



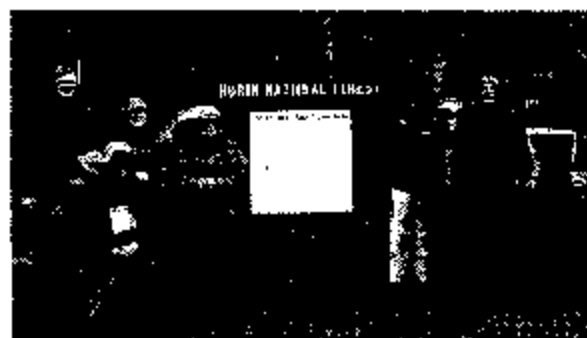
## Spring Backpacking 2004 (or You've Come a Long Way Baby)

by Elizabeth Schwab

I like amenities. "Roughing it" to me is camping at a State Park where I have to share showers and take my own hand towel to the bathroom. But I have an adventurous streak and love hiking, finding great peace, beauty and energy in the woods. Being a newish Solarite, I caught on quickly that Beginning Backpacking is Solar 101—a necessary evil if I wanted to move on to other things. I signed up with great reservation.

It was unbelievable how much class time was involved—6 days?! Our fearless leader Mike Banks set the tone the first night. There was a lot to learn to backpack safely and for maximum enjoyment, but set a fun relaxed atmosphere to learn it in. Over the weeks we covered many topics taught by many instructors (with the practical looming closer and closer...) and had many question & answer times where no question was treated as dumb, but much laughter was involved. There were literally centuries of experience for us to learn from.

I admit I skated over some of the readings, convinced that water filters and stoves were not really in my future. It was a great relief to learn I wasn't expected to carry a Coleman camp stove in my pack, since that seemed like an



*Backpacking Class*

awful lot of weight no matter how good hot food tasted.

It was comforting that the first practical was at Waterloo. How much trouble could we get into that close to home? No one expected the humidity with temperatures in the mid to high 80's, which our bodies just weren't accustomed to. Once at camp we had stations to practice knots, compass and map use, water filters, bear bags, those dangerous looking itty bitty stoves, and learn more about first aid. At the campfire that night it struck me what a diverse group our class was in terms of age and background, yet we were all (mostly) enjoying ourselves. The instructors looked out for us, but we also looked out for each other.

The second practical was optional, so we had a smaller turnout—I actually think the instructors outnumbered us! Hoist Lakes had fewer amenities, so we had to put the trusty shovels to use and take turns filtering water. We also had to set up camp twice, hike further and for an extra day. The weather was pretty ugly; lots of rain and cold. Breaking down camp May 2<sup>nd</sup>, white clumps periodically fell from the sky and honest to God I kept thinking, "What is that stuff?" Talk about denial being a river

in Egypt!

Despite all this and all the challenges of applying all that we had learned, I was enjoying myself! And when I, without thinking, said "Next time I'll..." I knew I had crossed to the other side. Pretty much everything I feared about backpacking happened and not only did I manage, but, with a little help from new friends, had fun.

Not everyone in our class plans to continue backpacking, but everyone agreed the instructors were superb, in class and at the practicals. There are not enough superlatives for them.

So I've had a major attitude adjustment. I know what features I want in my backpack and tent, as well as which cute little stove and water filter I want when (not if) I get my own gear—after I get a

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## Spring Backpacking 2004 (cont'd)

second job to pay for it all! I now react to pit toilets and water pumps with "Yes!" instead of "Yeah, right." Backpacking is no longer an evil but something that will bring me many fine adventures and challenges, the first one being to get better at it. I'm actually inching towards the possibility of the Winter Backpacking class. (A pastime I feel shows "insanity" is a subjective term.) Besides, a quinzee is one of those sandwich places, right?



*All the instructors fixing a pack*



*Water filter class*

## Cheat River Festival

by Peter Lamb

The Cheat River Festival is held in West Virginia every year to raise money to restore the Cheat watershed which was decimated by acid mining runoff. It has recovered remarkably well due to a lot of work and money by various river groups. Linda Hill has been running a trip to the festival for several years, and this year's trip was, as usual, a BLAST. SOLAR attendees included Linda Hill (i.e. River Woman), Cindy Taylor, Tiffany McLean Kelly, Victoria Founteas, Steve Nilson, Bob Conrad, George Usitalo, Ted Kosik, Mike Palazzo and me, Ray editor in the field. The festival is held at the end of April when the water has warmed up, and spring is well under way. It is a great time to visit this beautiful part of the country.

