Forestry Conclave - 1996

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Forestry Conclave - 1996

By Gretchen Holstein

This year’s Conclave, sponsored by Michigan Tech., was held on September 20-22 at the Ford Forestry Center located near Alberta, Michigan. Those who made the trip enjoyed a sneak preview of the fall colors. It was a 12 hour drive north, which was nothing compared to the 22 hours it took the team from Missouri to get there.

We arrived at the Forestry Center Friday night around five and set up camp. Then we headed into town to have dinner with the locals. Everyone spent that first evening around the campfire getting to know each other and sharing stories.

Saturday morning came way too fast. We were up with the sun, working out the knots and trying to get ready for the competition. This year we were prepared with axes sharpened and teeth on our cant hooks. We knew what we were up against and that in the end, it was all in good fun.

The competition began harshly with the tobacco spit first thing at 8:00 am. Traci Eldridge, Rob Rubsam, and Casey Bourke were the lucky participants representing Iowa State University in that contest. Events went on simultaneously all day long in which we tried to have at least two or three people at each competition cheering on our teammates.

There were a few mishaps throughout the day. Rob Rubsam hooked his foot instead of the log with Pete Smith as his partner in the log roll.
He recovered nicely after a trip to the ambulance and some minor repair work. Also, Pete Smith discovered that the speed chopping axe handle was broken a minute into his bellowing effort to beat the all time record.

In the academic competition Shane Delaney and Mike Lichter placed first and second respectively in wood identification. Shane Delaney also placed fourth in dendrology. The chain throw gave us a third and fourth place from Shane and Rob. Lastly, Traci and Gretchen came in a close second in the women's log roll after being knocked from first place by the last competitors.

At the end of the day we were tired, but our high spirit carried us into the night. After the awards there was music, dancing and socializing. For those of you who didn't get to go this year, try to go next year. It is definitely an experience that you will never forget.

Student Participants: Travis Bruch, Casey Bourke, Tony Cline, Traci Eldridge, Nicole Feldman, Jamie Hart, Gretchen Holstein, Mike Lichter, Monte Pope, Laura Revell, Rob Rubsam, Jason Sbiral, Dave Stokesberry, Sylvia Wlorderaski, Pete Smith Faculty Chaperone: John Smith
ISU Forestry Alumni present: Joel Skelley.

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The student chapter of the Society of American Foresters (SAF) at Iowa State University had another busy year. The chapter was able to attend the state meeting last fall in the Amana Colonies which was a spin-off of the Seventh American Forest Congress. The meeting had SAF members from the states of Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Former National President Robert Bosworth, and current Vice-President Bill Banzhaf also attended and shared their thoughts on the results of the Congress and where SAF needs to go from there. The student chapter also attended the spring meeting in Marshalltown with the Iowa’s Wildlife Society. Both meetings allowed the students to interact with forestry professionals from around the state and get a feeling for what types of careers are possible.

At Iowa State University’s VEISHEA celebration, the SAF National Chapter’s display was shown to increase the public’s awareness of what SAF is and what the goals of the organization are. On this display pictures were shown of some of the activities that the student chapter has been involved in this past year. These activities included the Walk in the Woods program with local 5th graders, attending the state’s fall and spring meeting, and conclave in Michigan that many of the members took part in.

1996-97 Officers - Chair - Gretchen Holstein, Chair Elect - Michelle Ludwig, Secretary - Traci Eldridge, Treasurer - Pete Smith.