

# NIGHT EAGLE NEWS

A Primitive Camp for Boys Ages 10-14  
[www.nighteaglewilderness.com](http://www.nighteaglewilderness.com)

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## From the Director

The big snowstorm has moved on and the sun is shining brightly on the deep powdery snow that it left behind. Leaux has a blast rolling in the frigid fluff every time we go out the door, and even though he is much bigger than the puppy that you remember from this past summer, he is still a puppy through and through (except his teeth aren't as sharp)!

Even as a puppy, I think Leaux has figured out that life in Wallingford is quite a bit different from life at camp. Here he is confined to the house much of the time and ventures outside only at the end of a leash. His constant biting at the leash shows that he misses the woods and the freedom he had at Night Eagle.

Like many people, we often don't appreciate people and places until they aren't there. Only then do we understand what a good thing we had.

Sure, I could snowshoe into camp any time, but it's not the same without the people who bring it to life. Everywhere I'd go would bring back memories: At Skunk Junction I'd see *Mustang Sun* and *Rising Wind* skinning a beaver. At the waterfront I'd see *Sunrise Bear* leaping Ninja-like from point to point. At the food shelter I'd see the bright red roof and think of last year's work and play group that put it up. Under Hocoka I'd think about all the campers and counselors who received their names on Grandfather Rock.

Memories are wonderful, but they could never take the place of reality. What they can do is remind us how much we want to be at camp enjoying nature, friends, and the freedom that camp offers. My bet is that if Leaux could talk, he'd say the same thing. See you this summer!

## The Symbolism of the Feather

As you all know, feathers were important to the American Indian, especially those of the eagle. Why? Because the winged ones can escape the earth and fly high, close to Wakan Tanka, the Creator.

Feathers play an important role at Night Eagle also. Our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary t-shirt depicts an owl carrying an eagle feather from camp toward the East, symbolizing the beginning of a new day. It is also the beginning of understanding because light helps us see things the way they are and helps people live better lives

However, to the Lakota, the feather itself has symbolic meaning:



The tip represents our adulthood.

The veins represent the days of our lives and the choices we make.

The fluff at the bottom represents our infancy and our beginning.

The quill represents our inner strength and the path we are on.

The feather is divided into two parts: Male or female, good or bad, right or wrong.

## The 12 Lakota Virtues

Humility	Perseverance	Respect
Honor	Love	Sacrifice
Truth	Compassion	Bravery
Fortitude	Generosity	Wisdom

## Looking Back

As you hiked through the woods at *Night Eagle*, you may have discovered some old fencing, either still standing or rolled up into large bales. It's not a pretty sight and definitely not welcome to hikers or to wildlife.

When we first purchased the property, it was being used as a beagle club. There was a mobile home and several concession stands near the front gate. In addition, the entire property had been fenced and cross-fenced with 7' tall hare and chicken wire. The 'beaglers' would purchase hares for their beagles to chase. In order to keep those expensive hares from getting loose, the club members erected 2-3 miles of fencing. While the fence did a good job of keeping the dogs and the hares from leaving the property, it also successfully kept other animals from entering.

In the summer of 1999, there were very few signs of wildlife at *Night Eagle*. Water birds could fly in but there were few songbirds because the beagle club would spray insecticides. There were no signs of deer or moose or turkey. When we first arrived on the property, we began the long process of removing the fencing. Now, seventeen years later, our labor has paid off. Birds are plentiful and, as evidenced during camp, moose seem to be everywhere. One summer we had over a dozen moose sightings, including the one that walked into camp late one afternoon and stood at Yankton.

In addition to the moose, other animals also have also found their way into camp. At various times over the past several years, raccoons, bears, porcupines, beavers, otters, grouse, partridge, turkey, fisher cats, coyotes, and deer have all been spotted, or left signs, in or around camp.

To be sure, although much of the fencing has been pulled out of the woods and taken to a recycling center, there is still a lot left hiding in the forests. With time, it too will be removed!

## On the Road Again

Last summer, Trudy, our nurse for seventeen years, left camp a week early so she and her husband could tour the upper mid-western states and national parks. This is her story in her own words:

"We left with our R.V. and were on the road during August and September driving a total of 9,324 miles through ten states and Ontario. We visited Todd, Linda, and Avery (son, daughter-in-law, and three-year-old grand-daughter) in New York at the beginning and end of our trip.

