



VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

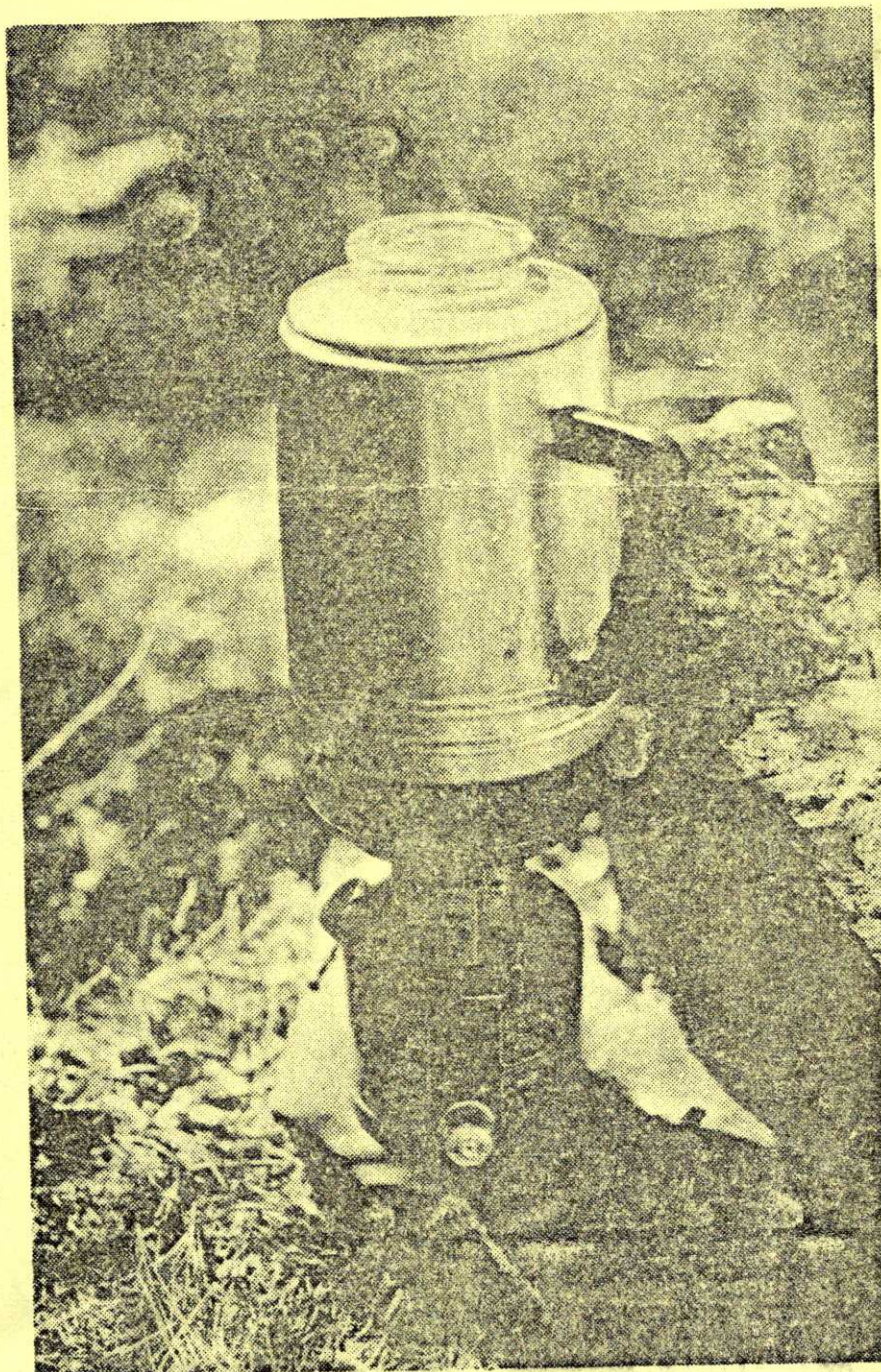
PUBLISHED BY THE VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION, A MEMBER OF F.O.H.T.A.

BOX 66, SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO P6A 5L2

NO:27

EDITOR: STEVE TAYLOR

SPRING, 1984



CANADA AM, TRAIL STYLE!

