



# Instructor Handbook

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# Introduction

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## Jennie Dieterman ~ Skills School Coordinator

Greetings,

Thank you for your interest in teaching at the Eagle Bluff Skills School. We are very excited at the prospect of welcoming you to our team of talented and passionate instructors.

The mission of the Eagle Bluff Skills School is to *empower people to care for the earth and each other*. We strive to meet our mission by offering unique learning opportunities that connect lifelong learners with each other and teach them skills to help them live more sustainable lives.

Eagle Bluff Skills School is committed to offering high quality, engaging and unique learning experiences that are student-focused and provide skills to empower students to live more sustainably. As such, the consideration of new instructors and/or new classes is an involved process that requires investment by both the interested instructor and the Skills School. The Skills School is searching for instructors who: are passionate about their subject, have a strong foundation in their subject matter, value providing hands-on learning and have teaching experience, particularly with adults.

Here at the Skills School, we provide support to each instructor and class to help them be as successful as possible, thus the assembly of this Instructor Handbook. The Handbook will provide you with the information you need to know about becoming a Skills School Instructor and what resources and support are available to our instructors.

If you are interested in continuing the process of becoming an Eagle Bluff Skills School instructor, please review the entirety of this Instructor Handbook and submit a signed handbook acknowledgement form and a completed [Instructor Interest form](https://goo.gl/forms/U4Awh6vEKf6xkCap2) (<https://goo.gl/forms/U4Awh6vEKf6xkCap2>).

If you have any questions as you read through this handbook, please don't hesitate to contact us. We look forward to further discussions with you.

Kindest regards,



### **Jennie Dieterman**

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# History of Eagle Bluff and the Skills School

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Nestled amid the hardwood forests and river bluffs of southeast Minnesota, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center is located 4 miles outside of Lanesboro. The mission of Eagle Bluff is to *empower people to care for the earth and each other.*

## Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center

Children need to get back to nature... that was and still is the belief of Founder and Executive Director, Joe Deden, a forester by education and a visionary by nature. As Joe was studying forestry in Germany, he worked along side students from schools who stayed in youth hostels. These students were learning to care for the environment by being educated about the environment in the environment. And it hit him—he had to make this same opportunity available to students in his home state of Minnesota. Joe returned to Minnesota in 1978 and began working on his vision.

In 1980 Joe’s vision started to become a reality and the center was incorporated as the “Southeastern MN Forest Resource Center” with a mission at that time to help landowners manage their forest land in a responsible but profitable manner. During this time, adult education programs were offered and co-sponsored with the University of Minnesota’s College of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Research and education began at the center, focusing on the cultivation of the shiitake mushroom as a cash crop. This remains the most extensive research to date on growing this Japanese specialty using U.S. hardwood logs.

During this time the Board of Directors had been wrestling with how to expand the resource center’s mission to include the students that Joe had originally envisioned working with. The board decided on a “Grow or Sunset Campaign” to try and take the first steps to becoming a day-use nature center for students. Funding was received from Betty King in 1990 to achieve this goal and the John Schroeder building, named for Betty’s grandfather, was built. The center became a regional day-use facility for the environmental education of K-12 students.

The next step in the dream was to make it possible for students to stay several days, just like the youth in Germany did. Funding was secured through the GreenPrint Plan for MN and the Blandin Foundation's Project EarthSense and the center expanded into a year-round residential center re-named Eagle Bluff. Today, Eagle Bluff is one of several members of the residential environmental learning center (RELC) network and is an excellent example for Minnesota’s approach to outdoor education. Eagle Bluff, as an established residential school, offers a variety of programs and outdoor opportunities to over 16,000 participants of all ages per year.

## Eagle Bluff Skills School

The Eagle Bluff Skills School was created in the spirit of other folk type schools. Discussions of a Skills School began in 2010. Eagle Bluff was looking to diversify their programming by incorporating more educational opportunities for adult learners. Eagle Bluff is known for being a wonderful learning center for kids, and there was an interest to expand learning opportunities to adults as well. The first Skills School classes were held in March of 2014. These classes included Cheese Making, Fermentation 101 and Food Drying.

Eagle Bluff Skills School offers classes, demonstrations and ecotours to help people lead a more balanced and sustainable life and to become more knowledgeable. The hope is that as participants explore the surrounding communities and gain a better understanding of the unique South Eastern Minnesota area they develop a stronger sense of place.

Class ideas come from the general public. The Skills School has a contact form on their website where people can select themes of classes they would be interested in attending. Ideas are also gathered from class participants in a short after class evaluation. There is also a focus on skills that may have been lost through the generations.

