

# THE SOLAR RAY

THE SCHOOL OF OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE & RECREATION

S E P T E M B E R 1 9 9 7

## Have You Heard the Latest?...BATS ARE COOL!

FROM KAREN BATES, PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON

After the October 7th General Membership Meeting, Lori Nelson with the Organization for Bat Conservation, will inform us of hundreds of "bat facts." Lori will be doing a presentation on Michigan bats. She will also answer questions such as: How many species of bats are there?; How many still live in Michigan?; How big is big?; How small is small?;

Are bats blind?; Do bats really carry rabies?; How many bugs do bats eat?; How can I attract bats to my backyard? The questions and answers go on and on...

Lori will also bring live, non-releasable Michigan bats, along with meal worms, so that first hand foraging techniques of the bats can be observed. She will

also bring a bat detector so everyone can hear what echolocation sounds like. There will be an interactive session where we will discuss bat conservation techniques and bat houses. I have been to one of these programs in the past and it is truly a great way to find out why *bats are cool!* See all you fellow bat lovers there.



### BAT FACTS PREVIEW

- *Bats are flying mammals.* Scientists have classified them into a unique order called "Chiroptera" which means "hand wing." Bats literally fly with their hands.
- *Bats have lived on the earth* for over 50 million years, and today live on all continents except Antarctica.
- *A single bat can eat* up to 600 mosquitoes in one hour; that's 3,000 insects in one night.
- *Bats will not attack people,* they are very small and gentle animals. Remember, we are very large to a bat and they are afraid of us.
- *Bats are disappearing at alarming rates.* Disturbance of roost sites due to development and vandalism are the greatest threats to the world's bats. Much of this is due to ignorance and misunderstanding.

*I have a wonderful, one of a kind November program planned! Sorry I have to delay the photo contest until January, but, you will not be disappointed! Watch the front page of the October Ray for details.*





## ASK SOLAR SAM...

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

*I'm new to the outdoor thing. What are some basic backcountry "rules" I should know before heading off into the wilds?*

- Call the forest ranger for helpful hints before you hike.  
Make sure your boots are properly broken in and waterproofed.
- Give an itinerary to a friend or family member.
- Avoid scented lotion and deodorants. You'll attract insects and bears.
- Pack a first aid kit and manual. Include items for treating blisters.
- Carry and drink plenty of water. Plan on at least 2 to 4 quarts per day per person. More for cold climates and high altitudes. For desert hiking, a gallon a day.
- Don't drink water directly out of a stream or lake. Boil first or use a water filter.
- If you're going to be hiking at high altitudes, acclimatize yourself for the first day or two.
- Wear an orange vest during hunting season.
- Warm, windy weather can produce fire hazards. Use a stove instead of campfires.  
If thinking of bringing your dog, call ahead to see if he/she will be allowed on the trail.
- Pack a radio and extra batteries to stay in tune with weather information.
- Always carry a compass and map. For USGS topo maps, call 1-800-435-7627. For rush orders, call Map Express, 1-800-627-0039.
- Carry out what you carry in. Stay on designated paths and tread lightly.<sup>1</sup>

— Solar Sam

<sup>1</sup>From a promotional flyer put out by Jeep, page 9, "It's summer. Go Take A Hike."

## UPCOMING ACTIVITY

### A DAY TRIP TO PT. PELEE

On Saturday, October 11, SOLAR

returns to Point Pelee in Canada for a Grand Day. We'll meet at their Nature Center and spend the day playing, hiking, eating, bird watching, tree identifying, flower hunting, squirrel chasing, frisbee throwing, scavenger-things-seeking, marsh walking, laughing, yelling, story-telling, maze exploring, picture drawing, movie seeing, souvenir buying, Verners drinking and bathroom visiting.



Kids are welcomed and encouraged. Plan for a 1:30 p.m. potluck lunch. Look for handouts at the September and October meetings.

**NOTE:** If it rains, after we do the Nature Center and the boardwalk, we may visit Golasantis Tropical Gardens and/or The Jack Miner Sanctuary.

