

THE RAY

THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE AND RECREATION

Upcoming Event

Rafting on the New River

Memorial Day weekend 1995 will find SOLAR headed to West Virginia for white-water rafting on the New River with ACE Rafting Company.

The cost of the trip is \$140 and includes one day of rafting with an expert guide in each boat, several meals: 2 breakfasts, 2 dinners, and 1 lunch, and three days worth of camping. And since this is a Jim Gilfix trip, you'll get your very own Vernors! If you prefer to "rough it" on the river, but not in the campground, some space may be available in the chalet for \$170 for the weekend. The Chalet will only be available if six people sign up for it. There are 3 double beds and you are not allowed to cook inside.

Other opportunities for SOLAR style entertainment in the area include mountain biking (including rentals if needed), volleyball, bass fishing (right at the campground!) and a semi-organized hiking trip on the rock infested, waterfall

encumbered, and cave encrusted trails in the area. ACE has their own 1300 acre resort/outdoor center.

For more information on this trip, call Jim Gilfix at (810) 288-4739, or see him at the March and April SOLAR meetings. Jim will have explicit directions at the May SOLAR meeting. The trip is limited to 18. The first 17 that pay in full will go. This trip will probably fill quickly, so be sure to reserve your spot early.

Review

VASA 95

By Tim Stangi

The weather people warned us of high winds and blowing snow, yet nineteen SOLARites headed north to ski at the VASA in Traverse City.

I arrived in my room to be met by the smell of burning skis and hot wax as the diehard SOLAR skiers, Dave Bombard, Bill Stanley and his brother Richard prepared their skis for the next day's race.

It was very snowy and windy when (See VASA, page 7)

Editorial

Another Bylaw Change!

Consider this written notice for a vote to amend the SOLAR club bylaws. This vote will take place at the next Steering Committee meeting on April 27th, at 7:30 p.m. at Tom Dunn's House.

Current Language: ARTICLE V: ASSOCIATION, Section 5.7: Membership Year. The membership year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31 of the same year. New memberships will be pro-rated at one-half the usual fee for those purchased after July 1. All memberships shall remain valid from the date of acceptance until December 31 of that calendar year.

New Language: ARTICLE V: ASSOCIATION, Section 5.7: Membership Year. The membership year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31 of the same year. *New members joining the club between October 1 and December 31 of any calendar year, and wishing to purchase an annual membership, will pay the full annual rate for that membership, however, that membership will be valid until December 31 of the following calendar year. With the above*

exception, all other annual memberships shall remain valid from the date of acceptance until December 31 of that calendar year.

Reason for change: The new language actually reflects the policy which is currently being followed, however, the bylaws were never changed to reflect this policy change.

Review

Ohio's Icy Hills

By Steve Gardner

"Does your camera take good pictures?" The students from the class, "Intro to Better Photography" know the answer to that frequently asked question.

We had a wonderful, clear, Spring weekend at Hocking Hills State Park, near Logan, Ohio for the practical to the class as we hiked the Grandma Gatewood trail from Old Man's Cave, to lunch at Cedar Falls and on to Ash Cave where the sunlight shone in refracted splendor through the 50 foot waterfall. The entire area had experienced a heavy snowfall earlier in the week and there was an abundance of icicles and snow, as well as the natural beauty of the rock formations and waterfalls, for the class to try and capture on film. We lost track of Mike Felix (see Ice, page 6)

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

April

- 4 Tuesday** **General Membership Meeting,**
Colony Hall, Southfield, 7:30 PM
Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 6 Thursday** **Rock Climbing Class, The Benchmark**
Sharon Stanek (313) 585-3080
- 9 Sunday** **Photography Day, Kensington Metro-Park**
Class Practical, Steve Gardner (810) 547-4998
- 11,18,25 Tuesdays** **Rock Climbing Class, The Benchmark**
Sharon Stanek (313) 585-3080
- 22 Saturday** **Rock Climbing Practical I, Location TBA**
Sharon Stanek (313) 585-3080
- 29 Saturday** **Rock Climbing Class, Outside, Location TBA**
Sharon Stanek (313) 585-3080
- 30 Sunday** **Mushrooms at Mayberry, Mayberry State Park**
Steve Gardner (810) 547-4998

