
THE AXE AND SAW

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Fall 2013

Grove City College Outing Club

www.gccoc.org

Rachel Schmidt & Emily Hare

Greetings Alumni!

This year marked an important year for the Outing Club: the 75th Anniversary! Thank you, alumni, for your involvement with the club over the years; we enjoyed seeing many of you. We also enjoyed hearing many of the stories from your time in the club.

This semester was full of activities once again. We enjoyed everything from laser tag to backpacking up mountains. The stories told here describe just a few of the activities that have made our Outing Club experience memorable.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions/suggestions you may have. We would love to hear from you!

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Letter from the President

Greetings Outing Club Alumni!

This fall has by far been the busiest for me, and I would say for many members as well. There were club events and trips nearly every weekend, but who would want it any other way?

Our semester started with the college's Organization Fair. A whopping 73 people signed up for the club. Out of them, a few have remained, but they are definitely keepers! The new members have wasted no time sinking their hands into pork, strapping on backpacks for trips, and introducing new areas of interest into the club. Hopefully you have already or will soon meet them!

We had a somewhat unique pig roast this year. The pig was donated by Cory Kirchoffer's family and the chickens were bought from a local farm. All of the meat was home-grown. As a farm girl myself, I was quite pleased that the club could support local farms and also be able to serve some of the best meat available to the college faculty and the club alumni. As always the club did a fantastic job preparing and executing the event. The weather was beautiful and warm, a perk of being held on an earlier than usual date.

Homecoming was special this year in that it marked the 75th Anniversary of the club. The 75th reunion dinner was an

enjoyable evening as well as spending time with the alumni who were present Sunday at the cabin. The active members appreciated the opportunity to hear the stories and experiences of alumni.

An event that was new for the club was outdoor laser tag at the cabin. Jeremy Brown, an alumnus, offered to bring his equipment and to facilitate several games. Of course we took him up on his offer! Members enjoyed it so much that there will be another event yet this semester.

There were many more events and trips including canoeing on the Allegheny, Outing Club Olympics, several backpacking trips, and bouldering and rock-climbing. I'll let the other members tell you more about this semester's events and their own experiences.

In the spirit of the season, I hope these pages are warming as you smile, chuckle, and reminisce about your own memories as we tell you of ours. So make a cup of hot chocolate, lean back into your chair, and imagine the glow and crackle of the cabin fireplace.

-Casey Trexler '14

Pig Roast

The pig roast fell early in the semester but was still a success with over 100 students, alumni, and faculty. It was a busy weekend beginning with the baking of over 60 pies on Friday evening. There were tons of hands to make assembly happen quickly and many ovens volunteered for speedy baking. We were completely done with pies much earlier than normal this year. Pecan, Apple, Pumpkin pie, Oh my!

Saturday morning came early for a few of us. Cory Kirchhofer, Alex Kiselica, Andrew Baur and I went to pick up the farm raised pig donated by the Kirchhofer family. Loading the pig was a bit of a challenge. Andrew was probably the first to ever use a trashcan to flip a pig onto a trailer. A broken ladder and a few leg bruises later the pig was loaded. Alive. We arrived at the cabin and prepared to slaughter

the pig. We needed knives, a saw, scrapers, burlap and hot water to scald. The slaughter proceeded in outing club fashion with a home-made spreader and tackle on a tree. There were only a few club members but many alumni there to help and spectate. Soon the pig was ready for the spit and looked like one we would have bought. The donated pig and processing by the club saved a lot of money and was an educational experience. The pig was greased and placed on the spit and soon perched sizzling above the fire. Many hands over many hours kept the pig cooking until Sunday morning. Overnight I also spit and greased the chicken with the help of Mike and Jess McElhaney's niece Sunny. The chickens were also purchased from a local farm.

The rest of the weekend continued as usual. Dr. Gordon preached at the worship service organized by our chaplain, Cara Christenberry. At its commencement, all available hands went to work pulled pork and chicken, cooking, and setting up tables and chairs. Soon guests arrived and enjoyed the home-grown meal and fellowship.

