

THE SOLAR RAY

J a n u a r y 2 0 0 0

H A P P Y N E W Y E A R !

BE A WINNER CHOOSE A WINNER

Photo Contest 2000

The rules are simple: The photo must have been taken by the person entering it, and the photo cannot be a previous contest winner. It must have been taken at a SOLAR event, unless entered in the non-solar category, and must be 5 x 7 or larger. The photo must be matted and/or framed. Only TWO entries per category are permitted. The categories are:

Scenery
Plants
Animals
People
Humor
Seasons
Non-SOLAR

The voting will be by all SOLAR members who attend the January meeting

ROCK CLIMBING

Saturday March 25, 2000

Many people say that they've always wanted to *try rock climbing* but never do... If you *are* like that, here is your chance to experience the thrill of climbing and the feel of making it to the top. On Saturday March 25, 2000, I'm taking 20 people to the Planet Rock climbing gym in Pontiac. The cost is \$33. This price includes a day pass for Planet Rock, rental of shoes and harness, basic instruction from the staff, subs, pop, and munchies. The food will be served at 6:45 PM and climbing starts at 8 PM. Climbing is an excellent way to exercise and for some people to get over the fear of heights. I am running this outing in conjunction with the SKIWI SKI AND SOCIAL CLUB so this is a non-SOLAR activity (please make your check out to Jeff Enterkin). **All are welcome to join us... except kids below the age of 16.** If you find that you really liked climbing on the walls then sign up for the SOLAR Rock Climbing Class in the spring! The time is now. Don't put it off. Contact Jeff Enterkin at (248) 399-0696 or E-mail me at Jente69690@aol.com.

Wilderness State Park February 25-27, 2000

Tucked away in the corner of our beautiful lower peninsula is a rustic, wild area designated as Wilderness State Park. This is an annual SOLAR trip for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and other winter activities. There are 18+ miles of trails within the park. Some prominent SOLAR members will be conducting activities such as a ski tour on the North Country Trail, an animal tracking clinic, and a cooking class. Others will be taking a trip north of the bridge to Tahquamenon Falls. Saturday evening, we will have a traditional potluck dinner, followed by a star-gazing walk with Tommie Takano. The trip cost is only \$15, which includes lodging in two rustic cabins. It is limited to the first 48 who pay so hurry and sign up! Any questions--call David Foerster at (734) 453-0692 or e-mail me at DBFoerster@aol.com or see me at the SOLAR meeting.

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T H E S O L A R R A Y

CLASS OFFERINGS

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 734-427-2610 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.

Mountaineering Safety Orientation

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

NEW TRIP!!

**WYANDOTTE CAVES STATE RECREATION AREA
CORYDON, INDIANA
MARCH 31 - APRIL 2, 2000**
(Kid friendly if you are 12 or older)

Be prepared for about a 6 - 7 hour drive. We will arrive Friday night and stay at the Hampton Inn in downtown Corydon, Indiana. Bring your bathing suit to swim in an indoor pool and hot tub (open until midnight), exercise room, free continental breakfast and in room coffee service. Saturday morning we will don our finest caving regalia and begin our cave tour at 10 AM. We are going to be participating in the 4 - 5 hour "PILLAR OF THE CONSTITUTION TOUR."

The park describes this as "several challenging climbs and crawls make the Pillar Tour one of our most difficult cave tours. *(Not for a SOLAR member)* The half-day journey includes a trip to the "Pillar of the Constitution." As the world's largest stalagmite, this formation stands 35 feet high and 75 feet in circumference. Ashes, charred wood and fragments chipped from the formation indicate that pre-historic peoples worshipped here. This is a trip that the caver may not soon forget. Impeded by several steep hills, the traveler may find the trip very exhausting. Before ascending into the upper Old Cave passages, one must first climb into the "Animal Pit" via a wooden pole. To squeeze through the "Straits" at the end of the route takes a chest size of 46" or less!!"



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 \$60, which includes 2 nights lodging, 2 free breakfasts, 1 day of caving and lots of fun. Interested? Call Leslie Cordova (248) 547-5626. **Hurry**, as there is limited space, and as usual, first pay, first go.

