



NO. 122 WINTER 2016

Published by the

**VOYAGEUR TRAIL
ASSOCIATION**

P.O. BOX 20040

150 Churchill Blvd.

Sault Ste. Marie, ON

P6A 6W3

Visit our web site at:
www.voyageurtrail.ca

Email address:
info@voyageurtrail.ca

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 Sudbury.

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

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No. 122, Winter 2016

EDITOR: Fiona Ortiz

President's Report *by Carole Blaquiere*

Since the end of the 40th celebration year, things have been quietly moving ahead. Over the past year we have had many hikes and activities to encourage people to use the trail. Interest continues along the shores of Superior to renew existing trails and to create new opportunities. We stand to have a world class trail to attract hikers from all over.

Our challenges remain the same in that we have few volunteers for such a long trail. This makes maintenance a challenge throughout its length. Currently we are looking for volunteers on the board as well as on the trail. Lil Sinclair, our treasurer for the past several years has stepped down and Kees van Frankenhuyzen has stepped up to the challenge. Others on the coordinating council have indicated that they would step down if they could find a replacement.

We had a lackluster maintenance week in the spring, mostly due to poor weather and lack of help to organize, but we were able to get a problem section worked on and finished up the week with a potluck supper. We continue to work on our strategic planning survey although the momentum has slowed over the summer months. A SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats) exercise at the AGM in Elliot Lake yielded some good feedback which will be incorporated in the strategic planning process. The survey questions should be completed soon and should be available online. Once this is in place, expect a push to get some further feedback over the next couple of months.

Membership is trending up somewhat with the Coureur de Bois in Elliot Lake having a bit of an increase lately, whereas our social media pages continue to gain followers.



I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy holiday season and a great winter full of activity. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our landowners for their continued support. Take a look at the Landowners Article where we outline how the Landowner Act and the Trespasser Act support landowners who generously allow the use of their land for activities such as hiking.



How Landowners are Protected *by Carole Blaquiere*

There are many private landowners in Ontario who generously allow recreational trails to be used on their property. Did you know that the property rights of landowners or their tenants (known as occupiers) are protected by the *Occupiers Liability Act* and *Trespasser to Property Act*? These laws also encourage them to make their land available for a variety of recreational activities.

The *Occupiers' Liability Act* defines the liability of all occupiers of land. It protects occupiers of most rural land from being sued for damages by most people who come onto their land. The *Trespass to Property Acts* provides protection from trespass to land, should the occupiers wish to prevent others from entering or to control the use of their land. Together these acts outline the rights and responsibilities of both occupiers and visitors and are designed to encourage continued cooperation between them.

The law in effect today establishes a *Basic Duty of Care*, which requires occupiers to do what is **reasonable** in the circumstances to see that persons using their premises are not harmed, either by the condition of the property or by activities on the premises. The *Basic Duty of Care* doesn't apply to four different types of entrants. These are people who willingly assume their own risks or who are deemed by law to assume their own risks:

1. If they are an entrant who willingly assumes risk, they know the possible dangers and choose freely to accept legal responsibility for the chance of injury when they enter the premises. Anyone who enters another person's premises with the intention of committing a criminal act is deemed by law to willingly assume all risks.
2. Non-paying but permitted recreational entrants on most rural land
 - a/ Any non-paying entrants are responsible for their own safety when they enter rural premises for permitted recreational purposes. Rural premises include cultivated fields, orchards, pastures, woodlots and forested or wilderness premises.
 - b/ Non-paying entrants are also responsible for their own safety when they enter road allowances, reasonably marked private roads and recreational trails.
 - c/ The law reflects the self-reliance of most people who enjoy sports and recreation in our countryside. You accept and respect the environment as you find it.
3. All entrants who do not have express permission to enter are responsible for their own safety. This law applies to non-recreational as well as recreational activities.

