Making the most out of cold weather

By Mike Weaver
Outdoors Correspondent

During the cold winter months, I want nothing more than a hot sunny day. I miss the smell of fresh-cut grass, the sound of chirping birds, and the feel of fresh air.

Many spend the winter months isolated indoors, counting down the days until spring. However, you can still enjoy the outdoors. You can beat cabin fever through weekend getaways, fun in the snow, or a relaxing nature hike.

Several resorts offer exciting slopes for skiing or snowboarding. Peak and Peak resort in western New York contains over 20 trails for all experience levels. If you are skiing for the first time, you can practice on a small beginner slope. However, if you are an advanced skier or snowboarder, you can attempt tricks in Peak and Peak’s terrain parks.

I recently went to Peak and Peak resort for a weekend with my friends. Aside from enjoying the thrilling slopes, I ate delicious meals in their restaurant, swam in their pool, and spent most of my time in the indoor/outdoor hot tub.

If you are unable to travel out of the state to enjoy winter fun, you can find many activities nearby. Riding a sled down a snowy hill will never grow old. Walking back up the hill is great exercise; about 250 calories are burned from sled riding for 30 minutes.

Old Economy County Park in Baden boasts an enormous hill perfect for sledding. A few weekends ago, the park hosted its annual “Snow Shovel Riding Competition.” Over 60 competitors of all ages participated in the event. At the wave of a flag, competitors steered their snow shovels to the finish line, hoping for the fastest time.

Wildwood Highlands, only a few minutes from La Roche College, offers an enormous snow tubing course. After tubing down the hill, a tow-ropes assists you back to the top. Speeding down a hill on a sled, snow shovel, or tube is guaranteed to provide entertainment.

If you are not feeling adventurous, the outdoors offers the opportunity to enjoy fresh air and nature, even during the winter months. I enjoy taking walks in the woods at a park near my house. Winter is a very interesting season to view nature. The absence of colors outdoors creates scenery perfect for pictures. You can look for the footprints of animals in the snow, search for wildlife, or breathe in the fresh air. In addition to viewing nature, you can test your firemaking skills, have a cookout, or build a snowman.

The key to making the most of your outdoor experience is to ensure that you dress warmly. By dressing in many thin layers, your body heat will be retained. Start with a base layer, and add layers of thin clothing. Depending on your outdoor activity, your outermost layer should be waterproof. By doing so, heat will be retained and you will stay dry.

In addition to warm clothing, be sure to keep your head, fingers, and feet warm. Insulated gloves and lined boots protect your hands and feet, keeping them warm and dry. If you dress appropriately for the cold weather, you will be able to spend more time enjoying the outdoors without risking hypothermia or frostbite.

The outdoors offers countless memory-making opportunities during all four seasons. Even though the weather may be cold, you can still take advantage of outdoor winter time activities. Start a sled riding or winter trip tradition of your own to avoid catching an unwanted case of cabin fever.

Radio station back after two years of inactivity

By Sarah Reichle
Editor-in-Chief

After two years of being off the air, two students have revitalized the La Roche radio station.

The La Roche radio station is located in the Student Development office. Students, faculty, staff and guest can see the broadcasters through windows in the hallway outside of CC Square.

The radio station’s President, Brandon Rodriguez, and Vice President, Eric Cosmides, tried to reboot the radio station last year but it failed due to lack of publicity, they said.

Rodriguez said after failing to get publicity he talked to Jeff Dailey, the Assistant Director of Student Development, David Day, the Director of Student Development, and Korryn Mozisek, a communications professor.

Rodriguez said there are 18 staff members and there are ten who consistently show up, Rodriguez said.

“We have a skeleton crew right now,” he said.

Currently, the broadcasters typically just play music. Cosmides said, “They just do the song playing. We would like to have more people come in and actually do shows.”

Rodriguez, left, and Brandon Rodriguez, right, in the radio station.

