

# Ranger School Alumni Association

257 Ranger School Rd.  
PO Box 48  
Wanakena NY 13695  
315-848-2566 ext. 112  
Gail Simmons, Office Mgr.  
rsaagail@esf.edu



## SUMMER 2015

### Comments from the Director's Office:

The Ranger School Class of 2015 is now history. Members of the class (now, Alumni) not only were successful with their course work, many were very successful finding post-graduate employment. Several graduates accepted work in other states, including Alaska, California, Massachusetts, Montana, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Wyoming. Others took jobs in New York, some with private companies (Davey Tree, Land Vest, surveying firms, St. Lawrence Nursery), public agencies (New York City Department of Environmental Protection, APHIS) and state agencies (NYS DEC, Jefferson County).

Offering three programs (forest technology, land surveying technology, and environmental and natural resources conservation) opens up a wide variety of employment opportunities. Timber management, fire control, soil and water management, recreation, arboriculture, wildlife management, seedling production, land surveying, and control of invasive species – these are the types of careers our grads enter, and for which we prepare them. It is very gratifying to see so many graduates leave Wanakena with a job in hand!

During the coming summer, we may have some construction on campus. Recently, the State University Construction Fund approved almost \$2.4 million for the Ranger School, to improve entrances and address campus safety concerns. Other aspects of the project include storm water collection, tile abatement and replacement, and improved energy efficiencies. It will probably continue into the summer of 2016. The campus may not look much different after all the work is done, but it will be a better place to live and study.

The future of the School looks very good. We are anticipating another large class arriving in the fall of 2015. Our recent open houses have been very well attended, and we continue to recruit from BOCES programs and community colleges. Many students are recommended by alumni, and we support as many as possible using scholarship and endowment funds. We are grateful for the continued support we receive from the Alumni and other friends of the School. — Dr. Michael R. Bridgen, Director

### Greetings all!

This last two years have flown by and I couldn't be happier to have served all of my Ranger School brothers and sisters. I want to thank all my fellow board members who have supported me and worked so hard to keep our mission on track. I especially want to thank our office manager Gail. Without Gail a lot of the day to day work would not get done. Gail you have been a dear friend and colleague for many years. Thank you for all you do! All the support and love you have given to me personally and to our beloved Ranger School could never be measured.

I will continue to serve on the board in whatever capacity I can. I live very close to the school so it's easy for me to keep working for all of you and for our Ranger School!

We had a very productive and fun work weekend! It was great to enjoy the wonderful weather conditions and the company of our Ranger School family. Our spring meeting went well and we are gearing up for the reunion in August.

I want to remind all of you that you do not need to be a board member to participate on committees or to lend a hand setting and preparing for the Alumni reunion. A very small group of dedicated board members, led by Gail, do all the work. It's no small task either. So please, I ask that if you are interested in volunteering that you talk to any of the RSAA board members. We will gladly take you on and point you in the direction where you are needed.

We hope you all have safe travels and I look forward to seeing you all at the reunion! Thank you!

Noah Herne '96  
RSAA President

### Standing Committee Volunteers:

Several years ago the RSAA revised and updated its Constitution & Bylaws. Among those changes were revisions to **Article VIII, Section 2** which lists the five standing committees, BOD chairpersons, minimum number of voting members needed, and general description of duties.

So far the BOD Members at Large have been the voting member portion of these committees. But there are only so many of them to adequately do committee work. The intent had been to facilitate general membership participation on these committees. We are now at the point where more members are needed to progress positive actions and to generate more ideas. Some of the committees face daunting tasks such as Recruitment and Reunion. To meet these needs and to stimulate the necessary thinking it will be advantageous to institute the recommendations spelled out in our Constitution.

To this end I ask and implore you as members of the RSAA to consider which committee on which you could best utilize your years of valuable experience. This will be a topic of discussion at the August BOD meeting and at the Annual meeting. Suggestions and volunteers are encouraged. I suspect e-mail will be a major part of the committee communications plan and at least one, maybe two, face to face meeting. Please think these opportunities over and express yourselves openly. See you at the Reunion.

Respectfully,  
Bruce E. Williams, '76;  
Past Bylaws Committee and  
Current Treasurer.

**Treasurer:**

Ah, spring is here. Torrential rains, Blizzard conditions, Tropical Storms, and Severe Drought all in just one week. But enough about the regular hazards of life. Ranger School is a much safer place to be.

As for the RSAA finances, all is in relatively good shape. Between the dues payments and the members always generous giving there has been enough money to pay the bills, meet payroll, pay any necessary taxes, and squirrel away some rainy day funds. The Reunion bills have already started coming in but we are in good shape to cover those.

