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Mild Winter, Many Improvements, A Look to the Future

It was the winter that wasn't, as most of you from the Northeast know only too well. We had to bring the first January group in through the back way across Golden and Silver Beaches because of lack of ice. Shortly thereafter, the ice road opened, and everyone else came and went across it. Most groups were able to get out on skis or snowshoes at least a little, but the conditions were far from what we have come to expect from the Adirondacks. The good news was heating bills were lower, and Bob DeShaw, mechanic, and Richard Fey, caretaker, spent less time plowing than they normally would have.

Good progress was made on the transfer/gifting of Antlers to the Cortland College Foundation. We expect this to be finalized by summer. We met with several alumni interested in supporting our efforts to establish a \$1.5 million Raquette Lake Endowment Fund that will reduce the cost of student trips to Antlers and Camp Huntington. In conjunction with the transfer of Antlers to the foundation, the College has included in its next capital budget plans \$1 million for much-needed renovations. These renovations will not only address pressing capital improvements, but also increase the availability of the Antlers center for early spring and late fall occupancy.

The Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education (CEOE) Advisory Council was reconvened in November with membership representing the faculty, administration, alumni, and student body. The group met again in March and plans one more meeting in late April to reorganize committees and focus on increasing use by the campus community of all four outdoor education properties. The April 2011 Task Force on Environmental and Outdoor Education report and its recommendations are guiding the council's vision for the future of CEOE.

The staff at Camp Huntington was busy over the winter making improvements to the operations in a number of ways. A new cross-country ski track setter was purchased and tested. It sets beautifully groomed tracks on the lake and camp trails. This allows novice and experienced skiers to have a much more enjoyable skiing experience than we could previously provide. Richard quickly learned to use the track setter behind our snowmobile to set double lanes on the wide Blue Trail. Feedback from groups was very enthusiastic. We would like to thank the College of William and Mary for the donation of the track setter.

Another major improvement was the acquisition of 25 new sets of skis and boots, equipped with modern New Nordic Norm (NNN) bindings. For years, we have maintained a very eclectic set of skis and boots bought piecemeal or donated from other programs. Much of it was in poor condition and did not perform well for our guests. Now, we can put people on state-of-the-art equipment that is dependable and a pleasure to use. We hope to purchase enough in the coming year to fill out the rest of the inventory necessary to supply all our ski groups at Camp Huntington.

This issue of the *Raquette Lake News* is partially devoted to the many alumni who teach in New York schools or work in therapeutic recreation and bring their groups to Camp Huntington each winter. It's rewarding to see the results of a strong Cortland foundation in outdoor and environmental education come to fruition in the alumni's professional practice.



Ski tracks laid in fresh snow with our new track setter
Photo courtesy of Scott Catucci '00, '03

Caring for People with Developmental Disabilities



Barringer group poses before heading home. Nick Stagliano '78 is second from left and Sara Parry '01 is at the far right.

It takes a very special person to devote their life to helping others who have the kinds of disabilities that years ago would have them placed in institutions separated from the rest of society. Thanks to wonderfully devoted professionals, many people with mental disabilities can lead relatively normal lives now and contribute fully to society.

Barringer Day Care, a unit of the Central New York Developmental Disabilities Service Office (DDSO), is one of the places where a structured environment and talented staff help many people live in supported independence as adults. Like most of us, they look forward to vacations and trips into the outdoors. Each February, a select group returns to Camp Huntington under the direction of Nick Stagliano '78. Nick earned his degree in physical education, but quickly found a passion for therapeutic recreation and has been with Barringer since 1992. He was accompanied here by another SUNY Cortland graduate, Sara Parry '01, who earned her degree in health education and joined DDSO the next year. And to further solidify the relationship between Raquette Lake and the DDSO, yet another alumnus, Rick Ondrako '82, started the Camp Huntington tradition back in the 1980s.

When I asked Nick what the highlights of the trip were for the Barringer folks, he quickly ticked off hiking, ice fishing, visits to St. Williams church, Chancellor (Richard's friendly yellow Labrador retriever), and of course, the food. The excitement shows on their faces from the time they arrive via van across the ice road until they head for home on the last morning. For some, the relaxed environment they have come to trust allows them to manage behavioral issues better and make important progress in their individualized education and treatment plans.