CLASS REVIEW

by Mark Tomes



I'd like to start with a big thank you to the instructors of the "Leadership and Team-building Class of '99" for their sacrifice and commitment to their students' transformation. Now, why did I volunteer to write this article? Was it the guilt I feel because I've been in SOLAR for five years and have given very little back? "No way, man!" I just spent a great weekend with some of the friendliest leaders I have ever met--I'm talking about everyone who participated in the class.

We learned that there are several different types of leadership styles. The style you choose to use must be authentic; it must reflect who you are for it to be effective. We also talked about attitudes, trip planning, responsibility, stress and resolving conflict. We heard many real life stories and participated on several team-building exercises. My favorite was when we had all eleven of us standing and balancing on a small log. Clearly this required everyone to work as a team.

On top of all these fun learning experiences we ate well, had ideal weather, a dandy place to sleep and a night hike.

Ed. Note: Watch out, club, for the budding leadership of Mark Tomes.

WHITE WATER RAFTING IN

WEST VIRGINIA

May 26-29, '00

Raft on the New River, adult style or family style. Again we will return to the A.C.E. Adventure Center in Oak Hill, W.Va. where they have a great safety record, some of the best guides around and good food! There are two trip options and multiple lodging options.

Trip #1: For adults (includes ages 14 and up). Whitewater rafting all day on the Lower New River. Instruction will be provided for those new to the sport. This is the adventurous trip that SOLAR usually sponsors. Cost is \$135/person, which includes 3 meals for that day.

Trip #2: For kids (6 and older), their parents, and anyone wanting a more relaxing trip. Raft class 1-2 rapids on the Upper New River; this may include floating along lazily in the river. You will join the other group later for dinner. Also available are "duckies," which are small inflated kayaks. Cost is \$125/person (17 and up) and \$70 for ages 6-16, and also includes 3 meals that day. 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 \$10 per person, NON-REFUNDABLE, is due by the February 2000 SOLAR meeting. **YOU MUST BE A SOLAR MEMBER TO GO!** Please contact Jim Giffix if you have any questions at 734-513-9460.

It's Canada—They Gotta Have Snow!

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 and worth it. 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. Lunches, munchies, transportation and lift tickets are on your own.

You might also do some inner tubing, enjoy a hot tub, sauna, and have a snowball fight... **Contact** Jonnie Kostishak at 734-398-5315 for more info or see her at the monthly meeting.

Interested in becoming a member?

SOLAR Club activities are open to SOLAR Club members only. But it's easy to join! For more information, call Mary Price at 248-477-7547. (See also the back page for membership rates and more club info.)

T H E S O L A R R A Y

SOLAR Primitive Skills Workshop

By Jo Ann Kwasnik

A handful of Solarites made it to the Waterloo rustic cabin on Friday, Nov. 12, 1999 for this intensive workshop. Catherine Krueger, one of the class coordinators, and the rest of the crew were up at the crack of dawn gathering wild edibles for the evening meal. We started the day with a great lecture and demonstration on fire making given by Dr. Patrick Munson. He started with teaching us to "talk to the wood." We brushed up on some knife safety and learned about picking just the right pieces for a four-part bowdrill. The bowdrill method is considered the most reliable system for making fire for the greatest range of environments. Well...we all realized we could eventually make a bowdrill after hours of labor and lots of blisters (a big knife really comes in handy!), but there is an art to making fire. Dr. Pat finally got a fire going using a seasoned bowdrill he had brought with him. Our wood was too wet to use that day, but it was challenging to try and hack some tools out of the wood pieces we had. I never realized wood had so many measurable qualities.

For those philosophical in nature a quote from Dr. Pat was "just like any form of communication, you never give up," in reference to talking



to the wood. For those less philosophical, there were guidelines given on the technical aspects of fire making, such as "press hard but not too hard," and "f tinder is best when it contains about one third downy

material." Learning to make fire anywhere at any time with only a knife and your ability to gather some basic natural materials takes one 180 degrees from a dependence on civilization. It is a freeing experience.



