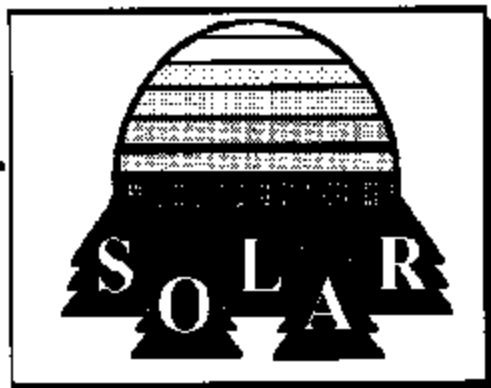


THE RAY

THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE AND RECREATION



Review

Pictured Rocks Backpacking Trip

by: Marilyn Arnold

October 1 - 3

Waking up to snow on the ground Saturday morning after our six mile hike to Chapel Rock the day before let Michael, Teresa and I know that this SOLAR trip was going to be exciting! Actually, I suppose that we knew that even before we were officially out of the tri-county area, when our caravan of two embarked on a wild-goose chase, which resulted in our being split-up until a rendezvous at, where else in the great SOLAR tradition, the McDonalds in Gaylord.

Actually, we were prepared for snow (and about two weeks of backpacking judging from the amount of food we brought - thanks Tim for the M & M's). Donning hats, gloves and several layers, we set off Saturday a.m. to view Chapel Falls in a blizzard. The falls were pretty, surrounded by the brilliant fall colors under a blanket of heavy white snow. Upon our return, we couldn't resist scaling Chapel Rock before we set off for our next destination.

A relatively easy hike, we were able to stop often to take in the

stunning views of the rock formations and Lake Superior, which put on quite a show for us with huge, crashing waves, as dramatic weather patterns blew in and out all day Friday and Saturday. The Sunday sky dawned clear and blue and we enjoyed our final miles to Castle Rock in the sun. It was a great trip - full of variety, and certainly my favorite this year. Hope more of you can join us next year!

Upcoming Event

November at Nordhouse

Come on out to the West Coast (of Michigan, anyway) for a weekend of camping fun at the Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness Area on November 5, 6, and 7.

SOLAR will be car camping in the Lake Michigan Recreation Area campground where you can then go on day trips throughout the (See Nordhouse, Page 2)



Michael Gardner and Teresa Savanno check out the snow on their gear Saturday morning at Pictured Rocks.

(Nordhouse, cont'd from page 1) wilderness area, hike along the beach or the many trails or just sit and watch Lake Michigan and get yourself back in focus on what it really means to be a True SOLARoid.

The plan calls for driving out to the park Friday afternoon, car camping Friday and Saturday nights, with hiking on Saturday and on Sunday morning before the ride back home.

There is no trip fee to SOLAR for this trip but camping is about \$7 per night per campsite with pumps and outhouses near by or free out in the

wilderness area. Groups in the wilderness area are limited to 10 and must NOT camp in the open sand areas. All other "Common Sense" backpacking rules apply as well so you'll need backpacking experience or the SOLAR class if you plan to make this a part of your trip.

Yes, it will probably be cold. Yes, it might snow. Yes, you can have a good time if you're prepared for the weather.

See Steve Gardner at the November meeting or call him at 547-4998 for more details.

Backpacking in Pickney - Part I

by: Julia Gordon

The groups of students in the backpacking classes ranged between 3 to 6 persons. We started out the weekend each assigned with our experienced guide/instructor for the sunny and warm weekend. The weekend was split up so we did two miles and five miles on the Saturday and Sunday. After Carol distributed the food for that evening she checked us out and we were off.

When we got to camp on Saturday afternoon, we had our quite humorous bear bagging lesson and trials. Happily, I got it the first try! Also, there was a water filtering demonstration - fortunately there is a pump to use instead of the mucky pond.

