



From the Director: Back to the Basics

NEWSFLASH!!!!

You may type your information into your camp application before you download it.

Also, those wanting HORSE APPLICATIONS will find that you can download the application from the forms page on our website.



...Paypal is now available to you. Check out information in The Shopping News article of this newsletter.

...Clinic Helper Schedule is up on the website. Please check out dates for Training Weekend.

There are times when I must admit I am reaching to be enthusiastic. That may sound strange coming from a camp director, but I believe today we share the stress and uncertainty of the current economy.

I have to laugh a bit. When people talk about hard times and living within a tighter budget, I think on how it is here at camp every winter. With very little money coming in, I am accustomed to living with a tight budget.

On an optimistic note, registrations are arriving from eager campers and CITs. An excitement is brewing. It is infecting me. So things are looking up. Yippee!

Happily, I am hearing from

you on a fairly regular basis. I hear talk that Sprucelands is your connection with friends and horses as well as your personal self, a connection that doesn't happen at school. Over and over again, you tell me that Sprucelands accepts each individual for who they are, and you love that.

So I am trudging forward, celebrating the 'getting back to the basics' attitude of our current world. Interestingly, that philosophy has been the Sprucelands approach for over 30 years.

You will recall my summer request that all things mechanical, computerized or telephone-ized be left at home. That emphasis forces everyone in camp to invest in

honest communication with one another. We talk, read, enjoy the natural world and work hard together. We realize that learning, humor, creativity, music, conversation, and spontaneity sustains us.

I grew up on 'back to the basics', making fun in mud puddles, brainstorming 50 uses for a wastebasket and loving animals. Every summer, campers, CITs and staff are refreshed by the genuine Sprucelands experience.

I have to say Sprucelands is not just any summer camp. It joins us together in an affirmation that we are who we are and we can handle what comes our way because we are united in the belief that "Anything is Possible".

Shavings Dilemma

Most difficult this winter has been keeping up with horse maintenance supplies. Bedding is one such example.

Because house construction and furniture companies are on hold, there is a very limited supply of shavings. What

shavings are out there go into making pellets for pellet stoves, and I think they are even having trouble securing the shavings they need.

Now here I'll plug Craig's List because through that resource we found a supplier

not far from here who makes their own shavings. They too were having trouble, and now they've discovered there's a business 'out there'.

So hard times have a way of bringing us together. Sometimes new business evolves.



Quiet memories stick with us all. Here Anna is loving Sunrise in Ring #1.

Sprucelands is on Facebook



A refreshing adventure across this winter has been the connections Eileen has made on Facebook with campers and staff past and present. What a marvelous way to discover the friends you thought you would never see again!

When the winter days grow shorter, Eileen becomes more daring herself. Partly because she dedicates herself in the off season to find new ways for expanding Sprucelands net-

working, she decided to look into Facebook. Partly because she likes to know what the kids are excited about, she ventured into the unknown Facebook world.

“I think this is one of the best websites out there,” says Eileen. “I’ve found so many friends, classmates, previous staff members, campers from long ago, and now I’m connecting with new campers for 2009. It’s wonderful.”

Facebook is the fastest way to get a quick message to someone. It also means responses to those messages are timely.

If you are interested in being part of the Sprucelands world, Facebook is the best. It’s amazing how campers and staff share photos back and forth from their summer fun. The memories are there and the enthusiasm for 2009 touches you every time you look through your home page.



Good News from Tim Grant

Last summer we worried about Tim Grant, one of our favorite horse truckers. Working with Equestrian Express Horse Transportation out of Raleigh, NC, Tim has been reliable, and a kind friend to the horses he transports.

When Tim did not respond to messages in August and did not show up to transport horses he had committed to

transporting at the end of camp, we were all worried that something terrible had happened to him. It left us scrambling to find a horse transporter that was as dependable and caring.

Recently, Eileen received a message from Tim: “Hi Eileen. Thank you for thinking of me. I am still with Equestrian Express and would love

to continue to work with your campers. As for my health, it has been a rough year. Had a slight heart attack last March, but am doing great. Let me know if we can help. Thanks, Tim.”

You can reach Tim at www.horsetransit.com or write him an email at: tgrant@horsetransit.com. He would love to hear from you.

“ As for my health, it has been a rough year. Had a slight heart attack last March, but am doing great.”



Norma Cristina & Casper

Dear Everyone...Thank you...

I miss you guys terribly, all the horses, barn staff, everything. I wish I was there right now, riding Casper and seeing all of you guys.

Tarrah...for showing me the “pizza-hut” technique, for teaching me and being patient with my stirrup issues.

