
THE SOLAR RAY

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 0 0



Bike Touring On-road, Off-road

For the February program, SOLAR members Daniel Merchant and Sean Lennon will give a presentation on two 1999 biking trips. The Johnston-Merchant Expedition of July-1999, which was a 6 day, 400 mile road tour from Alpena to Mackinaw City to Traverse City and back to Alpena, and the Lennon-Merchant-Sherman Expedition of October-1999, a 3 day, 40 mile off-road tour on the North Country Trail from Bowman Lake to Ucell. Learn about their different experiences on a road trip versus a mountain biking trip and prepare to be entertained!



VASA SKI RACE RESULTS

This year there were 12 SOLARites who participated in the annual VASA cross country ski race in Traverse City.

The results are as follows:

50K Freestyle

Joan Ritter 5:26:50

27K Classic

Eric Braun 3:04:50 1st time racer
Gene Cordova 3:05:43
Leslie Cordova 3:35:01 Won 3rd place in age division
Jeff Zabel 4:06:17
Judy Spitzer 5:01:32 Won 3rd place in age division

12K Fun Race

Mark Tones 1:23:26
David Granzine 1:31:02
John Gulas 1:33:22
Mary Bogush 2:13:42 1st time racer
Linda Rosa 2:30:09 1st time racer
Jenny Carpenter 2:41:34 1st time racer

Congratulations to everyone and hope to see more SOLAR skiers in next year's race!



The Solar Ray is a monthly publication of the School of Outdoor Leadership, Adventure & Recreation.

Inside this issue:

Class Offerings.....2, 5	Caving.....6
Cross-Country Skiing.....3, 4	Whitewater Rafting...6
Rock Climbing.....3	Downhill Skiing.....7
Snowshoeing.....4	Activity Calendar.....7
Items for Sale.....5	

T H E S O L A R R A Y

C L A S S O F F E R I N G S

S.O.L.A.R. CLUB CROSS COUNTRY SKI LESSONS

Sunday, February 27-1 p.m.

CROSS COUNTRY SKI HEADQUARTERS
9435 N. Cul Road (Co. 100, Higgins Lake)
Roscommon, MI 48653-9366

You dream of gliding on the snow, speeding through the woods. But then you have nightmares of crashing into the trees below.

There is an option to the dream vs. nightmare scenario.

Cross-country ski lessons.

You're already a "shuffler" and want to improve your technique.

Cross-country ski lessons.

Come out and join us at the aptly named XC Ski Headquarters, which is approximately a 3-hour drive from Metro Detroit. Trip leader Gene Cordova, along with our hosts, Bob and Lynne Frye, welcome all to come and have a great day on the beautifully groomed trails. Although any skill level could benefit from these lessons, we are targeting "beginners" and "intermediates." Jim Bradley, a well know X-C ski instructor from Mount Pleasant will most likely be helping Bob Frye with the personalized instruction, depending on class size. There is an additional "free" clinic that the Frys offer at 4 p.m., which would double your total lesson time. After the lessons, we will be going out on the trails to convert our knowledge into FUN! There are several loop trails that are tailored to the beginning and intermediate skier. **We need 6 students minimum, 20 students maximum.**

Cost: \$15.00 per student for a one-hour class.

Equipment Rental: There is a \$10.00 rental fee for skis, boots and poles (for 3 hours), which includes a trail pass. For \$4 more, you can ski all day. (Trail pass alone is \$4)

Attention Wilderness Cabin Weekend folks! This is on your way back, so feel free to crash the party! We can make it a SOLAR ski afternoon. Also, we've planned these lessons to coincide with the "Cajun Gumbo/Snowball Toss" festivities in the afternoon. Feast on Pat and Bob Haggerman's famous Cajun gumbo over rice, and compete, or enjoy being a spectator, in the target and long-distance snowball toss contest. The gumbo feast and snowball toss are both covered for a mere \$5.00 extra. SEE YOU ON THE TRAILS! For more info, contact Gene Cordova at (248) 547-5626 or talk to him at the meeting!

