



The SOLAR RAY

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



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February 2012

Eh! Team to the U.P.

by Michael Seng

The final practical for the fall beginning backpacking class was to the Pictured Rocks National Park east of Munising on the South shore of Lake Superior. We arrived at the Terrace Motel in Munising in the late afternoon on Thursday, October 7th.

There were 3 teams of 6 members in this fall 2011 class. My team was originally named simply team #3 and we decided to be the “Eh! Team” as a take-off of the 70’s TV series called the “A-Team” and incorporating the stereotypical “up north” or “Canadian” suffix to any thought: “Eh!” Our team consisted of **Kim Schott, Kristen Cook, Carrie Knisley, Bruce Coppola, Travis Wheeler** and I.



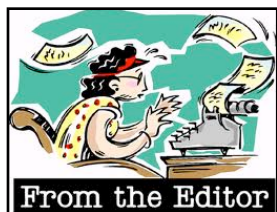
I met Travis at his house in Oxford to carpool to Munising along with **Scott** (a member of one the other teams and Scott’s father). We met at approximately 9:30AM Thursday, October 7th and we were on the road by 10:00AM. We made the trip in their 2011 Chrysler Town & County...loaded and with the leather interior....the only way to travel! We arrived at Munising’s Terrace Motel at about 4:30PM to check in with Larry at the front desk. The Terrace has been a good friend to SOLAR’s Backpacking class for many years. The rooms are clean, comfortable and priced very reasonably - \$55 for a suite!

Travis, Scott and I walked the couple blocks into town to wander around before dinner. Munising is a quaint little UP town. We hung out at the Rock Creek Café and Bookstore. The café had a gluten free/dairy free menu which made my

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Well, fellow SOLARites; it's well past deadline and I'm still working to put this issue to bed. But it's a great issue and features some of the best things about SOLAR. There's a great article on the Fall Beginning Backpacking course by Michael Seng, some of the winning photos from the annual photo contest, a photo collage from the Lake Ann XC ski trip (an annual favorite of many SOLAR members), and three pages of ads for upcoming adventures. There's something for everyone; find what's right for you!

SOLAR Meeting Minute: Microinterviews

Heather Hall asked SOLAR Members (at an undisclosed location):

"What luxury item do you take on backpacking trips?"



Ken Lemieux – "My camera. I actually consider it the 11th essential."



Marie Harrington – "My Thermarest chair. After a long day of hiking, it's the BEST to sit back, relax and watch the sunset."



Jeff Enterkin – "My camera, of course."

Rick Wisz – "Camp chair."



Heather Hall – "My compact brush. It folds up small enough for a pocket and also has a mirror, which has come in handy for fellow backpackers on a few trips."



SOLAR WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

Michael Abramsky
Michael Dwyer*
Denise Kramer

Patti Backos
Becky Johnson
Glenn Vincil

Beth Beson
Matthew Kowalczyk
Benji Ward

Teri Wertman



NEWLY upgraded to LIFETIME:

Bruce Coppola
Wayne McGarrah
Michael Dwyer*

* (Michael Dwyer joined for the first time AS a Lifetime Member)

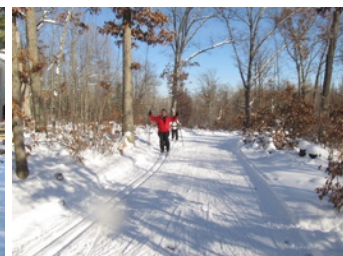
New Year's Day at Proud Lake-
January 1, 2012

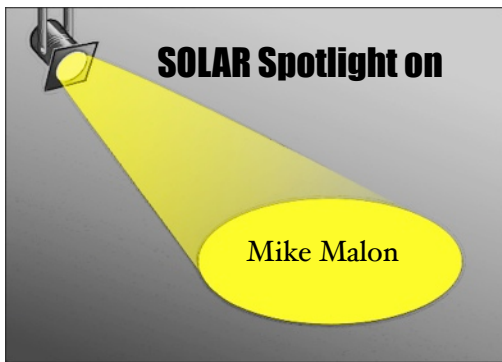


CHINESE NEW YEAR,
January 26, 2012



Learn to XC ski-
XC Ski
Headquarters-
Roscommon, MI-
January 21, 2012





How long have you been a member of SOLAR?
18 years

How did you learn about SOLAR?

I had just started rock climbing. My partner, John, was dating a young woman, Julia, who was a member (of SOLAR). She introduced us to this great group of outdoor enthusiasts that we joined instantly.

What are some outdoor activities you enjoy?

Over the years I have partaken in backpacking, canoeing, mountain biking, cross country skiing, winter camping, backcountry skiing, kayaking, Telemark skiing, rock climbing, day hiking big peaks, caving, big wall climbing, scuba diving, deluxe car camping, ziplining, paragliding, white water rafting and most recently, snorkeling.

