

RABBITSTICK

2007

*20TH ANNIVERSARY*

# THE LARRY DEAN OLSEN SURVIVAL ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

## THE FIRST ANNUAL **RABBIT STICK**

This is it! The cum-laud convention of the cactus set; a sneaky Indian week 'specially for under-snuck desert trekkers; for blanket-pack packin' packrat eaters and biscuit root gourmets; for all rabbit stick throwin', atl-atl flingin' troubadours of the wilds—and any other good guys or gals brave enough to chance it!

JUNE 21-24 1978

### WHAT IS RABBIT STICK?

It is not exactly rendezvous or a conference, nor is it simply a get-together. It is an intensive, 4 day, memorable experience with the stone age. Within its circle are the foremost names in **OUTDOOR SURVIVAL, PRIMITIVE LIVING, and TOTAL SELF-SUFFICIENT LIVING OFF THE LAND.** Each person attending will literally be steeped in the aroma of the occasion with a drum beat agenda of seminars, workshops, firesides, Indian dancing, trading, contests and skills awards. It's an unforgettable experience within the circle of an ancient Paiute camp.

### WHO MAY ATTEND?

**Rabbit stick** is for members of the **LARRY DEAN OLSEN SURVIVAL ASSOCIATION (LDOSA).** Anyone may join the association and include in that membership all members of the immediate family. Membership is only \$37.50 per year and includes many benefits beside **Rabbit Stick.** You will receive discounts on significant books and literature, conferences, seminars and survival courses, a subscription to **WOODSMOKE,** a journal of survival and self-sufficient living is also included with membership in **LDOSA.**

## SPECIAL LECTURES AND FIRESIDE AGENDA

In addition to the seminars and workshops there will be a lineup of impressive speakers on subjects dear to the heart of all outdoorsmen. Watch for an announcement of these speakers in an upcoming issue of **WOODSMOKE JOURNAL.**

*Ad for Rabbit Stick #1. From Woodsmoke magazine.*

# The 20th Anniversary Yearbook

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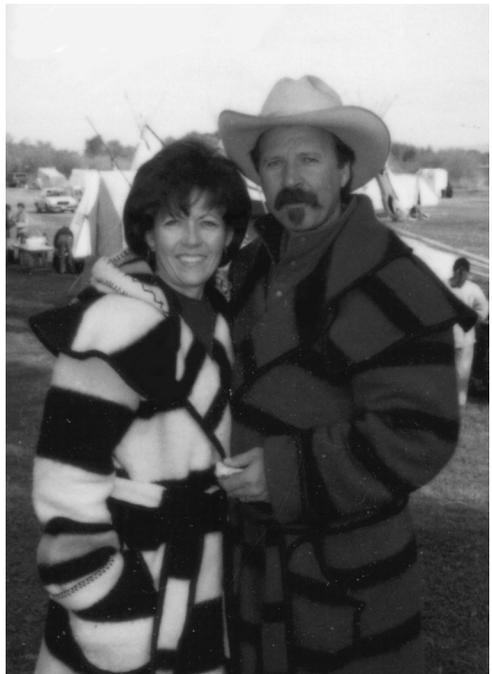
Here we are, starting our twentieth year of getting together and celebrating what has become a grand friendship – in many ways a family. This common thread of primitive skills is just one of the things that binds us together. Some of you have been coming from the beginning, others for not as many years, some of you are joining us again after a long absence, and still others join us for the first time as staff. We welcome you all, and hope you will share our campfire for many years to come.

