



The SOLAR RAY

April 2002

WWW.SOLAROUTDOORS.ORG - Environmental Stewardship, Fun and Games, and More since 1976

Stop and smell the wildflowers...



The SOLAR theme for April and early May is walks in the spring woods and weekend trips to Ohio.

Solar offers three wildflower walks in the next few weeks. They include a kids' nature walk in Kensington on the last Saturday of April, and in mid-May, a wildflower walk at Crosswinds Marsh and a wildflower walk/kite fly at Kensington.

The spring waterfalls of Hocking Hills, Ohio lure us in late April for a weekend of hiking and hot tubing. In early May, it's hiking and camping in another beautiful state park in Ohio. Mid-May and we're back in Ohio's Cuyahoga Valley National Rec Area for scenery and biking.

Meanwhile, a spring backpacking class with what must be a record number of students gets underway with a weekend trip to Pinckney Rec Area.

Begin the adventure on the first Tuesday of the month, April 2 at 7:30 at the Colony Hall, Southfield. Visitors attend free.

Trip to Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve, Ohio

MAY 3 - 5, 2002

Come join S.O.L.A.R. as we explore John Bryan State Park and Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve on May 3 - 5, 2002.

John Bryan is the most scenic State Park in western Ohio. The park contains a remarkable limestone gorge cut by the Little Miami River, which is designated as a state and national Scenic River. A portion of the gorge itself is designated as a national natural landmark. Nature lovers can enjoy any of the ten different trails found in the park. The trails follow the scenic river gorge and meander through majestic woodlands.

Drive down Friday night (3 - 3 1/2 hours) and spend 2 nights camping and exploring. This is going to be a loosely organized trip. There are a lot of things to do in the area. The main plan is to hike the trails at John Bryan State Park and Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve. If there is time, we can bike part of the 50 mile paved bike path that is in nearby Little Miami State Park.

If you wish to canoe, there are canoe liveries in the area. Also, you will need to register with the park if you want to rock climb or rappel. I will not be bringing rock climbing gear down.

There will be the traditional SOLAR (too much food) potluck on Saturday night. The rest of your meals you will be on your own. Bring a campstove, and rain tarp (just in case).

All this fun can be yours for \$7 adults, \$3 kids under 18 and \$2 dogs (must be on leash).

Interested contact Leslie Cordova at (248) 547-5626 or lesliegene@aol.com

SOLAR MAY ELECTIONS

It's spring! Time for new life to blossom and grow. Rivers break free from winter ice-lock. Animals emerge from hibernation. You emerge from your cocoon and become renewed as a human and a SOLAR member. Get the scenario? It's time to run for a leadership position on the SOLAR steering committee! SOLAR can always use more leaders and all steering committee positions are open for a challenge. At the April general membership meeting, current committee members will briefly describe their individual roles so you can better understand what we really do (and appreciate our efforts!). If you are interested in running for a position, come to the next meeting to find out more and discuss with individual members their roles one-on-one. Please call Amy Fedyk at (248) 543-9873 if you have any questions or want more info. Steering committee positions are: President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Education, Activities Director, Membership, Solar Ray Editor, Webmaster, Historian, Programs, By-laws, Public Relations, Equipment.

—Amy Fedyk



Memorial Weekend Rafting Update

There is still time to sign up for the rafting trip on the New River in West Virginia for the Memorial Day Weekend, May 24-27, 2002, but you will need to pay IN FULL at the April meeting, or make special arrangements with Jim. This will be an excellent adventure for people age 6-77, who are either new to solar, "old-timers" looking for something new, or families with Kids, looking for a fun safe trip. This trip will have the options of one of three experiences. You will choose one.

The first is the Traditional Lower New River, for age 15 and up.

The second trip will be the Kid-Friendly trip on the Upper New River. There is **NO** chance of the boat tipping or anyone being knocked overboard. Minimum age is 6.

The third trip is a new one. It is called "Team Extreme" as it is an intense and aggressive whitewater experience

All three trips will go on the same day, Sunday, May 26, 2002

The cost will cover rafting and all three meals that day, and camping FOR ALL THREE NIGHTS, on their grounds.

