



VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

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PO BOX 20040 150 CHURCHILL BLVD. SAULT STE. MARIE ON P6A 6W3

INFORMATION LINE 705-253-5353 or 1-800-393-5353 (where available)
& select message #9999 on your touchtone phone

No. 63

EDITOR: Virve Männiste Squire

SPRING 1996

3RD EDITION OF GUIDEBOOK IS OUT

Voyageur Hiking Trail GUIDEBOOK



Your patience is finally being rewarded! The long awaited new Voyageur Hiking Trail Guidebook is now available. At over 120 pages, two colour maps, and housed in an attractive six-ring binder, this edition is a major expansion and improvement over previous editions. Added Trail Sections include the Nipigon, Marathon, Coureur de Bois, Lake Superior Provincial Park and Pukaskwa National Park. Updates can be easily inserted into the book, and trail maps readily removed. There is also a wealth of useful trail information for users.

This Guidebook has been over a year in the making, and required many hundreds of hours of volunteer labour. Two of the key individuals involved are Karen Zhou and Dan

by Steve Dominy

Wheeler, who prepared maps and trail descriptions, respectively. In addition, I would like to thank all the committee members whose time and dedication made this all possible, as well as the many others who made contributions too numerous to mention. These efforts are greatly appreciated. Without a doubt, this was my biggest volunteer undertaking with this or any other organization, and I am now breathing a long sigh of relief.

The Guidebook cost has increased to reflect the higher quality product. Members can buy up to two Guidebooks for \$15 each, postage paid, while non-members will pay \$25. We are strongly encouraging people to become members, and are offering a \$5 rebate to those who buy a Guidebook and later decide to join the VTA. For the first time, the books are available (for non-members only) at a number of retail outlets. At the time of printing, these included:

In Sault Ste. Marie:

Clean North, 736A Queen St. E.;
Dunn's Authors Bookstore, Wellington Square Mall; and
The Trading Post, Great Northern Road.

In Blind River:

The Public Library; and
The Travel and Information Centre.

In Wawa:

The Tourist Information
Centre.



THE VTA AND LAND USE ISSUES

For those who completed the VTA questionnaire recently, you may recall the question: "Should the VTA take a stand on land use issues which do not directly affect the Trail"? The summary of the questionnaire results indicate that this was the only question which resulted in a clear split in the membership. About half our members feel we should be taking such a stand, even when the issue does not directly affect the Trail.

The executive has decided that the Association will not take such positions, except when the issues directly threaten the Trail. Our reasoning for this decision is that we are a small group with a very specific mandate, that of maintaining and building a hiking trail. To become active in other land use issues would require that the executive become familiar enough with the issue to be able to come to agreement on an Association position. We would then require a group of strong advocates to represent us at public fora.

The executive feels that this would be too great a departure from our current mandate at this time, given our current level of active volunteers and the difficulty we have in maintaining all

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THE VTA AND LAND USE ISSUES

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of the Trail we have. Nevertheless, we would be happy to hear further opinions on this topic.



OF SNOWSHOES AND PORCUPINES...

The snowshoe outing of March 23, 1996 along the Red Rock shoreline of Lake Superior was glorious under sunny skies.

frame takes on this look it is a scream for help.

The babish had the parched look of a seven-day camel on day nine just before it passes on. The tail of the snowshoes had been consumed by a desperate porcupine, some feat when you consider the random feeding habits of this mammal, it actually ate the lower third of both snowshoes.

At the break and enter of the Bruce Mines Historical Museum in late 1959, a similar pair of snowshoes was stolen. The faded library card attached to them said: "These snowshoes were worn by P. Chapeau when

he discovered the ore body at Rock Lake on December 11, 1892." Could it be that...

by D.R. who was there



As it was, there were around 30 people who actually did turn out to join us, which was a fantastic number—6 from Sault Ste. Marie! Several people came without the proper footwear and had to run home to pick up their boots, so everyone arrived at the trailhead at a different time which made introductions and instructions a little difficult. As soon as I introduced myself and started to give instructions about the proper use of the tools, people were firing questions at me about the VTA itself. There was a definite interest in who we are, what we do, and everyone was anxious to get out on this trail, especially me!

Soon we were underway. Jack Smit led a fast-moving group ahead to try to get as much accomplished as was possible. I pulled up the rear to make sure that everyone who had decided that they had had enough, passed by me in order to leave.

It was a perfect day—lots of sunshine and warm breezes. About 10 minutes in on the trail, it opens on to a beaver pond that is absolutely breathtaking! I could tell that a lot of people would have been happy just lunching on the banks of this peaceful area.

After crossing on the dam, we re-entered the bush and worked along for another half hour or so when we came upon a huge logged-over section. Some of us slower members decided that this was a good lunch spot in the sun and we enjoyed several birds singing during the break.

A few people decided that they had had enough already, so after lunch a sporadic flow of trail cleaners started to file past me on their way back to the highway and their cars. As they passed, they told me that they had had a wonderful experience and gave me their phone numbers

(cont'd. on page 3)



ELLIOT LAKE TRAIL CLEANING A HUGE SUCCESS!

by Gayle Phillips

On Sunday, May 5th as we arrived at the W. H. Collins Centre in Elliot Lake (the advertised place to meet) there had to be close to a hundred cars parked there! This unnerved me a little because we only brought tools for a small number of people to clean the Elliot

Lake section of trail. As it turned out, when I chose the Collins Centre as a meeting place, I didn't notice that there was a church next door and the spill-over parking for this church was the Collins Centre!

