



RAQUETTE LAKE NEWS

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A CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER



Bill and Jack CAT Fishing

On Christmas Eve Day, Bill James, caretaker at Camp Huntington, had quite a surprise! He and his wife, Penny, were preparing to travel to Cortland to spend Christmas with their family. Bill was taking their bags and Christmas presents across to Antlers by snowmobile and tote sled. As he approached the Antlers, his snowmobile and tote sled slid and broke through an area of thin ice. The rest is history! Bill, the sled and the tote sled were now in the water. Fortunately for Bill, the snowmobile actually floated for a minute or so. He was able to jump from the snowmobile to firm ice and did not have to swim. Minutes later, the snowmobile and the tote sled were on the bottom of Raquette Lake in about seven or eight feet of water.

Bill notified me from Antlers for help. I was very happy to hear he was okay. I changed into my cold water gear and thought about what would be needed for the recovery mission. My mind was racing as I gathered the most important items: a chain saw to cut the ice, a grappling hook and a rope. I have done a lot of ice fishing, but never for a snowmobile.

The work was cold and slow and Bill was nearly frozen. I entered the water to cut a trench in the ice about six-feet wide and out to where the sled broke through the ice. This opening would allow us to drag the sled on the lake bottom and up on shore. As I cut the opening, I pushed the chunks of cut ice under the other ice to get it out of the way. It was much easier than trying to get the sections of cut ice on top of the firm ice. After about 30 minutes of cutting, my waders

told me it was time to go to plan B. The water was too deep for me to wade any further. We got into the canoe, Bill in the stern paddling and me in the bow with the chain saw. That must have been quite a sight! I continued to cut the ice to reach the area where the sled was and try to fish with the grappling hook. After a number of attempts, I snagged the sled or at least what I thought was the sled. Bill backed the canoe while I held the line tight so the grappling hook would not come loose. The rope was too short to reach the shore so I re-entered the 33 degree water. I could not budge the sled by pulling on the rope.

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THE NATURE NOOK

The Nature Nook is a new section in our newsletter that will highlight fauna and flora found at Raquette Lake. The black-capped chickadee will be the first in our new series.



Black-capped Chickadee

The black-capped chickadee is a small, year-round resident of the Adirondacks. The bird is approximately five inches in length and can be identified by its black cap, white cheeks, black throat and greenish-gray back. The chickadee has dark to black feet, legs and bill. The male and female plumage is very similar.

This common backyard bird has varied feeding habits controlled by the weather. In the warm seasons, the chickadee will eat caterpillars, insects, snails and spiders. During the cooler months, the birds will eat berries, fruits and seeds. Chickadees have been known to cache food, too. Caching food means to store it, usually under leaves or in tree hollows for chickadees.

The call of the black-capped chickadee follows its namesake "chick-a-dee-dee." Fluctuations in tone denote various meanings. The birds can communicate with their mates as well as with other flocks outside of their own.

Black-capped chickadees are monogamous and tend to find their mates in the fall. Nest making normally begins in April or May and initiates the breeding process. After the nest is made, mid-April to July, the female will lay her clutch. One clutch consists of six to eight eggs. The female lays one egg per morning. The eggs are pinkish white with reddish or purplish specks. The female will incubate the eggs for 12-13 days while the male collects food and feeds her.

After the eggs hatch, the female spends less and less time with the babies each day. In roughly 16 days the birds will be ready to fledge. Fledging means that the birds are ready to fly. The parents will feed the birds for two to four weeks after they fledge.

A KIRBY CAMP RESERVATION UPDATE

Since the camp opened in 2002, usage has increased each year. This year, the Kirby Camp is fully booked for the season including a waiting list. Rental of the Kirby Camp is perhaps the best waterfront vacation value in the entire Adirondacks.

In 2006, we will initiate a lottery system for each week. The lottery will ensure that each applicant will have an equal chance in obtaining the week of their choice. Naturally, the weeks in July and August are the most popular.

Information regarding next year's reservation procedures will be posted on our Web site, in *Columns* and *The Bulletin*. Reservation applications and deposits will not be accepted until March 1, 2006.

WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER

For the third consecutive year, Dale Anderson of the Recreation and Leisure Studies Department, held a Wilderness First Responder (WFR) Course at Camp Huntington during spring break.

The mission of the course is to provide the highest quality medical training for outdoor professional and rescue specialists. The course is very intense, cramming 80 hours of instruction and simulations into seven days plus two or three hours of homework each night. Upon completion, the students were extremely proud of their accomplishment.

