

# THE AXE AND SAW

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Grove City College Outing Club

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

Katherine Smucz

## *A Message From the Secretary:*

Greetings y'all! The spring semester is ending, and we are heading for summer though as I am writing this it has only recently stopped snowing -sadness. But it's time for the next Axe and Saw! My name is Katherine Smucz, don't try to read and then pronounce the last name you might hurt yourself or at least kill a couple brain cells. Its pronounced Smoots (like boots). Anyway, I am the new and only alumni secretary and hopefully soon we will have an election to bring one more person on board this crazy train. We have had a lot of fun here at the college throughout this spring semester, from the Valentine's Day dinner to the spring break trip, from the stump debate (now that's a story and I have a video as proof) to the Beast Feast with the alumni, and everything in between. I hope you enjoy this edition of the Axe and Saw!

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### ***Letter From the President:***

*Abby Treusch, '23 - Biology*

From relaxing around the campfire singing hymns to milling the downed trees in the yard, Outing Club members always know how to have a fun time at the cabin! This past semester, we've had our usual events such as the Valentine's Day dinner, spring break backpacking trip (back to Linville Gorge we went!), pie baking fundraiser, and Beast Feast, with a few new ones thrown into the mix. Dr. Stauff, Adam Neff, and Magnus led the students in a snowy expedition to the Dolly Sods Wilderness, where we all gained working knowledge about barefoot river crossings in freezing temperatures... and yes, it was a blast! Plans are also in the works for reviving games of Ultimate Cantaloupe on the IM fields after some members discovered photographic evidence of such an event (members in '09, anyone?). A unique and wonderful aspect to the Outing Club is the continued involvement of its alumni, and this little newsletter is the perfect way to keep you all in the loop of the goings on with the students. We hope you enjoy reading about our escapades from the past semester and look forward to when our paths may cross at the cabin next!

*Actively not letting college interfere with my education (to quote Major Tom Morris).*

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### ***Cabin News: Mark Place '77 Alumni Cabin Manager***

#### 2022 Summer Outing

The annual alumni, students, families, and friends outing will be **August 4-7**. After two years of COVID issues we are looking

forward to a great turnout and a return to normal.

As usual, meals will begin with lunch on Thursday and run through lunch on Saturday. Please contact me at [mplace@johnplaceinc.com](mailto:mplace@johnplaceinc.com) or by phone at 412-877-0050 by Sunday, July 31 to assist Sue Knechtel with meal planning. While we would love to see you all 4 days, please feel free to join us for a day or even a meal. Many regular participants from years past have been missed, don't be a stranger! It is high time to introduce your spouse and children or grandchildren to the cabin.

We will be addressing the usual tune-up details like the gutters, spring, mowers, saws, drains etc. and may have some cleanup remaining from the removal of the four large trees that were removed after approval at the annual meeting at homecoming. Weather permitting there should be plenty of time for a hike or a swim each day.

#### Summer use of the cabin

Please check with Lee McCoy or me regarding summer use of the cabin to make sure there are no large groups scheduled. If you do enjoy the cabin, please allow a bit of time to help with mowing and wood splitting. The push mower and riding mower are ready to use. Please let me know if the gas for the mowers is running low. Keeping the place mowed and looking like someone could show up at any time is our best and lowest cost possible security system.

If you can help with mowing this summer, please let me know. Thanks to the retired alleged faculty advisor Dr. Dave Gordon for volunteering to continue as our most dependable mower. If we get it cut every say

3 weeks, it is not an all-afternoon project when it is cut. Even if you do part of the yard when out, it is appreciated.

The gas grill works great, please clean it when you are done, and if the propane is low, please consider getting the tank refilled or replaced.

Also, please do not leave any food in the fridges after finals. The gas periodically goes off for various reasons and finding a fridge full of spoiled stuff is a very unpleasant experience that Lee and I as well as others have had before.

### Use of the range

Please enjoy the range but allow time to clean up old targets and police up the brass before you leave.

### Fireplace

The inside fireplaces have beautiful new stone hearths. Regardless of how thick the stone is, please do not split wood inside on them. Firewood and kindling should be split outside. Please do not bring in more wood than you will be using as that can introduce harmful insects into the cabin.