What has been your favorite trip/activity so far?

Backcountry skiing in the mountains of Yosemite to camp out in the 18-foot deep snow! My favorite activity was teaching Wilderness First Aid.

What's the most challenging thing you've done through SOLAR?

Teaching Wilderness First Aid

What would your ideal trip be like?

Two men and two women backcountry skiing to Glacier Point in Yosemite and skiing in the full moon with Half Dome across the valley. Oh....and really good chocolate to finish the day.

Which classes have you taken through SOLAR?
What class(es) do you wish were offered that are not currently?

Scuba diving, kayaking, skydiving. I would like to see hang gliding offered as a class.

Tell us something about you that would surprise us!

I have a terrible sweet tooth. I only make homemade ice cream when I can share it with others.

Do you have any pets? Kids? Significant Other?

I have a wonderful 25 year old son, David, who likes the outdoors too. I have no significant other yet, but I have many friends to join me in these fun activities.

What would you like to see changed in SOLAR in the next year?

Free crutches for us older guys who keep blowing out their knees.



2011 Annual SOLAR Photo Contest

Each year, SOLAR Members compete to see who can submit the most astonishing and beautiful and even funny photos from their adventures. The contest was held at the January General Meeting at Colony Hall where attendees cast their votes for favorites in each of 9 categories. Winners (listed below) receive gift certificates from REI. Some of the winners sent us digital copies of their photos and these are highlighted below.

ACTION	JEFF McWILLIAMS
ANIMALS	MARK CARSON
BLACK AND WHITE	JEFF McWILLIAMS
HUMOR	JEFF McWILLIAMS (TIE) SUSAN HAGGERTY (TIE)
PHOTO PRO	KEN LEMIEUX
OVERALL	TOM OLOFFO
PEOPLE	JEFF ENTERKIN
PLANTS	SUSAN HAGGERTY
SCENERY	TOM OLOFFO



Elephant Seals by Mark Carson



First Day of Rifle Season by Ken Lemieux

Winter Water
Crossing by Jeff
Enterkin



Fantastic Falls by Tom Oloffo

Lake Ann 2012

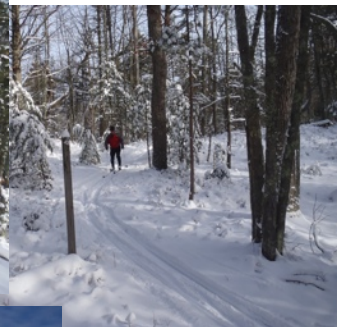
SOLARITES went up north in search of the winter. We found it in Lake Ann.

My 4th Lake Ann weekend by Sara Cockrell

Although I am only a visitor to this outing since I live nearby, I have enjoyed meeting many new friends and keeping in touch with those I have traveled with on SOLAR trips to the Grand Canyon, John Muir Trail, Glacier, Yellowstone & Adirondacks. Besides the potluck dinner Saturday night, this was the highlight of my weekend, a gorgeous sunny afternoon spent xc skiing the Platte Plains loop at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, with 4 other members, Charlotte, Linda, Bob & Mary.

We started our ski at the M-22 winter parking lot, skiing around Bass Lake, up & down the whoop-de-doo to the White Pine primitive campground, then out to the beach on Lake Michigan, with clear views of North & South Manitou Islands and Empire Bluff. From there, we skied through the dune grass to the Peterson Rd access, had a short snack, then continued along the Platte River Campground & back on the Lasso Loop.

We were very fortunate to finally get enough snow the preceding 36 hours to cover the trails, which have been bare Up North this miserly winter. Though the ski took longer than I had anticipated, and we were very tired when we finished, all agreed that it was the perfect way to spend this sunny afternoon, in the woods among trees blanketed in their finest winter coat, sharing the challenge & rewards of the ski together!





Top: Chapel Falls Trailhead
Bottom: Chapel Falls

day! I had a quick sandwich – a first for me in a restaurant in quite a while – and in, of all places, Munising! After walking around for a bit more we headed back to the motel to look for the rest of our class and the instructors that made the trip: **Carol McCrirrie, Leslie Cordova, Sam Modzierz, Cindy Taylor and Charlene Machnak.** An all female contingent of instructors for Pictured Rocks, a SOLAR first, they named themselves “Team Estrogen”.

We had dinner together as a class Thursday night in town at The Dog Patch, after which we retired to the Terrace for the Tiger’s game.

Friday morning we confirmed everyone was there after stumbling into the Terrace office at 7:30AM for the coffee Larry had made ready for us! By 8:00AM we were back to the Dog Patch for a hearty breakfast prior to meeting across the street at the National Parks Visitor Center. At the center we looked at the various information pamphlets available for the park while Carol confirmed the previous reservations with Pam the park ranger. We then met back in the parking lot for instructions on how to get to the Chapel Rock trailhead: East out of town and after Melstrand, we took the left towards the trailhead.

