



The SOLAR RAY

AUGUST 2001

Introducing Southeast Michigan to the Outdoors since 1976

Backpacking adventures await you...

SOLAR will offer its perennial favorite, the fall beginning backpacking class, again this year. The classroom sessions are set for August 29 and September 5, 12, 19, and 26. The practicals are September 15-16 and September 28-30. The cost of the class is \$100 which includes a textbook, class materials, camping, parking, and a dinner at the first practical. For more information, speak to Carol McCutchie at the August SOLAR meeting. Meanwhile, SOLAR members have several backpacking trips planned for late summer, including Yellowstone National park, the Manistee River Trail, and the Red River Gorge. The first two trips filled quickly, so sign up fast for a backpacking adventure at the August SOLAR meeting on Tuesday, August 7.

-Ed.

SOLAR soars in Backpacker contest

Backpacker Magazine's on-line contest is in high gear, and SOLAR is faring quite well in the rankings. The challenge is to record the most "bag nights" (nights spent in a sleeping bag). Winners will receive free gear. As of July 24, SOLAR is back in the top 5!!! It seems some of our "bag nights" competitors disappeared the same way they appeared - overnight. It's hard to say what happened, but... Who's complaining?

We still need your help, as several large organizations are right on our tail. If we want to stay on top, we'll have to earn it... torturing ourselves with nights spent in the outdoors. So Get Out More, log on, log in, and log your nights at www.backpacker.com.

See you out there!!

- Karl Overheu! (CyberNomad@backpacker.com)



Backpacker Magazine Contest Rankings (as of July 24, 2001)

1. Boy Scouts of America - 3,920
2. Robert Land Academy - 820
3. BSA Venturing Crew - 522
4. United States Army - 508
- *** 5. SOLAR - Southfield, MI - 363 ***
6. Appalachian Mountain Club - 309
7. Louisiana Hiking Club - 283
8. Carolinas Hikers - 248
9. Backpacker Magazine - 233
10. National Outdoor Leadership School - 227
11. Sierra Club - 215
12. Appalachian Trail Conference - 207
13. United States Marine Corps - 167

SOLAR Calendar

August

Aug 7 Tuesday **General Membership Meeting** Colony Hall Leslie Cordova (248) 547-5626
Aug 9-11 **Great Lakes Primitive Gathering***** Bois Blanc Isl. Glen/Catherine Krueger (810) 774-9697
Aug 10-12 **Rock Climbing** Rattlesnake Park Ontario Laura Albin (517) 324-0564, albinlau@msu.edu
Aug 10-12 **Mammoth Caves Crawl** Mammoth Caves, KY Karen Bates lady_musher@yahoo.com
Aug 18-19 **Manistee River Trail Backpacking** Manistee, MI Joan Tobin (734) 281-1568
Aug 25-Sept. 8 **Yellowstone Park Backpacking** Montana Rob Mair grosbees@aol.com; 248/559.4281
Aug 24-26 DeFrance 12th Annual **Canoe Outing** Hale, MI Dave & Moe DeFrance (517) 552-3660
Aug. 29 **Basic Backpacking - First Class** Location TBA Carol McCririe cam@ismi.net
Aug 31 - Sept. 3 **Red River Gorge Backpacking** Kentucky Lou Szakal jsdid409@aol.com

September

Sept. 4 Tuesday **General Membership Meeting & Gear Swap** Colony Hall Leslie Cordova (248) 547-5626
Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26 **Basic Backpacking Classes** Location TBA Carol McCririe cam@ismi.net
Sept 7-9 **Rock Climbing** Rattlesnake Park Ontario Laura Albin (517) 324-0564, albinlau@msu.edu
Sept. 14-16 **Hiking & Biking** Wilderness State Park, Mackinac Leslie Cordova (248) 547-5626
Sept. 15-16 **Kids Camping** Nordhouse Dunes Jim Hoffer (248) 360-4854
Sept. 15-16 **Basic Backpacking Practical** Location TBA Carol McCririe cam@ismi.net
Sept. 28-30 **Basic Backpacking Practical** Location TBA Carol McCririe cam@ismi.net

