



THE SOLAR RAY

THE SCHOOL OF OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE & RECREATION

J A N U A R Y 1 9 9 8

HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN A 2138 MILE HIKE?

by Karen Bates

The program after the February General Membership Meeting is one you don't want to miss! If you have ever wondered what it would be like to start hiking in Georgia and finish your hike 2138 miles later in Maine, join Raven and listen to his adventure. As an Appalachian Trail Thru Hiker, Raven's presentation will help us understand what it's like to spend six months on the trail. He will discuss the ups and downs; not only am I speaking of the terrain, but the pay-offs after being tired, hungry, thirsty, damp, and having aching muscles. I can only imagine the sights from the top of a mountain at sunrise and sunset, wildlife, waterfalls, and not having to worry about being late for work. Raven will not only speak on a Thru Hike of the Appalachian Trail. He will show slides and sing us a song he wrote while on this life changing journey. Plan to attend, listen, and learn because the Appalachian Trail is close to home.



*Raven with other Michigan Thru Hikers.
(Raven is third from the left.)*

And, in case you're wondering how he got the name "Raven", you'll just have to come to the February meeting to find out.

A *SPECIAL THANK YOU* goes out to Maureen DeFrance and Tim Stangl for the great slide show they put together. Maureen presented "20 Years of S.O.L.A.R." at the holiday party. Thanks for the time put into a wonderful show! You've left the club with a memorable historic slide show and a handy recruiting presentation for years to come.



~~WTSOLARING ALPONT~~**SOLAR is hitting the trail via dog sled!**

When: February 20th-22nd, 1998. (You must arrive in time to attend a Friday night 7:00 p.m. orientation.)

Where: Algonquin Provincial Park, Ontario, Canada (about an 8-hour drive from the Detroit area.)

Limit: There is a minimum of 6 people for the trip to be a go. A maximum of 16 people for a full trip.

Cost: \$250.00 American (if the Canadian exchange rate stays 30% or higher.) If 10 or more people sign up, the cost is \$225.00. If 16 or more sign up, the cost is \$216.00. *This cost includes:* Dog sled/2-person; 6-8 dog team; all meals on the trail Saturday and Sunday; heated tent with cots at camp; Saturday evening activities.



If you enjoy snow, scenery, lunch on the trail, more snow, caring for your dog team, teamwork with camp shores, fun evening activities, more snow, and a lot of fun, *contact Karen Bates at 810-983-4147 for more details.*

AND REMEMBER... THINK SNOW!!!

L A S E R Q U E S T

On November 17th, 1995, 20 SOLARites met to play Laser Quest. Many were playing for the first time. We were asked to think of a code name for ourselves. Some of the names used were Dr. Jack, Clueless, Bad News, Kitty, Woof-Woof, Conan, Mr. X, Tom Cat, and Trixie. We were lead by Wolf.

The first game was won by "MARALLYN", alias Jeff Martin. We had a 20-minute break between games to compare scores, discuss strategies, and cool off. Then we went back in for another futuristic adventure in their 8,000 square foot maze complete with four towers, ramps and passageways filled with black lights, smoke, and dragons. Most people did much better the 2nd game and everyone had (and gave) a blast...a laser blast. Afterwards Vernors was passed out and we divided into groups to further enjoy the evening.

Once again we are going back in for another futuristic adventure at Laser Quest. This will be a big and lite adventure trip, but also open to beginners and children.

On Sunday, March 8th, we will start at 4:00 p.m. (be there by 3:30 p.m.), play a game of tag (20 minutes), eat pizza, drink Vernors and help Jim celebrate his birthday. He'll provide the cake, (birthday cards are welcome!) Then we will play a second game. All for the low cost of \$15.00. Sign up and pay at the next SOLAR meeting. Limit 30 people. This trip is "Kid-Friendly", however, no one younger than 2 or older than 82! (Kids age 2-5 are FREE, but must be connected to a parent.)

NOTE: This is a Non-SOLAR event.

For further information, contact Jim Gilfix 248-539-0489.



WABOS LOPPET REVISITED

Once again our fearless leader/SOLAR President, Mike Banks, will be leading this annual event. The cost of the trip is \$145.00 which includes 4 days and 3 nights (March 20th, 21st, and 22nd) at the luxurious Glen View Cottages in Sault Ste. Marie. The Wabos Loppet, for those of you new to SOLAR, is a 27 kilometer ski ADVENTURE, i.e. non-competitive. (I believe the goal for first-timers is just to make it back before sundown...)