At the trailhead, we readied our equipment for the trail and took advantage of the latrine prior to the day’s hike to Little Coves group campground. There are no latrines at Little Coves and you will have to attend class #5 if you are curious as to what to do when a facility is not available to you. Just one of the many things covered in the class to make you capable of handling yourself in the wild in a responsible manner – knowledge is confidence.

I decided to test the concept of hiking with and without poles thus, day one was without poles.

North out of the trailhead we were all moving along well. Soon we were at “Chapel Falls” a small cascade of falls down a rocky slide. Then we continued on to Chapel Rock which is a pillar of rock with a cavity half the way up which supports the rock overhead with three columns – within the cavity is a low structure that resembles an altar...hence “chapel” rock. The rock’s formation is cool enough but, there is more! At the top of the rock column is a full grown tree with two entwined roots, as thick as my arms, spanning the open space to the nearby cliff top to bury themselves in the soil there. Previously, there was a stone arch spanning the open space and which has fallen away (as they all do) while the roots



Chapel Falls

continued on p. 8

EH! TEAM

remained. Here, at the bottom of the stairs where we could gaze up at whole of the Chapel Rock structure, was our lunch stop.

We travelled East from here (starting with climbing back up the stairs) to Spray Falls where we filtered water to top of all our Nalgens, platypi and MSR “Red Babies.” About a half mile beyond the stream that feeds Spray Falls we were at Little Coves Group Campsite.

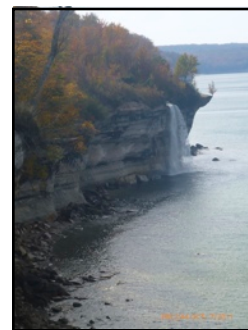
Everyone in our team was feeling pretty good. We got our campsite set up quickly. Travis and I were sharing my 2 man REI tent, Bruce had his one man Coleman tent and the ladies (Carrie, Kirsten and Kim) were sharing the Eureka 3 man...er women, tent. Bruce got started with boiling the water for the “Dirty Rice & Bean Tortillas” that comprised our shared meal. Bruce adapted a recipe he had to accommodate my dietary limitations and I thought it turned out great! We were all taken with his “antique” cook stove that had two speeds: off and “light the afterburners” on! It

came complete with realistic jet engine sounds.

At this campsite we had to “Bear Bag” our food, stoves, and anything else that had a scent to them (toiletries etc.). The campsite had a “Bear Pole” with hooks at the top and long poles to hook your bag to one of the hooks at the top of the pole – the instructors warned us that this would be entertaining...they were right. The campsite was atop a cliff and about 100 yards inbound from the face. There was a decent breeze that was cooling and keeping the insects at bay. With that breeze came a high altitude thin cloud layer that muted the stars that night. By 10:00PM we were all in our bags for the night. The sound of the trees rustling in the breeze was fabulous to fall asleep to!

The goal was to have the campsite broken down and be on the trail back to Chapel Rock (lunch) by 9:00AM. The campsite was up and moving by 7:00AM. We all got breakfast out of the way, our backpacks

M. SENG (*continued from p.7*)



Top: *Spray Falls Infinity Edge*

Bottom: *Spray Falls Distance*

repacked and started backtracking towards Chapel Rock. Somehow I had not noticed Spray Falls after we had filtered water Friday?!? The view of the falls from the stream where we filtered was merely like an infinity edge pool... nothing special. The view of the falls walking back towards them was absolutely spectacular!

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NAM LIBER TE CONSCIENTO FACTOR TUM POEN

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, set eiusmod tempor incididunt et labore et dolore magna aliquam. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerc. Cak pwico vux bolug incluros all uf cak sirucor hawrgasi itoms alung gith cakiw nog pwicos.



EH! TEAM

They are called Spray Falls because there is not enough water to going over the edge to make a solid column to the lake below. The water just dissipates into a “spray” or heavy mist plume. We backtracked to



Chapel Rock but, since we were walking north the day before and now were walking south, it seemed like new area.

Back at Chapel Rock we walked back down the stairs to the bluff overlooking the beach. We broke for a long lunch and rest. **Kurt LaFrance** and I both managed to “go swimming” in Lake Superior. In my case “swimming” meant that I got completely under the water for a moment. Although very refreshing for that moment, Lake Superior is cold, actually, unexpectedly painfully cold. By the time that I was walking out of the water my feet, which had the longest exposure, were in real

physical pain. Thankfully, the sun was out and the temperature was unseasonably warm so I was in no danger of hypothermia. Still, I think I would do it again.

Once lunch was over we got ourselves put back together and back on the trail. We were headed to Mosquito Beach campground which is where Mosquito Creek empties in to Lake Superior. The campground is on the far side, south and west, of Grand Arch – the postcard icon of the National Park. We still had a ways to go!

