



Raquette Lake News

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Inside This Issue

- 2 From the Director's Desk
- 2 Antlers Main Lodge Kitchen Remodeling Underway
- 3 Camp Abilities Breaks New Ground With Winter Camp
- 3 Student Scientists Explore the Lake
- 4 SCRA Mixes Fun and Service on Winter Outing
- 4 Red Dragon Skaters Open the Winter Season
- 4 Lean-Tos Installed at Camp Marion
- 5 Geographic Information System (GIS) Projects Continue at Raquette Lake
- 5 Spotlight on History
- 5 Alumni Opportunities
- 6 Nature Nook

For Newsletter Extras

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under newsletter

Upcoming Events

For a list of our Upcoming Events
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Upcoming 50th Anniversaries

The William H. Parks Family Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education will proudly host two celebrations this summer. One highlighting SUNY Cortland's use of Antlers and the other Hoxie Gorge.

Antlers is built on what was originally called Sand Point in 1886. Charles Bennett followed his brother to the Adirondacks in the late 1860s. They created a great business guiding for "sports," including Thomas C. Durant. Charles helped his brother build and run Under the Hemlocks, a hotel for sports and their families before branching out on his own. After some time, Charles purchased property and constructed The Antlers.

Antlers was a lively hotel, with guests from across New York and around the world. Options of accommodations included cabins with common rooms, Terrace Cottages, a single room in the Main Lodge, open camps (lean-to), and platform tents. The camp was built on a decentralized plan with common dining, meeting and recreational areas in addition to separate sleeping spaces. Activities included boating, golfing, riding horses and the like.

In the early 1950s Jim Bird, a local Raquette Laker, purchased the large hotel property. He broke it up and sold smaller parcels. Don Langham purchased the lot that included the Casino, Cedars and four Terrace Cottages. He and his family ran the property for a number of years as a hotel and restaurant.

In 1964, George Fuge, the center director at the time, bowled on a local league with Don. Don made mention that the business was getting difficult as he and his wife were aging and talked of possibly selling the property. George asked Don to give him some time to check in with the College and gauge interest in the property. Antlers had what Camp Huntington needed at the time, a place to land their boat, parking for guests and storage. After some discussions on campus, it was decided that the Faculty Student Association (FSA), now Auxiliary Services Corporation (ASC), would purchase the property.



It was not long before George and others realized additional teaching space at Raquette Lake was needed. The Main Lodge had not sold and was available for purchase. In 1965 FSA purchased both properties. The first year Antlers housed eight to ten Work-Study students for the summer. They updated and worked on both Antlers and Camp Huntington. The following year, a number of College groups used Antlers for course work, including

Field Biology, which had previously been taught in a clearing on Long Point. The first alumni camp began in 1968 with three families, the Fuges, Keefers, and Kreutzers.

In 2013, ASC transferred ownership of Antlers to the Cortland College Foundation. It is now leased by SUNY Cortland. Academic programs have grown to include childhood education, environmental studies, honors program, recreation, physical education and science for teachers, as well as non-academic programs such as adult education, orientation assistants training, residence hall roundups, SUNY Cortland Recreation Association retreat and the Adirondack Trail Blazers. Additionally, Antlers is used by alumni, middle and high schools and other colleges.

A celebration of Antlers as part of the Cortland family will take place on Aug. 22. The day will include hors d'oeuvres, ceremony, unveiling of the Parks Family Outdoor Center sign, postal cancellation opportunity and touring the facility. If you have pictures to share, forward them to our campus office at outdoor.edinfo@cortland.edu.

Hoxie Gorge will celebrate 50 years as well. Hoxie Gorge is the compilation of three farms in Cortlandville. The first was purchased in 1965 from Pop Robinson. Two additional parcels were obtained a short time later. Buildings on the farms were deconstructed with a single lean-to and outhouse remaining.

Hoxie Gorge is heavily used by the science departments, but has also been used by education, recreation and physical education. The celebration will take place July 11 during Alumni Reunion Weekend. The day's events will feature a hike of the property with Cortland faculty followed by a ceremony at 11 a.m.



