FROM THE DIRECTOR:

As hard as it is for me to believe, this will be the last time that I write to you as the Director of the Ranger School. After nearly 25 years as faculty member with 18 of those years serving as Director, I have decided to retire in July. This was a difficult decision to make but I know that it is the right decision for me and for my family.

Since officially announcing my retirement last fall I have spent quite a bit of time reflecting on the past 25 years spent at the Ranger School, as well as, my year as a student and two years as a program technician. My memories include many thoughts on a wide range of accomplishments, unique challenges undertaken, daily interactions with dedicated and enthusiastic students, great colleagues, and very active and supporting alumni. As I retire from the Ranger School I would like to take the opportunity to thank each of you for the impact that you have had on my career and my life. It has been a great experience and one I will not forget!

A sincere and special thanks to my family, Sue, Tim and Maria for their unending companionship, good humor, support and tolerance during my years as Director. There were times when sacrifices needed to be made by my family and they did so without complaint. I thank them for playing such an active role in my career.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Michael Bridgen on his appointment as the 14th Director of the Ranger School beginning July 1st. Mike and I have been working closely together over the past academic year to insure a smooth transition of the Directorship. I am confident that Mike will provide excellent leadership as the Ranger School begins the next 100 years.

I am pleased to announce that Gregory Vaverchak ’02 will be joining the faculty as an Instructor beginning in the fall semester. Greg has been serving as an Instructional Support Associate and we are pleased that Greg will now be a member of the faculty.

In January we welcomed Mr. John Shaylor as our Food Service Manager replacing Brad Woodward who left the Ranger School in August. I would like to thank Mary Hooven for coming back to fill in for about 6 months as we searched for a replacement for Brad.

Your overwhelming support of the $500,000.00 Centennial Campaign is most appreciated. We recently reached the $158,000.00 mark of the campaign. If you have not yet made a centennial gift, I encourage you help show your support of the Ranger School at the time of our Centennial. Gifts can be made either by mailing your contribution to at the Ranger School or you can make your gift on-line at our Centennial Webpage.

By the time you read this, the class of 2013 will have graduated. They have been a great class and leave here with the intent of either continuing their education in their chosen field or entering the work place.

Again, my sincere thanks to all who have helped to make my years as the Ranger School an experience I will never forget. I thank each of you for the confidence you have shown in me as I led the Ranger School for 18 years. I hope to see many of you at this year’s reunion!

--Christopher L. Westbrook ’73

RECRUITMENT:

“Many alumni have asked, ‘How can I help recruit students for the Ranger School’? May I suggest that you bring a friend to reunion. Many of you have friends, such as high school math teachers or guidance counselors, or Boy Scout leaders, or others who work with youth. If you can show your friends the School, they will be able to talk about it with future interested students. You can offer to pay for their meals, drive together, and enjoy the weekend activities. This will be an effective way to show off the School, and build a better friendship at the same time.—Mike Bridgen

Congratulations to Chris!

We appreciate your support and dedication. You will be remembered for the things that you did for the Ranger School and the Alumni Association. Just as your work has been long and satisfying, we wish you a long and satisfying retirement!

See you at Reunion!

79th annual
RANGER SCHOOL ALUMNI REUNION
Friday, August 2nd & Saturday, August 3rd, 2013
From the RSAA President:
Greetings RS Alumni, Families and Friends,
While 2012 was a year of celebration of the 100th anniversary of the ESF Ranger School, 2013 will bring changes. The leadership of the Ranger School is going to change, Chris Westbrook our current director, has decided to move on to the life of retirement and the reins are going to be handed over to Dr. Michael Bridgen. I would like to take this opportunity to commend Chris for all of his years of dedication, commitment and leadership as Director of the Ranger School and look forward to the future of the Ranger School being under the guidance of Michael Bridgen.
At same time the Ranger School is going through changes, so to, is the Alumni Association. One change being the Office Manager position. More on that subject found in this newsletter.
As I near the end of my two year term as President, I believe the RSAA will thrive into the future with these changes. During my term as President, I have had the opportunity to be part of an organization that has great history of traditions. These traditions will be carried on to future generations, as the Alumni Association keeps moving forwards in evaluating and managing our organization's operations and running it as efficiently as possible. This can only be established as new and old Alumni take roles in the many functions and goals that our Association has to offer.
I hope to see many of our Alumni and friends attend our annual reunions, year after year, for this wonderful time honored tradition.
Respectively, Randy Paquin '77

