
THE AXE AND SAW

Volume 70, Issue 2
2009

Spring

Grove City College Outing Club

www.gccoc.org

Brandy Tillow

Hello again, Outing Club friends!

What a year! As was pointed out in Fall's issue of *The Axe and Saw*, this past Homecoming marked the GCC Outing Club's 70th Anniversary. During our preparations, we connected with the GCC Alumni Relations Office and updated our list of alumni to match theirs. We nearly doubled our list, so many of you are receiving an *Axe and Saw* for the first or second time. I hope you enjoy reading about the recent adventures of the GCCOC actives and a few alumni, too.

If there is any other information with which we can provide you, if you have questions or suggestions, or you'd just like to reconnect, we'd love to hear from you! Feel free to contact:

Me! Brandy Tillow – Active Alumni
Secretary

Box 2037
200 Campus Dr
Grove City, PA 16127
E-mail: tillowbm1@gcc.edu

Brett Ely- Active Club President
E-mail: elybm1@gcc.edu

Tom Ronksley- Alumni Treasurer and Chair
Phone: (724)327-7214
E-mail: tironksley@yahoo.com

Mark Place- Cabin Manager
Phone: (412)877-0050
E-mail: mplace@johnplaceinc.com

Letter From the President

Thank you alumni for your continued support and involvement! This semester has been a whirlwind of activity and a big time of growth for the club. We have had shooting days, the game feast, canoeing, hiking, sledding, rock climbing, a worship night and even a formal dinner where the guys cooked for the girls! Every weekend there have been at least 10-15 students using the cabin and several outings throughout the week. Average meeting attendance is up to 25-30 students per week (up from around 5-10 a year ago)! We, the students, are so grateful for the opportunities provided to us from our dedicated alumni.

Of all the various activities this semester one particularly sticks out in my memory. This year the first annual worship night at the cabin was held around the back fire ring. Freshman Ben Cox played acoustic guitar while students and alumni sang for hours. It was great to worship the Creator amidst His creation and share a good time of fellowship at the cabin.

Additionally, this year's game feast was a great success. There was certainly no shortage of food, which included, rabbit pot pie, teriyaki goose and bacon, wild boar ham and loins, venison chili and stroganoff, squirrel stew and all the side fixens.

I look forward to next semester and the adventures in store for the club. I will be sending out a schedule of student events

over the summer and would love to see you there. Please mark your calendars for the annual pig roast on October 18th 2009.

I truly believe that the heritage and tradition of the club is what makes our group so strong. It is such a blessing to hear stories of outings past and to get to know the alumni. Thank you again for not only providing a great place to escape the stress of campus, but for investing your time into teaching and storytelling. May God continue to bless you and reveal himself to you as you seek Him!

Your brother in Christ,
Brett Ely, President '09

Shootin' for the First Time

There is nothing diluted about college, and living in concentrate can be extremely draining. One's mind can only handle so much until it begins to revolt against the body. Besides, this is Grove City. We all know it's a bubble, right? It takes five minutes- tops- to walk across upper campus, and everyone knows everyone else. After three years, I was looking for an escape, something completely different from what is right here in front of me all the time.

I had heard of the Outing Club a few times but never really knew what they did, where they met, how one joined, etc. Then a few of my friends joined, raved about everything it stood for and decided that I should venture out with them one fine afternoon to experience how fantastic it really was. The plan was to shoot clay pigeons- something I had never, ever done. My history with guns consisted of target shooting with my brother's BB gun...and not being very good at that. All in all, I wasn't sure what to expect.

After purchasing the clays and a box of shotgun shells, we set off on what was probably just another exciting day in the life of most of the people there but a completely foreign experience for me. Finally arriving, we all walked over to a picnic table in front of the cabin. There they lay: all 9 guns stretched out across the picnic table, glimmering a little portentously in the sun. A friend turned to me. "Which one do you want?" My response went something like this: "Hmm, uh, what? What's the difference? I'll take whichever looks nicest. That one has a cool design!" I could feel a collective sigh and silent shaking of the head as well as a patronizing dismissal of my ignorance. "Here, why don't you start out with this. It's a shotgun, smaller than most, so it will be easier for you to handle because..." (Charlie Brown's parents began to appear in conversation here).

I felt content watching everyone else take a shot as the clay was hurtled through the air, but no one was going to let me just sit there. I was handed a gun, told how to hold and load it, and then let go. The first time I turned off the safety, my stomach churned with an unfamiliar queasiness. The first time I yelled "Pull!" a sense of urgency filled my mind as my body tensed. The first time I pulled the trigger, I knew that I still had a shoulder.

