

Highlights from the SOLAR October Meeting Louise Flory Cold Water Paddling *By Cynthia Balkwell*

Louise Flory ACA Coastal Sea Kayak Instructor Level 3
American Canoe Association: www.americancanoe.org

Paddling in the colder weather seasons can be a great way to avoid the bugs and crowded waterways. As long as you dress correctly and use appropriate safety practices it can be a great way to enjoy all the outdoor seasons Michigan has to offer. This was the message delivered by Louise Flory at our October meeting. No cold weather paddler plans to end up in the water, but accidents can happen. Did you know that more deaths occur from hypothermia in the spring than any other time of the year? The main reason is that people don't realize how much colder the water is than the air on a sunny spring day. Being in water below 60 degrees can cause hypothermia in only minutes. Ending up in water below 40 degrees is life threatening.

Wearing cotton jeans, tee shirts and/or sweatshirts while paddling can be a major contributor to an unfavorable outcome whenever a tip over occurs. Cotton gets heavy when it is wet and will not keep you warm once you are back out of the water. Louise Flory highly recommends wearing silk, wool, or synthetic clothing with good wicking properties for your base layer. Insulation layers can be fleece or neoprene. A dry suit or other wind protection with tight cuffs and neckline is recommended for winter paddling. And don't forget to have good head, hand

and foot wear! Last, but not least, pack extra clothing and carry it in your dry bag.

Other important safety reminders were: If your kayak is equipped with a skirt, practice your rolls wearing extra clothing. Can you remove your skirt wearing gloves while under water? Pack a thermos with a hot beverage and carry high energy snacks. And most importantly, don't paddle alone, especially in cold water. Go with a partner or a group that has someone trained in rescue. Take pleasure in the camaraderie, enjoy the scenery and come home safe!

Photo by Jennifer Tislerics



New Hampshire On The Rocks *by Dave DeFrance*

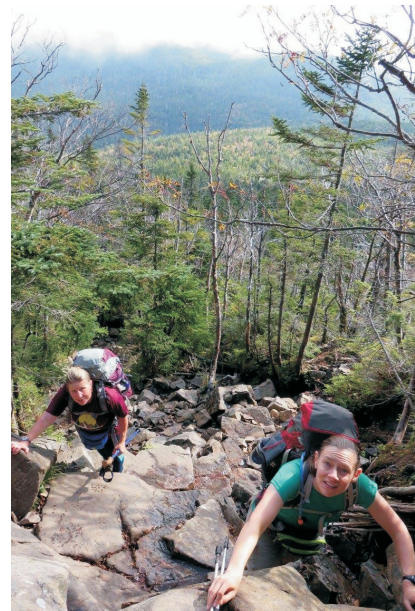
The earth's core is made of molten rock. When it comes to the surface, it solidifies into mountains, cliffs, boulders, talus, and scree. Allow for about 500 million years of erosion and plant growth and you have the recipe for the White Mountains of New Hampshire, part of the Appalachian chain of mountains. The Appalachian Trail, which is known for its difficult hiking, runs through this area.



Nine SOLARites tackled these trails with the luxury of carrying only day packs as we hiked from hut to hut. People that attended were Karen Bates, Dana Buxton, Leslie Cordova, Moe and Dave DeFrance, Cathy Girata, Karen Kish, Carol McCririe, and Linda Ringlein. Throughout the week, laughter, smiles, sweat, and joy exuded from each one of us – the trails were tough, but magnificent!

The Presidential area of the White Mountains has 8 mountain huts that provide a bunk, breakfast, dinner, shelter, camaraderie and even some entertainment. We visited 5 of these huts over a week of hiking and they were everything that was promised. As another bonus, the weather was fantastic. Neither of these facts made it easier to get from hut to hut. The rocky, steep trails kicked our butts as we averaged about 1 mile per hour and spent an 8-10 hour day traveling to the next stop where we collapsed with fatigue, sore knees, hips, and ankles.

But we also had memories filled with mountain views and a feeling of satisfaction at having had a fantastic experience.



Day by day, knock on wood, there were no major mishaps. We started off staying at the Highland Center Lodge. The next day we hiked to our first hut, which was Mizpah. There we met the rest of our SOLAR party that had opted for flying in to New Hampshire rather than driving. It was a good warm up of 2.6 miles and 1900 feet up.

After a day of hiking the hut served a family style dinner and breakfast which was nothing short of gourmet. To further spice things up, they offer an educational presentation each night, as well as skits to remind us of hut protocol and present awards to new junior

rangers. How do those supplies get up to the huts? Usually on the backs of the hut Crew. Sometimes by helicopter if large loads need to be hauled down. Each morning at 6:30 AM, a crew member of the

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New Hampshire On The Rocks *Continued*

hut would greet us with singing to wake us – it was beautiful! This would be followed by a hearty breakfast at 7 AM, and we would hit the trail around 8 AM. (We were lulled awake with guitars, saxophones, singing, and even poetry.)

