

The SOLAR Ray



[Facebook.com/SOLAROutdoors](https://www.facebook.com/SOLAROutdoors)

A monthly publication of the School for Outdoor Leadership, Adventure and Recreation (SOLAR) December 2010

Visit us at www.solaroutdoors.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Addiction to Geocaching	1-2
Knot Tying Class	2
Intermediate BP Trip	3-6
Snowkiting Class	7
Lake Ann Trip	7
Backcountry Gourmet	8
Club Membership	8
Spotlight On	9
This Month in SOLAR History	9
We Asked Club Members...	10
Welcome to the Club!	10
Campfire Story	10
Hayride/Bonfire Photos	11
Diving in Cozumel	12-13
Word Search	13
Riding the Bull	14
SOLAR Calendar	15

A Delayed Reaction: My New Addiction to Geocaching

by Sheila Smith (aka Kuhlbeanz) and featuring Ginger Bean

August 21, 2010 - The Inoculation

In August, I signed up for a class on Geocaching, taught by SOLAR members Jeff McWilliams and Clayton Lucey (with the help of Jennifer McWilliams). I'd only taken series classes before and only two of them (Spring Backpacking and Beginning Kayaking). This was a shorter time commitment (a one-day class in Kensington) and I'd been curious about geocaching for some time.

The morning of the class was cool and rainy (like a lot of our summers here in Southeast Michigan), but we arrived to find tents set up to shelter us from the rain and a table stocked with all sorts of boxes and gadgets.

Jeff and Clayton took us through the basics of geocaching, different types of caches, travel bugs and pathtags, how to download coordinates, and of course, since this course was taught by

SOLAR members, a practical experience in how to find coordinates (with GPS units provided by SOLAR for those of us who didn't have our own units... gotta love being a member of a club that lets you try before you buy). Class was fun and informative, met new people, saw old friends, etc.

But.... still occupied with my previous addiction (kayaking) and putting good use to all those skills I picked up in Basic Kayaking,

I didn't log a cache for a couple of months. In mid-October while down in Virginia on a work/play trip, a colleague/friend took me with her to find a cache on the JMU campus. The rest, as they say, is history.

October 17, 2010

Logged my first cache, Entering the Exit, on Geocaching.com (to which I'd had a free account since class in August). Downloaded iPhone app. Yeah, I know, it took a while.

(Continued on page 2)



SOLAR members are encouraged to use the online calendar at www.meetup.com/SOLAR-Outdoors for convenient class and trip sign-ups.



(Continued from page 1)

October 30 - Not all who wander are lost... but some of us are

So October 30 found me out in the woods trying to remember how to use my GPS (not the same unit as from class) to do this caching thing. Bean and I were befriended by a fellow cacher out with his dog. Went home, dug out GPS manual, upgraded geocaching account to Premium and headed back out the next day.

Today... Cache addict

I've logged 63 caches in the last month... most of which I've found with Bean in tow (or more accurately, Bean has had me in tow). I've found lots of creative caches... and not found others (DNF). I've introduced my friends with small children to caching. One of my coolest moments was finding the pathtag of Clatmandu (aka Clayton Lucey) in a cache in Holly; it was that aha! moment of connection.

Value Added...

For me the joy of geocaching is in adding value to the things that I already do: Walking my dog, riding my bike, even kayaking... there are caches that can be reached by each of these. As I've become more addicted to this activity, I've taken to simply filling my GPS with cache coordinates for the places that I frequent so I can pick up a cache when I'm out and about.

And all of this started with a SOLAR class...

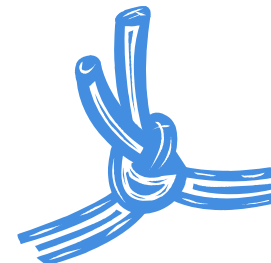
TFTC (Thanks for the Cache!)



Knot Tying Class

Monday, January 3, 2011 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

A working knowledge of a few knots can make camping and being in the outdoors both easier and safer. A bit of line and some simple knots can solve a lot of problems and make life easier!



We have a bunch of helpers for this class. The plan is to split into small groups, each with a helper, and to learn and practice knots by actually doing things with them. Instead of saying, "This is a clove hitch and it's used for..." we are going to use the approach of, "Here is a tarp, how are we going to set it up?"

I'll have some very small "mini tarps" to play with; we can practice setting clothes lines, and maybe even a bear bag. (Okay, I'm not sure how to do all this inside a house. We're SOLARites - keep a sense of humor and we will figure it out.)

The McWilliamses are graciously hosting us at their home in Troy - near REI.

There can be a maximum of 20 students for the class. It will be tight, but again, bring that sense of humor.

The cost for all this fun and knowledge is only \$10. To sign up contact me at cbryansmit@gmail.com, or on Meetup, or at the next SOLAR meeting.

