

# The SOLAR Report

THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE AND RECREATION

## Review

## 5TH Annual Haunted Halloween Weekend

By Leslie Cordova

Another Halloween has come and gone, but not without the traditional S.O.L.A.R. Halloween party. This year we had about 12 people show up on Friday night for card playing, mountain biking and hiking. Special thanks to Doug Lanyk who arrived at 3:30 to help decorate the cabins.

Saturday morning it was off to breakfast for most people, while others cooked in the cabin. When everyone was through with breakfast it was time to hit the trails for some mountain biking and hiking. Of course Dave DeFrance took hitting the trails too literally, and flew off his bike, but luckily Laura came back from college this weekend and was there to doctor him. Dave's fall earned him "The Most Demented Mountain Biker" award (okay so we are low budget - only a certificate). Around 3:00 most people made it back to the cabins to find that a lot of people had started to arrive, so it was time to go to Middleton Berry Farm for a hayride to the pumpkin patch to find the perfect carving specimen. We spent some time playing in the straw maze petting the farm animals, trying our skills on the balance beam maze (not too much skill for most of us) and then off on the hayride to the pumpkin patch. Most people found good



pumpkins, however I managed to get a great looking rotten one!!

Back to the cabins for some serious pumpkin carving competition, others just thought it was better to see how many people they could hit with seeds, look for next years pumpkin patch behind cabin #1!! The pumpkin judges (Matthew, David, Teresa and Cyndy) had a hard time choosing the best pumpkins among the dozen or so carved. After much deliberation the results were: 1st prize - Gene Cordova (hey wasn't he last years winner), 2nd prize - Maureen DeFrance, 3rd prize - Jeff Enterkin, 1st prize using a pumpkin carving kit - Jim Gilfix.

At 7:00 we had the traditional S.O.L.A.R. potluck (too much food) dinner. Thanks, Jim for sending out the gory recipes to everyone, it made for some strange looking foods. Awards were given to Ronda Shapiro for the best potluck theme food and Karen Bates for best potluck main course. Enough eating ... time to get serious - after all it is Halloween - we put on our costumes. I've been to a lot of Halloween parties in my time, but until you see how creative (Halloween, cont'd on Page 2)

## NCT Effort Update

With the completion of trail sections in the Manistee National Forest, SOLAR has completed 351 miles of the North Country Trail in Michigan.

### Miles Completed

**351**

### Miles to Go

**521**

## Section Coordinators

### Southern L.P. (113)

Marco Scarpetta (313) 823-8564

### Central L.P. (72)

Mike Banks (213) 425-4169

### Northern L.P. (16)

Leslie Cordova (810) 547-5626

### Eastern U.P. (75)

Steve Gardner (810) 547-4998

### Central U.P. (55)

Carol McCririe (810) 229-5232

### Western U.P. (20)

Bob Graham (313) 453-7313

#### Upcoming Event

## North Country Trail at Traverse City (NCT@TC)

On December 6-8 the mini cabins at Traverse City State Park will be base camp for a weekend of hiking or skiing on a nearby section of the North Country Trail. Cost of the weekend will be \$15. Bring a dish to pass for Saturday dinner.

Call Linda Rosa for more information at (313) 261-5584.

(Halloween, cont'd from page 1)

S.O.L.A.R. members can be - you haven't celebrated Halloween. A few examples of the costumes - the Wizard of Oz, Warner Bros. trio, Margaret how young you looked, Doug could use a few more teeth, a clown, a canoe porage sign, Castro, a bride (sort of), irate postal worker, Delilah, Phantom of the Opera, The Cat in the Hat - you get the picture. The judges (hey you didn't wear a costume - congratulations you're a judge) Dennis, Ted & Ron gave out the following awards: 1st prize - Damien Lanyk, 2nd prize - Cyndy Erickson, 3rd prize - Nancy Day and best overall Halloween spirit - Doug Lanyk.

