

February, 1997

The SOLAR Run

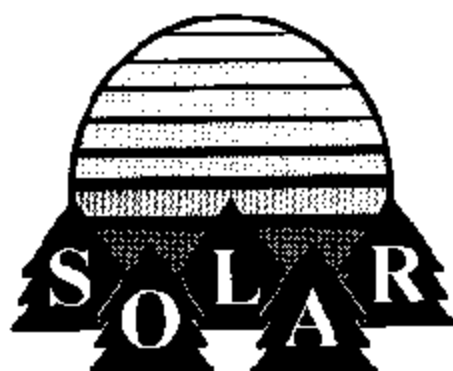
THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE AND RECREATION

Upcoming Program

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Peregrine Falcons

The February program will be truly outstanding: Judith Yerkey will speak about her close personal friends, the Peregrine Falcons of Detroit. Judith is the Jane Goodall of the Detroit Peregrine and her observations have provided vital and interesting information about the behavior of Peregrines. This endangered specie is improving through the efforts of Judith and others throughout the country who watch and record information about these magnificent birds all through the year.

Judith was a volunteer for the first Peregrine release by the Detroit Audubon Society in 1987. She then watched the released birds while they learned to live in the big bad world. Since then her work has been funded by grants from the Michigan DNR / Natural Heritage fund which relies greatly on donations. She is a recipient of the Michigan Audubon Society's "Member of the Year" Award and the Michigan United Conservation Club's 1994 Special Conservation Award and the Special



Award from Drayton Plains Nature Center. Thanks to her work, Detroit is one of the leading observation sites for the Peregrine Falcon and many similar programs use Judith's work as a model for other programs of it's kind.

Judith will present her slide program which is appropriate for children, but interesting to all. I met Judith a few years ago at a Hawk Observation Day at Lake Erie Metropark and I was impressed with her enthusiasm for the social structure of the Peregrine community. Bring all your questions about Peregrines and other raptors. She will do her best to respond!

Notice!

Just a reminder that annual memberships in SOLAR expire each December. So if you haven't already renewed by paying your dues, you're not really a member and not entitled to go on trips, attend classes, or get this news letter. So be sure to get your dues in to the membership committee or you may find yourself missing out.

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	Miles	
	Done	To Go
Southern L.P.	113	87
Marco Scarpetta (313) 823-8564		
Central L.P.	72	*
Mike Danks (313) 425-4189		
Northern L.P.	16	*
Leslie Cordova (810) 547-5626		
Eastern U.P.	75	68
Steve Gardner (810) 547-4998		
Central U.P.	55	*
Carol McCririe (810) 229-5232		
Western U.P.	20	*
Bob Graham (313) 453-7313		

* To be calculated

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.

Help!

We need your help in locating some misplaced photos that are to be used for the Enjoy Michigan Winters class. These photos were loaned out and have not been returned. If you have any information as to their whereabouts, please contact Doug Lanyk, Dave Jones, or Bob Graham.

Upcoming Event

Vasa Cross-Country Ski Race Weekend

Leader: Debbie Wood, Home Phone (313) 521-2891

Cost: \$35 per person, includes two nights lodging. A \$20 deposit is required at the December SOLAR meeting, and full payment by the January meeting.

Date: Friday, February 7 to Sunday, February 9, 1997

Where: Days Inn, Traverse City

Plan: Arrive Friday evening. The Days Inn has suites that sleep six to a room. Each suite has a refrigerator and a microwave. Continental breakfast is included, between 6 and 10 A.M. and the hotel has an indoor pool, jacuzzi, and a fitness center. If you have a preference of who you room with, state so on the sign up or let Debbie know.

Races: 45K, 27K, 12K start on Saturday between 9:00 and 9:45 A.M. If you are interested in skiing in the race, get a registration form from Debbie.

Saturday evening, we can get together for a group dinner at a local restaurant. There are a lot of options for cross-country / downhill skiing and other activities in the Traverse City area. Maps will be available at the January SOLAR meeting.

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).

Living Closer to Earth

Yes, I know I am 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 am 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, 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 needed. Lester Mok, (519) 256-0324.

Upcoming Class

It won't be Long

Get out and ski while you can because it won't be long before the snow melts and the days warm up and for SOLAR that means Rock Climbing. The 1997 SOLAR Rock Climbing class begins Wednesday, April 2nd. 1997 sign ups will be taken during the general membership meetings in March and April. Watch The SOLAR Ray for further information or contact Jim Young at (810) 731-2504.

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

SOLAR on the World Wide Web!