I didn't hit anything the first time. I didn't hit anything the second, third, fourth, or fifth time either. But after almost every shot, someone would explain something different that I should be doing; everyone helped me out, telling me not to lean in, keep the gun tucked into the shoulder, shoot a little ahead of the clay, etc. Finally, fifteen or so shots into the afternoon, with much coaching, I aimed very deliberately and fired. At first, I wasn't really sure what

happened as the solid orange disk dissipated into brown dust. I had shot it!

By the end of the afternoon, I hit four more and felt as though there wasn't anything I couldn't handle. The whole afternoon was spent doing something completely new and now fascinating to me. I learned more about guns than I ever expected, and the pressures of school disappeared behind a new experience. Even though I only hit five and everyone else hit, well, much more than that, it was a successful day. Driving back on campus gave me a renewed sense of energy, the memory of time well spent and the knowledge that with just a little practice, I could accomplish anything, no matter how unfamiliar.

Anna Wood '10



(Don't mess with the Outing Club...)

Work Outings!

Work outings are some of my favorite events in the outing club schedule. Besides the obvious purpose of work outing- to maintain the cabin- these outings serve as a time of fellowship for active members. Typically, while the boys spend quality time with the log splitter, the girls do

everything from general cleaning to raking leaves and cooking lunch, which is always spectacular or at least far superior to cafeteria food.

Most work outings start around nine in the morning with a hearty breakfast for those who spent the night at the cabin. Then we review and amend the list of chores needed to be accomplished that day. The standard list includes chopping wood, cleaning and filling lamps, sweeping and mopping the floors, washing dishes, organizing shelves and cupboards, and many other tasks I'm sure you are all familiar with that keep the cabin in top shape. Once everyone has arrived we split the list and tackle our projects.

After a few hours of working we stop to enjoy whatever lunch Sarah Lake has prepared. My personal favorite is her stuffed shells- yummy. At lunch we catch up with the members and of course there is plenty of joking around and general teasing. After lunch it is back to work for a few more hours until the whole cabin is spick and span and sparkling fresh. Then in late afternoon when everything on the list has been crossed off, some people head back to campus to start their homework, while others curl up in the Adirondack chairs in front of the fire and enjoy the quiet peace of the cabin.

That is my favorite part of work outings- when the day is coming to a close; we can reflect on the accomplished work and feel proud that we have done our part to preserve the cabin and club traditions for future generations

Laura Geschwindt '12



(The canoes all lined up and ready to go)



(Tim, Laura, and Dave relax on the river)

Canoe Trip on the Allegheny River

On Saturday, April 18, a sizeable group of students and alumni embarked on a canoe trip led by the fearless Josh and Erin (and Jaden) Butler. With canoes and paddles in tow, the group drove down to Franklin, PA, put in at around 10:30 AM, and spent the absolutely gorgeous morning and afternoon paddling down to Kennardell. The cold water didn't stop some people from getting soaked- specifically John Durfee when he decided that he wanted Scott Fahle's hat even if he had to jump from boat to boat to get it. The weather was absolutely perfect for being outside, despite the strong headwind (strong enough to run a boat aground at times). The gang stopped for a packed lunch on a little island and relaxed for a bit before finishing the paddle. Many people returned from this trip happy, exhausted, and very, very sunburned.

Jamie Schiappa '11



(Mika and Madison enjoy a snowy hike)

Reflections

Stepping through the door of the cabin, the first thing I always notice is the smell. I can identify wood smoke but the rest is still a bit of a mystery. It calls to mind my grandparent's ranch house and the memories I have of times with them. There's a peace to that scent.

Tonight, heads turned as you walked from the entry room around the corner towards the kitchen. Friendly faces gave their greetings. For some, it was a hearty "glad you're here!" For others, a simple nod was enough because the message was the same: if you came then you were welcome to enjoy a bit of the fellowship and food. The aromas of rabbit pot pie, venison stew, wild boar, goose wrapped in bacon, squirrel stew, fresh biscuits, and a mouth-watering apple crisp blended with the woodsmoke to create the heady scent that engulfed you when you crossed the threshold of the cabin.

Truth be told, I was up to my elbows in flour for a good portion of the evening. While that left me a little short of details (as you may have noticed already), it did give me a chance to think a bit. Part of what I love about the cabin is the "I may tell you what to do, but unless it could get you killed (or burn down the cabin), you should probably figure out how to do it on your own" attitude. It's a freeing reality that here, at least, we are treated like the adults we are. It calls to mind some words by George S. Patton, "Never *tell* people how to do things. *Tell* them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." Whatever else you may find at the cabin, you won't see much micromanaging.

In fact, there's a restfulness to whatever I do at the cabin. Away from the rush of campus, away from the almost frenetic urge to be busy all the time, away from the pressure to squeeze every last ounce of productivity from every last minute of the day, I can stop. I can pick up a simple biscuit recipe and triple it in my head. Successfully. (As a student of history, let me assure you that this is no minor feat.) I can modify the recipe on the fly. I can wing

it. It's the small things like this that make up a good life, I think.