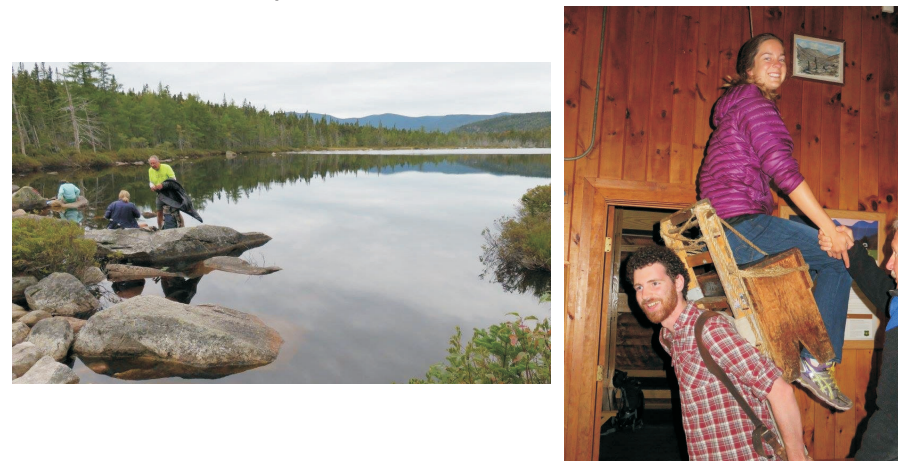
The crew at the huts were all well educated (from Bachelor to Doctorate degrees) but had degrees in majors that didn't easily lend to lucrative careers. As a result, these grads spend 2 - 7 years working at the huts to find their path after graduation.

After Mizpah, we visited 4 other huts, and we followed a rocky path from one to the next. The next hut was Zealand, and we hiked 8.1 miles and had an elevation gain of 2000 feet. We stayed there for 2 days, and during our free day a group of us took a 10 mile hike to Ethan Pond while others took a 5 mile



hike. Next we hiked 7 miles and up 2850 feet to Galehead hut. The views were remarkable. Following Galehead, we had our hardest day, hiking 7.7 miles and up 3450 feet to Greenleaf hut.

Several people in the group took an alternate route, and had less up, but a full 8 miles of hiking. Our last hut, Lonesome Lake, was nearest to the trail head, and despite its name, it was the most crowded and noisy hut. We had to descend 2800 ft. down, then back up to the hut. It was a total of 7.5 miles.



Enroute, we summited a couple lesser known presidentials, like Pierce, and Garfield and a few high peaks such as Mt. Lafayette at 5249 feet. Mt. Washington, about 20 miles away, is known to have the highest winds in the U.S – over 200 mph. This led us to traversing wind swept terrain and leaning into the mountains and the wind at the same time.

At the end, we congratulated ourselves for the chance to make this hike, and see the phenomenal views all around us. We even got to take in some of the local sites. All were able to complete the hike. We feel honored to have been able to share this special time with good friends from SOLAR. So we raise a glass of cheer, on the rocks of course, to toast our SOLAR friends, and the rocks of New Hampshire!

New updates to SOLAR Website links by Jim Kadlubowski SOLAR Webmaster

I have added a few interesting links to our website this past week that I would like to highlight for you all:

In the Winter Camping section I have added the website Wintertrekking.com. This site calls itself “The Winter Trekker & Camper’s Online Community”. They cover back country skiing, snowshoeing, clothing, equipment, and safety and have forums that currently have over 1,500 members and over 30,000 postings regarding all topics of winter living and enjoyment.

In the Fishing section I have added the USGS stream flow page for Michigan. This lists the current water flow readings for 192 different Michigan rivers and streams. This may also appeal to paddlers who want to check out the larger rivers for trip planning.

At the suggestion of a Girl Scout troop that contacted me, I have added “A Guide To Hiking Basics” in the Hiking section. This is a webpage from a kickboxing fitness club, put out by the club as part of its fitness suggestions for members. Even though it is a commercial site the guide is a well done compilation of hiking information from other sites and is informative for new hikers, which is how the Girl Scouts use it.

The last set of three links requires some explanation. First, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) in northeast Minnesota is currently under scrutiny for new sulfide mining claims along its southern border. This is the same situation that Michigan went through the past few years in the lead up to mining at the Eagle Site northwest of Marquette in the Huron Mountains. Activists then and still are worried about the potential pollution from the waste products of sulfide mining. To bring attention to the issue in Minnesota, a couple from Cook County in the far northeast part of the state, Dave and Amy Freeman, are spending a year in the BWCAW.

