



The SOLAR Ray

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

October 2010

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



Qajaq Training Camp 2010 *written by Pete Lamb, photos by Janet Schester*

For several years, a group of SOLARites have made an end-of-summer ritual of attending Qajaq (Inuit for kayak) training camp at Lower Herring Lake near Lake Ann, Michigan. This small camp hosts people who enjoy paddling with a Greenland-style paddle and who want to share knowledge by way of informal discussion and skills mentoring.



The mess hall

As Qajaq TC's website (www.qajaqtc.org) says, "This is a full immersion event." The camp is on a peninsula, and the only way to get to it is to paddle. (Luggage is ferried over on a pontoon boat.) The camp runs from Friday to Sunday afternoon, the last weekend in August. We stayed in cabins scattered amongst tree-covered sand dunes, within walking distance of Lake Michigan beaches.

About 90 people attended, including instructors, of which there were quite a few. People came from surprising distances to attend - two even came from Greenland! Other attendees came from Oregon, Washington, Maine, and Massachusetts.

You don't have to own an Inuit paddle to attend, nor do you need to own a skin boat. Certainly owning both would get you in with the "in" crowd, but well-executed, homemade wooden boats help to get a paddler up in the pecking order. Fortunately, the group is not in the least snobby about equipment; they do, however, really appreciate things that are well made. You can show up with a modern, wide-blade "Euro" paddle, but they will separate you from it upon arrival and lend you a Greenland stick. You would want to do this anyway, as otherwise you would feel like you were walking about a nudist camp in evening dress.

When you are separated from the Euro paddle, it is called going to the dark side. However, you will feel a great sense of relief and well-being to be on the true path to paddling purity. As you can probably tell, this changeover becomes a somewhat



Chuck surfing



Emmett surfing

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

religious experience and everyone has a great time (assisted by the great food and fantastic martinis).

On Friday those that arrive early enough will have the opportunity to carve (in one day) their own Greenland paddle. (Please note: those that built paddles through SOLAR were in attendance.) If you already have a Greenland paddle, you can choose to make an akuilisaq (spray skirt). I didn't mention the foreign language you have to learn, did I? (Oh, silly me.) My personal favorite is Qaannamik pinnqaatit which translates to "games played in qajaqs". If the wind is blowing onshore the better paddlers go and play in the surf. To do this you have to have a bomb-proof roll.

While learning to roll, you will use a tuilik (a very warm and dry garment designed for paddling in unforgivingly cold conditions) and aavatak (a hunting float) to help you. There are many different types of roll and all seem to have their own cutesy unpronounceable names, but towards the end of the roll demo, the paddlers get silly and do rolls with large rocks, bowling balls, and even a folding office chair. I personally find that a bit discouraging, as I do half rolls time after time. Nevertheless, of the ten SOLARites who attended, eight



Michelle surfing

learned to roll and Amy learned two different rolls. Two had absolutely no intention of rolling, so we achieved a 100% success rate.

Rolling your boat is not the only skill the camp teaches. You can learn to harpoon a seal (Styrofoam) or improve your paddle technique. You can work on your bracing skills so you don't have to roll. If the brace fails, you can learn various rescue methods so you don't have to get out of your boat. To do the rescue methods, however, you do need to paddle with trained friends for the rest of your life. That is a bit inconvenient, but it makes for long friendships.

On Saturday night a young woman, who out-of-the-blue decided to go to Greenland and enter the Greenland skills competition (and even placed in some events), made a presentation. She talked about the hospitable people she met and about the great times she had in Greenland. Following the



presentation, we watched a demonstration of an Inuit pastime of rope games. These games help to create strength and flexibility. The set moves have the same unpronounceable names as everything else and are very hard to do which makes for great facial expressions. I'm not sure if the applause was for successfully completing the move or the facial distortions resulting from the effort, but it's fun to watch. I have never ventured into this arena for two reasons: first, I noticed that it creates rope burns inside your arm and knee bends, and second, I no longer look good spread-eagled, tangled in a rope.

To follow up on our training, a few of us got together at Stony Creek the Monday after the camp and everyone tried a roll. We all succeeded, but one time only. Try as we might, no one managed a second successful roll. I guess we all need to work more on our rolls.



Words to Wander By

"I cannot endure to waste anything as precious as autumn sunshine by staying in the house. So I spend almost all the daylight hours in the open air."

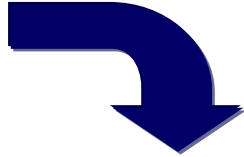
- Nathaniel Hawthorne

Thanks to Mark Carson for finding this quotation!