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A CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER

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Bill returned to shore in the canoe to get another section of rope and a chain. These were then connected and hooked to the plow frame on the center's truck. Bill slowly backed up the truck and the sled edged its way toward shore. As the snowmobile neared shore, it started to come up under the firm ice crushing the windshield. I was able to redirect it back into the trench and out it came.

It is nice when a plan comes together. The problem was the tote sled that had been hooked to the back of the snowmobile was not there. Somehow it became disconnected in the process of going through the ice. Now it was time to fish again, but in deeper water. Bill paddled me out to the scene of the crime. This time I was armed with the grappling hook rather than the chain saw. I must have fished for ten minutes before I snagged the wooden box on the sled. The tote sled was much lighter than the snowmobile and I was able to pull it as Bill paddled us back towards shore. The only problem this time was all of Bill and Penny's gear and all of their homemade Christmas presents were missing. I thought they came loose and were floating under the ice. I was upset because I knew how hard Bill had worked on these presents. Luckily, Bill said he had been able to retrieve them when they were floating in the hole. That was quick thinking on his part.

What is the moral of this story? Respect Mother Nature and thin ice! I learned this on two additional occasions during the winter of 2005, but those are stories for another time.



Pressure Ridge Over Big Island

WINTER COMES LATE THIS YEAR

Over the years, we have been very good about keeping records related to freeze-up and ice out. With no road access to Camp Huntington, we are solely dependent on what Mother Nature provides. A year ago, freeze-up came on Nov. 17. We had a contracting crew working on the Spruce Dorm at the time. On Nov.

16, when they came over they had to break ice with their boat all the way to camp. This was a long process as the ice was over an inch thick. The very next day, without any input from us, they decided to snowmobile across the lake. Fortunately, they made it without breaking through the ice, but we all questioned their wisdom. From then on, they came in the back way and avoided crossing the lake.

The fall of 2004 was quite different. The temperatures were unseasonably warm and we received a significant amount of rainfall. The water level in mid-November was well over the top of the main dock. This presented a major erosion problem. The violent wave action washed the gravel from the top of the dock into the water. The recovery of the gravel will be a summer group work project.

As we approached mid-December, cooler temperatures prevailed and the ice began to thicken. It is amazing how the ice will form in selected spots first. This includes not only the shoreline as you would expect, but also in the middle of the lake. Finally, on Dec. 20, 2004, we walked across the lake to Antlers for the first time. Safety is always our primary consideration. At the beginning of the season, one never walks alone. We test the thickness of the ice about every 10 yards. We always wear our float coats and carry a rope. Our float coats are life jackets with sleeves. In addition to providing floatation if we need it, they are also quite warm.

As winter progressed, we began to see temperatures dropping into the single digits. There was no snow so conditions were excellent for making ice. As the ice expands with the heat from the sun, it creates pressure cracks which actually erupts and creates a ridge. At times, these ridges can be two to three feet above the overall ice surface. They are very dangerous for snowmobiles.

Good ice is known as blue ice and poor ice is known as slush ice. Blue ice is far superior when it comes to strength. Temperatures continued to vary and the snow became rain and vice versa. There was actually a period in late December when you could ice skate all the way to the north outlet. As time passed, the ice grew thicker. When our first group arrived on Jan. 4, 2005, we could only transport their gear by snowmobile. This group, as well as all winter groups visiting during the winter season, walked across the lake from Antlers to Camp Huntington.

IS THE ICE SAFE?

The following is a table compiled as a guide for ice strength by the American Pulpwood Association. This is only a guide as conditions will vary from area to area.

Ice Thickness in Inches	Permissible Load (Clear Blue Lake Ice)
2	One person on foot
3	Group, Single file
7 1/2	Passenger Car (2-1/2 ton gross)
8	Light truck (2-21/2 ton gross)
10	Medium Truck (3-1/2 ton gross)
12	Heavy truck (7-8 ton gross)
15	10 ton
20	25 ton
25	45 ton

This table is for "clear" blue ice on lakes. Reduce strength values 15 percent for clear blue river ice. Slush ice is only one-half the strength of blue ice. The table does not apply to parked loads.

THE CLASH OF THE TITANS

Once again, the sisters of Theta Phi and participants from the St. Lawrence Environmental Management Council pitted their skills and experience against each other with a kite building and flying contest. This year was the third formal face off event between the two groups. The score was Sisters: 2; Managers: 0.

