



# RAQUETTE LAKE NEWS

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## ANTLERS' BULKHEAD PROJECT

The installation of a new Antlers' bulkhead is the result of a financial collaboration between Auxiliary Services Corporation (ASC), Cortland College Foundation and Raquette Lake Foundation. A bulkhead is a wall or an embankment along a waterfront that acts as a protective barrier. As many of you know, over the years the old wooden bulkhead at Antlers has fallen apart. Water washing through the wooden crib has resulted in soil erosion and unsafe conditions for those walking along the edge of the grassy area in front of Antlers' dining room. The eroding soil created holes that could actually be stepped into.

In 2005, a decision was made to construct a new bulkhead. Estimates for the project were requested. Dana Wavle, executive director of ASC, awarded the contract to Bob Waldron, president of North Shore Marine here in Raquette Lake. Before construction could begin, the necessary permits had to be acquired from the Adirondack Park Agency and the New York State Department of Conservation. The permit process took just over a year to complete. Everything, including the fish, was taken into consideration.

Once the permits had been obtained, the work could begin. The steel sheet piles had been ordered and stored for nearly a year, which was a good thing because the price of steel and steel products had skyrocketed. All the materials and construction equipment were brought to the site. It looked like there was enough equipment there to rebuild the Twin Towers!

Fortunately for those working on this project, we had an unseasonably warm fall and early winter. The warm weather certainly made their working conditions more pleasant. There were many days when the men worked without their gloves and coats. Remember this is late November and December in Raquette Lake. Over time, there were a few mechanical setbacks with the equipment, but once they were taken care of progress was rapid and constant. Bob and

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## THE NATURE NOOK

The unusual weather patterns this past winter provided unique wildlife sightings at Raquette Lake. Due to the open water in January, bald eagles were frequently seen visiting a tall dead pine tree in the back bay at Camp Huntington. The mild temperatures also allowed some migrating birds to remain at the feeders until winter finally set in.

The ever present deer and coyotes played their game of hide and seek most of the winter. Early on the deer were winning. As the snow accumulated to depths of more than three feet in the woods, the coyotes gained the advantage. On many mornings, I looked out my bedroom window into the dark behind the camp to see deer bedded down not 10 yards away. I am sure they felt more secure there. We have never seen a coyote or their tracks in camp.

For the first time in my seven-year tenure as director, I actually saw a snowshoe rabbit track here. I am sure the marten and fishers have taken a toll on the rabbit population. Over the winter we have observed otters out on the ice, as well as mink traveling from here to there. Just last week there was a flock of geese flying over. Unfortunately, they were headed south not north. We have already had red-winged black birds, grackles and morning doves at our feeders so spring is not too far away. Just in case you were wondering, there are no black flies yet.



White-tailed deer

## LIFE IN THE WOODS

Life In The Woods is a carefully designed adventure in learning for adults wishing to engage in low-to moderate-level activities while experiencing the fabulous history and extraordinary nature of the Adirondacks. Highlights of the trip will include: a special behind-the-scenes tour at the Adirondack Museum, bog investigations, bird watching at Ferds Bog, historical tours of Great Camp Pine Knot and a horse-drawn wagon ride to Camp Santaroni, a narrated luncheon cruise aboard the "W.W. Durant" on Raquette Lake and much more.

Judy Thaler and Wayne Robins, partners in Nature Ed-Ventures, will be the leaders for this adventure. Instructors at all venues are the best professional teachers and educators to be found. All are highly qualified, ensuring consistent quality programming. They are sincere and enthusiastic.

The program will run Sept. 23-28 and will be based out of Antlers. All meals are included in the fee, beginning with dinner on Sunday and concluding with breakfast on Friday. For more information on the program or to sign-up visit our Web site, [www.cortland.edu/outdoor](http://www.cortland.edu/outdoor) and look for the upcoming events marquee. We can also be reached by phone 753-5485.



Autumn reflection



A daddy longlegs spider

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his crew did an excellent job with the project. The metal sheet piles are covered and capped with pressure treated wood. The completed project looks very good; the steel can't be seen. Everyone who comes to Antlers and uses this area will be very impressed with its transformation.