# History of Eagle Bluff and the Skills School Continued

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Eagle Bluff Skills School instructors come from a variety of avenues. Instructors often contact the Skills School, expressing their interest in teaching a class. Other instructors have been sought out because of their expertise in a specific craft or skill. Since its inception, the Eagle Bluff Skills School has cultivated relationships with many instructors and continues to do so.

## Numbers Tell a Story

Over the course of 4 years, the Skills School has offered 400 classes. During this time more than 1,050 participants have been empowered to lead more sustainable lives through newly learned skills.

As the Skills School continues to establish itself, we look forward to having an even larger impact on our participants, instructors and community.

## Policies and Procedures

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At the Eagle Bluff Skills School we are committed to offering high quality, engaging and unique learning experiences that are participant-focused and provide skills to empower participants to live more sustainably. Below you will find our guidelines to help you understand our expectations for our instructors.

### Becoming an Instructor

Becoming a Skills School is an involved process that requires investment by both the interested instructor and the Skills School. An overview of the process is as follows:

- Interested individual contacts the Skills School
- Interested individual reviews the Instructor Handbook
- Potential instructor signs an instructor handbook acknowledgement form and fills submits an Interest Form
- Skills School checks references provided on the Interest Form
- Individual is made aware of their class's status (acceptance/denial)
- If the class is accepted, the Skills School will be in contact to discuss further details including class specifics and instructor compensation.
- When everything is in order, an Instructor Agreement will be drafted and signed by both parties.

### Communication with Participants

Eagle Bluff Skills School handles all communications with participants, including phone calls and emails concerning questions about classes. Communication between participants and instructors is also handled by Eagle Bluff Skills School unless either party wishes to reach out directly to the other. After registration, participants are emailed or mailed confirmation information which includes time and date of class, directions and what they should wear and/or bring to class. Communications concerning wait lists and class cancellations are also handled through the Skills School.

# Policies and Procedures Continued

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## Age Policy

Courses are open to those ages 16 and older. A fully enrolled adult is required to attend with participants younger than 18. In some instances, the instructor may choose to open the class up to younger participants, this is noted in class descriptions and communicated with potential participants.

## Early Bird Registration

Beginning with the May 2017 class registrations, participants will be charged the class and materials fee that was agreed upon by the instructor and Skills School up until three weeks before the class is held. This is considered the “Early Bird Registration”. After this time, participants will be charged an additional \$5. This upcharge is to encourage participants to register ahead of time instead of waiting until the last minute.

## Course Size and Registration Deadlines

Courses are intentionally kept small and often fill quickly, so registering as early as possible is encouraged. Registering at least 3 weeks prior to the class start date is advisable as classes without a minimum number of registrations (4), by the week prior to the class, may be cancelled.

## Wait Lists

Eagle Bluff Skills School will keep a waiting list for all filled courses. Individuals on the waiting list are contacted only if space becomes available.

## Class Cancellations

If Eagle Bluff must cancel a class, participants will receive a full refund. Class cancellations are typically made no later than one week out from the scheduled class date. Participants who cancel their enrollment more than 14 days prior to the course will receive a full refund. Those who cancel their registration 14 to 8 days prior to the class start date will receive a 50% refund of the total registration and materials fee, to cover administrative costs. Participants who cancel their registration 7 days or less prior to the class are not eligible for a refund. Material fees from cancelled registrations within the 14 days will be passed on to the instructor.

The Skills School will notify instructors of class cancellations no later than a week before their class is scheduled to be held. If an instructor needs an earlier deadline due to the time it takes to purchase materials, please inform the Skills School. If an instructor decides to run a class with less than 4 participants it is their choice and they will get ½ of the registration fees collected and any materials fees collected. **Weather cancellations** need to occur no less than 24 hours before class. Participants will be informed of class cancellations via phone. The Skills School staff will keep an eye on the weather and call classes as they see fit.

## Arrival Time of Instructor

Out of professionalism, we ask our instructors to arrive no later than 45 minutes before the advertised start time of their class. This allows time for the Skills School staff to ensure you are properly set up for class and ready for participants when they arrive. Many participants travel from out of town and often arrive 30 minutes early to class.

## Field Trips

If a field trip is part of the proposed class, it must be approved by the Skills School staff. Field trips should be within 30 miles (40 minute drive) of Eagle Bluff.



# Policies and Procedures Continued

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## Materials

It is highly encouraged that instructors supply materials for their classes and the participants pay the materials fee (reflecting the true costs of materials). This is especially true for beginner/intro classes where participants may find it difficult to find the materials you require.

## Printed Materials

Eagle Bluff will print up to 5 color pages (double sided) per participant up to 10 participants. Anything over this limit, we will charge \$0.10 per double sided copy/print. Any amount charged can be deducted from the instructor check or paid for at the time of the class.