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La Roche introduces new honor society

By Devin Shellhammer

Many students are curious about the new honor society on campus, The National Society of Leadership and Success. The NSLS is a nationwide honor society with the goal of shaping stronger leaders for the future. Members of the society have access to many perks such as a job bank just for members, a personal letter of recommendation from the society president, scholarships, and more.

The newly founded La Roche College chapter has approximately 200 members. The Chapter President Demetria Coleman stated that the goal for the society this year is to have at least 50% of new members inducted.

“Students can receive a letter of recommendation from the society president to send to colleges, the society president itself, or to include on their resume,” Coleman said.

In order to be invited to join the society’s chapter, you must have a GPA of at least 3.0. However, as with most rules, there is an exception to this. With a lower GPA, a student can still be invited if they have a La Roche College faculty or staff recommendation. Once a student joins, they can begin working towards induction. There are four steps to be completed before induction. The student must attend an orientation meeting, three speaker broadcasts, three Success Networking Team meetings, and a Leadership Training Day. Once these steps are completed, the student will be inducted. The induction ceremony for the La Roche Chapter will take place April 21st with a time to be announced at a later date.

Date auction benefits children with cancer

By Rita Vinski

On Thurs., Feb. 12, about 20 students walked the runway to be auctioned off at the annual La Roche College Date Auction. The Date Auction, organized by LAF and RHA, takes place every year during Sexual Awareness Week. The money raised from the event goes to a different charity or group.

This year, the money raised from the auction went to Kids with Cancer.

To be a part of the auction, students from all years were able to sign up, either by themselves or with a group.

They then walked the runway in apparel of their choosing to be auctioned off to other La Roche students.

Students were able to purchase tickets for different items that were being raffled off. Refreshments were also provided.

The students and their “dates” then went on a semi-formal dinner at the school, which was organized by RHA and LAF. This way there is no cost and no commitment to worry about.

I never participated in the date auction before this year. Since my close friends are seniors, we decided to do it together as a group.

Upon entering the dining hall, we were greeted with refreshments including appetizers, drinks, and chocolate covered strawberries.

There was also a table with the items for the raffle and a place to give the money. There was also music playing over the loud speaker.

In total, there were about 20 students, including individuals and groups that were participating to be auctioned off.

I was quite shocked at the turn out of students that came to support their friends and buy fellow classmates a dinner. The dining hall was packed.

Together, dressed in cocktail dresses and heels, my friends and I walked the runway as a group and were bought by student for $65.

While being on the runway was extremely nerve-racking, it was a lot of fun and I made some wonderful memories with my friends.

As a whole, the date auction was a great way to put yourself out to the student body and meet new people. I met a lot of cool people and was glad to help a great cause, and help make awareness.

Radio station revitalized after two years of being off the air

The atmosphere of the radio station is laid-back and is flexible for students.

“It’s low maintenance here at the radio station. You come in when you want. There’s always an empty seat,” Rodriguez said. “You can sign up for a time if you want to do a show. You could prerecord if you want to and then live stream if you’re courageous enough. I know a lot of people don’t like to hear their voice.”

The radio station has been located in the Student Development office since about Jan. 15th, Cosmides said. They take song requests from people who walk in as well as through email.

On the website there is a link in which you can request a song. That request will then be emailed to the broadcasters.

Rodriguez said, “We also do music for LAF events.” They charge $0.25 for requests at these events and donate the money.

“We’ve got a couple international students asking about doing shows in their native languages and we welcome that,” Cosmides said. Shows like that would diversify the station and make it appealing to other audiences, Cosmides said.

The room the radio station is located in has its positives and negatives.

The space is great for publicity. Professors have stopped and are aware of the radio station because of its location, Rodriguez said.

They said, the sound quality is bad for a radio station, however. Rodriguez said, “Anyone that opens the door automatically gets on the microphone.”

Cosmides and Rodriguez said they have been considering alternative locations for their organization.

They looked into relocating to the CHH room, a common office room on the third floor of Bold I.