Nick has also invited many of the clients in the past to come back to Raquette Lake in the summer, when they rent a pontoon boat and rough it at Camp Marion. For some of our alumni, like Nick, Sara and Rick, the love of the outdoors kindled during their undergraduate years, leads to a lifetime of memories shared with the people they serve.



Kathy Bilos '72 looks like she is walking on water, but is about to sink into it during the Polar Bear Plunge. Photo courtesy of Lew Cowan '73

New Sauna Stove Enjoyed by All

Thanks to a generous donation by the Theta Phi Sorority alumni, the sauna has a brand new stove as of this winter. Purchased from Lamppa Manufacturing in Tower, Minn.,

the Kuuma stove is an airtight, efficient model made specifically for outdoor saunas. Bob and Richard had it installed for the first group of the winter. It is a tremendous improvement over the old one, which had cracked over the years and was no longer repairable.

For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of taking the Polar Bear plunge, the tradition here at Camp Huntington is to toast your body nicely in the warm sauna, then quickly scurry out onto the lake, where Richard has cut a hole in the ice large enough to jump in and cool yourself off. Most winter groups wouldn't think of coming to camp without taking the plunge, and there is even a running contest for how many dips one can make during the same session. Sane bathers will limit themselves to one or two, but supposedly, our caretaker Richard has the record at seventeen!

One of the most ardent bather groups is the hardy Winter Alumni Camp. This year, everyone's daring dive was captured on film and compiled into a slide show by Lew Cowan '73. This group of sauna fanatics calls themselves the Ice Holers and includes a number of hearty souls well into their 70s. If you haven't had your Polar Bear plunge yet, what are you waiting for?



Split Session PE Slips in the Back Way

The first group to greet the New Year at Camp Huntington is traditionally a section of physical education's Outdoor Adventure Education for Teachers. This two-week long practicum is the introduction to camping, canoeing, climbing and hiking in the Adirondacks that has distinguished a SUNY Cortland undergraduate degree from other schools for decades. Four sections a year spend two consecutive weeks here and in the field in May, June or August. One, however, known as the split session, spends a week here in August and another in January during winter break.

As the arrival date – Monday, Jan. 2 – approached, there was still no ice road and very little snow on the ground. Instructor Corey Ryon '99, M.S. Ed. '03, filling in for Kate Hovey '03 on maternity leave, considered an alternative location for the course, but at the last minute decided to go ahead with the original plan. Because of thin ice on the lake, the students and instruc-

tors hiked in the back way from Golden Beach, using sleds to pull their personal gear and equipment. Fortunately, there was enough food in storage at the camp for the cooks to prepare meals for two days, until the first delivery could be made across the ice.

Cross-country skiing and winter camping are obviously a major focus of the split session. With only an inch or so of snow, we had to be creative to provide the 13 students with a realistic winter experience. Ski lessons were held on the lake near the ice road, followed by a short ski on the blue, yellow and green trails. Rather than risk the bases of the brand new Alpina skis, the group was issued the older 75 mm ski equipment and managed just fine. On Wednesday, they were even able to construct quinzees in the meadow and spend a night out before the warm weather collapsed them.

Thursday, the group walked out across the ice road and climbed Bald Mountain. The overnight trip to Lake Placid had to be cancelled, as the ski touring trails there had not opened yet. Given the unusually warm early winter conditions, the split session went very well. An oft-used quote was heard as the group left Camp Huntington the following Monday, "We'll surely have better conditions next year!" Let's hope these words are prophetic.

Raquette Lake Champion

Our current Raquette Lake Champion is Laura Platt '12, who was also featured in an article in the March *Moments*. For the full story, see "Educating a Champion", in the March edition of *Moments*, the online alumni newsletter.