The *Trespass to Property Act* is designed to give occupiers clear control over the entry and use of their premises. The act also facilitates recreational use of private land by providing a simple marking system to indicate where and how the property may be used. The intent of the act is to encourage shared recreational opportunities while discouraging trespassing.

Anyone who enters the premises or engages in a prohibited activity without express permission is guilty of an offence as is anyone who fails to leave the premises immediately after being told to do so.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE PREMISES WHERE ENTRY IS PROHIBITED

1. Where entry is prohibited without notice. The law states that entry to certain premises is prohibited, even though no notice is given. Such property includes:
 - *Gardens, fields or other land under cultivation;
 - *Winter crops, orchards, vineyards or lawns;
 - *Premises where trees of less than two meters (six feet) have been planted;
 - *Woodlots on primarily agricultural land;
 - *Land enclosed in such a way as to keep people out or animals in.
2. Where entry is prohibited by notice, the occupier of property may prohibit entry to premises, either orally or by written notice, which may be in the form of a letter. It is then an offence for an uninvited person to enter.

Cont'd from page 2

Notice by signs: an occupier of premises can use written signs or graphic illustrations of activities allowed or prohibited. A diagonal line drawn through the word or illustration gives notice that entry or a specific activity is prohibited. It is an offense to enter any property where signs have been posted showing that entry is prohibited. Such signs include "No Trespassing", "No Entry", "Entry Prohibited", or "Keep Out".

When a sign indicates that one or more activities is permitted, that sign is also legal notice that any other activities are prohibited. If a sign indicates that only horseback riding is permitted, all other activities are prohibited and anyone engaged in those activities on the land could be prosecuted. A sign that prohibits just one activity, such as fishing, will not permit prosecution of anyone engaged in other activities such as riding, skiing or hiking. All signs posted should be clearly visible in daylight under normal conditions. They should also be visible from every ordinary point of access to the premises.

Notice by coloured markings: Notice can also be given by posting with red or yellow markers. RED markings mean that entry is prohibited. YELLOW markings mean that only certain activities are acceptable. It is then the responsibility of the person who wishes to enter to find out what is permitted.

Landowners can easily look these up at the following links:

<http://www.ontario.ca/laws>.

[Occupiers' Liability Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.2](#)

[Trespass to Property Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21](#)

Source of information: Ministry of the Attorney General, Protecting and Enjoying our Land: A Guide to the Rights and Responsibility of Property Occupiers and Visitors. 1992

VTA Insurance covers property owners as follows: A blanket endorsement for ALL landowners will be in effect for the term of the insurance. This means that all landowners on whose land member organizations have a trail are protected under the Commercial General Liability Insurance. This coverage obviously only applies to any "trail related" accidents or property damage. See Endorsement 2 (below).

ENDORSEMENT NUMBER 2

HIKE ONTARIO

It is hereby understood and agreed that effective May 1, 2015 all Landowners are added as Additional Insureds but only with respect to liability caused by the negligent operations of Hike Ontario and member clubs as stated in the declarations of this policy.



We All Just Wanted to Hike!

by Gayle Phillips, Sauleteaux Club President

No one answers the age-old question of, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" with, "I want to go to lots of meetings and do loads of paperwork!" When we all joined the Voyageur Trail Association, it was to hike with others. That is still the number one attraction and who can argue? When you are rewarded with a spectacular view at the top of a cliff, it makes the time and energy you spent hauling your butt up there worthwhile.

But someone is toiling behind the scenes taking minutes at meetings, posting to web sites and Facebook pages, filling out advertising forms, distributing guidebooks and brochures, and doing a million little things so you can stand atop that cliff—and we are getting tired! Most of the executive have been in their positions longer than the pope! We need relief, and fresh ideas, and the energy to carry them out. We need YOU dear reader.

