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# THE SOLAR RAY

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A U G U S T 1 9 9 9

## THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

**Ever rest?** Some of us hear that we want to flop down on the couch. Say those same words to Nima Tenzing Sherpa and what does he think of?

Nima Tenzing Sherpa was born in Nepal at 14,400 ft. elevation. He graduated from the Hillary School near Everest and has served over 80 Himalayan climbing expeditions. He organized his company, Tenzing Treks, in 1975 and has been leading professional trips ever since. He also spent 8 years in France, graduating from French cooking school, and is able to speak six languages.



Come and enjoy Nima Tenzing Sherpa's slide show collected from his numerous expeditions and treks. Included are shots of Everest and the 1963 American Expedition. And if you've ever dreamed of climbing the most majestic peak, here's the opportunity to explore the challenge.

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## SEPTEMBER PROGRAM...

Gail Lowe, a returning SOLAR member, will present a slide show and talk about her six-month experience hiking the Appalachian Trail—solo.

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### Inside this edition:

- New and exciting classes and activities
- SOLAR member Tom Dunn writes from the road
- Trip reviews
- Ideas for keeping cool!

## SOLAR GOES UNDERGROUND...



Yes, underground—in a good sense of course. Join me, Karen Bates, for a trip to Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky. We will be going on a wild tour of Mammoth Cave. This is not the "foo foo" walkthrough with paved sidewalks and electricity...No, no, no! We will have the fun of getting nice and dirty in the dark on a challenging crawl. The following is from the park ranger:

: 6 to 6 1/2 hours, 5 1/2 miles, extremely strenuous. Must be 16 years or older—if there is doubt you will have to have proof of age. Must have a chest size no larger than 42 inches—if there is doubt you will be measured. Larger people will not fit through the tight spaces. Crawl, climb and squeeze through small passages off the traditional tour routes. Helmets and lights provided. Knee pads are available but you may want to bring your own. No rollerblade or hard type knee pads allowed. Light up over the ankle lace up boots, with lug or deeply treaded soles are required. Gloves and long pants recommended. Visitors may wish to bring a lunch and water bottle in a "small fanny pack". Visitors should consider their physical limitations realistically. This is not a trip recommended for visitors who fear heights or close places or who cannot climb steps.

OK...with all that said, this trip will be great fun. I saw over 40 Solarites at the last crawlathon having fun. Let's do it again! This trip is October 15-17, 1999, limit is 14 people max (first paid, first go). The cost is \$90.00 per person. Included in the trip is two nights lodging inside the park and the guided cave tour. If you would like to make a long weekend out of this trip there are plenty of other things to do in the park, including walking, hiking, horseback riding, canoeing and boating. For more information see me at the August SOLAR meeting or give me a call. Karen Bates 810 323-1346.

## *Wanna B A Wild Vegetarian? Huh??*

The Matthaei Botanical Garden in Ann Arbor will hold a "Edibles of Summer" class on August 11 and 14. The cost is \$55. Please call the Adult Ed Program at 734/998 7061 for information and phone registration. Several Solarites are going to this class but it is not a SOLAR event. Civilized meat eaters are also welcome :>).



## Letters from the Road: The Trek North

*By Tom Dunn*

This 58-day motorcycle tour of Canada and Alaska has been in the planning stages for a long time. My new Honda Shadow is the 17<sup>th</sup> and latest acquisition that has fed my lifelong fascination with two wheels and speed.

I had laid out a specific course that would have taken me to Colorado, where, pivoting north, I would ride the spine of the Rockies all the way to Alaska. However, I had to perform a series of high speed interstate fights to avoid persecution at the hands of Mother Nature. I experienced thunderstorms and severe lateral winds in Michigan and Indiana, forcing me off the road for a day. Turning north, I sought shelter from the storms and visited an old SOLAR friend, Tim Stangl. A short break in the storms allowed me to continue on my way. My journey was soon blocked by another series of storms which flooded roads in Wisconsin; I was forced to detour again. Finally, a break in the weather and the welcome sight of clear blue skies allowed me to make up for lost time. Flying across the high plains, again my ride was shifted abruptly north by a storm front that brought tornadoes and golf ball-sized hail to South Dakota, Colorado, and Wyoming.