Anatomy of a Kayak Roll



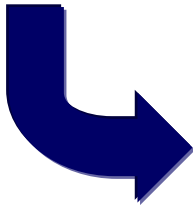
Roll setting up



Going over



Coming up



Finish

"MORE UP"

By Glenn Schultz

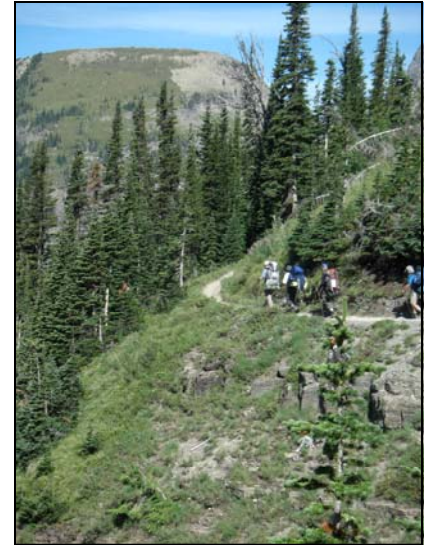
"More Up" said Ati as he stepped higher,
along the trail, this modest hiker

When starting from the valley floor
their trail lead up to the mountain door
and Passes tall and grandiose views
"More Up" he said to his fellow crew

Many steps were uneven
and on some they ached
as onward they hiked
so their tents they could stake
on a hillside meadow or in a glacial cirque
"More Up" he beheld as their legs they worked

Up switchback, round hairpin, up staircase and rung
over rock and talus, "More Up" said his tongue
"One climbs the mountain for the view"
That was one mantra that did hold true

So "More Up" went they, this group of eight
through Glacier's Best each day was spent
And photos show and stories unfold
of "More Up" of the trails
on the pathways they rolled.



Basic Land Navigation

What you will learn:

- Map reading skills (Terrain visualization)
- Taking & plotting compass bearings
- The "Three Norths" & Declination
- Navigation strategies
- Primitive Navigation (time permitting)
- You will be participating in a cross-country route finding exercise



This class is a prerequisite for the Advanced Land Navigation class, which focuses on GPS. GPS is not covered at all in this class.

Prerequisites: None

Cost: \$45.00

Includes: Book, Cabin, Handouts/Maps

Does NOT include: State Park Permit (\$6/day or \$24.00/yr), Meals

When:

- Wednesday, October 13th, 6:30 PM-9:00 PM - Berkley Community Center
- Wednesday, October 20th, 6:30 PM-9:00 PM - Berkley Community Center
- Saturday, October 23rd (9 AM - 7 PM) & Sunday, October 24th (9 AM - 4 PM)
- Waterloo Recreation Area

Due to the cumulative nature of the material covered, no "excused absences" are possible - students must attend both evening classes and both days of the practical.

Contact:

Ati Tislerics

E-mail (preferred): atisleri@umich.edu

Phone: (734) 763-7752 (work), (313) 794-0164 (home)

SOLAR/Proud Lake Moonlight Canoeing

This popular event is great for the experienced paddler as well as the novice. Come to Proud Lake State Recreation Area and paddle a canoe or kayak into the setting sun, then return by paddling back into the moonrise. When you return to the canoe rental, a bonfire will be awaiting you. Each evening will include pizza dinner. No partner necessary, all skill levels are welcome. Dress for the weather, including headlamps and water bottles.

Who: All are welcome. Child and dog friendly.

Where: Heavner's Canoe Livery, 2775 Garden Road, Milford, Michigan 48381

Cost: Canoe or kayak \$30 per person. Includes pizza dinner, boat rental (canoe or kayak), bonfire. Boat rental only (no dinner) \$25 per person. Dinner only (bring your own boat) \$15 per person. Bonfire only (no dinner, bring your own boat) \$5 per person.



When: Five moonlight canoeing/kayaking trips are being offered this year. The next (and final) trip will be October 23; to see a [full schedule](#) visit the Files section of the Yahoo! Group, the [Meetup.com calendar](#) or click on the link in the Ray's calendar to view the flyer.

Preregister by calling Heavner Canoe Livery at (248) 685-2379.



Please call in your reservation AT LEAST 24 hours before the event. Dinner will not be available for those who do not preregister. For more information call Margaret at 734-721-2821 or email her at mpluscat@yahoo.com.



Hayride and Bonfire

Kensington Metropark

Saturday, November 6, 2010

6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Come join us for a fun-filled evening at Kensington Metropark's farm center. A roaring bonfire will start at 6:00PM, followed by hayrides from 7:00PM until 9:00PM. Hot dogs, side salads and s'mores will be provided. You provide the roasting sticks and cook for yourself.

Please bring lawn chairs, warm clothes, jackets and blankets.

This is open to all so bring your family, friends, neighbors or co-workers.

This is kid-friendly but please leave your pets at home.

All this fun is yours for a mere \$15. You will need a daily (\$5) or annual (\$25) Metropark permit.

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



**SOLAR would like to
welcome these
new members
to the club!**

Ashok Bharhav

Pat Christian

Amy McGarrah

Monica Louise Wiesen

Why Do You Like Backpacking?