Everyone is taken by train to Wabos and deposited to X-Country Ski back to Srokely Creek Country Ski Resort. The race, a SOLAR tradition, takes place on the 21st and is followed up by the big-time barbecue and just a great time bragging and talking about the day's events. How you spend the rest of the time there is up to you.

For more information, pick-up a flyer at the January general meeting or call Mike Banks for the full scoop: 248-926-8939. Safe and happy skiing..

SOLAR Reunion & Welcome Home for Jeff Smith

who is returning from a year in Antarctica.

Saturday, January 17th, 7:00 p.m.

at the home of Ron and Peg Campbell in Northville.

(Peg was a club funder and past president.)

For details and directions call 248-348-4246.

STAY TUNED!

Visit Us At:
**THE DNR/NATURAL
HERITAGE HOME
PAGE!**

http://wildlife.dnr.state.mi.us/homepages/natural_heritage

Judith M. Yerkey
Detroit Peregrine Coordinator
Michigan Department of
Natural Resources
Nongame Wildlife Fund

F.Y.I.:

Judith did a talk on falcons in the Detroit area a while back.

Keep up with what's going on...

The Ray is a monthly publication of the Solar Club and is provided free of charge to the current dues paid members. For those members who move outside of a 200-mile radius of the Detroit Area and would like to continue receiving The Ray, a \$5.00 annual subscription fee will be charged to cover mailing costs.

ATTENTION ALL SHUTTER BUGS!

Start the New Year out by entering your best SOLAR shots in the Annual SOLAR Photo Contest. I know we have a lot of talent out there, so show the club what you've got. The categories and rules apply as follows:



CATEGORIES:

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| ☼ SCENERY | ☼ PLANTS |
| ☼ PEOPLE | ☼ HUMOR |
| ☼ WILDLIFE | ☼ NON-SOLAR |
- (This can be any photo you feel is a fabulous shot.)*

THERE WILL ALSO BE A BEST OVERALL PHOTO.

IMPORTANT CHANGE...

Due to concern regarding the photo contest rules, there has been one change. You may enter up to three photos in each category. This is a change from the December 1997 Ray article where it was stipulated only one photo per category.

Sorry about any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused.

The rules stand as listed below:

RULES:

1. Photo must be taken by photographer entering the contest.
2. All entries with the exception of the Non-Solar Category must have been taken on a recent SOLAR event.
3. Entry cannot be a past winner in a SOLAR Photo Contest.
4. Minimum size of entry is 5x7. This must be matted and/or framed.
5. Photographer can enter up to three photos in each category.
6. You must specify at time of entry into which category the photo is to be entered.
7. Judging will be by all members who attend the January Meeting.

If possible, please cover any matted photos with protective plastic. This is up to you but it will keep the photos and mats clean.

If you have any questions, please call Karen Bates at 810-983-4147.

Good luck and show us your photographic adeptness.

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Thanks to all of you who participated in the *T-shirt Design Contest* and the *Creative Cookie Contest*. The SOLAR Club voted Nancy Day's T-shirt design number one! Nancy will receive a T-shirt on the SOLAR Club. Look for the shirts to be available in the near future.

The SOLAR Club voted Susan Kranz's creative cookie to be number one! Susan won a \$20.00 REI Gift Certificate for her efforts.

Congratulations, Susan and Nancy!

GET THE BARGAIN?

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 Haulon, E. Lansing and Birmingham

SURPLUS CITY

Berkley and Westland

VENTURE OUTDOORS

Plymouth

THE SOLAR RAY BULLETIN BOARD

Winter Outdoor Safety Class*

• NO CANCELLATION •

This new class will prepare novice XC skiers, snowshoers and day hikers for their winter activity. Experienced day-trippers who want to review their safety skills are also welcome. We'll cover winter hazards, trip planning, proper clothing, nutrition and gear, basic winter first aid, trail navigation, and what to do in an emergency. This class will be held on January 10th (Saturday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.) in a rustic cabin at the Island Lake Recreation Area. The cost is \$10.00. Friday night bunk bed, Monopoly, and Risk are included. Sign up with a check payment to SOLAR at the January meeting.

Experienced skiers and winter day hikers are encouraged to apply as co-instructors and may possibly take over this class next year. Please see me for an interview at the January meeting.

Lester Mok (519) 256-0324.

ICE AXE & CREVASSE...

Several of us who've been trained in mountaineering are getting a meeting together within the next 2 months. We'll not be teaching classes but we'll be playing with rope and pulley, showing pictures, and swapping stories. *Contact Robert Roy at 248-399-0595 if you're interested.*

BANDANNAS

Did you see the SOLO Patient Assessment and the Lightning bandannas at the Winter Wilderness First Aid Class or at the November Meeting? Now you can order them for cost at the January meeting. They are \$4.50 each.

