

# NIGHT EAGLE NEWS

A Primitive Camp for Boys Ages 10-14  
www.nightaglewilderness.com

Fall, 2021 - 2022 (802) 855-8661  
Facebook.com/nightaglewilderness

## From the Director

Although it's been three months since the last campers left in August and there is snow on the ground at camp, I can still vividly remember the summer. And what a summer it was!

Although COVID was still hanging around, it did not slow us down or interrupt the program. To appease the state and to ensure the safety of our campers and staff, we did take advantage of the free weekly testing offered by the state. Every Wednesday morning *Summer Bear* took a few minutes to round up the campers, give them the twenty-second test, and package up the results. Our program continued without a hitch.

If there was a downside to the summer, it would be that the weather didn't fully cooperate for the first two or three weeks of camp, but that did not stop us from having a great summer!



## The Bromley Mountain Hike

In addition to our usual hikes to White Rocks and Little Rock Pond, *Fox Vigil* and *Circle Singer* led a three-day hike to Bromley Mountain where *Arctic Arrow* picked them up.

A few days later, another group led by *Hummingbird Sings* and *Arrow Shade* was dropped off at the base of Pico. They hiked up Pico and Killington Peaks and then made their way back to camp three days later just in time for an amazing supper!

Speaking of supper, the food this summer was even more extravagant than usual. In addition to our usual evening fare: stir fry, Night Eagle pizza (always amazing), lasagna, etc., *Arctic Arrow* and his tipi pleased the camp with his famous *New Orleans Red Beans and Rice* complete with sausage from Mississippi; and *Sahasipa* tipi group later put together a delicious *Vegetarian Surprise* with secret herbs spices

Not to be outdone, *Summer Bear* (known for his delectable creations in the food shelter) and his tipi presented the camp with three amazing meals in one day, beginning with *eggs and bacon burritos* and ending with finger-licking *ribs and brisket smoked in a barrel over hickory chips!*

Then, out to prove that *Summer Bear* was not the only accomplished cook at Night Eagle, *Fox Vigil* and his tipi prepared a gastronomic crowd pleaser with his *Kung Pao Sweet and Sour Chicken*.

I can't wait to see what's on the menu next summer!

## Thanksgiving A Time for Reflection

It's been 400 years since that October in 1621 when 50 Pilgrims and 90 Indians gathered in Plymouth, Massachusetts, for three days of feasting and games. The Pilgrims had survived a year in the New World and, with the help of the Indians, had managed to successfully grow a bountiful crop. They had much to celebrate.

We, too, have much to be thankful for, but sometimes it seems that the turkey on the table and the football games on the television divert our attention from the purpose of the holiday. As we sit down to our Thanksgiving meal this year, I hope we all take the time to look around and count our many blessings - family and friends - and notice the little things in life that make our lives so special.

We are thankful that each of you has come into our circle of friends, and we wish you a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving!

## Fall Work and Play 2021

What a great weekend for Work and Play! Great friends, Great food, and unlike last fall, Great weather! As with all work weekends, we had plenty of jobs awaiting us.



The morning began when I arrived early to clean and set up the food sheltered and found *Summer Bear* and *Blue Heron* walking on Wallingford Pond Road. They had already been to camp and were waiting for me to tell them what jobs needed to be done. I scooted to camp, unpacked the food, wiped down the counters, and posted a long list of jobs that we could choose from. Then I grabbed the push mower and finished cutting the grass in the upper clearing, a job I had begun the day before. Before I was finished, *Blue Heron* and *Summer Bear* walked into camp. *Summer Bear* found the chainsaw and headed down the Get Lost Trail to clear any downed trees. By that time others had begun arriving: *Sun Quest*, and his mom (*Yekaterina*), his dad (*Serge*), *Gentle Thunder*, and his son, *Rising Wind*. After a hearty welcome, the fun began!