Answers compiled by Ken Lemieux

From the start, I love planning trips because it allows me to think creatively about my food and to plan ahead for something new and exciting. When I am outdoors with my pack I get an empowering sense of freedom and self-sufficiency that is so hard to find in urban life. Backpacking provides the opportunity to see new places at a pace which makes you respect both yourself and your surroundings at a whole new level. Finally, I return from every hike with great memories to share and after a nap (and maybe a shower!), I just want to get right back on the trail again. - Steve Choc



The trails least traveled are often those that offer the greatest panoramas and splendid sites Mother Nature has to offer. - Chip Kleinbrook

I keep thinking of how good it feels at the end of the day after a long hard hike. When you make camp, kick off the boots, slip on your Tevas and relax. No better feeling in the world. - Darrell Ahlberg

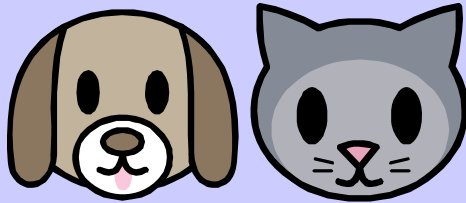
I like backpacking because you can visit places and see things that non-backpackers can't. It's definitely work, but so worth it. You get the trail less traveled. And, when your daily hike ends you get to revel in your accomplishment...and relax. It's a relaxation that isn't easily found - it's just freeing and simple. - Jacquelyn Ostrosky

I'm drawn to natural landscapes by my love of science. The people that I meet in places that are only accessible by backpacking enhance my experience with their passions. - Don Jones

The special bond you get by sharing the trail. - Karl Overheul

When I'm spending time outdoors in the natural environment, all of the stresses of daily life somehow seem to disappear. As soon as I hit the trail I feel like a new person. All of the amazing sights, sounds and smells fill my senses and all is right with the world. - Mark Carson

Pets & SOLAR



Out of respect for SOLAR members with pet allergies, we request your assistance in creating a reduced-allergen zone inside Colony Hall during membership meetings. We are asking that all pets stay on the south side of the room (the right-hand side, as you are seated in the chairs). This will allow people with allergies to breathe more easily on the other side of the room.

Recently, some SOLAR members have expressed concerns about pets causing some disruptions at the SOLAR membership meetings. We'd like to remind our members to take pets outside if they are distracting people, so club members can hear the presentations about recent or upcoming classes/trips.

If someone's pet is distracting you from the meeting you are encouraged to offer a friendly reminder of this message, or to seek out a Steering Committee member to remind the pet owner to step outside.

Please share with any member of the SOLAR Steering Committee your additional thoughts and ideas on maintaining a positive experience in regards to pets at meetings, activities, etc.

Thank you!

Upcoming SOLAR Programs

(Held after the monthly membership meetings.)

October Program: Tramping in New Zealand, by author Jim DuFresne

Jim DuFresne first explored Isle Royale when he was nine years old and has five decades of backpacking some of the most beautiful spots on the planet. An avid hiker who has trekked around the world, Jim DuFresne has written more than 15 guidebooks, including titles for Alaska, New Zealand, Australia, and Nepal. Jim will be talking about his recent experience backpacking in New Zealand.

November Program: Bats of the World, by the Organization for Bat Conservation at Cranbrook Institute of Science

The Organization for Bat Conservation is an excellent organization that facilitates conservation through grass-roots education. Why save bats? Bats in the US are the primary predators of night-flying insects. Bats in the tropics help us all because they disperse seeds that help the rainforests to grow, and pollinate flowers that provide us with foods we enjoy. The program will consist of a multi-media presentation that examines such topics as hibernation, ecology, behavior, migration, conservation, science, and public health issues. Live bats are one of the highlights of the program. All the bats used are either non-releasable, permanently injured, or captive bred bats donated from zoos to use for educational purposes. All bats are vaccinated on a yearly basis. Bat houses will be available to purchase.

December Program: Winter Gear Swap/Sale

Do you have outdoor gear you no longer use? Have several of the same items you have acquired over the years? Here is your chance to sell or barter your unused/unwanted gear and help other SOLAR members at the same time. Bring your gear to the December general meeting and be ready to sell it to other people.

January Program: Annual Photo Contest

SOLAR amateur photographers will have an opportunity to show off their camera skills. Dig up your best photos from 2010 and bring them to the January 2011 meeting. Details on the categories, official rules, and prizes will be distributed at the November SOLAR meeting.

Have a program idea? Contact SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org.



Fall Colors in the Smokies



Come enjoy fall colors at their best, in the Smokies!

Autumn in Great Smoky Mountains National Park is a special time when a glorious leaf season of several weeks is enjoyed by visitors as fall colors travel down the mountainsides from the highest elevations to the foothills. Fall colors in the Smoky Mountains are magnificent and varied because of the amazing diversity of trees. Some 100 species of native trees live in the Smokies, the vast majority of which are deciduous.

At the highest elevations--4,500 to 6,000 feet--colors can begin turning in mid-September, when the yellow birch, American beech, and mountain maple begin to turn. During the first two weeks of October, leaves are at their peak colors above 4,000 feet. The remaining weeks of October present the Smokies at their very best for color. The sugar maple, scarlet oak, sweetgum, red maple, and dogwood explode with color.

We will hike the Cataloochee trail system, on the eastern side of the park, where it is much less crowded because it's away from the most traveled routes to and from the Park. It's on the North Carolina side of the Park and is a little harder to reach than popular spots like Cades Cove. However, it's worth the trouble getting to Cataloochee because it will be a new experience even for those who visit the Park on a regular basis; it offers the same spectacular color show you will find elsewhere in the Park; and it's bound to be less crowded even during peak color periods.