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## ***The Tunnel***

*Matthew Lamberson, '22 - Mechanical Engineering*

On January 28, 2022, Alex Taaffe, Danny Beevers, RJ Gilner, and I decided to embark on an extended exercise in unpreparedness, adventure, stupidity, and/or homelessness (depending on who is telling the story). For those who don't know, there is an abandoned train tunnel a 4-mile hike from the cabin, down on the other side of Kennerdell. This

tunnel extends about a half mile through a mountain and is now a section of a biking path. We thought it would be interesting to make the short hike down and spend the night in the tunnel. We reasoned that, despite the single digit nightly temperatures, it would be much warmer in the tunnel. Don't ask why. So, we planned to hike from the cabin, stay the night, hike back in the morning, and drive back in time for lunch on Saturday. After packing a few basics, we set out, guided mostly by the light of the moon. We didn't realize until we started that the snow was over a foot deep for the almost entire hike. As a result, it took us over 45 minutes to reach the lookout (typically a 20 minute walk). We then slid on our rear ends down most of the hillside, stopping only to resecure our packs and avoid falling off cliffs. We finally reached the tunnel around 10:30, meaning we had been moving at just over 1 mile/hr. After exploring the tunnel to ensure we wouldn't be disturbed in the night by marauding vampire bats, drug addicts, cyclists, etc., we set up camp close to the middle of the tunnel. Taaffe and I were using 30° sleeping bags in 15° weather. And we were sleeping on the outer edges of the tent. And the ground was hard and uneven. And my socks were wet. Not to mention every whisper in the tent sounds like the approaching voices of whatever boogeymen you happen to be most afraid of. To say I didn't sleep well is an understatement. At least in the morning I was greeted by the hearty breakfast of a single packet of instant oatmeal and some nearly frozen water. By 9:00 we had set out into the daylight and began the return trip. The worst part was probably re-ascending the hill, which seemed to be as daunting as Mount Everest as we stood at its base. The hike was long and the difficulty was compounded by the

soft, slippery snow. After reaching the top we enjoyed the scenic view of the ice flows in the Allegheny, as well as a bald eagle. By the time we returned to the cabin, it was after 1:00. All in all, we covered 10 miles in about 8 hours of hiking. It was too late to return for lunch, so we sat down to eat whatever was available. I personally ate more raw peanut butter in the next half hour than I had in the rest of my life combined. On the ride back we discussed all the flaws in our plan. We look forward to repeating this hike in the future.

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### **Valentine's Day**

*Samuel Hertzler '24, Chaplain - Physics*

Valentine's Day was here  
 The dinner plans were grand  
 The sausages in the pot did sear  
 The food would be anything but bland

Etienne made chocolate strawberries galore  
 Sam made marinara with ties of bow  
 Daniel's no-bakes were not to be abhorred  
 Beth's decorations caused such a woah

Everyone enjoyed the meal  
 Tyler led us in song  
 We all surely did feel  
 That the party was not too long

Afterwards we set the Christmas tree  
 aflame It rather refused to burn

We waited inside and did blame  
 The cold for stopping the flames for  
 which we yearned

Finally, it went up alight  
 We gathered round the pyre  
 We sung to put our spirits aright  
 And stood and watched the fire

And thus, Valentine's Day was at end  
 We busied 'round with cleaning  
 We said goodbye to our friends  
 And went back to Grove for sleeping

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### **Spring 2022 Work Outing**

*Connor Rodgers, '25 - Political Science*

After a brutally cold, snowy, and windy winter, the Outing Club had much work to do for the first work outing of the 2022 spring semester. Not to mention the work that had to be done with the four massive trees now laying in the front of the cabin following their chopping that happened in the fall (no need to fear the stumps are still there). A dozen club members came together on a mid-March Saturday with a long list of tasks from our cabin manager, Danny Beevers that we had to complete.

The day started earlier for some as Danny, Lauren Brockway, and Ashley Simpson took a hike to the river as the clouds, fog and the mist drifted off to provide sunshine and warmth by the late morning. Back at the cabin, as the three took the hike, Etienne Pienaar and I sat on the cabin porch soaking in the joys of nature felling the breeze and

listening to the frogs croak in the pond behind the dirt backstop. We were also fortunate to watch John Brezinski construct and throw a projectile made of three knives at the stumps (good thing they were not removed). Before the final members arrived at the cabin, Etienne cooked up some venison soup for lunch. Once the final members arrived, the work outing began.

For the next several hours, we took on Danny's list of tasks. Knowing that rain was in the forecast for the afternoon, Alexander Taaffe suggested we tackle the outside tasks first to avoid the storm. John and Etienne managed to start a burn pile to get rid of branches from the four trees laying on the lawn. Despite the wood being soaked, it burned very well. Taaffe and Danny worked to get the chainsaw started to cut the limbs off the trees to burn. Ashley and Lauren cleaned trails leading to the outhouses and around the cabin. Matt Lamberson used his searching skills and metal detector to repaint the property lines. Jake Coffield and I climbed the ladder to get on the roof and clean the gutters and roof from debris. While up there, we watched a raccoon run across the property.