The plus side of these detours was that I got off the interstates and discovered quaint little towns like Moonsocket, North Dakota, Whocoup, and my favorite, Sunshine, Montana.

Shaking free at last from the storms, the ride across North Dakota and Montana was fast. One of my favorite sections was the road between Helena and Great Falls, Montana, a biker's dream with curvy mountain roads and smooth pavement.



I reached Banff, Alberta, on the evening of June 16<sup>th</sup>. Cathy Dolland and I had arranged to cross paths for several days of rest and recreation in the Canadian Rockies. We spent 3 days camping and day-hiking in the splendors of Banff, Lake Louise, and Jasper National Parks. The weather was perfect as we enjoyed a picnic on top of Sulphur Mountain. Cathy returned home on the 20<sup>th</sup>, and I resumed my northward migration.

It took me several long days in the saddle to reach Dawson Creek, where the 1500 mile long Alaskan Canadian (Alcan) highway begins. The Alcan passes through topography that varies from snow-capped mountains to bog-like tundra. The majority of the highway is paved, with services few and far between.

My final night in the Yukon was spent in Dawson City, famed as the hub of the Klondike gold rush. Leaving the history of Dawson behind, I headed toward the U.S. border, and enjoyed the scenery on the "top of the world highway."

*Next month: Alaska.*

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

### **OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP AND TEAM BUILDING**

WHEN: August 6-8, 1999  
 LOCATION: To be announced  
 COST: \$70.00  
 LEAD INSTRUCTOR: Harry Price  
 248/477-7547

This is a new class for SOLAR. The class will deal with leadership skills, including effective communications, decision-making, conflict resolution, leadership styles (sharing leadership), and controlling group performance. In addition, team-building exercises suitable for the development of small groups will be presented, discussed, and practiced. The class will start at 7:30 p.m., Friday night, and will end at approximately noon on Sunday. The text is Outdoor Leadership by John Graham - The Mountaineers. If you are thinking of leading a trip or activity for the first time, this is a class you should strongly consider.

### *Going Primitive*

The Great Lakes Primitives will hold its gathering on Bois Blanc Island from Thursday, 8/19, to Saturday, 8/21. It has workshops on fire and cordage making, edible and medicinal plants, pottery, basketry, primitive weapons and trapping, primitive navigation, and more. The registration fee is \$80. The ferry fee and material cost of the workshops is extra. The registration fee pays for your breakfasts and dinners from Thursday through Saturday, a wilderness tent site next to Lake Huron, and clean port-a-johns. If you are arriving at the gathering on Friday morning, the organizer may hold more workshops on Saturday and Sunday morning to make up for your late arrival. Bring your camping gear, camera, carving knife, pen and notebook, a pair of old gardening gloves, sun screen and hat, personal first aid kit and medication, bug juice, and a check book for the Saturday auction. Please contact Catherine Krueger (310/774-9697, [catrlstren@aol.com](mailto:catrlstren@aol.com)) for a registration package. We'll have registration and car-pooling information at the August meeting. Please mail you registration form and check directly to the organizer ASAP. Contact Lester (519/256-0324, [lesmois@sprint.ca](mailto:lesmois@sprint.ca)) if you have question about the gathering. This is not a SOLAR event.

RO day dreaming about mountain ranges and snowy peaks?

Well... get your butt off that sticky chair! Find yourself a guided trip and sign up for this new Mountaineering Safety Orientation. This course will prepare you for your first guided mountaineering experience. We'll discuss gear and clothing, camp management, mountain hazards, safety awareness, route finding, snow and glacier travel, rope skill and rescue, leadership and teamwork, decision making and judgment call. There is no climbing or backpacking activity in this course. The course date is flexible and all classes will be held in Detroit and Windsor area. Prerequisites are 4-season backpacking skills, rock or indoor climbing experience, current adult CPR and first aid certifications, and an interview with Lester Mok. Please contact Juli Pentod (248/589 2629, [juli@mediaone.net](mailto:juli@mediaone.net)) for more information.

*Warning:*

Mountaineering can be highly addictive.