Chuck Smith

Intermediate Backpacking Class - Hiking the Red River Gorge

by Karen Haroutunian

What do bear attacks, park closings, forest fires, back injuries, foot injuries, no remaining vacation days and schedule conflicts add up to? SOLAR's 2010 Intermediate Backpacking class.

Planning for our trip started in April with twelve students and five instructors, and consisted of one formal class (where we discussed trip planning and parameters, logistics and possible destinations), three face-to-face meetings, numerous emails and email polls, several useful flow charts and lots of opinions and discussion.

Our first task was to decide the number of days for our trip and how far we wanted to travel. We settled on a 4-day weekend with no more than a 7 hour drive.

We met again in May to select the date for our trip. This was no easy feat given how busy most SOLARites are. After compiling our polling data and checking our calendars, we settled on the weekend of October 29 to November 1. We decided we would drive to our location on Thursday, hike in on Friday and out on Monday.

Next we needed to select our destination. After much discussion and a couple of votes, we narrowed our choices to Red River Gorge in Kentucky and Shawnee State Forest in Ohio. We split into two groups, each group researching a location and preparing a trip plan to present to the class.

We met again in June for our plan presentations. After much discussion, which included telephone calls with students who could not attend the meeting, we decided on Red River Gorge.

Things were looking good and plans were falling into place. Then we heard there was a bear attack and the park was closed. Apparently a bear stalked and attacked a hiker. Yikes! We nervously checked and re-checked the website and made several

phone calls to the park to find out if they caught the bear and the status of the park. (We already knew from the article that the hiker was okay.) For the longest time we heard nothing. When we found out the park was open, we moved forward with our plans.

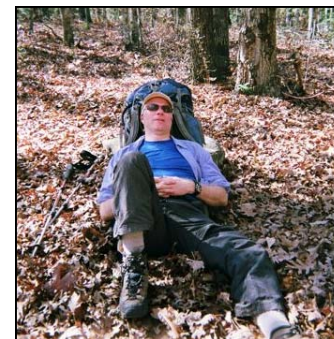
We met one last time in September when we ordered topo maps, planned group gear, made hotel reservations and finalized car pooling arrangements.

October turned out to be interesting as several students had to drop out due to injuries or other obligations - like jobs. So five students (Glenn Schultz, Heidi Tietjen, Paul Williford, Linda Rodrick and Karen Haroutunian) and three instructors (Leslie Cordova, Dennis Phillips and Samantha Schafer) made the trip.

Thursday, October 28: We met at the hotel and divided up the group gear. We chatted a bit and agreed to meet downstairs for breakfast at 7:00 a.m.

Friday, October 29: Everyone was up early and at breakfast. Everything was good to go. We were excited and ready for our adventure. Then we met Nina, the breakfast buffet lady. She innocently asked us, "What are y'all doing here?" When we told her we were there to hike the Red River Gorge, she asked, "Y'all know about the fire?" Fire! What fire? This was certainly news to us, especially since one student called and spoke to a ranger on Tuesday and an instructor checked the website on Wednesday and nothing was mentioned about a fire. Hmmm.

Nina explained that a large part of the park was closed due to a fire, which is why all the men in the restaurant looked so unhappy. Ah. Hunters. Luckily for us, there were two park rangers at the table next to us. We spoke with them, showed them our trip plan, found out what portion of the park was closed and were told that we could not have any campfires. Oh, remember that bear attack? We also found out from the rangers that the park was closed for only one week and they didn't find the bear. Great. Just what we need. A hungry, hiker-stalking bear.



(Continued from page 3)

Time for Plan B. We gathered around the map, redesigned our route and were confident we'd have a great trip. We also learned that when planning a trip you need to be flexible.

We drove to the Shell station for our permits, spotted cars at Koomer Ridge Campground and Angel Windows (along with two 5-gallon containers of water) and were ready to begin our journey into the Clifty Wilderness at Wildcat Trail.

The guidebook describes the Clifty Wilderness as "a rugged, undeveloped area." The guidebook is correct, as we quickly learned. The topography was challenging and beautiful. It consisted of cliffs, arches, rock shelters and large arbors of rhododendrons which must be gorgeous in the spring. We had a lot of ups and downs, often on the edge of narrow trails.

We planned to spend the first night in the Clifty Wilderness. Since there is only one designated campsite in the Red River Gorge and none in the Clifty Wilderness, we weren't certain how many acceptable sites we would find that would accommodate our group. We passed a few sites early in the day and mid-afternoon, but weren't ready to stop hiking for the day. We reached Angel Windows, where we spotted a car and had to decide if we wanted to keep going or turn back to one of the sites we passed. We estimated that we hiked about 5 miles in 4 hours. We were a bit tired. Time for Plan C.

