



NO. 121 FALL 2015

Published by the

**VOYAGEUR TRAIL  
ASSOCIATION**

P.O. BOX 20040

150 Churchill Blvd.

Sault Ste. Marie, ON

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[www.voyageurtrail.ca](http://www.voyageurtrail.ca)

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

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

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# VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS



No. 121, Fall 2015

EDITOR: Fiona Ortiz

## Loss of VTA Friend

A long-time friend of the VTA has passed away in Sault Ste. Marie. Horst Wetzl was a VTA landowner but much, much more. In addition to greeting passersby to his land at the end of Peoples Road, he built a small cabin for resting on the trail, put up a hand-made bench in honour of the late Steve Taylor, and led many an outing. He will particularly be remembered for his bushwhack skiing to "the canyon" and his famous Mother's Day hike, always culminating with a lunch of campfire-style hot dogs at his property. Horst really enjoyed meeting people and saw fellow hikers as friends and neighbours. He will be sorely missed.

A memorial hike for Horst is scheduled in November. Check the outing schedule for details.



*Horst with his dog Toby in 1996 on the way to the "Canyon".*



### Volunteer Opportunities

#### We Need You!!

**A number of volunteer positions are available with the VTA.**

A new treasurer and publicity person are needed for the coordinating council. Our current treasurer is stepping down and while Kelsey (publicity) has continued to maintain the VTA Facebook page from New Zealand she cannot perform the other duties! Guidebook Coordinator Steve Dominy has also indicated that he would like to step down. The roles and responsibilities of these positions are outlined in this newsletter. Please contact Carole Blaquiére by e-mail ([caroleblaquiere@yahoo.ca](mailto:caroleblaquiere@yahoo.ca)) or by phone (705-649-2235) if you are interested in helping out.

If you are interested, have a look at the detailed position descriptions on page 6 & 7.





## Musings on the Orphan Lake Trail *by Paula Dunning*



Sometimes hiking trails are the route to an adventure. But sometimes, they're old friends. That's how I feel about the Orphan Lake trail in Lake Superior Provincial Park. It's my favourite trail in the park, and I don't think Jack and I have missed a year on that trail for the past thirty years. (As we get a little older and a little less energetic, one of the reasons we choose it is the fact that it's a loop—once you set out on the 8-km trail, there's no turning back halfway.) It's where we've always taken guests who have the stamina for a real hike and an interest in seeing the variety of ecosystems present in the park.

That's what we were doing in late October, twenty-five years ago, when we invited a couple of friends to accompany us and a visitor from New Zealand for a day of hiking. It was a chilly day and there had been a dusting of snow the night before. By the time we reached the trailhead, it was late morning and we headed briskly toward the lake, stopping at the Orphan Lake lookout and the second lookout for a snack and a broader vista. It was too chilly to lounge along the lake for long, so we headed back along the Baldhead River and stopped for lunch in a protected nook near the waterfall. It was just after lunch when I confidently jumped from one rock to the next—and collapsed. In dreadful pain, I could put no weight on my right ankle. A short rest and several failed attempts to walk later, our friend Katy headed

back out the trail to get help while Jack, Dennis, and our New Zealand visitor (whose name I've long forgotten) fashioned a stretcher from raincoats and pine branches and began the arduous journey out.

I remember the pain and the jolting, but mostly I remember thinking my ride out was a picnic compared to their job, lugging that stretcher with a not-insubstantial me aboard. I dreaded the possibility that—after all—I would have a minor sprain and be walking normally in the morning. I needn't have worried!

The broken ankle healed, and the next year our first hike of the season was Orphan Lake. Get back on that horse! We never walk the trail without a nod to broken-ankle rock. We also never walk it without pausing where "The Tree" used to stand, just before the trail splits to create a loop. "The Tree" was a photo op for kids and grandkids, its three vertical branches growing from a horizontal branch creating a perfect seat for tree-climbers of all sizes. Alas, the seat-branch is now gone, but we always identify the tree on our way down the trail: an old friend.

Several years ago, a fire burned through a swath of forest between the high lookout and Orphan Lake. That first year we were appalled by the devastation. But it's been a lesson in nature's resilience as we've watched the forest reclaim the land, and every year Jack takes a picture of the post-fire recovery. I'm not the most adventurous or energetic of hikers; in fact, I'm more a walker than a hiker. But Orphan Lake is an old friend, and as long as I'm up to it I'll be paying it a visit at least once a year.



*Paula Dunning being carried out of the Orphan Lake Trail 25 years ago on an improvised stretcher.*



## Annual General Meetings

Hike Ontario's 41st Annual General Meeting is being held in conjunction with the Maitland Trail Association's 40th Anniversary and their 'El Camino de Sinuoso Rio Maitland' event, which takes place from Sept. 25 until Sept. 27. For more information:

<http://www.maitlandtrail.ca/el-camino-maitland-2015/>

**El Camino de Sinuoso  
Rio Maitland**  
The Way of the Winding Maitland River

**September 26 & 27, 2015**

Hike the Maitland Trail  
from Auburn to Goderich (49 km)  
or a shorter distance  
if you prefer!

