

# Spring Creek Lodge Academy

**Spring Creek Lodge Academy** was a boarding school located in Thompson Falls, MT.<sup>[1]</sup> The school, formerly known as Spring Creek Community, was first opened in the 1970s by Nancy and Steve Cawdrey.<sup>[2]</sup> In 1996, the school and the property were purchased by Cameron Pullan and Dan Peart and given the name Spring Creek Lodge Academy.<sup>[3][4]</sup> For several years the school was associated with the Utah-based World Wide Association of Specialty Programs and Schools.<sup>[5][6]</sup> The school was opened as a place to address behavioral issues of young people from across the county as well help motivate students for success.<sup>[7]</sup>

Its curriculum included a points and level system that rewarded compliance and punished noncompliance.<sup>[8]</sup> Extremely non-compliant individuals were often kept in solitary confinement<sup>[9]</sup> or transferred to a Mexican program known as High Impact, which was later closed by the Mexican Government due to allegations of child abuse.<sup>[10]</sup> At its peak enrollment, Spring Creek Lodge Academy housed over 500 students and employed about 200 individuals in various positions, making it the largest employer in Sanders County at that time.<sup>[11]</sup>

The school closed in 2009 after an extreme drop in enrollment, several lawsuits, licensing issues, and oversight controversy.<sup>[12]</sup> In 2010 the Montana-based Academy for National Native Leadership purchased the former Spring Creek facility and began to offer college classes at the school.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Notable alumni

Author Cindy Art includes personal experience from the school in her memoir *Trapped in Paradise: A Memoir*, CreateSpace, 2012. ISBN 978-1475192278

Authors Claire and Mia Fontaine include personal experiences from the school in their memoir *Come Back: A Mother and Daughter's Journey Through Hell and Back*.<sup>[14]</sup>

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8. Rau, Anna (2006). "Who is Watching the Kids?" (<http://www.montanapbs.org/WhosWatchingTheKids/>). *Montana PBS*. Retrieved 29 November 2011.
9. by Alexander Ziperovich:] "I am one of the "non-compliant individuals" that was kept in solitary confinement under extreme duress far outside international standards of even the treatment of prisoners of war whilst being constantly threatened with Mexico. Their methods included starvation (this is WWASPS magna cum laude of Behavioral Modification); I was feed one banana in the morning with one small carton of milk, eight hours later lunch consisted of a sandwich of one slice of kraft cheese, two pieces of white bread and possibly water, dinner was raw boiled cold pinto beans and tortilla; sleep deprivation was endless and in combination with the stress of the temperature and lack of any central or decentralized heating system to maintain body temperature, I ended up COLD, STARVING, under a massive almost iridescent(sp?) halogen 'white' light which was placed on the ceiling of every "hobbit", so called for its extreme small quarters." - Alexander M. Ziperovich
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