



VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

Happy Holidays!

No. 83 WINTER 2002/3

EDITOR: Cheryl Landmark

LAYOUT BY: Gayle Phillips

Published by the
VOYAGEUR TRAIL
ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 20040
150 Churchill Blvd.
Sault Ste. Marie Ontario
P6A 6W3

Toll Free 1-877-393-4003

e-mail address:
voyageur.trail@sympatico.ca

INFORMATION LINE
705-253-5353

Select message No. 9999
on your touchtone phone

Visit our web site at:
<http://www3.sympatico.ca/voyageur.trail>

A member of
Hike Ontario,
National Trail Association,
Ontario Trails Council, and
Trans Canada Trail.



INSIDE

We are impressed..... 2

Annual Report..... 3

Billy's Tips..... 4

Outing Schedules....5&6

Club Reports..... 7

Goodbye..... 8

And much, much more!

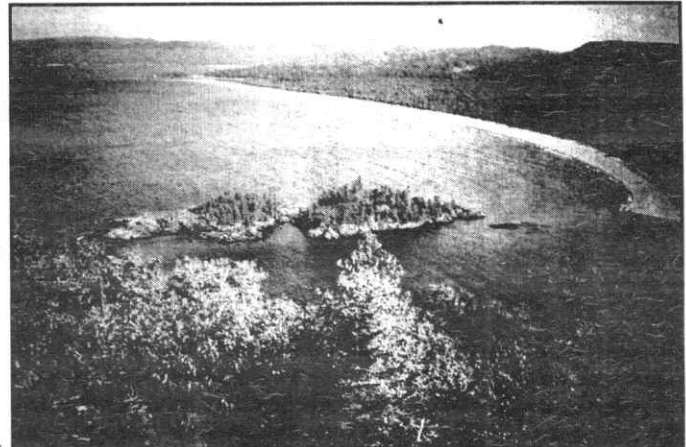
WORKING VACATIONS ARE GREAT! by Gayle Phillips

Maybe it was the sunny, warm weather...or maybe it was the scenic location on Lake Superior at the mouth of the Michipicoten River...it could have been the wonderful meals...or the paddling opportunities...or the folk concert...or the Voyageur Canoe ride...or the campfire get-togethers...or maybe the work itself, on a trail that was calling out to us for attention.

No, I think it was the **people** who made everything so special on our Wawa trail cleaning week September 14 to 19th. The VTA played host to six people from Britain, volunteers with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), six from the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON) who organized the trip, and two Bruce Trail members from Southern Ontario. To participate in BTCV "working vacations," visitors must pay their own transportation costs to and from Canada. The VTA defines the project, supplies the tools and provides accommodations.

The FON provides transportation to and from the area that needs the work and liaisons with BTCV to arrange flights and projects. The Federation of Ontario Naturalists is a charitable organization protecting Ontario's nature through research, education and conservation action. FON "Volunteer for Nature" participants get the opportunity to learn skills and participate in hands-on conservation projects throughout Ontario.

What a hard-working bunch they were! The Wawa area was hit hard last year with some terrible storms that had uprooted many, many trees and even though we only worked with hand tools, this group managed to clean and blaze all eight kilometres of trail in the Wawa area. They seemed to



(Photo) Without all the hard work, no one would be able to enjoy this Bridget Lake Trail view over our "home" for the week, Naturally Superior Adventures.

relish attacking a section that hardly resembled a trail at all. They worked hard, but at the end of a day, they still had energy to play!

Naturally Superior Adventures provided our "home base" for the week. And what a home base to enjoy! We tented on their wonderful sand beach and enjoyed all our meals together in the lodge overlooking Lake Superior. (A special thanks to Melissa Murray of NSA for all her hard work shepherding us through meal preparation and clean-ups every day.)

We were treated to an evening paddle in NSA's 36-foot Voyageur Canoe to Silver Falls along with some history about the Voyageur way of life from David Wells, NSA manager. On a half-day off, several of us participated in a paddle down the Michipicoten River in kayaks and canoes.

