

April, 1997

The SOLAR Racer

THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE AND RECREATION

Upcoming Event

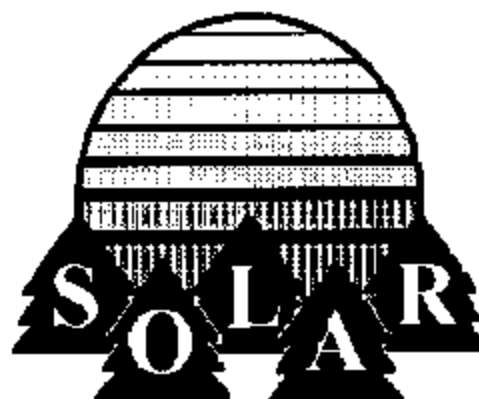
North Manitou Island Backpack Memorial Weekend

North Manitou Island is part of Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes National Lakeshore. The island has a wide variety of natural beauty as well as an interesting human history as evidenced by the interesting place names and ruins across the island. There are 15,000 acres to explore and hike around. The topography varies considerably from low, sandy, open dunes to rugged bluffs.

There is a variety of wildlife on the island, including deer, raccoons that will steal your food, given the opportunity and the piping plover, a shore bird which is on the endangered species list, BUT NO BEARS!!! Fishing is permitted on Lake Manitou, with a valid fishing license.

Be prepared for a rustic backpacking experience, as you will need to hang your food, purify your drinking water, and bring a cook stove, as fires are not permitted in the wilderness area. Oh, and by the way, there are no outhouses.

Cost of the trip is \$20 which will cover the ferry ride over to the island. The park service has started to charge for camping this year, the cost will be \$5 per night per site for camping. You



will be responsible for this cost, as it is NOT included in the \$20 for the ferry. You may choose to take the ferry over either Friday or Saturday at 10:00 AM SHARP, returning Monday at 11:10 AM SHARP!!!

Since this Island is very popular, I will be making the ferry reservations in April, thus I need everyone to pay by the April meeting. After this time, if you still want to go you will need to make your own ferry reservations.

At the May meeting I will have a list of people who are going on both the Friday and Saturday ferry. Please take a copy and try to carpool as much as possible. Also, since there will be a lot of people going on this trip, we will need to practice minimal impact camping, so try to set up small (less than 8 people) hiking groups. Remember that your group will be responsible for their own food and gear (stoves, water filters, tents, first aid, bear bag etc.) PLEASE COME PREPARED!!!

If you need additional information, please contact Leslie Cordova at (810) 547-5626

Please don't delay, as the ferry will

Upcoming Activity

Spring Bird Migration at Point Pelee

Mid-May brings the world renowned annual spring bird migration to Point Pelee National Park in Ontario, Canada. Saturday, May 17th we'll meet to set up camp; then we can hike, bird watch, bike, canoe, sun at the beach, etc.

Sunday morning at dawn, we'll arise to get an early jump on the bird watching. We'll hike the birding trails and try to identify as many birds as we can. This is a great time of year to hike the trails and also see many wild flowers.

The cost of the trip will be \$15 and is limited to the first 16 people to sign up and pay in full. The cost includes your camping and continental breakfast on Sunday morning. For further information, contact Cindy Harrison-Felix at (313) 722-3994.

Notice!

Just a reminder that annual memberships in SOLAR expire each December. All trip leaders and instructors are checking, so be sure to get your dues in to the membership committee or you may find yourself missing out.



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.

Mt. Zirkel Wilderness lies astride the Continental Divide within the Routt National Forest in Colorado. Encompassing 139,818 acres of unspoiled alpine terrain, this is big-view country: Open tundra dotted with shimmering turquoise tarns, mountains towering overhead.

The core of Expedition '97 is nine days of mountain backpacking along 60 miles of the Continental Divide at an average altitude of 10,455 ft. We will travel by train from Dearborn to Denver, bus from Denver to Steamboat Springs, and by taxi from Steamboat Springs to the trail head. Some time is available for sightseeing in both Denver and Steamboat Springs.

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).

Visit The SOLAR Page on the World Wide Web at:

<http://members.tripod.com/~solarclub1>

Upcoming Class

It's Time to Canoe!

If you like to canoe but aren't sure how to stay dry, or go in a straight line, have I got a deal for you. Doug's Special Paddling Clinic will teach you how to operate a canoe safely and with some confidence to get where you want to go. Important items will be taught like how to tell the bow from a thwart, an oar from a paddle, and how to keep the passenger side up. These skills are important to have a safe canoe trip and still be on speaking terms with your canoe partner.