Most people got to the camp-site on Thursday. We rafted on Friday and Saturday, and after a leisurely breakfast left for home Sunday. We rafted the Youghiogheny first. This river has a lot of class 5 water and is done in small rafts, two or three paddlers and a guide. The Yough is a highly technical and a lot of fun to run—so much so that one member of the party wanted a much closer look and ran the whole of Triple Drop rapids (class 5) outside the raft. Tiffany (said member) even had the presence of mind to put her contact back in half way down (the river?). Now that is cool under

pressure. She was eventually rescued with minor bruises and a great spirit. The guides said later they don't remember anyone else taking that long a ride. She had been picked up by the rescue kayak but had let go to prevent them both from going over a big drop. This is big water and that was a bad place to pop out of the raft. Great going Tiffany!

On Saturday we did the Cheat River including Tiffany who was not put off by her dunking. This was the start of the festival. There was also a kayak race down the river... I never really appreciated just how skilled the kayakers were until I took a lesson and spent a lot of time looking at the bottom of the river. The Cheat River has up to class 4 rapids, but it is big water and rain had made it challenging. It was a great day on the river. There were no major mishaps among our rafters but another group dumped out the whole raft of nine people. That did cause a bit of a scramble to rescue them. Going down the river with us was a class of guides in training. They were in inflatable duckies and are fair game to be tipped out or run over with the raft. The lunch stop is at the foot of a big rapid, so the lunch time entertainment was watching the beginning guides get thrashed by the rapids.

The weather was sunny for both days on the

river, but we had the traditional brief rain at the festival that evening. I always wonder about playing electronic instruments in the rain but it does not seem to bother the musicians. They have a silent auction of donated items to raise money for river restoration and there is food, kayaks and gear for sale. Last year I got carried away and bought a boat. I told the group if they see me going for my check book to sit on me till it passes. Since the bands were very good. All of us got into the spirit and did some fancy dancing in the mosh pit in front of the



*Cheat River Camp Site*

stage on Saturday night. Have you ever seen dueling amplified wash boards? Well that's just part of the mix in high energy country rock as well as some really cool fiddling. After the music finished for the night, we all went back to the campsite and sat around the campfire.

The scenery in West Virginia is truly stunning, especially so in these river valleys which rise so steeply from the water. They are tree lined canyons. I have never seen so many varieties or numbers of butterflies as I did in these valleys. If rafting is not your thing, other available activities include mountain biking, some truly great hiking, and rock climbing. I also stopped on the way down to visit Falling Waters, the truly amazing house built over a waterfall by Frank Lloyd Wright. I also stayed a day later and took a white water kayak lesson (most interesting).

You don't need rafting experience to do this trip especially if you have people in your raft that do, but it is nice if you have done something a little easier. Linda is running a trip to do the Mighty Gauley in September it would be possible to do the New River at that time to get some experience.

## Caesar Creek State Park Little Miami State Park and River July 2-5, 2004

Come join SOLAR as we celebrate the July 4th holiday. This kid and dog friendly outing is close to home, only a 4 hour drive, just south of Dayton Ohio.

**Parks' Amenities:**

Caesar Creek State Park has clear blue waters, scattered woodlands, meadows and steep ravines. The park offers some of the finest outdoor recreation in Southwest Ohio—including boating, hiking, camping, and fishing. It has 43 miles of hiking trails, 8.5 miles of mountain biking trails, a lake with a 1,300 foot beach and fossil hunting.

Nearby is the Little Miami paved bike trail system with over 100 miles of trails. Also close by are a bike rental, ice cream store, and winery.

**Planned Events:** We are going to have the traditional potluck dinner on Saturday night and canoe or kayak the Little Miami River on Sunday.

**Camp Conditions:** We will be camping at the Group Horseman's Camp within the park where we will have the entire camp to ourselves. The camp has a pit toilet but no running water. Please bring a water container with you that you can fill at the main campground, which also has showers.

### **Costs:**

- Adult: Camp and canoe \$30, camp and kayak \$40, camp only \$15
- Child: Camp and canoe \$20, camp and kayak \$25, camp only \$5
- Dogs: Free, not allowed in canoes or kayaks, and must be leashed at all times

If you are interested please contact Leslie Cordova at (248) 547-5626 or [lesliegene@aol.com](mailto:lesliegene@aol.com). The trip is first pay first go with a strict limit of 30 people.



