

# The SOLAR Ray

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A monthly publication of the School for Outdoor Leadership, Adventure and Recreation (SOLAR) November 2010

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## So you want to Backpack in Glacier National Park?

By Ken Lemieux

If you've been an active SOLAR member the last couple years you've probably seen pictures or heard stories regarding the "Crown of the Continent." I was already considering backpacking in Glacier when I attended Kevin Cotter's "Tail of Two Trips" presentation in October 2009. By the time the lights came back on in Colony Hall, I was convinced of one thing: I was going.

This article is intended to assist anybody who is considering a backpacking trip to Glacier but is unsure how to proceed. I coordinated a group of eight SOLAR members who backpacked in Glacier National Park in August 2010. We hiked in the backcountry for 6 days/5 nights, followed by one day of day-hiking.

### Reservations

The first thing you should do is go to the Glacier National Park website ([www.nps.gov/glac](http://www.nps.gov/glac)) and download the backcountry guide. Read the whole thing. Not only does it contain invaluable information, it also has the backcountry application, which you can mail or fax in. The map, which includes mileage, was very helpful in figuring out which route to apply for.



Campsites include bear poles, but bring your own rope.

Each approved application submission costs \$30 (non-refundable). All applications submitted between January 1 and April 15 are put into a

lottery. It is imperative that you get your application there prior to April 15 or you will end up with whatever's left after they process this first batch. It takes a few weeks for the rangers to enter the applications into the computer system, so don't freak out if you don't hear anything in the first week or two.

The National Park Service allows two tents per campsite, with a maximum of four people per site. And as we found out, most of these sites are pretty small. Each backcountry campground consists of 2-5 sites. The bigger your group - and therefore, the more sites you need - the less likely you are to get your desired route.

Glacier receives over 600 backcountry requests each year, and since these sites are open only a few months of the year, you truly are at the mercy of the lottery (we got permit #376). I'm aware of three SOLAR groups that applied for permits in the past two years, and none of them got the exact route they asked for. But like a ranger told me, there is no bad area to hike



Trails in GNP are well maintained, with signs at nearly every trail junction.

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Check out the online edition for hyperlinks to flyers for upcoming trips/classes.

[www.solaroutdoors.org/Newsletter/Download.aspx](http://www.solaroutdoors.org/Newsletter/Download.aspx)

SOLAR members are encouraged to use the online calendar at [www.meetup.com/SOLAR-Outdoors](http://www.meetup.com/SOLAR-Outdoors) for convenient class and trip sign-ups.



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in Glacier. And for the most part, I would agree with that statement. Once you arrive at the park, you can work with the rangers to adjust your route based on previously unanticipated availability (from campers who cancelled, etc.).

Probably the biggest mistake I made when submitting our application was being inflexible on the start date. That may have cost me the exact route I wanted, a loop starting and ending in Many Glacier. Instead, the trip was broken into two parts - a northern loop out of Many Glacier coming back to the campground at Many Glacier the third night, then a southern loop. When we arrived to pick up our permit we adjusted it so that the last night on the trail allowed us to end back in Many Glacier at our vehicles, eliminating the need to stage vehicles or take a shuttle. And coming back to Many Glacier on the third night also afforded us the opportunity to resupply, carry lighter packs, shower, and put on clean clothes half way through our trip. Heck, half our group even ate dinner in a restaurant that third night!

So be flexible and don't be disappointed when you receive your reservation by email. Hey, at least you got something! We met one group in Glacier which submitted a very inflexible application and did not receive any route – they had to piece one together once they arrived at the park.

### Getting There

Having obtained the reservation, the next thing you need to do is figure out how to get to Glacier. Part of the beauty of the park is that it is in the middle-of-nowhere Montana. That is also part of the problem. For our trip, five of us decided to fly into Great Falls, MT and rent a van to drive the three hours to Swiftcurrent/Many Glacier. Although further from the park, we selected the Great Falls airport over Kalispell because the Delta flights were cheaper and more frequent. Since we planned to hike on the east side of the park, the drive time to our starting point was only half an hour longer than what it would have taken us to fly to Kalispell and traverse the Going-to-the-Sun Road through the park (we planned on driving this scenic road after the backcountry portion of the trip, anyway).



