



VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS



Have a safe, healthy,
& happy
Holiday Season!

No. 95 WINTER 2007

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The Voyageur Trail Association is a non-profit, volunteer group dedicated to building and maintaining a public hiking trail along the northern shores of Lakes Superior and Huron, from Thunder Bay to South Baymouth on Manitoulin Island.

*The VTA is a member of
Hike Canada En Marche,
Hike Ontario,
Ontario Trails Council,
and
Trans Canada Trail.*

If you would prefer us to email you a short message when the VT newsletter is posted on our Internet site, just send an email to:
cheryl.landmark@sympatico.ca

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DEAR LANDOWNER

The Voyageur Trail Association would like to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to you for your continued support and generosity in allowing us to have access to your property.

Our members agree to abide by the following Trail Users' Code:

- Hike only along marked routes. Do not take short cuts.
- Do not climb fences.
- Carry out all garbage (if you can carry it in, you can carry it out).
- Light cooking fires at official campsites only. Drench fires after use (or better still, carry a lightweight hiker's stove).

- Leave flowers and plants for others to enjoy.
- Do not damage live trees or strip off bark.
- Protect and do not disturb wildlife.
- Keep dogs under control (*leash if necessary*) and follow your club's guidelines concerning dogs.
- Respect the privacy of people living along the trail. Walk around the edges of fields, not across them.
- Leave only your thanks and take nothing but photographs.

Our motto is: **BE A LOW-IMPACT HIKER!**

We look forward to our continued partnership in the years to come and thank you again for being so public-spirited.



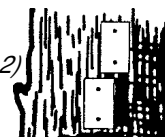
LSPP COASTAL TRAIL - THE SAGA CONTINUES

by Elizabeth Walter & Ian Evans

We had a great time. I've spent a lot of time in Algoma country and relish each return visit. This was Ian's first time on Lake Superior and he is now a convert. We loved being so close to the lake and experiencing its many moods. Here is brief synopsis of the route we took and the time it took to cover the distance. We flew our own plane to Sault Ste Marie. We took a taxi from the airport to Lake Superior Provincial Park. We had planned to hike down Gargantua Road from Hwy 17 but thankfully managed to get a ride all the way to the parking lot at the end. It was a hot, sunny day and that 14km on the road would have been a soul-destroying slog. It was 2:30 before we started our hike and we made it to the first campsite at Devil's Chair just before 6:00. I should say at this stage that I'm 60 and Ian is 50; so we're not young but are fit and very experienced backpackers. The next day, after a 9:00 am start, we returned to Gargantua Bay and stopped at the first campsite south of the parking lot. We like

to stop early each day after hiking for about six hours so that we can relax and not feel that we're on a forced march. We found the terrain very easy the first two days and it gave us a chance to get used to carrying the packs again. We made very slow progress on days three and four. We made it only as far as Rhyolite Cove on day three and to the second campsite past that on day four. It was very hot and sunny and we found it slow-going on the rocks and boulders. It was frustrating to crawl along at such a slow pace. We're not the type to try to eat up the miles as fast as possible but over the two days, we advanced no more than 6 or 7 km. We got really fed up with negotiating our way through, around and up and over boulders. We looked forward to any break in the woods. Day five was much more pleasant both in terms of being cooler and making more

(Continued on page 2)



LSPP COASTAL TRAIL (cont'd from page 1)

progress. There were still a lot of boulders but because it was cooler, your energy wasn't sapped. We made it to an Orphan Lake campsite after another 6-hour hiking day. Day six was also more rewarding. We stopped at Robertson Cove for the night. This may be our favourite campsite. It really was idyllic, sitting on the rock on the point watching the sun set and the moon rise. Unfortunately, thunderstorms rolled in from across the lake in the night and we got high winds and rain. We've hiked a lot in rain in the past (Gross Morne Long Range Traverse in Newfoundland certainly comes to mind!) but the wet rocks and boulders made progress the next day even slower than usual. It took us two hours to get to Katherine Cove. We had intended hiking all the way to Agawa Bay. We got a weather forecast from some kayakers at Katherine Cove and when we learned that more rain was on the way, we knew we'd never make it to Agawa Bay in the time we had available. We knew that if we had to negotiate more slippery rocks, we'd be creeping along the trail. So we got a ride to Frater Road and after walking to the station, caught a train from Frater to the Soo.

We have mixed feelings about our experience. We're sorry that we didn't finish what we set out to do. We see two main reasons for that. The first is that we didn't have enough detailed information about the terrain south of Katherine Cove. We didn't know if we were going to be spending our time on rocks or on trail in the woods. I don't think it's enough to warn people that the rocks are slippery when wet. Once you are on the trail, it is almost impossible to know what the weather will be like for the next few days and without easy access to the road, you have no choice but to make your way over slippery rocks and boulders. The second reason is related to the first. It is very difficult to plan how many days it will take to hike a trail if you don't have details of the terrain. Usually, a topographic map provides the information you need but in this case, the map gave very few clues. We could see when we were headed more inland and climbing up over a hill but we had no advance information about the trail right along the coast.

The past two years, we hiked the East Coast Trail (<http://www.eastcoasttrail.com/>) along the Atlantic coast in Newfoundland.

