
THE AXE AND SAW

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Grove City College Outing Club

www.gccoc.org

Jack Raubach

Hello again, Outing Club friends!

As the academic year comes to a stressful end, and summer looms large and warm on the horizon, it is refreshing to look back on a year well spent with the Outing Club.

I hope as we share this semester's OC experiences with you in The Axe and Saw that it remind you of your own time spent in the Outing Club. Feel free to contact me or anyone listed here with questions or suggestions, and a good summer to everyone!

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Letter From the President

Dear Outing Club Alumni and Friends,

It has been quite a busy and fun semester for the active club. Our cabin manager Doug Wallace organized and ran five very productive work outings.

There was plenty of wood split and the cabin was as neat and tidy as I have ever seen it.

Another improvement this semester was the electronic lock which has been added to the front door. This has made the cabin more accessible to both students and visiting alumni and has so far proven to be a wonderful addition.

We have also hosted several events at the cabin this semester from our Valentine's Day dinner to the annual Wild game feast. They were all wonderful gatherings full of good food and even better friends. Many of the students, myself included, continue to spend most of their weekends at the cabin relaxing and hiking the many surrounding trails. A few students experienced their first Cory hike this semester, while others just realized there are more trails than just the overlook trail to enjoy.

The club also ran several trips this semester including a ski trip, a backpacking trip in West Virginia, and several trips to Pittsburgh to go rock climbing. The ski trip ended up only including a few members because it was on a week night, but the few who went all said they had a great time.

The backpacking trip was wonderful although a bit cold and rainy. The group that went on that trip all enjoyed the striking beauty of the mountains as well as the general adventure of spending the night in the woods.

Rock climbing trips have become an every other week event and while the group changes in size from week to week everyone who goes has enjoyed climbing and of course the slushies that always follow.

Before the semester finishes we have the senior dinner and weather permitting a day canoe trip planned. Currently it looks like there will also be a canoe trip in Canada this summer. Hopefully many of the student will be able to make that trip and share in all the memories and adventures these canoe trips create.

It has been a great semester mostly because we have a great group of students who really love the outdoors and appreciate the opportunities the club provides. I'm sure as many of you read this letter you are remembering your own days in the club, and I hope you are happy to know that there is still a group of students experiencing and enjoying the same activities that you enjoyed as an outing clubber.

God Bless,

Laura Geschwindt '12

President '11

The Christmas Party

This year's Christmas party was a fun time of fellowship and a great break

from studies. We had around twenty active members and a few alumni at the cabin which made for a great mix. We started the party with supper at six and after a few lucky chaps got the dishes scrubbed, the members of the OC ventured out into the night to harvest a Christmas tree. After a short hike, a few snow ball fights, and a couple ice falls later we managed to find the perfect tree. Doug felled the mighty monarch and had the honor of carrying it back. Mack showed us how to string popcorn and soon the tree was wrapped in popcorn strands and hung with cookie ornaments, bringing Christmas cheer into the cabin. After the tree was decorated we gathered around the table and sang Christmas carols.

If you like sledding, Spook Hill would have been a heavenly place to be. Picture a half mile long hill at a 55° angle with a no maintenance winter road. Then cover that road with snow and ice and you have Spook Hill. Not everyone was up to the challenge, as the mere name of the hill frightened all but eleven of us away from taking the drive through the iced roads to reach our destination. Cory and Andrew provided the transportation and the hill provided the fun. It was a great time and Grace, Andrew and I had several good runs to the bottom of the hill. We sledded to the wee hours of the night and then crashed at the cabin.

The Christmas party turned out to be an amazingly fun event and was a much needed break from studying. What better way is there to refresh the

mind than having a celebration in honor of the greatest event that ever happened: the birth of Christ!
Jedediah Seltzer '14



(The Outing Club gathered around a wonderful Valentine's day dinner)

Valentine's Day Dinner

Once again, the men of the Outing Club invited the women to celebrate Valentine's Day out at the cabin. After last year, my expectations were high and I was not disappointed. I'm always amazed at the fine dining the guys can dish up even at our rustic cabin. Some of my favorites from the meal were the excellent steaks, oh-too-yummy rolls, and of course the Asian pear pecan salad. Naturally, the season demands an excessive amount of chocolate so we had chocolate kisses, brownies, and chocolate-covered strawberries.

While there was no song this year to close the event, we didn't mind so much because the men cleaned up. While I might be a bit biased, I would say that this event was a success and should never be neglected in the club's future history. Thank you, men!