*We adjusted our route when we picked up our permit.*



*"Little Zeke" was an exception to the rule.*

Two members of our group decided to take the 36-hour [Amtrak](#) train ride into East Glacier (and a [paid shuttle](#) from there to Many Glacier). On the return trip they boarded the train in West Glacier, for a bit of variety (the [Going-to-the-Sun Road shuttle](#) will take you to within a mile of West Glacier). If the train is an option you are considering, book it early; prices rise quickly in mid-May. A sleeper car is highly recommended, although coach cars are available. Sleeper room options vary from a 2-person roomette using community bathrooms to a 4-person bedroom suite with two private showers and toilets. The meals provided in the dining car are surprisingly good, and are included in the price of the sleeper room. Amtrak proved to be a very relaxing way to travel, although the experience is somewhat dependant on the quality of the train car attendant. There is plenty of room for carry-on luggage and backpacks on Amtrak, although you may have to keep them in a luggage rack far from your seat/room.



*Amtrak's two-person "Roomette" is cozy and private.*



*Volunteer docents shared information about the local areas in the "Observation Car".*

Yet another member of our group drove up to Glacier from his home in Wyoming. So yes, it was a story of planes, trains, and automobiles.

### Lodging

There are not a lot of lodging options in the park, especially on the east side. Things fill up quickly. If you are going to need a hotel

room before or after your hike, make your reservations as soon as you receive the backcountry permit confirmation.

We reserved two rooms at the [Swiftcurrent Motor Inn](#) for the night before the hike. This is an excellent location if your hike is starting at Many Glacier; several trailheads are within walking distance and they have a camp store and restaurant. The rooms are bare bones and small, but we were able to fit four people in each room. Be aware that they charge your credit card when you make the reservation and the tax when you check in.

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Note: As an added bonus, the parking lot across from the Swiftcurrent Motor Inn is big enough to leave your vehicle for the duration of your trip, and the rangers set up spotting scopes in the parking lot to observe the grizzlies and mountain goats on the slopes surrounding the area. The ranger station and campground are all within a couple minutes walk.

Also in the Many Glacier area is the beautiful [Many Glacier Hotel](#). We ate dinner there the night before the trip in the Ptarmigan Dining Room - the food was overrated and the service painfully slow. All our other meals in the Many Glacier area were at the Swiftcurrent Motor Inn's Italian Garden Coffee Shop (don't let the name fool you, it is a restaurant), which served us well.

Another east side lodging option is the [Rising Sun Motor Inn](#) inside the park on the Going-to-the-Sun Road (we stayed there after coming off the trail), and a few options in St. Mary. There are more selections to the west of the park.

### Getting/Changing the Permit

When you get to the park, you may pick up your permit one day prior to the start of your hike. If you need to adjust your route, you're much more likely to have success changing the end of your route rather than the beginning. On Glacier's website they have a page that enables you to see walk-up availability. I monitored the website in the days leading up to our start date and saw that usually 3-4 days out, site availability opened up.

In our case, we changed the fifth and final night of our permit, eliminating back-to-back 15 mile days and a lot of anxiety.



*Backcountry campsites include toilets (some with great views!), but bring your own TP.*



Participants were (l to r) Brian Nordhaus, Ati & Jennifer Tislerics, Rick Wisz, Ted Kosik, Jackie Ostrosky, Ken Lemieux and Linda Ringlein.

I would not recommend trying to get a walk-up permit during peak season. If that is your only option though, the Nyack/Coal Creek Camping Zone is probably going to be your best bet. This area allows camping in undesignated sites (you will still need to obtain a permit when you get to the park). Be forewarned, the backcountry office advises this is for backpackers with advanced skills.

Glacier charges each hiker \$5 per night on the trail, payable when you pick up your permit. Collect this from your group ahead of time. There are no ATMs in the ranger station.

### Bear Spray

A canister of bear spray generally costs \$39.95 and is a must in Glacier's backcountry (our group had 4 canisters between us, one per tent). You cannot take bear spray on a plane. Amtrak

doesn't want it, either, although no one seems to actually inspect luggage on the trains. The ranger stations, camp stores, and almost any place that sells anything inside or outside of the park should have it in stock. If you purchase bear spray and are flying home, you can ship it via the U.S. Postal Service. Another alternative is to donate it to other hikers or to the rangers.