Priscilla Dana 248-960-5151

BASIC TRACKING CLASS

• NO CANCELLATION •

"When you race your bike down a mountain trail, or ski over the fallen snow, or build a bonfire at your overnight site, or chit-chat with your friends as you hike, or fix your vision at a distant peak, or set your goal on top of a pinnacle..."

"But have you ever notice the tracks just beside your feet, or see the spirit of the fleeing animals? Have you ever look for a vole hair down on your knees, or follow a turtle to its creek? Have you ever spend an hour studying a square foot of dirt, or listen to the trill of a perching bird? Are you simply using outdoor for fun and endurance, or are you also intrigued with nature's complex web... and befriend its tenants?"

"Tracking has the magic power of opening your inner eyes. You can't see what you believe is not there, and you cannot decipher what you don't comprehend. Landscape is full of nature's manuscripts. Come read with me on this wonderful land."

We'll have our class on Jan 11th (Sunday, 9 AM - 3 PM) at the Island Lake Rec. Area. Bring 10 bucks to the sign up. No doe, please. Almost free for all those from the last tracking class. *Get details at the January meeting. Lester Mok (519) 256-0324.*

GREAT LAKES SHIPWRECK FESTIVAL

A DIVER'S FORUM & FILM FESTIVAL 21st Annual Great Lake Shipwreck Festival

The Ford Seahorses Scuba Diving Club will sponsor its 21st Annual Great Lake Shipwreck Festival on Saturday, February 21, 1998 at the Ford Motor Company World Headquarters auditorium in Dearborn, Michigan. The day's activities include an afternoon or evening main program, salt water programs, seminars, diver's forum, underwater photo contest results, and a large exhibit hall of maritime artists, historical and preservation societies, plus private and shipwreck artifact collections. For every main program ticket purchased, one dollar will be donated to Divers Alert Network (DAN). To receive an order form for tickets, and/or the photo contest, call the Ford Seahorses voice mail hotline at 313-769-2458 with your name, address, and where you heard of our festival. Also visit our web page for expanded information as the Ford Seahorses Scuba Diving Club 21st Annual Great Lakes Festival materializes at:

<http://www.mich.com/~rtaylor>.

For more information,
contact Joan Ryan, At Large 810-57DIVE1.

BETWEEN TWO

COLD/SOLITUDE/EXPOSURE

Shivered breath displacing leaves
Wind gusts the color of void
A frog still leaps
as rain knives through puddles of brown
An apple clings to heaven
smells of catnip, bergamot and mold
Over the sound of static
a white throat calls

WARMTH/CAMARADERIE/SHELTER

Smoldering coals and eyes burning
itchy clothing and matted greasy laughter
Sweat and smoke smearing
dinner plates and dripping windows
Quiet cards play through
a dysplasia of slumber
through the passage of darkness.

by John Fedyk

A NEW SOLAR TRIP... Kid Friendly



It's never too soon to be planning that family vacation. I'm talking about a small vacation, actually for the Memorial Day Weekend, 1998. I'd like to encourage

everyone to take May 22 (Friday) off and begin this vacation after work/school May 21. As an added bonus, take May 26 off (Tuesday). If you begin the 8-hour drive on Thursday and stay in a motel after driving a few hours, you can "play" more on Friday, and if you stay in another motel on Monday, May 25 (and return home Tuesday) you can "play" more on Monday. What do I recommend for this weekend?

WHITE WATER RAFTING ON THE NEW RIVER IN WEST VIRGINIA.

This will be similar to the trip I led in 1995, but this year I've included another separate trip for kids (and their parents), to be run simultaneously with the adult, regular white water rafting trip.

The price will include three nights camping (May 22-25) at the Ace Outdoor Center in Oak Hill, W. Virginia, plus either trip #1 or #2, and breakfast, lunch and an incredible dinner in their lake front dining lodge on the day of the rafting trip. Trip #1 is for adults, #2 for kids as young as 6 and their parents. Both include an expert guide per raft and watching videos afterwards of the rafting trip.

When not rafting there's swimming, fishing, mountain bike rental, hiking, canoeing, paddle-boating, volleyball and 23 private HOT showers at ACE. Then there are nearby sights to visit like the New River Gorge Bridge, Grandview Park, Babcock State Park, and Hawks Nest State Park where other activities await such as horseback riding and their tram ride down to the river for paddle-boating. Or go into Fayetteville to get a \$5.00 airplane ride over the NRG Bridge.