## A Morning on the Manistee River

by Gene Cordova

I am awakened by constant flashes of lightening and the booming of thunder. It sounds as if an enormous artillery barrage was trying to destroy the camp. The rain is beating down and striking a steady rhythm on the rainfly. Eventually, the lightening dims and the thunder fades into the distance. The rain slows and then stops. The sun begins to peek through the fabric of the tent and a lone bird sounds a mournful call from a distant tree.

I unzip the door and climb out into a peaceful world that seems to have renewed itself somehow. Everything smells fresh and clean, in the early morning air. I breathe deeply and inhale the fragrant scents of the damp earth, the wet grass and the leaves of the trees, heavy with the rain. I walk to some stairs that lead down to the river. I sit at the bottom and gaze into the water.

Only the sandy bottom along the shore, is visible at first. Further out, the river weed begins to grow in the sand and the far bank is covered with a mixture of reeds, cat tails and water grasses.

A quick movement to my right catches my eye, and I manage a glance at a speeding fish, darting upstream. But I quickly lose it in the glare of the early morning sun. As my eyes focus on where the fish once was, I see an old rusty vehicle frame. It is large, perhaps that of an ancient bus, or truck. It lies there, concealing some forever unsolvable mystery of how it managed to end its life's journey at this particular spot in the river. The river weeds seem to feel sorry for it and grow close to it, and inside of it, as if to console it in its resting place of sand and water.

A gentle breeze begins to blow, allowing a frenzied escape of captive raindrops, from the leafy trees along the shore. The multitudes of drops sound like the tintinnabulation of innumerable tiny bells as they strike the surface of the water. They play a melody that the river has known from the time of its birth. In response, the surface of the river seems to react with small creases and dimples resembling tiny whirlpools and waves, as if to form a watery grin.

The water shimmers in celebration of the rising of the sun, and the trees can see their own dark reflections in the surface of the water. Then the sun bursts forth, released from the clouds' feathery embrace. The river gurgles past me on some mission known only to it. It seems to speak to me, but I am unable to understand its watery language. Yet, there is no mistaking the subliminal message of the ancient waters. For those who would listen with their hearts, there is serenity, joy, and tranquility in the river's voice.

The reeds and grasses along the far bank appear to sway and wave in time to some unheard orchestra conducted by the wind. Behind this dance, and 10 yards further back on the far bank, grows a band of dark green bushes. These provide a backdrop to the lighter colored grasses and reeds, as if to offer themselves as a curtain for the stage, on which this dance is being performed.

The near bank, on which I stand, shows the effects of the river's unrelenting force, powered by uncountable rains. The bank is beginning to crumble and whole sections of earth have donated themselves to form the river's bottom. A weathered, gray tree has lost its footing as the bank gave way, under its gnarled and twisted feet, and is now lying across the river. How long it has been in this position, I can only guess. Most of its branches are no more than ragged stubs, still wearing away in a process both irresistible, and unceasing.

A high hill rises from the far bank and overnight has magically traded its dull brown coat for a vibrant, green one. The trees, along the hill top, must hide many choirs of birds as the voices of those feathered singers compete in some avian talent show. The butterflies begin to play a wildly weaving game of tag, in celebration of a new day, while some grasshopper plays its scratchy tune on its unseen fiddle.

As a blue heron wades through the reeds in search of its breakfast, I allow the peace of this scene to wash over me, and as it does, I understand why I want to return to this river each year.



**SOLAR JUNE 2004 CALENDAR**  
**School for Outdoor Leadership, Adventure & Recreation**

**JUNE ACTIVITIES**

1	TUE	<b>GENERAL MEETING</b>	<b>COLONY HALL</b>	Tom Hayes	thomashayes@wideopenwest.com
		Program: Nocturnal Animals		Linda Rodrick	lindamra@aol.com
4	FRI	<b>HOWL AT THE MOON PADDLE **</b>	Proud Lake	Heavner Canoe	248-685-2379
11-13	WKND	<b>HIKING, CAMPING, ETC.</b>	Big Bear Lake	Reggie Hayes	thomashayes@wideopenwest.com
18	SAT	<b>NAT'L TRAILS DAY- VOLUNTEERS NEEDED</b>	Maybury State Park	Jenny Couch	Jacouch23@excite.com
18	WKND	<b>BIKING IN AMISH COUNTRY</b>	Indiana	Jonnie Kostishak	jandrust@ic.net
20	SUN	<b>DFOP-IN CANOEING</b>	Island Lake	Margaret Martin	mimpluscat1@cs.com
26-27	WKND	<b>ARCHEOLOGY DIG</b>	Crawford Lk, ON	Jenny Couch	Jacouch23@excite.com