Overall the weekend was fantastic. All of the members were extremely helpful and their work is the reason for the success of the event. The Kirchhofer family also deserves a special thanks for the donation of the pig. So thanks again to all of the members and alumni who made the 2013 Pig Roast another great memory!

-Casey Trexler '14

Backpacking in the Dolly Sods

On September 20, 2013 a band of intrepid adventurers left the halls they loved to wander in the West Virginia wilderness. Their caravan was small but their hopes were high as they set off to meet the Neffs in the middle of nowhere. Little did they know that their adventure had already begun...

As the explorers made their way through the steel city they made a mistaken turn and found themselves caught amidst the interlocking street system. Eventually they were able to cast

their rearview mirror toward the city that so easily entangled them, but not without consequence. At this point in the journey, the second driver in the caravan had secretly lost trust in the lead driver's navigational skills; all the while as this driver's doubts grew the journey continued.

The hikers stopped at a Sheetz to refill their cars and their stomachs before the start of the trip. Might I add that this was the nicest Sheetz I have ever seen with a multitude of touch screens, plenty of outdoor seating room, and indoor booths in number rivaling Hicks. At this point (this Sheetz being the choice of the lead driver) the second driver should have been able to allay the doubts they had, but this was not to be.

Shortly after the wanderers left that unrivaled Sheetz, they came to a fork in the road. The lead car went left, the second went right. The group was thus parted as a result of doubts gained early in the trip. After much pain and effort the cars eventually joined company again and made their way safely to Red Creek campground where they would be staying. While they had left their hallowed campus at 6:30 expecting to arrive at their destination 4 hours later, when all was said and done they did not gain rest's sweet release until 2:30 a.m. The one rule we took away from our first day was that when in a caravan, always follow the car you are traveling with.

9-21-2013

As the sun rose the next morning, so did the long-suffering adventurers' hopes for their anticipated journey. They started the trip, a band of 15 hikers and 1 brave dog, with dry feet and high hopes of continued sunny weather. The hikers made their way through marshy swamps, hilly straits where the path divided the

deciduous from the coniferous trees, and soggy valleys with stretching views of the hills around them. The rain began while they were making their way through one of these valleys and didn't stop until darkness had fallen.

On the trail we saw two orange newts (I caught one) and a bright green snake (which I also caught). After we devoured a lunch of pita, summer sausage and cheese, the rain picked up and we decided to only hike for a couple more hours. When we finally found a suitable place to camp (a small grove of pine trees), we were cold, wet, and tired. After everyone had set up their personal gear we gathered under a tarp with its four corners fastened to trees and suspended by a pole in the middle. Under this we made a fire that grew to a final width of six feet by the time dinner was ready. Dinner was perhaps the best part of the trip! We had chicken Catherine. It was simply the best meal I have ever had on a backpacking trip and rivaled many of my favorite meals from home. The night ended the same way it had started with alumni telling stories of adventures past.

9-22-2013

The rain that halted our progress the previous night had ceased and the sky began to clear as we ate breakfast. We set off from our campsite around 10:30 with the sun warming our soggy, smiling faces. We decided to take the shortest route to the cars so we could skip lunch on the trail and get food elsewhere. On our way back we found that the previous night's rain had formed a few insurmountable puddles that you could not pass without getting your feet wet. On our way up the last hill, I caught another small green snake (this one was only about as long as the breadth of my hand). We made it back to the site we had camped at the first night, which

was clearly labeled with a “no camping” sign. We made it to the cars and in short time found ourselves bound toward pizza hut. Before we got there we took one last stop at a scenic overlook and relived the beauty that was Dolly Sods.

-Tommy Sites '14

Homecoming Reunion

The Saturday of homecoming weekend found a bunch of Outing Clubbers in a hotel sharing 75 years' worth of memories. Alumni from every generation helped remind the current students to love the time we have in Outing Club while we are still young and have the free time of college. Talking to alumni also tells us that Grove City is survivable, a reminder that we need sometimes☺ Bellies full, we spent the evening talking to friends new and old about the club that ties us together.

