



The

SOLAR RAY

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

May 2009

Virgin Island Adventure—46 Different Trips

Each of the 46 adventurers could stay from 7 trip from the three pages of options and explore both the US and British Virgin

to 14 days, design their own provided by Jim Gessner Islands.

Nancy Perks remembers that every night Edwards would say, "Why did I sign up for so many events?" "I am not going tomorrow." Nancy recalls Maria was up first thing in the morning, and off she went to another great

Maria



it up "As aware, this was the trip ever done in SOLAR (at far as number of people & That's quite an accomplishment! the bar high and hopefully others will some more big trips like this for our members.



adventure.

Cindy Taylor



summed far as I'm biggest least as days). You've set step up to do Looking

forward to the next VI trip!”

The one day that stood out in everyone’s memory was Sharon and Pete’s wedding day. Moe DeFrance shared “As I sat at the wedding, watching people dancing, mingling, singing, and having a ball...I knew it would be a long time before I saw any of them again. SOLAR is truly a family, MY family. I have known this for many years. Families celebrate life, celebrate one another’s joys, support one another’s sorrows...It was such an honor to be there to see all of it, and to know and truly FEEL the love that the group was feeling and flowing back and forth to one another.”



Marry, Deb, the little Lambs

Deb Zuchlewski, in a ministerial gown of her own design officiating the Celtic wedding ritual of Handfasting, pronounced Pete and Sharon wed.

The ceremony at sundown in the most scenic location on the island was so enthusiastic it merited a visit from the manager noting our celebration was being heard all over the island. Spirited Irish step dancing by Carolyn Francis, Pete Lamb and Linda Rodrick



would have been envied by Michael Flatley. The

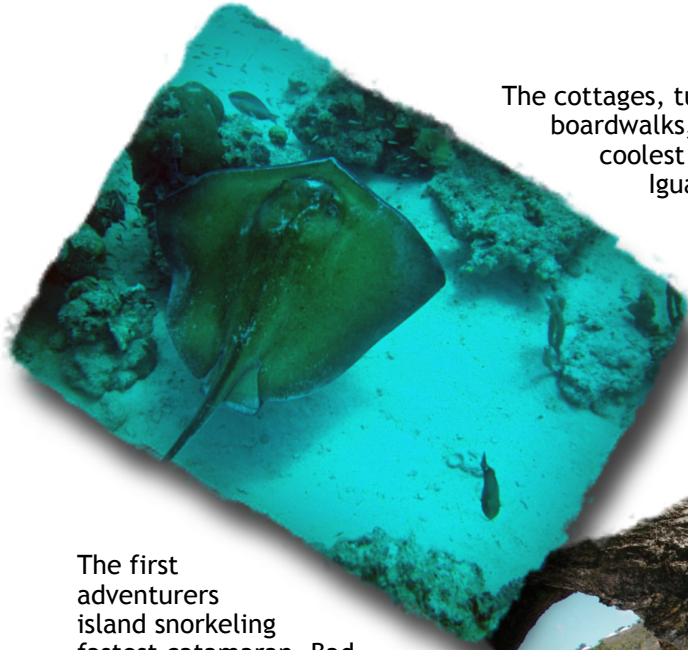


celebrants also danced to YMCA and the chicken dance.

Overheard during the ceremony “I loved the streamers made with twigs”, “the selection of songs was exceptional.”, “Deb, you truly are the high priestess!” and “Can you believe how well Pete could dance the jig?”

Maho Bay-Tree Houses





The cottages, tucked into the forest interconnected with boardwalks, were memorable. Carolyn Francis recounts "The coolest thing I remember are the iguanas in cabin A32 on Iguana Alley. After being fed a taste of fresh mango (provided by one of our tent mates who will remain anonymous) the entire iguana family decided to join us on the back porch at every opportunity. A group of three would slither down the trees and drop beside us on the porch rails; crawling across the table in hope of being offered some food or wine."

Bad Kitty

group of went on a four trip on the Kitty, in the explored well as described the same

The first adventurers island snorkeling fastest catamaran, Bad Virgin Islands. The group the Baths on Virgin Gorda as cave snorkeling on the island as Treasure Island in a book of name by Robert Louis Stevenson.