A Year in the Wilderness

Contributor(s):
Dave and Amy Freeman

Cook County adventurers Dave and Amy Freeman are spending a year in the wilderness. They paddled out in early September for a 365 day trip. On a regular basis they'll be sharing some of their experiences travelling the BWCAW. WTIP will be broadcasting those observations, experiences, good times and difficulties as the seasons progress.

Featured On:
DayBreak
North Shore Morning
North Shore Weekend

What's On:
A Year in the Wilderness: November 9 - Netting whitefish
Cook County adventurers Dave and Amy Freeman are spending a year in the wilderness. On a regular basis they'll be sharing some of their experiences travelling the BWCAW.
[Read more](#)
Listen:

A Year in the Wilderness: October 29 - Traveling the Horse and Basswood Rivers
Cook County adventurers Dave and Amy Freeman are spending a year in the wilderness. On a regular basis they'll be sharing some of their experiences travelling the BWCAW.
[Read more](#)
Listen:

They are broadcasting an audio blog about their adventure on WTIP radio in Grand Marais, MN. I have enjoyed trips in the Boundary Waters area both with naturalists extolling the benefits of the wilderness and with geologists from the Precambrian Research Institute of the University of Minnesota visiting (and subtly promoting) the sulfide mining sites.

I do not endorse one view over the other but feel that Dave and Amy's wilderness adventure is something that SOLAR members can enjoy strictly for its outdoor merits and how it meshes with their own. Their journey could easily fit under many of our Links categories so I put it under the broadest one, Survival 2: Homesteading Skills & Crafts. The page it links to has their recent broadcasts arranged with the newest at the top of the page.

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Website Updates *Continued* ● Join us for the SOLAR Winter Party

This is also a nice link if you want to connect to WTIP, the public radio station of Grand Marais, Minnesota, for streaming broadcasts of their other features. It is an interesting connection to a modern yet rural section of the Lake Superior basin.

Second, I added two links in the General Information & Reference section for a grand project called "The Out Of Eden Walk". Paul Salopek, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and National Geographic Fellow, is retracing the human migration out of Africa, across the globe, to the tip of South America, and doing it on foot. It is an estimated 7 year walking journey. It is being followed by his dispatches to National Geographic and a website dedicated to the walk. I felt that this is such an amazing feat (or should it be feet?) that it was worthy of being linked to on our website for people to ponder, enjoy, and draw inspiration from. I have added both links to our site as they are different. The National Geographic site is based on Paul's journalism while the Project website is dedicated to multi-media exploration of the walk by various partners exploring internet communication of the endeavor.

Upcoming November SOLAR Meeting

Choose Your Own Adventure 2016

What do you want to do next year?
Bring your imagination, your love for adventure -
and your calendar! Presented by Ati Tislerics,

**Tuesday, November 24, 2015
7:00 PM**

**St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
27475 Five Mile Rd
Livonia, MI**

The 2015 SOLAR Winter Party is just around the corner. We will be celebrating on Friday, December 4th, 7 pm. at St. Paul's. The party is always well attended and loads of fun, so please plan on joining the festivities. Amazing food is at this potluck, so please bring a dish to pass. SOLAR will provide the entree and pop. We will also have a donation box out to assist SOLAR in paying for the DJ and other party expenses.

**Good Food!
Good Fun!**



Please note, the SOLAR Winter Party will take the place of the December monthly meeting.

Welcome new members, and welcome back existing and previous SOLAR members

Radu Lovin, Barb Slovinsky, Cynthia Cicchelli, Hanne Skaarup,

Kathy Sprankle, Shela Marrs, Tammy Warren,

John and Ann Riley-Gawura, Lisa and James Rooney,

Mark Stribrny, Doreen Byrne,

Harsens Island Bike Ride *By Mark Carson*

Sunday, October 11th, 2015: sunshine, blue skies with a few white fluffy clouds, the trees just beginning to be tinged with autumn color. This was a perfect Sunday for a bike ride on Harsens Island. This was actually the second bike ride outing on the island posted by SOLAR members this year. The first was in June with more than a dozen people participating in the bike ride. This morning there were just three of us. Where was everyone else? It's a beautiful day and there won't be many more like it in Michigan with winter coming on soon. Well, Harsens Island is on the far northeastern fringe of the metro area and sometimes there are other things going on.



For the first Harsens Island bike ride, we rode along the south channel, through the village and out as far as we could go on the point until we came to a sign that said private property. This time we rode along the middle channel. There were fewer cottages along this stretch of roadway and fewer views of the lake. We passed several people fishing and were passed by several vehicles towing boats. I felt great starting off, but riding against the oncoming wind made me realize that I hadn't done much bike riding since earlier in the season. We passed another group of bicyclists assisting one of their members fix a tire and were soon at the end of the road. Well, not the actual end of the road. There was another private property sign and the road continued over a wooden bridge. Time to turn around. Heading in the opposite direction was much easier with the wind at our backs. On the way back we passed a dead tree sporting a bicycle in its branches. Was it an attempt at folk art? A prank by teenagers? A warning to cyclists? Something to contemplate as we turned down a side road and headed into the interior of the island.