We decided to spend the night at the Koomer Ridge Campground. The downside to this was that it was not the backcountry camping experience we wanted. The upside was that we could have a campfire on what was to be the coldest night of the trip. Oh, and there were outhouses. (Love those luxury accommodations.)



After dinner we gathered around the campfire to discuss our plan for the next day. After discussing a couple of options, we settled on our route. We sat by the campfire for quite some time - until around 9:00 p.m., I think - playing Leslie's "I'm going to Omaha" game.



Saturday, October 30: We were awakened by Denny saying something about blueberry pancakes for breakfast. Yum! After breakfast, which did not include blueberry pancakes, we decided to take a short day-hike to Chimney Top Rock and Princess Arch. Since there are no hiking trails to either destination, we drove the five miles to the adjacent parking lot.

At Chimney Top Rock we could see the smoke from the fire and wondered how far from us it was. Perhaps even more amazing than the fire were the memorials to the people who died because they ignored the posted warnings about not crossing the railings, and the number of people who crossed the railing so they could carve their names in the rock. After taking some pictures, we went to Princess Arch. We returned to the parking lot and had lunch at the picnic tables.

After lunch we drove back to Angel Windows to re-stage the cars and proceed as originally planned. We hiked along the Rough Trail (appropriately named) in search of our next campsite. Leslie, having been to the RRG before, had her map marked with possible campsites. We scoped out her sites and explored for more. We found a beautiful site across the river that looked like it would be perfect for us, but from where we were standing it looked like it was occupied because we could see several chairs.

Glenn decided to take a closer look and crossed the river to check it out. He shouted back to us that the site was vacant and we happily crossed over to what was an amazing location. Previous campers built a fire pit and several chairs out of stones. Very clever! The chairs were actually quite comfortable - sort of - and we made good use of them.

We set up camp, had dinner and discussed our plan for the next day. It got dark and cold quickly and we

(Continued on page 5)

stared longingly at the empty fire pit. Everyone agreed that a fire would be great about now. Then it happened. We were saved! Sam brought a candle lantern. We had fire! Between that, Leslie's battery operated lantern, glow sticks and headlamps, we had enough light for a game of euchre. Happy campers.

Sunday, October 31: Denny woke us up with the promise of French Toast. When asked where breakfast was, he said he was tapping a tree for the maple syrup since we deserved only the best. Yeah, sure. Oatmeal again.

Since nobody wanted to abandon our campsite, we decided to take a couple of day hikes. Most of us didn't have day-packs so our SOLAR resourcefulness kicked in as we fashioned day-packs from what we had with us. I must say, our creations were quite ingenious and we were pleased with what we could come up with on the fly.

We set out for the Suspension Bridge. Along the way, we could smell the smoke from the fire. When we reached the bridge, we took a short break and suffered our first (and only) injury. Heidi got stung by a bee. Glenn stepped forward with the first aid kit, medicine was applied and everything was fine. Leslie and Sam told us the story of the year someone in the class literally stumbled upon a ground nest and she, as well as some of the instructors, received numerous bee stings. We considered ourselves lucky.

After our trip to the Suspension Bridge we regrouped and proceeded to hike what we thought would be a short 7 mile loop consisting of the Rough Trail (where we stopped for lunch), Buck Trail, Koomer Ridge Trail and Sheltowee Trail. This loop was a lot more up and down (remember, it's a gorge) and took us by some of the closed trails that were part of our original plan. We saw some spectacular views and made 18 river crossings.

We returned to camp around 4 pm. This time Paul and Linda provided the fire. Well, actually, it was Paul just lighting his stove, but by now we really wanted a campfire. After dinner we had our own Halloween celebration, which consisted of way



too much candy. We enjoyed another night of star gazing before going to bed early.

Monday, November 1: We were up early to break camp and hike out. We proceeded up what some (or most) of us thought would be a long, difficult climb out of the gorge having made the descent the day before. Happily, it was much easier than we thought and we made very good time. The rest of the hike out was easy given what we hiked the previous days and we made it back to Koomer Ridge parking lot by mid-morning.

After retrieving the cars from their various locations, taking pictures, chatting and congratulating ourselves, we headed out for lunch. (You know it wouldn't be a successful trip without stopping for lunch!) Sam decided not to join us for lunch since her trip home was in the opposite direction. So we said our good-byes to her at the parking lot. A special thanks to Sam for driving from Georgia to go on the trip with us. We are very glad you did!

We had a great time and learned a lot, especially the importance of remaining flexible and being resourceful. We missed those people who couldn't attend and thought about them often. Although they weren't on the trip, their contributions to it were valuable - from helping with the actual trip planning, typing up and distributing the "minutes" of our meetings, hotel research, input from those who have previously been to RRG, use of group gear and just their great attitudes and SOLAR spirit.

Thanks, too, to our instructors: Leslie, Denny, Sam, Tom Hayes and Carol McCrie.