Questions have been asked as to the status of the Legacy Fund. John and I have gone back thru the records since its inception in 2013, starting with the Gordon Hughes bequeath. As of March 30, 2015 there is \$19,141 in this account. We are well on our way to the \$25k goal and beyond. Soon the RSAA can start supporting qualifying students from this Fund. At graduation a total of \$2600 was given out to the Class of 2015 in 7 different gifts and awards. We may soon be able to increase this amount also.

Many thanks to all of the Alumni who, as always, give so generously and so often. Keep up the excellent work and stay healthy. See you all at Reunion, "God will- ing and the River don't rise!"

Respectfully, Bruce E. Williams, '76

**Spaulding Memorial Alumni House News:**

Work weekend 2015 proved to be a successful event. All projects that were planned were completed. Improvements included rebuilding the grill, painting the floor on the first level, rebuilding the crawlspace access, fire wood processing, and many others. The most ambitious project relocated the canoe rack to the garage along with the paddles and PFDs. This has eliminated the need for campground users to enter the house (which is usually occupied) to get paddles and PFDs. I would like to thank everyone for helping make this a success. Your hard work improves everyone's experience when they come to visit.

Among the many improvements we made with cleanup, we combined some redecorating too. With donated funds, we were able to purchase a new futon and cover for the living room. We are also replacing some leftover items, and hope to improve the looks of the house interior.

Do you have a picture of a memorable alumni event that you would like to share? Perhaps it is of your classmates at a reunion, an exhausting work weekend, or your child catching their first fish out of the Oswegatchie at the alumni campground. The special projects committee would like such pictures. We will select various pictures, frame them, and hang them in the alumni house for everyone to enjoy. If you would like to submit a photograph, bring it to the reunion this August. If you will not be in attendance, it can be emailed to [gmvaverc@esf.edu](mailto:gmvaverc@esf.edu) or mailed to me at the School. Thanks for helping to document all of the good times that we have had.

Greg Vaverchak '02

**Class of 2015:**

Dear Ranger School Alumni Association,

My name is Karl Hunter and I am the 2015 class President. I wanted to write this to you to thank you for allowing us to use the alumni campground. It was the perfect spot to hold our end of the year class party! I'm sure it was harder here at Ranger School when your classes were coming through, but after a long hard year, it was nice to have a place to party that was close to the Ranger school so we didn't have to hike back from other party locations. *(You know where they are)* Special thanks to Bruce and John for coming down and staying at the alumni house that night and allowing us to store leftover food in the fridge. It was great to get to know you guys!

I'm typing this the day before we graduate. It seems August was a long time ago. This class looks forward to being a part of the Ranger School Alumni Association. This school has definitely impacted each and every student here. For most of us, in time we will look back at our time at Ranger School with fond memories, sitting around a campfire with other fellow alumni sharing stories about the crazy things we did so far removed from civilization; in this wonderful place we call Ranger school.

Thank you for accepting us into The Ranger School Alumni Association. We look forward to getting to know you at the Alumni Reunion, the Alumni Hockey Game, and the Alumni Work Weekend. Thank you.

Sincerely, Karl T. Hunter,  
2015 class President



**Wanakena Bridge Re-build Update**

Thank you to the many Ranger School Alumni who have donated so generously to the bridge rebuilding efforts. Much has been accomplished but there is much more left to be done. In a nutshell, the Town has accepted three of the four grants offered which amounts to \$185,000.

The community needs to match \$125,000. Of that, more than \$83,000 has been raised so far. There will be two large fundraisers this year: Bossie Bingo on July 4 and Bridge Day on August 15. Many of you bought raffle tickets last year for two beautiful quilts and an 18' canvas canoe. THANK YOU! The winners will be drawn on Bridge Day.

The architectural firm, Crawford and Stearns, has been hired by the Town Council to provide a bridge design and information needed for competitive bidding, solicitation of three price quotes, RFP's. etc. Once there is a design, then there will be more precise cost estimates.

For the most complete and up to date information, please go to <http://townoffline.org> and it will take you to the Town of Fine: Homepage. On the left hand side of the page you will see quick links. You can either: 1) Click on Meetings and then you will see Town Board Meeting, click on that and then you will see dates of meetings where all of the information on votes, proposals and agreements approved are; or 2) Click on Wanakena Footbridge Repair Project where you see Updates, Committee Meetings, Meetings with the State, etc.