Within minutes, the brilliant sunshine turned to clouds and wind. Within an hour, the 60-degree weather turned into clouds of a thunderstorm. We transferred the work inside as the rain battled the fire but never extinguished it. Inside the warm cabin, Ashley cleaned plates and various other kitchen necessities. Abby Treusch and Danny cleaned and organized while Sam scrubbed the windows throughout the cabin. In the kitchen, Matt cleaned the refrigerator where he found an expired Aunt Jemima syrup. That was best used by 2013. As the work outing ended, we finished cleaning,

packed up, and left. The once-hot fire was finally extinguished as the day ended cold and dry.

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## **Ski Trip**

*Alex Taaffe '23, Vice President - History*

One cold winter day, several foolhardy Outing-Clubbers went skiing on Mount Pleasant in Edinboro, Pa. It was Sam Hertzner's first time on skis, and when he put them on, he went straight down the bunny hill. I watched the look of panic on his face as he went faster and faster...right towards a group of 5-year olds getting on the bunny hill ski lift. Everyone yelled at Sam to fall, so he did, but he slid right into a little girl and knocked her off her feet. We all laughed at him. Luckily, no angry mom slapped Sam around afterwards.

I'm a Texas boy, and I had never skied before, but instead of taking the small hill a few times, I decided to try the black diamond slope on my second time through. Miraculously, I made it without a serious crash, but it sure was scary going straight down with no way to stop. Over the course of the day, Danny Beevers retrieved my skis for me more times than I care to admit.

We all had a good time, but by the end of the day we were cold and beat. Another Outing Club adventure with no casualties. My definition of a success.

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## The Troutling

### *Etienne Pienaar' 24 - Conservation Biology*

Saturday, April 2 was the opening day of trout season in PA. During the preceding two weeks, various members of the Outing Club had excitedly watched as stocking trucks from the Fish and Game Commission unloaded their coveted cargo at various locations in Wolf Creek. Even my conservation biology professor, Dr. Wood, was asking us if we had seen any “bananas” in Wolf Creek. (For those unaware, a “banana” is another name for variant of rainbow trout which has an orangey-yellowish coloring, also known as a “palamino” or a “tiger trout”. Because of their relative scarcity and difficulty to catch, they are considered one of the most coveted prizes.) Soon plans began circulating for a “Trout Outing”, which was later shortened by one member to “the Troutling.”

Anyone who has been around fishermen for any length of time can appreciate the excitement that accompanies preparing for the opening of the season. In my dorm, Danny Beevers, who is the cabin manager for the Outing Club, spent all his free time watching trout fishing videos on YouTube, testing his waders for leaks, preparing his tackle, and walking around outside after rain to collect worms from the sidewalk. By the end of the week, the group of 7 Outing Club members had their licenses, trout stamps, and more than enough worms and tackle for the planned outing.

I'm not gonna lie: 8 am on Saturday morning was cold. It was one of those days where a bright shining sun makes it look deceptively warm outside. In reality, it was barely above freezing when standing in the

sun. For those who were unlucky enough to be fishing in shady areas, we had to periodically break icicles off our rod tips.

The seven of us dispersed to various locations in Wolf Creek. Connor Rodgers and RJ Gillner went downstream of Rainbow Bridge to the Main Street bridge, I stayed right upstream of Rainbow Bridge, and Danny and Taaffe (Alex) went far upstream to the wall of boulders sloping down into Wolf Creek. Lauren Brockway and Sam Hertzler joined me a bit later upstream of Rainbow Bridge. After about an hour, it became apparent that there were a large number of hungry trout stacked up in my spot, so I texted the group to join me there. Ironically for Danny, who had been collecting worms all week, not a single trout was caught on worms or any other live bait we possessed. Instead, we eventually figured out that the trout were targeting small, moving baits. Although it was known that rainbows, browns, and bananas were stocked, no bananas or browns were caught. Between the seven of us, we caught ten nice-sized rainbows ranging from ten to fourteen inches in three hours. Out of those ten rainbows, six were caught on tiny artificial paddle-tail minnows (and I mean *tiny*; 1/16-1/32 oz. jig head, lure about 1 in long), one was caught on a small spinner, and the remaining two were caught on a small jerk bait. By lunchtime, we had amassed enough trout and our hands were freezing, so we put the gutted trout in our dorm fridge and went to lunch.