This is a 220km trail which hugs the coastline from St. John's to Cappahayden. In 2004, we hiked from St. John's to La Manche and last year we started in Cappahayden and hiked north to La Manche. There are very detailed topo maps of each section of the trail with descriptions of the terrain on the back. I know how difficult it is to build trails and provide information about them, but we wish that we'd had the same sort of information provided by the East Coast Trail about the Coastal Trail. We could have planned our time and route more efficiently.

All this being said, we're glad that we had the opportunity to experience Lake Superior along the Coastal Trail. We will definitely return and spend more time in Algoma country.

I hope the comments we've made are of some use to you.



Editor's Note: We introduced these intrepid two to our VTA Guidebook AFTER their trip.



VTA SIGNS IN NEWS



New Signs For Casque Isles Hiking Section

One of three trailhead signs has been installed at the top end of Isbester Drive by the Township of Schreiber, a project by the Voyageur Trail Association (VTA). The two other trailhead signs are located at Wardrope Park in Rossport and at the Terrace Bay Beach. Each sign shows a map of the respective area of the Casque Isles section as well as general information about the Voyageur Trail. 84 new informative signs have also been placed over the entire 52km trail between Rossport and Terrace Bay this spring. These signs either identify a location or give a distance to another location. For more information see www.voyageurtrail.ca. Much appreciation to the many volunteers who have cleared trail. Submitted by Doug Stefurak, Casque Isles Hiking Club. Jennifer Richter - Photo

from June 13th, 2006 edition of the Terrace Bay - Schreiber News

Three trailhead signs depicting the Great Lakes Heritage Coast were installed on the Casques Isles section of Voyageur Trail and covered in their local news. They also announced the new trail marker signs that the Casques Isles Voyageur Trail Club have been busily putting up along the route.



SKYLINE HIKERS OF THE CANADIAN ROCKIES

Celebrating 75 years of hiking in the Canadian Rockies!



Enjoy a first class wilderness experience with this non-profit organization offering five 6-day base camps in Banff National Park from mid-July to mid-August 2007.

Hikers carry only a daypack, but must be fit for mountain hiking.

Hike fee approximately \$900.00 p/p.

Includes return bus transportation from Banff to trailhead, tent accommodation with stove, wholesome meals, hot water, camp staff, guided day hikes, evening campfire program and sing songs.

For information & a free brochure

contact: 1-866-445-3374

e-mail: registrar@skylinehikers.ca

Website: www.skylinehikers.ca

Ontario residents contact volunteer:

Harry Moerschner: 1-705-445-0267

VTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING *by Cheryl Landmark*

The Voyageur Trail Association Annual General Meeting was held in Wawa on October 14, 2006. Eleven Council members and three members of the general public attended. Once again, the number of general members participating in the AGM was very disappointing, although the weather might have discouraged many from attending.

As a result of elections held at the meeting, the Coordinating Council gained one new member and recycled a few others. Again, nominations for the positions on Council were very few and far between, which was very discouraging and disappointing. Most current members agreed to stand once more for their positions, while others have generously opted to assume more than one position. If you are interested in filling any of the vacant positions, please let us know. We would like to see some more new blood and ideas on the Council, as most of the present members are quickly reaching the point of burnout and would like to pass the reins on to someone else.

Coordinating Council for 2006/07:

- President: Vacant
- V.P. East: Alan Day (also President of Coureurs de Bois Club in Elliot Lake)
- V.P. Central: Vacant
- V.P. West: Duncan MacKay
- Treasurer: Debbie Morettin
- Membership: Mike Landmark
- Publicity: Gayle Phillips (also President of Saulteaux Club in Sault Ste. Marie)
- Landowner: Vacant
- Trail Master: Vacant
- Hike Ont: Patrick Capper
- Recording Secretary: Cheryl Landmark

Committees:

- Guidebook: Steve Dominy
- Newsletter: Cheryl Landmark (Editor), Gayle Phillips (Layout)

Now, check the adjacent column for some good news that came out of the Annual Meeting!

MEMBERS: *Don't forget to check your newsletter envelope to see when your membership expires!*

CONGRATULATIONS!

The Saulteaux Voyageur Trail Club wishes to congratulate Mike Kirby, a Sault College student who managed to do an end-to-end hike of the entire 45.8 km Saulteaux Section *in one day!* Mike received his end-to-end badge at a gathering in November. Well done, Mike!



The winner of the Steve Taylor Volunteer Award for 2006 was Patrick Capper. This award is given annually to a VTA member whose volunteer contributions to the Association go far and above what is expected of a volunteer. Patrick spent a great deal of time this past year doing GPS work and trail maintenance for the new guidebook. He was also the only nominee and richly deserves this award. *Congratulations, Patrick!*



The winners of the draws for free VTA memberships were Ingrid Farquhar of the Coureurs de Bois Club, Lorna Ferguson of the Saulteaux Club, John VanKooten of the Coureurs de Bois Club, and Ilse Strieck of the Saulteaux Club. These free memberships are drawn each year at the Annual General Meeting from the Assumption of Risk forms submitted by the local clubs. If you are a leader, sweep or trail maintenance participant, you are eligible for this draw. *Congratulations to everyone!*

