



Hawk Circle

Fall Progress Report, 2020



Well...here we are, rounding the bend of the final weeks of an interesting year. We had just returned from NYC where our daughter was debuting her first screenplay in Manhattan and our timber frame apprentices were arriving —days before everything closed down. They came, quarantined for three weeks and spent the spring learning how to timber frame.

However, the rest of our Hawk Circle schedule for the year came to a halt and we were standing on new ground for the first time in 31 years. The only program that we were able to fulfill was the CROP after-school program. Schools weren't opened, but we were able to make **150 home-activity kits for the students** in each of the seven schools.

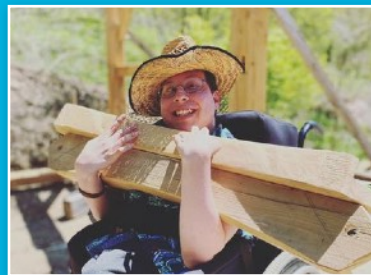
We had a full spring line-up with several schools coming for 7-10 day retreats, and of course, one by one, they canceled. And as we neared the summer season, the New York State Health Department canceled all summer camps.

Like many camps, we had a number of refunds due to our Hawk Circle families. Unfortunately, we did not qualify for any government funding programs and ended up with a loan from SBA that was just enough to pay our families their refunds. A few families transferred their refunds over to 2021 and one family even donated a portion of their refunds.

So here we were, faced with many decisions and uncertainty. But honestly, while it was certainly a trying time, opportunities sprang forth. For us personally, it was my unusually large orders for her herbal products that I make for Beekman 1802. We were so grateful to have this work, and thousands of salves later, we were able to deliver everything on time.

Also, for the past few years, we've talked about making changes here at Hawk Circle to better serve the changing times as well as reach more families and have a greater impact. We've had an online course planned out with little time to put it together. But, now, we had plenty of time on our hands.

For the past five months, we've been putting together a very extensive online program called **The Forest Mom Program**. It's designed to help moms(and dads!) connect their children to



Javi helping out with our spring timber frame project.



Our spring timber frame apprentices raising their frame, aka, wood shed!



Trista on her "video set" for the Forest Mom Program course teaching how to make and preserve jams and jellies.



nature, but also to create a nature-based lifestyle that instills confidence, creative thinking and a strong inner foundation. Something that is so needed right now as parents are faced with many challenges trying to meet the demands of the modern-day world and all its changes. We're hoping this course will give them the skills and the tools to raise grounded and confident children. We're launching this program during the week of Thanksgiving!

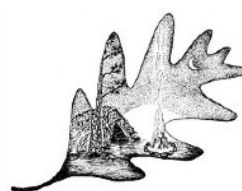
We were also super fortunate to have Grant DeNies here for most of the summer and who also returned in October. He's been helping to **move forward with Eagle House projects**, which you can read about on the next page. We were able to complete a lot of other projects as well.

As far as Hawk Circle, we're reluctant to put together a schedule for next year since we're still uncertain as to when the pandemic will be resolved. But we are preparing for the long-term. Thankfully, the income from our home skills kits for students in the CROP program for this fall, will cover many of Hawk Circle's expenses for the year—not all, but a significant amount.

We're anticipating more and more families seeking out **family programs in nature**. And we're also preparing for those that seek healing, renewal and **deepening their relationship with nature**. We're also expecting that there will be more and more people interested in **classes that teach self-sufficiency** from building their own cabin to gardening to herbal preparation and use.

To accommodate the needs of the people as we see it, first on our list is to **complete Eagle House**. Second on our list, is to **update our cabins** and make sure they're insulated and more comfortable. *The last group we had here in 2019 shared with us how difficult it was for them to be in unheated cabins when temperatures dropped.*

While it's challenging to make any concrete plans this year, what we can do is prepare for the near future by asking for support to complete Eagle House and to update our cabins.



Eagle House Progress

2020

What's been completed...

Electric Work is all completed! As soon as we finish insulating the walls and the ceilings, then our fixtures can be installed.

Windows & Doors are all installed with the exception of our main entryway. This door is in the works!

Plumbing is all complete except for hooking up the actual water line. All bathroom fixtures are purchased, but we haven't wanted to hook up the water line since we currently have no way to heat it. As soon as spring comes, our plumber will come out and hook it up.

Porch & Ramp are all complete making Eagle House accessible with a beautiful entryway.

Shower Deck is all enclosed and framed.

Insulation in the form of sifted clay from our land mixed with wood chips have filled our walls. Next step is to plaster with natural clay plaster. *Read about this process on the next page!*

Roof Soffits are all complete which was our final step to fully enclose Eagle House. The birds and chipmunks are not too happy about this, but...

Rain Gutters are all installed and work great!

What still needs to be completed...