Even experienced canoe veterans can improve their stroke and efficiency to go farther faster. The cost is \$5 and the class will be at my beach on June 14th (rain date the 15th). On June 28th, we will take a trip on a river. All will be welcome. Cost and location of the river trip TBD. Let's hit the water SAFELY!

Thank You!

Thank You to all the SOLAR volunteers for all their efforts on behalf of public TV. A select group of really good looking SOLAR Members gave up their evenings on March 11th and 17th to answer telephones at the channel 56 studios in Detroit. We spread the word about SOLAR to the masses.

If you have a good heart, please join us for the 56 auction running from April 15th to the 23rd. Only 1 or 2 nights from that stretch. Please contact me. Douglas Lanyk (810) 634-4551 for more details. Let's support Public TV and promote SOLAR!

Race for the Cure

On Saturday, April 19th SOLAR members have an opportunity to "Race for the Cure" at the Detroit Zoo. Women and men of all ages and athletic abilities can participate in the 5K Run/Walk or One-Mile walk to raise money for breast cancer research, screening and education. Seventy-five percent of the proceeds raised go to the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute, located in the Detroit Medical Center. Race organizers expect about 15,000 participants for the sixth annual event.

Entries cost \$15 through March 28, \$18 through April 4, \$20 through April 11 and \$30 thereafter. You can sign up at JCPenney's, Jacobson's, Pier 1 Imports, and running stores selling New Balance shoes - or call 1-800-KARMANOS (that's 800-527-6266). Race day registration is not available.

Race packets will be mailed to all registered runners the week before the race. The packet includes a race number, T-shirt coupon, course map, and directions. Late entrants may pick up their packets at the Expo on Friday, April 18 (info. in the registration brochure) or on Race Day. All paid participants receive the official T-shirt on Race Day.

SOLARites interested in walking and/or carpooling together can call Debbie Wood (313) 521-2891. (We can visit the zoo and/or meet for lunch after the race too!)

** Want to volunteer??? Race for the Cure can use your help getting the course ready, registering racers, attending the parking lot or distributing water and other refreshments. Call Ron Cantin at (810) 939-5925 or Valerie Fred (313) 745-9374.

Upcoming Events

Going Primitive

Did you read "Living Closer to Earth" in the February issue of The Ray? Well, now is the time to act. Harry Price has volunteered to coordinate some of these non-SOLAR courses for us. They are held between April and June, and include hide tanning, primitive pottery, willow chair, nature observation, two basic survival courses, and two wild edibles courses. See us for more information at the general membership meeting. The costs range from \$30 to \$135. Lester Mok, (519) 258-0324.

Mountaineering Partner Wanted

I am looking for a person or persons to climb a couple of 14,000 foot peaks in Colorado late summer or early fall of this year. You must be experienced in mountaineering, i.e. crampon technique, rope handling, glacier travel, etc. and willing to go on a couple of compatibility treks this summer. If interested, please contact Robert S. Graham at (313) 248-8764 (days) or (313) 453-7313 (evenings).

Upcoming Event

For the Personally Challenged

On Saturday, June 14 Jim Gilfix is leading a trip to Adrian, Michigan for a personal challenge weekend. The all day event will include team building exercises and a High Ropes Course. Cost for the trip will be \$35.

Call Jim Gilfix at (810) 539-0489 for more information.

Activities Calendar

April

- 1 Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5189
- 2,9,16,23 Wednesday** Rock Climbing Class, Location TBD
Jim Young (810) 726-3253
- 3,10,17,24 Thursdays** Backpacking Class, Benchmark, Leslie Cordova, (810) 547-5626
- 5 Saturday** CPR Class, Margaret's Condo, Westland
Margaret Martin, (313) 721-2821
- 8,22 Tuesdays** Advanced Backpack Class,
Mike and Cindy's, Inkster (313) 722-3994
- 11-13 Weekend** Hocking Hills State Park,
Logan Ohio, Jim Gilfix (810) 539-0489
- 11-13 Weekend** Wilderness First-Aid, Waterloo Rec. Area
Doug Lanyk, (810) 634-4551
- 18-20 Weekend** Shakedown Hike - Adv. Backpack, Location TBD,
Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 19-20 Weekend** Backpacking Practical I, Pinkney Rec. Area
Leslie Cordova (810) 547-5626
- 19 Saturday** Rock Climbing Class Practical I,
Planet Rock, Pontiac, Jim Young (810) 726-3253
- 21 Monday** Massage Therapy Workshop, Feet and legs
Cana Lutheran Church, Berkley,
Paula Dirks, (810) 399-9626
- 26 Saturday** Bike Maint/Safety Clinic Harper Woods,
Debbie Wood, (313) 521-2891
- 26 Saturday** Rock Climbing Class Outdoors, Powers Park,
Jim Young (810) 726-3253

