

THE RAY

SOME OVER-ACHIEVERS LAUGHING AT REALITY

Review

S.O.L.A.R. Members Ski in the "VASA"

BY CINDY HARRISON

Saturday, February 13th was the date for this year's VASA Cross-Country Ski Race in Traverse City. The VASA is part of the "Great American Ski Chase" which is a series of national cross-country ski races featuring marathon and shorter distances. Skiers from all over the country participate in these races, including members of the U.S. Cross-Country Ski Team who travel the country competing in races to work toward World Cup and Olympic recognition.

The VASA, now in it's 17th year, offers competitions for distances of 45 or 27 kilometers, classic (diagonal stride) or freestyle (skating) skiing, or a 12 kilometer fun race (both freestyle and classic). There are also sprint races and youth races associated with the VASA held on consecutive days. The weekend of February, 12-14th, Karen Sinclair-Smith and I lead a trip to the 1993 VASA. Fourteen S.O.L.A.R.ites met Friday night and stayed at the Days Inn in Traverse City. Five S.O.L.A.R. members skied in the race on Saturday: Bill Stanley (45K, freestyle), Mike Mannebach (27K, freestyle), Mike Felix (12K,



classic), myself (12K, classic), and Julie Stoligrosz (12K, classic).

Bill took a bad fall after about 30K and had to drop out of the race with a sprained wrist. Mike M. finished 21st out of 38 skiers in his age and gender division with a time of 2 hours and 13 seconds. He finished 96th out of the 184 men that skied the 27K freestyle race.

Mike F. finished 50th out of 112 skiers in the race with a time of 1 hour and 30 minutes. He finished 37th out of the 74 men that finished the 12K race. I finished 52nd out of 112 skiers in the race with a time of 1 hour, 31 minutes and 30 seconds. I finished 15th out of the 38 women that finished the 12K race. Julie finished 96th out of 112 skiers in the race with a time of 2 hours, 1 minute and 40 seconds. She finished 29th out of the 38 women that finished the 12K race.

The temperature was about 25 degrees at race time. There was (see VASA, page 2)



**Who is this
masked
"downhill"
skier?**

We never thought we'd see the day that our own Mike Mannebach, hardcore S.O.L.A.R. cross-country skier, would turn from the trails to the slopes; but here's proof! (Photo: Karen

Review

The Warm Wonderful Wilderness

by: Lori Lee Love

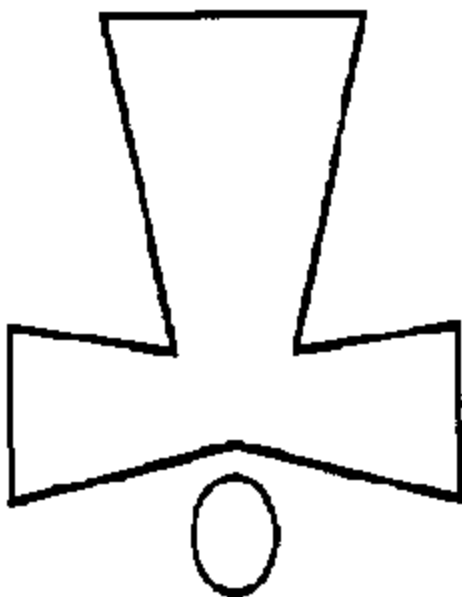
Friday morning at sunrise met Pam Clayton in Brighton where we loaded up and headed for the annual SOLAR weekend at Wilderness State Park near Mackinac City. Never having been to this park, Pam, Haley, Lisa, Doug and dog (Mijo) were all looking like they would be doing their first time winter camping due to the filled in cabin. So at 4:00 p.m. we pulled in and pitched the tent.

To make a long story short...another cabin became available at the last minute and nobody had to sleep in the cold (although some falsely implicating photos were taken next to the tent I heard). As a matter of fact, I'm surprised that no one made use of that tent on Saturday night. At 3:00 a.m. while most were asleep, packing alive, the local newspaper noted: "that a fission reactor was melting down the snow caps near Wilderness Park - origin as yet unknown". Perhaps this explains the nude female "snow angels" we found outside the door in the morning.

On a cooler note, the skiing was superb as was (as always) the SOLAR style potluck. Let's hope that next year we have once again such a wonderful sign-up for this trip. For those of you who wimped out and did not come up to winter camp - make note on your calendar for next February to sign up early so we don't look foolish for taking all three cabins.

For more information ask one of the 30 people who were up there!

one has to suffer. Wouldn't you know it, no body has Dramamine. Now that we're in downtown Detroit, we decide to look at the map. Gee. It would have been a lot shorter to go through Port Huron. We set out for Port Huron. The "good idea" is starting to show definite signs of tarnish.