May

- 2 Tuesday** **General Membership Meeting,**
Colony Hall, Southfield, 7:30 PM
Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 3 Wednesday** **Rock Climbing Class, The Benchmark**
Sharon Stanek (313) 585-3080
- 5-7 Weekend** **Rock Climbing Practical II, Rattlesnake**
Prov. Park, Ont.; Sharon Stanek (313) 585-3080
- 19-21 Weekend** **North Manitou Island Backpack, Leland, MI**
Mike Banks, (313) 425-4189
- 20-21 Weekend** **Bird Migration / Camping trip, Pt. Pelee**
Provincial Park Ont.; Cindy Harrison-Felix
(313) 722-3994
- 26-29 Weekend** **North Manitou Island Backpack, Leland, MI**
Leslie Cohen (810) 547-5626
- 26-29 Weekend** **White Water Rafting, New River, WV**
Jim Gilfix (810) 288-4739

WalleyBall every Monday, Baily Center, Westland. Contact
Margaret Martin (313) 721-2821.

SOLAR has a "No Refund" policy. However, if you are unable to attend
an activity, you can "sell your spot" to another club member.

If you would like to help plan and/or lead a SOLAR trip or activity,
contact Leslie Cohen at (810) 547-5626.

Upcoming Event

Adventure Announcement

Sometime in August, (actual dates will be determined by those involved) a group of SOLARites will board the Amtrak train in Detroit. Traveling west, the group will experience a brief layover in Chicago. Continuing on our journey, we will disembark at 51° 35' N, 120° 00' W at approximately 10:00 PM after a 48 hour train extravaganza. Those adventurous souls will spend a night's respite at a picturesque lodge. Upon awakening, the group will board a bus and travel north approximately 50 miles. This scenic route is appropriately named "Going to the Sun Highway". After five days of backpacking through some of the most spectacular alpine scenery in North America, the group will board the "Empire Builder" for the return trip to Detroit.

Bring your cameras and plenty of film. This might be your only opportunity to photograph a bear in The Valley of the Grizzlies.

The total length of the trip should be about 10 days (including a weekend or two) and cost for the trip is estimated at \$400 to \$500. For more specifics contact Tom Dunn at (W) (313) 494-5500 ext. 3008 or (H) (810) 471-9163.

Upcoming Event

Mushrooms at Mayberry

To some, Springtime in Michigan means just one thing: Morel Mushrooms. You've probably heard about them. The Morel is considered by many to be the absolute best of wild mushrooms. Unfortunately, they can be pretty fussy about their environment and are usually of a size that can hide well beneath leaves and other growth. But this is SOLAR. If a thing is difficult, that just makes it that much more of a challenge.

Plan to meet Sunday, April 30 at 9:00 AM at the riding stables at Mayberry State Park in Northville off of Beck Road, south of 8 Mile. We will review just exactly what a Morel looks like, how to tell it from the "False Morel", and decide on a search area at that time.

So, if you want to learn about mushroom hunting; how to set up a blind, what sort of ammunition to use, where and when to set out bait piles, stalking and camouflage techniques as well as how to dress out the kill, butcher and fillet, then this may be just the trip for you.

For more information, call Steve Gardner at (810) 547-4998.

Class

Want to Get Your Feet Wet?

Then be sure to attend the March, April and May meetings to register for the Open Water Diver and SCUBA Review classes. Whether you're a naturalist, adventurer, photographer, explorer, or fish watcher, SCUBA can open up a whole new world of excitement and recreation. If you're in good health, a moderate swimmer, and over 12 years old then you can learn to dive. The first step is to pick up an orientation package and provide payment for the class of your choice at one of the next three SOLAR meetings. We will be offering two types of classes with semi-private water sessions:

PADI SCUBA Review is for the already certified diver who hasn't been diving in two or more years. This would be perfect for those SOLAR members who got certified in '87 and '88, so you can join our dive trip later this fall.

PADI Open Water Diver is a certification card which is recognized anywhere in the world you may wish to dive. The class includes everything, except your bathing suit and towel! All equipment is provided for a comfortable confined (pool)

and open water dives. Best of all, the equipment will be available at the pool for confined water sessions so you get a chance to try an assortment of models and styles. If you become addicted, you'll probably want to purchase your own equipment to avoid rental fees for future dives.