## Compensation

Instructors are considered contractors and are compensated based on expertise in their subject area, teaching experience, participant feedback, and participant numbers. The instructor sets the class fee and the materials fee. The Skills School Coordinator will contact instructors personally to discuss both instructor pay and participant base rates.

There is a \$25 registration (per participant) base fee for those who wish to offer their classes at no cost. These instructors are welcome to the agreed upon compensation from these fees, but if they decide to not receive compensation, the entirety of the \$25 registration fee will go to the Skills School to cover general operations and marketing costs.

Instructors are compensated in three ways: a base rate, a % of the class fee, and materials fees. Below shows how each typically works:

- A base rate is set at 50% of the class fee for the first 4 participants.
- Once enrollment for a class exceeds the minimum class size of 4, the instructor receives in addition to the base rate, a percentage of the total class fees. The percentage begins at 15% for first time Skills School instructors. The percentage of class fees received by an instructor is based on expertise in subject area, teaching experience, participant feedback and number of classes offered.
- Instructors receive 100% of the materials fee for materials purchased

As an example, a first time instructor with a class fee of \$40 and a materials fee of \$10 would receive the following compensation for 8 participants:

$$(1/2 \text{ of the first 4 participant class fees}) + (15\% \text{ of the remaining participant class fees}) + (\text{materials fees})$$
$$\$80 \qquad \qquad \qquad + \qquad \qquad \qquad \$24 \qquad \qquad \qquad + \qquad \qquad \qquad \$80 = \$184$$

NOTE: As an instructor's expertise grows in their subject and teaching experience, and based on participant feedback, the total percentage received by the instructor for every participant over 4 may increase.

The class fees help to cover the Skills School costs for services provided, which include hosting the class, participant communications, marketing and promotions, and registrations. Materials fees are reimbursed to the instructor in full.

Payment is processed the first business day after the class is held. A check will be cut and sent out after the payment is processed by the Finance Director.

## Volunteers and Complimentary Participants

The Skills School often recruits volunteers to help drive vans, or assist in other ways as needed. The Skills School Coordinator will contact you ahead of time to request the acceptance of these 'scholarship participants' (no fees collected for these individuals) in your class.

# Policies and Procedures Continued

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## Cell Phones

While cell phones can be helpful devices in any class, instructors are encouraged to make it known to participants if and when phone use is appropriate during class. Asking participants to wait to use phones during breaks or personal project times is a reasonable request and expectation. In other Eagle Bluff programming, cell phone policy is as follows: *Due to the potential interruption of cell phones in our programs we ask that you not use cell phones in class, in the dining hall or while actively supervising students. Please turn phones off at class or during programs. And please limit cell phone use to the chaperone lounge, upper parking lot, or individual room.*

## Evaluation Process

Class participants are given an opportunity to provide feedback about the class and the Skills School in general at the end of class via a paper survey. An electronic evaluation is also sent out in a thank you email to participants for those who did not have a chance to fill out the paper surveys. After participants are given the opportunity to take the online survey, a summary is compiled and shared with the instructor.

Skills School staff will also evaluate instructors. This evaluation will be used to stay familiar with the working relationship between the instructor and Skills School.

Both evaluations will be important in determining whether or not a working relationship will be sustained. The Skills School reserves the right to terminate an instructor's contract/ discontinue offering classes with an instructor due to a poor working relationship, classes do not fit in with the current class offerings, etc.

## Private Group Classes

Groups can request private group classes via email or interest form. Upon receiving their request the Skills School Staff reach out to the instructor of the class the group is interested in, to determine if a private class is possible. The minimum number of participants the private group needs is set by the instructor. If the group does not reach the set minimum class size, the option to pay the registration fees for the minimum number can be considered. Private groups need to send in registration for at least half of the predicted number of participants to hold the date. The remainder of the registration fees can be paid the day of the event.

## Pets

Eagle Bluff skills School is responsible for assuring the health and safety of all participants. In keeping with this objective, we do not permit participants to bring their pets to class, unless specified by the instructor to do so (as part of the class). Animals may pose a threat of infection and may cause allergic reactions in participants. Some individuals may feel threatened or be distracted by the presence of animals.

A participant who requires the help of a service animal (defined by 28 CFR 36.104 as "any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability") will be permitted to bring a service animal to the class, provided that the animal's presence does not create a danger to others and does not impose an undue hardship upon the class.

All dogs must be leashed at all times. All animals must be in the continuous full control of their owners. They should be in the physical presence of the owner. Owners are expected to clean up, completely and immediately, after their animals. A participant who brings an animal to class is completely and solely liable for any injuries or any damage to personal property caused by the animal. Any repair or cleaning/ maintenance costs incurred by an animal will be charged in full to the owner. Eagle Bluff Skills School shall not be liable for loss of, or injury to, any animal brought to class.

