



THE SOLAR RAY

June 1999

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE UNANIMOUS WINNERS

At the May elections there was no need for high-security (or accurate) ballot-counting systems. Yes, folks, the vote was rigged- exactly one nominee per category. But may this not diminish the accomplishments we anticipate from the winners. Let us recognize these dedicated folks who sacrifice their time and energy to keep the club a unique and exciting organization. The new Steering Committee is: President—Doug Lanyk, Vice-President—Karen Bates, Secretary—Ted Huff, Treasurer—John Moffat, Activities—Leslie Cordova, Membership—Mary Price, Equipment—Rick Meiryman, By-laws—Laura Albin, Education—Harry Price, SOLAR Ray—Amy Barber, Historian—John Fedyk, Programs—Julie Penrod, Public Relations—Mike Banks.

And many thanks to the out GOING Steering Committee—Your hard work paid off—it was a another Great year for SOLAR events and education!!!!

The Ray Challenges Me—Let It Challenge You...

Yet again this publication has been overtaken by an amateur. Over the next year, I will be experimenting with my new computer and having fun with clip art, but foremost, the newsletter is the place to inform the club about the club. Here you can learn about upcoming activities and classes, enjoy members' articles about their trips and adventures, share ideas about the outdoors, cooking, photo tips, etc., display your photos from the latest amazing trip, and show other community members what the SOLAR is all about. This is your opportunity to share your experiences and thoughts (and get "published"), in turn making the Ray a more interesting read for all. Please contact me at the monthly meetings with your submissions ideas, or for more info, or write me via e-mail. Thanks—I look forward to a majestic reign.

Amy Barber, Editor
E-mail: amylay86@hotmail.com

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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

9th ANNUAL FOSSIL HUNT

July 24-25, 1999, or make it a one-day trip on July 25.

The annual fossil hunt is a kid-friendly trip to Arkona, Canada, which is an approximately 2 ½ hour drive from Detroit going over the Port Huron Bridge. Just north of the town of Arkona is the Rock Glen Conservation Area where the hunt will take place.

This is a non-SOLAR event so you can invite your non-SOLAR friends. Last year 22 adults and 25 kids enjoyed the hunt for the fossils and the enjoyment of the water.

So why collect fossils? Most people collect for the simple fun of it -- for the fun of tramping and exploring, for the excitement of a rare find. Here is an opportunity to spend a day or two with your friends as well as bring home a piece (or a few pieces) of PREHISTORY.

On Saturday, July 24, Jim will lead a visit to the waterfalls in the Godrich area for those who are camping nearby or motelling.

The Fossil Hunt will be on July 25. Although you don't HAVE to get wet, be forewarned to wear clothing that CAN get wet. Lunch will be the famous SOLAR potluck so bring your favorites to share. The cost is free, except for park entry fees and your food.

CONTACT JIM GILFIX at the June or July meetings for more info and sign-up or call Jim at 734/513-9460.



JUNE RATTLESNAKE, June 4-6, '99

Want to climb, hike, swim, or vege? Well, then June Rattlesnake is the place to do it. It takes place the weekend of June 4-6. Show up Friday night, set up your tent and crash so you can hit the crags at 8 a.m. on Saturday morning. An early start will avoid the heat of the day and the crowds. If you are not a climber, the Bruce trail is nearby, as well as a refreshing lake and some mountain bike trails. The cost is ten Canadian dollars for the weekend. It includes car-camping on site #10, running water, luxurious showers, and flush toilets. If the weather is bad, don't fear—the coolest store, Mountain Equipment Co-op is a mere 35 minutes away in Toronto. Any questions? Call Laura Albin at 810/229-8283 or e-mail at albinlau@pilot.msu.edu. Laura will bring maps and info to the next meeting.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

GRAND CAMPING WEEKEND

All Solarites invited on August 6-8, 1999!

