Golden Triangle

VOLUME 57, NUMBER 2 APR-MAY 2007

Obituary -- American Youth Hostels - Pittsburgh Council

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

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

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

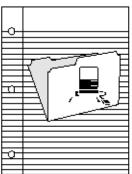
AYH always had its ups and downs. At times its weekly Thursday evening meetings saw people packed shoulder-to-shoulder watching slide shows of past adventures and listening to 8-10 trip leaders advertising the adventures they had planned for the weekend. At other times the organization was held together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

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



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Submissions Policy: Golden Triangle

Classified Ads:

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

Trips

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

Articles

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

General rules for submission

- ? No handwritten submissions
- ? Submissions Can be;
 - On computer disk (IBM), E-mail (Internet/compuserve), Type written material double spaced, faxed. NO EXCEPTIONS. Call if you have questions.
- ? Submitted before the deadline of the issue that submission needs to be 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 2006

Number 1 issue ->December/January/Februay **Number 2** issue ->March/April/May

Number 2 issue ->March/April/May **Number 3** issue ->June/July/August

Number 4 issue ->September/October/November Editor...

Triangle Staff

Managing Editor ... **Joel Platt** 412-521-5244 golden_triangle@bigfoot.com

NOTICE

Please note the deadlines for future issues of the GOLDEN TRIANGLE

JUN-JUL-AUG ISSUE All copy, May 2

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

Oops...

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

Mail regarding the Newsletter should be addressed to:

The Golden Triangle 1632 Denniston St. Pittsburgh, PA 15217

golden_triangle@bigfoot.com





SEA-KAYAKING

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

ActivityCo-Chairs

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

See

Sierra Clubs Hikes, at end.



ROCK CLIMBING

Important Notice / Rock Climbing

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

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



BICYCLING

IMPROMPTU BICYCLE RIDES EMAIL LIST

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

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

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

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

UPCOMING SLIDE SHOWS

Rambles For Fall 2006

MARCH (Start at 10:00 A.M.)

March 7 Chartiers Creek Conservancy Area. Marilyn Ham. 412-687-452.

March 14 Visit West Allegheny/ North Side with Dan/ Sue Sebolt, 412-563-6987.

March 21 Visit Chatham Village with Marty Brigham, 412-521-1913.

March 28 Visit the Nature Reserve in Murrysville with Mariam Fast, 412-241-2109.

APRIL (Start at 10:00 A.M.)

April 4 Chatham College (walk from Garden Center). Lunch in the cafeteria. Martha Raak 412-802-7226

April 11 South Park woods, South Park. Bag lunch. Sue and Dan Sebolt 412-563-6987

April 18 Garfield and Thomas Merton Center. Bag or restaurant lunch.

Mary Ruth Aull 412-795-7078

April 25 Todd Nature Reserve, Sarver, with botanist Dr. Mary Joy Haywood. Bag lunch.

Judy and Jim Stark 412-363-0462

MAY (Start at 10:00 A.M.)

May 2 Bushy Run Battlefied and museum, Jeannette. Bag lunch or restaurant.

Pat and Edmond Appleby 724-834-5077

May 9 Lower Frick Park. Bag lunch.
Joanne Winwood 412-371-3167

May 16 Beechwood Farms. Bag lunch. Margaret Laske 412-421-5219

May 23 Hillman State Park, Hookstown . Bag lunch.

Earl McCabe 412-761-1844 or Connie Black 412-371-1062

May 30 Audubon Greenway, Sewickley Heights. Bag lunch. Joel Platt 412-521-5244

Rambles begin at 10 A.M. (9:30 in summer months) from the parking lot of Phipps Garden Center (Mellon Park) on Shady Ave. Carpooling is encouraged. Please pay driver depending on distance. Call trip leader for details, especially if you plan to meet at the trailhead. Or call Billie at 412-886-1603(H)- cell 412-889-7048.

HIKING/BACKPACKING/TRAILS

AMBLE HIKES ARE 4-6 MILES IN INTERESTING LOCATIONS AROUND PITTSBURGH. CONNIE BLACK HAS AGREED TO TAKE CALLS FROM THOSE WISHING TO LEAD AN AMBLE AS WELL AS THOSE WISHING TO GO ON AN AMBLE. CONNIE'S PHONE NUMBER IS 412-371-1062 AND HER EMAIL IS ceblack@libcom.com

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Sun. April 29 - Try an 8-mile loop hike in the Mountain Streams area of Laurel Ridge. Travel clockwise on a trail that is slowly dying; with no Bureau of Forestry or volunteer maintenance, this trail will be lost in the near future; highlights: steep gas line, Indian Creek, probably some spring wildflowers. Meet at 9 AM at Gateway Middle School in Monroeville. \$6.50 carpool - 42 miles. Call Jim for info. 412-576-0849.