Hiking the Gros Cap Area

On a Sunday afternoon last November 6, Tom Allinson, Donna Kidd, Ernie Pringle and I met at the Stedmans parking lot in western Sault Ste Marie. The object was to do some hiking despite overcast conditions. We drove west towards Gros Cap and parked one vehicle at kilometer 7.9 on the Voyageur Trail. A second vehicle drove us to kilometer 3.3 in the Twin Lakes area where we began our trip.

The well-blazed trail led us through predominantly birch and maple forest, with occasional conifers appearing as a contrast. A moss and lichen covered ridge offered a glimpse of Lake Superior. Near an old cabin, we were greeted by the antics of a curious pine marten. Tom's camera and telephoto lens captured the colourful onlooker in various poses. After a while, we reluctantly continued, humouring one another with tales of personal hiking experiences. We paused first at a triple dammed beaver pond and later at a mighty fallen remnant of a white pine. Tom and Ernie informed us that the tree had toppled recently.

As Tom's car appeared in sight, we vowed to plan another hike or skiing trip before too many weekends passed.

Steve Dominy

Editors note: Late in February, another group consisting of Donna, Tom and Steve plus four others did manage to combine skiing, sliding and hiking together on the icy trails around Gros Cap.

Thought for the Spring

"April prepares her green traffic light, and the world thinks GO!"

Christopher Morley

Treasurer's Note

Copies of the club financial statement are available on request by writing to the club.

Editor's Note

Articles for the next newsletter should arrive no later than September 15. Have any of the associated VTA clubs besides the Saulteaux Club been involved in activities?

Membership Secretary's Note

Notice has been given to members who haven't renewed their membership as of March 15. If dues are not received by the time the next newsletter is in press, these members will be stroked off the mailing list. Please check the date on the membership card if you are not sure if you have renewed. With today's higher postage, your dues are needed. Since the first newsletter, mailing costs have risen from five to 32 cents a copy and the membership dues are the same. Note that prompt renewals will reduce our expenses by reducing renewal notice costs. In addition, it will diminish the amount of work required.

Lastly, an active membership is essential for our growth. I urge all members to inform people who might be interested in our organization. Try to get them involved, perhaps by inviting them to a hike. Club brochures can be obtained by writing to the secretary of your section club or to the VTA by using the return address on the back of the newsletter.

Weather Forecasting Out of Doors.

Numerous experiences have taught me the value of being able to predict weather. I have spent the majority of the last 10 summers working outdoors in Ontario. In that time, I have been caught unprepared in deluges, snowed on in Cochrane in August while dressed for summer conditions, almost hit by lightning, and forced to consume beer in golf course clubhouses waiting for rain to stop. In the winter, I've been stranded on skis five kilometers from the nearest road as the snow on the trail melted. Many times, I've listened to weather forecasts designed for a large area when the local conditions have been different. My own interests in and experiences with the elements have, I think, allowed me to gain some ability to forecast future weather. Procedures involved with outdoor activities (eg. when to set up camp) can be based on these predictions.

First, here are a few comments applicable to forecasting weather in Ontario. In general, much of the local variation in weather around the province is the result of the Great Lakes. When the lakes are warm, as they are in the fall, cold air passing over them tends to pick up moisture. Thus, if one of the Great Lakes is upwind within 60 km of you and the air temperature is below normal, heavy precipitation is a good possibility. In the summer, the lakes are usually warmer than the air at night. Thunderstorms often form over them at this time. During the day, the land is warmer and thunderstorms form over land and die over water. If the air is very unstable, this rule will be invalid. For the most part though, it can be useful to know if you have mostly water or land upwind for 100 or more kilometers.

A few basic forecasting rules are based on cloud formations. Cauliflower-like clouds warn of instability which can lead to thunderstorms, especially if the clouds become dark on the bottom and begin to flatten and fan out at the top. Small puffy clouds in the afternoon sky indicate fair weather unless they develop as above. Clouds banking across the sky from northeast to southwest may indicate an advancing cold front. High cloudiness from the west or southwest suggests an advancing warm front or low pressure. Watch for these clouds to thicken. If you stand facing the wind, it is normal for the best weather to be on your left and the worst on your right. Then, check the sky for cloud direction. This procedure can give clues to future weather.