*Call Jim Gilfix for more information at: 248-539-0489.*

## WANT TO KNOW?

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 Birmingham

**SURPLUS CITY**  
Berkley and Westland

**VENTURE OUTDOORS**  
Plymouth

## THE GREAT UNDERGROUND ADVENTURE

REVIEW BY KAREN BATES

**O**n the weekend of July 19-20, Leslie Cordova led an underground adventure to Carter County, Kentucky. For those of you wondering what an underground adventure is, you have never been caving with Leslie. So, read on...

As we all know, every summer adventure starts with the "can our patience outlast the highway construction?" event. Mine did. Therefore, Doug Lanyk and I arrived at the famous Carroll's Inn Motel in Olive Hill, Kentucky at 3:30 a.m. July 19th. We found that nobody had waited up to greet us upon arrival; imagine that!

After a four hour face plant on my pillow, I was awake and dressed in my stylish caving attire. I was excited to start exploring the land underground. (The "and 'downunder'" as we called it.)

Rick Simpson is another famous Olive Hill, Kentucky icon and was our caving guide. Rick gathered us together in a field, told us to say good-bye to our cars, then pointed to the woods. Of course he was the guide and it was his job to lead us underground, so we followed.

Well, the adventure started even before we went underground. We bushwhacked our way through woods and over creeks to the cave opening. A few people had surprised looks when Rick said, "Boy, am I glad I found my way here. Let's go in."

The day was filled with walking, crawling, climbing, slithering, belly crawling, and squeezing. And, to add to the fun, we got to do all that in the mud!

Without headlamps caves are beyond dark! But, there are sounds you will only hear in a cave on a SOLAR trip. Like...

...Drip, drip, drip of the condensation.

...Slipping rocks are SOLARites make their way through the passages.

..."The rim stone pools are beautiful."

..."Ouch!" As someone bumps their head, shoulder, hip, hand, foot or any other body part that didn't move out of the way or protruding formations.

..."Nice butt, who are you?"

..."Hey, did Big Doug get stuck?"

..."Big Doug." No, I'm just resting back here."

..."That hole was so small, I'm beginning to remember what being born felt like!"

..."Oh, the pack rats are so cute."

..."Don't think of this as hard work. We are on an *adventure*."

..."Where's Rick? It's time to hang him for taking us through there!"

...And, of course, a SOLAR sing-a-long in total darkness, underground. What were we singing about? Ham and macaroni!

We all had such a good time, we would do it again with Rick as our guide!

Saturday evening brought a twist to the traditional SOLAR trip. NO POTLUCK! But, as SOLARites, we improvised. We had a wine tasting instead. Several of us had tasty wines to share.

A local Olive Hill resident stopped by to join us. He lent Rick a guitar so he could lead the evening sing-a-long. I guess you could say the Carroll's Inn porch was "alive with the sound of SOLAR."

Everyone had a great time. The party outlasted me so if you want to know what happened after 1:00 a.m., you will have to talk to Dave DeFrance. Where was Dave at breakfast anyway?

Sunday took us to Tarkiln Cave. This cave was fabulous! It was more of the previous day and better! We went through a crawl space and ended up in a cavern that seemed like the Grand Canyon compared to some of the

passages. At this point Rick let us wander and explore for a few minutes before we headed to the Key Hole.

The Key Hole was an opening in the rock that looked smaller than my helmet. We all lined up to give it a try. Everybody managed to morph their bodies through this tiny hole. Even Big Doug gave it a try and with the help of the SOLAR cheering section, made it through! I would say without a doubt, but Doug would probably disagree.

On our way out of the Tarkiln Cave we got to play in the very cold water. As we hit the water there was a lot of screaming and splashing to be had. We are still debating on the depth. Doug Lanyk says "knee deep" while Teresa Savarino says "belly-button deep!!!!"

When we were thoroughly exhausted, Rick led us back to the earth's surface. At this point Judy Spitzer said "it was fun." But I'm sure she was too tired to tell the truth.

So, if you ask her now she would probably say "it was a blast! I had a great time! Everyone should give it a try!"

