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cortland.edu/rl-newsletter

Upcoming Events

For a list of our Upcoming Events
cortland.edu/rl-events

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\$1 Million Gift Will Endow the Center for Future Generations

Lynne Parks Hoffman '68 wasn't particularly crazy about portaging canoes or carrying wanigans through the Adirondack Park during bug season, but the education she received at SUNY

Cortland inspired her enough to leave a \$1 million gift to name the William H. Parks Family Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education. The two-part estate gift will be added to the Raquette Lake Program and Access Endowment to help provide continued innovative and long-established programming for students in the outdoors.

Parks named the gift in honor of her father, whom she credits with giving her a solid foundation upon which she built her education and career in physical education.

William Parks fought in World War II and returned home to build a life for himself and his family, including his first wife, Audrey, Lynne, and brothers Robert and John. Lynne's mother passed away when she was a freshman in college, and Bill married his second wife, Margaret, whom he lives with to this day in Amsterdam, N.Y.



Each of the four centers – Antlers, Huntington Memorial Camp, Brauer Education Center and Hoxie Gorge Nature Preserve – will retain their current names that honor either their donors or historical designation in addition to the Parks Family name will be attached to the overall Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education and be prominently displayed at each location as well as the center's office Miller Building, Room 230, on the main campus.

"Assisted by Lynne's generosity, we hope to be able to provide a transformational outdoor education experience to every SUNY Cortland student who desires it," President Erik J. Bitterbaum said. "Lynne's continued support of the College's mission is extraordinary. This gift will change many young lives in positive ways."

The addition of this support to the current endowment will allow us to underwrite a significant amount of the cost of every student trip to Raquette Lake. It also ensures that all the facilities in the center will continue to serve the College for the foreseeable future in ways we can only imagine.

From The Director's Desk

As is oft the case when putting the finishing touches on the summer edition of the *Raquette Lake News*, it is snowing on the lake. The majority of the boats are dry docked, the snowmobiles are being tuned up in the shop, and we've changed from hummingbird to songbird feeders. The seasons roll along here with relentless pace.

This edition of the newsletter features a number of articles recognizing the generosity and power of your individual giving. We are now providing substantial program and individual financial support to our College groups. The endowment is growing, thanks to naming gifts, giving societies, and one spectacular estate gift that is featured in our lead article. I also want to express my appreciation for each of your annual gifts and contributions to the endowment at any level. Your support for our work here is truly humbling.

We also feature several new programs, facility upgrades, new equipment and an update on our popular Adirondack Trail Blazers program. Rhonda, Mary Jo and I hope you will enjoy catching up on our *do-in's*, as Adirondack story teller extraordinaire, Bill Smith, would call them. As always, there's too much to include in a report of this size.



Adirondack Trail Blazers Growing

In just its second year of existence, the freshman transition program known as Adirondack Trail Blazers (ATB) had twenty-eight students participate this August versus eight in 2013. The expansion was due to word circulating among incoming students that this is a great way to kick-start their Cortland experience by getting to know some of their peers, upperclassmen and faculty in a casual and challenging outdoor environment before Welcome Weekend and the start of classes.

Amy Shellman, assistant professor, recreation, parks and leisure studies, and the program's director, said, "With the original eight last year, everything went as smoothly as could be imagined, due to a great schedule, perfect weather and an enthusiastic group of students. This year, with four groups in the field, the lessons learned from 2013 made it easy to accommodate the larger group, and everyone had an amazing experience."

The goal of ATB is to enable students to share stories of how they came to choose SUNY Cortland, see the diversity in those paths and discuss what college life will be like. This will help them appreciate and more easily get to know the rest of the class later on in the fall. It also shows them that they belong here and builds their confidence in exploring the full range of possibilities available on campus. A third objective is to introduce a small segment of the incoming class to Raquette Lake and encourage them to take full advantage of this resource throughout their college years. One student arriving from western Massachusetts, Corey Dolan, has already been to Raquette Lake three times this fall, once with the swim team and once with COR 101 as well as ATB.

Plans are underway to recruit even more students for next summer, up to thirty-five first years and a new cohort of transfer students, who will be housed at Antlers and experience a similar program format with an emphasis on making the most of Cortland after having tasted college life at a different school. Each of the two original cohorts continues to meet spontaneously for social activities, and longitudinal research is ongoing to see what impact the ATB program has on their entire SUNY Cortland experience.

