



No. 64 WINTER 1997

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Published by the
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VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

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THE VTA JOINS THE WORLD WIDE WEB!

by Gayle Phillips

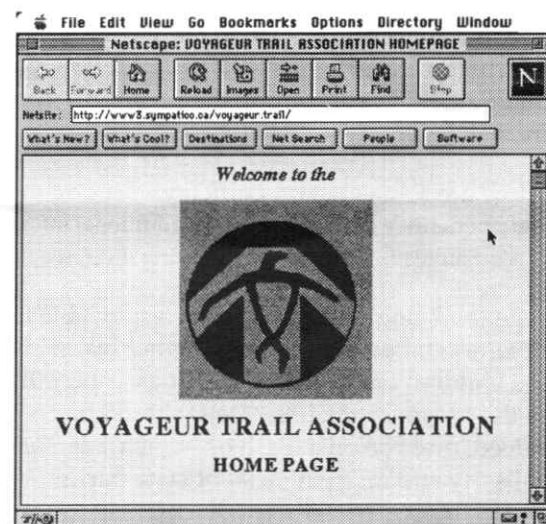
The Voyageur Trail Association has made the jump to the information superhighway! The VTA now has a web site on the internet at <http://www3.sympatico.ca/voyageur.trail>

Along with the web site is an e-mail address: voyageur.trail@sympatico.ca

More and more people turn to the internet when planning their vacations and when relocating to new areas. Our presence on the internet will hopefully stir some interest in areas that presently have no organized clubs.

When I designed the site, I surfed the web to find out what works and what doesn't work. I quickly found out what I *didn't* like—a lot of slow-loading graphics, links that didn't go anywhere and unclear link names. In our web site, the first window that opens has our philosophy, street address and e-mail link. From there you can select any of the other seven windows: [map](#), [membership](#), [code](#), [schedules](#), [clubs](#), [favourites](#) or [newsletter](#).

The [map](#) shows an overview of existing and proposed trails. From the [membership](#) link, a prospective member can join the club by printing a membership form and mailing it with a cheque to the VTA. The Trail Users' Code comprises the next link, called [code](#). Under [schedules](#), the outings planned by clubs are posted. In the [clubs](#) link, all of the towns and cities along the proposed route are listed. Updates will be posted regularly on the contacts for organized clubs in each area. Where an organized club doesn't exist, an appeal is made to anyone living in the area who might wish to start one.



The link that I hope VTA members will find helpful is the [favourites](#) link. From here, browsers can visit Hike Ontario, other Hike Ontario trail associations with web sites, interesting 'hiking' places, web sites for each of the towns and cities along the proposed route of the Voyageur Trail and others.

I've also introduced a section for VTA members who have web sites, no matter what their business. I thought it would be interesting to see what businesses our membership is in! Anyone who is on the web, and would like to advertise their web site is welcome to submit their address for consideration.

With the release of this newsletter, I added a [newsletter](#) link to our web site with "tidbits" from the VT News.

Anyone wishing more information, can contact me at (705) 942-1891 or send e-mail to: voyageur.trail@sympatico.ca
All comments are welcome!



HELP WANTED: The Voyageur Trail Association has two vacancies on its Executive. If you can volunteer for the Trailmaster or Membership Secretary position, please contact Larry Gringorten at (705) 949-7953.

VTA OUTINGS AND DOGS *by Susan Graham*

At the Voyageur Trail Association Annual Meeting in November, the membership discussed whether dogs should be permitted on organized outings. We'll maintain the current policy of allowing individual clubs to implement their own rules concerning dogs and inform members through a newsletter article (perhaps annually).

We also plan to discuss updating the Trail Users' Code at the next VTA executive meeting. Here is the proposed wording concerning dogs on the VT: "Keep dogs under control (on a leash if necessary) and follow your regional club guidelines concerning their control." Your comments are welcome.

Below are some general guidelines for dog owners taking their pets on VTA outings. (For additional information on VTA's Saulteaux Club rules concerning dogs, see the article right.)

In general, dog owners must be responsible for their pet at all times and be considerate of other hikers. Some adults and children are frightened of dogs, especially dogs excited by the prospect of a hike. Dogs should be on a leash, and indeed, must be on a leash on some trails, for example, trails in national, provincial or state parks.

There are times, however, when a dog on a leash would cause the owner to lose his or her balance, for example, crossing slippery rocks and streams. While the dog is loose, ensure the animal does not knock someone else over! Also, be aware dogs can scare any wildlife that may be around, or perhaps get into trouble with a skunk or porcupine.

Dogs must be on their leash and out of reach of others' lunches at mealtime.

"Poop and Scoop" is the requirement when a pet defecates on the trail.

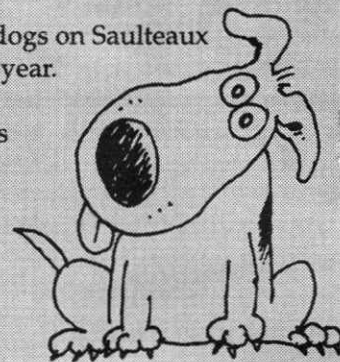
Owners should be prepared to take their own vehicles, as some people don't want dogs in their vehicles.

If you are planning on taking your dog on an outing, have some consideration for the terrain and the dog's physical limitations. Dogs often have difficulty walking in deep snow, so they tend to stay on ski tracks, where they jeopardize themselves and skiers. If dogs defecate along the ski trail, it can be a real problem for the skiers that follow!

On snowshoe outings, dogs tend to walk on the back of snowshoes. Also, it is difficult to ski or snowshoe with a dog on a leash. For these reasons, dog owners may want to consider a separate romp in the snow with their dog.

Dogs and the Saulteaux Club

We have had a number of dogs on Saulteaux Club outings over the past year. Since there had been no information regarding dogs given to new members, there were some questions and complaints from dog owners and other hikers alike. We hope to remedy this by sending a welcome letter to new members mentioning the basic considerations for bringing dogs on outings.



The VTA's Saulteaux Club will allow hike leaders to decide whether dogs are permitted on the hikes they lead. For information on whether dogs are permitted on an outing, contact the hike leader. When possible, information on whether dogs are permitted on a given outing will be published in the newsletter.

If the hike leader permits dogs on an outing, the animal should be on a leash until the hike is underway. Then, provided the outing is not in a park that prohibits loose dogs, those wishing to let their dog off lead can move to the front (just ahead of the leader).

Very often, the happiest hikers are the dogs who go bounding along the trail, tongues and tails going furiously. Let's work together to accommodate them.

DOG BISCUIT RECIPE

Courtesy of Pat Platt

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 cups whole wheat flour
- 2 cups bulgar or cracked wheat flour
- 1 cup corn meal
- 1/2 cup instant non-fat milk powder
- 4 tsp. salt
- 2-3 cups chicken broth or water
- Milk

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Mix flour, corn meal, dry milk powder and salt. Add 2 cups broth and mix well, with hands. Continue adding broth, if necessary, until mixture is the consistency of bread dough. Roll out to 1/4-inch thickness on a lightly floured board. Cut with cookie or dog bone cutter. Place on ungreased baking sheet. Brush each biscuit lightly with milk. Bake 45 minutes, then turn oven off and leave biscuits overnight. (If you find the biscuits are too soft, you can bake them longer.) Makes 3 1/2 dozen.

If you are having a problem with a dog on an outing, please mention it to the owner. It is most likely there is a simple solution.

