



VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

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INSIDE

Thankyou to the VTA... 3
Trail Cleaning efforts... 4
Outing Schedules.... 5&6
Using Poles..... 7
Tips from Billy..... 8
Survey Results..... 9
And much, much more!

INTRODUCING, ALLISON NORG

Let me introduce myself. My name is Allison Norg, and I'm the new trail development intern here at the VTA.

I am a graduate of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Program at Sault College, and have worked in various jobs including: recreation director, camp counsellor, activity programmer, tutor, and others.

My hometown is Brantford, Ontario, but I have become very attached to living in the Sault.

I started working for the Voyageur Trail Association in the beginning of June and have been involved in many different big and little projects. One of the upcoming projects that I've been involved with is the Federation

of Ontario Naturalists' visit to Wawa in September. We have plans to do a maintenance holiday on the Michipicoten Voyageur Trail. Due to really bad storms in the area last year, the trails in this area need some help. This week of work will take place from September 14th to 19th. Naturally Superior Adventures has offered to provide camping accommodations for all those who volunteer on this trip. It won't be all work and no play; there will also be opportunities available for kayaking, canoeing, campfires and other relaxing activities. This working holiday is open to anyone interested. We can use the help. I've also visited the bush on a few occasions...read on!

NEW TRAIL OPENED IN MARATHON! by Allison Norg

(Photos by Rob Woito) On Saturday July 20th, I had the awesome opportunity to hike a brand new section of VTA trail.

The Friends of Pukaskwa under the direction of Rob Woito and Glenn Labrash, have worked hard to clear a trail from Marathon's Penn Lake park all the way through to Pukaskwa National Park.

I met the crew of hikers and local volunteers at 8:00 Saturday morning where I was introduced to Harold Griggs from the town council along with Ted Schintz from the ambulance service, and the other hikers for the day. The purpose of this hike was to open the new trail as well as raise money for the local T.V. station.

Harold Griggs had the honour of officially opening the trail by cutting the branch that started the hike (see photo). And then we were off!

Leaving Penn Lake Park at around 8:30 am we headed out onto the trail in minor rainy weather. This was a bonus, because the flies and mosquitoes (always taken into account when hiking) were few. Unfortunately the cool wet weather didn't last long, and we inevitably faced those annoying little insects in full force.

The first 5 km of trail went off and on existing



The official branch-cutting ceremony.
L-R: Glenn Labrash, Peter Dobbs, Robert Woito, Harold Griggs (representing Town Council), Carole Woito, and Allison Norg from the Voyageur Trail Association.

trails used by ATVs, snow machines, mountain bikes, old train tracks, and other hikers. Our pace was quick, and our legs were light as we approached our first rest station at 5 km. Here we were met by our joyfully cheering crowd, who snapped pictures, refreshed water supplies and gorp, and treated us to freshly cut orange slices. After resting, layering down, and hydrating ourselves we prepared for the next 5 kms,

(Continued on page 2)



NEW TRAIL OPENED IN MARATHON

(Continued from page 1)

which would bring us to our lunch spot at 10 km. Although we lost a few hikers, five of us continued on. Glenn, Peter, Rob, Carole, and myself continued to hike through the next section of trail.

This section was not as well packed by other users, but the many trails from deer, moose, and bear were evident. Along this section of the trail we came out on Lunam Lake, as well as a lookout (photo below) where we could see Heron Bay, CPR Island, and the Pic River area.



On these hilltops, elders from the Pic River First Nations used to come to pick berries. We were able to use some of their trails to hike out from Lunam Lake. We stopped for lunch at 1:00 where our supporters once again met us. At this point, my socks and shoes were very wet and causing blisters to my feet. Paula Golding from the Ambulance service kindly lent me a dry pair of socks and tended to my blisters before we headed back out on the trail for the final 10 km.

We left lunch as four; Carole had other business to tend to. Glenn, Peter, Rob and myself took to the rather rugged trail around 2:00 pm.

This trail is definitely a wilderness class trail, and should only be done by experienced hikers. As Rob explained to me, Glenn had spent many trips in this area looking for the best route to take. After only a very short time, the route was decided and construction began. It is evident that it took a great deal hard work to cut the trail through this section, not just once, a few times.

It was around 5 km into this section of trail that Rob could go no further. Earlier in the day he had re-injured his knee, and had to stop. He was air lifted by helicopter ahead of us to Pukaskwa where we would meet with him later. And so we were three.

It was around this time that we slowed our pace and pressed on up and down the remaining trail. I have to admit my energy level took quite a drop soon after we left Rob, and wasn't regained until we hit the final coastline. The final part of the coastline is a very interesting section.

The quick, rocky ups and downs are challenging, but cool. Along with the cedar trees and soft mossy forest floor are rock crevices and cave-like areas. If you are short on time and

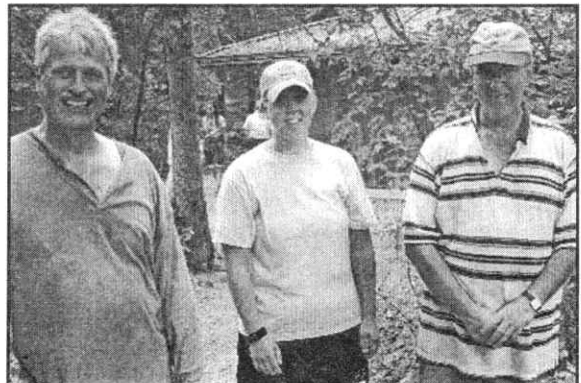


energy, this section of the trail is a great area to see. We finally made it to "the beach" which I had been anticipating since just after lunch. Finally I could stop asking Glenn, "How far are we from the beach?" Peter and I removed our boots, and walked the 2 km beach bare foot. Boy did it feel great! From here, we travelled up the road along the Pic River and across the Pic River bridge into Pukaskwa National Park. We had finally made it! We finished our hike by walking all the way into the Pukaskwa Park Visitors Center, where once again our supporters greeted us. Our arrival time was somewhere between 8:00 and 8:30.

The local folks who put on this event prepared a large feast of moose stew and salads. Although we missed the ceremony, the food was great! It felt so good to sit down and eat.

So that's the play by play of my experience in Marathon. Rob suggests that the trail is around 25 km; I tend to agree with him.

If you're ever in this area and looking to hike, any part of this trail is worth your time. For pictures and more information check out the Friends of Pukaskwa website at <http://www.friendsofpnp.ca/marathontopukaskwatrail.htm>.



L to R: Glenn Labrash, Allison Norg and Peter Dobbs end-to-end the new Marathon trail!

Note from Rob Woito: I would like to take this opportunity to especially thank the Pukaskwa National Park staff for their support and help, Collette and Proddy Goodchild for the opening ceremony, Marathon District Ambulance and Ted Schintz, Paula Golding for volunteering to provide emergency services, as well as several of the friends who helped to make this day such a success. We can only hope to continue to improve the quality of life for all to enjoy.

2003 is the 30th Anniversary of the Voyageur Trail Association!

If anyone has any suggestions to celebrate this milestone, call the President, Mike Landmark at 705-779-3409 or bring them to the Annual General Meeting 1:00 PM October 26, 2002 at the Snowbird's Clubhouse, in Elliot Lake. Everyone welcome!