-Emily Hare '14

There and Back Again, Five Grovers on a Rocky Adventure

I knew that something was wrong the moment that I looked at the weather report for Mount Washington, New Hampshire. It turns out that Mount Washington has the worst weather on earth; this didn't make me feel any better. You might be wondering why I would be the least bit concerned about what the weather was like 700 miles away on top of some God forsaken mountaintop; well let me start at the beginning. It was a hot day in July when the outing club received an email from Jed Seltzer about a backpacking trip to the beautiful White Mountains of New Hampshire over fall break. This sounded amazing and over the next few months a motley crew of five was rounded up to take on the challenge. The crew consisted of Jed Seltzer, Robert McKnight (Schwaabf), Jared Mathews, Josh Glessner, and myself (Evan Avery).

There was the usual hype about how hard this would be, and as normal we were all very confident (some would say overly so) in our abilities. The truth started to hit home as we began planning for the trip. The aforementioned weather report was quite awful, with highs in the twenties and winds at around forty miles an hour. We were planning on backpacking over several peaks in the same range as Mount Washington that weren't too much lower in elevation. Needless to say, we started packing some heavier clothes.

In order to maximize the amount of backpacking we could squeeze into a break which is basically a long weekend, our group left the Grove at a wonderful 4:30 in the morning to begin the 12 hour drive. When we finally arrived in the White Mountains we quickly attacked the trail to try and make the 5 mile climb which had 3,000 feet of elevation change in the last two miles. We started at 4:30 in the afternoon on the Franconia Ridge Trail (part of the AT); knowing that to make it before dark we would have to almost run the trail. So that's what we did; well at least until we hit the actual mountain. Jared held the record for tripping the most this day, face planting only five minutes into our three day trek, and Schwaabf immediately found his favorite spot in the rear as we started our 3,000 foot climb, now in the dark with only headlamps to guide us on this unfamiliar trail. We quickly learned why these mountains were called the White Mountains, it's not because of the snow, it's because of the insane amount of rocks that the trail consists of. Literally the whole trail is nothing but a bunch of rocks in a row, with incredibly large boulders in some parts and stairs in others. We quickly became completely and utterly exhausted as the climb over the rocks took its toll,

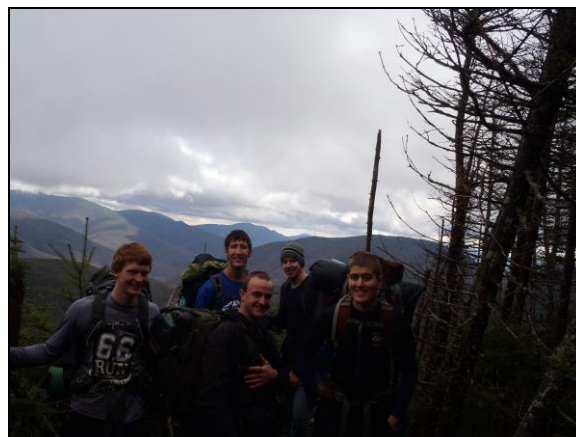
and so when we arrived at the Liberty Springs campsite in the pitch black we set up camp and hit the sack. Little did we know that there were about 15 campsites further on and a nice spring.

The weather had been beautiful so far on the trip, but the next day it took a turn for the worse as fog and a thirty mile an hour wind whipped up as we hit the peaks of Lafayette, Lincoln and little haystack. The fog obscured most of our views that day, but for a split second on top of Lafayette it cleared and allowed us to view the incredible expanse from a concrete bunker that we had discovered. It was at this point that most of us were pretty tired, and a little angry at Jed for misreading the contour lines on the map (by a few thousand feet of elevation gain), so we were all excited to see a bike trail coming up because it must be pretty flat. We soon started to doubt that this was a bike trail because it was going straight down the mountain over boulders and trees, and at the end the trail was a creek which we tripped our way down (ok mainly Schwaabf was tripping). Also, the people we told about the “bike trail” gave us strange looks. Turns out that bk stands for brook and not bike. Thanks Jed.

