



# WayPoint

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YEAR 23, ISSUE 1, APRIL 2022

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Year 23 ACC members at the Swearing-In Ceremony in September

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## The Return of the WayPoint Newsletter!

By Hannah Crosby

After a long hibernation, the great WayPoint Newsletter is back in action! WayPoint was created back in the early years of AmeriCorps Cape Cod (ACC) to document all that ACC was up to. A place to highlight service projects, share reflections on the service year, and offer funny anecdotes stemming from the communal living environment

that makes ACC so unique, WayPoint has taken many different forms, and it is the goal that in the latter half of Year 23, this mighty member-written newsletter might make a return to inboxes near and far.

**So, sit back, relax, and read up on what's been happening while we make up for lost time.**



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# First Things First

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## Meet the Members

By Hannah Crosby

Year 23 is made up of members from eleven different states from California to Massachusetts. We range in age from 21-26 and have varied backgrounds from marine science to English to engineering. We are split into four houses, LeHac (in Wellfleet), Devine (in Chatham), the Ranch (in Barnstable), and Pocasset (in Bourne).

We live and serve together for eleven months, each completing a minimum of 1700 hours of service in four core areas: natural resource management, disaster preparedness and response, environmental education, and community and volunteer engagement. We all bring something different to the table, and together, we GET THINGS DONE FOR AMERICA!



**The Pocasset House**

Susanna, James, Rob, Travis, Lauren, Maeve, Ella & Derek



**The Ranch House**

Robert (a.k.a Bert), Sylvie, Emily & Emilie (the Emilieys)



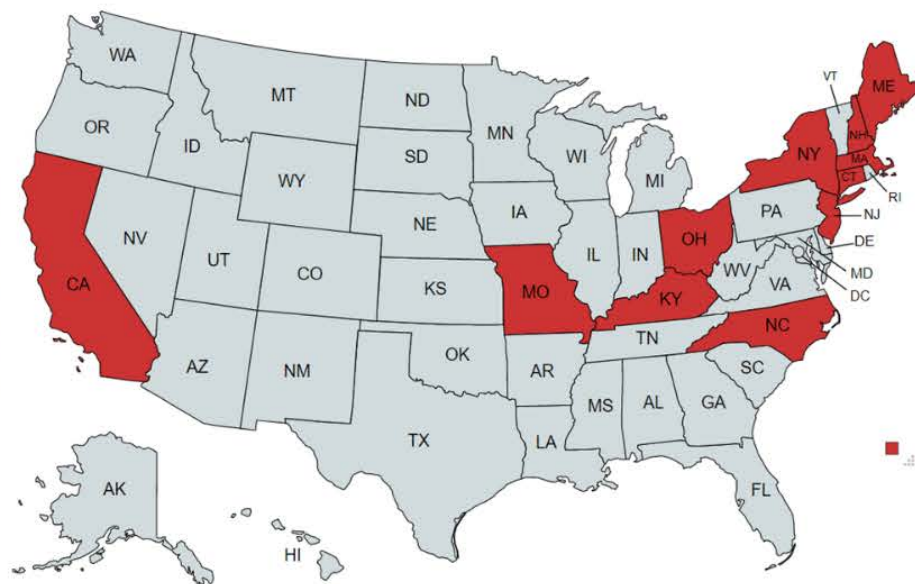
**The Devine House**

Hazel, Jodi, Hannah, Cas, Caroline, Maddy & Coach Mike



**The LeHac House**

Vince, Braden, Bob, Max, Audrey, Stori, Brandon, Korri & Jami



*Map showing where the Year 23 members are from!*

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# Service Spotlights

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## MLK Day Beach Clean-Up

By Hannah Crosby

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a nationally designated "day of service" that encourages Americans of all walks of life to volunteer in their own communities. For ACC, this means a "day on, not a day off." In that spirit of service, five ACC members spent three months planning a MLK Day beach clean-up in collaboration with CARE for the Cape and Islands and Center for Coastal Studies. Those ACC members—Max, Jodi, Emily, Emilie, and Travis—gathered donations, recruited volunteers, and planned the logistics of cleaning up nine Cape Cod beaches. Although the weather on actual MLK Day postponed us, we were not deterred, and the next Saturday we, along with over 100 volunteers, were out in gale-force winds, ready to serve. "Even though we had to delay the clean-up, we were still able to leverage many volunteers and cleaned up large swaths of beach," Emily, one of the planners of the day said.

In fact, we collected over 1,000 pounds of trash from beaches stretching from Sandwich to Provincetown. Using the CleanSwell app, we were able to categorize the types of trash we collected which helps us better understand the kinds of trash that is littering the beaches. "It's important to clean the beaches, not just in the summer, but winter too, because trash is continuously washing up and littering the area," Emilie, another planner of the event said. "We got a lot done, and that's always a good feeling."