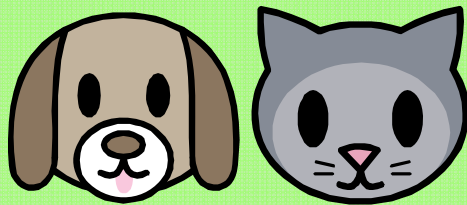
### Going-to-the-Sun Road (Free) Shuttle

The Going-to-the-Sun Road traverses the park from east to west and has a [free shuttle](#) that crosses the park. Members of our group used the shuttle a couple of times to get from one trailhead to another. Our fifth day called for a 22 mile hike from Reynolds Creek to Granite Park. Using the shuttle from St. Mary's Falls to Logan Pass we were able to cut that day's mileage in half. As an added bonus, the shuttle was packed with day hikers and tourists, most decked out in cotton, many in flip flops, and several wondering what we had experienced in the backcountry. Answering the questions of those curious riders and receiving odd looks from the less adventurous sure gave me a deep sense of satisfaction and accomplishment!



*Take advantage of the free shuttle service to impress the average park visitor with your "heavy" backpack.*

## Pets & SOLAR



Out of respect for SOLAR members with pet allergies, we request your assistance in creating a reduced-allergen zone inside Colony Hall during membership meetings. We are asking that all pets stay on the south side of the room (the right-hand side, as you are seated in the chairs). This will allow people with allergies to breathe more easily on the other side of the room.

Recently, some SOLAR members have expressed concerns about pets causing some disruptions at the SOLAR membership meetings. We'd like to remind our members to take pets outside if they are distracting people, so club members can hear the presentations about recent or upcoming classes/trips.

If someone's pet is distracting you from the meeting you are encouraged to offer a friendly reminder of this message, or to seek out a Steering Committee member to remind the pet owner to step outside.

Please share with any member of the SOLAR Steering Committee your additional thoughts and ideas on maintaining a positive experience in regards to pets at meetings, activities, etc.

Thank you!

**\*\* NOTE \*\*** Due to the presence of live bats, no pets should be inside Colony Hall at the November meeting. Even the scent of dogs/cats will stress the bats. Thank you for your cooperation.

## Upcoming SOLAR Programs

*(Held after the monthly membership meetings.)*

November Program: Bats of the World, by the [Organization for Bat Conservation](#) at Cranbrook Institute of Science

The Organization for Bat Conservation is an excellent organization that facilitates conservation through grass-roots education. Why save bats? Bats in the U.S. are the primary predators of night-flying insects. Bats in the tropics help us all because they disperse seeds that help the rainforests to grow, and pollinate flowers that provide us with foods we enjoy. The program will consist of a multi-media presentation that examines such topics as hibernation, ecology, behavior, migration, conservation, science, and public health issues. Live bats are one of the highlights of the program. All the bats used are either non-releasable, permanently injured, or captive bred bats donated from zoos to use for educational purposes. All bats are vaccinated on a yearly basis. Bat houses will be available to purchase.

December Program: Winter Gear Swap/Sale

Do you have outdoor gear you no longer use? Have several of the same items you have acquired over the years? Here is your chance to sell or barter your unused/unwanted gear and help other SOLAR members at the same time. Bring your gear to the December general meeting and be ready to sell it to other people.

January Program: Annual Photo Contest

SOLAR amateur photographers will have an opportunity to show off their camera skills. Dig up your best photos from 2010 and bring them to the January 2011 meeting. Details on the categories, official rules, and prizes will be distributed at the November SOLAR meeting.

Have a program idea? Contact [SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org](mailto:SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org).



The annual **SOLAR Holiday Party** is scheduled for Friday, December 3rd. The party will start at 7:00 p.m. and will end at midnight. SOLAR will provide ham, turkey, soda, biodegradable paperware, decorations, and the DJ. Members should bring a dish to pass, dancing shoes, and plan to have a good time!

# Basic Mountaineering & Safety Skills Class

by Lou Szakal

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to stand on the summit of a mountain? Or to know what it takes to get there? How about just advancing your winter camping, snowshoeing, or cross-country skiing skills to include one- to two-week expeditions to places like Yellowstone or the Colorado or Canadian Rockies? Your chance to find out begins with this class. Starting in December 2010, I will be teaching the Basic Mountaineering and Safety Skills class to a few lucky students who are interested in devoting their time and energy to the sport of mountaineering and advanced winter adventure.