\* adapted from the LawRoom "Office Pet Policy" found at [www.lawroom.com/download/9021-1.doc](http://www.lawroom.com/download/9021-1.doc)

# Policies and Procedures Continued

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## Smoking

Because we recognize the hazards caused by exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, as well as the life-threatening diseases linked to the use of all forms of tobacco, it shall be the policy of Eagle Bluff Skills School, to provide a tobacco-free environment for all instructors, participants and volunteers. This policy covers the smoking of any tobacco product and the use of oral tobacco products or “spit” tobacco, and it applies to instructors, participants and volunteers of the Eagle Bluff Skills School.

\* adapted from the American Cancer Society’s Tobacco Use Model Policy, found at <http://www.cancer.org/healthy/stayawayfromtobacco/smoke-freecommunities/createasmoke-free workplace/smoking-in-the-workplace-a-model-policy>

## Participant Waiver Form

Assumption of Risk Agreement and Liability Release Eagle Bluff Skills School

Note: Please Read Fully Before Signing

As a participant in Eagle Bluff Skills School programs, I acknowledge and am aware that the program may involve hazards and risks which I am prepared to accept. These risks may include, but are not limited to: use of hand and power tools, transportation by Eagle Bluff, using sharp tools, hiking on uneven trails, being in or near bodies of water, consuming food and/or beverages, working with or around fires and/or hot objects.

Accordingly, by my decision to enroll, I hereby release Eagle Bluff Skills School and Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, including all of its personnel, agents, affiliates, contractors, staff, volunteers, and governing board members, from any and all liabilities to me with respect to injury, sickness, disease, and/or loss or damage of personal property. This release does not apply to liabilities arising from gross negligence and wanton reckless misconduct by Eagle Bluff Skills School and Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center personnel, agents, affiliates, contractors, staff, volunteers, and governing board members. Apart from that exception, this release applies to any and all liabilities to me or my estate of any description, whether involving fees and expenses of any kind.

In the event that some other person, entity or party seeks compensation for these liabilities, I or my estate will indemnify and hold harmless, Eagle Bluff School, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, its personnel, agents, affiliates, contractors, staff, volunteers, and governing board, for all sums reasonably incurred in response to that claim. This release is to be interpreted and enforced under Minnesota State Law.

# Policies and Procedures Continued

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## Sample Skills School Day Timeline

A typical Skills School day goes as follows:

### Before Class

- Instructor arrives at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled start of class.
- Skills School staff and Instructor complete the set up for class.
- Participants arrive and check in with the Skills School Staff for class, starting anywhere from 30 minutes before class start time to the start time.

### During Class

- Coffee, tea and ice water are available to instructors and participants on site (at no extra charge)
- Skills School staff may pop-in on onsite class to take photos or videos.
- If the class is an all day class or multi-day class, a 1 hour (or a set time decided upon by the class) break will be given for lunch. This will allow for those who did not bring a lunch to drive to nearby Lanesboro or Fountain.
- Time should be set aside at the end of class for evaluations to be completed.

### After Class

- The instructor, along with the help of Skills School staff pack up any equipment and load it into the instructor's vehicle.
- The Skills School Coordinator will send an e-mail within 2 weeks to the instructor with the feedback from the participant evaluations.

## Instructor Support

As an instructor you are provided with the following:

### **Class Support**

- Class registration set up
- Payment Processing
- Communication with participants
- Day-of-Class Support Staffing

### **High Quality Facilities**

- Climate Controlled Classroom Space for up to 100 (projector screen, WiFi, dry erase board on easel, flat screen TV with HDMI capabilities, projector, laptop, sink, fireplace, carpeted room)
- Commercial Kitchen (convection oven, 6 burner gas range, tipping braising pan, commercial steamer, commercial refrigerator, commercial freezer, ice machine, stainless steel work space and 3 compartment sink, commercial dishwasher, Epoxy floor)
- Handicap Accessible Buildings
- Restroom Facilities
- Greenhouse and Gardens
- 9 miles of hiking and ski trails

### **Vehicle Transportation**

- 15 passenger van

# Policies and Procedures Continued

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## **Marketing and Promotion**

- **Print Catalog** : This course catalog is a class listing for the upcoming season and includes articles focused on sustainable living. The catalog is printed twice a year, summer and winter. Distribution is 12,000 catalogs per printing and they are distributed throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa.
- **Postcards**: General Skills School postcards are distributed at tabling events and are available for distribution by instructors.
- **Print Ads**: General Skills School ads are printed in several newspapers including the Post Bulletin's Radish (8 issues with 90,000+ readers) and multiple local Visitor Guides.
- **Monthly Emails**: Monthly update emails are sent out to subscribers (730+). Emails include an update on the Skills School, a sustainable tip for living, an upcoming class highlight and several other upcoming classes.
- **Online Presence:**
  - **Website**: <http://www.eagle-bluff-skills-school.org/>
  - **Social Media**: The Eagle Bluff Skills School page ([www.facebook.com/EBSkillsSchool/](http://www.facebook.com/EBSkillsSchool/) 470+ likes) posts regularly on upcoming classes, sustainable living stories and other fun content.
  - **Community Calendars**: Skills School classes are added to several calendars including chamber and newspaper calendars (20+).

