

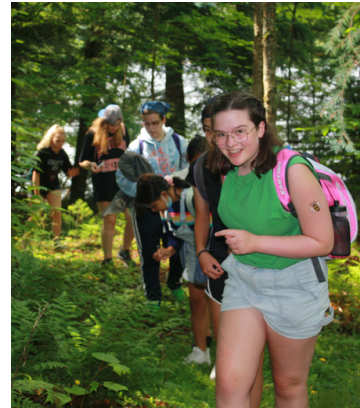


Eagle Island News

September 2021

Eagle Island, Inc.

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The Dream Becomes a Reality

WOW! Eagle Island Camp was abuzz with activity this summer! We hosted overnight, day, and family campers, and a variety of weekend events for adults. What brought tears to my eyes during my time on the Island (documented here in photos) was seeing the campers IN ACTION!

Collectively, we were able to truly restore overnight camp on Eagle Island. This success is because so many of you know the Island, love its natural beauty, and continue to carry fond memories and lessons learned—and, most importantly, believe in the Island's future. A shared vision, and the generosity of countless donors, volunteers, and advocates made this possible.

This summer provided the opportunity to connect multiple generations of campers with each other and with the wider Adirondacks community. Our Eagle Island family grew by leaps and bounds this year, with campers and guests writing their own stories and carrying them forward.

In my time on the Island, I had the privilege of leading nature hikes and a canoe paddle. In looking at the photos, I see the future of Eagle Island: happy campers swimming in the clear waters of Upper Saranac Lake, inquisitive young people exploring Eagle Island for the first time, enthralled with the incredible diversity of fungi, the scent of fresh wintergreen, and the papery yet strong bark of the birch trees. They discovered evidence of animals on the island: mink holes, an abandoned loon nest, red-backed salamanders hiding under rotting logs, and otter scat. Seeing the island anew through the eyes of a new generation was a highlight of my summer. Another wonderful memory was leading a mile-long paddle on a bright and windy day, with some nervous first-timers as well as more confident and experienced paddlers—and all were proud to say they made it all the way around the island!

I'd also like to highlight Katrina, who shines as Eagle Island's Camp Director and Assistant Executive Director. Watching her in action is a joy. She creates wonderful camp programs, accounts for contingencies, makes changes on the fly, and keeps it all fun (with safety the ever-present backdrop). Her Camp Director skills are also evident in the way she trains and mentors staff, empowering and encouraging them, and drawing out the best in each young adult. Although new to our island, staff adapted quickly, and committed themselves to making the first year of a new phase of Eagle Island camping a huge success.

This year, 2021, marks the real beginning of the future of Eagle Island, and the growth of our extended Eagle Island family. Over the past twelve years we faced what, at many times, seemed to be insurmountable challenges. But this summer is proof that the tireless efforts of so many were worth it. And, in 2022, Eagle Island will continue to build on that success!



Paula Michelsen
Executive Director



Summer Scrapbook





Camp 2021



Staff Spotlight

Alisha Wickham

I've spent many summers being a camp counselor at other camps. Each place is special in its own way. However, EIC is one of a kind. I loved being a camp counselor at Eagle Island in 2021!

One of the things that makes EIC special is its location. You're on this big ol' rock with thousands of years' worth of pine needles. You always have a beautiful view of mountains, the water, and trees. It's peaceful because it's just you, your campers, your friends . . . and CAMP.

Another thing that made EIC so special this past summer was the staff. Everyone was so unique. We laughed together so much. We had all of the inside jokes. There was always someone willing to play a game of Spoons or just sit and chat. My teammates had my back, and I theirs.

But the best part about EIC was the campers. They made this summer amazing. Our Grove of 16 overnight campers was ready to play all of the games and try all of the activities. I think of when my fellow counselors and I did team-building activities; it was so neat to throw different challenges at the campers and see how they creatively responded. Through each challenge, they learned to communicate and work with each other, and more quickly and creatively than the previous time. It was amazing to watch the group bond into a team. And, of course, they were always saying something funny. Knowing we made a difference in their lives, especially after a year and a half of living through a pandemic, made this job extra special and rewarding.

While this summer had its own set of unique challenges as well as its ups and downs, I look back on it and smile. EIC is a magical place. It's home and I can't wait to come back.

"I've spent many summers being a camp counselor at other camps. Each place is special in its own way. However, EIC is one of a kind."

Alisha Wickham
Gardner, Kansas
Student Teacher; Elementary Education
Emporia State University



Construction Update



Work on the Island never stops. With the large-scale construction projects paused during the camp season, Don Bennett Building and Maintenance is ramping up work on seven of the historic structures (part of \$800,000 in grants awarded by the NY State Environmental Protection Fund and National Parks "Save America's Treasures" program).

Current projects include: New concrete footings in place for a staircase to the second floor of the Family Cabin, recreating the historic look and creating a secondary egress so the upstairs can be used for sleeping quarters. Rehabilitation of the historic Woodshed/Ice House, beginning with replacement footings to stabilize the structure; once work is complete, the building should last another 100 years. A beautiful makeover of the Annex bathroom just completed, with new water and septic lines tied into the new infrastructure.

Construction and maintenance work continues on the Island through mid-October, when the property will need to be shut down for the season as the temperature drops and the lake begins to freeze, making boat runs impossible!

Pictured here: As ever, ongoing maintenance never stops for Property Manager Tyler Kriskewic and Property Assistant Hanna Sue Percy, here securing a heavy-duty tarp to the roof of the Service Dock until re-roofing can be done in the spring. Views of the new Annex bathroom. New stairway footings for the Family Cabin. A view of the Woodshed.



Volunteer Spotlight

Sally Stevens

I credit my love of the Adirondacks to the summers I spent at Eagle Island as a camper and a counselor. From the first day that I arrived at camp, the magic of the Island, the lake, and the mountains consumed me. Throughout my teaching career, I returned as often as possible to explore the ADKs. I reconnected with the Island before Friends of Eagle Island purchased the property. And I can't quite believe, fifty years after being a camper and then teaching sailing, that I can now be part of creating that magic for another generation.

I helped day campers enjoy sailing in 2019. And this summer I volunteered at the Memorial Day work weekend, the Alumni Weekend beautification project, Day Camp lunch service, and Open Island. With my sister and friends, I became a camper again at Women's Wellness Weekend. What fun! What's best, however, is that the Island is once again creating memories for kids and instilling in them appreciation and love for the natural world and their own place in it. Maybe these kids will grow into adults who care for the Adirondacks as much as I do. They are the future environmentalists and stewards of the lakes, rocky shores, and islands.



Sally Stevens
Camper '67, '68, '69
CIT '70
Counselor '71, '72, '73
Retired Teacher



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