

photo by Ryan Davis



Students in Writing 268 share a meal during their three-day camping trip to Silver Falls State Park.

Nature writing students take it outside in class camping trip

by Amber Fairbanks

Clackamas has a lot of classes that offer a variety of different things. But a writing class that has a mandatory camping trip? Yep. Nature Writing 268-01 has a mandatory three-night camping trip at Silver Falls State Park.

At first, I was not very excited. A camping trip with my instructor and people I barely knew didn't sound like my definition of fun, but instructor Ryan Davis and the other students in Nature Writing proved me wrong.

The weather was nice when we all arrived at Silver Falls, the sun peeked through the tall trees and chipmunks scurried around. I had never been camping in a government camping site before, so I was ecstatic when I found out there were hot showers and mirrors for me to use to draw my eyebrows in.

We found our camping spot and began setting up. After another student and I got my overly large tent up, we made dinner. Burritos were on the menu tonight, traditional camping food of course. I was just minding my own business enjoying my food when all of a sudden I'm getting slapped in the face by a

feathered wing. I screamed and then realized what had happened. A bird had dove right at my face, hoping to make off with my burrito. That bird went after our food all weekend. I named him Dick.

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The weather stayed nice all weekend and Silver Falls had a lot of things to offer, like hiking around the waterfalls it's named after. We were so close to the waterfalls we could feel the spray on us, it was amazing. I ventured off for a bit on my own and walked through the forest. It was nice to get away

from all the noise of the city and just listen to nature.

This being a school camping trip, of course we had to do some work. It actually wasn't that bad, we were given a bunch of different writing prompts directed towards nature and how it makes us feel and I really enjoyed it. As cheesy as it sounds, it made me think and find things out about myself.

My outlook from when I first arrived to when I left was completely different. Going from "school is stealing my weekend" to "I'm really happy I did this" was a huge change and I am so glad I took this trip.

I got to know my other classmates and my instructor and they got to know me. We were all different in every aspect, but we all got along. Hiking together, roasting marshmallows, sharing our writings: it made the dive bombing birds and sleeping on a tree root worth it. You never really get to know your instructor or your classmates and I'm glad I did. If you get the chance, take Nature Writing, it's worth it.