# AUGUST OCCASIONS

## LEELENAU STATE PARK CAMPING WEEKEND

August 20-22, 1999, Karen Bates will lead a trip to the tip of the Leelenau peninsula for a weekend of hiking, **biking**, swimming, **building sand castles**, beachcombing, **touring a lighthouse**, shopping in Traverse City, cookouts, **campfires**, and the activity of choice for Saturday, **winery tours** on Old Mission and Leelenau Peninsulas!

Sunday will feature the Bates brunch—you have to go the trip to experience this!

**COST:** \$10 per person, plus the cost of a State Park vehicle permit. There may be an additional fee/donation cost for the lighthouse tour.

Space is limited so **contact Karen** for info at 810/323-1436.

## SEA KAYAK ADVENTURE ON LAKE SUPERIOR

Emerald waters...Mineral-streaked sandstone cliffs...Deserted shorelines on Grand Island...Unusual and beautiful rock formations...taking it all in...in a kayak!

No experience is necessary for the trip, although you should be in good physical condition to endure 5-6 hours per day of kayaking. Professional, highly trained guides will provide expert instruction, guidance, and leadership. All kayaking gear and kayaks will be supplied, as well as all meals!

Plan to arrive Thursday night as we will begin kayaking Friday. There are two separate trips being offered and the groups will remain small. There may still be spots left! For the August 12-15 trip contact Lisa Boose at 248/681-3617 for availability, and for the August 26-29 trip, contact Juli Penrod at 248/589-2629. The cost is \$255.00 and includes not only the guided tour and gear but all your meals and hotel lodging for Thursday night

## 1999 SOLAR/DEFRANCE CANOE OUTING

This annual get-together near Hale, Michigan, is an event not to be missed! It takes place August 13-15, beginning with a campfire, stories, and songs on Friday night at the DeFrance's cabin. There is plenty of room for car-camping on their wooded lot with outhouse facilities. Saturday is a free day to explore the area on foot or bike, go for a swim or kayak in Jose Lake, play volleyball, or hang out in the cabin. Sunday is the canoe trip down the beautiful Au Sable River, lasting somewhere around five hours with a break for lunch midway. The cost is \$25 per person, which includes the cost of the canoe (two people per canoe), breakfast on Saturday morn, and camping. Bring a dish to pass for gigantic Saturday eve potluck and summer toys and games.

**Contact Laura Albin** at 810/229-8283 or [albinlau@pilct.msu.edu](mailto:albinlau@pilct.msu.edu) or see her at the monthly meeting!

## POINT PELEE TRIP SUMMARY



*By Tom Ponsart*

Now I understand why it's so hard to recruit new trip leaders. It's a tough job! My co-leader and I arrived by noon on Saturday at the campsite...all excited and ready to go birdwatching. We had a glorious day ahead of us. My first clue that something was amiss should have been the campground itself. It was full of tents and people. Ok, I thought, our check-in is 3 PM and they'll be out of here by then. We decided to pitch our tent on the perimeter and wait.

Several other Solarites showed up and did the same. Enter the leader of the Audubon Club. He questioned us about being at this campsite, so I whipped out our campsite permit and prepared to boot his group out of Little Raccoon North. I gasped. Our permit said Marsh Hawk. Oops. Finally we got settled into our new site, which was MUCH better than the other one anyway, and we all took off to do different things...bike, birdwatch, hike.

When we got back to camp, tents dotted the landscape. Our site was filling up—with another group! Egad! The park had double-booked our site. No problem until...it came time to build our campfire. One of the "other" people approached me with a quandary. He had pitched his tent right next to our fire pit. He was allergic to smoke. He was going to bed. He didn't want us building a fire. Oh boy. What was a trip leader to do? We ended up taking over a nearby fire pit and talked about what we'd do to the "outsider's" tent that night. Jim Gilfix brought sparklers!

Sunday, only six bedraggled Solarites were up for the 7 am walk. It was great.

Our guide, Sarah, pointed out all kinds of birds throughout our two hour excursion. Other Solarites went hiking and kayaking. Highlights from the bird-spotting included Scarlet Tanagers, an Indigo Bunting, Kingbirds, Yellow Warblers, Nashville Warblers, Red-eyed Vireos, Orchard and Baltimore Orioles, Woodcocks, Blue-headed Peck-A-Boos, and Black-footed Red-Bellied Worm Eaters (just kidding!). A personal thrill for me was watching a Bald Eagle pass over us while we were eating lunch. I was in awe. All in all, I believe a relaxing, happy time was had by all.

