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The Hemlock

Volume 1, Issue 3 (May 2008)

**"In wildness is the preservation of the
world." --Henry David Thoreau**



It's Spring! (Photograph courtesy of Chico Cannady)



The annual explosion of color after the long, gray winter is upon us and provides an appropriate context to offer one final issue of *The Hemlock* for this year. The theme of this issue is students writing

about the outdoors. So many students responded to the April *Hemlock* and indicated that they'd like to contribute that we decided to turn this issue over to them.

We'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to the efforts of the [Environmental Focus Group](#) this year--the most exciting part of this initiative has been the cooperation that has developed among the administration, faculty of all disciplines, students, staff, and members of the Lock Haven community. From the beginning, we had hoped that this effort would unite diverse groups to work towards common goals

and this is exactly what has happened. If you would like to help with our projects next year or if you have any comments, please contact [Bob Myers](#). Get out and enjoy the Pennsylvania summer!

Celebration of Pennsylvania Culture

One project we are considering for next Fall, is a university-wide celebration of the history, culture, and environment of Pennsylvania. The event would focus on all aspects of life in Pennsylvania and connect what we do at the university with the life of the larger community. We're envisioning such things as student and faculty presentations on environmental, social, and historical topics; artistic celebrations of the region; and displays of Pennsylvania foods, sports (especially wrestling!), and cultural life. If you would like to be part of this, please contact [Bob Myers](#) with your ideas.

Kayak Paddle Fishing

--William Shetler (LHU Exploratory Studies Major)

It seems we never have enough time for all fun things we want to do. Thinking about this one day, I realized I could combine two of my favorite hobbies, fishing and kayaking. People have asked me why I would choose to fish from a kayak rather than a regular boat. For me, it's really all about simplicity and portability. I can hit the water fairly quickly and find those sweet fishing holes that you would never find with a larger boat.

This type of fishing may seem a bit daunting at first, and it can be quite a juggling act trying to control the kayak and cast your line





out. Why bother then? Well, if you enjoy spending time outside or on the water, then this is precisely why you should try this activity. To put it in perspective, close your eyes and envision the sun rising from behind a mountain, slight ripples of it reflecting in the water. Hurriedly you paddle upstream, wanting to get in that perfect fishing spot. As you start to tire, the cool morning air, filled with the sounds of chirping birds and the gurgling of the water relaxes you, despite your arms being tired from all the paddling. In my own personal experiences, nature has blessed me with some wonderful sights when fishing out of my kayak. I've sat and watched deer, playing in a calm pool. I've seen the beauty and gracefulness of a blue heron in flight. This large bird followed my progress on a small stream (maybe watching for a chance for an easy meal). Another time, how I wished I had a camera to capture the moment when I saw a bald eagle land in a tree just above me. The eagle, the symbol of our national pride, sat within a few short feet of me as I floated silently beneath its perch. I've had similar experiences seeing wildlife during other outdoor activities, but none compare with the serenity and solace afforded me in my kayak.

Take some time, think about what you like to do and how you approach it. There really is no right or wrong about combining activities, but one should exercise plenty of common sense and safety consciousness. There are many resources available to help and guide you in just about any activity. Tips, tricks, and some great ideas can be found easily via the online information highway. Good luck and be safe!

LHU Outing Club

--Danielle Tepper (LHU Communication Media Major)



LHUP has a variety of clubs. Some are geared toward specific interests or fields of study, others are related to music or sports. A club that might appeal to

readers of *The Hemlock* is LHUP's Outing Club.

The first collegiate Outing Club was formed in 1909 at Dartmouth College. Since then outing clubs have spread to other colleges and universities nationwide, offering a multitude of activities. Here at Lock Haven, students have the opportunity to go backpacking, hiking, camping, kayaking, caving, whitewater rafting, horseback riding, and so much more. Each year, Outing Club is given a generous amount of money by the SCC, which we spend on trips.

Trips that took place this year included backpacking, car camping trips to places like Ricketts Glen State Park and Bilger's Rocks, a kayaking roll clinic in Zimmerli pool, a day spent on LHU's high ropes course, day hikes to places like White Rocks, ice skating in State College, snowtubing at Sawmill, and many others. The club also gets together for movie nights to watch *Planet Earth* and other outdoor-related films, and occasionally gathers for games and dinner.