Kirby Camp Provides Ideal Rustic Retreat

Since 2002 when Jesse Arno '04, Rhonda Jacobs '01, center staff, and a few volunteers restored this 1880s treasure to a fully functioning cabin, hundreds of faculty and alumni families have taken advantage of its charm and location for a summer vacation. For only \$625, renters receive boat transportation to and from Antlers for a full week of adventure in a quiet cove on the south shore of Long Point, one mile east of Camp Huntington. The cabin has no electricity, but features gas lighting and kitchen appliances, cold running water, a composting toilet and solar shower.

With no electricity, WiFi or cellular coverage, the cabin is a perfect retreat from the hectic lifestyle that technology forces upon us. Families love the opportunity for quality game time, swimming, canoeing, fishing and sitting around the campfire telling stories. Friends and couples use the solitude to relax and renew important relationships, as they catch up on each other's busy lives.

One return guest put it this way, "A roof over our heads, beds, paddling, swimming, hiking, sunrises, sunsets, moon lite (sic) lake, loons, a bear cub, fire pit, bbq (sic), porch with swing, hammock, walking trails, mtn (sic) views – where can you get all of this for \$625?"

The cabin has four equally sized rooms – two bedrooms (one queen and one with two bunks), a living room and kitchen. Each room has a door to the outside, probably a feature that allowed multiple parties to come and go when the cabin was used as a guest house in the 19th century. Guests bring their own food and beverages, and we provide the cooking utensils, drinking water and an outdoor charcoal grill. For an additional \$125, visitors can also rent a small motorboat to go to and from the mainland for extended activities. Three canoes are on site for shorter excursions on Raquette Lake.

The rental season begins in early June and runs through Labor Day. This past summer was completely booked by spring, so renters need to apply early to get the week they are looking for. Application forms can be found on our website and are accepted beginning Jan. 1. Beginning in 2015, the rental week will run from 2 p.m. Monday through 10 a.m. Sunday.

For more information, go to cortland.edu/rl-events or call the office at 607-753-5488. If a week in the Adirondacks away from the hustle and bustle of the daily routine is what you are looking for, then Kirby Camp might be the perfect vacation destination for you next summer.



Raquette Lake Champion

Some people get a late start in life; others seem to live a number of lives over one lifespan. Such a person is this year's champion, Chris Widdall '00, M '03. At the age of 37, Chris received her first degree from SUNY Cortland, a bachelor's degree in health education. Prior to that, she raised six children and tried her hand at a number of temporary jobs that allowed her to spend most of her time at home with the family. These included site supervisor for the Office for Aging, coaching high school swim teams, and working as a Red Cross swimming and first aid instructor.

But Chris didn't stop at a bachelor's degree. She completed her master's in health education in 2002 and a doctorate in instructional design in 2012. She is now an assistant professor in childhood/early childhood education. She teaches courses in both first aid and educational technology. She also coordinates the EdTPA testing and Taskstream for Cortland.

Her first trip to Raquette Lake was a winter excursion with the information resources team, where her friend and colleague, Beth Klein, taught her how to cross-country ski. When she joined the education faculty in 2007, she began to apply her background in health education, technology and her newly found interest in outdoor activities to the curriculum at Raquette Lake, where all C/ECE majors attend a three-day immersion experience in the fall or winter. She estimates she has attended over 20 of these programs since then.

Chris is a font of enthusiasm when she is here with her students. Whether it's leading a 6 a.m. kayak tour to see the sunrise or supervising students on KP (kitchen patrol) in the dining room, she exudes positive energy and makes sure they get the most out of their experience here. She is one of those people who lights up an otherwise grey day in September and warms the spirits of students outdoors for the first time on a sub-zero February morning.

I asked her what keeps her coming back with such passion. "At first, I really just liked being here in this special place. But now, it's seeing the faces of students change from anxiety to confidence and joy to be part of the group experience here at Raquette Lake. The difference it makes in the relationship between students and faculty in the cohorts is remarkable." One of her favorite memories is of a student who felt terrified to get into a kayak for the first time, but later conquered that fear with the support of her classmates and beamed with pride and appreciation for their support (see photo below). Hats off to you, Dr. Widdall, our 2014 Raquette Lake Champion.