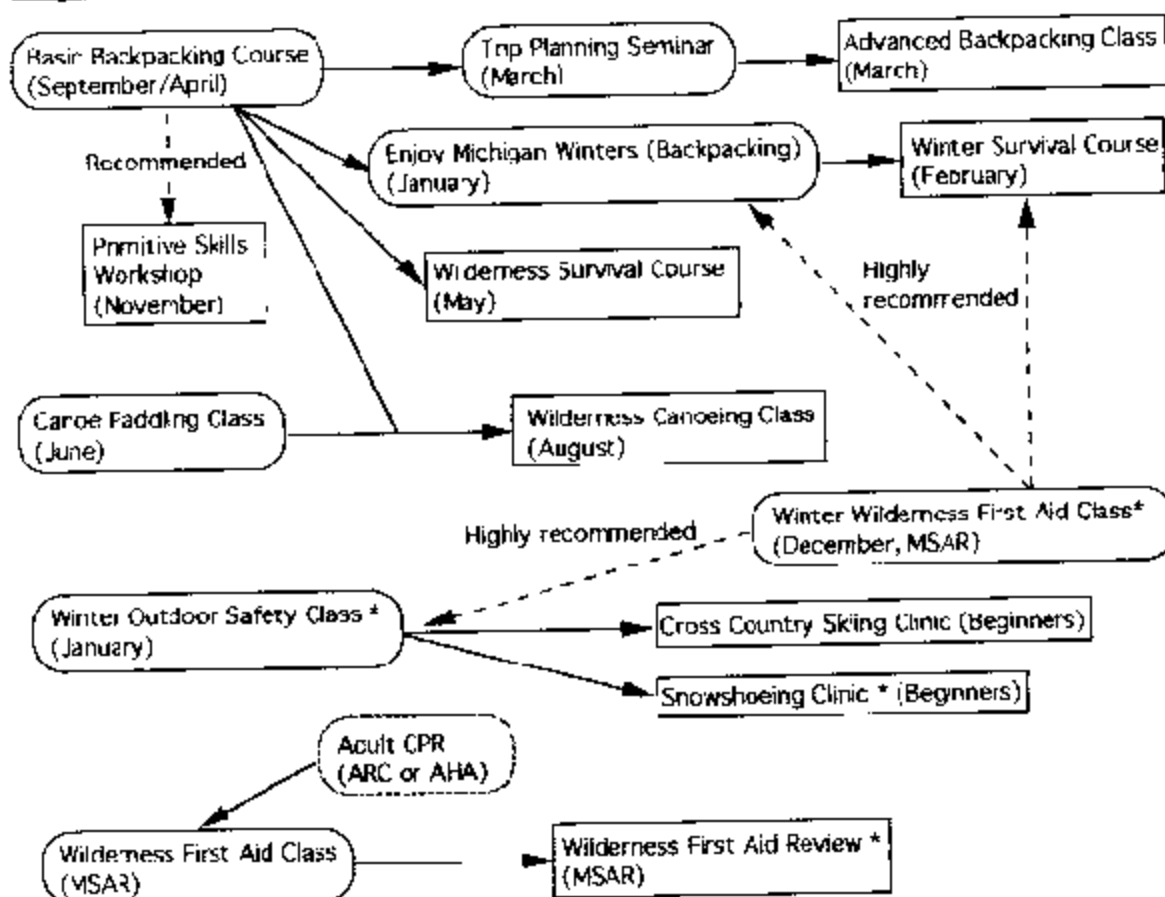
A great way to try caving will be in January at the Carter Caves Crawl-A-Thon. I'm sure Leslie will be glad to give you the details.