Gail A. showed up on snowshoes she borrowed from a certain member of the VTA executive. The woodframe had the impoverished patina money could not buy. People with grey hair look eminent, some are called Your Eminence. When an ash snowshoe

**ELLIOT LAKE TRAIL
CLEANING A HUGE
SUCCESS!**

(cont'd. from page 2)

to contact them if we ever did this again. All-in-all, the weekend was a great success as we managed to clean the trail all the way to Turtle Lake, blaze with vinyl to Christie Creek, install two 100' ropes on slopes to make climbing easier, and make about 25 new friends to boot! (A big thank you to Mike Landmark who provided the rope and lots of elbow grease!)

Jack Smit told me that he and his daughter were planning to canoe up the Black Creek to Turtle Lake to continue cleaning towards McGiverin Lake on the long weekend in May and invited all of us to join him. I almost wished that I hadn't committed myself to leading hikes that weekend.

All-in-all this trail is a real treat and I hope that the next time anyone is in the area they will give the Elliot Lake Section a little inspection.



**THE SAULTEAUX
CLUB - RUNNING
ON FAST
FORWARD!**

While some V.T. clubs appear to be suffering from a lack of enthusiasm, the Saulteaux Club must have a 'Fast Forward' button that someone has pushed: Membership numbers are up this year, people are calling to ask if they may lead an outing(!), new members are volunteering for anything asked of them. Probably a good deal of this heightened activity can be credited to Gayle Phillips' efforts to get the Voyageur Trail name known in the area (but we won't give her all the credit as she

may get a swelled head). Newcomers Mike and Cheryl Landmark have also pitched in to assist Gayle, notably with the development of an audio tape to accompany the VTA slide presentation. Mike has shown the slides to several groups north of the city and has distributed pamphlets to the businesses, with the hope of getting a V.T. club started in the Goulais area.

The hiking schedule for this spring (if we get one), summer and fall is exhaustive - literally! From short hikes to backpacking trips and canoeing, there is surely enough to please everyone's tastes/abilities/timetables.

At the recent Annual Dinner, a new executive was elected, consisting of:

- Susan Graham - President
- Laura England - Vice-President
- Gayle Phillips - Secretary
- Gale Koteles - Treasurer

Saulteaux Club meetings will continue to be held on a bi-monthly basis. Most often they will consist of a short business meeting followed by a talk or presentation of interest to the members. All members are encouraged to attend to keep informed of club events as well as getting to know your fellow members better and perhaps learning something new from the presentation.

Let's keep the Saulteaux Club soaring!



REMINISCING

by Jeanette Cave

- 25 years later and still loving it.

A Toronto Star article opened the door to years of pleasure. In 1971 we had four young children and very limited funds. Joining the Bruce Trail was reasonable and still is. It is by far the most economical exercise club there is. The mind, body and soul are all invigorated by a hike along the trail.

With Trail Guide in hand the hike leaders willing to lead, my adventures started. Learning to find my way to the trail head was a definite adventure. Sometimes it was found - after everyone had left. At times my navigating was right on and I did find the other hikers. On the trail I could never figure out how they knew where to go as my eyes were always looking down trying to keep from tripping along the pathway.

Now it's time to introduce the family to the great outdoors. First, learn to pay attention to the hike description, not all hikes are suitable for families. Hike leaders have always been great but I'm sure they would not have missed the six of us. Some family hikes were done on our own. Try letting a 5-year old lead, it can be a wonderful experience. Children see things we would never see. We saw nature in all its seasons and different moods.

The years start passing, we gain experience and ability to hike more miles. Our circle of friends is expanding. People are talking about backpacking or skiing. Are we capable of doing these activities? Of course we can. We borrowed backpacks and headed out for the Beaver Valley in the peak black fly season. Despite the problems we had, we loved it. We have now backpacked all over North America. Cross country skiing brings its own challenges and the beauty of our Canadian winter. Now our grandchildren are appreciating the great outdoors too.

The more I saw of the trail, the more I wanted to see. I had never heard of the Niagara Escarpment. Now I could see the beauty of this special area. I have led hikes now for a number of years as I'd like to pass on some of this love I have for a very special part of our province. The

(cont'd. on page 4)



REMINISCING

(cont'd. from page 3)

vision of our founders I will be forever grateful for.

...reprinted from
CALEDON COMMENT,
Spring 1996



**SURE IT'S BIO-
DEGRADABLE...
BUT WHEN?**

This item comes from a brochure put out by the Collier-Seminole State Park in Naples, Florida. Do you know how long it will take to decompose into non-recognizable form?

- Paper containers: 2 - 5 months
- Orange peels: up to 6 months
- Wool socks: 6 - 24 months
- Plastic-coated cartons: 5 years
- Cigarette butts: 10 - 12 years
- Plastic bags: 10 - 20 years
- Leather shoes: 25 - 40 years
- Vibram soles: 50 - 80 years
- Plastic containers: 50 - 80 years
- Aluminum: 80 - 100 years
- Styrofoam: never

...from Winter 1994-1995 issue
of the Niagara Grapevine



**PUBLICITY
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT**

by **Gayle Phillips**

★ I owe a debt of gratitude to Mike Landmark who has been instrumental this spring in spreading posters and brochures of the Steve Taylor and Goulais Sections from Heyden to Haviland Bay. He also helped develop a stand-alone VTA slide presentation complete with recorded script (thanks to his wife, Cheryl) and timed pulses to go to the next slide. He presented this slide show publicly three times this spring in an effort to get a Club going in the Goulais area. His report states "March 20, Mountainview School - 3 classes (Grades 2, 5 & 8) = a total of 80 persons; March 28, Goulais River Ventures = a total of 9 persons; April 10, Sault College = a total of 4 persons." Since these presentations, the Goulais River Ventures have adopted a section of trail and a land-owner has contacted the club about purchasing a guidebook. Thanks, Mike!