Julie...for not giving up on me even though I had trouble waltzing on Casper and being

impatient with him. Lizzie... for your work at the barn. You Rock!!! Alie...for being kind to me, and talking with me about my problems.

Miranda... You rocked our cabin! Thanks for all the fun. Jaime...for making things right whenever problems came up with the horses. Hannah...for being one of the few I could talk to. Nurse Amy... for taking care of me.

Lia T...for being my friend and sharing your love to Casper with me. Great job at the Horse Show! I miss you! Boys... for making the song Candyland so fun to sing. Bradley...for making trail rides fun...and for your comfort and love. Nancy...your food is delicious. Jenny...you are awesome. And Casper...I love you! You are the greatest pony. I miss you!

New Grain Program for Horses

Last August Lori Kibler connected Sprucelands with Green Mountain Nutritional Services Inc. in Attica, New York. Best thing we ever did for our horses! Sprucelands will be eternally grateful.

With Lizzie Briggs and Jaime Sawka’s help, a very clear assessment of our horse breeds, sizes, ages and level of activity was provided Green Mountain. Owner James Miller designed a specialized diet for each individual horse based on

their individual needs. I don’t know how many horse owners out there in horsey land have ever really thought about whether their horse is eating right. I know we’ve always experimented with different feeds, and in the end that’s wasteful and expensive. Feeding this new way means our horses get the correct balance of minerals, vitamins, salt, soy, and ground oats. It also means I can afford feeding the horses this winter.

They are handling the winter cold well. They are less aggressive with each other, and they seem to have a stamina in lessons that was missing. I tell you this in case you want to evaluate what you feed your beloved steed. It’s worth looking at because attitude and performance are as important as weight. James Miller will help you with your horse’s diet if you contact him. The information is at the right of this article.

Green Mountain Nutritional Services Inc.
247 Main Street Attica, NY 14011
Equine Supplements Lab Analysis Nutritional & Water Consultant
James Miller
Business 585-591-0922
1-800-564-7336
Fax 585-591-4839
www.stridefree.com

Staff Brainstorming Session

Hill parents and Senior Staff members will join together at Eileen’s home on March 7th (10 a.m.-5 p.m.) to evaluate last summer, organize the coming camp season, catch up on news, and then the fun part: brainstorm programming ideas for *All Things Dr. Seuss*. As it turns out, some Counselors, CITs and local campers will attend. They will listen

and be an advocate for their summer camper friends, offering viewpoints and perspectives that can only help with planning. “We look forward to this meeting every year,” says Eileen. “It kicks off the season by reconnecting us and jump-starting an enthusiasm that is both inspirational and downright exciting.”

Best of all, we realize once again how much we look forward to summer after the challenges and drain of winter and schoolwork. As my very wise mom says, “Everyone needs to look forward to something.” So March 7th it is. Bring a bag lunch and a smile. Come with a list of ideas. This is a special time.

Manon Bonnal from France will join us as a Counselor in Training.
 Two additional French campers registered this week for the last two weeks of the summer. We also have a camper coming for 6 weeks from Romania.
 How exciting!

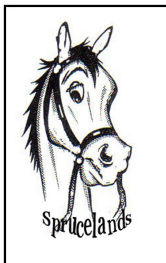
Addition: The Saturday Club

Weekend riding clinics are popular at Sprucelands. Girl Scouts from the Western NY area come to learn about horses and riding. Their enthusiasm for horses and horse care brings them together in a good time. Last fall one troop asked if

they could come back and help with the horses. Eileen welcomed their eagerness but didn’t think they would come. Then there was a phone call and next thing Eileen knew she had helpers on three or four Saturdays this winter. The girls are now the Satur-

day Club. They muck stalls and bed the horses. They help feed and that makes it easier for Eileen after she teaches lessons on Saturday morning. Thank you, Saturday Club, for continuing your enthusiasm and love for our horses. You are very special.





"Several staff members are on fire with ideas for evening programs, novel names for riding classes, and silly skits."
Long live Dr. Seuss



Babe will be missed.



Pudge and Lily

Meet Our New Barn Manager

We changed barn managers in the late fall. Lorie Kibler moved on to meet the challenges of her family; she stays involved with horses however as she cares for Jax, Lacey, Charm and Lena at her home.

We honor Lorie, always grateful for her hard work and investment in Sprucelands. May she take what she learned in our barn and apply her expertise to continued learning about and love for animals. Lorie has always wanted to be a vet tech. May that dream one day come true.

Monique Corriveau is our new barn manger. She is 23 years old, originally from Deep River, CT.

Monique attended the University of Connecticut where she received a bachelor's degree in Animal Science. She minored in Women's Studies. After college she did a 3 month Equine Internship at Miner Institute in Chazy, NY where she learned tons about horses, riding and even carriage driving.