Doug does the Key Hole

## Education Projects: Fall 1997 - Summer 1998

### 1. Progression Outline for SOLAR Courses with Prerequisites:



### 2. SOLAR Courses with no Prerequisite:

Rock Climbing Class (April)  
 Backpacking Clinic\* (Summer)  
 Backpacker Cooking Class (Fall)  
 "I Leave No Trace" Seminar\* (Summer)

Land Navigation Course (March)  
 Orienteering Class (Spring/Fall)  
 V-1 Skiing Clinic (Int/Adv Skiers)

Nature Photography Class (Fall)  
 Basic Tracking Workshop (Winter)  
 Bird Watching Class\* (May)  
 Wild Edibles Class\* (Summer)

Outdoor Leadership & Safety Course (March)  
 Instructor Development Seminar\*  
 Caving Orientation\* (January/July)

### 3. Non-SOLAR Courses - Information Service: \*\*

Canoeing & Kayaking  
 River Safety & Rescue  
 Primitive Skills

Mountaineering, Ice Climbing, & Avalanche Safety  
 Rappelling, Rig Rescue, & Evacuation  
 Mountain Biking, Cycling, & Safety

All SOLAR courses are subject to schedule change, cancellation, and the following conditions: Courses are open to SOLAR members only. No refund except when a course is canceled by the instructor. If you cannot attend a course you can "sell" your spot to another member. By signing up for a course you assume all risk inherent in the course activity. Cost: \$5 to \$80+. Payment due at sign-up and make check payable to SOLAR. Some courses are "kid friendly". \* New courses under development. \*\* This information is for private use only. SOLAR does not endorse and is not responsible for any non-SOLAR courses. Please call Lester Mok, (519) 256-0324, if you have any question or suggestion.

## EDUCATION PROJECTS — THE BIG PICTURE

The best way to predict the future is not by calling the psychic hotlines but to plan for it and make it happen. Some of our SOLAR staff and instructors have put together the grand scheme (on page 4) for the upcoming year. Please bring this issue of *The Ray* with you to the September meeting so I can explain the Progression Outline and answer any of your questions. You can also contact me if you'd like to volunteer for any projects or if you have any suggestions.

Lester Mok (519) 256-0324.

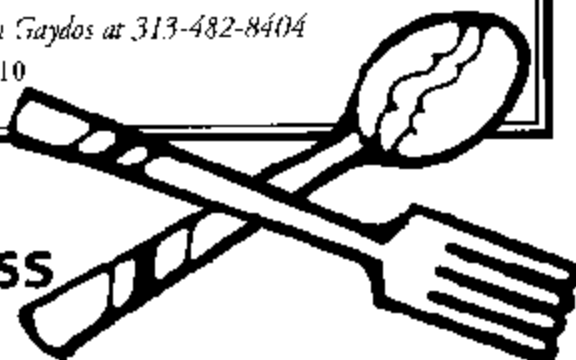
## PRIMITIVE SKILLS WORKSHOP

We all know of your secret dream to much grass, eat worms, and snuggle with wild bunnies and squirrels. You're not dreaming about a "rough it, rough it" survival course, but a basic workshop on building a debris shelter, making fire and tools, nature observation and earth living philosophy. You can make your dream a reality on November 1-2. We will spend the night in a rustic cabin at Waterloo. The cost is 30 bucks and please pay by check as you sign-up. This course may be "kid-friendly".

<b>WHAT</b>	- "SICK DAY"
<b>WHY</b>	- Wilderness First Aid grads to practice their assessment and treatment skills
<b>WHEN</b>	- Mid - Late October for approximately 10 SOLARites
<b>WHERE</b>	- Waterloo Recreation Area
<b>WHO</b>	- Contact Susan Gaydos at 313-482-8404
<b>COST</b>	- About \$5 - \$10

## BACKPACKING COOKING CLASS SEMINAR

Tired of hauling granola bars and freeze-dried food on your backpacking trips? Want to learn how to cook in the wilds? Well, SOLAR has the class for you. On Saturday, October 18th we're planning a one-day backpacking cooking class. The cost will be \$10 and there will be sign-up at the September general meeting. You MUST PAY WHEN YOU SIGN UP and there's a minimum of 12 participants or the class won't take place. Learn how to be a gourmet chef...all from your very own backpack. Come and get more particulars at the September general meeting as to where and what time or call Heather Langille (519) 734-1656.



## SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER AND SOME OF NOVEMBER ACTIVITIES

- Aug. 31 - Sept. 6 - Canoe Trip/Practical, Algonquin  
Margaret Martin (313) 721-2821
- Sept. 2 - General Membership Meeting  
Colony Hall, Southfield  
**SWAP MEET & T-SHIRT CONTEST**
- Sept. 3, 10, 17, 24 - Backpacking Class  
Benchmark, Farmington Hills  
Carol McCrie (810) 229-5232
- Sept. 5-7 - Rattlesnake Weekend  
Rattlesnake Provincial Park  
Jim Young (810) 731-2504
- Sept. 5-7 - Mountain Biking  
Stokely, Sault Ste. Marie, Canada  
Sharon Broderick (313) 256-6541  
Charles Haley (248) 524-1273
- Sept. 9 - Summerfest  
Channel 36 Pledge Drive  
Doug Lanyk (248) 634-4551
- Sept. 12-14 -  
Elora Gorge Hiking/Camping  
Elora, Ontario  
Jim Gillix (248) 539-0489
- Sept. 20-21 - Backpacking Practical #1  
Buckley Recreation Area  
Carol McCrie (810) 229-5232
- Sept. 27 - Orienteering Class  
Highland Recreation Area  
Linda Burke (248) 471-9185
- Oct. 1 - Backpacking Class  
Benchmark, Farmington Hills  
Carol McCrie (810) 229-5232
- Oct. 3-5 - Backpacking Practical #2  
Picured Rocks National Lakeshore  
Benchmark, Farmington Hills  
Carol McCrie (810) 229-5232
- Oct. 7 - General Membership Meeting  
Colony Hall, Southfield  
**Program: BATS ARE COOL!!!**
- Oct. 11 - Hiking/Butterfly Migration  
Pt. Pelee Provincial Park, Ontario  
Jim Gillix (248) 539-0489
- Oct. 18 - Backpacking Cooking Class  
Location & particulars TBA  
Heather Langille (519) 734-1656
- Oct. 19 - Photography Hike 'n Shoot  
Location & particulars TBA  
Nancy Day (248) 641-9863
- Oct. 24-26 -  
6th Annual Haunted Halloween  
Bald Mountain Recreation Area  
Leslie Cordova (248) 547-5626
- Nov. 1-2 - Primitive Skills Workshop  
Waterloo Recreation Area  
Priscilla Dana (248) 960-5151

# FOSSIL HUNT WEEKEND

*Photographs by Jim Gilfix*



*The Grand Potluck*



*Clockwise: Dominique, Stephanie, Nicole & Cassie enjoy themselves at the potluck*



*Falls Reserve Park*



*Rock Glen Conservation Area Falls*

## REVIEW BY JIM GILFIX

We began the weekend camping at the Rock Glen Resort. After swimming, a bonfire and ghost stories, it was off to bed!

Saturday we awoke to rain. We jumped into our cars and drove north. After eating and COFFEE we came to the Falls Reserve Park. We played in the falls, rapids and chutes of the Maillard River. Back into camp for more swimming, water sliding and hot tubing. A big bonfire, s'mores and no bugs! The seven adults and nine kids were content.

Sunday started cloudy and turned wonderful! We hiked, searched, and had an incredible potluck lunch, (what SOLAR trip doesn't?), then showered in the falls. More searching, swimming in the warm "Amazon"-like river, being hit by horse flies, and all this to the constant chatter of "Jim, is this a fossil?"

Everyone had a great time! This was my biggest excursion ever, with about 17 kids and about 25 adults plus myself.

Thanks, everyone. See you again next year!

*Jim Gilfix*

## CONGRATULATIONS!!!

### SOLARite JONATHAN SCHECHTER NAMED FULL-TIME WEST BLOOMFIELD NATURALIST

Jonathan definitely has his docket full with his new position as the township's first park ranger. Not only will he be responsible for coordinating educational programs, but also oversee the general environmental protection of the parks. On top of all that, he will continue writing his nature articles for the Oakland Press.

