

March / April 2007 Newsletter

Toronto Outdoor Club

Don't put that winter coat away yet...

Although recent weather would have us believe otherwise, spring is just around the corner. This month we say hello to Tatiana Usova, the latest edition of our member profile. We also have the second edition of *Examining Our Environment*, the TOC's environmental column, and an article from our VP of Safety & Operations about planning for spring trips. As always, I can be reached at info@torontooutdoorclub.com if you have any questions, comments or ideas.

Cheers,

Deb (TOC PR & Communications Officer)

Volunteers Wanted:

Community integration project

TOC President Steph is looking for volunteers who are willing to help create a special TOC canoe trip, where every year we will invite a number of new immigrants, or those seeking refugee status, to a short and easy multi-day canoe trip to Algonquin park. She is hoping to collect donations to cover the cost of rentals and carpool through the TOC, as well as donations such as food, equipment and clothing for outdoor use.

Can you stern a canoe? Are you interested in participating in the trip? If so, you would be a great fit -- we'll need one volunteer for every participant. To give you a sense of timelines, the project must be completed by July 16, 2007.

This project could turn in to a yearly activity for the TOC -- a way for new Canadians to experience their country at it's most majestic, with canoes, water, campfires, tents.

To participate, contact Steph at pres@torontooutdoorclub.com

Examining Our Environment

A TOC Feature Column

By Jenn M

Last month's column generated member interest in the topic of the threat of quarry development on Michipicoten Bay, on the north shore of Lake Superior. As a result, David Wells from Naturally Superior Adventures, located on Michipicoten Bay recently gave a presentation to the TOC on Lake Superior. Following that, he's set up the following site - <http://naturallysuperior.com/toc> - for any TOC members who'd like to take a trip with Naturally Superior Adventures - we get a 5% discount!

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TOC BULLETIN BOARD

Welcome the new TOC Ombudsman!

Dominic is the new ombudsman for the TOC. If you have a complaint about member, volunteer or officer behaviour, please contact Dom at

Ombudsman@torontooutdoorclub.com

Photos from events

If you have photos from the event, please remember to send them to us for posting on the TOC web site. **Send your pictures to photos@torontooutdoorclub.com** in 640x480 or 750x500 pixel resolution - do NOT send original high-res photos.

Event Reminder:

TOC 2nd Annual Picnic

All TOC members are invited to attend the second annual TOC picnic at the Toronto Islands on Saturday, June 16, 2007. The festivities will begin at 1 pm and run until the last ferry back to the city. This is a great opportunity to meet the volunteers and other members. We will have a potluck picnic and access to a fire pit (so don't forget those marshmallows!). You can go to the beach, take the kids to Centreville, ride a bike around the Islands, and lots more...

(Examining Our Environment, continued from page 1)

Leave No Trace Principles

As the summer season draws nearer and more and more people are getting outside hiking, biking, canoeing and camping, this column will be reviewing the 'Leave No Trace' principles and discussing how, as TOC members, we can ensure we have trips with little to no impact, leaving the places we've been as or more beautiful for others who may follow us. The principles of leave no trace are:

1. Plan ahead and prepare
2. Camp and travel on durable surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find (except for garbage!!)
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

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Camping can be enjoyable and safe for the environment when you practice the Leave No Trace principles.

Upcoming Events

- Thu, Apr 12 2007 - Social - TOC Book Club (Easy to Moderate)
- Apr 13 2007 - Overnight - Spring into Spring Camping: Craigeleith (Moderate to Difficult)
- Apr 13 2007 - Overnight - Backpack Frontenac Provincial Park - Cluster 6 (Moderate to Difficult)
- Apr 14 2007 - Bruce Trail-Webster's Falls Hike
- Apr 15 2007 - Horse - Spring Trail Ride
- Apr 15 2007 - Hike - Terra Cotta Side Trail Loop
- Apr 15 2007 - Bike - Queens Quay (Harbour Front) to Port Credit (Moderate)

Planning for outdoor trips in spring

By Hassan

Spring is in the air, and with the smells of a new season come the anticipation of activities on the water, hikes and overnights in short sleeves, and dry firewood. Although it's just around the corner, overnight trips over the next month are some of the hardest to plan, pack, and prepare for. Here are some tips for outdoor activities over the next few weeks:

Weather conditions

There is always a chance of ice, cold weather, and snow further north. Temperatures and conditions vary greatly at this time of year. When it's raining in Toronto, it's likely still snowing north of Barrie. A zero degree night in Toronto could easily be -15C a little further north.