Trip Leaders:

Robert Schwenke (512-961-8686, robert.schwenke@yahoo.com)

Sarah Kirkish (734-612-3327, skirkish@peoplepc.com)

Trip Participants:

Maximum of 6 people

Costs:

Permits - Free

Oak Park Inn - \$85 per room, 2 rooms, 2 nights - \$408 est. (~\$70 per person for 6 participants)

**NOTE: For convenience, trip leaders will reserve one or two rooms at the Oak Park Inn at participant's request.*

Itinerary

Oct 21

- Drive to Waynesville (Southfield, MI to Waynesville, NC - 615 miles, ~10 hours)
- On your own for meals
- Stay near Waynesville, NC (i.e. Oak Park Inn)

Oct 22

- Breakfast at Underwoods in Dellwood, NC
- Place the cars - one at Sterling Gap and one at Cataloochee Divide trail.
- Starting at Mount Sterling Gap, head south on Long Bunk trail, head southwest on Little Cataloochee trail, spend first night at campsite 39. (mileage: ~8.5, elevation: ~800 ft gain, ~2100 ft loss)

Oct 23

- Depart campsite 39, work our way south to Big Fork Ridge trail, west on Caldwell Fork trail, spend the night at campsite 41. (mileage: ~8 miles, elevation: ~1000 ft gain, ~300 ft loss)

Oct 24

- Depart campsite 41, head northeast on Caldwell Fork trail, southeast on McKee Branch trail, lunch stop at the Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center, north down the Cataloochee Divide trail. (mileage: ~8.3, elevation: ~1900 ft gain, ~1300 ft loss)
- After collecting the cars we will head back to Waynesville for pizza and beer at Nick & Nate's, and we'll stay near Waynesville, NC (i.e. Oak Park Inn)

Oct 25

- Drive to Southfield (615 miles, ~10 hours)

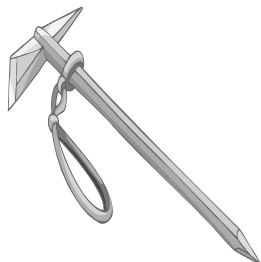
On the trail meals:

Two (2) breakfasts, three (3) lunches, two (2) dinners, and snacks.

Basic Mountaineering & Safety Skills Class

by Lou Szakal

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to stand on the summit of a mountain? Or to know what it takes to get there? How about just advancing your winter camping, snowshoeing, or cross-country skiing skills to include one- to two-week expeditions to places like Yellowstone or the Colorado or Canadian Rockies? Your chance to find out begins with this class. Starting in December 2010, I will be teaching the Basic Mountaineering and Safety Skills class to a few lucky students who are interested in devoting their time and energy to the sport of mountaineering and advanced winter adventure.



MANDATORY PREREQUISITES:

Basic Backpacking, Land Navigation or Adventure Racing Class, Winter Camping (a.k.a. Enjoying Michigan Winters), belay card (rock gym)

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Location TBD (probably Birmingham Public Library), 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. (sharp)

Class 1	12/09/10	Thu.
Class 2	12/16/10	Thu.
Clinic	12/18/10	Sat.
Class 3	01/06/11	Thu.
Practical 1	01/07-09/11	Fri.-Sun.
Class 4	01/13/11	Thu.
Class 5	01/20/11	Thu.
Class 6	01/27/11	Thu.
Practical 2	01/28-30/11	Fri.-Sun



COST:

\$175.00 per person (check made out to SOLAR). Subtract \$17 if you own Mountaineering, Freedom of the Hills Edition 7 by The Mountaineers. Subtract \$12 if you own Glacier Mountaineering: An Illustrated Guide to Glacier Travel and Crevasse Rescue by Andy Tyson & Mike Clelland.

CONTACT: Lou Szakal, email: everest2008@comcast.net, or cell: 248-756-7001

SOME OF THE SKILLS, LESSONS AND ITEMS YOU'LL GET OUT OF THIS CLASS:

Self-arrest	Fixed Lines	Roped Travel
Running Belays	Risk Assessment	Snowshoeing Skills
Health/Fitness Tips	Avalanche Issues	Chest Harness
Camaraderie	Ice Axe Use	Basic Mountaineering Skills
Leadership	Navigation	Prusiks
Technical Tool Usage	Mountain Safety	First Aid Skills
How To Use Crampons	2" Binder	Nutrition
Knots	LNT	Weather
Sled Skills	Glacier Travel	Climbing Info
Group Dynamics	Frost Bite Issues	Winter Safety Skills
Z & C Pulley System	Optional Mountain Trip	Proper Clothing
Rappelling	Gear Issues	Effects of Cold
Reading Material	Crevasse Rescue	Expedition Planning
Environmental Ethics	Altitude Awareness	Ascending Ropes
Ropes/Webbing	Alpine Rescue	Team Building Skills
Stewardship	Movies	Clinic
Fun	Two Practicals	Two Mountaineering Books
Much, much more		

We asked SOLAR club members...

What have you learned through SOLAR that you use today?



Lorann Jesuale

One thing I learned with SOLAR that I use in everyday life: GPS systems are not always accurate. After several hours of loudly barked directions on the way to Chain O Lakes last year, mine not only drove us crazy, it landed us in a corn field! Since then, I have learned how to control the volume, but I'm still not sure how we got into camp...Good times, though!