That night we had a buffet of different foods. There was fresh, fresh with instant, instant, and freeze-dried. With the exception of the freeze dried cheesecake, that was the groups least favorite (although lightest) option. I preferred a little fresh prepared with instant foods. In the wee hours, a few discovered the importance of a warm sleeping bag.

Sunday's highlights mostly included having to hear "ON YOUR LEFT" a few too many times as the mountain bikes whizzed by every five minutes (annoying after a point to move over on the path). I can say by Sunday I was all "gorped out". So once off the trail we proceeded to the local tavern for real food before the quick drive home.

Stay tuned to your RAY for the next article. Julia gives us the review on the second practical next month.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

November

- | | | |
|-------|------------|--|
| 2 | Tuesday | General Membership Meeting
Colony Hall, Southfield, Joan Govan (358-3627)
Swap or Sell month (see details, page 5) |
| 6-7 | Weekend | November at Nordhouse
Car camping at Nordhouse Dunes, Lake Michigan Campground, Steve Gardner (547-4998) |
| 10,17 | Wednesdays | Enjoying Michigan Winters Class
Cindy Harrison (722-3994) |
| 12 | Friday | Wallyball
Bailey Recreation Center, Westland (7-9 pm) |

Every Tuesday there will be rollerblading at the Pontiac Silverdome from 8:00-9:30 p.m. - for details call 377-7370 (work/daytime)

December

- | | | |
|-------|-----------|--|
| 7 | Tuesday | General Membership Meeting
Colony Hall, Southfield, Joan Govan (358-3627)
Annual holiday party (pop, byob, food, fun...) |
| 8 | Wednesday | Michigan Winters Class
(see November listing) |
| 11-12 | Weekend | Michigan Winters Class Practical I
TBA at what location (sometime in January will be the final Practical) |

Tech Tips

by: Kathleen Spring

Most people join the SOLAR club because they love to get out in nature, concepts about protecting the earth for our children who will inherit it, and warnings to see the beauty but leave it for others, sometimes seem to go by the wayside.

Carol McCrie, who teaches the SOLAR backpacking classes says that rules about the environment seem to be the thing that campers forget the quickest.

While the mini-slums left by the woodsmen of the past, including chopping trees to make kitchen racks and bough beds, and leaving the cans where they lay, are rarely found today, it is the subtle forms of pollution that are destroying parks and forests.

CAMPSITES

Down by the River: Most national parks forbid camping within 200 feet of a waterway. It's easy to say "Let's camp on the picturesque soft sandy beach next to the lapping waters until someone tells us to move," but in the mean time you've trampled the shores and ave damaged the ecosystem. How close do you really need to get to the water to save those steps carrying it back to camp? Isn't it the same as driving your car to the store that is a block away from home?

Alpine Meadows: Slopes and valleys are the least favorite camping sites for obvious reasons. Meadows tend to be preferred because of the flat land and the bushes and trees which provide shelter and shade. These meadows are fragile, however, and setting up a tent there for a week may leave visible scars for years. You have

two good options. One would be to set up camp at the edge of the meadow. If you can't do that, try to pick a campsite that was previously used in order to minimize your intrusion on the wilds.

Bodily Waste

This is one case where we could learn something from our pet dog. Many campers just leave it where it lies, thinking somehow that it will magically turn into fertilizer within a few weeks. Even toilet paper buried under soil will take a year to break down. All solid wastes should be buried six inches or so below the surface. Animals don't appreciate the deposits in pretty wrapping paper; nor do hikers like to discover it on their shoes at night. Some people think that doing their job near or in a stream will wash the effects away - not true. Latrines should be at least 50 yards from water.

COOKING GARBAGE

No one needs to be told about gathering up the tin cans and cardboard packaging, but you should start thinking about pollution before you leave on the trip. Don't bring those paper plates, plastic spoons or Styrofoam cups - wash and reuse your stainless steel (not lip-burning aluminum) utensils.