The hike from Chapel Rock beach was along the cliff face against, but far above, Lake Superior. There were periodic open areas where we could take pictures of the shoreline. Unfortunately, the cliché “every vantage was more spectacular than the last” is an understatement! It was amazing – the geology really is something to behold.

At one area we hiked out into a shear ledge that was just rock.

M. SENG (*continued from p.8*)

The ledge was easily half as large as a football field and a shear drop to the lake...breathtaking!

As we got closer to Grand Arch you could see where the rock fall that closed the access under the arch had fallen from. It was pretty neat to be able to see the “scar” left on the face of that rock and imagine the moment when it collapsed. You are forced to realize how much simple, yet insidious, erosion can and does shape a vista, even in a single lifetime. As we got closer to the arch, the enormity of its scale becomes apparent. It is an



Top: Chapel Beach Lunch break

Liber: The author in front of Grand Arch

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EH! TEAM

absolutely massive structure – what looked bushes and shrubs from a distance were actually full grown trees. The arch forms the

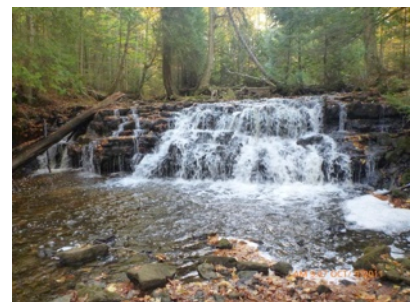
song by Lou Reed titled “A Walk on the Wild Side” played in my head as I recalled the view just now!

M. SENG (*continued from p.9*)

After dinner we all went down to the beach to catch the sunset. Saturday evening was clear and unseasonably warm and slightly humid – all the makings for a great sunset. I have seen many sunsets in my lifetime but, I have to say that not many compared to its spectacular display of orange and red that evening. It may have been enhanced by the satisfaction of having gotten to that place with our team and collectively with our class.

Some of us stayed on the beach till the almost full moon made its appearance and washed out the majority of stars.

The next morning, Sunday, again we were up, and after breakfast, broke down the campsite and had it ready to go by 9:00 AM. We took time to pose for our group



photographs; “Shadow **Bob**” **Innes**, Carrie’s boyfriend, was a great sport in taking multiple photos of each pose (i.e. one each with all of our cameras). Once all the photos were finished we

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pinnacle to a large expanse of rock that bulges into the lake and defines the turn of the trail South towards Mosquito Beach.

At one point along the trail the path makes an abrupt turn inland and was visibly “newer”. Although there had been a lot of work on the trail due to a windstorm in the area recently this seemed different? The trail traced a box pattern of some 15 to 20 yards and ended back up against the cliff face (we had been hiking within 3 to 4 feet of the “edge” for quite some time). When you looked back at whence we had just come you can see why: the cliff face had fallen away and along with it a portion of what had recently been the trail. For some reason the

crowded, and it had “bear boxes” instead of the “bear poles” we had used the night before – more convenient but less entertaining.

Interestingly, the wind storm had knocked a small tree down on top of one of the “new” bear boxes and it had to be moved in order to be useable. It sustained minimal damage and worked just fine...tough enough to withstand even the most curious bear. Once we all got the tents up, we got dinner cooked, consumed and cleaned up. Of the many special attributes this campsite had – proximity to water, protection from the wind and access to the beach, I would be remiss to underestimate the value of easy access to two outhouses!



The hike back to the cars at Chapel Falls trailhead was away from the coast to the South then the East. Along the way we crossed the Mosquito Creek just downstream from the Mosquito Falls. For those of you counting, that is three waterfalls that most people do not get to see. In short order we were back to the trailhead and our cars. We took this time to unload, “freshen up” and relax a bit. A headcount revealed that we did not lose anyone. We also confirmed who was going to go back to Munising for lunch at Sydney’s Shark Lounge prior to the drive home then got on our way.

On the way back to Munising Travis, Scott and I (among others) took a detour to see Miners Castle – another icon of the park. While there I was able to get a topo map for the park and 2 stickers for my truck bumper: Support the National Parks and Pictured Rocks National Park.

Given the fun our team and the class had the previous couple of days our lunch was way too short. Too soon we were saying our good-byes and heading back to the cars. The drive back was the same six and a half hours it took to get there but seemed longer.

Great classmates, great instructors and a great team made the culmination of the Beginning Backpacking workshop an absolutely wonderful experience! I highly recommend this to any who have not had the chance to take it.

A special thanks to the volunteer instructors that made the trip possible and enjoyable...Team Estrogen was comprised of Carol, Leslie, Sam, Cindy and Charlene. NOTE: many thanks to all the other volunteer instructors that participated over the course of the workshop!

Lest you believe that we did not learn anything or have anything reinforced with this activity – I learned that you must always be aware of where your teammates are while on the trail when I allowed Cindy Taylor to fall behind and out of sight without noticing...Fail!.