★ This spring we developed a "Why Start Your Own Club?" flyer to be inserted into VTA brochures in areas where we would like to see clubs start.

★ A very big thank you goes out to Parks Canada and the Water Heritage Trail people who allowed us to put

tion of 150 outing schedules and 100 VTA brochures. They went so fast I couldn't keep up and often found the racks empty of brochures. Thanks to Judy Falkins for helping with setup.

★ The two day trail cleaning outings in Elliot Lake were a great success with 30 people showing up the first day, and 9 the second. The trail was cleaned all the way to Turtle Lake and blazed to Christie Creek. We made several new friends and hopefully made a good impression! Many thanks to all the people who made the long trip to give moral support and a hand - you know who you are!!

★ Lastly, the *Outdoor Leadership I* course that I went to in Wawa was fantastic and I would recommend Naturally Superior Adventures' courses for anyone interested in the outdoors. The courses are well-organized, full of vital information, taught by someone who understands our problems and can offer some workable solutions. They are planning an *Outdoors Leadership II* course in the fall and I will be the first to sign up! I am planning to prepare a handout for leaders to add to our library with the suggestions that were made about some of our leadership problems and will keep you informed of further courses being offered. 'Bye for now!



**WISE BEYOND
OUR EARS**
by **Steve Dominy**

No one could deny that the group which ventured off to the Little Rapids area to clear trail on May 4, 1996 was particularly bright-eyed and bushy tailed that morning. After all, the sun was shining and

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our brochures on their table at the Sportsman's Show in March. I volunteered to help 'man' the display for only two hours on the Saturday evening and made several good contacts for the Association.

★ The Earth Week static display in the Station Mall (April 21-28) was again a success with the distribu-

WISE BEYOND OUR EARS

(cont'd. from page 4)

the temperature was beginning to soar to spring levels. However, as it turned out, the long winter had taken a heavy toll on our minds and our bodies. The only thing bright about us was our eyes that day, and those bushy tails were dragging on the ground by that afternoon.

As leader, I was quite pleased to see a hardy group of 12 show up at Churchill Plaza for the work party on the Thessalon Section. I had chosen the Thessalon area because there was still an incredible two feet of snow in the bush nearer the Sault. I was quick to inform them that this trail was badly in need of cleaning, and that there was still about a foot of snow in the bush, based on my visit the previous day. Nevertheless, this group was completely un-daunted as we piled into four vehicles and headed east.

I was particularly pleased to see several rookies amongst the group, including Jim Miller and his two young sons. The road to the Trail north of Little Rapids was bare, and we gathered at the Trailhead for some instruction on trail clearing for the novices. This complete, I began to lead the group into the Kirkwood Forest, made up largely of pine and spruce plantations of various ages. It became immediately evident why the trail was in such disrepair. Some logging had occurred in the area and tree tops were left across the trail.

Somewhere within the first few hundred metres Jim Miller was brought to his senses by the complaints of his two sons, and they turned back. The remaining nine of us continued to slog through often thigh-deep snow, reaching a bare spot beneath some red pine just in time for lunch. By that time everybody had wet feet and legs, even those of us wearing rubber boots.

Normally the people putting up

vinyl blazes have a bit of an easier task, but this day they worked harder than the rest, creating their own trails to the selected blaze tree and often backtracking to check for visibility.

About an hour after lunch we completely lost the Trail for almost an hour. Some of the group relaxed on a rock outcrop while others scouted around, finally rediscovering the Trail. A missing double blaze in dense young spruce was the culprit. By this time a decision was made to backtrack. However, I had raised the hopes of the group that we would reach Shaw Dam Lake that day, and three members were determined to attain that goal. Interestingly enough, two of those people were of short stature, and must have been in really good shape to continue through the snow. The three rejoined us just as we reached the vehicles, having been forced to give up due to dense vegetation and deep snow. Our efforts did manage to clear about 1.5 km of trail, although without snow, I'm sure the tally would have been much higher.

We emptied the ice cream freezer at the Little Rapids General Store before dragging our tired bodies back to 'civilization'. Many thanks to Brian, Barb, Ann, Ron, Bill, Diane, Jim and the kids, Cynthia and Gayle for performing above and beyond the call of duty. Those who hike east from the Little Rapids road this year should not now be surprised by the brush cut off a foot or two above the ground. At least the blazes are easy to follow! I guess an outing should be scheduled for the Thessalon Section this year to show off our hard work.

There's a funny ending to this story, though. When Gayle Phillips returned home that afternoon, her phone was ringing. Who should it have been but a prospective member from Little Rapids who is interested in bringing her kids out on some hikes. This was pure coincidence, as the woman was not aware of our work party.



'NATURALLY GIFTED'

by Gayle Phillips

I've often noticed how hikers are special people. We appreciate more than most the serenity and beauty of nature around us. This story just proves it.

One of our own Voyageur Trail Association members, Doris Welz, has signed up to board a child from the country of Belarus (a former republic in the western part of the U.S.S.R.) for six weeks. This country received 70% of the total radiation fallout from the Chernobyl disaster of 1986. More than 3 of the 10 million Belarusian people were directly affected; 800,000 of them children. Thyroid cancer among children has increased up to 100 fold in the affected area. Over 40% of Belarus land was contaminated and will remain so for centuries. Children in these areas have depressed immune systems and a higher risk of developing serious illnesses.

Six weeks of breathing Canada's clean air, drinking our pure water and eating uncontaminated food assists the children to strengthen their depressed immune systems. This short period results in a substantial improvement in their health condition and as they return to Belarus, they are better able to resist radiation effects.

Doris heard of a group of 25 families in Kapuskasing who raise money to house Belarusian children each year. In the Sault, there is one other family who is taking a child.

