

---

# THE AXE AND SAW

Volume 73, Issue 2

Spring 2012

---

Grove City College Outing Club

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

Emily Hare

---

## **Hello Outing Club Friends!**

Life is becoming stressful here on campus as the papers and tests pile up on each other as students are trying to figure out travel arrangements and how to pack up our lives. For those of us in Outing Club it is also a time of cramming one last visit to the cabin in and trying to find the time for one more Outing Club memory.

As we scramble forward, we also look back on what we were able to do this semester and the opportunities we have had. Thankfully, we have a chance to share with generations that have had the same experiences through the Ax and Saw. Feel free to myself or anyone listed here with questions or suggestions and enjoy your summer!

Emily Hare '14- Active Alumni Secretary

Box 1868

200 Campus Drive

Grove City, PA 16127

E-mail: [HareEJ1@gcc.edu](mailto:HareEJ1@gcc.edu)

Andrew Baur '13- Active Club President

E-mail: [BaurAP1@gcc.edu](mailto:BaurAP1@gcc.edu)

Tom Ronksley '77- Alumni Treasurer

Phone: (412)807-8175

E-mail: [tironksley@yahoo.com](mailto:tironksley@yahoo.com)

Mark Place '77- Cabin Manager

Phone: (412)877-0050

E-mail: [mplace@johnplaceinc.com](mailto:mplace@johnplaceinc.com)

---

## **Letter From the President**

Greetings Alumni,

As this semester comes to a close and I reflect upon the time spent this spring in Western Pennsylvania, I'm reminded once again of the blessing the Outing Club is, not only to me, but to so many others,

also. As you all know, it is one-of-a-kind in so many ways, and your generosity has provided a wonderful place to retreat from the college's campus. Fun and serenity both can be found and we form a group of people with similar interests that span generations. Whenever I have the opportunity to introduce students to the club, I feel as if I'm uncovering a hidden gem from the ground in front of them – and I believe they often feel the same way.

With regard to the club, the semester has progressed quite nicely, albeit lacking the abundance of snow a few of us (myself included) were hoping for. As a result of paltry snowfall, regrettably, some traditional Outing Club winter events, such as skiing in the spring and sledding Spook Hill did not occur. The mild weather, however aided the routine work outings, which have been diligently led by returning Cabin Manager Jed Seltzer ('14). If the work outings I've attended are any indication, the turnout has been exciting and the work accomplished, encouraging. The Valentine's Dinner was a success, with the men keeping the women out of the kitchen while preparing a delicious meal. The good food didn't stop there, however. With a wonderful selection of 'wild beast' found at the Beast Feast, thanks in large part to Major Tom Morris ('77), it would be a lie to say that anyone left that meal anything less than stuffed. Eradicated porcupine did NOT end up in the stew. In addition to the great meals, members also enjoyed a car clinic, dinner, and movie night at the home of Cory ('99)

and Laura Geschwindt ('12) Gibson this semester. Only in the club do those three things go together.

While I have yet to mention outdoor activities, there has been no shortage this semester. The trails around the cabin have been exceptionally well-tread and a few weekend backpacking trips have been planned. Ne'er a week goes by that the cabin does not host students studying, playing, or enjoying the outdoors. I wish I had a record of the number of man-miles logged on the trails this semester, as I have a suspicion it would be quite impressive. Continuing from last semester, the active club has had a unique opportunity to assist the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) in a project along the River Trail. I believe that you will hear more about the project later in this publication from Casey Trexler ('14), who has impeccably handled the project. This has served not only as a way to connect with the group that controls so much of the land around the cabin, but also to learn more about many aspects of the Kennedale Tract and surrounding area. I'd encourage you to take a look at the signs which can be found along the river trail (after their installation April 29<sup>th</sup>) or online at

[http://www.gccoc.org/attachments/sign\\_project\\_2012/](http://www.gccoc.org/attachments/sign_project_2012/).

On one hand, it is encouraging to see the number of new students expressing interest in, and joining, the club, but on the other, it is sad to know that in only a few weeks many of the seniors active in the club will be graduating. I hope that they will continue to interact with the active student club as have many of you – it's one of the things that makes the club great. If you've shied away from the student club in the past, I encourage you to join us for an event, dinner, or a weekend at the cabin – I know we would appreciate

it, and I hope you would enjoy yourself as well.

Thank you for building the club we all enjoy.