The winner of the Guidebook draw for a GPS Unit (generously donated by Western Auto in Sault Ste. Marie) was Rick Wytsma from Sault Ste. Marie. *Congratulations!*

Two gift certificates for \$25.00 each from Algoma's Water Tower Inn in Sault Ste. Marie were offered as a door prize for those who attended the meeting. These certificates were made possible by a donation from the Water Tower Inn and the monies earned by the VTA through the Trailhead Agreement with the Water Tower Inn. The winners were Mike Landmark, Membership Secretary, and Doug Stefurak, President of the Casque Isles Club. *Congratulations!*

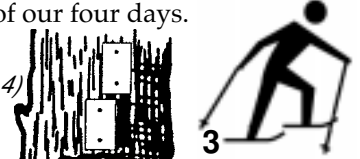


NO PASSPORT REQUIRED *by Susan Graham*

In early October, I enjoyed a delightful "girls hiking holiday", with sunny weather, no bugs, spectacular scenery, a cozy cabin complete with an outdoor hot tub and pleasant companions. In addition, we had no hassles with passports, border crossings, or foreign currency. The cost was very reasonable and we all had a great time. Where did we go? The town of Wawa, with hiking in Lake Superior Provincial Park and the Wawa area.

Marge Kelland had suggested back in the spring that she would like to go up to Wawa for a few nights to hike the trails in the top end of LSPP. After much discussion about who was available when, four of us decided to go in early October (Marge, myself, Ila Aho and Wendy Walker). I had my doubts about the weather when we had two weeks of rain the latter part of September, but we lucked out and had warm weather with sunshine for most of our four days.

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NO PASSPORT REQUIRED (cont'd from page 4)

Our first stop was at Rabbit Blanket campground to hike the Peat Mountain trail. This trail is one of the longest we did, and involves considerable climbing. I wondered if I would be able to keep going for three more days! The views with the fall colour made the effort worthwhile. It felt good to get back to the car, though, and we headed to the Kinniwabi Pines Motel and the cabin we had booked. After getting organized a bit, we headed to the outdoor hot tub for a quick soak and then off to supper in town. As it was Sunday night, we had to watch our time - there was another Desperate Housewives fan besides myself in attendance. Once we got the satellite TV going, we were quite happy!

We had a simple breakfast in the cabin each morning and made our lunches, so we were able to get going fairly quickly. No one complained of sore muscles, but we didn't want to do so much climbing the second day. We decided to walk into Noisy Bay, which is a relatively flat trail, with a pretty, cobble beach on the Lake Superior shore where we ate lunch. We still had lots of energy when we arrived back at the parking lot, so we drove to the old Fort Friendship property along the Michipicoten River. There was work being done on the site, and we were told we were welcome to have a look around, which we did before heading down the road to Driftwood Beach. The afternoon was sunny and warm and Lake Superior's soothing sounds encouraged us to walk the full length of the beach to the mouth of the Michipicoten, opposite Rock Island and Naturally Superior Adventures. Our legs were complaining on the way back; beach walking is tough! Thank goodness that hot tub was waiting! After supper we had some laughs playing Scrabble.

Day three saw us hiking the Voyageur Trail from the highway access point opposite the Wawa goose to Silver Falls. I was pleased to see the trail was in good shape, with the exception of the cut-over area about 15 minutes in from the highway. It was a challenge to find the blazes a couple of times, and there is really no trail on the ground in that area, but we managed just fine, and enjoyed the river scenery. Our lunch at the park at High Falls was eaten at a table in the covered picnic shelter-luxury hiking! We returned to the vehicle via the Wawa Mission Road and the snowmobile trail rather than return along the Voyageur Trail. After a soak in the hot tub, we headed for a wonderful dinner in the Kinniwabi Pines Restaurant next to the motel. We walked back to the cabin in a light rain - the only rain we saw over our four days.

Our final day had to start with a visit to Young's General Store for dill pickles and a walk into Vallee Park via the trail opposite the Wawa goose and visitors' centre. There is some new hiking trail before you join the ski trails, then back to the hiking trail along the lake to Vallee Park. That walk was just a nice little warm-up for our afternoon of hiking the Nokomis Trail at Old Woman Bay. I had not hiked that trail for a number of years, and I enjoyed it immensely. Again, we had perfect hiking weather, and the lookouts along the trail over the lake with the sunshine and fall colours were spectacular. Sadly, we had to head for home and regular routines, but not before a stop at the Voyageur Cookhouse at Batchewana for supper.

I should mention that we had no problem with the trails being congested - the only other hikers we saw were the two people going in on the Peat Mountain trail as we were finishing. It may not have been an exotic locale for a holiday, but it was a wonderful break - and no passports were required.



FROM THE DESK OF THE CdB PRESIDENT by Alan Day

The Coureurs de Bois Voyager Trail Club was the first club I joined when we arrived in Elliot Lake just over 8 years ago. At that time the Voyageur Trail ran from Highway 108 to Christie Creek and on to Intersect Lake, a true wilderness trail. All the club seemed to do was clean the trail through the wet lands west of the highway. In the spring of 2001, I along with several other club members (a total of 5 or 6 as I recall) did an end-to-end of the CdeB section, a marathon effort. In fact 32 Km from car to car even though the CdeB section is 23.5 Km. I, as the recently elected Trail Master, there and then decided the trail had to be moved in order to make it more accessible for our average member, and, to provide a series of hikes that could be enjoyed as a series of day hikes with a small pack for lunch only.