Photo Courtesy of Chris Widdall

New Partnership A Big Success

Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP) is funded by the New York State Department of Education to address the high dropout rate in our schools. Founded in 1988, LPP provides programming and supportive services to at-risk youth in more than 500 elementary, middle and secondary schools and Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) throughout New York. Since the office for the Central New York Chapter is on the SUNY Cortland campus, we are a natural fit to provide support to the summer enrichment program.

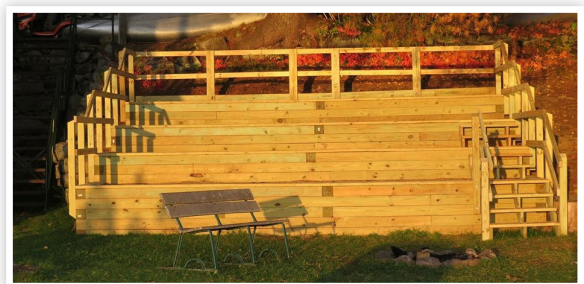
After a number of planning and information-sharing meetings with Director Sherry Tackill, a program was created to bring 30 high-school age students here for four days in July. The activities included canoeing, hiking, a full day on the ropes course and team building designed to build students' self-confidence and problem-solving skills.

The all-day canoe trip turned out to be the challenge of the week, as a strong southwesterly wind made it difficult to cross South Bay into the South Inlet as planned. Instead, the group changed plans and made it to Golden Beach, where they enjoyed a packed lunch and swim before heading back into a strong headwind. Finding it impossible to make progress, they landed the canoes at Silver Beach and hiked back into camp.

In the closing discussion, many students said this was the hardest day they ever remember facing, but felt extremely accomplished in the end.

The final activity was a cardboard boat regatta, organized by summer intern Andy Scopino. In small groups, the students cut, folded, taped and decorated a variety of boats that were designed to be raced around a short course in the Back Bay. Prior to launching, the boats were paraded through camp with proper pomp and circumstance. In the end, only one boat managed to stay afloat through the entire course, but the ones that sank went down in glory.

Andy was a big hit with the kids in the program and hopes to join them on campus this year for some of their other activities. We are already looking forward to planning next year's program, which will be even bigger and better.



A new amphitheater graces the hillside beside the Casino facing the lake and Blue Mountain at Antlers. It will host lectures, entertainment and campfires starting next summer.

Alumni Camp Season in Review

Each year we offer a variety of alumni programs at Raquette Lake, and this past year was no exception with a total of sixteen opportunities. Graduation years ranged from Dorothy Kreutzer '52 to Ian White '14.

Volunteer work weekends at Antlers and Camp Huntington help us ready the properties for the summer season. Participants work on everything from landscaping and raking, to scraping and staining, to cleaning and polishing. We could not shine as well as we do without you!

Family camps run throughout the summer in sessions ranging from three to seven days. For some families, it is their first trip, while others have been coming for 30 years. Meals are the only scheduled activity leaving participants to create their own personal agendas. Campfires, hiking, horseshoes, ladder golf, paddling, reading, sleeping, socials, and sunset cruises are just a few of the many favored pastimes.

Adult-only sessions include a winter camp, a September week, and four sorority gatherings. Each February a hearty group of alumni rally for cold weather activities like cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and polar plunging. Theta Phi sorority also enjoys a winter weekend as well as an autumn one. Arethusa and Sig Rho alumni like the warm climate of July.

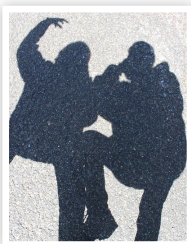
Alumni Adventure Camp offered last summer did not run due to low enrollment. However, we are not discouraged and will try this action-packed opportunity again. The long weekend will include paddling, whitewater rafting and the challenge course.

Digital Photography was a great success this past fall. Participants learned how to venture off auto mode and use their specific cameras in a variety of situations. Keep your eyes open for a repeat of this session in the near future. In the past, we have offered Watercolor and Life in the Woods among other programs. If you have an idea for a fall adult education program, let us know.