By far the most popular trip of the year is the Appalachian Wildwaters trip to West Virginia. A weekend of camping and whitewater rafting attracts a lot of people, some of which aren't even members but heard about the trip through friends. Normally after that trip, those people become official members.

"I hadn't gone on many trips until that point because I didn't really know anyone in the club, but I had such a blast on that trip and made so many new friends that got much more involved as the year continued," said sophomore Jen Alles, "I felt silly for not going on trips before that; everyone is so friendly!"

According to DJ Scott, president of the club for the past two years, "The best part about the club is that anyone can do it. There's something for everyone and you don't need any experience. Just take the initiative to get involved and you'll definitely have fun." The club is practically completely student-run; the officers take care of putting together all the trips, they run the meetings, and figure out all the details with the help of fellow members. Together, the officers and members enjoy the environment and all it has to offer.

The members are students who love to spend time outside, and the club gives them a chance to attempt things they wouldn't normally do. "I think it's important for people to just get out every once in a while and enjoy the outdoors; it breaks down the daily routine and gets you motivated to do other things," said Scott, "Not only that, it's a great chance to meet new people." "I love to do things outdoors, but others always had to help me set up and do things for me, like starting fires or setting up tents. With Outing Club, I learned how to do those things on my own. Now I can go camping anytime!" said senior Elizabeth McMaster. Sophomore Ashley

Miller said, "Being from the city, I never really got to experience the natural things like camping and hiking. In Outing Club, I get to do that and hang out with people, now my friends, who



like it too. It's a blast."

The club is concerned not only with having fun in the outdoors, but protecting it as well. The club's advisor, Paula Kistler, said, "I made Clinton County my permanent home after graduation from LHU because I recognized and love the beauty that Clinton County offers. I am willing to support any student of LHU in their love of the area. The Outing Club not only appreciates the resources available, they work to better those resources." Some of the members are former Scouts, while others are just aware of conservation efforts and ways to protect the environment.

The club members are very diverse; they all come from different areas of PA; some are from out of state; and all come from different backgrounds and have different preferences when it comes to having fun outside. "We've even had a few international students check it out, although it's uncommon," said Scott. Treasurer of the club Jennie Benoist explained how members of Outing Club are incredibly accepting of people; "It's just amazing what happens while on trips together; people may come to meetings and sit with their 'cliques' but once everyone is out in that atmosphere together, those cliques break down and everyone simply melts into one very large group of friends." Keith Nelson, junior and Vice President agreed, "It's a great opportunity for students to build character and get to know each other."

If you're interested in joining the club next Fall, look for advertisements around campus or contact club President [DJ Scott](#) or Secretary [Danielle Tepper](#). Upcoming trips are announced at meetings.

Waiting to Return

--Zach Fishel (LHU English Major)

Sleeping on the floor left my back in a curvature that, without coffee, will leave me unable to walk for quite some time. I grab my brother's foot as I slowly gather my vision. Plodding down the steps my brother quickly follows in a mismatched

camouflage suit with a crooked annoying orange hat shining in our gas lantern like some vulgar pumpkin. I spill coffee all over



the table as my brother is muttering about needing more sleep and how nothing else is awake. We sit on the porch smoking stale cigarettes, shotguns in hand waiting. A tequila sunrise begins to chase off the last blinking stars as we tread across intricately woven patterns of frost. The soft damp leaves silence our primitive shuffling, and as the pungent earth fills our heads a transformation

occurs. Suddenly, archaic fires dance across our faces as we huddle in fear of the storms in some estranged abandoned cave. Lightly armed we trek for days after our only source of food. Surviving on bare essentials, fighting the elements together we ford through endless swamps doing our best to avoid sinking amongst the shrieking willows. We scale endless cliff sides competing against red-tailed hawks as we try to keep their standards in reach. The most terrifying trap is the brier thickets that cling to our pant legs as blackberry bushes burn into our flesh. Grape vines lay like snares to forever swallow us among gnarled birches.