Happy trails.



Additional Photos from the Intermediate Backpacking Trip to Red River Gorge



Bear bagging



Don't miss the hiker coming down the trail.



One of many water crossings.

Snowkiting Class Being Offered

by Chuck Smith

I've always wanted to try kiteboarding, and snowkiting is a good starting point. Professional instruction is pretty much necessary to play with big kites, to have some semblance of safety. I've arranged a class with MAC Kiteboarding in Grand Haven to show us the basics. It will be a 1/2 day class, held on Saturday, February 5, 2011.

The cost will be \$210 for about 4 hours of instruction and equipment use. We need a minimum of three students (including me :-), with a maximum of five. Students will need to bring downhill skis or a snowboard, helmet, knee & elbow pads, and dress to be playing outside in February. Previous practice with a training kite is recommended, and I am working with the equipment chair to see if SOLAR may want to purchase a trainer. A (significant) portion of the cost of the trainer is included in class cost.

Lessons are weather-dependent.

From MACKite's website (mackiteboarding.com):

What's Included: Lessons and camps include all necessary kites and harnesses; you must bring your own protective gear (a helmet is mandatory) and skis or snowboard. We operate our school with a maximum of 2 students per instructor to maximize your learning potential and enjoyment.

What is covered: We will strive to pair students of similar experience levels, so that each group's needs are met. If you are a total newbie, we will start with trainer kites and kite theory to build your experience from scratch. Don't fear however, we find that even complete beginners are generally riding significant distances by the end of Day 1. More experienced kite fliers are often holding their ground, or even riding upwind by the end of that first day. This is why we love to teach on snow, your progress is double or triple what it is in the water.



What to expect: Dress warm in layers. Imagine you are going to start out dressed as if you were downhill skiing and riding a long chair lift in between runs (meaning short periods of activity). As the day progresses, your activity level will increase nearly to the extent of cross-country skiing. You may need to remove a layer, so plan ahead.

Protective gear list: A ski/snowboard helmet (mandatory), knee and elbow pads (recommended), and butt/hip pads (optional).

Lake Ann January 2011



If you haven't been to Lake Ann you owe yourself a mid-winter trip. It's inexpensive and a lot of fun, and the accommodation is just great. This has been a SOLAR favorite for a number

of years. Cross-country skiing is the main focus, but if downhill is your sin of choice, Crystal Mountain will satisfy it.

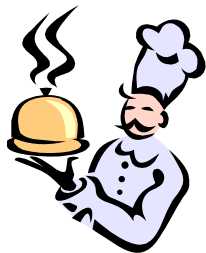
For \$65 per person for two nights you get lodging and a potluck turkey dinner. Jim Coe will perform his traditional naked snow dance at Island Lake (I will have to talk to him about that, now he is married), clad only in a pair of mukluks, to guarantee snow. You will be assured of a great time with people you just love to be around. What more could you need for a fantastic weekend?

Turkey dinner, card games of your choice (euchre is a favorite), plus skiing yourself to exhaustion. Sounds like SOLAR to me! Make out your check to SOLAR for \$65 and

send it to Pete Lamb at 12352 Erika St., Hartland, MI, 48353.



Backcountry Gourmet



Stewed Fruit "SLUMP"

submitted by Bernadette Lois

Now that winter is upon us, this is a good warm-up and refuel — breakfast or dessert! It's much better than it sounds, and only takes a few minutes to concoct this comfort food. Plus, options are endless for mixtures to your liking.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 - 3/4c Dried Fruit, double the amount for Fresh Fruit - Your choice
- Water, enough to cover fruit
- 1c dry Biscuit mix (e.g. Bisquick or Jiffy Mix)
- 1/3c Water or milk for biscuit mixture
- Side of sugar, honey or maple syrup.
- Garnish of spice or nuts or chocolate!

Serves 2. (Multiply as needed.)

1. Toss bite sized bits of fruit into a pot. Cover with water and heat.
2. Multi-task and separately whip up some biscuit dough, using a prepackaged mix. If desired, add sugar to dough.
3. Once the fruit starts to simmer, drop spoonfuls of dough around the circumference of the pot.
4. Cover again to steam the dumplings to desired "slumpness".
5. Serve. Drizzle sweetness and garnish to taste. Enjoy !

(Base recipe from Paddling.net)

Creative Combos to try:

Cranberry/Apple with dried Cardamom, Pineapple/Banana with Coconut and Pistachio, Peaches with Cinnamon/Nutmeg and Pecans.

A Message from the Membership Chairperson:

The end of the year is rapidly approaching, so once again it is time for all SOLAR annual members to renew their memberships. Annual memberships expire December 31, 2010, except for new memberships paid between October and December 2010 (which will roll over through December 31, 2011). Starting in 2011, all Lifetime members will be asked to complete a membership form every year. It is every SOLAR member's responsibility to review the liability waiver on the membership form and sign the form.