Next, onto the debris shelter. We had two teams making two shelters. This was a drill in group dynamics. One lesson about being comfortable outdoors with minimal supplies is how well you work with others. For awhile I thought my group would never make it, but with a little extra coaching from Lester we built our shelter with nothing but branches and leaves. Roger James and I got to try these out that night.

My biggest fear about a survival was having to learn how to go hungry. This was not a problem with Catherine and her enlistees on the job. The dinner that evening was a feast. Catherine's acorn sweet bread melted in my mouth. We fought for the recipe. The crickets were a bit crunchy, the mealworms were better, starchy and more filling. A vegetable stew was made from a wonderful assortment of wild edibles. Cartails, watercress and dandelions were a big hit. There were rolls and boiled chicken to fill us up, too. Everyone really pitched in to work together.

Lester had us make our bowls and spoons from blocks of fragrant cedar. We took coals and let them burn into the wood. Then we scraped out a depression in the wood to form a bowl. After dinner, we learned how to boil water without a stove or cook set, make a group site without tents and make cordage out of plants we gathered in the area.

I was so ready to go to bed by 10:00! Lester walked Roger and me out to our debris shelter and tucked us in. The wind was whipping and I wondered how all these leaves were ever going to stay together until morning. But our teams did a great job of layering leaves and twigs. Overall, we stayed pretty comfy without a synthetic sleeping bag, sleeping mat, pillow or tent. We just buried ourselves into the leaves of our new "home." Still I was glad to have my field jacket. More leaves for next time! Alas, we didn't stay the whole night. Lester wouldn't let us sleep all night because of hunters in the area. Earlier that day we saw a whole crew with guns go through our "camp." That convinced even me who hates getting out of bed to get back to our cushy rustic cabin before the hunters came out. But not before a look at the stars--they really were a beautiful sight. Recommendation: it may sound nuts, but try it when you get a chance.

Sunday morning started with a plant walk and lecture by George and Kerrie Hedgepeth. We found at least 33 edible and useful plants with yards of our cabin. This proves that even in November you don't have to depend on a freeze-dried gourmet meal for a substantial, nutritious and even delicious meal with some knowledge. Raspberry brambles, when prepared, are a good antispasmodic. The rosehips were delicious and a good source of vitamin C. The crabapples were good, too; they lose their bitterness after a frost. Leave the toilet paper at home. Slightly damp moss was touted by George as the premier butt wipe.

Well, Lester didn't have much time to go over tracking but after 12 pages of notes and all the activities, I think we all felt our \$45 was well spent! Thank you Lester and Catherine for a great class. I highly recommend this class to anyone who goes more than five minutes from civilization.

THE VASA

It is that time of year again for the granddaddy of cross-country ski events. This year the Vasa will be held on Saturday, January 15th. If you always wanted to be cheered by crowds of people, the Vasa is the trip for you. Every year hundreds of skiers flock to Traverse City to compete in this event. As usual, SOLAR will be staying at the Days Inn in Traverse City. I have reserved three suites, complete with kitchenettes. Each room sleeps four people and the cost is only \$70.00 per person for the weekend. This includes breakfast at the hotel restaurant on Saturday and Sunday.

For those of you who wish to get an early start on Friday, I plan on meeting at *LA Cuisine Amical* located on 229 E. Front St. in Traverse City sometime around 6:30 P.M. for dinner.

Race fees are an additional cost and you will be responsible for registering with Vasa. I will have entry forms at the next SOLAR meeting

If you would like more information, you can call Jeff Zabel at (810)778-1676 or check Vasa's website at <http://www.vasa.org>

DOGSLEDDING



January 21-23, 2000 or February 18-20, 2000

Both trips involve two days of dogsledding in South River, Ontario, just west of Algonquin Provincial Park. Included with your team of dogs and sled gear are all your meals on the trail and heated tents in camp. Also included is lodging for Friday night in the Algonquin Motel. Each team is made up of two people and six dogs. You will be expected to care for your own team while on the trail and help with camp chores at night.

