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# THE AXE AND SAW

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Grove City College Outing Club

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

Ellen Albers & Alyssa Black

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## **Greetings, Alumni!**

After a warm start to fall, the cool weather has finally made its way to Grove City. We have even seen some snow in the air! It's a great reminder that the semester will (eventually) end and Christmas is coming.

This semester, the cabin is once again (mostly) free for our using, and it definitely has been getting a lot of use! The New Member Outing, Pig Roast, and Olympics were all held there, and many students have gone out to enjoy some much needed downtime on the weekends. We have also had a lot of fun away from the cabin with trips to places like Canada, New York, and West Virginia. The articles of this issue highlight all of the fun that has been had!

Also, an important point we need to note is that there has been an unfortunate technical issue with a file containing some names of those who wish to stay on the mailing list. Please see the last page for more details on what this may mean for you.

As always, thank you Alumni for all you do for the club and its members. We hope you all enjoy the holiday season (and, if you're lucky, snow!)

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## **Letter from the President**

*Jake Dudt*

What a year it's been for the Outing Club! It seems like so much has happened recently. The work on the cabin is now almost completely finished and the club is now back to normal cabin usage.

If you haven't seen the cabin since the construction started, do try to make it out there at some point. There is now a perfectly flat roof, a larger porch, and a full walk in basement. Minus a few remaining odds and

ends, the cabin is undoubtedly in the best condition it has ever been in.

I'm really excited about the potential opportunities that the full basement provides the club. The club now has the ability to store anything from canoes to tools to anything that didn't have a good spot in the cabin before this. I'm hoping that this will help us move some of the storage items out of the bunk rooms and possibly bring one of the small side rooms back into use as a changing room. At this year's Pig Roast we put about six tables in the basement as a backup to getting rained out. Thankfully it wasn't needed. Ultimately, how the new basement is utilized will have to be figured over the next few years but things are already starting to look a lot better.

The club kicked off the year with a trip to the Adirondacks over Labor Day weekend, our first weekend back at school. It was a fun, easy backpacking trip besides the rainy weather we experienced. It was so rainy our second day that our pace slowed to about two miles an hour as we waded through and jumped over pools of mud. If you ever get a chance, ask Sarah Scrivener '19 about the mouse who made it into her sleeping bag one night.

The New Member Outing had one of the largest turn outs in recent memory. It was a bit of a surprise that coming off that event that there isn't a single freshman now in the club. The club did gain a good number of upper classmen though. I'm hoping that the New Member Outing left a positive mark on the people who did not end up joining. There is a good chance that some will show up again over the next couple years.

I was really excited about the Pig Roast this year. Last year it was unable to be at the cabin due to the construction. With a two year gap since the club had cooked a pig, it was a huge help having some recent alumni there to coach us students through it. The pig

was cooked to perfection in my opinion and the chickens turned out well too.

I am really enthusiastic about the club's future. Ever since the club's beginning it has created opportunities for students to get off campus with an awesome friend group and experience the outdoors. As the next generation of leaders rise up and new opportunities come to the club, I'm looking forward to seeing the club grow and influence students here at Grove City College.




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### **Baby Blueberry Island and the Great Cliffs**

*Shelley Downward '20*

We had great adventures on the layover day island during our ZEC Trip. However, my favorite places had to be off the island itself. There was another island, a mere 50 meters from the shore. It was so small that it was more a formation of rocks, but I shall call it an island nonetheless. Bryan, Jaden, Bryer, and I decided to venture over to the tiny island. There were a few trees and lots of rocks, so naturally Jayden made an amazing rock man. The rest of the island was covered in bushes. To my great surprise, these were not your ordinary everyday leave-filled bushes, but genuine Canadian wild blueberry bushes. We very happily ate our newly discovered snack, but that would not be our last stop to Baby Blueberry Island.

The layover island just so happened to be across the way from the great cliffs. We canoed over to, climbed up the side of, and jumped off the edge of the 25 foot cliff (which was super fun). We almost lost a squad member on her descent, but all was fine. She even jumped again. We were then inspired to swim back to our layover island instead of canoeing. Bryan took one for the team and canoed the canoe back and made sure we didn't die on the way. Fortunately, Baby Blueberry Island was on the way back, so we stopped in for a snack. We made it back all in one piece, despite the several times I fell on rocks near the shore.

However, we couldn't leave the island without one last stop on Baby Blueberry Island. So, Jayden, Bryer, and I went back and collected an entire Nalgene full of blueberries. They were a great addition to breakfast. There ended our adventures with Baby Blueberry Island and the Great Cliffs of Zec Kipawa, Canada. Side fun fact: you can drink water underwater, but don't try this at home.