Ice Climbing in Sault Ste Marie

This trip will teach the basics of ice climbing, and can be done by any skill level. The first day is instruction and the second day will be a practical based on the skill level of the individuals. It takes place on Saturday, 2/26 and Sunday, 2/27. We will be driving up Friday, 2/25, and staying at a hotel Friday and Saturday nights, returning Sunday. Instruction will be provided by Steve Foster Adventure Instruction. The cost of the trip is \$225, which includes instruction, gear rental and hotel. Travel, food and gratuities (to the guides) are not included. There is a maximum of 8 people for this trip.

Mountaineering in the Adirondacks, NY

This trip will teach basic mountaineering including crampon use, self-arrest, navigation and more. The first day is instruction and the second day we'll climb a small summit to apply the knowledge learned from the first day. Instruction provided through Alpine Adventures. The instruction will be on Saturday, 3/4 and Sunday, 3/5. We will need Friday, 3/3 and Monday, 3/6 for driving—it is approximately a 10-hour drive from the Detroit area. The cost of the trip is \$350, which includes instruction, gear rental and hotel. Travel, food and gratuities (to the guides) are not included. There is a maximum of 3 people for this trip, but we may be able to accommodate 6.

Contact info for both trips: Adam "A.J." Pastula (810) 268-5471, pastula@umich.edu.

Take the *Snow Train* to the Land of XC Ski!

Sault Sainte Marie, Ontario, March 17-19, 2000

Wabos Loppet is undoubtedly a strange name for a ski trip. If you are in the know, you will refer to this trip as "The Loppet," loppet meaning "long trip" in Norwegian. Wabos is the place where the snow train stops for the skiers to disembark, and it refers to a defunct lumbering village. Although there are other loppets around, this one is a tradition for SOLAR. It is a noncompetitive event with about 300-400 participants each year.

Cabins are available for Friday and Saturday nights. Saturday morning we will take the Algoma Snow Train for an hour ride up the Agawa Canyon to the trailhead. The scenery is beautiful along the way. Then we will begin the 27K ski on groomed trails back to Stokely Creek Lodge. Along the way there will be food stations set up with hot drinks and we can stop at the famous Norm's cabin in the middle of the wilderness. We will ski on top of lakes and up and down challenging hills. A large BBQ awaits the skiers at the end of the trip.

Lodging costs will be \$70. The application and fee are the responsibility of each skier. **Previous ski experience is required.** However, feel free to join us for the weekend and ski on your own—a downhill ski resort is located nearby as well as groomed cross-country ski trails where you can go your own distance. The Ontario Winter Games will be taking place this weekend as well. Contact Mary Dunn for information and applications at 248-585-9954. A deposit of \$35 is required at the February meeting with the balance due in March.



Meet the Wall!!

Rock Climbing at Planet Rock

On Saturday, March 25, 2000, Jeff Enterkin is taking a max of 20 people for a climb at the Planet Rock climbing gym in Pontiac. The cost is \$33 and includes a day pass, shoe and harness rental, basic instruction from the staff, and food and drinks. The food will be served at 6:45 p.m. and the climbing starts at 8 p.m. This is a non-SOLAR activity; however, you must be over age 16 to participate. This is good opportunity to try rock climbing—if you want further instruction, you can sign up for the SOLAR Rock Climbing class in the spring!

Contact Jeff Enterkin at 248-399-0696 or e-mail him at jente69690@aol.com.

Camping Hints by A.N. Onymous

1. When using a public campground, a tarp placed on your picnic table will keep the campsites on either side vacant.
2. The best backpacks are those named for national parks or mountain ranges. Stay clear of those named for landfills.
3. While the Swiss Army knife has been popular for years, the Swiss Navy knife has remained largely unheralded. Its single blade functions as a tiny canoe paddle.
4. You'll never be lost if you remember that moss always grows on the north side of your compass.
5. In emergency situations, you can survive in the wilderness by shooting small game with a slingshot made from the elastic waistband of your underwear.

Disclaimer: If you are doubtful about any of the above advice or techniques, look for the next backpacking class to be offered in April!

BULLETIN BOARD

 Wilderness State Park February 27-29, 2000

Highlights of this trip: Stay in rustic cabins, cross-country ski and snowshoe 18+ miles of trails. Go on a ski tour on the North Country Trail, take an animal tracking class, a cooking class, and go on a star-gazing walk. Potluck dinner Saturday night. Cost is only \$15! Space is limited! Any questions--call David Foerster at (734) 453-0692 or e-mail him at DBFoerster@aol.com.