May

- 1 Thursday** Backpacking Class, Benchmark
Leslie Cordova, (810)-547-5626
- 2-4 Weekend** Shakedown Hike, Adv. Backpacking, Location
TBD, Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 2-4 Weekend** Rock Climbing Class Practical II,
Rattlesnake Point, Jim Young (810) 726-3253
- 6 Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall,
Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5189
- 7 Wednesday** Advanced Backpack Class, Mike and Cindy's,
Inkster, Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 9-11 Weekend** Backpacking Practical II, North Manitou Island
Leslie Cordova, (810) 547-5626
- 9-11 Weekend** Rock Climbing, Rattlesnake Point,
Jim Young (810) 726-3253
- 17-26 Week long** Adv. Backpack Practical, Location TBD,
Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 17-18 Weekend** Bird Migration/Camping Trip, Point Pelee
Margaret Martin, (313) 721-2821
- 22-25 Weekend** ** White Water Rafting, Cheat River, WV,
Jonnie Kosiishak (517) 456-7569
- 23-26 Weekend** North Manitou Island, Backpacking, Leland, MI,
Leslie Cordova (810) 547-5626

Upcoming Event

Am I Still in Ohio?

That's the question asked by visitors to the Hocking Hills area in Ohio, as they see the dramatic sandstone and shale cliffs, canyons, caves, and waterfalls. Ohio Magazine picked this region as having Ohio's best rock scenery, most photogenic waterfall and best caves.

Join us on April 11-13, 1997 as we journey down to Ohio. We will car-pool to Hocking Hills State Park, 40 miles southeast of Columbus, about 5 hours drive from Detroit. We will stay in their deluxe cabins, with real beds, stoves, fridge, heat, hot showers, and fireplace.

Saturday we will hike the Grandma Gatewood trail, a 3 mile section of the Buckeye Trail, starting from the Old Man's Cave, past the upper falls and the Cedar Falls to the Ash Cave; a four hour hike if you don't stop for photos (April is a good time for wild-flowers in Hocking Hills). We may spot a car at the end so we can have time to see Cantwell Cliffs on Saturday as well. Old Man's Cave measures 150 feet long, 120 feet high and 90 feet deep. The lower falls is 60 feet tall and at the plunge pool, a deep recess cave has been carved in the underlying shale. Cedar Falls will be a good place for lunch. Ash Cave is 700 feet long and 90 feet high. A stream falls from the roof edge into a pool. Saturday evening will consist of the delectable SOLAR Pot Luck Dinner.

Sunday we can choose from some of the other wonderful sites in the area such as the Rock House and Conkles Hollow. Hiking plans for both days are flexible, due to the weather and wide variety of scenic opportunities in the area.

Cost of the trip is \$30 payable at the February or March meetings and includes 2 nights in a cabin, hiking maps, a Vernors, and breakfast. The trip is limited to 17. Be sure to sign up early as this trip is likely to sell out quickly.

Contact Jim Gilfix at (810) 539-0489 for more information.



Upcoming Class

Biking Basics: Maintenance and Safety Workshop

Who: Cyclists of all levels.

What: An opportunity for enthusiasts to get their bikes (and themselves) ready for Spring riding. The day will include a group discussion, facilitated by Marco and Debbie, on various aspects of biking (safety, clothing, equipment, etc.), basic cleaning, maintenance and repair (learn how to fix a flat), the famous SOLAR potluck lunch, and a bike ride (to Lake St. Clair, total distance determined by the riders).

When: Saturday, April 26 at 10 a.m.

Where: Debbie Wood's house in Harper Woods (Map Available)

Bring: Bike, Cleaning Supplies, Tools, Stands, Air Pumps, Riding Clothes, Helmet, Food for a Potluck

Cost: \$5

Contact: Debbie Wood (313) 521-2891

Review

Everglades, Part II

by John Gulas

Hi everyone! Yes, the Everglades are truly an amazing national park. Thanks Julia Gordon for an excellent description of your trip (and also for pressuring me to finally write this article). My experiences have been a little different since I have been living in South Florida with a time filled schedule that does not permit much time for playing. But when I can, I often try to experience what the 'Glades are like at the current particular moment. Like any other wilderness, this area is constantly changing. So I have been fortunate in the sense that I have been able to observe different and unique features completely unlike the Midwest.