**A special thank you goes out to all of the Ranger School Alumni who have volunteered their services and/or provided financial resources to the Project.**

Marsha Smith, President Wanakena Historical Association



*From the Archives:*

## Guardians of the James F. Dubuar Memorial Forest

By Kathy Greenwald '79

The 1915 Red Pine have watched over the Dubuar Forest for 100 years. In 1915, there was much work to be done to transform the 1,800 acre tract of cut over, partly burned land donated by the Rich Lumber Company in 1912 into a teaching forest. In an essay in the 1928 Alumni News, James F. Dubuar wrote "When the Ranger School was established, the name, 'College Forest,' appeared out of place. What forest could be found was in the embryo state." In that same issue, the first Director of the Ranger School, P.T. Coolidge, recalled that ground was broken for a tree nursery and the first plantation was established on the School forest in the spring of 1913. Not only did early student classes build the first School structures and dig a well for water, they reforested vast acres of cut over land.

Reforestation from 1913 to 1915 was limited to sample plots to see which species would grow. Professor E.F. McCarthy wrote a management plan which called for complete reforestation of Block I by the end of 1921 planting season. The 1915 Red Pine plantation covers an area of about 20 acres in Block I. McCarthy's goal was met and the students moved on to Block II which included Cathedral Rock.

Early hand written plantation records provide a wealth of information including the year, season, location, spacing, acres, age and species of trees planted; site description; development of (change in basal area, dbh) and any damage to (snow/ice, blister rust, porcupine), and treatment of (cleaning, pruning, and thinning) the plantation. About 20 acres of 4-year old red pine and Norway spruce seedlings were planted in spring, 1915. Records show the 1915 plantation was cleaned of undergrowth in 1927 and pruned during the winters of 1934-1935. In 1927-1932, species such as Scotch pine, jack pine, and white spruce were planted in areas where the red pine and Norway spruce failed to grow. In his 1928 essay, Dubuar defended the less valuable Scotch and jack pines by noting their importance as site savers - they can withstand adverse conditions better than native species and establish a crown cover which shades the ground and gradually causes a change in site conditions that favors the future growth of more valuable timber species on the site. Areas of the red pine and Norway spruce were thinned in the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, early 1990s, and in 2007-08.

The first pictures of the School forest were taken by Dean Hugh Baker from the College of Forestry in Syracuse during his initial inspection trip to the Ranger School site in 1912. In 1936, School staff began supplementing the written plantation records with a photographic log to visually document the development of the forest over time. Professor McCarthy took some pictures in 1934 and 1938 but it wasn't until 1939 when he loaned the Ranger School a 5x7 view camera belonging to the College of Forestry that the quality and consistency of the photographic record improved. The plan was to take subsequent pictures at the same photo points every 5 years and display them in an album to be seen by anyone who was interested, especially alumni. The first photo album was compiled in 1937 and updated in 1965. In 1980-1981, then Ranger School Forest Manager, James Crevelling, and Forest Technician, Wayne Allen, re-established all of the old photo points (marked by a wire pin in the ground) in the forest and took new photographs, added new photo points on land acquired later in time, and reorganized the old albums. Currently, there are 80 active photo points on the forest and photographs were last taken in 2008-09 using digital cameras with a plan to retake photographs every 10 years. Prints taken prior to 2008 have been scanned by SUNY ESF's Adirondack Forest Properties and are stored in a computer file with all of the Dubuar Forest photographs.



Photo point #29: 1915 Red Pine in 1936 (above) and after student logging in 2008

The famous 1915 Red Pine plantation is considered the oldest continuous intact stand on the Dubuar Forest and has earned a special place in the history of the Ranger School and in the hearts of alumni.

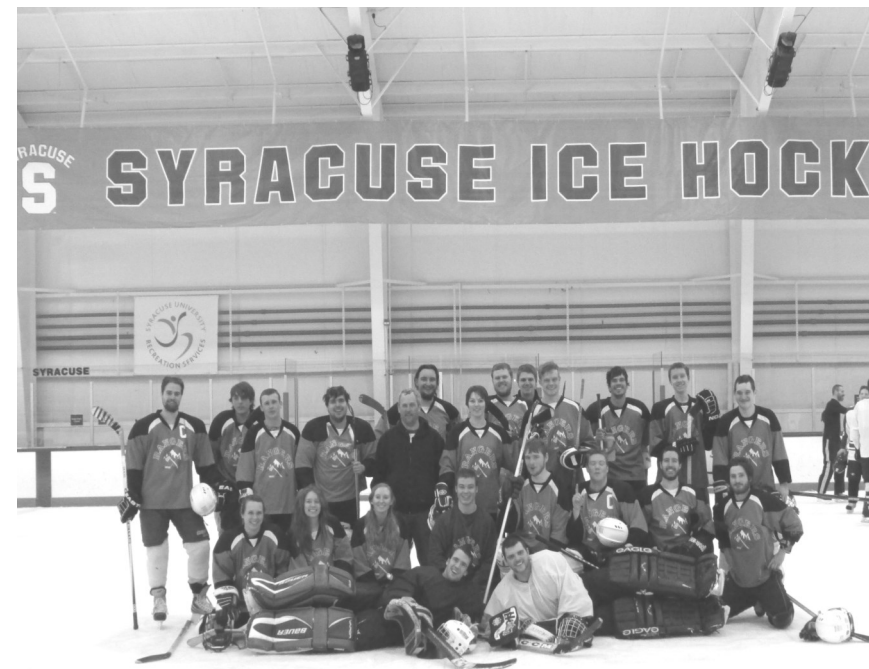
*with thanks to Wayne Allen '79,  
Bruce Breitmeyer and Mike Gooden,  
SUNY ESF Adirondack Forest Properties)*

