

Past Tents

Mental meandering by SOLAR historian

Each month we will dig into our archives and ponder on the past and present minutia of our club.....

As an experiment of format and content. I have randomly accessed our SOLAR archives and will expound from there.

I hope in the future to also be a bit of a document of record and comment on current event and perhaps give a historical context.

Welcome to Mike's mad mad world of run on sentences and mental meandering vol. 1

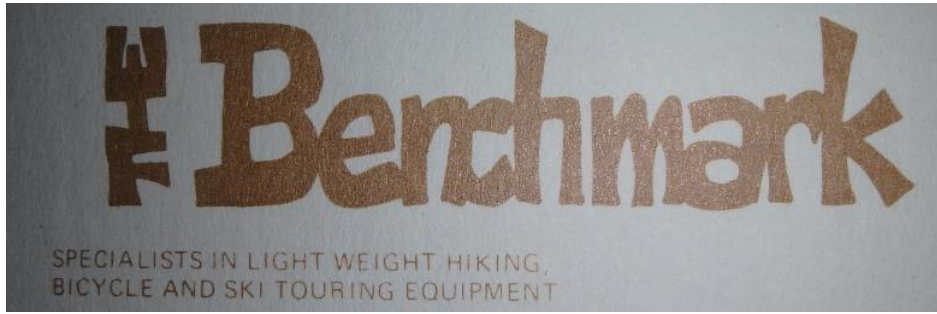
Plaque:



Sometimes we all have mental plaque buildup and we just can't remember things, if we are lucky enough to have keepsakes our memories are jogged and that memory pops up. I have found a physical plaque in our archives. It is to Charles Spiggs, an Honorary Lifetime Membership for the Service and Friendship of The Benchmark, from the S.O.L.A.R. Club, Sept. 1991.

Now to excise some of that mental plaque. The Benchmark, what is it? Charles Spiggs, who is he? What did they do? Why are there dots after every letter of SOLAR in the engraving.....

Benchmark: *An outdoor store that was on Grand River in Farmington Michigan, it was a destination store for backpacking, paddling, mountaineering and more...*