*Sun Quest* and his parents set up their tent and then we all raised the tool shed, which had once again blown over sometime between the end of camp and Work Weekend. Then *Sun Quest* and *Serge* grabbed some green paint and began putting a fresh coat of paint on the tool shed. While they were painting the shed, *Blue Heron* and *Rising Wind* repaired one of the spoke shave benches and then set about building a brace to prevent the tool shelter from ever being blown over again. We'll see how that works out when we arrive for Spring Work and Play Weekend in May!

After painting the tool shed, *Sun Quest* and his *Serge* headed to the feathered gate, sanded it with steel wool, and painted it green. My plan is to have someone paint some (or all) of the feathers on the gate to resemble owl feathers.

Friday night's supper was delicious as usual, with food running the gamut from hot dogs to tasty chicken and sausage dishes!

On Sunday after breakfast, we once again headed down the road to Skunk Junction. *Sun Quest* and *Serge* equipped with their paint and brushes and *Rising Wind* with his tools. Together they replaced some of the plywood on the *Black Bear Buffet*, and the new coat of paint made it look like a different building!

Meanwhile, I attacked the trail up to the Questing site, which had become overgrown with young trees and hobblebush. As we were doing that, *Yekaterina* searched for various various mushrooms, and *Summer Bear* spent time splitting wood where loggers left plenty of inviting targets. *Blue Heron* split his time working with *Rising Wind* and helping *Summer Bear*, giving his expert advice and a helping hand wherever it was needed.

After completing those tasks, we dragged the stumps and trees that *Fox Vigil* and some hard working campers dragged out of the lake during one of our work projects at the end of the summer and piled them up next to the burn area near the sweat lodge.



On the walk back up to camp, we all cleared the water bars and chatted about all the tasks we able to accomplish in about twenty-four hours. After a quick lunch, everyone packed up, and we took a group photo before heading home. Another successful Work and Play Weekend!

## **Serendipity**

If you are not familiar with the word, Serendipity is an unplanned fortunate discovery. That's the best word I could think of to describe what happened to me recently.

Having retired from teaching this past December, I have had many opportunities to meet people and do things in the area that I have not had time for when I was teaching.

As fate would have it, the owner of the house I have been renting in Wallingford decided to sell the house and trying to make a killing in the housing market. The bad news is that I had to find a new place to live. The good news is that I had the opportunity to meet the many workers (handymen, carpenters, painters, plumbers, electricians) who are getting the house ready to sell.

One of the handymen (Wayne) who was working on the house is a local who can do all of the above trades. I struck up a conversation with him and found him to be intriguing. It turns out that he is an avid outdoorsman, has a hunting/fishing camp, and is a "jack of all trades." So I asked him if he would come to camp and do a few jobs in camp and at the gatehouse. He did, and I discovered that he knew all about living off the grid, has installed solar power systems in cabins, and could easily "modernize" our hot water system at Night Eagle, which he did. He was completely in awe of camp, and he fell in love with Night Eagle. He even gave us a box of Morning Star vegetarian "meats" that he had won at a fishing raffle. Needless to say, he'll be back!

Randy Baker, another worker I have become friends with, is a painter/carpenter who was also working on the house. One morning I made some banana bread muffins and offered him some. That broke the ice, and over the next few days I found out that he, like Wayne, is a Vermonter and could do almost anything.

However, several weeks passed before I learned that he was a hunter, a trapper, and a fisherman. Somehow our conversation turned to Night Eagle. After he heard about camp, I found out "the rest of the story." He's part Abnaki (Vermont Indian)! He tracks, knows survival skills, can identify wild

edibles, makes atlatls and blow guns, and does a host of other things. One of the "other" things he does that really caught my attention is that he makes knives. In fact he has his own portable kiln.

I asked him if he would be interested in trying to find some time to bring some of his skills to Night Eagle this summer and share some of his knowledge with the campers and the staff, and he was all for it. He told me that the man who works with him is also a knife maker, and he too has a portable kiln.