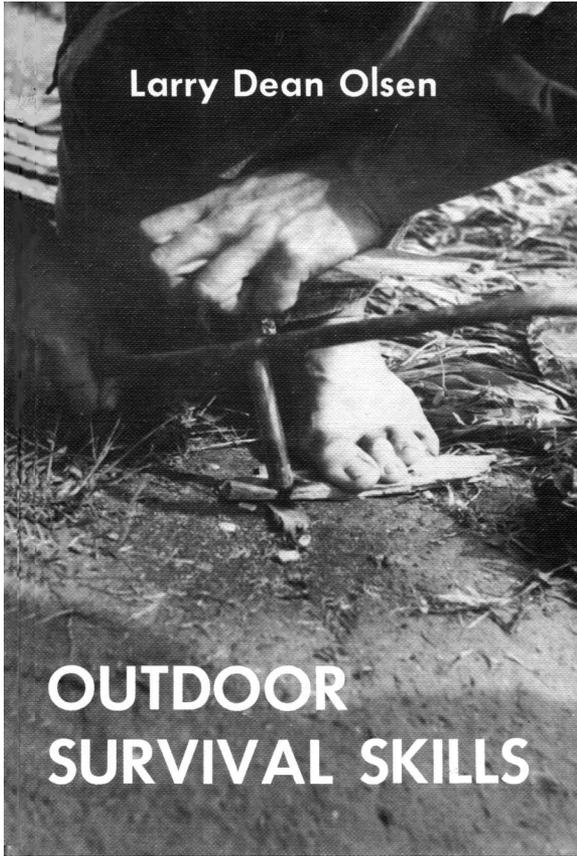
Organizing Rabbitstick and Winter Count has become a labor of love. It's great to have this extended family check-in twice each year and share news of births, deaths, marriages, new adventures and medical miracles, among other stories. Our switchboard starts to hum about mid-summer and doesn't slow down until Winter Count starts. Everyone stays busy for spring and summer - the tribe separates back into small bands where hunting and gathering take priority - getting back together again in the fall.

We thought for years that our photo albums and videos would keep our memories straight – now with digital photo technology, DVDs and web-sites, there are so many sources for sharing and recalling prior gatherings that things are starting to flow together – not to mention aging minds. It's getting hard to fit loose photos back into their proper sleeves, and identify unmarked videos. It's like an archeological dig through memories – matching shirt patterns, hair-styles, various levels of dress (hot or cold event) and who was hugging on whom – to get the years straight.

We love you all, and miss you when you're not around. Your spirits keep us uplifted and your love is felt in return. Welcome to Rabbitstick 20. It's because of you that all of this happens, and we never forget it.

*Thanks for 20 great events,  
David and Paula*





Larry Dean Olsen

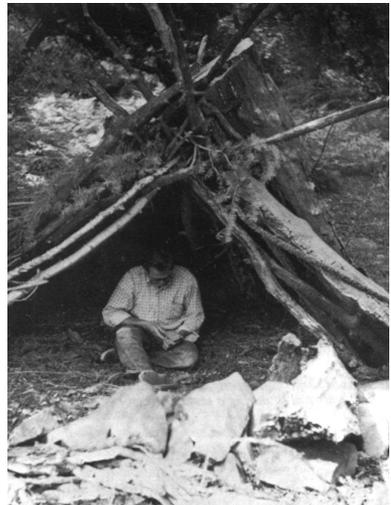
# OUTDOOR SURVIVAL SKILLS

*The book that, for many of us, started it all.  
First edition 1967.*

Many of you may be unaware of how all this started. I met Larry Olsen in 1970. He was teaching a class called Outdoor Survival Skills at Brigham Young University – his book of the same name had been published just 3 years before. It was then that I finally figured out why I was here. 20+ years of wanting to be Robin Hood, Tarzan or Ishi finally came together and made sense. I devoured his book and followed him around like a puppy. I was fortunate to have been in that place at that time...it shaped my future.

For those of you who don't know, Larry is one of the foundation-stones of what we do. There are of course others – we all have our mentors and points of entry – but Larry's book was a landmark contribution to the field (it took me years, however, to figure out that what we do goes way beyond survival skills). If you can, get a hold of a first edition. It's the earthiest version of the book, with home-grown drawings and photos, and the Philosophy of a Caveman is something we all need to read at least once.