## **Tools for Self-Promotion**

The following are tools that you can use for promoting your class(es) within your own networks.

- **Flyers**

Eagle Bluff Skills School has predesigned flyers for each class. These flyers are shared with you, the instructor to distribute online and throughout your community and other surrounding communities.

- **Press Releases**

If you would like a press release, please contact the Skills School Coordinator at [school@eagle-bluff.org](mailto:school@eagle-bluff.org). Together, we can put together a press release for your class and the Eagle Bluff Skills School that you can send in to your local newspaper.

- **Social Media Marketing**

Follow these simple pointers to increase your social media marketing. \*Pointers taken from "Social Media Examiner", to learn more visit - <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/social-media-marketing-tips-pros/>

- 1) Look at past content to improve future posts – which posts reached the largest audience?
- 2) Optimize visual content with links – images grab attention, be sure to have a link for viewers to follow and learn more.
- 3) Switch up content formats
- 4) Deliver content consistently – keep posts relevant, interesting and valuable for your audience and look to post regularly.
- 5) Use scheduling tools on social media to keep a regular posting schedule – with an erratic publishing schedule, you can unintentionally alienate your audience.

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## **What is the Skills School and the concept behind it?**

The Eagle Bluff Skills School is adult focused education. The school was created in the spirit of other folk type schools. We are offering classes, demonstrations and ecotours to help people lead a more balanced and sustainable life and to become more knowledgeable. We hope our participants explore the surrounding communities and gain a better understanding of this unique area and in turn develop a stronger sense of place.

## **When and why did the Skills School begin?**

Discussions of a Skills School began in 2010. We were looking to diversify our programming by incorporating more educational opportunities for adult learners. Eagle Bluff is known for being a wonderful learning center for kids, and we wanted to expand that to include adults as well. The first Skills School classes were held in March of 2014.

## **What does the Skills School focus on?**

We currently offer 1/2 and full day classes focused on skills that encourage living well and living sustainably. We also focus on skills that may have been lost through the generations.

## **What sorts of classes do you hold?**

Classes are held in the following 7 topics:

Food, Self & Wellness, Farm & Garden, Handcraft, Sustainable Home, Outdoor Skills, and Ecotours

... examples of classes we've held are: Rain Garden Installation, Deep Nutrition, Foodies of the Forest, Sustainable Home Tour, Amish Bread Baking, Cheese Making, Writing in the Outdoors, Saving the Monarch Butterfly... and MORE!

## **Where do you get class ideas and instructors?**

We gather ideas for classes from you! We have a contact form on our website where people can select themes of classes they would be interested in attending. We also gather ideas from our class participants in a short after class evaluation.

Our instructors come from a variety of avenues. Some instructors have reached out to us, expressing their interest in teaching a class. Other instructors have been sought out because of a class request and others have taught classes through a partnership with other organizations.

## **How often do you hold classes?**

Classes are typically scheduled over one weekend each month and a couple of weekdays throughout the month. Most classes are held on Saturdays and Sundays, with some held on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

## **Who are the classes for? Is there an age range?**

Classes are for EVERYONE over the age of 16 unless otherwise specified – our hope is that everyone can find something that interests them!

## **What are some of the things you want to communicate to those who come through those classes?**

Our mission is to *empower people to care for the earth and each other*. We want people to succeed, be sustainable and give back to their roots!

# Testimonials

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## **Food Drying and Jerky Making**

I really enjoyed the small class and learning how to make things I'll actually try. We had delicious samples!

I missed the class on natural cleaning products and hope it will be offered again sometime. I loved this class—thanks!

## **Our Body's Energy Connection**

This was an excellent experience. Sue's knowledge and energy always makes me feel so good. I am learning to incorporate more positive things into my life. This class is exactly what I needed, when I needed it. Loved it! Thank you so much Sue.

I would welcome participation in a follow-up session. I enjoyed the morning and found it to be a valuable way to spend my morning.

## **Beer Brewing Basics**

Great mix of learning/hands-on experience. Learned a lot and came out feeling that beer brewing is easier than I thought.

