

Rabbitstick – Session 34

Primitive Skills Conference - It's Time To Gather!

September 11-17, 2022

Hello Rabbitstickers - Rabbitsick 34 is just around the corner. We're anticipating a number of old-timers rejoining our camp after many years, and are excited to see everyone in just a few weeks. We hope that includes all of you.

IT'S ROLL CALL TIME - We know that current conditions are having some impact on all of us, but if we wait for perfect conditions we may never leave the house again. So, give us a buzz and let us know your plans. We have managed to stay in touch with many of you, but this group is getting larger, so if we've missed you, we hope you have been doing well.

Please RSVP as soon as possible. We will be gone from the office from Sept 25 – August 9 (David has been invited to give a keynote address at the Global Bushcraft Symposium in Wales), so help us out by getting responses and schedules up as soon as possible.

We are sending this information out via *rabbitstick.com* (see the Staff page and the Updates page), Facebook, E-mail and Snail-Mail, so it should reach everyone. Once you get it, please let us know ASAP of your intentions to come or that we won't be seeing you this year. Please let us know either way! backtracks905@gmail.com or go to the **"Meet Our Staff"** page at *rabbitstick.com*, click the **"2022 Staff Roll Call"** button and drop us a note.

Class Scheduling - If you want your classes to be on the bulletin board or in the printed schedule, please get them on the schedule early. Everything will **go to press on Sept. 6th**, so don't delay. If there is a conflict or you want to make a change, it's very simple to do, so don't dilly-dally and wait until the end. Add your schedule now so we can all make last minute changes. Please find the schedule instructions below.

Also, I have noticed that if I teach a few classes on Thursday and Friday I get a great turn-out since everyone is heavily engaged in big-ticket classes earlier in the week. Spread your schedule out a bit and see what happens. **Contact us for the link.**

Things That Are The Same – Due to the fact that there are so many gatherings going on and we have a lot of new instructors applying, we need to reiterate a couple of things.

- 1. No Fire Arms, No Booze, No Drugs, No Excuses** – It's been on the participant forms since day one. This is just a reminder for you. Once again, **No Politics – leave your "isms" at home.** – **The "Safeword" – How about them sticks and rocks.**
- 2. Class should reflect the cost of materials only.** Teaching at Rabbitstick is sort of the entry fee for staff to be a part of this event. We are all proud of our status and teach because we love the skills we share. We have never made any recommendations in the past, but if you do charge for materials, keep it reasonable. If your schedule allows it, make room for a free class on your schedule. Keep in mind Rabbitstick is more of a national gathering rather than local...so people travel a long way and at great expense to be here.
- 3. Remember – our focus is primitive technology.** Projects should have historic context. Of course we have classes on survival, preparedness and even the new boom in "Bushcraft". Topics should reflect material culture with worldwide connections – our shared inheritance.
- 4. Pot-Luck Party** – We will hold our annual feed **in camp**. We'll have the staff meeting at 4pm and our pot-luck meal at 6pm on Saturday Sept 10th. It's a pot-luck, so we'll provide the meat and you bring the side dish or dessert that you love.
- 5. We will continue having one camp-wide meal each day – dinner at 6pm.** Plan on bringing a stove or eating a cold breakfast/lunch. Work with other staff to share meal prep/cooking and shopping.

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

1. The main campfire rings should be for traditional camps – no bright 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. We can talk more about it at the staff meeting. 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. We had some loud obnoxious ones in camp last year that were way out of keeping for our camp.
4. Our annual staff meeting will be at 4pm (**new time**) on Saturday Sept. 10th. This is always a great time to get together and share stories, catch up and take a census of what's been going on with the tribe. We have lots of news and too many sad reports to address this year.
5. Along with our regular evening programs, we are going to formalize our Sunday and Monday night presentations around the main fire for the entire camp. These will be informative and instructional, focusing on the theme of the camp. We also want to encourage reintroduction of more home-grown music around the main fire any evening.

Other Concerns -

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.

Buildings and Neighbors – We have been raided by out-of-staters and building is insane in our neighborhood. We are working with the local constabulary to make sure we operate within ordinances and respect our new neighbors. Right now, we have quiet hours in camp after 10:30. That means if you want to drum each night, start right after dinner. On Thursday, we'll go to at least midnight and maybe later.

Fire Restrictions – We had an amazing spring and early summer, but last week someone turned up the heat. We are currently not quite as dry as other areas, but as summer progresses, things may change. We are hoping that there will not be a fire ban, and hoping that conditions improve as our regular Rabbitstick weather moves in.

Weather – We have had a bit of wild weather with amazing electrical 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.

We will be gone from the office from Sept 25 – August 9 so we may close registrations during that time, but the **Team-up** class schedule will be open for you to add your classes. When we get home, we will be focusing all of our efforts on Rabbitstick. After that, if you need us, we will be around and the office phone is forwarded to my cell (208-351-3799). If you have a question don't hesitate to call.

Hoping to see you all soon,
David and Paula and the Backtracks Team

PS - Larry Kinsella is offering a legacy class in honor of Rob Withrow. He will be doing Rob's *Heat Treating Flint* workshop and has asked that anyone who would like to participate should bring some locally sourced flint from their area if they can.