For class schedules, costs and dates contact Joan Hettinger (P.A.D.I. #91016) at (810) 377-2377. A dive trip scheduled for later this fall will be for all certified divers. The destination, logistics and cost will be announced in a future edition of *The Ray*. You must be a newly certified diver, taken a SCUBA Review or dove within the last two years to participate in this trip.

Let me leave you with my favorite quote from "Wonders Under Water" by Leni Riefenstahl. "Diving is addictive. Once you have tried it you will be under the spell of the underwater world. Nowhere else will you get closer to the mysteries of life than here, where all life came from. But most of all it is the experience of floating and weightlessness, of sinking into a mysterious and unknown world, that brings about in a diver a totally unexpected feeling of exquisite happiness." Don't miss our May program on SCUBA diving!



(Ice, continued from page 2)
for a while as he spent a good bit of the day taking pictures on his own, but we finally met up again at Ash Cave and compared notes.

Besides Mike and his variety of cameras, there was Tom Dunn and his array of Nikon stuff, Julia Gordon and several Canons, Phil Pond and his Nikon, Kathy Kirby and her automatic camera and me with my Olympus and Pentax. Amongst the six of us, there were over a dozen cameras! I'm sure that you'll be seeing pictures from this trip. I shot over five rolls of film myself, and that seemed about par. Now we're all looking forward to the next trip back for the wildflowers!

Upcoming Event

Kite Delight

Kiting is an activity that is sometimes better when shared with other enthusiasts. The opportunities to fly kites usually don't come often enough, unless you're willing to get up and go by yourself. Enter the SOLAR Kite Crew, a means for kite enthusiasts to meet on an "As opportunity presents" basis.

The way it works is simple. The names and phone numbers of all Kite Crew members are on a list, separate from the general membership roster. When any member of the Kite Crew gets the urge to go flying, he or she can call another member and establish a place and time to meet. The call to fly is then relayed down the list. The last person on the list calls the first, creating a circular list.

This is a spontaneous thing! It may well be that the call goes up Saturday morning, to fly Saturday afternoon. Kite Crew members must agree to the phone list relay idea before being added to the list. It is preferred that all Kite Crew members have their own kites, to avoid the unpleasantness of wrecking someone's kite who was kind enough to loan it to you.

If you would like to be on the list for the SOLAR Kite Crew, call Steve Gardner at (810) 547-4998.

(VASA, contd. from page 1)
 things started Saturday morning. Jim Perry and myself left the comfort of the Best Western and headed towards the VASA course. As we headed out of town driving became very treacherous with near zero visibility because of the blowing snow. Many people turned back after a few cars became stuck on the road to the VASA course that heads up a series of hills. Jim and I kept going. We parked the car and waited after being told by a race official that the start of the races would be delayed one hour. When we finally reached the race starting point, John Gulas and Karen Sinclair-Smith informed us that ALL the races had been started at the same time, (10:00 a.m.) to prevent the racers that had already gathered from freezing. The 45K race was cut down to 27K because of the harsh winter conditions and the lack of volunteers to man several of the aid stations that were to be set up along the course. Jim was further told by race officials that we could start on the course, but would have to leave our bib numbers with the race officials at the start because they did not want the liability for the 12K fun racers since the bulk of the skiers had already started. By now the wind chill factor was -40° F and the snow was still falling and blowing around like mad.

The first part of the course we had our backs to the wind. That's the

good news. The bad news, then was the fact that on the return trip we would be skiing 8K back directly into the wind. I can always tell it is cold outside while skiing because I have to screw off the frozen top of my double insulated Ultimate water bottle before I can get a drink of water.

Further up the race course Jim and I caught up with Clare and Alex VonderHarr, Marco Scarpetta and Marie Crow. For several kilometers we skied together. I started to get a little cold as the direction of the race course turned into the wind. Jim was doing pretty good considering he was learning how to use skate skis for the very first time. Jim and I started to kick butt to warm ourselves up. Even though that meant leaving the other SOLAR members behind.

Around 7K my hands became very cold. I decided it was time for the Gore-Tex overmitts. By the 8K mark my hands were still cold. Luckily we came across an aid station. The Boy Scouts to the rescue. A warm drink of water, and a few cookies did wonders for morale.

