skyline Drive to get to our planned hiking area. This was fun, because the views from the overlooks were clear. You could see range after range in the distance with the sun shining on them and the remaining leaves on the trees taking on more of a golden hue. The clouds were sparse but feathery, the sky a pale blue, and it felt good to be alive. This has always been my favorite National Park, maybe because this is where I caught the hiking disease.

We parked the car in a lot just beyond US250 and I-64 and returned to Sawmill Run Overlook in Bill's car where most of the group was trying to keep warm while we did the car shuttle. Off we hiked and warmed very quickly climbing a long unnamed steep hill only to drop down again a little east of Jarman Gap. In fact, the entire day was a series of roller coaster ups and downs usually about 400' to 500', some of them nicely switchbacked and some pure grunt work straight up the hill. The views from atop the meadows, called "balds" were incredible. You could see 360 degrees and one view nicer than the one before.  
continued on page 10

# COUNCIL BULLETIN BOARD

## FREE 1991 AYH DISCOVERY TOURS CATALOG AVAILABLE

In a constant endeavor to provide the best travel programs for the best value, AYH has completely updated its World Adventure trip program and changed the name to American Youth Hostels Discovery Tours.

AYH Discovery Tours now offer a selection of hiking and cycling tours in the U.S., Canada and Europe which emphasize a "sense of place." Experience new places, not just travel through them, and learn what is special about the area you are visiting.

Tours are available for all ages: teens (ages 15-18), young adults (ages 17-25), adults (ages 18 and over), and persons 50+. They feature small, friendly groups - usually nine participants plus an AYH-trained tour leader.

Hiking and cycling range from a nine-day tour around New York's Finger Lakes region for only \$350 to 44-day cycling trip throughout Europe for \$2995 (land cost).

Hiking tours include a nine-day hike and trail maintenance program in the John Muir Wilderness Area for just \$250, a nine-day hike through the Lochs of Scotland for only \$425 (land cost), and a 23-day hiking tour of the Rocky Mountains for \$1475.

All tour prices include overnight accommodations in hostels or campgrounds, group-prepared meals, an entertainment fund and an experienced AYH leader.

AYH Discovery Tours also introduce the first affordable package to New York City! This three-day package, available for only \$65, includes two nights guaranteed confirmed accommodations at the New York International AYH-Hostel, two continental breakfasts, admission to the Empire State Building observation area, a ferry ticket to the Statue of Liberty, and an information packet featuring budget sight-seeing opportunities around "the Big Apple."

All AYH Discovery Tours emphasize responsible tourism with awareness of and respect for natural environments and other cultures. AYH leaders are trained in low-impact travel techniques and practice the general hosting principle of treading lightly on our environment.

The 24-page 1991 AYH Discovery Tours Catalog is available free of charge by writing: AYH Discovery Tours, Pittsburgh Council AYH, 6300 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232 or by calling (412) 362-8181

## OHIO PYLE WORK PARTY

It's not a regular party. You do have some fun and get a free lunch and transportation (and a free overnight to be used later) but mostly you do some work and feel good about helping at the hostel. We are planning to leave AYH headquarters at 9:00 am on Sun, March 17 and be back by 6:00 pm. If the weather is really nice some outside painting will get done. If not, we have plenty of work to do inside both painting and cleaning and hanging posters, etc. If you would like to lend a hand please call Linda at 531-1868 and I'll save a place for YOU!



## HOSTEL DEVELOPMENT IN WEST VIRGINIA

Caitlin Porter is working with Potomac Area Council to develop hostels in West Virginia. Their current effort is a hostel in Shepherdstown, not too far northwest of Harper's Ferry in the (far) eastern panhandle of West Virginia. However, Caitlin has recently moved to Morgantown and would like to find if there's additional interest in hostel development in other parts of the state. If you think you might be interested in a West Virginia hostel or would just like more information, call Caitlin at 304-296-6916 or the Pittsburgh Council at 412-362-8181.