Current recreation, parks, and leisure studies students spend a weekend in September with alumni from the major. It is a time for the two groups to share SUNY Cortland stories of past and present as well as network. Some students have left the weekend with an internship or eyes open to prospects they had just discovered.

The alumni board hosts a yearly retreat at Raquette Lake. It provides time for the group to connect in a way that can be difficult in a meeting on campus.

The threads in the fabric of Raquette Lake are continually growing as current students become alumni. Offering opportunities for alumni to stay connected, not only to their college friends but to a place where they created fond memories, only strengthens our fabric.



Naming Gifts Add to Endowment

A major component of the capital campaign allows donors at various levels to leave their mark on posterity or honor a family member by naming a building, room or other structure at either Huntington Memorial Camp or Antlers. During the current campaign, eleven such gifts have been received, and each has or shortly will be recognized with a brass plaque permanently affixed to their named space. Following is a list of the spaces and for whom they are named:



Photo courtesy of Peter VanderWoude

- McDermott Hall – by George McDermott, SUNY distinguished service professor emeritus of geography, in honor of his late wife Marcia Spaeth McDermott, professor emeritus of recreation, parks and leisure studies.
- Howe-Colligan bedroom (Durant Cabin) – by Jim Colligan '62 in honor of his parents Ray and Edna, caretakers at Camp Huntington 1955-71, and director emeritus, Art Howe.
- M. Louise Moseley Porch (Huntington Staff House) – by Theta Phi Sorority in honor of Louise Moseley, professor emeritus of physical education.
- John Forsythe '58 Carpenters Shop – by his wife, Barbara.
- Sandra Morley '77 Flagpole – In honor of her parents Eric and Zelda Morley
- Donald '59 and Donna Bell Traver '59 Front Porch and Fireplace (Metcalf Hall) – by the Travers.
- Arethusa Sorority Porch (Camp Huntington Dining Hall) – by Arethusa Sorority.
- William Pauley Porch (Antlers Casino lower level) – by his wife Janice Pauley '71 in honor of her late husband.
- Kris Cummings Fireplace (Antlers Dining Room) – by her husband, Jay Cummings, assistant director emeritus, in honor of his late wife.
- Arethusa Sorority Porch (Antlers Casino upper level) – by Arethusa Sorority.

We thank all of these donors for their generosity and commitment to furthering the mission of the Outdoor Education Center at Raquette Lake. The names will be etched in the minds of students who pass through here for generations to come. There are still many giving opportunities available at Antlers and Camp Huntington, as well as a range of giving societies that will be recognized with a collective plaque in the Camp Huntington dining hall. See the "Campaign for Raquette Lake" on the Giving website, cortland.edu/giving, or contact the Cortland College Foundation at 607-753-2518 to learn how you can participate.



Alumni Camps

Antlers	Camp Huntington
June 29-July 5	Feb. 15-20
July 5-11, July 5-8, July 8-11	July 1-5
Aug. 14-16 OA Reunion	
Aug. 19-22	
Sept. 1-5	
Sept. 8-11	cortland.edu/rfevents

New Program Grants And Student Support

The Educating Champions capital campaign has raised nearly \$1 million for the Raquette Lake Program and Access Endowment that funds grants to reduce the cost of attending programs here for all Cortland students. The center has been busy promoting the grants and allocating funds to groups and individual students.

The fund is divided into two pools, one that faculty and student group advisors are able to tap for financial support for their classes or programs. The grants can be used for transportation, program enhancement or to defray the room and board costs for first-time programs that demonstrate innovative uses of the Outdoor Education Center. Applications are reviewed prior to each semester to allocate as much money as possible to worthy programs.

This fall, the following programs received support for one or more of the aforementioned expenses: art/art history (supplies for creating nature notebooks), COR 101 (transportation and ropes course facilitation), history (transportation), swim team (transportation), International Programs Office (transportation and ropes course facilitation), tech first/geography (transportation), and childhood/early childhood Education (ropes course facilitation). Total awards were \$6,000 for the fall, and we hope to increase this to over \$20,000 per year with current earnings on the endowment.

In addition to the program grants, a separate fund generates income that supports students taking academic courses here. These are applied for individually through an online process and awarded to students with unmet financial need to help pay the cost of room and board at both Antlers and Camp Huntington. Fees can run as high as \$600 for the two-week practicum courses in physical education and recreation, so this financial support is key to the success of outdoor education for the College.