## BOATING IN JANUARY?

According to George Fuge and other locals in Raquette Lake, none had seen a January like this past year. Normally, the ice will cover Raquette Lake by mid to late November. It is always questionable if one can boat on Thanksgiving. There is a short period of time when the ice forms on the lake where ice can be broken with a boat. The boat will plow through about a half inch of ice. Once it gets thicker, about three quarters of an inch to an inch, the boat will actually ride up on the ice and its weight will break the ice. It is not the time to think about getting a hole in your aluminum boat from breaking the ice. Once this point is reached, groups no longer visit and the boats are stored for the winter. The photo says it all; who would like to go to work in this?

This year was quite different. The lake would freeze over and then the wind would pick up. If there was any open water, the wind would push the water and the ice would open up again, which happened numerous times. I boated



Snow covered boat

to Antlers from Camp Huntington for the last time on Jan. 10. The ice was about an inch thick and too hard to break through. The first group for winter session arrived on Jan. 3, but that is another story.

There are reports of people actually boating on Raquette Lake every month of the year. I haven't met any of these hardy souls but their legacies continue.

## WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER: THAT'S WFR NOT WOOFER!

For the fourth time SUNY Cortland's Recreation and Leisure Studies Department hosted a Wilderness First Responder (WFR) course at Raquette Lake. The course was taught by two instructors from Wilderness Medical Associates based out of Portland, Maine. The students participating in the course may elect to take it for credit, satisfying a course requirement for SUNY Cortland's recreation majors.

The 72-hour course is conducted over a period of eight days and is a combination of case studies, demonstrations, laboratories, lecture and media presentations. Students are assessed by both written and practical exams. Some of the areas contained in the course are: Circulatory and Respiratory Systems, Fractures and Dislocations, Human Anatomy and Physiology, Hypo and Hyperthermia, Patient Assessment, Principles of Trauma,



Woof!

and Stabilizing Injuries just to name a few. The certification is recognized by outdoor professionals throughout the world.

Like the physical education students coming to Camp Huntington in January, the WFR participants needed to walk into camp the back way. The route consists of hiking through Golden Beach State Campground, across Cunningham's Point, through the Silver Beach swamp and finally to the Blue Mountain Road. After all of that, Camp Huntington is still two miles to the west. Fortunately, there was a small snow covering. Students and instructors alike pulled their personal gear into camp via small tote sleds.

During their stay, winter began to set in. We had our first series of really cold nights, creating more ice on the lake. By the time the group was scheduled to leave, we had about six inches of ice on the lake and they were able to walk across the lake over to the Antlers.

The course is a tremendous educational opportunity for SUNY Cortland's students. We have had students attend from other colleges and universities in past years. This year there was a student enrolled in the course from Chicago. Dale Anderson, lecturer III, recreation and leisure studies, is the person who pulls this all together. Dale is not only the man behind the scenes making sure everything runs properly, he is also the man behind the camera. I am sure I speak for all the participants and instructors over the years when I say "Thank You" for all you have done to make this course a reality.



Students practicing "packaging"



Assessing the patient

## ST. LAWRENCE & THETA PHI: SOMETHING FISHY

During 2007, the "year of the fish," the groups focused and based their activities on a fishy theme. As you can see by the picture, Nells and Jon take their roles very seriously. It was the "Fish" vs. the "Crab Man." The theme even carried over to the Yankee Swap held after dinner on Friday night. It has become a real tradition and something everyone looks forward to.

Shortly after lunch, the two groups met to compete in the annual outdoor Olympics. The activities for the weekend were developed by the host group, Theta Phi. The events came fast and furious and included everything imaginable from the traditional rutabaga toss to the ole' throw the fish down the hopper



"Fish" vs. the "Crab Man"

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event. Who knows or cares who won? It was just a blast to participate in and laugh at everyone making a fool out of themselves.