## DEADLINES FOR THE APRIL ISSUE

Copy  
March 7  
Binding & Mailing  
March 21



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### NEWS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Pittsburgh Council Board of Directors met on January 21st. The Board approved selling Eurail passes at the Council as part of an agreement between the AYH National Office and FrenchRail. A Board planning retreat was set for Saturday, March 2nd to review the status of the Council and to discuss long term Council goals. The Publications Committee reported that the new edition of Canoeing Guide will be going to press shortly and is expected to be available in the early Spring. The next meeting of the Board will be on March 18 at 7:30 pm in Joe Hoechner's office at One Oxford Center in downtown Pittsburgh. Individual committees will also be meeting separately in the interim.

### ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

The next meeting of the Activities Committee will be April 3, 1991 at 8:00 pm. It will be held at the home of Pat Tieman, 56 Greenbriar Drive, phone 561-3286. Directions to the meeting will be mailed to all Activities Committee Chairpeople. Also, appearing in this month's Triangle is an Activities Survey. I urge you to take a few moments and fill it out! It is your chance to give us feedback on the activities program and to help us tailor the program to better meet your needs. If you prefer to speak to someone in person about the program, please feel free to call me at 441-2306. I am always happy to hear your comments and answer any questions you may have. Jon Maiman, Activities Committee Chairman.

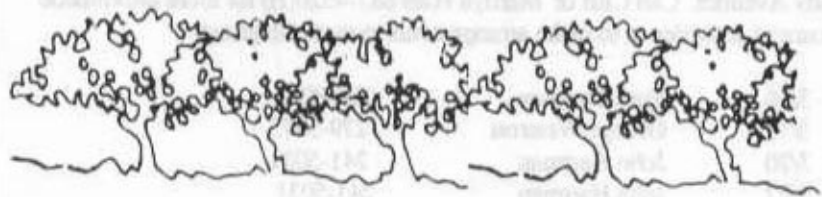
Last month, I wrote about the changes that have been occurring in Pittsburgh Council and about the challenges that are ahead for the Council. Many of these challenges are administrative as we try to support the growth in Council membership and programs. But the most important and significant challenge for the Council is to keep aware of our mission as an organization and to implement this mission for the benefit of our membership and the general community.

The Council's Constitution states our mission as "providing, especially for young people, recreational and educational opportunities through hosteling to promote greater knowledge and understanding of the out-of-doors and the fellowship of man".

We have been implementing this in three ways: programs, hostels, and hosteling. As I see it, "Programs" includes our activities and special events for members and our community; "hostels" consists of providing hostels and hostel-based interpretive programs for visitors to our area; and "hosteling" consists of providing the information and resources for members, especially young people, to explore our world on their own.

This month I'd like to talk about the "hosteling" part of our mission. Travel, especially travel abroad, can be intimidating for the uninitiated or inexperienced. Pittsburgh AYH, as part of a national and international network, can and should act as a resource for the traveler interested in low impact, open minded travel. The very nature of hostel facilities fosters interaction and communication with other travelers and the world community. But first, you have to start on the adventure. I hope to see the Council develop as THE place to go to get information on how to travel — not only information on what it's like to hostel in other countries but practical information on how to get a passport, a hostel pass, a student ID card, a Eurail pass; on what's the best kind of luggage to carry; on how to get the best value on airline tickets. We've started on some of this by presenting hosteling seminars at local universities and by making some of these items available for sale through the Council store. I'd like to expand this further by offering more presentations to colleges and high schools, by having more reference material available, and by having a Council store open for reference and sales throughout the week, rather than just on Thursday evenings.

Interested? Do you have hosteling experience and advice you'd be willing to share? Would you like to help set up an expanded Council store on a volunteer (or paid) basis? If you would, I'd like to hear your ideas. Call me evenings at 412-665-9554. *Larry Laude*





## BICYCLING SEASON OPENS!

With the coming of warmer weather, many AYH'ers start thinking about getting back on their bikes. (Usually, by mid-April a few of them will actually have ridden them.) To help you get in the riding mood, here are a few bits of information:

The 1991 Pittsburgh AYH Bicycling Trips Brochure should be available by March 15. Pick up your copy at headquarters or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Chuck Ejzak, 6858 Wilson St., West Mifflin PA 15122

If you are thinking of getting a new bike this year, March is an excellent time to shop. You have the choice of last year's leftovers (often at a good price) or the newest 1991 stuff. Plan your cold weather rides near mid-day after the ice in the puddles has melted.