Photo courtesy of Laura

Upcoming Raquette Lake Events

- Teacher Education Workshop, July 22-25
- Adirondack Regional Alumni Picnic, July 28
- Class of 1959 Reunion Sept. 4-7
- Nature Ed-Ventures Adult Education Sept. 9-14
- Watercolor Painting Workshop Sept. 10-14
- Hearts of Gold Reunion, Sept. 21-23

For more information
www.cortland.edu/outdoor
 Choose Raquette Lake and Upcoming Events

Former Swimmer Returns with Team

Physical education alumnus, Kevin Crossman '98, decided to share the team building magic and winter beauty of Camp Huntington that he experienced as an undergraduate with his high school boys swim team. Kevin was an outstanding swimmer while at SUNY Cortland and has built a strong team at Glens Falls High School. We had a number of email exchanges and phone calls to arrange just the right date and schedule to work with their competition calendar.

Kevin wanted this to be a community event for his team and included a number of parent chaperones and their families who were active with the team. This made for an interesting mix of ages within the group, including some under the age of ten. My first concern was getting them across the ice road in twilight, but the youngest in the group literally ran across the road and was the first one in camp! The rest of the weekend everyone bonded very well, and the boys left with an increased sense of self and support from their families.

Some of our returning alumni teachers and coaches retain friendships with current Cortland faculty. In Kevin's case, he swam with Corey Ryon '99, M.S.Ed. '03, lecturer in health, and assistant swim coach, who instructs the Outdoor Adventure Education for Teachers course each summer. Corey spent the weekend working with the team and facilitating on the low ropes course. His knowledge of Camp Huntington and the activities available here were great assets to the Glens Falls group.

The swim team spends many hours prior to this trip collecting returnable containers which pays for the entire trip. This adds to the values of teamwork and self-reliance that Kevin instills in the boys throughout the season. We are delighted that they have already committed to returning next February.

William and Mary Continue Strong Tradition

A plaque on the wall of the Knox Classroom includes a brass label for every year a student group from the College of William and Mary has attended winter camp at Camp Huntington since 1976. There are only four years missing. Two of those were due to the fire and subsequent rebuilding of the dining hall. The other two were due to lack of snow. This adds up to a total of 32 times the Kinesiology and Health Sciences course has been offered here. But the story only begins with the numbers.

Sylvia Shirley taught in the Women's Physical Education Department at Cortland from 1971-75. At that time she took a job teaching at William and Mary, where she created the long-standing course that comes to Raquette Lake every March during their spring break. Over the years, the course has included building snow shelters, cross-country skiing, outdoor cooking, snowshoeing up Blue Mountain, an overnight trek to one of the DEC lean-tos on the lake and winter camping. For fun, sled sailing with a tarp or parachute are thrown in.

One of Sylvia's students from the SUNY Cortland days, Tim Ramsey '73, M.S. Ed. '75, began helping her teach the course from the very beginning. Tim is now a professor at the University of Northern Colorado, but makes the trek back east to assist Randy Drake '77, who took over teaching the course about ten years ago. Randy remembers Sylvia from his days at SUNY Cortland,

but only got to know her well when they were both teaching in the Kinesiology Dept. at William and Mary. Sylvia first asked Randy for his help with the course when she discovered his background in cross-country skiing (Randy competed on SUNY Cortland's ski team for four years), but before long he took over for Sylvia as she neared retirement.

The course still has Sylvia's mark left on it from the early days. Tim and Randy consider her a mentor and have each had successful, high-adventure careers of their own. Yet another teacher was influenced by Sylvia when he attended the winter camp as a student at Point Option Alternative School in Newport News. Sylvia had invited a friend of hers, Linda Baumler, to bring along a few of her more responsible high school students, and Kelly Garner was one of them. He was so "transformed" (his word) by the opportunity to be with William and Mary students and challenge himself in the Adirondack winter environment that he decided to become a teacher himself and motivate other students to reach their potential as well. He now oversees the outdoor education courses for Point Option and regularly brings a handful of students along, while helping Tim and Randy teach the course.

I asked him what the Point Option students get out of the experience and he responded, "They are at the alternative school because they haven't yet realized they have control over the decisions they make. Here [Raquette Lake], decisions have immediate and measureable consequences. I constantly hear them saying, "That's the first time I ever..." Kelly is working to gain approval from his school to provide students who complete the course with one credit in physical education. At this time, the students are here without credit, and Kelly serves without pay. The lesson of this story is the lives of so many people are often touched by a teacher with vision, strong character, and the commitment to go above and beyond. And when that teacher touches the lives of other teachers, as Sylvia Shirley did, the ripple effect can be profound.



