



VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

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Twin Lakes: Saulteaux Section

ONTARIO HIKING DAY

Sunday, October 1, is Ontario Hiking Day, when hikers all over the province get out to show their strength in numbers and invite the public to join them in a delightful pastime.

This year, along the Voyageur Trail, there will be public hikes: at Espanola for the Rainbow and Sudbury Clubs, at Sault Ste. Marie for the Saulteaux Club, at Wawa for the Michipicoten Club, at Schreiber for the Schreiber Club, and at Thunder Bay for the Thunder Bay Club.

At Thessalon, the official opening of the Thessalon Section will take place, with the Penewobikong, Thessalon, Desbarats, Echo Ridges, and Saulteaux Clubs promoting that event by their participation.

So let's get out on Ontario Hiking Day and show the world that there are people who hike and that we intend to be counted. Help your club invite the public and introduce more people to hiking and your club. Watch for posters in your area for local details, or contact your club executive.

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE THESSALON SECTION

The Thessalon Section of the Voyageur Trail was completed this summer and extends the trail between Rydal Bank (Hwy 561) and Iron Bridge. Total walking distance is between 50 and 65 kilometers. The work remaining includes measuring the section and placing logos every ½ km (although a few have been placed to create public awareness).

The opening will be on Sunday, October 1, Ontario Hiking Day and will involve local dignitaries. After a ribbon cutting ceremony, there will be two hikes, and refreshments.

To help make this a gala event, ALL VTA MEMBERS FROM SAULT STE. MARIE TO BLIND RIVER, INCLUSIVE, ARE URGED TO GO TO THESSALON ON ONTARIO HIKING DAY, OCTOBER 1, TO HELP CELEBRATE THE OPENING. Meet at the Carolyn Beach Motel, at the western junction of Hwy 17 & 17B, Thessalon, at 1 p.m. Directions to the ceremony will be given there.

Let's see a good turnout of VTA members for this significant event. We especially invite our landowners in the Thessalon section. See you at Thessalon on Sunday, October 1.

NORTHWARD BOUND!

With the east-west portion of the Saulteaux section completed several years ago, work has started on trail clearing to the north. A good start was made this summer by some of the Saulteaux team, especially Tom Allinson and Ernie Pringle. Trail now is cleared from Gros Cap half way to the top of Prince Twp., and much of that is blazed. Presently, it dead-ends in the bush, but shortly will carry on to the shore of Lake Superior. CONGRATULATIONS, DILIGENT WORKERS.

WORK IS NEVER DONE

With the opening of the Thessalon Section this fall, the longest portion would extend for approximately 200 km, from north of Gros Cap to Iron Bridge if the Echo Ridges Section were complete. But it is not. There is much to be done to complete this section and give us a very significant length of continuous trail. There will be many work parties called this fall to try to close the gap. You are all urged to give of your time. If we all (those of us in the Echo Ridges and Saulteaux Clubs) pitch in and help WE CAN DO IT.

There also is trail building and planning going on along other parts of the Voyageur Trail route and you are urged to help your local club when called upon. This trail is built and maintained by volunteers; even when students are consigned to helping clear trail, the background work - laying out the route, flagging, contacting landowners, obtaining work permits for crown land operations, making signs, etc. - is done by volunteers.

It will take a lot of helping hands to make the Voyageur Trail a reality. If we ALL help, even a few times a season, the work load per person will be less and the job will be done more quickly. When your club calls on you for assistance, LEND A HAND. BE A HELPER.

A PAT ON THE BACK

(excerpt from a letter to P. Syme, August 30, 1978)

.. We are both very excited about your plans for the Voyageur...We are sure you will have eastern Canada's greatest trail someday... We have nothing but praise for you and your members. We started at Gros Cap and spent 3 days on the trail. It was well marked and presented no special problems although we had to wade one stream on the eastern end. The beaver dams, water falls, ancient beach, side trails, etc. all add to an interesting adventure...

Bill Boyce
Chuck Duff
South Bend, Indiana

THE TRAIL USER'S CODE - IN DEPTH

This is the third in a series designed to ask you to consider seriously the Trail User's Code and what it means. The Code is not merely a set of rules designed to make life difficult for the hiker. Indeed it is for just the opposite. If the Code were adhered to strictly by all trail users, there would be virtually no problems along the trail, and use of the trail would be a joy to all. Is that not the way we would like to see it?

Actually, we have had very few problems along the Voyageur Trail, and none of them were serious. This suggests that our members and other users are following the Code, intentionally or unwittingly. After all, as stated in the first of this series, to follow the Code is merely to be courteous on the trail.