So this spring we are going to try to work out a few days during both three-week sessions when he will be free to come to camp and share his knowledge with us. Randy is more than happy to bring his kiln and safety equipment along, and show us all what it takes to make knives out of railroad spikes. Then, if there is interest, he is willing to work with some older campers and let them make their own knives.

## **Abenaki Fact Sheet**

### **How do you pronounce Abenaki?**

AH-buh-nah-kee - means "people of the dawn" or "easterners."

### **Where do Abenaki Indians live?**

Abenakis are mainly natives of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine.

### **What were Abenaki homes like?**

Abenakis lived in small birchbark buildings called wigwams or lodges. A village contained many wigwams and was surrounded by high log walls for protection

### **What was Abenaki clothing like?**

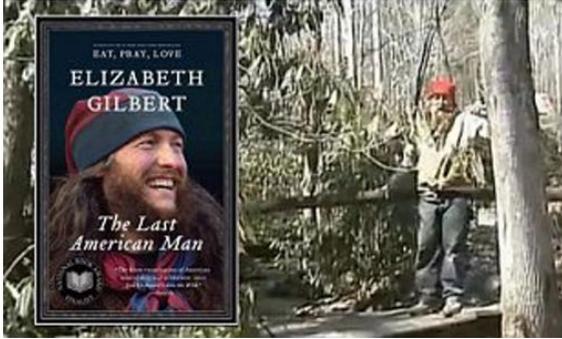
The Abenaki men wore leather breechclouts and leggings. Shirts were not necessary in Abenaki culture in the summer.

### **What was Abenaki food like?**

Fishermen used nets and pronged spears to catch fish. Hunters used bows and arrows, spears, and heavy wooden clubs.

## **The Last American Male** - by Elizabeth Gilbert

*The Last American Man* is the biography of Eustace Conway who, at seventeen years old, set off with little more than a tipi and a knife to escape a materialist society and a tense home life where his dad (a chemical engineer with a PhD from MIT) expected impossible perfection.



Eustace was always wild at heart. By the time was seven years old, he could throw a knife accurately enough to nail a chipmunk to a tree. By age twelve, he had begun to spend stretches of his life living off the land, alone in those woods. After finishing high school, he left his family's comfortable suburban home in S.C. and moved to the Appalachian Mountains where he has lived for more than thirty years sewing all his clothes, eating nettles, and hunting small game with a Cherokee blowgun, using darts made from sticks, thistle down, and strands of deer tendon."

He has hiked the entire Appalachian trail often wearing nothing but a breechclout (or less) and ridden across the United States on horseback.

By his late 30's, Eustace had managed to accumulate a thousand acres of solitude and nature in Todd, N.C., where he established Turtle Island Preserve and decided that it was his calling to share this way of life with other people. He lives there in a tipi and teaches "primitive living" skills to young people and adults. Eustace is neither a bleeding-heart tree hugger, nor a true survivalist. The wilderness is simply where he is comfortable, and where he feels he needs to be.

When we were looking for land in North Carolina to begin what is now Night Eagle, we drove by Turtle Island Preserve, but never saw the camp. We did, however, write Eustace and told him our plans. I still have his response wishing us luck!

## **"Why the Leaves Fall"** - a Lakota Myth

*All cultures have myths, which are considered by many to be the first science. Myths are stories that explain why things are the way they are: Why do rabbits have long ears? Where did we come from? How do people fall in love? They are good stories, but they are important because they teach us things that are important to various cultures. The following Lakota myth explains why the leaves fall in the autumn. Can you find an important spiritual lesson in the story?*

"Many moons ago when the world was still very young, the planting animal life was enjoying the beautiful summer weather. But as the days went by, autumn set in, and the weather became colder with each passing day.

The grass and flower folk were in a sad condition, for they had no protection from the sharp cold. Just when it seemed that there was no hope for living, he who looks after the things of creation came to their aid. He said that the leaves of the trees should die and fall to the ground, spreading a soft blanket over the tender roots of grass and flowers. To repay the trees for the loss of their leaves, he allowed them one last bright array of beauty.