October

Oct. 2 **General Membership Meeting** Colony Hall Leslie Cordova (248) 547-5626
Oct. 19-21 **Hiking, Caving, Climbing etc. at Hocking Hills** Ohio Peggy Medved (248) 390-3969
Oct. 19-21 **10th Annual Bald Mountain Halloween Weekend** Lisa Boose (248) 358-5330
Oct. 26-28 **Horseback Halloween Party** Double JJ Ranch Rothbury Lisa Boose (248) 358-5330

*KAYAKING 101*** is a monthly presentation on the 3rd Wednesday of each month for beginning to seasoned paddlers, Starting June 8, 2nd and 4th Fridays will be a scheduled paddle at different locations. For more information please call Larry Dunn at EMS 248.932.5953 or Alan Heuener at Heuener Canoe Rentals, Milford 248.685.2379.*

*** Denotes NON-SOLAR activity (SOLAR will not be held responsible for this activity

-- on here for informational purposes only). ***

If you would like to plan / lead a SOLAR activity,

contact Pam Riehl at pariehl1@netscape.net or solaractivities@netscape.net.

SOLAR HAS A NO-REFUND POLICY. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND AN ACTIVITY, YOU MAY "SELL YOUR SPOT" TO ANOTHER CLUB MEMBER



Milton,

Rattlesnake Point



Ontario

Photos: At last year's cookoff, Terry & Krystina Felix & other SOLARites tried to whip up something tasty, but the most impressive Coleman-stove concoction was Betsy Telford & Karen Sinclair-Smith's wildflower wedding cake made to celebrate meeting their husbands at a Rattlesnake climbing weekend ten years prior. Photos by Laura Albin.

Rock Climbing & Cookoff Weekend Aug. 10-12

Attention All Chef Wannabes (or those who already are!): Here is your chance to show off your camp cooking abilities (whether good or not-so-good) for prizes! Join us for the annual August Rattlesnake party and cook-off - not just for climbers any more. The weekend is August 10-12 at Rattlesnake Point in Milton, Ontario where there is climbing, mountain biking, paddling, swimming, hiking, sightseeing, and Toronto nearby. The weekend starts Friday evening when people arrive and usually set up tents in the dark, Saturday participating in numerous activities including preparing an entry dish, then Sunday playing some more. The rules for the cook-off are few and simple.

- 1) The dish must be entered into a predetermined category of: Appetizer, Entrée, Side Dish, Dessert.
- 2) The dish MUST be prepared and placed on the buffet table by 7:00pm Saturday
- 3) The dish MUST be entirely prepared at camp, including all chopping, cooking, cutting, seasoning, basting, baking, or anything thing else that goes into preparing a dish
- 4) The dish will be judged on taste, presentation, creativity and difficulty of preparing at camp
- 5) Everybody will be stuffed by the end of the evening and there will be no leftovers....Just Kidding.

If you have questions, contact me (albinlau@msu.edu/517-324-0564). I will have maps the next meeting.

-- Laura Albin

Beautiful Hocking Hills Oct. 19-21

Rolling Hills, Beautiful Cliffs, Running Rivers, Grand Waterfalls! If you have never been to Hocking Hills, Ohio, don't miss out on this chance! The scenery is Spectacular and Breathtaking. The trip is planned for October 19th thru October 21st. There is everything from Fantastic Hiking Trails (Long and Short), Caves, Rock Climbing, Repelling, Horse Back Riding, Swimming, Canoeing, Kayaking, Fishing, A Scenic Train Tour, Golf, and Antique Malls! As if it couldn't get any better, it will be the PEAK season of FALL! After a fantastic day on the trails, come back to a wood cabin that sits on its own two acres. Relax by the Fireplace, or sit in your own HOT TUB! After cooking in a fully supplied kitchen, join the group at the local fire pit! I guarantee that you will love this place! **PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN PRICE:** Cost for two nights = \$84. For more info call me at (248) 390-3969.

--Peggy Medved

Primitive Skills Gathering Aug. 9-11

Living Closer to Earth. Anyone? Yes, I know I am already living on the 3rd Rock. What I mean is ... can you live without phone, pager, computer, TV and CD? Or can you survive without backpack, tent, sleeping bag, stove, butane lighter, water filter, TP and candy? I am not asking you to give up the modern conveniences, but the more we are attached to them, the more we are removed from heartbeats of Mother Earth.