Prospective Canadian families apply to board a child, raise money to pay for airfare and transportation, buy additional health

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OUTING SCHEDULE

This ambitious outing schedule was put together early in May and may have last-minute changes from time-to-time. Please call our Information Hotline at 705-253-5353 or 1-800-393-5353 (where available) and select message #9999 to check and see if any details of the outing have been changed. This Information Hotline is updated regularly and will have the latest news on the next planned outing.

Saulteaux V.T. Club

(Sault Ste. Marie area) (outings marked with an * are outside the Sault Ste. Marie area)

Due to the late snow in the bush in the Sault Ste. Marie area, the Saulteaux Section end-to-end hikes have been postponed until September. See the schedule below for exact times and dates.

Sunday, May 26 - Join us on a trail cleaning outing. Come and find out why some members actually prefer cleaning trail to hiking it! Call Alan Comfort at 705-945-9496 for more information.

Tuesday, May 28 - Join us on an evening hike in the Gros Cap area with invited guests from the Canadian National Gymnastics teams. Meet at 6:45 pm at the Roberta Bondar Tent Pavilion to car pool. Bring fly dope and water. Call Gayle Phillips 705-942-1891 for more information.

***Sunday, June 2** - Bicycle outing to Naiomikong Point in U.S.. Meet at the Sault Michigan Tourist Information Building at 9:30 am. sharp. Bring bike, food, water, fly dope, health insurance and ID for the International Bridge. Call Tom Allinson at 705-942-0768 for more information.

Thursday, June 13 - Special meeting to plan outings and logistics for the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers visit in August. We will meet at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre at 7:00 pm. If you are hosting a volunteer, or have any ideas of outings we can offer for their entertainment, or can offer help in

organizing the 10-day visit, please come. Call Larry Gringorten at 705-949-7953 for further information.

Saturday, June 15 - 1st Annual Chiropractic Health & Fitness Run - must pay a \$10 entry fee to Susan Graham before June 5th to enter (free t-shirt included). The 3 km Fun walk/run or 8 km Run starts at White Pines High School. All proceeds go to spinal research. For more information call Susan at 705-949-4105.

Thursday, June 20 - Join us for a leisurely evening boardwalk hike to celebrate the summer solstice. Meet at the Visitor Centre parking lot at the Sault Canal at 7:00 pm. We may stop for refreshment afterwards so bring a little pocket money. For more information call Susan Graham at 705-949-4105.

Friday, June 21 or Saturday, June 22 - Join us as we take our VTA Slide Presentation 'on the road' to Thessalon. Limberlost Lodge is interested in hosting us for an evening of information and possibly a small hike. For more information, call Mike Landmark at 705-779-3409.

Sunday, July 7 - An evening hike at Gros Cap with Mike Landmark leading. Meet at the Market Mall parking lot at 7:00 pm sharp. Bring fly dope and water. Call Mike at 705-779-3409 for more information.

***Sunday, July 14** - Hike the 10 km Awaussee Loop Trail in Lake Superior Provincial Park. This is a demanding, steep climb so bring lots of water, a lunch and fly dope and meet at the K-Mart Plaza behind Red Lobster at 8:30 am to car pool. For

more information, call Chuck Bosley at 906-248-3287.

Monday, July 15 - Saulteaux Club Bi-Monthly Meeting at 7:00 pm at the Civic Centre and an evening hike along the Boardwalk afterwards. We may stop for refreshments afterwards, so bring a little pocket money. For more information, call Gayle Phillips at 705-942-1891.

Saturday, July 20 - We would like to enter a contingent in the Community Day Parade with a 'Sherlock Holmes theme' carrying a sign "Where IS the Voyageur Trail?" There will be no float involved, just walkers dressed in VTA shirts. Anyone interested in walking in the parade, please call Susan Graham at 949-4105 before July 13th.

- Friends of the Sault Ste. Marie Canal & Parks Canada are arranging an event to follow the Parade in honour of Canada Parks *Take a Hike* day. Call the VT Information Line 253-5353 (or toll free 1-800-393-5353) & select message #9999 for final details.

***Saturday, July 20** - Lake Superior Provincial Park staff will be leading a 5 km hike from Coldwater Creek to Katherine Cove in conjunction with the Michipicoten Club and the Saulteaux Club of the Voyageur Trail Association for Canada Parks' *Take a Hike* day from 10 am to 3 pm. Meet at 10 am sharp at Katherine Cove. Call Carol Dersch at 705-856-2284 for further information.



(cont'd. on page 7)

OUTING SCHEDULE

(cont'd. from page 6)

***Saturday, July 20-Sunday, July 21** - Beth Hronek is leading an overnight backpacking trip to Trapper Lake or Au Sable Point. For further information call Beth at 906-635-9313.

***Saturday, July 27 - August 4** - Hugh Carey from southern Ontario is leading a week-long canoe trip in Lake Superior Provincial Park. For information, call Hugh at 519-291-5168.

***Sunday, July 28** - Join us on the Orphan Lake Trail in Lake Superior Provincial Park. Bring water, lunch, fly dope and meet at the K-Mart Plaza behind Red Lobster at 8:30 am sharp to car pool. This is a moderate 8 km loop trail. For more information, call Gale Koteles at 705-949-1302.

***Sunday, August 11 to Friday, August 16** - Gayle Phillips is organizing a week-long camping/day hiking trip to Nipigon, Marathon and Wawa called "Let's Try Out the New Guidebook" Week. There will be plenty for all to do, even for those who don't hike great distances. For more information, call Gayle at 705-942-1891.

***Saturday, August 17 & Sunday, August 18** - Beth Hronek is leading an overnight backpacking trip to Warp Bay in LSPP. For more information, call Beth at 906-635-9313.