Mid-day approaches and I can't remember a better lunch than our smashed ham and cheese sandwiches and a quick gulp from one of the thousand playful brooks racing through the hollow. We tread onward around the sleeping giants and torn jagged skyline of trees reaching out like crooked teeth. As we return home, with vests full of squirrel and a lone grouse, we look back to the trail with deep respect and admiration. Lost between the present and an ancient home.

A Wilderness Warning

--Kyle Essick (LHU English Major)

There is something about the wild that always eats at our hearts. A certain element that evokes a sense of desire and longing to be embraced by the ruggedness. Perhaps it is the untamed nature of it all, broken down into the most simple components. There is no hustle and bustle, no daily grind. This is the world in its natural state, and it can affect the mind like a drug. A certain romance is felt, one that plays with the heart, promising beautiful gifts and experiences. However, if you are unaccustomed to the trials of the land, you will soon find yourself damned. If you are ill-prepared for the long stretches of solitude and silence, then you might experience a psychological war. There is the "honeymoon" phase: when first entering a path, the freshness of the situation makes your heart leap with excitement. Everything appears to be new and exciting. Soon, much sooner than you think however, is the time of silence and depression, comforted only by the sound of your trudging feet. Digging at you like a knife, left with nothing but your thoughts. Each day facing nothing but your secrets, regrets, and journeys in life not yet undertaken. You will have no one to comfort you, and there will be no television to supplant your boredom. How will you respond to this period? This is when your adventure can be made or broken. This is when you must dig inside of yourself and decide whether this is something you are able to finish. So, a warning to those who fantasize about the beauty of the wilderness; think before you attempt a foray into the bush. When you are by yourself will you be able to handle the awkward silences and never-ending progression down the path? Can you stand the sound of your trudging feet day-in and day-out? Can you leave behind the creature comforts that you are so accustomed to? If so, then join us.....follow us down that road less traveled.

"Hike" of the Month--Paddling Fishing Creek

--D. J. Scott (LHU Secondary Education Science Major)



For a great local canoe and kayak run, check out Fishing Creek. The creek itself runs through Mill Hall, Lock Haven, and Castanea, but you spend the majority of this

two-hour trip in peaceful wilderness seclusion. You will most definitely enjoy yourself as you see this area from a perspective that most people never get to experience.

The put-in spot is the Ax Factory Dam at the Mill Hall Fishing Creek Access Port off Route 64 (from Walmart, turn right onto 150 South/Hogan Blvd. Go .3 miles and, after crossing the bridge, turn left onto 64 South. Go 1.4 miles and turn left onto Nittany Valley Drive). The take-out (where you'll want to leave your other vehicle) is the PA Fish and Boat Launch Ramp in Castanea (Take the Castanea/LHU exit from 220 North; at the bottom of the ramp turn right towards Castanea; take the first right, and then the first right onto the gravel road that leads to the ramp).

After the put-in at Mill Hall, you go through a small boulder garden, which is a great place to work on catching eddies. Then you pass through the heart of Mill Hall. You almost always gets some raised eyebrows from passing cars. As you continue, be aware of two trouble spots. The area directly after the country club has a tree on river left which isn't very friendly. To avoid it, go under the right bridge abutment. The other area of concern comes after the confluence of Fishing Creek with Bald Eagle Creek-- a series of small islands that are little more than

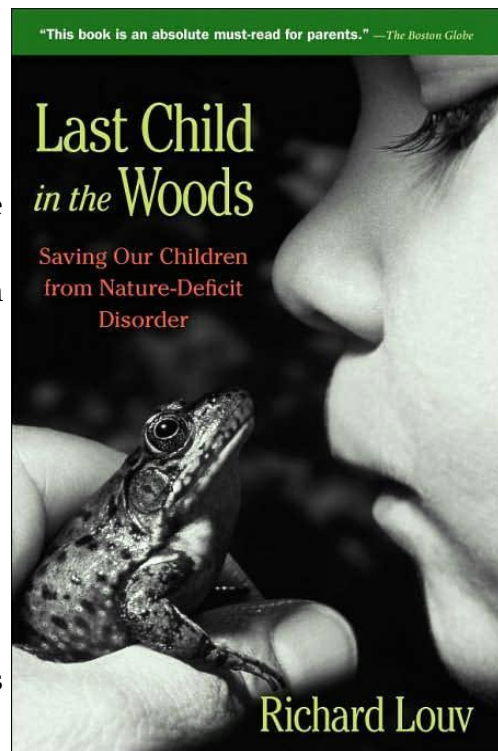
patches of driftwood and small trees. They look really nice, but they end up making a maze with plenty of strainer-filled dead-ends. From personal experience, be safe and stay towards the middle of the creek.