## The Mohican River Weekend Brand New Trip!

Come join us October 1 - 3 for a fun filled weekend of canoeing and hiking along the Mohican River in Loudonville, Ohio (3.5 hours from Detroit). On Saturday we will hike some of the 12 miles of trail in the nearby Mohican State Park. The striking Clearfork Gorge with its towering hemlocks and virgin stands of white pine are part of the reason that the National Park Service has dedicated the area as a Registered National Natural Landmark. Along the hiking trails there are two waterfalls, a scenic wooden bridge and one which follows a lakeshore. Sunday, we will canoe or kayak the Mohican River for about 4 hours before we depart for home.

We will be staying in cabins at the Mohican Canoe Livery and Fun Center. These are not exactly your rustic cabins as they have real beds and showers, even hot tubs on the back decks. Cost is \$44 for 2 nights w/hot tubs, \$40 without. Canoeing is \$15 per person, or you can rent kayaks for \$18. Interested? **Call Leslie Cordova** at (248) 547-5626.

## Canoe Class '99 Review

*By Doug Lamyk*

The SOLAR volunteer spirit was running high for June's Canoe Class. We had 9 or 10 very experienced instructors at any one time for the 2 classes. The instructors also provided 10 canoes and 4 kayaks for class use. All of the boats were different styles to show what is available for different types of canoeing. The weather cooperated perfectly for both classes. Sunny hot days made being on the lake the perfect way to spend a weekend afternoon. Out of 34 students who signed up, 14 showed up, 7 each day. Those that attended got as much or more attention from the instructors than they wanted. Almost all of the students were capable of paddling in a straight line when they wanted to, and turning the canoe in the right direction. I only witnessed 1 canoe with 2 promising students try to canoe with the gunwales below the water. The experiment with alternative canoe

orientation being performed about 5 ft off my beach was greeted with great mirth. The rest of the class decided to try a more conventional style of canoeing after witnessing the drowned rat demonstration. As with most Solar experiences the food was more than acceptable, and in great abundance. The BBQ lasted well into the evening after each class.

The first class performed a quick cool rescue of my house during the first class. A jar of fat from the drip hole on my smoker burst into flames and shattered onto my deck. By the time I paddled across the lake to check out the commotion, the fire was out, leaving only a few charred spots for future conversation starters. Thank you to all who saved my house and made the canoe classes a success.

Next year we are planning a river canoeing class and a wilderness canoeing class. Please express interest if you would like new canoeing skills.

## Awesome Folk Festival in Brethren

*By Mary Bogash*

Saturday, June 19, Jeff Zabel, his good buddy, Mike Hobig, and I took a fun-filled road trip to the small town (and I do mean *small*) of Brethren, located east of Maristec. We went to hear 12 hours of toe tapping, head bobbing, knee slappin', hand clappin', bluegrass, Irish, and other types of folk music. The concert price was right—FREE!

We drove up very early Saturday morning, making about six "Zabel" specialty U-turns before finding our remote campsite. We were some of the first audience members to show up so we parked ourselves right in front of the stage. Mike proved to be an avid folk music fan, as well as a superb sketcher of music listeners, drawing with 100% authenticity and accuracy. (Hey, Mike, are you sure you aren't Michelangelo reincarnated?)

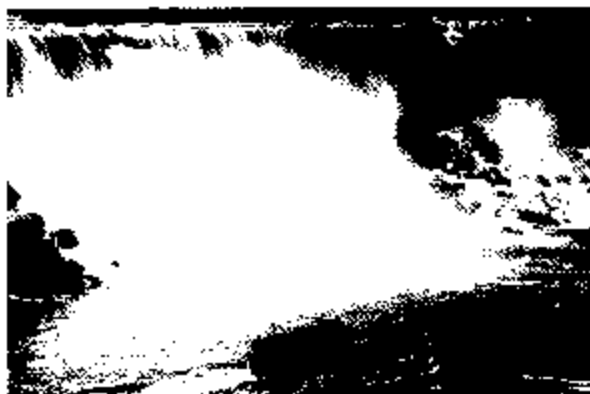
We were later joined by Dave and Maureen DeFrance, who delighted us with a cooler full of food. Maureen also had a wealth of patience and expert advice on helping me pick out the perfect tie-dyed dress, which was among the many cultural crafts available for sale. After enjoying a perfect sunny day with awesome folk music, good food, and excellent company, we ended the evening with square dancing.