Remember to dress in layers and take advantage of the high tech clothing you may already have. (Remember those cross-country clothes which have not seen much use in the last several years?) e.g.: Cross country ski gloves, long-underwear (synthetic material or silk), thin hat or polypro balaclava (to fit under your helmet), plus some lycra or polypro tights as an outer layer for your legs, and a wind shell or wind breaker.

Feet are vulnerable to cold weather unless they are well protected. Don't try to wear an extra layer of socks and then stuff your feet into your cycling shoes. Constricting your feet reduces circulation and makes them even colder. It is better to add insulation to the outside of your shoe. This can range from booties designed especially for cycling shoes to a very large pair of wool socks with cleat holes cut out.

Don't overdo your early season rides and pay attention to the weather forecasts. You do not want to be caught by surprise when the temperature drops from 60 degrees to 35 degrees when you are still 20 miles from the end.

## MONTOUR TRAIL ON RIGHT TRACK!

The Montour Trail Council is currently negotiating with the P&LE Railroad to purchase the abandoned Montour Railroad right-of-way from Coraopolis to Clairton. The Council has received a grant of \$200,000 from the Sarah Heinz Foundation for the purchase and is expecting matching funds from State RIRA funding. The deal should be closed by the end of February. The Montour Trail Council is beginning to work up a development and maintenance plan to have parts of the trail operational as soon as possible. If you would like to become involved in this project please call Jerry Agin at 343-1425. George Schmidt. Reprinted from Cycling Circular - WPW Ltd.

## Mid-Week Rambles

Every Wednesday we meet at 10:00 a.m. in the upper parking lot at Fifth and Shady Avenues. Call Cliff or Marilyn Ham 687-4520(H) for more information on current activities or to make arrangements to meet the group.

3/06	Tom Caveney	276-8044
3/13	George Westcott	279-5375
3/20	John Hartman	241-5031
3/27	John Hartman	241-5031

## BICYCLE THE SOUTH

Enjoy Spring in the South. Join Glenn Oster on a bicycle touring trip from Newport News, Virginia to Ormond Beach, Florida. The ride will start Sunday, April 7, 1991 and take one month or less. Sign up for the full trip or for as little as one week. Call for details and reservations. (412) 364-2864 (before 9:00 pm)

## BIKE AMERICA

Join Glenn Oster on all or a portion of his cross-country bicycle trip. Start at Vancouver, B.C.; continue south to San Diego and east to Newport News, VA

Glenn will welcome males or females for the full trip or for as little as two weeks. Pace will be easy covering 40 to 75 miles per day, more or less, varied by winds, terrain, and campground location. Each person must be self-sufficient for camping and cooking. Expect to stop to sightsee and hike as opportunities present themselves. Timing is from May 21 to October 31, 1991.

For more information and reservations phone Glenn at (412) 364-2864 before 9:00 pm.



## Volleyball

We'll play indoors at Schenley School every Tuesday evening from 6:30 - 9:30. For more information call Jeff Marsh (384-7827) or Joel Platt (521-5244-H) or (421-4446-W) ♦♦

## Pittsburgh Council Activity Chairs

### Bicycling

Chuck Ejzak 466-6196  
Bill Eberle 833-9732

### Canoeing

Clare Bunker 244-9788

### Caving

Dan Martt 921-4638

### Climbing

Eric Bauer 687-0766

### Family Activities

Barbara Hanusa 441-7205

### Hiking & Backpacking

Ben Brugmans 736-2751  
Pat Tieman 561-3286

### Kayaking

Ray Yutzy 341-5682  
John Gayler 366-4062

### Mid-Week Trips

Cliff Ham 687-4520

### Rafting

Jon Maiman 441-2306  
Linda Smithyman 531-1868

### Sailing

Bob Zavos 325-2175

### Sea Kayaking

Ted Self 795-6286  
Mark Mistrik 441-8293

### Volleyball

Jeff Marsh 384-7827

### X-C Skiing

Fred Parker 856-4713  
Steve Tubbs 279-4866

## Trips in March

### BICYCLE TRIPS

3/16 Sat All Ober Roone 364-3956

9:00 am in Civic Arena area. Parade starts at 10:00 am. Western PA Wheelman in conjunction with St. Patrick's parade

3/17 Sun B/C Bill Eberle 833-9732(H)

35 miles. St Patrick's Day Ride, Call Bill for more information on this ride. As with all rides this month, the weather will help determine the actual distance and meeting time.

