



SUMMER 2019 NEWSLETTER

RANGER SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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FROM THE RSAA PRESIDENT:

The Board has been continuing to work towards updating our contract with SUNY. The SUNY ESF administration has been very helpful and supportive of the RSAA in this matter. Their lawyer has been working closely with ours to get all the paperwork in order. A “soft” internal audit will be conducted by main campus staff to help us prepare for the annual external audits that are required for the contract. They are also helping us set up and update our records in their Raiser’s Edge system. We will be making a report on the contract at the August General Membership Meeting. Look for a mailing containing the updated Bylaws soon. Please look over these documents before Reunion. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (tanskiae@gmail.com).

We are currently looking for submissions for the 2019 Alumni News! If you have any articles, memories, photos, artwork, maps, anything, please send it in! We accept submissions at any time. If it doesn’t make it in time for this year’s news, it will be included in the next. Please forward submissions to Gail (rsaagail@esf.edu) or myself (tanskiae@gmail.com).

Looking forward to seeing you all in August!!

Ariane Tanski ‘09

GREETINGS FROM YOUR 1ST VP

& SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE CHAIR:

I would just like to remind everyone that our website is still a work in progress and anyone who has the technological savvy and desire to help with this undertaking should reach out to me. We are hopeful that we can get it ready for an online dues paying system and also online reunion registration by the end of this year. We are still looking for pictures of alumni events for the website, those can be emailed to: nysrsaa@gmail.com

Please check out our website at nysrsaa.org We’d love to hear any feedback that you may have, both the good and the bad. What would you like to see on there that the framework is not there for yet? What do you want of see more of? Do you have better pictures for our background images? All of this and more, we want to hear about.

Remember, you don’t need to be on the board to get involved.

Have a great summer and see you in August!

Christi Barber, 2010

FROM THE TREASURER:

Another year of travel on this big “Blue Marble”, we call home, through the “Space-Time Continuum”. The journey has been quite intriguing since the beginning of this year, but all we can do is concentrate on our little portions and make the best of it.

The RSAA Board of Directors has met with Main Campus officials, regarding our affiliation contract. Albany is being very persistent in pushing policy and practice controls on to all non-profit groups statewide, thusly pushing enforce of these on our small organization. The process required us to hire a law firm to review our corporate certificate, make revisions and upgrades to our constitution/bylaws, and to establish long need policy statements for handling of funds. All good things but burdensome.

As I mentioned in the previous newsletter, an outside audit is required which will cost approximately \$5,000. What I did not realize was that Albany wants this done on a yearly basis. I guess they think all the small non-profits are rolling in money. Anyway, the ESF Alumni Association has had to do all of this also. They are sharing their list of CPA’s contacted and bid request letters, for guidance. Main Campus is also trying to help us with an internal audit, as a prep for the external. I guess we’ll find out if your faith in me, to be Treasurer, is well founded. I’m sure things will need to be modified and upgraded on my end.

Thank you for the generous donations to help cover our added contract expenses. As always, you are the most consistent and generous in this ongoing effort “To keep in Touch.” Thanks and see you at REUNION.

Bruce E. Williams ‘76

85th Annual Ranger School Reunion
Friday, August 2nd & Saturday, August 3rd, 2019

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

The Ranger School, 2018-2019, was another great year. We received students from as far away as Missouri. The School attracts large numbers of individuals hoping to secure an outdoor-related profession. Our graduates continue to find excellent employment opportunities. This year, for example 80% of graduating Ranger School students had jobs-in-hand on graduation day.

One of the legacies of RS'2019 is the new solar-powered flood light for flag pole in front of the School. This year's class was very respectful of the flag, and, daily, lowered and raised the flag. They pushed for night lighting, which was installed in May. The Class honored Mr. Mike Webb for his involvement with the project, by placing a special plaque on the battery case. Previously I had reported a faculty search last year. **Dr. Vanessa Rojas** started teaching GIS, wildlife, and entomology this past fall. She was well-received by the class, and has made a good start in her Ranger School career. We also conducted a search to replace Mr. Michael Webb, who retired after graduation in May. The search resulted in hiring Mr. Jeremy Thompson, RS'97, as primary instructor for the land surveying technology program. Jeremy will start work later this summer.