In 1972 Larry started hosting "trade sessions" for locals interested in attending. I lost a great pair of



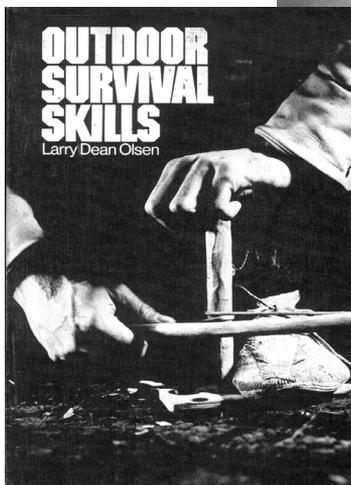


*Larry Olsen, circa 1967.*

sinew-sewn Sioux moccasins that I had acquired on the Pine Ridge Reservation when I was 16 to Larry's shrewd bartering skills. They were subsequently worn by me again for the cover of the 4th edition of his book. Those sessions ran for a couple of years, along with the infamous Beaver Banquet and excursions to Diamond Fork.

At the same time, 30-day expeditions to the southern Utah canyons and 10-day youth adventures to the arid west desert kept us busy all summer long.

In 1978, these events evolved into the first annual Rabbit Stick. Notables such as Jim Riggs, Mtn. Mel DeWeese and Tom Brown Jr. were in attendance. Larry spearheaded the doings and was later



*From the fourth edition.  
David Wescott, circa 1973.*

joined by Dick and Linda Jamison. After two years, Dick and Linda took over the reins and renamed the event Woodsmoke. They carried on for 4 more years (1980-83) until their book by the same name was published in 1983.

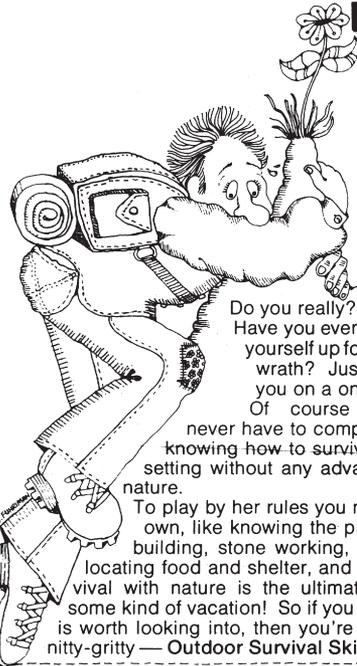
These six years were full of things that served to get us where we are today - *Woodsmoke Magazine* is published, *Woodsmoke* the book shortly follows, along with *Blue Mountain Buckskin* and *The Tracker*. The LDO Survival Association and field excursions were launched, but short-lived. These people were ahead of their time.

In 1987, Paula and I had owned Boulder Outdoor Survival School for 2 years. We were looking for ways to expand the field. We even advertised other schools in our newsletter *The Songline*. Our staff was encouraged in those days to attend at least one workshop from another school during the off-season, creating a broader skill-set in our field staff. They also brought us news that there were others out there like us. Teachers and practitioners who had much to offer a world in need of a return to skills from the earth.

We started writing and calling everyone who's name came our way, asking if we were to host a gathering, would they be interested in attending. The response was overwhelming.

So, we made a pilgrimage to Larry's house and requested permission to use the name and resurrect Rabbit Stick Rendez-

**So you think you understand nature.**



Do you really? Have you ever set yourself up for nature's wrath? Just the two of you on a one to one basis? Of course you'll probably never have to compete that way. But knowing how to survive in a wilderness setting without any advantage is *knowing nature*.

To play by her rules you need a few of your own, like knowing the primitive arts of fire building, stone working, weaving, tanning, locating food and shelter, and tool making. Survival with nature is the ultimate adventure. It's some kind of vacation! So if you really think nature is worth looking into, then you're ready for the real nitty-gritty — **Outdoor Survival Skills** by Larry Olsen.

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Please send \_\_\_\_\_ copies of **Outdoor Survival Skills**.

<input type="checkbox"/> Paperback	ISBN 0-8425-0002-2	\$2.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Hardback	ISBN 0-8425-0001-4	\$4.95

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: **Publication Sales, Brigham Young University Press, 205 UPB, Provo, Utah 84602** PB

Ad from Backpacker magazine #3 that started the bestseller status (1973).