3/30 Sat B/C Chuck Ejzak 466-6196(H)

10:00 am at Elizabeth, PA, 35 miles. Ride in the level terrain of the Mon valley. The precise length and route will depend on the weather. Call before you show up since bad weather will cancel the trip.

### HIKING/BACKPACKING

3/9 Sat I/A Glenn Oster 364-2864(H) before 9p.m.

Hike up to Bachman's Rock at Ohiopyle and return via the bike trail - 12 miles. Call for info and reservations

3/17 Sun Beg Ben Brugmans 736-0103(H)

9:00 am at Headquarters. Spring Ephemeral Wildflower Walk. Raccoon Creek - 3-4 Miles.

3/22-24 F-S Int Glenn Oster 364-2864(H) before 9p.m.

Hike through a stand of beautiful hemlocks in the Henry's Mills area of Allegheny National Park. Call for info and reservations.

3/30 Sat Beg Linda Smithyman 531-1868

Destination to be announced, 3-4 miles

4/5-7 Fri-Sun Int Jim Ritchie 624-1220(W) 828-0210(H)

6:00pm at HQ. Hiking and Cabin Camping. Cook Forest will be our base camp. Saturday we do a 12 mile hike on North Country Trail from Kellettville to Marienville. Sunday we go to Cornplanter State Forest for an interesting 4-mile loop hike before heading home..

## THRIFT DRUG CLASSIC BIKE RACE

There will be an annual event on Memorial Day weekend with kick-off on Sunday, May 26, 1991 of the international pro am bicycle race on a challenging seven mile circuit through the streets of Pittsburgh from the Golden Triangle to the top of Mt. Washington. Total race distance will be between 120 and 130 miles. The final course will be selected to showcase the city, provide difficult challenges for the racers and offer ample opportunities for spectator viewing and television coverage. The race will last approximately five hours.

Approximately 100 of the best professional bicycle racers from up to 15 nations will compete. Special emphasis will be placed on inviting strong teams from Eastern European countries (Poland, Czechoslovakia and Russia).

Between prize money and racer guarantees, the total purse for the race will approach \$100,000 making it one of the three richest cycling events in North America.

How does Pittsburgh AYH fit in with this major bike race? The promoters will need volunteers for crowd control and road marshalls the morning of the race. You don't have to be a bicyclist! The only bikes on the race course that morning will be the 100 professional racers who previously qualified.

If you'd like to offer your help (if needed) call Joe Hoechner 242-0781 to get on the list.



## *western pa's canoesport center*

### **features:**

old town • sawyer • mad river • oscoda  
aquaterra • lincoln • hydra • middle path  
thule • extrasport • body glove • nw riversport  
granite gear • tilley • voyageur's • okesport  
mitchell • grey owl • gillespie • mohawk  
quick & easy • perception • and others  
special savings for AYH members!

## *canoe pittsburgh!*

74 south 20th street • in the "southside"  
pittsburgh, pa 15203 (412) 481-0700  
hours: mon/wed/fri/sat, 11-5 tue/thur 11-8

## *Pittsburgh Council Hostels*

Ohiopyle AYH Hostel  
Ohiopyle State Park  
P.O. Box 99  
Ohiopyle, PA 15470  
(412)329-4476

Charleroi Youth Hostel (S.A.)  
Rego's Hotel & Restaurant  
601 McKean Ave.  
Charleroi, PA 15022  
(412)483-6200

Living Waters AYH-Hostel  
RD# 1 (1 mile west on Route 30)  
Schellsburg, PA 15559  
(814)733-7607