Reef Bay and Rams Head Hikes

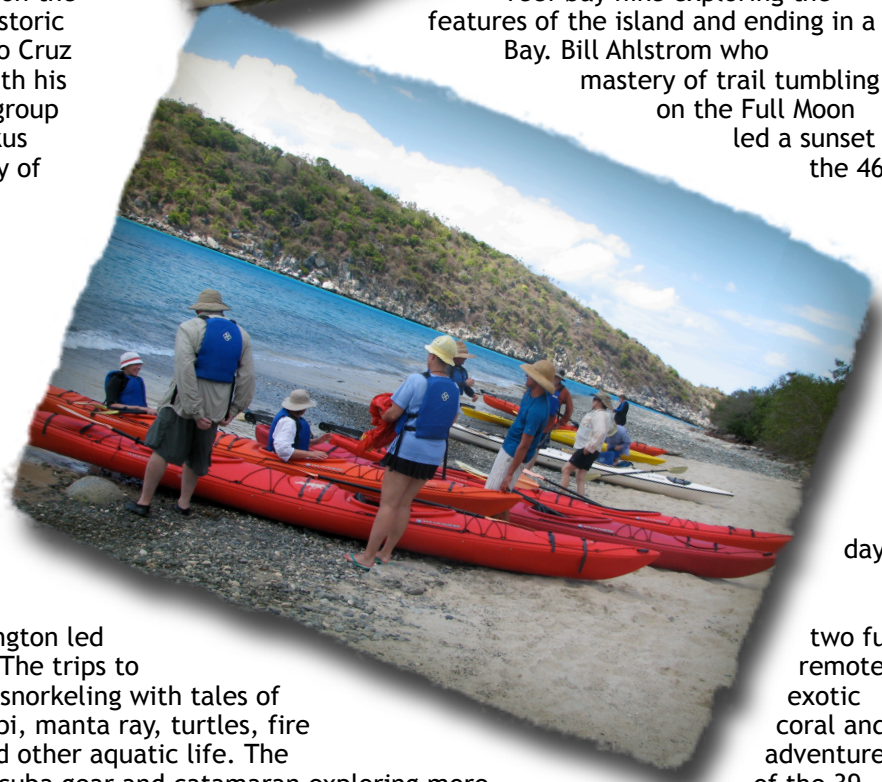
Linda Rodrick led the group on the geological, biological and historic swim and a boat ride back to Cruz entertained fellow hikers with his earlier in the week led the group Ram's Head Hike. Dave Norkus wine hike to Trunk Bay. Many of adventurers took a map and hiked one or more of the 20 trails, sighting abundant wildlife including donkeys and mongoose.

reef bay hike exploring the features of the island and ending in a Bay. Bill Ahlstrom who mastery of trail tumbling on the Full Moon led a sunset the 46