***Monday, August 19 to Thursday, August 29** - the BTCV group is here cleaning trail around the Sault. Watch for details of outings and entertainment planned during their stay in a separate mailing to your home in June or July. For details of where and when they will be working, call Gayle Phillips at 705-942-1891.

***Saturday, August 24 & Sunday, August 25** - Beth Hronek is leading an overnight backpacking trip on the Towab Trail (24 km return) in Lake Superior Provincial Park. For more information, call Beth at 906-635-9313.

Saturday, September 7 - END-TO-END #1 - This 12.5 km first leg is from Gros Cap to Airport Road and will be led by Larry Gringorten. This is a long, difficult hike. Bring water, lunch and dress appropriately and meet at the Market Mall parking lot at 9:00 am sharp. Call Larry at 705-949-7953 for more information.

***Sunday, September 8 to Wednesday, September 11** - Gayle Phillips leads a trail maintenance outing in Marathon. Allowing for two days of travel, there and back, we will be actually working on the trail for two days. For information, call Gayle at 705-942-1891.

Sunday, September 8 - Trail cleaning outing. Call Alan Comfort at 705-945-9496 for more information.

Saturday, September 14 - Trail cleaning outing. Call Alan Comfort at 705-945-9496 for more information.

Sunday, September 15 - END-TO-END #2 - Steve Dominy will lead the second in the series from Airport Road to Goulais Avenue (14 km). This is a long, difficult hike. Bring water, lunch, dress appropriately and meet at the Market Mall parking lot at 9:00 am sharp. Call Steve at 705-946-2484 for more information.

Monday, September 16 - Saulteaux Club bi-monthly meeting. This month's presentation is "Mushrooms". We will meet at 7:00 pm at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre on Queen Street East. For more information, call Susan Graham at 705-949-4105.

Saturday, September 21 - END-TO-END #3 - An 11.5 km hike from Goulais Avenue to Glenview Cottages with Horst Wetzl. This is a moderate hike which involves a wade across the west branch of the Root River. Bring water, lunch, dress appropriately and meet at the Market Mall parking lot at 9:00 am sharp. Call Gayle Phillips at 705-942-1891 for more information.

Saturday, September 28 - Trail cleaning outing. Call Alan Comfort at 705-945-9496 for more information.

Sunday, September 29 - END-TO-END #4 - Susan Graham leads us on the last leg from Glenview Cottages to Mabel Lake (8 km). Moderate difficulty. Bring water, lunch, dress appropriately and meet at the K-Mart parking lot behind Red Lobster Restaurant at 9:00 am sharp. Call Susan at 705-949-4105 for more information.

Saturday, October 5 - Hopefully the autumn leaves will be at their peak on this hike from Robertson Lake Road to Stokely Creek (7 km). Some climbs are involved, but the views are spectacular! Meet at the K-Mart Plaza behind Red Lobster Restaurant at 9:00 am sharp to car pool. For more information, call Patrick Capper at 705-253-4470.

Sunday, October 6 (Ontario Hiking Day) - Steve Dominy will lead a family hike from Connor Road to Crystal Falls (Hiawatha Highlands Conservation Authority) where we will picnic. Children are encouraged to attend. Bring lunch, water, dress appropriately and meet in the K-Mart Plaza behind Red Lobster Restaurant at 10:00 am sharp to car pool. For more information, call Steve at 705-946-2484.



MAKE IT A HABIT... call the Voyageur Trail Association Infoline before you go on an outing to make sure the details have not changed! Call 705-253-5353 or 1-800-393-5353 (where available) and select message #9999

'NATURALLY GIFTED'

(cont'd. from page 5)

insurance for them, as well as providing a healthy, stimulating environment for these 8- to 12-year-old children for six weeks. The children are very young to be away from their families, and speak only Russian or Ukrainian, but they all seem to understand how important this visit to Canada is for them. Their families back home are not wealthy and so they come with few expectations.

Doris tells me that the objective of this program is to host as many children in Canada as possible. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about this program, call Doris at 705-942-9466.

In the meantime, I hope VTA members in the Sault Ste. Marie area will make a special effort to welcome this child. I hope Doris can bring her charge along on some of the hikes we have planned this summer. If you know of someone who would be willing to interpret Russian or Ukrainian, provide moral support to the child, or even have children of the same age who might be willing to visit and play with the child, please contact Doris.

We have much to learn from this child—not to take for granted our "naturally gifted" surroundings, so that we may pass on a safe, clean environment to our children.



TRAIL MIX

→ **THE SAULTEAUX CLUB** supported the Group Health Centre's "Sneaker Day" with their participation and with the donation of a VTA T-shirt which was won by Louise Adams. The noon-hour walk was held on Thursday May 16, and following the walk, the

GHC 24-Hour Relay team "The Relay Rockers" held a barbecue to raise funds for the Relay.

→ **ROUTE TO THE FUTURE** - The recent survey questionnaire to members resulted in an encouraging 35% response rate from members. Although the cost of the survey was over \$400, the information gleaned has been invaluable in helping guide the Association down a "Route to the Future", knowing we have the support of our members. A surprising result was that most members were single-minded in their responses to the questions. Of course that made the task of charting our course so much easier. See the results in this and future newsletters, along with summaries of actions taken by the executive. Many thanks to all those who took the time to reply.

→ **BUY TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS THROUGH THE VTA** - Trail users are strongly urged to obtain current topographic maps of areas they intend to explore. These maps are not always readily available to our members, and so as a service to members the VTA has secured a dealership for National Topographic System (NTS) maps.

