

The SOLAR Day

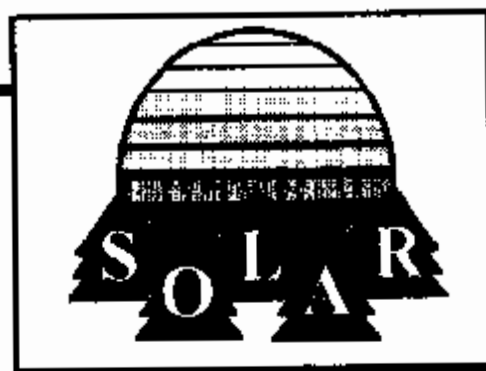
THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE AND RECREATION

Review

NCT Kick-Off Bike Ride

By Julia Gordon

On Saturday, June 1st approximately 30 bike-and-picnickers helped to kick off the SOLAR 20th year anniversary North Country Trail effort. We completed 25 miles of Marco Scarpetta's section, starting one bike length into Ohio, although we almost lost a few who thought they would go the other way and complete the NCT southeast of Michigan! OOPS! (see photo page 4) Several people showed up just to eat and play, but the rest of us biked either the 10 or 26 1/2 miles! There were even a few die-hards who did the loop around the park again, going the correct way this time! We can't forget to mention Cindy who sagged behind us all! Thanks for planning a great day Marco!



Review

Point Pelee National Park, Canada

by Cindy Hamison "Audubon"
Felix

May brings the world renowned annual spring bird migration to Point Pelee National Park in Ontario, Canada. On Saturday, May 18th, twelve SOLARites met at Point Pelee to set up camp. We hiked the Marsh Boardwalk before dinner and enjoyed the "winged" company of swallows and red-wing black birds.

Dawn broke Sunday morning

and we arose to catch the "early birds". It was a great day and the birds were out in full force. We hiked the birding trails and identified many species. We saw my favorites, the Indigo Bunting (an exact look-a-like of the blue-throated polyester) and the Scarlet Tanager. We also saw many different varieties of Warblers. Many of the spring migrating birds are very colorful and its always a treat to see their contrast with our average dull city birds.

We hiked to the "point" to see the most common spring phenomenon in Point Pelee; hordes of bird watchers all standing with binoculars looking into the trees on the edge of the beach. This is the first stop for the tired migrating birds and a good spot to see many varieties without having to move (more popular with the gray birders).

It was a great weekend to spend with SOLAR friends and the birds. I managed to stay on the road this year while driving and not veer off at the site of an Indigo Bunting. Thanks to all that attended and happy birding! Don't miss this opportunity next year, we already have a campsite reserved for 16 SOLARites for Saturday, May 17th, 1997!!!

NCT Effort Update

With the completion of the Bike Ride in Southern Michigan SOLAR has completed 25 miles of the North Country Trail in Michigan.

Miles Completed

25

Miles to Go

847

Review

Rock Climbing Practical at Rattlesnake

Fourteen students and seven instructors braved the cold and rain at Rattlesnake Provincial Park in Milton, Ontario to demonstrate their newly learned rock climbing skills.

The group arrived at the park at noon on Friday and set up camp. In a light but persistent rain we practiced setting up top-rope belay anchors at an actual cliff edge for the first time (an experience guaranteed to raise your heart rate!) After dinner, we took a written test that was rumored to be three pages long, but Jim Young actually made it five pages. Because of all that paper we had plenty of fuel for the fire. Jim and Maralynn Arnold entertained us by telling stories about each other and a lot of jokes were told around the camp fire. We got a spectacular view of the rising moon from the top of the cliff.

On Saturday at 8 A.M. we started setting up anchors that we would actually climb on. By 10:30 we were climbing and kept at it until about 4 P.M. Cloudy skies and intermittent rain kept away many of the climbers who usually crowd Rattlesnake on the weekends. We set up five belay anchors at climbs with names such as Cobwebs, Spiderman, and Beer Party. Dave Forester earned the nickname "Gummy" for his stemming technique on Cobwebs. While most of us

were using hand holds and foot holds to climb the rock, Doris Piccinin invented a new move where she used her butt to help climb. This was dubbed the a**hold. Jeff Martin got several nicknames for his daring climbing while Charles Haket spent so much time hanging from a rope while climbing a tough overhung section that he should have earned frequent flyer miles. Most of the group went to Pizza Hut and an ice cream parlor that night.

Sunday dawned sunny but still cool. A diehard group of climbers

set up anchors again and climbed till the afternoon. Others hiked around Rattlesnake and the nearby Hilton Falls Conservation Area.

Thanks to all the instructors: Jim Young, Tom Kuhn, Maralynn Arnold, Mike Malon, John Fox, Julia Gordon, Sharon Stanek, and Paul Thacker. They made this a very successful class.

Monthly trips are planned to Rattlesnake for June through the end of the summer on the second weekend of each month.