Membership forms can be downloaded at the SOLAR website (www.solaroutdoors.org). Select the Membership tab. The link to the membership application can be found at the bottom of the page. I will have plenty of forms available at the upcoming general membership meetings and at the Holiday party.

The good news is that the membership prices remain the same:

- \$40 for a single annual membership
- \$55 for a family annual membership
- \$175 for a single lifetime membership
- \$250 for a family lifetime membership

I can be reached at SolarMembership@SolarOutdoors.org or 248-477-7547 with any questions or concerns.

Mary Price, Membership Chairperson

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Karen Haroutunian,
SOLAR Member

How long have you been a member of SOLAR? Almost 3 years.

How did you first learn about SOLAR? Through BS Hiking.

What are some outdoorsy activities you enjoy? Hiking in the woods, camping with friends, gardening and yard work.

What has been your favorite trip/activity so far? Pictured Rocks this summer with friends.

What's the most challenging thing you've done through SOLAR? The high ropes course in Flint and learning how to pack my backpack.



What would your ideal trip be like? Any place where I can see the Northern Lights.

Which SOLAR classes have you taken? What class(es) do you wish were offered that are not currently? I've taken Beginning Backpacking, Basic Land Nav, Search & Rescue, Wilderness First Aid, Enjoying Michigan Winters and Adventure Racing. I'd like to see Intermediate Land Nav/Orienteering offered.

Tell us something about you that would surprise us! I consider myself an introvert. Also, I was quarterback on my high school flag football team.

Do you have any pets? Kids? Significant Other? Two dogs: Kipling, my poodle mix and Bosley, my cocker spaniel.

This Month in SOLAR History

compiled by Pam Riehl Szakal



10 Years Ago: There were ten activities/classes offered on the December calendar. They were SOLAR General Meeting/Holiday Party, Winter Outdoor Safety Class, Enjoying Michigan Winters Class, Dog Sledding in Algonquin National Park (2 trips), Caving/Hiking in Carter Caves, Skiing/Snowshoeing at Crystal Mountain, Snowshoeing/Dog Sledding in Hiawatha National Forest, and Skiing/Snowshoeing in Sault Ste. Marie.

20 Years Ago: Eleven SOLAR members participated in a Personal Challenge Course at Camp Maas (Tamarack) in Ortonville. Activities began with a "Log Crossing", where everyone stood on the log and those on the left had to move around those on the right without using the ground for aid. Other morning challenges included the "Spider Web" where all members had to be passed through a different hole in a network of ropes without touching the ropes and the "Wall" where everyone had to work together to get members over a 12-ft. wall. It was a lot easier to get the women over than the men! After lunch everyone participated in a "ropes course" that included tight ropes, balance beams, and long jump platforms 20 feet in the air.

23 Years Ago (1987): SOLAR had approximately 180 members.



We asked SOLAR club members...

What have you learned about yourself since you joined SOLAR?



Mary Bogush

I can eat a lot more
than I thought I
could!



Doug Lanyk

It's been so long, I'm
not the same person
anymore. I've been in
SOLAR for 27 years!



Lynn Dubay

My biggest change was
learning that you can hike,
camp, and have fun outdoors
after Labor Day! I always
thought you could only
backpack between Memorial
Day and Labor Day. Since
joining SOLAR, not much stops
me now!!

*Have a question to suggest? Contact the Ray Editor at
SOLARrayeditor@solaroutdoors.org.*



**SOLAR offers a warm welcome to the
following new members:**

Maria Beckwith
Dennis Felker
Wayne McGarrah
Doug Meyers
Gregg Stefansky
Thomas Wucetich

**We'd also like to welcome the club's
newest lifetime member:**

Diane Siemen

A Campfire Story

It was night time. Two bats were hanging upside down. One bat said to the other, "What you want to do?"

The other bat said, "I don't know. What do you want to do?"

The first bat said, "How about we fly around looking for some juicy bloody bugs?"

"Good idea!" said the second bat.

So the bats flew around awhile and both of them came back to their roost.

The first bat said to the second bat,

"My, you must have found a lot of juicy big bugs! You have a lot of blood all over your face!"

The second bat said, "See that tree over there?"

"Sure!" replied the first bat.

The second bat said, "Well, I didn't."

Hayride & Bonfire

November 6, 2010

photos submitted by Leslie Cordova



Cozumel 2010

by Pete Lamb



Four SOLAR members (Amy Fedor, Karen Carr, Sharon Lamb and I) latched onto a trip to Cozumel in the Caribbean through a dive shop in Kalamazoo. A week in a resort for \$500 included food, accommodations, and drinks - what a deal! The dives were extra. Two dives in the morning, two in the afternoon, and a night dive was a demanding schedule, but we did what we felt comfortable with. We could not dive the last two days, as we had a hurricane go past. We experienced a drop in temperature and fairly breezy conditions; it was not unpleasant, just too choppy for

diving. There is not much to do in Cozumel aside from diving and shopping. The inland area is scrub that was shredded by a big hurricane that stopped over the island for three days some years ago. Three days of 150-mile-an-hour winds can do enormous damage.