Point Park College Youth Hostel  
(S.A.) (summer only)  
201 Wood Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
(412)392-3824  
(412)391-4100 (after 4 pm)

Little Hickory Home Hostel  
East Hickory, PA  
(814)755-4908

The Pittsburgh -VCR-Hostel  
1323 Forbes Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
(412)471-2600





## ANNUAL AYH BANQUET

The 1991 Annual Banquet will be held on SATURDAY, APRIL 6th at L. C. Simpson's (same place as last year, great food) located at 3220 West Liberty Avenue in Dormont. Cocktails are available at the cash bar at 6:00 PM and dinner will be served at 7:00 PM. The buffet will include their fantastic vegetable lasagna, baked Boston scrod, stir fry chicken + vegetables and sweet and sour pork accompanied by tossed salad, deviled eggs, fresh vegetables, rolls and chocolate mousse for dessert. Vegetarian meals are available upon request. The cost of all of this: \$15.00 per person, members and non-members pay the same price.

We do not have a confirmed guest speaker at this point in time but it will be somebody who is involved in the outdoors. We will also bring everyone up to date on what has been happening at AYH. Quite a few people use the banquet for the annual reunion!

The restaurant is located in Dormont near the intersection of McFarland Road. Parking is available behind the building if you take the driveway to the left side of the building. Public transportation is available both by bus and the "T".

Please fill out the form below and enclose it with your check payable to PGH Council-AYH. Call Linda Smithyman at 531-1868 or Peggy Mills at 661-9070 for additional information. Reservations must be made by April 1st. I hope to see you there!

### BANQUET RESERVATIONS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of People \_\_\_\_\_ x \$15.00 = \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your check or money order to: Linda Smithyman, 756 Eathan Avenue,  
Pittsburgh, PA 15226

A donation of any amount to AYH would be extremely appreciated: \$ \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you.

## AUDUBON SOCIETY PROGRAMS

On Sunday March 10 at 2 pm at Beechwood Farms, Esther Allen will show slides and talk about this excellent area for wildflower enthusiasts, birders, hikers, and backpackers.

For up to date information on programs, outings and events call Audubon Events Line: 412-963-0201

For up to date information on unusual bird sightings in western Pennsylvania call 412-963-0560.

## CANOEING PLANNING MEETING

Is this the year you have promised yourself you are really going to get into the canoeing activity?

To get involved and get a feel for how it all comes about, you might want to attend the first meeting of the canoeing season and listen to water logged river rats tell wild stories.

At this meeting, trips, schools and trip leaders are scheduled for the summer. Topics of discussion will include rivers, equipment and perhaps, just maybe, The New Edition of the Canoe Guide! Your help and interest will be greatly appreciated. Who knows, you may develop into a fine paddler.

You are invited, nay, urged to drop in at Jan and Gordon Bugby's home at 262 Cascade Road in Forest Hills, Tuesday evening, March 26 at 7:30 pm. Refreshments and socializing will follow the short meeting. Call 371-4233 for directions. For more information: contact Clare Bunker, canoe chairperson, at 244-9788.

## THE 1991 GREAT RIDE TO BE HELD ON MEMORIAL DAY

Pittsburgh Council, the Western Pennsylvania Wheelmen and Pittsburgh Citiparks will again be cosponsoring the Great Ride. This year, the Ride has been moved up to Memorial Day (Monday, May 27th) to coincide with the international bike race to be held on the previous day.

Details are still be worked out, but as of this writing, the Ride will follow much the same format as last year, with a variety of rides being offered for cyclists of all interests and abilities. The registration fee of \$11 (\$8 for early registration) will provide each rider with a marked routes through the city accompanied by AYH and Wheelmen ride marshals, a T-shirts, and rest stops with water, snacks and rest facilities.

A portion of the proceeds of the ride will go directly to support the development of the Pittsburgh International Youth Hostel. Last year's ride raised almost \$6,000 for the hostel.

The Great Ride committee is already at work planning the ride and is looking for volunteers to help with the planning as well as to help on the day of the Ride. If you are interested in helping, call Larry Laude at 412-665-9554.