The SOLAR Club has recently added a new communications resource via the World Wide Web on the Internet. Stop in for a look at the latest activities calendar, receive or submit articles for The SOLAR Ray, link to other web sites, or exchange E-mail with your electronically compatible friends. The address for The SOLAR Page is:

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

If you would like your E-mail address to be added to the on-line list of members, you may send an E-mail request to me at:

sfgardner@earthlink.net

and give me a day or two to set it up. You can also stop by the site and E-mail me from there. See you on line!

Activities Calendar

February

- 4 Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169
- 5 Wednesday** Enjoying Michigan Winters, Mike and Cindy's, Doug Lanyk (810) 634-4551
- 7-9 Weekend** Vasa ** XC Ski Race, Traverse City, MI, Debbie Wood (313) 521-2891
- 15-16 Weekend** Michigan Winters Practical II, Pigeon River, Doug Lanyk (810) 634-4551
- 21-23 Weekend** Cabin / XC Ski Weekend, Wilderness SP, Laura Albin (810) 229 8283
- 28-2 Weekend** Downhill and XC Ski Weekend, Searchmont / Stokley, Can. Sharon Broderick (810) 349-3844
- Tentative** Snowshoe Superior, North Country Trail, Upper Peninsula, Dave Jones (810) 477-8605

March

- 4 Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169
- 5 Wednesday** Trip Planning Seminar, Mike and Cindy's, Inkster, Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 5,12,26 Wednesdays** Adv. Backpack Class, Mike and Cindy's, Inkster, Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 15 Saturday** Outdoor Leadership Seminar, Brighton, Lester Mok (519) 256-0324
- 16 Sunday** Murder Mystery, Brighton, Jim Gilfix (810) 539-0489
- 22-23 Weekend** Land Navigation Class, Waterloo Rec. Area, Brighton, Lester Mok (519) 256-0324
- 21-23 Weekend** Wabos Loppet XC Skiing, Wabos, Canada, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169

April

- 1 Tuesday** General Membership Meeting, Colony Hall, Southfield, Mike Banks (313) 425-5169
- 2,9,16,23 Wednesday** Rock Climbing Class, Location TBD, Jim Young (810) 726-3253
- 2 Wednesday** Advanced Backpack Class, Mike and Cindy's, Inkster (313) 722-3994
- 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
- 18-20 Weekend** Shakedown Hike - Adv. Backpack, Location TBD, Cindy Harrison-Felix (313) 722-3994
- 26 Saturday** Rock Climbing Class Outdoors, Powers Park, Jim Young (810) 726-3253

** Denotes a Non-SOLAR activity

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

Blatant Plea

Let Me Help Plan Your Trip!

By Steve Gardner

The nice thing about being the Editor of The SOLAR Ray is that you can get away with doing things like this!

I'd like to help plan a Cross-Country Ski or Snowshoe trip along a very beautiful, but somewhat remote section of the NCT, between the Tahquamenon Falls area and the Lake Superior shore. The trip would center around the Culhane Lake state campground, rustic, but with outhouses. It could be a two or three day trip, or even a weekend if you don't mind spending more time driving than on the trail. It would probably help to have at least one four wheel drive vehicle available for shuttling. I just wish I could go on the trip but can't so I need someone to help plan and lead the trip.

Even if this trip sounds like too much for you, give me a call and we can come up with something simpler. There are MANY opportunities for NCI travel yet to be completed. If you can help, please call Steve Gardner at (810) 547-4998 to set up a meeting.

I'm sure the other section coordinators could help with similar trips in their sections. All the sections and contacts are listed on the front page of The SOLAR Ray. Give us a call!



Upcoming Events

Before You Wander...

Congratulations! You've taken the Fall, Winter, and Advanced Backpacking Classes. And you've completed the Rock Climbing, Skiing, Wilderness Canoeing, and miscellaneous Courses. So you head straight out of town into the wide open air. You have a pack on your back, boots full of feet, and you can pick any direction you choose to take. Wander into yonder? Perhaps, you may wonder. When you come back you can teach us what you've learned. But not if you discover too late that you have not packed those bags of tricks and come to die in the woods.

So don't just sit there and cross your legs! These courses are here for you to take. Sign up BEFORE the mountain is waiting or you're off for a hike. Or call Lester at (519) 256-0324 to hear his telephone clicks.

Wilderness Leadership and Safety Seminar

March 15 at Brighton, \$10. This is a one day seminar designed to share insights between members who want have a safe, successful, and enjoyable outing. Tentative topics include leadership, group dynamics, and wilderness hazards and safety. All levels of outdoor enthusiasts are welcome.

Land Navigation Course

March 22-23 at Waterloo Rec, \$30. Learn how to get from nither to yon safely and wisely. You will practice navigation strategies and route finding skills using your map and compass. This is an intensive course designed to build your confidence in on-trail hiking and off-trail bushwhacking. Bring your compass and a wandering spirit. Beginners welcome. Rustic lodging

on Friday and Saturday are included. The class starts promptly at 9 am on Saturday and ends at 3 pm on Sunday.