That is why, each year, during Indian summer the trees take other pretty farewell colors of red, gold, and brown. After this final display, they turn to their appointed task of covering the Earth with a thick rug of warmth against the chill of winter."



## “Nurse Trudy”

When Nurse Trudy came to Night Eagle, it was our lucky day. She wasn't looking for a summer job and we had already hired a nurse. Circumstances changed when the nurse whom we had been hired had a family emergency just days before camp opened. Trudy stepped in and hasn't missed a day since. Much to our delight, she's hooked on Night Eagle as much as we are hooked on her!



***Nurse Trudy hanging out with the boys after breakfast.***

Trudy was a school nurse for quite a few years and during that time saw many changes in children's health and family attitudes about health issues. To say that she is experienced, is an understatement. She also knows about boys, having raised two of her own, and she has taken care of Night Eagle campers and staff since we opened our tipi doors to the public!

Trudy and her husband Ed live in the village of Wallingford (about six miles from camp) where she gardens, knits, works in her church, and gives health care to her family and friends. Together she and Ed spend as much time as COVID will allow touring the United States, visiting friends around the country, sightseeing, and square dancing every chance they get.

She has been a lifesaver for us in many ways. Two years ago, for example, I was looking everywhere for an old wood stove for camp, and guess where I accidentally found one. You got it! I had mentioned my search to them, and they quickly looked at each other and then led me down into their basement where there was an old wood stove that they were happy to see removed. Now, when you take a shower at camp, thank Trudy and Ed!

## Teton Division (Lakota)

At Night Eagle, we learn about many Indian tribes in America, but we focus on the Lakota because of my connection with Allen Flying By a member of the Hunkpapa band of Lakota at Standing Rock.

There are three divisions of the Lskoys, and the Teton (Western Division) is the largest of the three. It's comprised of seven bands, which our tipi sites at Night Eagle are named after.

### Teton (Lakota) “Dwellers on the Plains”

- 1) **Oglala** - *Scatter Their Belongings*
- 2) **Sicangu** - *Burnt Thighs*
- 3) **Minicoujou** - *Plants by the River*
- 4) **Hunkpapa** - *Camps at the Entrance*
- 5) **Itazipcho** - *Without Bows*
- 6) **Oohenunpa** - *Two Kettles*
- 7) **Sihasapa** - *Blackfeet*

Members of these bands speak the Lakota dialect and traditionally occupied the area west of the Missouri River. Later they spread out and settled the sacred lands of Paha Sapa (Black Hills).

## Wait until you see what we are cooking up for you in 2022!



### Campers Already Enrolled

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Mustang Wind</i>  | <i>River Shines</i>  |
| <i>Aspen Moon</i>    | <i>Sunset Oak</i>    |
| <i>Western Moon</i>  | <i>Marsh Rabbit</i>  |
| <i>Fox Brother</i>   | <i>GlowingSpring</i> |
| <i>Spirit Dance</i>  | <i>Tundra Winds</i>  |
| <i>Wolf Spirit</i>   | <i>Creek Stone</i>   |
| <i>Southern Star</i> |                      |



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If you had a good time at camp this summer,  
go to

**NIGHT EAGLE WILDERNESS ADVENTURES**

And Leave a Review on our Business Profile!

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**Important Dates:**

June 1	Health Forms Due in the Office
June 25	Staff Week Begins
July 3	First 1-Week Session Opens First 2, 3, Week Sessions Open 6-Week Session Opens
July 17	Second 1-Week Session Opens 4-Week Sessions Opens
July 24	Third 1-Week Session Opens Second 2, 3 Week Sessions Opens
August 7	Fourth 1-Week Session Opens
August 14	To Be A Man Opens

**Night Eagle Wilderness Adventures**  
**P.O. Box 479**  
**Wallingford, VT 05773**



***Prairie Dance and Deer Seeker***  
Hanging out in the Clearing