Grace Watson '13

A Hike

Students at Grove City College value whatever vacations we are given. One of the most curious of these is Spring Break: that extended weekend that comes a bit too early for its title of "Spring" Break. Helene Royster and I wanted to use our time well and do something that we wouldn't be able to do during the average school week. We wanted to go out to the cabin but neither of us have a car. Our solution? Walk. And walk there we did.



(Photo taken by Grace Watson '13 of Helene Royster '13 and the two "crazy friends" on their hike to the cabin)

The cabin happens to be about 17 miles from the school. I had never walked that far in one day before but there is always a first time for everything. Helene and I found two more friends crazy enough to go with us and we made plans. Saturday morning found four girls dressed a bit too warm for the sunny day following directions printed out from Google Maps.

We made pretty good progress as we trekked along both loud highways

and empty back roads. We sang, took pictures, helped each other brainstorm for assignments, gave each other personality tests and took snack breaks but mostly we just walked, and walked, and walked for six hours.

We didn't expect to find a historical site on our route but were pleased to come across the Venango Path which connected Pittsburgh to Franklin and was used by George Washington in 1753. We passed a house there which was a major hotel during the early nineteenth century.

The cabin has never been a more welcome site. Sinking into a chair inside, all I could think of was what good weather we had, how far it had been and what great friends I had spent the day with... walking.
Grace Watson '13

The Beast Feast

Throughout history mankind has had many such events as the one that happened the twelfth of March at the GCCOC cabin. Traditionally events such as this took place after a successful hunts, more recently the term game dinner has been giving to gatherings such as ours. We however have a superior name for such an event: The Beast Feast.

The GCCOC annual beast feast was quite a hit and a fun time. There were many types of game including, Deer, Boar, Rabbit, and Partridge. Cooking preparations started early Saturday morning and carried on throughout the day. When not busy baking members

and alumni went hiking, played games, or just relaxed by the fire. One brave group (Cory, Doug, and Mac) built a snow bust of Tom which was quite the sensation.

As the evening turned to night the feast was placed on the table and soon the cabin was filled with the happy chatter of dinner conversations. Slowly people began to trail off to the bunk room or their vehicles with full stomachs and another memory of a great time spent at the cabin. And so another beast feast came and went just as another semester, another season and another year has.
Jedediah Seltzer '14'

Dolly Sods

Jamie Schiappa '11

Planning for the Wilderness

It is a bittersweet thing to recount the last

GCCOC event I ever planned as a student. I had it fairly easy, as Adam Neff benevolently agreed to be our guide on this epic journey. The only thing I really had to do was run to County Market and purchase the trail food. I barely even had to finagle the gear situation as everyone had pretty much everything they needed.

On that fabled Saturday, everyone piled into either my little hatchback or Cory's truck at the butt crack of dawn—my car left around 5:10 am—and the drivers drove and the passengers snoozed (or talked in Cory's case) all the way to West Virginia. It was a pleasant day to drive once the sun dissolved the murky dark of that

morning, and the super-strong McDonald's coffee did its part to wake me up enough to drive to the next gas station where I promptly passed driving duty on to Jim Duncan.

The first day of the hike was pleasant and fairly unremarkable weather-wise. When we woke up in the morning, however, there were two inches of snow on the ground and the temperature had dropped. The group opted to take the 5-mile route out of the Sods as opposed to the approximately ten miles that we had planned, and we once again had to cross a large stream once we got close to the trailhead. At this point, I managed to lose one of Adam Neff's hiking poles and upon trying to retrieve it I fell into the river. I was extremely happy that it was only a half-mile to the end of the hike and my bag of dry clothes. After that trip, a Wendy's spicy chicken sandwich never tasted so good.

Jamie Schiappa '11



(Waking on the Dolly Sods trip to a surprise snow-fall!)

Dolly Sods

Jedediah Seltzer '14

The morning of the 26th of March was dark and early at 3:30 a.m. when I awoke. But I was too excited to care much about the early start as I was about to leave to go on my first backpacking trip. I drove to Cory's house and hitched a ride down with him and Laura Jo as I had no wish to drive the four and a half hours to Dolly Sods, WV, myself.

Eight outing club members, past and present, braved the cold weather to embark on a beautiful trek through the trails of Dolly Sods. Jamie, Jim, Helene, Laura Jo and I were the students, Cory, Adam Neff, and Sarah Lake the Alumni.

The adventure began soon after the trek had begun with a stream crossing. We made it through with little loss of life, as the water was only about knee deep, and proceeded up the mountain.

