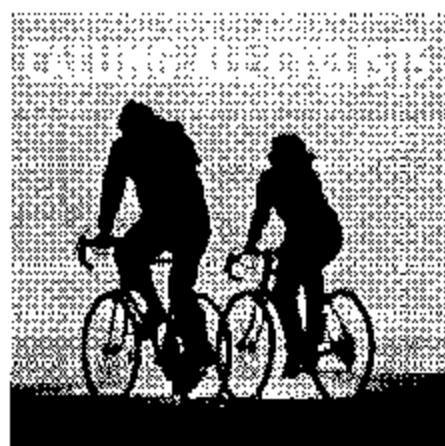


THE SOLAR RAY

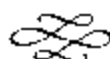
THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE & RECREATION

J U L Y 1 9 9 7



Join your fellow SOLARites on the Kal-Haven Leg of the Michigander. We'll start in Kalamazoo on Saturday, bike to South Haven where we will camp for the night. Sunday we will head back to Kalamazoo.

For more information, contact Mike Malon at (248) 352-4019. He'll be organizing the trek to Kalamazoo so let him know if you have a bike rack and can help transport someone or if you need transportation yourself. Just leave your name and number on his answering machine and he'll get back to you.



ADVERTISING IN *The Ray*?

Presented by Mike Banks, President

At the present time your Steering Committee is exploring this option. There's a lot of research that must be done on this matter and the debate, no doubt, will be lively! Review the following information and let us know what you think.

FACTS:

- 1) *The Ray* is currently costing approximately \$350 per month (plus postage).
- 2) The above cost is based on current membership numbers and printing costs.
- 3) *The Ray* is supported entirely by membership dues.
- 4) If *The Ray's* costs rise, it may be necessary to raise membership rates.
- 5) Even if the costs were stable: \$4,200.00 added to the annual budget could be put to good use.



THOUGHT:

Should an attempt be made to make *The Ray* a self-supporting entity by taking in advertising?

IF WE DID ALLOW ADVERTISING:

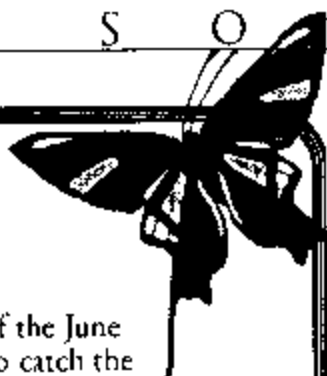
- 1) What guidelines should we implement?
- 2) Who should be allowed to advertise?
- 3) How much space in *The Ray* should be committed to ads?
- 4) How much should we charge for space?
- 5) Do we have enough advertisers? Who are they?

Call us on the SOLAR Hotline at 248-988-6658. We hope to hear from all opinions.

Butterflies were free...

If you rushed out of the June General Meeting to catch the "Wings" game, you missed some great "wings" presented by club member Cyndy Erickson. Her talk on butterflies, hummingbirds, and their habitats was informative, the slide presentation colorful, and the paraphernalia on display enlightening. **PLUS, you missed refreshments** -- butterfly-shaped cookies brightly and artistically decorated with candy and chocolate chips -- cordially served by Cyndy's daughter Natalie during the slide presentation. (Hm-m-m-m, good!)

Thank you, Cyndy, for all the time and effort you put forth on a great program!



ASK SOLAR SAM...

SOLAR Sam thanks you for your questions. Here's what he came up for the July SOLAR Ray...

How can I lead a SOLAR activity?

Any SOLAR member can organize and lead a SOLAR activity. (Keep in mind that we are an outdoor club and plan accordingly.) Formulate your idea, get some specifics together about when, where, approximate cost, and about how many you can take on your activity. Run your plan by the Activities Chairperson, Leslie Cordova, (248) 547-5626. Some things cannot be sanctioned by SOLAR because of the risk and liability involved.

Check with the park, outfitter, campground, motel, etc. where the activity will be taking place to make sure they will be able to accommodate a SOLAR group and if any special provisions need to be made.

Before carving anything in stone, start an interest sign-up sheet at a general meeting, which you can get from Leslie, a few months before the planned activity, so you can get an idea how people would like to go.

Next, set-up your shingle at subsequent SOLAR meetings at the activity tables and hawk your trip. Make up an information sheet with what, where, when, cost, participant limit, maps, special equipment and clothing, food, etc. Keep track of payments on a permanent sign-up sheet. **And remember:** all those participating must be SOLAR members if it's a SOLAR sanctioned activity.

You're in charge of making needed reservations, collecting the fees and turning the money over to our Treasurer, Susan Gaydos, (313) 482-8404. She'll provide the final check(s).