If you have even a little time to devote to the cause of keeping your local club going... please, please, please contact your Club's executive! We need people with all kinds of abilities and talents. It is very true that "many hands make light work". Here are a few samples of ways YOU can help (pick any!):

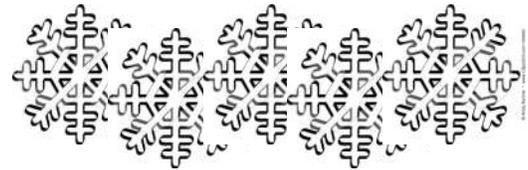
publicity, records keeping, photography, leading outings, special events help, story writing, delivering brochures/posters/guidebooks, and many, many more!

Please contact Gayle at gayle.p@shaw.ca or [705-942-1891](tel:705-942-1891) (message service available)

Volunteer coordinator needed (new VTA Coordinating Council position)

Working with the membership coordinator and the president, the volunteer coordinator will focus on the recruitment, organization and recognition of volunteers. Recruitment includes updating volunteer websites, posting volunteer requirements on social media and investigating membership forms for members who have volunteered to help out. Organization refers to the listing of type of volunteer, contact information and mobilizing those volunteers when needed. Recognition of volunteers refers to the organizing of the yearly draw for free memberships for volunteers, as well as collecting nominations for internal awards and external awards.

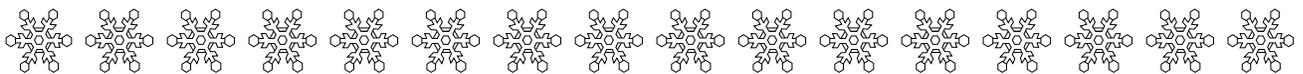
If interested, contact Carole at 705-649-2235.



Voyageur Trail hiker mentioned in the Star

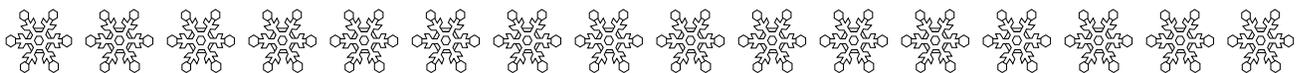
Check out this article by Bill Taylor. He publicly thanks Andy Penikett for his help, and gives the Red Top Inn and Birch Lodge some free PR.

<http://www.thestar.com/life/2015/09/03/hitting-the-trail-to-defy-my-aging-body-bill-taylor.html>



THANK YOU LANDOWNERS!!

Once again, the Voyageur Trail Association would like to express its thanks to the landowners who support the VTA and allow us to trek across their properties. With the help of their generosity and goodwill, VTA members and the general public are able to enjoy all kinds of outdoor adventures on a superb hiking trail that spans several hundred kilometres. Continued use of the trail is dependent upon the proper care of the lands entrusted to us by these landowners. Please be respectful of the landowner's wishes and property and adhere to the Trail Users' Code at all times whenever venturing out on the trail!



Saulteaux Club Outing Schedule (Sault Ste. Marie)

Typical meeting locations: Goodlife building, 589 Second Line East (Second Line side); Market Mall, 275 Second Line West (on Second Line side near Country Style Donuts); Wellington Square Mall, 625 Trunk Road (near the corner of Trunk Road and South Market Street). All outings are volunteer-led. If you participate, you do so at your own risk. Call the outing leader listed for more information about that specific outing.

To see the outing schedules for other clubs, check the VTA website or call the local contact in the community of interest.

Interested in work parties? Trimming trees and putting up blazes is an ongoing job on the Voyageur Trail. Work parties are put together in spring, summer and fall. If you would like to spend some time helping us to keep the trail well-marked and free from undergrowth, send your contact information to Don at: mcgormd@hotmail.com or call 705-946-9599.

*Indicates an out-of-town Outing

Fri., Jan. 1 ~ New Year's Day Joint Snowshoe (or Hike depending on snow conditions) with the Soo Nats and volunteer leader: Ila 705-949-1097 – Bring lunch and water. We'll travel along the trails in the area of St. Kateri Outdoor Education Centre (formerly known as Camp Korah). Meet 10:30 am behind Penningtons to car pool. Please leave your pets at home.