Places we enjoyed were Green Bay, Wisconsin where we attended a Packers pre-season football game at Lambeau Field, Theodore Roosevelt, Glacier, Yellowstone, and Tetons National Parks.

Other points of interest included Custer State Park, Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse Monument, and of course, the Prairie Berry Winery in Hill City, South Dakota. Their wine is made from peaches, pears, honey, black currants, rhubarb, and many other local fruits and berries.

As we headed back east, we visited Garyowen Montana, the site of the Battle of the Little Big Horn, and Devil's Tower in Wyoming. Along the way we square danced with clubs in Idaho and South Dakota."

After spending the fall and Christmas in Vermont, Trudy and Ed are now set to spend February on a square dance cruise in Hawaii. Then in July, they will be off again to join another square dance cruise, this time to Alaska!

So, for the first time in eighteen years, Trudy will not be at *Night Eagle*. However, she has made me promise to keep her job open for 2018.

Bon Voyage, Trudy! We all hope that you and Ed continue to enjoy your retirement years and look forward to hearing about your adventures next summer!

**Tanyan omani po!**

(Have a good journey!)

## Spring Work and Play Weekend



Relashing Hocoka at a Work and Play gathering

This year's Spring Work and Play Weekend will be on May 6 and 7 (weather permitting). We invite you all to be part of the fun as we prepare camp for the summer. This is an informal cooperative event that allows new and returning campers and their families to get to know one another while together we attack some of the many projects around camp.

Families and friends are invited to come for all or part of either day or to join us for the entire weekend. This is a great time to introduce your friends to Night Eagle. The majority of the work will take place on Saturday beginning around 9:00 a.m. (*Night Eagle* time).

Families that are staying can bring a tent or reserve some space for their sleeping bags in one of the tipis that we'll put up for the weekend. We can also recommend some nearby motels or inns if you're more inclined to a hot shower and a soft bed after a day's work.

Work projects at this year's gathering will include putting up a tipi or two, clearing fallen limbs and trees, checking the Little Rock Pond Shelter, replacing the shower floor, and generally sprucing up camp. There is always plenty to do to prepare camp for the summer. We'll send out an e-mail and post on facebook with more specifics as the date nears.

**NOTE: If the ground is soft, plan to walk into camp from Skunk Junction.**

## Distinguished Safety 1st award

Markel Insurance announced that Night Eagle has *once again* been included among only 59 boys' and girls' camps in America to have received this prestigious award.

Each year, Markel's Safety 1st program recognizes policyholders who have shown an exceptional commitment to the safety of their employees and customers.

Michael Swain, Senior Loss Control Specialist for Markel Specialty, stated, "Camps and clubs must meet stringent criteria to qualify for the Safety 1st designation. They must have a proven safety record, undergo formal assessments and inspections, and participate in continuing education and certification programs. These facilities deserve to be recognized for keeping safety a top priority."



*Hummingbird Drums and Meadow Dreamer*

## Bring a Friend to Camp

Please help us get the *Night Eagle* word out! If you know someone who might be interested in attending *Night Eagle* or learning more about camp, call or e-mail us and we'll send the family an information packet. ***If any of your referrals enroll for any Night Eagle session, we will be happy to credit your account with a value of 10% of the new camper's tuition.***

**THINK SUMMER!**

## Colors

*(Each day in the summer during Morning Reflection, someone tells or reads an American Indian story or myth that has been passed down from generation to generation. This is one of those stories. I hope you enjoy it!)*

“Once upon a time the colors of the world started to quarrel. All claimed that they were the best, the most important, the most useful, the favorite.

**Green** said: "Clearly I am the most important. I am the sign of life and of hope. I was chosen for grass, trees, leaves - without me, all animals would die. Look over the countryside and you will see that I am in the majority."

**Blue** interrupted: "You only think about the earth, but consider the sky and the sea. It is the water that is the basis of life and drawn up by the clouds from the deep sea. The sky gives space and peace and serenity. Without my peace, you would all be nothing."

**Yellow** chuckled: "You are all so serious. I bring laughter, gaiety, and warmth into the world. The sun is yellow, the moon is yellow, the stars are yellow. Every time you look at a sunflower, the whole world starts to smile. Without me there would be no fun."

**Orange** started next to blow her trumpet: "I am the color of health and strength. I may be scarce, but I am precious for I serve the needs of human life. I carry the most important vitamins. Think of carrots, pumpkins, oranges, mangoes, and pawpaws. I don't hang around all the time, but when I fill the sky at sunrise or sunset, my beauty is so striking that no one gives another thought to any of you."