For those of you unfamiliar with the geography of the area, Everglades National Park consists of over 1.4 million acres. This makes it larger than the state of Delaware. The original Indians refer to the area as Pa-hay-Okee, the "grassy waters," or "river of grass." The terrain ranges from the hardwood mahogany forests to the big cypress and pine forests of southern swamps. In much of the park a person can choose to see sawgrass all the way to the horizon. Unless of (see 'Glades, Page 5)

Spring Sales

Sherpa snowshoes (9x34): \$120
REI insulated booties (small): \$15
Bike booties: \$10
Coleman 440 stove
(white/unleaded gas) and
windscreen: \$30
Gander Mountain sleeping bag
(-15° F 3-season, 3.7 lb): \$80
See 'em at the April meeting. All
sales as is. Call Lester Mok at
(519) 256-0324.

1997-1998 SOLAR Steering Committee Nominations

PRESIDENT: to preside at meetings of the Club and Steering Committee, and other duties pertaining to this office. Running for President: Mike Banks

VICE PRESIDENT: to preside at meetings in the absence of the president, and other duties pertaining to this office. Running for Vice-President: Cyndy Erickson, Margaret Martin

SECRETARY: to inform membership of meetings, record the minutes of Steering Committee meetings, make required reports, carry on necessary correspondence, and other duties pertaining to this office. Running for Secretary: Bob Graham

TREASURER: to have custody of all funds; accounting for the same by written report at the Steering Committee meetings, to maintain an inventory record, and other duties pertaining to the office. Running for Treasurer: Susan Guydos

ACTIVITIES: to develop activities and assist in carrying out those approved by the Steering Committee in keeping with the purpose of the Club, to establish and maintain guidelines and to make subsequent determinations on "Steering Committee approved" activities developed by members of the Club. Running for Activities: Leslie Cordova

BYLAWS: to review periodically the Bylaws to determine what, if any, changes should be made to meet the changes in time. Running for Bylaws: Harry Price

SOLAR Ray to be responsible for the publication of the SOLAR Ray, to work with other committees and groups to promote the club and its

activities, and to organize and publish other materials as deemed necessary for the good of the club. Running for Communications: Nancy Day, Jim Young

EDUCATION: to develop and coordinate the educational program of the Club, to approve or select the qualified people to instruct these programs and to explore new areas that may be of interest to members of the Club. Running for Education: Margaret Martin

EQUIPMENT: to establish and maintain guidelines for the procurement and use of all physical properties of the Club, to maintain inventories, to monitor the condition of, and to regulate the use and storage of such properties. Running for Equipment: Bob Graham

MEMBERSHIP: to strengthen and expand the membership in the Club, to maintain accurate and updated membership records, to maintain and update mailing lists and mailing labels, to provide new members with information and appropriate materials pertaining to the Club. Running for Membership: Mary Price

HISTORIAN: to compile and maintain a record of club activities utilizing all necessary documentation methods to extol the fulfillment of the stated purpose of the Club. Running for Historian: Dave Foerster

PROGRAMS: to arrange for presentations at the monthly Club meetings, in keeping with the purpose of the Club. Running for Programs: Karen Bates

PUBLIC RELATIONS: to disseminate information about the Club, including press releases, class announcements, etc. Running for Public Relations: John Fedyck, Doug

(*'Glades*, cont'd from page 4)
course you happen to be along the coastline where the fresh water from the interior meets with the salt water of the Gulf of Mexico. My first experiences upon arrival last August

quickly taught me that this area is influenced and dependant upon the tropical weather. The blistering heat that Teresa Savarino and I sweated under while canoeing was extremely energy draining. Leftover energy then was spent swatting at the swarms of mosquitoes whom drank rather well that weekend. Generally, these first two months were informative as I learned about the regional history and background.

One area that quickly became my favorite is a bike/tram/walking trail on the north side of the park. Shark Valley is a 15 mile loop with an observation tower at the halfway point. It was here that I had my first real encounter with an alligator. One day while biking, I rounded a bend and suddenly came across a gator crossing the road. He was probably only 25-30 feet away when I hit the breaks and squealed to a stop. It was very, very big (probably about 10-12 feet) and I was both shocked and excited.