Another form of support for individual students is the financial aid available for Adirondack Trail Blazers (ATB), an orientation program for first-year and transfer students. In 2013, a total of \$400 was awarded to two students, and this year \$2,000 was provided to ten students to help defray the \$385 program fee. Our goal is to allow any student entering the College to join ATB, regardless of their financial situation.

Future donations to the Raquette Lake Program and Access Endowment will add to the amount we can give in both program grant and individual financial support each year. Please be generous when the annual appeal comes around and help us provide even more students with quality outdoor experiences here that enhance the academic and co-curricular life on campus.

History Faculty and Majors Explore Camp Huntington Landmark

A new program was launched in August, when 15 sophomore majors and members of the History Club went on a retreat with seven of the department's faculty to delve into history as an academic discipline and possible career. Partially funded by a new Program and Access Endowment grant, the group arrived Friday night to hear an extended orientation from Director Rob Rubendall, touching on the story of the Durants and Huntingtons who built Camp Pine Knot in the late 19th century.

The purpose of the retreat was to help early majors understand what the academic life of a history major comprises. Professors Randi Storch and Kevin Sheets conceived of the program while delivering two weeks of professional development for history teachers here in July of 2013. "It's unconscionable," said Storch, "that with this unique resource owned by the College here in the Adirondacks, we are not exposing more of our history students to it. We need to come up with a solid program that takes full advantage of it." With that, the plans began to be laid for bringing the first cohort to Camp Huntington at the beginning of the fall semester.

The program consisted of a comprehensive tour of the facilities, discussions in the classroom and around the campfire about the academic life and career options for history majors, and plenty of time for canoeing, kayaking and exploring the trails on Long Point. A video was shown, followed by discussion that focused on the American Historical Association's Tuning Project. Tuning is a collaborative process which convenes experts in a discipline to spell out the distinctive skills, methods, and substantive range of that field. Each academic department can then tailor the discussion to their own discipline and help students better understand what lies ahead as a history major.

A few officers of the history club attended and provided a peer perspective for the sophomore participants. This worked so well that the faculty intends to continue the practice and will soon be able to recruit new officers from students who have attended the fall retreat, completing the cycle from novice to experienced mentors. As a pilot program, the department was very pleased with the success of the retreat. In future years, with better publicity and a commitment to the early semester dates, a larger group of students is expected to attend. The idea of tuning students' understanding of their field in a retreat setting is a concept that might work well for other academic disciplines.





Nature Nook

Nature's best engineer is also a skilled, furry, four-legged swimmer. The beaver, classified as a rodent, can weigh up to 70 pounds and

live as long as 24 years. Both male and female beavers of similar age are typically the same size, measuring 3 feet long and easily identifiable from their broad flat tail. As a semi-aquatic animal, they have clear protective eyelids along with ears and nostrils they can seal when underwater. Their fur is naturally oily and waterproof. A beaver's large-webbed hind feet and paddle-like tail help the rodent to swim up to 5 mph.

Beavers have hard orange, enamel-coated incisors with chisel-like ends that continue to grow throughout their lives. These herbivores consume leaves, bark, roots and twigs of wood from alder, birch, cherry, maple, willow trees and also eat aquatic plants such as water lilies. Beavers do not hibernate and survive on stored bark, sticks and twigs.

Beavers are known for their construction capabilities of dams and lodges. They meticulously build dams with large logs at the base and then build vertically using smaller branches and saplings. The holes in dams and lodges are filled with mud, rocks, twigs and weeds. The placement of dams and lodges with underwater entrances help beavers protect themselves. The flooded habitat is beneficial to many other animals, plants and insects.

Mating takes place in February followed by a 107 day gestation period. Birthing may take several days and a total of four to six kits may be delivered. The kits are furry with open

eyes and visible teeth when born. They are in the water after their first day. The kits from the previous year, who still live in the den, will be displaced with the father to another den during birthing. Young can stay with their parents for two full years before leaving.

Beavers can be found from Canada to northern Mexico. Their valuable skins have an inner fur containing mini barbs that were used in felting. Beaver fur was used in clothing and top-hats. Musk glands were used for medicine and perfumes. The animal's desired fur spurred trade and exploration of new territory and drove the species to near extinction. Today's predators of beaver kits include raptors and otters while adults are wary of bear, coyote and human trappers.