We are also anticipating another large class of students in 2019-2020. This new class will break the record for both the number and percentage of female students. I don't know what the ratio was for your class, but this year we anticipate almost 40% female students. We will also be welcoming students from Florida, California, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Indiana, and New Jersey. Ranger School has a national reputation.

Professor Jamie Savage took a sabbatical leave during the fall semester, and we were fortunate to hire **Mr. Paul Jones, RS'78**, to teach Natural Resources Measurements. Paul's previous teaching experiences, and his Ranger School connection, really helped out, and he did a great job.

One of our faculty members, **Mr. Greg Vaverchak**, earned tenure this year, granting him permanent appointment as a faculty member. He was also recipient of the President's Quality of Work Life Award for Public Service. Greg has one of the best-recognized faces of ESF, and the Ranger School in southern St. Lawrence County.

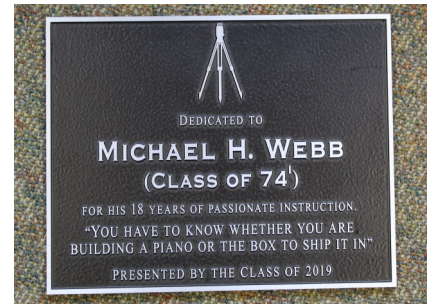
You may recall from a previous communication that the RS faculty have been evaluating our newest program, Environmental and Natural Resources Conservation (ENRC). After receiving feedback from previous classes, holding our first advisory committee for the ENRC program, and numerous faculty discussions, we made revisions which affected all three of our current programs. The revisions were approved by the College's Committee on Curriculum, and we'll implement these changes in the fall of 2019.

Once again we hired an "endowed technician", using Foundation funds to employ a recent Ranger School graduate to work for the School during the summer. This year, we were able to get **Will Story, RS'2019**, who is working on a number of projects.

Finally, may I thank each of you who has referred, or recommended, a student for the Ranger School. We continue to receive high-quality students, referred by alumni. Many of our students also tell of a personal connection, or referral, which started them thinking about the School. You have a vital role in recruiting new students and keeping the School strong.

Please feel free to contact me at bridgen@esf.edu, or 315-848-2566 x 105.

— Dr. Michael Bridgen



Dr. Vanessa Rojas



Mr. Paul Jones, RS'78



Will Story, RS'2019



THE NORTHERN ADIRONDACK REGIONAL ENVIROTHON

For a number of years now, the Franklin County Soil and Water office along with the Essex, Clinton and Saint Lawrence offices, have invited me to create and administer the forestry exam for the Northern Adirondack Regional Envirothon (NARE). The NARE is a hands-on environmental education competition where teams of five high school students work together in hopes of winning scholarships and awards. The teams compete in five different environmental categories (i.e., soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife and current environmental issues.) This event is funded by donors (the Ranger School being one) and soil and water staff (www.fcsxcd.org).

Despite being hosted by Paul Smith's College, the Ranger School presence was strong. This year had a record number of alumni volunteering. They were, from left to right in the included picture: myself, **Kristin Hrobuchak '07**, **Devin Normandeau 2018**, **Allie Holmes 2016** and **Aaron Barrigar '08**.

While reflecting on the enjoyable day I couldn't help but feel honored to contribute to the successful event which has run for decades! Not only was my predecessor at the forestry station an alumni (associate professor emeritus, **Wayne Allen '79**), but the event was established and developed under the hard work of other dedicated alumni including **Dawn Howard '79** and **Bob Brower '78**.
 — **Gregory M. Vaverchak '02**, Assistant Professor



RANGER SCHOOL ALUMNI HOCKEY GAME

On March 9th at the Tenny Ice Skating Pavilion on Syracuse's south campus, the class of 2019 faced off against the alumni in a fast paced alumni hockey game. Both benches were overflowing, as were the bleachers. Everyone came out for the game of the year! The game started off with a quick goal (the first shot) by Ryan Pietrzyk which got the students off and running. However, they were quickly overcome by the mighty alumni. The students managed two more goals and Rachel Buchner stopped close to 40 shots on net, but ultimately the Bridgen cup was hoisted into the air by the alumni, bringing the students winning streak to an end. Alumni goals were scored by Locke, Anderson, McCartney, Cooley, Fleming, Hanson, Henrie and both of the Johnston brothers. Another Ranger School Hockey Club season has come to an end. The equipment has been put up and the ice has returned to the trees.