However, the highlight of those first months was not the large amounts of wildlife that I still was not seeing, but rather the conditions of the wet season. Every afternoon a person could watch thunderstorms form over areas miles away (this is possible because of the lack of trees to obscure visibility). But within minutes the storms would quickly move and soon strong downpours would suddenly soak those of us brave (or stupid) enough to be on the trail. The thunder was so loud, it would reverberate for miles. However the lightning that came crashing down was much scarier than anything I was familiar with in Michigan. Blinding strikes usually came down within a couple of miles, and in one instance within a mile.

The months of October through December were different as the wet (see *'Glades*, page 6)

Review

Wabos '97

By Doug Lanyk

I lack the words to fully describe how wonderful the experience was. 13 hearty SOLARites took the Algoma snow train north out of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, up through some of the best scenery near Michigan.

When we got to the town of Wabos, several hundred skiers disembarked and were left to find their way back to Stokley XC ski resort. It was a 27 or 28 Km ski over some moderately rugged but very beautiful terrain.

The trail was crowded at the beginning but spaced out as the day progressed. There were hot-dog truck XCers goofing off and entertaining at the first rest break (back-flips on skis). The second stop provided a chance to meet the famous Norm at Norm's cabin where we signed the guest book and some paused to warm up and take some much needed refreshment. Then it was off to the finish to have a beer and a bugger and tell all the stories (and lies) about how easy or tough the trail was. It was quite the carnival atmosphere.

Back to the cabins, we went for some much needed saunas and a long soak in the spa. Sunday brought another perfect day for getting out and having fun. Some of the crew went home, some went to see a waterfall, and some who needed more exercise went skiing again. Stokely RULES! Skiing is free for Loppeteers the day after. The hot tub and sauna saved us again.

Those that stayed Monday went out to a great restaurant, the Buttermilk Lodge, and had a fantabulous meal cooked especially for us in a private dining room. Dancing and comradery abounded.

From the lodge, we went to Batchawana Bay for a truly cosmic experience. The eclipse of the moon was well in progress as we skied out onto Lake Superior to view the comet. Since we were 45 miles north of the Soo, the light pollution was almost non-existent. Hale-Bopp and the moon were revealed to us in their full glory.

What a trip! Practice your skiing and

Upcoming Class

Wilderness First Aid Class

You have had CPR and you went through a first aid course. That fully equipped and very expensive emergency kit is in your pack and ready to go. So now that your best friend and hiking partner is wet, shivering and bleeding you have everything under control, you know exactly what to do, right? Was your answer yes? In truth, for most of us the answer would be NO. People head off for wilderness adventures, usually armed with a BIG first aid kit, and a LITTLE first aid training.

When serious trouble hits, they realize that they are not prepared to use either one. Standard first aid classes do not begin to address the extreme situations that the wilderness environment can and will throw at you. That is where the SOLAR Wilderness First Aid Course comes in.

The class is taught by Doug Brown, a working, licensed paramedic in Jackson County and owner/operator of Michigan Search and Rescue. Doug uses the NOLS Wilderness First Aid manual and his knowledge and experience as an emergency rescuer to teach us what works and what doesn't when faced with real

emergency situations.

The course will be offered on the weekend of April 11-13 at Waterloo Recreation Area near Chelsea. The class will form up on the evening of Friday the 11th. Students will stay in the wilderness cabins in the Burnside area. Friday night is a get acquainted session around the camp fire. Saturday starts early and ends late with a full day of intense classroom interaction. Sunday is when it all comes together. Students are placed into simulated wilderness emergencies in the surrounding woods and must respond to the situations they find.

The cabins are RUSTIC, equipped with bunk beds and a wood stove and no electricity. You will also be responsible for your own meals. The course fee is \$80 and includes two nights stay in the wilderness cabins and the NOLS Wilderness First Aid manual. For further information, contact Doug Lanyk at (810) 634-4551.

('Glades, cont'd from page 5)

season progressively diminished to an end. The year-round residents along the trails included numerous white egrets searching for food in the reeds. In the canals brown aningas are either swimming and/or diving for fish. After their search for food they can be seen sitting on branches with their wings outstretched, drying the wings in the afternoon sun. The changes of season in the north slowly resulted in more and more species of birds migrating to the area, i.e. warblers, peregrine falcons, herons, and tree swallows.

By December, a transition was noticeable throughout the region. Numerous species and numbers of birds wading in the reeds were easily viewable from most trails and roads. Also the turbulent weather had settled (see 'Glades, page 7)

Upcoming Event

My Dogs are Barking!