## MANDATORY PREREQUISITES:

Basic Backpacking, Land Navigation or Adventure Racing Class, Winter Camping (a.k.a. Enjoying Michigan Winters), belay card (rock gym)

## CLASS SCHEDULE:

Location TBD (probably Birmingham Public Library), 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. (sharp)

Class 1	12/09/10	Thu.
Class 2	12/16/10	Thu.
Clinic	12/18/10	Sat.
Class 3	01/06/11	Thu.
Practical 1	01/07-09/11	Fri.-Sun.
Class 4	01/13/11	Thu.
Class 5	01/20/11	Thu.
Class 6	01/27/11	Thu.
Practical 2	01/28-30/11	Fri.-Sun



## COST:

\$175.00 per person (check made out to SOLAR). Subtract \$17 if you own Mountaineering, Freedom of the Hills Edition 7 by The Mountaineers. Subtract \$12 if you own Glacier Mountaineering: An Illustrated Guide to Glacier Travel and Crevasse Rescue by Andy Tyson & Mike Clelland.

CONTACT: Lou Szakal, email: everest2008@comcast.net, or cell: 248-756-7001

## SOME OF THE SKILLS, LESSONS AND ITEMS YOU'LL GET OUT OF THIS CLASS:

Self-arrest	Fixed Lines	Roped Travel
Running Belays	Risk Assessment	Snowshoeing Skills
Health/Fitness Tips	Avalanche Issues	Chest Harness
Camaraderie	Ice Axe Use	Basic Mountaineering Skills
Leadership	Navigation	Prusiks
Technical Tool Usage	Mountain Safety	First Aid Skills
How To Use Crampons	2" Binder	Nutrition
Knots	LNT	Weather
Sled Skills	Glacier Travel	Climbing Info
Group Dynamics	Frost Bite Issues	Winter Safety Skills
Z & C Pulley System	Optional Mountain Trip	Proper Clothing
Rappelling	Gear Issues	Effects of Cold
Reading Material	Crevasse Rescue	Expedition Planning
Environmental Ethics	Altitude Awareness	Ascending Ropes
Ropes/Webbing	Alpine Rescue	Team Building Skills
Stewardship	Movies	Clinic
Fun	Two Practicals	Two Mountaineering Books
Much, much more		

# The Gichigami Gremlin & The Green Lantern

By Glenn Schultz

This account is conveyed from actual occurrences. The specific location at Pictured Rocks will remain unnamed. Each fact can be verified by the participants.

On an August evening following a picturesque day of hiking, Karen Haroutunian, Krisanne Schmidt and I were relaxing after dinner at camp in our wooded clearing. Daylight was passing. Our bear bags were suspended on the bear pole like colorful ornaments. This third night in the woods, as was our evening ritual, one of us hung a battery powered glow stick on a tree at the mouth of the trail to our campsite, for this was our beacon for any nighttime journeys. As we reclined, we gazed through the trees toward the sandy bluffs overlooking Lake Superior, known as Lake Gichigami.



We saw a haze, but thought that we had hiked too much perhaps and that our eyes were tired. Looking again, we noticed fog slowly rolling in and methodically draping the forest canopy around us inch by inch. Our group's consensus was that something strange was in the air. The bright moon and stars from the night before had left the sky. Eeriness entered our camp as goose bumps rose on our arms and legs and the hair on our heads tingled with keen anticipation. On the previous night we had seen lightning on the horizon reach from the sky and connect to the water. Had that been an omen?



Tonight there was stillness. We noticed that no birds were flying. No crickets were chirping and all bugs had vanished. The chipmunk that had visited us at breakfast was nowhere to be seen. There were no sounds at all but the low drone of the waves beating steadily against the shoreline. Beating steadily against the shoreline.

No leaves were stirring in the trees or on the ground. No wind was blowing, yet the fog drifted in. Two bats swooped by.

Our voices quieted. The three of us could see our lantern's green glow as it rested against the tree's trunk. And then as if a candle flame was blown out, the light suddenly turned off! Very strange, we all thought!



There was no timing device or mechanism for sleep mode? We gasped in unison at this odd occurrence.

Or was it odd? What had the fog brought? Would it mean anything if I told you that our campsite had the # 6 in it? What orbs were in the air?



Motionlessness remained, yet our ears were perked for any sound. Who would check the lantern? Should we draw straws? Our eyes darted around each tree

searching for clues, yet what were we looking for? A moment was a minute and a minute was a moment. Mustering enough inquisitiveness, we paced ourselves toward the lantern. Reaching out slowly, hoping that the tree would not come alive, one of us grasped the lantern, examined it, and showed the others that nothing was mechanically altered. And so the button was pushed again and the stick glowed. But for how long would this last, we mused?