REMINDER:

RETURN BACKPACKING EQUIPMENT TO RICK MERRYMAN!!!

A couple of items are still missing from the fall backpacking class. These items are a backpack and a Kelty sleeping bag. Please check for these items and return them ASAP. You can reach Rick at 248-620-0808 or page him at 810-830-3525.

Snowshoe Group Forming

Cross-country skiing isn't the only way to travel across the snow. Snowshoeing has an appeal of its own. It's a fun and easy way to enjoy winter scenery and it's economical. I am forming a snowshoeing special interest group. An email list will be put together and shared with interested Solar members. Local activities are being planned and short-term notice snowshoeing activities will be organized when snow conditions allow. Members interested in snowshoeing during upcoming Solar events can plan to get together. Many local retail stores rent snowshoes and some Solar members may allow newcomers to the sport to try their snowshoes. Contact Matt Dalton at 248-360-1611 or e-mail him at mdalton@ameritech.net to express your interest!

Note from Leslie Cordova, Activities Chair

For the past 6 or so years I have traditionally led a Memorial Weekend backpacking trip. From the number of SOLAR members who have participated on these trips, I know they are successful and quite popular. This year however, I will be whitewater rafting the Grand Canyon for a week, and therefore will not be able to organize a trip. So...I am looking for a trip leader for this year's Memorial weekend backpack.

I see lots of SOLAR members on this trip, so perhaps one of you would be willing to lead it this year. I can provide you with information on how to lead the trip, as well as offer possible backpack locations. Please contact me if you are interested in helping *preserve this tradition*. Thank you to anyone who is willing to volunteer. Contact Leslie Cordova (248) 547-5626 or lesliegent@aol.com.

T H E S O L A R R A Y

M O R E C L A S S O F F E R I N G S

Winter Outdoor Safety Class

This 1-day class will prepare novice XC skiers, snowshoers, and winter hikers for their day trips. Tentative topics include winter hazards, trip planning, clothing, hydration, nutrition, basic trail navigation, hypothermia and frostbite, survival preparation, leadership and emergency scene management.

This class will be held on Feb 12th, Saturday, from 9 AM to 6 PM. The fee is \$12. Registration deadline is the February general meeting. Please call Jenny Carpenter at 734-427-2670 for an update.

WILDERNESS FIRST AID CLASS

There will be a SOLO WFA class in Dearborn on March 11-12. The cost is \$125. SOLO is well known in teaching backcountry medicine. A Wilderness First Responder class is also available from March 1-10. Contact Vertical Ventures at 517-336-0520 for more info. Registration deadline is Feb 1. This is a non-SOLAR event.

Basic Mountaineering Safety

Information on how to set up this course, including a map and compass test and prerequisites, will be available at the February general meeting. This information supercedes all previous sign-up information. Contact Lester Mok, 519-256-0324, lesmok@sprint.ca to discuss your plan.

ITEMS FOR SALE

i-Don't-Need-3-of-Everything Sale!

Camptrails Internal Frame Backpack, used, excellent condition, 4500 CI, Purple and Black, like new: \$95.00.

Slumberjack 0 degree, long sleeping bag, synthetic fill, excellent condition, like new: \$85.00.

20 degree Down Sleeping bag, excellent condition, like new: \$120.00.

Dana Designs Astroplane 7000 CU internal frame backpack, excellent condition, Red/Black: \$225.00.

14 foot, 2 person, Radison Canoe, aircraft aluminum, 40 pounds, excellent condition, comes with 2 paddles, \$450.00.

PUR Hiker Water filter, used, \$35.00.

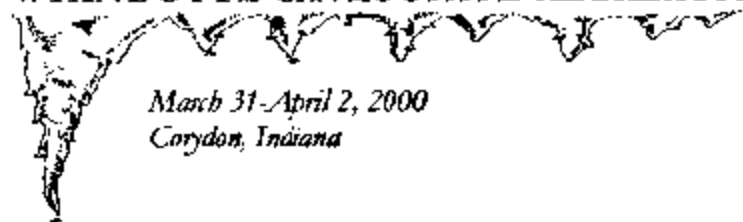
Contact Matt Dalton at 248-360-1611 or email: mdalton@ameritech.net



SHOES for SALE!