*Top: Group of volunteers and ACC members cleaning a beach in Wellfleet*

*Bottom: Some of the trash we collected*

## Chainsaws, Chainsaws, and More Chainsaws

By Hannah Crosby

Ask any member of the Corps this year, and I'm sure they'll agree when I say that we have been doing A LOT of chainsawing this winter. We've worked in Brewster, in Falmouth, in Sandwich, and Chatham. We've dropped trees, bucked even more, and continue to perfect the ever-elusive bore cut. We've also cleaned and sharpened more chains and saws than I personally know what to do with. Who would have thought cleaning gunk from a chainsaw could be so satisfying?? It's fair to say we all have favorite saws, my personal fav being Her Majesty; others are partial to "Elphaba" or "Donkeyman." But one thing we can all agree on is our loathing of "Tom Sawyer." And though the saws often give us trouble when we're serving, it's often thanks to our mighty supervisors who help us troubleshoot a myriad of issues when they arise in the field, so we can quickly get back to service. I can't explain it, but sometimes the saws just need their magic Supervisor touch. So, without further ado, here's some sweet action shots.



*From left to right: Emily, Susanna, Lauren, Caroline and Hannah & Ranch House*



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## Pitch Pine Removal at Breivogel Ponds Conservation Area

By Hannah Crosby

On an unseasonably warm February day, we had what member Caroline Genther aptly describes as her "favorite kind of service day"—an ALL CORPS DAY! All Corps days are few and far between, and thus, extra special when they arise. And to have it be 60s and sunny in early February, AND we got more than was expected done? AND we didn't have to wear full PPE so we could actually talk to each other instead of listening to the whine of chainsaws all day? There's truly nothing better.



*Hazel and Stori attacking some pitch pine*

Led by our fearless project lead, Emily, we removed pitch pines at Breivogel Ponds Conservation Area in Falmouth with Emily's Individual Placement Service Partner and Town Conservation/MES Tech, Mark. Breivogel is a sandplain grassland with wetland edge habitats. The sandplain grassland is 13.5 acres, with scattered pine saplings and some invasive autumn olive and gray willows sprinkled in for fun. Emily split us into three groups, and we were each assigned an area to work in. Using loppers, shovels, hand tools, or just sheer brute force (looking at you Bob and Caroline), we removed hundreds of pitch pine saplings from the ground to help preserve it as a sandplain grassland and provide habitat for species there.



Our morning at Breivogel had all the components of the best kind of service day. Not only did we all get to work together, but it was also a beautiful day to be outside, AND we got to work in groups of people we normally don't interact with very often. We got more than expected done, and at the end of the project, we were able to physically see the difference our service made. As Emily said, "This project gave me great satisfaction that we all worked together as a team to clear the field and we could see our results of our service at the end."

The service we provided at Breivogel Conservation Ponds Area is also a testament to the uniqueness of AmeriCorps Cape Cod and the service we provide the community. During our debrief, both Mark and Emily emphasized how they never could have gotten this amount of work done, spread over so many acres, just by themselves. The fact that ACC was able to provide this service in just a morning is amazing. Caroline articulated it best when she said, "it's always so fun to see SO much work getting done in such little time and have SO much fun doing it."



*The Year 23 crew!*



*Project Lead, Emily, showing how it's done*

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# Other News

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## House Dinner

By Hannah Crosby

One of the components of ACC that makes it unique from other AmeriCorps programs is its communal living requirement. Even though we do live and serve together, everyone has their own lives, so Wednesday house dinners are a wonderful way to stay connected, re-group, and chat about our weeks with our house members. For Devine, this means sitting shoulder to shoulder around our table and sharing our “peaches” and “pits” of the week, or, more accurately now (due to a mispronunciation) our “pitches” and “petes.”

We take turns cooking in pairs, and house dinner can be whatever you want it to be, though, Devine all likes each other, so we try to make sure everyone’s dietary preferences are met. For us, this means vegetarian and dairy free (or we give our lactose-averse housemates a heads up that Lactaid will be required for the meal). So far, so good. Using an interesting word choice, Coach Mike describes food he loves as “potent,” so with that in mind, here are some potent meals Devine has made so far this year:

Soup—Caroline is the Queen of soup at Devine. You want Zucchini? Minestrone? Black Bean? She’s got you covered. She just throws things in a pot, and it comes out delectable.

Breakfast for Dinner—Hazel and Maddy really outdid themselves making a gourmet spread of pancakes (of 5 different varieties!), sausage, veggie sausage, and scrambled eggs.

Steak—In a move still beyond my comprehension, Jodi and Hazel made us a STEAK DINNER one Wednesday night. We are not worthy.

Breaded Chicken and Pasta—Mike’s version of this meal has no reason to be as good as it is, but there you have it. And while we’re on Coach’s cooking, an honorable mention needs to go to his banana bread. Now that was potent.