You can explore and learn about the world of nature through earth living skills and awareness. These ancient skills include primitive shelters, fire and cordage making, wild edible and medicinal plants, primitive pottery, basket making, hide tanning, bone tools, tracking, nature awareness and observation, caretaker attitude, and more.

You can learn all this at the Great Lakes Primitives Gathering. The event is Aug. 9-11 on Bois Blanc Island, near Cheboygan. This is a really fine event co-sponsored by the Great Lakes Primitives, the Michigan Atlatl Association and the Michigan Flintknappers. Limited to first 100 registered. Participants: \$85. Non-participants and participating children: \$45. For more information/registration call George Hedgepeth at 517-288-0168 or e-mail georgehedgepeth@hotmail.com or write George at 219 Holmes, Durand, MI 48429. This is a non-Solar event. See <http://members.aol.com/tbprim1/GLP.html>, or talk to SOLAR member Glen or Catherine Krueger, rkrueger11@home.com.

DeFrance / Albin Canoe Outing

It's the 12th annual DeFrance/Albin canoe outing! Come join the fun on Aug. 24-26. This year promises to be better than ever! The event starts on Friday when you arrive to late-night card games, setting up by feel, and sitting around the campfire. On Saturday morning we provide the ingredients for breakfast as well as opportunities to go biking, hiking, swimming, volleyball, and anything else you can imagine. Saturday night you provide a dish to pass for a traditional SOLAR potluck, followed by evening hikes and swim, more cards, more campfire, and whatever else you want. Sunday morning we get up and head to the canoe livery for 9 a.m. where we paddle down the AuSable River, Comins to 401 Bridge, 5 hours. The cost is \$25 for 1/2 of a canoe, breakfast Saturday morning, camping in our luxurious forest, and access to amenities like our top-of-the-line pit toilet facilities, (probable) running water, microwave, stove (still planning), and the cabin in general. If you have any questions or can't wait to sign up, contact me at 517-552-3660. (defrance@isrmi.net). Don't forget the sunscreen and bug juice!! This is near Hale off M-65 about 2 1/2 hours from metro Detroit. We'll have maps at the August meeting. The outing is friendly to well-parented kids and dogs. Note the maybes above; we are still remodeling and repairing the cabin, but it should be done by August. We have 11 years of perfect weather in a row, knock on wood.

--Maureen DeFrance

10TH ANNUAL BALD MOUNTAIN HALLOWEEN WEEKEND

*\$30 pp reserves your plot
Plus you'll get quite a lot
Like 2 nights' rest in Kevorkian's cabin
And admittance to Up'and Hil's for some autumn happenin'
Pumpkin picking and carving too
And bring your scariest costume to boo
Something fun that we're bringing back
Is our Saturday night Potluck, so food we won't lack
So all adults, you must bring a child
To stay overnight for fun & fright in the wild
If you can't find a child, then come Saturday by 4:00
Bring a dish to pass, a costume, & Halloween lore
See Lisa Boose to find out more
Or call 248-738-4867*

-- Lisa Boose





Photos: SOLARite Catherine Krueger uses a transit to survey the dig site; a SOLARite shows off how much can be unearthed in a meter x meter x 10 cm. area; and an excited Peter Lamb makes a discovery with help from SOLARite Shal Singh. Photos by Laura Phillips

Archaeology digs end on a hot note

SOLAR wrapped up its first archaeological field season with a weekend of sweaty digging in the trenches of the Metate site outside Milton, Ontario on July 21-22. SOLAR dug under the supervision of Dr. William Finlayson, an archaeologist with 30-plus years of experience in southern Ontario. Club members excavated in a privately owned site, searching for Mel's elusive complete pipe and the rare post mold. With transit accuracy, each SOLARite unearthed dozens of Iroquois artifacts dating to 1400 A.D., including bits of animal bone, pieces of decorative pottery as big as five inches across, arrowheads, stone axes, and the like. Perhaps the most impressive finds were a large bear's-tooth pendant found by Pete Lamb and a stone pipe bowl found by Roger James.

Meanwhile, for those who missed out on the SOLAR trips, the archaeologist has some openings on an independent September 15-16 dig. For more information, talk to me or email Dr. Finlayson at wfinlayson@uwo.ca.

For those 22 of you who went this year, thanks for supporting SOLAR's foray into the fascinating world of archaeological field work and I hope you had as good a time as I did.

