

RANGER SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2017



RANGER SCHOOL NEWS:

Dr. Michael R. Bridgen: bridgen@esf.edu
Ranger School Director and Professor

The Ranger School continues to offer Associate of Applied Science degrees, preparing students to take employment in a variety of outdoor careers. In addition to the traditional degree in Forest Technology, the School also offers degrees in Land Surveying Technology, and Environmental and Natural Resources Conservation. During the last three years, an average of 77% of our graduates have accepted employment opportunities immediately following graduation. A large percentage of our students also transfer to ESF, continuing their education in natural resource management or sciences.

We have had some changes to the Ranger School faculty. **Mr. Gregory Vaverchak** (RS'2002) was promoted from instructor to assistant professor. Also, **Dr. Mariann Johnston** took a sabbatical leave during the spring 2017 semester. Her classes were filled by **Ms. Elizabeth (Bitsy) Daut** (RS'1982), of Berlin, VT. Some of you may remember **Mr. Joshua Harvey** (RS'2013), who became an instructional support associate in 2014. Josh resigned his position in February of this year to take a position at the DEC academy for Environmental Conservation Officers. **Ms. Samantha Oliveras** (RS'2015) has filled his vacancy. **Mr. Doug Crane**, a member of the Physical Plant, retired this year after 26 years of service to the College.

A new scholarship was established this year by a donation from Barbara Fecke, in memory of her husband **George Fecke** (RS'1952). He passed away November 2015. We are also in the process of establishing two new scholarships for Ranger School students. The **Legacy Scholarship** (also known as the Alumni Memorial Scholarship) was initiated by a gift from the estate of **Gordon Hughes** (RS'56), with contributions from many other alumni. This scholarship is intended to assist descendants or relatives of Ranger School graduates. Another one, the **Class of 1961 Scholarship**, was initiated by a challenge from an anonymous donor and quickly became large enough to endow. These scholarships are very important for attracting students to the Ranger School, many of whom struggle financially.

Several social activities added some variety to campus life. During a beautiful weekend in September, students' parents and families attended the Family Day. They all enjoyed some recreational activities, including a game of cricket, had a nice barbecue dinner, and shared some of the educational progress the class had already achieved. In November, numerous professional guests were invited to share a formal "Etiquette dinner" with the class. Students were asked to dress well, consume a four-course meal served by the faculty, while engaging in conversation with a prospective future employer. It was an intimidating, but successful, learning opportunity. In December, the School's hockey club participated in the Tyler Shaylor Memorial Hockey game, raising about \$2300 for the Watertown Urban Bridge Mission in Watertown, NY.

Finally, a new construction project has been initiated on the Wanakena campus. This \$2.3 million SUCF project will help to improve campus safety by modifying entrances to the main building. It will also improve the campus infrastructure, replacing old sanitary and storm sewer drains, redirecting storm runoff. The Physical Plant building will also be improved. The most noticeable change to campus will be the new, two-story main entrance, replacing the original 1928 sally port. Construction will continue until the fall of 2018.

83rd Annual Ranger School Reunion

Friday, August 4th & Saturday, August 5th, 2017

Greetings fellow Alumni!

I have been blessed and honored to have served as president of this great organization. With the end of my term approaching, I want to thank all of you for your continued support. The RSAA is behind many awards and scholarship's for deserving and appreciative students. As I sat on stage representing all of you at this year's graduation, I experienced great pride.

A want to thank you so much Gail, along with all the board members and all of the volunteers. The work they do and their personal sacrifices are remarkable. Our passion for the Ranger School along with the tremendous bond we share from having survived this difficult and rewarding education together are two major reasons we keep returning to this institution.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the reunion. I think you will be impressed by all of the improvements at the Alumni house and property.

Keep in touch! (And remember to like us on Facebook!)

Your Alumni President and friend,

Joan Macholl '83

Hello Everyone!

Congratulations to the Class of 2017 and Welcome to the RSAA!

We are always looking for submissions for the 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@yahoo.com).

We are continuing to work with main campus to set up a system to accept online payments. It has been an ongoing process, but we plan on having something in place in time for next year's dues. This is not meant to replace the current system, but to be used in addition to it. We'll be sure to get more details out to the membership as soon as they become available.