The cost will range from \$85 for kids, \$160 for adults and \$200 for the "Extreme" experience (which can only be booked in groups of 4 or 5).

You can call me, Jim Gilfix at 734-513-9460 for more info

There will be a handout at the March to April Solar meetings.

The full payment is due at the April Meeting.

-Jim Gilfix



**Congratulations to the
following newly engaged
SOLARites: Lynne Dubay
and Mike Hubbard,
Suzanne Creech and
John Srodawa, Meg
Webber and Eric Braun.
Solar blessings on all!**

Outdoor photography show at the Benchmark

I will be having a photography exhibition at The Benchmark in Farmington on Friday April 19 from 6:00-9:00 PM. Many of you have seen my work in the photo contest and during my presentation at the February meeting. The prints are from my travels out west last year, as well as shots from various places in Michigan.

I will have a variety of framed and matted prints, all of which are individually numbered and signed. They will be available for sale, and I will be accepting orders from my catalog for others. Custom framing and matting will be available for order.

Come on out and enjoy the pictures! (And help support my quest to make a living by sharing the great outdoors!!)

-Karl Overheul



Hike for Hope - On June 2, 2002, Mark Orton and Jeremy Baldwin will set off on an adventure, 101 miles along the historic Appalachian Trail in beautiful Shenandoah National Park. While planning their hike, Mark was reading *A walk for Sunshine* by Jeff Alt. This book inspired him to use their hike to raise money for diabetes, a disease that affects his family in many ways. Both Jeremy and Mark are currently working very hard in their respective communities to raise money for the Diabetes Action Research and Education Foundation.

You can help by visiting www.consideration.org/hikeforhope.

--- Mark Orton
Hike For Hope, Chairman

2002 MEMORIAL WEEKEND NORTH MANITOU ISLAND BACKPACKING TRIP



Plan:

- Meet at the boat dock in Leland at 9:30 AM Friday morning or Saturday morning. The boat leaves at 10:00 SHARP and if you are not there, your money cannot be refunded.
- Backpack and day hike in small groups (eight or less) around the island in this wilderness haven for the weekend.
- Leave the island on Monday morning at 11:10 AM. Please meet shortly before the departure time, as the boat will leave without you.
- You will be responsible for your own food and gear for the weekend.
- You must have taken the S.O.L.A.R. backpacking class, or be proficient at backpacking, as this is a true rustic wilderness area.
- You must let me know which day you are taking the Ferry so that I can make appropriate reservations.

MORE FUN TRIP DETAILS:

North Manitou Island is part of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The island offers 15,000 acres of wilderness with an atmosphere that emphasizes solitude, self-reliance and a sense of exploration. Primary activities that North Manitou offers are hiking, swimming, backcountry camping, bird watching, beach combing and fishing. Be prepared for a rustic backpacking experience, as you will need to hang your food (NO BEARS, but other four-legged food thieves), purify your drinking water and bring a cook stove, as fires are not permitted. Bring T.P. and a trowel, as you will need to, ah, create your own outhouses.

At the May meeting I will have a list of people who are going on both ferries. Please take a copy (I will E-Mail it as well) and try and carpool as much as possible. Also, since there will be a lot of people going on this trip, we need to practice low-impact camping, so try and set up small hiking groups (under eight). You will be responsible for your own food and gear, so PLEASE COME PREPARED!! This trip always fills up fast for the holiday weekend, so don't delay!

--- Bill Cowdin

First SOLAR Curling Season Ends in Success

I hosted the second curling party of the season on 16 February at the Detroit Curling Club. 20 SOLAR members and guests showed up and learned how to curl. After lessons that lasted about an hour, all of these novices played their first game, two hours of sliding big, granite rocks and sweeping as they flew down the ice.

Is it difficult? Ask around. Ask me. To deliver rocks and sweep is a question of balance; you are moving on slick ice. These novices were making good shots and sweeping effectively before they left and went home. But consistency takes years of practice. No one got hurt and smiles were broad and common. This game is literally and culturally COOL. The Club closes at the end of March. I will organize SOLAR parties again next fall. This first season with a new building in Ferndale has been an amazing success. The Club will end the season with at least 50 new members, among whom are SOLAR members Judy Spitzer and Linda Dwziga'ski, and former member Michele Falvey. Thank you all for your interest and grand enthusiasm.