Kevin Cotter

By experiencing and using what I have learned through taking the class on Land Navigation, I am more confident in teaching a course at Wayne State University on the usage of topographical maps.



Mary Bogush

What I have learned from a SOLAR experience that I use today is this: No matter how unreachable a goal may initially appear, it is always achievable with faith, perseverance and will power! I learned this best during the Rock-climbing Practical when I felt it would be impossible to climb to the top when arms felt too weak, it seemed so high up and all that, yet it was accomplished, and looking down from the top is the best kind of high a person can experience!!! This is transferable to many other seemingly impossible situations in life!



Clayton Lucey

I've gained confidence in being outdoors during the winter by taking the "Enjoying Michigan Winters" class. I can survive overnight by building a quinzhee.

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

A Walk Across the Park: Glorious Glacier from East to West

by Jennifer Hill

Bears, moose and fish – Oh My! On the occasion of Glacier National Park's centennial, eight SOLAR members walked 68 miles through the park in 7 days. Bill Lynch filed for the permit on April 15; it was his eighth trip to Glacier and he was hoping to get to the Hole in the Wall campground and cross Boulder Pass on this trip. Gary and Carol Wilkinson, Bill Ahlstrom, Grey Ivanov, Howard Weiss, Andrew Dalian and Jennifer Hill rounded out the group.

We gathered Friday night at the St. Mary's campground, some arriving by the shuttle bus from the west side of the park and the other half drove in from the airport in Great Falls, Montana. We watched the bear video as required. So soon after the attack in which the man from Grand Rapids lost his life, we were attentive watchers, wondering, would we have the fortune of seeing these magnificent animals at a safe range?

To catch the very first shuttle of the day, we were up in the dark, watching the sunrise light the mountains around us. We wondered - would all of us and our packs fit? We were the only ones on the shuttle. Luckily, as eight people and packs take up quite a bit of room. We drove through the Blackfeet Reservation that hugs the east side of the park and then back into the park, park passes at the ready (tip: if you are over 62, you qualify for the \$10 lifetime pass!) Breakfast at the Swiftcurrent Motor Inn was buckwheat pancakes and hash, our last "real" food for a week.



Ptarmigan Pass

By 9:30am we were off! Our last paved steps were at the end of the parking lot, where a trail sign stands next to a well-walked path. Starting a climb right away, we walked up out of the trees into shrubs. Not 60 minutes in - Grizzly Bear! A mother and three cubs, heads down, eating. They were a half-mile away, at the most. A safe distance!

We were climbing to Ptarmigan Pass, where a tunnel was built in 1930 to cross to the Belly River area of the

Park. The path left the woods and went into alpine meadows as the valley narrowed and the steep cliffs came closer. At Ptarmigan Lake, you climb 600

feet of switchback through scree, pretty much straight up a cliff. Six of us enjoyed lunch at the tunnel door.

Crossing the tunnel takes you into another world, a place where the water, wind and rock are your companions. The mountains are sharply etched by glaciers. When the park was founded in 1910, there were approximately 150 glaciers in the park. There are now only 25 left that are [bigger than 25 acres](#). The rock is deep, wine-dark. The layers of light to dark red climb hundreds of feet above while below the path is scree for many hundreds more. We were most grateful to the many people who hewed out the level path for us to walk and moved the rocks in place to hold the trail in place.



Ptarmigan Tunnel



Approaching Elizabeth Lake

Crossing the bouncy suspension bridge, we reached the campsite that was not our campsite and we walked the length of Elizabeth Lake, extending a long day. Our designated site was in the trees, a short walk to the lake and around the beach to a flowing stream. Andrew Dalian jumped in, his first of many swims on the trip. Howard tried his luck fishing; we'd heard from a former park ranger at the tunnel that arctic grayling could be had.

Big winds that night, but no rain.

The second day was to be three miles shorter and only 300 feet up and down. We walked back the length of Elizabeth Lake, then followed a river to the spectacular Dawn's Mist Falls. We dropped packs (thanks to folks who stayed to watch them) and took many photos at



Elizabeth Lake

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

the falls. After a few more miles, we crossed the Belly River with the help of a steel cable - about 100 feet in knee-deep water. Rainy, misty conditions kept us moving through the beautiful valley. Later the rain cleared out and we set up camp at Mokowanis Junction, back in big trees where we met a young couple from Washington, D.C. and a mule deer.

The next morning we were off to Kootenai Lake over Stoney Indian Pass. First you pass by one more lake on your left, and then the climb begins. Pulling you up along the way are the glorious waterfalls. In front of you,



Mt. Custer

bubbling ribbons of water dance down the rock, skinny here, broadly spread over cliffs higher up. You think you've made it to the top, look up and there is more mountain - but more waterfalls too, thank goodness. Four mule deer surprised some of us at one of the two alpine lakes fed by the falling waters. We were glad for the warm sunny day, so different from the mist of the day before - so glad for the views and our hiking poles. At the top, pikas whistled and the wind provided a welcome breeze - yes! We had reached the top of the pass! A steep cliff of switchbacks zigzagged over seeping

water to the lovely Stoney Indian Lake and our first alpine meadow in full bloom. Green, white, yellow with the white pom-pom sentinels of the beargrass welcoming us down.

