



The SOLAR Ray

A Monthly Publication of the School for Outdoor Leadership, Adventure, and Recreation (SOLAR)

June 2006

ST. JOHN ADVENTURE

By Jim Gessner & Moe DeFrance

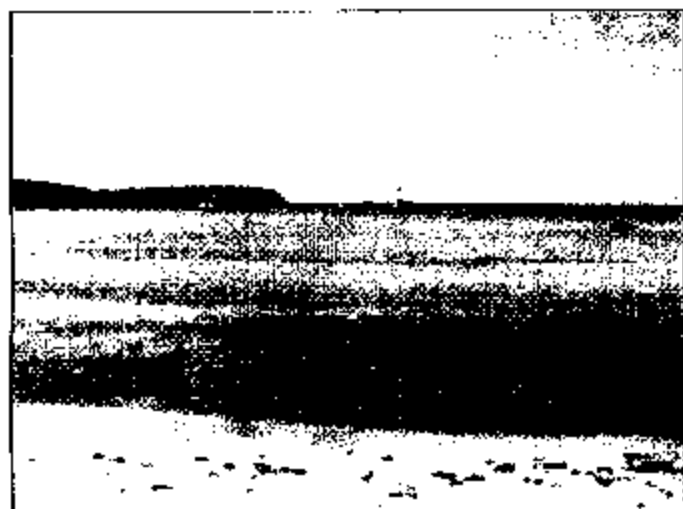
Forty Virgin Island adventurers explored tropical rainforests and remote coves while living in cottages or tents for a week in April (13th to 20th) on the shore of Cinnamon Bay in St. John. They have survived the experience and wish to tell their tale of unrelenting sun, merciless insects, fabulous snorkeling and wonderful companionship.

THE BEGINNING

It started a year ago in Tobermory with Moe and Leslie asking in tandem "Can I go?" to a Jim Gessner inquiry. Leslie, Moe and 37 others signed up to go. Seventeen volunteered to facilitate aspects of the trip ranging from the Festival of Love to snorkeling, hiking, biking, cruising and kayaking. Pre-trip preparations included a meet and greet at Colony Hall; enjoying tapas, learning Flamenco (Dave and Moe were impressive), Salsa at Sangria's (also at Debra's), and snorkeling lessons with Margaret for those a little unsure of themselves in the water.

FESTIVAL OF LOVE PIG ROAST

Thursday evening at Miss Lucy's provided great island cuisine, our introduction to a powerful libation known as a "painkiller" (we subsequently had a few more of these) and our first opportunity to dance the evening away. Katherine did the planning, but in a twist of fate missed the taxi ride.



Trunk Bay

THRILLS OF KAYAKING

Over half the group joined Karen on a kayak trip that provided a beautiful view of the island, great snorkeling, and water rough enough to prevent a scheduled landing and made a few people wish they had taken their Dramamine. Several people were in their glory with the 3 foot chop, screaming and singing with delight at the waves. All survived to enjoy the rest of the trip.



Jim & Karen

BIKING GROUP CHEERED ON

Jennie led a group of bikers on a strenuous, but rewarding trip of the island. The course was picturesque while avoiding the more mountainous regions. As the others were headed out by taxi to snorkel another bay, we passed the bikers and cheered them on their way (with those steep hills, they NEEDED cheering!)

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Continued from St. John Adventure...

MATRIMONIAL BLISS

When you are in such a romantic setting, one's thoughts naturally lead to romance.

It is not surprising that two of the group were married early Monday morning on the beach. Rhoda was absolutely beaming, Byron was handsome, and the happy couple celebrated for the rest of the trip.

THE ULTIMATE HIKE

The Reef Bay hike (facilitated by Linda) came complete with a ranger guide (Pat) who led the group on a three mile downhill hike through tropical forest and rocky volcanic terrain to mysterious petroglyphs and regaled the group with stories overflowing with history, lore, nature, and seasoned with a dash of political commentary. We toured one of the sugar plantations, and heard of the harsh conditions for slaves. The average life span of these poor souls was 3-5 years after coming to the island. We ended the hike with a swim and a boat ride back to Cruz Bay. Groups also hiked the trails in Cinnamon Bay and those leading to numerous remote beaches and snorkeling sites.



Reef Bay

SNORKELLING OPENED UP ANOTHER WORLD

Groups headed out each day to the many great snorkeling sites, and returned with stories of shark, squid, barracuda, and a myriad of other fish and plant sightings. Some walked a hundred feet and dove into Cinnamon Bay and swam around the island or hiked to nearby Trunk Bay. Some took a taxi and hiked to one of the many bays such as Brown Bay, Leinster/Waterlemon Bay, and Great Lameshur Bay. A few brave souls even swam the two miles from Leinster Bay to Brown Bay. The sea turtles were fantastic.

