



Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy

P.O. Box 35 Warrendale, PA 15086-0035

www.rachelcarsontrails.org info@rachelcarsontrails.org

President's Corner

By Todd Chambers, President

This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of her birth in Springdale, Pennsylvania on May 27, 1907 and the Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy is one of a number of organizations commemorating this notable scientist.

The Rachel Carson Trail, one of three trails that we steward, traverses the northern tier of Allegheny County, from North Park in McCandless Township to Harrison Hills Park in Harrison Township in the northeast corner of Allegheny County. The trail route goes through Springdale, in close proximity to her birthplace. The site is now managed as the Rachel Carson Homestead, a National Historic Monument and museum of her life. Although our organization provides stewardship for three trails, The Harmony Trail and the Baker Trail being the other two, we have chosen to use The Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy as the name for our group because the ideals she espoused in her life fit well with our mission of developing, protecting, and promoting public hiking, biking, and walking trails and their greenways throughout western Pennsylvania.

Rachel Carson attended and graduated from the Pennsylvania College for Women, now Chatham College, in Pittsburgh. She continued her studies at John Hopkins, where her training as an ecologist and her degree in marine zoology formed the

Inside This Issue

President's Corner	1
Annual Public Meeting Invitation	1
Rachel Carson Trail Challenge Celebration	2
Walking the Maze	2
Baker Trail UltraChallenge	3
Event Calendar	4

basis of her understanding of nature that underlies all of her writing. Starting with *Under the Sea-Wind* in 1941, she went on to write the best selling and National Book Award-winning *The Sea Around Us* in 1951 and *The Edge of the Sea* in 1955. Finally, battling cancer, she published her best known *Silent Spring*, in 1962 about the dangers of chemical pesticides and their unintended consequences on the environment. All of her work and specifically *Silent Spring* contributed to the awaking of environmental awareness in our country and around the world.

With her training as a scientist and the poetic quality of her writing, she was able to translate complex ecologic principles into language any reader could understand. She wanted her readers to comprehend the interconnectedness and interdependence of all life. That humans were not separate from, but a part of the natural world and dependent upon the

Please see *President's Corner* on page 3

Annual Public Meeting Invitation

By Marian Crossman

Our annual public meeting will be held on May 12 at 3PM at the Old Fire House in North Park, where Walter Road joins Lake Shore Drive near Kummer Road. We'll be discussing progress and plans for the trails we steward, as well as holding elections for our Board of Directors (a quick and painless formality).

Here are the nominees for '07-'08 which will be presented for the approval of members:

George Beckman, Bradfordwoods
Michele McCann, Marshall Township
Charlie Brethauer, Richland Township
Bill McIlroy, Middlesex Township
Patty Brunner, Plum Borough
John Menniti, Sewickley Borough

Todd Chambers, Marshall Township
Steve Mentzer, Town of McCandless
Marian Crossman, Ross Township
Jim Northrop, Town of McCandless
Mark Eyerman, Hampton Township
Gail Schlichtkrull, Pine Township
Jerry Hoffman, Butler County
Donna Stolz, Shaler Township

Nominations from the floor may be made by members.

Everyone is welcome to attend and bring their reports of trails and recommendations.

Rachel Carson Trail Challenge Celebration

By Steve Mentzer

The eleventh staging of the Rachel Carson Trail Challenge, our annual 34-mile one-day endurance hike between North Park and Harrison Hills Park in Allegheny County will be held on June 23, the Saturday nearest the summer solstice. The objective is to finish the hike within 15 hours 4 minutes, which is the official length of the solstice day, or by sunset, 8:54 PM, whichever comes first. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Rachel Carson's birth, two additional exciting events are being offered that day.

The first is the Rachel Carson Trail Homestead Challenge, a 19-mile hike from North Park to the Rachel Carson Homestead in Springdale. It begins one hour after the start of the 34-mile event, with a finish deadline of 3:40 PM or 8 hours 10 minutes, whichever comes first. Can't conceive of doing 34 miles? This event is a great opportunity to test yourself and see what you're capable of.

The second event is the Rachel Carson Trail Family Challenge, an 8-mile trek from Emmerling Park in Indiana Township, also ending at the Rachel Carson Homestead. Families of up to five members can register for one entry fee. It's a great way for parents to spend time with their kids working toward a shared goal, in addition to exposing them to outdoor activities and the natural world. This same hike will take place on May 27 as part of the Rachel Carson Birthday Celebration in conjunction with the Rachel Carson Homestead. If you'd like to experience it in advance of Challenge day, sign up for the Birthday Celebration Hike!