There are a few tips that can be used at home to plan a trip. Home barometers are indicators of trends in weather. Falling barometers indicate that low pressure area is advancing towards you (low pressure brings deteriorating weather). Thus, a rapidly falling barometer with a reading of less than 30 inches of mercury hints at precipitation within several hours. On the other hand, you are usually safe if the barometer is rising or steady and is over 30 inches of mercury. A radio can be used to warn of thunderstorms ahead of time in the summer. Lightning creates a unique form of static that can be picked up between stations when the storm is still over 100 km away. This only works on the AM band. If you are between stations and it sounds as if someone is jumping in a bathroom filled with potato chips, it is not a good sign. If the static is getting louder, it means that the storm is getting closer. If you can hear static while the radio is on a station, the storm is close. Also, the more frequent the static, the stronger the storm. Listen to the radio during a storm to learn how to detect this static from other types.

Conditions in the earth's atmosphere are always in a dynamic state but these dynamics usually follow patterns that are at least partly predictable. The object then, is to find out the kind of pattern the weather is in. Thus, the nature of change in the weather is usually a better indicator of future conditions than is the weather at a given moment. I have constructed a forecasting guide which is presented below. The first step in using this guide is to find out which one of the nine weather conditions best fits the weather you are experiencing. You can then go into the description for that weather condition and determine which one of several possible additional conditions are occurring. Use this as a guide for weather forecasting but remember that the best way to become proficient at it is to become experienced at making the appropriate observations. A basic understanding of the main air masses and air mass processes that affect our weather is also a help. Here then, is the guide.

GENERAL CONDITION	SUB-CONDITION	FORECAST
1) NO CLOUDS -indicates no precipitation for at least 6 hours.	-Wind calm or W to N. -Wind S to W and increasing. -Wind NE to E to SE and increasing.	-No precipitation for at least 24 hours. -No precipitation for at least 6 hours. Watch for condition 3 to develop. -No precipitation for at least 6 hours. Watch for condition 2 or 6 to develop.

- | | | |
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| 2) HIGH THIN CLOUDS ACROSS MOST OF SKY WITH SUN OR MOON VISIBLE.
-No precipitation is likely in next 6 hours but conditions could change later. | -wind E and veering to S.
-Wind N and veering to E.
-wind E and veering to N.
-wind S and veering to E.
-Wind SW, W, NW, to N and constant. | -Possible warm front moving in. Watch for conditions 3, 5, or 6 to develop.
-watch for the above sub-condition or condition 4 to occur.
-Fair weather likely.
-Condition 4 likely.
-Fair weather likely but watch for condition 3. |
| 3) CLOUDS THICKENING TO NW. WIND INCREASING AND POSSIBLY VEERING.
-boaters beware of possible squalls from cold front. | -wind may switch to NW for a while but general direction is W to S or SE.
-wind becomes gusty from the NW. | -Unsettled weather continuing.
-Fair weather most likely but watch for condition 7. |
| 4) WIND STRENGTHENING AND WITH AN EASTERLY COMPONENT (NNE TO SSE). CLOUDS THICKEN TO OBSCURE SUN OR MOON.
-Precipitation is likely in one to several hours. | -wind E veering to SE.
-Wind SE or NE and becoming E or remaining constant.
-wind NE and tending to turn into the N. | -Rain, fog, thundershowers possible in near future. Watch for a warm front to pass followed by condition 3 or 5 to develop.
-A bad sign. Continuous precipitation and cool temperatures likely.
-Storm should pass by to the south. Condition 1 or 2 should develop. |
| 5) HUMID. PARTLY CLOUDY TO CLOUDY. LIGHT TO STRONG SW TO S TO SE WIND. | -wind strong.