**JUNE CLASSES**

12-13	WKND	<b>KAYAKING CLASS</b>	Silver Lake	John Moffat	johnmoffat@yahoo.com
15,17, 22,24	T, TH	<b>WILDERNESS FIRST AID CLASS</b>	TBD	Mary Price	mathildet@voyager.net
19	SAT	<b>FLAT WATER PADDLING CLASS</b>	Doug's House	Doug Lanyk	dslanyk@earthlink.net
19	SAT	<b>INTRO TO KAYAKING</b>	Cass Lake	Mat Dalton	mdalton@ameritech.net
26	SAT	<b>WILDERNESS FIRST AID PRACTICAL</b>	TBD	Mary Price	mathildet@voyager.net
TBD		<b>ADVANCED BACKPACKING &amp; LDSHP</b>		Mike Banks	Slywolfe52@yahoo.com

**JUNE 11 JULY SOLAR RAY SUBMISSION DEADLINE** **SEND TO PETE LAMB AT [petekandu@yahoo.com](mailto:petekandu@yahoo.com)**

**JULY ACTIVITIES**

6	TUE	<b>GENERAL MEETING</b>	<b>COLONY HALL</b>	Tom Hayes	thomashayes@wideopenwest.com
		Program: Annual Summer Picnic & Gear Swap		Linda Rodrick	lindamra@aol.com
2-5	WKND	<b>HIKING, BIKING, KAYAKING, CANOEING</b>	Caesar State Park, OH	Leslie Cordova	lesliegene@aol.com
31	SAT	<b>MOONLIGHT CANOEING **</b>	Proud Lake	Heavner Canoe	248-685-2379
31-Aug 16	MU-TI	<b>HIKING- FULL</b>	Switzerland	Lou Szakal	Everest2006@aol.com
18	WKND	<b>BIKING IN AMISH COUNTRY</b>	Indiana	Jonnie Kostishak	jandrust@ic.net
20	SUN	<b>Drop-in Canoeing</b>	Island Lake	Margaret Martin	mimpluscat1@cs.com

**AUGUST ACTIVITIES**

3	TUE	<b>GENERAL MEETING</b>	<b>COLONY HALL</b>	Tom Hayes	thomashayes@wideopenwest.com
		Program: SOLAR Core Classes Overview		Linda Rodrick	lindamra@aol.com
6-8	WKND	<b>CANOEING &amp; CAMPING</b>	Pine River	Reggie Hayes	thomashayes@wideopenwest.com

**AUGUST/SEPT CLASSES**

18,25	WED	<b>BASIC BACKPACKING CLASS</b>	TBD	Carol McCrie	cmccrie@sbcglobal.net
SEP 8,15, 22, 29	WED	<b>BASIC BACKPACKING CLASS</b>	TBD	Carol McCrie	cmccrie@sbcglobal.net

**WEEKLY ACTIVITIES**

THURSDAYS	<b>ROCK CLIMBING**</b>	Planet Rock Pontiac	Michelle Delaporte	<a href="mailto:tazspaz2@hotmail.com">tazspaz2@hotmail.com</a>
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**FOR INFORMATION ON JOINING THE SOLAR CLUB, CONTACT MARY PRICE (248) 477-7547 OR VISIT [WWW.SOLAROUTDOORS.ORG](http://WWW.SOLAROUTDOORS.ORG)**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP PLAN AND/OR LEAD A SOLAR ACTIVITY, CONTACT  
PAM RIEHL SZAKAL AT (248) 685-0367 OR SEND EMAIL TO [solaractivities@netscape.net](mailto: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**

**\*\* DENOTES NON-SOLAR ACTIVITY (Solar will not be held responsible for these activities)**

## SOLAR Club Election Results

The annual S.O.L.A.R. elections were held at the May General Membership Meeting and the results are in. Please welcome your new Solar 2004/05 Steering Committee:

<b>President</b>	- Tom Hayes	<b>Programs</b>	- Linda Rodrick
<b>Vice President</b>	- Lou Szakal	<b>Public Relations</b>	- May Price
<b>Secretary</b>	- Cindy Taylor	<b>SOLAR Ray Editor</b>	- Pete Lamb
<b>Treasurer</b>	- Reggie Hayes	<b>Equipment</b>	- Carol McCrie
<b>Education</b>	- Gene Cordoba	<b>Historian</b>	- Charles Hailey
<b>Membership</b>	- Penn Lopez	<b>By-Laws</b>	- Gloria Fontaine
<b>Activities</b>	- Pam Riehl Szakal	<b>Web Master</b>	- Karl Overheul

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the voting process. Let's have a great year.