The next day, I learned that Jeff and Mike like to get up early even on their weekends off. Not sharing this same enthusiasm, I insisted that they find me a great breakfast. Mike promised that the Doherty Inn in Clare had a super breakfast smorgasbord. It really was worth getting up early for! I hope next year we can add a day of canoeing or hiking, add a bunch more Solarites, and make it a weekend trip. Thanks to all for an excellent time at the festival.

## Niagara Falls Review

By Jim Giffey

On June 18, twelve Solarites and I met at the KOA in Niagara Falls. We toured Sherman's Falls and the falls at Archester Mill earlier in the day, and then I dragged ½ the group along to search for the elusive Siddhorn Falls (or sometimes called Logies Falls), which we finally found after a steep climb through a rocky valley.



Unfortunately, this waterfall was mostly dry and buggy. However, as compensation, we saw a free light show and fireworks over Niagara in the evening.

The next day we took the Maid of the Mist boat tour, saw the butterfly house and had a snack at the Butterfly Café. No, not butterflies...ice cream!

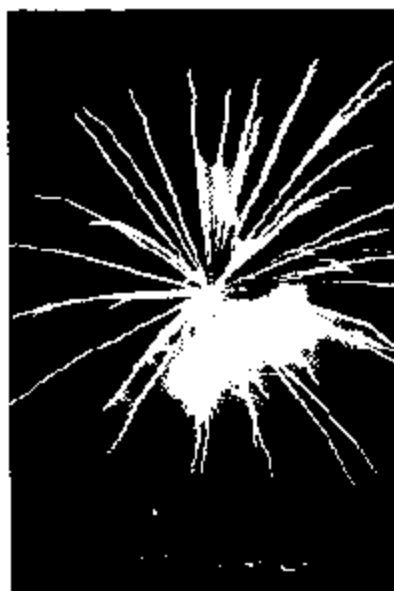


Back at camp,

we swam, sipped wine, and had a bonfire with s'mores and sparklers. On Sunday, our final day, we drove to DeCew Falls at the Morningstar Mill. We saw two out of their three falls, and then Rockaway Falls. The trail was quite an adventure, or perhaps a

trial since not all enjoyed it. These three falls were also dry, which didn't help.

Finally, we went to Balls Falls, where a reenactment was being held. We got to see flint lock guns at play, animal skins, and teepees. A hike to the swimming hole revealed no swimming hole. Even I was disappointed. Sorry, guys, I remembered it differently. Hopefully, we'll be able to see another 4-6 waterfalls during the August Rattlesnake trip. Hope to see everyone there!





# AUGUST

## RATTLESNAKE

**This is the month** for this annual event! Otherwise billed as the **Grand Camping Weekend**, this outing will take place on August 6-8<sup>th</sup> in Rattlesnake Provincial Park near Milton, Ontario. We will be camping, with access to outhouses, hot showers, and even flush toilets. Come on this trip and you can participate in initiation rites (they are generally mild) and become part of SOLAR lore.

### It's about SOLAR TRADITION

#### *Ever been on a buffalo shuffle?*

Sure, you can do your best imitation (we'll watch and take photos), but what you'll really be doing is taking an early morning hike to see real, LIVE buffalo!

#### *Race on the Bicycle Hill Climb!*

Will you be the winner? It's an impossible bike race up an impossible hill—are you game?

#### *Participate in the Annual Creative Cook-off*

Bring your most creative ideas and the best ingredients. An added challenge is all food must be prepared on site. Previous years' winners have been awarded for their culinary imagination. The cook-off will be followed by an unforgettable Saturday night meal. Please bring a dish to pass if you choose not to participate in the cook-off.

Other events on this trip include taking trips to see the geography of the Niagara Escarpment, visiting a reconstructed 15<sup>th</sup> century Iroquoian village, hiking around the Spencer Gorge Wilderness Area and along Bruce Trail.