Pretzels—It’s a little cheap to highlight my own cooking, but I think it’s okay because the homemade soft pretzels I made with Cas were a big hit. They were so good, in fact, that after making them for house dinner on Wednesday, I then made a double batch of them on Friday of the same week. Additionally, they pair incredibly well with one of Caroline’s soups. And because I want you to get as much joy from these pretzels as my house did, here is the recipe.

## Hot Buttered Soft Pretzels from King Arthur

### Ingredients

Dough

2 1/2 cups (300g) King Arthur Unbleached Bread Flour  
1 teaspoon (6g) salt  
1 teaspoon granulated sugar  
2 1/4 teaspoons (7g) instant yeast  
7/8 to 1 cup (198g to 227g) water, warm\*

\*Use the greater amount in the winter, the lesser amount in the summer, and somewhere in between in the spring and fall. Your goal is a soft dough.

Topping

1 cup (227g) water, boiling  
2 tablespoons (28g) baking soda  
coarse, kosher or pretzel salt, optional  
3 tablespoons (43g) unsalted butter, melted

### Instructions

1. **To make dough by hand or with a mixer:** Weigh your flour; or measure it by gently spooning it into a cup, then sweeping off any excess. Place all of the dough ingredients into a bowl and beat until well-combined. Knead the dough, by hand or machine, for 5 to 8 minutes, until it’s soft, smooth, and elastic, then proceed to step 4.
2. **To make dough with a bread machine:** Place all of the dough ingredients into the pan of your bread machine, program the machine for dough or manual, and press Start. Allow the dough to go through its kneading cycle, then proceed to step 4.
3. **To make dough with a food processor:** Place the flour, salt, sugar, and yeast in the work bowl of a food processor equipped with the steel blade. Process for 5 seconds. Add the water and process for 7 to 10 seconds, until the dough starts to clear the sides of the bowl. Process a further 45 seconds, then proceed to step 4.
4. Transfer the dough to a lightly greased bowl, cover, and let it rise for 30 minutes.

*Continued on next page*

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*Directions continued*

**To make the topping:**

1. While the dough is rising, prepare the topping. Combine the boiling water and baking soda, stirring until the soda is totally (or almost totally) dissolved. Set the mixture aside to cool to lukewarm (or cooler).
2. Preheat your oven to 475°F. Prepare a baking sheet by spraying it with vegetable oil spray, or lining it with parchment paper.
3. Transfer the dough to a lightly greased work surface, and divide it into eight equal pieces (about 70g each).
4. Allow the pieces to rest, uncovered, for 5 minutes. Pour the baking soda/water into a 9" square pan.
5. Roll each piece of dough into a long, thin rope (about 28" to 30" long), and twist each rope into a pretzel shape. Working with four pretzels at a time, place them in the pan with the baking soda/water, spooning the water over their tops; leave them in the water for 2 minutes before placing them on the baking sheet. This baking soda bath will give the pretzels lovely golden-brown color.
6. Transfer the pretzels to the prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle them lightly with coarse, kosher, or pretzel salt. Allow them to rest, uncovered, for 10 minutes.
7. Bake the pretzels for 8 to 9 minutes, or until they're golden brown.
8. Remove the pretzels from the oven, and brush them thoroughly with the melted butter. Keep brushing the butter on until you've used it all up; it may seem like a lot, but that's what gives these pretzels their ethereal taste. Eat the pretzels warm, or reheat them in an oven or microwave.

## Halloween Party Extravaganza

By Hannah Crosby

As an icebreaker during our first few days of training, ACC staff asked us what our favorite holiday was. The overwhelming answer from the Corps was Halloween, and we agreed then and there we would have a Halloween party. So, a few short weeks later, we made good on that promise and Devine hosted a Halloween spectacular. There were costumes, snacks, games, and general merriment. The real hit of the Halloween party, however, came in the form of knock out and karaoke. A truly winning combination.

Using the free basketball hoop that Caroline and Hannah found on Facebook Marketplace back in the fall (shout out to Bob for helping transport it in ACC's program truck), many Corps members participated in endless games of knockout with costumed spectators looking on. The only thing that brought the party inside was the lack of light after the sun went down, so once we could no longer see the hoop, we moved indoors.

Inside, Caroline single-handedly transformed Devine's living room into the Cape's most successful karaoke bar, leading us in rousing versions of "Halleluiah" and "Shallow." With some prodding, others joined in, and soon, almost everyone was singing away. It's hard to overstate just how much fun we managed to have that night, and it's certainly a memory many of us will cherish from our service year (which is good, because no one managed to take many photos that night).



*A group of costumed ACC members and staff watching an intense game of knock-out.*



AmeriCorps Cape Cod  
Cape Cod, Massachusetts