I'd like to consider the third item, "Carry out all garbage (if you can carry it in (full) you can carry it out (empty)).". Garbage on the trail is one of the most annoying of all things to both hiker and landowner. Garbage is just that - unwanted material things, from the wrappings of a box lunch to a gum wrapper. Virtually all hikers use the trail, at least in part, to enjoy the natural scene, and the presence of litter of any sort is extremely incongruous to that scene, and unnecessarily so - IF YOU CAN CARRY IT IN YOU CAN CARRY IT OUT.

Anything you might be tempted to discard along the trail, be it only a gum wrapper or tissue, had a place in your pack or pocket or purse when you brought it in, and can go back into that same space until you reach home (or a convenient trashcan). It will weigh no more going out than it did on its way in.

If you drop a tissue or a piece of paper as you hike, it may seem inconsequential, but it is merely "out of sight, out of mind". It probably will "scream" at the next hiker who passes by. To toss it a little further back in the bush is not the answer, as anyone who has walked the verges of our highways will know.

When back-packing, burn your burnables if you must, but crush cans to save space and pack out all your garbage. DON'T BURY IT. It will be dug up by humans repeating the act, if it becomes fashionable, or by animals searching for food. The latter could make a designated campsite unsafe if the animal is a bear and accustomed to finding food at a particular site.

Remember then, don't litter; leave the trail as neat as you would like to find it. If you don't find it that way, go one step further and bring out the litter of thoughtless persons. Especially if you are day-hiking, carry a plastic bag. It will fit into your pocket and can be used to bring out any litter you may find. Leave the trail neat for the next person. Remember too, a messy trail fosters a messy attitude - "What's the harm of one more tissue?",

soon will lead to a deplorable situation. People not likely to be the first to litter, may be quite willing to add to an already littered trail. So, by extending yourself and picking up after others, you are protecting your trail for your enjoyment - think about it.

If you come across a pile of garbage you are unwilling or unable to bring out, report it to your club so it will be taken care of by a work party.

LET'S KEEP OUR TRAILS CLEAN.

P. D. Syme

NEW CLUB AT SCHREIBER

The Voyageur Trail Association has extended its influence to the north shore of Lake Superior. A new club was formed at Schreiber this summer with Tom McGrath as president, and D'Arcy Furlonger as secretary-treasurer. This club will take over the 45 km of shoreline trail built between Terrace Bay and Rainbow Falls Provincial Park, and extend it. The original trail was built by the Ministry of Natural Resources, at Tom's instigation. This trail was written up by Tom in "Outdoor Canada" a few years ago. If you are in the area, take a walk along it. It is some of our most scenic trail yet.

PUKASKWA PARK HAPPENINGS

As some of you know, there are about 35 km of shoreline trail built in Pukaskwa National Park. This will be linked, in time, with the Voyageur Trail and will provide some of the roughest hiking along the route. Some of you have hiked part of it and the reports are exciting. Currently, to get to that trail the Pic River must first be crossed, but the result is worth the effort. For more information about the park and its trails contact: The Superintendent, Pukaskwa National Park, Marathon, Ontario, POT 2E0.

OTHER NEWS ALONG THE TRAIL

We have a few members in Thunder Bay and, hopefully, we'll see a full-fledged Voyageur Trail Club there soon.

Also along the North shore of Lake Superior, there is some interest in Marathon in starting a V. T. Club.

A few members have joined from the Goulais Bay area, and perhaps we'll soon see a club born there also.

A FALL HIKING HAZARD: HYPOTHERMIA

(adapted from The Trail Voice, Vol. IV, No. 4, International Backpackers Association.)

By definition, hypothermia, or what is commonly called exposure, occurs when the body temperature drops below 37 C or 98.6 F.

CAUSE: Hypothermia is simply a drop in body temperature through wearing clothing inadequate for wet, cold and windy conditions. Exhaustion and hunger contribute to it.

DANGER SIGNS: Hypothermia is not easy to recognize. A person is exhausted, lags behind, stumbles, is reluctant to carry on, is not "with it" mentally, and may be difficult to reason with.

TREATMENT: Shelter from the wind immediately. Drop off a ridge to the lee side and look for shelter in scrub, behind rocks or under trees.

Put on extra clothing, have something to eat and drink, and assess the situation carefully.

Recovery can be swift, but if it has not occurred within 15 minutes, or if the victim has collapsed, he/she will be past warming himself/herself: you must do it for him/her. You must treat on the spot; he/she may collapse and die if you attempt to assist him/her to the shelter of a hut. If practicable, change him/her into dry woolen clothing. Put him/her in a sleeping bag and have a strong member of the party get in with him/her, or have two people in sleeping bags lie close alongside him/her.