WE EVEN SAVED SOME ENERGY FOR THE EVENINGS

Gena's social hours were always well attended with many vying for the honor of wearing leis and the grass skirt. Later in the evening, while some listened to interesting ranger talks, others went shopping, dining at the many excellent restaurants or dancing. Darts at Miss Lucy's, Cinnamon Bay

and at Fred's in Cruz Bay had the group shaking it to rock and roll, the Hustle, conga line, salsa and reggae. Lying on the beach and gazing at the stars was popular and several people even took a night snorkel. We enjoyed stunning sunsets, and glorious sunrises. The sound of the early morning animals before daybreak while lying in our cottages and tents will stay with us for a long time to come.

CRUISE TO THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Leslie lined up Captain Bob, his crew, Moe (not our Moe), an elegant teak and mahogany vessel (once rented by President Clinton) and some of the best snorkeling in the British Virgin Islands, including a group of islands and three caves. We ate lunch at a moored boat where one could earn a t-shirt by diving off the roof without a bathing suit. What happens in St. John (and the British Virgin Islands) stays there. We can share that Moe (crew, not our Moe) had earned a number of shirts.



What Happens in St. John, Stays in St. John

WHAT WE COULD HAVE LIVED WITHOUT

The sun baked any area of the body unprotected by sunscreen. Poor Alan kept a low profile for most of the trip after burning his feet on the first day. Sand fleas took a liking to some of the group, and we all itched until we looked battle-scarred - we are STILL itching! Taxis were prevalent but took a bite out of trip finances.

WHAT WE DIDN'T HAVE TIME FOR

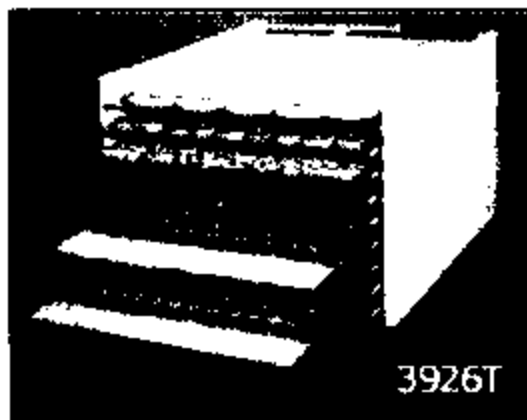
We ran out of time to explore 30 of the 39 beaches, horseback riding, scuba/snuba, lots of snorkeling and hiking, St. Thomas CARNIVAL, and much, much more. All of us want to thank our fearless leader, "Jovial" Jim. His dream became a reality for many of us, thanks to his tireless efforts. Special thanks to Darvi for all the meal planning and preparation. Put the island (or Jost Van Dyke for a more rugged experience) on your 2008 calendar for a return trip.

JOHN MUIR TRAIL (JMT) COOKING TIPS

by Pete Lamb

Hi guys, this is Pete the Galloping Gourmet. I am at the moment trying to put together 300 meals for Dave DeFrance's hike to hell and back through the Sierra Nevada's and I would like to impart some of what I have learned while putting together meals for 4 for 28 days.

First off, by a buy big dehydrator, you have no idea what you are getting into. We have three of them and it's not enough. I have a 9 tray Excalibur, that cost about \$210 and a 4 tray for \$110 and Dave has a 5 tray round one. The 9 tray is much more efficient than the other two. They will pay for themselves after one two week trip, and your stomach will thank you for not having to eat that freeze dried cr@p. Do not buy the round ones; get the Excalibur it's worth it.



Excalibur Food Dehydrator

Buy the parchment sheets for each tray; these are good for soups and wet stuff. You cannot get the parchment for the round dehydrators so you cannot do pasta sauce and the like very easily. The parchment stuff works like Gortex, moisture is pulled through the sheet when you dehydrate.

When dehydrating it is better to slice every thing thin and evenly and to that end I bought myself a mandolin. No, I'm not getting into country music; this is a device with a v shaped blade and a series of spacers for different thicknesses of slices. I sliced 9 pounds of tomatoes and 9 pounds of onions in about 10 minutes all of them a millimeter and a half thick. For you non automotive-types that is pretty darn thin.

I have three books I work from, *Lip Smacking Backpacking*, *Lip Smacking Backpacking Vegetarian*, and *Backpack Gourmet*; there is more than enough in these three to keep you occupied. I also have sudden inspirations that I put together that work, well usually. One good tip is to label stuff as you go, we spent quite some time tasting dehydrated stuff from a large box of finished meals trying to determine what the hell is that and does it go with pasta or oatmeal. You cannot guess how much time we spent trying to figure out what this sweet stuff with beans in it was, Dave has dried a can of baked beans and forgotten about it and I didn't know he had dried them.

