

January 2003

A publication of Hostelling International-Central & Southern Ohio Council, Inc.

Scioto Valley News

Thoughts from the Council President

A defining focus of any organization, and this council, is the answer to the question, "What is the purpose of this organization?" After the sale of the Columbus Hostel this past fall, the Central & Southern Ohio Council (CS&O) has been re-evaluating the answer to that question.

So what's coming in the next year for our Council? We have planned the annual sailing trip in August on Lake Michigan, an open house at the Malabar Farm hostel, and promotion of hostelling via festivals such as Comfest and presentations/classes on travelling. Our planning, however, is only one step toward really defining what our new focus will be without a local hostel. Promoting our organization is an important marketing tool that we must utilize in the coming year. Hostelling was devastated by the events of 9/11: the number of passes purchased and the number of travelers to the U.S. has dropped dramatically. Nationally, American Youth Hostels (AYH) has taken drastic money-saving measures to try and curb the loss.

Marketing hostelling means not only increasing the sales of passes and number of overnight stays, but also promoting the learning and understanding of other cultures and peoples that can be gained through hostelling. The questioning of how the world views America and Americans following 9/11 point directly to the need for a greater understanding of the world

community and ours as well. While the world has "shrunk" via the internet in terms of accessibility, the world still seems so far apart in terms of real communication, which stems from understanding.

Fostering understanding is the mission of AYH and to promote this, AYH has created programs such as "Open Doors, Open Minds". This campaign includes a domestic travel scholarship for groups, such as the Girl Scouts, to increase awareness of hostelling. If things go well, there will be an exchange between American hostelling groups and Arab/Islamic hostelling groups in an effort to creating a bridge to lessen conflict resulting from misunderstanding.

So what does this mean for you? Renewing your pass is vital in helping support Hostelling both nationally and locally. I also invite you to contact us so that we can introduce hostelling to your youth organizations. And finally, our board is a small dedicated group, but we always need more help and enjoy fresh ideas! If you'd like to volunteer, please contact me at this number: 614-276-0447.

Allan South
C&SO Council President

Central & Southern Ohio Board of Directors

President

Allan South

Vice President

Phyllis South

Secretary

Brian Stettner

Treasurer

Editor

Tracy Ross

Members at large

Dale Lofland

Jon Porter

Diana South

Central & Southern Ohio Council of American Youth Hostels

P.O. Box 41

Columbus, OH 43216-0041

voicemail: (614) 470-4276



Our Mission To help all, especially the young, gain a greater understanding of the world and its people through hostelling.

Adventures: A Trip to see the Bears

by Allan South

My wife and I recently took a rail trip from Windsor, Canada, all the way to Churchill to see polar bears. The Canadian rail passenger system called Via Rail is excellent. The trains are clean and run pretty much on schedule. For the thrifty traveler, there is the Canrail pass. Using it, one may travel 12 days in a 30 day period for a very reasonable fare. The fares vary by age of traveler and season. We opted to include a berth on the train between Toronto and Winnipeg, which doubled the fare, but it's more romantic than every night in coach.

The trip from Winnipeg to

Churchill was a long one--we were back in coach and how we missed our berths! We had a good view of the northern lights which made up for it. In Churchill, we took dogsled rides and saw polar bears on a Tundra Buggy. The bears were awesome and seemed as interested in us as we were in them.

If you should plan a trip to Churchill, be aware that the number of rooms available are few, so it is wise to make reservations far in advance. We were lucky to get a cancellation --only six months ahead!

During the layovers in Toronto

We'd love to hear about your hostelling adventures. However, we may edit the stories due to spacing constraints. Send your stories to the Council's address, Attn: Editor.

and Winnipeg, we stayed in hostels. The Winnipeg hostel is a big, old house and has a wonderful classic hostel atmosphere. We met young people from all over Canada, Japan, and India. The Toronto hostel is quite different. It's a large facility with hostel rooms for families. For those on a tight budget, there is an opportunity to trade work for a free bed. Toronto has numerous attractions and will keep you very entertained!

Upcoming Events

- **January 15, 2003**
7:00 p.m. **Budget Travel & Tour** presentation at Benchmark Outfitters
9525 Kenwood Road, Cincinnati, OH
- **January 18, 2003**
1:30 p.m. **Women Traveling Solo** presentation at Benchmark Outfitters
9525 Kenwood Road, Cincinnati, OH
- **January 29, 2003**
7:00 p.m. **Budget Travel & Tour** presentation at Benchmark Outfitters
4550 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH
- **February 1, 2003**
10:00 a.m. **Women Traveling Solo** presentation at Benchmark Outfitters
4550 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH

These presentations are designed to provide travelers with useful information.

- **Women Traveling Solo presentations are to empower women travelers to travel solo and comfortably on a budget.**
- **Budget Travel presentations cover the nuts and bolts of transportation, accommodation, food, passports and where to get information on customs and things to see and do.**

Presentations last about 2 hours and are free. All are welcome.



American Youth Hostels
Central & Southern Ohio Council
P.O. Box 41
Columbus, OH 43216-0041

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MINSTER OH 45865
PERMIT NO 2