Sat., Jan. 9 ~ The Voyageur Trail Association (VTA) is working at updating its strategic plan. They want the opinions of the Saulteaux Club membership. This is a fun day we have set aside to participate in a SWOT Session (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). This is your chance to contribute your opinions/suggestions to the VTA Strategic Plan and enjoy a lunch on us with a hike afterwards! We will begin at 10AM at the Sugar Shack, SSMR Conservation Authority at 1100 Fifth Line East. Please register in advance by calling Carole at 705-649-2235 or email: caroleblaquiere@yahoo.ca

Mon., Jan. 18 ~ Saulteaux Club bi-monthly meeting at 7PM. Location TBA. For more info, call Gayle at 705-942-1891.

***Sat., Jan. 23** ~ Stokely Creek Snowshoe Festival -10:00am to 4:00pm <http://www.stokelycreek.com/trails/events> Snowshoe along trails within the scenic beauty of the Algoma Highlands. Cost is \$18 if you pre-register (call 705-649-3421) and \$20 at the door per day for adults. Children under 12 are free. The event includes Stokely's famous chili.

Sat., Jan. 30 ~ Snowshoe west of Goulais Avenue with Susan (705-949-4105). Meet Market Mall at 10AM. Call for more details.

***Sat., Feb. 6** ~ Trans Lake Tour Snowshoe I with Garry (705-949-1302) - a trek across several lakes north of town. Bring lunch & water. Meet 10AM behind Pennington's to car pool. This is a joint outing with the Soo Nats so no pets.

Sat. Feb. 13 ~ Bon Soo Lantern Ski at Hiawatha in the evening. See www.soofinnishnordic.com for more info when available.

Sun., Feb. 14 ~ Snowshoe at Hiawatha Park near Mockingbird Hill Farm (good for beginners/families) with Gayle (705-942-1891). Meet 11AM in the Good Life parking lot near the Second Line side. Call for more info.

Sun. Feb 14 ~ Volunteers needed to attend a VTA display table at a Passport To Unity event (@ Essar Centre). Please contact Don (705-989-8817) if you are available to assist with a two-hour shift.

Sat., Feb. 20 ~ **The Canyon Ski** – Join Mark (705-254-2356) for a joint VTA/ Sault Naturalist venture to The Canyon in memory of Horst Wetzl. This can be a challenging back-country ski of approximately 8 km return north of Peoples Rd. Bonfire at noon. Bring lunch & water. Call the leader for meeting details.

Sun., Feb. 28 ~ Snowshoe with Carole and Chris. Call 705-649-2235 for meeting details. Location will be decided a week before the outing.

***Sat., Mar. 5** ~ Trans Lake Tour 2 with Ila (705-949-1097) - Check out some more of the frozen lakes north of the Sault. Lunch, liquids and snowshoes required. Meet 10AM behind Pennington's to car pool. This is a joint outing with the Soo Nats so no pets allowed.

Sat., Mar. 12 ~ Snowshoe at Red Rock with Dieter and Erika (705-942-9636). Meet in the Market Mall parking lot at 10AM to car pool.

***Sun., Mar. 20** ~ Snowshoe at Tower Lake with Gayle (705-942-1891). Meet at 10AM in the Wellington Square Mall parking lot near the corner of South Market and Trunk Road. Behaved pets welcome. Call for more info.



Mon., Mar. 21 ~ Saulteaux Voyageur Trail Club bi-monthly meeting at 7PM. Location TBA. After the business meeting, we will plan our summer outings. Call Gayle at 705-942-1891 for more details.

Sun., Apr. 3 ~ Snowshoe with Carole and Chris. Call 705-649-2235 for meeting details. Location will be decided a week before the outing.

Fri., Apr. 8 ~ Reserve the date for the Saulteaux Club Dinner and Presentation at Grand Gardens North. Cliff Graham will speak about hiking the Chilkoot Trail. Menu and prices will be set early in 2016 so watch for announcements (it would be MOST helpful if you would report your up-to-date email address for this type of communication). For more info, call Gayle at 705-942-1891 or Susan at 705-949-4105.