Back from left to right: Sarah Scrivener '19, Philip Dudt '17, Katie Ross '19, Danny Downward '18, Alyssa Black '18, Kevin Hanse '13, Bryan Miller '19, Megan Lawson '20, Shelley Downward '20, Tim Mahoney '09, Erin Butler '02, Josh Butler '02, Cory Gibson '99

Front from left to right: Adam Neff '06, Jayden Butler, Bryer Butler, Saxon, Knox, Tom Morris '77

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## Labor Day Weekend Trip

*Ellaina Reuther '20*

To summarize the Adirondacks trip with one phrase it would be “I just want to cuddle with the fire.” The trip was an adventure full of laughter, mishaps, good memories, and lots of rain. The long drive consisted of one car singing along to various songs, playing “All your cows are dead” and wondering if we should just go to Canada while the other car generally just slept the entire way. We had Alyssa, Jake, Hannah and Sarah in one car, nicknamed “the Millennium Falcon” while Danny, Megan, Katie and I rode in the “Struggle Bus.” We arrived in the area and could not find the actual road that led to the trailhead. After driving for a while wondering if we would ever find this mysterious road, we eventually arrived at the trailhead around 2 in the morning. We settled in for a short sleep, and early in the morning headed onto the trail. After hiking for a while and eating the classic outing club tortilla PB&J for lunch, we ventured off the path to see one of the Adirondack lakes. The lake was peaceful. There was a silence in the air as we stood at different vantage points, gazing out across the water. In that moment, I felt a wave of peace. No cars, no sirens, no noise, just the rushing of water, birds calling, and the branches shaking in the gentle breeze. Close your eyes and you feel the stillness of a place where the rush of human kind has not interfered.

After hiking for a couple more miles we reached our first lean to near another lake to where we would spend the night. We quickly gathered wood and explored the area. We were surrounded by beauty. The next fun adventure came with Hannah proposing swimming. Two other brave souls ventured with her. Jake and I. Looking back on our decision to swim out to this rock in the middle of the lake in freezing water... not the best decision. Was it worth it? Mmmm...

questionable, but it made a good memory. The rest of the evening was spent around the fire, playing euchre, Danny making a staff (classic engineer), and reminiscing over previous trips.

I woke up the next morning, vaguely remembering someone swatting my head and a scream. Apparently in the middle of the night a mouse had been on top of me and being a good friend, Sarah tried to get it off. Unfortunately the mouse jumped into her sleeping bag. Sarah relayed the story back to me in the morning and said that she threw it out of the lean to. Once everyone was up we realized we had slept 12 hours and it was worth it. We hiked through a river for the rest of the day. The trail morphed into a combination of a couple inches of water or thick mud. We arrived at the next lean to soaked to the skin and ready for food. Chili mac here we come! We had an amazing view of another beautiful Adirondack lake from our lean to.

After settling somewhat, Jake started a fire and we all started to dry and get warm. Alyssa wanted to be really warm. She cuddled with the fire. Just kidding. Megan may have melted her boots a little, Danny learned to French braid hair and we all figured out how to fit 7 people into a very, very small lean to. There was no mice that night. The next morning we booked it back to the trailhead. It was incredible the rate that we hiked that next morning. It ended with an amazing meal at Olive Garden with the majority of the group taking the two deal entrée and eating our second one on the way home. It was rather comical situation, we were given a big conference table off to the side, we smelled strongly of smoke, emptied multiple baskets of those wonderful garlic bread sticks and ate as much food as we could. The journey, yes, journey back to campus was something else. To quote Secondhand Lions “Corn, corn, corn, nothing but corn.” All those cows are mine became all that corn is mine. We

stopped at an ice cream place after I had counted 11 places that we had passed. After a couple more hours of driving we arrived back at school.



From left to right: Katie Ross '19, Sarah Scrivener '19, Danny Downward '18, Hannah Wilson '15, Jake Dudd, Megan Lawson '20, Alyssa Black '18, Ellaina Reuther '20

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## A Ridiculous Adventure in the Cave

*Kate Perry '18*

This is the overly-dramatic (although unembellished) retelling of an epic journey through the cave. It is the story of one of the many adventures of this year's New Member Outing and of how I once again demonstrated my affinity for getting myself in way over my head. Here it goes:

The evening was going off without a hitch. Maugs had taken most of the new members for a night hike while I stayed behind at the cabin to welcome any latecomers. As a few more people rolled in (both Actives and New Members), Ellen Albers and I decided to lead a late night expedition to the cave: what better way to inaugurate new members in the club than to lead them into a dark hole in the ground and make them crawl through bat poop for a while! Little did we know that the trip would be far more traumatizing for me than for any of the first-timers...