The Beginning Backpacking course is typically offered in both the spring and the fall. Thanks for letting me take you along – and again, if you haven’t taken this course do so! Get up, get out and do!



WORDS TO WANDER BY

"Go to the winter woods: listen there, look, watch, and “the dead months” will give you a subtler secret than any you have yet found in the forest."

- Fiona Macleod, *Where the Forest Murmurs*

2012 FIGHT FOR AIR CLIMB

experience the climb of your life

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION

Join the award-winning **SOLAR Stair Stars** in their annual trek up the stairs of the infamous Renaissance Center! The team trains indoors and outdoors during the winter to get ready to race up 70 flights of stairs.

This year's stair climb is on **March 4, 2012.**

Can't join the climb?
Support SOLAR Stair Stars fund-raising efforts—by check or on-line:

<http://www.lungusa.org/pledge-events/mi/detroit-climb-fy12/>

Contact: Mary Donahue,
mldonahue824@gmail.com

Annual Winter Fun Day at Proud Lake

February 11, 2012

Organized by Bill Morse,
billc095@yahoo.com

The annual Winter Fun Day gives us another chance to enjoy extended fun at Proud Lake. We'll have use of the River Hawk Annex for a day. You can use it as a base for indoor and outdoor activities.

If there is enough snow, you can **cross-country ski** (bring your own) or **snow shoe** (Alan Heavner will rent, \$10 for the day). We should have snow by then but if this winter continues to be snow free, we will go hiking. If it's warm enough, **canoeing and kayaking may be offered**. You can have just as much fun inside. You're invited to bring your favorite **games** and **decks of cards**.

In the evening you'll be hungry, so **bring a dish to pass for our potluck dinner**.

I'm paying the park to rent the annex. When you come, please pay **\$3 per person** to cover that cost. Any money I get in excess of the rental cost will be donated to the No Child Left Inside fund. RSVP's are welcome but not necessary.

I'm inviting other groups and you can invite your friends to come. We tend to have our first hike in the late morning, and some of us stick around till around 9 PM. Come for as much of the day as you can. As we get closer, I'll give more specific info on what we'll be offering and when.



Photo by Pablo Balan



Winter Hike on the Potawatomi Trail – February 12, 2012

Organized by Laura Buhl, buhl1@yahoo.com

Winter is a great time to hike the Potawatomi Trail—without the foliage you can really see the glacial topography and you don't need to dodge the mountain bikes.

The whole trail is 17.5 miles. There are several shortcuts along the trail, including a few at the end that let you shave off 1-3 miles.

Meet at 7:45, begin hiking at 8:00 am. We'll park in the second parking lot near the trailhead towards the lake.

You will need to buy a State Park day pass if you don't have the Recreation Passport on your license plate registration tag.



Winter Camping – March 1-5, 2012

A veteran winter camper? C'mon, let's get in one last winter trip! Took Enjoying Michigan Winters five years ago but haven't camped in the cold and snow since? That's ok! We'll head to the north woods for a few days of camping, exploring, skill-building, and fun. Possible destinations are Tahquamenon Falls or Pictured Rocks or in the U.P. or Wilderness State Park or Nordhouse Dunes below the bridge. Destination will depend on snow/ice conditions and on the consensus of the group going. EMW or winter camping experience a must.

Interested? Contact: Heidi Tietjen, h_tietjen@yahoo.com

Snow Kiting Seminar

February 11, 2012

Organized by Chuck Smith, cbryansmit@google.com

Brian LeFeve and staff from Great Lakes Kiteboarding will be hosting a snow kiting seminar Saturday February 11, at Stony Creek Metro Park. The seminar is to educate people on snow kiting in Michigan. Brian LeFeve has been snow kiting for 13 years and wants to share his knowledge and experience of this incredible sport.

Things we will be covering:

1. Types of kites for snowkiting.
2. Which types of snowboards / ski's work and which don't.
3. What to wear for snow kiting.
4. Which kind of places are good for snow kiting.
5. Different types of launching and landing methods in the snow.
6. Dangers of snow kiting.

We will also have trainer kites for all to fly. Trainer kites are the first step into getting into kiteboarding as 90% of the sport is kite control. Any questions please call Brian LeFeve @ 586 822 6511, www.greatlakeskiteboarding.com.

This is open to SOLAR members and their family members. As always, payment secures a spot. This is really weather dependent so we may have to change the date and we can refund your money if the new time/date doesn't work for you. We will be playing outside, so come dressed to spend all afternoon outside in the wind. EMW class or previous winter sport experience strongly encouraged



SPRING BACKPACKING CLASS

Are you interested in learning basic backpacking skills? Do you want to refresh skill that you haven't used in some time? Perhaps you are an experienced outdoors person but want to learn new skills and meet new people? This Class is for you!