The unveiling and flying of the kites was to take place on the ice road in the back bay. There was a definite sense of secrecy as each group moved to their respective staging areas to work on their creations. For some, it was a short night due to all the kite preparation. For others, it was a third cup of coffee and visions of their creation soaring above the tree tops.

As the day progressed, the winds grew stronger. By the time of the afternoon competition, the winds were just about perfect in the back bay. All of a sudden there were people and kites flying and falling all over the place. It seemed there were too many categories to count and judge properly. One commercial entry flew so well it ended up in the top of a tree over by the house boat. Some soared, others crashed, while others never made it off the ground.

The overall winner was a box kite that flew like the Goodyear blimp. It was truly a masterpiece. It soared and flew effortlessly in the hands of the builder, Jon Montan. The design for the kite came from the Internet and cost a total of 50 cents to construct.

The stage is set for the 2006 competition. Due to it being an Olympic year, they will most likely focus on an adaptation of one of the Olympic events. Perhaps we will see ski jumping or Huntington's first luge competition. I am sure everyone is looking forward to the upcoming competition at Camp Huntington. The score is now Sisters: 2; Managers: 1

RAQUETTE LAKE SEEN AS A LEARNING COMMUNITY BUILDER FOR STUDENTS

Susan Stratton and Kimberly Rombach, new faculty members for 2005 in the Childhood/Early Childhood Education Department, brought their Block I undergraduate childhood education majors to the center along with Beth Klein's, Andrea Lachance's, and Judith Schillo's Thematic Methods Block (TMB) group. Students enrolled in the TMB option come to Raquette Lake in both the fall and winter semesters. The first group came in September 2000. Susan and Kim are hoping to take students from Block I each semester to strengthen their understanding of outdoor education and the importance of building strong bonds in a learning community.

While talking with Susan and Kim, we came up with the idea of holding an induction meeting at Camp Huntington for the Master's of Science in Teaching (MST) students. Kim and Susan also teach together in this program. The graduate students have undergraduate degrees in areas outside of education, but are seeking career changes into teaching in the MST program. Susan is the coordinator of the program and teaches the Master's



Preparing for Kite Flying

Project research course and Kim teaches Inquiry into Teaching Technology and Research. The students comprising this cohort see each other in all of their classes during the short, 16-month program. The planned induction meeting for 2006 will serve as an opportunity for new students to engage in activities and dialogues outside of the classroom; allow them to understand the components of the program; and the importance of teacher dispositions. Presentations are being planned by selected School of Education administrators and faculty.

CORTLAND COLLEGE RECREATION ASSOCIATION

The Cortland College Recreation Association made their annual winter odyssey to Raquette Lake under the supervision of Pat Mercer, a faculty member in the Recreation and Leisure Studies Department.

The group embarked upon what was a traditional trip I remember from 30 years ago. Immediately following breakfast on Saturday, they packed a lunch and set out on skis for West Mountain. They skied across Raquette Lake to Indian Point, into Sucker Brook Bay and then to the trailhead at West Mountain. The group changed from their skis into snowshoes, which they had carried with them, for the two-hour climb. Once they reached the summit, they enjoyed a beautiful view of the surrounding area which included Raquette Lake.

Experiences like these create memories that will last a lifetime. I am sure the group returned to campus and talked about their good time. Perhaps they even planted seeds in the minds of some students who will be making the winter trip to Raquette Lake next year.

COLLEEN MARA BEAUDRY

This past year, the Class of '59 collected donations for a very special memorial bench. Colleen Mara Beaudry, wife of the late Bob Beaudry '59, was a 1960 graduate who used to join the Class of '59 for their annual retreat at Raquette Lake. Colleen passed away in 2004 leaving behind many fond memories.

Colleen would sit for hours knitting or reading while enjoying the spectacular beauty of Blue Mountain. For those of us who have had the opportunity to gaze at Blue, we know that she changes looks daily and sometimes hourly. Colleen had no small task keeping track of that mountain. We sometimes joke that the mountain is not a real mountain, but is inflated for guests and tourists.

To honor Colleen, a cedar bench with a memorial plaque has been placed at the Antlers dock facing Blue Mountain.



Memorial Bench at Antlers

CORTLAND WRITER'S ASSOCIATION ANNUAL WINTER RETREAT

Writing majors and faculty members of the English Department enjoyed a weekend retreat at Camp Huntington under the direction of Vicki Boynton, associate professor of English. The weekend provided an opportunity for participants to focus on individual projects as well as group assignments. They worked primarily in the Carlson Classroom where they were able to use the laptop computers and the remote wireless computer system.