The standard for hiking is the 1:50,000 scale, 6 colour map. However, we can also supply 1:250,000 scale colour, 1:50,000 monochrome, or any other NTS maps. The cost is \$9.00 per map, postage paid and shipped folded.

The Guidebook has the NTS map numbers on each map of the Trail route. However, if you would like maps for other locations in Canada and you have the map number, or can describe very accurately the area of coverage you would like, we can supply you.

We intend to place three bulk orders per year. The first deadline for

orders is June 28, 1996. Please allow at least four weeks for delivery.

→ **ONCE AGAIN THREE** Hike Ontario member clubs are hosting working vacations on their trails. Do come out and enjoy a natural break in good company. The Bruce Trail had its annual Peninsula Weekend on May 10-12.

The Oak Ridges Trail, Uxbridge Section, is the setting for a vacation from August 6-17, staying in the Durham Forest Outdoor Education Centre. The Uxbridge Chapter plans to complete their trail this summer. In surprisingly unspoiled country close to Toronto it is sure to become a firm favourite. Details from Tom Rance (905) 852-7128, FAX (905) 852-4413.

Adventure awaits you on the Voyageur Trail work vacation, August 19-30, through the hills of Algoma. The Saulteaux members will be billeting guests: space is limited so register early. The chance to visit Lake Superior country is not to be missed. Details from Larry Gringorten (705) 949-9461 ext. 2500 or (705) 949-7953.

The last two of these are joint vacations with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, with their leader Andy Rockall, who also led last year's Ganaraska and Voyageur trips. The BTCV are also coming for two vacations in May and September to work on trails in nature reserves managed by the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. You would also be welcome on either of these vacations.

Details of all the environmental vacations are contained in a brochure called "Natural Breaks 1996".



(cont'd. on page 9)

TRAIL MIX

(cont'd. from page 8)

Call Hike Ontario's Walking Centre if you would like a copy (416) 426-7362.

→ **THE CLEAR-CUTTING PRACTICES** of loggers may be unsightly, but they seem to suit bird life right down to the ground. Ornithologist John Hagan of the Manomet Observatory in Massachusetts studied a vast clear-cut area expecting it to be devoid of birds. He found instead that avicular life was thriving. "The birds were almost deafening" he says. Tropical white-throated sparrows, mourning warblers, grey catbirds and other song birds that migrate to New England, Quebec and Ontario populated the area in great numbers, he says. Of long-range migrant birds known to be declining in other parts of the region, he found more than a dozen species doing well, all feeding on exposed seeds and insects. While the findings have enraged environmentalists opposed to clear-cutting, Dr. Hagan's research into 72 species of birds found that none had been endangered. In fact, the populations of 38 species grew from 1981 to 1992, while 34 posted modest declines.

...*The Globe & Mail*, April 13, 1996

→ **IF YOU WANT TO BUY** hiking boots this season, be aware that the March 1996 issue of Consumer Reports has reported on them.

→ **WANTED TO BUY - A** set of roof racks (gutter-type) suitable for a canoe. Please call Steve at 705-946-2484.

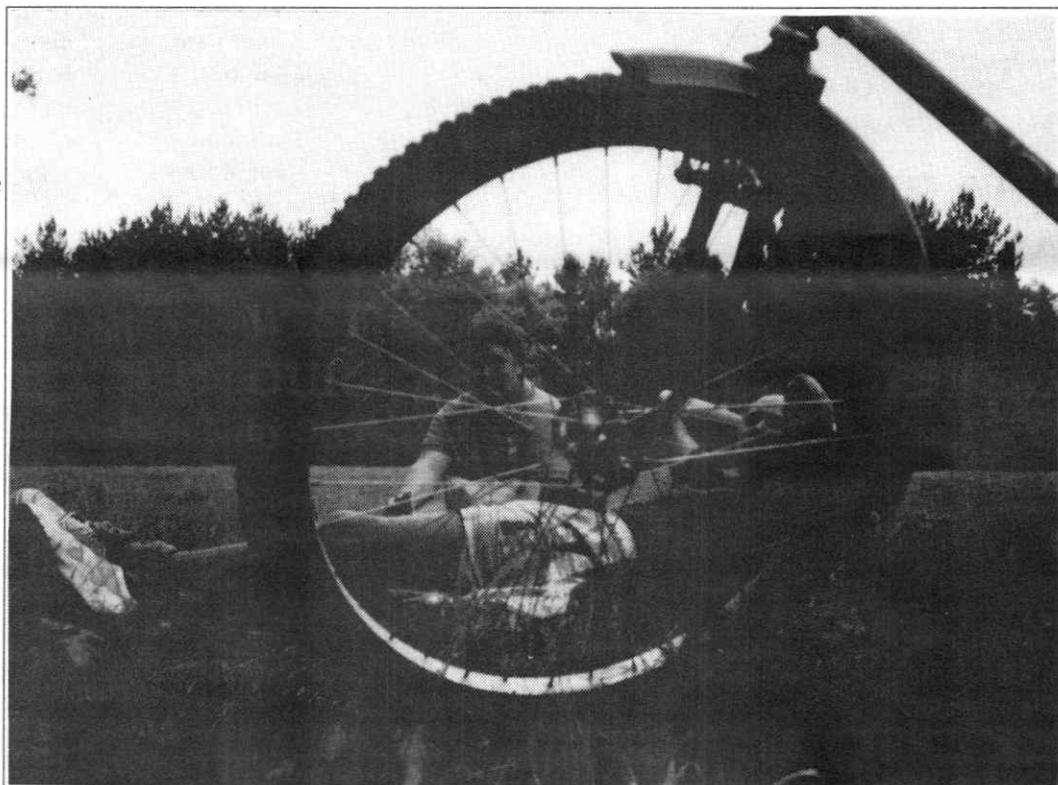
→ **WE NEED MORE VINYL!!** - We again have a shortage of white vinyl required for trail blazes. If anyone is siding their home or knows of anyone who is, please contact any member of the executive. Also, the woman in the P Patch who had some in her garage, please contact us again and we will be more than happy to pick it up. Blue and yellow vinyl is also required for side and loop trails. If you have any old crazy carpets or anti-freeze bottles or anything similar, please contact us.

