



THE OCTORARO LOOP

The Horseshoe Scout Reservation Alumni Association (HSRAA) News

Spring 2024

Successful “Raise the Roof” Efforts

By: Kristin Conran, Director of Development

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Camp Horseshoe Dining Hall “*Raise the Roof*” campaign. The Dining Hall roof, especially over the kitchen area, was in desperate need of replacement. Due to many generous donors, we were able to raise \$129,795.05.

The cedar roof over the dining room area will be replaced with metal, while the flat roof over the kitchen area will be a rubber membrane roof.



Special recognition goes out to those who gave \$1,000 or more. These supporters will be listed on a commemorative plaque in the Dining Hall.



Camp Horseshoe’s Allen Memorial Dining Hall is not just the place where three meals a day are served, but where traditions, customs, and stories of Scouting have been made since 1928.



The new roof construction will begin in May and will be completed by the time our first summer campers arrive in June. We are looking forward to generating more memories for Scouts and Scouters for generations to come. Check out regular updates on the progress of the roof, plus other updates on Facebook and Instagram.

• HSR Alumni Association

- Jim Bennett
- Heather L. Bishop
- Andrew R. Coe
- Charles R. Coxson
- Crystal Trust
- Devon 50, Inc
- James Goudie
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- Robert B. Lenker
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- Joseph Rubino
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- Tedco Insulation, Inc.
- William C. Whitehead
- William Stuart Watson
- William H Trowill
- Robert J. Urban

Managing Greenbriar & Wildfire Risk

By Ed Layton, Conservation Committee, Chair

Did you know that HSR has over 1,200 acres with over half consisting of forest? This forest needs constant management to sustainably manage and nurture the woods, wildlife, and water, as a recreational and aesthetic resource of the property. Through prudent stewardship and utilization, we help to ensure the protection, health, and productivity of these resources for future generations to enhance our scouting programs as we have since 1928.

One concern that we are always working to manage is fire prevention. Recently, completed upgrades to HSR's existing forest management plan by a professional forester found that the current level of dense, vegetative understory, "... *contributes a significant wildfire concern.*" In camp, one of the most common plants in the understory is our thorny greenbrier.



Greenbrier is a woody vine which is native to this part of the United States. The plant stems are climbing and tend to form tangled masses with individual vines that may be more than 20 feet in length. This dense green envelope provides excellent cover for bobwhite quail, many small mammals and provides habitat for a Pennsylvania endangered reptile known as the Rough Green Snake. Additionally, the thick, natural hedgerows yield desirable ascetic properties by providing natural screening and a pleasing visual appearance.

However, too much of anything can also be bad. Such is true with greenbrier. Although it is true that no plant is fireproof, greenbrier has a high flammability rating due to the natural oils in the

plant among other characteristics. The plant can alter the forest "fuel bed" as well as the frequency and intensity of potential wildfires. In other words, wildfires will happen less often but with greater intensity when they do occur during extremely dry weather conditions. In addition, greenbrier acts as a "ladder fuel" (i.e. it brings fire up into the tree canopy).

The humid climate of our region has helped to keep wildfires in HSR as a rare occurrence, but these dry periods (not to mention droughts) do happen. Consequently, wildfires have occurred as recently as just last year. In the fall of 2023, a short dry spell combined with a windy day were all it took to carry embers from a neighbor's brush fire into Camp Ware. Luckily, in this situation, the Camp Ranger was able to address it before it got out of hand. But four fires occurred in the 1980s and 1990s with one that consumed 25 acres of camp property and private lands. A fire 1938 destroyed three of the stockade campsites and damaged the dining hall at Camp Horseshoe. (See article in the Octoraro Loop, Winter edition 2018)

To reduce this risk, planning has begun to increase the "defensible space" around camp buildings. While this may alter the visual aesthetics, we are hoping to maintain the safety of those within the camp itself while seeking to preserve HSR as we move into the future.

Second Annual HSRAA Social

This past November HSRAA held our social at PARC to reunite, rekindle and reminisce with good cheer and refreshments. This event is free to all active members. Thanks goes to a fellow alumnus who supplied this year's refreshments.



Recruiting Alumni for Camp Prep

By Bill Grub, Camp Staff '68, '70-'72, '74-'76



We are looking for some willing weed whackers to help get Camp ready before the season. An opportunity to work a couple days with fellow alumni (admittedly somewhat arduous) but it really helps get the camps looking good for the opening. On **Friday, June 14th** (also Flag Day) we will meet at Horseshoe and whack/mow around Staff City, the showers and generally around the loop (to fool young staff and their parents on Saturday morning that Camp is domesticated). This year we've also been asked to help with the campsites at Ware, so an extra team of volunteers is needed. I'll handle dinner on Friday night for those that stick around.