From The Director's Desk

Winter doesn't want to loosen its icy grip on the lake this year. Two weeks after our last group left camp, we are still driving back and forth across on the ice road, and snow is flying outside my office window. Every group who came here this past season had excellent conditions for whatever outdoor activities they had in mind, so we aren't complaining. This includes three new groups this year, an Environmental Chemistry class, SUNY Cortland's women's ice hockey team, and a Camp Abilities group from the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. You can read about all three in this edition of the *Raquette Lake News*.

Of course, the regular groups enjoyed being here in the winter wonderland, too. We had a full Wilderness First Responder class, numerous clubs and student groups from the College, our annual Winter Alumni Camp and a visit from Theta Phi Sorority members. We hope they all took something special home with them in the form of memories and new experiences.

We are also busy preparing for two celebrations this summer. Both Antlers and Hoxie Gorge are turning 50 this year as properties owned or operated by the College. Be sure to read our lead article about the fun we are planning.

Work continues on improving the properties at Raquette Lake. Dead trees were cut down in the camp between seasons. We have approved plans to replace the main dock at Camp Huntington this fall. The roof on the Director's Cabin, Library and Birch Dorms complex is also scheduled for replacement this spring. And perhaps most exciting is the renovation project of the Main Lodge kitchen underway at Antlers. The generosity of our donors and volunteers is making a big difference on both sides of the lake. We thank you.

Speaking of volunteers, if you are interested in helping with the sprucing up of the grounds this spring, there are weekends scheduled May 1-3 at Camp Huntington and May 22-24 at Antlers. For more information, please contact Rhonda Jacobs at 607-753-5485. If we don't see you then, we hope we will at one of our many summer alumni, faculty/staff or ASC family weeks.



The 2015 Wilderness First Responder graduation class

Antlers Main Lodge Kitchen Remodeling Underway

The second major step towards expanding the seasonal operation of Antlers is in progress. A complete renovation of the Main Lodge kitchen will be completed by summer, allowing SUNY Cortland and other groups to conduct overnight retreats in the early spring and late fall, when food service in the Casino is not available. An independent well and water treatment system was installed last spring that supplies the entire camp.

The long term business plan for Antlers includes expanding the operating season into the spring and fall semesters when access to Camp Huntington is limited. This will allow us to introduce more students to outdoor and environmental opportunities



Electric lines being installed in Main Lodge kitchen.

at Raquette Lake in programs that will explore the Adirondack Park from the Antlers base camp. Fifty people will be able to stay at Antlers when all seven buildings have been updated or replaced. For now, the Main Lodge will accommodate up to 20 people, enough for a class or weekend retreat group.

The work is being done by Richard H. Lutz Building and Mechanical, Inc. of Inlet, N.Y., the contractor who remodeled the Coolidge Cabin at Camp Huntington. When finished, there will be new doors, flooring, lighting, plumbing, windows, wiring, as well as new cupboards and countertops, oven, range and three bay sink. The kitchen will be completely equipped with cooking and serving utensils for 20 people.

Groups interested in further information about using the Main Lodge and rates should contact the Parks Family Outdoor Center office or visit our website. Reservations for fall groups will be accepted starting this spring.



Alumni Winter Camp 2015

Camp Abilities Breaks New Ground With Winter Camp



Skiers who are blind or visually impaired ski with their guides on the ice road.

Camp Abilities was started at SUNY Brockport by Lauren Lieberman in 1995 to empower children and teens with visual impairments to be physically active and achieve independence. Since then, many independent Camp Abilities have been started across the United States and even a few abroad. In the fall, we were approached by Kathy Beaver from the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI) in Utica to try a winter version of the summer camp they have successfully run the past two years. Although it seemed a bit outside the box for Camp Huntington, we enthusiastically said “yes!”

CABVI is a large, multiple services agency that advocates and provides opportunities for people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired. These services include adaptive sports, vocational training, vision rehabilitation, technology training and more. Their adoption of the Camp Abilities model incorporates both sports training and general life skills that prepare young people with visual impairment or blindness to become as independent as possible.