The trail now runs from the town of Spanish through to Intersect Lake and then on a short section of the Blind River section to the road to Granary Lake--a total of about 65 Km that can be split up into shorter sections. The longest section is from Spanish to Pardee Lake-- a 39 Km section.

This new trail will be reflected in the new VTA guidebook. Having said all that, the club, which is incidentally also known as "The Outdoor Club," has access to several hundreds of kilometres of trails in and around Elliot Lake, which true-to-itself proclaimed title really is "Jewel in the Wilderness".

The following will, I hope, provide the reader with some insight to the beauty of this area and perhaps encourage you to visit this area and join in with our club activities.

In addition to the Voyageur Trail at 65 Km, we regularly hike on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays over a wide range of trails totaling about another 250 Km, most of which is kept clear and in good condition by the club.

A recent average turnout for our club scheduled hikes is about 20 members for the easy hikes and about 12 to 16 members for the intermediate hikes.

We seem to have our mix of hikes just about right for our members, if the numbers attending are anything to go by.

All our leaders get together every 3 or 4 months and plan out the schedule, this ensures all the variety of hiking experience we have to offer gets included and no one leader get imposed upon to extend his or her good will as leader too often.



The following photos might give you some idea of some of our recent events and of the enjoyment our members get from the club.

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OUTING SCHEDULE

This schedule was put together early and may have last-minute changes. Please call the outing leader listed to check if any details of the outing have changed. This schedule is also on our web site

< www.voyageurtrail.ca/saulteaux.html > Unless otherwise indicated, these outings are all a Level 2, slow (according to Hike Ontario recommended ratings.) Goodlife building, 589 Second Line East (Second Line side); Market Mall 275 Second Line West (on Korah Road corner); Churchill Plaza near the Beer Store, 150 Churchill Blvd., (on Trunk Road between Lake and Wellington Streets); Wellington Square Mall near the now closed old restaurant, 625 Trunk Road.

VTA Winter Activities Disclaimer: It is important to note that the VTA does not provide formal instruction for snowshoe and ski activities. Each participant in our winter activities is assumed to:

- understand the causes, preventive measures, and treatment for hypothermia;
- dress appropriately, bring lunch and water and be prepared for unforeseen delays on the trail;
- understand that changes in weather and snow conditions can affect the difficulty level of a given trail;
- have experience on, and be familiar with, his/her own equipment;
- for skiers: be able to perform the basic manoeuvres, such as snowplow and herring bone under a variety of snow conditions for a period of several hours.



Saulteaux Club

(Sault Ste. Marie and area—outings marked with an asterisk (*) are outside Sault Ste. Marie.) **For all outings, bring water, lunch, dress appropriately and be prepared to sign an Assumption of Risk Agreement.**

Tues., December 26 - Boxing Day snowshoe with Don (946-9599). Meet 10AM at Glenview Cottages. Behaved pets ok.

Mon., January 1 – Snowshoe with Ila (949-1097). Meet 10AM at Goodlife building (Second Line side).

Sat., January 6 – Snowshoe at Crimson Ridge with Doris (942-9466). Meet 10AM in the Goodlife parking lot (Second Line side) to car pool. Behaved pets ok.

Sat., January 13 - Tour of Brookfield Windfarm. Meet at 10AM at 400 Allen Side Road. RSVP to Mike 779-3409. Limited space.

Mon., January 15 – Saulteaux Club meeting @ 7PM in the Civic Centre. Call Gayle at 942-1891 for more info.

Sat., January 20 – VTA Coordinating Council meeting @ 10AM at Great Lakes Forestry Centre.

***Sun., January 28** - Snowshoe at Island Lake with Susan (949-4105). Meet at 10AM at Goodlife building (Second Line side).

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! Sat. & Sun. Feb 3 & 4, Feb. 10 & 11 for Bon Soo Children's Snowshoe event at Bellevue park. 11AM to 4PM all four days. If you can volunteer to help out for a few hours on any of these four days to assist children in putting on snowshoes, please call Gayle at 942-1891.

Sat., Feb. 3 – Snowshoe in the Camp Korah area with Doris (942-9466). Meet at 10AM in the Goodlife parking lot (Second Line side) to car pool. Behaved pets ok.

Sun., Feb. 11 - Snowshoe with Gayle (942-1891). Meet at 10AM at Goodlife building (Second Line side) to car pool. Behaved pets welcome.

Sun., Feb. 18 - Snowshoe with Gayle (942-1891). Meet 10AM at Goodlife building (Second Line side) to car pool. Behaved pets welcome.

***Wed., Feb. 21** - Lake walk with Marge (253-5888). Meet 10AM at Goodlife building (Second Line side) to car pool. Please leave your pets at home for this outing.

***Sun., Feb. 25** - Snowshoe north of the city with Ila (949-1097). Meet 10AM at Goodlife building (Second Line side).

***Sat., Mar. 3** – Snowshoe the Pancake Bay trail with Doris (942-9466). Meet 10AM in the Goodlife parking lot (Second Line side) to car pool. Afterwards, we can stop for dinner. Behaved pets ok.

