



CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Raquette Lake News

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Jack's Reflection

Looking back on the past ten years, I feel truly blessed to have been in this position. It has been an honor and a privilege to have served as the director for the Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education. As my wife, Patti, and I depart, we can look over our shoulder and say we have made a difference. We have done our best. Having known George Fuge '49, Harlan "Gold" Metcalf and Joe Pierson, I feel they would be

pleased with the way we have continued the traditions and their legacies.

I feel fortunate to have seen Raquette Lake from three perspectives. The first, as a graduate student in 1971. I had completed my military service and enrolled in SUNY Cortland as a graduate student in outdoor education. Over the winter break Marcia Carlson, professor emerita of recreation, offered a winter course at Raquette Lake, which I was fortunate to attend. Second, upon graduation in 1973, I was asked to remain at SUNY Cortland as a faculty member and teach in the recreation program at which time I also became a part of the outdoor education practicum staff at Raquette Lake. The third perspective came when I returned to SUNY Cortland, after a 21 year hiatus, as the new director. There was so much history and tradition that I just hoped I was up to the task.

They say hindsight is 20/20. In the fall of 2000 I wish I knew then what I know now. Jay Cummings, the assistant director for 33 years, helped me a great deal with getting adjusted. I want to thank Jay for all he shared with me. I also need to say thank you to all those on campus who have helped Raquette Lake in one way or another. Without the support of the facilities office and administrative computing, we wouldn't have new roofs on buildings or a wireless network. I would also like to say thank you to all of you who have brought groups to Raquette Lake, contributed to our foundation account and helped with volunteer projects. Patti and I know what a special place this is and how important it is to so many of you, but, what makes it so special are not the buildings, lake, or even the woods, it is you! The people are what we will miss the most.

It is with a tear in my eye that I write the articles for my last newsletter. I have been humbled by such support, friendship and love. I am truly grateful to have had this opportunity, but now it is time to address new challenges. Patti and I are looking forward to playing golf, seeing family, traveling and just sitting a few extra minutes without looking at my watch. Thank you!





The Winter That Was

Kate Becker-Hovey, physical education coordinator for the outdoor education practicum, and her assistant, Patrick Langendorfer, were greeted with the

best winter conditions we have had in a decade for the winter session of PED 308. It was only Jan. 2, but there was plenty of ice on the ice road and ample snow for quinsy hut construction, skiing and snowshoeing.

For the vast majority of these students, this is truly an adventure. Being at Camp Huntington in January is unlike anything they've experienced before. When I give them the orientation, I challenge them to approach each activity with an open mind. Explore outside your comfort zone. Attitude is everything.

As I mentioned earlier, conditions were great. The skiing and snowshoeing were terrific. The students did not have to haul snow long distances to get enough to make their snow shelters.



Naturally, when there is more snow, the shelters are larger. In fact, the shelters were constructed on or about Jan. 5 or 6 and were still there as of March 20. We have had cold temperatures and no rain to speak of. The group was greeted with good trail conditions and blue skies as they climbed mountains.

Like other winter groups, they had an Olympic competition at the end of their session. The events took into account their training and equipment. The skill and enthusiasm shown by the students make one proud to be SUNY Cortland alumni.

Bolton and the "BIG GUY" Return

On Feb. 3, 2010, Bolton Central School returned to Camp Huntington. Bolton has used the Raquette Lake facilities for nearly two decades. Ted Caldwell had served as the coordinator of the annual event but retired at the end of the school year in 2009. He turned the reins over to a very capable staff, and they did not miss a beat with the kids. They were all well prepared and knew what was expected.

When we speak of the "big guy" we are referring to Ted. He is about 6'6" tall and naturally stands well above anyone in the group. For whatever reason, Ted decided to return this year more as a chaperone than as the group leader.

Getting the kids in and out of their skis and snowshoes is quite a chore. Even with obvious front and backs on the skis and snowshoes, challenges do arise. Speaking of skis, I was very

surprised when the group arrived. Each of the children had a super pair of boots, poles and skis. The sets were all the same and looked brand new. I asked Ted if they had gotten a grant for the physical education program, but he said no. It appears that the Sagamore Resort and Conference Center, located on Lake George, was closing their winter operation. It was determined that in these difficult financial times they could not operate at a profit during the winter months. Consequently, they donated all their cross-country ski packages to the Bolton Central School. Fantastic!

The one activity Ted had the students participate in each year will be forever etched in my memory. Ted spoke to the kids about ort. If you are not familiar with this word, it is another word for food waste. After each meal, all the children and adults had to place all the uneaten food on their plate in a container. Once it was all collected, it was weighed and then put on a graph. It was no surprise that the first meal had the most waste identified on the chart. It is a good way to have the children understand that they are wasting food if they take it and do not eat it. Great lesson "big guy"!

