

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. 51

Editors: Peter Frederick & Pim Delfgou

Spring 1992

ANNUAL VTA CAMPOUT -

The annual VTA campout will be held the weekend of August 15/16th. We have reserved the group areas at the Agawa campground in Lake Superior Provincial Park, and plan activities for Saturday and Sunday. Intrepid campers are invited to arrive on Friday evening for an early start on the weekend. Planned activities include day hikes to nearby places of interest such as Noisy Bay, a potluck barbecue for Saturday evening, and possibly a slide show (if we can find some electricity). This should be a relaxing and fun weekend for everyone -- all members are encouraged to participate. There is a fee for using the campground. Plan on \$3.00 for Saturday night only, or \$5.00 for both Friday and Saturday nights. Reservations are required -- please contact Steve Taylor by 8 August if you plan to go. Official meeting time is 9:00 am Saturday morning for the activities, but everyone is welcome to show up on Friday, too. See you there!

TRAIL BLAZING GOES HIGH-TECH

On the April 25 VTA work party, we had installed trail blazes of a new material. They were introduced at the last executive meeting held in March. These blazes were cut up from white vinyl siding into 5 x 15 cm markers which would then be installed on trees on the trail to identify the route.

These new blazes were installed on the section of the North Trail that was restored and cleaned up on this logged over stretch near Walls lake. The new blaze markers are more durable than the paint blazes that have been used up to now. The vinyl markers can last 10 to 15 years, as opposed to the paint blazes that must be re-

painted every two or three years.

The vinyl blazes have been used in Lake Superior Provincial Park for several years. The durability of their blue diamond markers with the white backpacker symbol has been proven as very few of them needed replacing within five years.

We would appreciate if you are going to get rid of excess white siding, please let Bill Robinson, Tom Allinson or Steve Taylor know. Also, we can use blue plastic such as old crazy carpets for the blazes for our side trails. Your cooperation would be appreciated (plus we are reusing and recycling the vinyl and saving space at the landfill). - Pim Delfgou

**Crossing a beaver
dam on the trail
- Mother's Day
Hike, 1991**



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SAULTEAUX CLUB NEWS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1991 was a year of development in our trail with improvements and expansion carried out in the Coureur de Bois Section of Elliot Lake and the Casque Isles Section along Superior's north shore. 1992 looks like it will be a year of consolidation. A major camping weekend is planned for August 15,16 in Lake Superior Provincial Park. The weekend is in the planning stages at this time, but we hope to get representation from all along the trail, and hopefully some interest from the hiking community away from our trail. The set of outings and activities being planned will hopefully bring lots of people together in a relaxed outdoors setting. I encourage all Clubs at this time to focus on getting people out on outings and out to Club meetings.

We have some decisions to make this year. I still would like to see us obtain some support to hire someone to work as an executive director. This position is a key, I believe, to the Voyageur Trail achieving its original objectives of a continuous trail. We have to decide on where and how to expand next, and on how much effort to allocate on publicity versus trail maintenance versus trail expansion versus other initiatives.

I wish to recognize the contributions of three individuals who have decided in the past year to relinquish their positions. Susan Graham has brought a lot of enthusiasm and ideas to her position as Saulteaux Club President.

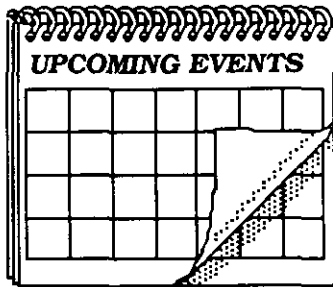
Virve Manniste Squire took the task of improving the appearance of our newsletter and the results speak for themselves. Bill Robinson did an outstanding job in the role of trailmaster, not just in coordinating work parties, but by contributing a number of refreshing ideas to myself and others in the organization. All three of these individuals have decided to put family commitments first. Their level of involvement will be missed, but all three wish to continue to support the Association and we should still at least see them at outings. They will be welcome if they decide to take on new positions in the future. Thanks for your support Bill, Virve and Susan.

This leaves positions to fill. We are fortunate that Peter Frederick and Pim Delfgou have formed a dynamic duo in working with the newsletter. Peter has taken on the task of coordinating the input so far, and Pim's enthusiasm and generation of written material has been apparent. The task of producing a newsletter is not small, and the final layout by Jack and Paula Dunning is one of the main reasons for the improvement in newsletter quality. Lets all provide these people with some material to show all members.