The weather was perfect for a big bonfire with 4 people entertaining the crowd with their guitar playing a big group sing-a-long. Others stayed in the cabin to play Jim Gilfix's body parts game. The festivities continued until about 1:00 AM when it was time to take our full moon hike to the sledding hill. Next time my brother, Alan, should change out of his Bugs Bunny costume before heading out into the woods - lots of predators out there. Once at the hill safely, normally we can see lots of stars, but on this cloudy night, we

had to entertain ourselves, so lots of big and little kids rolled down the very wet hill time and time again.

Back to the cabins and fire again, 2:45 AM - okay let's play twister - 3:00 AM I went to bed, but I heard that people were apple bobbing until 4:00 AM. Big Doug won the award for "Best and Therefore Scariest Apple Bobbing". Way to go Doug - you beat out a couple of 12 years old boys!!

Sunday morning everyone was up early to survey the damage - must have been a good party - the cabin looked like a tornado went through it. Everyone pitches in to help clean up and we go hiking. At noon the park ranger checks us out and we pass inspection - how I don't know, so I guess we are permitted return next year for the 6th annual haunted Halloween!!!

#### Upcoming Event

## Caving in Kentucky

Well, you asked for more caving and you got it. I just got word that the annual Carter Caves Crawl-a-thon is scheduled for January 24-26, 1997!

The plan is to drive down to Olive Hill, KY on Friday and stay at Carroll's Inn Motel. I have reserved five rooms under my name. The cost will be \$30 for 2 nights lodging and will be first paid, first go. I will be supplying the entry forms for the Crawl-a-thon itself sometime in December. You can sign up for as many caving tours as you'd like on Saturday and/or Sunday. The cost is \$15 for two days of guided caving, and you will receive a free T-shirt. You must send this form to Carter Caves State Resort Park yourself, but don't delay as the trips do fill up quickly.

This is an annual event put on by the state park, and it is a great way for people to get acquainted with caving as they offer a wide variety of tours ranging from walking tours, a little bit of crawling, a lot of crawling, and vertical caving.

This trip could involve prolonged crawling through small, constricted passages, some of which may contain water. The rewards are a great physical challenge, and you will probably see lots of bats, cave crickets, and interesting formations. You must be in good physical condition to participate in level 3 or 4 caving tours.

Equipment you will need: old coveralls or any type of loose fitting clothing, knee and elbow pads, gloves, boots that cover the ankle, hard hat with chin strap (SOLAR can provide), three light sources with one that is mounted on your hard hat (duct tape works well) and extra batteries. If you need to borrow a SOLAR club helmet, I will have them at the January meeting. A \$25 refundable deposit is required.

For more information, contact Leslie Cordova at (810) 547-5626. Note: future caving trip/bat count in March, 1997!

#### Upcoming Event

## Expedition '97

Mt. Zirkel Wilderness is the destination for Expedition '97, a mountain backpacking trip departing Saturday, August 2, 1997 and returning on Sunday, August 17, 1997. Participation will be limited to eight hardy souls.

You might want to consider this Expedition when making your 1997 vacation plans. For more information, and to sign-up, contact Jim Wright, work: (313) 592-2925, home: (313) 284-2639.

## Did You Know?

By presenting your membership card at any of the area retailers listed below you will be entitled to special discounts reserved for SOLAR members. These discounts vary from store to store and its always best to check with the manager on duty at the time of purchase. So get out there and get yourself a deal and support these stores, thanking them for supporting the SOLAR Club!

**Joe's Army-Navy Surplus,**  
Royal Oak, Pontiac, and Warren  
**Moosejaw Outfitters,**  
Keego Harbor  
**Surplus City,**  
Berkley and Westland  
**Venture Outdoors,**  
Plymouth

### Upcoming Event

## Massage Workshop

Just what you've been waiting for!

On Saturday, December 14, 1996, a stress management and massage therapy workshop will be presented for SOLAR members at the Cana Lutheran Church in Berkley, just east of the high school. Participants will be put into pairs for the "hands on" portion of the workshop. All work will be done over clothing. The session will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and will be held on the carpeted floor of the church's lounge/library so bring a floor mat or therm-a-rest for comfort's sake. Cost of this workshop by certified professionals is \$20. Sign ups will be taken at the November and December meetings and are limited to 40. For more information call Paula Dirkes at (810) 399-9628.

