



# VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

As many of you are no doubt aware by now, our newsletter editor, Linda Badowich, has left for Toronto to further her career. Although we will miss her, we wish her all the best of luck and hope that she will not forget us up here in the North! Also, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Linda for her excellent contribution as editor of the newsletter for the past year.

With Linda's departure, I have accepted the position of editor. The "Voyageur Trail News" has always been an interesting, informative and well-received newsletter, and I hope to continue that tradition in the future while I am at its helm. Of course, any suggestions, comments or constructive criticism from you, the readers, will be welcomed and appreciated, and I know I will be able to count on Gayle Phillips to help keep me on track!

I do bring some experience to the position, as I was editor for the scuba club newsletter in Elliot Lake for several years.

I will be looking for articles, photographs and tidbits of information to put in the newsletter, so if anyone has anything of interest, please don't hesitate to send it along to me, either through the mail at Voyageur Trail Association, P.O. Box 20040, 150 Churchill Blvd., Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 6W3, or through e-mail at [cheryl.landmark1@sympatico.ca](mailto:cheryl.landmark1@sympatico.ca).

I am looking forward to the challenge of being your editor and promise to do my best to provide you with a newsletter that is as excellent as it has always been in the past.

Yours in safe hiking,

*Cheryl Landmark*

## WAWA WEEKEND

by Susan Graham

As we are members of the Voyageur Trail Association, Saulteaux Club members thought it appropriate to try a day on Lake Superior in a Voyageur canoe. Arrangements were made through Naturally Superior Adventures in Wawa for a full day in the 36' "Montreal" Voyageur canoe, paddling the Superior shoreline and mouth of the Michipicoten River. Free camping was available on the beach for those arriving early or staying over on the Saturday night, which most of us took advantage of, some for one night, some for two and some for three nights. You could not ask for a nicer campsite as far as the view is concerned — Lake Superior at Michipicoten Harbour is spectacular with its high hills, sand beaches and a few rocky islands offshore that make for interesting paddling in the coves. Eighteen intrepid Voyageurs, composed of VTA members, their families and friends, plus one cross-country traveller who happened to be in the right place at the right time, set off across the bay in calm water and blue sky with "Pierre", our Voyageur guide. Paddling time to the lighthouse at Perkwakia Point at the mouth of the bay was about 45 minutes, but there were stops along the way to rest and listen to Pierre (Peter Labor) tell us of the life of a Voyageur. It was discovered that paddling in unison took a bit of concentration, and we knew why some of the paddles had banged-up edges! We continued around the bay after a stop at the lighthouse, with further stops at a fishery

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*Voyageur Trail Association members experience first-hand the life of true "Voyageurs!"*

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### WAWA WEEKEND

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to inquire about smoked fish and at artist Jim Saunders' house, where he treated us to a tour of his pottery. Then, it was through the islands at Wigwam and back past the beach to Rock Island for lunch. The more daring (and the kids who didn't know any better!) sampled Pierre's bannock, which was cooked over a wood fire started with flint and steel. As our arms (not to mention, bottoms!) were starting to feel the effects of paddling for several hours, the trip after lunch up the Michipicoten River was short on paddling and long on stops — at Silver Falls on the Magpie River and at the site of the Northwest Company Trading Post. The buildings on the site were only dismantled/destroyed in the 1950's, so there is still evidence of the post in the building foundations and bits of rusting iron to be found on the ground. Visiting the post was a fitting end to our day as Voyageurs. We headed back to Rock Island (Naturally Superior's headquarters at the mouth of the river), where a barbecued whitefish dinner, complete with wine, awaited us. There's something to be said about being a modern Voyageur!

It was an early night for the campers, as the canoe and dinner had taken their toll on our energy levels — and, to top it off, we had a trail maintenance outing the next morning with Wawa VTA club members. (It seemed like a good idea when we were planning the outing schedule!) The six remaining Saulteaux club members met up with five from Wawa and set off on the Bridget Lake trail. We puffed and panted uphill for a bit, but were rewarded with great views over Lake Superior and Driftwood Beach. We heard from Pete Stinnessen that it was "all downhill" after



Looking towards Driftwood Beach and Rock Island from Wawa's Bridget Lake Section of Voyageur Hiking Trail.

that, but he wasn't referring to the terrain! It started with a hornet's nest that one of the party painfully discovered (we managed to avoid them further along the trail!). Then, the views of Superior disappeared and the trail continued along rough, hilly ground, causing us to reach the roadway an hour later than we had expected. Then, we received the rest of the bad news — the vehicle the Wawa group had spotted at the end of the trail had to be left at the highway because of road construction, so there was more walking involved before we were done. Because the day was, once again, warm and sunny, we were all warm and tired when we completed the trail. But, we could congratulate ourselves on the fact that the first half of the trail is in great shape now, and the blazes will make it much easier to follow the trail along the section that still needs work. Maybe next year...



