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VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

EDITOR: Cheryl Landmark

LAYOUT BY: Gayle Phillips

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

*Best wishes to everyone for the holiday season
and happy hiking in 2001!*



**Still looking for the perfect gift for that
hard-to-buy-for person on your list? How about
a VTA membership? Guidebook? Sweatshirt?
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FROM THE INCOMING PRESIDENT *by Mike Landmark*

As the new President of the Voyageur Trail Association, I would like to introduce myself. For those of you who don't know me, I have been a member of the VTA for several years now and have served on the Coordinating Council (executive) for the past four years, as Vice-President Central and Publicity Director. In these two capacities, I have tried to promote and publicize the VTA as much as possible throughout not only our existing trail system but in other parts of the province as well. Thanks to the efforts of myself, and the VTA as a whole, the Voyageur name is becoming more and more widely known. In my recent capacity as Regional Logistics Coordinator for the Trans Canada Trail Water Relay 2000, I also tried to promote the VTA wherever I could in other parts of Canada.

Thank you to all the members of the Coordinating Council who volunteered to stand in their positions for another two-year term, and welcome to those new members who were elected to the Council. Your new Council is as follows:

President	- Mike Landmark
Vice-President (East)	- Ray Cormier
Vice-President (Central)	- vacant
Vice-President (West)	- Duncan MacKay
Treasurer	- Dieter Ropke

Recording Secretary	- Cheryl Landmark
Membership Secretary	- Susan Graham
Trail Master	- Patrick Capper
Hike Ontario Representative-	Patrick Capper
Landowner Liaison	- Jack Donald
Publicity Director	- Gayle Phillips

My aims for the VTA in the next two years are to continue to enhance the membership base, especially in the outlying areas, and to encourage the building of new trail. Our Trail Coordinator, Georgena MacDonald, has been and, will continue to be, a great asset in this area.

Our guidebook is presently in the planning stages for a new edition to be published within the next few years. Meanwhile, edition 3.1 is still a good buy for anyone interested in purchasing one. Some of the proposals for the updated version include GPS waypoints, colour maps, and local history along the trail system. Anyone who is interested in helping out with the guidebook is asked to contact myself (705-779-3409) or Steve Dominy (705-946-2484).

I look forward to working together with all the members of the VTA for the next two years and hope to see some exciting and challenging times ahead of us.



YEAR 2000 STEVE TAYLOR AWARD RECIPIENTS



For the first time in its short history, the prestigious Steve Taylor Volunteer Award has gone to two VTA members for the year 2000! Andy Penikett from the Penewobikong Club in Blind River (in middle of photo on left) and Don McGorman of the Saulteaux Club in Sault Ste. Marie (on left in right photo) will share the plaque for six months each, but will get to keep their own Trans Canada Trail Walking Stick. In these photos, incoming VTA President, Mike Landmark and out-going VTA President, Gayle Phillips present Andy and Don with their awards. The Steve Taylor Award was established in 1995 to honour those VTA volunteers who have gone 'above and beyond' in their volunteerism. Both Andy and Don were instrumental in organizing and participating in many, many trail maintenance outings this past year. A great big thanks to Andy and Don for their dedication!

WELCOME TO NEW VTA MEMBERS IN YEAR 2000

John Abbott
Ruth Abbott
Sabine Atteln
Marg Barek
Doug Barker
Chad Beharriell
Gail Bennett
Jerry Bertrand
Jeff Black
Dan Boileau
Ron Boissineau
Myrtle Buller
Paul Burke
June Burtoft
Peter Burtoft
Gwen Calhoun
Elizabeth Campbell
Linda Clemens
Francine Codlin
Arthur Coggan
Marlene Coggan
John Cooney
Donna DiAngelo
Paul Echle
John Edmands

Laurie Elward McBay
Enos Evans
George Farkouh
Diane Farrell
Maxine Forsyth
Debbie French
Max French
Rene Gagnon
Gorden Garrett
Murley Gilbert
Richard Gollain
Sylvia Gollain
Kevin Good
Ruby Goreham
Jennifer Grant
Jacqueline Hall
Margaret Hawton
Kerstin Hedgecock
Patty Henderson
Rob Henderson
Anne Hillstrom
Bruce Holden
Earle Jones
Ernest Jones
Gisela Kados
Joseph Keleher
Edith Kirkby
Herb Kirkby
Carol Kirkland-Boissineau

Oskar Mablmann
David MacGillivray
Denise MacGillivray
Howard Malach
Steve Meawasige
Jack Moffat
Suzanne Moul
John Needham
Marie Price
Nicole Rouillard
Stella Rouillard
Michael Ryan
Edena Sinacola
Lawrence Souchereau
Lorrie-Ann Souchereau
Gerhard Strieck
Lloyd Tanner

Jim Tucker
Jan Vassbotin
Eric Vincent
Pat Vincent
Barry Wannan
Nancy-Jo Wannan
Isabella Wehner
Nicole Welvaert
Marcella Whillans
Alexis White
John Williams
Victoria Williams
Fred Young
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THOSE WERE THE DAYS...

by Susan Graham

Some of the best days I have spent with fellow members of the VTA haven't involved any hiking whatsoever. Such was the case twice this past hiking "season".