- Steve Taylor

THE VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS is published three times per year. Your articles and submissions are always welcome! Send them to Editor, VTA, Box 66, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6B 5L2

Submissions for the Fall 1992 issue must be received by September 1, 1992.



SAULTEAUX SECTION

13 June: Saturday hike from Tower Lake to Gordon Lake (10k). Meet at the Churchill Plaza parking lot at 9:00 am. Bring lunch and insect repellent! Leader: Tom Allinson.

10 July: Wednesday evening hike at Gros Cap (1-2k). Meet at the Bluewater Park at 8:00 pm, or at the Bluewater Inn at 6:30 for dinner prior to the walk, if desired. Bring camera, flashlight, and insect repellent. Leader: Virve Manniste-Squire

19 July: Sunday Beachwalk and Picnic from Foley Creek north in the St. Ignace area (10k). Meet at the Greyhound Bus Terminal at 9:00 or the US Tourist Information on the US side at 9:30. Bring lunch. Leader: Chuck Mosley

22 July: Wednesday Boardwalk and St. Mary's Island hike. Meet at the Parks Canada Locks parking lot at 7:00 pm. Refreshment stop at the Jolly Friar.

Civic Holiday Weekend backpacking trip: Donna Weeks is considering making a backpacking trip on the Civic Holiday weekend. Please contact her if you are interested.

15/16 August: Camping weekend at the Agawa campground, Lake Superior Provincial Park. Potluck barbecue and slide show on Sat. evening, day hikes to Noisy Bay and other areas of interest. Camping fee is \$3.00 for Sat., \$5.00 for Fri. and Sat. nights. Meet at

the Agawa group camping area Sat. at 9:00 am. The group camping area will be reserved for both Fri. and Sat. nights for those who wish to spend the entire weekend. Please register with Steve Taylor by 8 August.

29 August: Beach Walk and potluck barbecue at Betty Nassoiy's (Birch Pt. Road, Brimley area). Bring something to barbecue and something to share! Meet behind the Greyhound Bus Terminal at 1:00 pm or the US Tourist Information at 1:15 pm. Barbecue at 5:00 or when everyone gets hungry.

5/7 September: Labour Day Backpacking trip in the Elliot Lake area. Intermediate difficulty -- be prepared to filter water, etc. Please contact Steve Taylor by August 29 if interested.

20 September: Hike the Basswood Lake area of the Voyageur Trail (10k). Intermediate. Meet at the Churchill Plaza parking lot at 8:00 am. Leader: Joy McFee

26 September: Outing to Galloway Lake area to see old pine forest. Much of the day will be driving -- 2 1/2 hours, much on gravel road. Bring lunch and wear bright clothes. Hopefully, fall colours will still be present. Meet at K-Mart Plaza lot by gas bar at 9:00 am. Leader: Ken Baldwin.

4 October: Ontario Hiking Day hike at King Mountain. Intermediate difficulty family hike (10-15k). Meet at the K-Mart Plaza parking lot behind Red Lobster at 10:00 am. Leader: Steve Taylor.

MICHIPICOTEN SECTION

31 May: Bird Watching Hike in the Golf Course area. 2 to 3 hours -- moderately easy. Leader: Carol Dersch -- Lake Superior Park Naturalist. All meet at Post Office at 1:00 pm

for car pool.

6 June: "Go to Blazes Day" All meet at Big Sky Trailer Park at 9:00 am to walk and clean the trail from "Big Sky" to Senic High Falls. Pop and cookies will be provided.

10 June: Wildflower Hike at Nokomis (Old Woman Bay). 2 to 3 hours -- moderately easy. Leader: Pete Stinnissen, 856-4270. All meet at Post Office at 6:30 pm for car pool.

12 July: Bridget Lake Hike. 3 to 4 hours -- moderately difficult (bring a snack). Leader: Pete Stinnissen, 856-4270. All meet at Post Office at 1:00 pm for car pool.

16 August: Peat Mountain (Shore of Lake Superior). 3 to 4 hours -- moderately difficult. Leader: Dorothy Egan, 856-2226. All meet at Post Office at 1:00 pm for car pool.

20 September: Gargantua (Shore of Lake Superior). 3 to 4 hours -- moderately easy (bring a snack). Leader: Pete Burgoyne, 856-2290. All meet at Post Office at 1:00 pm for car pool.