The registration fee for all three events includes a shuttle bus, trail guide, a cookout at the finish, and a commemorative t-shirt for everyone. Also included are up to four checkpoints along the way, providing water, Gatorade, and snacks.

Also new this year is Friday evening check-in. Between 5 PM and 8 PM at the Cabin in North Park, participants will be able to pick up

their map, t-shirt and tracking tag. There'll also be Challenge veterans available between 7 PM and 8 PM to answer questions and discuss strategy.

Visit our web site at www.rachelcarsontrails.org to register for any of these unique events and help us preserve and promote community trails in Western Pennsylvania!

And don't forget: volunteers are essential to a successful Challenge and are needed throughout the day. If you're interested in helping, please contact Steve Mentzer at challenge@rachelcarsontrails.org, or call (412) 512-4544.

Free Picnic May 12!

Let's start the season off right! We're having a picnic and everyone is invited! We'll be celebrating our many volunteers and landowners. Keeping the trails alive in western Pennsylvania not only requires willing landowners, but is very labor-intensive. Over 150 volunteers stepped up to help in 2006. Four new stewards signed up for trail segments, there were thousands of maintenance hours on all the trails, and of course there was the Rachel Carson Trail Challenge and the Baker Trail UltraChallenge with hours upon hours of volunteer support and administration.

Come bring your friends and help us celebrate Saturday May 12th 1-3 PM. For more information, contact Patty Brunner at 724-325-3224.

Walking the Maze

By Charlie Brethauer

Building trails is rewarding! It comes from the honest work needed to hew a path out of mud, rock and forest. To create a path to somewhere, even nowhere, for people to enjoy. Sometimes the trail building can't start until the paperwork is done and approvals obtained. Approvals may be needed to construct a trail in a floodplain or to cross a creek. The approvals ensure that constructing the trail doesn't have unintended consequences. A raised trail alongside a small stream could slow floodwaters from whooshing downstream. Or a bridge built too low could catch debris and become a dam, resulting in flooding of neighboring properties. The state and federal governments require proof that such things will not happen. This is a good thing, for we don't want to flood our neighbors. Preparing the permit applications to get these

approvals resembles a maze, which is a special kind of trail. Mazes, especially the cornfield or hedge kind, can be fun. They involve figuring out which way to turn, dealing with dead ends, and having to double back, plus sunshine, laughter, and exploration. Paperwork mazes, however, are made of small print, references to Appendix 3b or paragraph II.b.13 or Publication #37, and multiple copies of everything. GPS or maps won't help. The level of detail required will discourage all but the most dedicated applicants. The Conservancy has volunteers committed to navigating this maze in order to make our trails a reality. It takes time -- sometimes a lot of time -- and progress can be agonizingly slow. But it's necessary in order to know that the trails we're building will endure.

President's Corner from page 1

laws of nature that guide all of forms of life. Her ability to describe the impacts of human action on the environment and the ecologic consequences of those actions, conveyed to all the need to better understand what we do and how it might impact the delicate balance and diversity of life forms we depend upon for our health and well-being.

The balance and diversity that is required for a healthy natural environment is also required in the development of the communities where we live. To a large extent, communities developed since 1950 have limited planning for a healthy lifestyle. Our organization encourages more trails and open space for the communities we serve, to provide a diversity of choice that make for healthier and more sustainable places to live. Rachel Carson's

work helped us understand that the ecologic principles required for a healthy natural environment apply to our human communities as well. The mission of our organization is to take a small but useful part in fostering these principles.

Rachel Carson had the courage to be subversive in the face of overwhelming pressure to conform to the accepted practices of her day. She gave all of us the opportunity to better understand our environment and to learn to interact with it in ways that will serve us well in the future. This organization honors her important contributions and tries to reflect the values that she so eloquently brought to our collective mind.

Baker Trail UltraChallenge

By Steve Mentzer

On Saturday August 25, we'll be staging the third leg of our three-leg series of 50-mile ultramarathons on the Baker Trail, known as the Baker Trail UltraChallenge & Relay.

As you may know, our key objective is to put feet on the trail in order to promote recognition, encourage use, and recruit maintenance volunteers. The good news is we're well on our way to achieving these goals.

This year we'll be covering the southern section of the trail. The course will begin in Schenley, across from Freeport, and follow the Baker Trail north to Smicksburg, covering a total of 51 miles and ending at a private farm. It starts at 6:30 AM and participants have until 8:30 PM, or 14 hours, to finish.