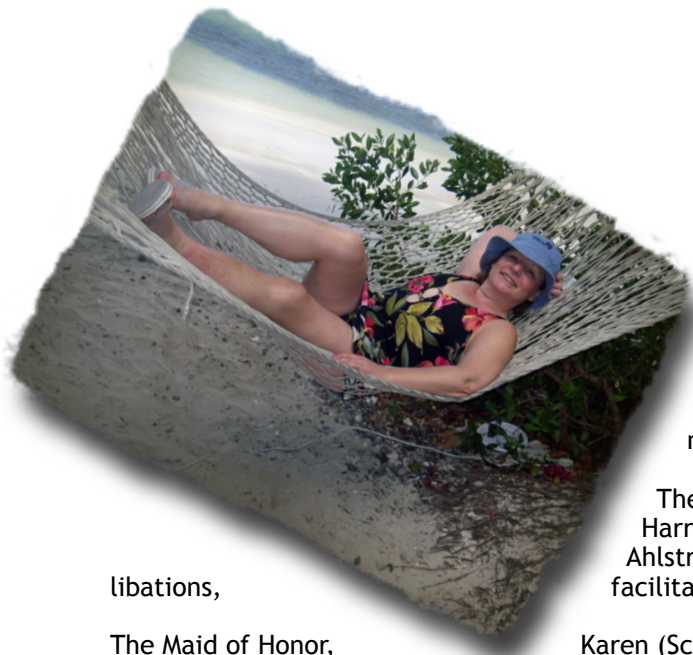
Snorkeling, Scuba and Kayaking

Moe DeFrance and Gayle Larson led snorkeling trips and Dave Norkus led an all scuba trip that all received rave notices. Phil Crookshank and Marie Harrington led and thrill filled kayak trips. The trips to areas produced spectacular snorkeling with tales of fish, shark, barracuda, octopi, manta ray, turtles, fire an assortment of urchins and other aquatic life. The rented kayaks, snorkeling, scuba gear and catamaran exploring more bays on their own.



day

two fun remote exotic coral and adventurers of the 39



Dining, Social hours and other Celebrations

The group enjoyed the pig roast at Miss Lucy's and "all the shrimp you can eat" at Lime's Inn (Wednesdays). Those that stayed two weeks ate the best burger on the island at Skinny Legs. However, a delicious dinner prepared by Nancy Gaarenstroom and Marie Harrington was my most memorable culinary experience.

The Mambos (Marilyn Teeter, Amy Fedor and Marie Harrington) and the Susie Qs (Gena Sue Brown and Sue Ahlstrom) did a great job seamlessly keeping the supply of facilitating the planning of the next day's adventure.

libations,

The Maid of Honor, Schester and Best Man, bachelorette party at the

Karen (Scooter) Carr, Hair Stylist Extraordinaire Janet (Smith) Darrell Ahlberg, orchestrated the activities at the bachelor and famous Beach Bar.

Gena Brown celebrated her milestone birthday with a group of friends and the ubiquitous Hamilton as host with dinner at Crazy Crackers and dancing a local reggae bar.

Rockefeller Yacht Honeymoon Cruise

On a honeymoon cruise to the British Virgin Islands, Pete and Sharon luxuriated on the mahogany and teak yacht once owned by the Rockefellers. Twenty of us joined them, dashing their hopes for a romantic cruise. They had to content themselves with some of the best snorkeling in the Virgin Islands and a lunch at the notorious Willie Ts which encourages patrons to dive off the top of this moored restaurant minus clothing.

Jost Van Dyke, life on a deserted island

Taking the Ferry from Cruz Bay, a band of explorers criss-crossed the island paradise, visiting Ivan's Camp (where you can rent a tent right on the beach), Foxy's (one of the 21 sexiest bars in the world as per Travel Channel), walking the white sand beaches stopping for fresh lobster sandwiches. What a day!!!

Culture

There were lots of opportunities to enjoy the island culture -theatrical plays (Q&A with the play writer, director and star) and astronomy(telescope on the beach), Annaberg Culture Center and other ruins, glass blowing, yoga and massage.

How can I sign up for Jim's next trip?

Jim is planning a trip(sometime between December 2010 and December 2011)to St John USVI, staying at Concordia in hillside cottages with lofts, electricity (for refrigerator and lighting) coming from solar panels and warm showers (solar heating) with a side trip to Jost Van Dyke (tents on beach). If you think you would like to join Jim in the Virgin Islands or if you're interested in Ireland and Scotland (Sep 2010) or Australia and New Zealand (2011) contact Jim on 248 360 1393 or at gessnerj@comcast.net

Why I Walk !

By Jim Coe

"Importance of Walking"

Walking 20 minutes can add to your life.

This enables you at 85 years old to spend

An additional 5 months in a nursing Home at \$7000 per month.

My grandpa started walking
Five miles a day when he was 60.
Now he's 97 years old
And we don't know where he is.

I like long walks
Especially when they are taken
By people who annoy me.

The only reason I would take up walking
Is so that I could hear heavy breathing again.

I have to walk early in the morning,
Before my brain figures out what I'm doing.

I joined a health club last year,
Spent about 400 bucks.
Haven't lost a pound.
Apparently you have to go there?

Everytime I hear the dirty word 'exercise',
I wash my mouth out with chocolate.

I do have flabby thighs,
But fortunately my stomach covers them.

The advantage of exercising every day
Is so when you die, they'll say, 'Well, he looks good doesn't he?'