## **The Sportsmen's Club**

The third weekend of April was a three day weekend for the students so the Sportsmen's Club took advantage of this by making a trip to the famed waters of Roscoe NY. Five students (Nick Kanauer, Joe Polfleit, Sam Ramos, Joe Sweeney, and Adam Wilckens) and I fished for three days on the East Branch of the Delaware and the Beaver Kill landing 35 trout in total. The fishing trip was the second one of the year in which we joined up with the TroutBums from main campus; the first being a trip to Pulaski in early November. Overnight camping was provided by TroutBums president and Ranger School graduate Alex Hascha (2013).

The Tuesday before graduation was an all-day recreation class which provided another opportunity for students to get out on the water. Thirteen students joined me in canoes on Star Lake and other area trout waters after getting blown off the lake. Many trout were landed as well as a few salmon. Overall this class was active with many sporting opportunities. I look forward to starting it back up in August.

—Greg Vaverchak '02, RSSC Warden.



On March 14<sup>th</sup> the class of 2015 sent their best to take on the alumni at Tennity Ice Pavilion in Syracuse to fight in the annual battle for the famed Bridgen Cup. Wearing green and orange jerseys the team dug deep and gave it their all. Despite having an intimidating banana on the team (Nick Pitrelli) and goals from Jon Crast and Tim Pietrzykowski, the alumni were victorious. Alumni goals were scored by Carl Twyman, Ryan Savage, Justin Coleman (2014), Matt Kendall ('01) and Mike Rozeski ('90). Thank you to all who participated. It was another memorable game and a great ending to the season.

Recently, there have been a number of requests from alumni to purchase Ranger School hockey jerseys. This fall when the team orders jerseys, I will order for alumni as well. They will be delivered in time for Christmas.

Get your order form at the reunion or the RSAA website at:

<http://www.esf.edu/rangerschool/alumni/>.

— Greg Vaverchak'02, RSHL Commissioner

## **THE NEW YORK SAFE ACT PROHIBITS FIREARMS ON LANDS HELD IN TRUST FOR ESF.**

Fellow alumni of The Ranger School, the Safe Act passed by the legislature and signed by the governor in 2013 has caused hardship on the recruitment of students. Many of the students that come to the Ranger School are looking forward to hunting the property while attending school. I have talked to students from the 2014 class and they were upset because of this injustice, however, they had paid their tuition and began the curriculum and had no desire to change institutions.

The good news if there is any is there is a bill in the legislature that would exempt lands held in trust for ESF and would allow firearms on the Ranger School forest once again. This bill would specifically amend 265.01-a of the penal law.

At present the bill is in the Codes committee of both houses of the legislature. In the Assembly it is A1126 and in the Senate it is A1126-2015. Assemblyman J. Lentol is chairperson of the Codes and has an e-mail address of [LentolJ@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:LentolJ@assembly.state.ny.us). In the Senate the chairperson is M. Nozzolio and has an e-mail address [nozzolio@nysenate.gov](mailto:nozzolio@nysenate.gov).

As many alumni as possible should write to these two individuals and alumni in NY should also write their own representative in the Assembly and Senate stressing the importance of allowing firearms back on the Ranger School forest. A search on the web can locate whom your representative is as well as their e-mail address. Although it is no longer mandatory, it would be great to restore this tradition.

Time is of the essence since you will be receiving this letter in late May or early June and our crystal ball can't tell us when the legislative session will end. It will be greatly appreciated by the Alumni board as well as the prospective students wanting to attend the Ranger School.

If there are questions, send me an e-mail at [berniebean07@gmail.com](mailto:berniebean07@gmail.com) and I will try and answer them. There is strength in numbers.

— Bernie Siskavich, "71" Alumni Board Member