### VENTURERS ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE!!

by Cheryl Landmark

CHALLENGE!! is the Venturer motto and this is exactly what the 1st Goulais River Venturers in the Sault Ste. Marie/Algoma District tend to live by. This relatively small, but very active Company (in fact, the most active group in the Algoma District), has accomplished a variety of new and challenging goals, one of which was adopting a section of the Voyageur Hiking Trail in Goulais River.

Two years ago, a presentation by a representative of the Voyageur Trail Association at one of the group's monthly meetings sparked the interest of the Venturers and set them on a new and exciting path. In 1995, the members decided to adopt a section of the trail that runs from Haviland Bay on the shore of Lake Superior to Walker Lake in the Stokeley section (a distance of approximately four kilometres). By adopting this portion of trail, the 1st Goulais Venturers agreed to maintain it and keep it in pristine condition for the



enjoyment of all nature lovers, following the Scouting movement's high standards of promoting and demonstrating zero impact on the environment. Maintaining the trail involves pruning branches, removing deadfalls and blazing trees.

The 1st Goulais River Venturers is a small Company. This year's membership is 13, including two young women, all ranging in age from 14-18. Two eighteen-year olds are Rovers. However, the small size of the group does not deter these eager and adventuresome young people from accepting the challenge and fun of maintaining a hiking trail. They love nature and the great outdoors, the physical demands of trail clearing, the enjoyment of being with people of their own age and interests, and, most of all, the sense of accomplishment they get from doing something helpful for the

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## V.P. CENTRAL REPORT

by Mike Landmark

Being unemployed, I thought I had a lot of free time on my hands. I was wrong!! Looking back at my first year as V.P. Central, it seemed that I never had enough time to accomplish all the things I set for myself to do. Publicity, trail maintenance and outings, along with working on the Prince Township Centennial Loop Trail in conjunction with Prince Township Council, kept me from being bored!

I attended four trade shows throughout the spring, one at Sault College, one at the Great Outdoor Show in Sault Ste. Marie, one at Blind River, and one in Thunder Bay. In addition, slide presentations were given to school groups, Boy Scout groups, and community leaders interested in organizing clubs in Bruce Mines and Terrace Bay. I would like to thank Susan Graham and Gayle Phillips for greatly assisting me in the above endeavours. When I wasn't busy doing presentations, I was being interviewed for the local paper by Peter Denley and Marguerite LaHaye (and, I promise that, next time, I'll smile for the photos!). In May, Cheryl Landmark, Gayle Phillips and myself interviewed the 1st Goulais River Venturers, who have adopted a section of our trail (see Cheryl's article on page 2). Also in May, I attended the International Tourism Train to Agawa Canyon. Approximately, 500 tourism-related representatives were present on the tour. I would like to thank Gayle Phillips for putting up with me hounding her for more and more and even more brochures, which were distributed between Elliot Lake and Thunder Bay at any place I could think of that would accept them. Approximately 400-500 alone were circulated to tourists and visitors to the Blue Water Inn at Gros Cap. Guide books are now available for sale in Elliot Lake through the Arts Council of Elliot Lake and District, 180 Mississauga Ave., as well as in the Township of Prince at Jan's Place at the corner of Hwy. 550 and Airport Road.

On blustery days, to keep myself amused, I tried to wear out a paper cutter making vinyl blazes and was able to produce approximately 4000 white blazes and about 1000 yellow blazes. Most of the blazes were handed out to various club members, so, hopefully, any old, faded paint blazes have by this time been replaced. A good portion of my yellow blazes were used when the Prince Township Centennial Loop Trail was completed this spring. If anyone knows of any areas that require vinyl blazes, please contact the VTA or myself, so that they can be included in the next maintenance schedule.

Some of the more physically demanding, but enjoyable, projects I was involved in

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## "HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP YET?"



Are you one of those people who keeps forgetting to fill out that little slip of paper that renews your membership in the VTA?

Well, now, you have the opportunity to enter our first-ever **Membership Incentive Draw** and, not only continue to enjoy all the benefits of membership, but to also win a fabulous prize!

If you fill out and return the membership form found on pages 9 and 10 in this newsletter before January 1, 1998, your name will go into the draw for a beautiful piece of pottery generously donated by one of our long-time members, Erika Ropke.

Don't miss out on this chance! For only \$20.00 for adult, \$20.00 for Family/Group, or \$10.00 for student, you could be the lucky winner of this wonderful prize! (See page 9 for the benefits of VTA membership)



## VENTURERS ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE!!

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community. And, what is very impressive about this group is that they are doing it all on their own, with the adults acting strictly as advisors.

The Voyageur Trail Association is planning on erecting a sign at the access point of the trail in the near future, acknowledging the adoption of the section by the 1st Goulais River Venturers. The Venturers themselves have also expressed an interest in placing a plaque of their own at the location.

While interviewing the 1st Goulais River Venturers, they told me they would like to issue a challenge to scouting groups everywhere to do the same as they have done. There are plenty of wonderful hiking trails out there just waiting for willing hands and feet to shape them into exciting and interesting adventures, and they would like these groups to accept the CHALLENGE!!, too.