**Saturday Evening Feast**  
prepared by Chef Devin Tabor  
at Knights of Columbus, Goderich

**hike ontario**  
experience it...one step at a time

**PUB NIGHT**  
Friday, September 25  
from 5 to 10 pm  
Joe Friday's on the Square  
Goderich

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
Saturday, September 26  
at 5 pm Knights of Columbus  
Goderich

**MAITLAND TRAIL ASSOCIATION**  
40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**COST:**  
\$25 - Early Registration Fee (before September 1st)  
\$30 - After September 1st  
\$30 - Saturday Evening Feast  
Registration fee includes hiking map, check points and shuttling

Register on-line at  
[www.maitlandtrail.ca](http://www.maitlandtrail.ca)

Sponsored by: **Libro** credit union

The 2015 VTA Annual General Meeting will be held at the clubhouse in Elliot Lake on October 17th at 10am. Lunch will be provided to those who attend, after which we will be hiking in the area. Call Carole Blaquiere for details 705-649-2235 or email [caroleblaquiere@yahoo.ca](mailto:caroleblaquiere@yahoo.ca)

### Coming soon!!

There is a new hiking bear coming soon to the Ontario Travel Information Centre in Sault Ste. Marie. This new bear will replace the ever popular Harvey the Bear which, after many years of faithful service, had to be retired. Look to the VTA Facebook site to see the story of both Harvey's demise and the creation of the new bear.

After the new bear is installed at the Queen St. address, we will be holding a bear naming contest.

Tentative installation date is mid-October.

## Trailhead North Meeting *by Carole Blaquiere*

The VTA was represented by myself (President), Chris Kuntz (Membership) and Kirsten Spence (Vice President West) at the Trailhead North conference held on April 17th -18th in Thunder Bay. Over the two days, we attended as many of the presentations as we could and tried to learn something that we could use to improve our organization. Here are some of the highlights:

Parks Canada: It was suggested that trails should tell a story. What are our stories? If you have story to tell about the Voyageur Trail, let us know.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation: new funding over the next 10 years has been announced and there will be some changes to make the application process simpler. The Action Areas they will consider funding are: Active People, Connected People, Green People, Inspired People, and Promising Young People. Applications will be accepted in late autumn 2015.

Tourism: Trails are still considered new and innovative products where tourism is involved. We could apply for funding to establish a base audit of the entire trail. If you are interested in helping out with this initiative, please let us know.

First Nations: Kwewiskang Trail – Pic River has been the home for First Nations for over 12000 years and they have been using trails the entire time. First Nations like to tell their story.

Fat Biking Craze: Fat bikes (bikes with very large tires that can be used year-round, even in winter) allow for a new type of cycling experience. It is an activity that attracts mountain and touring cyclists equally. If you build a fat bike trail, the manufacturers of fat bikes (such as Salsa, 45 North) will promote the trail on their website. Stats indicate that the fat cyclists may buy guidebooks and use the Voyageur Trail and that they use a lot of word-of-mouth marketing.

Auditing and Mapping Trails: Geo Audit is a software program originally made for the downhill ski industry, where risk management is critical and there is a need for frequent auditing and well-kept documentation. This software has been adapted for parks and trails. It was tested and used for the Kinghorn Trail lease agreement. It is an App-based tool used to record/audit trail inventory (anything from benches to blazes) and to inspect those objects. This looks to be an excellent tool that may be of use to the Voyageur Trail. There is a substantial cost and we may need to find additional funding or develop a partnership with another organization such as the Heritage Coast if we would like to use it.

Medivac Success – planning for emergencies: The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is one of the organizations that conducts search and rescue in Ontario. They report that the number of calls is up for search and rescue operations, but the severity of those calls is down. Often the callers are simply unprepared for the conditions they encounter. Trails need better signage so that casual users don't get lost. Unfortunately the OPP no longer registers trip itineraries. If you have expert knowledge of an area, the OPP maintains a database of contacts for search references and can add your name if you are interested.

Ornge conducts medical evacuations in Ontario but is under restrictions at nighttime. Personnel on board are fully trained EMTs, but are not allowed to perform any type search and rescue, so if the victim is not found immediately they are required to head back to base. It's best to communicate the location in degrees, minutes, and decimal minutes and if you contact them via cell phone give them your cell number. If you have knowledge of an area or special skills that could help in a search and rescue operation consider signing up for the Search and Rescue database of contacts by emailing [scott.taylor@opp.ca](mailto:scott.taylor@opp.ca)

Trail Inventories – Superior North: Trail inventories have been completed from Dorion to Terrace Bay for NMBA and then to Pic River for Communities Futures Development Corp.