--- Rob Mair



WILDFLOWER WALK

Sunday, May 12, 2 PM, Crosswinds Marsh Park, Flat Rock. At this annual event we'll walk through the marsh and wooded area of Crosswinds Marsh checking out the wildflowers. Crosswinds Marsh boasts many different trails including a boardwalk across the lake and marsh, and through wooded areas. There is a variety of wildlife including a small blue heron rookery, nesting swans, a profusion of frogs, and a pair of nesting bald eagles. We'll meet at 2 PM, and hike for about 1-2 hours. After the hike, we'll have a picnic dinner at the park. Please bring wildflower identification books, binoculars to check out the birds and a picnic dish to pass. Some also like to bring cameras with lots of lenses, since we will be stopping a lot to check out different flowers. Grill available at the park. This park is dog friendly, and admission is free. *Directions: Take 275 south to Exit 8. Turn right off the exit ramp and follow the signs (about 10 miles) to Crosswinds Marsh.* We'll meet in the parking lot at 2 PM. Activity will be canceled if it's raining.

--Margaret Martin

Last-Minute trip to beautiful Hocking Hills, April 26-27



Photos:

Above: At last year's trip to Hocking Hills, Pam takes in a spectacular view. Below left: Pam, Roger, Tom & Gloria bask in sunshine on the state park steps. Center: Riley & his master. Right: Tom. Photos by Laura Jones.

Have you ever been to Hocking Hills? Hocking Hills is a beautiful place located in Ohio. Yes it's hard to believe that Ohio can be so beautiful, but it is. In fact it is one of SOLAR members' favorite places to visit. Especially at this time of the year. The ice will be melting and the water is flowing. The scenery is breathtaking and it is all out for the viewing. Past trips have all been sold out. Even last trip I was able to make room for people who were able to camping out. We also have the bonus of no crows or lady bugs. This trip is going to have kid & dog friendly cabin. There maybe an extra charge for pets. Since the Hot Tubs were such a big success, I will be renting cabin again. The cabin will be at a different locations, but will include, yes again, Hot Tubs! The kitchen is fully stocked, and towels are provided. Just bring is personal items, extra towels for the hot tub, and food if you prefer to cook indoors. There will be a pot-luck on Saturday night. I will provide the main dish, so I will need to know if there is any dietary restrictions. The cabins have 2 bedrooms with queen-size beds and a queen size sofa sleeper. The cost is \$115 for the weekend, price based on 6 people per cabin. Add \$40 per person if you share a cabin with only 4 people. For more information on Hocking Hills, please check out the local web site at: <http://www.hockinghills.com/> Or email me with any questions. I need at least 10 additional people to have this trip a go. Money will be collected at the April SOLAR meeting. You can also mail me a check.

--Peggy Medved(248) 390-3969



2002 Calendar

For details and
email addresses
of trip leaders,
visit the
SOLAR calendar:
www.solaroutdoors.org

Trip leaders –
be sure to share
your plans with
the Ray editor.

Everyone else –
remember, most
trips fill very
quickly, so if
you're interested
in going,
sign up fast!