4 October: Ontario Hiking Day. We will walk from Post Office at 1:00 pm to "Vallee Park".

Outing leaders are unpaid volunteers. You are welcome to participate, but you must do so at your own risk. You should be reasonably fit. Always bring appropriate footwear and extra clothing and water (coffee, tea or soup in a thermos is welcome on a cold day). Some of our outings are into relatively remote areas. If you are interested and have any questions, please contact one of the people listed below. Transportation to hike locations from meeting places is by car pool.

Contacts: Tom Allinson - 942-0768; Steve Taylor - 759-2480; Susan Graham - 949-4105

**WORK PARTY
#1 1992**

On April 25, 13 hardy souls (we don't have any other kind of souls) set out, under icky cloudy skies on the year's first work party.

The access road was so soft we couldn't drive to where we had intended. In any case after a 30 minute walk we approached our target area. This portion of the trail had been cut over and was a mess. Our chain saw rose to the challenge and away we went. Al Comfort proved to be a maestro of the chain saw and he made short work of the tops that littered the trail. The folds with the bow saws, pruners, and clippers followed providing a final trim.

Gail Andrew nailed (aluminum nails) on our new high tech plastic markers that will replace the old paint blazes eventually. They do indeed stand out. Incidentally, Gail denies the charge that she hit her thumb about as often as she hit the nails.

Everyone was in great form and we finished clearing by 3:00 pm. After a 45 minute walk out it was off to YE OLDE DONUT SHOPPE for goodies.

One of the ladies showed such superb prowess in handling a small bow saw that she was re-named "LITTLE SAW", an honourable title indeed! Thus another legend was created. - Tom Allinson

**CANADA, U.S. TO TRY
'ZERO DISCHARGE' ON
SUPERIOR**

Canada and the United States are to announce a major agreement to protect Lake Superior - the cleanest of the Great Lakes - from persistent toxic chemicals.

The lake is to become a test zone for the "zero-discharge" anti-pollution policy, as recommended by the International Joint Commission (IJC) last year.

The agreement will effectively ban any new plant which discharges persistent toxins into the lake, said officials who

spoke on condition that they not be named. Existing sources of toxic pollution on the lake are to be gradually phased out.

Environment Minister Jean Charest is to endorse the agreement at a meeting of the IJC in Traverse City, Michigan.

It would be the biggest step yet toward the goal of zero-discharge in the Great Lakes ecosystem. The goal is enshrined in the 1978 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, but little progress has been made in achieving it.

Zero-discharge is the principle that no discharge of persistent toxic chemicals shall be permitted.

--Sault Star

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New as well for 1991, we will be offering the fine line of OSTRUM packs and bags, internationally acclaimed as the best on the market.

159 Stanley St., Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. P6A 3K5
Tom and Linda Weldon

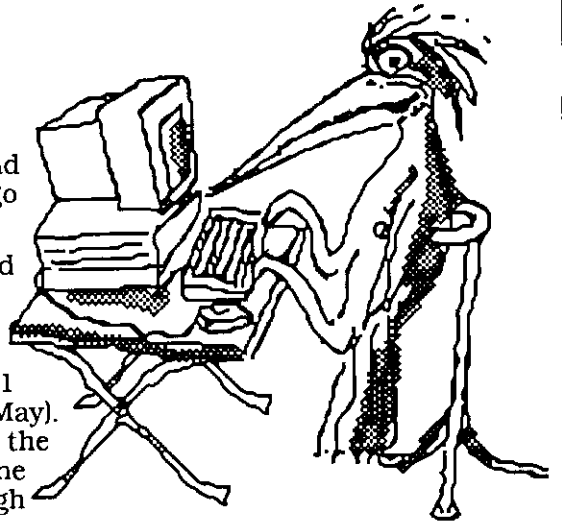
EDITOR'S NOTES

So far we are holding up in spite of creeping deadlines and scattered files! With a little luck, things will continue to go well.

We have been informed that the Executive committee would like the newsletter to be a little more timely in the Spring and Fall, and so we are suggesting the following deadlines for materials for inclusion: 1 Sept. for the Fall issue (to appear 1 October), 1 January for the Winter Issue (to appear 1 February), and 1 April for the Spring Issue (to appear 1 May). This will permit us to get outing and other information to the members on a timely basis. We hope it will also nudge the clubs into planning outings and other activities early enough for other members to participate.