When making purchases from Amazon, don't forget about the RSAA! Every time you make a qualifying purchase from Amazon Smile, they will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the RSAA. There are a few steps you need to take for this to happen. When making purchases from Amazon access the site by going to smile.amazon.com and sign in using your Amazon account username and password. Search for New York State Ranger School Alumni Assn Inc. and select it in the results window. You can then shop the site as usual. In order for the Association to receive your donation you must sign in, and make your purchases from, smile.amazon.com.

I look forward to seeing you all in August!

1st Vice President Ariane Tanski '09

Alumni Properties & Projects By 2nd Vice President Bob Brower '78

On April 29th and 30th, we held another highly productive work weekend at the Spaulding Alumni House. Over 20 alumni showed up to tackle a myriad of tasks I had assembled and by goodness, we got a lot of them complete. Again, hats off to Mike Bushey for heading the painting detail. Mike personally painted the entire garage roof while folks like Ariana Tanski, Joanie Macholl, Bruce Williams and Matt ? tackled garage trim, the outside of the lean-to and the tank and cover for the house fuel storage. Greg Vaverchak, Chrissy and I jumped on doing some of the exterior paint on the porch as well. Steve and Bill Mager tackled redoing the screening and screen door on the porch replacing pieces; adding molding to keep the little bugs out and fixing the door where a dog got lose. Justin Mager and Noah Herne power washed the exterior of the house and then the Magers first tackled a kitchen plumbing issue and then tackled the electrical issue with power to the garage. Unfortunately, we are not able to fix that issue until next fall or spring as we have to dig up the old and install new conduit and wiring from the house to the garage and will need to hire a back-hoe. Jim Fish, Tim Dinse, Montana Cassavaw, John Adams, Lee Berry and Scott and Stefan (son-in-law and grandson of Ovid White '49) and two fellas who showed up from the class of 1958 (Hugh McMillian and John Meissner) spent the day cutting up logs, splitting and hauling firewood. And Sue Berry (Lee's bride) spent the day cleaning, scrubbing and organizing the kitchen, bathroom and the downstairs of the house itself.

On May 18th, the Ranger School Class of 2017 utilized the campgrounds for an end-of-year gathering. Noah Herne and Mike and Rose Rozeski were in attendance to welcome the class to the RSAA!

We hope everyone enjoys the house and campgrounds this summer and if you have issues, please do not hesitate to contact Gail, myself or any other Board member with your concerns or issues.

From the Archives:

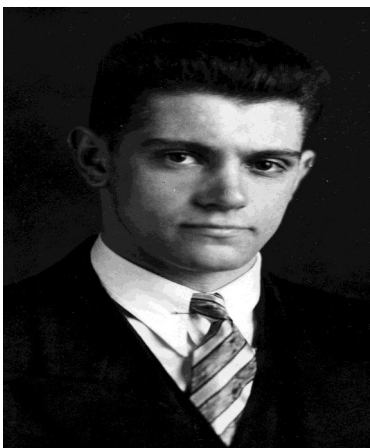
LETTERS TO BARNEY KOLB '33

By Kathy Greenwald '79

Keenly aware of my interest in the history of the Ranger School, my husband gave me a unique gift he found on the internet - a bundle of brittle letters addressed to Ranger School graduate, Barney Kolb. They had faded postmarks from the 1930s so I searched old Alumni News books until I found Bernhard Kolb in the Class of 1933. It seems that Kolb was quite the ladies' man with three women writing to him - "Birdie," Ginny, and Harriet. Birdie was the most prolific pen pal of the three. She often included quotes, quips, and newspaper clippings and colorfully signed her name after "*Chirpingly yours,*" "*Kisses galore and love unlimited,*" or "*Huggishly yours.*" Within the stack of love letters was a one page hand-written contract dated November 1, 1930 and signed by Barney and one of his Staunton Military Academy classmates. It said if "*Bernhard A. Kolb has not taken unto himself a wife by his 30th birthday, I, Andrew L. Morrow hereby submit to pay him \$25.*" My guess is that Andrew thought that was a safe bet!