Commissioner Vaverchak '02

SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Hello fellow alumni and associates,

We had another busy work weekend this past weekend despite the falling snow all day. We ran a new electrical line to the alumni garage. We installed a light inside the garage, an outlet inside the garage, and a new motion detector flood light on the outside. We also cut and stacked lots of wood, repaired and replaced worn plumbing pipes, extended the bathroom exhaust pipe so it vents outside. The kitchen and the house got cleaned. We even had some people get under the house to try and jack up the sagging floor.

Unfortunately due to the snow, cold, and high water, we were unable to repair the alumni dock. We going to have a warmer weather alumni work day on Saturday June 8th if anyone would like to help us repair or replace the dock.

As always everyone had a great time and lots of food was consumed. A special thanks goes out to the following people for their help this past weekend:

Lee and Sue Berry class of '68, Les Buell '61, Ed Goodrich '61, Mike Webb '74, John Adams '82, Ariane Transki '09, Tim Dinse'78, Greg Vaverchak '02, Bruce Williams '79, Joan Macholl and her friend Ron '83, Steve Whalen '71 (tell your wife thanks for the cookies Steve) , **Chris and Cheryl Tcimpidis '93, Jim Fish '62 and his daughter Amy, Rob Cole '02, Noah Herne '96, Travis Hamilton and his wife Casey '03, Montana and Mandy Cassavaw and his tractor ' 09, Scott Reddick (honoray),** and a big thanks to our chef extraordinaire **Bob Brower '78** for the wonderful Chicken and Rib barbecue on Saturday night.

I hope I didn't forget anyone else. I hope you all enjoy your stay at the alumni house and campground.

Sincerely, **Mike Bushey '94** Second V.P. RSAA.

* Editor's note: The new dock should be arriving any day now. Thanks to our many donors that gave to the dock fund!



WANAKENA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
PO Box 73
WANAKENA, NY 13695

REUNION 2019

MORE GOOD NEWS FROM THE WANAKENA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION!

On May 17, demolition (garage) and reconstruction work began on the historic house at 21 Second Street in Wanakena that will soon become the **WHA History Center**. Most of the construction work is to be complete on or around July 4th. The WHA will soon have a permanent place to display the historic wood clock gifted to the WHA at the 2018 alumni reunion. This gift from the Knickerbocker brothers and the Ranger School will soon have a place of honor proudly displayed on a fireplace mantle in Wanakena. Current plans are to have a dedication and grand opening on July 4, 2020, which also happens to be the 20th anniversary of the founding of the WHA.

The Kermit E Remele Award & historic clock continues to be on display at Otto's Abode in 'downtown' Wanakena for the community to view and appreciate.

The WHA plans to dedicate space for a permanent exhibit to share the history of the Ranger School and its link to the survival of the Wanakena hamlet. We will continue to partner with the Ranger School through Gail Simmons & Mike Bridgen to strengthen our partnership related to maintaining, promoting and now exhibiting the history of the area.

The WHA has applied and plans to continue applying for grants to support the initial efforts, as well as raise donor funds to furnish the space with display cases, lighting, posters, shelves and file cabinets to provide storage for documents and photographs.

Visit the Wanakena Historical Association Facebook page or webpage www.wanakena.com/history-center to see progress as we create the History Center.

— Allen Ditch, President

Wanakena Historical Association.

Congratulations to the Class of 1969 on their 50th anniversary of graduation!

We have many activities lined up, some old and some new. Check out the full schedule of events, but there will still be time to reconnect with old friends, make new friends, go on some tours, and eat good food and relax! Don't forget our exciting raffle, silent and live auctions. All are welcome to donate to this. It helps pay expenses.

We also ask if you are bringing your dogs, please keep it on a leash at all times, and away from the serving and dining areas.

Bats, balls, basketballs, volleyballs or soccer balls will be provided at the athletic field, for any who wish to participate in such pastimes. There will be a limited number of canoes and paddles available

Please remember to be courteous of our fellow alumni and their families with noise, pets, and fire safety.

Thank you to all our volunteers for help with the reunion and their ideas!

— The Reunion Committee!