Upcoming Activity

Fossil Hunt

By Jim Gilfix

On July 14, 1996 we will be once again meeting at Arcona, Canada for the 6th annual fossil hunt. This trip is perfect for kids as young as 4 and for adults as old as...well 72.

The fossil hunt will consist of a brief hike, a fossil search, a pot-luck (which is usually awesome) and games. After lunch, we will shower in their 35 foot waterfall, then walk down the stream hunting for and finding many fossils. It is even possible for the young (at heart) to go under the falls in places. Bring your underwater cameras as everything gets wet on this part of the trip. This is a free trip and all are encouraged to attend.

For those of you who like to plan ahead, there is also an option to camp at the Rock Glen Family Resort campground across the street. This is a family campground and has tons of kids all over. Their phone number is (519) 828-3458. They charge about \$25 a night, and this fee includes campsite, water fire-pit (but I plan to hold a BIG campfire which will include food and ghost stories). The campground also has an indoor pool, an outdoor pool, a hot tub, a sauna, free mini-golf, playgrounds, modern bathrooms, hot showers, a game room and it's very close to the fossil park. Also there is a motel down the block and you can still come by on Saturday night for the stories, food, and other fun. For more information call Jim Gilfix.

Upcoming "Kid Friendly" Trips!!

August - Rattlesnake, swim, eat, Games. September - camp, day canoe, scavenger hunt. October - Halloween hayrides/stories.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

July

- 2 **Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169
- 4-7 **Weekend** Deam Lake State Rec Area Camping (KF), Indiana, Jim Gilfix (810) 539-0489
- 5-7 **Weekend** Rock Climbing, Rattlesnake Prov. Pk., Jim Young (810) 731-2504
- 12-14 **Weekend** Wilderness Survival Skills Class Practical, Mike Felix (313) 722-3994
- 14 **Sunday** 6th Annual Fossil Hunt (KF), Canada, Jim Gilfix (810) 539-0489
- 19-21 **Weekend** Backpacking Shakedown Hike, Jordan River Pathway, Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 26-28 **Weekend** Caving in Kentucky, Olive Hill, KY, Leslie Cordova (810) 547-5626
- 28 **Sunday** Trout Farm, Hands On Museum, (KF) Ann Arbor, Jim Gilfix (810) 539-0489

August

- 6 **Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169
- 7-13 **Weeklong** Backpacking Practical, Long Trail VT, Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 9-11 **Weekend** Rock Climbing, Annual Summer Festivities, Rattlesnake Prov. Pk., Jim Young (810) 731-2504
- 10 **Saturday** Indian Village, Waterfall, Swim, Milton Ontario (KF) Jim Gilfix (810) 539-0489
- 11 **Sunday** Scottish Highland Games-Ghosts, Fergus, ON (KF) Jim Gilfix (810) 539-0489
- 30-6 **September** Canoe Trip, Quetico Provincial Park, Tom Dunn, (313) 494-4212

Upcoming Events

- Late September UP Mountain Bike Color Tour, NCT, Steve Gardner (810) 547-4998
- Early October Backpacking, Baxter State Park, ME, Tom Dunn, (313) 494-4212

* 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 Activity

Caving in Kentucky with "Cordova the Barbarian"!

Back by popular demand we are going caving again in Northeast Kentucky. The dates are July 28-28, 1996!!! The plan is to drive down to Olive Hill KY on Friday (7 hour drive) and stay at Carroll's Inn Motel.

Saturday morning we will go to breakfast at the infamous James Drive-in, (delicious food at very low prices), then go directly to some caves, mostly on private property, for 5-8 hours of caving. Expect more of the same on Sunday, with a stop back at James Drive-in on the way home for the best milk shakes and cobblers you've ever tasted.

We should be heading back to

Detroit at 2:00 or 3:00 p.m. This trip involves 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 very interesting formations.

You must be in good physical condition to participate in this activity. Equipment needed: 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), 3 sources of light, one must be mounted on your hard hat (duct tape works well), and extra batteries

The cost of the trip is \$55. Sign ups will be taken at the May SOLAR Membership meeting. For further information call Leslie Cordova (alias "Cohen the Barbarian") at (810) 547-5626.

Great Lakes Sea Kayak Symposium

The dates for the 12th annual Great Lakes Sea Kayak Symposium are July 18-21, 1996 at Grand Marais, Michigan. The symposium will include lectures, workshops, instruction, boat trials, demonstrations, and guided trips.

Registration is \$65 before July 1st and \$80 after that date. For further information contact Cathy Susan at (313) 668-2437.

Class

Paddling Basics

Canoeing is a great way to: A) Have fun, B) Get down river, C) Go fishing, D) Enjoy life, E) Get wet, F) All of the above. If you answered F, you passed this test. Several SOLAR members are finding out the truth for themselves at the SOLAR Paddling Class.

The first day was spent on a lake learning basic canoe safety, how to make a canoe go straight, how to turn when and only when you want to, how to upright your craft after your partner swamps you, and how to come back from a canoe outing on speaking terms with your partner. This was followed by the requisite pot luck dinner (Too much food).

