

# RIVER RUN



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**The Healthy Aboriginal Network**  
Non-profit promotion of health, literacy & wellness

# RIVER RUN

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Promoting wellness. Ensuring care.



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HOW FAR NOW, DAD?

WE'RE ABOUT 10 MINUTES AWAY.

AWESOME!!! I WONDER IF WE'RE GONNA SEE BEARS OR SOMETHING.

YEAH, RIGHT. I BET ALL WE'RE GONNA SEE IS WATER AND TREES. IF YOU WANT TO SEE WILD ANIMALS, JUST GO LOOK ON THE COMPUTER.

C'MON. IT'S STILL GONNA BE LOTS OF FUN! 'MEMBER WHEN WE USED TO GO SWIMMING AT THE LAKE NEAR GRANDPA'S?

YEAH, WELL THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO...

I STILL REMEMBER.



LET'S GO!

HI!



THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING MY ESSAY!!!

YOU MUST BE JESSE COTE! YOU'RE MORE THAN WELCOME.



IS THIS YOUR FAMILY?

YEAH. THIS IS MY MOM AND DAD.

WELCOME TO SOARING EAGLE. MY NAME IS HUBERT DREAYER. IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU. YOU HAVE A VERY TALENTED SON.

THANK YOU. THE PLEASURE IS OURS.



YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH THIS MEANS TO JESSE.

WELL, I'D LIKE TO THINK THAT SOARING EAGLE IS A PLACE FOR YOUTH TO SEE THEIR DREAMS REALIZED AND HELP THEM MAKE RESPONSIBLE CHOICES DOWN THE ROAD. YOUR SON IS ALREADY WELL ON HIS WAY.

AND WHO'S THIS?

THAT'S MY SISTER, LIZ. SHE'S GRUMPY 'CAUSE SHE HAD TO GET UP EARLY.

WELL, IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU AS WELL, LIZ. BETTER GET USED TO EARLY MORNINGS THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS.

WHATEVER....



HURRY!! HE'S STARTING!

OKAY.... I GET IT. JEEZ.

I JUST WANT TO WELCOME YOU ALL TO SOARING EAGLE.

EACH YEAR WE HOST A NATIONAL WRITING CONTEST. THE YOUTH WITH THE MOST EXCEPTIONAL STORIES ARE BROUGHT TOGETHER FOR A CAMPING TRIP. THIS SUMMER, THE PRIZE IS A JOURNEY DOWN THE SQUAMISH RIVER, THE TRADITIONAL WATERS OF THE COAST SALISH.

HERE'S OUR GRACIOUS HOST, EDDIE THREE RIVERS.

GOOD MORNING AND WELCOME.

I'VE BEEN BUILDING AND PADDLING CANOES FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER. WE'LL BE TRAVELING MOSTLY ON FLAT WATER BUT THERE ARE SOME NICE RAPIDS ALONG THE WAY. I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND IT AN EXCITING JOURNEY.

THANKS, EDDIE.

I JUST WANTED TO ADD ONE THING BEFORE THE SAFETY RUN. SINCE YOU'VE COME FROM ALL PARTS OF TURTLE ISLAND, I WANT YOU TO ALL GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER.

WE MIGHT ALL BE ABORIGINAL, BUT WE'RE ALL DIFFERENT IN SOME WAYS AND SIMILAR IN OTHERS. YOU ARE ALL LITTLE KNOTS IN A NET. THE NET IS ONLY AS STRONG AS THE KNOT THAT BINDS IT. YOU'LL GET A CHANCE TO MAKE THIS NET STRONGER.

NOW, HERE'S MY SON, DEVIN, AND DAUGHTER, RACHEL. THEY'RE GOING TO GO OVER SOME SAFETY ISSUES.

THE KEY HERE IS TEAMWORK - RIGHT FROM GETTING INTO THE CANOE TO LANDING ASHORE. WHEN ENTERING THE CANOE, IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP YOUR BALANCE. IT'LL BE UP TO YOUR TEAMMATES TO KEEP THE CRAFT STEADY WHEN ENTERING.

THERE'S LOT'S MORE TO TELL YOU BUT WE'LL LEARN IT AS WE GO.