3:00 Oh, by the way, Kevin, that was the turn off for the Blue Water Bridge back there. But that's okay, this gives us opportunity to stop at gas station number three to top off before we get into Canada. Potty stop. Jeff runs to a nearby pharmacy and buys Dramamine and Pepto Bismol. Our hero!

3:45 "How long will you be in Canada?... just the weekend." "Any hand guns or fire arms?" "...no ma'am. "Any alcohol?" "...not that I know of.... Ouch! ... Good answer Kevin! Hey! She bought it! You're such a nice guy she believed you even though there was a bottle of champagne sitting on the seat. Kewl! We're in Canada

4:30 Highway 21 North. Lisa votes for a pit stop and everyone else (see Purgatory, page 4)

It really seemed like a good idea at first. After all, we had a blast in the car driving to Pennsylvania for the back packing trip. Even though I had made plans to drive up to Collingwood, Ontario myself for the Blue Mountain ski weekend put together by Maria Picano, when she asked if my passenger Laura and I would like to ride in the van with her and seven others, we decided to take her up on it. Like I said, it seemed like a good idea at the time.

11:00 Friday. We met at Maria's house to get an early jump on the weekend. Ariane and Liz will follow us in their car. We struggled shuffling the gear around every way imaginable trying to get skis, boots, food, and luggage to fit into the biggest white van imaginable while still maintaining comfortable seating. We ended up with a fair compromise and headed out at about 12:30. The seemingly "good idea" is starting to dim a wee bit.

12:45 We stop at a gas station (remember this, it's an omen) almost right away to top off the tanks and air up the tires. Our expert chauffeur, Kevin, gives us a brief tour of the lot, trying to find the air hose. No hose. Off we go.

1:10 We pull off -66 downtown Detroit to check air at a gas station. The tires are fine. We've discovered an interesting phenomenon. The people most prone to motion sickness are sitting in the back seat and not doing too well. It's decided we'll take turns sitting in the back seat so that no

Purgatory is a White Van!

A Blue Mountain Weekend
By Steve Gardner

Review

Upcoming Event

Hike, Bike and Bird-watch

Ah, Spring! If you've been waiting for months for a chance to get outside without the need of mukluks, here's your chance.

Cindy Harrison has put together a trip to the Pinery Provincial Park in Canada for Saturday April 24. We can Bike, Hike, go to the beach, stunt kite bird-watch, etc. We'll probably go to dinner in Grand Bend, just north of the park.

So bring your own lunch, snacks, drinks and all the stuff you'll need to do the above activities. Remember, you're going to Canada so bring your identification. For more information and directions call Cindy at 331-2804.

(Purgatory, cont'd from page 3)
votes to wait a while so we stop anyway at gas station number four. Everyone takes care of business and estocks or pop and other goodies. Tom is the last one in so we hide his potato chips. Kathy transfers them to a plastic bag and gives Tom his empty one. Tom looks mortally wounded.

5:00 Jeff and Kathie are in the back seat playing Euchre with Kim and Tom. Laura and I are knitting chain mail (if you need to know, ask us). Maria, Kathy, and Lisa are probing Kevin's inner psyche. Hey, look. It's snowing. Kevin slows down to be safe. Maria gives in and returns Tom's chips.

6:00 The snow is getting pretty intense so we stop at gas station number five to take a break and

give Kevin a chance to stretch. The attendant tells us all this snow has fallen in the past three days and that it's an hour to Collingwood in good weather. We have a little fun with the bathroom light switches located in the hallway.

7:45 WE'RE HERE! Maria goes to check us in. We're supposed to be in condos 103, 201, and 203. We drive around to the buildings and Kim strolls into 103. "Hi, are you with SOLAR?" No... oops wrong building.

8:15 We get to the right building and the right condos and settle in. Let's take the van into town for dinner.

10:30 Back to the condos. Suzanne and Natalie have been here all day and praise the cross-country conditions. John and Mark arrive and complain about the roads. Yeah, yeah, we know. Everyone goes upstairs to bed. I stay up to wait for Leslie and Pam who are arriving late, and to continue my chain mail (again, you'll have to ask).

2:30 a.m. I wake up from the couch and let in Pam and Leslie and they complain about the roads. Yeah, yeah, etc. Mike rode up with them and is staying in a local motel. stairs... bed... sleep.

8:00 Saturday. We get up, we ski, it's great.

7:30 p.m. The group dinner in 103 consists of Pizza, salad, and pop. Afterwards we go over to the main lodge for dancing and more socializing, then back to the condos for fireplaces and champagne. All in all, it was a most excellent way to spend a Saturday.