After the lake, though, it was more of a slog. There have been good rains this year at Glacier, which is a good thing, but the 5' and 6' tall cow's parsnip gave the shrubby path more of a jungle feel. You had to resort to using hiking poles almost like machetes to find the well-worn path for your next step on the switchbacks. Many fewer people here, we only saw maybe 10 others the whole day. Finally, we reached Kootenai Lake and the moose were there to greet us! There were 4; three females and a male who swam slightly further away, his enormous antlers somehow not capsizing the ship. The females were clearly at home, as when one walked right into camp, about 2' feet from a tent and back into the trees at dusk. We were visitors, lucky to be there in their home.

Howard was successful fishing here, hooking a nice sized brook trout and then releasing it. There are photos to prove it. We escaped the gathering mosquitoes, probably the worst of the trip, and slept well that night.



Lake McDonald

The walk to Goat Haunt was level and pleasant. The boat from Waterton, Canada came in while we were there, and a customs official checked passports. A line formed and we provided the entertainment, looking a bit scruffy but hopefully still impressive as we hoisted packs and headed into more wilderness. We climbed up through a valley where all the trees were dead, victims of bug infestations that have intensified, as the winters are warmer now than they have ever been before. It began to rain; we suited up

and carried on to the campground food area near Lake Janet for lunch. A family from Kansas joined the two Bills, Dalian and Jenn. Grey, Howard, Carol and Gary were ahead, looking for fishing. We continued through forest very gradually climbing and the walls of the valley grew higher as well. To the south, a glacier-fed cascade flowed from the top all the way to the bottom to Lake Francis - like Yosemite Falls. Beautiful. Howard and Grey fished there - catching a smaller trout than before, which became dinner for them and Gary that evening. The campground that night was Hawksbill, in a bowl with a stream nearby and waterfall to the north, but many mosquitoes again. We basked in the sun that came out for the last hour or so, after a mostly rainy day.

The next day was the short hike - we were all ready for that, even with the climb. We walked 4.2 miles, with 1,200 feet up and 260 feet down. It was the most beautiful day of a beautiful hike. After some more woods, we hugged a perfect aqua blue lake where 6 hikers were swimming, fed by another at least 100' waterfall. Then we hiked the switchbacks up to Brown Pass, short and steep. The saddle was broader here; we headed north and west across at least a mile of flowering meadow. Below us, to the south, the mountain dropped away hundreds of feet. Eventually, we came to another valley and you could see all the way to Bowman Lake - a broad vista of several miles. Breathtaking. The trail followed the mountain flank that curved north and we were rewarded with the first views of the incredible cirque with seven waterfalls that holds the Hole in the Wall Campground. We dropped down into a hanging valley, and crossed a couple of streams before being greeted by a marmot at the first campsite. Heaven!



A marmot

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

Most of us jumped under the waterfall to wash off while it was still sunny. It did rain on us a few times that evening. But the siltarp, expertly hung in a well-thought-out group process, (sort of) sheltered the food area for cards and dining. White and gray clouds raced across Thunderbird Mountain and more reward for a life well lived this week - rainbows formed three times that evening.

The next morning, Howard's watch registered 43 degrees. The glorious views of mountains were well hidden behind white banks of cloud fog. We broke up a fairly wet camp and went up to the top of the cirque, following its arc to reach the saddle that would take us to Boulder Pass above treeline with many snowfields. We walked in a bubble, only able to see about 100 feet in front or behind you. A new way to experience the mountains for some of us - in the clouds. Boulder Pass was very rocky and open, and was the favorite place on the trip for some of us. Crossing the snowfield required careful steps, more thanks to the hiking poles! Reaching the top, we left the Hudson Bay watershed we had been in for the trip so far and entered the Columbia River watershed that flows to the Pacific.

The vegetation was quite different on this side, no more cow's parsnip, more cedar and now there were enormous Douglas Fir. The trip down consisted of switchbacks down two mountainsides, with clear views of glaciers on the mountains across the valley. More misty rain, even small, BB-sized hail, just enough to be able to brag about.



Upper Kintla Lake

west. After dinner, there came a point when the two cleverest people on the trip (Gary and Carol) decided to go to sleep while the others stayed at



Near Hole-in-the-Wall campsite

the campfire. Little did they know that they would be trapped at that fire for longer than they imagined....

It rained that evening - no misty, cloudy bounce-into-a-cloud rain - this was hard, driving, pounding rain that put out the campfire. The six not sleeping resorted to standing on logs and crowding in close under the tarp, waiting it out. It was raining so hard, surely it would not last, we figured. Need more proof it was a hard rain? The next morning, we heard a rockfall in the distance - a good 10 - 15 seconds of falling rock. Exciting - but glad to be far enough away to only see dust rising. Eventually, the rain did, of course, let up and we dashed back to our tents dodging the puddles along the way.