Great instructor. Helpful and open to questions and great job answering them. Friendly and knew the process of beer brewing well.

Excellent activity for couples, I would have liked to have brought my wife along.

## **Up Cycle Jean Rug**

My favorite part of class was learning was recycling, making something out of a very durable material to utilize in many different ways—especially rugs that can even be washed! Love it!

## **Amish Experience**

I loved seeing and learning more about how the Amish live. It was fascinating!

What wonderful ladies! I so enjoyed getting to know them and learning about their beautiful lifestyle. They were so kind and had much good information to share.

## **Fossil Hunting in Fillmore County**

Very friendly—excited with our finds—encouraging. Very good with all ages—adults and children—a great 'expedition' truly enjoyed it.

My favorite part of class was being able to explore a hobby along with others who share the same interest.

## **Sausage Making**

They do it right! Enjoy coming here (Eagle Bluff Skills School)!

## **Felting with Wool for Beginners**

I truly enjoyed the EBSS Class: 'Felting with Wool for Beginners' last weekend. I am an engineer by training, not an artist. But I really felt like an artist after taking the class taught by Courtney Bergey. Courtney provided 3 hours of fun. The class participants all went home with several projects they had made and numerous ideas for more. Great connection were made. Thanks for a fun and enjoyable morning!

# Resources

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## How to Introduce Yourself to Your Class

So what do we need to know about introducing ourselves to that person sitting next to us? What makes a good introduction? And how do we go about it? Here are 3 tips:

### Tip #1: Share Your Story

Everyone knows that when we introduce ourselves, we need to speak loudly and clearly as we share carefully chosen information about ourselves. The problem for most is, what exactly should you share?

If you're the teacher, keep in mind the purpose of your introduction is to help the students feel comfortable and excited to be learning from a credible expert who is also likable. You'll want to share your professional background and credentials as well as include one or two non-professional interests. Optionally you might hint at values that are important to you. Remember: your teacher's introduction will set the tone for the rest of the class.

In some classes and workshops, after my introduction people have commented on how they appreciate hearing not just what I've done, but why I did it. By disclosing unique information about myself, I connect with students and often motivate and inspire them to share in a similar manner.

The best classroom introductions are ones that share experiences in the form of a story. I noticed a real shift in the quality of the introductions once I started delivering my classroom introductions as a story.

### Tip #2: Share Relatable Information

Although the instructor introduction is about establishing credibility and likability and building rapport, the student introduction should focus mainly on building rapport and being memorable. This means if you are the student, it is important for you to share unique information about yourself that will help the other students (and the teacher) to remember who you are and also to feel like you've got something in common with them.

In an academic classroom, this usually means sharing a few of your interests. Choose one or two you think others in the class might share but also include one that is very unique to you. So for example, I might share something like, "I'm Lisa, Lisa Marshall and I'm a computer systems major. When I take a break from studying it's to go for a swim or a bike ride, or to go rollerblading with my dog!"

Oh, and by the way, this isn't the time to share information that is too personal. Avoid awkward conversation-stoppers like politics, a messy divorce, or your 37 cats, that make people uneasy. Stick with what draws people together rather than with what divides us.

### Tip #3: Have Some Fun

A fun way to make introductions a little more comfortable is to have some fun with them.



# Resources Continued

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One good idea for facilitators is to break all the participants into small groups of 2-4 people. Have them interview and introduce each other. For example, “I would like to introduce you to Jeff Rogers. He likes to kayak, ride bikes with his young sons, and eat ice cream as often as possible.”

The bottom line is that introductions in the classroom are very important. Our relational society thrives on knowing that person sitting next to us. So get comfortable with introducing yourself. Be sure to pick personal facts that are unique and interesting, but not divisive or uncomfortable to others. And if you can come up with a fun, new way to introduce people to each other, then do.

This is Lisa B. Marshall, The Public Speaker. Passionate about communication; your success is my business. \*This article was taken from the “Quick and Dirty Tips”, to learn more visit - <http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/business-career/public-speaking/how-to-introduce-yourself-to-a-group-or-a-class>

## Tips for Teaching Adults

Teaching adults presents unique challenges and rewards. Here are several important features of adult education:

- 1. Mutual trust and respect:** Be patient, receptive and approachable. Be a student advocate. Provide all the information the student will need. Help make the student feel secure in the new environment. Prepare them for class content and expectations. *Examples: Handouts w/schedule or syllabus, write class outline on whiteboard, etc.*
- 2. Individualized learning:** Base content on the perceived needs of the student. Allow the student to set the pace of learning. Engage the student in mutual goal setting. Students learn well from watching others, participating in care, and developing her/his own learning plan. Allow the student to make choices and be self-directed. *Examples: Ask each person to share what they hope to get out of the class, build in check-in or stopping points so adults can work on own pace but catch up when needed, etc.*
- 3. Shared learning and reciprocity:** Work as a team and relate as colleagues. An instructor who views her/his role as a facilitator of learning more than an imparter of information helps make adult learners feel more comfortable.
- 4. Safe, supportive and friendly environment:** Adults need to feel they will not be embarrassed, made to feel inadequate or intimidated in any way. Watch without taking over, be non-judgmental, and plan for success. Because learning can be mentally and physically exhausting, allow the student some free time when the occasion arises as a reward for hard work and good performance. *Examples: Provide frequent positive reinforcement; be prepared to explain directions multiple ways.*
- 5. Active learning:** Encourage learners to participate actively in the learning process. Engage students in dialogue about care and procedures. *Examples: Explain why certain actions are taken as well as how, show the student available resources, such as procedural manuals and reference texts.*
- 6. Prior learning:** Make use of the student’s prior experience and knowledge by finding out what they already know and what experiences they have had, and then anchoring new learning in these past experiences. Valuing the student’s skills and knowledge recognizes past accomplishments and helps ease this difficult and often humbling transition in adult education. Even if the previous experiences are not care related, there may be a transfer of skills. *Examples: Have students introduce themselves at start of class and their level of experience with topic or ask students to share and give insight throughout session.*

# Resources Continued

**7. Feedback:** Give frequent, clear feedback so the student knows how s/he is progressing towards her/his goals.

**8. Organization and repetition:** Repeat content over time and sequence it in a logical fashion. Use a variety of teaching methods if possible. *Examples: Read about a procedure, watch a procedure, assist with a procedure and actually do the procedure are all different ways of teaching and can be used in combination with each other.*

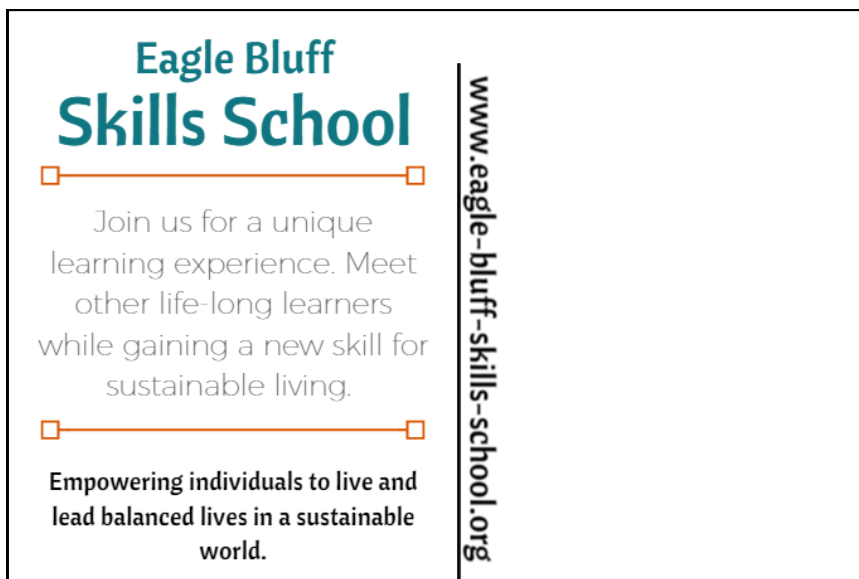
Sources: Baltimore, 2004; Clay et al., 1999; Trevitt, Grealish & Reaby, 2001; Rush, Peel & McCracken, 2004; Hohler, 2003 Developed by Em M. Pijl Zieber RN, BSN © 2005 - University of Lethbridge These Tip Sheets may be reproduced for personal or educational purposes only, provided the author is duly acknowledged

## Sample Marketing Materials: Postcard

Front



Back



## Resources Continued

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### Sample Marketing Materials: Flyer



September 17th

The background of the flyer is a photograph of a hand holding a mala, a string of 27 beads used in meditation. The beads are various colors, including red, green, black, and white. The hand is positioned at the top of the frame, with the mala hanging down. The background is a light, textured surface.

# Mindful Mala Workshop

Yoga tradition is rich with practices to help you deepen your embodied experience and navigate challenges of everyday life. This workshop incorporates movement, breath, mantra, meditation and the creation of a 27-bead wrist mala. You'll be led in using your wrist mala in meditation and mantras helping to center, support, and steady your path to a more balanced life.

Register at: [eagle-bluff-skills-school.org](http://eagle-bluff-skills-school.org) or 507-467-2437



# Resources Continued

## Catalog

Feel free to share our online catalog at the following link and if you would like physical copies of the catalog to distribute, please contact us and we will get them sent to you as soon as possible.