One of the most important things to look out for – especially if you are planning for activities on the water – is the presence of ice. Don't be deceived by a fully thawed pond or lake in the city, as most areas of Ontario will still be fully frozen. Canoe trips are possible, but you must research which rivers and lakes will be passable and which will not be. Remember – falling in a lake now is no less dangerous than falling in ice water in mid-January.

If you are looking for a lake to skate, ski, or snowshoe on, you'll also need to be very careful. Ice is out there, and many areas are still safe to walk on, but be careful and do your research.

TIP: Call the park you wish to visit and ask about the conditions they are currently experiencing as well as the conditions they will be expecting while you are up there. Don't hesitate to question an event co-coordinator or the safety team if you are uncomfortable with a route they have suggested.

Trip preparations

This time of year, temperature fluctuations from day-to-day and even hour-to-hour can be quite substantial. Prepare for both warm weather and the cold weather. Multiple layers will be more effective than one very warm layer. You'll be able to shed clothing when it's warm and add clothing as required to keep your body temperature at a comfortable level and to help prevent dehydration. If you feed off the land, don't forget to renew your fishing/outdoor license!

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Member Profile: Ten Questions

This month marks our fourth member profile in the newsletter. Our feature member for this month is **Tatiana Usova**.

If there is someone you'd like to see profiled, email Deb at info@torontooutdoorclub.com.

Name: Tatiana Usova

Nicknames:

I do not have any right now. In earlier days I had two: Sunny, given for my optimism and ringing laugh; Bunny for my gentle nature

TOC member since:

I joined in April 2006. I heard about the club from Gerry Dombrower -- we both attended a day trip with the High Park Hiking Club.

Favourite TOC event so far:

I have fond memories of the Rattlesnake Point and Camp Tawingo trips. The first was simply perfect: the company, the place, the weather. At the Tawingo Camp weekend I was freezing cold, but nevertheless enjoyed the variety of sport activities, board game nights and fabulous views of the forest covered with snow.

Hometown:

I have lived in many cities around the world, including Khabarovsk, Boston, Toulouse, and Warsaw, but I spent most of my life so far in Minsk, the capital of Belarus. I came to Toronto in February 2006.

Other non-TOC hobbies:

I love learning new things. I am particularly interested in ballroom dancing, reading, conversations in French, volleyball and, of course, travelling.

Which one item could you not live without on a day-to-day basis?

My clothes -- I can't leave my apartment without them!

If you had one day to spend however you liked, cost being no barrier, how would you spend it?

I would have my family from Belarus join me in either in Queenstown, New Zealand, or in the Seychelles Islands. It would be a great adventure -- I would visit a celestial place, see my family and share my divine discovery with those dear to me.

If you could be someone else for a day, who would you be and why?

I would have liked to be Margaret Thatcher at the moment of making an important political decision, such as her decisions regarding the Falklands War. I am willing to learn how it feels to run the male-dominated government, to lead the conflict-torn country and to take responsibility for its present and its future.

Finish this sentence: The best thing about being outdoors is...

...to escape from the city and its anxieties, to discover the beauties created by nature and to put your senses and your mind in tune.

Here's Tatiana on the Rattlesnake Point to Crawford lake trip, on April 30 2006.



Below: Tatiana (right) on the Osler Bluffs hike, Oct 15, 2006





Ice fishing on Lake Simcoe



Harbourfront DJ skate



Ice fishing on Lake Simcoe



Latin fever!

March / April Events



Maple Sugarbush Adventure



(Examining Our Environment - continued from page 2)

In the coming months, this column will review each of these principles in detail. In the meantime, please be aware - think before doing, and consider the impact of all of your actions. Leave no trace really builds on this in an effort to leave the land visited as it was found, so that others can enjoy it in the same way.