7:30 a.m. Sunday morning everyone hustles to get packed for the long

ride home. A few die hards, including Maria, Jet, Marilyn and Hue, hit the slopes again despite the worsening weather. It seems a front is moving in and we'll be driving home through the heart of it. Joy.

The trip home took us ten hours through snow and freezing rain. Despite the long drive times, everyone was glad they went and would like to extend thanks to Maria for arranging some truly wonderful skiing and to Kevin, whose driving was nothing short of heroic. Too bad you can't plan ski trips when it's 90 degrees and sunny. Hey! I bet you could backpack on the Blue Mountain cross-country trails...

Upcoming Event

WHITE WATER RAFTING

On Memorial Day weekend, May 28 through 31, SOLAR will be heading to the New River in West Virginia for white-water rafting. The river is located near Fayetteville and we'll be going eight to a raft with a guide for a full day trip on Sunday.

Plan on tent camping for the three nights as well as hiking and biking on Saturday.

Cost of the weekend is \$120 per person, due in three \$40 monthly installments in March, April and May. The cost includes the rafting, camping for three nights and breakfast, lunch and dinner on Sunday.

More information and directions will be available at the April meeting or call Mike Felix at 908-1991. See you on the River!

Upcoming Event

You're Only Half Right...

... if you think a compass is what you draw circles with (besides, your other half is left).

On Saturday, April 17, Bob Westbrook will be hosting a class on orienteering, the art of map and compass. The class will meet at the Highland Lakes State Recreation Area at 10:00, when Bob will give basic instruction in the cooperative use of map and compass.

After the instruction, students will have opportunity to try out their new found skills on a practice course in the area. The entire instructional period will last until about noon. Following the class, we will be participating in a sanctioned meet in the area, offering courses of varying difficulty, from beginner to expert.

The \$10 class fee includes the participation fee for the meet. If you don't have a compass, you can get one the day of the class from Bob

in profile:

Address:

Occupation:

Hobbies/Interests:

How did you hear about SOLAR?

What do you like best about SOLAR?

Bicycle

Camping Trip

By Steve Limkemann

The 5th annual GOBA (Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure) will be held from June 20 through 26. This is a week-long bicycle and camping tour that covers 50 miles per day.

The 3,200 people expected to be part of this year's ride will start from Van Wert on Sunday and return Saturday. A baggage shuttle will transport the riders' equipment between camp sites. Showers will be available each night if you don't want to really rough it.

There are many non-cycling activities planned throughout the week. You are responsible for all of your meals. Local school, social and church groups will prepare meals to augment the restaurants along the route.

The cost for the week's adventure is \$80 for the first person from a household, \$70 for the second and \$35 for all other family members 6 years of age or older.

This ride is organized by the Columbus Council AYH which also brings you that cycling classic, TOSRV. This is a chance for you to get in on the ground floor of an up and coming idea.

To get an application call (614) 847-8687. You could also call me for a copy of the application and more information at 595-7991. The application deadline is May 22.

Good judgment comes from experience.
Experience comes from bad judgment.

- Mark Twain

Don't Just

Do It...

Overdo It!

Please forgive your errant editors for their overdone April Fool's joke issue. Low pay and long hours contribute to our folly.

This issue of the SOLAR Ray is the product of the warped and bizarre minds of its editors. It is in no way intended to be taken in any manner other than in jest.

Disclaimer:

For more information and directions to the class/meet site, call Bob Westbrook at 358-3627.

For an additional \$5. Dress for a walk in the woods, and bring water for the trail.

(VASA, cont'd from page 1)

only a couple of inches of snow on top of a base of ice which made some of the hills rather treacherous. I discovered a definite disadvantage of skiing classic style in the 12K race is that all the 45K and 27K freestyle skiers that start first have no mercy on the diagonal stride track. This leaves you to maneuver the best you can without a track.

Anyway, it was still great to compete in my first race and have the opportunity to rub elbows with

some of the top skiers in the country. A special pat-on-the-back goes to Mike F. and Julie who not only competed in their first race but were also beginner skiers this year, nice going! Also, thanks to the other S.O.L.A.R. members who came out to cheer us on!

A few other S.O.L.A.R.ites chose more peaceful surroundings to ski on Saturday, such as Sand Lake, Quiet Area and Sleeping Bear Dunes. Other activities included shopping, relaxing in the pool and

jacuzzi, and attending the VASA awards ceremony.

Dinner on Saturday night at The Embers restaurant was a glorious feast. We enjoyed such delights as king crab, lobster, prime rib, and decadent desserts (good choice Karen!) After dinner, some of the group went off to dance the night away with the Chisel Brothers; others returned to the hotel to kick back.