But don't wash them in the waterways. You should be using biodegradable soap, but, this is still pollution. Think about this: the next time someone dips their water bottle in the lake, will they be picking out your macaroni?

Orange peels and gum wrappers are samples of things people think will disappear. Clean smelly or oily packages and crush and pack them out. Some Canadian parks actually ask to see your plastic garbage bags to make sure you are hauling the garbage away!

SOUVENIRS

It wasn't too long ago that people would not only bring home handfuls of wildflowers, but also fallen wood for their fireplaces and small trees for their yard. This is now prohibited in parks, and hopefully, the same respect is shown beyond the boundaries of the government's arms. As we all know, flower seeds bring more flowers and fallen leaves and trees turn into needed mulch and fertilizer. Sadly, many people never multiply the "they won't miss just one" by the thousands of people who say that.

NOISE POLLUTION

So you don't bring a radio, and you're feeling mighty superior to (continued on page 4) those trailer-

In Profile

Amber Rae Stanek

Address: Living in Dearborn with my mommy (Sharon) and daddy (Pat)

Purpose in Life: To get as much attention as long as I can from everyone

Interests: The cat, the food unit, people who I can get cuddled by....hey! It's all new to me you know!

(continued from page 3) campers. But there's something more you can do for yourself! Sit down preferably alone. Don't smoke, read or talk. Settle in for an hour of nature. Be very still and use your five senses - look at the leaves, the animal tracks, the sky. Look at a bird's feather pattern, as if you planned to paint them. Study the paws of a squirrel. Smell the fresh air and detect the damp soil or the pine needles. Let the pebbles and sand run through your fingers.

Now isn't this worth preserving?

Environmental issues/facts:

- * the world's forests are about half the size they once were, and many parts of the world are now treeless. Because more than half of the total biological diversity exists where vegetation is threatened, more than 1.2 billion species are expected to vanish in the next 25 years. No extinction of this magnitude has occurred in the past 65 million years.

- * Americans generate twice as much trash now as they did in the 1960's, and our trash output is expected to increase another 20% in the 1990's.

- * assuming 200 million people use a paper towel dispenser 3 times a day, 200 days a year and use 2 towel each time, this generates 240 billion paper towels discarded per year. At 170 paper towels per lb., this would total about 700,000 tons of paper being discarded. It takes about 12 million 20 year old pine trees to make this much paper.

- * trees play a key role in the global cycling of carbon. A forest the size of Alaska would absorb about a billion tons of carbon dioxide every year, and give off oxygen. When a tree or paper product is burned, carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere.

- * since 1967, the rate of deforestation in the U.S. has been one acre every five seconds. At the present rate of cutting, most of the "old growth" forests will be gone in the next 20 years.

- * with \$49 billion in annual sales, the Canadian forestry industry (employs 1:14 people) is clear cutting Canadian forests at a rate rivaling the destruction of Brazil's Amazon rain forest. "We are harvesting perhaps more than we should" states Canada's Forestry Minister, Frank Oberle.

Frankfort Color Tour

by: Kuei-mei Lui

Bob Steel, David Bombard and Kuei-mei arrived Friday night in the freezing rain. Bob set up his tent in the yard and Dave parked his sleeper van behind the cottage. Saturday morning tiny snowflakes flying down from the overcast sky as we hiked the sheltered trails in Sleeping Bear Park and had our picnic lunch by the Platte River. Bob cooked his tuna brown rice casserole and we enjoyed hot herb tea.

Laury Morrison and Margaret Martin arrived on Saturday afternoon. We went to the beach to view the spectacular sunset by Lake Michigan along the lighthouse. Dinner was at Northern Delight, one of the areas best natural foods restaurants. We danced the night away with the rock & roll band at the Cabbage Shed afterwards.

Sunday was sunny and warmer. Bob adjusted Kuei-mei's two spare bikes with Dave's tools for Laury and Margaret so we all could ride. Thanks to Dave and Bob, we had a wonderful day of safe biking around Crystal Lake.