We walked back to our seats befuddled. We had thought about taking a brief after-meal nap, but that would now mean sleeping with one eye open. What would the three of us do? And then there were two?

The drifting fog now muted the shine of our headlamps. Two lamps shown red like ominous eyes. Shadows danced as we lifted our heads; imps perhaps dodging the rays? Our conversation shifted to talk of Gichigami and of the legends of the realm. Since the fog continued to thicken, we moved our green lantern away from the tree to near us on a rope line by our overhead tarp for more light.

We made a pact that there was no need for any night hikes tonight. And as the evening waned to dusk, we made our way to our tents and zippered the doors shut.

Through the nylon I could see a small glow in the opposite direction. Was it the moon rising or

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was it a mischievous sprite determining our campsite? I nudged my head back through the door and peered into the void. Our lantern was illuminating a ghostly glow.



Returning to the shelter of my sleeping bag, I burrowed deep because the temperature had deceptively dropped. The adrenaline of the previous moments had not registered with what now enveloped our camp. An icy calm lay across the forest. It was not abnormal for this time of year, but it was peculiar. Spiders climbed the walls of our tents and any arachnophobia was stifled as the wayward ones were smothered and suppressed.

As one may surmise, before dawn, nature called and I had to listen. My tent door unzipped like a creaking shutter, and I stared once more into the darkness. And darkness it was, for our green lantern was out. Who had turned it off? Again.

At this time I had no inclination to investigate this phenomenon and so with my headlamp on full I scurried

down the sandy path trusting that I would be moving faster than any rustling bush. The fog devoured my headlamp's beam a few feet in front of me while the drumming of the lake's waves drowned out any footsteps that may have been coming my way. Occasionally the sound paused and then a loud crescendo battered the shore.

I reached a boardwalk that groaned under my weight. My knees could feel the cold and dampness with every step. What was a block seemed like a quarter mile. How hungry was the wolf that was howling? Was it a wolf at all? Was I sleepwalking or in a shuffling trance?

Later when I arrived back at camp, with my eyes and ears as diligent as at first, I could see our lantern silhouetted against our tarp.

But was it off?

Or was it on?



## Enjoying Michigan Winters: Backpacking & Winter Skills Class

Winter backpacking skills are not just for the winter; they are a useful back-up for the unexpected cold days in early spring and late fall. In this class we'll teach you how to keep warm, and keep your energy level up when skiing or snowshoeing in the winter. We will learn how to build a snow shelter and work on many other skills. These skills are great to know, just in case something does go HORRIBLY WRONG on that so-called "simple" 3-hour ski trip. You can also use these skills in the summer on glaciers and snowy peaks in the Rockies, the Cascades, Alaska, etc.



If you've already have taken the beginning backpacking class or have comparable experience and are looking to expand your skills to the next level, this is the class for you!

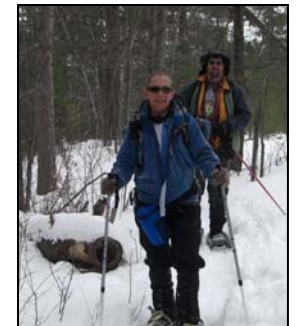


We will have six classroom sessions and two Practical exercises in the great outdoors. Our second Practical includes a play day in the great white north, where you can snowshoe, ski or just sit by a nice warm roaring campfire sipping

hot chocolate. So it's up to you - lay around on a couch all winter watching outdoor shows on TV, or take this class and actually live the adventure! After all, isn't that why you joined SOLAR?

The cost is \$125.00 for new students (there's a reduced fee for past graduates who want to retake the course). Classroom dates are December 1, 8, 15, January 5, 19, 26 and February 2. Outdoor Practical dates are January 15-16 and February 11-13, 2011.

To sign up, or have your questions answered, contact Allen Duncan at (734) 276-3194 or [allenduncan@aggienetwork.com](mailto:allenduncan@aggienetwork.com).



## Hayride and Bonfire

*Kensington Metropark  
Saturday, November 6, 2010  
6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.*



Come join us for a fun-filled evening at Kensington Metropark's farm center. A roaring bonfire will start at 6:00PM, followed by hayrides from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. Hot dogs, side salads and s'mores will be provided. You provide the roasting sticks and cook for yourself.