I have cooked quite a bit from *Lip Smacking Backpacking* and everything I have done so far has been good. The challenge on this trip is that Dave does not want to carry pots, so every thing has to be edible by just adding boiled water. That way there is less for the beasties to be attracted to! So I have picked out the recipes with that in mind.

Several granolas are described in the books that do not need dehydration and are tasty. I have put together 30 portions of this with 30 more to go. I have dehydrated yogurt to put on the granola and I have found that if you want to break up yogurt leather for packing, put it in the freezer and it breaks up nicely, that also applies to pasta sauce and salsa, and onion soup. I have also found that anything runny that you put on the parchment is usually still damp on the parchment side after drying, so I turn it over and continue drying. Just remember; you cannot over dry things, at least I don't think so.

I have put together some high protein breakfasts that involve potatoes baked and boiled, pasta sauce, garlic, salsa, tofu, and goat cheese this is very tasty. I got both of these recipes from the *Backpack Gourmet* (page 21, 22, 23 of B/G). Also from B/G I made a fish stew and a seafood stew both of which are very yummy. Just remember if you do these recipes to really chop the fish and shrimp very finely. I did not chop them fine enough the first time I did these, and even after boiling the fish was hard enough for bird shot.

If we get back from this ambitious trip without starving to death, I will once more put fingers (well one finger) to keyboard and let you know how it worked out, and if we are still talking to each other.

A late news flash from dehydrating central...

If you consider dehydrating frozen fruit like a blackberry, raspberry or blueberry; mix please take into account the amount of juice released when it thaws, especially when using a round dehydrator that opens at the bottom and you have no parchment to hold the juice on each tray. This holds especially true if the dehydrator is resting on a neutral colored carpet in a living room. If you have the misfortune to do this make sure the Limey that usually occupies the dog house is not in residence at this time as you may be there for some time and need the space.

Until next time...

Bon Appétit!

SPOTLIGHT ON LOU SZAKAL



HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH SOLAR?

Actually, I found out about SOLAR from Gloria Fontaine. We were talking online and she invited me to attend a meeting. My first meeting was in January of 2000 and I've been a member ever since. I actually met my wife Pam Riehl during a Winter Backpacking class. We started dating about a year later and have been married for over 2 years now.

WHY DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH THE STEERING COMMITTEE?

I am a "Type A" personality and the Steering Committee allows me to express myself and to try and make a difference. SOLAR has been a big part of my life and has opened up many doors. My being on the SC lets me give back to this School/Club and I feel that I have a lot more to give. I have been on the Steering Committee for 3 years. I started out in Programs and for the last 2 years I have been the V.P. I have a lot of respect for the SC members and all of the time and effort they put into it. There are a lot of things to do over the next year and I believe that everyone is up to the task.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AS PRESIDENT OF SOLAR?

There will be some changes. I would like to see us blast into the 90's, at least with our website. I've looked at enough of them to know ours is a little dated. I would like us to look into a forum page so members could click only the topic they want to discuss instead of opening dozens of e-mails that don't involve them. I would also like to see a little synergy with the classes as well as a few more classes added to our curriculum. I would like to see a brochure of all the classes offered as well as some of the regular activities that we offer (I have been playing around with a design for the last year already). There are quite a few requests for a brochure of this nature. One big thing that started way back with Tom Oloffe (I think) and carried over with Tom Hayes is our Not for Profit status changing to Not Profit. This is a very tedious and time consuming effort and I praise Reggie who started and Carol who

will finish this endeavor. I think the Ray will have a different look over the next 3-6 months (all for the better). PR will make some very big changes. First will be our appearance as a club. We need to look professional and still maintain our outdoorsy look and approach. After seeing our tabletop display with 10 year old pictures, Pam (PR) will be replacing it with a new display and updated pictures. NEW and UPDATED EQUIPMENT!!!

HOW DID YOU START MOUNTAINEERING?