We would like to have reports from all the club activities to include in the newsletter, along with any other items of interest.

- Peter Frederick & Pim Delfgou



NEWS FROM OTHER CLUBS

The Ganaraska Trail Association has completed marking and mapping their trail, which is now usable for it's entire length.

This year is the 25th anniversary of the official opening of the Bruce Trail. Congrats to the folks at the Bruce Trail Association!

The Rideau Trail Association has done some re-routing on the trail. If you wish to hike it, get the new information! It has been clearly marked, but the route book is incorrect in places.

LANDOWNER CHANGES

The VTA would greatly appreciate notification of changes in ownership of land which the trail crosses. Landowners who are selling property can contact any of the Exec Board members if and when a sale takes place. This will allow us to contact new landowners promptly and avoid any unpleasantness as a result of a new landowner being unaware of the existence of the Voyager trail on their property.

THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING!!

The Michipicoten section of the VTA will be hosting a group of Russian and US kayakers, who are returning a visit made to Lake Bikal by US and Canadian kayakers last year. The group circumnavigated Lake Baikal last year, and are repeating their journey in a similar manner around Lake Superior this summer. Plans are not as yet finalized, but this ought to be a very interesting event. Peter Stinnissen has more details.

COLDBUSTER BARS

We have received a request for information on the effectiveness of the "Coldbuster" candy bar. If anyone has tried these, knows someone who has tried them, or has even in fact SEEN one of them, please send the info on to the Newsletter! We will report whatever we hear about this product.

Q. Where does the farmer take his sheep to get its wool trimmed?

A. To the ba-aa-aa-ar Be-ee-ee-er shop.



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Rick Sowerby

VTA SAYS ADIEU TO WINTER OF 1992

The winter of 1992 was long, and ended late. Nevertheless, it meant that eight VTA skiers squeezed one more winter cookout off the Carpin Beach Road area before the belated arrival of spring.

The trail started off a little icy as we made the long climb up the gravel pit. The temperature was quite comfortable, after record lows the previous week. At the top, we entered the forest.

The terrain was varied with easy skiing through the sugar and red maples and tough going where we bulled our way through a black spruce bog and a cedar swamp. We found tracks of a fox on our hill climb, and a pileated woodpecker on a dead maple.

We finally reached a beaver pond where we located a nice lunch spot. With plenty of firewood around, we started a campfire and ate lunch. Bill Robinson and I started a photography session, taking pictures - you guessed it - of VTA skiers having lunch. We spent some time afterwards trading camp stories around the fire as we basked in the warm sunshine.

After the cookout, we went down along a creek where Betty Nassoly motioned us over to observe otter tracks and a slide. We edged our way

along a narrow ledge and through an obstacle course of trees, finally reaching a well-used snowmobile trail.

One snowmobile came by before we crossed over to the inevitable shack in the bush. This shack even advertised hot dogs, hot chocolate, and coffee for sale and a room for rent. This must be an awfully cold place for accommodations.

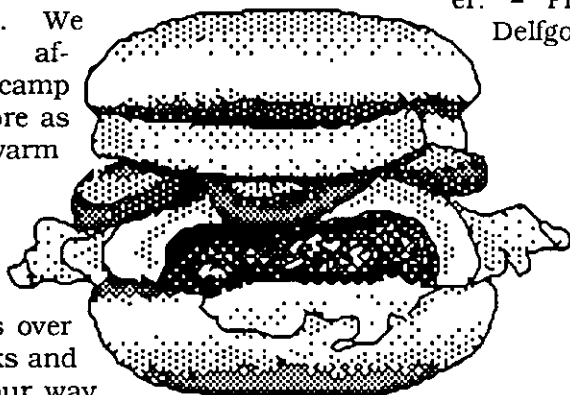
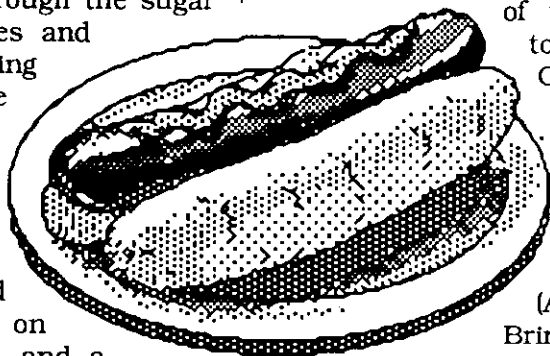
Bill demonstrated ski jumping off an old school bus parked beside the shack. Ken Baldwin and Betty debated whether to film it for America's Funniest Home Videos, but alas, we had no camcorder. Since I

am a member of the Photography Club, I followed their first basic rule, the rule of ABC (Always

Bring Camera).