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*Dick and Linda Jamison, 1978.*



## SEMINAR & WORKSHOP AGENDA & BRIEF SYNOPSIS

This 4-day "Rabbit Stick" has been created to provide those members of IDOSA unique opportunity to learn how to do the things that make living in the outdoors a rich and rewarding experience. Rabbit Stick is designed to convey the excitement, warmth and fellowship afforded by the camaraderie of being one with nature and with others.

### MAKING & USING FIRE WORKSHOP

- Bow drill fire making.
- Flint & steel fire making.
- How to lay out fires for cooking, keeping warm, and for heating materials for tool construction.
- How to construct a primitive kiln.
- How to construct a primitive kiln.
- Firing pots.

### PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP IN BEGINNING & ADVANCED STONE WORKING WORKSHOPS

- How to make stone tools, arrowheads, knives and axes.
- Core preparation, percussion flaking, pressure flaking, pecking and crumbling.
- Advanced blade making, fluting and parallel flaking methods.
- Rabbit Stone at making, drilling and grinding methods.

### EDIBLE & CONSTRUCTIVE PLANTS SEMINAR

- Identify many edible and useful wild plants.
- How to harvest and prepare wild plant foods.
- How to make medicines, tanning tools, dyes, medicines and cordage.
- Advanced study in plant identification.
- Poisonous plants.

## SPECIAL EVENTS AGENDA

Continuous programming allows all to participate until they drop from sheer exhaustion. Most events are scheduled to begin when it is time for you to decide to sleep for awhile!

### FOOD — THAT'S AN EVENT!

The first six days always cooking and the meeting starts day and night. The fire is always primitive, tasty and filling. Indian and pioneer cooking provides mutton and fry bread; stew, and pih bread, potatoes and meat dishes galore, and a variety of special recipes guaranteed to satisfy the real thing and move to the heart beat of the desert. (see the famous "ashcake" delights).

### INDIAN DANCING

Special every night are the drums of an Indian group who will dance, sing and teach all who want, how to do a variety of Indian dances. Learn the real thing and move to the heart beat of the desert.

<p><b>TRADING SESSION</b> Spread your business and trade goods. There's only one hitch—talk—use sign language only. You may not know how, but we're sure you can get your point over eventually!</p> <p><b>ATL-ATL THROWING CONTEST</b> This could become a new national sport. Start now to make an atl-atl and spear (use directions in the book <b>OUTDOOR SURVIVAL SKILLS</b>). Big prizes will be given for accuracy and distance throwing.</p> <p><b>FIRE MAKING CONTEST</b> There's a big and valuable prize for the fastest bow drill in the west! Prizes also given for flint and steel fire making and a special award will be given to each person who makes a fire with the hand drill method.</p> <p><b>SKILLS QUALITY AWARDS</b> Prizes will be given to the top 10% of the winners chosen for their outstanding quality in primitive skills. Bring your best possibilities for entering this event.</p> <p><b>RABBIT STICK SKILL AWARDS</b> Specified survival and primitive living skills achieved by anyone during the 4 days will be awarded and passed off in steps leading toward provisional certification in the IDOSA. Provisional certification in the IDOSA will recommend you as an instructor of primitive survival and primitive living. This certification is not easy, and therefore a prized and honorable position.</p>	<p><b>KICK STICK RACE</b> A two mile race involving rugged terrain where each runner will kick a stick over the small carved stick. It may not be touched with the foot. Big prizes to the winners. Start practicing now!</p> <p><b>CORN GRINDING CONTEST</b> Using the ancient method of the metate and mano, contestants will be judged on quantity and quality in a given time span.</p> <p><b>THROWING THE RABBIT STICK</b> Distance and accuracy are awarded in this event. There will also be a prize for the best looking Rabbit Stick.</p> <p><b>THE COVETED BLACK FEATHER AWARDS</b> Each day at sunset a warrior or maiden of the most distinctive magnitude, who merits special accommodations due to his/her exploits of the day will be awarded a black feather. This award will be bestowed on the person who has most instructively share a common bond of desert humor. It's A fun award!</p> <p><b>THE GREAT RABBIT SKIN ROBE AWARD</b> One person of outstanding ability and honor in the world of Rabbit Stick will be chosen as the Chief of Rabbit Stick for the coming year. This honor bears some heavy responsibility and dedication. In a ceremony, the new chief will be awarded a robe of Rabbit Skin. The robe is only constructed, rare rabbit skin robe for his own, valued at over \$2,000.00.</p>
<p><b>CHILDRENS PROGRAM</b> Bring the whole family. Special instructions will teach the children the skills and techniques of primitive activities. They will have many opportunities to win prizes of their own, enter contests, and learn how to survive at Rabbit Stick.</p>	<p><b>NOTE:</b> There will be only one place at Rabbit Stick where items such as books, papers, and related outdoor items will be on sale. If you have items to sell, they must have been approved and it will only be sold at the designated selling area. This is also true of free handout literature, brochures, etc. The only exception to this rule is the trading session which will be held at a designated time and hopefully most of that will be barter rather than cash.</p>