When I took the Basic Backpacking class in Spring of 2000, one of my instructors was Julie Penrod. She had mentioned that she had done some mountaineering and since I was smitten with her at the time, I started researching it. I soon found myself signed up for Kilimanjaro in February of 2001, only a year after I joined SOLAR. Since then I have taken various Mountaineering classes and have climbed in Russia, Alaska, Argentina, and all over the lower 48. The highest has been Aconcagua in Argentina at 22,841'. It is the highest mountain in the world outside of the Himalayas and I am currently planning a SOLAR trip over this Christmas and have seven people confirmed and one pending. I also designed and have taught SOLAR's Basic Mountaineering class over the past several years and have led two groups to Mt. Olympus and Rainier in which a total of 9 people have summited. I will be teaching this class again starting in December and will put a little twist in it. I will try marketing it not only to people who want to climb mountains, but to people who want to hone their skills in advanced winter travel (i.e. CC Skiing in Yellowstone or the Teton's).

WHAT HAS YOUR FAVORITE TRIP BEEN SO FAR?

The Haute Route by far is the most memorable one to date. Pam and I were hoping to get 4-6 people to join us and 32 people signed up with 16 going. This was a 128 mile trek through the Swiss Alps starting in Chamonix, France and ending in Zermatt, Switzerland over the course of 15 days. We had about 56,000' of ascending and 52,000' descending. It was beautiful and somewhat challenging. The people, lodging, and food/wine were great. There is not a whole lot that can top this trip.

WHAT WOULD YOUR DREAM TRIP BE?

I have been thinking of this for a while. I would like to go back and do the Haute Route again but do the upper glacier part. Then go and do the Cirque de Mont Blanc which is the Wonderland Trail of Mont Blanc. After a few days of R&R, I would then climb Mont Blanc, the Eiger and Matterhorn all in a row. I would then spend a few more days of R&R. This should all take place in a 6 week timeframe. Other than that, maybe climb Mt. Everest.

METRO GRAND SPRING TOUR

by Dick Ebenhoe

The morning of Sunday May 7th was clear, sunny and cold. There had been frost warnings overnight and frost was still visible on the grass at Willow Metropark when at least ten SOLARites were among the 1,198 cyclists participating in the Downriver Cycling Club's 23rd Annual "Metro Grand Spring Tour" bike tour. The tour offers options of a 25, 45, or 60 mile routes along the Huron River and scenic country roads of Wayne and Monroe counties.

We arrived early. After checking in, receiving our numbers, maps and our bright yellow MGST shirts, we were ready to hit the road shortly after 8AM. Despite the cold temperature, the winds were light and it promised to be a great day for cycling. The first leg of the tour followed Huron River Drive southeast along the river. As the sun rose, the weather began to warm up and after about 5 miles we were already shedding some of our layers. As is usually the case on this type of ride, everyone was riding at their own pace, but we frequently met and passed each other all along the way.

Thirteen miles into the ride we arrived at Lake Eric Metropark and the first of three food stops. There, with flashing caution lights and signs warning of low flying pancakes, was the all-you-can-eat "Chris Cakes" Pancake Breakfast. (Stand behind the line, hold out your plate, and catch the pancakes.) Despite a few pancakes on the floor, there was plenty of food. This was also the first of three "decision points" on the tour. You can choose to turn around here and head back to the start, or continue on.



SOLARites Henry Marschner, Peggy Skaggs and Dick Ebenhoe meet some other friends at the pancake breakfast

Most of us chose to continue, and after a going a little way south on Jefferson, we turned and headed straight west for about ten miles. After a right turn and a couple of miles north, we arrived at the second food stop, 28 miles into the tour, in Carleton. Here we were treated to homemade cookies, bagels, fresh fruit, and drinks all served by volunteers from the DCC. This is also the second decision point. Those choosing the 45-mile route head straight north from here toward the northern end of Lower Huron

Metropark. We chose the longer route and continued west out of Carleton.



The Road to Carleton



Riders at the 2nd Food Stop

By this time, it had warmed to the point where we were riding in shorts and short-sleeves. The scenery was great. Trees and lilacs were in bloom. The air smelled of fresh cut grass, flowers, and spring time. We saw cycling teams, recreational cyclists, tandem bikes, triplet bikes, recumbent bikes, you name it. After another fifteen miles of riding through the countryside, our route converged with the 45-mile route. A little over two miles farther and we were at the Foxwoods Picnic Area in Lower Huron Metropark and the final food stop of the day.

After another break and more refreshments, the 45-milers head south along the Metropark's bike trail back to the start. We headed a little further north before turning back along a different route. We completed the 60-mile route back at Willow Metropark roughly 6 hours after we started. We all had a great time.



ANNOUNCEMENT

by Margaret Martin

May's Mother Nature's Full Moon Paddle was postponed due to the weather. Please join us on Saturday, June 17 at 7:00 PM at Heavner's Canoe Rental in Milford,.

Cost is \$25 per person which includes canoe/kayak rental, dinner, and smores. For reservations, call Heavner Canoe Rental at 248-685-2379 or email AlanHeavner@heavnercanoe.com.