We camped this night at an actual campsite next to some waterfalls and relaxed. The next day the weather was incredible again and we hit some flat ground where we made great time and hiked next to the river. We took a slight detour to see some more beautiful waterfalls and Jed demonstrated his remarkable ability of running down mountains, fully loaded down. We saw the most incredible views off of Mt. Liberty this last day as we looped back around, possibly the best panorama I have ever seen, with a 360 degree view of nothing but white topped mountains and forests as far as the eye could see.

The five of us hiked down the mountains to the same campsite where we stayed the first night and found it full. This was not taken well. Eventually everything worked out though and we found a place to camp and had an easy but rainy hike out the next day, followed by a drive back to the Grove. Thus ended the hardest and one of the best backpacking trips I have ever been a part of, with the whole crew expressing their love for the trip and a desire to return to face the ruggedness of the Whites again.

-Evan Avery '16



Left to right: Josh Glessner '15, Evan Avery '16, Jedediah Seltzer '14, Robert McKnight '15, Jared Matthews '15

Rock Climbing

This past semester a group of students have been going to Climb North in Pittsburgh, Pa. Climb North is an indoor climbing gym with both bouldering and top roping walls. We have only been bouldering but will probably try top roping in the future. Bouldering costs less and is still a lot of fun. Most of the students going have little climbing experience but thanks to some alumni with past experience we have been learning new skills.

The gym has many different climbing routes set up ranging in difficulty. Some are low difficulty and everyone completes them their first try. These climbs usually have plenty of large holds and are a good confidence

boast for beginning climbers. Other climbs are a little more challenging. These are the climbs you continually try until you're exhausted. They may go across the ceiling or have holds large enough for two fingers. Even though these climbs typically end in frustration, they are fun to attempt and improve your skills. Each week we gradually move up in difficulty. It's great to witness everyone improving from week to week. I hope to continue going to the gym throughout the winter. It's a great way to practice climbing skills while the rocks are covered in snow. Hopefully in the spring we will be able to go to McConnell's Mill and climb some real rocks.

-Lauren McGarvey '15

Rolling in the Wind

The buildup to our Allegheny River canoe trip this semester was long and exciting. It was scheduled for late October this year, almost a month after the regular weekend in September. As fall came upon us in its full brisk glory, we anxiously awaited the day of the trip, with one eye on the forecast.

The morning came: 40°F; 20-30mph winds. Seemed like a bit crazy, but hey! That's why we're in the Club, right? We live for blizzard bike trips, freezing mountain climbs, and rainy trail runs. This was simply one more adventure. So, bundled in layers of polyester and wool, we put out from Franklin, PA at 9, ready for a relaxing trip as the chilly water slipped beneath our boats. The blustery morning was in fact all it had been cracked up to be, with the wind regularly sending our line of canoes swerving this way and that, and the occasional splash leaving hands numb for several minutes for those without gloves. However, one certain moment opened our eyes a bit to the risk: as the water lay strangely still, a visible gust whipped across the river and literally hit us with the force similar to a sonic

boom, shoving the canoe sideways several feet.

After a few relatively calm hours (where we enjoyed linking the canoes together and going down the river as a giant unwieldy unit for a while), the wind picked up again. Soon, it became so strong that it pushed several almost to shore, and spun several others around to face upstream. As we struggled to maintain a true course, one canoe lost a paddle as the force needed to stop was too strong to move safely. A few seconds later, my partner and I were literally being pushed upstream by it! Getting a little exasperated at this point, we made a ferocious attempt to prevent another spin, and... oops. In the bath. The next few minutes went by pretty fast, but it was cold. (Turns out the water was 45 that day.) Fortunately, Casey, Baur, and several others were behind us. In the next several minutes, they all guided us to shore and helped get a change of clothes from what several had donated, but the time in the water made it hard to feel our legs and arms, let alone stand up. Though we were, it was hard convincing those around us that we were lucid, since every word came out sounding something like, "yeabababah ib abactwabababwy fibibym."