This is the only safe method. Excessive external heat such as a fire can kill. Alcohol must not be given. In any case, do not move the person until fully recovered, or without medical advice. Meanwhile, watch the rest of the party.

These simple rules can save your life:

- Whatever the length of the trip, prepare for it carefully. Take heed of weather forecasts. Always go prepared for a change in weather conditions.

- Have a good meal before setting out and eat well at meal times on the trail.

- Plan your day so as to reach your destination with time to spare before nightfall. If weather deteriorates, turn back, or take a safe alternative route which will provide all-important shelter.

- Remember that there always is a chance of having to spend the night in the open. A thermal blanket can save your life.

REMEMBER: DAMP, WINDY CONDITIONS WITH TEMPERATURES AROUND 4 C ARE THE MOST DANGEROUS.

HIKING DURING HUNTING SEASON

Both hiking and hunting, when responsibly pursued, are enjoyable, healthful and largely non-conflicting forms of outdoor recreation popular in the fall. As a long-distance hiking trail, The Voyageur Trail passes through both Crown Land of varying category and through unposted as well as posted (against hunting) private land. The Voyageur Trail Association can simply request, through signs, that due to possible danger to hikers, hunters refrain from hunting on the Trail itself. Unfortunately, as evidenced by the annual toll of shot-up signs, an irresponsible minority of shooters appear to ignore this request.

Aside from remaining indoors entirely during this most attractive time of year, the hiker (or, for that matter, anyone travelling in the bush) can increase his/her safety by some commonsense measures:

- First, apprise yourself of open seasons, especially for moose, deer and bear, in the particular locality in which you wish to hike (information available from Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources).
- While it might be aggravating, it might also be discreet to avoid certain areas of particularly high hunting pressure during open seasons.
- Whereas grouse or other small-game hunting with shotguns poses less hazard than hunting with rifles (shotgun pellets are dangerous only within a few tens of meters, rifled bullets may be lethal for two kilometers or more), the latter poses a significant hazard in that low-powered rifles are most popular among that small minority who are careless. Thus, you should apprise yourself of open seasons and hunting pressures for small game as well as large.
- Wear bright coloured clothing. Bright blue is useful in the fall when autumn leaf colouration diminishes the effectiveness of the traditional brights, red and yellow.
- When in the bush, do not show white clothing, especially in deer season. Under no circumstances, wear fur or deerskin jackets, coonskin caps, etc.
- If you don't have a loud voice, it might be useful to carry a loud whistle.

I. Morrison

ON THE JOB TRAINING

A new production team presently is struggling to master the art of editing and assembling this newsletter. Patience, Gentle Reader!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Voyageur Trail Association is hosted this year by Echo Ridges VTC. The annual meeting will be October 21, 1978 and will commence with a hike on the trail past One Horse and Two Horse Lakes. The dinner meeting will follow, featuring the showing of the Bruce Trail film Backpack to Nature and a report from the C.A.S.S. crew who worked on the Thessalon section this past summer.

Those intending to attend the meeting are asked to signify same to Barry Hansen at RR# 4, Echo Bay, P0S 1C0; telephone 248-2897 by October 7 so that catering arrangements may be completed. Please indicate whether you will attend both parts or the dinner alone. The hike portion of the program will commence at Echo Bay School at 3 p.m. on October 21. Further details will be phoned or mailed to those who indicate that they will be attending. P.S.: The cost of the dinner will be very reasonable!

DISCOUNTS TO HIKERS

On presentation of a current membership card, the following businesses offer a discount to V.T.A. members.

Joe's Sports and Surplus, 9 Queen Street East, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., offers a 10% discount. Sales items and all "Woods" brand articles are excluded.

Kinney Shoes of Canada Ltd. offers a 10% discount on hiking boots.

Margessons of 17 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5C 1H4, offers a 10% discount on most camping items. Margessons issue a camping catalogue which may be obtained by writing to them.

Freeze-Dry Foods of 579 Speers Road, Oakville, Ont., L6K 2G4, offers a 20% discount on their freeze-dried products to club members.

SPECIALISED SERVICES

Sport Sewing Shop of 1659 Bayview Ave., Suite 201, Toronto, Ont., M4G 3C1, Telephone 1-416-486-9666, specializes in repairs to down-filled items, back-packs, tents, harness, etc. They also can supply specialized fabrics, zippers for sleeping bags, etc, webbing and fasteners. Free sewing advice is also offered.