PADDLE TO THE SYMPHONY

by Matt Dalton

SOLAR, Hostelling International, Heavner's Canoe, and about 5000+ cultured people will participate again this year in a Detroit Symphony Orchestra Concert at Kensington Metro Park. This is a wonderful event that thousands of SE Michigan people have enjoyed for years and you're invited to be part of the entertainment.

As a fundraiser for Hostelling International, Heavner's Canoe is again organizing a paddle from North Martindale Beach at Kensington to Maple Beach for the outdoor performance of the DSO. Enjoy priority parking, no lines or waiting, a nice box dinner and a canoe paddle to the concert.

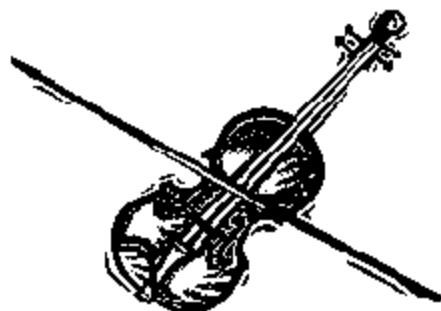
You will be part of the entertainment because the crossing of about 80-100 canoes and kayaks is noticed by thousands of people each year. If that's not enough, wait until the concert ends and all the boats paddle back at sunset many lighting the water with battery operated candle lights. It's a sight to see, but it's 100 times better to be on the water.

When: Friday, July 7, 2006, meet at 6:30 PM

Where: Kensington Metro Park, North Shelter, Martindale Beach

Cost: \$18.00 per person includes a half of a canoe, a nice boxed dinner and the concert.

For more information, contact Matt Dalton at: 248-360-0031 or mdalton@ameritech.net

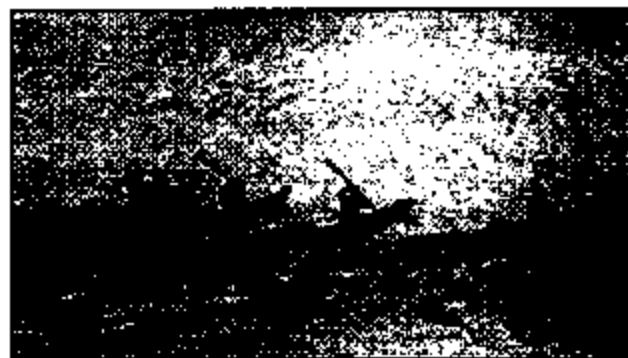


SOLAR INTRODUCTION TO KAYAKING

by Matt Dalton

Kayaking is one of the best ways to explore all the wonderful lakes and streams Michigan has to offer. It's also a great form of exercise.

If you've never had formal lessons than this is the class for you. Introduction to Kayaking is a 4 hour class taught at Heavner's in Milford, MI., on the quiet and safe Huron River.



You'll be introduced to the basic kayak design which will assist you in choosing a kayak for rental or purchase in the future. You'll learn about required, optional equipment and clothing. You'll learn the fundamentals of safe paddling, how to paddle fast and efficiently, and how to stay in your kayak. No Eskimo rolling in this class!

When: Saturday, June 24, 2006 at 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Where: Heavner's Canoe, Milford, MI

Cost \$60.00 everything included, \$40.00 with your own boat.

Depending on demand we may have another class in July and an advanced kayaking class, Wilderness Sea Kayaking, class in August. Interest sign up is now being taken.

For more information, contact Matt Dalton at: 248-360-0031 or mdalton@ameritech.net



SOLAR HIKING SCHEDULE FOR JUNE 2006

Meet new friends, see old faces! SOLAR members and non-members welcome. Some hikes are more child-friendly than others, please check the difficulty of the hike.

Hikes start at 9:30 AM, unless otherwise stated.

Hike Coordinator: Matt Dalton at 248-360-0031 or mdalton@ameritech.net.

Contact Matt and/or post a message on the SOLAR Yahoo site after you decide to join one of the hikes to discuss carpooling, obtain a list of other hikers, ask directions or find out additional details for the hike.

Date & Time: Saturday, June 3, 2006
Group: SOLAR 30th Year Reunion
Location: Brighton State Park

Date & Time: Saturday, June 3, 2006 @ 11:00 AM
Group: With the Sierra Club, Lee Becker, 586-294-7789
Location: Kensington Metro Park (lazy-daisy, 5 miles, slow)
Instructions: Bring water and binoculars we'll be scanning for Osprey, Herons and other feathered friends. Interested in carpooling? Meet at Tel-12 Mall, SE corner.