The whole coastline on the west side of the island is made of coral reefs and has hundreds of dive sites. We only did a few within several miles of the resort, but I would definitely go back to explore the ones we missed. There is a strong current between the island and the mainland so most of the diving is drift diving. I had never dealt with strong currents before... there you are drifting along a wall, faster than you can walk. If you miss something don't even try to get back to it. This is good and bad - you don't use much air since you are not working too hard, but it causes anxiety trying to stay with the group, which does use up air, so I guess it's a



wash. Oh, incidentally, the water is 5000 feet deep, which is something to think about.

The three ladies I went with were experienced divers and could not wait to do a night dive ("Oh Pete, you see such neat things at night"). I had reservations about the whole concept of diving in the dark: giant sharks coming out of the depths, moray eels that can bite your arm off, octopus that could grab you, getting lost in the dark - you name it, I could imagine it. All three of them waxed enthusiastically about the bloody octopi, which was the last thing I wanted to see... well, almost. I wanted to see a Great White even less. I thought about this a lot: which would be worse, being bitten in half by a Great White or being engulfed by an octopus and slowly dragged into the depths. I still haven't made up my mind about this, yet.



As some of you know, I have asthma, and with that comes a degree of claustrophobia. I had always been a bit worried about how I would react to an emergency under water. Well, my air tank came loose on a dive and during the struggle to get it back in the rack it was partially shut off. All went well until I took a big breath and there was nothing to breathe. I got concerned about this and it must have showed on my face. The Dive Master swam over and gave me her spare octopus (the mouthpiece one breathes through). I switched mouth pieces okay, then went back to my own tank. Still no air, so I had to go to the surface with my partner, Sharon, breathing out of her tank. I was a bit pleased about how this all went - I didn't freak out, and things went smoothly. So in an optimistic mood, we went on a night dive. It wasn't too bad and the octopi are really neat. I did have some

(Continued on page 13)



(Continued from page 12)

trouble with buoyancy and got separated from the group, but by exhaling hard I got back down to them. I even went through a cave.

Several days later we did a second night dive, and fears of suffocating came surging into my mind. I could not maintain proper buoyancy, even though I had extra weights attached to me. I was holding air and rose above the group. Try as I might, I could not get down to

them. I exhaled hard and swam down as hard as I could, but that just made me breathe hard. Finally, with just 500 lbs of air left, I could not stay down and popped to the surface. I could see the other divers' lights under the water, but the current was sweeping me away from them. I inflated my buoyancy control vest and took a look around. It was pretty choppy and very dark, and I could not see the boat. I felt like a survivor

of a U-boat sinking. It's very lonely adrift in a dark sea on your own. After an eternity (at least half a minute), Sharon surfaced quite close, then the rest of the group came up and the boat appeared from behind me to pick us up. On the ride back the group was talking about all the neat things they had seen: octopus, eels, and such. I could not speak for about 2 hours, and those that know me know that is unusual. I won't hesitate to dive again, but I will have to think quite a bit before I do another night dive.



Trail Mix Word Search

by Glenn Schultz © 2006

S	I	R	D	N	E	W	B	E	R	I	E	S	E
T	D	E	R	A	I	S	I	N	S	R	A	U	S
A	S	E	I	R	R	E	B	N	A	R	C	T	T
N	D	R	E	N	I	A	I	A	U	A	U	S	U
P	N	U	D	S	N	A	I	L	N	N	N	O	N
I	O	T	C	A	R	M	A	S	L	A	A	R	A
N	M	H	H	Y	M	E	R	A	C	I	N	E	E
E	L	R	E	P	A	C	W	A	Y	A	P	A	P
N	A	O	R	I	N	G	A	O	C	A	K	L	T
U	L	T	R	A	D	S	O	I	L	M	C	K	S
T	R	A	I	L	M	I	X	R	O	F	A	C	T
S	R	I	E	A	S	E	I	C	P	I	N	N	U
U	I	R	S	W	E	H	S	A	C	R	S	U	M
N	O	P	I	N	E	A	P	P	L	E	R	O	S

- 1 TRAIL MIX
- 2 SNACK
- 3 GORP
- 4 PEANUTS
- 4 RAISINS
- 5 CRANBERRIES
- 6 MANDM'S
- 7 PINE NUTS
- 8 SUNFLOWER SEEDS
- 9 CASHEWS
- 10 WALNUTS
- 11 ALMONDS
- 12 PAPAYA
- 13 DRIED CHERRIES
- 14 BANANA
- 15 PINEAPPLE