They said if administration could get a wall built in their shared room in the Student Development office then their current location would be perfect.

The radio station also struggles with their technology, they said.

“Our biggest problem right now is probably our hardware, our computer, because of its limited specifications. It’s kind of old,” Rodriguez said. “It’s hard for us to reliably continue playing music.”

Cosmides compared using their technology to putting an apple on a toothpick. “We are trying to support a bigger operation on equipment that is insufficient.”

The two core radio station members said they hope to purchase updated equipment next budget period and intend to fundraise.

Rodriguez said, “The monitor is usually going on and off.”

Rodriguez and Cosmides said they plan on creating a sustainability plan for this on-again off-again radio station.

Cosmides said they would like to create a five-year plan so the radio station can continue after the pair graduate.

“A big thing about clubs on this campus is they just rise up, people graduate, and then they fall apart,” Cosmides said. “We want to make sure we can have something that is able to last because radio stations should not go off the air.”

He added, “You don’t see CMU radio stations turning off every two years.”

“It should be something that is always on campus. It’s like the Courier, almost. The Courier is a newspaper. It’s always there. The radio station should be the same thing,” Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez and Cosmides continue to add goals to their list. They said they would like to bring more people in and to keep publicizing their presence on campus.

They said they would like to make the organization more inclusive and less exclusive.
Encouraging women to pursue science

By SYDNEY HARSH
Science Writer

Take a walk through the Palumbo Science Center at La Roche College. What do you notice? Look closely at the student population. Maybe look into a classroom or two. Depending on which part of the classrooms are full of women who have a strong passion for science?

Many of the students involved in the sciences at La Roche are female. “There are more women in science than men here at La Roche,” chemistry professor Dr. Bozym said. “When you move up to faculty positions there are more men than women.”

Dr. Gail Rowe, a biology professor, said, “There are more women in biology in the lower level [Bachelors degree], but once you get to the East Coast each other’s PhD degree there are more men.”

Dr. Rowe said, “If you go to a research lab, you will notice that most of the lab technicians are women who all have men as bosses.” There are issues in stereotypes when it comes to women in science, Dr. Rowe said.

Reminiscing about her grad school years at the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Bozym said women were pretty popular in the sciences. She said, “There were two women [faculty members] and the rest were men in grad school.”

Dr. Bozym said we can help get more women interested in science by going to elementary schools.

“Your interest in science has to start young,” Dr. Bozym said. “They have to be available to opportunities.”

Dr. Bozym said she was not always interested in science. “After I realized that they wouldn’t let women play baseball in the Major Leagues,” Dr. Bozym said, “I was interested in science.”

“My dad inspired me to become involved in science. He was an environmental health and safety inspector for nuclear power plants,” Dr. Bozym said.

Dr. Rowe’s interest in science began young she said. “I have always been interested in science, but particularly the natural world,” Dr. Rowe said.

“I always loved animals and wanted to become a veterinarian, so I thought I would go into biology,” Dr. Rowe said. “But, I soon realized that I couldn’t dissect anything without getting lightheaded, dizzy, and sick so becoming a veterinarian wasn’t going to work out.”

“Then one day I looked into a microscope at a piece of moss, just a little green leaf when you looked at it without the microscope. When you look into a microscope you could see this little world that was alive. That’s when I knew I was interested in microbiology and the microbial world,” said Dr. Rowe.

People who are interested in science have the ability to become involved in science, Dr. Rowe said. “There’s nothing gender specific about poster for grad in science,” Dr. Rowe said. “However, teachers need to tell their students that it’s OK, even if you get it wrong the first couple of times.”

Both Dr. Bozym and Dr. Rowe said they have some advice for women who are involved in science. Dr. Bozym said you have to be self-confident, try not to be emotional, stick with each other, and most of all help each other out.

“I’ve seen women in science attack each other and we don’t need any of that,” Dr. Bozym said. “We need to support each other.”