### *From the SOLAR Program Director*

*By Lou Szakal & Linda Rodrick*

#### Upcoming SOLAR Program Schedule

**Please Note:** All programs will take place at Colony Hall immediately following the SOLAR Business meeting.

#### JUNE PROGRAM

Nocturnal Animals/Organization for Bat Conservation

#### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**July:** Annual Picnic/Gear Swap

**August:** Annual Core Class Presentation/Ail Instructors

**September:** Search and Rescue

**October:** Bats Presentation/Organization for Bat Conservation

**November:** SOLAR Trip Presentation/TEA

**December:** Annual Holiday Bash

### **JUNE PROGRAM**

#### **NOCTURNAL ANIMALS**

Organization for Bat Conservation  
(OBC)



Step into the night and discover how nocturnal animals are adapted to hunt and survive in the darkness in this hour long, interactive program, focusing on nocturnal animals. You will learn what attributes nocturnal animals have, why they are active at night, what they eat, what eats them, and how they can survive in the darkness. OBC will cover information on each animal, such as silent flight, large eyes, large ears, and more. This promises to be an exciting program with live animals, such as: screech owls, bats, bush baby (monkey), and flying squirrels. Please join us after the General Membership Meeting.

### **Important Parking Notice**

The City of Southfield has posted NO PARKING signs on the side street next to Colony Hall. The city is enforcing this new ordinance by issuing rather costly parking tickets. Please try to park in an orderly fashion in either the paved parking lot or on the lawn. We need to park as many cars in these two areas as possible.

### **Request for Tips**

The SOLAR Ray is looking for handy tips you have learned along the way that will benefit others—anything—dealing with convenience, comfort, safety, cooking, warmth, cold, disaster avoidance, animals, great places, great gear or whatever. Send your tips to Pete Lamb at [petekandu@yahoo.com](mailto:petekandu@yahoo.com).

**SOLAR Tip #1** Remember to put silicon grease on the O rings of your water filter regularly. You will be amazed at how it makes pumping easier.



## 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL SOLAR GEAR SWAP



&

## END OF SUMMER BARBEQUE

TUESDAY, JULY 6, 2004  
COLONY HALL, SOUTHFIELD

- Have outdoor gear you no longer use?
- Have several of the same items you have acquired over the years?
- Or just trying to pawn off the old stuff on someone else?

WELL HERE IS YOUR CHANCE

to sell or barter your unused/unwanted gear and help other solarites at the same time  
Bring your outdoor gear to the July meeting and be ready to sell it to other needy people\*

While this is happening, we will have the  
SOLAR end of summer barbeque:  
SOLAR will provide the main course and basics,  
You bring a side dish to pass- dessert, salads, etc.

Any questions, contact Linda Rodrick at:  
LINDAMRA@aol.com or 248-673-4842

\*SOLAR takes no responsibility for warranty, guarantee, quality, price or satisfaction of this outdoor gear.

## SOLAR's Flat-Water Canoe Paddling Class

by Doug Lanyk



Good day,

I am excited to once again offer SOLAR's flat-water canoe paddling class. This class is for those of you who have always had a bad canoe partner or those that have a hard time keeping the dry side of the canoe up. It is for those who enjoy a fun day on the water. It is for those who think that canoeing is a lot of work. We'll show you where you went wrong. My seasoned staff and I can tweak just about anyone's canoe stroke to make you one of the best paddlers in Michigan.

**Date of the class:** Saturday June 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM.

**Cost:** \$25 and a dish to pass

**Location:** Doug's little cottage up North, in Holly Michigan. At 3:00 PM we will have a bit of a barbeque to celebrate the impending solstice. All in SOLAR are invited to the feed afterwards.

Let's all do a thousand miles of fun safe canoeing this summer.

## Canoeing for the Summer

Each month during the warmer seasons this year, a drop-in canoe outing is being held. **The plan**—we'll meet at the canoe rental at 1 p.m., pay the rental fees, break into groups and have fun on the water.