Then you can be off on your SOLAR activity!!!

PLUS: The benefit to leading a SOLAR activity is that you get to go **FREE!!!** Build your cost into the activity fee, then enjoy the trip!

WHY VISIT RETAILERS?

By presenting your membership card at any of the area retailers listed below you will be entitled to special discounts for SOLAR members. These discounts vary from store to store, so it is always best to check with the manager on duty at the time of purchase.

JOE'S ARMY-NAVY SURPLUS

Royal Oak, Pontiac and Warren

MOOSEJAW MOUNTAINEERING

Keego Harbor, E. Lansing and **NOW, Birmingham...**

*For a limited time, go in and flash your SOLAR membership card at this new location, 833 S. Hunter Blvd., and **GET A FREE GIFT!***

SURPLUS CITY

Berkley and Westland

VENTURE OUTDOORS

Plymouth

Visit the SOLAR Page on the World Wide Web at:

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

NOTICE

On July 31st, 1997, we are ending the **SOLAR Bonus Bucks** for bringing in new members. So if you have any prospects, have them sign-up before the end of the month.

NORTH MANITOU ISLAND:

SAND, MORE SAND, GNATS AND...IT WAS FANTASTIC!

REVIEW BY JOHN FEDYK

I started out on this trip without any expectations: I've never been to North Manitou Island before. I was surprised.

Lester picked up Teresa and I Thursday afternoon, and after shoving all of our gear into his economy-sized car, (I shared the rear seat with my backpack), we were off to the land of Leelanau (County). Round about midnight we made it to our motel room where I discovered a spider in the sink (see photo). I was thrilled. It was an impressive example of North Country wildlife. We set it outside.

Next day, after I was sure of the hockey game score and the state of



much of its topography. And, sand, when it is wet, sticks and, as I not-so-fondly recall, it somehow got into clothes, food and hair. Likewise, so did the gnats. There was a godzillion gnats

everywhere, but if there weren't all those gnats, there would not have been such a profusion of birds.

This place was a birder's paradise. The trees were not leafed out so I could see far into the canopy. I didn't bring my binoculars, but even so, I spotted Orioles, Grosbeaks, Cedar Waxwings, Yellowthroats, Redstarts, Goldfinches, Catbirds, Caspian Terns, Hairy Woodpeckers,

multifarious knowledge of tracking, land navigation, and animal behavior. So rather than seeing tracks in the sand, we saw a slice of life of critters such as crows, deer, raccoons, and chipmunks that had preceded us on our travels, as well as the movements of a species of a creature commonly described as the ubiquitous featherless biped. But, above all, Lester helped to guide us on a back country trek that led us through several different habitats, where sights, smells and sounds changed as we pressed on through.

Theresa brought to our attention the world of plants and fungi. Because of her, we noticed the spring flowers, the diverse desert vegetation of the dune, the lichen loaded lawns of the cemetery, and especially the myriad shapes, sizes and colors of the funguses that sprouted on the dead and diseased trees that decorated the island.

The trip wasn't just an extended wildlife safari for naturalists. I also had fun watching an impromptu wrestling match and playing beach baseball with the flotsam found along the shore. I enjoyed the songfests that spontaneously occurred while hiking, cooking or filtering water. I got a kick out of furtively stalking the hapless Banks and Cordova parties along with Lester. And, I also enjoyed witnessing the brilliant sunset that followed a mostly rainy Saturday, exploring ruins at twilight and beholding the stars that came out while laying on a grassy foothill.

All in all, the trip was a blast, and I'd show no hesitation to go again next year.



SOLARies Dave, Lester, John, Susan, Dennis, Jim, Gene and Leslie take the ferry over to North Manitou Island

the weather, we proceeded over to the ferry in Leland and had an uneventful crossing.

Finally, I was on the island. Permit me to describe it. It is made of SAND: Sand and leaves, sand and soil, sand and roots, wet sand, dry sand, and sand. It is sandy, and that pretty much accounts for all the dunes and beaches that make up

and other assorted hawks, finches, sparrows, thrushes, and warblers that I did not recognize. Then there were the bird songs: I heard Tohees, Whip poor wills, Tanagers, Veeries, Brown Thrashers, Flickers, Hermit Thrushes and yet more songs that I could not identify. This place was wonderful!

Lester brought to our party his

FOSSIL HUNT NUMBER 7

*A not quite verbatim
SOLARite conversation...*

"Hey, Randy, what do you want to do today?"

"I don't know, what's up?"