The 20 campers and 35 or so staff traveled across the ice road on Thursday afternoon, Feb. 26. The first task was to use audible GPS devices to find their way across the lake. Once at camp, the kids and counselors had no trouble settling in and making this home for the next four days. Activities included cross-country skiing, complete with a United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) biathlon-style rifle target range, ice fishing, snowshoeing, sledding, broomball, arts and crafts, technology class and snowmobile rides. Rides were supplied by

CABVI board members and locals from Raquette Lake, who took the campers to the Winter Boat, docked in the village for hot chocolate and snacks.

The camp ran amazingly smoothly, thanks to a talented and dedicated staff



“Sighting” in with the audio-controlled biathlon laser rifle.

that included a counselor for each camper. The friendships that were made were heart-warming and will surely last a lifetime. Kathy and her team were ready to handle any snag, change in schedule or camper issue that came up. Each activity was followed by the instructors asking campers to reflect on what they had learned and how they might continue it on their own at home. The staff also facilitated a number of Care to Share sessions, where the campers and staff were asked to verbalize special moments from their day. Five SUNY Cortland undergraduates and two graduate students were hired by CABVI as counselors and were able to apply theory to practice at camp.

We said goodbye to the campers and staff early Sunday morning, but the camp wasn't over yet. Next stop was McCauley Mountain in Old Forge, where there were downhill ski lessons and practice. When the tuckered out campers finally reunited with their parents in Utica at 3 p.m. that afternoon, there was nothing but smiles, hugs and maybe a few tears to bring closure to what had been an awesome experience for everyone involved.

Student Scientists Explore the Lake

Supported by a William H. Parks Family Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education grant, eight chemistry majors



Chemistry students sampling water off Silver Beach. Photo courtesy of Jeff Werner

and Jeffrey Werner, assistant professor of chemistry, arrived at Camp Huntington on Jan. 18 equipped to explore the water under the frozen lake. The special topics winter term course in environmental chemistry was a direct result of

the Parks Family Outdoor Center's drive to create new academic programs that involve departments and students that are underrepresented at Raquette Lake.

Armed with snowshoes, cross-country skis, ice auger and sampling equipment, the students took water samples from the mouth of the Marion River and just off Silver Beach to try to discern differences in the water chemistry that create the iconic silver colored sand. Earlier research had been done by Robert Darling, professor from the geology department, who determined the sand color was the result of the higher acidic concentration of the water flowing out of the wetland behind Silver Beach. Future classes may continue this research to better understand the role of acid rain and neutralizing factors that affect Adirondack Lakes.



Students and Assistant Professor Jeff Werner (right)

SCRA Mixes Fun and Service on Winter Outing

The SUNY Cortland Recreation Association (SCRA) is Cortland's recreation major's club. The student-run club provides members and participants with opportunities to socialize, exchange ideas, give service to the community and expand educational opportunities. For the past few years, a number of its members have come to Raquette Lake to enjoy the beauty and recreational opportunities that abound here.



A sled "train" waits for a push.

This year, fifteen undergraduates and one graduate student arrived Friday night for dinner and began planning their activities for the weekend. These included the usual cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, broomball and indoor games, as well as a group sauna and polar plunge into the icy lake. But there were some special events this year requested by the camp director that the group willingly obliged. With a winter camp for visually impaired children (see accompanying article on Camp Abilities) coming up the following week, we needed to test the sledding potential on the hill leading up to the Barque houseboat. With plastic sleds, SCRA members gleefully sailed down the hill in as many body positions and formations of sleds imaginable, leading to some amazing athletic accomplishments and quite a few wipeouts.



Many hands make light work, as snow is cleared off the Barque roof.

The next day, with over three feet of snow on the ground, the crew climbed onto the roof of the Barque and cleared it with shovels and roof rakes. One of the tenets of SCRA is its commitment to service, and they never fail to leave Raquette Lake without helping out around camp. After clearing the roof, and with ample snow banks all around, the members sat down and sailed off the roof into the soft white fluff on the ground. These students surely know how to turn any project into an adventure and have fun doing it. The camp staff would like to thank SCRA for both their faithful use of the center and always leaving their positive mark as well.