Bring your own canoe or kayak or rent one here. All skill levels are welcome. This activity is kid and pet friendly, but your kids and pets need to go in **YOUR** boat. For more information, call Margaret Martin at 734-721-2821 or e-mail at [MLMPUSCAT1@cs.com](mailto:MLMPUSCAT1@cs.com).



### **Additional special trips this summer.**

For each of these canoe trips, you need to pre register by contacting Rose Marie at Heavner Canoe Rental Huron River, Proud Lake State Recreation Area 2775

Garden Road, Milford, Michigan 48381 Phone: (248) 685-2379 Fax: (248) 684-7939 Email: [AlanHeavner@heavnercanoe.com](mailto:AlanHeavner@heavnercanoe.com) Web Site: <http://www.heavnercanoe.com/>

**Three Moonlight Canoe Trips**—weather permitting. Call the rental to confirm on the day of the event. All of these trips begin at at Heavner Canoe & Kayak Rental at Proud Lake State Recreation Area.

**Howl at the Moon Party.** Chow on cheeseburgers and then canoe or kayak the river in the mysterious moonlight. Afterwards, relax around a bonfire with friends and snack on smores.

**Date:** Friday June 4th

**Price:** \$32 (includes dinner and rental)

**Time:** 7:30-8:45 p.m. Dinner 9:00-10:30 p.m. Paddle 10:30 p.m. Bonfire

**Blue Moon Party** Gather for a cookout and then paddle by the light of the blue moon. Afterwards, relax around a bonfire and snack on smores and anything blue.

**Date:** Saturday July 31<sup>st</sup>

**Price:** \$32 (includes dinner and rental) Double the fun by camping at Proud Lake Recreation Area.

**Time:** Dinner 7:30-8:30 p.m. Paddle 8:45-10:30 p.m. Bonfire 10:30 p.m.

**Get Lunar Party (Lunar Eclipse Night)** Be whisked away through the waters in a canoe or kayak and watch the moon rise over the lake. Return for pizza, and smores, hot chocolate, soda, and watch the lunar eclipse beginning at 8:45 p.m.

**Date:** Thursday October 28th

**Price:** \$25 (includes dinner and rental)

**Time:** Arrive at 6:00 p.m. 6:30-8:00 p.m. Paddle . Dinner from 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eclipse at 8:45 p.m & Bonfire (at two locations)

**Solar Tip # 2:** When mountaineering, particularly above the snow line, mount your stoves on an insulated board in a tight cluster of three by using nuts and bolts. That way you can use a very large pot to cook for the group and to melt snow. A large pot means something above 13quarts. Using this method is far more fuel efficient than using individual stoves with conventional sized camping pots. The pot can be stuffed with a sleeping bag or just filled with food supplies while in your pack.



## Kayak Class—Silver Lake State Park

by John Moffat—Class taught by Ron Smith, Black Parrot Paddling

**Date:** June 12-13, 2004

**Place:** Silver Lake State Park, Mears, MI

**Limit:** 10-12 Students Max.

**Costs:** \$175 - with Ron's equipment (includes campsite)

\$145 - your own equipment (includes campsite)

State Park sticker



**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.

For further details on this weekend, see the article in the April SOLAR RAY or contact John Moffat, 248-515-7489, [johnjmoffat@yahoo.com](mailto:johnjmoffat@yahoo.com)

## National Trails Day®



**June 5, 2004**

## 12th Annual National Trails Day

**Date:** Saturday, June 5, 2004

**Time:** 10 am- 1pm

**Place:** Maybury State Park, Northville

Calling all Solar Members, your families, and friends—

Join us as we link with "The Friends of Maybury" and other community groups for a morning of trail maintenance and work on other trail projects yet to be determined. This is your chance to give back a little of your time and muscles for all those times we hike the trails at our State Parks. With the recent budget cutbacks to our parks, our help is needed more than ever.

We will meet at 9:30 a.m. at the first pavilion off the Eight Mile Road entrance. Maybury State Park is located between Beck and Napierville Roads and Eight and Seven Mile Roads in Northville. Bring wheelbarrows, shovels, water, and work gloves.