New Laptops for Camp Huntington

On March 4, Vicki Hess, assistant director, instructional computing facilities, academic computing services, and Mary Toti, instructional support technician, academic computing services, brought 15 new Dell laptops to Camp Huntington. This was the third replacement and upgrade that has taken place over the last eight years.

The use of the computers by students is determined by the faculty or staff leading the group. In some cases the computers are an integral part of their academic activities while at camp; for other groups, the laptops remain in their charging unit and are not utilized. The laptops connect to our wireless computer network, which allows them to access the Internet from most locations on Pine Knot Point. The machines are programmed to print from remote locations throughout the camp. The wireless system allows the user to connect to a centralized printer located in the Carlson Classroom.

In October 2000, we were using a dial-up modem to access the Internet and campus. Thanks to Paula Warnken, associate provost emeritus of information resources, Dan Sidebottom, director, administrative computing services, and their staff, our computer systems and network have advanced tremendously over the past decade. Faculty from other colleges tell us our



system administrative equipment is better than what they have on their campuses. The addition of the Web cam also was made possible through administrative computing on campus. Enjoy!

The Ice Road

As most of you know, our ice road on Raquette Lake is one mile long and runs from Antlers to Camp Huntington. During the winter months it serves as our lifeline. It functions as our connection to the mainland. The user groups at Camp Huntington walk over on the ice road. Our building materials, food supplies, fuel oil, gasoline, and paper products, etc. all comes across this narrow strip during the winter.



The 2010 ice road was the best I had seen during my ten-year tenure here. It got off to a very good start back in early December. We had a number of sub-zero nights over an extended period with no snow during this time. Snow is a tremendous insulator and creates serious problems for us when we are trying to build or gain ice. The initial ice covering was about five inches of clear blue ice, which is the best ice one can hope for. It is clear and has great strength and integrity. During that time, we were able to cross by snowmobile. Shortly after that, we were able to plow the snow off the road with our small Mule. Keeping the snow off of the ice, combined with the extremely cold temperatures, allowed the ice to get thicker by the day. As the ice got thicker, we were able to get heavier equipment, such as our pickup truck and tractor with the snow blower, on the ice. Using heavier equipment certainly makes the job easier.

Now winter season is over and our last group had a good road to walk out on. As the sun gets higher and more intense, the problem is not the ice road itself but the shoreline. The sun heats the shore and the ice begins to soften and disperse. In addition, as the rain comes, the lake begins to rise also breaking up the shoreline. The 2010 ice road served us well. I am sure there are sections where the ice is still nearly two feet thick. As spring approaches, it won't be long before holes are everywhere. It is at this time travel on the ice road is over and hiking out through Silver Beach swamp and Golden Beach Campground is the only way out.

The following is a table compiled as a guide for ice strength by the American Pulpwood Association for "clear blue" ice on lakes. This is only a guide, as conditions will vary from area to area. Slush ice is only one-half the strength of blue ice. The table does not apply to parked loads.

Ice thickness in inches	Permissible load (Clear Blue Lake Ice)
2	One person on foot
3	Group, single file
7.5	Passenger Car (2 1/2 ton gross)
8	Light Truck (2-2 1/2 ton gross)
10	Medium Truck (3 1/2 ton gross)
12	Heavy Truck (7-8 ton gross)
12	10 Ton

Is it Twenty-one or Twenty-two?

The question came up over dinner one evening about just how long Broadalbin/Perth Middle School has been coming to Camp Huntington. Colleen Buchanan, lecturer IV, physical education, has served as the facilitator for this group since their first visit. Colleen seemed to think it has been 22 years of winter fun and activities for this group.

Michelle Nasner has served as the school's coordinator since 2000. She, Colleen and the other staff do an excellent job. The group is extremely fortunate that their school principal, Wayne Bell, also serves on the staff. We do not host many schools whose principal serves as one of the chaperones.

Like most groups, they are going from dawn to late evening. Once the group gets settled in the dorms, they begin their team-building and problem-solving activities. During the day they utilize our cross-country skis and snowshoes for most of the day. Then they get down to a good old fashioned game of broomball on the ice road. Brooms and participants are flying. It looks like semi-organized confusion. While they know where the goals are, that doggone ball just doesn't want to go there.

After dinner, the group usually does some stargazing on the lake, locating and identifying some of the better-known constellations. The next evening's activity is a night walk to the church without flashlights or talking. Have you ever tried to keep a group of middle school students from talking when they are on a night hike without a flashlight? They don't pay the staff enough for this activity. The group participates in a tour of the historical buildings at camp and also views the American Castles Video done by the Arts & Entertainment Television Network.