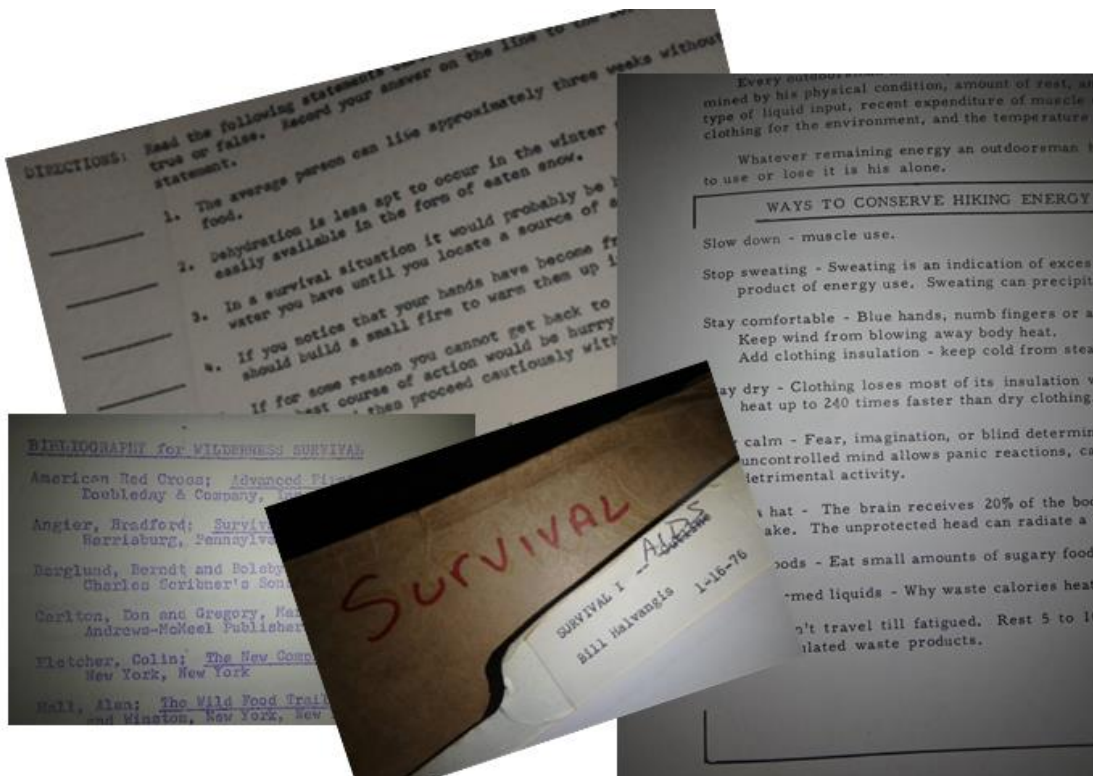


Charles Spiggs : *the only perceived connection between Benchmark is a man of that name, 71, living in Palm City, Florida with a former residence in Farmington. He has not been contacted. I have reached out to a club member who worked at the store but have not received a reply, will revisit if info surfaces. I will infer from the plaque that he helped out the club in the early days while both he, the store and the club were active.*

Dots: *S.O.L.A.R. is an acronym and an abbreviation standing in for "School of Outdoor Leadership, Adventure and Recreation". We have used SOLAR (no dots) to represent the club in our flyers and info cards.*

Currently SOLAR works with many local groups, business and state, we do clean up on trail days and have been on locations in Moose Jaw, L.L. Bean and REI for presentations. Another past business was Raupp Campfitters that rode the outdoor enthusiast wave till Gander Mountain, EMS (Eastern Mountain Sports) and the mega stores came in. We don't seem to have a relationship with the mega stores Cabala's, Field and Stream or Bass Pro Shop like we did the smaller stores but often we have club members working at these places and building relationships that spread further into the community.

Class Material:



We have quite a bit of paper in our archives from back before we became a "paperless" society. Actually typed not printed, copied not sent electronically. Some of the original on typing paper, thin sheets of onion skin (at one time actually made of onion) that excepted carbon pressed into them from metal arms with raised striking plates.

This material was for a class (now referred to as a learning opportunity) “Survival” run by Bill Halvangis. Currently there is not a “Survival” learning opportunity being offered by a club member, we would need a member to run it again if there is interest, other members offer experience and knowledge and I expect we have caches of reference material out there as well.

Offered in 1976 our papers had reference on how to conserve energy, different methods to stay calm and avoid “survival” situations, still very good knowledge. There were slight changes on advice that have changed with time for example how to deal with ticks (cover them with oil so they can’t breathe.....) and more but generally solid advice for then and today.

I have a request in to Bill on history of “Survival”....hope to plumb the depths of his experience for a few highlights and inspiration - at the time of publishing no comments received.

Living History:

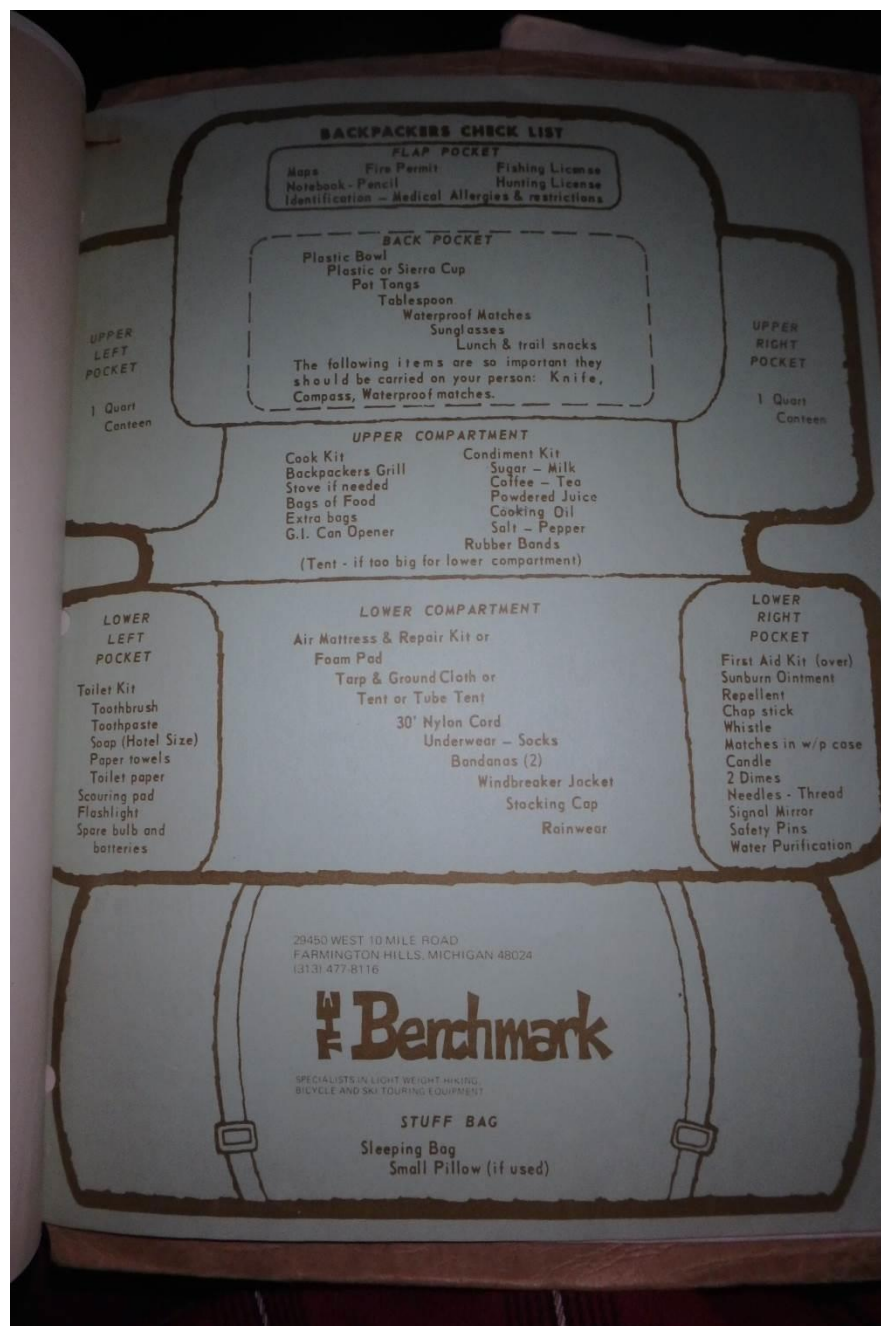


Recent event (2017) in celebration of Pete Lamb’s 80th Birthday his wife through a party at Proud Lake, renting the River Hawk annex for the festivities.

A good time was had by all and there may be stories for years to come about it. One observation was that we get caught up in our own day to day and I personally was a bit haggard from all the run around by the time I got there I almost didn’t attend and then realized it was wonderful. The cool green of the woods enveloped the car on the road in and the friendly faces banished the push of the day. It is truly a blessing to see SOLAR folks and friends, when you realize they are there it takes you out of yourself and into the good place of community.

That being said there were some picture of Pete from the dawn of time, he is shown on the mountain side and top with only some rope and a carabineers to support him in what I could only call a fearful location. It dawned on me that I don’t want to ever climb mountains like that but also that with will, wool shirt and pants, solid boot and minimally a rope or two and some steel, he went were I never would. This time is also before all the gear stores or outfitters and guides that dominate travel now. I have seen the X games and Banff film festival where gravity is challenged but for all the new gear and spandex the location and images of Pete and his brother hold up extremely well to the new breed of thrill seekers. There were some folks out there before Pete but in my opinion he is part of the old guard that spans the recent crop of adventurers by being one that has lead the way. I also see him still as leading the way, along with my dad who just recently went down the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon for 6 days at 84, both tell me figuratively don’t sit on your ass, get up you lazy bugger and get out there.

I for one hope and am proud to follow in the footsteps of living history and a great example we have in our midst. Thanks Pete for leading the way down a great path to the future, your gusto of life, food and adventure are inspiring (and thank you Sharon for throwing him one heck of a party.)



Just one diagram of a backpack from the late 80's or early 90's, probably an external frame with lots of pockets which was the predominate style, today the black hole style harkens even fruther back to the rucksack or further back basket.....