***Sat., Mar. 10** – Snowshoe with Dieter & Erika (942-9636). Meet 9:30 at the Churchill Plaza.

Sun., Mar. 18 - Bushwhack ski at Gros Cap with Gail (942-0768). Meet 10AM at Market Mall parking lot to car pool.

Mon., Mar. 19 – Saulteaux Club meeting @ 7PM at City Hall. After meeting, the summer outing schedule will be planned. Call Gayle 942-1891.

***Sun., Mar. 25** - Snowshoe east of city with Ila (949-1097). Meet at 10AM in Churchill Plaza parking lot near Beer Store.

Sat., Apr. 14 - Hike in the Hiawatha area with Doris (942-9466). Meet 10AM in Goodlife building parking lot (Second Line side). Behaved pets welcome.

Sat., Apr. 21 – Earth Day Clean-Up with Gayle (942-1891). Meet 10AM in Goodlife parking lot (Second Line side) to car pool. Bring work gloves.

Sat., Apr. 21 – Saulteaux Voyageur Trail Club Annual Dinner at Buttermilk Hill. More details to be announced.

Sun., Apr. 22 - Check out Hiawatha Highlands in spring with Ila (949-1097). Meet 10AM at Goodlife building (Second Line side).

Sun., Apr. 29 – Go to Blazes Work Party with Gayle (942-1891). Tools will be provided. Meet 10AM at Goodlife building (Second Line side).

Sat., May 12 - Re-dedication of the Tom Allinson Side Trail. Call Gail (942-0768) for details.

Sun., May 13 - Mother's Day hike with Horst (971-4812 or 542-8978). Meet at 10AM in the Market Mall parking lot. Pets welcome but must be leashed at lunch.



Coueurs de Bois Outdoors Club (Elliot Lake)

For fun, fitness and friendship come and join us.
All outings at 10 AM unless otherwise noted. Meet at Sears parking lot.

If snow conditions warrant it hikes will become snowshoe outings.

For all outings bring water, lunch, dress appropriately and be prepared to sign an "Assumption of Risk Agreement". Make sure your fitness level corresponds to the outing level you wish to participate in.

Hike Levels

Easy 2 – 3 hours Level 1 Ontario

Intermediate 3 – 4 hours Level 2 Ontario

Advanced 4 – 6 hours Level 2 Ontario (Note the Coueurs de Bois have NO Level 3 hiking routes--our advanced level is relative to time on the trail only.)

PLEASE CONTACT HIKE LEADERS FOR MORE INFO.

For any changes in the schedule and photos of outings check our website at: www.coueursdeboiselliottlake.blogspot.com and/or The Elliot Lake Standard - The Community Bulletin Board section.

JANUARY

- 1 Mon., NOON New Year's Day Hike and Mayor's Levee Alan 848-8766
- 2 Tues., Easy Hike ~ John V 461-1026
- 4 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Fred 848-2956
- 6 Sat., Easy Hike~ Liz and Phil 848-8767
- 9 Tues., Easy hike ~ Jean-Guy 848-2544
- 11 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Liz and Phil 848-8767
- 13 Sat., Easy Hike ~ Gerry and Nicki 461-6304
- 16 Tues., Easy Hike ~ John B 848-3515
- 18 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Fred 848-2956
- 20 Sat., Easy Hike ~ Jean-Guy 848-2544
- Also:VTA Meeting at Great Lakes Forestry Centre 10AM in SOO**
- 23 Tues., Easy Hike ~ Gerry and Nicki 461-6304
- 25 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Liz and Phil 848-8767
- 27 Sat., Easy Hike ~ John V 461-1026
- 30 Tues., Easy Hike ~ Nancy-Jo 848-2947

FEBRUARY:

- 1 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ John B 848-3515
- 3 Sat., Easy Hike ~ Jean-Guy 848-2544
- 6 Tues., Easy hike ~ John V 461-1026
- 8 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Fred 848-2956
- 10 Sat., Easy Hike ~ Phil and Liz 848-8767
- 13 Tues., Easy Hike ~ Jean-Guy 848-2544
- 15 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Liz and Phil 848-8767
- 17 Sat., Easy Hike ~ John V 461-1026
- 20 Tues., Easy Hike ~ Di 848-8767
- ALSO: CdeB Meeting at 7:00PM at Snowbird's Clubhouse**
- 22 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Fred 848-2956
- 24 Sat., Snowshoe/ski to Wannan's Cottage 848-2947
- 27 Tues., Easy Hike ~ Nicki and Gerry 461-6304



MARCH:

- 1 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Phil and Liz 848-8767
- 3 Sat., FUN DAY at Sheriff Lake ~ John V 461-1026
- 6 Tues., Easy hike ~ John B 848-3515
- 8 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Fred 848-2956
- 10 Sat., Winterfest ~ Phil and Liz 848-8767
- 13 Tues., Easy Hike ~ John V 461-1026
- 15 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Liz and Phil 848-8767
- 17 Sat., Easy Hike ~ Di 848-8767
- 20 Tues., Easy Hike ~ Nancy-Jo 848-2947
- 22 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Fred 848-2956
- 24 Sat., Spring Equinox Party at Thomas' in Massey 461-9668
- 27 Tues., Easy Hike ~ Di 848-8767
- 29 Thurs., Interm Hike ~ Alan 848-8767