In addition to writing, the group took advantage of the many winter offerings, viewed the video of Camp Pine Knot and toured the historic buildings.

Vicki has already scheduled their weekend in 2006. Familiar faces will surely return next February.

INFORMATION RESOURCES STAFF RETURN

Paula Warnken, associate provost, information resources, and a majority of her staff journeyed to Raquette Lake for the fourth consecutive year to attend their annual winter retreat.

In recent months, an Internet Protocol (IP) telephone that utilizes the wireless computer system at Antlers and Camp Huntington was installed. We no longer make long distance calls to campus. We just pick up the IP phone and dial the four-digit extension. During February, they installed a video camera over my computer screen which is connected to the phone line. It allows me to see our secretary, Connie Elliot, in her campus office, on my computer monitor. She can also see me on her screen on campus. In addition, a video conference was conducted between the Carlson Classroom and faculty and staff located in the Sperry Learning Center on campus. What will be next?

Paula, along with Dan Sidebottom, director of administrative computing services, and their staff, have been very supportive of Raquette Lake. Without their financial and technical support, we wouldn't be as advanced as we are. We have capabilities at Raquette Lake not found on many college and university campuses. I extend my sincere appreciation for all they have provided to the staff and our many user groups.

THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

Under the leadership of Professor Randy Drake, College of William & Mary, and Professor Tim Ramsey, University of Northern Colorado, 24 students from the Williamsburg Campus traveled north for their spring break. Unlike most of their peers, these students opted for snow rather than sand.

Just prior to the group arriving, Raquette Lake sustained its first major snowfall. The student's spirits ran high as they unloaded their gear from their chartered motor coach and prepared for the one-mile walk across the ice to Camp Huntington. I am sure some wondered what was in store for them.

This seven-day venture ran like a Swiss watch due to the organization and coordination of both Randy and Tim. The students were involved in either instruction or applying new found skills in nature's classroom the entire time they were here. Their days were long, sometimes extending to 9 or 10 p.m., preparing for the next adventure.

The group skied, snow shoed, climbed Blue Mountain, went sledding at Fox Mountain, sailed their sleds on the ice, and

camped overnight at Tioga Point. One setback this year was the snow shelters. After gathering and packing snow and hollowing them out in record time, with the intent of sleeping in them the following evening, a warm front came through overnight and brought rain. The next morning the snow shelters looked like a series of Adirondack volcanoes in the meadow.



Randy Drake in Snow Shelter

The last night in camp concluded with the traditional evening program of skits. Once again, the group maintained the tradition of excellence established by Sylvia Shirley, a retired faculty member from William and Mary and a SUNY Cortland alumna. After leading many winter visits to Raquette Lake over the years, Sylvia retired in 2004 and Randy took over the reins. She will be pleased to know Randy and Tim's program was outstanding.

NEW MAPS FOR ANTLERS AND CAMP HUNTINGTON

A SUNY Cortland geography student, Ben Youngs, is completing his senior project at Raquette Lake. This winter, Ben and I walked, posted and signed much of the Long Point boundaries and trails. Ben used state of the art technology such as the Global Positioning System (GPS), satellite orthorectified (ortho) maps and USGS topographical maps to accurately develop new maps for participants at Camp Huntington and Antlers.

Utilizing the geography laboratory on campus, Ben will create overlays of the data collected at Raquette Lake on the satellite ortho and topographical maps. He will design an Antlers map that will identify boundaries as well as the location of each of the buildings. The map will be helpful with the orientation of new user groups. The new trail maps at Camp Huntington will not only reflect the exact location of the various hiking and skiing trails, but will also indicate the actual distances.

The east property boundary has been neglected for nearly 20 years. George Fuge, a former director of SUNY Cortland Outdoor Education Center, was the last one to actually blaze this boundary. Today, rather than blazing trees, way points are set in the GPS unit and then down loaded on the satellite ortho maps. Blazed trees have a way of growing old, falling over or the blaze marks grow over. Way points do not hurt the tree or decay over time.

One of the most interesting findings was at Silver Beach. We walked on the ice as close to the land as possible to get the boundary. When Ben input the data on the 1954 topographical map, it indicated the path was five to 10 feet on the land itself not on the edge of the land. With any GPS unit there is a margin for error, but this appears to reflect erosion that has taken place over the years.

This has been an excellent project for both Ben and the center. I look forward to the finished product. Ben will develop a large laminated trail map which will be located at Camp Huntington. Ben's efforts will be enjoyed by thousands of users over the years to come.