Pictured here ready to film a scene at the Polar Bear Plunge are from left to right Stephen Schweitzer and Elin Barton of White Knight Productions and Lesli and Kirk Van Zandbergen, Photography. Both groups were hired by the College to provide video and images for use in upcoming promotional projects.

Orange Dialogue Engaged at Camp Huntington



A group of Syracuse students and Fulbright Scholars enjoys a fresh snowfall. Photo by Leonard Blume, Binghamton University

Scott Catucci '00, M. '03 had plenty of experience at Raquette Lake earning his two degrees in recreation at SUNY Cortland. Since becoming the Assistant Director of Recreation Services at Syracuse University, Scott has been in charge of the outdoor adventure and freshman pre-orientation programs and dreamed of bringing a group back to Camp Huntington. As colleagues in the Association for Experiential Education, we talked about this possibility as soon as I became director in May of 2010.

Last February the dream became reality with a combined outdoor winter recreation and Orange Dialogue program, a workshop Elane Granger, Syracuse University's assistant director of advising and counseling, offers several times a year. Orange Dialogue brings together diverse Syracuse students and Fulbright Scholars from Central New York to engage in discussions focused on contentious issues to foster intercultural understanding and tolerance. Needless to say, the Carlson and Knox classrooms were the site of a number of very interesting debates among bright, motivated young people from many different countries and backgrounds.

But the weekend wasn't all about indoor conversations. The group was divided in two, and one group headed out Saturday morning for cross-country skiing on some newly fallen snow that arrived just in time for the weekend. The other group went for a hike on snowshoes. Then on Sunday morning, after a dialogue session, they switched and had a chance to try the other sport. For many students, this was their first experience on skis or snowshoes and for some their first with snow. The combination of outdoor activities on a beautiful winter weekend and the chance to engage in intercultural exchange without the typical interruptions of campus life was a perfect combination that sparked both increased understanding and self-confidence. Kudos to Scott and Elane for working hard to put this program together, and let's hope it's only the first of many to come.



Jack Frost works his magic on the windows of the Chalet.



Teaching Science in the Outdoors

Each February and September, the Childhood/Early Childhood Education Department sponsors three separate sessions of students at Camp Huntington. The pre-service teachers are enrolled in EDU 374: Teaching Elementary School Science, and the time at Raquette Lake is to introduce them to methods for teaching in the outdoors. For many, who hail from urban and suburban areas and have to this point only had experience in the classroom, this can be quite an eye-opening practicum filled with adventures and new discoveries.

With five sections of the class coming each season, the 224 students accommodated during the 2011-12 academic year comprises the largest number of SUNY Cortland students to annually attend programs here from any department on campus. The lead science faculty, Beth Klein, Susan Stratton, Gail Tooker, and Orvil White, strongly support the need for their students to have this introduction to outdoor education. Whether it's paddling a kayak or canoe, cross-country skiing, using the low ropes course, taking a night hike or practicing environmental science in the field, becoming comfortable in the outdoors will hopefully encourage their use of these activities when they begin to teach.

In addition to the core faculty, at least three or four additional professors and graduate assistants accompany the groups to Camp Huntington to help deliver the curriculum through a rich variety of activities. Professors in language arts, math, and social studies take advantage of the outdoor setting to introduce experiential teaching methodologies to the students in these curriculum areas. In recent years, former staff members of the Rogers Environmental Education Center have volunteered their expertise and time. With years of experience teaching elementary-age students at their outdoor facility in Sherburne, these skilled naturalists add depth to the three-daylong programs.



Students in EDU 374 From left, Susan Griesche, Alison Brady, Elizabeth Reed and Kristin O'Connor record their finding of an orienteering station.

One of the activities offered both fall and winter is an introduction to navigation, using maps, compasses and GPS units. In small groups, students try to find stations hidden in the woods and record their success using iPads or mobile phone cameras. The fall students learn teambuilding techniques on the low ropes course, and the winter students often ski or snowshoe for the first time. The programs also incorporate Adirondack and Gilded Age history, with the final evening providing an opportunity for the students to demonstrate their new knowledge to their teachers and peers in the form of songs and skits they compose while in camp.