-wind less than 15 KPH. | -Severe thunderstorms are possible, especially if vertical development in clouds is noted. Watch for condition 3 or 4 to materialize.
-watch for thunderstorms especially in afternoon followed by fair warm or hot weather. |
| 6) WARM WITH LIGHT SE, S OR SW WIND OR WIND CALM. MOSTLY CLEAR. | | -Fair and hot weather likely but watch for conditions 3 or 5 to develop as possible routes to change. |
| 7) NW WIND WITH PARTLY CLOUDY TO SHOWERY WEATHER.
-cool weather. | -Condition 7 followed 3 and wind now decreasing.
-wind increasing or constant in speed and direction. | -showers ending with fair weather moving from W to E into area.
-showers and possible squalls could develop or continue. |
| 8) FOG WITH LIGHT WIND | -In morning.
-In afternoon or evening. | -Fog should burn off with fair weather in a few hours.
-Difficult to predict. Watch for 3, 5, 6, or 7 to begin to develop. |
| 9) CLOUDS INCREASING. | -High clouds mostly.
-Low clouds with no vertical development and NW to N wind.
-No vertical development seen out clouds thick and weather hazy and humid with light or NE, E, SE, S, SW, or W wind.
-Puffy clouds with vertical development obvious. | -See condition 2.
-Fair and cool but watch for vertical development in clouds which could lead to showers.
-rain probable. See conditions 3 and 4.
-Showers or thundershowers possible especially if clouds develop before noon. Fair weather should follow. |

Steve Taylor

Hiking the Coastal Trail in Lake Superior Park

The folks at Lake Superior Provincial Park are quietly opening up new sections of the Coastal Trail. There has been a trail in existence for a few years now running from Gargantua Harbour to Indian Harbour. This is a good 'family' trail which is not too demanding. A new section was opened last year. It is the subject of this article.

This new section has been laid out along the shore where possible and it is very beautiful. It is also very rough and rugged and is not a good trail to be on in wet weather. The beginning is at the parking area at Gargantua and the trail runs south to the Baldhead River where it links up with the return loop of the Orphan Lake Trail to Highway 17. I estimate the distance to be about 15 miles in length. Due to the rough terrain, I would allow three days to hike it. In 1963 I hiked this section of the trail three times without getting bored. The paint blazes were not even completed at this time.

One trip was made early in July with two ladies from the Toronto Bruce Trail Club. We left a car at the parking lot for the Orphan Lake Trail and carried on to the Gargantua Harbour parking area. Camp was set up nearby.

The next morning, we headed out, crossed the stream at the parking area, and spent about 15 minutes hiking along an old road that terminated at a burnt out cabin. At this point, the trail leaves the shoreline and climbs steeply uphill. An hour or so later, after passing some lookouts that afforded us some fabulous views of Lake Superior, we picked our way down to the shore again. What a shore! If there isn't an arm of land or island to hold the sand, the shoreline is bare rock.

We finally reached Rhyolite Bay. There is a small campground here. If one did not care to spend the first night at Gargantua Harbour, it would be possible to begin hiking around noon and arrive at Rhyolite Bay before supper. We elected to continue on.

After Rhyolite Bay, the trail is laid out along the shore where possible and as we hiked from one day to the next, we were rewarded by beautiful vistas. There are sections of the trail that could not be hiked if the lake were in an angry mood. It would be necessary to bushwack inland. At one point, the trail is forced inland by cliffs along the shore. We tramped inland until the trail reached the base of another large cliff. The trail wanders along the base. Even inland, one is not in prairie country. After about an hour inland, the trail led us back to the shore and we were day hopping again.

Our layover point was the small campground at Buckshot Creek. These campsites were established by boaters over the years. We tend to forget that although the trail is brand new, people have been using the lake as a highway for hundreds of years. The shore is mostly inhospitable and where there is an infrequent harbour, there is usually some evidence of people. At Buckshot Creek, we enjoyed a hearty supper and spent a little time staring into the flames from our campfire reminiscing on the days activities.

Our last day objective was to reach the Baldhead River. About halfway along this leg of the trail, we reached Beatty Cove. There is a beautiful sand beach here, about the only sand on the entire section. After Beatty Cove, the trail rambles to and away from the shoreline until it reaches the bank of the Baldhead. This river must be forded. We crossed at a point about ten minutes walk from the mouth. The river is wide here but not too deep at this time of year. After crossing the river, we returned to the lakeshore and set up camp. A brief swim in the lake was followed by supper.

We were awakened earlier than usual by a sudden storm off of Lake Superior. The wind threatened to flatten one of the tents. We broke camp in the rain and headed out on the Orphan Lake trail return loop to Highway 17. We piled into the vehicle we had left at Orphan Lake and returned to Gargantua Harbour to get the other cars. The road into Gargantua Harbour is a dirt road that is rough but navigable in spots.