Broadalbin/Perth is always a great group. The students are well prepared by the staff prior to their arrival. Some of the children had brothers or sisters who attended camp. Consequently, they hear all kinds of stories, many of which are embellished. We hope that Raquette Lake and Camp Huntington are a part of Broadalbin/Perth's Middle School curriculum for another 20 years.

Calling All Volunteers

Antlers will host a volunteer work weekend May 28-30. If you would like to join us and spend some time applying elbow grease, let us know. Camp Huntington's volunteer work weekend is full at this time. To reserve a spot contact Mary Jo Carey at (607) 753-5488 or at maryjo.carey@cortland.edu. We work rain or shine so bring work gloves and plan accordingly.



Photo Courtesy of Lewis Cowan '73

SUNY Oneonta Visits

In late February, Snapper Petta '76, brought his winter outdoor activities class to Camp Pine Knot from SUNY Oneonta. At that time, we had snow storms that went south of Raquette Lake so Oneonta actually had more snow than we did. Go figure!



Snapper has been here more times than I can count. He first came to Raquette Lake as a student, enrolled in the outdoor education practicum. Snapper continues to serve as a staff member for SUNY Cortland's Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies Department's annual outdoor education practicum each summer. Over the years he has scheduled other outdoor classes from SUNY Oneonta at Raquette Lake. One fall a few years ago, he brought his students up for some primitive camping at Camp Marion. I think he may have wanted them all to have that "outhouse" experience we all remember so well.

While his class was here this winter, the skiing conditions were excellent. With no slush on the lake, the group was able to ski just about anywhere they wanted to go. As the winter progresses, slush begins to appear in certain locations of the ice, which is not a good thing when you are skiing.

Camp Huntington has about four and one-half miles of groomed cross-country ski trails. Bob DeShaw, staff association, Camp Huntington, designed and fabricated a new cross-country ski trail drag this year that is fully adjustable. It does an excellent job of grooming the trails behind the snowmobile. In addition, we have about seventy pairs of boots, cross-country skis and poles for folks to use.

A Very Special Group!

Over the past decade one of my very favorite groups has been from the Central New York Developmental Services Office in Rome. Each February, Nick Stagliano '78, and his dedicated staff bring a group to Camp Huntington. For this group, the winter adventure to Raquette Lake is the highlight of their year. The participants' playful and positive attitudes carry them through all of the trying winter sports.

One of their favorite activities is ice fishing. The group selects a location along the ice road to help drill holes and set up the tip-ups. Some participants walk over to talk to other ice fishermen to see what they have caught. Other participants choose to forego ice fishing for indoor activities provided by the staff. By far, everyone's favorite



activity is eating! They are early for every meal. A special thanks to Deb and Rob, the camp cooks, for the adjustments and happiness they provided for this group.

Nick and his staff are truly gifted professionals in my eyes. Their ability to work with this group of individuals is truly remarkable. To leave the comfort of their center and bring their program participants to Raquette Lake requires a deep commitment on their part. I wish you all the very best and never forget that you will always be remembered and loved!

Reflections by Amanda Grant, College of William and Mary

Never had I heard ice crack like that beneath my feet. Never had I seen stars in such brilliance. And never had I eaten such darn good food from Rob's kitchen!

A week in the Adirondacks on a winter camping excursion that counted as a one-credit class through the College of William and Mary and included constructing an igloo to spend the night in, jumping into an ice hole with no clothes on, learning to cross-country ski and snowshoe, watching the sunset, Venus set, the moon rise and the sunrise all while standing on the solid frozen Raquette Lake, and yes, eating delicious food, does not sound like the typical spring break of a student. But you could definitely not ask for a more amazing one.



The entire trip was filled with new experiences, places and faces. Though I have had countless outdoor experiences, everything I learned while at camp was new to me. Though I have been up and down the east coast, I had not yet visited the Adirondacks. And being a freshman at the college, I was able to bond with all sorts of new people who I felt connected with in some way or form, especially through our love of nature and the outdoors. And this, I think, is what made the trip truly great. Because one of the most important things to do in life is broaden your horizons, engage in hands-on learning experiences, take the time out to enjoy your natural surroundings, and, of course, to simply have fun.

Accomplishing all of this while at Camp Huntington, I would say winter camping is an experience that will be long talked about, long remembered, and always fondly thought about.

Winter Alumni 2010



Coolidge Cabin

The Coolidge Cabin, formally known as the Old Maid's Cabin and the Infirmary was dedicated on July 26, 2008, in honor of Franklin E. Coolidge '35. Coolidge was a consummate outdoorsman.



His passions as both woodsman and teacher came together at Raquette Lake. Coolidge was the principal of SUNY Cortland's Campus School. He was directly responsible for bringing literally thousands of Campus School children to Camp Huntington over the years. Their memories of Camp Pine Knot are just as memorable as those of our biology, physical education and recreation, park and leisure studies majors.

