



# VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

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## MESSAGE FROM THE INCOMING PRESIDENT

by Larry Gringorten

I am pleased to have this opportunity to introduce myself as your new president for 1995-96. During my 10 years as a member of the VTA and four years as general secretary, I was able to observe my three immediate predecessors, Pete Stinnissen, Steve Taylor and Steve Dominy, in the role of president and get a sense of the demands of the job. Their efforts and achievements are a formidable challenge to me to keep the momentum going. They brought an energy and commitment to the task that will be hard to match.



***The above photo is a tribute to all our public spirited landowners. Our hats are off to you for facilitating the many pleasures of hiking in the northern woods. We are grateful for your continued support and wish you a happy and prosperous 1996!***

The VTA, as I learned at last fall's board meeting, has markedly boosted its public profile and continues to enjoy a strong membership (now at a 10-year high of 179 registered individuals and families). This year also saw a significant increase in participation in hiking activities. These statistics are gratifying indeed, and are eloquent testimony to the VTA's success as a hiking organization. The underpinning of this success has been the dedicated

efforts of a relatively small number of persons who have given of their time to organizing and publicizing the VTA's numerous activities, and conducting its business affairs. My appeal to you now is a call for a higher level of volunteer input into the actual running of the VTA. We need a larger pool of volunteers to draw on for executive and committee positions to help run the VTA and implement its programs. Local clubs need more people to come out on work parties to help refurbish and

extend trails in their regions.

It is my hope that I and the executive, with help from the general membership, can formulate an agenda that will address these needs and bring us closer to achieving the ultimate goal of a continuous trail from Manitoulin Island to Thunder Bay. I look forward to working with this year's executive and interacting with VTA members during my term as president. With your support, we will enjoy a successful year. Happy hiking!



**NIPIGON RIVER  
RECREATION TRAIL  
OFFICIALLY OPENED**

On a bright, sunny Saturday morning (Sept. 23, 1995) in Nipigon, Economic Development Officer Bruce Pritchard emceed ceremonies marking the official opening of the Nipigon River Recreation Trail joining Nipigon and Red Rock. Local and regional politicians, Reeves, business and government officials were given an opportunity to speak to the crowd of about 150 gathered at the Nipigon Marina. Steve Dominy and Gayle Phillips represented the Voyageur Trail Association, with Steve nailing up Voyageur Trail logos on the signs at each end of the trail and formally announcing the inclusion of the trail in our northern Ontario system. Gayle and Steve stayed for a barbeque lunch and a hike along the trail, and were later rewarded with a certificate of achievement for their efforts.

The eight km trail (plus side trails) has been constructed to the highest standards, using gravel, wood chips, bridges and even a causeway. It follows the scenic Nipigon River, and hikers are rewarded with beautiful views over the river and Nipigon Bay. A full colour brochure describing the trail is available from the VTA upon request. The trail will also be included in the 3rd edition of the guidebook to be published this winter. *(For your chance to see this trail, see "Let's Try Out the New Guidebook Week" notice on page 6.)*



**THE EXCURSION TO  
CLIMB JACOB'S  
LADDER by Pim Delfgou**

A dozen enthusiastic trekkers assembled outside the Red Lobster on a beautiful autumn Sunday and

headed north to Batchewana Mountain. We ventured off the highway past Chippewa Falls on a logging road. The road started innocently enough, but became rougher until we reached a point that we all had to pile into Gary Koteles' truck to reach the base of the hill. Bushwhacking was the order of the day for there were no established trails. Gary led us up the hill, but we were left wondering why we had to carry pressure treated 2x4s with us. We noticed he had this monster backpack on and wondered if he was going to build a house on the summit.

We ploughed through the thick underbrush, and an hour later reached the summit. At this point, Gary proceeded to unload his tools and more lumber and started to build a ladder while the rest of us showed more common sense and had lunch, soaking in the warm sunshine.

Once the ladder was complete, we all climbed to the top. We could see quite some distance to Lake Superior as well as Turkey Lake and the Batchewana River. We even caught a glimpse of the old Tribag Mine.

We took a roundabout way back down to the road when we followed the wrong flagging tape and wound up on a watershed study line. Nevertheless, we made it back safe and sound. We stopped on the road and took a look back at "Jacob's Ladder" standing out over the hill as a monument to our visit. We wondered what future visitors to the area will say when they see this strange thing on the hill.



**NEW GUIDEBOOK  
ALMOST COMPLETE  
by Steve Dominy  
Chair, Guidebook Committee**

By the time you read this, the new, greatly improved 3rd edition of the Voyageur Trail Guidebook will be

undergoing final proofing before going to the printer. A binder format has been chosen which will permit ease of updating as updates are produced. Also the individual, two-colour maps can be removed, placed in a plastic ziplock bag and put in your pocket for the day's outing. There is no need to carry the entire binder with you. Our intention is to make the guidebook available to non-members, at a premium price, through book stores and outdoor equipment suppliers.

Activities undertaken on this project in 1995 included: 1) conducting an audit of most trail access points to ensure that they are in good condition; 2) securing an agreement with Geomatics Canada to reproduce topographic maps; 3) hosting trail volunteers from southern Ontario and Britain who completed the Goulais River Section; 4) measuring several re-routes and the new Marathon Coastal Trail; 5) arranging to use the mapping software, computer and printer at the Clean North office in Sault Ste. Marie; 6) purchasing building materials, hand tools and a motorized brush saw for trail clearing; 7) constructing a boardwalk and steps using pressure-treated lumber. In early 1996, a full-colour brochure\* will be produced to advertise the new trail guide and entice new members to join, and trail signs will be made.

Generous support for the production of the guidebook and related trail improvements has been received from the following sources: Mountain Equipment Co-op (\$5,000), Laidlaw Foundation (\$5,000), Shell Environmental Fund (\$5,000), Charles Ivy Foundation (through Hike Ontario) (\$750), and Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) (\$5,895). Under the Section 25 program, the HRDC funds supported the hiring of two people



*(cont'd. on page 3)*