Trail Mix Word Search Answer Key

S	I	R	D	N	E	W	B	E	R	I	E	S	E
T	D	E	R	A	I	S	I	N	S	R	A	U	S
A	S	E	I	R	R	E	B	N	A	R	C	T	T
N	D	R	E	N	I	A	I	A	U	A	U	S	U
P	N	U	D	S	N	A	I	L	N	N	N	O	N
I	O	T	C	A	R	M	A	S	L	A	A	R	A
N	M	H	H	Y	M	E	R	A	C	I	N	E	E
E	L	R	E	P	A	C	W	A	Y	A	P	A	P
N	A	O	R	I	N	G	A	O	C	A	K	L	T
U	L	T	R	A	D	S	O	I	L	M	C	K	S
T	R	A	I	L	M	I	X	R	O	F	A	C	T
S	R	I	E	A	S	E	I	C	P	I	N	N	U
U	I	R	S	W	E	H	S	A	C	R	S	U	M
N	O	P	I	N	E	A	P	P	L	E	R	O	S



So, what is “Riding the Bull”? A river guide recently told me that this is a technique that enhances one’s rafting experience and that it is best done on a long Class II or III straight-away of rapids without deep drop offs or steering maneuvers. He suggested shying away from rapids named Pinball, Meat Grinder, Bone Crusher, Masher, or Twisted Sister. This still gives you plenty of rivers to choose from. That’s what he tells me.

This is how it’s done: You, the volunteer, i.e. the bull rider, move to the front of the raft and sit on the nose with your legs draped over the outside. With one hand you grasp the safety line that is strapped around the circumference of the craft and with your other hand you clutch the wrapped tow line that is between your legs. Your boat-mates shift back one seat so that the raft is better balanced and the front row is clear.

This allows you to head bop and leg flop and perhaps fall backwards into the raft without landing on your friends. You do not want to land on your friends since they are the ones that may have to rescue you. But in all the excitement, gravity always has a pull in things.

While you flail, should you lose your grip you

“Riding the Bull”

by Glenn Schultz

may bounce off and then ricochet forward or to one side, and then possibly get run over by the raft. That is the theory anyhow, yet one would have to take a huge header and let go of both ropes simultaneously to do that.

Recall that you are wearing a helmet so that if your head hits a rock, it will protect what sanity you have left in your noggin. And you are wearing a ~~straight-jacket~~ life jacket, yet just because it is orange does not make it safer, it only makes you easier to find in the water.

Trying it one-handed would be suicidal, let alone oxymoronic. Or is that what your friends called you as you worked your way to the front of the raft? Now hold on tight as we go through the rapids!

“Riding the Bull” gets you up close and personal with the waves as they splash over the bow. Splash is a relative term. It could be spelled s-u-r-g-e, s-w-a-m-p, d-e-l-u-g-e, or p-l-a-s-t-e-r, depending on the daredevil.

It also gives you a leadership position as the bow tips forward when cresting into a dip. The waves buffet you mercilessly while you do not swallow as much water as you think you have.

You may think that the bigger your eyes get that the more your rear end will suction cup to the raft; however, any number of bounces gives new meaning to the phrase “Hang on Sloopy!” With

the coordination of a Raggedy Andy doll after a fifth of hooch, you will confirm that you are the world-class athlete that your magical bathroom mirror says you are. And all your raft-mates believe so, too, if they could only tell you through their stifled laughter and amazement.

So hang on, because this ride will not end until this stretch of rapids stops. Eight seconds is timeless, there are no buzzers and there are no rodeo clowns apart from the one on the bow.

Like a runaway chuck wagon everyone is paddling hard, except for you, of course, since you are the beacon on the bow, the boulder on the bovine, the hood ornament of this hydro hacky sack as you spring and recoil on this wave train with no brakes, big-eyed, smiles and all.

So talk to your rafting guide, step on up, straddle the saddle, grab the rope, and “Ride the Bull”!



SOLAR DECEMBER 2010 CALENDAR

www.SolarOutdoors.org

OCTOBER 2010 TRIP COORDINATOR DRAWING WINNER
ALLEN DUNCAN - JORDAN RIVER PATHWAY TRIP

SOLAR MEETING AND PROGRAM DATES

12/3	Friday	SOLAR Holiday Party 7:00 p.m.	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
12/7	Tues	Monthly Meeting 7:30 p.m.	Colony Hall	Allen Duncan	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program- Winter Gear Swap/Sale	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
1/4/2011	Tues	Monthly Meeting 7:30pm	Colony Hall	Allen Duncan	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program - Annual Photo Contest	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org