Ceiling Insulation spray foam in ceiling and gable ends being done in a few weeks **using existing funds. \$8,580**

Flooring is our other big step. We are ordering larch boards that are being milled and kiln-dried by an Amish sawmill. They'll be ready to install in the spring. **\$5,200**

Interior Trim Work and Wall Boards

Exterior Siding and Trim will probably be one of the last things we do. **\$12,000**

Heating System \$15,000

Exterior Deck and Railing will be a project that Grant and Ricardo will work on this winter for spring installation. **\$3,500**

For more info and pictures go to:

<https://www.hawkcircle.com/donate>



We are looking to raise \$37,000 to complete Eagle House

While much of the work will be done by Ricardo and Grant, there are few projects that we'll need to hire others to complete, which is where the big expense is. This is always our continual dilemma with Eagle House —estimates from contractors are so steep, that we end up doing it ourselves which always takes longer but works with our limited budget. Doing a great deal of the work ourselves is also more conducive to adding the “Hawk Circle creative flair” which really is what makes Eagle House so special. We've wanted Eagle House to not just serve a practical need, but also to be an experience that inspires creative thinking and imagination, as well as healing and renewal. I think we're accomplishing this!

Natural Clay Insulation Process...

One of the truly awesome features of Eagle House is our **natural insulation and walls**. We are so fortunate to have clay on certain areas of our land. We collected a lot of clay over the past couple of years, screened it to remove any pebbles or stones and spread it out to dry before storing it in bags.

We then took wood shavings and mixed them with water and the clay and then spread them out on tarps to dry before putting them in bags. The clay coats the wood shavings helping to preserve them and eliminate any moisture build up or molding. Once the clay/chip mixture was dry, we poured them into the pockets of the walls that were created by the outer wall of Eagle House and a covering of reed mattings inside. Now, the next step is to make a clay plaster using our clay, water and chopped straw to cover both the reed mattings and insulation. See the pictures below.

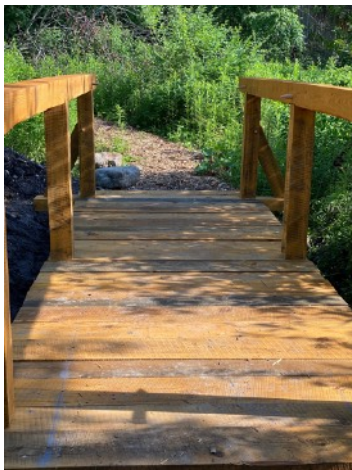
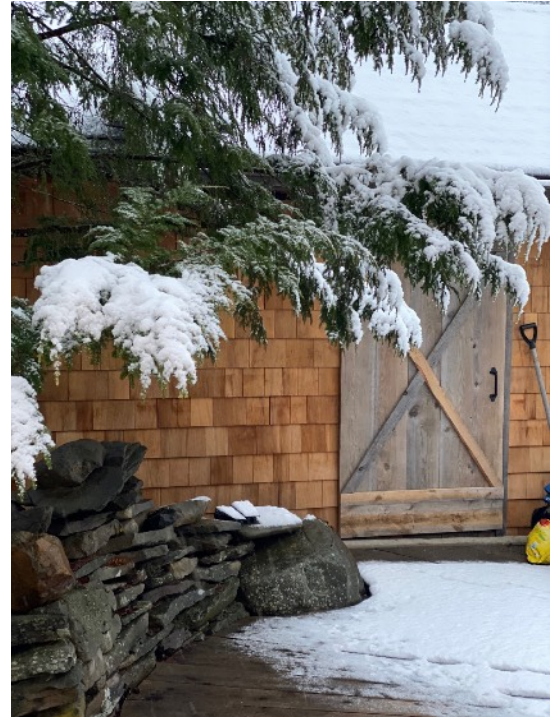


Other Projects Completed



Eagle House soffits and rain gutters were installed this fall.

To the right, is our new timber frame wood shed that this year's timber frame apprentices built.



We installed timber frame bridges over the stream that runs through the trails to the cabins.

The unique design on the right was built by David Prendergrast, an apprentice from England who was here a few years ago.

The Near Future

Currently, we are officially closed. NY State has been strict with any kind of gatherings, canceling most.

While it's difficult to feel confident with the future of our world right now, for us, we do feel confident that what we can offer at Hawk Circle is more relevant than ever.

We're receiving emails from:

- Teachers, asking for outdoor skills and activity training.
- Families wanting an outdoor experience.
- Individuals seeking respite and renewal asking to come for a retreat.
- Individuals asking for skills in self-sufficiency. (timber framing, herbalism, hunting)

When this pandemic is over, we are perfectly poised to open our doors and offer a variety of programs.

Right now, we have an open window with both time and help. We have two helpers here for the winter who are ready and eager to work on projects.

But we need to raise the funds to move forward.

If we can complete **Eagle House**, then we'll have a beautiful indoor space for gatherings and classes as well as nice bathrooms and showers. Any extra funds raised, will go into insulating the cabins, installing new wall boards and exterior siding and trim. We already have the electric set-up to heat the cabins.

The **cabins** have worked well for having children here during the month of July. But even as early as the end of August, temperatures can drop significantly in the evenings making the unheated and uninsulated cabins too cold.

This pandemic has led to more and more parents concerned with the amount of time their children are spending online. They're seeing the effects and know more time spent outdoors is the remedy.



So we are asking for your help! To support us seizing this opportunity to complete these valuable projects so that we can reopen as a “grand opening” with just what we need in place to serve the growing need.

Thank you for taking the time to read this year’s progress report and for being long-time supporters of the Hawk Circle community. We’ve so appreciated your support and friendship over the years.

If you can offer a donation this year, we would be so very grateful as we do need the help to continue moving forward.

Best wishes to you and your family. Have a wonderful holiday season!

Trista, Ricardo and Javier

