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# THE AXE AND SAW

Volume 71, Issue 2

Spring 2010

Grove City College Outing Club

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

Grace Watson

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## **Hello Outing Club friends!**

As new to the club myself, I've enjoyed getting to know some of its great traditions and events, from greasing the pig for our Pig Roast to attending the highly cultured Valentine's Day dinner. I also have the privilege of collecting some of the stories from this year and sharing them with our alumni. I hope you enjoy this issue and have many wonderful adventures of your own!

If you have any questions or suggestions or would just like to reconnect, we'd love to hear from you!

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## **Letter From the President**

Word from the President

It is with great pleasure that I greet all of you this spring! The new year has ushered in a new crop of officers and although we're still a little wet behind the ears, I think this semester has provided a wonderful new experience for all of us.

Planning and putting on the wild game feast was the first true test of my ability to run an event, and with the help of a few other students and active alumni it went off without a hitch. We had just the right amount of food to feed the people in attendance even though a few more people than I expected showed up. Just for the record, Major Tom and I make a mean venison chili. In February, the club sponsored a Valentine's Day dinner during which a few men of the club cooked a veritable feast for a few of the female members complete with a dinner serenade. There has also been a small group that has established semi-regular trips to the Climb North gym for rock climbing. In addition to more traditional festivities, the club sponsored a trip that may seem a little uncharacteristic to see the Pittsburgh Symphony.

The advent of warm weather has brought a slew of fun outdoor events! Just last weekend alumni Adam and

Kate Neff headed up a hiking trip in the Dolly Sods, WVA and as I write this a group led by the Butler clan is cruising down the Allegheny River. Other events on the schedule between now and the summertime include the running of the Mt. Summit Challenge, Senior Dinner, and running of the concession stand for the Track and Field PAC Championship Meet. Although there is sadly no ZEC trip happening this summer, alum Cory Gibson has been scheming to make a backpacking trip to Colorado happen in August.

I want to sincerely thank you all for your continued interest and support of the club. I hope this year has brought you more hope and happiness than it has stress or despair. The Outing Club is still very much alive and kicking and we hope to keep it that way. May the road rise to meet you and may the wind always be at your back. Drive fast, take chances.

Jamie Schiappa '11  
President '09



(David Stitt '10 splitting a round on a work outing)

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## Senior Perspective

I am graduating in a few weeks. Alas, it's time for nostalgia to wreak havoc on my emotional psyche. Looking back, I'm grateful that the Outing Club has been a formative part of my four years here. Some highlights of my time in the club:

Two ZEC trips (2008 and 2009): It's hard to imagine a more relaxing environment that middle-of-nowhere Quebec. Even when our adrenaline raced from cliff jumping or plunging down Ballbuster Falls, we were still care free in the Canadian wilderness. I can't thank those who organized the trip enough!

Heading up Pig Roast pie-making: Katie Doll and I took on this task two years in a row. I don't think I'd ever made a pie before that first year, but now I can say that, twice over, we made more than 70 in one night. Thanks to the pie crews both years!

Valentine's Day dinner. I hope this tradition sticks. The 2009 Valentine's Day dinner was fantastic. The cabin was transformed into a classy establishment, and the boys wine and dined the ladies, complete with a serenading and a raspberry mousse dessert.

Hazy afternoons on the cabin porch: On those days when we most needed to escape campus, there was always the calm of the cabin. I most loved sitting wrapped in a blanket with my feet propped up on the porch, watching a drizzly twilight.

70<sup>th</sup> reunion dinner: I was fortunate to be an officer when our dear club turned 70 years old. The highlight of that Homecoming was attending the banquet. We read letters from distant alumni, reminisced about the old days, and planned for the future of the club. We are blessed to

have such a rich heritage and people who still care.

Axe and Saw management (2008-2009): I've now passed on the role of Alumni Secretary. It may not be the "most important" position in the club, but I wouldn't have traded it. It allowed me to hear stories from countless past and current students and understand how deeply people care about the Outing Club.

And now I get to join the ranks of the Outing Club alumni. Ever since joining the club, I've admired this mysterious group of elites. Perhaps I've looked up to them solely because they loved the club when they were students and have continued to stay connected. I hope that I, too, can stay in the loop, if only by reading the tales of the next generation of Outing Clubbers in the Axe & Saw. Thank you, everyone!

Brandy Tillow '10

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## **Ski Trip**

Once again winter, so well known by the denizens of Grove City College, descended upon western Pennsylvania bringing with it the customary copious flurries of fresh white snow. Seeing that, the members of the Outing Club bent their thoughts towards the mountain slopes of snowy powder and swift descents on ski and snowboard. "Bad" Andy Falcone rose to the occasion and organized an outing to Seven Springs ski resort to indulge in a midweek study break on the ski slopes. So, deserting our academic responsibilities for the afternoon, a group of 11 Outing Club members, accompanied by a few guests, set off for seven springs for our annual Outing Club ski adventure.