Contact Jennie Couch at [jacouch98@yahoo.com](mailto:jacouch98@yahoo.com) or Mary Price [hmpri@ameritech.net](mailto:hmpri@ameritech.net) (248) 477-7547 for more information

## Suggested Guidelines for Submitting Articles to the SOLAR RAY

By Pete Lamb

- Please submit articles in Microsoft Word (if you have it) as an attachment in e-mail. Articles submitted by regular e-mail take a lot of work to clean up the multiple paragraph marks included in them.
- Please keep the formatting simple (such as fonts), as the articles will be reformatted for a unified look.
  - ❖ Keeping margins within the page setup
  - ❖ Not using section breaks on a one page article
  - ❖ Using Word tables when needed, not Excel tables, because the Excel tables have to be converted
- When sending photos, please cut down the physical size, remove the color if you can, and reduce the resolution to 100. My e-mail limit can be filled with two photos not reduced.
- The rule for deadlines is 17 days before the next Steering Committee meeting, which is the last Tuesday in the month. A week each is needed for putting the paper together and printing it.
- If an event is advertised in the Ray one month but will not be taking place for several months, we generally reprint the article until the event takes place—unless otherwise directed.



*The Bride to Be*

## Abandoned at the Altar

by Pete Lamb



*The Groom to Be*

Petrella Nutela waited in vain at the Nut Bush Church for groom Chester Nutkins to show up at the altar. Unfortunately, she was left there, tear stained and heartbroken. The wedding feast was given to the homeless of Green Lake Woods.

The bride's father, Busta Nutela, caught up with the errant groom some hours later and roughed him up a bit. Young Chester sniveled out an incredibly thin excuse for his appalling behavior. He claims that while he was in his nut store in the hollow oak in Green Lake Human Campground he was entombed by a human female. He claimed that she jammed a wad of nylon rope into the door of the store house. He struggled desperately all night to get out-to be at his bride's side. Busta cuffed his ears a few more times for such a fabrication but did admit some time later after he had cooled off that Chester's fur was covered with nylon fibers. He was very sweaty, and his claws were worn down and bloody.

Chester claims to have a photo of the female entomber taken through a small air vent, and this publication has got hold of a copy. Chester also claims that the other humans called the female human Queen Joan. This seems an absurd claim and needs verification. In a desperate gesture, Chester has offered a reward of five hundred prime acorns for further information or sightings of this alleged royal personage.



In a sad twist Chester got drunk drowning his sorrows on acorn brandy and is currently being sought on larceny charges for theft of bird seed. Petrella, having maxed out her credit card to cure her depression, ran off to Nut Vegas and is currently working as a show girl to pay off her debts. It is amazing the havoc caused to these young squirrels' lives by someone just hanging her backpack and stuffing a loose end of cord into a hole in a tree.



### COME CELEBRATE GENE'S 50TH BIRTHDAY

SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2004  
NOON - 6PM- RAIN OR SHINE  
Island Lake State Park  
Bluebird Shelter

BBQ & SOFT DRINKS PROVIDED (BYOB)  
Bring a side dish or dessert to pass  
Biking, Hiking, Canoe Rental, Volleyball  
RSVP TO: LESLIEGENE@AOL.COM  
(248) 547-5626

Island Lake Recreation Area  
12950 East Grand River, Brighton, MI 48116, (810) 229-7067  
Off I-96 exit 151

Follow signs to park entrance. The bluebird shelter is just past the beach at Kent Lake.

## The State of Our Parks

A call to arms was sent out this spring. SOLAR answered the call.

On Friday, May 14<sup>th</sup> three of us journeyed north to a state-wide conference being held at the DNR's RAM Center at Higgins Lake. The conference was called for by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) but was attended by representatives from a much broader contingency. Tom and Reggie Hayes and I represented SOLAR. Behind us sat the executive directors of both the Michigan Horse Council and the Michigan Mountain Bikers Association. Trout Unlimited, State Parks and Recreation, the state health care professionals, the Michigan Environmental Council, Sierra Club, 'Friends' groups, the state senate, cities, business and other citizens from all over came together for 5 hours for one purpose.



SOLARITES at Higgins Lake St. Ignace

What could gather together hikers, bikers, equestrians, politicians, environmentalists, bureaucrats and the 'hook and bullet crowd? We all have the same concern. Our parks are continuing to deteriorate and we may lose some or all of them.

In 2004, Michigan's state park system stands alone in America in many ways. We take pride in knowing that those long sandy beaches, evergreen forests and miles of trails are preserved forever. Or will they be? Michigan has the 9<sup>th</sup> highest visitation of any state park system and it is the 11<sup>th</sup> highest in state acreage. Yet, we are the only state that has decided this resource should survive or vanish based entirely on user fees. Think of it. Fifty million dollars is hoped for in permit fees in 2004. This is supposed to be derived from and in turn support not only the 94 parks and recreation areas. It must also provide for 750 boat access sites and 14 state harbors. The estimated deficit for this year will be anywhere from 1.5 to 6 million dollars. This will be due to emergency maintenance and other issues. In a time that this state's economic survival and recovery is a top priority we are gambling on an estimated \$600,000,000 in direct economic impact.