Sunday morning, we all bid our farewells and headed toward home. Some of the group carpooled to Wilderness Valley near Gaylord for more cross-country skiing. Thanks to all for another great S.O.L.A.R. event.

INACTIVITIES CALENDAR

MAY

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1 SATURDAY | ROCK CLIMBING PRACTICAL I, Grand Ledge
Sharon Stanek (565-3080)/Al Fylak (852-7514) |
| 4 TUESDAY | GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Colony Hall, Southfield, 7:30 p.m. |
| 6 THURSDAY | ROCK CLIMBING CLASS 3
Sharon Stanek (565-3080)/Al Fylak (852-7514) |
| 7-9 WEEKEND | ROCK CLIMBING PRACTICAL II
Rattlesnake Provincial Park, Canada
Sharon Stanek (565-3080)/Al Fylak (852-7514) |
| 28-31 WEEKEND | WHITE WATER RAFTING TRIP, New River, WV
Mike Felix (908-1991) |

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP PLAN AND/OR LEAD A SOLAR ACTIVITY, PLEASE CONTACT CINDY HARRISON AT 331-2804

Mike Felix (12K classic style)

APRIL

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 3 SATURDAY | GRAND LEDGE ROCK CLIMB
Al Fylak (852-7514) |
| 6 TUESDAY | GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Colony Hall, Southfield, 7:30 p.m. |
| 13 TUESDAY | ETHNIC DINNER Celebrate Opening Day
in Tigertown, Julie Stolicz (454-9361) |
| 18 SUNDAY | HOWELL NATURE PRESERVE
Pam Claydon (229-5456) |
| 22,29 THURSDAYS | ROCK CLIMBING CLASSES 1&2
Sharon Stanek (565-3080)/Al Fylak (852-7514) |
| 24 SATURDAY | BIKE, HIKE & BIRDWATCH, Pinery Provincial
Park, Canada, Cindy Harrison (331-2804) |
| 28 WEDNESDAY | WHIRLYBALL, Whirlyball West, West Bloomfield
Julie Stolicz (454-9361) |

At the April S.O.L.A.R. General Meeting, trophies will be awarded to the five members of the "1993 S.O.L.A.R. SKI TEAM" in recognition of their participation in the VASA. Next year, it's the 27K for me! How about you?

S.O.L.A.R. SKI TEAM IN THE 1993 VASA:

Bill Stanley (45K freestyle)

Mike Mannebach (27K freestyle)

Cindy Harrison (12K classic style)

Julie Stolicz (12K classic style)

This was Julie's, Mike Felix's and Cindy's first VASA race and Mike and Julie were also beginner skiers this year.

Flash! Late breaking news just in! Karen Sinclair-Smith and Mike Mannebach came down with a case of engagement on this trip and will be happily ever-aftering together! Congratulations!

About the Ray

The Ray is a monthly publication of the S.O.L.A.R. Club and is provided free of charge to the current dues paid members. For those members who move outside of a 200 mile radius of the Detroit Area and would like to continue receiving the Ray, a \$5.00 annual subscription fee will be charged to cover mailing costs.

DEADLINE for the Ray is the Friday after the general meeting for the following month's edition. Contributions in the form of comments, trip reports, recipes, photos or original articles are welcome. Send all contributions to: Lori Love, RAY Editor, 324 Catalpa, Royal Oak, MI 48067 or call Lori @ 398-5774 or Steve Gardner, RAY Editor @ 547-4998

Meeting Location

The purpose of the S.O.L.A.R. Club is to promote and advance interest in the outdoors through information and participation. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at the Colony Hall, located at 21780 Evergreen Rd. in Southfield, between B & 9 Mile Roads at 7:30 PM SHARP. Membership dues are \$20.00 per individual and \$30.00 per family.

PEOPLE WITH ATTITUDES

President	Al Fylak / 852-7514
Vice-President	Jess Harding / 375-5268
Secretary	Laura Bowman / 960-1516
Treasurer	Joan Govan / 356-3627
Activities	Cindy Hamson / 331-2804
Membership	Maria Picano / 420-3423
Equipment	Sharon Stanek / 565-3080
Bylaws	Bill Stanley / 263 1873
Education	Dave Jones / 722-8178
S.O.L.A.R. Ray	Lori Lea Love / 398-5774
	Steve Gardner / 547-4998
Historian	Pam Maxey / 867-4553
At Large	Joan Hettinger / 377-2377
	Debby Campbell / 620-5300
	Bob Westbrook / 356-3627
	Mue DeFrance / 229-6263
	Larry Martin / 591-3856
	Bill Halvargis / 689-1911
	Peg Campbell / 344-1260

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