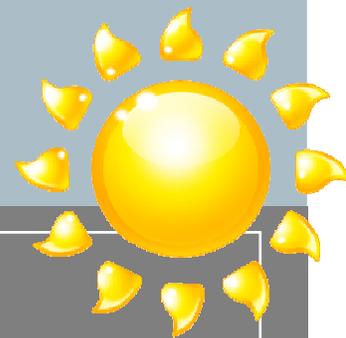


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- Summer Community Events
- Follies Pics



HDFS Graduate Student Steering Committee

Katie Bamberger & Brandon McDaniel

HDFS Newsletter

May 2012

Issue 4

Professional Milestones

Advice from students for each major milestone



Masters

My first piece of advice to other people working on their Masters is to have faith that it will actually get finished! Sometimes when I was working on mine I felt that with every bit of progress made, there were twice as many edits. I think it helped me to just realize that this was part of the process and to be a little flexible about my goal defense date. My second piece of advice is to remember that your committee is on your side. I was nervous about the



defense itself and had all sorts of crazy ideas about the questions my committee was going to ask. I had this expectation that they were going to ask really difficult questions to try to stump me. But that expectation ended up being very unrealistic, and I think that with the harder conceptual questions they were really just trying to help me figure out the best way to frame my thesis so that I could hopefully try to publish it. They didn't make me feel on the spot to give them an answer right away.

- Lauren Philbrook

Candidacy

For the candidacy evaluation, students put together a packet of material that includes information on a variety of topics (e.g., future academic plans, coursework). This



packet is used to assess two questions. First, are you a good fit for the program? In other words, candidacy is used as a check to make sure you are doing well in your classes/assistantships/etc. Second, is the program a good fit for you? One of the main goals of candidacy is to get students thinking about their academic futures in order to assess whether the program can train you for your desired career. In addition, the candidacy evaluation provides an opportunity for five professors to give advice to a student based on his/her career goals (e.g., possible dissertation committee members, relevant courses).

Overall, advice can be hard to give since the candidacy evaluation is very specific to a student's future goals. However, based on my experience, there are a couple of tips that I can offer. First, I recommend scheduling the date/time of candidacy as early as possible. Having a concrete time serves as a motivator for you to get your packet to-

Candidacy continued

gether (not that we would ever procrastinate as graduate students). In addition, it can be very difficult to find a time that works not only for your schedule, but also that works for five professors. Second, I recommend talking to upper-level students about their candidacy experiences and asking for example packets. I found that the upper-level students were not only very positive about the candidacy experience in general, but were also very willing to share materials/give advice based on their own personal experience.

— Katie Lawson

Comps

The comps process is one of the larger milestones in our department and has the potential to be really stressful or a great professional development experience, depending on your level of preparation for, and the mindset you have, going in to the exam period. In particular, successfully navigating comps requires you to have identified the key substantive and methodological areas that make up your professional identity. Your 'list' (i.e., the papers which you draw on to answer your comps questions) will be built around these areas. The list should include a mix of foundational papers (e.g., Bronfenbrenner) and current papers that are specific to your area of work. Generally, there are two or three questions with lots of little sub-parts to answer. Expect to get questions about the history/development of your area, critical analysis of the state of the field



(e.g., conflicting definitions, measurement techniques, analytic approaches, etc), and often a question asking you to develop a study, model, framework or an intervention that requires synthesis of major theories and current work in your area. Ideally, you will have selected areas that will result in written content you could use in your dissertation or future papers

Comps is one of the few milestones that you could begin prepping for on day one of grad school. Simply putting the papers you enjoy into a folder on your computer during the first couple years of grad school will save you lots of time. Also, ask senior students for their lists to make sure you're covering all the foundational papers of importance. Have honest conversations with your advisor about comps (and all milestones), ask whether they think you're ready, and what time of the year is best for them. Make sure to start the comps scheduling process early to accommodate your committee member's schedules.