Julia Gordon shot this photograph of her group members from the backpacking class

People

On September 28, 1993 at 8:12 a.m. Sharon Stanek gave birth to her daughter, Amber Rae Stanek weighing in at 8 pounds 4.5 ounces and 18.5 inches long. Congratulations!

Sincere sympathy to Mike Felix on the passing of his father. The family asks for no flowers, but donations to the American Cancer Society are welcome. Mike and Cindy thank everyone for their help moving and support.

August Spelunking Trip

by: Teresa Severino

Leslie Cohen always picks the sunniest weekends to go subterranean. So there were ten SOLARites (Leslie, Mike F., Gene, Les, Bill, Dave D., Jim D., Marilyn, John G. and myself) eager for the challenge of crawling on, squeezing through and eating a little mud. And challenge it was, for eight hours on Saturday and five more on Sunday. One exciting moment for all was climbing over the "chimney" formation. We wedged our bodies between two walls as we pulled ourselves up inches at a time, then we came down the same way on the other side this wall of limestone. The alternative route seemed less risky, but that depends on how you feel about being 50 feet underground and squeezing through a tunnel - while up to your shoulders in cold

water.

Before caving on Saturday, we met at our refuge for that night - the wasp haven, the mecca of mildew, the Shangri-La (that's Shangri-La-tee-da, folks!). We changed rooms once, to find we had exchanged the mildew for a nest of wasps in the bathroom. In true SOLAR tradition, we decided to make the best of it and just asked the management to remove them while we went caving. Everyone thought the winged creatures had been evicted, as we took turns washing away the layers of mud in the shower (wait a minute, I mean showers - we each washed off our own mud). And then came the last shower (mine). The shower was good, but drying off was a race against time, the time it took the last sneaky die-hard wasp to crawl up the front of my shirt and into my collar as I finished dressing. I was calm until that point. Then.... my fellow spelunkers heard me yelp three times. The first was when the wasp

stinger pierced bare skin, the second and last were when the wasp body pierced the bare skin inside my zippered pants! My friends on the other side enjoyed the episode more than I did.

On Sunday, we started off with scourdough pancakes for breakfast which were not supposed to be sour dough. But eating light was an advantage later when we squeezed through a low-ceilinged, high floored pass, otherwise known as a "belly crawl". Our fearless caving guides, Rick and Dan Simpson, hung back and sent us through this with "just go until you can't fit through any farther". Did we do it? You bet. Dave "the barrel-chested" DeFrance gets an "atta boy!" for his tenacity and calmness while trying four or five different ways to squeeze through the narrowest part of this tunnel (which was an effort even for Les Tuckey). Many thanks to Leslie for maintaining contact with our guides (who were quite good) and for rousing us to action on this fine weekend.



That's our Marilyn Arnold squeezing her way along the cave passage!

Upcoming Event

November Swap or Sell is Back!

Okay, so you've finally upgraded your stove to the latest and greatest version you've always wanted, but your sleeping bag just doesn't make it in a quinzee. What to do? How about bringing your old stove and sleeping bag to the November meeting for **Swap and Sell**, a "used to be" annual event with the SOLAR club.

The idea is to bring in the outdoor equipment you no longer use; whatever it is, whatever the reason; and trade it with your SOLAR friends for something you will use. You might even be able to trade a stove for a sleeping bag!

About the Ray

The Ray is a monthly publication of the SOLAR 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: Steve Gardner, RAY Editor, 10024 Borgman, Huntington Woods, MI 48070 or call Steve at 547-4888 or write Lori Love, RAY Editor, 42267 Old Pond Circle, Plymouth, MI 48170 or call Lori at 420-2175

Meeting Location

The purpose of the SOLAR 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 21750 Evergreen Rd. in Southfield, between 8 & 9 Mile Roads at 7:30 PM SHARP. Membership dues are \$20.00 per individual and \$35.00 per family.

STEERING COMMITTEE

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