Upon arriving, our party geared up and split into several smaller groups according to their skiing preferences and soon began flying, or in some cases tumbling, down the slopes. Fresh powder was quite scarce, and most of the runs had abundant amounts of ice covering them. Being a Midwestern lad myself, where the terrain closely resembles a pancake, I scarcely qualified as a highly skilled skier, and so found myself flat on my face in the snow and ice several times before gaining any semblance of control. However, some of our more skilled skiers, including Cory Gibson, Brett Ely and Sarah "Beastly" Baltzer soon showed us how to tear up the slopes in style. The runs were sparsely populated, and so the Outing Club enjoyed quality skiing unhampered by lengthy lift lines and unpredictable fellow skiers.

However, no Outing Club ski trip would be complete without a memorable tale of a violent wipeout that threatened life and limb, and this time around our very own David Stitt obliged us with such an event. He and I happened upon the terrain park, and in a fit of masculine hubris decided to give it a try. Stitt, being the gentleman that he is, volunteered to go first, clearing the first jump with a good 4 feet of thin air between him and terra firma. Upon following him, I found the far side of the jump littered with his skis and poles while he himself lay at the bottom of the landing, panting for the wind that was knocked out of him. Fortunately, there was no permanent damage done and we both learned more fully the limits of our skiing ability and the influence of gravity.

When we finally returned to the college we all sank exhausted into our beds, and awoke the next morning to greet our classes with sore muscles and stiff joints.

Nonetheless, we were all thoroughly pleased with our decision to cast off our “rigorous academics” in favor of another unforgettable night of skiing with our beloved Outing Club.

Tim Noble '12



(Cory Gibson '99 and Laura Geschwindt '12)

## Canoeing on the Allegheny

Outings certainly make me more concerned about the weather. It was forecasted to rain the weekend our canoe trip was planned. It was to be my very first canoe trip and I was looking forward to it even if that included spending most of the time drenched in cold rain. I figured it would be a good bonding time and a character-building experience.

We met that morning at the cabin and selected the oars that would be our companions for the day under mostly clear skies. At the river, we pushed off with fifteen enthusiastic people, seven canoes, and three happy dogs. The river was ours and we paddled off amid the company of the brown moths that flew low over the surface of the river.

After about ten minutes, I realized that paddling is a monotonous and demanding activity. If it did end up raining, I knew that it would be a challenge.

It was my friends in the canoe and our conversation that made our journey pleasant.

As I dipped my paddle in the water again and again I had a growing appreciation of the opportunity I was enjoying to be out on the water with friends instead of fretting over assignments. All I had to do was concentrate on not splashing myself again with my paddle.

Along the way, we saw ducks, herons, vultures and two bald eagles. That was new for me too. Thankfully, it only rained once we had finished the trip, landed and were waiting to be picked up. Even though it had been overcast the whole time, I was surprised to find that the sun still managed to burn me. Looking at my red face, I thought, “What a wonderful way to spend a Saturday.”

Grace Watson '13



Josh Butler '02, Tim Noble '12, Jason Johnson '10, and Cory Gibson '99 during a brief regrouping

## Valentine's Day: Guy's Perspective

### Dinner Menu:

Macaroons  
Asian Pear Pecan Salad  
Carrot Bayonets

Pork Royal  
 Lemon-Almond Green Beans  
 Strawberry Daiquiri (GCC Style)  
 Applesauce, served home-style  
 Vanilla Bean Ice Cream  
 Strawberry Cool Whip & Strawberries  
 Orange filled Chocolate Cookies

I think the men again successfully fooled the women into thinking that we can cook – unfortunately our attempts at singing during the dinner service were not quite as impressive. This was the second annual Valentine’s Day dinner and I think it’s going to be a great tradition – the men get to learn what it means to julienne something and that not all frozen dinner rolls are easy bake. The girls get a great meal and plenty of entertainment. I think we pulled off service worthy of a 4-5 star rating, I think the only error might have been serving too many desserts....but in the end we found a solution for that

Jonathan Durfee ‘10



(Jonathan Durfee ‘10 makes sure everything tastes just right)

This year has been my first as a participant in the Grove City Outing Club. I heard about it from one of our alumni before setting foot on campus. When February came along, I looked forward to the Valentine’s Day dinner at the cabin I had been told about. Even though I had heard it spoken of very favorably, what I was treated to exceeded my expectations.

The men of the club were gracious enough to prepare the meal and most importantly, clean up afterwards. Instead of one big dish of spaghetti and salad out of a bag, they served a much more elaborate feast. My personal favorite was the pear pecan salad. I had several servings of that. I was also astounded by the chocolate covered strawberries arranged alternating dark and white chocolate. Was I still in a rustic cabin?

Our hosts ended the meal with one last surprise: the performance of a favorite Disney song. I was fully impressed with the hard work displayed and the quality of the entire evening. I look forward to next year’s dinner.