Well, despite the fact that a few of the guys on our expedition are roughly the height of your average NBA player, we managed to get



everyone through the entrance of the cave, past the spiders (the arachnophobe writing this article would like to point out that she didn't cry this time), and into the main cavern. We only had four headlamps between the nine of us, so it was pretty dark down there, but heck: we're the Outing Club!

Ok. So, if you've ever been in the cave you'll know what I'm talking about here: you know that point where the tunnel opens up a bit for the first time and the ceiling is about 18 feet high? Well, it turns out that if you go far enough back in that fissure and squeeze through a hole that's about the diameter of a dinner plate you can get up into the ceiling and crawl through a tight little tunnel that leads to a point where you can look down on the people bellow you. Who knew, right?

Ellen knew! I watched in awe as she scaled the cave wall and disappeared into a crack so small that a hamster would have struggled to navigate it, standing amazed as she appeared a few minutes later on a ledge a dozen feet above my head. Over-confident as always, I decided to follow.

I'll save you a description of how I nearly got stuck trying to squeeze through Ellen's rabbit hole and skip ahead to the part where I crouched next to Ellen on the ledge, paralyzed by my competing fears of heights and small spaces: you see, I had failed to realize that once I made it through the tunnel and onto the ledge, I would then have to turn around and crawl back the same way I had come in. My claustrophobia won out and I calmly explained that I would rather jump, asking Andrew Messinger if he would be kind enough to carry me back to the cabin when I inevitably broke my ankle in the fall. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed and I was talked out of casting myself into the abyss.

But there was still no way I was gonna make like toothpaste and squeeze back through that hole. Thus it was that I found myself clinging desperately to Ellen's arm with one hand as

she dangled me off the ledge, attempting to lower me onto the human pyramid formed by Ryan Meyer and Josh McFall who stood on the uneven cave floor yards bellow. For a terrible moment I hung perilously in the blackness, Ellen's bicep the only thing between me and death, before I found myself perched precariously atop Josh's shoulders. At this point I half climbed, half fell off the heroic tower of humanity and onto Andrew, who was not part of the pyramid but who is no less a hero. All eight of our feet firmly on the ground again, we waited as Ellen crawled with great poise and grace back through the tunnel which for her, unlike me, held no terror.

I'll end my story here. I hope my portrayal of myself in this story has not marred your good opinion of me, and also expect you all to be duly impressed by Ellen's feat of strength in supporting the weight of a 140lb human being on one arm. I am ridiculous, Ellen is incredible, and the men of the Outing Club are gallant; end of story!

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### **[Insert GCCOC Activity Name Here]**

*Anonymous*

This year I have attended a very exciting activity that was held by the club. There was great community between all of the participants. We could not decide what we should do at one point but in the end someone finally decided, not without discussion, on what we would do. At one point the water got annoying. We attempted to go stargazing. I had a great time and ate well. I hope to attend this activity next year.

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### **Fall Break Trip to Dolly Sods Wilderness**

*Josh Bauder '20*

This fall break trip was one of the best I have been on, ever. It was the perfect mix of organization and off the cuff, of forests and

fields, of knowing your location and being lost, of comedy and conundrum.

To start, our trip started nothing as it was supposed to. Driving in on the wrong side of the park and having no easy way to drive to the intended start point, we began our trek halfway along what was meant to be hiked the second or third day. We had a low mile count for the 3 days that we were going to be out there, which allowed for lots of side treks and excursion between camps. The first of these we had only, maybe, four miles in from the trailhead. We came across a steep, boulder built stream that allowed for the hopping from massive boulder to rock to boulder down the grade alongside trickles and splashing pools of water.

We made it to a beautiful campsite along a river that our rock-strewn stream made company with. Here we had a great meal, a perfectly timed fire, and perfect sleeping weather. Upon waking, we filtered more water with our gravity filter, broke camp, and took the woods by storm. We hiked up and then down, where we burst into golden fields spattered with patches of Christmas foliage.

It is in such fields that we met our match: mud. The trail descended into the flood plain and seemed to descend right into the creek. With much wandering and weaving, sinking and soaking, and a tumble or two, we drudged through the grassy bog. With this weaving and wandering, we came to a place of which we knew not where we were or where the trail was. The solution was tree climbing. One of the group members scampered to a patch of autumn-stripped trees and clambered up, locating the trail and setting the group on track.

The landscape continued to switch around: beech groves, conifer thickets, brushy meadows, windswept fields. With several little excursions and breaks, we made it to our second camp. We were sheltered along a gentle stream by a copse of established fir

trees among a vast open valley that frosted over that night. Here we discovered a beaver pond system with three beavers and snuck downwind to see them swimming around their main pond and lodge. We had a great campfire filled with laughter, which sent us all to bed tired, but high spirited. Amidst this though, we had hardly filtered any water that day since the filter was malfunctioning. When morning broke, and the water filter having all but stopped working, we made the decision to evac, since water was running out and was not able, besides boiling, to be replaced.