— Laura James

Dates	Trip	Location	Trip Leader	Notes
April 2	Meeting	Colony Hall	Leslie Cordova	7:30 in Southfield
April 13-14	Backpacking	Waterloo SRA	Mike Banks	Class Practical #1
April 21-28	Archaeology dig	Rio Bravo Belize	Laura James	Mayan ruins
April 26-27	Hiking	Hocking Hills Ohio	Peggy Medved	Hot tubs & cabins
April 27	Kids Hike	Auburn Hills	Meg Webber	Nature program & cookout
May 3-5	Backpacking	Manitou, maybe	Mike Banks	Class Practical #2
May 3-5	Camping/hiking	Bryan St. Park, Ohio	Leslie Cordova	Kid friendly
May 3-5	Whitewater rafting	Pa./W. Virginia	Linda Hill	Cheat River
May 7	Meeting	Colony Hall	Leslie Cordova	7:30 in Southfield
May 10-12	Rock climbing	Near Sault Ste. Marie	Laura Albin	Climbing class
May 12	Wildflower walk	Crosswinds Marsh	Margaret Martin	Near Flat Rock
May 17-19	Biking trip	Cuyahoga Nat'l Area	Jonnie Kostishaks	Near Cleveland
May 18	Kite fly	Kensington Metropk.	Jim Gilfix	Nature walk too
Men. Wknd	River rafting	West Virginia	Jim Gilfix	Family friendly
Men. Wknd	Backpacking	N. Manitou Island	Bill Cowdin	SOLAR adventure
May 25-June 2	Mountaineering	Sierra Nevadas	Rick Waller	Hardcore hike in Cali
June 1	Nat'l Trails Day	Island Lake	Peggy Medved	www.americanhiking.org
June 4	Meeting	Colony Hall	Leslie Cordova	7:30 in Southfield
June 8-9	Kayaking class**	Silver Lake St. Park	John Moffat	**non-SOLAR- near Means
June 14-16	Rock climbing	Rattlesnake, Ont.	Laura Albin	New dates
June 15-16	Archaeology dig	Rattlesnake, Ont.	Laura James	Field work – Iroquois site
July 2	Meeting	Colony Hall	Leslie Cordova	7:30 in Southfield
July 14	Fossil hunt	Ontario	Jim Gilfix	Close to Pt. Huron bridge
July 19-21	Rock climbing	Rattlesnake, Ont.	Laura Albin	New dates
July 20-21	Archaeology dig	Rattlesnake, Ont.	Laura James	Excavate ancient garbage
July 27-28	Canoeing trip	Au Sable River	Tom Obizzo	Canoe race, too
Aug. 6	Meeting	Colony Hall	Leslie Cordova	7:30 in Southfield
Aug. 8-12	Primitive skills	Bois Blanc Island	Glen Kueger	The big annual gathering
Aug. 9-11	Rock climbing	Rattlesnake, Ont.	Laura Albin	New dates
Aug. 16-18	Caving	Indiana	Leslie Cordova	Wyandotte/Marengo caves
Sept. 3	Meeting	Colony Hall	Leslie Cordova	7:30 in Southfield
Sept. 7-8	Rock climbing	Rattlesnake, Ont.	Laura Albin	Can't get enough of it.

The Kids' Corner: Kids SOLAR Club Up and Climbing!

For March's activity we went rock climbing at Planet Rock in Pontiac. We had a good turn out with 6 kids! Rebecca, who is 7, is a natural! She went right to the top every time! She even ventured over to one of the harder walls. All of the kids did a great job! They especially enjoyed bouldering in "the cave"! None wanted to leave at the end of the day! A special thanks to Susan for coming by to help belay!!

April 27th we are going to the Auburn Hills Nature Center to make Dwarf Tree Frog aquariums. The cost is \$4 per child. We need to be there before 11:00 so we can get started right at 11:00. We are also having a cook out afterwards. So, bring a dish to pass and forks for roasting hot dogs. I will supply the hot dogs and buns. There are about 2 miles of trails for hiking as well. So, it should be a good time for all!

Be sure to put June 8th and July 6th on your calendars! We are checking into canoeing in June and kayaking in July. I have friends who are very experienced kayakers and are really excited about taking out a group of kids and showing them the ropes. Or should I say strokes? I should have more information at the April meeting.

If you have any questions, please call me at (248) 980-3667 or send an email to megann34@ivillage.com

Meg Webber

School of Outdoor Leadership, Adventure & Recreation



National Trails Day Volunteers Needed!

National Trails day is June 1st! To add to the fun and excitement of the day, I'm making a weekend out of it! That's right! The location is going to be Island Lake. Come join your fellow solar members in by help clear the trails, laying wood chips, repairing some paved trails, and building a possible board walk and bridge, for future hikes. The parks budget is low, so If anyone has extra 2 x 4 wood to donate, or has some connections for donated wood, please contact me. The park is in need of a board walk that would extend some 60 ft. The fun will begin Friday night with spending the weekend in there cabin with a total of 20 solar members. The cost is \$10 per person for a single space in the cabin, for the weekend. If you are unable to share the nights with us, the volunteer work begins Saturday morning at 10 am. There will be a traditional pot luck on Saturday night, and all are welcomed, just bring a dish to pass, and then dig in! Please contact me for any additional questions. Thanks for helping out with a great trail! Keep Hiking!