"I have been riding and working at horse barns since I was

ten," says Monique. My biggest passions in life are horses and dogs. I enjoy training both and learning about their behavior."

Currently, Monique has a Siberian Husky named Desiree. She has two cats, a cockatiel, and a fresh and salt water fish tank. "What can I say," she says, "I love animals."

So we make the transition from Lorie to Monique. We are better for knowing them both and happy they are our friend.

Did you know...?

...our pony Mikey was majorly hurt at the start of the winter? He got himself tied up in the fence. Thanks to Lorie, he is alive to tell the tale.

...lessons continued all winter long. This winter Eileen actually taught more lessons than any other winter she has been with Sprucelands.

...Lianna Altieri returns this summer as does our Ra-

leigh pony lover, 'T', Katie Ballard and Taylor Buttaro?

...*All Things Dr. Seuss* is our summer theme? Several staff members are on fire with ideas for evening programs, novel names for riding classes, and silly skits.

...Betty Duhart will return the last two weeks of the summer as a Hill Parent? Eileen talked with her last night on the

phone. She and her children are sooo excited!

...campers are spreading the Sprucelands spirit? You are busy talking us up with your friends. That's wonderful because those friends are joining us for camp.

...The Footlocker has renamed themselves *Everything Camp*. We have linked to them on the shopping page of our site.

A New Puppy for Sprucelands

Facebook and blog readers already know that Eileen put her dog Babe to sleep on Monday, December 7th. As it turned out, Babe had cancer and was far more ill than Eileen ever guessed.

On Valentine's Day, Eileen found an 8 week old Aussie/

Border Collie mix at a local pet shelter. Erin Kirsch went with Eileen to help with the selection. Together Erin and Eileen made a perfect choice.

Named for Eileen's maternal grandmother Lillian (*I'm not sure she would be flattered*), our new puppy is called Lily.

She's doing well with Pudge and her training. She is a sweetheart. I think you staff and campers will love her.

Strange was discovering that Lily's mother's name was Lilly. "We had no idea until we looked all through her papers," says Eileen.



Summer Counselors Announced

It is such fun introducing our new counselors for the season ahead. This year we celebrate first timers Dani Trice, Kristin Reindel, and Pauline Sklenar.

We also say ‘welcome back’ to Alicia Lewkowicz, Jenny Petersen, Agy Merkel/Cassie DiMarino. Agy and Cassie will split the summer because neither one can do 8 weeks. Matt Krempholtz and Andrew Elich return on Boys Hill.

Weekend Clinic Schedule

The schedule for our weekend clinics is now listed on the website. Clinic helpers: make a note to put the dates on your calendar.

There is a mixture of clinics and work weekends so that you may earn your free week at camp. Also, there is a training weekend scheduled for March 13-15. Our first clinic weekend is March 27-29.

Let’s have a great time! Hope you’ll join us this spring.

ITT & Counselor Dialogues Begin

A number of you have asked about the dialogues. They will start this next week. Instead of revving things up in January, I waited so we would begin closer to camp time.

There will be a variety of questions for you to think on. I will list them on the website. If each of you would send me your current email address, I would be appreciative. That way I can send an alert when the 2009 questions are in place.

Dr. Seuss Ideas Right Here!

All things Dr. Seuss was chosen as a theme because several staff members had leads in their school musical *Seussical*. They have the music, rhythm, sense of humor, spontaneity and creativity to make this summer the best.

At this point we want your ideas so we might incorporate them into the fun. Write spruceland@gmail.com with your input. I know you must have lots to contribute.

Please Consider Your Options Before Deciding Against Camp

When you’re trying to decide about summer camp, make a list of true expenses for when your child stays home.


Consider the expense of carting them here and there, video games, the cell phone bill, riding lessons, having friends over, and mall shopping. Add in food and their portion of household costs. Come up with a total and compare it to camp time. You

might be surprised: it’s often more expensive to have your child at home than it is to send him/her to camp.

Take note: Sprucelands is the best buy of riding programs. We offer quality instruction, meeting riders at their level. At the same time, Sprucelands builds spirit, rider confidence, lasting relationships and leadership skills, enhancing independence and responsibility.

We make a difference here. Campers and staff bond with each other for a lifetime. There’s a focus on life lessons that will help you as a parent and inspire your child to be the best they can be.

This year we offer a **wide variety of financial options:** discounts, one week options and more. Put on your thinking cap. We can be creative! Let’s help each other.



Consider this Option: We will work with you on the cost of camp. If you are having trouble, give Eileen a call. Let’s think creatively so your son or daughter will continue learning at Sprucelands.