Montrail - Moraine AT
Women's size 7
Like New - Only Worn Once
Fit Too Small
Asking \$120 OBO
Call Laura at 517-381-8976
Email: albinlau@pilot.msu.edu

WYANDOTTE CAVES STATE RECREATION AREA



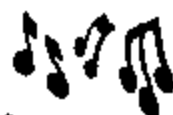
*March 31-April 2, 2000
Corydon, Indiana*

This caving trip features a trip to the world's largest stalagmite, known as the "Pillar of the Constitution." This formation is 35 feet high and 75 feet in circumference. Other exciting formations include the "Animal Pit" and the "Straits," which requires a chest size of 46" or less! The park describes the Pillar Tour as one of their most difficult cave tours; the tour length is approximately 4-5 hours.

The drive to Corydon is about 6-7 hours. Lodging is at the Hampton Inn in downtown Corydon, and includes a indoor pool, hot tub, exercise room (just in case you don't find the caving exhausting enough), free continental breakfast and in-room coffee service. The caving starts Saturday morning at 10 AM.

The park provides lights and helmets (you need to bring 3 C cell batteries) or you may wish to bring your own gear. The cost for this trip is only \$60, which includes 2 nights lodging, 2 free breakfasts, 1 day of caving and lots of fun. **This is a kid-friendly trip for age 12 and older.** Interested? Call Leslie Cordova (248) 547-5626. **Hurry**, as there is limited space, and as usual, first pay, first go.

West Virginia, Whitewater Rafting,



The New River, Lots of Fun and Splash-ing!

May 26-29, 2000, Oak Hill, W. Va.

The New River is the world's second oldest river and the scenery is beautiful. The Lower New River is for those who want the whitewater, white-knuckle experience. The guides will provide enough instruction even for those who have never rafted before. Cost for this trip is \$135/person, which includes 3 meals. You must be 14 or older to choose this trip.

The Upper New River is a tamer river with Class 1-2 rapids, perfect for families and those who want a more laid-back, yet still fun, trip. You'll raft through a gorgeous 1,400 foot-canyon and see magnificent scenery. Kids must be 6 or older to participate. Cost for this option is \$125/person (age 17 and up) and \$70 for ages 6-16, includes 3 meals. Also available for rental are "duckies," which are small inflated kayaks.

Group camping is available at ACE, \$30 /adult and \$15 for kids (age 16 or less) for three nights. We will have a bonfire and play around in the area during the day. All rafting will be on Sunday and will be as a group. A deposit of \$20 per person, NON-REFUNDABLE, is due by the February 2000 SOLAR meeting. **YOU MUST BE A SOLAR MEMBER TO GO!** Please contact Jim Gilfix if you have any questions at 734-513-9460.

The Solar Ray would like to offer its sincerest condolences to Jim Gilfix. His grandfather, Sam Vander, passed away on January 8th. He was 95 years old and according to Jim, was going strong up until the end of his life. He was married for 69 years; his wife passed away four years ago. He was an avid bowler, playing twice a week and was on the top of his league for decades. His score averaged 200 per game!! Jim said he's fortunate he got to spend a lot of time with his grandfather and is going to miss their monthly outings for dinner and a movie.

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Feb. 1—General Membership Meeting
Colony Hall, Southfield
Doug Lanyk, 248/634-4551

Feb. 5-6—Michigan Winters Practical II
Pigeon River State Forest
Doug Lanyk, 248/634-4551

Feb. 11-13—Downhill and X-Country Skiing
Blue Mountain Resort, Ontario
Jonnie Kostishak, 734/398-5315

Feb. 12—Winter Outdoor Safety Class
Jenny Carpenter, 734/427-2670

Feb. 18-20—Cabin/ X-Country Ski Weekend
Hartwick Pines State Park
Mike Banks, 248/926-8939

Feb. 18-20—Dogsledding
Algonquin, Ontario
Karen Bates, 810/323-1346

Feb. 25-27—Cabin/ X-Country Ski Weekend
Wilderness State Park
David Foerster, 734/453-0692

Feb. 27—X-Country Ski Class
Roscommon, MI
Gene Cordova, 248/547-5626

Mar. 3-5—DeFrance Winter Outing
Hale, MI
Mo DeFrance, 517/552-3660

Mar. 3-5—Downhill and X-C Skiing
Blue Mountain Resort, Canada
Glenn Pace, 734/458-9353