Date & Time: Sunday, June 4, 2006
Group: SOLAR 30th Year Reunion
Location: Brighton State Park

Date & Time: Sunday, June 4, 2006 @ 9:30 AM
Group: SOLAR and BS Hikers
Location: Maybury State Park, Northville, MI
Instructions: Meet at 8 Mile Road entrance and parking lot by concessions area.



SOLAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

by Karl Overheul

JUNE: Drummunity Circle...a SOLAR Celebration!

By: Lori Fithian (facilitator and founder of "Drummunity")

Lori's unique drum circle program is an exciting, hands-on experience with a message of community-building, peace, diversity and wellness - as well as just plain rhythmic fun!

Lori has trained with numerous well known drum circle teachers. Her training includes Health Rhythms which is a specific protocol developed for wellness. She has been influenced by many drumming traditions - West African, Brazilian, Japanese, Afro-Cuban, Middle Eastern, and more. Lori will bring a collection of hand drums and percussion toys to accommodate all in attendance. Feel free to visit the drummunity website for more information about this exciting program at www.drummunity.com.

Please note: All programs take place at Colony Hall immediately following the SOLAR business meeting.

JULY: ANNUAL SOLAR GEAR SWAP & SUMMER BARBECUE



****PLEASE NOTE: THE JULY MEETING WILL BE ON THURSDAY, JULY 6****



- Do you have outdoor gear you no longer use?
- Have you acquired several of the same items over the years?
- Would you like to clean out your closets and help other Solarites acquire needed gear?

Well here is your chance! Bring your unwanted outdoor gear to the July meeting (to sell or barter).

And there's even more fun! Also featuring the SOLAR summer barbecue...a great opportunity to socialize!

- SOLAR provides the main course and beverages.
- Please bring a side dish to pass...dessert, salads, etc.
- We could also use barbecue grills...please help by bringing one!

Any questions, please contact Karl Overheul at cybernomad@backpacker.com.

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



AUGUST: Personal Encounters with Wild Edibles

By: John Fedyk (a SOLAR member presentation)



WILDFLOWER WALK 2006

by Margaret Martin

It was a nearly perfect day for a walk at Mayberry Park. Thirteen people ages 1.5-Retired set off at just after 2:00 PM on a slow paced hike. Armed with a variety of wildflower books, the group walked from the parking lot near the concession stand along the dirt walking path to the lake. Almost immediately the group found may apples and trillium. The trillium came in multiple colors, white to dark red. The group walked to the lake. At the lake the group took a break and watched a snapping turtle swimming along the edge of the docks. Then several people returned to the parking lot. Those that were left, including the 4 children ages 1.5-4 years old, continued around the lake, then back to the parking lot. Some of the flowers that were spotted were: trillium, bloodroot, wood anemone, blue cohosh, meadow rue, wild ginger, wild geranium, spring beauty, Dutchman's breeches, may apple, lily of the valley and many others.

There were many special moments. Eliza Fedyk looked for the upside down parts (Dutchman's breeches) and was quite excited to find a some. Tim Wiseman recorded many of the flowers with his camera. Chip Kleinbrook played horsy with the children, several of which ended up with piggy back rides. The group burst out in song a few times, including the old camp favorite "White Coral Bells". The group found a large hillside covered with wild ginger in bloom. The foliage was quite large, possibly attributed to the close proximity to the horse trail resting area. There were also large patches of Dutchman's breeches, and skunk cabbage leaves. A few of the flowers were past their peak due to the early spring weather in April, but some were just about to bloom.



The last of the group returned to the parking area at around 7 PM, and retired to the local Guernsey Ice Cream restaurant for moose tracks and mint chocolate chip. Yum!

KAYAKING 101

by Charlotte Zinkus

If you've been kayaking before but never had any formal training, this class is for you. Led by ACA certified instructor, Matt Dalton, eight of us showed up at Heavner's on a rainy Saturday afternoon. Matt has been paddling for 10 years and teaching kayaking classes for the last four.

The class is organized into three parts, an introduction to basic paddling gear, paddling on the ground, then application on the water. Paddling on the ground sounds goofy, but it's an exercise in learning correct paddling technique. Everyone in the class seemed to get this form except me because I developed a style that doesn't effectively use my abdomen muscles. The paddling stroke feels like "kayak warrior" when you punch the paddle, but the point is to use your whole upper body, not just your biceps.

Once in the water, it's easy to see how much stronger and faster you can paddle when you use your shoulders and abdomen muscles in coordination with your arms. Of course not falling back into old habits is the hard part. At least I understand now what Pete Lamb means when he tells me "Charlotte, you're arm paddling."