Wanted and For Sale

Wanted: I keep slipping off the wall at the Rock so I think it's time to have a bag of chalk. The deer legs are not for climbing but I'm collecting the sinew for cordage making. Used bag and legs are OK.

For sale: (1) Sherpa snow shoes (9"x34") with alpine bindings: \$120 (2) REI insulated booties, small: \$15 (3) Bike boot: \$10. As is and cash. Call Lester at: (519) 256-0324.



Ski Stuff For Sale

I have two sets of cross-country skis for sale; Trak and Haga Mountain. The Trak set is waxless, suitable for groomed trails and mid off-track use. The Haga Mountain set has steel edges, waxable surface, and is wide enough for back-country use. Both sets include bindings and boots (men's size 11). Asking \$80 for the Trak set and \$110 for the Haga Mountain set.

All prices are negotiable. If you are interested, contact Steve Gardner at (810) 547-4998

Wanted Wanted Wanted Wanted

The past and present of SOLAR the first twenty years.

A group of current and past SOLARites has been commissioned to put together a slide show representing the past twenty years SOLAR has been a club.

So open up those boxes of pictures and photo albums that you have gathered over the years and see if you have some shots that can help show who we are and what we like to do as SOLARites.

We can use your Bald Mtn. Halloween, Winter Camping, backpacking, SOLAR picnics, SOLAR weddings, Rattlesnake, wind surfing, rafting, canoeing, kayaking, hiking, SOLAR classes and activities, survival, biking, SOLAR parties, X-skiing, downhill skiing, ballooning, gliding, caving, roller blading, and kiting pictures and slides.

All materials will be returned to you after copies have been made.

You can bring your photos or slides to the January 97 SOLAR meeting, or attend our next group review meeting that will be held at Moe DeFrances house in Brighton, MI on Monday, January 13, 1997.

Questions can be directed to Tim Stangl at H (810) 474 3242 W (810) 262-5964.

**Don't Just
Do It, Over
Do It!**

Upcoming Event

Murder Mystery

Yes, this is a mystery. Webster defines "mystery" as "anything that arouses curiosity because it is unexplained, inexplicable or secret." The word "detective" usually brings to mind the image of a Sherlock Holmes character, in a deerstalker hat, an S-curved pipe and an oversized magnifying glass.

Come March 1997, Jim Gilfix will organize, with Mo DeFrance, a solvable mystery. It will be an all day event (a Sunday), a pot-luck for lunch, and you will be required to arrive in costume for the role!

The Date: Sunday, March 16, 1997

The Cost: \$10 payable at the February or March SOLAR meeting, or until the limit of 15 or 23 is reached. There will be a \$5 refund ONLY if you are on time!

The Place: Mo and Dave DeFrance's house in Brighton.

The Time: 1:00 P.M. SHARP!! You MUST be on time!

You are encouraged to appear in costume. About 2 weeks before the game is to begin, you will be mailed a list of the other suspects, besides yourself, your character's description and his/her suggested clothing. Directions to the DeFrance's house will also be enclosed.

You are encouraged to bring a dish to pass, a dinner FINGER FOOD. We will play for about 2 hours, break and eat, and then play for another hour. We should be done around 5 P.M.

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

Editorial

There's Plenty of Snow ...

... So there's no excuse for not getting out there and enjoying the season.

As you may have noticed, the North Country Trail update on the front page hasn't changed this month from last. That's because no one has done anything on the NCT in the past month. We REALLY need to reverse this trend if we are to meet our goal of completing the NCT in Michigan before June 6, 1997.

Remember, ANYONE in the SOLAR Club can plan a trip. Don't leave the planning to the section coordinators. They are there to assist you in planning your own trip. Just tell them what you'd like to do (snowshoe, ski, hike, crawl, etc.) and how much time you have, and work with them as your trip comes together. You don't even have to open the trip up to the club. In fact, most of the sections that have been completed were done by individuals out for a weekend trip or on a day hike!

So why not plan your next weekend adventure somewhere along the North Country Trail in Michigan? You could even test your "Michigan Winters" skills! The section coordinators (listed on the front page) would be thrilled to assist you in planning anything from an afternoon stroll to a week long cross country ski adventure. There are still large sections in premium snow areas to be completed in the Northern Lower and Upper Peninsulas. You'll be helping the club reach its goal and will have a good time in the bargain!

Contact one of the section coordinators on the front page for more information.