"That 7th Annual Fossil Hunt is today, July 27th. I hear they are meeting at the museum at Rock Glen Conservation Area in Arkona, Ontario at 11 a.m. and that we'd have about a two and a half hour drive to get there from Detroit."

"I don't know if I want to look at a bunch of old bones..."

"Randy, it's not just old bones and fossils. There's a 35-foot waterfall we can stand under, which I understand is ice-cold, tons of wildflowers growing all over the place, and there's a fun, wet hike!"


"Well, it sounds great, but Jennifer, are you taking your daughter?"

"Are you kidding? Kids love the place. Natalie and Stephanie had a great time last year. I hear Erin, Jeanette, Nicole and Keavy are going this year. Roland and Dave, too. Kids enjoy the cave under the falls, swimming in the Ausable River and just plain getting all wet!"

"Well, I don't know...sounds like we could get extremely hungry from all the activity."

"On a SOLAR Trip??? No way. They have a huge potluck lunch

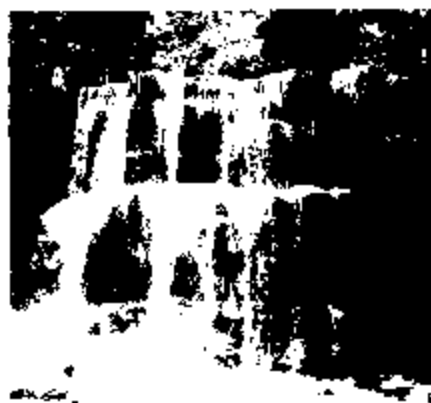
FULL MOON AND THE BLUE HERON ROOKERY with Jonathan Schechter

 n July 20th at around 7:30 p.m., come to the West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve in West Bloomfield Township, Michigan's first official Urban Wildlife Sanctuary.

The site is home to a prolific and very visible Great Blue Heron rookery, and has red-headed woodpeckers (like Woody), vultures, red fox, white-tail deer, coyotes, and *lots* of man-eating mosquitoes. Wear sneakers and jeans and bring bug repellent, binoculars and cameras. No permit or sticker will be needed to enter and park.

Afterwards, there will be an optional "afterglow" at the Moose Preserve Bar & Grill (excellent and inexpensive U.P. style sports bar).

For details and directions, call Jim Gilfix at 248-539-0489 or pick-up a flyer with map at the July Solar Meeting



planned and it's always fantastic!"

"You've sold me. Who do we pay?"

"It's **FREE!** Let's go! All we gotta do is drive to Port Huron, take Highway 402 East to County Road 79/7 North at Exit 44. 1 km past Arkona is the sign for Rock Glen Conservation Area. We don't even need to call the guy leading the trip."

"Well then, let's hit the road!"

Call Jim Gilfix at 248-539-0489 for more details.

* Denotes Kid-Friendly Activity



BACKPACKING... WHO ME???

Have you ever wondered how people head out into the woods with their kitchen, bedroom and bathroom on their backs? Have you asked yourself "Why do people do this and are they



The back side of some SOLARite backpackers. Recognize their rear views?

having fun?" Well, join Carol McCrie after the August General Meeting. She will show you that backpacking can be fun if you know how to do it right. Carol will also answer any questions and let you know how you can take part in the Solar Backpacking Class. *See you there!*

WET & WILD!

REVIEW BY BILL EDWARDS

What a great day to go canoeing! The weather was wonderful: it was warm and sunny at Doug Lanyk's house on Braemar Lake. The SOLAR Basic Canoe Paddling Class taught on Saturday, June 14th boasted twenty-three students, 5 instructors, and a couple of guests.

The class learned basic canoe safety, paddling and water recovery skills. This included teaching the different paddle strokes: J, K, draw, pry, sweep and others. In addition to the paddling strokes, the class learned how to stabilize a canoe for a partner's

safe entry, how to paddle in a straight line, and how to upright a swamped canoe in water, with and without the aid of another canoe. Also, the importance of communication in canoeing was stressed – many marriages have almost ended up in divorce court due to canoe trips! Other topics that were covered included the different types of canoes and some of the finer points of canoeing – like how to canoe in a strong wind. The experience ranged from someone that had never been in a canoe to someone that had been canoeing for 20+ years. Even the canoeing veteran of 20+ years was able to learn something! If any of these terms are new to you, or you

would just enjoy having fun on the water, you should join in next year's Basic Canoe Paddling Class with Doug.

After class the BBQ was fired up, the chicken was put on the grill, and a variety of dishes and beverages were passed. All this for just \$5. Not bad!