The ultimate treasure in the bundle was an envelope with the Ranger School's return address. Inside was a four page hand-written letter from James F. Dubuar dated December 12, 1938! I never met the iconic Director but have felt his omnipotent presence in the Ranger School since arriving as a student in August, 1978. I expected Dubuar's tone to be as stern as his facial expression in the portrait of him hanging in the Ranger School. Instead, he was compassionate, reflective, and fatherly as he responded to a letter he had received from his troubled former student. Apparently, Barney Kolb feared that his abrupt departure from his Department of Agriculture job would blacklist him from future government jobs. Director Dubuar's words of encouragement included a hint of scolding as he said, "*In any case, you should buck up, you're young yet and hale & hearty & one can make life more or less what he wants it to be.*"

James F. Dubuar revealed an important influence on his life when he shared, "*Sgt. Gene Pierini in my company in the Army finessed a philosophy that has its points. Often when things seemed pretty much hay-wire he sang the song in which was repeated many times 'and the world goes round and round' and it does no matter what, & it's a sign to the individual to be not too downcast of misfortunes which are, most likely, only temporary to plague him, and by the same sign perhaps he should not float too high in the clouds when he is the favored one.*" In closing, Dubuar's tone was again a mixture of encouragement and "buck up" as he wrote, "*Don't get so down. I know it's hard not to but develop the capacity to take misfortune knowing it won't be that way always. It's the ups & downs that make life interesting.*"



Words that still ring true 80 years later.

So whatever happened to Barney Kolb? He attended the University of Idaho, graduated from the University of Michigan in 1936, served in the U.S. Navy during WWII, worked for the Department of Parks in NYC, and died in April 1984 at age 74. There was no mention of a wife or children in his obituary. To read the full text of James F. Dubuar's personal letter to Barney, stop by the Centennial Room during your next visit to campus.

From the WANAKENA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION:



WANAKENA FOOTBRIDGE UPDATE:

The Wanakena Footbridge is DONE! The dedication will take place on the morning of the 4th of July! It will be followed by a day of festivities and celebration.

We will not only celebrate the patriotic holiday, but the accomplishment of many people that helped in making this happen, and of course, celebrating their love for Wanakena.

What an accomplishment!

THANK-YOU & INVITATION TO THE FOOTBRIDGE DEDICATION

The Wanakena Historical Association Board of Trustees thanks the many, many Ranger School Alumni who generously contributed to rebuild the Wanakena Footbridge. After almost 3 ½ years of time dedicated to raising funds to rebuild the 112-year-old historic footbridge, we are elated to announce the dedication and celebration to recognize the hard work and dollars contributed by so many friends of Wanakena. Raising over \$180,000 in-cash donations, along with numerous grants to cover a final total cost of over \$440,000 is an amazing accomplishment for any community.

We hope that many of you will be able to join us on **JULY 4th at 10:30am** for the Dedication, a parade will follow at about noon. Other events and food (prepared by the Pinecone Grill) will be available throughout the morning and early afternoon.

We couldn't have done it without the RS Alumni support!! Hope to see you there.

Allen Ditch & Marsha Smith,
co-chairs of the bridge fund-raising committee.

REUNION 2017

With the construction project going on, this reunion may be a little different than the most recent ones. At this point we don't even know how many rooms we will have available, what sections of the building will be unavailable, or what parts of the administrative site will be off limits. BUT we are going to be able to have a reunion!

We have more 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!

We have many great features to our reunion this year, and possibly will be adding more in the meantime.

Some of the features are:

Retired Professor, **Jim Coufal '57** will be doing a nature poetry reading; Surveying Instructor **Mike Webb '74** will hold a dedication of "Station Charlie"; **Terry McKendree**, chainsaw carver/wood sculptor; slideshow presenter, **Gary Lee '63**; and **Ms. Linda Polin McGuigan RS '99** will do a presentation "The Return of the King: Developing a Blight Resistant American Chestnut Tree".

There will be crafts and activities for children of all ages; a photo scavenger hunt; a fun-run; boat trips, Key Log Rolling "Birling"; tours and hikes, along with the Award presentations.

There will be time to reconnect with old friends, make new friends, tour the school and forest, eat good food and relax. Don't forget our exciting raffle, silent and live auctions. All are welcome to donate to this.

Congratulations to the Class of 1967 on their 50th anniversary of graduation!