SCRA members celebrate a job well done.

Red Dragon Skaters Open the Winter Season

The first group across the ice road in January was the SUNY Cortland women's hockey team, led by Coach Earl Utter. Being

on ice was nothing new to these women, of course, but facing sub-zero temperatures and 20 mile-an-hour wind was a bit out of their arena. The purpose of the retreat was to help the players and coaches



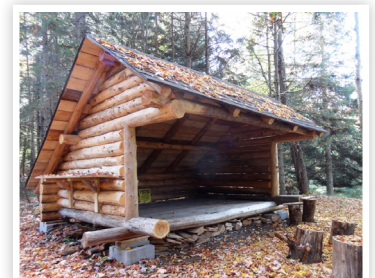
Coach Utter and team members

bond and create team goals for the balance of the 2015 season. Built into the schedule were interviews with Coach Utter, Assistant Coach Ashley Furia and each individual player to help them assess their strengths and areas of potential improvement.

Although pond hockey was on the docket, the weather conditions were too extreme to allow it. Instead, snowshoeing and a scavenger hunt were used as teambuilding events. We know the time they spent here together helped the team build camaraderie that sustained them through the season and will last long after.

Lean-Tos Installed at Camp Marion

Two Adirondack lean-tos were added last summer to Camp Marion on Long Point, Raquette Lake, that are now available for alumni, faculty and students to reserve and use at no cost. The rustic cedar lean-tos are closed on three sides and open to a fireplace in front. One faces Raquette Lake just outside the mouth of the Marion River, and the other is tucked into a stand of hemlocks farther up the hill. Each lean-to can accommodate up to eight people. There are also a large group fire circle, an outhouse set in the open meadow and areas for additional tents.



The lean-tos will be used for program groups embarking on or returning from extended trips to Blue Mountain Lake, Forked Lake and beyond during the summer months. However, we encourage other SUNY Cortland affiliated groups and individuals to use them when available. Users must bring their own camping gear and food.

Advance reservations are required by contacting our office at 607-753-5488 or outdoor.edinfo@cortland.edu. Since the camp is only accessible by water, you must make your own arrangements for transportation. Canoes are available at Antlers for rent on a daily basis with prior notice. Use of Camp Hunting-ton facilities is not included. If you have any questions about access or the lean-tos, please contact us.

Geographic Information System (GIS) Projects Continue at Raquette Lake

Faculty and students from the SUNY Cortland Regional GIS Lab have made a long-term commitment to provide GIS mapping and analysis services for the four facilities of the William H. Parks Family Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education. This fall, four teams travelled to Camp Huntington to pursue projects designed to collect baseline information that can be utilized now and in the future.

One team took GPS units into the woods to collect new data for the trail maps. Their efforts will provide more accurate mapping of the current trails. A second team joined Steve Broyles, professor and chair of the Biological Sciences Department, in locating and identifying some of the most important trees on the property, including a current candidate for New York state's largest yellow birch. A third team used GPS units and tape measures to record the location, size and orientation of all the buildings and other structures at the camp. A fourth reviewed the accuracy of the mapping of infrastructure elements (such as buried electricity and water lines) that had been done the previous summer.

These projects provide students with experiences that challenge them to apply skills they are learning in the classroom to real-world problems. They earn course credit through their work. Their efforts also support important College initiatives that encourage undergraduate research and community engagement activities.

We wish to thank Steve Broyles and Scott Anderson, professor and chair of the Geography Department, Adam Levine, Physical Plant, and the students for sharing their time and talents on this project.



Randy Werkmeister, Nicholas Goffredo, and Mary Colomaio at the yellow birch candidate. Photo courtesy of Scott Anderson

Spotlight on History



Nowadays, Google, or another website like it, might be used to do historical research. The Web has become a great way to learn about the past, but what else have we used? In researching Antlers, we have come across many clues that help us paint the picture of the hotel it once was.