As with all Raquette Lake programs, a secondary benefit is the camaraderie and relationship-building that results from living, learning and working together in a supportive environment for three days. The sessions occur early in the block semester, where the same students travel from class to class together, so the opportunity to get to know each other on a very personal level adds to the richness of the experience when they return to campus.

Spotlight on History

Found in the kitchen of the Kirby Camp during renovation were a few pieces of agate ware. Agate ware is porcelain enamel covered iron. L & G Manufacturing was one of the first companies in the United States to make enamelware, a popular choice of consumers because of its aesthetics and light weight. Agate ware was also easy to clean and unaffected by acidic foods unlike cast iron cookware. Enamelware was exhibited at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, making it more visible to the public. All L & G agate ware has a burned stamp on the bottom in blue, Agate Ware, L & G Mfg. Co., while other companies of the time used stickers that eventually wore off. Agate ware, a brand name coined by L & G, was so widely used it became the generic name for all enamelware.

Two French immigrants, Charles Lalance and Florian Grosjean started producing agate ware between 1863 and 1870. Lalance and Grosjean opened their doors in Woodhaven N.Y., in southwest Queens. The two helped to turn a farm community into a manufacturing town, employing more than 2,100 people. Agate ware was only one of the products the company produced. They were well known for improving the process of tin stamping and making mess kits for the Spanish-American War.

Grosjean managed the factory and had several company houses built to accommodate French workers who immigrated to work in his company. Houses were built in all of the communities hosting an L & G factory. Boston, Chicago, Harrisburg, Pa. and New York were all sites for L & G Manufacturing. In New York, the company was on an eleven-acre plot. Harrisburg was the feeder steel mill for all of the other L & G Manufacturing sights.

As times and business changed, L & G Manufacturing became the world's leader in tin stamping for almost a century. After World War II sales began to drop, and the factories all closed their doors in 1955. In 1984 most of the plant portion of the property was demolished and turned into a mall with the factory clock tower remaining as the mall centerpiece.

Nature Nook

Dark-eyed juncos are a beautiful slate gray colored sparrow and happen to be one of the most common birds across North America. Their territory spans Alaska to Mexico and California to New York, covering much of the continent. The birds often appear in the winter at bird feeders giving them the nickname snowbirds.



Photo courtesy of Jenna Slade '07

Juncos are medium-sized sparrows with fairly long tails and round heads. Their underbellies are stark white while their top coats are either dark slate gray or brown, depending on their region. Juncos white tail feathers show as they fly around.

Forests and surrounding areas are a favorite home to juncos during the summer months. In the winter, they can be found in open woodlands, backyards, fields, parks, and on roadsides. Habitat elevation ranges from sea level to more than 11,000 feet. Nesting sites are mostly on the ground in protected areas such as sloped ground, rock faces or snarled tree roots. Sometimes nests will be found on branches, in flower pots or window ledges. Nests spanning three to five inches take about a week to build and are made out of fine grasses and pine needles. Other nest materials might include hair, leaves, mosses and small twigs.

Juncos typically build new nests each year.

Juncos are ground feeders that can often be seen hopping around bird feeders searching for fallen seeds. Their diet consists of mostly seeds from chickweed, buckwheat, lamb's quarter and sorrel. At feeders, juncos favor millet over sunflower seeds. During breeding season, the small birds also eat insects such as beetles, moths, butterflies, caterpillars, ants, wasps and flies.

Breeding season takes place between the spring and early summer. A clutch of junco eggs can be three to six in number. The eggs are white, gray or pale greenish in color and are speckled gray and green. Length-wise the eggs are approximately the size of a nickel. Incubation lasts 12 to 13 days when the birds are hatched with eyes closed and naked except for a few gray, down feathers on their backs. The babies will fledge between 9-13 days after hatching.

Alumni Camps

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| <p>Antlers June 30-July 6 July 7-13 Aug. 27-31</p> | <p>Camp Huntington June 30-July 6 June 30-July 3 July 3-6</p> |
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Kirby Camp

June 17-23, June 24-30, Sept. 2-8

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