Did you know that foot health has an influence on total body health? Are you aware that every part of your body is represented by a reflex area in the feet? With a little training in the ancient art of Reflexology, you can learn to do work to the feet that can have an influence on how the whole body feels and help your dogs feel mighty fine. A good session of Reflexology can feel like a full body massage and maybe even better! The SOLAR Club is sponsoring a 3 hour Reflexology Workshop on Monday, April 21, 1997 from 7-10 pm at Cana Lutheran Church in Berkley, Michigan (just east of Berkley High School on Catalpa). The workshop will be lead by Linda Roman, certified reflexologist and myomassologist and will be assisted by Paula Dirkes, SOLAR member. Content will include a brief history of reflexology, theory and its practical application. This will be a hands on workshop designed to teach you the techniques as well as receive and experience the benefits.

How do you prepare? 1) Plan on taking your socks off because bare feet are required. 2) Bring a large towel to roll up (to raise feet level) 3) Bring a floor mat or small blanket to lie on 4) Bring your feet to be worked on by a partner 5) Bring your hands to reciprocate the favor and 6) Trim fingernails work best and 7) Wear loose fitting, warm, comfortable clothing. Course fee: \$20.00 per person. Make checks payable to SOLAR. Questions? Call Linda Roman at 546 6507 or Paula Dirkes at 399 9628

Upcoming Class

Trip Planning and Advanced Backpacking Class

The Trip Planning Seminar teaches the basics of planning and leading an extended outdoor trip. It is open to all SOLAR members and will be held on Wednesday, March 5th from 6 to 10 PM at Mike and Cindy's house in Inkster. The cost is \$10.

The Advanced Backpacking Class will use the trip planning techniques to plan a week long backpacking trip. The trip planning meetings are scheduled for March 12 and 26, April 8 and 22, and May 7, plus the March 5 trip planning seminar. Two weekend shakedown backpacking trips are planned for April 18-20 and May 2-4 and students must attend at least one of these trips. The Backpacking trip is scheduled for the week of May 15-26.

The trip destination will be decided by the students, to be within a 12 hour driving radius of the Detroit area. The trip could be North, part of the North Country Trail (Porcupine Mountains, Ottawa National Forest, etc.) in celebration of SOLAR's 20th anniversary, or South, perhaps the Smoky Mountains. The cost of this class is \$25. You must have taken the backpacking class, be able to attend the trip planning seminar, participate in the planning meetings, attend one (or both) weekend shakedown backpacking trip, and be available for the entire week for the final trip.

For further information, contact Cindy Harrison-Felix at (313) 722-3994 (h) or (313) 745-1188 (w).

(Glades, cont'd from page 6)

down and now the dry season was upon the park. The result of the seasonal change was the drying up of much of the low level waters. The activity for the adventurous at this time is sloughing. I have not tried this as of yet, but I have hopes that someday I will. Essentially sloughing is wading anywhere off the trail. This can only be done in the dry season. The opportunities to see even larger amounts of wildlife are supposedly excellent. My only advice is to make sure you don't step into an alligator hole.

The new year made this unique place even more special to me. It's a great place to take a break from the headaches that life can offer. The peak dry season occurs between January and March. Since there is less water, the wildlife congregates around the larger water hole; several are conveniently next to trails. For instance at Shark Valley, I routinely would see on any given trip at least thirty alligators and one to two dozen species of birds.

Every trip in the past three months has resulted in another special memory for me. One time I saw three ravens pull open zippers on a day pack, pull out two candy bars, unwrap them and then eat them. One final memory was walking along a train and seeing an eleven foot gator sitting on the cement and offering a big smile to numerous tourist whom were walking by. To me some irony occurs here since this scene is analogous to what is currently occurring in this region. The rapid growth of South Florida has resulted in large losses of the Everglades to mankind. Unfortunately the wildlife has no choice but to try to live next to mankind. Thus far, the results have not been good for both the Glades and the wildlife it supports. But this is a story for another time.

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, 10024 Borgman, Huntington Woods, MI 48070 or call Steve at (810) 547-4998, or send E-mail to efgardner@earthlink.net

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 B & E 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) 235-6129
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
Historian	Dave Foerster / (313) 453-0692
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) 226-8283 Larry Martin / (313) 591-3856
	Bill Helvangis / (810) 889-1911 Al Fylak / 652-7514
	Juan Ryan / (810) 570-DIVE1

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



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