Day 2 will be on a river to experience what the current will do with your new skills; some light white water will be available (Pray for rain the week before the class) to get some practice getting wet. For more information, call Doug Lanyk at (810) 634-4551. Let's hit the water! Yea!!



This excited looking group of cyclists is about to depart on the first leg of the North Country Trail as it winds through the State of Michigan. (Note: some are facing the wrong way and are headed to New York).

Upcoming Event

Fishing Fun*By Jim Gilfix*

Every kid should catch a fish in summer. For that matter, so should every adult. Some of us don't have the time or the equipment to go to the lake and sit for hours and hope to catch something. Well, if you desire something easier, this trip is for you.

We will meet at the Spring Valley Trout Farm just west of Ann Arbor in Dexter on Sunday, July 28. They provide the poles, bait, buckets and if needed, people to bait your hooks and remove them from the fish you catch. Nearly everyone gets lucky at Spring Valley. Those who don't, have a last resort: a small heavily stocked pool called "the Kiddies Pond". While fishing is fun, catching fish is more fun! You and your kids will catch fish on this trip. The fishing is free, you pay for what you catch, no throw-backs. Their address is 12190 Island Lake road, Dexter. Phone is (313)-426-4772. Call THEM for better directions.

If the weather is nice we can go to Gallup Park in Ann Arbor and perhaps rent canoes. Or, they have superb play structures, or we can hike, sit by the water and watch the ducks. We may also picnic here to cook the fish we catch.

If the weather is NOT nice, we can go to the hands on museum in Ann Arbor. Think of this as a four-story playroom with a purpose, with the bubble capsule, shadow wall, computer games, giant zipper, and lots more of fun and interesting playthings.

We can grab dinner at Zingermans Deli if we cannot cook our fish, then head for home. Contact Jim Gilfix for more information.

Upcoming Event

Deam Lake Trip*By Jim Gilfix*

This is an update for the July 4 weekend trip. Some changes have occurred. We will not be staying at Clifty Falls, instead we will be camping at Deam Lake State Recreation Area. This also is in Southern Indiana.

The camping for this trip will be in modern electrical sites with toilets and hot showers, an arts program, fishing, nature center, boat rentals, swimming, playground equipment, wind surfing and hiking trails.

The many outdoor activities in the area include a boat ride in the Twin Caves at Spring Mill State Park, Hiking at Donaldson Cave Gorge and swimming. Bluespring Caverns featuring the longest navigable underground river in the US, Marengo Cave with the Crystal Palace and totem pole stalagmites, the Wyandotte Cave System with extremely rare and exquisite formations called helictites, and the Falls of the Ohio.

The next day, we will drive about an hour east to Clifty Falls State Park to see its five major waterfalls ranging from 60 to over 80 feet.

The Cost: \$40 per campsite - up to 6 people and no more than 2 (two) tents per site - this is strictly enforced in Indiana. Please sign up and pay as soon as possible. There will be a handout available at the June meeting. Contact Jim Gilfix for more information at (810) 539-0489.

Walleyball!!

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

Review

Kidstown*By Jim Gilfix*

On May 21 more than a dozen people met for the SOLAR gathering at Kidstown. The kids loved it and we adults had fun. Luckily it was cool out that day, which kept the temperature in the tunnels and passageways a mild tempered temperature of about 110 degrees F. We had dinner there, lots to drink and some of the kids were offered a job to stay and clean up to earn free ice cream. Guess what they did? When they were cone eating, everyone left and admitted to a nice trip.

Upcoming Event

August SOLAR Rattlesnake!*By Jim Gilfix*

Every August, SOLAR hosts a grand camping weekend at Rattlesnake Point. Besides the buffalo shuffle (hike) and a bike race up a VERY steep hill, we also have the GRAND COOK OFF where we all try to out-do each other in the camp culinary arts in pursuit of a trophy. There's also a spot to go climbing for those of you into that, but I'm not, so this year I thought I'd sponsor 2 trips for others, kids included. First, on August 10 after the bike race, we'll visit Crawford Lake Conservation Area, (about a 20 minute drive) and their reconstructed Indian Village (maybe a fee here), a meromictic lake, and a fragile woods. They also have an archaeology exhibit, native garden and trails. Afterwards, we may visit Spencer Gorge in the Webster's Falls area where there is a 50 foot tall waterfall that is also quite wide, and a short hike to Tews Falls which are almost as tall as Nagra. Contact Jim Gilfix for more information.

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, SOLAR Ray Editor, 10924 Borgman, Huntington Woods, MI 48070 or call Steve at (810) 547-4998, or E-mail to sfgardner@aol.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.

STEERING COMMITTEE

President	Mike Danko / (313) 235-8129
Vice-President	Doug Lanyk / (810) 634-4551
Secretary	Cindy Harrison-Felix / (313) 722-3994
Treasurer	Cyndy Erickson / (313) 397-8240
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If you would like to assist with any of the above positions, call the appropriate committee chairperson.



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The Ray is printed on 50%
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SOLAR

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