Think through how you want to keep track of your notes. Some students outline each paper, others highlight on hard copies, some use annotation programs (e.g., iAnnotate). Do what works for you. Make sure you understand the methods papers on your list. If necessary spend time going over them with your advisor, a methods professor or a methods-oriented student (it's often harder to figure out a methods concept on your own compared to a substantive concept). Once you start reading for comps, **protect your time**. Most advisor's will give you space, but its ultimately on you to make sure that you don't have major project deadlines that occur over your

comping period (Learning to say no to things without burning bridges is an invaluable professional skill). Chunk your list into manageable daily goals. Start with your hardest articles in case you need to ask someone questions. If you can, begin defining the major concepts you know will be part of your questions (you'll know what they are when you get there).

The writing period is three weeks, which can be a source of a lot of stress. This is where healthy optimism and careful management of any obsessive characteristics (if you don't have them yet, you will by comps) are key. The name, 'Comprehensive Exam', is misleading (and kind of cruel) because no one can write anything truly comprehensive in three weeks no matter how little sleep the person gets. You can't know every paper and every new development in your field. You can outline the important topics and debates relevant to your work, cite most of the important researchers, and demonstrate that you have a deep, nuanced understanding of the concepts and dynamics that are crucial to becoming a thoughtful scientist. Remember to make time for exercise, healthy eating and sunlight. Breathe deep and trust in yourself. You got this.

—Max Crowley

Comps

Comps has the potential to be a really productive academic experience, but it also has the potential to wreck your body, stress you to your limits, and completely exhaust you. I think the



Comps continued

most important thing that I did to support my writing during comps had nothing to do with the reading I did. Staying attentive to my mental and physical health and wellness made comps a tear-free and mostly positive experience for me. While you're prepping for comps, don't underestimate the importance of taking steps to prep for your health and wellness, too. Staying organized and setting up a writing schedule is, of course, important for reducing your stress, but there are some less obvious but equally important steps you should take to support yourself:

- Stay active. Do LOTS of stretching every day, and take short walks or exercise for at least a few minutes every day. When you are tied to a computer in a desk chair with tension creeping into your shoulders, back and hips, your body can get into a horrible state really fast. After my first few days, I realized I hadn't been stretching or walking enough, and my legs and back were screaming. I started taking regular stretching/yoga breaks throughout the day and I felt worlds better.
- Make sure you have a desk/chair set up that supports good posture. Make a point to be aware of how you are sitting and make posture corrections. It's more important than you think.
- Eat small light meals throughout the day. Avoid heavy foods (e.g. buffets, too much bread or pasta) that will make you sleepy or unmotivated. Eat fresh fruits and veggies and home cooked meals as much as

possible - recruit friends to help you out. Stay hydrated, and don't drink too much caffeine.

- Stick to a good sleep schedule. Sleep is your friend.
- Take breaks for human contact and to get your mind off your writing now and then. I found that going out to dinner with my cohort was a great way to motivate myself to reach a writing goal.
- Be aware of what's going on in your head. While you're prepping for comps, make a list of the practices that work for you to relax and relieve anxiety. Having a huge writing task with a 3 week deadline will send your mind into high gear - which has some good and bad sides. Don't beat yourself up or let yourself get blinded by anxiety. When you get into a negative head space, your writing isn't going to be any good. In those moments, step away from the computer and just breathe or do whatever works for you to relax. You definitely don't want to stand in your own way. Remember, it's only three weeks, and nothing produced in that amount of time will ever be perfect!

— Alexis Harris

Dissertation

A good first step is to set up a timeline for your dissertation. Break it up into small, manageable chunks and give yourself reasonable deadlines – and hold



Dissertation continued

yourself to them.

Think of your dissertation writing as a collaboration with your committee members. Treat them as a resource and get their input early in the process. Remember, they are on your side and they want you to succeed!

As you write, take notes about issues you think your committee might raise or any unresolved questions that you have yourself. It's easier to do this while you're actually writing, rather than trying to anticipate questions after you've completed your dissertation. You'll end up with a clear list of potential defense questions and have plenty of time to prepare your responses.