Sat., Apr. 16 ~ Hike a section of the HUB Trail with Gayle (705-942-1891). Call for meeting place and time.

Sun., May 8 (Mother's Day) ~ Doris will be leading a Mother's Day hike in the Crimson Ridge area in memory of the late Horst Wetzl. Call 705-942-9466 for more details.

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Mon., May 16 ~ Saulteaux Club bi-monthly meeting at 7PM (last meeting before the summer hiatus). Location TBA. For more info, call Gayle at [705-942-1891](tel:705-942-1891).

Mark your calendars: January 9, 2016 is the Strategic Planning SWOT session

This is your chance to give your input into the VTA strategic plan. For your efforts we are going to feed you some lunch and we will go for a hike as well. Meet at Hiawatha Sugar Shack for 10am, we will have a 2-hour session before we grab a bite and head out on to the trails. Please call Carole to confirm your attendance so we get enough food. 649-2235 or email caroleblaquiere@yahoo.ca

Holiday Adventures in the Hiawatha Highlands *By Dawn Elmore*

The holiday season is a time to reconnect with family and friends - for me, no time over the holidays is more special than the time I spend exploring nature with my son. This year, we decided to venture out to Hiawatha Highlands to try our luck at geocaching. We selected three caches from geocaching.com, packed the GPS and some snacks, and set off into the bush. A series of adventures (and misadventures) awaited us on our journey.

The site of the first cache was at the start of the lighted ski trail. We located a wicker basket placed upside down with nothing underneath but no other signs of treasure. After 15 minutes of searching, we decided to move on to the next cache at the top of the Crystal Creek waterfall. Along the way we encountered one jumping dog with booties named Max, one menacing chocolate lab whose endless barking terrified my son, and icy rocks that prompted my son to say "Mom, we should be on that show *We Shouldn't Be Alive*." The coordinates led us to the specified clump of four trees but nowhere in the clump could we locate the tag that was supposed to guide us the rest of the way to the cache. Well...after much searching it was decided...on to cache number three.

The coordinates for the third cache led us back down the boardwalk and east to the Crystal Creek trail. The first large hill was quite icy. My son decided rather than simply walk up it, he would walk partway up and slide down on the ice. As he began to pick up speed, a squirrel ran from the forest directly into his path! The timing was perfect...the squirrel was on a collision course and in grave danger of being taken out by a 65-pound boy. We both yelled as the squirrel ran under his legs and emerged seconds later on the other side having narrowly escaped. It took us both awhile to regain our composure after laughing at what could have been a squished squirrel catastrophe.

Finally we moved on to the location of the third cache. Sadly, we were not destined to find even one of the caches. Instead, we located an old metal sign, some trash, and a broken dog leash which we brought home. Shortly after giving up on Cache #3, we did find a treasure of sorts. Someone had hung a bloody plastic severed foot and a plastic skeleton from a tree. What were the odds? Three or four years ago I led a Halloween scavenger hunt hike for the Voyageur Trail Association and a few of my props went missing. I had found my severed foot! And possibly my skeleton!

We decided to bring the skeleton back to its rightful home. However, to ensure we were not stealing from someone who now called the skeleton their own, we replaced the skeleton with a plastic Star Wars figure. This figure now hangs from a tree on the Crystal Creek trail if any Star Wars fans are out skiing this winter. The sky was beginning to get dark so we figured we had better wrap up this winter adventure. We made it back to the truck just as the daylight began to fade completely.

The day left me with one reflection and many questions. My reflection is that time spent in nature with a child and an open mind is priceless. I have many questions (most importantly, are there actually any geocaches in Hiawatha or am I just really bad at finding them??) but none of these questions is important now that I am reminded of what really is!





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Hike 250 kms of beautiful coastal trails on the Avalon Peninsula in Newfoundland with our help.