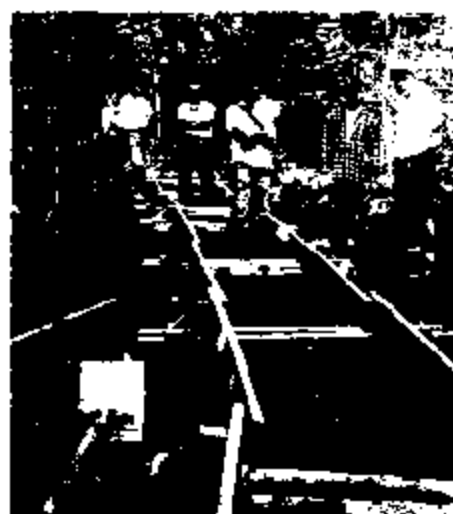
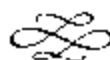
In conclusion, thanks to all who contributed to the class, either by donating canoes, life vests, paddles, and/or time. A special thanks to Doug for allowing us to use his house, grill, and many hours of road time galavanting across Southeastern Michigan rounding up canoes, equipment and food to allow this class to happen. **THANKS DOUG!**

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY



Some of the people who worked on the boardwalk on Saturday, June 7th.

Some SOLARites and REI employees and patrons banded together on June 7th to work on the construction of a boardwalk on Huron River Trail, Proud Lake Recreation Area.





Spotlight on August...**RATTLESNAKE**

IT'S COMING! GET READY! On August 8-10th all SOLARites are invited to our **GRAND CAMPING WEEKEND** in Milton, Ontario. This one weekend SOLAR encourages **EVERYONE** to participate. We camp on a grassy lot, hot showers and flush toilets nearby and outhouses even "nearby." Every year SOLAR sponsors events like *The Buffalo Shuffle*, *The Bicycle Hill Climb Race* and the annual *SOLAR Cook-Off*, a cooking contest based on **EVERYTHING** being prepared at the campsite. (Entering the Cook-Off is not required, but do bring a dish to pass for the traditional Potluck. A phenomenal spread is guaranteed.)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9th:

EVENTS:

The Buffalo Shuffle – A unique event early Saturday morning helps set the atmosphere for the day. Shuffle, walk, run, we don't care. Just don't come back until you spot a buffalo!

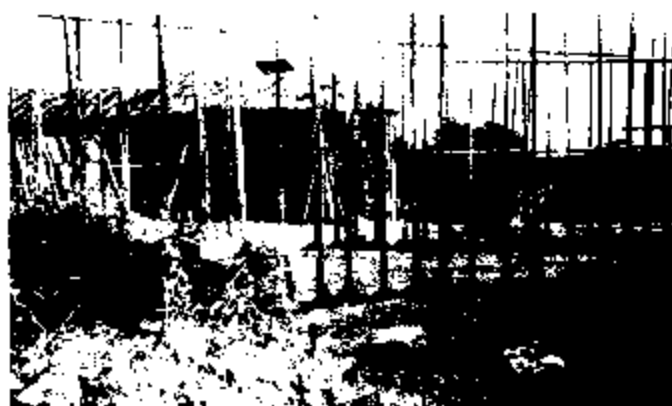
The Bicycle Hill Climb – A grudging race up an impossible incline. Only for those with legs of iron, empty stomachs, and masochistic athletic tendencies. Women are especially urged to enter...possible financial rewards upon completion? Or, you can participate by being a member of the cheering section.

SOLAR Cook-Off (approximately 7:30 p.m.) This results in a wonderful potluck because everyone gets to sample the entries and some lucky SOLAR members get to be judges! Give it a try!

Campfire: Don't forget guitars or other instruments suitable for a campfire sing-a-long *Friday and Saturday* nights.

ACTIVITIES:

Bring bikes, hiking shoes, windsurfing equipment, climbing apparatus and other sport gear suitable for the cliffs, woods and nearby Kelso Lake.



Crawford Lake Indian Village

OR...Join Jim Gilfix's Waterfall Discovery Tour...

- ① **Crawford Lake Conservation Area** – Crawford Lake is perched atop the Niagara Escarpment, the most significant landform in southern Ontario. Extensive woodlands, pristine wetlands and rugged limestone cliffs provide a specialized habitat for a great diversity of plants and animals. There's a 15th century village, hiking trails, a boardwalk around the lake, and a giftshop.
- ② **Spencer Gorge Wilderness Area** – This Y-shaped gorge is fed by two creeks which plunge over the escarpment in falls. We will hike and see the sights.
- ③ **Decision time...**what to do next? Either Hilton Falls and more hiking or swimming at Kelso Lake.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10th:

More biking, hiking, climbing, windsurfing, etc.