The first outing I am referring to was a canoe outing in August down the Thessalon River/Gordon Lake followed by a pot-luck dinner led and hosted by the Ropke's. The day was overcast, and I wondered if there would be a good turnout. I need not have wondered! In fact, Erika Ropke looked rather worried as the cars started arriving at the meeting point - she only had 24 plates at her cabin! (Some people thought to bring their own dishes anyway, and I was quite willing to improvise and use the frisbee in our vehicle.) Getting underway took a while, as the entry point into the river presented a bit of a challenge portaging the canoes down a clay bank. Once underway though, we enjoyed easy canoeing down the river and across the lakes. There was very little development along the banks of the river, as this is a farming area. My husband and I were paddling at the front of the group for a while, and were able to spot a mink on shore - about the only wildlife we saw. There was no wind, and the cloudy conditions meant sunburn was not a problem. Dieter and Erika must have influence in high places, as they arranged for the sky to clear as we were approaching the landing. By the time we shuttled all the vehicles to Rydal Bank and drove to the "Ropke country estate", we had clear skies and sunshine. The meal was wonderful, thanks to everyone's contributions. A number of people had enough energy left to explore the trails around the property before heading home - some just enjoyed the view from the deck! Cliff and I agreed it had been a "10" on the Enjoyment Scale.

Another great day was spent cycling the Old Goulais Bay Road with Gail Andrew as leader on a perfect fall day. Our eight-year-old son, Ian was with us, so we were a little slower than the rest of the group on the way (uphill) to Mile Hill, as Ian doesn't have a gear bike and had to rely on the strength of his legs to get him there. (I was glad to have Ian as an excuse for going a little slower anyway!) We caught up to the group at the lunch spot overlooking the Goulais River valley and Robertson Cliffs. As many times as I have seen that view in my lifetime, I was astounded by the scene as we came out of the bush into the clearing - the hills in their fall colours against a clear blue sky. It was spectacular! After lazing in the sun on the rocks for a while, we headed back the way we came (only it was mostly downhill now - and Ian was up at the front this time!) Upon arriving back at the vehicles, we decided it was much too nice a day to go for coffee at Tim Horton's - Dairy Queen sounded like a much better idea! Again, we decided this was a "10" kind of a day.

I'm thankful that the Saulteaux Club recognizes that many of our members like all kinds of outdoor activities and has people willing to lead some great outings like these two. While I've done some really great hikes, I appreciate the change once in a while. I wonder what's in the works for this winter?



Dennis Paradine of Sault College (second from left) shows VTA Annual Meeting attendees the finer points of GPS technology. The Annual Meeting took place in Elliot Lake on October 21, 2000 and was well-attended.

NEW INCENTIVE DRAWS

The new format for the Membership Incentive Draw was unveiled at the October 2000 Annual Meeting. Those who lead VTA outings and those who participated in trail maintenance outings and, who signed the Assumption of Risk Agreements at these times, had their names entered into the free draw. The more outings you attend, the better your odds.

Winners of one year's free VTA membership were: Gale Koteles, Patrick Capper and Gayle Phillips. All three winners attended trail maintenance outings to qualify. A new year and a new collection of names from the Assumption of Risk Agreements has begun. Agreements should be mailed attention to our Trail Master, Patrick Capper to get in on the draws at the next Annual Meeting.



ADDITIONS TO WEB SITE

by Gayle Phillips < www3.sympatico.ca/voyageur.trail >

I am delighted to report that the VTA can now take donations over the Internet. This wonderful service is provided by "Charity.ca" an organization created by the Ivey Foundation to help small charities reap all the benefits of being on-line. Visitors need only click on the button on our home page to safely donate.

As VTA Web Master, I get a lot of inquiries from people wanting to hike long distances on our trail. Having no idea of the hiker's background or if they have ever hiked in Northern Ontario, I never know what to tell them. Our trail is a true wilderness trail that I don't think exists anywhere else in North America, or the world for that matter! How do you tell people what to expect? Hopefully there is a way. On the home page of our web site, there is now a link called "What to expect". This link gives visitors an idea of terrain, trail conditions and what wildlife there is on our trail, complete with photos. Please pay our home page a visit and e-mail me at: voyageur.trail@sympatico.ca with your thoughts.