The Coolidge Cabin is the last historical building at Camp Pine Knot in need of major renovation. Its restoration will be logged as one of my last accomplishments as director. With a lot of work and financial support from alumni and others, we have acquired the money necessary for this project. It has not been easy, nor was it a modest sum, but we did it.

In the fall of 2009, the plans for the project were drawn up. In the late fall, the project went out to bid with the understanding that much of the logs and materials could be brought over on the ice road. The bid was awarded to Richard H. Lutz Building



and Mechanical Contractors of Inlet, N.Y. It was nice to see the bid go to a local company.

The demolition began more than a month ago. The debris was removed as the new materials arrived. A number of very large trees in the front of the building had to be removed. Not only did this open it up to more sunlight, but it was also a safety measure. We did not want to complete an expensive renovation only to have a tree fall on the building.

As of March, the cabin has been totally gutted, new piers for supports were poured as well as new floor joists installed. The interior will be similar to that of the library with wainscoting on the walls and a v-matched pine ceiling. The windows are all being replaced with energy efficient ones that are being donated by Steve Abramson '75, President and CEO of Pace Window and Door. Steve, a recreation major, also donated the new windows for the Hemlock dorm project in 2005.

Once the work is completed, the building will have three primary functions. First and foremost, it will be a tribute to Franklin E. Coolidge,



for his educational contributions to SUNY Cortland and the Campus School children. The building also will provide a central location for the director's office, which will make it more visible for those attending to administrative duties in the office. In addition, an accessible bathroom and bedroom are being constructed.

The project is one I am very proud of accomplishing during my tenure as director. Again, I would like to thank each of you who financially supported this project. Without your support, this project would be on the next director's to do list.

2010 Raquette Lake Olympics

For the past decade, the sisters of Theta Phi and the members of the St. Lawrence Environmental Management Council have met in February at Raquette



Lake. During this period, a spirited competition has grown between the two groups. Although not quite as visible as the Cortica Jug between SUNY Cortland and Ithaca College, it is a close second by our standards. Each year the host group determines the theme of the competition, the events, and naturally, the rules. This year was EMC's chance to shine with a Winter Olympic theme. The games and competition were nothing less

than spectacular. The entire time we were on the ice for curling, ice dancing, opening ceremonies, rutabaga fling and skating, I was looking for the ESPN helicopter to cover this spectacular event.

Next year the sisters of Theta Phi will determine the theme. Based on previous years, I am sure both groups

will be up to the task. As I mentioned earlier, the rivalry grows with each year and every event. The first night everyone is together there is an old fashioned "Yankee Swap." All I can say is, hopefully you will get something you really don't like, because if you did, someone would swap with you.

As the years have passed, their friendships have grown tremendously. I am sure everyone was a bit suspect when I scheduled these two groups together years ago. They have enjoyed spending time together with slight schedule adjustments including brunch and their departure time on Sunday.



A Season's Glance

The 2009/2010 winter season has brought back a number of traditional winter birds and animals. The one thing winter usually provides, which helps identify our wintery friends, is snow. Unless they are flying, they leave tracks and this year was no exception. If you spend time outdoors during the winter and are not too familiar with animal tracks, you may want to consider purchasing a field guide on animal tracks or nature in the winter.

Tracks and other signs left in the snow can tell you a story if you take the time to read them. It might be as simple as how many animals passed by or how long ago they came through. Look at the path they took. Were they going in a direct line or were they meandering? Is the track clear with well defined lines; is it partially filled with snow or starting to become distorted in the sun? You may come across some small tracks in the snow,



and then they stop and seem to go nowhere. Then you discover a series of lines in the snow nearby. What could these be? Looking further, you determine the lines were made by the wing tips of an owl or hawk. It appears the bird snatched that little fellow right off his feet. I am sure you can figure out the rest of that story.

Upon occasion you come across a track that may puzzle you; perhaps one you have not seen before or can't identify. A track I discovered this winter on the Waldbauer Nature Trail was that of a snowshoe hare.



It is a very common track in certain areas, and I have seen it many times before. However, it is the first time I have seen snowshoe hare tracks this close to camp. I saw them several years ago near Silver Beach Swamp, where I have also noticed bobcat tracks. The snowshoe hare is a favorite food of bobcat and Canadian lynx.

One of the most unique tracks you will come across is that of an otter. With the ice cover we had this year, there were not a lot of places an otter could get out or back into the water around the lake. Otter have a distinctive style where they run for a short period and then slide. The pattern is easy to identify once you have seen it. During the winter, we had otters and slides both at Antlers and Camp Huntington.

The snows of winter can help us all become outdoor detectives. We can see far more clues with snow than we might see without it. Take the time to stop, look and analyze the clues Mother Nature has provided. You might be surprised what is in your own backyard.

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