Please bring lawn chairs, warm clothes, jackets and blankets.

This is open to all so bring your family, friends, neighbors or co-workers.

This is kid-friendly but please leave your pets at home.

All this fun is yours for a mere \$15. You will need a daily (\$5) or annual (\$25) Metropark permit.

Interested? Contact Leslie Cordova at [lesliegene@aol.com](mailto:lesliegene@aol.com) or (248) 547-5626.

## High Ropes Course

Where: Base Camp Challenge Center  
G-5081 Torrey Rd.  
Flint, MI 48507  
Phone: (810)422-6030

When: Saturday, November 20, 2010

Time: 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early.

Group size: 40 people.

Cost: \$33 per person. First pays, first plays.

Trip Leader: Jeff Enterkin (248) 399-0696 or [jente69690@aol.com](mailto:jente69690@aol.com)

Signup Deadline: November 2, 2010 is the last day to sign up.

The Ropes Course is part of the Base Camp Challenge Center educational program. Rachael Abler, a SOLAR member, will be putting our adventure program together. We will be starting off with ground activities / team building adventurous games and then move onto the rock climbing wall, the bi-level high ropes course, Tyrolean Traverse, and there is a potential surprise if time permits. The first level of the ropes course is about 15 feet off the ground and the second level is about 30 feet off the ground. Our group will be split up into 2 groups. While 20 people are on the ropes course the other 20 will be on the climbing wall then we will switch activities.

We will be ordering pizza for a short food break. You will need to bring \$5 for the pizza. It is not included in your cost. If you do not want pizza you can bring something simple to eat like a snack and drink. Our time will be limited for eating.

You are welcome to bring your own harness and gloves. Any rock climbers will need to be checked off on their belay skills before allowing them to do off-the-waist belay.

Kids over the age of 10 are welcome to participate. There is a minimum reach-height of 72 inches while standing flat on the ground and reaching straight up. Both participants and non-participants (those who just want to watch) MUST fill out an Acknowledgment and Release form. All participants under 18 years of age must have the release form signed by a parent or legal guardian.



## SPOTLIGHT ON...



**Darrell Ahlberg,**  
SOLAR Member

How long have you been a member of SOLAR?  
*Since 1999.*

How did you first learn about SOLAR?

*From my girlfriend at the time. She was already an experienced backpacker and was trying to talk me into it. She told me about this club that offered backpacking classes. So I joined and we took the class together in the fall of 1999. The practical to Pictured Rocks is still one of my favorite trips. After the class we used our skills to backpack for a week in Yosemite. Sadly, the relationship didn't last and she went her own way. But I really liked everything SOLAR had to offer so I stayed with it.*

What are some outdoorsy activities you enjoy?

*It's almost easier to name the things I don't enjoy. I'm not a hunter or a fisherman. But I like most everything else. I particularly enjoy camping, hiking, bike riding, backpacking canoeing, cross-country and downhill skiing,*

Which classes have you taken through SOLAR? What class(es) do you wish were offered that are not currently?

*I took the Basic Backpacking class, Wilderness First Aid, and Basic Land Navigation.*

What has been your favorite trip/activity so far?

*Oh, there have been so many, its hard to choose. With SOLAR, probably the trip to Yellowstone. That was a two week trip. The first week, we saw some sites during the day and hiked to backcountry sites for the night. The second week, four of us split off for a week of backpacking. It was a blast. The Adirondack trip was great, a North Manitou weekend was also great. I've also gone on some fun non-SOLAR trips out west. A couple years ago, we climbed Long's Peak in Colorado. I also backpacked for a week on Isle Royale.*

What's the most challenging thing you've done through SOLAR?

*I think the Long's Peak climb. Although that was not through SOLAR, I give SOLAR credit for giving me the skills and getting me started. Without SOLAR, I would never have done that or a lot of other things. I also have to mention that in 2007 I ran the Nashville Country Music Marathon for Team In Training, to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Although not SOLAR, it WAS a great challenge and one of my proudest accomplishments.*

What would your ideal trip be like?

*Somewhere out west in the mountains. It would involve camping and/or backpacking.*



Tell us something about you that would surprise us!

*I like beer. Wait, I guess that wouldn't surprise too many of you. How about, I don't like beer? That might surprise you, but it wouldn't be true. Nope. I can't think of anything too surprising about myself.*

Do you have any pets? Kids? Significant Other?