Dr. Rowe said, “You need to be willing to work really hard, but don’t give up who you are because that isn’t worth it.”

A senior biology major represented La Roche College at a conference held by the Allegheny Branch of the American Society for Microbiology, or ABASM. Jesse Marweg presented his research poster in a one-on-one setting to conference attendees on Nov. 7 and Nov. 8 of last year. The meeting took place at Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pa.

“Our annual meeting is very student-focused,” Dr. Gail Rowe, a La Roche College biology professor, said. “We encourage students, whether it’s graduate students or undergrads, to present the research they’ve done.”

“Anyone who is a serious scientist needs to be able to talk about their research,” Dr. Rowe, the counselor for the ABASM, said. “The student also gets experience making an oral presentation or the poster presentation, a skill that is also important.”

Dr. Rowe said that presenting at a conference such as the ABASM looks great on resumes and takes science students up a notch.

“We were doing a broad look at the different microorganisms that are present in the microbiota of the gastrointestinal tract of felines,” Jesse Marweg, a senior biology major, said. In other words, they analyzed the DNA in feral cat feces. Feral cats are cats that are used to be domesticated pets, but now live in the wild.

“It was fun,” Marweg said. It was a great experience to be from a small school and go to a microbiology conference, get exposure, and do a little networking. Marweg admitted, “It was a little bit nerve-racking trying to remember all the facts.”

He said there were about 30-50 posters set up around the auditorium in Lycoming College, where the meeting was held. “People just wandered around and would stop at different posters to ask questions,” Marweg said. The senior said it made it a lot easier to present that way instead of presenting to a full auditorium.

The biology major said he was able to talk to keynote speaker Dr. John Stolz, a professor and the director of the Center for Environmental Research and Education at Duquesne University.

“He did research on fracking and the metabolism of arsenic, which is a poisonous substance,” Marweg said. “It was pretty cool to hear him speak.”

Marweg was able to gather his data through his BioSolve class, which is funded by the National Science Foundation. Graduates Deanna Carter, Leah Larkin, and Melinda Sager also contributed to the research.

“There’s too much time involved in biology laboratory research for one student to accomplish that much,” Dr. Rowe said. “But in a group they can do more.”

Dr. Rowe said the goal of BioSolve is to give biology students the opportunity to do research. “A lot of students might do research but don’t have enough data or it’s not of enough quality that they could take it to a presentation,” Dr. Rowe said.

According to Dr. Rowe, La Roche College introduced the BioSolve program in 2008. The biology professor said that BioSolve is a two-semester course designed for upper-level biology students to do novel research—research that discovers something previously unknown.

Dr. Rowe said, “Some students who have taken BioSolve in their junior year have then gone on in their senior year to do additional research. That is the case with Jesse Marweg.”

“It was a good experience by myself because sometimes it’s just going to be me presenting my own work,” Marweg said. “You need to practice being your own presenter.”

“They’re learning what it means to be a real scientist. They do everything a scientist would do from developing their own ideas, reading about it in scientific literature, giving presentations, and doing actual experiments,” Dr. Rowe said.

“What people at Duquesne University, the University of Pittsburgh, Penn State University, or other institutions think of us matters when our students apply for graduate school or for jobs in their research labs,” Dr. Rowe said. “It raises awareness about the quality of training our biology majors get.”

Dr. Rowe said that having a program like BioSolve and having students present their research at conferences raises the La Roche biology department in the minds of area institutions.

“We are doing good research. We are offering extra opportunities to students that want to do the work,” Dr. Rowe said.

The senior Marweg presented is hanging in the Science Center biology hallway.
By Sarah Reichle

Editor-in-Chief

From team building to community service to providing activities for the student body, La Roche’s Student Government Association has been busy. President Jessica Finke and Vice President Robert Patterson made goals at the beginning of the year and have been checking off their list. Their goals consisted of creating more community service opportunities, enforcing community service in clubs and organizations, and getting commuters involved, said Finke.