### AYH BAKER TRAIL GUIDE AVAILABLE

A guidebook to Western Pennsylvania's "Baker Trail" is available from Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels, Inc.

This 140 mile hiking trail starts near Freeport PA and continues northward to Allegheny National Forest where it connects to the North Country Trail. The Baker Trail was conceived and developed by Pittsburgh AYH in 1952 and has been maintained by active volunteers ever since.

The guidebook consists of 38 pages with 17 detailed maps in a handy soft cover format priced at only \$4.00 a copy! For mail orders please include \$1.00 for postage and handling with PA residents adding 24 cents sales tax per book. Please inquire for dealer or bulk order rates.

Make all checks payable to Pittsburgh AYH and mail to: AYH Books/Baker Trail, Pittsburgh Council AYH, 6300 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Sales proceeds benefit trail maintenance and hostel development.

### ENJOY THE MAJESTY OF THE HIGH SIERRAS.

Here's your opportunity to backpack and see the incredible beauty and massiveness of California's highest mountains. Hike through towering Sequoia trees in Sequoia National Park and on to the breathtaking views of the High Sierras. You will have an option to hike up Mt. Whitney, 14,500 feet, the highest peak in the lower 48 states.

This trip will be moderately strenuous, an advanced hike covering over 100 miles in 11 to 12 days with one pass at 13,200 feet. We will meet in San Francisco on June 29 and return to San Francisco on July 13, 1991. Cost should be under \$500.00 plus air fare and meals.

The trip is half full already; so act quickly if you are interested. For information and reservations, call Glenn Oster before 9:00 pm at (412) 364-2864.



PIGEON POINT LIGHTHOUSE, SAN MATEO COUNTY, CA

### HOSTEL CALIFORNIA!

Pigeon Point Lighthouse Hostel

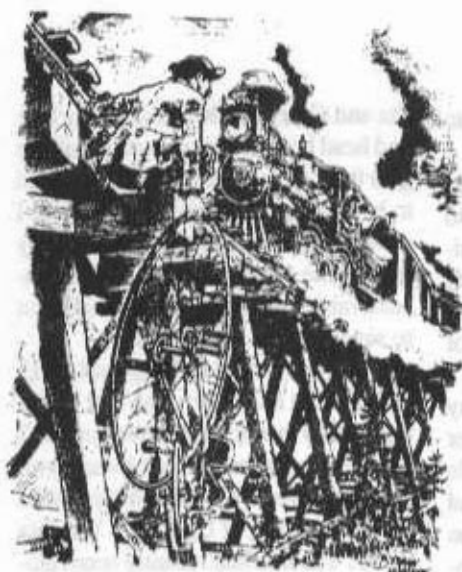
Pescadero CA 94060

(415) 879-0633

This lighthouse makes the 50 beds available to AYH card holders at this coastal location about 50 miles south of San Francisco.

For about \$7 a night (such a deal!) you get bunk space in one of the former lighthouse keeper's buildings. Sorry, you don't actually sleep in the lighthouse itself. For reservations, call or write.





—BIKECENTENNIAL

## Wedding Invitations

Our wedding consultants will help you select beautiful wedding invitations and announcements. They offer you the largest selection of invitations at very reasonable prices. Invitations that let you express the mood you wish to set for your special day.

By Appointment

**SUNDOWN GRAPHICS**

Answers 24 Hours 373-9198

*discount for AYH members*



## HIGHLIGHTS OF NATIONAL MEETING

by Tony Pranses

I attended the annual National Council meeting in Austin TX in mid-November as the delegate of the Lima Council. This was perhaps the 30th such meeting which I have attended during my 52 years as an AYH member, and it was a good one — a fine setting, expeditiously conducted and with great hospitality provided by the host Southwest Texas Council, a relative newcomer to local council ranks. There are 41 local councils in AYH today, 7 of them in the Southern Region which was almost totally inactive 10 years ago. That's progress.