Despite plans changing before they start, getting momentarily lost, continually sucked into the mire, and our water running out, this trip was packed full of beauty, adventure, and fun. All in all, I can say with confidence that it was one of, if not the best backpacking trip I have been on to this day.




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### Cabin News

*Mark Place '77*

*Alumni Cabin Manager*

**Construction report:** Work on Phase II of the cabin restoration has been underway all summer and fall with many tasks completed or nearing completion. Our General Contractor, Chad Surrena, and his crews danced through a wet summer and soft yard, but really made impressive progress.

- Roof restructuring
- Selected roof sheeting replacement
- Ice barrier installation
- 50 year shingles
- Improved venting
- Major repairs to the kitchen and dining room to finally correct the damage from the early 70's and mid 2000's when the walls separated.
- Reframing most of the windows
- Installation of better framing as needed
- Installation of exterior wall sheathing for lateral stability
- New hemlock batten board siding
- Completion of all new porches and steps
- Additional curtain drains in the yard to cut off subsurface flow to the foundation drain
- Replacement of selected windows with top of the line Anderson windows



Over the winter breaks additional work is planned to restore many of the original windows a few at a time and to do extensive repairs to the fire places. Please be alert to any signage restricting using of the fire places if you visit over the winter.

Come spring, additional work will be required to restore the yard and fine tune the road in after 2 years of construction activity.

**Summer Outing 2018:** For the first time in 41 years we did not hold our annual summer outing for alumni, family and friends but we will be back at it in 2018. There will be many

projects as we fine tune the huge new basement, clean and paint new gas lines and mark the new shut-off valves, service the drains and the spring and help the new yard come to life. Look for the dates in the spring issue of the Axe & Saw. If you have not seen the progress during the annual pig roast or at homecoming this will be a great opportunity.

**Use of the cabin:** With construction nearing an end the cabin is again available for use. If you are thinking of a trip please let us know so we can get an update on any restrictions. Also be aware that while the road can support a 40 ton concrete truck now it is far from an express way with some 40 ton ruts. I would suggest walking the road before driving down to make sure it is compatible with your vehicle. Also please park at the very top of the yard on the stone if you do drive down as the yard is still soft in places.




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### Goucher Fund Status

*Tom Ronksley '77*

*Alumni Treasurer*

The "Goucher Fund" is a fund that the Alumni Association loosely established in 1980 or so to 1) honor Bill Goucher (largely credited with saving our property from

becoming State Game Lands) and 2) hold donations that we hoped would eventually cover our main fixed expenses – insurance and taxes on the cabin. While we’ve had wonderful and generous donors over the years, the fund never got to a point where we could protect the principal and just rely on interest to cover those fixed expenses. Now, however, with Tom Morris’ donation of excess funds from Phase 1 of the Cabin Restoration Project to the Goucher Fund, the Goucher Fund principal has reached a point that we can protect that principal and rely on interest ... at least for now. Insurance and taxes typically increase every year so donations are still critical to keep the Goucher Fund solvent. Thank you for those donations!

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### 80th Anniversary Update

Corrected dates for our 80th Anniversary celebration next year are October 5-7, 2018. We have already reserved the banquet room and a block of rooms at our favorite place - the Quality Inn in Franklin, PA. Rooms are expensive, though (\$204-\$213), since AppleFest is the same weekend in Franklin, so start your shopping now if you want less expensive accommodations. The cabin should be available as well – more info to follow.

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### -- ATTENTION! --

Due to some technical difficulties, **anyone who contacted Rachel Kenney from the Fall 2016 Issue and onward** indicating that they would like to continue receiving the *Axe & Saw* **will need to do so again**. If you do not do so, you will not be on future mailings.

Those who contacted her before this time, or who contacted Alyssa Black are still on the list. If you are not sure when you “cast your vote,” you may want to do so again.

*We greatly apologize* for the inconvenience!

(If you’re a procrastinator and never got around to contacting us, then I guess today is your lucky day!)

If you wish to continue receiving the *Axe and Saw*, please email Alyssa Black indicating you wish to receive the mailing **or** cut out the card below and mail it to Alyssa Black (address on page 1). **IF WE DO NOT HEAR FROM YOU by Spring 2018**, you will be eliminated from the list.

NOTE: This is the (actual) LAST TIME this notice will run.

<p><b>Yes! I would like to receive the <i>Axe and Saw</i> in the future!</b></p> <p>My name is:</p> <p>Any address changes:</p> <p>Any comments:</p>
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