We provide transportation from & to St. John's Airport, to and from trail heads, and three meals a day with accommodations.

For prices and information contact Isa.



Who is this man and where on earth is he hiking? Find out at the Saulteaux Voyageur Trail Club dinner on Friday, April 8, Grand Gardens North.

Phone: 1-709- 334-2208

Fax: 1-709- 334-3601

email: brownrabbitcabins@nf.aibn.com

www.brownrabbit.nl.ca

VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION REGISTRATION & STORE (please print legibly) 12/15 (For more details and to purchase products and memberships visit our secure on-line store at www.voyageurtrail.ca)

Name: _____ Phone (home): _____ (work/cell): _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Prov./State: _____ Postal/Zip Code: _____ Please check one: New Member Renewal

MEMBERSHIP FEES: Prices subject to change without notification.

For: GPS maps (Garmin units only) & PDF Hiking trail guide individual sections } visit our on-line Store.

Individual: yearly @ \$25 or three-years @ \$70 = _____

Family or Group: yearly @ \$30 or three-years @ \$85 = _____

Full-time Student @ \$10 yearly = _____

Donations Charitable Reg. #119261923RR0001 (tax receipt will be sent) = _____

____ Crest @ \$3 each = _____

____ Guidebook (limit 2) @ members \$30/non-members \$40 = _____

Shipping/handling for ALL MAILED Guidebooks.....=\$12

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (Cdn. funds).....= \$ _____

____ If this is a gift please provide name & address for the mailed acknowledgement.

Please send my VTA newsletter via: __ Postal delivery to above address.

__ Reminder to download PDF from VTA web site

My email is: _____

Make cheques payable and mail to: _____

**VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION, P. O. Box 20040,
150 Churchill Blvd., Sault Ste. Marie, ON, Canada P6A 6W3**

(over)

The Voyageur Trail News is published three times per year. Your articles and photos are welcome!

Deadline for the next issue is April 1, 2016.

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Tel. 705-942-5709 or e-mail to
info@voyageurtrail.ca

Articles in this newsletter can be
copied if credit is given to the
Voyageur Trail Association.

We're on the Web!
www.voyageurtrail.ca

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807-889-0602

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Marathon: Bob Hancherow
807-229-1340 ext. 2226

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705-856-2884

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705-942-1891

Bruce Mines/Huron Shores:
Patricia Wynter 705-842-0123

Penewobikong: Joanne Marck
705-842-2659

Coueurs de Bois:
Astrid Turner 705-578-2095



VTA CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL

President -

Carole Blaquiére 705-649-2235

Membership/Landowners -

Chris Kuntz 705-649-2235

Data Management -

Bob Sinclair 705-946-3126

Vice-President West - Kirstin

Spence 807-889-0602

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Media Coordinator -
vacant

Director(s) -at-Large (2) -

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Amber Jones

Vice-President Central -

Vacant

Hike Ontario

Representative -

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Alternate (vacant)

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Wynter 705-842-0123

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Kees van Frankenhuyzen
705-255-2177

Insurance Coordinator -

Larry Gringorten 705-949-7953

Guidebook Committee -

Steve Dominy 705-946-2484

General Secretary - Tricia

Kelly 705-910-1795

For information on any of these positions (especially the vacant ones), please email us at info@voyageurtrail.ca.

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 off the trail. Walk around the edges of fields, not across them.
- * Leave only your thanks and take nothing but photographs. BE A LOW-IMPACT HIKER!!

I WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH:

- Trail maintenance
- Trail development
- Hike leader
- Organization—executive, directors
- Newsletter, guidebook, photography
- Landowner records, maps
- Publicity committee
- Special events
- Sorry, not at this time.
- Contact me with information on what's needed, and I'll decide then.**

Please add my membership to the membership list of the club closest to my home, OR consider me a member-at-large, OR

consider me as a member of the following club _____.

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 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. BE A LOW-IMPACT HIKER!

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 (above).

(signature): _____