The cost of this exciting weekend is only \$320.00 (Canadian—the exchange rate is excellent). For those of you who have signed up, please pay the balance of your trip ASAP. For more details or to sign up for this trip, call Karen Bates at 810-323-1346 or see me at the SOLAR meetings.

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

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

Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26—Enjoying Michigan Winters Club
Beechmark, Farmington
Doug Lanyk, 248/634-4551

Jan. 14-16—Vasa X-Country Ski Race
Traverse City
Jeff Zabel, 810/778-1676

Jan. 15-16—Michigan Winters Practical I
Waterloo Recreation Area
Doug Lanyk, 248/634-4551

Jan 21-23—Dogsledding
Algonquin, Ontario
Karen Bates, 810/323-1346

Jan. 22-23—Ice Climbing
Sault Sainte Marie
Juli Perrod, 248/589-2629

Jan. 28-30—Crawlethon-Caving Trip
Olive Hill, Kentucky
Leslie Cordova, 248/547-5626

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

Feb. 25-27—Wilderness State Park
David Forster, 734/453-0692

March 11-12—Winter Mountaineering Course
Adirondacks
Juli Perrod, 248/589-2629

T H E S O L A R R A Y

19TH ANNUAL CARTER CAVES CRAWL-A-THON

Olive Hill, Kentucky

January 28-30, 2000

This annual caving event is designed to include all skill levels, including children. Cave options range from walking tours to vertical caving. You need to reserve your own tours so check with Lesle about available options.

Some caving may include prolonged crawling through small, constricted passages and some may contain water. Equipment needed includes old coveralls or loose clothing (no sweatshirts or sweatpants), knee and elbow pads, gloves, boots that cover the ankle, three sources of light (one mounted on the hard hat—duct tape and a flashlight work), and spare batteries. A hardhat is required which SOLAR can provide with a \$25 deposit.

In addition to caving, there are beautiful trails to explore. The park is also known for its natural arches. You can opt for caving or hiking or both!

Average Travel Time: 7 hours

Lodging: Eleven rooms reserved at Carter Caves State Park lodge

Space is limited

Lodging Cost: \$50 per person for two nights (payable to SOLAR)

Caving Cost: \$15 for two days (payable to Carter Caves State Park)

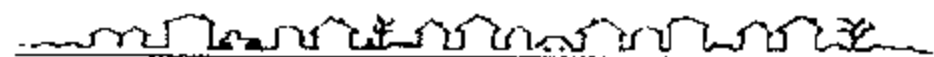
This fee includes guided caving and a T-shirt.

For more information, contact Leslie Cordova at 248-547-5626.

Winter's Last Fling

The Wabos Loppet may be the last great ski of the season! Come join us in Saulte Ste. Marie, Ontario, for this adventure. Cabins will keep us warm the nights of March 17 and 18. On Saturday, a train ride up the Agawa Canyon will take skiers to the beginning of a 27 K trail. Enjoy skiing groomed trails through scenic woods punctuated with lakes and streams back to the Stokely Creek Lodge. The 300-400 skiers will be treated to a huge BBQ at the trail's end.

Lodging costs will be \$75. The Loppet 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. Contact Mary Dunn for information and applications at 248-585-9924. Deposits will be collected at the January meeting.



ANNOUNCEMENT!

Ken and Lesia McQuade are happy to announce that Gregory Hoover McQuade arrived on October 25, 1999. Congratulations to all three

ONE MORE SKI TRIP? YES!!

Glenn Pace is planning a non-SOLAR downhill skiing trip to Blue Mountain Ski Resort for March 3-5. The cost is \$120 up front—an adjustment may be made according to Canadian rates. This fee includes skiing for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and lodging for two nights. Ski and snowboard rental and meals are extra. Maximum number of people is 5. He will have more info at the January meeting or call 734-458-9353.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT CLINICS at REI

(All clinics begin at 7 pm)