Perhaps we should include camcorders as well except they are too big and unwieldy to carry while hiking or backpacking.

I'd like to give special thanks to Tom Allinson for organising this wonderful hike, and mother nature for supplying the sunshine and warmer weather. - Pim Delfgou



WHO BLAZED THIS TRAIL, ANYWAY???

Given the length and low usage level of part of the Voyager trail, and the fact that we do not have manpower or time to routinely inspect the trail in its entirety, it might be a good idea to let the local club President or the Exec Board know the condition of any part of the VTA Trail you might hike. This is most important for the more unused or remote sections. This will give the Trail Master a chance to re-blaze and clear sections in poor shape or re-route the trail before someone has a difficult time following it. It also permits us to keep the trail description up to date. Logging operations, gravel pits, roadbuilding, and a host of natural causes can disrupt the trail marking. Reports of these events allow us to keep the trail usable.

Q. What is Smokey The Bear's middle name?

A. The!

TRAIL MIX

The Winter 1992 issue of the VTA newsletter mentioned that you may submit newsletter articles on computer data disks. A word of caution is in store. There has been an epidemic of computer viruses recently. If you plan on entering material for the newsletter on a disk, be sure to check your computer for viruses with scanner programs before typing. We don't want our own computers to become infected, or to spread the virus to others. Remember: computer viruses, like human viruses are contagious.

Insurance against getting lost in the

Big Piney Woods from Tom Allinson:

I was chatting with various people at the Saulteaux Clubs annual dinner when I was introduced to a seasoned bush traveller, who offered the following advice re getting turned around in the woods. "You should always carry a pack of playing cards with you &, if you become lost, simply commence playing solitaire. In no time, there will be someone gazing over your shoulder, murmuring things like 'the red five goes on the black six!!'"

From Derek Fletcher's (MMP) 1992 calender -- "A typical Ontario family spent about \$2500 on energy in 1986 - and more than half of that pays for gasoline. Try walking -- you'll burn

calories, not money!"

Canadian backpackers encountered a grizzly bear on their trek through the woods. Immediately one of them removed his pack and as quickly as possible put on his running shoes. The other stood in amazement and said "That is no good, the grizzly can run a lot faster than you." 'Ah' said his friend, 'but I don't have to run faster than the bear, I only have to run faster than you.' [Quoted in More of Mould's Medical Anecdotes]

NOTE FOR TRAILMIX - Sometimes a note or two is needed to fill the newsletter. If anyone has a point worth noting or a short joke, pass them on. These are needed.

Volunteers - Cont. from p. 8

cross their property.

We do not all have the time to get deeply involved, but we can choose the level of involvement suitable to ourselves and our particular situation. Just decide if you want to take on a particular job and let someone know if circumstances change and you can not do it. There are many things to do, some of which require only a little of you time. Photography, writing

an item for the newsletter, giving rides for hikes, and making phone calls are a few examples. Everything helps!

Even very simple things help. Let the leader of a hike know you enjoyed the trip (or didn't), along with what other trips might be of interest to you. Pass on your thoughts -- none of us are mind-readers, and we are all open to suggestions to improve our organization and activities.

What does a volunteer get out

of the club? Perhaps the example of Norm Ledett might illustrate best. Norm wanted everything life had to offer. He started by getting a wife and family who made him happy and proud. He also remembered that some of his happiest times were with his father in the woods. After retirement, with his brother he started enjoying outings laying out a route for a hiking trail, and got more and more hooked. As with all jewels, the treasures he found were best used by showing them to others. He took a sly pride in his stubbornness cutting a steep path to a spectacular lookout just to show that at 75 he was just going up the hill, not over it. He and his brother have received several awards for their efforts over the years, and countless hikers have enjoyed the fruits of his labours.

- Jack Smit



VOLUNTEERS

Participation in the Voyageur Trail Club is in two main areas. One is in outdoor activities and the other is organization.