After a quick lunch on the trail we proceeded up onto the plateau through a glorious forest of Birch, Spruce, Rhododendron, and Mountain Laurel and found a suitable camp sight. After we dropped our packs Adam led us to THE overlook. Words cannot describe the wonder of the overlook, I could see for miles in three directions over the hills of the pristine West Virginia wilderness.

The boulder scramble up to the overlook was also a wonderful experience.

While the guys gathered fire wood the girls got supper cooking. Soon

we had a roaring fire and ate supper to the sound of crackling wood and the call of a disturbed raven. As the evening drew on members of the group slowly slipped away from the fire and crawled into their sleeping bags. I too turned in after enjoying the fire, Adam's recital, Helene's African folk tale, and the company.

I awoke the next morning to a winter wonderland. While we had slept the night away a blanket of snow had slowly descended onto the ground. The Sods had become snow covered mounds, the Spruce trees sparkled in the snow, and the air had the scent of snow. We had a breakfast around a roaring fire and then packed up to begin the journey back to the cars.

The hike back was uneventful except for the main stream crossing where Jamie lost one of Adam's hiking poles in the river much to the delight of the trout that now have a pull to use as a stringer for fishing lures.



(Helene Royster '13, Sarah Lake, and Jamie Schiappa '11 in the hills of WV)

We made it back to the cars and so the trip had come to an end. I will not lie: I

was tired and glad of the rest. I was still sad to have to leave such an amazing place and head back to the reality of classes, tests, and other "joys" of college life. I am now official hooked on backpacking and look forward to going on many more trips in the future. I would like to express a hearty Thanks to Jamie for arranging this grand event and also to Adam who knew the lay of the land well. The trip was amazing; the scenery displayed the glorious handiwork of God.
Jedediah Seltzer '14

Rock Climbing Adventures

During the course of the year, a group from the club made an effort to drive down to the nearest decent indoor climbing gym down in the North Hills. Climb North is one of my favorite places in western Pennsylvania, and the fact that ladies can climb for half price on Wednesday nights just sweetens the deal. For those with Y chromosomes that may protest that this is discrimination, you too could climb for half price on ladies night. In order to obtain this discount, however,

you would have to wear a sports bra sans shirt for the duration of your climbing time. I was present during the first and so far only time a male climber ever took them up on that offer.

After a long night of climbing – 1 to 2 hours is what I consider "long" –

there's nothing better than stopping at the nearby 7-Eleven to ease the burning of our raw hands with the cold, sugary goodness that is the Slushie. Bouldering is awesome. Life is good.

Jamie Schiappa '11

Summer Outing 2011 – Food/fun/friends

This summer's joint student-alumni-family-friends outing will be held July 28-31. We try to rotate the dates every few years to accommodate different folk's schedules and we tried a little later date this year. At least the river will be warm!

We are still firming up the project list but know that we have a ton of rotted and broken floor joists to "double out" based on last year's survey. While some are relatively easy to access, the ones under the girl's wing will be a bear. We will also address the normal summer housekeeping projects. As always we will include attitude adjustment and a swim down at the river each evening after dinner.

Meals will start with a late lunch on Thursday and run to lunch on Sunday. There is no charge for the meals.

If you are able to participate this year, even a day or for an afternoon, please try and call or email me before July 26th with the number of adults and children under 10 so we can plan the meals. As always if you would like to bring a special dish, or have food allergies etc. please let me know so we can plan accordingly. See you soon!

Mark Place, Alumni Cabin Manager
mplace@johnplaceinc.com or 412-877-0050

April storm damage

April has been a VERY wet month in WPA. Last I heard we were 4" over the average rainfall for the month. The yard has been draining well but is very wet. The water level in the rear monitoring well by the small woodshed is only 12" below grade and Lake Morris is maybe 3" from overflowing into the basement proper



During the week of April 17th we had winds in excess of 50 MPH in Mercer and Venango counties in addition to the rain. On April 20 one of the students reported finding one of the larger pines in the front yard had fallen over and had struck the roof of the girl's wing:

Fortunately it does not appear that any structural damage was done to the roof after a brief inspection the day after the Cabin Team got the report.

The front gutter suffered major damage and will be replaced April 29-30 which is the last student work outing for the semester. Unfortunately the damaged gutter revealed major insect and water damage to the fascia boards which will also need to be replaced. With all the work required in the basement we need to get that section repaired immediately so that more water is not diverted into the basement. (Insect damaged fascia board)

We were fortunate that no major structural damage occurred which had folks been in the wing sleeping could have been a terrible event. Cory pointed out that with so many folks driving down to the yard that it was fortunate that no one's car was struck. This is unfortunately another incident that supports removal of these top heavy trees in the yard that imperil the cabin.