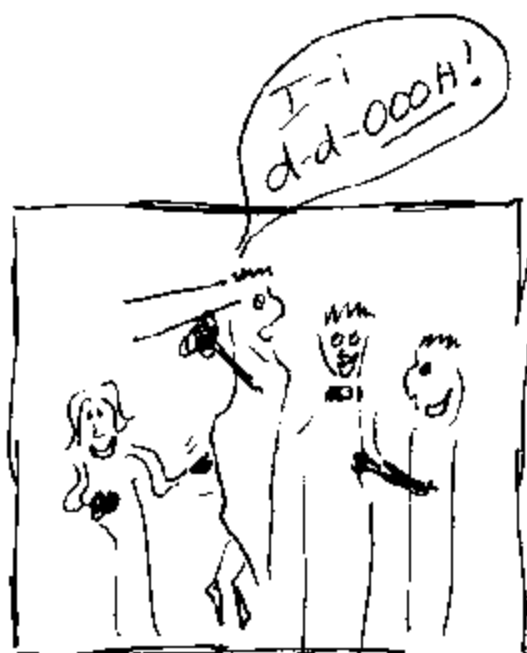
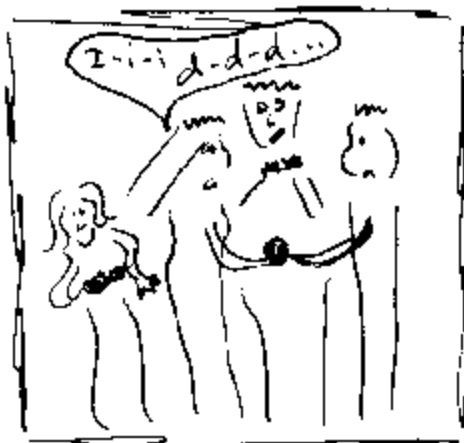
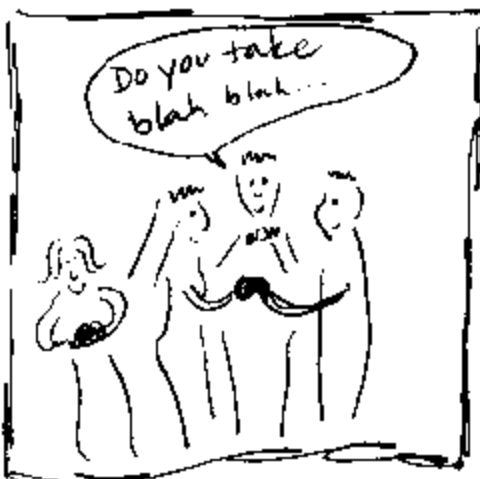
January 5 th	Safe Winter Travel with the Michigan State Police
January 12 th	GPS Skills
January 19 th	Climbing Denali
January 26 th	Backpacking the North Cascades
February 2 nd	Introduction to Winter Photography
February 9 th	Tuning the Board (for snowboarders)
February 16 th	Introduction to Cold Weather Biking
February 23 rd	Mountaineering in Alaska

FEBRUARY BONUS

Saturday, February 5th

REI store in Northville

Check out this day long event and hear some of SOLAR's experienced members, among other speakers, give talks on various topics including minor ski repairs, canoeing, and climbing the Tetons.



Editor's Note: Although I am still somewhere in the realm between Barber and Fedyk, I would like to announce that my new last name is indeed Fedyk. John and I were happily married on November 20, 1999 in a rip-roaring bash. We would like to extend a formal thank you to those members who attended wearing singlasses and shaking their ball bearings

T H E S O L A R R A Y



Happy New Year

STEERING COMMITTEE

President
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer
Activities
Membership
Equipment
By-laws
Education
Publication
Historian
Programs
Public Relations

Doug Lanyk
Karen Bates
Ted Huff
John Moffat
Leslie Cordova
Mary Price
Rick Merryman
Laura Albin
Harry Price
Amy Barber
John Fedyk
Jill Peared
Mike Banks

AT LARGE

Steve Gardner
Al Fylak
Cindy Harrison-Felix
Larry Martin
Joan & Bob Westbrook

Ms DeFrance
Joan Ryan
Bill Halvingis
Peg Campbell
Mike Banks

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

2000!!



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



SOLAR CLUB
P.O. Box 2438
Southfield, MI 48037