With that in mind, as you head out on your spring camping trips, hikes, and bike rides remember that springtime means many birds and animals have young, and that you may be disturbing them - move around any nesting areas and leave animals alone. Enjoy the spring flowers - like the beautiful trilliums we get for such a short time - but leave them for others to enjoy as well. If you're out on a TOC event, whether it's a day trip or an overnight, bring an extra bag for any garbage you might find on the trail or at the campsite, so that our communal places can be left cleaner than we found them.

Questions? Email Jenn M at jenn@torontooutdoorclub.com

Want to get in touch with the TOC?

Here are some email addresses to write to:

Steph, TOC President

pres@torontooutdoorclub.com

Erik, VP and Treasurer

erik@torontooutdoorclub.com

Hassan, VP Safety and Operations

hassan@torontooutdoorclub.com

Deb, PR and Communications Officer (& newsletter)

info@torontooutdoorclub.com

Check out the volunteer page at:

<http://www.torontooutdoorclub.com/aboutus/officers.asp>

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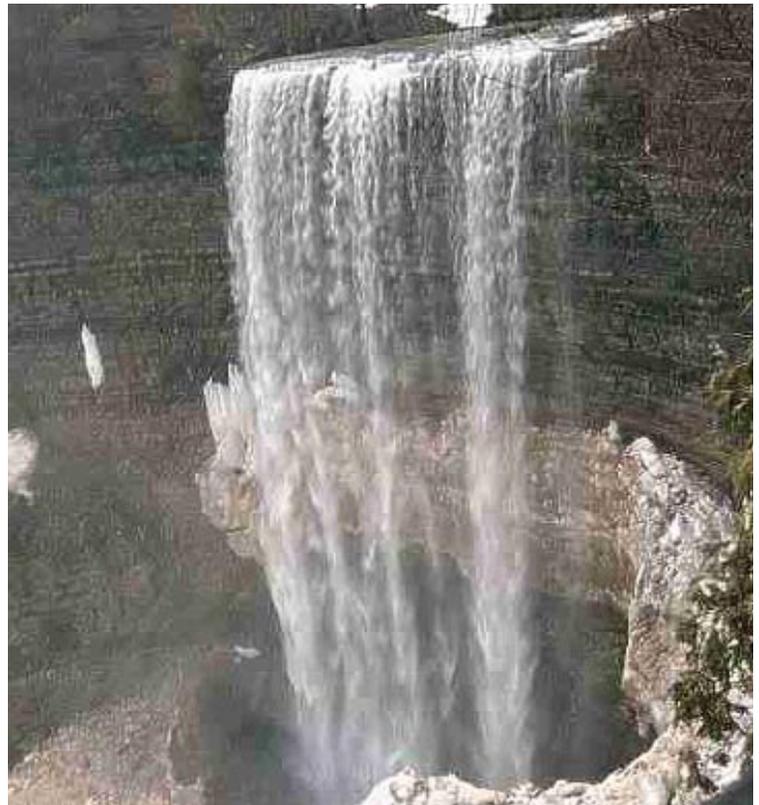
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Hamilton area winter waterfall tour

(Planning spring trips, continued from page 2)

Outdoor safety

With ice currently melting, there is more water now than any other time of the year, and water and currents may be moving faster than they do in the warmer months. When canoeing, if you see something that may be difficult to navigate, or if you see rocks or faster moving water than you are used to, put your life jacket on. Five minutes of discomfort is worth the bother as hypothermia can set in just as quickly as in mid-winter. If you are planning a multi-day trip during this time of year – whether in or out of a canoe – be sure to plan some extra time for the unexpected muddy terrain, fast moving water, reduced maintenance from trails that were closed during winter, or surprise cold weather.

Why camp now?

Here are a few reasons why spring is a great time to be out in the wilderness:

1. Experience the intricacy, beauty, and unique scents of fresh growth – from flower buds to seedlings and ferns
2. Prime season for sighting hard-to-find birds
3. Less crowded
4. We're past the -35C wind chill days!
5. Hibernating animals will soon be up and about for you to enjoy

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