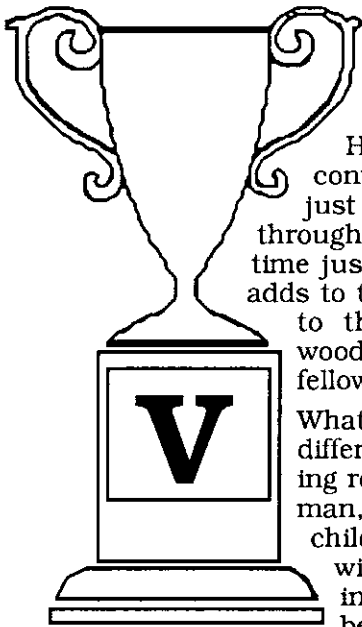
What kind of person can make a difference in an outing? Anyone who walks for half an hour on the trail and walks back without leaving any garbage has participated in the most important part of

Voyageur Trail work: creating a beaten path for themselves and others to follow. The more often a person gets out and the further they walk the more they help the trail.

However it is possible to make a major contribution in committing yourself to just one outing. Two bridges were built through the help of people who come one time just to help. Anyone coming on a hike adds to the safety of others as well as adding to the enjoyment of talking about the woods. I have learned a lot by listening to fellow hikers.

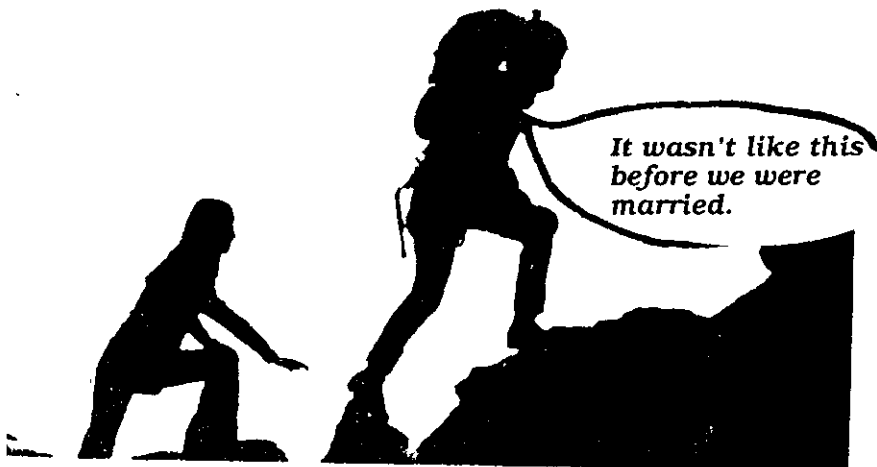
What kind of person can make a positive difference? A six year old had fun painting rocks white to mark the trail. A young man, busy with a family of three preschool children has often come out, sometimes with his family. One man with a hole in his throat due to cancer, enjoyed the beauty of nature. His compass work,

trail finding, and encouragement was a major reason for having a trail for others to follow. Despite not being able to talk on the phone, he always made sure that the person organizing the outing knew if he was coming or not. As well if people needed a ride to hike he was ready to help. A grandmother made an overnight backpacking trip by providing enjoyable company and helping keep two small children amused. A blind lady phoned people for outings, provided casseroles for get-togethers as well as going on



many outings including overnight backpacking trips. Almost anyone can enjoy the beauty, challenge, and fun of an outing.

Besides being a means of enjoying the outdoors the Voyageur Trail club is also an organization and provides an interesting learning experience in what makes any organization work. A club is just the same as a family, a house, a car, a career, or a cottage. It is something that requires attention. Sometimes a small detail such as a quart of oil or a word of praise for a family member yields results far beyond the effort required. In a way a club is one of life's real bargains in terms of satisfaction. For \$10, and a few hours a month, you can get prestige as well as the satisfaction of making a real difference. You meet interesting people who enjoy the same things you do and who have been involved for years and are happy to assist you. However there is also a major challenge. As an organizer in a small club you are a one-in-a-hundred person. Despite the often small but critical number of club organizers there are a lot of allies both in and out of the club. For every club member on the trail there are five other people helping. The Ministry of Natural Resources has put our trail on their maps, given advice, supplied Junior Rangers, and co-sponsored projects. Shell Oil and the Mountain Equipment Co-op have donated funds. The local newspaper has sent out reporters, given free publicity, and printed everything given them. Landowners have given their kind permission to



See Volunteers, p. 7