Most evenings were spent swimming, paddling kayaks or canoes, and of course, campfires! One evening, NSA hosted a Canadian folk singer and some of us attended her concert.

Our last evening at the lodge

(Continued on page 2)



WORKING VACATIONS ARE GREAT! *(Continued from page 1)*

was a fantastic whitefish barbecue dinner with slide show about Lake Superior. Several members of Lake Superior Provincial Park staff attended to say goodbye to the group. (The group had worked for the Park in the week previous.) Howard Whent, Councillor with the Township of Michipicoten attended and thanked the group for re-opening the local hiking trails by presenting them with a Wawa pin. He explained how eco-tourism was becoming very important to the town and having proper trails to send visitors out on was a major local concern.

All in all, the week couldn't have been more perfect. But best of all was meeting people from all walks of life and other corners of the globe who share a common interest in nature and the outdoors way of life.

Participants included: Kevin Callender, Lisa Cooper, David Grimshaw, David Hanlon, Chris Morgan, Gaynor Rees from Britain; Larry Cornelis, Barry Wallace,

Christopher Guselle, Edward and Willma Lang, and Howard Lyn from Southern Ontario FON; Finlay and Margaret Morrison from the Bruce Trail in Southern Ontario; Shaun Parent from Montreal River; Mike Landmark, Gayle Phillips, Allison Norg, Myrtle Buller and Marie Foster from the Saulteaux Club, Sault Ste. Marie; Duncan MacKay from the Casques Isles Club, Terrace Bay; Bob Elliot and Carol Dersch from the Michipicoten Club, Wawa.

Thank you to everyone involved!

(Watch in upcoming newsletters for the final arrangements for FON's Working Vacation taking place September 21-28, 2003 in Wawa again!)

For more information visit these web sites:

Federation of Ontario Naturalists: www.ontarionature.org

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers: www.btcv.org

Bruce Trail Association: www.bruce-trail.org

Naturally Superior Adventures: www.naturallysuperior.com



WE ARE IMPRESSED

by Dieter & Erik Ropke

On the 17th of August a bunch of people came to canoe down the Thessalon River. Weather conditions were dismal, driving rain showers, whipping gusts of wind and a forecast just as bad. Loretta and Dan had their canoe off first with the obvious motto 'when the going gets tough, the tough get going'. Gordon Lake was white with rollers and the rain never ceased. One young man from Great Britain, Phillip, tried a wet exit with his kayak albeit it was an involuntary exit. Elaine, Ellen and Nancy did a canoe rescue of the young man under actual field conditions, a rare opportunity since this manoeuvre is usually practiced under perfect summer conditions on a small lake in mid July.

The soaked trippers piled out like wet rats before they reached Ottetail Lake. What an intrepid group of optimists. Everybody changed and enjoyed a potluck. Trips like this are fun in retrospect but most important, they give you perspective and let you recognize the scale of outdoor activities. The camaraderie was palpable. *We salute you for being a tough bunch!*



Looking for the PERFECT GIFT for that hard-to-buy-for person on your list? Why not get a VTA membership?

Guidebooks, crests, t-shirts & sweatshirts are also available. For quick delivery, call our Membership Secretary,

Susan at
(705) 949-4105.



Booking 2003 Holidays?

Remember: Plan to join the Federation of Ontario Naturalists Working for Wilderness at Naturally Superior Adventures in Wawa from September 22nd to the 26th, 2003. Plans in the works include a backpack of the Towab Trail in Lake Superior Provincial Park including a train ride on the Agawa Canyon route for a special price! Plan your holidays early!

When does your VTA membership expire?

Check the date printed on your VT NEWS envelope label!