Going forward is one thing but being able to control your boat rather than being controlled by your boat is a whole other thing. Matt showed us turning, paddling backward, and moving sideways. We are now ready for our first outing and before you know it, we'll be able to impress our friends with a cute pirouette when we pull up next to their boat. Onward to intermediate kayaking. Thanks Matt, for a great lesson.

If you want to rent a kayak at Heavner's Canoe Rental mention that you are a SOLAR member and receive a 10% discount. Here's the location information:

Heavnercanoe.com
248-685-2379
2775 Garden Rd.
Milford, MI 48381



SUPER LOU TO THE RESCUE!

by Vida Ruggere

This year's spring beach clean up brought much excitement and much better weather than last year's sleet storm! Eleven SOLAR members volunteered to help clean-up one of Lake Michigan's most beautiful and remote beaches, Nordhouse Wilderness Dunes. The Alliance of the Great Lakes offers the opportunity to "adopt-a-beach," and as many of you already know, I have been involved in this program for the last 5 years. It is a fun and rewarding way to give something back to our beautiful state and benefit the Great Lakes, one of the important water resources in the world.

"Super" Lou, campground host, was kind enough to arrange free camping for our entire group after Doug and Kim told him about our beach clean-up efforts. (More about Super Lou later!) We had a great walk on the beach Saturday morning, April 29th, and picked up a few interesting items along the way. We even made a sculpture out of some of the things we found: large pieces of wood, a shoe, some fishing lures, and even a sparkly purple thong! We were pleased and surprised that we didn't find more garbage.

Carlo was excited that new member, Jim Rosenberg, brought his son, Mason, who lives in our hometown! They will both attend the same middle school next year and it was a really neat coincidence. Gregory McQuade kept things lively for the boys by bringing along his pool noodles for some good-natured "fights." Gregory also unfortunately learned that half-dead bees can still sting!

Just as we all set up camp and started an early happy hour, Super Lou came by in his golf cart with some news: a forest fire was burning in another part Nordhouse. We needed to be on stand-by to evacuate! Lisa McQuade came prepared with a map and she and Doug set out on a scouting mission. The fire was burning off Nurnburg Road. We began to make plans to move the camp to Ludington State Park. Luckily, Super Lou kept on top of things and let us know that the firefighters had dug a trench around the fire and contained it! To thank Lou for taking care of us, we invited him to join our hors d'oeuvre party and then Kathrine won him over with the plate of steak and veggies. We invited him to our awesome bonfire too, which was not affected by the light rain. Lou invited us all to join him at the campground where he will be a host this summer. The only thing I regret is that the talent show never materialized in the amphitheater. Something to look forward to for the September clean-up...

On Sunday, most of the group packed up to go home. We all took a last admiring look at Natalie's hammock tent. The McQuade's and Carlo and I got ready to leave for the llama farm but we had a small problem... "Super Lou to the rescue!" shouted Gregory when Super Lou saved the day with jumper cables. Super Lou really had fun with our group...and he is especially hoping to see Katherine again at the campground this summer!

The rolling hills of the llama farm were beautiful. It was fun to watch the boys walk an animal larger than themselves. Carlo even got to remove the harness and return his llama to her stall and visit with Inca, the llama he walked last year. Make plans to join us at the fall beach clean up, tentatively scheduled for September 22-24.



Noodle Fight!

SOLAR JUNE 2006 CALENDAR

JUNE ACTIVITIES

6/1-6/4	WKND	SOLAR 30th Anniversary Celebration	Brighton State Rec. Area	Dick Eberhoe	rjebenhoe@yahoo.com
6/6	TUE	GENERAL MEETING	Colony Hall	Lou Szakal	Everest2008@comcast.net
6/6	TUE	PROGRAM: Community Circle & SOLAR Celebration	Colony Hall	Karl Overneul	cybernomad@backpacker.com
6/9-6/11	WKND	Camping/Loon Watching**	Wakeley Lake	E. J. Brocks	ejphoto@aol.com
6/23-6/25	WKND	Hike and -float	Manistee River	Jim Loe	jlmcc@comcast.net
6/30-7/4	WKND	Hiking and Biking	Cuyahoga Valley National Park	Leslie Cordova	lesliegene@aol.com

JUNE CLASSES

6/3, 6/10 6/11	THU/ WKND	Wilderness First Aid	Maybury State Park	Mary Price	mathildet@sbcglobal.net
6/20, 6/24- 6/25	TUE/ WKND	Basic Land Navigation	TBA/Waterloo State Rec Area	Karl Overneul	cybernomad@backpacker.com