*Con't on page 7*

## 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**

**Mon., Sept. 21** ~ Saulteaux Voyageur Trail Club bi-monthly meeting at 7pm. Location TBA. Call Gayle at 705-942-1891.

**\*Sun., Sept. 27** ~ Hike Grifon Peak to see the fall colours. This hike is not for the feint of heart. For meeting place and time call Mark at 705-254-2356.

**\*Sun., Oct. 4** ~ Hike in the Little Rapids area in honour of World Animal Day. For more info, call Dan at 705-842-0123.

**Sat., Oct. 10** ~ Work party on the Red Rock section of the Tom Allinson Side Trail with Gail (705-942-0768). Bring lunch and water. Tools and a surprise dessert will be provided!

**\*Sat., Oct. 17** at 10AM - The 2015 Voyageur Trail Association Annual General Meeting will be held at the clubhouse in Elliot Lake. Lunch will be provided to those who attend, after which we will be hiking in the area. Call Carole for details 705-649-2235 or email caroleblaquiere@yahoo.ca

**\*Sun., Oct. 25 @ 1PM.** ~ Haunted Family Hike. This hike is suitable for families with children and will include a spooky scavenger hunt and spooky surprises! Call Dawn at 705-649-4936 for details.

**Sat., Oct. 31** ~ Hike with the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organizations and see displays from Sault College at the Sault Canal between 10AM and 4PM. For more info, call Mike at 705-779-3409.

**\*Sat., Nov. 14** ~ Hike with Carole and Chris likely outside SSM area. Call Carole for details 705-649-2235 or email caroleblaquiere@yahoo.ca

**Mon., Nov. 16 @ 7PM.** ~ Saulteaux Voyageur Trail Club bi-monthly meeting. Location TBA. After the business meeting, we will begin planning our winter outings. For more info, call Gayle at 705-942-1891.

**Saturday, Nov 21** - Join the Soo Nats on their hike of the Wetzl Loops - A late fall memorial hike on the loops off Peoples Road named after the late Horst Wetzl. Bring a lunch & water. Leader: Val Walker [705-253-7044](tel:705-253-7044) Meet: 10 am @ Market Mall (near Country Style Donuts)

**\*Sat., Dec. 5** ~ Hike (or snowshoe depending on snow conditions) with Carole and Chris likely outside the SSM area. Call Carole for details 705-649-2235 or email caroleblaquiere@yahoo.ca

**Sat., Dec. 26th** ~ Boxing Day Snowshoe/Hike at Hiawatha Highlands with Don (705-989-

8817). We'll enjoy some refreshments afterwards in the clubhouse. Meet at the Hiawatha Highlands clubhouse (780 Landslide Road) at 11:00 AM. Please leave your pets at home.

**\*Sun., Dec. 27, 10 AM.** ~ Hike or snowshoe north of the city with Dawn. Call Dawn at 705-649-4936 for details.



Tier Lake, Stokely Section of the VTA, September 2015



Havilland Bay causeway and Hwy 17 seen from the Havilland Bay lookout September 2015



**Retrospective:** In this edition, we looked back at some articles that appeared in the newsletter over 30 years ago. Here are two reports of a hike that took place on April 28, 1985, from then nine-year-old Rachel Squire and the late Tom Allinson.

### **The Hiking Trip** by Rachel Squire

Once, on a sunny morning, my Dad's friend Lyle came over. I was glad to meet him. He ate breakfast over at our house. After breakfast we went on a hike. We met at Stedman's. Lots of other people were there too. We had to put cars at two different places. Then we squished into a couple of cars and drove to the start of the hike at Creek Road. A sign there said No GARBAGE, but we saw lots of garbage, even five bottle caps. We started on the hike and headed towards a lookout. When we got there, there was a big cliff so Mom told Laura (my sister) and I not to go near the edge. Laura, mommy, daddy, and I sat on a big rock while Lyle took pictures of us. It was a pretty picture with the steel plant in the background. Then, we left the lookout and hiked to a river. The river was skinny enough for the grownups to get across, but too wide for the kids. Some of the grownups put one foot on each side of the river and lifted the children across. Then we climbed a steep hill to another lookout. It was a nice one. Then we went back into the bush. We hiked a lot and I even did some cartwheels and a front walkover.

Then we were at another lookout where we had lunch. We had cheese, salami, trail mix, and juice. It was good. I ate just with my family and Lyle. Lyle ate with us because he forgot to make a lunch.