→ **AFTER TWO SPRING HIKES** were cancelled due to excess snow still on the trail, about 25 hikers headed out on the Mother's Day hike, determined not to miss this annual event. We arrived with our hiking boots ready for a new season of hiking and our enthusiasm in high gear. Quite soon after we had left the trailhead, we realized that skis or

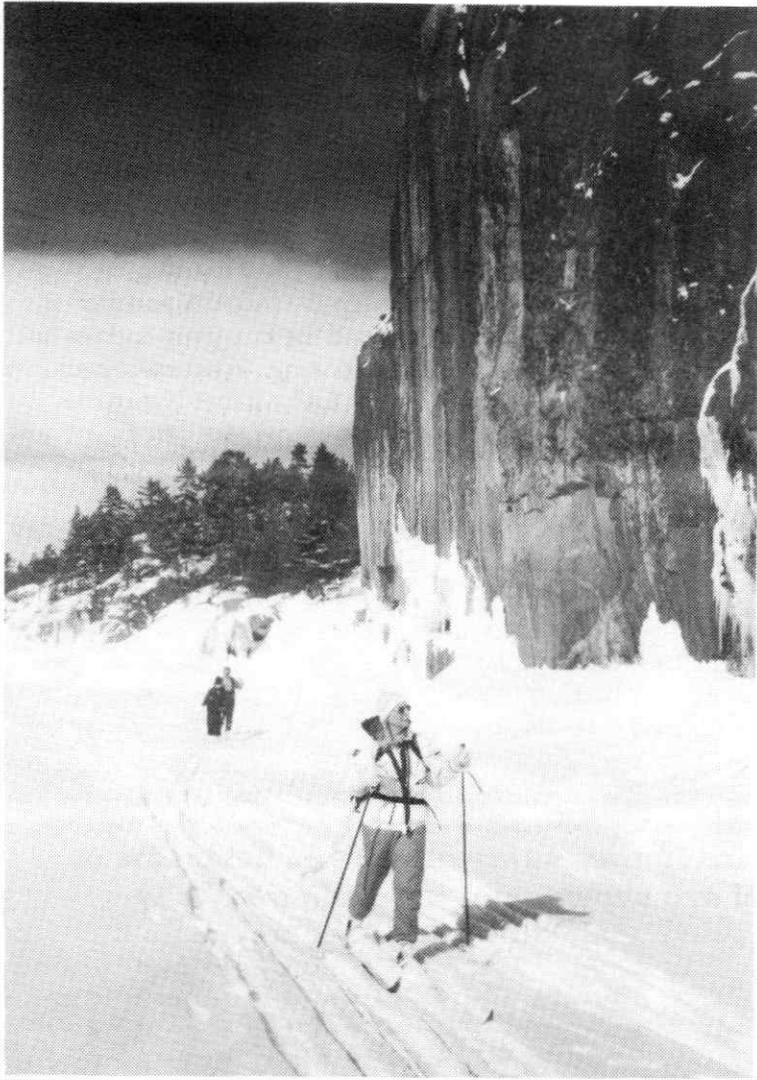
snowshoes would have been the footwear of the day. Sections of the trail had up to three feet of snow still covering it. No matter, it was spring and it was Mother's Day, and we were determined to get to the Wetzl homestead no matter what. Enroute, we were treated to a heron, nesting geese, sandpipers and kildeer, which more that made up for the effort of trudging through the snow. Upon arrival, Lise had the fire going and the hot dogs cooking. What more could we ask for? Mother Nature decided to throw in a little fresh snow for good measure. A cool wind reminded us that spring was not quite here, but the mood of the day indicated that as far as we were concerned, spring had definitely arrived!



Our favourite Mother's Day hostess & host, Lise & Horst Wetzl are shown on a leisurely bike ride



Skiing the Pictographs in Lake Superior Provincial Park Photo by Patrick Capper



happy to report that more than 90% of the respondents are pleased with the newsletter. Of course, many thanks to Gayle Phillips for taking our publishing out of the dark ages and into the current computer age. As to the content of the newsletter, only the members are to be thanked for that. Without contributions, it would be a very slim tabloid. I will continue to ask for stories,

This is a positive response, as trail building and maintenance is such a vital part of realizing the dream of the Voyageur Trail running from Manitoulin Island to Thunder Bay.

Our members were pleased with our outing schedules and our leaders. Most of you felt that we scheduled enough outings. Our leaders must feel very strong this year, for our schedule is the most ambitious yet. Perhaps they have a feeling that we will be blessed with beautiful weather this summer and fall. Whatever, the reason, I'm sure there will be something for everyone this year.

The responses received from the landowners were also very positive. They seem to be happy that we keep them informed without being pushy. The level of contact seems to be just about right. The most important finding from our landowners was that they do appreciate how the trail is being used on their land. The following comment by a landowner sums it up: "As a landowner, I do appreciate how well the trail is used. Nothing has been left and nothing taken away. I trust that many will continue to enjoy the beauty and the wonders of nature along the way."

THE RESULTS ARE IN!!!

by Virve Männiste Squire

A very big thank you to all who took the time to fill in the VTA strategic questionnaire. With a high percentage of returns, and many, many comments, our club now has some idea of how our membership feels. Over the course of the next few newsletters, details of the results will be published, but for now a quick overview reveals:

First and foremost (because your editor is writing this article), I am

article, photos, etc. If it has to do with hiking or VTA events, there is a good chance it will be published.