[Online Catalog Link](#)

## Press Releases

### Family & Faith

POST-BULLETIN  
WEDNESDAY  
JULY 16, 2014

#### Families can take a trip on trolley



**FAMILY TIME**  
**LINDY LANGE**  
@lindylange

Ride your way to fun on a Rochester Trolley & Tour Co. Hop-on Hop-off tour.

New to the trolley tour summer lineup, the Hop-on, Hop-off Tours are specially designed for kids of all ages and parents. Tours kick off this Saturday and run every Saturday through Aug. 30, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., making stops at fun spots around town including Silver Lake playground, Minnesota Children's Museum of Rochester, and the Rochester Downtown Farmers Market.

"There's no need to sign up ahead of time," said Kathy Dahl, Trolley & Tour Co. director of business development. "Just hop on, ride the trolley and hop off at any of the stops to see and enjoy."

**If you go**  
Rochester Trolley & Tour Company family-friendly tours  
Phone: 507-421-0573  
On the web: www.rochesterrentours.com



The incredible smell of baked bread permeates the kitchen as the brown loaves are set near an open window to cool.

#### Get baking in an Amish home

Bluff Country Reader - May 9, 2016  
Chatfield, Preston, Rushford, Spring Grove & Spring Valley 15

### Seek out fossils during upcoming Eagle Bluff Skills School offering

Fillmore County has proven to be a great place to hunt for fossils. Due to the unique landscape of the bluffs and the rich geological history of the area, fossils are not as challenging to find as one might think!

Southeastern Minnesota was covered, not once but twice, by a sea in both the Ordovician Period 440 million years ago and

the Devonian Period 380 million years ago. These events left fossils of sea creatures, including fish and corals, scattered throughout the area. These fossils can be found without too much trouble if seekers know what to look for and where.

Eagle Bluff Skills School, located in Lanesboro, is holding a fossil hunting class on Saturday,

May 14, from 1 to 6 p.m. Cost is \$40. Join the "Fossil Lady," Beverly Sandlin, for an afternoon of adventure and discovery around the Spring Valley area, collecting fossils — some older than dinosaurs!

Sandlin is a passionate fossil-hunting hobbyist and enjoys sharing her passion with others. She hosts the Bluff Country Fossils

Blog where she blogs fossil facts, adventures and great pictures.

To learn more about the fossil hunting class, or to register, visit <http://www.eagle-bluff-skills-school.org/classes/fossil-hunting-in-fillmore-county-3/>. Class size is limited.

The Skills School is offering several other unique learning experiences the weekend of May

14 and 15, including classes on photography, birding, journaling sustainability, crocheting, trout fly fishing and Amish bread making.

To learn more about these classes and the Skills School or to register for a class, visit <http://www.eagle-bluff-skills-school.org/classes/>.

## Eagle Bluff Skills School Logo

Feel free to use our logo in promotional materials, on your website and/or facebook page.

Please contact Jennie Dieterman, Skills School Coordinator at [skillsschool@eagle-bluff.org](mailto:skillsschool@eagle-bluff.org) to request the logo.

## Concluding Thoughts

Eagle Bluff Skills School is very grateful for the support of the surrounding communities. We are appreciative of the many lifelong learners that have attended classes and provided valuable feedback to better the program. We are also thankful for the skillful instructors who have shared their time and talents with the Skills School and the participants.

Kindest regards,

**Jennie Dieterman**

Skills School Coordinator

# Eagle Bluff Skills School Instructor Handbook Acknowledgement

I have read the foregoing Instructor Handbook and am familiar with its terms. I understand that it is not a binding contract, but a set of guidelines for the implementation of policies. I understand that Eagle Bluff may modify any of the provisions of this handbook at any time. I also understand that, notwithstanding any of the provisions of the handbook, I am contracted on an at-will basis. My contract may be terminated at any time, either by me or by Eagle Bluff Skills School, with or without cause.

I understand my responsibilities as a contractor of Eagle Bluff Skills School. I will strive to follow through with the expectations Eagle Bluff has of me. These expectations include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Offering high quality, engaging and unique learning experiences that are student-focused and provide skills to empower students to live more sustainably.
- 2) Instructor arriving no later than 45 minutes prior to the advertised start time of class.
- 3) A cooperative attitude and respect towards Skills School staff, volunteers and participants.
- 4) A positive effort to satisfy the needs and desires of class participants.
- 5) Self-promotion of Skills School classes in surrounding communities and groups of followers.

## Signature:

I have a sound understanding of my responsibilities as a professional and representative of Eagle Bluff Skills School. I have a clear understanding of how compensation is handled. By signing this contract, I agree to the terms stated above. I understand that this is not a contract of employment, but rather a contract agreeing to the above expectations.

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_