Praise the Lord, a kind couple on the far shore saw what happened! When we got to their side of the shore, they didn't hesitate to offer blankets, hot soup, hot showers, and even brownies, and then delivered us to the landing zone just as the rest of our crew was breaking out the goodies. They tell us we had the "Jonah effect"—the wind simply died as soon as we were gone. All I know is that shower was the most incredible shower of my entire life.

When we arrived, the rest of the crew was actually a little jealous of the incredible kindness the family had shown

us. Hot soup and brownies? Oh, yeah! We enjoyed more treats and cocoa, thanks to Rachel, Joscelyn, and others, then packed up and headed for home with 20-pound sacks of clothing. All in all, it was still an incredible trip—met wonderful new friends, enjoyed beautiful scenery, and...almost died? Not exactly, but one thing's for sure: a 40°, 30mph-wind canoe trip was definitely the most exciting adventure we have had in a long time. Just maybe not one to repeat.
-Sam Kibler '16



Canoeing on the Allegheny River

Shootout at the OC Cabin

The day was cloudy and cool; the ground was wet from the sporadic rain showers all day. A group of camo-clad students gathered around the porch at the Outing Club cabin, accepting their weapons as Jeremy Brown handed them out. They quickly formed teams and began planning strategies. As soon as the rules of the game were explained, the teams took off into the woods to their bases, and the remaining students crowed on the porch to watch. The observers were not disappointed, as laser tag with the Outing Club proved to be just about as much fun to watch as it was to play.

Perhaps the most entertaining part of watching the game was the taking of the cabin. The bunk rooms and front part of the cabin were open for play, and everyone quickly figured out that whoever controlled the cabin had a good chance of winning the game. As most of the observers gathered on the porch,

this put us right in the middle of the action. At one point, a participant hid underneath the porch and “shot” an opposing team member as he peeked out to see what was going on. One of the best bits of strategy that developed during the game was placing the sniper (who had a long range gun) in the woods by the opposing team’s base. The sniper could easily pick off players as soon as they “recharged”-eliminating them from play.

The games ended peacefully, with no injuries to report. And despite the fierce competition during the games, everyone was smiling at the end. We were all a bit wet and cold, but it was most definitely worth it.
-Annie Laurie C. Holfelder '15

Simply Breathtaking

November 23-25

I will never forget backpacking in the Joyce Kilmer Wilderness! Each person in the group contributed to this memorable experience. Some contributed humor in high doses, while others guided us with their map skills. A few were prepared for anything (plant books, towels, portable flotation devices, etc). And all of us were ready for adventure. Together we were a congenial, talkative, and supportive group. We had a blast! To top it off, we got to spend 3 whole days with each other in the *Smoky Mountains*.

The Smokies were absolutely stunning. On the second day, snow dusted our region, and the mountains looked as if they were wearing white hats in preparation for winter. At the end of day three, we reached the highest point of our hike. From there, we could see a 360° view of the brilliantly blue mountains surrounding us. They rolled beyond our line of sight like ocean waves moving towards the horizon. During the second night, the stars almost rivaled the beauty of the mountains. Because there were no leaves on the trees, we could see millions

of stars from our seats around the campfire. They were dazzling!

Everything I saw on the trip was new and exciting. After being at Grove for a month, I really appreciated the change in scenery. Being a couple hundred miles away from the cabin, the North Carolina plants were so different than those in Penn's woods. The mosses, fungi, and lichens along the trail ranged from a light green to a deep red to a clementine orange to a soft white. The poplars in the old growth forest were full of years. Their branches nearly touched the sky, and their trunks were at least 8 feet in diameter. If Jack and the giant had climbed down from one of them, I would not have been surprised. And those rhododendrons were phenomenal...