Remember our motto: “Anything is possible at Sprucelands.”

Attention: Something New This Year

We want you all to know ahead of time that there is a new requirement. **Every camper and staff member must have their own helmet, labeled with their name, AND the helmet must be contained in a helmet bag.**

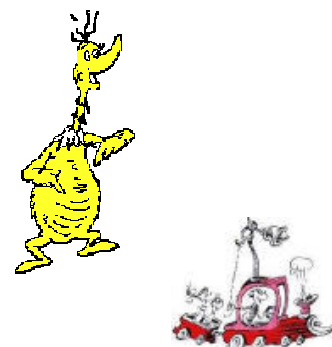
Those helmet bags will hang

on assigned hooks at the barn. *No helmets will be shared or borrowed. Your helmet is your personal helmet and will be worn by you and you only.*

The upside of this new rule is that you will no longer need to carry your helmet back and forth from your cabin to your

riding lesson. That should make things much easier.

Why the new ruling? In the 4th session last summer we had a scare with lice, and so we have quickly come up with the above solution. You will have to work with us on this. No questions asked and no exceptions.



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Welcome New Campers!

Dana Hansen from Kansas writes: Coming all the way from Kansas to NY for a horseback riding camp was the scariest, most amazing thing I have ever done. My first year I was extremely shy and a somewhat timid rider. Leaving at the end of the summer, I had completely changed. I came out of my little shell and my riding improved so much! I kept coming back for 4 years! Since the camp is pretty isolated, you really become good friends with everyone you meet and they become your family for the summer. I have still kept in touch with and visited some of the people I met during my first summer at camp and I know they will always be there for me.

Pauline Sklenar from Texas: Having been to many different camps, I thought Sprucelands was going to be like all the rest: many kids, don't get to know all of them, very generic. I live in Texas so it was also nerve-racking to come to NY for two weeks, spend time at camp and then go back. But once I got to Sprucelands, I realized my idea of what the camp was going to be like was completely opposite. I'm naturally an outgoing person and I love to do fun and crazy things and I noticed from the first day that every one was like that here and I fit right in. After two weeks, I don't think I've ever made stronger bonds with people at camp than at Sprucelands. I've been coming back ever since and have never been to another camp. This summer will be my 6th year and I can't wait. All my friends back home get sick of my talking about Sprucelands, but I can't help it. It's like my second home and the people I become friends with are my second family.

We're on the web!

www.sprucelands.com

<http://spruceland.blogspot.com>

"Anything is Possible at Sprucelands!"

Julie Batelli writes: My first year was six summers ago, and like everyone else, I was nervous. It took all of ten minutes to relax. Many of the campers I have met over the years, I am close with...Every time you walk into a room, whether it's the Nart Room or the Clubhouse, you smile because everyone is having a good time! The horses are all awesome. There's horses for every level. Another thing I love is that everyone is at a different level, and it's a nice, even mix from beginner to advanced. I personally think the barn staff is awesome, but then again, I'm biased. So come to camp. There's always something fun going on!

Connect with us on Facebook. We talk about Sprucelands all the time, and we share photos that are priceless!

Sprucelands Shopping News - Believe it or Not!

In these challenging economic times, Sprucelands has begun a 'think-outside-the-box' campaign. This has been an adventure across the winter, but we want to be a camp that survives so children will continue to benefit from this quality summer experience.

- (1) A **shopping page** is added to our website. Every time you purchase something from a link on the Sprucelands site, Sprucelands earns a commission. Designed through a site called Link Share, businesses approve you when there is enough traffic to the website. When there isn't enough traffic, they gradually withdraw access to their business. So we want to inspire you to use
- (2) Eileen has started an Internet Store called **Connections by Eileen**. She sells note cards, mouse pads, and has just started selling 5 x 7 and 8 x 10 photos. Her sales will benefit Sprucelands. The address of this Internet Store is www.spruceconnect.etsy.com. Etsy is a site for all things homemade. If you have ideas for items she might add to her site, please contact Eileen.
- (3) **Paypal** is available on the website as an easier way for you to make that initial \$200 registration payment. You can also complete your camp application, sign the forms, scan them in and

attach them to an email. We are hoping to make everything easier for you. This is especially helpful for those coming from foreign countries.

- (4) Links to **Sealed with a Kiss** and **The Wrinkled Egg** camp care packages are found on the Shopping Page. These are helpful in the summertime. There is also a link to **Everything Camp** which was formerly known as The Footlocker. They are an excellent resource for anything you might need or want for summer camp.

So we are 'thinking outside the box' and hope you will join our efforts. The process of putting things together has been time-consuming and fun. I think you'll be pleased with the results.