Mar. 7—General Membership Meeting
Colony Hall, Southfield
Doug Lanyk, 248/634-4551

Mar. 10-12—Winter Mountaineering Course
Adirondacks, New York
Juli Perrod, 248/589-2629

Mar. 17-19—X-C Skiing
Wahos Loppet, Canada
Mary Dunn, 248/585-9954

Mar. 23, 30—Backpacking Class
REI, Northville
Mike Banks, 248/926-8939

Mar. 25—Rock Climbing
Planet Rock, Pontiac
Jeff Enterkin, 248/399-0696

Mar. 31-Apr. 2—Caving—
Wyandotte Caves
Corydon, Indiana
Leslie Cordova, 248/547-5626

Apr. 4—General Membership Mtg
Colony Hall, Southfield
Doug Lanyk, 248/634-4551

Apr. 6, 13, 20—Backpacking Class
REI, Northville
Mike Banks, 248/926-8939

Apr. 15-16—Backpack Practical I
Mike Banks, 248/926-8939

Apr. 28-30—Backpack Practical II
Mike Banks, 248/926-8939

May 26-29—Whitewater Rafting
New River, West Virginia
Jim Gilfix, 734/513-9460

Interested in becoming a member?

SOLAR Club activities are open to SOLAR Club members only, unless otherwise specified. But it's easy to join! For more information, call Mary Price at 248-477-7547 or e-mail her at Mprice8708@aol.com. (See also the back page for membership rates and more club info.)

Blue Mountain Downhill Skiing

Join us Feb. 11-13, 2000 as we head over to Blue Mountain Resort in Collingwood, Ontario. It's about a 5-hour drive from Detroit. There is cross-country skiing in the area as well with gorgeous views of Georgian Bay. We'll stay in two 6-person condos. The cost of the trip is \$95 (minimum of 10 people). If we get 11 people signed up and paid for, I will provide both breakfasts and also dinner Saturday night. Lunch, transportation and lift tickets are on your own. Other activities may include inner tubing and enjoying the hot tub and sauna. Contact Jonnie Kostishak at 734-398-5315 for more info or see her at the monthly meeting.

Check it OUT!

It is the "Fridge," Michigan's first refrigerated toboggan run, at Waterford Oaks County Park.

According to the Oakland County Parks brochure, "after a 55-foot drop, riders are whisked 1,000 feet. Speeds reach in excess of 30 mph. The Fridge is open mid-December until early March, conditions permitting."

Adult rates are \$8 or \$6 if you are an Oakland County resident. Kids get in for \$4 (30" to 43" tall). There is a lodge adjacent to the Fridge with a fireplace, viewing areas, concessions and restrooms. Discounts for groups are available! Call 248-975-4440 for more info and check it out!

T H E S O L A R R A Y



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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 Fedyk, 1614A Fairview, Royal Oak, MI 48073. Phone# 248-435-2450. Send e-mail to 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.

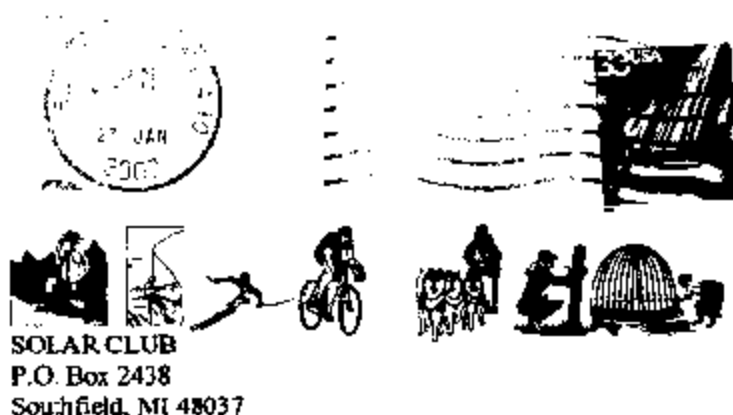
For more information about SOLAR:

SOLAR CLUB HOTLINE

24-hour Voice Mail 248/988-6658

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

or call Doug Lanyk @248/634-4551



GENE & LESLIE CORDOVA
14520 BORGMAN
OAK PARK, MI 48237

The School of Outdoor Leadership, Adventure & Recreation