

Rabbitstick 2026 - #38

Primitive Skills Conference - It's Time To Gather!

September 13-19, 2026

Letter to Returning Participants

One more trip around the sun.....

Hello Rabbitstickers - Well, it looks like “gathering season” is in full swing – so much to do, so little time. We’re already in countdown mode here. We feel a bit left out with all the events that happen throughout the summer, but we can feel the energy in the air. It’s become an interesting transition for us with farmstead and family responsibilities; always new projects waiting for attention – you know how it goes.

Registration Is Open - The website - rabbitstick.com – has been busy. This is your reminder not to wait. If trends hold as in the past, we will close registration early again the year and we wouldn’t want to miss you. Up until now we have had our regular trickle of registrations coming in from people around the world, but it appears even geopolitics can have an impact on primitive skills events. Currently our return participants are about even with new people, so the mix is pretty nice. It’s great to rely on old-timers to help us manage things and keep the camp running smoothly. The return of our dedicated staff and regular participants helps to maintain that *Rabbitstick* culture we have all grown to love.

“Camp Mom” has posted a great new pep letter for this year. Take a minute and catch the excitement about another great year at Rabbitstick - rabbitstick.com/2026-updates. There is also our annual Welcome letter that you won’t want to miss at - rabbitstick.com/open-letter-2026.

We look forward to seeing you in camp once again along the banks of the Snake River. Hopefully your plans make it possible so you can join us once again.

Travel safely, be well, and we hope to see you around the fire in a few short weeks.

David and Paula and the Backtracks Crew



Rabbitstick 38 – Updates

Sept 13-19, 2026

“It’s not what you make, it’s what you learn”

Participant Updates

We are sending this information out via rabbitstick.com (see our *2026 Welcome Letter* - rabbitstick.com/open-letter-2026 and *2026 Updates* - rabbitstick.com/2026-updates), Facebook, Email so it should reach everyone. Be sure to read Janet “Camp Mom’s” pep letter and check-out the photo archives from past events at rabbitstick.com/photo-gallery. Once you get it, please let us know ASAP of your intentions to come or that we won’t be seeing you this year. Either way, we’re glad you’re part of the family.

Things That Are New –

1. **Opening Day Circle** – Our annual *Staff Blanket Mall* will begin about 11am. This is a time to meet staff and see what they plan to teach. Please do not request to sign-up for classes until after our 1pm Opening Circle is completed.
2. **Opening Presentation and Monday Keynote** – We encourage adults and youth to attend our after dinner camp-wide presentations; these have been really well received – both *Eavesdropping on Animals* and the *Heartbeat of the Camp* presentations were highlights for many. These programs will be informative and instructional, focusing on the theme of the camp. If you have something that you would like to propose, please contact us. We also want you to join us in more home-grown music around the main fire any evening.
3. **Sunday Symposiums** – Make sure you schedule time to attend our Sunday afternoon ‘*The Basics*’ (4-6pm). These are excellent overviews where several instructors get together and demo skills that you can do later in the week as part of a class. The purpose is to show you the breadth and depth of available instruction. This time will be more of a demo and discussion as well as some hands-on practice, but plan to take a full class to work on mastery. There are 4 sessions offered – *Fire Tech, Knife Safety, Stone Tool Tech, and Fiber Tech*.

Things That Are The Same – Due to the fact that there are so many gatherings going on, here are a few activities that make Rabbitstick unique.

1. **2026 Theme** – “*It’s not what you make, it’s what you learn.*” Once again, we want to stress learning over making. Be sure to review why we focus so much on teaching and why we use the term “*primitive skills*” by reading rabbitstick.com/what-are-primitive-skills.
2. **No Fire Arms, No Booze, No Drugs, No Nudity, No Excuses** – This is just a reminder for both staff and students. Once again, **No Politics – leave your “isms” at home.** – **The “Safeword” is – How about them sticks and rocks.** Just remember, we are welcoming you to our living room. Please respect the standards we uphold.
3. **Forms** – Along with your registration we need you to download and fill out the Registration and Release forms that are on the Event Registration page - rabbitstick.com/2026-registration. This let’s us know who is coming so we can accurately plan resources. Please scan or photograph them and send them back to us ASAP.
4. **Remember – our focus is primitive technology.** Look for projects that have historic context. Of course we also have classes on survival, preparedness and even the new boom in “Bushcraft”. Topics reflect material culture with worldwide connections – our shared inheritance. If you haven’t already, please read “*Why Primitive Technology*” at rabbitstick.com/what-are-primitive-skills.
5. **Meal-Time** – Getting together to break bread is something that unifies the camp, then stay after to join in the raffle and support the scholarship fund. We will continue having one camp-wide meal

each day – **dinner at 6 pm**. Bring plates and utensils large enough to get a full serving. Plan on bringing a stove or eating a cold breakfast/lunch. Work with other students to share meal prep/cooking and shopping.

6. Be sure to review all the “*Planning Helps*” that are available to you on the website

Things That Are Different – Over the years things evolve – some for the better, some not. Here are a couple of things to keep in mind.

1. The main campfire areas should be for traditional camps – Please no electric or bright Coleman-style lights or other intrusions that take away from the feel of the camp.
2. Keeping with that theme, we’d like to return our trade blanket back to its roots – homemade items and high-quality trades. This isn’t to step on anyone’s toes; we just want to get back to where we started.
3. Trailer campers should be self-contained and limit internal generator use to a minimum if needed. These campers seem to be getting larger and more frequently used. Please remember this originated as a primitive skills camp with a flavor of camps that are simple and close to the earth. Let’s back to where we started and come “camp” with us.
4. **Teens In Camp** – We are seeing an increase in families coming to Rabbitstick for the social aspect as compared to those coming to really participate in learning skills. Our program for teens is well-done with lots of effort being put into it by the staff. Please encourage teens to participate in the event and learn something new.

We have noticed an increase in feral bands of youth roaming camp and not participating in anything while forming “exclusive cliques”; this can be a great thing for youth, but can also be fertile ground for the cultivation of behaviors that are inappropriate. We encourage all parents to check-in with your kids and make sure they are getting the most out of what this camp has to offer. This is mentioned as a caution for those parents who are concerned, and a warning for those parents who are not. This is a camp for adults that provides space for kids as a service to you.

5. **Pets In Camp** – Y’all know we have revised the Dog Policy, but please be responsible and respectful. We will still provide a “Dog Pound” camping area, but will allow leashed pets in camp so long as they behave. An animal that can’t be left unattended in camp without acting up has no business being at a public event. Animals that bark or are aggressive to others will have to leave camp. No dogs in the kitchen area or at mealtime. **We had an inordinate amount of unclaimed poop in camp last year so clean up behind your pet.**
6. **Weather** – We have had a bit of wild weather with amazing wind and rain/hail events. Be sure to make plans for your own security and safety. Remember, it can snow in September. Every year the *Weather Gods* see you coming and play all kinds of pranks...plan accordingly.