RSAA Office Manager Committee:
After two years of research and discussion about potential changes in the way the RSAA and its Office Manager conduct business, some changes have been made.
These are changes that are intended to save money for the association as well as to allow the office manager to be able to re-assume the half-time position it was originally intended to be.
Over the years and for many reasons, Gail Simmons has had many duties added to her plate simply by default. Gail being Gail, when there has been a void, she has filled it and many of the extra hours have been donated by her.
Realizing that this could not and should not continue indefinitely, then President Bob Diehl, appointed a committee to identify duties that could be assigned to volunteers and also to research the offers of help from the Syracuse campus and its Office of Alumni Affairs.
It is hoped that the results of these efforts will soon bear fruit. Some of the recommendations are already in place, others are in transition. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by our President Paquin, College President Dr. Murphy, and ESF Alumni President Gilbert outlining and explaining the new arrangement.
This new arrangement will be explained and questions answered at the annual membership meeting in August. In the meantime, we hope that this transition will appear as seamless as possible.
Dave Hayner ’68
1st Vice President

From the RSAA Treasurer:
Ah! Spring has finally sprung. The snow has gotten so low you can see the mud again, for the third or fourth time. And the birds are making so much noise it’s hard to concentrate.
The good news is that RSAA has enough money to cover taxes and bills, for now. The Treasurer’s finally getting off the valium.
The sky is actually blue.
As usual the Alumni have kept funds flowing and continue to be ever so generous. Please keep up the good work, stay in contact, and above all else remain healthy so that we all can see each other at the Reunion.
Bruce E. Williams ’76

Ian Freeburg, RS Class of 2006, was a hard-working guy this year. During spring semester, while finishing his graduate work at ESF, Ian also taught Dr. Bridgen’s classes at the Ranger School, including silviculture, timber harvesting and wood identification. Ian was also awarded the Farnsworth Memorial Fellowship by the FNRM Graduate Education Committee.
The Farnsworth Fellowship is presented to a currently matriculated MS and/or PhD student who demonstrates and holds promise for scholarship and service in forest and natural resources management. The fellowship program honors the late Professor C. Eugene Farnsworth Jr., who was appointed to the Ranger School faculty in 1930, later became a professor of silviculture at ESF, and spent more than 50 years in forestry and education.
Ranger School Archives Project

Mike Bridgen took a sabbatical leave during the spring 2013 semester, and has been working on the Ranger School Archives. He has organized old documents, arranged photographs, (http://www.flickr.com/photos/rangerschool/collections/) and written a few short stories about “Alumni Tales”. You can read a story about the Class of 1913 at: http://cefts.org/new/?p=359
The Archive Room will be open for display during the Alumni Reunion.

Missing volumes of the Alumni News.

The Alumni News has been successfully published since 1927, and we’re trying to keep one volume from each year for the Archive Room. We are missing volumes from the following years:


If you have any of these volumes, and are willing to donate them to the Archive Collection, please send them to Mike Bridgen c/o Ranger School.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION:

As part of our centennial celebration, this year’s Alumni hockey game with students was held in Star Lake, NY, on February 2, 2013. It was touch-and-go for a while, as the rink was melted just three days before the game, but the rink managers worked night and day to get into shape for the game. It was the first hockey competition played at the Clifton-Fine Arena for many years.

Thirteen alumni and former players played against a home team of eighteen students. One of the team captains, Dylan McCartney (see attached photo) arranged for new team jerseys and even a celebratory giant cookie. The alumni team won, and everyone had a good time.

Another centennial event held on February 2 this year was the Centennial Soiree, a nice gathering at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake, NY. Over sixty guests, including some current students, faculty, alumni, and their spouses and guests enjoyed a private showing of the Center, a great meal, great music and even dancing! Both Dr. Ross Whaley, former ESF President, and the current President, Dr. Cornelius Murphy, attended.

Dr. Michael R. Bridgen, Professor

Wanakena Historical Association

The WHA is looking for photos of the historic Wanakena footbridge. We have many recent photos, but we are looking for more that range the 110 years the bridge has been here. All originals photos will be returned after we scan or duplicate them.

In addition, any other Wanakena pictures you wish to share with the WHA archive, will be appreciated.

