



NATURE'S CALL

THE NEWSLETTER FOR VOLTAGE

providing transformative group experiences using tailored challenges and guided reflections.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Another year is fast approaching. What do we see as we look towards the future?

- Venture completed its AEE Accreditation Review process. We are now the longest accredited university-based outdoor adventure program in the country. This is recognition that our programs have passed stringent safety and quality standards and that our safety management procedures are at the highest levels in the adventure field. We received our Accreditation in November and so we are good to go until November 2013- which means the core staff will begin gearing up for that review in the late fall of 2012. I suspect that most of the current Volt students will be gone by then. I expect to have retired by then as well.
- Two years ago we hosted the Southeast AEE Regional Conference. Last year we were preparing for our accreditation review – and finishing that up this year. Next year, we will be planning for Venture's 40th reunion. Initial plans include inviting all our previous (and current) Volts and staff (and their families) to come for a weekend of fun and reflection. We will play on the Odyssey, do a raft trip and kayak trip at the US National Whitewater Center, talk about the lessons we took from our involvement with Venture and share memories and good times. It will likely be on the weekend of May 22 & 23, 2010. I hope each of you will plan to attend.
- We have had many talks over the years on how to strengthen the Voltage program to enhance how we prepare students to step into leadership roles with Venture. Unlike many similar university programs, we have maintained a process that enables anyone who is interested to be involved, where folks can start at any point during their tenure at UNC Charlotte, and where a person progresses based on his/her own choices, skills and drive. It has worked fairly well - though there have been challenges. One issue is that very few students rise to the level of a Trip Leader. We are adding something new to the program that we hope will increase this number. It is called

V-TAP = Volt—Training Assistance Program.

This program will provide training resources (such as funds for a WFA course) and training opportunities (like reserved space on Volt trips, LeaderShape, some free Venture trips, etc.) in exchange for a future expectation of serving as a Trip Leader. Venture staff will try to identify those Volts who we think have the skills (technical and interpersonal), attitude and capacity to achieve Trip Leader status within a year or two. We will invite those students to apply. Others may also apply. This will be a very selective program since we do not have the financial resources to help more than a handful of students in any year. Our hope is that we can help 1 (or possibly 2) student(s) from each class to achieve Trip Leader status sometime during their Junior year. Invitations were recently sent out to a few active Volts to apply for this program. If you are interested in learning more about this or applying, please talk with Sarah.

As we look back at the year coming to a close, again we want to say **Thank You** for the time, energy and care you put into Venture and each other to make this a healthy and growing community. Venture would be an empty shell without your contributions. We can not overemphasize how grateful and enriched we feel by your involvement.

Sandy

INSIDE THIS DEC ISSUE:

Volt of the Semester	2
Ginny's plea for assistance	2
Voltage "E" News	2
Spring Adventure Trip Schedule	3
To the Fall 08 Volts	4

AJ BABCOCK: VOLT OF THE SEMESTER



Venture Staff would like to congratulate AJ for being selected as Volt of the Semester!!

Here is what a nominator said about AJ: *"for the volt of the semester because every time I have worked with him he has worked his butt off! He is silent and strong and I have never heard him complain."* - the nominator

Here is what a voter said about AJ: *"I think AJ has shown a lot of interest and commitment into the program especially the climbing. He is also very helpful if anyone needs help and is willing to teach what he does know and is excited when learning something new."* - the voter

You finally get to find out something about "the silent volt." He is AJ Babcock for those of you who don't him. Born in Baton Rouge, LA where he picked up a love for hot food and a hate for humidity.



His family of which he is the oldest of the NINE children moved to NC at the beginning of 2005. During his high school years he was involved in flying, scuba as well as soccer, x-country and basketball. Did he stay busy or what? During his first 3 years of college were spent at Virginia Tech (*of which he would like to add, Go Hokies!! AAC Champions two years in a row*) as an AFOTC cadet in their Corps of Cadets program. When life turned everything upside down (ask him how) he ended up at UNC Charlotte as a MIS major last fall. Now he has founded new hobbies such as rock climbing and kayaking through Venture and had a chance to work with some great people. "Best of luck to everyone on finals" he shouts out to everyone.



FISH OUTTA WATER

Hi, VOLTS!

I really appreciate all the help you give me around the office, especially during the busy times. Now I'm going to ask for even **more** help and support.

On the first day of classes next semester, January 12, my husband is going to have surgery and I will be out of the office at least the entire first week of the semester. That first week is a very busy time for all of the staff, with new students coming in to inquire about Venture, registration for trips beginning that first day, students wanting to add our terrific academic classes.....

My request is simple: If you have a break in classes during the day, where you can hang out in the office for an hour or more, please spend some of the time in the front office, meeting new people, welcoming new students, explaining what Venture is, and taking registrations for trips.

I will be available during these last two weeks of the semester and a few days before the new semester begins to show you where things are and teach you how to register a participant. The professional staff have lots to do during this first week and it's very difficult for them to break out of the back to spend a **quantity** of time in the front office. They are available and willing to assist and spend **quality** time with students, but not to remain in the front office.

Thanks so much for your help during this time; we're looking forward to a GREAT semester!



