



## 2017 Spring Timber Framing Program

The Hawk Circle Timber Framing Apprenticeship is changing a little based on a number of factors for the Spring Season. One is that it is going to start in late March (around March 25th) and run until the beginning of June. So, it will be slightly shorter than the usual three month/twelve week program we generally offer.

The other change is that it is going to be a work/study program, meaning that we aren't going to charge anyone for attending and being part of our program, but we will be asking people to do work at Hawk Circle in trade for skills instruction and experience. We have room for three people in this spring season, so our positions are very limited.

The primary reason for this change is because we are working on completing our new Timber Framed workshop building Eagle House, and I won't be able to devote my daily time to just timber framing instruction for apprentices. However, I believe there will be a LOT of framing and other construction learning that will be invaluable to anyone who takes part this spring.

Top Left:  
Eagle House Interior  
Top Right:  
Eagle House Exterior  
Bottom Left:  
The Barn Workshop  
Bottom Right:  
Small Woodshed Frame



Here's how the calendar looks:

March 25th	Arrival and Orientation
March 31-April 2	Timber Framing Skills One
April 7-9	Carpentry Skills Workshop
April 14-16	Earth Skills Instructor Retreat
April 24-28	Brooklyn Waldorf Class Trip
April 29	Herbs for both Pets & Farm Animal
May 6	Hawk Circle Adventure Field Day
May 12-14	Timber Framing Skills Two
May 15-19	Natural Building Skills Retreat
May 20	Forest Mom Experience
May 21	Forest Grandparent Experience
May 27	Hawk Circle Adventure Field Day
May 28	Natural Healing Class
June 18	Forest Dad Experience

The beginning weeks of the program involve learning about the tools of the trade and getting started on a few projects in the shop and around our campus. We need to build two bridges (small) as well as assemble a small woodshed timber frame for our summer camp campfire area, and we need to assemble a deck ramp for Eagle House, as well as make a new timber frame structure for our camp sign by the road. We also have to prep for our natural building for Eagle House and a new cabin as we are enclosing them with a wood chip/clay insulation and earthen clay plaster this spring and early summer.

Our work projects/work trade includes cutting, splitting and stacking firewood so it can dry for next year, as well as some farm work with our chickens, sheep shed, moving electric fences for our sheep pasture, some program support such as kitchen prep and clean up, and work in general construction at Eagle House, such as framing, insulation, tile work, railings, flooring, windows and door installation, and other projects. All work trade projects will be outlined and include detailed instruction and supervision, with some of these being done individually and others in a team effort, depending on how the week's weather and projects line up. When two or three or four people work on a project, they can get a lot done in a short period of time!

Apprentices will get to participate in all workshops and classes offered at Hawk Circle while they are here, which would include food if that program serves food. (Currently, the Brooklyn Waldorf School Trip is the only program offering food at this time. **Housing in our farmhouse is provided**, or a cabin or tent if you prefer to be outside or closer to nature.

So, rather than making the program a paid apprenticeship, it's going to be run as a **work trade**. You will get all of the workshops listed, as well as any that aren't listed but are added later, as well as at least four weeks of hands on timber framing, natural building and construction project experience, including a 'final project' if you want to put all of your skills to the test and create a frame that will be something that can really add to your portfolio and lead to a job with a timber framing company if that is what you want to do. Or, it can be used as the foundation for a larger project like building your own timber frame house or cabin.

I think it's a pretty good deal. Typically we will work about **four days a week, Monday through Thursday, from 9 am to 5 pm, with an hour for lunch**. Sometimes, we might work five days or even six days a week with time off the following week, to balance it out, if we are trying to finish a particular project before bad weather, or just to meet a specific deadline. The workshops are not included in the work trade hours, so you might be involved in working, then have a long weekend, then another week of projects, but we will make sure that you get time off to rest as needed.

In addition to the construction and framing, there is a lot of opportunity to learn various **wilderness survival skills, earth living skills**, including shelter building, fire making, carving, coal burning, hide tanning, bow making, stone tools, tracking, wild edible plants and much more. We run programs in ten local schools as an after school program, teaching wilderness skills and crafts, and there will be an instructor or two living in the farmhouse with everyone as well.



The opportunity to learn about sheep, chickens and gardening is also offered, if you are so inclined, and Trista's work with treating common ailments of these animals holistically with herbal treatments and nutrition is offered to anyone at Hawk Circle who is interested.

**Food:** Typically, you will need about \$50-70 per week for groceries, snacks or spending money, so budget accordingly.

You can probably eat Top Ramen the entire time, and save money, but we don't recommend that. It's good to have good food to support your body while you work and learn. I'm sure you can eat for less, but it's better to over estimate your needs rather than under estimate them. Many times, everyone in the community will share some food with each other and this can save money as well as build community too.

Our community has a washer and dryer for your clothes, and over 200 acres of land to explore, wander and enjoy. We are two miles from Cherry Valley, where you can get internet access, and there are several stores for food shopping in Cooperstown, about 11 miles away. You are welcome to bring your own tools but we will provide them if you don't have any of your own yet. You will need work gloves, sturdy boots, warm clothing, and your own hearing and eye protection too. If you need something, we can always purchase it locally after you arrive.

I will also make sure I spend plenty of time with you during this program to answer questions, help you design your own projects and support you both this spring and beyond with advice and consulting or letters of recommendation as needed. I like to make sure you get a lot for your effort too!

During the spring, I will be coordinating the building of Eagle House with any subcontractors, as well as handling many duties of the summer camp preparations, and also helping my wife Trista with our son Javier, who has special needs. I'm also finishing up the writing of my book 'The Natural Advantage' so, it's going to be busy but I want to assure you that I am looking forward to working with you, teaching you some skills you will have for the rest of your life, and also have a lot of fun here in the barn workshop room, or out on our camp, creating some spaces that will last for maybe hundreds of years. Spring is a beautiful time of year here, too, and the land awakens from the sleep of winter in a big way, starting with the flow of maple syrup and ending with hot summer days. If this sounds good to you, please let me know as soon as you can and we can arrange to have a short phone call to make sure that this is a good fit. Please let me know if you have any restrictions for you physically, or have any questions, too. I am happy to try to answer them as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Ricardo Sierra

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