To me, the high point of the meeting was a long (90 minutes) post-luncheon address by Englishman John Parfitt, current International Youth Hostel Federation President. What he told us was that the youth hosteling movement has been steadily losing membership worldwide in most of the 71 country associations within the IYHF (the USA is an exception). Japan, once with the second largest membership, has shown the most dramatic decline. Secondly, use of hostels by a country's own members has dropped significantly (again, the USA is an exception). On the other hand, overall hostel use has remained steady, almost entirely because of foreign use. (Here the USA fits right in - 66% of overnights in our hostels last year were for foreigners.) To find out what is going wrong and what to do about it, the IYHF conducted an in-depth survey among 18-to-25 year-olds in West Germany, France, Britain, Ja-

pan and the USA. The survey results indicate that these young people, both in and outside the hosteling movement, want more hostels in key tourist areas, cheaper overnight fees, much more luxury than hostels currently provide, and few, in any, rules. I doubt the IYHF was surprised by these findings. Most people want more for less these days, preferably more for nothing, and our young people are more inclined in this direction than their elders, yet it is probably the latter who are mostly to blame. That's the way the kids were raised!

Obviously, we have an international dilemma here. If the YH movement is to grow again — perhaps even to survive — is it necessary that it become merely a provider of cheap overnight accommodations? Clearly, this would be an abandonment of hosteling's founding precepts. On the other hand, what good are precepts if there remains nothing preceptual about? I don't offer solutions to this huge problem because I have none. I'm merely thankful that most of my hosteling years were during periods when most of the YH's original values remained intact.

The 1990 meeting was in the historic 100 year old Driskell Hotel in Austin, TX. 40 of the 41 councils were represented and 20 of the 25 National Board were present, an excellent turnout. In addition to John Parfitt, Paul Magowan, President of the Canadian Association was also present. A joint handbook (Canada and the USA) will be published this year (due out in April). Tony Pranses is President of Lima Council, Lima, Ohio. Reprinted from the Road Runner, the Lima Council newsletter.

continued from page 1

I've pecked away at the AT for 600 miles or so (not much compared to its 2015 mile overall length) and this area was the most pleasing to me of anything I had seen to date, physically demanding, but really worth it.

This was Charlie Forbes second hike with AYH, and he was tuckered, but made it just fine. He retired recently and is becoming active again. It's rewarding to watch people as the addiction sets in. A few trips like this and you're hooked. Everyone else did very well, too, but they have been on many AYH activities in the past and were expected to handle this without too much difficulty. The map showed this section to be about 10 miles, but with all the ups and downs, twists and turns, I'm confident that it was more like 12 miles.

Returning to Bill's car became a touch and go matter. We discovered that at this time of year they close the Skyline Drive from Rt. 250/I-64 to Rt. 33, and Bill's car was in that area. We went around the gate and headed for the entry kiosk. Happily, the ranger let us go through but we had to clear the gate at Rt. 33 by 6:00 pm. We made it by 6:05 and got through, whew!

On our way back to the campground we estimate that we saw 38 deer grazing beside the roadway. For that matter, we had 7 deer wandering through our campground that morning and a certain young man couldn't resist those big eyes pleading for a handout. Despite the don't feed the wildlife signs, he parted with a few of his granola bars, and I didn't detect any complaints from the deer.

By the time we returned to the campground, it was dark and dinner had to be prepared. No one seemed to want to try to find wood for a campfire, so we passed that up. Most of us prepared dinner in the open on a picnic table lit by the lights from the tailgate of my mini-van, but (you'll never believe this) two of our young ladies elected the light and warmth of the heated ladies room to cook their dinner, and they even allowed the deer feeder to join them until he was

evicted when Pat arrived and wanted to use it for its real purpose.

Nights are long in winter camping; so after dinner, some of us who are into such things retreated to my warm mini-van and listened to (brace yourself) classical music. I have a big case full of tapes. You never can tell what one of these trips can degenerate into.

The last point of note for the day was that subsequently the deer feeder joined the young ladies in their tent while one of them read aloud with a delightful British accent. His price of admission was bringing his bright (and warm) lantern. They elected not to worry about fumes or using up all their oxygen.