Finke said, “When Rob and I were first thinking of goals we looked at La Roche’s motto, ‘to light through love,’ and what better way to do that then to help others?”

According to Patterson, the SGA has participated in events hosted by SGA members’ high schools. He said they helped out at a spaghetti dinner fundraiser that benefited a high school volleyball coach battling cancer.

“It’s about being out in the community,” said Finke. “We also held a 5K here during healthy La Roche week, which was sponsored by Student Government, and we raised money for the North Hills Community Outreach through that.”

The SGA also helped hang banners at a church event.

As for trying to get commuters involved, SGA hosted an event in which commuters were given free doughnuts and coupons for the dining hall. Finke said that if commuters could eat with other residents they would feel more integrated and would be given the opportunity to meet new people.

“Since the majority of board members are seniors, another goal for Finke and Patterson is to focus on the younger members on the board,” said Finke. “I have noticed a big difference from the beginning of the year to where we are now. The freshmen that are on the board, they are doing much more. Many more projects and they are starting to transform into leaders.”

The younger board members have also been encouraged to attend leadership conferences, she said.

“Robby is taking a group to New Jersey at the end of the month for student government and leadership training,” Finke said.

As for student body involvement, Patterson and Finke are pleased with attendance levels.

Patterson said, “I think it is always a struggle to get people to attend events. Especially because how small the school is and how many commuters there are, but we are pretty pleased with attendance.”

Patterson and Finke said they love to give back to the student body and try their best to help in any way that they can.

Finke said, “It is something we see as an issue and an issue among other students, we see that it is resolved.”

The SGA board recently helped get the Bold Hall dryers fixed as well the water bottle refill station in Schneider fixed.

Patterson said, “It also helps to get feedback back from student body and board members.”

Finke commented on how difficult it is to know what the student body likes and wants.

She said, “As the former Director of Activities you never know what the students want and you sometimes think, ‘oh, they would really like this event’ and it could be the opposite. But for the most part things pull through and we do have decent numbers of people attending events.”

Finke and Patterson discussed wisdom words of David Day, the Director of Student Development. Patterson quoted David Day and said, “If you are going to complain about something you have to have a solution.”

Patterson added, “Don’t just cut something down and say it’s stupid or wrong. Come up with a solution.”

Finke further explained, “So if the issue is I hate the food: Well, what do you hate about the food? What do you want from the cafeteria?”

This semester the SGA board is currently working on their Student Government gift and planning a MDA muscle walk to raise awareness about muscle disease and fundraise for the cures to these diseases, Finke said.

The SGA gift is still in the works, said Finke.

Student Government gift has not completed their plans for last year’s SGA gift. The plan was to have an outdoor basketball court behind the gym.

These plans are still in the process of being worked out, they said.

The SGA President and Vice President said they have other duties that take place behind the scenes.

Finke said, “We also do a lot that the students don’t know about. We have to meet with the Board of Trustees and all sorts of people who are higher up in the college to discuss major issues.”

This year, the SGA has approved some clubs including the Library Advisory Board, National Leadership and Success, and the Asian club.
What are you are giving up for lent?

By Sarah Reichle and Megan Poland

Name: Juan Manuel Dama Bianchi
Major: Communications
Age: 22

Name: Jess Finke
Major: Education
Age: 21
What? I gave up sweets. I don’t know if I can even do it.

Name: Olivia Nogay
Major: Communications
Age: 22
What? Haven’t thought of it. I’m probably not going to give stuff up but I think I’m going to pray more.

Name: Chris Matone
Major: Film
Age: 21
What? Nothing.

Name: Federica Riedel Gonzalez
Major: Graphic Design
Age: 18
What? Soda.

Name: Sarah Vorsheck
Major: Professional Writing
Age: 21
What? Giving up dairy.

Name: Erin Dougherty
Major: Management
Age: 21
What? I don’t know yet.

Name: Juan Manuel Dama Bianchi
Major: Communications
Age: 22

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