Most of our members are anxiously awaiting the new guidebook. They do own the old guidebook, and are looking forward to the new and improved version.

A strong majority of members are willing to help maintain existing trail, some even by adopting a section of trail. More than fifty percent displayed willingness to help build new trail.

(cont'd. on page 11)



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THE RESULTS ARE IN!!!

(cont'd. from page 10)

These are the results in a nutshell. As reported elsewhere is the newsletter, the only issue that divided the membership was the land use issue. Otherwise, the majority of members appear to have the same thoughts and ideas about our trail. As I mentioned earlier, details of the results will be published in future issues. The VTA must be doing something right, and we have all our members and landowners to thank. We want to continue to ensure that all the needs of the membership and landowners are being met, and the survey results will point us in the right direction. A comment from the questionnaire sums up what we had hoped to learn: "Obviously, to be operational for so long with the broad appeal, a lot of people had to have done a lot of right things for quite some time. The efforts that are being put forth in the communication indicate that the present man-

agement is on the right path. Thank you for this opportunity."



LANDOWNERS:

As a free service to landowners, the *Voyageur Trail News* will publish, free-of-charge "**Land for Sale**" ads. The strategic questionnaire results indicated that there are people (*especially in Southern Ontario*) who may be interested in purchasing a property with a section of the Voyageur Hiking Trail running through it. If you are planning to sell your property, contact the VTNews Editor at P O Box 20040, 150 Churchill Blvd., Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 6W3.



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**Did you know...
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VTA are
tax deductible?**



-----✂-----
VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM (please print)

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Prov./State: _____
Postal/Zip Code: _____ Phone (home): _____ (work): _____

Please check one: New Member Renewal

MEMBERSHIP FEES: (January 1st to December 31st—fees paid after October 31st will be applied to the next membership year)

Adult.....	\$15.00	=	_____
Family/Group.....	\$15.00	=	_____
Student.....	\$10.00	=	_____
Donations (tax receipt will be sent)		=	_____
Guidebook (member) \$15.00 x _____		=	_____
Guidebook (non-member) \$25.00 x _____		=	_____
Crest \$2.00 x _____		=	_____
Pin \$3.00 x _____		=	_____
T-Shirt \$10.00 x _____ (size _____)		=	_____
Sweatshirt \$20.00 x _____ (size _____)		=	_____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Make cheques payable and mail to:

VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION,
P. O. Box 20040, 150 Churchill Blvd.,
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada
P6A 6W3

(cont'd. on back ◀)



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Larry Gringorten (705) 949-7953

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Dan Wheeler (705) 356-1195

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Dieter Ropke (705) 942-9636

GENERAL SECRETARY

Ian Morrison

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Patrick Capper (705) 253-4470

PUBLICITY DIRECTOR

Gayle Phillips (705) 942-1891

TRAILMASTER

Alan Comfort (705) 945-9496

LANDOWNER LIAISON:

Jack Donald (705) 942-1761

HIKE ONTARIO REPRESENTATIVE:

Patrick Capper (705) 253-4470

GUIDEBOOK COMMITTEE

Steve Dominy (705) 946-2484

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Editor: Virve Männiste Squire

(705) 942-2370

Layout: Gayle Phillips

(705) 942-1891



THE VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS is published three times per year. Your articles and submissions are always welcome!

Send them to Editor, VTA, Box 20040, 150 Churchill Blvd. Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6A 6W3.

Submissions for the next issue should be received by September 1, 1996.

The Trail User's Code

- Hike only along marked routes. Do not take short cuts.
- Do not climb fences.
- Carry out all garbage (if you carry it in, you can carry it out).
- Light cooking fires at official campsites only. Drench fires after use. (or better still, carry a lightweight 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 on a leash, especially on or near farmland and in parks.
- Respect the privacy of people living along 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!**

-----✂----- (clip and mail) -----✂-----

DECLARATION: I have read and will abide by the Trail User's Code. (signature) _____

I WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> trail development | <input type="checkbox"/> trail maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> newsletter, guidebook, photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hike leader | <input type="checkbox"/> landowner liaison, records, maps | <input type="checkbox"/> publicity committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> organization—executive, directors | <input type="checkbox"/> special events; conferences, dinners | |

Please consider me a member-at-large or a member of (check one below): (*denotes active sections)

<u>Section</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Club</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Thunder Bay	Thunder Bay V.T.C.	<input type="checkbox"/> Thessalon	Thessalon V.T.C.
<input type="checkbox"/> Nipigon		<input type="checkbox"/> Iron Bridge	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Schreiber	Casque Isles V.T.C.	<input type="checkbox"/> *Blind River	Penewobikong V.T.C.
<input type="checkbox"/> Marathon		<input type="checkbox"/> Elliot Lake	Coureurs de Bois V.T.C.
<input type="checkbox"/> Pukaskwa National Park		<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Wawa	Michipicoten V.T.C.	<input type="checkbox"/> Massey	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lake Superior Provincial Park		<input type="checkbox"/> Espanola	Rainbow V.T.C.
<input type="checkbox"/> Batchawana		<input type="checkbox"/> Little Current	
<input type="checkbox"/> Goulais		<input type="checkbox"/> Sheguiandah	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Sault Ste. Marie	Saulteaux V.T.C.	<input type="checkbox"/> South Baymouth	
<input type="checkbox"/> Echo Bay	Echo Ridges V.T.C.	<input type="checkbox"/> Sudbury	Sudbury V.T.C.
<input type="checkbox"/> Desbarats	Desbarats V.T.C.		