When we reached the cars, one of the ladies treated us to a fabulous pot of real coffee. Goodbyes were said and we headed separate ways content with the feeling of accomplishment that a good hike leaves. One with. Then, on the way out to the highway, we received the icing on the cake when a big black bear crossed the path.

Tom Allinson

Notes on the Coastal Hiking Trail

Over the last three years, Lake Superior Provincial Park has been developing its Coastal Hiking Trail. Upon completion, it will traverse a distance of 110 kilometers along Lake Superior's rugged coastline. Presently,

35 kilometers of the trail is developed with 18 campsites at six points along the trail. This section of trail is accessible from Highway 17 at the mouth of the Coldwater River, from the Orphan Lake Trail, or by travelling the 12 kilometer road to Gargantua Harbour.

The trail itself passes areas of a colourful past. Old foundations and cabins mark the passing of the trapping and fishing era. As you walk this land enriched in Indian legend, one can feel the mystique and awe that the Ojibwa felt along the rugged coast. At times, you walk on bluffs 60 meters above Lake Superior. At other times, you encounter secluded sand and cobble beaches. The strength of the glaciers will make you ponder as you pass beneath a huge hanging rock wedged in a chasm.

Future expansions will extend the trail north and south of its present location to the parks boundaries, eventually to become a part of the Voyageur Trail. This hiking trail is recommended for experienced hikers. The terrain is extremely rugged. Allow five days to travel from the Coldwater River to Gargantua harbour.

A can and bottle ban is now in effect in the interior of Lake Superior Park. This restricts the use of food and beverage containers to those that are burnable or reusable with no deposit. Pre-registration at interior access points or the park office is also mandatory. There is no fee for interior camping.

Mark Hillis-OMNR

Hike and Board Meeting

The Voyageur Trail has sections as far apart as Rossport and Espanola. It is difficult for members from one section to meet those from another. Often, it is only at the annual meeting in November that hikers see members from other clubs. A v.T.A. board meeting is scheduled for Saturday May 26 at Wawa. A hike has been scheduled as well. All interested hikers are encouraged to come and hike and express opinions at the meeting as well. Please note that only board members are allowed to vote at the meeting however.

Why not meet members of other clubs and join us. The schedule is as follows:

- Meet at 11 am. at the Big Sky Trailer Park at the junction of Highway 17 and the Highway 101 turnoff. There is a restaurant (The New Era) should you arrive early. The hike will be 2-3 hours. Bring a picnic lunch.
- Supper at the Wawa Motor Inn. Pay for your own meal.
- Board meeting at about 7:00 pm.

Peter Stinnissen needs to know how many people to expect so please contact him at Wawa (856-4270), or, if coming from the Sault, contact Patrick Capper (253-4470) so that car pools can be arranged. If you are coming from Casque Isles, contact Heather Jessup McGrath (624-2116). A meeting agenda will be sent to board members before May 26.

Hike Report

Area - Gros Cap (west of Sault Ste Marie).

Date - April 14, 1984.

Attendance - 11.

Weather - Cloudy and warm (10-12 C).

Start - Prince Lake Road

Finish - Gros Cap

Notes - This trip was scheduled to end at the Falls Lake Road but the enthusiasm of the hikers carried nine of them on to Gros Cap. Several spring herbs were seen as they began to poke out of the litter and the last remaining snow patches. A porcupine and several large beaver dams were seen. In addition, some poplar trees were sexed. An entire group of poplars were found to be all male (ed. note - Poplars and willows do have male and female flowers on separate plants). No one reported the hike to be too strenuous and no one reported wet feet.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 6 -hike in Stokely area. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at K-mart Plaza parking lot (Second Line Side). Bring lunch.
- May 12 -Go to Blazes Day.
- May 26 -Board meeting and hike in Wawa.
- June 23 -hike Tower Lake area. Meet Churchill plaza at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch and FLY DOPE.
- June 29 to Monday evening July 2 -backpacking trip in Lake Superior Provincial Park. This will be an easy to moderate hike and beginning backpackers are welcome. Please contact Mr. Tom Allinson 256-8742 by June 22 re this trip.
- July 14 -Hike Mabel Lake area. Meet at 9:00 am. at Churchill Plaza and bring a lunch.
- July 22 -Deborah section trail hike. Outing starts with pot luck supper and campfire Saturday July 21. Participants may camp free of charge Saturday night (tents only, no trailers please). Excellent commercial accomodations (several choices) are also available nearby. Drive 65 km from Sault to Rydal Bank area. Hike is through hardwood forest with lunch stop on quartzite hilltop. Easy to moderate hiking for about 16 km. Contact Erika or Dieter Ropke ((705)253-8375) for information and directions.
- August 13-hike Stokely area. Meet at K-Mart Plaza at 9:00am. with lunch.
- Sept 29 -hike Batchewana mt. area. Meet at 9:00 am. at K-Mart Plaza with lunch.
- Oct 13 -hike Red Rock area. Meet at 9:00 am. at Stedmans parking lot and bring lunch.