Sincerely,

Andrew Baur '13

GCCOC President

### **Interpretive Nature Trail**

A few months ago the Outing Club began a service opportunity for the local Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. We thought it would be a great opportunity to foster good relations with those who control the state forest upon which the cabin sits. The project entailed designing educational signs that would be placed on the Kennedale Trail along the Allegheny River. The subjects of the signs included the Allegheny River, Birds of the Allegheny, Dennison Run, Forest Management, Plant and Insect Invasive Species, the Iron Furnace, as well as a number of local tree species. There was a total of 20 signs. Several students collected the research and Cory and Laura Gibson formatted the signs. Jake Scheib, District Forester, was extremely pleased with the signs and the work of the club. We will be installing the signs April, 29<sup>th</sup>. We hope someday you have the opportunity to take a walk along the trail and see the club's work.

Casey Trexler '14

### **Back Packing to the Worlds End (3/8/12)**

After my first backpacking trip last March I got hooked so when Helene Royster talked about arranging a backpacking trip over spring break I was hyped. The 1<sup>st</sup> of March found three adventurous clubbers meeting in the PLC parking lot, loading gear into Helene's Subaru. The 4 hour drive to Worlds End State Park went fast. We arrived at the office at 12:40 and made it to the trail head shortly after 1.

The initial phase of the hike was an intense vertical climb up a boulder covered

hill. Then after Tommy Sites led us down the wrong trail for a little while we made it back to the Loyalsock Trail and had a rather uneventful hike till we found a place to camp near Sonn's pound roughly 7 miles from the office. The scenery was great, my favorite habitat being the marshy hemlock groves.

While Tommy and Helene set up camp I got to try out my new hatchet and got a fire going. Tommy, the master chef for the trip, made a scrumptious dinner of ramen. As night fell we sat around the roaring fire enjoying each other's company and the peacefulness of the nature. We did decide that the Canada goose was our trip mascot as there were a ton of the blighters that refused to shut up!

Friday morning I awoke before the stars had retired from the sky. I gathered some more wood and started a fire. After a quick breakfast of oatmeal we packed up camp and started our long 17 mile hike. We left Sonn's pound behind and then after hiking about an hour dropped our packs and hiked a 5 mile out and back to the haystack rapids. These rapids had to be the coolest thing on the entire trip! The rock was a light sandy color and the water had carved the rock into round shapes that looked like haystacks as well as making divots and slices in the formations.

After the haystacks we hiked up a killer mile long hill and exhausted and tired stopped to eat lunch. We then hiked the remaining few hours and finished the link trail back to the office at about 4 p.m. We then had to hike up another really steep hill out of the park and into the state forest so we could set up camp. I was exhausted and had to stop many times to catch my breath while I traversed the steep hill. All three of us were exhausted, well maybe not Tommy, but we set up camp and got a roaring fire going.

We were driven into our tents while the night was still young by a fierce rain. Saturday morning was introduced to the world with a curtain of fog. I got a large fire going and we enjoyed the morning for a bit. After the fog lifted the sun came out and we had beautiful weather the rest of the day. We hiked back down the mountain to the park office and dropped our packs, deciding to travel light and swift while we traversed the world ends loop. I was the navigator for this loop and despite losing the map managed to guide us safely back to the vehicles.

The scenery on the world ends loop was great and the habitats diverse. We made it back to the car at 2 and then head back to the Grove. I can think of no better way to spend my break then pack packing through the wilderness and spending time in God's pristine creation.

Jedediah Seltzer '14



Jedediah Seltzer '14, Helene Royster '12,  
Tommy Sites '14

### **Beast Feast Hike to the Cave**

Night of the Beast Feast (which by the way, was amazing) a group of us decided to go for a hike and we decided the cave would be the best place to go since many of us had never been there, and it wasn't too far of a hike. Jed Seltzer led the hike and on our way out I believe a few of us even saw a porcupine. Well, we got out there, everything is a bit wet and about half of us go into this crevice in the rock to explore. About 20 feet in we hit what seems to be a dead end. Somewhat disappointed that this is all that's there, Jed

keeps looking to see if this crack in the rock is actually a “cave”. After a bit of scrambling, Jed, Cindy and Helene squeeze through an opening which is the entrance to the rest of a pretty amazing looking cave! After a bit of yelling back and forth, almost all of us end up in the cave exploring. It ended up being a pretty decent cave. I was really surprised! For those of you who haven’t been in there, it was about 2 people wide, at least ten feet high or more in spots and went really far in. There were other smaller “tunnels” jutting off the big one. The one large crevice that turned from the main cave ended up being even muddier and had huge spiders on the walls. And most of the mud looked like bats had been there. Needless to say by the time we got out, we were filthy! But it was so much fun! It was a little harder to get out than to get in, but it was completely worth it. By this time it’s getting really dark out and we jogged back to the cabin so that some of us would be able to leave for campus in time for other plans. I don’t think any of us realized how dirty and muddy we were until we got into the light of the cabin...we had left for the hike all ready and excited to go dive into a cave, and we came back wet, smiling, and looking like we had just jumped into a swamp. We had such a good time, and it definitely was a good hike!