The interior roads are a lot less populated with only a few houses. We stopped so that Steve could assist a turtle across the road. We also passed the first really forested area consisting of large trees that we had seen on the island. Most of the rest of the island, apart from the residential areas, seems to be open marshland and the few trees were at the edges of the marshes, farm fields and roadways. More vehicles towing boats. Some look like vehicles that had already gone past. Were they the same ones that had gone by before or different vehicles that just looked the same? Stopping by the DNR parking lot for a rest, we saw several more of the same vehicles, large pick-ups or SUVs towing flat bottomed boats, most painted in camouflage. That answers that question.



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Harsens Island Bike Ride *Continued*

We made our way to the south channel in time to get a good view of a freighter going by behind the cottages on the waterfront. We continued into town past the well kept Victorian cottages and looked for the road that would take us to the restaurant. After a wrong turn, we found the correct road and cycled the short distance to the Schoolhouse Grille. The restaurant is in the old schoolhouse that served the families of the island from 1934 to 2005. The patio and dining room were full, so we took seats at the bar. After a tasty lunch we headed back toward the ferry. My two companions decided to spend some more time bicycling on the island. It was time for me to call it a day, but I was glad to have made the time to enjoy what might turn out to be the last bike ride of the season.



Upcoming Class • Enjoying Michigan Winters



If you already enjoy winter days in Michigan snowshoeing, skiing, or just being out in the cold, crisp air - why not enjoy the nights too? You'll learn to keep your energy level up for traveling, playing, and sleeping in comfort outdoors. You'll build and sleep in a snow shelter (the highlight of the class - ask any EMW grad!) and develop practical cold weather skills that are a foundation for more ambitious undertakings such as mountaineering - or just for dealing with that unexpected cold snap or snow on an outing any time of year.

You'll also have yet another way to make your non-outdoorsy friends wonder about you!

Beginning Wednesday December 2nd we will have classroom sessions at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, one Saturday field day at Maybury State Park, and two weekend practical exercises. The second practical includes a free day to snowshoe, ski, have snowball fights, or just hang around the fire.

Prerequisite: Completion of Basic Backpacking class or backpacking experience.

Gear: SOLAR members may borrow appropriate sleeping bags, pads and stoves for free for this class!

Cost: \$130 (member) / \$150 (non-member) includes textbook & all camp permit fees.

Schedule: Classes: Wed. Dec. 2, Wed. Dec. 9, Wed. Dec. 16, Wed. Jan. 6, Wed. Jan. 13, Wed. Jan. 27

Sat. Dec. 19 Maybury State Park, Sat. & Sun. Jan. 23 & 24 Waterloo State Recreation Area Practical #1

Fri. - Sun. Feb. 5-7 Pigeon River State Forest Final Practical #2

TBD Survivor's Dinner and Debrief

You do not need to be a member of SOLAR to take this class.

However, non-members must contact the lead instructor (via email address below) to register.

Leader: Bruce Coppola bcoppola1@comcast.net



SOLAR CALENDAR

SOLAR NOVEMBER CALENDAR www.solaroutdoors.org

ACTIVITIES

Nov 24	Tue	SOLAR Meeting	St. Paul's, Livonia		www.solaroutdoors.org
Nov 27	Fri	Anti Black Friday Hike	Proud Lake Rec Area	Carol Rogers	cjrjune30@yahoo.com
Nov 28	Sat	Heavner's Moonlight Paddle	Heavner's Canoe and Kayak Rental, Wixom, MI	Al Heavner	http://heavnercanoe.com
Dec 13	Sun	Hike at Stony Creek Nature Center	Stony Creek Nature Center	Bonnie Michalak	
Jan 15-18	Multi	Lake Ann Winter Trip (full)	Lake Ann, Michigan	Jim Coe	Jimc27k@gmail.com
Feb 5-7, 2016	Fri to Sun	Roscommon Winter Trip	MacMullan Conference Center Roscommon, MI	Bill Morse	billc095@yahoo.com
Feb 11, 2016	Thur	Chinese New Year Dinner Year of the Monkey	New Peking Restaurant 29105 Ford Rd, Garden City	Leslie Cordova	lesliegene@aol.com

SOLAR MEETINGS

SOLAR holds monthly meetings on the **LAST** Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm.

Meetings are held at:

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church • 27475 Five Mile Road, Livonia, MI 48154

SOLAR PHOTOS