SOLAR RAY DEADLINES

12/16	Thurs	January SOLAR Ray Deadline		Jennifer Tislerics	SolarRayEditor@SolarOutdoors.org
1/13/2011	Thurs	February SOLAR Ray Deadline		Jennifer Tislerics	SolarRayEditor@SolarOutdoors.org

ACTIVITIES

1/21/2011	Multi	Lake Ann Ski Trip	Lake Ann, MI	Pete Lamb	petekandu@yahoo.com
1/23-30/2011	Multi	Yellowstone in Winter Trip	Yellowstone National Park	Moe and Dave DeFrance	moelifeisgood@lavabit.com ventures@lavabit.com
2/4-6	Wknd	Immersion in Ice Climbing	Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore	Don Jones	jonesdlus2@yahoo.com
3/6	Sun	Fight for Air-Climb Detroit	Renaissance Center Detroit, MI	Mary Donahue	mldonahue824@gmail.com
3/12	Sat	Square Dancing	St. Timothy, Livonia	Margaret Martin	mpluscat@yahoo.com
4/2-9/2011	Multi	St. John Escape	St. John, VI	Jim Gessner	gessnerj@comcast.net
7/2-8/2011	Multi	Alaskan Expedition Cruise	Alaska	Robert Schwenke	robert.schwenke@yahoo.com

CLASSES

1/3/2011	Mon	Knot Tying	Troy, MI	Chuck Smith	cbryansmit@gmail.com
12/1,8,15, 1/5,15-16,19,26, 2/2,11-13	Weds, Wknds	Enjoying Michigan Winters	Schoolcraft College Waterloo State Rec Area Pigeon River State Forest	Allen Duncan George Zapp	allenduncan@aggienetwork.com gzapp@comcast.net
12/9,16, 18,1/6-9,13,20, 27, 28-30	Thurs, Sat, Wknds	Basic Mountaineering and Safety Skills	Berkley Community Ctr Nordhouse Dunes	Lou Szakal	everest2008@comcast.net
2/5	Sat	Snowkiting	Grand Haven, MI	Chuck Smith	cbryansmit@gmail.com

If you would like to plan/lead an activity for SOLAR, contact our Activities Chairperson, Jennifer McWilliams, at SolarActivities@SolarOutdoors.org.

If you would like to teach or suggest a class for SOLAR, contact our Education Chairperson, Chuck Smith, 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.

How Can I Become a Member of Meetup?

Having trouble finding SOLAR-Outdoors on Meetup? Want to become one of the growing number of SOLAR members joining Meetup? Visit <http://www.meetup.com/SOLAR-Outdoors/>

If you aren't a member of Meetup in general, you'll need to create an account before you can apply for membership in the SOLAR-Outdoors group. Once you apply for membership in the SOLAR-Outdoors group, Mary Price (our Membership Chair) will confirm that you are a current member of SOLAR and approve your membership in our Meetup group. Please be sure to include your first and last name when you apply to the group, so she knows exactly who you are.



WHAT IS SOLAR?

SOLAR is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization with 400-plus members who enjoy the outdoors. Members share their knowledge and experience with each other by leading classes and coordinating activities/trips.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is only \$40 a year per person (\$55 per family) and includes free access to most 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, deep forests, scenic shorelines, and the experiences to be found there. Lifetime memberships are available for \$175 (single) and \$250 (family).

MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month in Southfield at Colony Hall, 21780 Evergreen (between 8 Mile & 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 SOLARmembership@solaroutdoors.org.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Submissions for the *SOLAR Ray* are due on the Thursday three weeks prior to the monthly Membership meeting. Articles, poems, recipes, etc. should be submitted in electronic format, preferably in Microsoft Word. Please attach images separately as JPG files. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Tislerics at SOLARrayeditor@solaroutdoors.org.

STEERING COMMITTEE

President: Allen Duncan
Vice President: Heather Hall
Treasurer: Mary Donahue
Secretary: Glenn Schultz

Activities: Jennifer McWilliams
Bylaws: Ati Tislerics
Education: Chuck Smith
Equipment: Marcia Murphy
Historian: Pam Riehl Szakal

Membership: Mary Price
Programs: Debbie Zuchlewski
PR: Samantha Mozdzierz
Ray Editor: Jennifer Tislerics
Webmaster: Jeff McWilliams

PRESIDENTS AT LARGE

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

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SOLAR RAY ASSISTANT EDITORS

Winnie Chrzanowski, Jennifer Hill, Ken Lemieux, Helen Peters, Janet Schester, Pamela Schmelzer-Anzicek, Elizabeth Shaw, Rebecca Sweeton and Ati Tislerics.

MORE INFORMATION

Please visit our website at www.solaroutdoors.org or attend one of our monthly meetings.

SOLAR

33228 W. 12 Mile Road

P.O. Box 220

Farmington Hills, MI 48334

Visit our website: www.solaroutdoors.org