— Peggy Medved
S.O.L.A.R. Public Relations Director
(248) 390-3969,
Meddsn@voyager.net



Ready to venture?

LAKE MICHIGAN CHALLENGE JULY 22

Watertribe's upcoming Lake Michigan Challenge is scheduled to launch on Monday, July 22nd after the conclusion of the Great Lakes Kayaking Symposium in Grand Marais. The Lake Michigan Challenge is an unsupported 304-statute-mile expedition race with three check points that starts in Maristec on Lake Michigan and ends at Tawas State Park on Lake Huron. The challengers are provided upwards of 8 days to complete the race, although there are deadlines for reaching the three check-points at Leelanau, Cheboygan and Harrisville State Parks.

The purpose of the WaterTribe Challenge is to encourage the development of boats, techniques, skills, equipment, and fitness for safe and efficient coastal expeditions and wilderness tripping using minimal impact human and wind powered watercraft based on kayaks, canoes, and small multihulls. These are tough races for skilled paddlers and sailors and additional information on the two Everglades Challenges and the Okefenokee Challenge that have already been held as well as the upcoming Lake Michigan Challenge can be found on the WWW.Watertribe.Com website. Information specific to the Lake Michigan Challenge can be found at WWW.WATERTRIBE.Com/LakeMichigan.

The Lake Michigan Challenge is sponsored this year by Verlen Kruger and Mark Przedwojewski of Kruger Canoe. Mark has been a first place finisher in his class in the last three Challenges

SOLAR sponsors new T-Shirt contest



The last official SOLAR T-shirt contest was in 1998. It's high time we update our wardrobes! The 2002 T-shirt contest will be held following the April general membership meeting and we need YOUR talent and creativity! You don't need a design degree—just produce a design according to the following rules and maybe your design will win!

Here are the rules:

1. Design must be representative of SOLAR (sporty, humorous, outdoorsy, people-oriented, tasteful).
2. Design must be clean lines—no shading or rough edges. May be handdrawn or computer-generated.
3. Design needs to be separated according to color, i.e., blue part of design on a separate sheet of paper from mauve part of design (for the sake of the contest, though, present the design on a single sheet of paper).
4. Design may be 2 colors on one side of shirt or 1 color on front and back of shirt.
5. Design size may be no larger than 13x14 inches per side.
6. Sign your design!

If your design wins, you win a FREE T-SHIRT, plus FAM! and very little fortune. But everyone will be wearing "your latest look." So think big...and plan for April! Please call Amy Fedyk at 248-543-9875 for any questions or contact her via jfedyk@hotmail.com.

—Amy Fedyk

Spring Bike Trip May 17-19

- ♦ Where: Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, near Cleveland, Ohio.
- ♦ Cost: \$35 per person, includes 2 nights lodging at the Stanford Youth Hostel, and breakfast Saturday and Sunday.
- ♦ Please Bring: Pot luck dish for Saturday Evening, games, bikes, hiking stuff, etc.
- ♦ For More Information, Please Call Jonnie Kostishak. 734-398-5315

We'll be staying at the historic Stanford House Hostel located in the beautiful Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, just south of Cleveland, Ohio. There is the 35 mile Erie Canal Towpath and the Bike Centennial Maine to Iowa Bike Route for all you bike enthusiasts. Plenty of other things to do for the non-biker.

— Jonnie Kostishak



SOLAR Nature walk and Kite Fly



Saturday, May 18

Spring is just around the corner, warmer weather, cool breezes, flowers, animals. Join us on May 18, Saturday at 1 PM for a Kite fly and nature walk at Kensington Metro Park. We will meet at the Nature Center for a walk around the pond, checking out the wildflowers, and maybe the deer. Then we will go to the big field and get out our kites for a festive afternoon. If you do not own a kite, come anyhow, I have a few extra. Of course this trip is Kid-Friendly, and FREE.