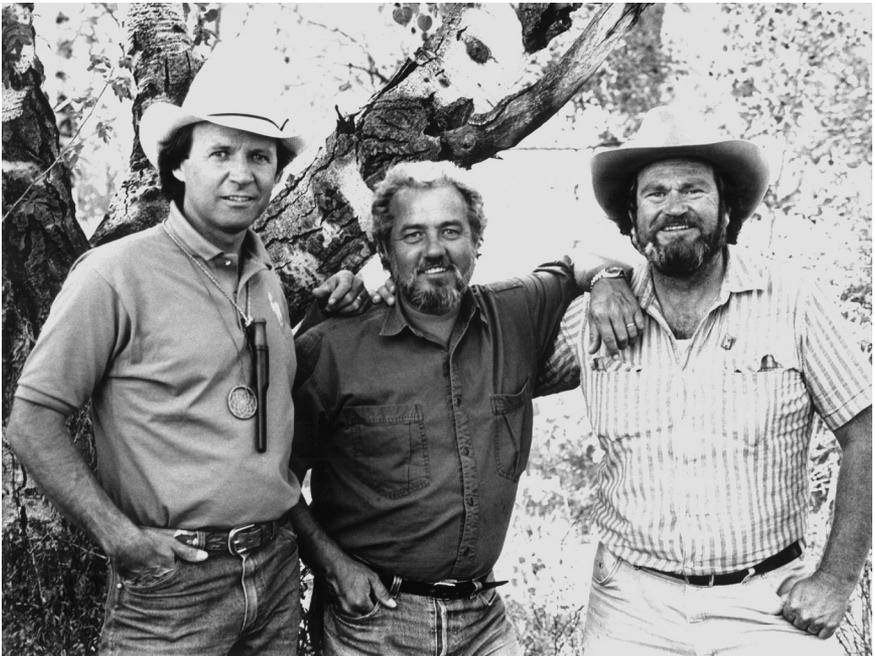
*Advertising pages from Woodsmoke: Journal of Outdoor Survival and Self-Sufficient Living volume 3. This was the first announcement of this landmark event, and made its way across the country. The first annual Rabbit Stick set in motion many of the events that have affected most of us interested in primitive skills in at least some way, and we have Dick and Larry (and 2 very supportive women) to thank.*

vous. It seems that when Larry and the Jamison's parted ways that he had kept the terms "rabbitstick" and "badger stone," both of which figure prominently in his therapeutic outdoor school today, and Jamison's retained the 'woodsmoke' trademark. He graciously consented, and the rest is history.

On September 15, 1988 we were joined on the banks of the Henry's Fork of the Snake River outside of Rexburg, Idaho by a few folks who have become life-long friends. Why September? At the time, most of us operated summer classes, and fall was the best time to hold such a gathering. We were able to attract teachers like Steve Watts, Mel Beattie, John and Geri McPherson, Larry Olsen and the Anasazi Explorer Post, Bob Perkins and others – 48 staff and 2 paying students in all. We all took the same classes. We would have one person start a presentation on a topic and it would evolve into a round-robin discussion for as long as we could hold an interest in it. Then it was on to the next topic. It was a most satisfying experience. Many of us met for the first time after carrying on years of correspondence.