APRIL:

- 3 Tues., Easy Hike ~ John V 461-1026
- 5 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Fred 848-2956
- 7 Sat., Easter Hike ~ Fred 848-2956
- 10 Tues., Easy hike ~ Nicki and Gerry 461-6304
- 12 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Di 848-8767
- 14 Sat., Intermediate Hike ~ Alan 848-8767
- 17 Tues., Easy Hike ~ John B 848-3515
- 19 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Fred 848-2956
- 21 Sat., Easy Hike ~ Nicki and Gerry 461-6304
- 24 Tues., Easy Hike ~ Jean-Guy 848-2544
- 26 Thurs., Intermediate Hike ~ Alan 848-8767
- 28 Sat., Easy Hike ~ John V 461-1026



FROM THE DESK... (cont'd from page 4)

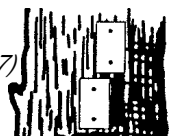
McCarthy Lake Hike - Another Trail to the south of town, this is a there and back and can be up to 18 Km if you want to go all the way there and all the way back.

Falls on McCarthy Creek



EDITOR'S NOTE: Members of the Coueurs de Bois VTA Outdoors Club post photos and stories on their blog spot at: www.coueursdeboiselliottlake.blogspot.com

(Continued on page 7)



FROM THE DESK... (cont'd from page 6)

Quirk Lake and Rochester Creek Trails - These trails are to the north of the city and provide some interesting terrain and good wildlife and nature spotting. In October, Fred our fearless leader took 15 members on this grand expedition. And in November when 22 members braved the early snow, way in the background is Rooster Rock. (below)



Dunlop Lake/Banana Lake - These trails are to be found off Dunlop Shores Road (Summers Lake Road as it used to be known). The new road will take you right down to the portage between Dunlop Lake and Gusty Lake.

The camp site on Banana Lake



The Jim Chris Trail
This trail located in Mississagi Park to the north of the City of Elliot Lake is just one of many excellent hiking trails in the Park.

Other trails in the area, outside of the park and maintained by the club include the Cobre Trail and the Old Baldy Trail. (photo) A large white pine on the Jim Chris Trail. Liz, give that tree a hug for me too!



Last but not least, the club and the community... The club gave a cheque to the Food Bank to help with Christmas Hampers. Club members will help with the annual food drive and the Santa Claus Parade.

I hope this has given all the readers of the Voyageur Trail News a brief look into the activities of the Coureurs de Bois Club. We look forward to seeing you here in Elliot Lake and of course, every visitor is welcome to join one of our many excursions into the "Jewel in the Wilderness".



MY FIRST VTA OUTING

by Gail Francis

We met at the parking lot at 10 a.m. and it was more breezy and cooler than we had expected. We were initially going to clean a trail that is close to the lake shore because the weather had been so hot lately. My first mistake of the day! We decided to stay inland and clean a trail that had not been open for two years. I had a full backpack because we were going to go swimming at the end of the trail. That was mistake number two. They were all older than I am, so I assumed I wouldn't have any more trouble than any of them--Big Mistake #3! We took two cars and then all piled in the pick-up truck when we reached sand roads. The breeze stopped and the temperature rose. It got to about 90 degrees and 95% humidity. Worse day of the year, according to the weatherman when I got home. All I could see was a wall of forest. They told me that was the start of the trail! How did they know? They taught me to look for blazes (coloured tiles on trees). I knew that but I didn't know different colours meant different things.

Well, was I wrong about the oldest lady in the group! She is in her 60s and is part of the local Sault Search and Rescue team. She repels down cliffs and flies in planes and helicopters to rescue folks that are lost or injured in the bush! She took the lead and at one point, I just kept trying to keep sight of the blue patch of her shorts against the 'green' wall of trees! At another point, I heard a fat old lady gasping for breath. I looked around to see who it was. It turned out to be me!! There were only five in the group. They could have all pointed and laughed but they didn't. At the same time that I thought I had taken my last breath, the leader stopped to check her pack to make sure she had something. I realized she found it just as I caught my breath. She allowed me to save some shred of dignity.

They are really a nice bunch of people. We came across a pile of bear scat and they told us to keep talking so the noise would alert the bears that we were there. I thought, how do I keep talking when I can't even breathe? We finally got a rhythm. The leader would forge ahead looking for markers, the two fellows behind her sawed down trees that blocked the trail, my friend took the big pruners and cut thumb-sized trees from the trail and I would throw the cut stuff into the forest and use hand pruners to cut the little stuff left on the trail.

It seemed that the trail was all uphill! It took us four hours of hacking, cutting, throwing before I could tell it was getting less humid and the sky colour was changing, and the blue shorts were getting closer! I made it--yeah! We came out on top of a boulder that overlooked the ponds and a little lake below. The highway looked like a sliver and on the horizon was a freighter that was heading up the St. Mary's River from the locks towards Lake Superior. It was MAGNIFICENT!!!

I thought I had better enjoy this day because I was certain they would never invite me again!