**Red** could stand it no longer. He shouted out: "I am the ruler of all of you - I am blood - life's blood! I am the color of danger and of bravery. I am willing to fight for a cause. I bring fire into the blood. Without me, the earth would be as empty as the moon. I am the color of passion and of love, the red rose, the poinsettia and the poppy."

**Purple** rose up to his full height. He was very tall and spoke with great pomp: "I am the color of royalty and power. Kings and chiefs have always chosen me for I am the sign of authority and wisdom. People do not question me - they listen and obey."

Finally, **Indigo** spoke, much more quietly than all the others, but with just as much determination: "Think of me. I am the color of silence. You hardly notice me, but without me you all become superficial. I represent thought and reflection, twilight and deep water. You need me for balance and contrast, for prayer and inner peace."

And so the colors went on boasting, each convinced of his or her own superiority. Their quarreling became louder and louder. Suddenly there was a startling flash of bright lightning - thunder rolled and boomed. Rain started to pour down relentlessly. The colors crouched down in fear, drawing close to one another for comfort.

In the midst of the clamor, rain began to speak: "You foolish colors, fighting amongst yourselves, each trying to dominate the rest. Don't you know that you were each made for a special purpose, unique and different? Join hands with one another and come to me."

Doing as they were told, the colors united and joined hands. The rain continued: "From now on, when it rains, each of you will stretch across the sky in a great bow of color as a reminder that you can all live in peace. The rainbow is a sign of hope for tomorrow." And so, whenever a good rain washes the world, and a rainbow appears in the sky, let us remember to appreciate one another."

*At Night Eagle, we know Rain is right, and we try to value everyone's uniqueness, not just when a rainbow appears, but all the time. This summer when we have come together and join hands as the colors did in the story, let's try to remember Rain's lesson.*

## Out With the Old

In June, 2015, *Little Bear* and *Snowy Owl* told me that our website was 16 years old and they thought it had become outdated. I responded that I thought it was effective even though it was old. In the end, after viewing dozens of other sites, I relented and let Little Bear begin laying out a new site.

At that point I was preparing for the opening of camp and didn't have time to think about the site again until the campers had left in August. *Little Bear* worked with me a bit to show me the basics of the site, however, by then it was time to drive the boys to their respective colleges, St. John's and University of Tampa.

After returning from Florida, I begin the daunting task of building a new site, splitting my time between school and camp. When the boys were home from school on breaks, we worked together. When they were away, I worked alone and sought advice from a group of camp moms, our graphic artist, a couple of counselors, and friends at school. Finally, a year and a half after beginning the project, we felt that we were ready to go public, and *Snowy Owl* made the site live at the beginning of February. He did, in about fifteen minutes, what would have taken me an entire afternoon!

I want to thank everyone who offered encouragement and suggestions along the way. The site is still a work in progress so I hope you will take some time to look it over, tell us what you like and don't like, and offer any suggestions that you may have to improve it. <[nighteaglewilderness.com](http://nighteaglewilderness.com)>

Thanks and I hope to see you all this summer!

## Night Eagle News

Are you tired of having to wait to receive your copy of the Night Eagle newsletter in the mail. We can change that! If you will let us know, we'll be happy to send you your copy via electronic mail. Like many others, you will receive it as soon as it's completed, and you will be able to download the color photos if you'd like.

## Favorite Quotes

*"Why this cult of wilderness? . . . because we like the taste of freedom; because we like the smell of danger."* - Edward Abbey

*"I am glad I shall never be young without wild country to be young in."* - Aldo Leopold

*"May your trails be crooked, winding lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds."* - Edward Abbey

*"Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons. It is to grow in the open air, and to eat and sleep with the earth."* - Walt Whitman

*"And forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair."* - Kahil Gibran

*"I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."* - Henry David Thoreau

*"What do parents owe their young that is more important than a warm and trusting connection to the earth?"* - Theodore Roszak



Aug. 6	Second One-Week Session Opens
July 16	First One-Week Session Opens
July 23	Second Session (2 and 3 weeks) Opens
July 16	Four-Week Sessions Opens First One-Week Session Opens
July 2	First Session (2, 3, 6 weeks) Opens
June 25	Staff Week Begins
<b>Important Dates:</b>	

**Night Eagle Wilderness Adventures**  
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*Marsh Hawk* tries to get a coal using a hand drill