The finale of the weekend on Sunday is a visit to the African Lion Safari on the way home. See lions, tigers, and...monkeys! And for \$5, ride an elephant! See Jim Gilfix at the August meeting for details and sign-up or call him at 734/513-9460.

## Activities Calendar

August 3	<b>General Membership Meeting</b> Colony Hall, Southfield
August 6-8	<b>Leadership and Team Building</b> Harry Price 248/477-7547
August 6-8	<b>Rattlesnake Provincial Park</b> Milton, Ontario Jim Gilfix 734/513-9460
August 12-15	<b>Guided Sea Kayak Trip</b> Grand Island Recreation Area Lisa Boose 248/681-3617
August 13-15	<b>10<sup>th</sup> DeFrance Canoe Outing</b> Au Sable River Laura Albini 810/229-8283
August 20-22	<b>Hiking/Biking/Beach/Winery</b> Leelanau Peninsula Karen Bates 810/323-1436
August 19-21	<b>Great Lakes Primitive Workshop</b> Bois Blanc Island, MI Lester Mink 519/256-0320
August 26-29	<b>Guided Sea Kayak Trip</b> Grand Island Recreation Area Juli Penrod 248/589-2629
September 7	<b>General Membership Meeting</b> Colony Hall, Southfield
September 18	<b>Land Navigation Class</b> Waterloo Recreation Area Linda Burke 248/471-9185
September 8,15 22,29	<b>Backpacking Class</b> Benchmark, Farmington Carol McCrene 810/229-5232
September 10-12	<b>Rattlesnake Provincial Park</b> Milton, Ontario Laura Albini 810/229-8283
September 25-26	<b>Backpack Practical I</b> Pinckney Recreation Area Carol McCrene 810/229-5232
October 5	<b>General Membership Meeting</b> Colony Hall, Southfield
October 8-10	<b>Backpack Practical II</b> Pictured Rocks Nat'l Lakeshore Carol McCrene 810/229-5232
October 15-17	<b>Wilderness First Aid Class</b> Harry Price 248/477-7547
October 15-17	<b>Caving/Hiking</b> Mammoth's Caves Nat'l Park Karen Bates 810/323-1436



## STEERING COMMITTEE

President	Doug Lanyk
Vice-President	Karen Bates
Secretary	Ted Huff
Treasurer	John Moffat
Activities	Leslie Cordova
Membership	Mary Price
Equipment	Rick Merryman
By-laws	Laura Albin
Education	Harry Price
Publication	Amy Barber
Historian	John Fedyk
Programs	Julie Penrod
Public Relations	Mike Banks

## AT LARGE

Steve Gardner	Al Fylak
Andy Hansen-Beck	Larry Martin
Joan & Bob Westbrook	Mo DeFrance
Joan Ryan	Bill Halvings
Peg Campbell	

## 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 12 days after the general meeting for the following month's edition. Contributions in the form of upcoming events, comments, trip reports, recipes, photos, and original articles are welcome. Send all contributions to Amy Barber, 6921 Lakeview Blvd., #3311, Westland, MI 48185. Phone# 734/595-4595. Send e-mail to [amykay86@hotmail.com](mailto:amykay86@hotmail.com).

## Meeting Location

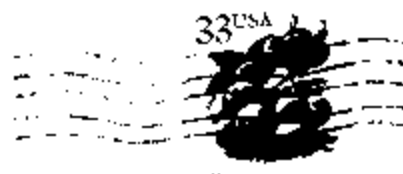
Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at the Colony Hall, located at 21780 Evergreen Rd., between 8 and 9 Mile Roads in Southfield at 7:30 PM. **Visitors can attend meetings for free.** Membership dues are:

- \$30 individual, annually
- \$150 individual, lifetime
- \$45 family, annually
- \$225 family, lifetime

The **SOLAR CLUB** is a non-profit organization of people interested in promoting appreciation of outdoor activities through education and practical experience. The club offers educational programs and various activities which are listed inside. We sponsor trips as well as informal gatherings to provide the exchange of expertise, experiences and information. All of these contribute to fellowship among the membership. SOLAR Club activities will enhance and further the skills and information taught in the basic and more advanced classes through active participation.

**For more information about SOLAR:**  
SOLAR CLUB HOTLINE:

24-hour Voice Mail 248/988-6658  
or <http://members.tripod.com/~solarclub1>



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