(Continued on page 8)



MY FIRST VTA OUTING... *(cont'd from page 7)*

Now we settled down to lunch and I smelled this foul odour! I sat next to some moose droppings! I moved up wind and enjoyed the leisurely time to enjoy lunch and our surroundings.

After lunch, it was time to head back to the truck. What took us four hours to get into, only took us 15 minutes to get back! We had cleared about 1/2 to 3/4 of a mile! Some leaves covered some rocks made slippery by moss and I lost my footing and slid under a log that was too big to cut off the trail. I pretended like I had meant to do that rather than climb over it. I don't think they bought it!

When we got back to the truck, we piled into the back and took a little ride further into the bush to see the newly-erected windfarm right beside a beautiful little lake.

After reading my story, do you think I would have had a better time sitting in front of an air conditioner? Absolutely not! It was a wonderful day!

It took me a full 24 hours to recover from stiffened muscles and it occurred to me that I was just a farm kid who had walked around the lake before. I haven't reached the status of a true north woods woman yet. I was sure that I would never hear from them again.

Lo and behold, the phone rang and my friend from the outing called to ask me to go hiking along a waterfalls and swim at a beach that typically only the hikers know about. I got the nerve to tell her that I knew they were watching out for me and I realized that I wasn't in good enough shape to hike with them. To my surprise, she said "yes you are!" The outing I was on turned out to be a brutal one, not a typical one and she didn't think she would get through it either.

So the story ends well. We hiked up along a beautiful waterfalls and ate blueberries as we went. I feel I am welcome to continue on outings and they do not see me as a liability.

My friend told me that she has never met a hiker who wasn't a nice person. I took that as a compliment and will keep on hiking!



MUSINGS... *by Patrick Capper*

(Editor's Note: Patrick now lives in Goderich in Southern Ontario.)

How the other half lives!

The Maitland Trail had its annual meeting recently. Fifty members came out for the meeting and a talk by a couple of members on the Bruce Trail end-to-end trips. One recently completed trail project was to replace a 100-foot section of board walk – put on doubled cedar logs at 6ft intervals with cedar spars and topped with 4ft long 2"x6" pressure treated planks with shingle strips nailed to each plank. Its cost, about \$1000, was covered from Nevada ticket sales and the work was done on three Thursdays by a gang of eight people. (The board walk was about a 10-minute walk from where you park the car and planks were taken in with a lawn tractor towing a trailer and also a small hand-propelled trailer.)



(Continued on page 9)

SNOWSHOEING WEEKEND

March 2 to 4, 2007

We had such a good time last year that we're inviting you to join us again for another fabulous weekend of snowshoeing.

What better place to capture the magic of winter than the Haliburton Highlands - with more than 75 km of trails, there's literally a trail around every corner!

No experience necessary.

COSTA RICA FOR SINGLES

February 17 to 25, 2007

Join us in the eco-tourism jewel of Costa Rica. Our program includes the incredible bio-diversity of La Selva Biological Station, the lush rainforests of Tapanti National Park and the world famous Arenal Volcano – still active!

HIKE DOMINICA

March 24 to 31, 2007

The "Nature Island" of Dominica is blessed with dense tropical rainforests, wild parrots, spectacular waterfalls, towering mountains & very hospitable people. It remains unspoiled by mass development and tourism. If you have an adventurous spirit and want to see some of the best sunsets in the Caribbean, then Dominica is for you!

HIKE CORFU

May 6 to 19, 2007

Have you ever seen water so blue, you'd swear they had painted the bottom of the ocean? That is Corfu! Come hike with us through silvery-green olive groves, up to the abandoned fortress of Angelocastro and along the remote northern coastline. Feast with us on Greek cuisine, relax by the shores of the Ionian Sea and enjoy ouzo with the locals. Opa!

ALSO AVAILABLE IN 2007

Spain (April) – snowcapped mountains, bottomless gorges where vultures nest, & forests of cork oaks

France (June) – land of castles, immaculate sculptured gardens and fine wine

Iceland (July) – a once-in-a-lifetime adventure to the "Land of Fire & Ice"

Slovenija (July/Aug) – gorges, castles, churches, lakes and the Julian Alps, truly a fairy-tale setting

Saguenay Fjord (Aug) – hike along the 2nd longest fjord in North America plus whale-watching in Tadoussac

Tuscany (Sept) – La Dolce Vita, where gelato is an every day essential and vineyards and villas dot the landscape

New Zealand (Nov) – Rotorua, Tongariro, Abel Tasman, the Milford Track and so much more

Comfortable Hiking Holidays

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MUSINGS... (cont'd from page 8)

Incidentally, a snapping turtle was seen resting alongside one of the cedar logs. I also found three puff balls about 1 foot in diameter nearby.

Wasp Attacks

I checked with Dr Paul Syme – an entomologist and hiker. He reported disturbing a wasps’ nest on a trail and avoided being stung by lying flat on the ground, crawling along to recover a dropped tool which he flung away as far as possible and then retreating to behind a tree.

He said the trick is to hide behind a tree or even a mound so that the wasps can't see you i.e. you have no silhouette. The worst thing is to remain standing in the open where you are very visible to the wasps.

Also thought you might be interested in the knowledge I recently acquired taking a Biology course.

On a poop study for Giardia, it appears that the beaver is usually wrongly blamed.