OR...Head to the Scottish Festival and Highland Games Festival at Fergus, Ontario with Jim G. Fergus is known for its ghosts. Encounter them, if you dare! Plus there are shops, markets, cafés, and of course, another waterfall.

So be ready for an action-packed weekend with everything from goulash to ghosts. *Contact Jim Gilfix for more information at (248) 539-0489 and pick-up handouts at the July and August SOLAR meetings.*

T H E S O L A R R A Y

U P C O M I N G A C T I V I T I E S

JULY ACTIVITIES

- July 1 General Membership Meeting**
Colony Hall, Southfield • Mike Banks (313) 235-8129
- July 4-6 North Manitou Island Backpack**
Leland, Michigan • Mike Banks (313) 235-8129
- July 11-13 Rattlesnake Provincial Park**
Milton, Ontario • Jim Young (810) 731-2504
- July 12-13 MS 150 Bike Ride**
Southeast Michigan • Jeff Enterkin (248) 399-0696

- July 18-20 Caving**
Olive Hill, Kentucky
Leslie Cordova (248) 547-5626
- July 19-20 The Michigander**
Kal-Haven Rails-to-Trails Leg
Mike Malon (810) 352-4019
- July 20 Full Moon - Blue Heron Rookery**
W. Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve
Jim Gilfix (248) 539-1489
- July 27 7th Annual Fossil Hunt**
Rock Glen Conservation Area • Arkona, Ontario
Jim Gilfix (248) 539-1489

• COME CANOE WITH SOLAR ON THE HURON RIVER •

Of all southern Michigan rivers, there is probably none that has been promoted more for canoeing and other recreational uses than the Huron. A large and extensive system of parks has been arranged to make the river accessible and attractive to vast number of people in Southeastern Michigan. Not only its convenience has inspired this kind of development.



With its clear water, rock and gravel bottom, and attractive and unspoiled surroundings, this Country-Scenic designated Natural River would be a favorite with canoeists wherever it happened to be located. There are, however, several stretches of fast water that can be difficult for beginners. At least one short rapids is challenging enough during high-water to attract kayakers and other whitewater enthusiasts. Although never quite out of earshot of freeways, the

Huron flows through mostly undeveloped country, much of it wooded. Except in the cities, of course, there are few houses on its banks, and wildlife is as abundant as on many far northern rivers. There are otters, herons, osprey and a variety of waterfowl.

Wilderness enthusiasts will perhaps find the large number of reservoirs and the fee-oriented park system too civilized, but for large numbers of city residents, the Huron provides a quick and convenient getaway. Certainly most of them come away surprised and delighted by such a fine river.

So, come and discover the Huron River with us on AUGUST 16TH. There is a limit of 28 people on the trip, so get your reservation in.

The activity fee will include: Canoe, snack and Vernors.



You need to bring: Lunch, a change of clothing and a zest for fun! (Kids welcome.)

Meet at: Argo Park, Ann Arbor at 9:15 a.m. SHARP!
Call (313) 668-7411 for directions.

Other activities in Ann Arbor that evening include:
Early dinner at Zingerman's.

Pick-up informational flyer from Jim Gilfix at the July and August SOLAR meetings.



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 and original articles are welcome. Send all contributions to: *Nancy Day, SOLAR Ray Editor • 1788 Brentwood Drive • Troy, MI 48098 248-641-9863 • FAX: 248-545-3479 or provide on MAC disk.*

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., Southfield between 8 & 9 Mile Roads at 7:30 p.m. Membership dues are \$50 individual annually or \$100 individual lifetime and \$45 family annually or \$175 family lifetime.

For more information about SOLAR, call the

SOLAR CLUB HOTLINE

24-Hour Voice Mail (248) 938-6558

Or visit our Worldwide Web at:

<http://members.tripod.com/~solareclub1>

STEERING COMMITTEE

President Mike Banks / 313.235.8129
 Vice President Margaret Martin / 313.721.2821
 Secretary Linda Burke / 248.471.9185
 Treasurer Susan Gaydos / 313.482.8404
 Activities Leslie Cordova / 248.547.5626
 Membership Mary Price / 248.477.7547
 Equipment Bob Graham / 313.453.7313
 By-Laws Harry Price / 248.477.7547
 Education Lester McK / 519.256.0324
 SOLAR Ray Nancy Day / 248.641.9863
 Historian Dave Foerster / 313.453.0692
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 Al Fylak / 852-7514
 Joan Ryan / 810.571.0461

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

THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE & RECREATION

SOLAR CLUB

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• S O L A R •
M E M B E R

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