JULY ACTIVITIES

7/5	THU	GENERAL MEETING	Colony Hall	Lou Szakal	Everest2008@comcast.net
7/5	THU	PROGRAM: Annual SOLAR Gear Swap and Summer Barbecue	Colony Hall	Karl Overneul	cybernomad@backpacker.com
7/13-7/16	WKND	Great Lakes Sea Kayak Symposium**	Grand Marais, MI	Steve Hoffman	SHoffman@cranbrook.edu
7/13-8/13	MULTI	Extended Backpacking Trip (FULL)	John Muir Trail	Dave DeFrance	defrancemex@comcast.net
7/29-8/15	MULTI	Backpacking Trip (FULL)	Kings Canyon/ Sequoia NP	Don Wold	dwold12972@aol.com
7/29-7/30	WKND	Avite Water Black Bear Bicycle Tour**	Grayling, MI	E. J. Brocks	ejphoto@aol.com
7/29-7/31	WKND	Canoe Outing**	Manistee River, Grayling	Tom Oloff	mcmountainman@yahoo.com
7/30-8/6	MULTI	Camping/Hiking in the Rockies	Rocky Mountain NP	Mary Bugush	notteev@yahoo.com

JULY CLASSES

7/28-30, 8/11-13, 8/25-27, 9/8-10, 9/29- 10/9, 11/3-15	MULTI	Advanced Backpacking and Leadership	TBA	Mike Banks	michaelbsolar@yahoo.com
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AUGUST ACTIVITIES

8/1	TUE	GENERAL MEETING	Colony Hall	Lou Szakal	Everest2008@comcast.net
8/1	TUE	PROGRAM: Edible Plants	Colony Hall	Karl Overneul	cybernomad@backpacker.com
8/18-8/20	WKND	Irishfest**	Milwaukee	Lou & Pam Szakal	Everest2008@comcast.net
8/26-9/4	MULTI	Wilderness Paddling Trip	Algonquin Provincial Park	Phil Crookshank/ Sharon Smelter	wanderphil3@netzero.net

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

9/3	SAT	Harvest Full Moon Canoe Paddle**	Heavner's, Proud Lake	Margaret Martin/ Alan Heavner	mpluscat@hotmail.com AlanHeavner@heavnercanoe.com
10/8	SUN	Pumpkin Party and Full Moon Canoe Paddle**	Heavner's, Proud Lake	Margaret Martin/ Alan Heavner	mpluscat@hotmail.com AlanHeavner@heavnercanoe.com

UPCOMING CLASSES

10/4, 10/7- 10/8	WED/ WKND	Advanced Land Navigation	TBA/Waterloo State Rec Area	Karl Overneul	cybernomad@backpacker.com
10/17, 10/21- 10/22	TUE/ WKND	Basic Land Navigation	TBA/Waterloo State Rec Area	Karl Overneul	cybernomad@backpacker.com

If you would like to help plan and/or lead a SOLAR activity, please contact Kevin Cotter at (248) 544-9637 or solar@wowway.com.

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)

WHAT IS SOLAR?

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

MEMBERSHIP

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, scenic shorelines, and the experiences to be found there.

MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month in Southfield at the Colony Hall, 21780 Evergreen (between 8 & 9 Mile Roads) at 7:30 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.

SOLAR RAY NEWSLETTER

The SOLAR RAY is a monthly publication of SOLAR and is available online at www.solaroutdoors.org. To receive a copy in the mail, please contact Mary Price at hmpri@ameritech.net.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Submissions for the SOLAR Ray are due on the Friday two weeks prior to the monthly Steering Committee Meeting (June 16 for the July issue). Electronic documents only. If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Yoo at janey_13@yahoo.com.

STEERING COMMITTEE

President: Lou Szakal
Secretary: Heather Hall
Activities: Kevin Cotter
Education: Mike Banks
Historian: Dick Eberhoe
Programs: Karl Overheul
Ray Editor: Rebecca Yoo

Vice President: Moe DeFrance
Treasurer: Carol McCririe
By-Laws: Cincy Taylor
Equipment: Dave DeFrance
Membership: Mary Price
Public Relations: Pam Szakal
Webmaster: Dave Sweeton

PRESIDENTS AT LARGE

Mike Banks | Leslie Cordova | Moe DeFrance | Al Fytak
Steve Gardner | Bill Halvingis | Cindy Harrison-Felix | Tom Hayes
Doug Lanyk | Larry Martin | Joan Hettinger | Tom Oloffo
Joan & Bob Westbrook

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Steering Committee meets on the last Tuesday of every month at 7:30 pm. 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, please contact Lou Szakal at Everest2008@aol.com.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website at: www.solaroutdoors.org.

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SOLAR
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