At your defense, you will get questions that you did not anticipate. It's perfectly fine to take a moment to think about it before responding, or to say that you don't know the answer. Be confident, and remember that you are the expert on your dissertation. And don't forget that you can ask questions too!

At your defense, be ready to talk about how your dissertation fits into the bigger picture. How does your research contribute to the existing literature, and what kinds of practical applications does it have?

—Anna Solmeyer

Summer Travels

Where students are traveling this summer
(or where they wish they could go)



I will not be traveling anywhere (except to DC for a conference). I wish I could go to Italy.

-Anonymous



I will be traveling to California for family events. I wish I had enough time that I could drive and take my dog with me; then I would go to Yosemite (one of my favorite places in the US!) for a couple weeks!

-Tamara Goode



I have plans to travel to San Antonio, Texas this summer to see my best friend stationed there with the military. However, I wish I could also travel to the beach...

-Allison Reamy



I will be going to Turks and Caicos for my honeymoon in June! It's my first time going to the Caribbean, I'm so excited!

-Lauren Philbrook



It would be nice to go back to Brazil again so that my family could experience it as well.

-Brandon McDaniel



My boyfriend and I will be traveling to New Mexico to visit my family. We will be taking a hot air-balloon ride (a gift from my mom for my birthday and his dissertation defense) over the Rio Grande - I've heard the experience is incredible, so I'm really excited despite the fact that I'm a little afraid of heights! We'll also do some backpacking while there and hang out with my adorable niece and nephew!

-Jacqui Cox



I'm going to the Dominican Republic for the last week of May to visit my fiancé (who is doing his dissertation research there) and to go to a friend's wedding. I'm also going to Utah for a wedding in August.

-Concetta Mineo



I'll be traveling back home for a few weeks. I wish I could go to the beach for some warmer, sandier relaxation time!

-Anonymous

Currently on the list are traveling to London, Paris, Barcelona, and Rome.

-Frank Infurna

The Productive Summer

Katie B's search (and tips) for having a productive, balanced, and fun summer.

I am just like one of my fellow HDFS'er who filled out the survey saying, anonymously, "I don't know [of any tips for making summer productive]; my one summer so far in State College was remarkably unproductive."

I've spent a good deal of time thinking about what happened last summer. There are a few things I can be proud of: I biked to campus once or twice per week for a while, I worked on a PSU research farm at Rock Springs, and I worked in the office a lot. There are several things I think that I can do to be more fulfilled by this summer. The main thing is spending my time in a wider variety of ways and paying attention to what is making me happy and what is not, then being flexible enough to change

what I'm doing accordingly. Here are the strategies I'm trying to make

Pay attention to what is making you happy and what is not, then be flexible enough to change what you're doing

that happen translated into tips that may work for others.

Take the time to get yourself organized at the beginning of summer. If you're like me, all kinds of projects get put on the backburner until classes

end, and when classes do end, I want to get started on something else—anything else—right away. Whenever I do jump in to those projects in marathon-mode, I spend a whole week cleaning, a whole week organizing my papers, an entire day finding new recipes. Then my energy is gone, and I spend several weeks doing nothing (or at least doing nothing that I wanted to accomplish over the summer). So, resist the call to start the projects you have in mind with full force. Remember that even though you just finished finals and are used to being consumed by what you're working on, you'll burn out (even during the summer). In sum, don't approach the summer in the same way that you approach school. Instead, take the

time to organize your plans and commit to spending a few hours here and there on various things and try not to get wrapped up in any single thing. This

is not a final-paper-writing-marathon—it's summer.

Clearly define your summer goals and balance your time to meet all of those goals. (If I spend my entire summer making satisfactory progress on only one of my goals, I'll



be frustrated going into the school year that I have not used my summer free-time wisely.) To do this, make sure you include your entire scope of goals so that if one day you don't feel like cleaning the house, you can still spend time in a productive, but more fun way.