Speaking of driving down to the cabin

With everything else going on structurally we have not done any heavy road work for several years and there are few spots that are getting rutted again. The worst area is the basically level to downhill stretch approaching the road up to the gas well. If it has been raining recently I would not suggest driving a car down to the front yard. The road is slippery and the yard is going to be soft for weeks.

Fundraising report

This is a good news / bad news report. Based on the Treasurer Tom

Ronksley's latest report we are at \$8960 donated by 30 alumni representing a



wide range of classes. This is an average of just under \$300 per supporter.

Unfortunately this is well below the \$40,000 needed to move forward with the design study without asking the College for financial assistance. Based on the vote at Homecoming 2010 we will be setting up a meeting with Dr. Jewell in the coming weeks to discuss the situation with him.

It should be emphasized that everyone is in agreement that the ideal situation would be to fund all repairs/renovations/ construction internally. However based on the response so far, that is not looking to be a viable position. I have had many email and telephone exchanges with concerned alumni and I guess the concern of the Cabin Team is that collectively the membership does not understand the scope of the structural problems, the time and cost to make even temporary repairs and the regulatory issues we face when we go to make major repairs.

The facts are that the cabin is built on a swamp, the wood that is not rotting is being attacked by various insects that cost hundreds of dollars to spray against, and the cabin is not compliant with literally dozens of building code and environmental regulations. Believe me the Cabin Team and summer outing crew do not like laying on their backs surrounded by mud and mold making temporary repairs so that you do not fall through the floor that is 6" over their head. We are not making these problems up.

There have been thoughtful discussions on rebuilding a wing at a time. The catch is that the study still needs to be done, the cost will be higher, and we still do not have the funds to even consider doing three projects over time. At this point we could not fund a new roof.

There have been suggestions about moving the cabin to a drier location up the hill. That certainly has merit but the study would be needed to insure that we did not impact the spring and we would have to either carry water as we do in the winter or install an electric pump as a pitcher pump will not lift too much more than we do now.

Another bold idea is to construct a completely different cabin more in line with what Doc Kase said that he wanted and that the Trustees refused to build. A two story farm house looking building similar to many AYH hostels. The smaller foot print would save foundation money and the heating and ventilation would be

better but there would be other challenges such as ADA compliance.

I guess the point is that we need your support for completing the study. The study is not a decision point but a way to clearly understand what the issues and challenges are so that the membership can make an informed decision on where we want to go for the next 70 years.

As always please contact Keegan Hange or Mark Place with any questions or comments.

Electronic front door lock update

The new electronic front door lock researched and installed by Cory Gibson seems to be working well. If you want a door code or electronic key please let Cory know. All alumni in shall we say good standing; will be supplied with a unique code and instructions on how to use the lock. The ability to track student use and to limit use of the cabin by inactive students or even non-members who obtained a key in the past is the major benefit.

Unlike in the past were getting a cabin key from Cory or Lee made a visit to the cabin a bit complicated you can now contact Cory Gibson or Mark Place by cell or email for a fast temporary access code without having to allow time to pick up and return a key.

Use of the cabin

As noted in past issues of the *Axe & Saw*, due to liability issues and the work in progress we have been forced to curtail use of the cabin by school and alumni groups. Several groups are planning day hikes and other events in the yard, and

that is great. We are sorry for the inconvenience, but until the floor, kitchen ceiling and gas line issues are resolved we must continue this policy.

Summer mowing and bug watch

If you see any carpenter ants or signs of the boring beetles please let us know so that we can have the place sprayed again.

Making the cabin look well used is our best defense against vandals. If you can help with regular summer mowing, please let Cory Gibson or I know. We now offer a choice of either push mowers or the riding mower. We would like to get a mowing in every 3 weeks or so beginning in May. Let us be blunt, if you have time to visit, you have time to do a little mowing. Even a chunk of the front or the back helps. Mowers (and we now have a lot of choices) and regular gas are located in the back shed. The combination is the same as the gate. Please be especially careful around the shooting area as spent brass is an accident waiting to happen. Always mow that area with the discharge chute facing the creek and away from other visitors or pets. If you find that a mower that needs serviced, please let Cory Gibson or Mark Place know.

Shooting at the cabin etiquette

If you are shooting during a visit to the cabin, please police up the brass and target area. The brass is a particular hazard to folks helping with the mowing and anyone around when mowing or weed whacking is going on.