The Spring Backpacking Course offers an overview of basic backcountry skills including subjects such as clothing, shelters, packs & pack fitting, boots, water filtration & treatment, stoves & cookware, food, maps and more! The Field Day and weekend practicals provide hands-on experience and opportunities to enjoy the outdoors.

Classroom: Thursdays March 29th, April 5th, April 12th, & April 26th. 6-9 p.m at the Berkley Community Center, 2400 Robina Ave, Berkley.

Field Day: Saturday April 7 8:30-5pm, Maybury State Park, Northville.

Practical I: April 14 & 15, Waterloo State Recreation Area.

Practical II: May 4-6 (May 4th is not required). Location TBA.

Cost: \$110*. Make the checks payable to SOLAR. *All participants must be current SOLAR members. Additional costs may be incurred for students needing personal items such as boots, clothing, toiletries and food. Some tents, backpacks, sleeping bags, pads, & stoves may be borrowed from SOLAR through SOLAR's usage policy.

Contact:

Meetup.com/SOLAR-outdoor to sign up for the class and Michael Banks and Glenn Schultz at gunghoglenn@yahoo.com or c: 734-751-3769 with any questions.



Whirlyball

Tentative Date/Time:
Saturday, February 11, 2012, 1-3 pm

Organized by: Jeff Enterkin
jente69690@aol.com, (248) 224-4384

Whirlyball is a fast-paced game that combines basketball, hockey, bumper car, and jai-alai. There are 10 cars on the court with five person teams driving them. The court is set up like a basketball court with a vertically hung backboard at both ends. The backboard has a 15 inch hole in the middle with a swing gate. The object is to drive a bumper car to your opponent's net and using a (jai-alai style) plastic scoop throwing a whiffle ball at their net. The team with the most points wins. Each game typically runs 13 minutes long.



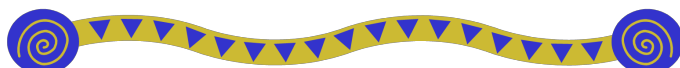
When: The tentative date and time will be Saturday February 11, 2012 at 1 pm going to 3 pm. I am using a Groupon for this event, so I cannot reserve that date and time until February 7, 2012. I will let you know if the date and time are confirmed or if I have to change it.

Where: Whirlyball Novi, 41550 Grand River Ave., Novi MI 48375. Tel: 248-788-8900. The building is located behind the mini mall on the north side of Grand River just west of Meadowbrook Rd. The Whirlyball entrance is located on the West side of the Total Sports Complex building.

Cost: \$22 per person. This includes 2 hours of playing time (four games per person), pizza, bread sticks, salad, and soda.

Who: SOLAR members, friends, and family. Children are welcome but all participants must be 54" tall. Looking for 20 people.

From Whirlyball: Remember, Whirlyball is a play at your own risk activity! As with any contact sport, there is the possibility of injury. While the risk of injury is minimal, Whirlyball assumes no responsibility for any injuries incurred while playing. Be careful and have fun! Persons with heart conditions, back or neck problems, pacemakers and pregnant women are not recommended to play! A height of 54" must be met to participate. No outside food or beverage permitted at any time.



Let's do some curling!

Organized by Kurt LaFrance, kklafran@comcast.net



I've never tried this before and it sounds like a lot of fun. The Detroit Curling Club has curling sheets available for rent and provides all the special equipment and instruction on how to play.

WHERE: Detroit Curling Club, 1615 E Lewiston, Ferndale, MI, 248-544-0635

WHEN: Sunday March 11, 2012. Show up before 11:30 AM to be ready for the instruction. The actual play will begin at noon and we will have the ice until 2 PM.

RATES: \$25/person, includes instruction and equipment. There is a maximum number of 8 players per sheet. I have reserved two sheets, so we need 12 to 16 people to play.

PAYMENTS: Preference is signing up and paying on Meetup. Otherwise sign up at a SOLAR meeting, or contact Kurt LaFrance to arrange payment.

AGE: 18 years or older (12 - 17 year olds can participate if accompanied by parent). Please let me know ahead of time if you plan to bring someone under 18 years old.

WHAT TO WEAR: Loose fitting clothing (i.e., jogging pants), short jacket, hat, gloves, CLEAN tennis shoes (Please carry in the shoes you will be wearing on the ice). The arena temperature is usually around 40 degrees.

BEVERAGES & FOOD: There is no food service provided by the club, so you may want to bring a snack. Soft drinks, juice, water can be purchased from the club's beverage counter. **NO ALCOHOL IS PERMITTED.**

OTHER INFO: You will have to sign a liability waiver before you can enter the rink. There is an observation area if anyone just wants to hang out and watch.

I am planning to go to lunch afterwards. I have no knowledge of the area since I live in Jackson so suggestions are welcome! Contact Kurt LaFrance by email or 586-248-2081.

Cross-Country Skiing on Mackinac Island

February 24-26, 2012

Organized by Linda Hill, riverwoman@comcast.net

Ski the miles of dedicated trails on the island, through peaceful woods, along the shore, on bluffs overlooking the straits. Ski and snowshoe rental available.