NOTE: FLY DOPE IS A MUST IN BUG SEASON. WEAR APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR AND CARRY RAIN GEAR. IT IS INTENDED THAT DAY HIRES WILL BE SIX TO EIGHT MILES IN LENGTH. THE TRAIL IS IN 'SHIELD' COUNTRY AND THE TERRAIN IS OFTEN ROUGH AND HILLY.

Trail blazing - There will be some trail blazing parties this summer. Activities could include clearing, locating, and maintenance. In the Saulteaux section, Paul Syme will be drawing up a schedule. Persons interested should contact him.

Note to Readers

Most of this newsletter is in a smaller type. This is an experiment to try to diminish costs of putting out the newsletter. If the size of lettering creates problems for readers, some feedback would be appreciated. Such feedback may determine whether or not the small type is continued.

+ + + + +
 + GO-TO-BLAZES DAY!
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 + SATURDAY MAY 12, 1984
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 + A "Go-To-Blazes Day" is planned for Saturday May 12, 1984. This is
 + an occasion to clean up the trail and refresh the blazes. Sponsored
 + again by Hike Ontario, the Federation of Ontario Hiking Trail
 + Associations, its purpose is to improve the quality of hiking trails
 + in the province and to communicate an outdoors ethic (a respect for
 + the land and a responsibility for caring about its quality).
 +
 + How Do I Get Involved?
 +
 + We need a lot of volunteers. To help up organize the day, please
 + sign up when contacted by your club. You will be assigned to a
 + small work party to look after a specific section of trail.
 +
 + All volunteers should bring a paint scraper and a 1 to 1 1/2 inch or
 + 25-40 ma used paint brush, or a pair of pruners. Paint will be
 + supplied. Bring a friend and introduce her or him to the delights
 + of the outdoors. No major trail construction will be done.
 +
 + You will be contacted by one of your club members, so be sure to
 + volunteer and make this a success. One day's work will provide all
 + users with a more enjoyable trail and summer recreation.
 +
 + What's In It For Me?
 +
 + First of all, enjoy the warmth of spring while helping out in a
 + good cause. Meet new friends and enjoy the fellowship of working
 + together. Take pride in your contribution to the trail as a natural
 + resource available to all of us. Celebrate in the knowledge that
 + the trail is in excellent shape for the start of the hiking season.
 + + + + +

Go-To-blazes Day, Saulteaux V.T. Club

On Go-To-Blazes Day, Saturday May 12, the Saulteaux volunteers are asked to meet at the Stegman's parking lot next to the second line, Market Square Mall, at 10:00 sharp!

There will be a pot luck supper for those participating so bring your contribution to the meal and volunteers will relieve you of your food until supper. After the day's work on the trail, we will all retire to the home of Donna Kidd, 45 Caddy, for a pot luck supper at 5:00 pm. Don't forget to pack a lunch for the trail. Your supper won't do you much good at Donna's place until dinner time.

Let's have a good turnout and a fun time on the trail and after. Also, see the above article on Go-To-Blazes Day for what to bring besides supper.

MINI BACKPACKER'S TRIP

For those who are interested in taking a guided mini backpacking trip this summer, there will be an introductory meeting with Tom Allinson in early June. This will be to familiarize those wishing to participate with the fundamentals of equipment and camping procedures. Anyone interested should call Tom at (705) 254-6742.

Camper's Discount

Largensons of 17 Adelaide St East, Toronto, M5C 1A4, offers a 10% discount on most camping items upon presentation of your membership card. A camping catalogue is available on request.