Sun. April 29 - Easy 1.5-mile hike (2 hours) in Seldom Seen Greenway (Beechview Area). Meet at the far end of Brashear High School's parking lot at 590 Crane Ave. in Beechview at 1:30 PM. Call John or Kathy Murphy, 412-341-9367, or Bill Lawrence, 412-922-3951.

Sun. April 29 - Hike - strenuous and exploratory - loop from Robinson over Chestnut Ridge and along Packsaddle Gap North, with a fine over-192k-35 Conemaugh Gorge, crossing (yet another) Roaring Run. \$5.25 - views. Prior backpacking experience required. 16 miles total. Limit: 10. \$22 carpool - 150 miles. Call Bruce Sundquist, 724-327-8737. (Fred Kissel will lead if he is able.)

Sun. May 27 - Hike an intermediate 9 miles in Quebec Run Wild Area of Forbes State Forest on Chestnut Ridge. \$8.75 carpool - 65 miles. Call John Dern, 412-856-4642.

Sat. June 2 - Try a fascinating 5-cave loop-hike near Sarver (4-6 miles depending on weather). Includes a cookout lunch along Buffalo Creek. Meet at Harmarville Bank at Noon. \$2.50 carpool - 20 miles from Harmarville. Call Ed Divers, 412-828-5154.

Sat. June 2 - Try a moderate 3-4 mile hike in Linn Run State Park/ State Forest. Meet at 10:AM at the New Stanton Park-and-Ride Lot at the PA Turnpike exit or inquire about a Monroeville carpool. \$7.50 carpool - 59 miles from Monroeville. Call Bill Kozorra, 412-531-6236, or Dianne Ciccarelli, 724-834-5787.

Sun. June 10 - Strenuous hike on LHHT from Maple Summit Trailhead to Laurel Ridge State Park and return if the majority wants to hike 16 miles. If not we'll shuttle and hike 8 miles but at a 2.5-3 MPH pace. Participants should be in very good condition. Meet in Duff Park at 8:00 AM. Return anticipated by 6:00 PM for the longer hike. \$9.75 carpool—68 miles. Contact Dave Mottorn 724-327-7528, or dmottorn@alltel.net.

Sun. June 24 - Hike - strenuous and exploratory - loop in the Charles Lewis Natural Area and the Gallitzin State Forest, including views over the Conemaugh, along Clarks Run and on Rager Mountain. \$7.25 carpool—61 miles. Call Dick Pratt, 412-362-5567.

NOTES: Ask the leader for names and phone numbers of trippers for you to arrange a car pool. Reserve at least 36 hours in advance. If you leave your phone number on the leader's answering machine, give it slowly and clearly. Notify leader to cancel your reservation. Bring lunch, rain gear, water, first-aid kit, small flashlight and extra clothes for changes in weather. If you have a cell phone, bring it along. Cell phones have saved the day on several trips when accidents have required evacuation of trippers. Sierra Clubbers planning to lead outings during 6/1/07 - 9/15/07 should contact Bruce Sundquist at 724-327-8737 or bsundquist1@juno.com by 5/1/07.

HELP WANTED:

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

SIERRA CLUB MEMBERSHIP INDUCEMENT

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

ALLEGHENY GROUP MONTHLY MEETINGS

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

NON-SIERRA CLUB TRIPS

Trips listed below are in no way connected with the Sierra Club. Sierra Club takes no responsibility, and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of these trips. They are published here purely as a service to our members.

OUTSIDE ADVENTURES: Call Mark Mistrik 724-230-0237 (evenings) for more information or email at mmistrik+@pitt.edu Winter 2006-7 - Nordic (Cross-Country Skiing) every Sat. in the Laurel Highlands. Winter 2006-7 - Nordic Skiing every Tues. Eve. in Pitts-

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burgh's City Parks (Schenley and Frick).

Winter 2006-7 - Nordic Skiing every Thursday Eve. in North Park. Sun. Afternoons beginning 1/14/07 - Winter Kayak Pool Classes begin! Registration for Session 1 (4 classes) and the full 8 sessions now available.

Weekend Feb. 22-25/07 - West Va. 3rd Annual Nordic Skiing Getaway.

Feb.- Mar./ 07 - Florida (Kayaker's Spring Break Trip). Memorial Day Weekend 2007 - ASSATEAQUE Island National Seashore

SUMMER 2007 - Atlantic Islands of Downeast Maine. Labor Day Weekend 2007 - Chesapeake Bay and the Mid-Atlantic.