If you are going to try cross-country skiing,
Start with a small country.

I know I got a lot of exercise
The last few years ...
Just getting over the hill.

We all get heavier as we get older,
Because there's a lot more information in our heads.

That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

AND

Every time I start thinking too much
About how I look,
I just find a Happy Hour
And by the time I leave,
I look just fine.

SOLAR MAY 2009 CALENDAR

www.solaroutdoors.org

MAY ACTIVITES					
1	Tues	Monthly Meeting	Colony Hall	Cindy Taylor	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
1	Tues	SOLAR Elections	Colony Hall	Janet Duncan	SolarPrograms@solaroutdoors.org
5/8-10	Wknd	Mother's Day Weekend Backpack Trip	North Manitou Island, MI	Mike Banks	slywolfe52@yahoo.com
5/9	Sat	Moonlight Paddle	Proud Lake Rec Area	Margaret Martin	mpluscat@yahoo.com
5/22- 25	Multi	Starved Rock and Mattiessen State Park Hike and Camp Weekend	Utica, IL	Leslie Cordova	lesliegene@aol.com
5/22- 25	Multi	Bruce Peninsula Backcountry Camping	Tobermory, Ont.	Jennifer Tislerics	jtislerics@yahoo.com
MAY CLASSES					
(cont) 5/7, 15-17	Multi	Beginner Backpacking Spring Class	Oak Park Community Center	Mike Banks	slywolfe52@yahoo.com
(cont) 5/9, 30	Sat	Adventure Racing	State Parks	Pamela Riehl	pariehl@gmail.com
5/16	Sat	Paddling Class	Proud Lake Rec Area	Margaret Martin	mpluscat@yahoo.com
5/17	Sun	Introduction to Kayaking	Proud Lake Rec. Area, Milford, MI	Matt Dalton	mdalton@ameritech.net
5/16-17	Wknd	Scuba Diving - Pool	TBD	Tom Hayes	sarcaptin@yahoo.com
5/28, 6/4, 11, 18, 25	Thurs	Open Water Kayak Skills	Harley Ensign Boat Ramp	Chuck Smith	cbryansmit@aol.com
JUNE ACTIVITES					
3	Tues	Monthly Meeting	Colony Hall	Cindy Taylor	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
3	Tues	Kayak Build Presentation	Colony Hall	Janet Duncan	SolarPrograms@solaroutdoors.org
6/5-7	Wknd	Summer Kickoff Camping Weekend	Brighton Rec Area	Carol McCririe	cmccririe@sbcglobal.net
6/19-21	Wknd	Kid Mandatory Beginner Backpack Trip	Manistee River Trail	Charity Loring	charitymarie@yahoo.com
3/10	Sat	Moonlight Paddle	Proud Lake Rec Area	Margaret Martin	mpluscat@yahoo.com
3/13	Fri	Paddle to the Symphony	Kensington Metro Park, Milford, MI	Michael Willihnganz	copycast@aol.com
6/26 - 7/12	Multi	Olympus/Rainier Mountaineering	Washington State	Lou Szakal	everest2008@comcast.net
JUNE CLASSES					
(cont) 6/4, 11, 18, 25	Sat	Open Water Kayak Skills	Harley Ensign Boat Ramp	Chuck Smith	cbryansmit@aol.com
6/6-7	Wknd	Scuba Diving - Open Water Test	Bowling Green, OH	Tom Hayes	sarcaptin@yahoo.com
6/10, 17, 20-21	Multi	Basic Land Navigation	Berkley Community Center/Waterloo Rec Area	Karl Overheul/Ati Tislerics	cyber.nomad@comcast.net
6/18, 20-21	Multi	Wilderness First Aid	TBD	Mike Malon / Mary Price	mmalon@comcast.net