It's the annual August Rattlesnake weekend at Rattlesnake Point in Milton, Ontario. On this weekend, everyone camps on a grassy hillside with access to outhouses, hot showers, and even flush toilets. SOLAR tradition includes the buffalo shuffle (an early morning hike on Saturday to see REAL buffalo), a bicycle race, and the competitive COOK-OFF, in which all food preparation must occur on the premises. Unusual and creative gastronomic concoctions are certainly welcome. Although you may choose not to enter the contest, all campers bring a dish to pass for a potluck feast.

On Saturday, the 7th, we will drive to Crawford Lake Conservation Area, a short drive away. Crawford Lake is a basin atop the Niagara Escarpment, the most significant landform in southern Ontario. Here you will see limestone cliffs, woodlands, wetlands, and the lake, an ecologically unusual formation itself. Studies of the sediment, which can be accurately dated back 1000 years, led to the discovery of one of the most accurately dated Iroquoian villages in Canada. A reconstructed fifteenth century village is located at this site. Here we will visit Wolf Clan's Longhouse Learning Center.

Another trip we will take is to the Spencer Gorge Wilderness Area. This Y-shaped gorge is fed by two creeks, Spencer and Logie's, each of which plunges over the Escarpment in a waterfall. We'll hike along the Bruce Trail, perhaps stopping at the Kelso Conservation Area for a swim and then head back to camp to begin cooking.

On the way home Sunday, we will visit the African Lion Safari near Cambridge, Ontario and see the lions, tigers, monkeys, plains animals, and water animal habitats. For an extra \$5 you can even **ride on an elephant!** It's a whole lot of fun and a nice ending to our camping weekend.



COMMUNITY PROJECTS

LET'S BUILD A BOARDWALK-----

Waterford Oaks County park is a wonderful place to visit, and they could use our help. On Saturday, June 19, 1999, Doug was so kind as to volunteer SOLAR's help to finish up a boardwalk on their nature/interpretive trail. The park is not only home to some nice nature trails, but it also has a wave pool, swimming pool, children's pool, giant slide, and the Fledge. We have been promised free passes for the swimming pools after we are done for the day. The workday starts at 9 a.m., with lunch at one of the picnic shelters, and then ends at around 4 p.m. Bring gloves, water, and a snack. Contact Doug Lanyk just before the event for last minute details. Waterford Oaks is located north of M59, west of Telegraph, and south of Dixie Hwy. Sign up at the June meeting! Doug will have maps at the meeting or call him at 248/634-4551.



National Trails Service Project Maybury State Park, June 5, 1999

Last year, this service project was a sound success: productive, fun, wholesome exercise, and good bagels. It is being sponsored again this year by RCL. Projects may include trail repair and rerouting, brush removal, wildflower planting, and the most popular, stump removal. It's a wonderful way to get involved with our valued park service, enjoy the outdoors, and pick up a few skills, as well as meet new people. Contact Mike Banks at the next meeting for sign-up and more info or call him at 248/926-8939.

MEMBERS WRITE...

A Review of Hocking Hills

By Jim Gilfix



I rode this year to Hocking Hills with Connie and Marcella McClatchey and their two friends Natalia and Lenore. The next day we were ready to see the sights. First, we visited the Rock House, and then Corkles Hollow with its three waterfalls and beautiful trails. Then we walked the Old Man's Cave and Upper Falls area. Finally, we went to the 90-foot Ash Cave.



After our hike we went back to our cabins for a basic, rustic stay...NOT. We enjoyed the hot showers, gas fireplace, and fully stocked kitchen. After eating Connie's food, we played the games "Set" and "Taboo" which were both big hits.



Saturday, all twelve Solarites hiked together. Jennifer's eight-year old daughter, Mickey, hiked in purple galoshes and did great.

The Saturday Pot Luck was fun and filling. Afterwards, we settled in for a long game of "Taboo." Everyone played except Mickey, who sat and knitted placemats for mice.



Sunday, after an excellent hike at Cantwell Cliffs, we drove the back roads to an area just north of Xenia. (No, not the warrior princess—the town.) We then hiked at the Clifton Gorge, saw their waterfalls and marveled at all the wildflowers.