Moonlight Over Water

By Michelle Gillen

Such solitude filled me as I gazed at the moonlight, seeing it dance on the misty surface of the lake. The brightest stars glimmered in the sky, a few shooting stars winking past in my peripheral vision. I had finally achieved a peaceful silence, rooted to the Earth. As I am prone to do, I began to ponder. Gazing up at that milky-whiteness helped me understand more about me than I knew. I blocked the soft chatter from the other people around me, focusing on what enraptured my attention.

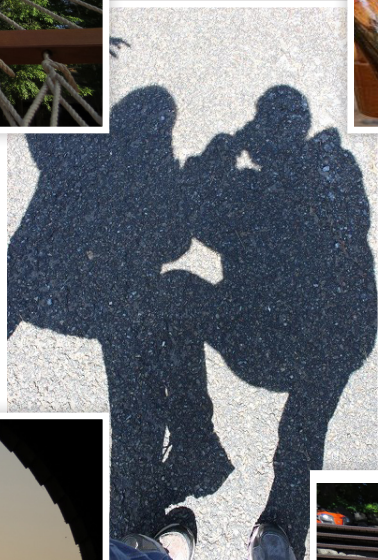
Clouds covered the moon, but didn't mask its brilliance. It shone as bright as the sun, and I drank it in.

The gentle ripples of the lake lapped the dock while I stood, mesmerized, almost paralyzed, by the grip of the moon's radiance. It shone and illuminated the night, spurring something in me as I headed back to my group, seeing them gather in a huddle, waiting to return to their warm cabins. Such determination filled me: I knew I would be back, to gaze lovingly at the moonlight upon the water, to be inspired and to be embraced by the natural beauty around me.

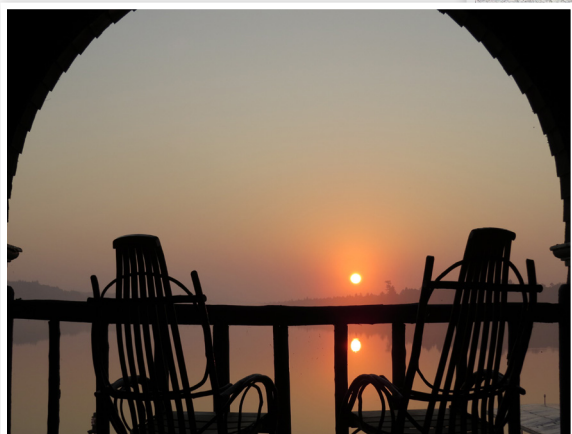
The preceding piece was written by a student attending the annual Cortland Professional Writers Association retreat in fall wrote a reflective piece about her experience around the campfire, looking out over Raquette Lake.

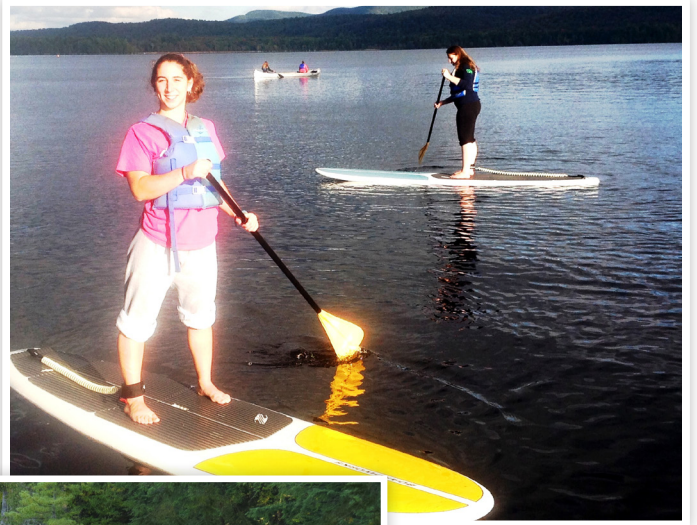
Kirby Camp





Photos from the digital photography course above
Amphitheater construction below right
Art and art history student web below left





Stand up paddle boards in use above

The smoke hosue at Camp Huntington gets a new roof



Wings on Raquette Lake