Review

Winter Camping Practical I

From a Student's Point of View
By Karen Bates

I woke up Saturday morning at 6:30 AM to the weekend weather forecast. I began to wonder if crawling out of a warm, cozy bed was worth the predicted sub-zero temperatures I was about to face.

The hour and a half drive to Waterloo State Recreation Area turned into a three hour defensive driving course for Doug Lanyk. Due to the icy roads and several spin out accidents along the way we arrived slightly late, but safe and sound.

After prying Doug's hands from the steering wheel, we met with our assigned groups and headed into the woods. Thanks to Linda Burke, our start on the wrong trail was quickly corrected with her great map and bush whacking skills. After all, this wouldn't be SOLAR without a slight detour or an extra mile.

It was a three mile hike in about eight inches of snow and 10° temperature. Actually, with the proper clothing this was a fun and comfortable hike.

With the temperatures dropping and the sun slowly dipping towards the horizon we arrived at our home for the night, Green Lake Campground. We had the whole campground to ourselves. Imagine that! I realized very quickly that you don't want to quit moving in zero degree temperatures.

My camping partners, Susan Guydos, Rob Roy and I pulled out our stove to boil water for hot drinks. We had to warm our now freezing digits (fingers and toes). After several attempts at lighting the stove, Susan figured out you can't pressurize a fuel bottle with

large gloves on. Thanks Susan at least Dennis Phillips won't find out about my SECOND camp stove mistake!

At this point I have to admit I asked myself, "Is this really fun?" When the hot cider and a walk around camp brought feeling back to my frozen digits, I decided it was better than sitting inside because of a little sub-zero wind chill factor.

The remainder of the afternoon was fun as we began to set up our shelter. The instructors gave us a large sheet of plastic, a rope, and a roll of twine. We were then told to build our shelter. Some of us had the "Yeah, RIGHT" look, but with teamwork and a few pointers from "The Jims", we built a plastic palace, complete with front and back doors.

With a hot dinner and warm drinks under my belt I took my fifth or sixth (who's counting) warm-up walk and crawled into my cocoon for the night. With the actual temperature below zero, I was very comfortable until ... the moment we all dread when winter camping ... Mother Nature calls! I crawled out of my sleeping bag and realized it really was sub-zero out there. After satisfying Mother Nature, I crawled back into my sleeping bag and snuggled up to my new best buddy Mr. Hot Water Bottle!

Before crawling out of my sleeping bag in the morning, I checked the temperature which read -10°. This reading caused me to jump out of my sleeping bag and directly into my heavy winter clothing. This trick was better than someone pulling the cloth off a set table. I do apologize to the head I bumped during the process.

Over breakfast, our Fearless Leader, Doug Lanyk, decided his students had bragging rights so here they are:

"We spent the -10° night under a piece of plastic!"

The hike back to the trail head on Sunday was wonderful. The 15-20° temperatures and sunshine had me shedding layers. The "Big Hill" wasn't even that bad right Susan?

We all met in Chelsea for lunch and recapped the weekend. Here are some things you might hear during a winter practical:

- Cold water will boil faster than snow
- Hydrate, Hydrate, I hydrate
- Who wants to go for a warm-up walk?
- Has anyone seen my fingers and toes? I can't feel them so they must be gone!
- I don't care about the floaties as long as the water is hot
- Thanks for the booties, Tim (How many pair did you bring, 4 or 5?)
- And ... "I'll only get mad if you wake up and tell me you were cold all night!" Doug Lanyk (I guess so. Doug brought four sleeping bags)

There is one thing you can never have enough of, instructors with helpful hints and great attitudes! Thanks guys!

I look forward to the second practical in February. Watch out, Pigeon River State Forest. We are SOLAR and our gear is checked and ready for another wonderful winter wonderland weekend!

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 Cartwell 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 Corkles 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.



Yes, This is Ohio!

This photograph shows a portion of the main recess at Old Man's Cave, on the Grandma Gatewood Trail. The falls shown are only the lower portion of a much longer cascade that starts near here.

(Photo by Steve Gardner)

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 sfgardner@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 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 Barks / (313) 235-8129
Vice-President	Doug Lanyk / (810) 634-4551
Secretary	Cindy Harrison-Felix / (313) 722-3994
Treasurer	Cindy Erickson / (313) 397-8240
Activities	Leslie Cordova / (810) 547-5626
Membership	Mary Price / (810) 477-7547
Equipment	Mike Felix / (313) 722-3994
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SOLAR Ray	Steve Gardner / (810) 547-4998
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	Joan Westbrook / (313) 513-8454
	Mo DeFrance / (810) 229-8283
	Larry Martin / (313) 591-3856
	Bill Halvargis / (810) 669-1911
	A Fylak / 852-7514
	Joan 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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