VENTURE OUTDOORS TRIPS: For information on VO events, call 412-255-0564 or visit http://www.ventureoutdoors.org/ All VO events are open to the public, but there is usually a charge.

BUTLER OUTDOORS CLUB: Contact Dave Adams at 724-453-1685 or DaveEAdams@aol.com or Bob Tait, 724-287-3382 Bob-Tait@zbzoom.net or visit http://www.butleroutdoorclub.com P.O. Box 243, Butler, PA 16003-0243

Visit the web-site for information on the 10th Annual Outdoor Extravaganza May 25th to 27th

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

Other Outdoors Clubs

Butler Outdoors Club

BOC runs the same sorts of trips as Allegheny Group. Contact Dave Adams, 724-453-1685 DaveEAdams@aol.com or Bob Tait, 724-287-3382

BobTait@zbzoom.net or visit http://www.butleroutdoorclub.com Some trips by BOC and North Country Trails Assn. (NCTA) are listed below.

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

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania

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

WPW (Western Pennsylvania Wheelmen) Bicycle Club

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

Moraine Sailing Club

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

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA FIELD INSTITUTE -- TRIPS

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

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

Outside Adventure Learning of Western Pennsylvania

Outside Adventures 2002 Paddling Schedule

Call 724-230-0237 or 412-968-0310 for information or to sign up for any event.

www.outsideadventures.org or www.outsideadventures@Yahoo.com More outings continuously offered. Call for Updates: 724-230-0237 or 412-968-0310.

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

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



CANOEING

Activity Co-chairs:

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

SAILING

The AYH no longer owns its own sailboats or runs trips

but Bob Zavos will help coordinate sailing interests with other area organizations. The Moraine Sailing Club (MSC) is the largest local sailing group. Most activities are on Lake Arthur in Moraine State Park which is about 35 miles North of Pittsburgh. They offer education, social events and run a youth summer sail camp. They also have a large racing program and sponsor a Community Sailing Program for people without their own sailboats. They help organize/publicize Cruising Trips, but do not officially sponsor them. More information is on their website at www.morainesailingclub.org. Big boat sailors may want to check out the Erie Yacht Club: www.erieyachtclub.org or the Erie Bayfront Center for Marine studies: www.goerie.com/bcms

Moraine Preservations Fund (MPF), is looking for volunteers to help with the 50 passenger pontoon boat which they run on Lake Arthur in the Summer. It is used for scientific hands-on field trips for students and summer and fall tours for the public. They are looking for people interested in becoming volunteer mates and captains. You will need to have a boater's safety class, which you may already have taken or is easily available locally. To be a mate you must be 16 and 18 to be a captain. The boat training is given by experienced MPF captains, and you will be tested and licensed by the Fish and Boat Commission. The times and amount of time you would volunteer is completely by your choice. Even limited help is appreciated. If you have questions or would like to sign up, please contact Ruth Roperti at 724 843 7046, or email: missionmorain@zoominternet.net

The 6th annual **Lake Arthur Regatta is scheduled for August 14 &15**. This is one of the largest water and boating related activities in the area. Mark your calendars and look for more information later in the season on the MSC Website or the Butler County site: www.visit-butler-county-pennsylvania-pa.com/

Baker Trail and Rachel Carson Trail Trail Maintenance Opportunities for 2006

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

Right now the trail needs AYH members who would like to participate in trail crew maintenance activities. Please contact Steve Mentzer SGMentzer@TrueCommerce.com

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



Baker Trail/Rachel Carson Trail Resources

Rachel Carson Trail website: www.rachelcarsontrail.org; this website has information about the Rachel Carson Trail, the Baker Trail, and the Rachel Carson Trail Challenge.

<u>Baker Trail website</u>: www.geocities.com/bakertrailpa; this website has some abbreviated information concerning the Baker Trail. <u>Hostelling International website</u>: http://trfn.clpgh.org/ayh/; general

information about the BT/RCT sponsor organization.

Keystone Trails Association: http://www.kta-hike.org/; has information about all Pannsylvania hiking trails

information about all Pennsylvania hiking trails
"Guide to the Rachel Carson Trail"; this is a trail guide, with

topographic maps, and some interpretive information about the 34-mile long trail, available from HI-Pittsburgh for under \$10, including postage and handling. Call 412-431-4910 to order.

"Baker Trail Guide Book"; a trail guide with topographic maps, and interpretive information about the 141-mile long Baker Trail. Available from HI-Pittsburgh for under \$10, including postage and handling. Call 412-431-4910 to order.

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