I thank Johnnie for setting up this fine trip, Linda and Lenore for their great company and Marcella and Natalia for climbing by the rocks and waterfalls to show the scale.

Let's plan to go next April—I'll lead and try to get some more families and less active Solarites to go (*ed. note: That's a promise, Jim!*) Hocking Hills is truly one of the very best places around.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

DESTINATION NIAGARA FALLS



Join us for a jaunt to Niagara Falls June 18-20! There's so much to do. Start the weekend on Friday with a free fireworks display over the falls at 10:00 p.m. On Saturday we will **Journey Behind The Falls** wearing biodegradable raincoats and explore the tunnels on a self-guided tour, seeing the underside of the falls, and come out on the observation deck to view the falls (and the spray) up close. Afterwards, we will hike, drive, or walk to other areas, including the world's largest glass enclosed conservatory, Niagara Glen Nature Area, which is a great place to learn more about the geology of the area, and Clifton Hill.

After a full day of sight-seeing and dinner, we will swim in the outdoor or olympic indoor pools, and bath in the hot tubs and sauna, eat marshmallows, and relax our bones further around a campfire.

On Sunday, we can visit other waterfalls along the Niagara Escarpment and off the Bruce Trail, including the lesser known but incredible three falls at the Rockway Conservation Area and the Balls Falls area.

Lodging arrangements include camping at the local KOA campground (\$28 for two persons per night or \$8 for groups of 20 or more) and cabins (\$50 per night for two or \$60 for four people). All prices listed are Canadian dollars—the exchange rate is about 40%. All arrangements are up to the individual (lodging, events, food). The SOLAR fee is FREE!! It's about a 5-hour drive from the Detroit area. See Jim Gilfix at the June meeting for details on lodging, maps, and more or contact him at 734/513-5460.

****This is a kid-friendly trip and sure to be a wonderful weekend!

1999 SOLAR/DEFRANCE CANOE OUTING



Everyone is welcome to join us at our cabin for our annual canoe outing on August 13-15. The party starts Friday evening, where we gather around the campfire to plan our schedules for the next day. **Hiking/biking** through the Huron National Forest, going for a **swim/kayak** in Jose Lake, playing **volleyball**, or just hanging out in the cabin are just a few of the many activities that people do. The cost this year is \$25 and it includes the cost of the **canoe** (assuming 2 people per canoe), **breakfast** on Saturday morning, **rustic car-camping** in the woods on our property, use of our trusty **outhouse**, and some serious **S.O.L.A.R.** fun. Bring a dish to pass for a traditional Saturday eve **potluck**, summer **toys and games** (i.e., hikes, ball gloves, bathing suits, volleyballs, etc.), and your shovels and face masks for this year's project...**JUST KIDDING!!**

Contact **Laura Albin** at 810/229-3283 or albinlau@pilot.msu.edu or see her at the booth at next month's meeting!



THE SOLAR RAY

WILDFLOWER WALK AT INDIAN SPRINGS METROPARK

By John Fedyk

On one bright and clear Sunday in late April, several SOLAR members met at the Indian Springs Metropark in Oakland County for a wildflower identification outing. The weather was mild, and so the day was perfect for this kind of activity.

We loitered and gabbed with each other outside the nature center as SOLAR-souls trickled in for our hike. Margaret was very patient and waited for over a half-hour before we started out. As it was, the latecomers found us anyway.

Among the plants we saw:

- The county's biggest bumper crop of Skunk Cabbage. Fortunately, it hadn't begun to blossom, thus saving our olfactory receptors (and us) from a stinky situation.
- A multitude of Mayapples. When they are sprouting they look like a forest of umbrellas for elves popping up out of the ground.
- Hepatica—Medical people in the club might wonder why a flowering plant is named after an organ meat that is often served with onions. Look at the leaves for a clue...And you still might wonder who thought they were liver-shaped.
- Trout lilies—What comes to my mind are flowers that look rather fishy. Actually, it's the leaves of this plant that have the mottled look of that famous Michigan fish.
- Pitcher plants. Like the Venus Flytrap and the Sundew, it relies on insects to provide part of its nutrition. It never fails to amuse me how a plant might not be a vegetarian.