--Laura Phillips

www.solaroutdoors.org



WILDERNESS PARK HIKING & MACKINAC ISLAND BIKING Sept. 14 - 16

KID FRIENDLY, NO PETS -- Come join S.O.L.A.R. as we bike Mackinac Island and hike Wilderness State Park on September 14 - 16, 2001. This is going to be a loosely organized trip. There are a lot of things to do in the area. The main plan is (weather depending) to go to Mackinac Island (11 miles from park to the ferry) on Saturday and do some bike riding, visit the forts, eat some fudge, eat some ice cream, take a carriage ride or visit the butterfly house. You can rent bikes on the Island, but it is cheaper to bring your own. The ferry to Mackinac Island leaves every half hour and costs \$15.50 round trip for adults, \$7.50 for children 5 - 11, and \$6.50 for bikes. On Sunday, you can hike Wilderness State Park which has 16 miles of hiking trails, and 26 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, or you can take a trip to Tahquamenon Falls. We will be staying in bunkhouses #2 and #3. These are rustic bunkhouses (i.e. no electric) with mattresses provided, outhouses nearby, and this time of year the showers and flush toilets should be available. Bring a sleeping bag or sheets. Also, please bring a lantern, campstove, games, stories, and a sense of humor. Everyone is expected to help clean up the cabin on Sunday before we leave!!! All this fun can be yours for a mere \$15 per person, plus the cost of the Mackinac Island ferry. Interested: contact Leslie Cordova at (248) 547-5626 or lesliegens@aol.com. Hurry as there are only 48 bunks available and as usual, it is first pay, first go.

-- Leslie Cordova

Review of the 11th annual fossil hunt

Once again the Fossil Hunt was a big success. We met at the museum at the Rock Glen Conservation Area in Arkona, Canada. This area features some of the best Cambrian Period fossils in North America, so the brochure says. Most of what we found were Brachiopods, coral or "bone fragments" and crinoid stem sections. These are the remains of the marine life of the Paleozoic Era, *the time of the Dinosaurs*. Err...actually these date back to 500 Million years ago and the dinosaurs didn't begin until 200 million years ago, in the Triassic Period. The Jurassic Period started 135 million years ago, but I guess Jurassic sounded better for a movie title than Triassic.

We had 19 people show up, 11 were kids. The age range was 4 to 55. While the day was hot, in the 90s, the morning was delightful. We hiked to the Ausable River and found many interesting things, including the alive and the fossils. Michele Hoffman (age 10) was the first to find wildlife, in the form of a small (about 8") water snake. Soon all the kids wanted to hold it, and drop it back into the water, and hunt for it again. I'm not sure who found the large frog, the many small toads, the crawfish, butterflies and the like. I do know that the horseflies found me.

After a modest but bountiful potluck lunch I made some balloons for the kids. We then went to the WATERFALL. It was cool but not the freezing cold of past years, and no bugs in the water! I think everyone played in the falls as well as the cave further down the creek. Hannah Cooley was the mermaid under the waterfall.

Upon reaching the river we crossed at the customary spot and swam past the mill to the best spot. Kyle Stanley (age 15) found two arrowheads and later Aubrey found another.

The real find of the day goes to Rebecca (age 8). She found one of the nicest *Trilobites* I have ever seen. I was very impressed. To think that this small arthropod, related distantly to horseshoe crabs, was crawling along the mud one day feasting on small worms and other animals when it became trapped, embedded in the sedimentary rocks which formed from the mud and sand of long ago. And there it sat, for 500 Million Years, waiting, waiting, to be found by Rebecca of the SOLAR Club!

Let's see. Solar is celebrating it 25th year. These small fossils are from 500 MILLION years ago. It truly is hard to comprehend. But they were easy to find.

All in all I think everyone had a GREAT time. I know I did. See you all next year!

If you were on the trip, E-mail me (ToUncleJim@aol.com) and I'll send you some photos.

-- Jim Giffix

Read me now:

SOLAR RAY DEADLINES

- * September issue ... **August 19**
- * October issue ... **September 16**
- * November issue ... **October 21**
- * December issue ... **November 18**
- * January issue ... **December 17**

The SOLAR RAY editor has a new address. Although email is strongly preferred (Laura4991@prodigy.net), you can send things the old-fashioned way if you insist. Please send your trip reports, articles, classifieds, etc. to Laura Phillips, 57100 West Eight Mile Road, Northville MI 48167.