Lauren Dallachiesa ‘15

### **Is That the Big Dog or the Crab?**

As I write this in late April, the weather report is threatening snow. Gone are the days in March of 80 degree weather, but I remember them warmly. During those two glorious weeks of summer temperatures I made sure to spend some evenings out at the cabin.

One weekend we had a bonfire out at the cabin. What a fire! Its flames seemed to reach over a story high and the report is that it smoldered for days afterwards. After a couple hours sitting and watching the logs burn we decided to walk out to the “Christmas tree farm” and stargaze.

I had been given a book for stargazing and locating different constellations but I

had not had many opportunities to use it considering that there are so few clear nights at Grove City. It is a book that is quite easy to use because it has different maps of the sky depending on what time of the year and night you are out.

There was no moon out that evening so walking in the dark to the field offered a couple near missteps into a puddle. For a city girl accustomed to street lighting, walking in the dark is still a new experience; I like it. We made our way to the field and settled in the damp grass.

With the aid of a dimly glowing, red headlamp we picked out constellations one by one starting with the ones we knew: the Big Dipper, the Orion, and Cassiopeia. From there we made out unfamiliar shapes with interesting names: Gemini, the Lion, the Crab, Big Dog, the Charioteer, Perseus, and Hydra.

Three or four of us were enthusiastically searching the sky with exclamations of “I see the neck of the Big Dog! There to the left of Orion’s belt.” Pointing and then checking the map, we worked for all of us to make out the creatures parading over us.

The others lounging and watching for shooting stars began to laugh at our comments and began to add to our descriptions with their own chorus of exclamations. “Yes, there’s the Bright Dot right below the Not-so-bright Dot. Now I see the little dog and there’s the neighbor cat!” We joined in with our own banter about the funny names ascribed to the array of points of light in the sky.

The stars were so bright and clear and our searching so successful that it wasn’t until we got up to leave that I realized that the knees of my jeans were quite wet from turning and turning in the wet grass. I didn’t mind; they would dry soon enough back at the fire. We left better friends for it and more educated now about the pictures in the sky.

Grace Watson '13

### **An April Swim**

On a crisp April day, Jedediah Seltzer, Helene Royster and I went for a hike down at the North end of the cabin trails. We started our hike at around 6:45 with the goal of finishing about 7 miles of hiking before dark. We started our course down the Oak Rock trail and then passed through the strip mine to the HoYaNeh trail. We basically sprinted the whole way down this rocky trail (Jed going the fastest of course) until we reached the Allegheny. At the Allegheny, we took a short-cut through some thorns after stopping to admire the long retired machinery by the water's edge. As we followed a river trail we noticed a couple of small inviting islands about 200 yards out. We heeded the urge to swim to them and found out that the water was much colder than it looked! By the time we arrived back on shore, dusk had fallen and we found it necessary to use our headlamps. We continued to skirt our way along the water's edge until we reached a steep hill near the windows. We scampered our way up this extremely steep hill and hit the pipeline trail which we followed back to Jed's car. Once back at the cabin, we turned the floor heater to max and Jed did what he does best (made a fire). We warmed ourselves by the fire and drank hot beverages to our hearts' content to end the night. It was a good hike.

Tommy Sites '14

### **Spring 2012: A brief 'summary'**

Many a times have I been called long winded. My first semester in the outing club I was accused of writing most of the Axe and Saw. Since that time I have restricted myself to writing fewer articles. In that spirit I have decided to write a brief summary article of the entire semester! ☺ I have no idea why I am called long winded.

The first major OC event of the semester was the Valentines party. This party is becoming a tradition and is

honestly quite fun. A few master chefs, Tommy Site '14 and Andrew Baur '13, joined Cory in the kitchen to help prepare dinner. I stayed in the kitchen and pretended to help but my real intention was preparing the chocolate covered strawberries. The cooking is always fun and as Laura put it "it is quite amusing watching a sparky, two mechies, and a bio major trying to cook". In our defense though I feel that the dinner turned out fantastic! The valentines Party was a ton of fun.