Arrange your own room and transportation.

Lodging: Pontiac Lodge, 906-847-3364, www.pontiaclodge.com, \$85-\$250 per room

Flights from St. Ignace: Great lakes Air, 906-643-7165, www.greatlakesair.com, \$27, each way.



Images from www.mackinac-island-insider-tips.com

Upcoming SOLAR Programs

Programs follow the monthly business meeting at Colony Hall on the first Tuesday of the month.

February 7 *Living in the Shadow of the Moon Dog: A South Pole Diary*

Just days before Paul C. Daniels left Detroit to spend nine months locked into the most remote and isolated outpost on the face of the earth, he bought a Sony-Handy-Cam to keep a video-diary of his experience. He captured everything from melting ice for drinking water, to his five jobs, to his social life as a "POLIE." Through equipment failures, conflict, and crisis, the scientists and crew members of the US Antarctic research station could rely on no one but each other to survive.

March 6 *Hiking the Buckeye Trail: A 1,400 Mile Journey Around Ohio*

In March 2011 Andy "Captain Blue" Niekamp set out on a hiking journey from Dayton on Ohio's Buckeye Trail. His goal was to hike on the Buckeye Trail for as long as it was fun. Over 1,400 miles and 88 days later Captain Blue returned to Dayton on the Buckeye Trail, the longest circular trail in the nation. His presentation will take you on a foot journey around Ohio with his beautiful photos and narrative. Come get acquainted with Ohio's backyard trail.

April 3 *A Photographic Journey through Baja* Adventurer and mountain climber Steve Jochmans will share photos and stories from his expedition to Baja California with National Geographic. A must-see presentation for lovers of marine mammals, especially whales!

May 1 *Steering Committee Elections* As a volunteer-run organization, SOLAR depends on members to step up to fill leadership position. Run for one of 12 steering committee positions. Even if you can't run, vote!

Hocking Hills State Park Camping Trip

Memorial Day Weekend 2012
Friday, May 25 - Monday, May 28

Family Friendly! Dog Friendly!

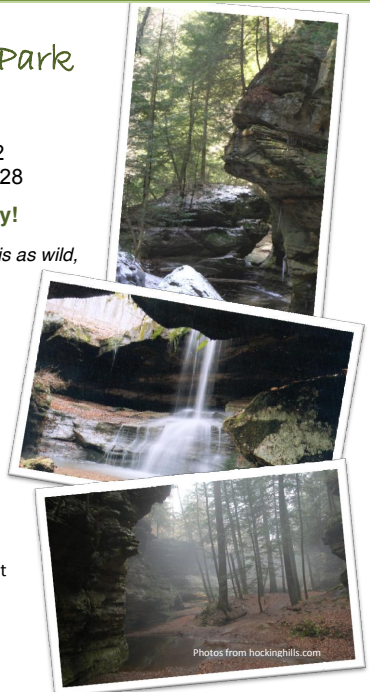
Perhaps no other area in the state of Ohio is as wild, romantic and picturesque as Hocking Hills State Park. Massive sandstone outcroppings, deep cool gorges, towering hemlocks and glistening waterfalls characterize the Hocking region...

Location: Hocking Hills State Park is located in Logan, OH, 58 miles southeast of Columbus, OH. It is 275 miles from Warren, MI, about a 5 hour drive.

Campsites: Hocking has 2 group campsites reserved at Old Man's Cave Campground for Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. The sites are non-electric and have pit toilets. It is a short walk to the facilities with flush toilets and showers. Campsites are pet friendly.

Things to do: *Hiking!* Numerous scenic hiking trails in and near Hocking Hills State Park, featuring geological formations, streams and waterfalls. *Horseback Riding!* 1-2 hour rides to include interesting geological features. *Paddling!* River trips of varying lengths down the Hocking River. Some take you near a natural arch. Night paddles, too. *Ziplines and Canopy Tours!* Over a beautiful valley, waterfalls, and a natural cave. There's also a quarter mile SuperZip. *Rail Trail and Road Biking!* 18 beautiful, twisting miles on the Hocking Adena Bikeway or ride the scenic roads. *Mountain Biking!* Lots of trails in the area, including Ohio's top-rated trail at nearby Zaleski State Park. *Rock climbing and Rappelling!* Equipment rental available. *The Columbus Zoo!* A nice stop when driving to/from the Hocking Hills. Zoo features a manatee exhibit and polar exhibit.

Cost: Adults/couples \$20 per person. Families (with children under 18 staying in one tent) \$50. Space is limited so sign up early. No refunds for cancellations but you can sell your spot.



Photos from hockinghills.com

SOLAR FEBRUARY 2012 CALENDAR

www.SolarOutdoors.org

Click to get
the details on
Meetup.com!