From this simple start, Rabbitstick has grown into a premier gathering of primitive technologists. Thanks in no small part to the generosity of the teaching staff and excitement of participants, who have carried the message word of mouth around the world. Keeping Rabbitstick at a manageable size will be our challenge for the future. The desire to learn primitive skills has maintained high interest over the life of the event, and it continues to grow.

*The three Rabbitstick organizers: David Wescott,  
Dick Jamison, and Larry Olsen, 1990.*



# RABBITSTICK

ON THE HENRY'S FORK OF THE SNAKE RIVER REXBURG, IDAHO



A RENDEZVOUS  
SPONSERED BY BOSS  
**SEPT 15-18, 1988**

**COST \$425 FOR FULL NINE-DAY EVENT,  
INCLUDING RENDEZVOUS AND  
ADVANCED PRIMITIVE LIVING COURSE (P-2)  
( COST FOR RABBITSTICK ONLY, \$200 )**



*The staff of Boulder Outdoor Survival School hosted the 1988 event. These folks are hard-working life-long friends. Carrie and Mike Ryan, Dean Zimmerman, Joshua Sage, Phil Kueper, and David Wescott (clockwise from upper left). All should be at the 20th.*



*Some of the teaching staff at the 1988 event (from upper left)  
Wescott, Brian James, Mel Beattie, Jim Riggs, Paul Linegar, Bob  
Perkins, Marie Cuierier, John and Geri McPherson.  
Our 2 paid participants - Scott Van Den Berg, and the other unknown.*

*Steve Watts was and still is our muse. His inspiration and support for  
the first event have made it easy to get the job done and stay excited.*





*Discussion and teaching sessions were open, informal and informative, Many of us met each other for the first time and the sharing of teaching tips, tricks and methods was a treasure.*

*Rabbitstick weather. Look at the photos on these two pages and you can see why what we now know as “Rabbitstick Weather” came to be....from breachcloths to capotes in 1 day.*





*It would be interesting for Rabbitstickers to create a geneology of where and by whom they were first influenced. many would identify one of these two men.*



*RS 88 was followed by the Rock Biter's course. Conduct on the island across the slough, our little band starved its way through 5 days until a trio of courting porcupines gave away their position.*





*It's hard to believe, but the first event took place in what is now our kitchen. This is the McPherson camp where many of the discussions took place. All of the other camps were in the same area. Only one tipi was pitched in the lower instructors camp we use today.*

## RABBITSTICK TRADITIONS

To anyone attending Rabbitstick for the first time, two things are mentioned most as setting this event apart: the quality of instruction and the sharing attitude of the instructional staff; and the spirit of camaraderie that permeates the camp. These, above all, are the hallmarks of the Rabbitstick family. This tradition of making others welcome and never short-cutting a lesson are what make Rabbitstick so valuable. Through our years together, the program has many things that have come with us along our journey, but we have many new characteristics that have made their way into the traditions of Rabbitstick.



Last month I was approached by one of our neighbors who told me that they look forward to going to bed at night and listening to the drums in the distance. They said they missed not having more of them like in the old days (old farts go to bed early). They also mentioned that it was nice to

come out and see things that have happened for years and see such a community come together without incident. They share our ownership in this event. The traditions we have adopted were created by us, for us. We celebrate them together. They can't be celebrated without you.