In order to feel productive this summer, you may want to make a calendar. My summer problems are always sleeping too late and getting caught in the work routine, which causes me to miss out on the variety of things that I

had planned for myself. This summer, I'm going to have a weekly calendar

Make a calendar and keep a list so that you don't lose track of things you really want to do this summer

just like I do during the school year. This sounds pretty lame and counter to my previous advice about not treating the summer like the school year, I know. However, the things on my calendar are work outside, projects at home, go to yoga, etc. This will allow me to spend my time in a variety of ways each day and not get burned out on any one thing. When I thought about making my calendar, I paid particular attention to allocating times in proportions that I feel will satisfy my goals of fun, variety, and productivity, so that I'm more likely to maintain those proportions.

Professionally, I always make a timeline for each goal and

milestone so that I at least know whether I'm on-track for the target completion date. If not, I can evaluate whether my timeline was realistic and hopefully avoid getting frustrated. Designing a timeline also requires clearly defining each step toward the goal, which helps me to think about all the steps necessary and plan for each one. And, having a clear plan eliminates the time from completing step 1 to figuring out what step 2 should be. I've found that keeping momentum is half the battle for sticking to a timeline, so eliminating this mid-project

floundering has saved a lot of time and motivation.

I'm putting each of these small steps that are part of my time-

lines in addition to all of my other summer projects and goals all together. (For the summer, they're all of equal importance.) One tool that has helped me to organize my summer plans: Evernote, which is software that allows you to clip webpages and make notes and checklists. It is all backed-up online and searchable with titles and tags. I have a ton of things tagged "summer." Recently I just started a to-do list with all of those projects and goals.

— Katie Bamberger

Followed by others' tips for a productive summer

The Productive Summer

Survey Responses from your fellow HDFFS'ers

Set deadlines with your adviser... before summer starts and stick to them.
-Anonymous

... Respect your personal time. I always catch up on reading for fun - but I also recommend catching up on some of the reading in your research area you haven't had time to do during the semester. It can be really motivating to spark your interests and think of current issues in your field.
-Alexis Harris

As basic as it may sound, I typically keep a list of important to-dos on a white board, along with tentative deadlines. I actually feel more motivated to be productive during the summer because classes aren't taking time away from valuable opportunities to further my research!
-Anonymous

State College is really nice in the summer, so I like to take my laptop out to one of the state parks to work. Being in such a peaceful place without the distraction of the internet is great for writing and reading.
-Jacqui Cox

...I think summers should be a much more relaxing time, so that you are recharged for when the fall semester starts. Make sure to devote lots of time during the summer to do various activities and traveling that you don't have time for during the school year.
-Anonymous



Recharge

Take time for yourself to relax a bit, but also set small goals for yourself to accomplish throughout the summer. If the goals seem too large they usually don't get touched...at least from my experience!
-Allison Reamy

Set Goals

The Productive Summer

Survey Responses from your fellow HDFS'ers

I am going to try to make sure that I come into my lab for a certain number of hours each weekday (or maybe just Monday through Thursday). Hopefully this will allow me to have time to focus on writing papers and preparing for other milestones, such as candidacy. My other time will be free to spend with family and friends though.

-Brandon McDaniel

Enjoy time outside whenever you can. After a long, chilly and dark winter, this is the time to get outside and really reconnect with nature. Work hard in the lab, but also set aside time for hikes, picnics, or just a stroll through campus.

-Aaron Miller

Rest

When you are taking time off, take time off. Go unplugged from work email. We all need time off, and that break will make us more productive... Think about how you work best – start out the day at home? Do you need to get out of the house to be productive? -

- and then do it... Reach out to friends to stay connected during the summer...

-Tamara Goode



TIPS FOR MAKING THIS SUMMER A PRODUCTIVE ONE: PART II

I think the most important thing is to allow yourself relaxation time. Planning too much to do and too much to accomplish will just burn you out and be counterproductive. Set goals, but set them low, and allow yourself time to catch up on rest and personal time. You can pick up the pace in the fall.

-Concetta Mineo

Personally, I think it is important to set aside time to yourself to relax and recharge your batteries from the long school year. Professionally, I think the summer is an important time to make strides regarding learning new skills by working on research projects and being able to spend time writing.