**VTA Membership Secretary
705-949-4105**



Trailhead Packages for 3 or more day stays for 2 include:

- free Algoma map
- services of tourist coordinator
- detailed local travel maps
- password for personal web access to the Great Lakes Explorers Club Secret Tips

Quote code #1200 when booking & the Voyageur Trail gets a donation!

360 Great Northern Rd • PO Box 787 • Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 5N3
Tel (705) 949-8111 • Toll-Free: 1-800-461-0800 • Fax: (705) 949-1912
Internet: www.watertowerinn.com Email: resort@watertowerinn.com

As a hotel guest let us connect you with local individuals and businesses with specialized services such as equipment rentals or guiding services. Each Trailhead package is designed to be as unique as you are to make this a truly memorable vacation!

VTA ANNUAL REPORT

by **Mike Landmark** (as presented at the 2002 Annual Meeting)

The Voyageur Trail Association's Trails Coordinator, Georgena MacDonald, finished her contract in February, 2002. Her contributions to our Association during her tenure were greatly appreciated.

The VTA also hired a FedNor intern, Evan McCaul, from December, 2001 to April, 2002, at which time he moved on to a full-time position elsewhere. Evan was very instrumental in organizing several projects for the Association and in meeting with various groups within the VTA's far-reaching trail system. A second FedNor intern, Allison Norg, was hired in June, 2002, to replace Evan for the remainder of the FedNor grant, and is also busy working on various projects for the VTA.

During 2002, the VTA partnered with a group in Marathon and Pukaskwa National Park to create 25 kilometres of new trail between Penn Lake and the west end of the park. This is a very welcome addition to the Voyageur Trail Association's trail system and we appreciate all the hard work and time that went into creating it.

Version 3.2 of our guidebook was completed early this year and has been distributed to the various outlets, who have generously offered to carry the guidebook for the VTA. Partial sections of the guidebook are also available to those who do not wish to purchase the entire book.

A trail cleaning project was scheduled for the Wawa area of the VTA trail system in September, 2002. Members of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, the Bruce Trail Association, and the Voyageur Trail Association spent a week in this area working to ensure that the trail is properly blazed and cleared for the enjoyment of hikers.

In August, 2002, the VTA received a grant of \$15,600 from the Ministry of Tourism. This very welcome funding will be used to produce a training video and materials.

In November, we received a grant from the Great Lakes Heritage Coast to purchase nine trailhead signs. Tourist Information Centres throughout Northern Ontario have been provided with VTA information packages and display boards.

The VTA has several ongoing projects in the works, including 1) finding suitable locations for Trans Canada, Hike Ontario Legacy and Great Lakes Heritage Coast signs throughout our trail system, 2) working towards having a Trans Canada Trail pavilion constructed in Sault Ste. Marie, 3) re-routing the Elliot Lake trail to connect to the city, 4) extending our trail north to Batchewana Mountain and south from Wawa to Lake Superior Provincial Park, 5) trail from Marathon to White River.



Participants in 2002's Annual VTA meeting in Elliot Lake were treated to a guided hike of the Horne Lake trail in the last of autumn's coloured leaves.

In conclusion, 2002 has been a busy and challenging year for the Voyageur Trail Association, but it has also been very rewarding in terms of growth and affiliations. Our volunteer base has remained fairly steady, and we hope this will continue in the future.



WINNERS

Winners of a free membership for 2003 drawn after the Annual General Meeting are: Susan Graham and Gayle Phillips (*Saulteaux Club leaders*), and Marge Kelland (*Saulteaux Club work party participant*). Congratulations!

To get your chance to win next year, make sure your outing leader sends your club's Assumption of Risk Agreements to Patrick Capper, 167 Kohler Street, Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 3V2.

Outing leaders and all participants on work parties are eligible to win.



Gayle Phillips, VTA Publicity Director congratulates Mike Landmark, VTA President on winning the 2002 Steve Taylor Volunteer Award. The award was established in 1995 to honour those VTA volunteers who go above and beyond the call of duty on behalf of the Voyageur Trail.