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*The growth of interest in primitive technology is reflected in how far people travel to attend Rabbitstick - Mexico, Italy,*



*Japan, Spain, France, Germany, Eugene (it's a long ways from the 60s). Master teachers Mors Kochanski and Hans DeHass are but two of the many skilled teachers who have found their way to Idaho. We acknowledge their skill and welcome their presence at our gatherings. To have them here makes us all better teachers, and makes us aware of the levels to which we might all aspire.*



*Hand Games and Trade Blanket*





*Mask Night - Trying to explain any of this to someone else can be a challenge.*



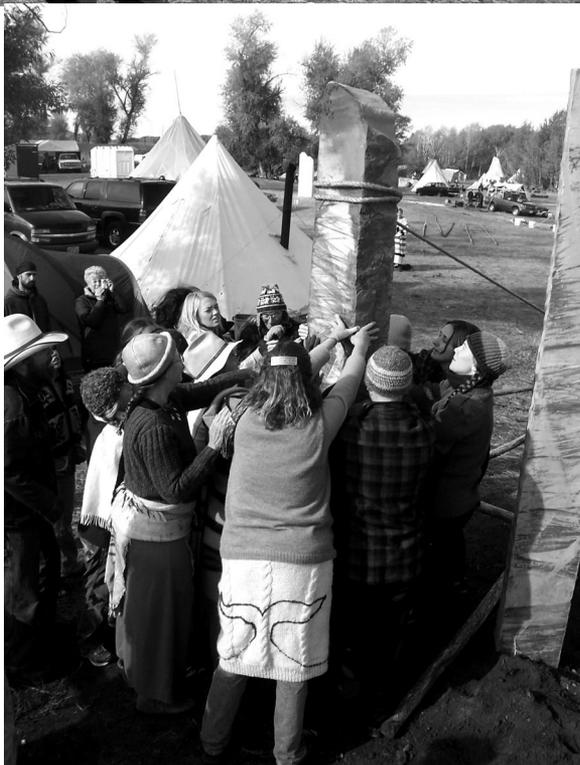
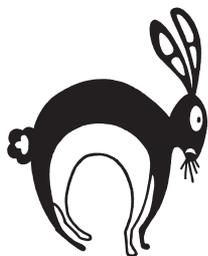


*Megaliths - A class started in 2003 by Steve Watts is now a Rabbitstick tradition. Standing stones now mark significant events for the Rabbitstick family. We cherish these memories.*

*The Student - upper left - was the first stone. The Teacher, or the George Stewart Stone, being leveled by Larry Kinsella, has been our biggest challenge to date. The Cove Stone was added in 2005. To stand within these 3 stones brings one to a new appreciation of such structures.*



*The Sunrise Portal was constructed in 2005 and marks the Autumn Equinox. Memories of special friends and loved ones are marked by these two stones. The All-Female Erection was a Rabbistick first.*







*Change is inevitable. The photos at left mark a ten year milestone for the BOSS staff at Rabbitstick. Going through photos for the anniversary, the change in hair color (and lack thereof), girth (and lack thereof) and other tell-tale signs are sure indicators that we have piled on a few miles. Do you recognise anyone from these 1988-89 photos?*





## ***KIDS CAMP***

*Denyce Bigley and Denice Lovell, along with the support of many other staff, have created an incredible experience for the little folks in camp. We are very appreciative of their efforts and the time spent by countless others to help these children learn valuable skills.*





***CLASS OF 1990***



*CLASS OF 1992*



*CLASS OF 1993*



***CLASS OF 1994***



*CLASS OF 1995*



***CLASS OF 1996***



*Unfortunatly we can't find staff photos for these years. But here are some highlights. The Burning Mask fire 1997; The Shoe Factory 1999, and Good Ole Boys 1988.*

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***CLASS OF 1997-98-99***



***CLASS OF 2000***



*CLASS OF 2001*



*CLASS OF 2003*



***CLASS OF 2004***



***CLASS OF 2005***



*A fire that burns bright for the next generation.*





## Honoring A Legacy

*Jim Riggs is the only person to attend all of the Rabbitsticks from 1978-2008. In doing so he has also been a significant influence on the people who have attended this event as well as the many others now available. Through his writings, teaching and craftsmanship, Jim has created a lasting legacy that will carry on for decades to come. Photos - clockwise from lower right - 1978, Dick Jamison; 1988, Larry Wells; 2004, Hal Farneman).*