St. Lawrence will be the host for 2008. The theme will be snow and snow snakes. Each of the participants was provided a wooden blank to fashion their snow snake. The design and detail of the snakes are left to each of the participants. Who knows, this might be the First Annual Raquette Lake President's Day Snow Snake Race? Look for the tracks next year. Do snow snakes leave tracks?



The College of William and Mary students

### NEW CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULED FOR CAMP HUNTINGTON

The College has agreed to fund the construction of a new maintenance workshop at Camp Huntington. It will be located in the same area as the current shop, which is adjacent to the wastewater treatment facility. The new shop will be approximately 32' x 50'. The increased size will ensure that newer equipment can be worked on inside rather than out in the weather. For example, the tractor does not fit in the existing shop because the doors are too low. When the Dodge truck with the snow blower attached is in the shop, the door can't be closed.

The new facilities will allow staff to work on projects in a clean and safe environment. The building will blend in with the existing facilities. It will have a green standing seam metal roof like all of the others recently installed. The exterior will be a batten and board construction stained bark brown.

We are really looking forward to the completion of this new facility. I would like to thank Bill Shaut, vice president for finance and management and Nasrin Parvizi, associate vice president for facilities management, for approving the project. I also would like to thank all of those assigned to the Facilities, Planning, Design and Construction Office for their support of this project. The Project Coordinator is Dan Davis and the Designer is Karl Elsner. Construction is scheduled to begin by mid-summer and should be completed by the first of November.

Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, working with Bill Shiner, a national leader in the area of environmental and outdoor education. After thirteen years at Slippery Rock, Tim moved to the University of Northern Colorado and now works in the Natural and Health Sciences Department.

Both of these professionals received their initial exposure to outdoor education in higher education as part of their physical education curriculum at SUNY Cortland. Raquette Lake played an important role in establishing a sound foundation for their professional development. I am sure it is very gratifying for them to teach college students winter outdoor skills at Camp Huntington.

The students arrived at Raquette Lake to find an ice road, three feet of snow and single digit temperatures; a far cry from Virginia's warm temperatures. They were probably asking themselves why they were here and not on a beach in Florida for spring break.

The students were involved in a very demanding week. For many, this was their first experience with snow oriented activities such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Randy said this group built their quincy huts in record time. It helped to have three feet of snow so they didn't have to scrounge for it. The group went skiing and sledding at Fox Mountain and climbed Blue Mountain. The students spent a night in the quincy huts they made. In addition, they skied over to Tioga Point and spent the night. The students did not spend much downtime in the dorms. Each evening after their last instructional program, the students would plunge into a hole cut in the ice and then get out and retreat to the sauna. It's an experience they will never forget.

As the group was getting ready to depart on their long bus ride back to Virginia, many students said they had a wonderful time and wouldn't have missed it; several plan to return in 2008. William and Mary enjoyed the best winter conditions they have had in years. Randy and Tim had done an excellent job preparing these students. See you all next year!

### THE DYNAMIC DUO: DRAKE AND RAMSEY

Randy Drake '77 and Tim Ramsey '73, M.S. Ed. '75 are two of SUNY Cortland's physical education graduates who have successfully pursued outdoor careers in higher education. Randy has been a member of the Department of Kinesology at The College of William and Mary since 1993. When Sylvia Shirley '73 retired from William and Mary, Randy took over the Winter Studies Course. Randy's outdoor skills, easy manner and organizational expertise are some of the reasons this course has continued to be so successful.



Tim Ramsey and Randy Drake

Tim Ramsey has been involved in outdoor education for more than three decades. Upon graduation from SUNY Cortland, Tim worked and developed the outdoor program at Higher Horizons in New York State. He then moved to an academic position at

**VOLUNTEER WEEKEND MAY 18-20**

Are you looking for an opportunity to lend a hand at Antlers? May 18-20 alumni families and friends will be helping Antlers open with a bang! Interested folks can find more information on our Web site under upcoming events or by calling our office. We look forward to hearing from you!