We saw much more, and some plants we couldn't identify. Some because they weren't plants, like Damien's Morel, and others because they were remnants from last year's growth. Maybe next year we'll get it figured out.

We also saw and heard birds. I won't mention more than a few: Chickadees, Nuthatches, Goldfinches, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and Eastern Meadowlarks. There were enough other tree-top feathered flitterers to give me a stiff neck.

We finished up over at Doug's for a potluck in nearby Holly. The food was tasty, the company quite agreeable, and our day an overwhelmingly enjoyable experience.



INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER?

SOLAR club activities are open to SOLAR club members only. But it's easy to join! For more information, contact **Mary Price** at 248/477-7547.

T H E S O L A R R A Y

Activities Calendar

- June 1 – General Membership meeting**
Colony Hall, Southfield
- June 4-6 – Rattlesnake Provincial Park**
Milton, Ontario
Laura Albin 810/229-8283
- June 5 – National Trails Day Service Project**
Maybury State Park
Mike Banks 248/926-8939
- June 6 – Orienteering**
Haven Hill
Linda Burke 248/471-9185
- June 19 – Trail Maintenance – Boardwalk**
Waterford Oaks County Park
Doug Lanyk 248/634-4551
- June 18-20 – Niagara Falls and Camping**
Canada
Jim Gilfix 734/513-9460
- June 20 – Canoe Class**
Doug Lanyk's House in Holly
Larry Martin 734/591-3845
- June 26 – Canoe Class**
Doug Lanyk's House in Holly
Larry Martin 734/591-3845
- July 6 – General Membership Meeting**
Colony Hall, Southfield
Doug Lanyk 248/634-4551
- July 9-11 – Rattlesnake Provincial Park**
Milton, Ontario
Laura Albin 810/229-8283
- July 16-18 – White Water Rafting**
Lower New River, W. Virginia
Lisa Boose 248/681-3617
- July 22-25 – Sea Kayak Symposium**
Grand Marais, Michigan
Matthew Dalton
- July 25 – 9th Annual Fossil Hunt**
Arkona, Canada
Jim Gilfix 734/513-9460
- August 6-8 – August Rattlesnake Camping**
Milton, Ontario
Jim Gilfix 734/513-9460
- August 13-15 – 1999 SOLAR/DeFrance Canoe
Outing**
Hale, Michigan
Laura Albin 810/229-8283

June Canoe Class

— Interested in learning to maneuver a canoe in still water? Need to refine your skills? Want to watch your partner attempt to flail himself back into the canoe after a practiced capsized? Whether you are a beginner or an experienced canoeist, you can get something out of this class. The class covers the safe and proper way to get into a canoe (do you know what a gunnel is?), the basic paddling strokes, deep and shallow water rescues, canoe anatomy, and solo and tandem canoe operation. The Canoe Class is a fun, practical class to learn about canoe safety and techniques. It will be held at Doug Lanyk's house on the lake in Holly, Michigan.

Contact Larry Martin at 734/591-3845.



*(Insert your favorite canoeing photo here.....
Or better yet—send it to the editor!)*

Do you have a dream trip you'd like to run? Contact Leslie Cordova at 248/547-5626 for details!



THE SOLAR RAY

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
Cindy Harrison-Felix	Larry Martin
Joan & Bob Westbrook	Mo DeFrance
Joan Ryan	Bill Halvangs
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, SOLAR Ray Editor, 6921 Lakeview Blvd., #3311, Westland, MI 48185, 734/595-4599 or 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

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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.

SOLAR CLUB

P.O. Box 2438
Southfield, MI 48037

GENE & LESLIE CORDOVA
14520 BORGMAN
OAK PARK, MI 48237

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For more information about SOLAR:

SOLAR CLUB HOTLINE

24-hour Voice Mail (248)988-6658

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