You can send them to the Wanakena Historical Association, PO Box 73, Wanakena, NY 13695.
Greetings all,

It was another fabulous weekend for the RSAA work weekend. We had 14 Alumni in attendance and a grand total of 25 alumni, friends and family. The Legacy Rock trail was completed and is ready for the dedication. The campground road got some patching and smoothing out. Wood was gathered and distributed throughout the campgrounds. Railing got painted along with some picnic tables and the canoe rack. Bill Mager ’74 brought his sons Justin and Jon. The boys brought with them Paul Chmielowiec who is a professional painter. Paul brought painting supplies and paint which he donated to us for the house. Paul and Jon painted the upstairs hallway, one of the upstairs bedrooms and the whole living room. I find it incredible the generosity of people who never went to the school but are willing to volunteer to help because they know the love and connection we all share as alumni. Friday night we all enjoyed a huge cook out, campfire and “back when I went to the Ranger School” stories. I would first like to thank Gail Simmons for her work as always above and beyond and smothered in love. I am grateful to Bill, Justin, and Jon Mager and their friend Paul. Without your skillset and tools we would never get as much done as when you are around. Bob Simmons Thanks for securing us a tractor and showing me how to turn on the water to the house. And in no particular order Thanks to the following for your help and enthusiasm: Bruce Williams ’75, John Adams ’82, John Graves ’69, Jim Helmbrecht ’70, Tim Dinse ’78, Joanne Stang, Jim Fish, Bob Brower ’78 and his son Maxwell, Steven and Jean Whalen ’71, Randy Paquin ’77, Jeff Speech ’90 and Christopher Westbrook.

A very special thank you to Scott and Spruce Reddick for always showing up to support our association. Spruce is the daughter of Ovid White from the class of 1949. Ovid White passed away on April 26. At Ovid’s request Spruce and Scott came up to the work weekend the next day. We all send you our condolences, thoughts, and prayers.

And now I need to ask you all for help. The furniture in the living/dining room needs to be updated. The RSAA is asking for donations in any amount to raise some funds to replace the old stuff. Any donations can be sent to the office managers with a note for Alumni House Furniture Donation.

Thank you all again, see you at the reunion!

Noah Herne ’96 Second VP RSAA

---

**Blue Ox News**

This year has been a very notable one in many respects. The Blue Ox Woodsmen Team is celebrating its tenth year of inter-collegiate competition (as well as several years internationally). This year’s group competed in eight different events. Five of those in the fall semester which is more than most teams do in a year. On September 29th, the group put on a demonstration as part of the Centennial Celebration. Mountain Lake PBS aired a small clip entitled Festivities in the Forest (http://borderlessnorth.org/videos/festivities-in-the-forest-esf-ranger-school) which showcased several scenes from the demonstration as well as interviewing two members of the team. Competitions began on October 6th in Canandaigua, New York for the Fall Festival hosted by Finger Lakes Community College and appropriately ended there on April 19th and 20th for the 67th Annual Northeast Woodsmen Conclave. The team numbers declined over the year and only seven tenacious individuals made the trip. The group was only the second team to score over 1000.0 points with a record high of 1280.9 points. Ben Peak was this year’s recipient of the Frank A. Reed Memorial Scholarship ($1000.00). The scholarship is given out annually to a student either from Paul Smiths or the Ranger School at the Annual Woodmen’s Club meeting and banquet in Long Lake, New York. This is the fourth year in a row that a Ranger School student has received it making it five times in all. To all of the friends, family and alumni that have supported the team this year, many thanks. I would like to especially thank Ariane Tanski ’09, Ian Freeburg ’06 and Will Roberts ’03 for all of your help in making it the year that it has been. Check out photos and videos of the team’s performance on the Ranger School Facebook page.

Blue Ox Woodsmen Team Advisor Robert T. Fleming ’96

---

**The Legacy Rock & the Alumni Memorial Scholarship**

As mentioned in the winter newsletter, an Alumni Memorial Scholarship will be created, and endowed when the fund reaches the necessary level.

A trail has been built along the river near the alumni lean-to, and a heavy plaque will be installed on the rock face explaining the Trail and why it was established. The spot will be called the Legacy Rock.

The plaque reads:

**The Legacy Rock**

This area has been set aside as a place for quiet contemplation in memory of those who have left a legacy to the Ranger School Alumni Association.

The first name entered underneath will be Gordon Hughes’56, as he was the first donor.

Please consider donating to this fund, the sooner we can endow this scholarship, the sooner we will be able to financially support a worthwhile student. Checks may be sent to the RSAA Office at any time. Please make checks payable to the RSAA and note on the check that it is for the Alumni Scholarship. Thank you in advance for your consideration and generosity.”

We plan on dedicating the Legacy Rock at reunion on Friday afternoon at 4 PM from the alumni house.