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION: MAKING THE BEST OF A BAD SITUATION

On Jan. 3, 2007, the winter outdoor education section of Physical Education 308 was scheduled to start at Raquette Lake. Unfortunately, conditions were less than wintry. Had it not been for the fact that students needed this course for graduation, I would have canceled it. After discussing the options with Steve Patrick, lecturer, physical education, it was decided that the students would hike in through Golden Beach State Campground. They would have to use tote sleds to pull their gear in from that location. There was some snow on the ground, but it was sparse in certain spots. Although it was not what had been scheduled, the students and staff made the best of it.



Physical Education hiking to camp

After a trek of more than three miles, everyone and their gear arrived at Camp Huntington; all were very happy to be there. After getting settled in the dorms, the group had their camp safety orientation and reviewed their schedule for the next eight days. Due to the lack of snow, many of the winter activities scheduled such as cross-country skiing, building quincy huts, and snowshoeing could not be done. Steve and his staff came up with an alternate plan. It was a real departure from the traditional winter session which focused on activities at or near Camp Huntington.

The new program included winter mountain climbing. The group didn't have to worry about snow, however, ice was the real challenge. The students managed to climb Black Bear Mountain and Blue Mountain. On their return trip, the students brought in the food for their session, 70 boxes in all, on the small tote sleds. In a normal January, the ice would have been thick enough to cross with a snowmobile and tote sleds for the food.

South Bay had open water with the exception of spots that had a layer of thin ice. The warm weather and wind continued, leaving the lake free of ice. The group was scheduled to go out on a two night, three day extended trip. Again, after discussing the various options with Steve, it was determined that we would put the small pontoon boat in the water and boat everyone over to Antlers for their departure. It was also decided the group would not return for their final night at Camp Huntington. Therefore, the students not only packed for their extended trip but also packed all of their other gear.

In summary, everything went very well thanks to Steve's creativity and leadership. The students rolled with Mother Nature's offerings. This was a winter camp that will be long remembered for the lack of winter.

## ROME RETURNS TO RAQUETTE LAKE

Clients associated with the Central New York Developmental Services Office returned to Camp Huntington this year. Nick Stagliano '79 led the groups in a fantastic winter experience. Some of the participants have stayed here in previous years.

Not everyone was able to participate in all the planned activities, but they certainly did their best. For many, this was the highest level and longest duration of physical activity they had experienced in quite some time. The fresh air and activity even made the group sleep better.

A number of the clients were quite interested in ice fishing. Nick would take the small group for a walk on the ice to see some of the local ice fishermen. As they approached the ice fishing shack, the group could see where the tip-ups had been placed and if any of the flags were up. Gordie, a local fisherman, took the time to explain what he was doing and how he did it.

Once the ice formed on the lake and we began plowing the ice road, the ice thickened rapidly. When Rome came to the Center in February, the ice road was more than 20 inches thick! The group traveled across the ice road in the open trailer we used to haul gear to Camp Huntington from Antlers. One of the



The ice wagon ride

finest experiences the group participated in was the ice wagon ride. Some of the group had previously been on a hay ride and it reminded them of that. If smiles were any indication, they had a wonderful ride.

Nick and his staff do a fantastic job with their group. Everyone appreciated being at Raquette Lake and made the most of their experience. The group was excited to have a full day of activities. I think eating is certainly one of their favorite activities. They loved KP and helping out. It is nice that Raquette Lake has had a positive impact in their lives.

## HEMLOCK RENOVATION NEARS COMPLETION

Once again, I would like to thank all of those who have made the renovations possible. Steve Abramson, President and CEO of Pace Window and Door, donated new windows. What a difference they have already made. Theta Phi donated pillow replacements throughout the entire camp, and Donna '59 and Don Traver '59 donated new Adirondack chairs for the Hemlock dorm porches.

The last segment of the renovation is to complete the exterior. New siding to match the other buildings will be installed this summer after an insulation barrier has been applied. Over the past few years Hemlock has seen quite a transition from new mattresses to completely renovated bathrooms, as well as new curtains, roof and windows.