We continued on the hike. We walked a long way when we came to some snow which was about NINE FEET DEEP. We all got soaked. I was wet from my toes to my knees. We came to another river and I was scared to cross it because it looked like it had rapids in it. Patrick cut a log to make a bridge so we could cross it. After crossing, we had to climb up a hill. Laura fell here. She was all muddy so we had to change her shirt. She wore my pink sweatshirt. Then we walked a little and I fell. I had no other shirt to change into so I wore my dirty shirt. We hiked until we came to another river. It was a big one. At first, we didn't see any place to cross it, but then Patrick found a bridge. Finally we could get across. First, some of the grownups crossed it, then Mom helped Laura and I get across.

Then, we climbed up a hill and started the last part of the hike. We came out of the bush at Maki Road. While we were walking down the road, a dog came over to us. Mom wanted to take a picture of him but he ran away too fast. We walked a little bit down the road and then we had to cross a farmer's field to get back to the bush. Mom

took a picture of a rusty tractor in an old barn. We walked through the bush and then the hike ended at Korah camp. It was a nice hike.

### **Spring Hike Saulteaux Style** by Tom Allinson

The Saulteaux section of the Voyageur Trail Association had its first scheduled hike in 1985 on Sunday, April 28. Fifteen adults and two children met at Stedman's parking lot at 10:00 a.m. under a sunny sky. Cars were pooled and eventually spotted at both ends and in the middle of the section to be hiked (from Old Creek Road to Goulais Ave.—11.5 km).

The trail was a bit wet with snow under foot in the shaded sections but it was great to be out seeing the first spring flowers. A couple of the creeks were still 'in flood' and presented a bit of a challenge in getting across. The Bennett Creek crossing was particularly interesting. The 'ford' was narrow, but fairly swift and deep. It appeared for a moment that Steve Taylor was going to do his impersonation of a salmon swimming upstream to spawn, but luckily he made a last-second recovery.

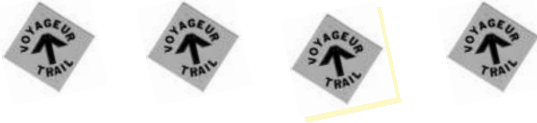
Patrick Capper spent a lot of time ahead of the pack, building 'bridges' and generally easing the creek crossing for all concerned. A great big ATTA BOY goes to Pat for his efforts.

To sum up, I would say that the hike was enjoyed by all, although the writer received some comments to the effect that the pace was a bit slow.

### **VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**

**Treasurer/Tool Master:** Receives, records and deposits all VTA monies. Prepares and distributes cheques for regular VTA expenditures. Issues receipts for tax-deductible donations. Maintains accurate financial records and reports on financial matters at meetings. Audits monthly bank statements for accuracy and works with appointed auditors to double-check the financial records. Prepares the annual tax return and handles all other government correspondence related to finances. Keeps a written record of and coordinates the bulk purchases of tools for the Clubs in the Association.

**Publicity Director:** Prepares and distributes brochures and other printed publicity materials for the association. Prepares and distributes press releases for major events. Maintains the VTA display and arranges to set it up at significant venues. Speaks to the media about the association and its clubs. Maintains (if capable) the VTA website, or arranges for someone to do this and coordinates the information presented there.



Con't from page 4

Importance of Tourism and Trails in Northern Ontario: David MacLachlan, Executive Director of Tourism Northern Ontario (TNO), explained the role of the organization. The Voyageur Trail is unique in that it spans all three sections of their area of oversight. The annual meeting of TNO will be held in Sault Ste. Marie in November 2015. A possible joint venture between the VTA and TNO would be to explore the possibility of doing trail inventory from Sault Ste. Marie to Pic River.

The first day ended with a talk from Joannie McGuffin on the Group of Seven Superior Trail and a presentation from Dana Meise on his hike across Canada on the Trans Canada Trail. More information on day 2 events will appear in the next newsletter.

**Guidebook Coordinator:** Maintains up-to-date descriptions and maps of the Voyageur Trail Guidebook as submitted by members. Prepares and submits reports of trail changes for the newsletter. Oversees the preparation of the guidebook for printing and maintains the supply of guidebooks for sale. Contacts businesses to sell the guidebook to the general public and keeps them stocked for the purpose. Sells topographic maps.

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## VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION REGISTRATION & STORE (please print legibly) 09/15

(For more details and to purchase products and memberships visit our secure on-line store at [www.voyageurtrail.ca](http://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 December 1, 2015.**

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Voyageur Trail Association,  
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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](http://www.voyageurtrail.ca)

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705-848-6035

**Voyageur Trail News—Fall 2015**



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**Data Management -**  
Bob Sinclair 705-946-3126

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vacant

**Director(s) -at-Large (2) -**  
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Amber Jones

**Vice-President Central -**  
Vacant

**Hike Ontario  
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Steve Dominy 705-946-2484

**General Secretary -** Tricia  
Kelly

*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 light-weight 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

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- 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): \_\_\_\_\_