Unlike the Rachel Carson Trail Challenge, this is a running event. To finish within 14 hours you must maintain a pace of

over 3.57 miles per hour (a 16:48 mile). Fast hikers can do this and are welcome to enter, but shouldn't expect to win.

As always, relay teams of up to five participants can be registered, allowing each member of the team to run a subset of the course. The relay segment lengths are 11.6, 9.2, 12.4, 7.8, and 10.0 miles.

This is a competitive event and trophies will be awarded for first, second, and third place finishers, for both individuals and relay teams. All individual finishers will receive a unique medal in the shape of a pie wedge. As well, everyone who earns all three medals will receive a special commemorative holder in which to display them.

Check the Conservancy web site for more details about this exciting event. Registration is open now!

Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy Membership Application/Renewal

Join RCTC leaders by volunteering for a role that suits your time and inclinations. There are many ways individuals can help! Make check payable to the Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy, P.O. Box 35 Warrendale, PA 15086-0035, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

I Am A			<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewing Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Former AYH	Date	Your mailing label notes last RCTC contribution
Annual Dues			<input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate \$250
<i>WHILE THEY LAST - RCTC t-shirt, with your membership of \$25 or more. Circle size: M, L, XL</i>							
Name							Age
Street Address							
City, State, Zip							
Telephone			Email Address			Municipality	
Contact Me For							
<input type="checkbox"/> Rachel Carson Trail maintenance		<input type="checkbox"/> Harmony Trail maintenance		<input type="checkbox"/> Membership development			
<input type="checkbox"/> Baker Trail maintenance		<input type="checkbox"/> Community contacts		<input type="checkbox"/> PR/Publicity			

Event Calendar

Details and more events on www.rachelcarsontrails.org/events

Saturday, May 12: Volunteer Appreciation Picnic 1PM-3PM

Calling all volunteers! If you participated in a trail work crew, or helped out on the Challenge or UltraChallenge, or any other activity related to our trails or would like to, then please attend our Volunteer Appreciation Picnic! There'll be food and drink and lots of discussion about trail related topics. Takes place at the Old Firehouse in North Park prior to our Annual Public Meeting. Contact Marian at (412) 366-3339. **FREE and open to all!**

Saturday, May 12: Annual Public Meeting 3PM-4PM

Join us as we discuss a year of progress and teamwork on the Baker, Harmony and Rachel Carson Trails in addition to details for participants and volunteers on the Rachel Carson Challenge and the Baker Trail UltraChallenge. Takes place at the Old Firehouse in North Park. Contact Marian at (412) 366-3339. **FREE and open to all!**

Sunday, May 27: Birthday Celebration Hike 10:30AM-2PM

Get out on the Rachel Carson Trail with a tough 8 mile hike from Emmerling Park to the Rachel Carson Homestead. Then when you finish, take part in the Homestead's Centennial Celebration festivities! On this hike you'll get to cover Rich Hill, Lefever Hill, Log Cabin Hill, and the infamous "roller coaster", ending with a quarter-mile walk through Springdale to the Homestead. Meet at the Springdale High School parking lot and carpool to Emmerling park. There is a \$10 per person fee for this hike, which includes admission to the Birthday Celebration at the Homestead. (This hike covers the same section of trail as the Family Challenge.)

Saturday/Sunday, June 2/3, June 9/10: Challenge Training Hikes 8AM-12PM

Four hikes on the Rachel Carson Trail to help prepare for the Challenge, 6-8 miles each. Contact Barb at (412) 371-2506.

Friday, June 22: Rachel Carson Trail Challenge Check-In 5PM-8PM

Participants in any Challenge event may pick up their tag, map, and t-shirt the evening prior to the event at the Cabin in North Park. Veteran Challengers will be on hand between 7 PM and 8 PM to answer questions and offer advice. Contact Steve at (412) 512-4544

Saturday, June 23: Rachel Carson Trail Challenge

The eleventh annual grueling 34-mile endurance hike on the Rachel Carson Trail, plus the 19-mile Rachel Carson Trail Homestead Challenge and the 8-mile Rachel Carson Trail Family Challenge. See the article on page 2.

Saturday, August 25: Baker Trail UltraChallenge

The third running of the 50-mile Baker Trail ultramarathon. See the article on page 3.

Please check mailing label for record of your contact with the RCTC.

Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy
P.O. Box 35
Warrendale, PA 15086-0035

Return Service Requested

**Preserving and Promoting
Community Trails in
Western Pennsylvania**



Non Profit Org
US POSTAGE
PAID
Pittsburgh PA
Permit No. 3215