% times Giardia Found in Poop

Humans	1%
Beavers	3%
Dog	4%
Deer Mouse	10%
Meadow Vole	33%
Red Backed Vole	95%

So blame those pesky voles.

I also learned it is a myth about lemmings running in mass off cliffs. The chief source for this was a Disney movie “White Wilderness” made in 1957, when they got a bunch of lemmings to run off the edge of an apparent cliff in an Alberta film studio. Apparently, it is theoretically possible for 2

lemmings to multiply into 6788 lemmings in a year. The lemming spikes occur about every 4 years. Lemmings include 7 genus and 20 species but only the northern ones spike in a 4-year cycle. Northern Snowshoe hares peak in a 10-year cycle that is synchronized across all northern latitudes and is related to the sun spot cycles!!



VTA landowners are entitled to free advertisements when they sell their property...

**PROPERTY FOR SALE IN PRINCE
TOWNSHIP (near Sault Ste. Marie) BY VTA
LANDOWNER: 160 acres with road access.
Call 705-779-2749 for details.**

TAST UPDATE

The Tom Allinson Side Trail (TAST) can once again be used. For the last two years, due to the construction of the Prince Township Wind Farm, the trail has been closed to hiking. Now that the work is completed we can hike this section of trail again, BUT it still needs a bit of clearing/blazing. Thanks to Susan Graham and her crew who worked on this trail this fall to start to get it back into hiking form. There are also some changes to the trail. The access (A1) from Red Rock Road is GONE as well as the first 8.1 Km section down to the lake. Also the Wind Farm roads are NOT for public use. They have been posted as private property. Hikers can find out more about the TAST and the Wind Farm property at a presentation from Brookfield Power on Sat. Jan 13 and also participate on the re-dedication of the trail on Sat May 12 (see schedule on page 5). You can also call the 1-877 info line for updates.



VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION YEARLY MEMBERSHIP FORM (please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov. / State: _____ Postal / Zip Code: _____

Please check one: New Member Renewal Phone (home): _____ (work/cell): _____

E-mail address: _____

MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Individual ~ \$25 / Family or Group ~ \$30..... = _____

Student ~ \$10..... = _____

Donations (tax receipt will be sent)..... = _____

Charitable Reg. #119261923RR0001

2007 Guidebook: members \$25 / non-members \$35 ___ = _____

(will be mailed approx. April 2007)

Shipping/Handling for ALL MAILED Guidebooks \$ 8.00

For topography maps, call Steve (705) 946-2484

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please send my VTA newsletter via:

___ Reminder to upload pdf from VTA web site

My email is: _____

___ Snail mail to my home address.

Make cheques payable and mail to:

VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION

PO Box 20040, 150 Churchill Blvd.

Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 6W3



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(For information on any of these positions [especially the vacant ones], please contact us at our toll-free number 1-877-393-4003.)

The VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS is published three times a year. Your articles and photos are welcome!

Deadline for the next issue is:
April 1, 2007

Mail to Cheryl Landmark, c/o Voyageur Trail Association, PO Box 20040, 150 Churchill Blvd., Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 6W3
Tel: 705-779-3409 or E-mail to: <cheryl.landmark@sympatico.ca >
Articles in this newsletter may be copied if credit is given to the Voyageur Trail Association.



Voyageur Hiking Trail Users' Code

- Hike only along marked routes. Do not take short cuts.
- Do not climb fences.
- Carry out all garbage (if you can carry it in, you can carry it out).
- Light cooking fires at official campsites only. Drench fires after use (or better still, carry a lightweight hiker's stove).
- Leave flowers and plants for others to enjoy.
- Do not damage live trees or strip off bark.
- Protect and do not disturb wildlife.
- Keep dogs under control (*leash if necessary*) and follow your club's guidelines concerning dogs.
- Respect the privacy of people living along the trail. Walk around the edges of fields, not across them.
- Leave only your thanks and take nothing but photographs.

DECLARATION: I understand that the Voyageur Trail is a wilderness trail and some remote or little-used sections may be in poor condition due to fallen trees or regrowth of vegetation. I understand I hike it at my own risk. I have read and will abide by the Trail Users' Code.

(signature) _____

I WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH: Outdoor Activities (*eg: trail maintenance/development, lead outings*) Tel: _____

Indoor activities (*such as: newsletter, publicity, record keeping, special events, guidebook work, etc.*) Tel: _____

Do you have any special skills? (*eg: leadership skills, computer skills, etc.*) _____

Please consider me a member-at-large or a member of (*check one below*):

<u>Section</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Club</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Nipigon/Thunder Bay	Nipigon/Thunder Bay V.T.C.	<input type="checkbox"/> Echo Bay	
<input type="checkbox"/> Schreiber/Terrace Bay/Rosspoint	Casques Isles V.T.C.	<input type="checkbox"/> Desbarats	Desbarats V.T.C.
<input type="checkbox"/> Marathon		<input type="checkbox"/> Bruce Mines	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Batchewana		<input type="checkbox"/> Blind River/Iron Bridge	Penewobikong V.T.C.
<input type="checkbox"/> Harmony Beach/Haviland Bay		<input type="checkbox"/> Elliot Lake	Coueurs de Bois V.T.C.
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