After lunch, we went to Walmart and County Market to collect some ingredients for grilling the fresh trout. After collecting tin foil, fresh lemons, butter, and garlic and herb seasoning, we returned to lower campus and started a large fire in one of the

open metal grills. The fishermen (and fisherwoman), several other Outing Club members, and a few mutual friends arrived to help prepare, cook, and eat the fish. Each trout was liberally seasoned with garlic and herb, given a squeeze of lemon, had a thin slice of lemon stuffed inside its belly, and had several thick slices of butter placed on top. This package was wrapped in tin foil and cooked over the hot coals for 10 minutes each, flipping every 60 seconds. The results were absolutely delicious.

This ought to be made a yearly tradition and given that the Fish and Game Commission stocks Wolf Creek multiple times during the spring, I am sure there will be a repeat of this in the near future.

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### *Just for Fun Spring Trip*

*Ashley Simpson '25, Secretary - Business Management*

Driving the winding roads of West Virginia, we saw the occasional hope for sunlight and looming ominous storm clouds filling the sky. It was still sunny when we began to hike. There were many streams running through the trail that needed crossing. Some we stepped over, while others we crossed by balancing on rocks using our amazing skills and coordination. After several miles we reached a wide creek that was impassible unless you were willing to wade through it, and right on schedule it began to snow. As true outdoorians we hung our boots on our packs and hiked through the creek. Thanks to our great trip leaders everyone made it across the creek without falling in and relatively happy. The only unhappy camper was Magnus (Adam Neff's dog), who had to swim through the freezing creek. Walking

up a hill in the snow, Dolly Sods became Narnia. Rhododendron bushes lined the trail and the glistening snow added to the mystical experience of the forest. Many games of 20 questions were played throughout the day. By about 4:30 we reached a great campsite (except for the area of mud you could sink a foot into). Amazingly there was enough dry(ish) wood and determination to build a fire. Adam cooked a wonderful dinner. In the morning, we packed up camp and headed down the trail, to continue playing 20 questions. After several hours we had the Outing Club lunch special of tortillas and PBJ (if there's a food you don't like, take it backpacking, it's a whole new experience). The food was great, but our hands were numb. We traversed through swamp land and eventually reached the trail to hike to Lions Head. The wind whipped us around, but the view made the temperamental weather worth the journey. Hiking all the way down the mountain we had to cross the creek once again, but the sun was shining, and the temperature was pleasant. We ended our trip with milkshakes! Everyone agrees that it was a truly great experience, and we were so thankful we had the opportunity to spend the weekend in Dolly Sods.

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### *The Song of Hiking*

*Margaret Daughtery, '25 - Exercise Science*

On the first day of break the Outing Club did have...

12 pieces of bacon (for Treusch)

11 "cows are my cows"

10 missing tortillas

9 hikers hiking  
 8 hour car drive  
 7 pm bedtime  
 6 foot-high bear bag  
 5 freezing nights  
 4 tents of tenting  
 3 hammocks hanging  
 2 twisted ankles  
 1 more mile to go

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### ***Cabin Ready***

*Samuel Hertzler '24, Chaplain -  
 Physics and Lauren Brockway '24,  
 Historian - Conservation Biology*

When you go to the cabin certified, you get  
 cabin ready

When you eat bread at the cabin, you eat  
 cabin bready

When you say hi to Fred at the cabin, you  
 meet cabin Freddy

When you shield yourself from nuclear  
 radiation at the cabin, you use cabin leady

When you make it official with your girl at  
 the cabin, you go cabin steady

When you bring your dogs to the cabin, they  
 cabin sheddy

When you sleep at the cabin, you go to  
 cabin beddy

When you're afraid of the dark at the cabin,  
 you hold onto cabin teddy

When you like modern Christian hymns at  
 the cabin, you listen to the cabin Gettys

When you rip skateboard tricks at the cabin,  
 you cabin shreddy

When you hold a grudge at the cabin, you're  
 cabin petty

When you go to the bathroom in winter at  
 the cabin, you meet the cabin yeti

When you're an indigenous Canadian at the  
 cabin, you're cabin Metis

When you sew your shirt at the cabin, you  
 use cabin thready

When you visit the plague doctor at the  
 cabin, you get cabin bleeddy

When you eat Italian food at the cabin, you  
 eat cabin spaghetti

When you write a poem about the cabin, you  
 write Cabin Ready

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### ***Homecoming 2022***

We would love to reconnect with our alumni  
 members during Homecoming weekend this  
 fall. **Homecoming will take place Friday,  
 Sept. 29th - Sunday, Oct. 2nd.**

To learn more about Homecoming 2022,  
 please visit [www.alumni.gcc.edu/  
 homecoming](http://www.alumni.gcc.edu/homecoming). We hope to see you there!