*I have two grown sons, a six year old grandson, and my beautiful granddaughter was just born August 19. I'm single and available.*

We asked SOLAR club members...

*What's the craziest thing you've done through SOLAR?*



***Pablo Balan***

Sleeping in a quinzhee, which was a brand new experience for me, especially coming from a warmer climate. Stepping on top of the quinzhee was also crazy!



***Mark Nordhaus***

A night hike without light around the lake, during the Basic Backpacking class. Either that, or dog-sledding.



***Krisanne Schmidt***

Besides camping in the winter?!?



***Bob Conrad***

Square dancing!

*Have a question to suggest?*

*Contact the Ray Editor at  
SOLARrayeditor@solaroutdoors.org.*



SOLAR extends a warm welcome to the following new club members:

Pat Charbonneau

Dean Foussianes

David Meyers

Karen Stauble

**Words to Wander By**

Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.

*-Albert Camus*

# SOLAR NOVEMBER 2010 CALENDAR

[www.SolarOutdoors.org](http://www.SolarOutdoors.org)

## SOLAR MEETING AND PROGRAM DATES

11/2	Tues	Monthly Meeting 7:30 p.m.	Colony Hall	Allen Duncan	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program- Bats of the World, by the <a href="#">Organization for Bat Conservation</a> at Cranbrook Institute of Science	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
12/3	Friday	<a href="#">SOLAR Holiday Party</a> 7:00 p.m.	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org
12/7	Tues	Monthly Meeting 7:30 p.m.	Colony Hall	Allen Duncan	SolarPresident@SolarOutdoors.org
		Program- <a href="#">Winter Gear Swap/Sale</a>	Colony Hall	Debbie Zuchlewski	SolarPrograms@SolarOutdoors.org

## SOLAR RAY DEADLINES

11/18	Thurs	December SOLAR Ray Deadline		Jennifer Tislerics	SolarRayEditor@SolarOutdoors.org
12/16	Thurs	January SOLAR Ray Deadline		Jennifer Tislerics	SolarRayEditor@SolarOutdoors.org

## ACTIVITIES

11/6	Sat	<a href="#">Hayride and Bonfire at Kensington Metropark</a>	Kensington Metropark	Leslie Cordova	lesliegene@aol.com
11/20	Sat	<a href="#">High Ropes Course</a>	Base Camp Challenge Center in Flint, MI	Jeff Enterkin	JEnte69690@aol.com
1/23-30/2011	Multi	Yellowstone in Winter Trip	Yellowstone National Park	Moe and Dave DeFrance	moelifeisgood@lavabit.com ventures@lavabit.com
3/6/2011	Sunday	Fight for Air-Climb Detroit	Renaissance Center Detroit, MI	Mary Donahue	mldonahue824@gmail.com
4/2-9/2011	Multi	St John Escape	St John, VI	Jim Gessner	gessnerj@comcast.net
7/2-8/2011	Multi	Alaskan Expedition Cruise	Alaska	Robert Schwenke	robert.schwenke@yahoo.com

## CLASSES

12/1,8,15,1/5,15-16,19,26,2/2,11-13	Weds, Wknds	<a href="#">Enjoying Michigan Winters</a>	Schoolcraft College Waterloo State Rec Area Pigeon River State Forest	Allen Duncan George Zapp	allenduncan@aggienetwork.com gzapp@comcast.net
12/9,16,18,1/6-9,13,20,27,28-30	Thurs, Sat, Wknds	<a href="#">Basic Mountaineering and Safety Skills</a>	TBA	Lou Szakal	everest2008@comcast.net

If you would like to plan/lead an activity for SOLAR, contact our Activities Chairperson, Jennifer McWilliams, at [SolarActivities@SolarOutdoors.org](mailto:SolarActivities@SolarOutdoors.org).

If you would like to teach or suggest a class for SOLAR, contact our Education Chairperson, Chuck Smith, at [SolarEducation@SolarOutdoors.org](mailto:SolarEducation@SolarOutdoors.org).

SOLAR HAS A NO-REFUND POLICY. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND AN ACTIVITY, YOU MAY "SELL YOUR SPOT" TO ANOTHER CLUB MEMBER.