Please send photos with captions, too – preferably high-contrast action shots of club members. You can send either "JPEG" photos to the email address, or mail me actual photos, whichever you prefer.

If nobody sends photos for publication, the editor reserves the right to publish several photos of Roger James in each issue. ☺

-- Ed.

Double JJ Horseback Riding Weekend Oct. 26 - 28

This is SOLAR's second annual Halloween Weekend git-a-way. We've got a great block of rooms along the main strip where all the action takes place Saturday night. For only \$261 per person, you get two nights at the Adult Exclusive Ranch, meals Saturday and Sunday, at LEAST one hour of horseback riding (pretty much unlimited riding if you show up at every ride time) for every level Saturday and Sunday, a hayride to a haunted barn, corn roast, d.j. dancing, mechanical bull, Saturday night Halloween trick-or-treat on the Ranch where we go door-to-door for shots and such, all followed by an MC Dance Party with contests. There's so many activities to choose from you will never get bored and will definitely want to come back year after year. I have a pre-trip party planned for Saturday, October 13 to go over carpooling arrangements, share costume ideas, decorations for our cabins and of course, tasting the treats we will bring. I've got an additional 10 spots, so rope up a friend, wrangle up some cash, and brand your spot now! I guarantee you will have a great time!

For details, call me @ 248-358-5330 during the day, 248-738-4867 evenings.

--Lisa Boose

SOLAR scrapbook in the works

Historian Denise Kordie is looking for cool old pix of past trips & meetings for the SOLAR scrapbook. Mark the back (date, place, people) and give to Denise at the meeting or call her at (248) 426 9364. Thanks!

SOLAR goes underground Aug. 10-12

Join me on an underground adventure of Mammoth Cave. This is not your average view of Mammoth Cave. The wild cave tour will take us to places where it will be mandatory to crawl, slither, squeeze, climb and get dirty. No experience is needed; just the love for adventure. The dates are August 10-12, 2001. The cost is: \$95.00 per person. This includes the cave tour, two nights of lodging and Saturday evening dinner.

Also available on this trip is two non-caving spots for \$54.00/person including 2 nights of lodging and Saturday dinner. These two spots would be great for those who have always wondered what was in a cave. Book your own walk through tours or spend the weekend day hiking in the park. For more info contact lady_nusher@yahoo.com or 810-323-1346, evenings. Warning... these spots will fill fast

--Karen Bates

SOLAR is a non-profit club with almost 400 members dedicated to the intelligent enjoyment of nature and outdoor pursuits. All SOLAR adventures begin at our meetings. There, you can get to know the other members and sign up for SOLAR activities, trips and classes.

Membership is only \$30 a year and includes discounts to a number of retail outfitters, access to club-owned equipment, a monthly newsletter, and a chance to meet hundreds of other like-minded adventurers drawn together by a common love of pristine lakes, breathtaking vistas, virgin forests and scenic shorelines, and the experiences to be found there.

Solar Club
P.O. Box 2438
Southfield, MI 48307



SOLAR Steering Committee

President	Leslie Cordova
Vice President	Tom Oleffo
Secretary	John Simonds
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	Larry Martin
	Joan Ryan
	Joan & Bob Westbrook

The SOLAR Club publishes the SOLAR RAY once a month for free to current dues-paid members. Submissions must be 500 words or less and must be received by the deadline. SOLAR events have priority over non-SOLAR events. Events in the next 2 months have priority over other events.

To submit by email: send to Laura4991@prodigy.net (preferred - no, Strongly Preferred - please send only Word attachments and either "JPEG" photos or actual prints, with captions and name of photographer)

By mail (sigh): Laura Phillips, 57100 W. Eight Mile Road, Northville MI 48167

Check out SOLAR on the World Wide Web

www.solaroutdoors.org
www.solaroutdoors.com

Monthly meeting location: Join us at the Colony Hall, 21780 Evergreen (between 8 and 9 Mile Roads) in Southfield at 7:30 p.m. Visitors can come for FREE. The club meets on the first Tuesday of the month. Membership dues are:

Individuals - \$30 a year / \$150 lifetime
Families - \$45 a year / \$225 lifetime