JULY ACTIVITES					
7/2-5	Multi	Camping Weekend	Chain O' Lakes State Park, IN	Leslie Cordova	lesliegene@aol.com
1	Tues	Monthly Meeting	Colony Hall	Cindy Taylor	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
1	Tues	Gear Swap and Summer Picinic	Colony Hall	Janet Duncan	SolarPrograms@solaroutdoors.org
7/11	Sat	Moonlight Paddle	Proud Lake Rec Area	Margaret Martin	mpluscat@yahoo.com
7/17-19	Wknd	Diving World Record	Gilboa Quarry, Ottawa, OH	Gary Schafer	saniglowcfm@gmail.com
7/24-26	Wknd	Canoe float down the Manistee River	Grayling, MI	Tom Oloffo	mcmountainman@yahoo.com
JULY CLASSES					
UPCOMING ACTIVITIES					
8/5, 9/4, 10/3, 11/1	Fri, Sat or Sun	Moonlight Paddle	Proud Lake Rec Area	Margaret Martin	mpluscat@yahoo.com
10/4-10	Multi	Week in the Adirondacks	Lake Placid, NYI	Don Wold	dwold12972@aol.com
Fall 2010	Multi	Gaelic Adventure	Ireland/Scotland	Jim Gessner	gessnerj@comcast.net
UPCOMING CLASSES					
Sept/Oct 2009	Multi	Women in the Woods	TBD	Pamela Riehl	pariehl@gmail.com

If you would like to plan/lead a SOLAR activity, contact our Activities Chairperson, Samantha Schafer, at SolarActivities@SolarOutdoors.org.

If you would like to teach or suggest a SOLAR class, contact our Education Chairperson, Allen Duncan, at SolarEducation@SolarOutdoors.org.

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

Solar's 7th Annual Introduction to Kayaking Class

Date: Sunday: May 17, 2009 Time: 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Location: Heavner's Canoe & Kayak Rental, Milford, MI Proud Lake State Recreation Area

Cost: \$30.00 Includes: Class, all equipment and dinner Cost: \$10.00 If you have your own kayak

This is an introduction class for people who have never kayaked or those that have and never had a lesson had a lesson. WE will cover how to paddle correctly, what gear to bring or rent, where to paddle. If you're thinking about buying a kayak this year, we're cover some must know information before you make a purchase.

Class size limited to no more than 10 students to insure personalized attention.

Past kayak class students who would like to assist are encouraged to contact me.

Students need to register before the class. Contact Matt Dalton with questions and to register at mdalton@ameritech.net or 248 760 3792

Introduction to Kayaking

By Ken Lemieux



Remember “it is a water sport” yelled our instructor Matt over the roar of the pouring rain. The weather had been volatile all weekend and had taken a sudden turn for the worst. As the temperature dropped sharply and the cold rain pelted us, I couldn’t help but think, “I see what Matt says about staying close to the shore on bigger bodies of water, this kayak sure doesn’t afford much protection from the elements.”

In a few minutes, the squall passed, the temperature went back into the seventies, and we would resume our class. The seven students (Nancy, Marie, Mike, Ann, Jeannie, Heidi, and I) were more or less in the same boat, so to speak, with minimal kayaking experience. Mike, although still somewhat of a rookie, had purchased a kayak from Matt last year. Compared to our rental “recreational” vessels, his was a Cadillac.

The most important concept we learned in class was “punch don’t pull.” This refers to a specific way to paddle and, to make a long story short, gives you a much more powerful and sustainable stroke. For most of us, this was a totally new technique which required a good deal of effort to train our “muscle memory.”



The class was scheduled from 1-5 PM at Proud Lake Recreation Area. The first portion was spent going over various situations, concepts and equipment. Who knew there was so many different types of kayaks and that a top-end paddle could set you back \$450?

The second part of the class was spent sitting on the grass in a semi-circle while Matt instructed us on various paddling techniques. Although it might not sound logical, it is a lot easier to learn how to paddle correctly sitting on land rather than in a kayak. If you're considering taking the class, I would recommend a camp-chair with back support. I was definitely jealous of the one Heidi brought.

After a couple of hours and a brief weather delay, we finally hit the water. The class practiced going forward, backwards, sideways, turning, and in circles. As there is a proper procedure for everything, we even practiced getting in our kayaks.

Mike has a kayaking trip planned to International Falls in May, and wanted to be as prepared as possible. As the rest of the class watched with mild amusement, Mike practiced tipping his kayak and getting back on board. With Matt giving advice, he handled the situation well; although being as it was still April, I certainly wasn't ready to willingly go for a dip!