### How Can I Become A Member of Meetup?

Having trouble finding SOLAR-Outdoors on Meetup? Want to become one of the growing numbers of SOLAR members joining Meetup? Visit <http://www.meetup.com/SOLAR-Outdoors/>

If you aren't a member of Meetup in general, you'll need to create an account before you can apply for membership to the SOLAR-Outdoors group. Once you apply for membership to the SOLAR-Outdoors group, Mary Price (our Membership Chair) will confirm that you are a paid member of SOLAR and approve your membership in the club's Meetup group. Please be sure to include your first and last name when you apply to the group, so she knows exactly who you are.

We look forward to seeing more members on Meetup!



### WHAT IS SOLAR?

SOLAR is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization with 400-plus members who enjoy the outdoors. Members share their knowledge and experience with each other by leading classes and coordinating activities/trips.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership is only \$40 a year per person (\$55 per family) and includes free access to most club-owned equipment, a monthly newsletter, and a chance to meet hundreds of other like-minded adventurers drawn together by a common love of pristine lakes, breathtaking vistas, deep forests, scenic shorelines, and the experiences to be found there. Lifetime memberships are available for \$175 (single) and \$250 (family).

### MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month in Southfield at Colony Hall, 21780 Evergreen (between 8 Mile & 9 Mile Roads) at 7:30 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### SOLAR RAY NEWSLETTER

The *SOLAR Ray* is a monthly publication of SOLAR and is available online at [www.solaroutdoors.org](http://www.solaroutdoors.org). To receive a copy in the mail, please contact Mary Price at [SOLARmembership@solaroutdoors.org](mailto:SOLARmembership@solaroutdoors.org).

### SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Submissions for the *SOLAR Ray* are due on the Thursday three weeks prior to the monthly Membership meeting. Articles, poems, recipes, etc. should be submitted in electronic format, preferably in Microsoft Word. Please attach images separately as JPG files. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Tislerics at [SOLARrayeditor@solaroutdoors.org](mailto:SOLARrayeditor@solaroutdoors.org).

### STEERING COMMITTEE

President: Allen Duncan	Activities: Jennifer McWilliams	Membership: Mary Price
Vice President: Heather Hall	Bylaws: Ati Tislerics	Programs: Debbie Zuchlewski
Treasurer: Mary Donahue	Education: Chuck Smith	PR: Samantha Mozdzierz
Secretary: Glenn Schultz	Equipment: Marcia Murphy	Ray Editor: Jennifer Tislerics
	Historian: Pam Riehl Szakal	Webmaster: Jeff McWilliams

### PRESIDENTS AT LARGE

Mike Banks | Leslie Cordova | Al Fylak | Steve Gardner | Bill Halvingis | Cindy Harrison-Felix  
Tom Hayes | Joan Hettinger | Doug Lanyk | Larry Martin | Tom Oloffo | Lou Szakal  
Cindy Taylor | Joan & Bob Westbrook

### STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

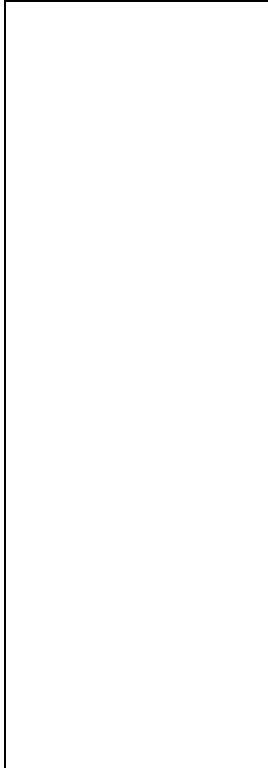
The Steering Committee meets on the last Tuesday of every month at 7:30 pm. These meetings are usually open to the general membership. Anyone who is interested in learning about the decisions being made or contemplating running for a position on the Steering Committee is welcome to attend. If you are interested in attending the Steering Committee meeting, please contact Allen Duncan at [SOLARpresident@solaroutdoors.org](mailto:SOLARpresident@solaroutdoors.org).

### SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SOLAR RAY ASSISTANT EDITORS

Winnie Chranowski, Jennifer Hill, Ken Lemieux, Helen Peters, Janet Schester, Pamela Schmelzer-Anzicek, Elizabeth Shaw, Rebecca Sweeton and Ati Tislerics.

### MORE INFORMATION

Please visit our website at [www.solaroutdoors.org](http://www.solaroutdoors.org) or attend one of our monthly meetings.



**SOLAR**

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