VENTURE "E" NEWS

Starting **January 2009** the only way to stay current with Venture's happenings will be to subscribe to Venture's website newsletters. You may subscribe to one, two or all three newsletters. Descriptions below. The reason for new system is to allow you to subscribe and unsubscribe, change your email at will without the CORE staff having to constantly update and revise the list while allowing the opportunity for folks who forget or "accidentally" deleted the email to go to the website to catch up on the news.

- **Venture Newsletter** will provide information general information once a month about Venture's happenings with the overall public audience in mind. This will also have the adventure trip schedules, most current trip that went out "trip reports," student staff bio's and other articles of interest pertaining to Venture. This is a good newsletter for everyone *including* Volts to subscribe to.
- **Climbing Updater** will be for folks interested in receiving updates about wall closings, workshops being offered, climbing comps at or around Charlotte and other worthy climbing news. This newsletter is good for the persons involved in climbing. This will not be a frequent posted newsletter but only as information is needed or desired to be broadcasted.
- **Voltage Updater** is important for staff, students, volunteers and others directly involved with Venture to subscribe to. This newsletter will provides updates about trip stuff, meetings, trainings, upcoming challenge course request for folks to staff, climbing programs and more which of all is important for current semester Volts to receive. Volts are **URGED** to subscribe to this edition.

NATURE'S CALL**THE NEWSLETTER FOR VOLTAGE****Anticipated Spring 2009 Adventure Trip Schedule****January**

- 12 Venture Interest Meeting 6pm – 8pm
- 14 Mobile Initiatives Training 12:30-3:30pm
- 16-19 VOLT X-Country Ski Trip
- 31 - Feb. 1 Caving Trip

February

- 5 Teaching the Kayak Roll 7pm - 9pm Pool
- 7 Orienteering Meet @ Reedy Creek
- 12 Kayaking Roll Session #1 7pm - 9pm
- 14 Homecoming Valentines Day
High Team Challenge Course 9am – 12pm
- 18 VOLT Meeting 6pm – 9pm
- 19 Kayaking Roll Session #2 7pm - 9pm
- 21-22 Team Challenge Course Facilitator Training
- 21-22 Trip Leading Class Backpacking Trip
- 26 Kayaking Roll Session #3 7pm - 9pm
- 28 - Mar. 1 Top Rope Anchor Training

See Sarah if **YOU** are wanting to lead, co-lead or apprentice with any of these trips ASAP!!
Limited Volt staff spots available!!

Ps. You know about the Volt Country Ski trip don't you?! You are soooo out of the loop if you don't!! See back page or talk to Sarah to see what she has planned for YOU!!

March

- 4 Wilderness Medical Scenarios 3pm – 6pm
- 18 VOLT Meeting 6pm – 9pm
- 19 Kayak Polo 7pm - 9pm
- 21-22 Paddling Trip
- 24 Segway Adventure Tour at Latta Plantation
- 26 Kayak Polo 7pm - 9pm
- 28 Banff Film Fest at ASU
- 28-29 High Team Challenge Course Facilitator Training

April

- 1 Wildflower Walk 12pm – 2pm
- 2 Kayak Polo 7pm - 9pm
- 4 Intro Class Catawba River Kayak Trip
- 5 Crowder's Rock Climbing Trip
- 8 Swift Water Rescue Training @ USNWC 1:30 – 5:30pm
- 15 VOLT Meeting 6pm – 9pm
- 17 Lake Wylie Sunset Paddle and Astronomy
- 18 Tuck River Clean-Up
- 19 Tuck River Trip
- 19 Climbing Class Trip
- 21 Rafting at USNWC 5pm – 10pm
- 25-26 Whitewater Kayaking Trip
- 25-26 Yoga Backpack Trip
- 29 VOLT Picnic

Do *YOU* know about this?
Don't be left out of the FUN!!

VOLT X-COUNTRY SKI TRIP

January 16 – 19, 2009

*Start off the semester
with an ADVENTURE
For only \$100.*



No Experience Necessary

At the base of Snowshoe Mountain, WV...

...there are more than 35 kilometers of cross-country skiing trails which crisscross the Highland Scenic Highway 150, peaking at an elevation of around 4700'. We will be staying at Elk River Touring Center, which borders the Monongahela National Forest. The elevation of this area makes it one of the snowiest in West Virginia. (annual snowfall of about 180 inches per year)

Basic Itinerary

Friday: Drive to West Virginia (about 6 hours)
Saturday: Cross Country Ski Day
Sunday: Cross Country Ski Day
Monday: Drive back to Charlotte

But what if there isn't enough snow to cross country ski?

Since we will be conveniently located near Snowshoe, there will be the option of purchasing lift tickets, or the less expensive option of hiking.

Full day lift ticket: \$72
Night lift ticket: \$36



Lodging

2-story cabin with kitchen, bedrooms, and common living area.

Ski Rentals

Elk River Touring Center rents both 75ml and NNN binding Nordic skis.



Registration

\$50 deposit due by Dec. 12
\$50 remainder due by Jan. 13

So why is this trip so cheap?

(The actual per person cost is closer to \$200.)
This is a VOLT trip and we appreciate your commitment to Venture. We trust that you will continue to assist us with high quality programs in the semester ahead. The evenings will include additional leadership training.