After climbing the top of the next hill my hands and body were warm for the remainder of the race. I was glad to reach the finish line more food, hot drinks and gas (See VASA, page 8)

(VASA, contd. from page 7)

heaters. A lot of skiers with beards were standing around with 4 inch icicles hanging from their beards. A lot of people mentioned this was the hardest VASA ever because of the weather conditions.

I met Karen again and she was worried that Mike Mannebach, her husband, had already been out three hours and still had not returned. Marco and Marie came through the finish line and still no Mike. Finally I saw Mike shivering in the corner of the tent trying to get warm by a gas heater. Mike mentioned that he pulled himself from the race around the 21K mark because he was very cold and tired. At least now I know what severe hypothermia looks like. Those rumors were not true that Mike had been transported by helicopter to a local hospital. A lot of other skiers also had a bad day at the VASA. Alex and Clare finished and the gang headed back to the Best Western for warmth, sleep and the hot tub.

So how did the SOLAR diehard skiers fair? Because of the poor conditions they decided to hit the hot tub instead of racing. As Bill put it, We might be animals, but we are smart animals. Congratulations to the other SOLAR members who completed the race, Alex and Clare VonderHair, Marco Scarpella, Marie Crow, Jim Perry, Teresa

Savarino Jim Young, Jeff Zabel, Marilyn Arnold, Mike Banks, Tom Kuhr, Jeff Enterkin, and Mike Mannebach. The whole group went out for dinner at Auntie Pasta's for wine and their favorite Italian dish. A roaring fire kept everyone warm. Even Dan and Laura Martin stopped by to say hi.

The next day on the way back to Detroit, I missed the turn to the breakfast stop and headed straight for Hansen Hills for 8K of additional fine skiing. The other rumor is that it took me until 10:30 a.m. to pack up all my stuff. I guess I am a pack rat.

Lessons learned: Like in the past, the saying still holds true about SOLARites, We don't just do it, we over Do it! (*Due* implies that you deserve the way you feel the next day.) Mole skin can be used to cover your nose and cheeks to prevent frostbite. When you buy M&Ms you should remember to take them along. Try to ski with a group of your SOLAR buddies. Bring lots of water. Know your limits. Like at work, the rumor mill is synonymous with Stang. Thanks Teresa and Jim for another fine SOLAR trip.

Review

Way Down and Way Dirty

By Teresa Savarino

We arrived in Kentucky with the greatest hopes of losing ourselves once again in Nature's art gallery. We were not disappointed. We first entered the ultra realism "foyer" to the gallery; our point of contact with trip organizers and leaders who would burrow ahead of us into the real land down under. Here we milled around the large lodge at Carter Caves State Resort in Eastern Kentucky, bumping into other duct-taped, helmeted and padded people, many sporting light brown dirt from spelunking times past on their as yet "clean" clothes. I struggled to snap my new clamps onto the strap of my main light and finally did it with the help of a coin. A new friend in the lodge held the bottom of my pant legs down while I dragged the knee pads over my lower legs. The two pieces of duct tape I'd begged and borrowed stuck to the floor before I got it onto my elbows and I would rue this later as I crawled on my stomach, elbow over elbow in front of me to drag the rest of my body with the elbow pads up around my wrists.

The ice covered branches spring at my face as I shuffle through the snow behind another spelunker. Most of the 18 of us are quiet on

this walk; this is the only part of the trip that is not somehow enjoyable. We are dressed only in caving attire, lightweight polypro, t-shirt and cotton pants for me, and the snowy ground numbs my sneakered feet. I would run fast to keep warm if I was not treading switchback style down a snowy slick slope.

I arrive at the hole we are to enter, 1 1/2 feet high and 2 1/2 feet wide, to find that one of the cavers is stuck, by physique or mindset I'm not sure. She emerges fully from the hole and is sweaty and smiling. She's a good sport about it, and will get a ride back to the "foyer" of our gallery in the van. I balance on the log to keep my feet from becoming numb; I talk to three newer cavers about the challenges and beauty of this particular cave. Finally, my turn into the "rabbit hole". The 50° F vapor of the earth rises up and beckons me. One of the plastics straps to my helmet has broken, and as I go eagerly head first down the hole, the helmet swings down onto my face - a graceful entrance! I right myself and my helmet and begin my journey through Meander Canyon, which curves and twists downward into the earth, as do we cavers. We have truly entered the "surreal" portion of Nature's gallery now. Our journey reveals pictures (See Caves, page 10)

(Caves, contd. from page 9)
on the walls like no paintings I've seen: the undulating striated horizontal lines, the "flow stone" with its smooth concave pockets, the curtain formations with their brown folds, the small bats with their silvery coats of dew, the rim-stone dams with their lobe-fringed tops. The cave called "Burchette's Odyssey" once again satisfies the desire to explore and to be surrounded by beauty for a short time.