Grace Watson ‘13



(Sarah Abdelmessih & Sarah Baltzer ‘12 enjoy the Dinner)

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**Valentine’s Day: Girl’s Perspective**

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**Co-founder Ester Post inducted into GCC Sports hall of Fame**

In late January Tom and Jane Gregg and I attended the festivities and banquet inducting nearly a dozen alumni into two categories' of award. Miss Post '25 and the driving force behind the founding of the Outing Club with Doc Kase was one of the inductees based on her decades of service as the women's athletic director. Representing her were two nieces that we had a chance to visit with. Each inductee or their representative was allowed to provide memorabilia for the display cases in the athletic department office area in Physical Learning Center. This material will be on display until next year's class is inducted at which time the plaque will be hung in the awards hallway. Jane had been contacted by Coach Lyle regarding pictures of Doc and Ester and we were able to provide one of Ester that Ruth Smock had passed on several years ago as well as a very popular one of Doc taken in by Howard Strubble at PrinGrove in the early 80's. Ester's nieces provided her red Outing Club jacket and some other items.

Mark Place '77



(Ester's red Outing Club jacket in the Physical Learning Center)

## A Recent Alumni's Account

Dear ones: Life does not end with graduation.

I know this may come as something of a surprise, but I tell you, it is true. For those of you facing graduation in a few short weeks (I'm sorry for bringing it up), or those for whom graduation is in the same mental filebox as such things as heaven and space travel (as in, you know it exists but don't expect to experience it anytime soon), I lay out here a true account of my experience on the Other Side. Otherwise entitled "Seven Minutes of Real Life." I live to tell the tale.

Guys, it hasn't been easy. I've been living for four months in a place where my closest friends are the people at church who I talk to for a bit after the service, and my family. I spend most of my days working and reading. There's no roommate, no best friends I can bug at any hour of the day, no Cabin to run to when the house is stifling. I live in a cross between a suburb and a farm community with no mountains, and I have no one close to me who hikes or canoes with any kind of regularity. My biggest adventure has been walking the six-mile paved loop around the lake near my house with my dog and a 20-pound pack (getting in shape for summer trips, I hope), passing suburban mommies jogging off baby weight behind a stroller.

But there have been good points: For instance, my dog is in great shape.

I'm not kidding, though. There is something Thoreauvian about life after graduation. It is a time without anchors, and though I am choosing to hold firmly to the anchor of place, of God, of books, and of family, there is a spareness about this life that is necessary and good. It is like tunnel

vision—seeing everything in particularity, every small part important and clear. My time in nature has been vivid, every conversation with friends, every interaction with family, even my time in the small-business-killing coffee purveyor I call my workplace (though they do support open carry in PA).

And honestly, I think a great part of that has been my time in the Outing Club. The blissful feeling of settling in for a weekend at the cabin, when the most important thing was to sit on an adirondak and watching the fire together, or talking in the dark of a midnight paddle, or even just sitting on the edge of camp watching the water. The ability to enjoy the details of life is something that a lot of people don't have—especially in suburban America, where I now watch moms go to the park and talk on the cell phone while playing with their kids at the same time.

And the best part is, the club stays with you... I've left behind a home of sorts, but I still am part of the GCCOC community, no question (I'm writing to all of you right now! Hi!). And to know that there will always be a Cabin waiting for me at the end of a five hour drive, and a group of actives—it makes this time of limbo a lot less depressing.

I don't have a home right now, but I have a place where I am pretty sure I will always feel at home.

"Hey dude, nice place."

Katie McIntyre '09

## Homecoming 2010-

This coming year, Homecoming will take place from **October 8<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>**. This will be the club's 72<sup>nd</sup> anniversary. Please come by and visit the Outing club tent that will be set up within the stadium area and come on out to the cabin to reconnect with club members all weekend. Please write our president- Jamie Schiappa (E-mail: [SchiappaL1@gcc.edu](mailto:SchiappaL1@gcc.edu)) with questions.

## Summer Outing 2010 – Food/fun/friends/

This summer's joint **student-Alumni-family, friends** outing will be held **July 22-25**. We try to rotate the dates every few years to accommodate different folk's schedules.

We are still firming up the project list but will certainly be looking for any new structural problems while we are there. 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 20 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](mailto:mplace@johnplaceinc.com) or 412-877-0050

## **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.

## **Email master and web site**

If you have a new email or are looking for a classmates email, please drop Cory Gibson or me a note so that I can update our records or see if we can help. Since the 70<sup>th</sup> we added a large number of folks to the database. As noted in the mailings for the 70<sup>th</sup>, if you absolutely, positively never want to hear from us by email or wish to be removed from both the College and Club data base with regard to the Outing Club, please let one of us know.

[mplace@johnplaceinc.com](mailto:mplace@johnplaceinc.com) or [cgibson@gccoc.org](mailto:cgibson@gccoc.org) If you have not visited the official Outing Club web site please take a look at [www.gccoc.org](http://www.gccoc.org) Cory has done a super job with this project.

## **Architect update**

In the fall I met with the architect that has been doing some preliminary work for us pro-bono for over 5 hours to review the inspection work that we did last summer. He has some interesting ideas for the project that he is investigating further.

Unfortunately he also has determined that the new statewide building codes very specific exemptions for vacation type cottages **do not** apply to us.

We are hoping to have a webinar in conjunction with a live presentation option in the next few months to bring folks up to date.



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