Call me at 734 513 9460 with any questions, or pick up a flyer at the April and May Solar meetings.

—Jan Gifex

Kayak Class June 8 - 9

Taught by Ron Smith, Black Perrot Paddling, at Silver Lake State Park, Mears, MI; 10-12 Students Max. \$175- with Ron's equipment (includes campsite); \$145 - your own equipment (includes campsite). The first 12 people to place their \$25 deposit will receive confirmations. Others will be put on a waiting list, in case of cancellations. Neither the deposit nor the fee are refundable. The camp-services booked for the weekend. I Park or Ron. However, you may sell close to the beach at Silver Lake, other boat traffic, also has sand dunes and have our class. Silver Lake has Michigan. It may be possible to shallow, approximately a mile. Ron for those who need it (kayak, paddle, using Ron's equipment we need your can fit you for a kayak and wet suit. waivers for this class. We have the night June 7 and Saturday June 8. day and must check out by 1 on Sun-Park sticker, however, the site fees are included in the class fee. Two tents are allowed per site, two persons per tent. You will receive a reservation number when the deposit is made. You may make your camping and site arrangements according to your own preferences. Bring your own meals, potluck on Saturday night.



sites will be reserved and Ron's cannot get refunds from the State your spot. We have campsites which although it does have at one end where we can paddle a creek that flows into Lake paddle all the way if it is not too Smith will provide all equipment PFD, wet suit, etc.) If you are height and weight so that Ron Ron provides insurance and campsites reserved for Friday You can check in after 3 on Friday. You will need to buy a State

Course: Basic to intermediate kayaking skills. Kayaks, kayaking equipment, entering and exiting a kayak, paddle strokes, wet exits, using paddle float, reentering the kayak individually and with assistance (rescues), basic tips on weather, navigation, Eskimo rolls and about anything else you would like to learn. If there is a specific skill you want to learn beyond the basics, let me or Ron know.

—John Moffat (248-515-7489; johnjmoffat@yahoo.com)

School of Outdoor Leadership, Adventure & Recreation

SOLAR is a non-profit club with 400-plus members dedicated to the intelligent enjoyment of nature and outdoor pursuits.

Membership is only \$40 a year per person (\$55 per family) 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.

The School For Outdoor Leadership,
Adventure & Recreation
P.O. Box 2438
Southfield, MI 48037



GENE & LESLIE CORDOVA
14523 BORGMAN
OAK PARK, MI 48237



SOLAR Steering Committee

<i>President</i>	Leslie Cordova	<i>Equipment</i>	Carol McCritie	<i>At Large</i>	Mike Banks * Moe DeFrance
<i>Vice President</i>	Tom Oloffo	<i>Historian</i>	Denise Kordie		Al Fylak * Steve Gardner
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<i>Activities</i>	Pam Riehl	<i>Pub. Relations</i>	Peggy Medved		Doug Lanyk * Larry Martin
<i>By-Laws</i>	Gloria Fontaine	<i>Solar Ray</i>	Laura James		Joan Ryan
<i>Education</i>	Harry Price	<i>Web Master</i>	Roger James		Joan & Bob Westbrook

SOLAR MEETINGS are generally held the first Tuesday of each month in Southfield at the Colony Hall, 21780 Evergreen (between 8 & 9 Mile Roads) at 7:30. Visitors can come for FREE.

THE SOLAR RAY is a monthly publication of SOLAR and is sent free to current dues-paid members. If you change your address please tell the membership chairman, Mary Price, hmprice@ameritech.net.

Submission guidelines:

- ☑ Articles must be 500 words or less
 - ☑ SOLAR events have priority over non-club events; events in the next 2 months have priority over other events
 - ☑ Please submit via email or Word attachment to Laura4991@prodigy.net
 - ☑ Please submit via regular mail to Laura James, 57100 W. Eight Mile Road, Northville MI 48167.
 - ☑ Please submit photos as JPEGs or prints only
 - ☑ All articles and photos must be attributed and submitting photos is encouraged!
- March issue deadline is **Sunday April 21**; NO SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THAT DATE ☺