Bob Collins working on the windows

## AN OCTOBER SURPRISE ATTACK!

On October 28, 2006, Mother Nature threw a real curve ball to all those staying at Raquette Lake. David Miller, distinguished teaching professor and chair of geology, and Diane Craft, professor of physical education, each had SUNY Cortland student groups at Camp Huntington. They were the last two groups for the fall season scheduled to come to Pine Knot.



A SUNY Cortland van blazing the trail

The groups arrived at Antlers in vans from the campus fleet Friday afternoon. They enjoyed the pontoon boat ride over on a mild afternoon and spent Saturday involved in their scheduled activities. Saturday evening, shortly after dinner, it began to snow. There was nothing in the forecast so no one paid much attention to the snow. As the evening went on the heavy, wet snow began to accumulate rapidly. Still, there was nothing in the weather forecast to worry about.



At 3:30 in the morning the power from the mainland went off. Power outages up here are quite common, so again, I didn't think much of it. After about 30

minutes the power was still not on. I got up and started the generator. I do not like to do this too early because of the noise, but without it there would be no heat or water in the dorms. As it became light outside, we saw the effect of the heavy, wet snow. Tree branches were broken and bent. Some trees had actually fallen over from the wet snow and wind.

It was decided at breakfast that the groups would return to Cortland shortly after they ate breakfast and cleaned up. As I went down to prepare the pontoon boat for their departure, I was greeted with a real surprise. The weight of the heavy, wet snow had collapsed the aluminum roof on the 40-foot pontoon boat. We began to shovel off the roof but the damage had already been done. The roof was so low that I actually hit my head on one of the bent supports as I walked to the helm.

It was a slow ride back to Antlers. The wind was blowing about 20 knots out of the northwest and the temperature was now down in the 20s! Once we arrived at Antlers, the students carried, lugged, dragged, and skidded their gear to their respective vans. The only problem was that every van they brought was stuck! Each van had to be towed with a chain to the paved road through the slop. After about two hours all the vans were out and on their way.



Clearing snow from the Barque

We didn't know the road was closed between Blue Mountain Lake and Old Forge. While driving to Old Forge, the groups encountered conditions like they had never seen before and

probably won't ever want to see again. Trees and wires were all over the road. About an hour later, after weaving their way through the tangled mess, they finally arrived in Old Forge. As they drove south to Cortland, the roads improved.



I am sure it was a Camp Huntington visit that will never be forgotten. The storm was very localized. Twenty-five miles in any direction, the snow was nearly non-existent. Power was restored after four-and-a-half days. The generator, which we were very lucky to have, ran out of fuel on the third day. When the snow melted, there were trees and branches on the ground everywhere. It looked like a war zone.

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMPRISE A MAJOR PORTION OF CAMP HUNTINGTON'S WINTER SCHEDULE

During this past winter, we hosted school groups from the following schools: Bolton Middle School, Broadalbin Perth Middle School; Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES; Homer Junior High School; and New Hartford High School. Each of these programs returns to Raquette Lake every winter to take advantage of its unique learning environment. I wish to extend my thanks to all the teachers and staff who make the trips possible. I also would like to thank the school administrators and parents who make these educational opportunities available to the students. How many schools can actually say they have teachers and students stay at a National Historical Landmark as part of their curriculum?

Winter certainly provided our school groups with fantastic conditions. In recent years, an effort has been made to purchase cross-country skis and snowshoes that are better suited to meet the needs of our younger users. Many of the winter nature interpretation programs utilize this equipment. Groups are able to ski or snowshoe over to St. Williams Church on Long Point. With the use of the snowshoes, the groups are able to get off the trail system and bushwhack to find animal tracks. While some of the tracks are quite common, like the white-tailed deer, other elusive tracks include coyote, fisher, otter, pine martin and snowshoe hare. Groups that go out on night hikes have heard the coyotes calling and others, owls communicating with one another. A few years ago, we actually had a great horned owl attack a fur hat a student was wearing. Now that is an experience to talk about back in school!

The students do everything from building and sleeping in quincy huts to taking a dip in the icy lake and then going into the sauna. A lot of these groups will return during the spring and fall seasons. It is the same physical environment, but Mother Nature provides a whole new menu of opportunities.



Homer Junior High School