## Activities Calendar

### December

- 3 Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, and Annual Holiday Party Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169
- 6-8 Weekend** Cabins / Hiking North Country Trail Traverse City, Linda Rosa (313) 261-5584 (see page 2)
- 14 Saturday** Christmas Caroling / Pot Luck, Westland area Margaret Martin (313) 721-2821
- 14 Saturday** Massage Therapy Workshop, Cana Lutheran Church, Berkley, Paula Dirkes (810) 399-9628

### January

- 7 Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169
- 8,15,22,29 Weds.** Enjoying Michigan Winters, Location TBD Doug Lanyk (810) 634-4551
- 11 Saturday** XC Ski Clinic, Maybury SP or XC Ski HQ, Mike Mannebach (810) 632-3955
- 24-26 Weekend** \*\* Crawathon - Caving Trip, Olive Hill, KY Leslie Cordova (810) 547-5626 (see page 2)
- 31-2 Weekend** XC Ski Weekend, Hale, MI Maureen DeFrance (810) 229-8283
- Tentative** Snowshoe Superior, North Country Trail Upper Peninsula, Steve Gardner (810) 547-4998

### February

- 4 Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169
- 5 Wednesday** Enjoying Michigan Winters, Location TBD Doug Lanyk (810) 634-4551
- 7-9 Weekend** \*\* Vasa XC Ski Race, Traverse City, MI
- 15-16 Weekend** Michigan Winters Practical II, Location TBD Doug Lanyk (810) 634-4551
- 21-23 Weekend** Cabin / XC Ski Weekend, Wilderness SP Laura Albin (810) 220-8283
- 28-2 Weekend** Downhill and XC Ski Weekend, Searchmont Stokely, Can. Sharon Broderick (810) 348-9650

### February

- 4 Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169
- 21-23 Weekend** Wabos Loppet XC Skiing, Wabos, Canada Mike Banks (313) 235-8129

\*\* Denotes a Non-SOLAR activity

KF = "Kid Friendly", activities appropriate for kids and parents.

If you would like to help plan or lead an activity, please contact Leslie Cordova at (810) 547-5626 (H) or (810) 901-1711 (W). SOLAR has a "No Refund" policy, however, if you are unable to attend an activity, you may "Sell Your Spot" to another SOLAR Club member.



#### Upcoming Class

## Cross Country Skiing I - The Diagonal Stride.

Instructor: Michael Mannebach

Assistant: David Bombard

It was great to see so many SOLARites interested in a basic skills X-C ski class. We had 16 people sign up so far! With that kind of enthusiasm, how could we not have a class?

So the class will be for the beginning to intermediate level skier. These individuals will learn the true pleasure of cross country travel over snow with skis by way of the diagonal stride. This technique is the most fundamental for in-track as well as out-of-track skiing and will lead to more advanced techniques such as the double pole and kick-double pole. Also covered are: how to select proper gear; how to hold your poles; how to recover from a fall; how to slow down and speed up on a down hill run; and, how to turn on down hill runs as well as on flats. Armed with these basic skills you will now enjoy endless hours of X-C skiing, in the cold chill of winter, and love every minute of it! Thank God for snow!

The class will be an on-snow clinic, with some handouts including a bibliography of great instructional books. The cost will be \$10.00 a person. It will take place at Maybury State Park for a half day providing good snow conditions, or if not, we will make it a whole day adventure by driving up to The Cross Country Ski Headquarters in North Higgins Lake area (near Roscommon).

Which brings us to When? Well, if we really want to enjoy the ski season fully with our new skills, we should have it early in the season. So, the

day is Saturday, January 11. Time will be 9:00 am at Maybury, or if up north, 11:00 am. Both touring centers rent skis if you don't own a pair yet. Call me if you have concerns about this. For those of you who didn't sign up and would like to, see me at this month's meeting. Total space is limited to 20 skiers. You can also contact me at (810) 682-3955.

