

Information for New Campers

We come for a variety of reasons -- to make new friends or to see old ones, for intellectual stimulation, spiritual renewal, artistic expression, to share ideas, to relax and to have fun. You're about to become part of this unique intentional community.

Eliot Institute is a non-profit corporation affiliated with the Pacific Northwest District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Eliot Institute is managed by a volunteer board of directors made up of representatives from the established conferences held each year. Eliot Institute has been presenting camps and conferences since 1947. Eliot Institute currently sponsors three camps each year at Seabeck - during July, during August and over New Year's Day and one at the Naramata Conference Centre in eastern British Columbia straddling June/July. Eliot summer conferences are 7 nights; the Winter conference is 4 nights.

The Eliot community values safety, fun, and diversity. Many campers are old-timers, having come for years. Newcomers are always welcome and an important part of the community. Newcomers may ask to be paired up with returning campers who give support and answer questions while serving as a "Newcomer Buddy."

Host Facilities & Surrounding Area

Seabeck

Once a thriving milltown, Seabeck today consists of the Seabeck Conference Center and the surrounding community, including the General Store, an historic cemetery, pizza and espresso businesses, and the marina. Eliot and other Unitarian Universalist groups are the most frequent users of the Seabeck Conference Center.

The Conference Center includes over 90 acres with housing, meeting areas, dining hall, woods, a lagoon, beach access on Hood Canal, the Cathedral in the Woods, trails, a swimming platform, tennis courts, volleyball, a children's playground, and Ping Pong. A refrigerator in the dining hall is available for guest use. Guests leave valuables at home, as the doors to guest rooms have no locks.

Silverdale, the closest city, has supermarkets, pharmacies and a mall. It is a 15 minute drive from Seabeck. Scenic Beach State Park is two miles south and west of Seabeck. It has a beautiful woods, a picnic area and beach, and a spectacular view.

Naramata

Naramata Centre is located within a peaceful village on the shores of Lake Okanagan in eastern British Columbia. It's a place of orchards and vineyards, of lake and mountains, of country lanes and wilderness paths.

Each year more than 10,000 people of all ages and backgrounds come to Naramata Centre for retreats, conferences, continuing education courses, training programs, workshops and special events. Marion McConnell (Mugs) is the Centre's Conference Coordinator. The Centre features a private beach and

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swimming area, a peaceful chapel, the Mustard Seed Bookstore, pianos in several buildings, and ping pong or pool in the Games Room. Walk the labyrinth, set amidst orchards and clay cliffs. Or play volleyball, badminton, baseball, bocci, croquet or soccer on the conference play fields.

Naramata Village has a post office, a general store and several small shops. Penticton is 15 kms/10 miles to the south, with all the amenities of a mid-sized city. Several wineries are within hiking or a short driving distance of the conference grounds. Wilderness camping and fishing areas are also nearby.

Communication with the World

Some cellular phones work on conference grounds, and pay phones are available. Host facilities can receive and send mail and fax communications, and postage may be purchased at their offices. The Seabeck office can be reached at 360-830-5010 during office hours or in case of emergency, with a local number from Seattle, 206-842-0346. Naramata Centre is at (250) 496-5751, or after hours for emergencies at 250-490-7385.

Please do not ask host facilities or the Eliot Administrator to receive or send email for you. Both Seabeck and Naramata have Internet access ports available, though you must provide your own laptop and Internet service. However, we strongly discourage personal computer use at Eliot, particularly by children and youth. Take advantage of your time at Eliot to "unplug" and enjoy the people, activities and the beauty of nature all around you.

With the community

There is a daily Eliot newsletter. It is distributed at dinner and extra copies are usually available in the main building lobby. The newsletter is created by the whole community -- you can submit an article, joke or drawing before the deadline each day. Other announcements and sign-up sheets will be conveniently posted in a main traffic area.

Food

Most people love meals at Eliot, which are served family-style at Seabeck and buffet-style at Naramata. No K.P. duty is required on the part of campers. When arranged before camp starts, vegetarian and other special diets can usually be accommodated. Make your requests through the Eliot Administrator when you register. At each meal, you will need to alert your server that you are on a special diet. It is important not to eat special meals prepared for others. The kitchen staff can be very accommodating. Seconds are usually available. If you need something, please ask.

At Seabeck, a refrigerator in the dining room area at is available for those who bring food for special diets or for children's preferences. Most housing at Naramata, including campgrounds, includes shared refrigerators for the same purpose.

Emergency Resources

First Aid supplies are available in the main building, children's program areas, and on the swim dock. Fellow campers who have volunteered for First Aid assistance will be identified at the all-camp meeting on the first day. The lifeguard usually has an air horn and 911 cell phone for emergency use. For additional assistance, ask an Eliot staff member. In case of emergency, call 911 and notify the host facility office.

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Coming & Going

Essential to the experience at Eliot Institute is the sense of community we create during the week together. To help foster this intention for a safe, inclusive environment, we encourage you to arrive opening day, to base your experience on the grounds of the conference centre, and to stay the full length of the conference. It is especially important that newcomers to Eliot arrive in time to attend the all - camp orientation meeting, and that children and youth be present on the first meeting of their morning program.

We also ask that, if at all possible, you refrain from inviting any unregistered friends or family to visit you during your stay at camp. If you expect visitors, plan to meet them at a location off conference grounds. If you have a visitor on-site, Eliot requires the following:

1. Ask Dean in advance for approval.
2. Notify Registrar for day - use fee payment and visitor nametag.
3. Visitors may not attend Eliot programs, nor stay overnight.