-Frank Infurna

Get Outside Relax

Milestones

Academic Milestones

*Graduating
Spring '12
MS*

*Brandon McDaniel
Lauren Philbrook*

PhD

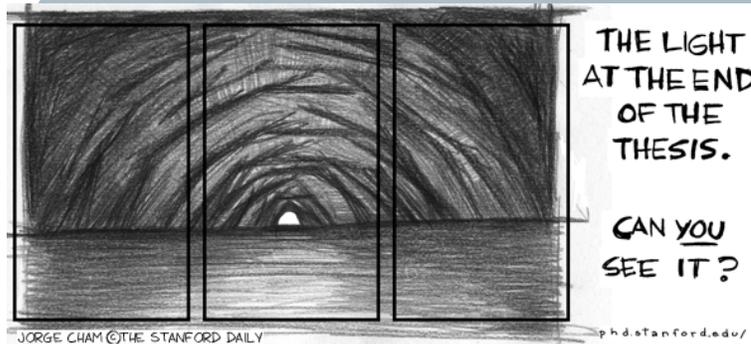
*Frank Infurna
Lesley Johnson
Julia Moore
Anna Solmeyer*

Candidacies

*Emily Pressler 4/23/2012
Katie Lawson 4/23/2012
Jennifer Morack 3/26/2012*

Dissertation Defense

Lesley Johnson 12/15/11



Aaron and Lacy Miller will be welcoming a baby girl, Avery, very soon!

Julia Terr-Malloy will be marrying her fiancé, Will Bleser, at the end of May.

My husband and I are expecting our first baby in September!

—Megan Maas

After almost a year of waiting, my fiancé and I FINALLY have a wedding date: July 12, 2014!

—Concetta Mineo

Personal Milestones

Being done with my first year feels like a huge personal milestone. —Aaron Miller

I was awarded a travel grant by the International Society on Infant Studies to their upcoming conference.

—Brandon McDaniel

I will be doing candidacy in

June and I am presenting at the meeting for American Psychological Science in May.
—Tamara Goode

Rebecca and Yao will start writing their comps in early May.

Siwei, Kyungmin, Ian, and Molly are all defending their dissertations in May.



Summer Community Events

See the calendar at the end of the Newsletter for community events. Also check out the bulletin board at Café Lemont; statecollege.com; and the Spikes calendar; plus check out Bar Bleu, The Deli, Otto's, Elk Creek Café & The Autoport for their live music events; and keep checking Way's Fruit Farm for the beginning of the season to pick-your-own strawberries.

Recent Events

HDFS volunteer and social events



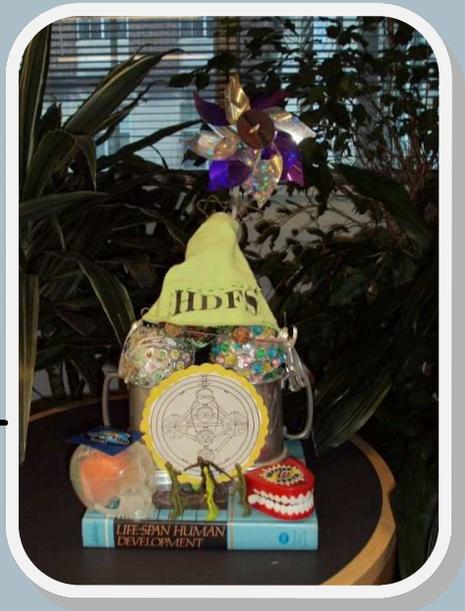
PAWS

Thanks to HDFS'ers who volunteered for the group work day at PAWS!



FOLLIES APRIL 2012

If you were not able to attend Follies this year, you missed out! It was loads of fun. And we've got the pictures to prove it!



FOLLIES continued...