Postcards have helped us understand guests' experiences, old

waitress note pads tell us what meals were like, advertisements shared what amenities had been added and key fobs help us understand what else might have been part of The Antlers in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

A number of guests would stay for the "season" (July-September). As a high-end hotel where the guests wanted for nothing, it would make sense that we have key fobs for a barbershop and hair salon. Other fobs solidify activities and structures around the camp like billiard hall, boats, carpenter shop, game room and laundry. Most cabins were named after trees.

Alumni Opportunities

Antlers

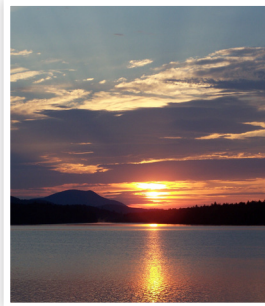
Volunteer work weekend, May 22-24
ADVENTURE CAMP July 11-14

Alumni Family sessions

June 29-July 5	July 5-11
July 5-8	July 8-11
Aug. 19-22	Sept. 1-5
Sept. 8-11	*Adults only

50th Anniversary, Aug. 22

Hearts of Gold Reunion, Sept. 18-20



Camp Huntington

Volunteer work weekend,
May 1-3

Alumni Family Session, July 1-5

Arethusa Reunion, July 5-10

Sig Rho Reunion, July 5-8

Theta Phi Reunion, Oct. 9-12



Camp Marion

Lean-to reservations throughout the year



Kirby Camp interior

Hoxie Gorge

50th Anniversary Celebration,
July 11

Kirby Camp

Available weeks: June 22-28,
June 29-July 5

Camp Huntington Public Tour July 31

In conjunction with the Durant Days celebration, a tour exploring Camp Huntington and St. Williams Church by foot and the rest of the lake aboard the WW Durant tour boat while you enjoy lunch. A special appearance by world renowned ragtime/boogie-woogie pianist Bob Milne will be presented. Reservations may be made by calling 315-354-5532.

Nature Nook

The snowshoe hare, sometimes called varying hare, primarily live in northern forests. Their territory covers all of Canada and the northern U.S., following mountain ranges into the south. Hares like the cover that dense brushy undergrowth forests provide. Cover is a primary factor in finding habitat followed by food availability. Hares do not burrow like rabbits, but stay in hollows and ground depressions.



Snowshoe hares are 16 to 20 inches long and weight up to 4 pounds. They have unusually large, furry feet that prevent them from sinking into the snow. Fur lines the soles of the feet to protect them from freezing. In

the winter the snowshoe hare's coat is white, camouflaging it well in the snow. As spring nears and the snow melts, a brown coat starts to appear. The complete change takes about 10 weeks. Hares do not hibernate.

Snowshoe hares tend to feed at night on trees, shrubs, grasses, and plants. In summer it feeds on grass, ferns and leaves while in winter eating twigs, bark from trees and buds from flowers and plants.

Deep snow allows the hare to reach buds and narrow stems that may have been out of reach without it. When food is scarce, the hare can roam up to 5 miles.



Photos courtesy of Richard Fey

Snowshoe hares are prolific breeders; beginning in late December-January lasting until July or August. Gestation is 35-40 days. After 35 days, the females can be impregnated again, hosting two litters for a short period of time. Females normally have two or three litters each year, with an average of three to eight leverets. Newborns are born with all of their fur, eyes open and ability to move right from the start. During the day, they forage and learn, gathering each night for nursing. Weaning occurs around 25 days. Leverets can survive on their own when a month old.

With a multitude of predators, the life span of snowshoe hares is a short eight years; most live two to five years. Animals hunting hares include bobcat, fisher, mink, black bear, lynx, fox, coyote and even some birds of prey.

Photos in this column courtesy of Lew Cowan '73



The annual winter alumni photo op; just a second before the camera snapped this photo, the snow on the tree branches above gave way.



Above: The interior of the Durant Cabin showing William West's original desk.

Below: Looking across the mosaic twig-top table out the window towards the Huntington Staff House.

