



Michael Piniewski
Photographer,
Adventurer



Photo Credit: Michael Piniewski

Michael Piniewski, renowned adventurer and nature photographer, takes dazzling photographs of action sports and marvels of the natural world. You may have already seen Michael's work in the following magazines, corporate advertising and webzines: National Geographic, Sports Illustrated, Coca-Cola, Anheuser Busch, Mountain Bike Magazine, American Ski Company, Burton Snowboards, Vermont Life, Transworld Snowboarding, and Southern Vermont Adventures Magazine. More information can be found at frusthollowphoto.com.

I grew up in Hamburg, N.Y., and have lived in Windham County for 26 years. I traveled west after college living in the mountains of both Wyoming and then to Colorado. Between jobs I came back east to "visit" and couldn't quite afford to return to Colorado. I fell in love with the variety and easy access to a large number of adventures and activities in Vermont, and moved here in 1982 to take a job at Mount Snow.

After my wife, Louise, and children Kate and Devan, my greatest love is the natural world and wildlife. Few things thrill me more than sitting quietly concealed in the forests of Vermont watching the drama of nature unfold before me. I love capturing the beauty of the Green Mountains, from the spectacular grand scenics to the intricate, subtle details of nature.

I have a comfortable home abutting a piece of the Green Mountain National Forest. My children attended a small school, that despite its size, has offered them a wonderful wealth of opportunities to grow. Aside from my work as a photographer, I ski patrol in the winter (my commute is a chairlift ride), and spend summer weekends sailing on Nantucket Sound just a few hours away. Since moving to Vermont, I have become an avid rock and ice climber, mountain biker and kayaker. Many of my published wildlife photos have been taken in my own backyard. What else could you ask for?

Each April vacation, my wife and I try and do something special with our daughters, Kate and Devan. This year we elected to stay close to home and take advantage of the beauty of our own snow-covered Southern Vermont.

With its miles of trails and vast expanses of undeveloped land, we set off into the Green Mountain National Forest surrounding Grout Pond—without a specific destination and without a time schedule. A sense of adventure filled the air.

Though snow still blanketed the ground, the temperature hovered comfortably around 40 degrees. Without a breath of wind, and with a bright overcast sky, we couldn't have asked for nicer spring weather. As the girls willingly hauled our loaded sled through the open forest, I was able to fall back, take a few pictures and enjoy the peace and solitude of the national forest. In the distance, I could hear the tap, tap, tap of a downy woodpecker. Overhead, a small flock of noisy crows passed. For a short distance, a set of moose tracks paralleled the trail.

With the tent set up, and the down sleeping bags lofting inside, the girls volunteered to cook the one-pot meal of delicious "slop." We had the place to ourselves; the only sounds were the noisy call of a nearby blue jay and the chatter of red squirrels as we passed through their domain.

As the temperature began to drop to the freezing mark, we sat comfortably on our foam pads, filling our bellies with the warm, nourishing gruel. A final cup of hot chocolate as the sun went down, and we were ready to nestle into the mass of nylon and goose down. The small candle lantern filled the tent with warm, glowing light, while a barred owl hooted from somewhere above our cozy nest.

As darkness settled around us, and the girls drifted off to sleep, I lay in the tent, listening to their gentle breathing and the hooting owls in



All photos on this page by Michael Piniewski



Snow-covered forest, East Dover

the distance. Outside, the overcast skies had cleared, and the star-filled sky and the rising moon lit the snow-covered landscape. As I fell asleep, a lone coyote gave one single howl, before going silent.

In the morning, after a warm bowl of oatmeal, the girls dragged their sleeping pads out onto the pond to soak up the morning sun. I sat down to savor my second cup of coffee and just watched the girls as they read their books in the bright sunshine. I was proud to see them so comfort-

able and "at home" in the outdoors. I was looking forward to another day without schedules, phone calls and commitments.

As I packed up the stove, and stuffed the sleeping bags, I took great comfort in knowing that the only decision I would have to make that day was which trail-network to explore, and whether or not to have another bowl of "slop."