The cabin itself may be aging with more or less grace. Parts of it may need to be replaced and repaired in the years to come. In a way, it's always a little sad to make these repairs since they're a quiet reminder of our own mortality. But that's the way of things, isn't it? Life moves on, but we are allowed to take with us our memories of good times past. The cabin provides the castle, the place refuge, in which we can create some of those memories.

Looking around me that night, listening to the bits of conversation that filtered through the happy buzz of activity that surrounded the kitchen, that was the common bond I saw. No matter our background, no matter where we came from or where we were going, here was a moment in time, a place where our lives intersected. We were all of us, in our own way, looking for and finding the same thing that evening: a bit of fellowship, a bit of community, a bit of kindness. At least for that moment, at least at the cabin, we all belonged.

Andrea Fellersen '09

Valentine's Dinner: Gentlemen's Perspective

The men of GCCOC kicked off the spring semester with a dinner at the cabin for the ladies on the eve of Valentine's Day. The second annual dinner was a well-attended success.

Preparations began early in the week as groceries were purchased and food was prepared after the weekly club meeting. The delicacies included pork royale, eye of round roast, mashed potatoes, boiled carrots, fresh Caesar salad, and green beans.

A white-chocolate raspberry mousse was served for dessert in addition to coffee.

Over the years, the cabin has been used for lots of different things, but this night was rather special. Upon entering the cabin at the designated time, the ladies found a small fire burning in the front living room and tables set up around the perimeter. Ambiance from a few faintly burning candles filled the air. Heard but not seen from behind the wool curtain separating the living room and dining room, the men were hard at work preparing the dinner. Their labor had by this time spread from the kitchen onto both dining room tables. Some of the guys had been cooking for several hours by this point.

A few designated men waited on the tables, taking requests from the ladies as they ordered from their menus. At one point, some of the guys even broke into a brief Valentine's Day serenade.

The men wish to say thank you to all who attended and for allowing us to show you some Valentine spirit. Everyone had a great time and many spent the remainder of the night at the cabin. Thanks to all who helped out too!

Dave Stitt '10

Valentine's Dinner: Ladies' Perspective

The Valentines dinner this year was a special treat for the ladies of the Outing Club. The men of the club prepared a wonderful dinner for us. Many of them were at the cabin all afternoon and evening slaving away to plan this meal for us. As we walked into the cabin, we were asked to sit and relax by the fire while dinner was being prepared. It was a very nice change to not have to lift a finger to make dinner.

Before long we were seated at candlelit tables set with the best china at the cabin. The guys poured our drinks and served us delicious appetizers. The appetizers were so good we had to be careful not to eat too much before our main course was served. We were given menus and options to choose from for the main course. All of the food was absolutely scrumptious and the service was perfect. After serving us one of the most delectable desserts I've ever had, the men joined us at the table. The good company and the tasty food made for an amazing evening. It was nice to feel so treasured by the gentleman of our club. Thanks for everything guys!

Stephanie Solomon '10

Worship Night at the Cabin

The worship night on April 17th was the first of its kind, as far back as any current members can remember. Hopefully it will turn into a new tradition.

The stars were out that night, the first time in a while. The fire was already crackling, up the hill, and we could see it through the bare tree trunks as we walked up from the Cabin. We carried more food than the ten of us could eat. The woods were cheerful with laughter.

We opened the musty hymnals and all became hushed. The night-sounds set the tone as we ruffled pages from hymn to hymn, finding favorites. The guitar was our only guide as we picked the harmonies out of the still air, squinting to see the notes in the firelight.

There was no moon.

And the warmth of the fire and of singing hymns outdoors and of being together was enough to keep off the

deepening chill as we looked up at the splendid stars.

Katharine McIntyre '10

Sleeping Under the Stars

What more appropriate thing could members of the GCCOC do on a clear, cool, spring Friday night than to remove themselves from the comfort of their dorm room to a certain venerable old cabin for the night? And having escaped the confines of campus, what would be more logical than to liberate themselves entirely from walls and roofs of all kinds and spend the night sleeping outside under the expanse of the stars?

On the eve of the canoe trip several of us Outing Clubbers followed that exact reasoning away from campus, out of the cabin and through the woods to the Christmas tree farm where we spent the night with grass as our bed, pine trees as our walls and the heavens as our roof. It was a beautifully clear night, and not a single cloud obscured our view of the bright stars above us.