For those few individuals who expressed a desire to learn the advance technique of skating, please see me at the meeting. I will try to accommodate you sometime this season. In the meantime, let it snow!

#### Review

## Its a Record!

By Steve Gardner

This year's November at Nordhouse trip departed from it's tradition of being the SOLAR Club's worst attended trip by having more people show up for the weekend than in any previous year.

All told, fifteen SOLAR members decided to deal with the weather, regardless, by spending the weekend camping on Michigan's west coast. This year, most of us just camped in the rustic campground so as to have better access to the North Country Trail. A couple others camped out in the wilderness area.

Saturday morning the group split three ways: the first planned to hike a nearby section of NCT south to north, the second planned to do the same section north to south (passing keys in the middle somewhere) while the third decided to explore out in the dunes area of the wilderness. It was getting dark and about an inch of snow had fallen by the time the two NCT groups met in the middle. An impromptu pot luck ensued right there on the trail (thanks for the soup, Doug). With snow still falling,

the plan changed to "Let's just go back to camp" since we had already covered the section we planned on anyway. Back at camp we gathered around a campfire for French Silk Pie a la Koz, warm drinks, cold beer (yes, really) and television (yes again).

Sunday morning included visiting with Lake Michigan, Porter Creek, and all those dunes. We had the entire lakeshore to ourselves. I'd like to report that Lake Michigan says "Hi," but it really just waved. After our visit, we all headed into Ludington for breakfast, then the TBWC Store. Doug and Karen did another chunk of snowy NCT just south of the prior day's journey before heading for home.

Yes, we had a good trip, and yes we got snowed on. Say, how does "February at Nordhouse" sound?

## "Winter Camping" Next Summer?

Do you know that you can dine and sleep on glaciers and watch the sun rise on snowy peaks with clouds under your feet? Yes, you can if you go to Alaska, the Rockies, or the Cascades on your next summer vacation, and here are some hints on how to do that.

First, sign up for the Enjoy Michigan Winters Class so you can learn the "ins and outs" of winter backpacking. Second, I'll bring you information on Outward Bound, NOLS and other mountaineering schools at the next meeting. These schools are not related to SOLAR, but I have taken courses from them in the past. Third, well ... now is the time to condition yourself and plan ahead. It is your adventure, so you have to do the rest. Call Lester Mok at (519) 256-0324 for more information.

## A Picture was Worth a Thousand Words

At the November meeting, we had the third annual SOLAR Photo Contest and the pictures were great. Thank you to everyone who brought photos and thank you to all of you who voted. Special thanks go to Steve Gardner and Carol McCrie for counting ballots and to Margaret Martin for putting the whole thing together. The winners were:

### Best Scenic:

1. Doug Lanyk, 2. Nancy Day, 3. Dave Forester, 4. Nancy Day.

### Best Nature:

1. Cyndy Erickson, 2. Cyndy Erickson, 3. Margaret Martin, 4. Nancy Day.

### Most Humorous:

1. Nancy Day, 2. Margie Guyot, 3. Jim Gilfix, 4. Doug Lanyk.

### Best People/Person

1. Nancy Day, 2. Nancy Day, 3. Jim Gilfix, 4. Doug Lanyk.

Start planning now for next year's contest! Keep those cameras snapping!

## Carolling for Shut-Ins

Don't forget to join us for Holiday Carolling as we visit several area nursing homes on Saturday, December 14 to brighten their holiday season. Come to the December general membership meeting or call Margaret Martin at (313) 721-2821 for more information.