May 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 MOTHER'S DAY	14	15	16	17	18	19 Bellefonte's Big Spring Festival (see 5/20) Hands-on Bee-keeping Workshop, Spring Creek Homesteading @ Warriors Mark or Zion, 2-5pm
20 Bellefonte's Big Spring Festival @ Talleyrand Park/ Downtown Bellefonte Jazz Brunch @ The Deli, 11:30	21	22	23	24	25	26 Backyard Chickens Building a Coop Workshop, Spring Creek Homesteading @ Friends Meeting House, 12-5pm
27 Jazz Brunch @ The Deli	28 Boalsburg Memorial Day Run @ Blue Spring Park, 8:30am	29	30	31		

Showings of *Rumors* @ The State College Community Theatre

Showings of *Rumors* @ The State College Community Theatre

June 2012

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1	2 Spring Creek 5K/ Fun Run @ Mill- book Marsh Na- ture Center, 8:30am
3 Summer Sounds @ Bellefonte's Tallyrand Park, each Sunday evening	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Jazz Brunch @ The Deli Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park	11	12	13	14	15	16 Strawberry Festi- val @ Lemont Village Green, 4- 8pm
17 FATHER'S DAY Jazz Brunch @ The Deli Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park	18	19 State College Spikes Home Opener @ Medlar Field Lubrano Park, 7pm	20	21 Spikes Nookie Monster draw- string backpack giveaway	22 Nittany Valley Symphony @Tussey Moun- tain Sunset Sym- phony, 7:30pm	23
24 Jazz Brunch @ The Deli Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park	25	26 Black Moshannon 5K/10K race @ Black Moshannon State Park, 10am	27 Showings of <i>Guys & Dolls</i> @ The State College Community Theatre	28	29	30

July 2012

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

<p>1</p> <p>Showings of <i>Guys & Dolls</i> @ The State College Community Theatre</p> <p>Jazz Brunch @ The Deli</p> <p>Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Spikes Buck Night— \$1 bleacher tickets, hotdogs, sodas, & popcorn</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Spikes t-shirt giveaway</p>	<p>4</p> <p>INDEPENDENCE DAY</p> <p>Central PA 4th Fest @ BJC</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Jazz Brunch @ The Deli</p> <p>Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Central PA Festival of the Arts (Arts Fest) @ Downtown State College & PSU Campus (through the 15th)</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Spikes— Kids under 12 eat free</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Spikes— Man on Fire stunt and fireworks</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Jazz Brunch @ The Deli</p> <p>Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Spikes Buck Night</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Showings of <i>Steel Magnolias</i> @ The State College Community Theatre</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>WingFest w/ Band TBA @ Tussey Mountain, 5:30pm</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Jazz Brunch @ The Deli</p> <p>Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Spikes Buck Night</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Spikes t-shirt giveaway</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Showings of <i>Steel Magnolias</i> @ The State College Community Theatre</p>	<p>26</p> <p>WingFest w/ Ted & the HiFi's @ Tussey Mountain, 5:30pm</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Jazz PA Festival @ Tallyrand Park</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>Jazz Brunch @ The Deli</p> <p>Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>				

August 2012

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1	2 WingFest w/ J.R. and Natalie @ Tussey Mountain, 5:30pm	3 Spikes \$25,000 Winning Inning Night	4
5 Jazz Brunch @ The Deli Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park	6 Spikes Buck Night PLUS free ticket to future game if the Spikes win	7 Showings of <i>Seussical</i> @ The State College Community Theatre	8	9 WingFest w/ Velveeta @ Tussey Mountain, 5:30pm	10	11 State College Microbrew Expo @ Tussey Mountain, 5pm
12 Jazz Brunch @ The Deli Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park	13	14	15 Showings of <i>Seussical</i> @ The State College Community Theatre	16 WingFest w/ Royal Benson @ Tussey Mountain, 5:30pm	17 Bellefonte Arts & Crafts Fair @ Tallyrand Park	18
19 Jazz Brunch @ The Deli Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park	20	21	22	23 WingFest w/ The Earthtones @ Tussey Mountain, 5:30pm	24	25
26 Jazz Brunch @ The Deli Summer Sounds @ Tallyrand Park	27 138 th Centre County Grange Fair @ Grange Fairgrounds, Centre Hall Spikes Buck Night	28 Spikes t-shirt giveaway	29	30 WingFest w/ Hybrid Ice @ Tussey Mountain, 5:30pm	31	