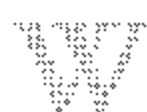
Come spend a special holiday weekend with your family and all your SOLAR friends. Pickup a flyer at upcoming meetings and read all about it or give me a call, *Jim Gilfix, 248-539-0489*.

JANUARY, FEBRUARY & MARCH

- Jan. 2-4 - Cross Country Skiing
Tahquamenon Falls
Pam Macey 248-887-4553
- Jan. 6 - General Membership Meeting
Program: Photo Contest
Colony Hall, Southfield
Mike Banks 313-235-8129
- Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28 - Enjoy Michigan Winters
Benchmark, Farmington Hills
Doug Lanyk 248-634-4551
- Jan. 10 - Winter Outdoor Safety Class
Island Lake Recreation Area, Brighton
Lester Mok 319-256-0324
- Jan. 11 - Basic Tracking Class
Island Lake Recreation Area, Brighton
Lester Mok 319-256-0324
- Jan. 17 - Cross Country Skiing Clinic
Independence Oak County Park or
North Higgins Lake Area, depending
on snow conditions
Mike Mannback 248-682-3955
- Jan 17-18 - Enjoy Michigan Winters,
Practical I
Waterloo Recreation Area
- Jan. 23-25 - Crawlathon-Caving Trip
(Kids Okay)
Olive Hill, Kentucky
Leslie Cordova 248-547-5626
- Jan 30 - Feb. 1 - Enjoy Michigan
Winters, Practical II
Pigonn River
- Feb. - TBA - Winter Survival Course
Hub Westbrook 313-513-8454
- Feb. 3 - General Membership Meeting
Program: Appalachian Trail
Colony Hall, Southfield
Mike Banks 313-235-8129
- Feb. 6-8 - CC Ski Weekend Meeting
Hac, Michigan
Laura Albin 810-229-8283
- Feb. 13-15 - Vast X-Country Ski Race
Traverse City, Michigan
Debbie Wood 313-521-2891
- Feb. 20-22 - Cabin/X Country Ski
Weekend
Widerness State Park
Laura Albin 810-229-8283

CAVING IN KENTUCKY

**A.K.A. CRAWLING AROUND IN THOSE DARK, WET
PLACES WITH LESLIE AGAIN AND LOVING IT!!**



*Well, you asked for more caving and you got it: the
Annual Carter Caves Crawl-a-thon is scheduled for
January 23-25, 1998!*



The plan is to drive to Olive Hill, KY, Friday (7 hour drive) and stay at Carroll's Inn Motel. I have reserved 7 rooms under my name. The cost will be \$30 (payable to S.O.L.A.R.) for 2 nights lodging and it will be first pay, first go. I will be supplying the entry form for the Crawl-a-thon itself some time in December. You can sign up for a many caving tours as you would like on Saturday and/or Sunday. The cost is \$15 for 2 days of guided caving, plus you will receive a free t-shirt. You must send this form along with your check for \$15 to Carter Caves State Resort Park yourself, but don't delay; the trips do fill up quickly.

NOTE: I have no control over whether or not you get the caving trips you want. However, from past experience, if you send in the form quickly, you usually get the trips you want.

This is an annual event put on by the state park, and it is a great way for people to get acquainted with caving as they offer a wide variety of tours, ranging from

walking tours, a little bit of crawling, a lot of crawling, and vertical caving. They even have caving trips for kids and seniors!!

This trip could involve prolonged crawling through small constricted passages, some of which may contain water. The rewards are a great physical challenge, and you will probably see lots of bats, cave crickets, and very interesting formations. You must be in good physical condition to participate in level 3 or 4 caving tours.

Equipment needed: old coveralls or any type of loose-fitting outer clothing; knee and elbow pads; gloves; boots that cover the ankle; hard hat with chin strap (SOLAR can provide); 3 sources of light, one of which must be mounted on your hard hat (duct tape works well); and extra batteries.

If you need to borrow a SOLAR club helmet - I will have them available at the January meeting - a \$25 refundable deposit is required.

*Need more information?
Contact Leslie Cordova
at 248-547-5626.*



Feb. 20-22 - Dog Sledding
Algonquin Provincial Park,
Ontario, Canada
Karen Bates 810-983-4147

Mar. 20-22 - X-Country Skiing
Wabos Lopett, Canada
Mike Banks 248 926 8939

TBA - Land Navigation Class
Linda Burke 248-471-9185
Laura Albin 810-229-8283

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 248-641-9853 • 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 \$30 individual annually or \$150 individual lifetime and \$45 family annually or \$225 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>)