### Upcoming Classes

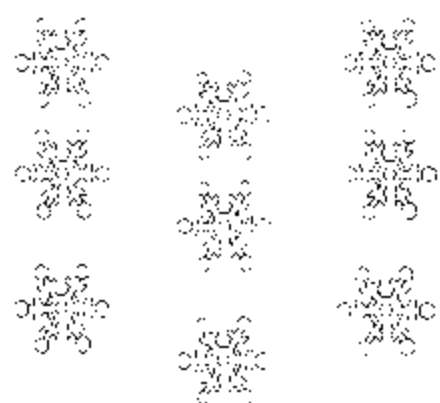
## How to Track a Leader without Getting Lost

Well, its hard to explain but you'll figure it out after taking these courses. I would like to have volunteers to share the load on registration and logistics and please remember to pay your 1997 dues before registration. I also need to know where I can borrow an overhead projector for the leadership seminar. Lester Mok (519) 256-0324, Windsor.

**Basic tracking workshop:** January 11, 10 AM to 5 PM. This indoor workshop is intended as an introduction to nature awareness, track identification, interpretation and tracking animals in the snow. The cost is \$10, payable at the December meeting.

**Wilderness Leadership Seminar:** March 15. This one day seminar is designed to share insights between experienced members and members who want to be part of a safe, successful and enjoyable outing. Tentative topics include leadership qualities and styles, team building and maintenance, expedition behaviors, communication, problem solving, risk vs. safety, etc. The cost will be \$10 and an interest sign-up will be taken at the December meeting.

**Land Navigation Course:** March 22-23. Learn how to use navigation strategies and route finding skills together with your map and compass. This is a comprehensive and intensive course designed to build your confidence on and off trail. Beginners welcome. Cost is \$30. Interest sign up at the December meeting.



## Living Closer to Earth

Yes, I know I'm already living on the 3rd rock. What I mean is ... Can you live without phone, pager, computer TV and CD? Or, can you survive without backpack, tent, sleeping bag, stove, butane lighter, water filter, TP and candy? I'm not asking you to give up the modern conveniences, but the more we are attached to them, the more we are removed from the heartbeats of Mother Earth.

You can explore and learn about the world of nature through earth living skills and awareness. These ancient skills include primitive shelters, fire and cordage making, wild edible and medicinal plants, primitive pottery, basket making, hide tanning, bone tools, tracking, nature awareness and observation and a caretaker attitude, and more. I know where you can learn these skills in Michigan. Please see me if you are willing to coordinate these non-SOLAR classes for our members. No experience is needed. Interested members should contact Lester Mok at (519) 256-0324.

## Walleyball!!!

Every Monday night 7-9 p.m. at Bailey Recreation Center, Westland, MI. Contact Margaret Martin at (313) 721-2821 (home) or (313) 722-7620 (work).



## 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.

**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, SOLAR Ray Editor, 40024 Borgman, Huntington Woods, MI 48070 or call Steve at (810) 547-4998, or E-mail to [sfgardner@gnn.com](mailto:sfgardner@gnn.com)

## 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. Membership dues are \$30 individual annually, or \$100 individual lifetime.

For more information about SOLAR call the

## SOLAR Club Hotline

24 Hour Voice Mail: (810) 988-6658

## STEERING COMMITTEE

President	Mike Banks / (313) 235-8129
Vice-President	Doug Lanyk / (810) 634-4551
Secretary	Cindy Harrison-Felix / (313) 722-3994
Treasurer	Cyndy Erickson / (313) 397-8240
Activities	Leslie Cordova / (810) 547-5626
Membership	Mary Price / (810) 477-7547
Equipment	Mike Felix / (313) 722-3994
Bylaws	Harry Price / (810) 477-7547
Education	Bob Graham / (313) 453-7313
SOLAR Ray	Steve Gardner / (810) 547-4998
Histories	Dave Foerster / (313) 453-0602
Programs	Margaret Martin / (313) 721-2821
At Large	
	Cindy Harrison-Felix / (313) 722-3994 Steve Gardner / (810) 547-4998
	Bob Westbrook / (313) 513-8454 Joan Westbrook / (313) 513-8454
	Mo DeFrance / (810) 229-8283 Larry Martin / (313) 591-3856
	Bill Halvangel / (810) 869-1911 Al Fytek / 852-7514
	Joan Ryan / (810) 570IVE1

If you would like to assist with any of the above positions, call the appropriate committee chairperson.



**SOLAR CLUB**  
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