BEFORE YOU ALL BREAK INTO YOUR GROUPS, THE PARENTS OR GUARDIANS FROM EACH FAMILY WILL STAY WITH ME AND PREPARE THE FEAST AT THE FINAL CHECKPOINT.

OKAY, EVERYONE GRAB THEIR LIFE JACKETS AND SEE RACHEL AND DEVIN FOR YOUR CANOE ASSIGNMENT. TONIGHT, WE'LL SHARE WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT EACH OTHER.

HERE YA GO, SIS. I THINK THIS IS YOUR SIZE.

THANKS, SQUIRT...

DON'T MENTION IT.

STUPID LIFEJACKET!



YES, JESSE?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WE ARE OFFERING THIS SACRED MEDICINE AS A SIGN OF RESPECT AND SAFE TRAVELS TO THE CREATOR. WE PRACTICE SIMILAR CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS, EVEN THOUGH WE'RE FROM DIFFERENT TRIBES.

I THOUGHT TOBACCO WAS BAD FOR YOU...

IT IS IF YOU'RE NOT USING IT TRADITIONALLY. TOBACCO IS A SACRED GIFT FROM THE GOOD CREATOR.

OHOO, I DIDN'T KNOW THAT.



DON'T WORRY. WE'RE GOING TO HELP EVERYONE UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL USE. NOW BEFORE WE GET INTO THE CANOES, WE'RE GOING TO DO A PRAYER.

CREATOR, WE THANK YOU FOR BRINGING US TOGETHER ON THIS AMAZING DAY, FROM ALL PARTS OF THIS GREAT LAND. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE GIFTS YOU HAVE GIVEN US AND HOPE THIS JOURNEY IS SAFE AND THAT WE'RE ABLE TO GROW STRONGER TOGETHER. MEEGWICH.



ONE MORE THING:  
I WANT YOU GUYS TO COME UP WITH A UNIQUE NAME FOR YOUR CANOES. WHEN WE STOP FOR LUNCH, WE'LL EACH HAVE A NAME FOR OUR BOATS.







FOR THOSE WHO ARE A LITTLE OUT OF SHAPE, YOU'RE GONNA FEEL IT TOMORROW. BUT IT'LL BE A GOOD HURT. I'M ALSO GOING TO SHOW YOU A VERY IMPORTANT SURVIVAL TIP TONIGHT.



I KNOW WE HAVE MATCHES AND EASIER WAYS TO START A FIRE. BUT IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF ALONE IN THE WOODS, THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AND BASIC THINGS TO CREATE. IT WILL WARM YOU AND COOK YOUR FOOD. NOW GO OFF AND COLLECT SOME WOOD AND TRY IT YOURSELVES.



I GOT AN EASIER WAY TO START A FIRE:

MY LIGHTER.





SIS?



JEEZ! DON'T SNEAK UP ON ME LIKE THAT!



I... I HEARD THAT YOU SMOKED. CAN I TRY?



NO WAY! THEY'RE NOT FOR KIDS.

WELL, YOU'RE STILL A KID, TOO.



I'M WAY OLDER THAN YOU. AND IT'S NOT YOUR BUSINESS ANYWAY.



GET OUTTA HERE!



HI, LIZ.



BETTER HURRY. YOUR GROUP IS READY. THROW SOME SAND ON THAT AND MAKE SURE IT'S OUT.





HEY, GUYS. CHECK OUT THE SIZE OF THAT BEAR. WHERE I'M FROM, BEARS ARE STRONG MEDICINE.



COOL! FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN A BEAR OUTSIDE OF A ZOO.

HEY--LOOK! IT CAUGHT A SALMON.

COOL! HEY, SIS, CHECK IT OUT!

THE LAST THING I WANNA SEE IS SALMON GUTS ALL OVER THE PLACE.



THAT'S JUST NATURE. YOU HAVE TO APPRECIATE THE CYCLES OF LIFE.

I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL EVERYONE WHAT WE SAW!





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If you like the story so far  
and want to see the rest,  
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[sean@thehealthyaboriginal.net](mailto:sean@thehealthyaboriginal.net)  
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