After more rain, we slept, waking to our last day on the hike. At least we'd be packing wet tents only this one day, on flat ground. We traveled 11.6 miles with only 400' down, and no up at all, to the Kintla Lake parking area, where a van would be waiting for us. On the south side of the lake, Mt. Kintla, which is one of the six 10,000 foot peaks in the park, had a fresh dusting of snow above treeline. We enjoyed the sun peaking through the clouds on the walk out, with some more misty rain. The highlight was passing through acres of regenerating forest, recovering from fires in 2003 and 2005. In some areas, with the damp air, you could still smell burnt wood. We loaded up the van and drove the very bumpy gravel road to the Polebridge Mercantile to enjoy the delicious pastries, then to the transit center at West Glacier, where we could pick up cars left there seven days before. The farmers' market in the West Glacier Post Office parking lot provided souvenirs and fresh cherries, \$2/pound - a treat after the freeze dried food for sure! After showering and changing into clean clothes, we met for dinner at the Belton Inn, built by the Great Northern Railroad early in the 20th Century and partially restored with hardwood floors and stone fireplace intact. A delicious dinner of duck, pasta and fish provided a celebratory end to a wonderful trip.

[Editor's note: See more of Jenn Hill's photos at <http://bit.ly/d1M2yE>.



Enjoy Michigan Winters: Backpacking & Winter Skills Class

Winter backpacking skills are not just for the winter; they are a useful back-up for the unexpected cold days in early spring and late fall. In this class we'll teach you how to keep warm, and keep your energy level up when skiing or snowshoeing in the winter. We will learn how to build a snow shelter and work on many other skills. These skills are great to know, just in case something does go HORRIBLY WRONG on that so-called "simple" 3-hour ski trip. You can also use these skills in the summer on glaciers and snowy peaks in the Rockies, the Cascades, Alaska, etc.

If you've already have taken the beginning backpacking class or have comparable experience and are looking to expand your skills to the next level, this is the class for you!

We will have six classroom sessions and two Practical exercises in the great outdoors. Our second practical includes a play day in the great white north, where you can snowshoe, ski or just sit by a nice warm roaring campfire sipping hot chocolate. So it's up to you - lay around on a couch all winter watching outdoor shows on TV, or take this class and actually live the adventure! After

all, isn't that why you joined SOLAR?

The cost is \$125.00 for new students (there's a reduced fee for past graduates who want to retake the course). Classroom dates are December 1, 8, 15, January 5, 19, 26 and February 2. Outdoor Practical dates are January 15-16 and February 11-13, 2011.

To sign up, or have your questions answered, contact Allen Duncan at (734) 276-3194 or allenduncan@aggienetwork.com.



Wine Making & Tasting

by Mary Donahue



Red wine, white wine, fruit wine. It was there for the tasting! The wine-making and tasting outing took place at Fieldstone Winery in Rochester, with twenty-four

people in attendance. We each had the opportunity to taste up to 8 samples of the wine. Typical of SOLAR events, there was tons of food to complement the wine. Especially complementary were the palate cleansing treats, such as Rice Krispy Treats! In the end there were several bottles of wines purchased and 3 - 4 batches of wine made that night.

I would say fun was had by all!



High Ropes Course

Where: Base Camp Challenge Center
G-5081 Torrey Rd.
Flint, MI 48507
Phone: (810)422-6030

When: Saturday, November 20, 2010

Time: 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early.

Group size: 40 people.

Cost: \$33 per person. First pays, first plays.

Trip Leader: Jeff Enterkin (248) 399-0696 or jente69690@aol.com

Signup Deadline: November 2, 2010 is the last day to sign up.

The Ropes Course is part of the Base Camp Challenge Center educational program. Rachael Abler, a SOLAR member, will be putting our adventure program together. We will be starting off with ground activities / team building adventurous games and then move onto the rock climbing wall, the bi-level high ropes course, Tyrolean Traverse, and there is a potential surprise if time permits. The first level of the ropes course is about 15 feet off the ground and the second level is about 30 feet off the ground. Our group will be split up into 2 groups. While 20 people are on the ropes course the other 20 will be on the climbing wall then we will switch activities.

We will be ordering pizza for a short food break. You will need to bring \$5 for the pizza. It is not included in your cost. If you do not want pizza you can bring something simple to eat like a snack and drink. Our time will be limited for eating.

You are welcome to bring your own harness and gloves. Any rock climbers will need to be checked off on their belay skills before allowing them to do off-the-waist belay.

Kids over the age of 10 are welcome to participate. There is a minimum reach-height of 72 inches while standing flat on the ground and reaching straight up. Both participants and non-participants (those who just want to watch) **MUST** fill out an Acknowledgment and Release form. All participants under 18 years of age must have the release form signed by a parent or legal guardian.

Algonquin for Two

by Pete Lamb

Algonquin in the summer has never appealed to me. I have been many times in winter, whereas Sharon just cringes at the idea of going there any time after September. So here I am, canoe in tow, heading up the east coast of Lake Huron, in August, shuddering at all the bugs splatting on my windshield and thinking that no matter how many die, it still will not diminish the biting swarms that await me in Algonquin Provincial Park.