Spring is best time to go, or right after a hard rain, because Fishing Creek is fairly shallow. For a quick reference, check the water level at the old bridge pier across from the car dealership on Rt 64. The water should be at either covering the pier or just under it. Also, as the name suggests, the creek is a very popular trout stream, so remember to share the waters and respect other users.

Book Review: Richard Louv's *Last Child in the Woods*
--Melissa Novak (LHU
Recreation Management
Major)

Recently I just finished reading [*Last Child in the Woods*](#) by Richard Louv. The book confronts the notion that, in recent years, children lack a vitally important relationship with nature. Louv presents organized facts based on research and life experience. He avoids persuading readers and instead familiarizes them to the issue in a "here is what is happening" format. I prefer to develop my own

conclusion after collecting information which is why I remained enthralled with the book. *Last Child in the Woods* educates and affirms the need to strengthen the relationship between nature and humanity. *Last Child in the Woods* was an easy read, and it addressed a lot of issues which affect me. The text reminded



me of a weeklong special on CNN hosted by Anderson Cooper.

Too often I find myself concerned with the immediate, which is the next objective to a goal at work, or what needs to be pulled out of the freezer for dinner, or organizing a group camping trip. It is easy to forget about what is going on in the offices downtown with zoning policies or building plans, or within educational organizations. *Last Child in the Woods* serves as another wakeup call in a way of reminding me that there is a lot more going on than what is for dinner.

Each new year is a surprise to us. We find that we had virtually forgotten the note of each bird, and when we hear it again, it is remembered like a dream, reminding us of a previous state of existence...The voice of nature is always encouraging. –Henry David Thoreau

Two Haikus

--Emily Smith (LHU English Major)

1

Wasp scales the stonework,
snail-stretching against a gasp;
a wheeze of snowflakes.

2

Feathers dead on red,
the cardinal loses ground
against the mortar.

Upcoming Events

May 2nd-4th. Renova Heritage Days. Throughout the weekend there will be music in several venues, and in Heritage Park there will be an encampment of Sheshequin Buckskinners, living historians who recreate life in North America from 1700-1840.

May 24th. 1-2 p.m. [The Woolrich Company Store](#) (39 Boardman Drive, Woolrich, PA) will feature the "[Get Out More Team](#)" from *Backpacker Magazine*. The team will provide information on the gear and skills you need to get started in backpacking.

Our Readers Respond

Since reading your first issue of *The Hemlock*, I have made myself pickup one piece litter each morning on my way from the car (behind Glennon) to my office in Price. The corridor between Bentley and the upper dorms is always strewn with litter from the Dining Hall. My other deed is to find classrooms in Sloan (and there are many) that are left empty with the lights on. I have been turning those off when I find them. --Jack Schmidt (LHU Music Professor)

Interesting Websites

- [PennEnvironment](#). A statewide, citizen-based environmental advocacy organization.
- [The Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club](#). A place to learn about issues affecting the environment of Pennsylvania.
- [Clinton County Historical Society](#). The society's headquarters are the Heisey Museum (326 E. Water Street).
- [Little Pine State Park](#). A great state park that is 35 minutes from Lock Haven ([directions](#)).
- [R. B. Winter State Park](#). Another fantastic state park that is 45 minutes from Lock Haven ([directions](#)).

The Environmental Focus Group

Bob Myers (chair), Md. Khalequzzaman, Lenny Long, Jeff Walsh, Danielle Tolton, John Crossen, Sandra Barney, David White, Tom Ormond. The committee is charged with promoting and supporting activities, experiences, and structures that encourage students, faculty, and staff to develop a stronger sense of place for Lock Haven University and central Pennsylvania. Such a sense of place involves a stewardship of natural resources (environmentalism), meaningful outdoor experiences, and appreciation for the heritage of the region.