How does this affect SOLAR and our members? Why should we get involved? Many of you may think this doesn't need to be answered, but we must address it for anyone that thinks this is too political for our organization. Well, let me ask you some questions. Where will we teach? Where will we lead our trips? Where will we rent our cabins? Where will we ski? Where will we have our training hikes? Where will we ride our mountain bikes? How do we get it back once it is lost?

The suggestion has been made that we close the parks that are non-profitable. It has also been suggested that we close the parks during the winter or curtail activities between Labor Day and Memorial Day. These suggestions didn't come from our conference. They came from the same offices in Lansing that would love to sell off the nation's largest state forest system. If you think that it wouldn't affect you if some obscure state park in the U.P. was closed, you should think again. Waterloo-Pinckney is at the top of the list and the list has 94 names on it. What can you do to support your state parks?

1. Support SOLAR and the other organizations that will be forming a coalition to save and promote our state parks.
2. Contact your representatives in Lansing and tell them you care what happens to our state parks. They will listen.
3. Show that you care. SOLAR is a partner at National Trails Day, at Maybury State Park on Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. Show you care enough about our parks to volunteer 3 hours of your time. (See p. 9.) - Michael Banks

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.

#### SOLAR MEETINGS

Are held the first Tuesday of every month in Southfield at the Colony Hall, 71780 Evergreen (between 8 & 9 Mile Roads) at 7:30 p.m. Visitors can come in for free.

#### Solar Steering Committee

<b>President</b>	Tom Hayes	<b>Equipment</b>	Carol McCrie
<b>Vice President</b>	Lou Szakal	<b>Historian</b>	Charles Hailey
<b>Secretary</b>	Cindy Taylor	<b>Membership</b>	Penni Lopez
<b>Treasurer</b>	Reggie Hayes	<b>Programs</b>	Linda Rodrick
<b>Activities</b>	Pam Richl Szakal	<b>Pub. Relations</b>	Mary Price
<b>By-Laws</b>	Gloria Fontaine	<b>Solar Ray</b>	Pete Lamb
<b>Education</b>	Gene Cordova	<b>Webmaster</b>	Karl Overheul
<b>At Large:</b>	Mike Banks • Moe DeFrance • Al Fylak • Steve Gardner • Bill Halvingis • Cindy Harrison-Felix • Doug Lanyk • Larry Martin • Joan Hettinger • Leslie Cordova • Joan & Bob Westbrook • Tom Oloffo		

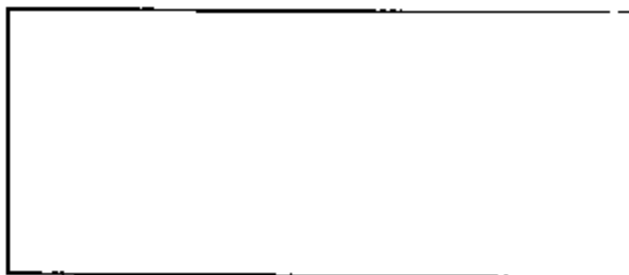
**SOLAR Steering Committee Meetings**—The Steering Committee meets on the last Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. These meetings are usually open to the general membership. Anyone who is interested in learning what topics are discussed, the decisions being made, or contemplating running for a position on the Steering Committee, is welcome to attend. If you are interested in attending the Steering Committee Meeting, contact Tom Hayes at (586) 778-3589 or [thomashayes@wideopenwest.com](mailto:thomashayes@wideopenwest.com)

**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 chairperson, Penni Lopez at [kayekrawler@yahoo.com](mailto:kayekrawler@yahoo.com)

#### Submission Guidelines:

(Submissions are due on the Friday two weeks prior to the monthly Steering Committee Meeting (June 11 for July issue). Electronic files accessible to Word are required.) Pete Lamb, 409 E. Southlawn, Birmingham, MI 48009 Or call 248-644-5831 E-mail: [PeteLamb@yahoo.com](mailto:PeteLamb@yahoo.com)

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [WWW.SOLAROUTDOORS.ORG](http://WWW.SOLAROUTDOORS.ORG)



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