The trail itself was exhilarating! Adventure was its middle name. During the first night, I woke up to snow hitting the tent. Because of the snowfall, I was extremely thankful for the fire. Despite the wind and the sub-freezing temperatures, the fire kept us all warm and toasty while we ate breakfast. At the end of the second day, we waded across a stream, and that was so cool! Wait, I mean cold. On the third day, we started off bushwhacking through rhododendrons and hurdling over logs. We all couldn't help but laugh as Mother Nature smacked a few of us with branches. At midday, we began our 3000ft ascent. Once we got to the steep climbs, my legs started to cry out in pain. At some points, we had to use our arms to pull ourselves up some of the slopes. Even though I had hurt all over, I think that this part of the trail was my favorite. Reaching

the top of the ridge and seeing the panoramic view was so rewarding.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, I must say that I have never been so happy to be in a home as I was in the Avery's home after the hike. Evan's parents were gracious and welcoming to all of us. Mrs. Avery was a fabulous cook. By far, she was the most popular person in the house among the hikers. We all really enjoyed our stay in the Avery home.

If I were to pick one word to describe the whole trip, I would pick *brehtaking*. For if the beauty of the Smoky Mountains does not succeed in taking your breath away, then the ruggedness and the steep climbs certainly will finish the job.

Here's a big thank you to Jed Seltzer for planning the trip, the Averys for hosting us, Devin Stauff for driving us, and everyone else for making the trip an unforgettable experience!

-Joscelyn Seaton '16



Left to right: Jared Matthews '15, Lauren McGarvey '15, Rachel Schmidt '16, Joscelyn Seaton '16, Evan Avery '16, Josh Glessner '15, Alex Kiselica '17, Devin Stauff '05, Jedediah Seltzer '14

Winter Cabin News 2013

Mark Place '77 Alumni Cabin Manager



2013 was a big year for cabin work as we move toward the complete restoration project in a few years.

We had a very successful Alumni, Friends and Family Summer Outing in July with over 30 folks participating during the 4 days. In addition to the usual maintenance items like mower service, cleaning road drains, and cutting some firewood, a major rebuild of the end wall of the Girl's Wing was completed. This was probably the most challenging project completed at a Summer Outing ever as the end wall and floor had become completely detached for over 10' due to a combination of rotted wood, past

repairs failing and poor construction back in 1938. The separation was over 1" wide and 2" tall in places.

Some collaborative engineering and out of the box thinking resulted in the wall and floor being supported while a complete new substructure was designed and built and grading work was done to improve soil separation. Much of the work was done in close quarters and under a tarp as the team finished up Saturday.

While temporary, this critical project will allow the Girl's Wing to be used until the restoration work is completed. Special thanks to project lead Henry Limmer, Mark Fair, Scott Davis, Dan Young and Cory Gibson for work on this one. Also a shout out to Sue Knechtel for again leading the kitchen team that kept everyone very well fed and hydrated.

Thanks also go to club President Casey Trexler, the 2013 officers and the club for getting the cabin in great shape for the 75th anniversary weekend and for coordinating our meals prior to the annual business meeting.

One other major change approved at the annual meeting was the replacement of our two stoves with a single 8 burner unit. The large 4 burner stove which had been purchased from a sale at Polk State Hospital many years ago was presenting challenges and many times the smaller white stove was just not big enough when we had a full house. Research was done on the cost of new and used stoves and this unit was located in Erie PA by past President Dan Young. Dealer serviced it offers two full size ovens and 8 larger burners which we have not enjoyed for over 20 years. Club chefs report that it is working well and it is nice to have ovens that hold the selected temperature again. Thanks to Dan for not only locating the stove but for donating it and also to Henry and Chuck Limmer who drove down from Syracuse to assist in the removal of the old stoves and the installation of the new one during a special work outing in late October. Details of how the ovens and burners work can be found in the Cabin Manual located in the dining room.