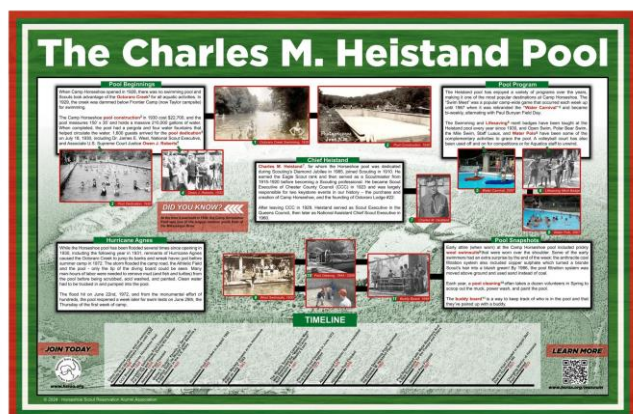
On Saturday, we attack the 13 campsites so that they are ready for the full staff to set them up in a single visit (aka one fell swoop).

Many hands make light work. For those able to stay over, some of us stay in Lisle (we'll have the pavilions clean); others stay in their Troop's campsite since everything is vacant.

Want to join the fun "in-crowd"? Contact Bill at: bill@williamgrubb.com or text: 301-514-9985.

Fifth Historical Sign to be Installed

HSRAA is pleased to announce their fifth sign to be installed on the reservation. Be sure to check out this year's sign at the pool, highlighting the history, timeline, and a QR code that can send the user to our online museum.



New Camping Director

Ryan Teat has been hired as the Council's Camping Director overseeing all camping programs and the maintenance for HSR and PARC properties. Ryan comes to us from the Del-Mar-Va Council, where he has spent the past 25+ years in Scouting. A full-time member of the Del-Mar-Va Council professional staff for the past five years including four years as a Council Program Director, a role that included being the resident Camp Director of Henson, and most recently as a Senior District Executive for the Tri-County District. Ryan, along with his wife Kaitlyn, two children, Luke and Finley, and dog, Lua, are excited to join the Chester County Council Scouting family.



Camp Horseshoe's Camp Director

Ethan Bilson will be serving as the Camp Director of Horseshoe this summer. An Eagle Scout from Troop 78; Ethan most recently served as the Handicraft Director in 2019. In recent years, Ethan graduated with honors from Susquehanna University and began his career as a History Teacher. Ethan is looking forward to enhancing the program and inspiring the next iteration of the Summer Camp. Ethan joins the list of a previous Horseshoe Camp Director from Troop 78, Ernie Heegard.



The Alumni Association exists to preserve and promote the spirit of HSR and to promote the spirit of the brotherhood of Scouting among the alumni. This year's **Executive Board** consist of: *Andy Smith, *Steve Miller, *John Kemmerer, *Sam Mantegna, *Mike Arles, *Dick Bensing, *Mike Berkeihiser, *Chris McConnell, *Andrew Coe, *Eric Lorgus, *Mark Siegle, *Damon Sinclair, and *Dave Woodward.

Spread the word, the HSR Alumni Association is always looking to expand its membership. Since 2000, the HSRAA has enhanced camp facilities, investing in camp projects beyond the normal maintenance, ensuring that generations of Scouts continue to have access to a world-class Scouting experience. Our virtual museum has over 10,000 artifacts with photos, videos, documents, etc. Log on to www.HSRAA.org and check out our website, museum, and more.

HSRAA Reunion – Friday, July 19th

We are excited to announce our annual reunion dinner will be held this year on Friday night. We moved the date from Saturday to coincide with the camp's closing campfire ceremony. This year's event will be held the 4th week of summer camp 7/19 to concur w/ Octoraro 22's OA Vigil.



Uncovering a Snapshot of Prohibition Era Moonshiners at Buzzard's Rock

The picture below was recently discovered, showing local bootleggers during Prohibition posing at Buzzard's Rock (we assume before the council's purchase of the property). Notice the row of bottles lined up in the back. Because the Octoraro at HSR crosses state lines, it was an ideal location to avoid local law enforcement.

It was said when Chief Heistand and several members of the Executive Board first stepped onto the property in 1927 they encountered several questionable looking characters who were sporting guns. These shady individuals were serving as lookouts for operators of illicit stills producing liquor on the property and Heistand had been first mistaken as a revenue agent. Upon convincing the guards they were only Scouters looking to purchase the property for possible use by the Boy Scouts, they were permitted to enter. At the time, there were over 100 such stills operating on the property.