The Park is enormous -- 5 times the size of a small European country and it's only a 7-hour drive from the Detroit area, so if you have a yen for some space, Algonquin is the place to go. After my usual hassle at the border, we headed to Opeongo Lake. The Michigan weather had been so hot and humid that the cool breeze was initially welcome, less so as we pushed off from the dock with a loaded canoe into the teeth of a stiff wind. The wind blowing the 16-mile length of the lake soon piled up some impressive waves that burst over the bow of the canoe and went up the legs of my shorts much to the amusement of my lovely wife. Sharon did a great job keeping the bow into the waves as we clawed our way up the lake to a campsite on Bates Island. The wind increased considerably as we approached the first campsite, probably 45 to 50 mph. It almost tore the paddles from our hands and rendered that site unusable. We managed to turn downwind and into sheltered water. We might not have made it if I had not been using a kayak paddle that doubled the strokes of a canoe paddle. We found a site in the leeward side of the island and spent the night listening to the wind just roar nonstop. We wouldn't have been so snug if we had known that two people had been killed by a bear on that island, but ignorance is bliss.



Our plan was to explore Lake Opeongo for a week and scout out the options for a more extended trip next year. There are several routes out of the lake via rivers and portages to other lake and river systems. Opeongo Lake is

big enough for a one week trip and there are loads of campsites sprinkled on islands and peninsulas. This is not an area to be taken lightly. There are drownings every year -- you must wear your PFD (not sit on it); lash your gear onto the canoe; and practice dumping the canoe before you leave on the trip. You can find yourself several miles from land as you cross the bays and inlets; hugging the shore is not a realistic option. Most of our campsites were on islands just big enough for one site. You can take a water taxi from the park dock to the far end of the lake and just paddle back but it's only 16 miles and if the weather is decent it's a very nice paddle. You do need a map and compass, since Lake Opeongo

has a very convoluted shape and it is easy to get lost. In essence the lake is three huge bays with Annie Bay off the east arm which is where the Opeongo River runs out. We wanted to check out the river to see if it was possible to use it for an extended trip. We made camp part way down Annie Bay, had a bite to eat and set off to find the river. Now this is just a small extension of the lake but it was an almost 4-hour paddle and yes it would be possible for an extended trip down the river.

Our last day there dawned with a peculiar light. It was strangely flat and the lake seemed oily as we paddled down the South Bay. We ran into many dozens of loons, rafting up into groups of up to 20 -- something I had never seen before. We were able to get within feet of them. Then it started to rain -- straight down and unrelenting. As a result, except for us, everyone stayed put and we had to paddle all the way back to Bates Island to find a campsite. Perhaps everyone else knew about the bear incident? We set up camp, rigged a tarp over the tent and made a soggy supper. Then the rain stopped and that was when I got my first and only mosquito bite of the trip. An area well worth returning to -- even in the summer!!!!



SOLAR OCTOBER 2010 CALENDAR

www.SolarOutdoors.org

SOLAR MEETING AND PROGRAM DATES

10/5	Tues	Monthly Meeting 7:30pm	Colony Hall	Allen Duncan	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program – Tramping in New Zealand	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
11/2	Tues	Monthly Meeting 7:30pm	Colony Hall	Allen Duncan	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program- Bats of the World, by the Organization for Bat Conservation at Cranbrook Institute of Science	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
12/7	Tues	Monthly Meeting 7:30pm	Colony Hall	Allen Duncan	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program-Winter Gear Swap/Sale	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org

ACTIVITIES

10/16-17	Wknd	Jordan River Pathway Backpacking Trip	Antrim County, MI	Allen Duncan George Zapp	allenduncan@aggienetwork.com gzapp@comcast.net
10/21-25	Multi	Fall Colors in the Smokies	Smoky Mountains National Park	Sarah Kirkish and Robert Schwenke	skirkish@peoplepc.com robert.schwenke@yahoo.com
10/23	Sat	Day at Bald Mountain	Bald Mountain	Darrell Ahlberg	dahlberg7@comcast.net
10/23	Sat	Moonlight Canoe Paddle	Proud Lake State Park	Margaret Martin	mpluscat@yahoo.com
11/6	Sat	Hayride and Bonfire at Kensington Metropark	Kensington Metropark	Leslie Cordova	lesliegene@aol.com
11/20	Sat	High Ropes Course	Base Camp Challenge Center, Flint, li	Jeff Enterkin	JEnte69690@aol.com
12/3	Fri	SOLAR Annual Party	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
1/23-30/2011	Multi	Yellowstone in Winter Trip	Yellowstone National Park	Moe and Dave DeFrance	moelifeisgood@lavabit.com ventures@lavabit.com
3/6/2011	Sunday	Fight for Air-Climb Detroit	Renaissance Center Detroit, MI	Mary Donahue	mldonahue824@gmail.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

8/26, 9/2,9,11, 16,17-19, 23,30, 10/7-10	Thurs, Sat, Wknds	Fall Basic Backpacking	Royal Oak, MI Northville, MI Brighton, MI Pictured Rock National Lakeshore	Carol McCrie	cmccrie@sbcglobal.net
10/13,20, 23-24	Weds, Wknd	Basic Land Navigation	Berkley Community Center, Waterloo State Rec Area	Ati Tislerics	atisleri@umich.edu
12/1,8,15, 1/5,15- 16,19,26, 2/2,11-13	Weds, Wknds	Enjoying Michigan Winters	Schoolcraft College, Waterloo 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	TBA	Lou Szakal	everest2008@comcast.net

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.



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

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Bylaws: Ati Tislerics
Education: Chuck Smith
Equipment: Marcia Murphy
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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

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