*All us SOLARites wish you the best of luck in your new position.*

# THE SOLAR RAY BULLETIN BOARD

The SOLAR Page on the World Wide Web has a new Photos Page, now, up and running at:

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

Stop by and have a look. Please let me know what you think, or if you have photos I can use on the club page. I would like to put fresh photos up at least once a month. Any photos showing what it's like to be a SOLAR member will be considered. When submitting a photo, please be sure to include the name of the photographer and when and where the photo was taken, so that proper credit can be given.

All photos will be returned, once scanned. For now, only prints (up to 8 x 10) can be used. Due to space limitations from our service provider, only about 9 photos can be displayed at a time, so be patient.

Your assistance in this project is greatly appreciated! Thanks for helping make the SOLAR Page a success!

Steve Gardner

[sfgardner@earthlink.net](mailto:sfgardner@earthlink.net) • 248-422-0758  
Web Presence Manager • The SOLAR Club



## WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT...

...for a good, no great, no excellent cause! We're helping out WTBS on September 9th with their Pledge Drive. Come on down and help answer the phones. Times start at 6 p.m. To "pledge" your time, or for more information, contact Doug Lanyk at 810-834-4551.

## •ORIENTEERING•

"The primary causes of wilderness incidents are bad decision, lost, and injury." Such is the opening line of Lester's safety sermon. "I've never been lost in my life, just temporarily disoriented," so says you. "Yes, I'm sure it's true, but it doesn't hurt to polish your map and compass skills for a day or two," is the usual answer.

Despite of what Lester says, orienteering is not just a blood-and-guts competition, but can also be fun, relaxing, brain-teasing, and kid friendly. The Fall Orienteering Season is just around the corner, and more info will be available at the next meeting. If you go to these events, watch out for Linda Burp and Lester Wok, they'll run over you in a flash!



## NON-SOLAR COURSE INFO

Are you interested in taking courses on river safety and rescue, vertical rope rescue, and winter mountaineering? Do you know that one way to prepare for a safe and adventurous trip is to develop your rescue skills and not to stagnate in your comfort zone? These courses are beyond what we can offer you in SOLAR, and if you've taken our advanced classes, then this is your chance to learn more soft and hard skills, and to expand your safety awareness.

These non-SOLAR courses will be held from early September to December. SOLAR is not responsible for and does not endorse any of these courses, so you have to make your own arrangements. Please see me for details or if you'd like to coordinate this information service for your club.

Lester Mok (519) 256-0324.

## 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: 248-545-3475 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 \$30 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) 988-6658

Or visit our Worldwide Web at

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

## STEERING COMMITTEE

President ..... Mike Barnes / 313.235.8129  
 Vice President ..... Margaret Martin / 313.721.2821  
 Secretary ..... Linda Burke / 248.471.9185  
 Treasurer ..... Susan Gaydis / 313.482.8404  
 Activities ..... Leslie Cordova / 248.547.5526  
 Membership ..... Mary Price / 248.477.7547  
 Equipment ..... Bob Graham / 313.453.7313  
 By-Laws ..... Harry Price / 248.477.7547  
 Education ..... Lester Mok / 519.256.0324  
 SOLAR Ray ..... Nancy Day / 248.641.9863  
 Historian ..... Dave Foerster / 313.453.0692  
 Programs ..... Karen Bates / 810.983.4147  
 Public Relations ..... Doug Lanyk / 248.634.4551

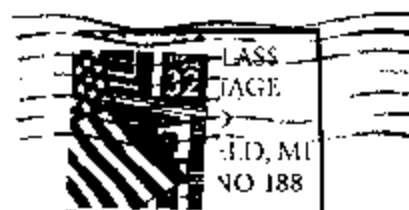
### At Large

Cindy Harrison-Felix / 313.722.3994  
 Steve Gardner / 248-442-0758  
 Bob Westbrook / 313.513.8454  
 Joan Westbrook / 313.513.8454  
 Mo DeFrance / 810.229.8283  
 Larry Martin / 313.591.3856  
 Bill Halvargie / 810.569.1911  
 Al Fylak / 852-7514  
 Joan Ryan / 810.570.1161

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

# THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE & RECREATION

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• S O L A R •  
 M E M B E R

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*The SOLAR Ray*  
 is printed on 50%  
 recycled paper stock.