This semester I have gone out at least once a week and spent the night at the cabin. I jokingly call these times 'Tuesday nights at the cabin' because they usually happen on Tuesday nights (but not always). These times at the cabin consist of frying up some good food, hanging out with awesome people, and usually conclude with a night hike to the Christmas tree farm to enjoy the bright stars. Oh and we actually do homework too.....occasionally...Oh and of course there was the time Tommy Helene and I went swimming in the Allegheny in mid-April.

One of my favorite highlights of the semester was the Spring break backpacking trip that Helene Royster '12 took the time to organize and lead. Tommy and I were the only other brave souls that went on this trip. We travelled four hours to worlds end state park and proceeded to backpack/hike 39 miles in 48 hours! This trip was a great experience and have the chance to be out in God's amazing creation was a blessing. We saw beautiful waterfalls, hiked up steep mountains, built decent campfires, and had an amazing time.

I am trying to start a new tradition in the OC. This year I arranged a St. Patrick's Day bonfire. As some of you may know I enjoy fires so I was really in

my element when it came to planning a bonfire. I strategically scheduled a work outing for the same day as the bonfire to entice people out to the work outing ☺ (not really). The bonfire went really well though and a great group of people came out for a fun time of FIRE, food and fellowship. We ended the night with an awesome star watching in the Christmas tree farm

The Beast Feast was great as usual. Tom Morris '77 brought a wonderful amount of diverse wild game and the meal was delicious. After the meal Helene, Cindy, Zack, Lauren, Emily and I went for a night hike to the cave. We proceed to explore the cave and get all covered in mud, bat guano and spiders. After this hike we talked by a fire outside enjoying the peacefulness of the night.

Of course being cabin manager I should probably mention work outings that took place throughout the semester. All I can say is we have a great group of students! We have cleaned up a lot of the older would around the cabin, split wood, cut new rounder's, stained the shed, raked the yard, removed the moss from the roof, cleaned the range, kept the cabin clean by sweeping and mopping floors as well as washing windows.

Jedediah Seltzer '14

### **A Hike to the Iron Furnace**

Looking back, laughter frames almost all of my memories from Outing Club events. My favorite memory comes from a hike down to the Iron Furnace with Jed Seltzer '14, Helene Royster '12, and a handful of others. We were at the cabin for a work outing except we could not do half the list because the weather was about thirty degrees below what it had been when the to do list was written up. So we improvised and Jed added hiking to the list of things to do for that day.

The hike was a mix of carefully choosing the where to step and sprinting down the snowy

trail with slight breaks to surf down the steep hills on fallen down logs. Once we reached the iron furnace, several of our members thought that the best way to fully enjoy the experience was to go as far up the iron furnace as they could. So with daring members going up and hikers to practical for their own good staying down (I admit I am too careful) we shared laughter wherever we were with relation to the furnace.

Emily Hare '14

### **Paintball!**

On Saturday, April, 14<sup>th</sup> Jedediah Seltzer, Andrew Baur, Helene Royster, and myself went paintballing. We got our gear, mask and gun, and headed out into the woods. There were a few barricades set up and plenty of multiflora rose. We played until we ran out of paint switching up 2 vs. 2 teams and 3 on 1's against both Andrew and Jed. We learned that Helene is dangerous when she secures a fort and Jed is invisible in camouflage. We also played speedball which involves few blockades and well, speed. Those games involved much less strategy and much more skill. We all took our share of hits, but I was definitely the most well-decorated player; and that was not in medals.

Casey Trexler '14



Helene Royster '12, Andrew Baur'13, Casey Trexler '14, and Jed Seltzer '14 after paintball

## **Summer Outing 2012 – Food/fun/friends/**

This summer's joint **student-alumni-family-friends** outing will be held **July 19-22**. We try to swap the dates every few years to accommodate different folk's schedules and this is often the most well attended weekend.

We are still firming up the project list as usual but know that we have another dozen or so rotted and broken floor joists to "double out" as a temporary fix based on last year's survey. 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 17th with the number of adults and children under 10 so Sue Knechtel can plan the meals. As always if you would like to bring a special dish, or have food allergies etc. please let Sue or I 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

## **Driving down to the cabin**

With everything else going on structurally we have not done any heavy road work for several years and there are few spots that are getting badly rutted again. The worst area is the basically level to downhill stretch approaching the road up to the gas well. We will try and do a better job of reseeded the upper yard after last year's seeding did not take well.

## **Electronic front door lock**

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

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

## **Use of the cabin**



As noted in past issues of the *Ax & 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 all the 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 cabin sprayed again. We typically get 2-3 years between costly professional treatments and we are approaching that point 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's 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.