Brandy, Cooper, Brett and I all crawled into our sleeping bags and drew the hoods tight around our faces, insulating ourselves against the rapidly cooling night breeze. Peeping out from within the warm cocoon of my sleeping I tried to identify as many constellations and stars as I could before sleep overtook me. The big dipper's brilliant outline was the first to catch my eye, followed by the all important North Star, steadily twinkling at the end of the little dipper. The old hunter Orion, with his bright sash and raised weapons stood out next, then the faint yet discernable Pleiades. By the time I was straining to glimpse Sagittarius, the patron constellation of archers, the warmth of my sleeping bag and

the sweet smell of the open air saturated with the scent of pine and grass had overcome me, and I drifted off.

I awoke from this exotic sleep to the sound of a shotgun blast echoing throughout the cold, still morning. I forced my head out of the shelter of my sleeping bag, involuntarily shivering as the chilly wet morning air drove the sleep from my head. A moment later another distant report disturbed stillness of the morning. I checked my watch. It was 0700; time to be heading back to the cabin to scramble up some breakfast before heading out on our canoeing adventure. I reached over and attempted to wake Brett, solidly asleep amid the war zone that apparently surrounded us as yet another shot rang out. I informed the semi-awake specimen of the gunshots, and was electrified by his response as he sat bolt upright and stripped his sleeping bag off. Brandy and Cooper both also rolled over at this display of morning energy, but we soon learned of its source as he proceeded to tell us that this was the first day of youth turkey season. Upon realizing that we were no doubt surrounded by dozens of over eager trigger-happy eleven-year-olds, we rolled up our bags and put on our shoes with marvelous efficiency and proceeded to beat a hasty retreat back to the cabin (obviously reaching its safety without being perforated by a load of # 4s).

Although our nighttime adventure was unceremoniously cut short, it was nonetheless a magnificent time, and I highly encourage anyone who wishes to spend a night surrounded by pure nature to venture out and make their bed in the grass to drift off to sleep under the majestic heavens. Just be sure to check your local regulations so that you don't run the risk of being awoken

by some little camouflaged kid jumping at every—and any—chance to blaze away at something that resembles their first ever trophy.

Tim Noble '12

Summer Outing 2009 – Food/fun/friends

This summer's joint **student-Alumni-family, friends** outing will be held **June 25-28**. We try to rotate the dates every few years to accommodate different folk's schedules and we have not done June for a couple of years.

Right now the main priority project will be removing siding from the outside walls and mapping the damage or lack of damage we find for the architect. This project will be rain or shine under the eaves and tarps as required. This will take a lot of people to get it done safely and fast. We will be using the scaffolding as well as ladder and possibly a lift in addition to ground level work. We will need to be very careful as every board needs to go right back up. The primary tools needed are hammers, wonder bars and small nail removers. We will reattach the boards using nail guns. Each crew will also need a person to do the documentation so there are jobs for every skill level.

We 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 June 23rd 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 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, Mike McElhaney 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 70th we added a large number of folks to the database. As noted in the mailings for the 70th, 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 or

cgibson@gccoc.org If you have not visited the official Outing Club web site please take a look at www.gccoc.org Cory has done a super job with this project.

Architect update

We recently heard from the architect that has been doing some preliminary work for us pro-bono. He has discovered that the new statewide building code offers some very specific exemptions to vacation type cottages. There are several specific requirements that we meet but one critical one that we do not meet and that is the law only applies to new construction. Dan has requested a ruling on renovations in writing from the appropriate agency. Because this would apply to every similar renovation, the reply will be precedent setting which means this could take a while or even require legislation. The answer we get here will greatly influence how we address several other agencies and their regulations.

On the cabin's dining room table, you'll find a thick red leather-bound journal, known affectionately as The Cabin Logbook. Every person that goes out to the cabin is asked to sign the logbook. Although primarily used as an official record of who goes out to the cabin, the logbook has also become a place to reflect, tell stories, and communicate with other members. Cooper O'Neil has compiled a few excerpts from this semester's entries.

off is cheap manhood.
- ANDREW BRINKERHOFF '09, with Will Ross, Taylor Knight, Joel Messer, Lex, and James Brinkerhoff, survivors of Groke City's coldest in 15 years, -FP

Excerpts From The Logbook

Life is Good!

2/25/09
TIM MAHONEY & DAVE STITT - TALKED WOMEN
SHOTGUNS AND VARIOUS OTHER SMALL ARMS AND MUNITIONS
ALSO DISCUSSED: OLD MAN, MURDERING REDNECKS, CRIME
AND POLITICS.

Life is good!

2/28/09
Ben Bander Andran Marten Kegan Hauge &
Dhil Shugnessy stayed overnight. Overall a
relaxing & successful weekend; with the exception
of finding mouse droppings in the bottom
of my mug. AFTER I drank what was in
the mug. 😊

Shoeing is an odd
word, an even odder thing
to do without snow
•
March 4, 2009
Bill Robinson
Gordon James Brinkerhoff
Colleen Dougher

Life is Good!
+ = 1-1

Life is indeed good. Thank you for reading this edition of *The Axe & Saw!*