Ben Youngs with GPS Unit

WINTER STUDIES OR JUST STUDIES?

Credit must be given to Dale Anderson, lecturer in the Recreation and Leisure Studies Department, for making the best of a poor situation. When the Winter Studies class arrived on Jan. 4, the winter conditions were almost nonexistent. The lake was frozen with only a modest snow covering of about two inches, enough for cross-country skiing. There was very little snow in the woods which prevented cross-country skiing, but did provide the group with greater mobility to explore the woods.

Dale's class utilized the Carlson Classroom for instruction and discussion. The students learned various winter techniques for camping, skiing and snowshoeing. They also viewed an instructional video and used the Global Positioning System (GPS), maps, and compasses. Instruction also focused on the history of Camp Pine Knot, the Adirondack Park and the Adirondack Park Agency.

Later in the week, the group decided that if the snow would not come to them they would go to the snow. The decision was to climb Blue Mountain, a nearby snow-covered peak that provides an excellent view in all directions. The summit is more than 3,600 feet. A forest fire observation tower still exists on the top. The group had a beautiful, sunny and cloudless day to climb with temperatures in the 20s. The trail was a little icy at the beginning, but as they climbed it got better. Blue Mountain provides one of the best climbs and rewards for a mountain located in this region of the Adirondacks.

All in all, the group had a great time during their stay. They had to make adjustments in their schedule, but don't we all! Kudos to Dale and the students for making the most of less than perfect conditions and for their ability to adapt to them.

HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR ORT TODAY?

Each winter middle school students from Newcomb and Bolton Central School Districts come to Camp Huntington for a three-day experience.

Under the direction of Ted Caldwell, program coordinator for the Tri-District Consortium, *Newcomb Students With Ort Chart* these middle school students participated in a variety of activities. This year was no exception as the experience contained an added twist called ort!

Ort is not one of those words used in your everyday conversation. You might be more familiar with it if you are one who tries to solve the daily crossword puzzles. The term ort is used to define food waste. Ted's goal was to challenge the students to have zero food waste at the end of their meals. Any food the students left on their plates would go into a container to be weighed. After weighing the amount of waste it was then recorded on a large graph. It was rumored that the scale used to measure the ort had been used on one of the first space shuttles to measure food portions for the astronauts. For a good story, ask Ted how this priceless piece of history made it into his possession.



Newcomb Students With Ort Chart

Ted's goal was achieved as the students became more aware of their eating habits. As they consumed each meal, the amount of ort decreased. This was an excellent lesson. The activity helped students better understand how their actions and waste directly impact society and our environment. Great job, Ted!



Alumni Preparing Tips Ups

ALUMNI WINTER CAMP: FANTASTIC!

Alumni came from near and far to enjoy the winter wonders, one another and the hospitality of Camp Huntington. This annual event has become a family reunion for the majority of the participants.

This year the group was very fortunate. As they arrived, so did winter and we finally got the snow we wanted. The cross-country skiing and snowshoeing had been almost nonexistent until mid-January. Prior to the first real snowfall, people had taken advantage of skiing on the lake. There was not enough snow to cover the trails in the woods. This opened up some new opportunities such as skiing to Tioga Point or around Big Island. In years past, one was always confronted with slush on the ice which made very poor skiing.

In addition to the traditional skiing and snowshoeing, some of the group got involved in ice fishing. Many of the alumni helped rig a number of tip-ups. A tip-up is basically a spool on a stick holding a baited line suspended through a hole in the ice. When the bait—usually a minnow—is taken by a fish, pulling on the line releases a signal, such as a red flag. The group put these tip-ups to good use the following day. It was a blustery day as this group of hardy ice fishing enthusiasts braved the elements to harvest a record catch. Actual photographic evidence exists of the rewards bestowed on these fishermen for their efforts. The pictures will be available at next year's get-together.

The evenings were filled with a variety of activities. As the fire burned in the dining room fireplace, the group gathered prior to and after meals. Many talked about the good old days at SUNY Cortland while others focused on more important concerns such as the sauna and who was going to jump into the hole cut in the ice. Don '59 and Donna Traver '59 shared a series of slides they had taken on a recent birding trip to Cuba. Now I know where all the vintage cars from the 50s and 60s have gone.

At the end of each session, I think it can't get any better, but it does. Come and join the family in 2006. You will not be disappointed. Be sure to mark Jan. 22-26, 2006 on your calendar. Check our Web site, www.cortland.edu/outdoor or the *Columns* in the fall for registration information.



Alumni Ice Fishing