The sky was very black and clear and the stars were intensely bright, the kind of night about which the astronomers have fantasies. The deer feeder was excited about how bright and red the planet Mars looked up there near the Pleiades (I think he said). I'm so unlettered in such things, it didn't look red but bright white to me. Nevertheless it was a sky to remember. We don't get many skies that beautiful in one lifetime.

Sunday morning was clear and frosty at 27 degrees F, and the sun came over the mountain like an enormous orange spotlight. Couldn't believe that in 1990 we would get two good days back to back on any one trip - and this day had the promise of becoming a beauty. Making breakfast and striking tents always takes longer than anyone believes, but eventually all this was accomplished and we set off on the beautiful drive to Front Royal following the Skyline Drive. The views again this morning were clear and breathtaking. I've travelled this road 20 or more times and have never seen the air so clear.

Eventually we got to Front Royal and did the car shuttling so that we could hike the next planned section of the AT (this was to fill in gaps of the trail that I had missed for various reasons on earlier trips) in Northern Virginia. Before hiking, though, we had a real challenge.

Pat and Gerry needed to skip this hike and head home. This meant that all the gear that Gerry hauled for the group had to be transferred to my mini-van. All I can say is that these vehicles (fortunately mine is the stretch version) hold an unbelievable volume of things in addition to seven people. We did it.

We didn't begin hiking until 12:15 with all that had to be done that morning, and by then it had warmed up to 52 degrees F. By the first hill I was down to shirtsleeves. We were hiking from the AT crossing of US 522 to Virginia Rt. 55. The trail had recently been relocated and we found it along Rt. 55 where Rt. 725 crosses. Here were climbs, beautiful views, a clear sky, warm weather and great companions. Who could want more.

This segment was about 8 miles long, and we finished at about 4:15 PM (not bad considering the hills, rough walking surfaces in some places, and lunch all in four hours). We needed to move at a brisk pace to finish the trail before darkness set in. The trip home was without notable incident, some of us trying to whistle Christmas tunes with marginal success. Had a good dinner at Hoss's in Bedford, and a couple hours later parted company after one of the most rewarding weekends I've spent in many a season.



SKUNK CABBAGE



## WISHES COME TRUE

One day several of us spent the better part of the afternoon doing some cleanup work at Ohiopyle and discussed what is going on with AYH the whole trip back. We had plans for the banquet and meetings and the hostel and more. I reflected on the load of work that I sometimes take on but I believe in AYH and that it is the best club that I could have found for my own enjoyment and personal development.

Later that evening I was searching for something in the bottom drawer of my dresser and came across some memories I was saving there. Along with a nice thank you card from an old boss and a birthday card from an old boyfriend that still plays "Happy Birthday" every time it is opened, I also found a brochure on hosteling, circa 1980 or so. Back then hosteling was only a dream I had put in the drawer. Little did I know then that ten years later I would be assisting in the planning of the club and helping to shape it's future along with having lots of fun rafting, hiking and participating in other activities. It was a pleasant experience to find that brochure after all of these years. A dream has come true. *Linda Smithyman*



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*The Golden Triangle* is published monthly by the Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels. Contents are at the discretion of the Editor. Mail regarding this newsletter should be addressed to: *The Golden Triangle*, Pittsburgh, AYH, 6300 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232, (412) 362-8181.

American Youth Hostels is a nonprofit organization which promotes international understanding, educational and recreational travel, good citizenship and an appreciation of America. AYH does this by bringing travelers of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities together in hostels and by providing low-cost travel programs through U.S. affiliate of the International Youth Hostels then 5,400 hostels worldwide—the largest

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- Articles of interest to our members are welcomed—subjects relating to our trips and activities, the environment, the outdoors, etc. Articles to be submitted should be:
- On a 3.5" Macintosh disk with files formatted as text. The disk will be returned to you.
  - Sent to the Editor via modem when prior arrangements are made. Comp-U-Serve ID 73467-3201.
  - Sorry I can't accept more than a couple of short paragraphs of hand-written copy. The use of material will be limited to available space. Place articles in the Editor's box at AYH Headquarters or mail them to The Golden Triangle, 6300 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15232 Jan Bugby, Editor



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# The Golden Triangle

The Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels

Volume 42 Number 3

March, 1991



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