Above the ground, my cohorts (most of the rest of the group) were searching out the beauty of the river in winter - while battling the elements and bailing out their cances. Look forward to hearing from Gene Cordova on that trip in the next Solar Ray!

Upcoming Events

NMI x 2

In order to avoid the holiday rush, Mike banks is planning a trip to North Manitou Island for the weekend of May 19-21. Leslie Cohen wants an extra day for her trip, so she planned one for the following weekend, Memorial Day, May 26 - 29. Choose whichever suits you, or do both! The die-hards have one other option: to go over to the island with Mike, stay the week and come back to the mainland with Leslie! See the calendar on page 3 for phone numbers for Mike and Leslie.

Upcoming Event

Bird Migration at Point Pelee

Point Pelee National Park in Leamington, Ontario, Canada is known as one of the best locations in North America to observe the northward migration of birds. The total number of bird species recorded at Point Pelee is 347, of which 328 species have been recorded for the spring migration period. May is the month dear to the hearts of most birders, since it is possible to see more species at the height of migration than at any other time of year. For the past few years, SOLAR members have gone to Point Pelee to experience this event by spending a day at the park. This year, SOLAR is among the privileged few to have a campsite at the park during the peak of the spring bird migration. The advantage of camping at the park (for those hard-core birders) is crawling out of your tent at the crack of dawn and jumping right on the trail to spot those "early birds" before the day crowd of bird watchers hits. So join SOLAR on May 20th-21st for this special event. There's also lots of other things to do at the park like biking, canoeing, and miles of beach to enjoy. So bring your camping/hiking/biking/beach/bird watching stuff and join us! For further information contact Cindy Harrison-Felix at (313) 722-3994.

STEERING COMMITTEE

President	.....	Cindy Harrison-Felix / (313) 722-3994
Vice-President	.....	Tom Dunn / (313) 494-5500 ext. 3008
Secretary	.....	Mike Banks / (313) 425-4669
Treasurer	.....	Karer Fox / (810) 380-9257
Activities	.....	Leslie Cohen / (810) 547-5626
Membership	.....	Sharon Stanek / (313) 585-3080
	.....	* June Legarski / (313) 386-8798
Equipment	.....	Julie Stollgrosz / (810) 471-7444
Bylaws	.....	Mike Felix / (313) 722-3994
Education	.....	Jim Young / (810) 726-8253
SOLAR Ray	.....	Steve Garcher / (810) 547-4998
	.....	* Julia Gordon / (313) 475-7265
Historian	.....	John Gulas / (810) 574-0243
Programs	.....	Margaret Martin / (313) 721-2821
At Large	.....	Joan Hettlinger / (810) 377-2377
		Bob Westbrook / (810) 356-3627 Joan Westbrook / (810) 356-3627
		Mo DeFrance / 229-8283 Larry Martin / 591-3856
		Bill Halvangs / 669-1911 Al Fylak / 852-7514

*Not elected but serving on the sub-committee indicated
If you would like to assist with any of the above positions, call the appropriate committee chairperson.

People

Carol McCririe took a nasty fall and broke her ankle. We wish to send wishes for a speedy recovery as she continues to work from home.

We're wondering if **Gene Cordova** had ulterior motives when he broke his Ring Finger, but did it to his right hand by mistake.

We wish to send sincere condolences to **Linda Rosa** on the loss of her father.

Julia Gordon has moved again. Here's her new address and phone number:

Julia Gordon
24365 Buchannon Court
Apt. #1945
Farmington Hills, MI
48335

(810) 615-7559

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 second 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 547-4988 or

E-Mail to sgardner@cerinet.com or call Julia Gordon, Ray co-Editor at (810) 615 7559, (no calls after 10:00 PM please).

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 21780 Evergreen Rd. in Southfield, between 8 & 9 Mile Roads at 7:30 PM SHARP. **SOLAR Club** dues are \$30 individual annual or \$100 Individual lifetime.



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