After the instruction period was over, we took a short paddle up stream and then returned to Heavner's Canoe Rental where Alan Heavner had pizza waiting for us. What a great way to end an educational and fun afternoon.

Note: Matt Dalton is teaching this class again on May 17. Cost is \$30. To sign up, email Matt at HYPERLINK "<mailto:mdalton@ameritech.net>" mdalton@ameritech.net.



A Big Thanks To SOLAR

A BIG Thank You to the many SOLAR friends who have made our solar wedding such a wonderful, joy filled occasion.

From a high hill top overlooking Mahoo Bay the sparkling blue hues slowly turned a wonderful shade of pink as we shared our happiness to the sounds of many Solar people singing John Denver's' tune- You Fill Up My Senses.

Colorful ribbons tied to branches by friends waved in unison as our wedding vows were witnessed.

What a wonderful community of people - SOLAR is. More than just a club - A bonding of shared events, memories and aspirations and future goals.

The party continued in Michigan with many Solar people gathered at our new home on Bullard Lake. We cannot even find the words to convey the gratitude for help given to prepare for the party!!!..The lake glimmered as a few kayaks took off in the crisp breeze, the sun shone warmly through the clouds and sounds of laughter filtered through the trees. All these warm sights and sounds are etched into the fabric of our new house and hearts now and we heart fully want to thank each of our solar friends who have given their congratulations, had our marriage in their hearts and prayers, been able to attend our gathering or sent a card or a wonderful gift!!!!

We are in awe of the happiness our marriage brings to us and we thank all of you for sharing in this event!.....Love from us both.....Pete and Sharon Lamb

CHAIN O' LAKES STATE PARK

JULY 2 – 5, 2009

**HIKING, CANOEING, KAYAKING, CAMPING, SWIMMING, AMISH COUNTRY -
KID AND DOG FRIENDLY**

Come join us July 2 - 5, 2009. We are going to drive 3 - 3.5 hours to Indiana. Eight connecting lakes will be the center of your adventure at Chain O' Lakes State Park. Paddle through the chain, hike the 10 miles of trails, attend a nature program in the park's "old school house" nature center, relax and go swimming. At nearby Rome City, you can visit the Gene Stratton-Porter House. Also, Shipshewana (Amish County) is only a 30 minute drive.

We will spend 3 nights camping, and exploring. Saturday night will be a traditional SOLAR potluck. There are 7 individual campsites reserved, in this modern campground with showers and flush toilets.

All this fun can be yours for a mere \$18 per person.

Contact Leslie Cordova to reserve your spot today. lesliegene@aol.com or (248) 547-5626.

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 membership@solaroutdoors.org.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Submissions for the SOLAR Ray are due on the Friday two weeks prior to the monthly Steering Committee Meeting (June 13 for the July issue). Electronic documents only, Word is preferred and please attach your images. If you have any questions, please contact Pete Lamb at rayeditor@solaroutdoors.org.

STEERING COMMITTEE

President: Cindy Taylor	Vice President: Carol McCririe
Secretary: Sherri Doebel	Treasurer: Michelle Delaporte
Activities: Samantha Schafer	By-Laws: Chuck Smith
Education: Allen Duncan	Equipment: Sherri Doebel
Historian: Debbie Zuchlewski	Membership: Mary Price
Programs: Jan Duncan	Public Relations: Pam Szakal
Ray Editor: Pete Lamb	Webmaster: Willi Gutman

PRESIDENTS AT LARGE

Mike Banks | Leslie Cordova | Al Fylak | Steve Gardner
Bill Halvingis | Cindy Harrison-Felix | Tom Hayes | Doug Lanyk
Larry Martin | Joan Hettinger | Tom Oloffo | Lou Szakal
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 Cindy Taylor at president@solaroutdoors.org.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website at: www.solaroutdoors.org.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SOLAR RAY ASSISTANT EDITORS

Winnie Chrzanowski, Kathy Drewyore, Sheila Hardy, Pam Schmelzer, Carol McCririe, Elizabeth Schwab.

Visit our website: WWW.SOLAROUTDOORS.ORG

SOLAR

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