Winner of the December Activity Organizer Drawing: Matt Dalton, New Year's Day Gathering and Paddle

SOLAR MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS					
2/7	Tues	Monthly Meeting 7:30 pm	Colony Hall	Chuck Smith	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program: Living in the Shadow of the Moon-Dog: A South Pole Diary	Colony Hall	Christine Pawyl	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
2/28	Tues	Steering Committee Meeting, 7:30 pm	TBD	Chuck Smith	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
3/6	Tues	Monthly Meeting 7:30 pm	Colony Hall	Chuck Smith	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program: Through-Hiking the Buckeye Trail	Colony Hall	Christine Pawyl	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
3/27		Steering Committee Meeting, 7:30	TBD	Chuck Smith	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
4/3	Tues	Monthly Meeting, 7:30 pm	Colony Hall	Chuck Smith	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program: A Journey through Baja	Colony Hall	Christine Pawyl	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
4/24	Tues	Steering Committee Meeting, 7:30	TBD	Chuck Smith	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
SOLAR RAY DEADLINES					
2/17	Fri	March SOLAR Ray Deadline		Sheila Smith	SolarRayEditor@SolarOutdoors.org
3/16	Fri	April SOLAR Ray Deadline		Sheila Smith	SolarRayEditor@SolarOutdoors.org
4/13	Fri	May SOLAR Ray Deadline		Sheila Smith	SolarRayEditor@SolarOutdoors.org
ACTIVITIES					
2/9-12	Multi	Ice Climbing in Colorado	Ouray, CO	Kurt LaFrance	kklafran@comcast.net
2/11	Sat	Whirlyball	Novi, MI	Jeff Enterkin	Jente69690@aol.com
2/12	Sun	Winter Hike on the Potawatomi Trail	Pinckney State Rec Area	Laura Buhl	buhl@yahoo.com
2/24-26	Wknd	Cross-Country Skiing on Mackinac Island	Mackinac Island, MI	Linda Hill	riverwoman@comcast.net
2/26-3/3	Multi	Porcupine Mountains Winter Camping	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park, MI	Ati Tislerics	atisleri@med.umich.edu
3/1-5	Multi	Winter Camping Trip	North! TBD	Heidi Tietjen	h_tietjen@yahoo.com
3/4	Sun	SOLAR Stair Stars Do the American Lung Association Fight for Air Climb	Detroit, MI	Mary Donahue	Mldonahue824@gmail.com
3/11	Sun	Curling	Ferndale, MI	Kurt LaFrance	kklafran@comcast.net
5/25-28	Wknd	Hocking Hills Memorial Day Weekend	Logan, OH	Nancy Prall	pralln@yahoo.com
CLASSES					
2/11	Sat	Snow Kiting Seminar	Stony Creek Metro Park	Chuck Smith	cbryansmit@gmail.com
3/29, 4/5, 4/7, 4/12, 4/14-15, 4/26, 5/4-6	Multi	Beginning Backpacking	Berkley Community Center, Waterloo Rec Area, Hoist Lake	Glenn Schultz, Michael Banks	gunghoglenn@yahoo.com
4/26, 9/21-24	Multi	Intermediate Backpacking	TBD	Leslie Cordova	lesliegene@aol.com

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

You Can Organize a Class or Activity! If you would like to teach or suggest a class, contact our Education Chairperson, Kevin Cotter at SolarEducation@SolarOutdoors.org.

If you would like to organize or suggest an activity to share with other SOLAR members, contact our Activities Chairperson, Heidi Tietjen at SolarActivities@SolarOutdoors.org.



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, tranquil 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 Jennifer Tislerics 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. Please attach images separately as JPG files. If you have any questions, please contact Sheila Smith at SOLARrayeditor@solaroutdoors.org.

STEERING COMMITTEE

OFFICERS

President: Chuck Smith
Vice President: Laura Buhl
Secretary: Ati Tislerics
Treasurer: Paul Williford

Activities: Heidi Tietjen
Bylaws: Tim Davis
Education: Kevin Cotter
Public Relations: (vacant)
Ray Editor: Sheila Smith

Historian: Chip Kleinbrook
Membership: Jennifer Tislerics
Programs: Christine Pawyl
Equipment: Glenn Newa
Webmaster: Bob Innes

PRESIDENTS AT LARGE

Michael Banks | Leslie Cordova | Allen Duncan | Al Fylak | Steve Gardner | Bill Halvings
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 Chuck Smith at SolarPresident@solaroutdoors.org.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SOLAR RAY ASSISTANT EDITORS

Karen DeCoster, Heather Hall, Jennifer Hill, Ken Lemieux, Helen Peters, Janet Schester, Pamela Schmelzer-Anzicek, Elizabeth Shaw, Ati Tislerics and Jennifer Tislerics.

MORE INFORMATION

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



SOLAR

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Visit our website at www.solaroutdoors.org

