



“A New Trail”: Maine Yukon Day 2007

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On February 17-19, 2007, Northern New England Royal Rangers held the 13th Annual Maine Yukon Day at Fairhaven Camps in Brooks, Maine. A total of 214 boys and men—the 2nd highest in Maine Yukon Day history— from New Hampshire and Maine gathered for the yearly Winter Pow Wow. The theme of this year’s Yukon Day was “A New Trail”, and the Scripture verse was from Ezekiel 36:26: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”

Maine Yukon Day is a special event for NNED, one that takes plenty of planning, preparation, and prayer in order to make a success. As Camp Commander Ken Bustard said, the biggest challenge was “just getting the trailer of food, supplies, and equipment.” However, when the outposts arrived at the camp on Friday, everything was all set up and ready to run!

On Friday night, after everyone arrived, an evening assembly was held to prepare everyone’s hearts for the weekend. Commander Ken, District Commander Jerry Love, and the rest of the Camp Staff were introduced to the audience. Commander Jerry said that while he wanted everyone to enjoy the weekend and have fun, he reminded all that attended that the main purpose of MYD was to honor God. On Saturday morning, following breakfast, patrols got their first chance to perform songs, skits, and yells, which had to meet the approval of Commander Ken, or else he would be happy to “gong” them. These songs, skits, and yells added up to valuable points for each Outpost and patrol in their quest to become the Top Outpost! Following the morning assembly, it was time for the outdoor challenges to begin! It was a blessing to not only have snow on the ground this year, but to have, as Commander Ken put it, “the best conditions we’ve had in several years.” There were twelve different stations that each patrol had to pass in order to garnish points: Dog Sled Review, Ice Rescue, Emergency



First Aid, .22 Rifle, Primitive Snares, Fire and Hot Chocolate, (which was getting a fire started to boil water needed for hot chocolate), Matchless Fire, Firecraft, Orienteering, Lashing, (which involved using knot-tying skills to make a ladder), Over The Ridge, (which involves the patrol members pulling the sled to the top of a challenging hill), and, of course, “The Wall”, which involves patrol members climbing to the top of a 12 foot wooden wall, and pulling up their sled over the wall as well! Also, patrols had the chance to compete against each other by age group in the Sled Race, which was done on Lake Passagassawamkeag. Jake Blake of Outpost 40, whose “Flint n’ Steelers” won Fastest Dog Sled for Expedition Rangers, said “My favorite part of Maine Yukon Day was winning the sled race.”

Also, outposts and patrols earned points for various other activities, such as monitoring the gymnasium, performing kitchen duty, and passing uniform inspection, which was done with detailed attention by Security/Color Guard Coordinator Jason Wright.

It wasn’t all about earning points, however. What would a Maine Yukon Day be without the tug-of-war between New Hampshire and Maine, and Maine winning in perhaps the most one-sided match

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Maine Yukon Day 2007

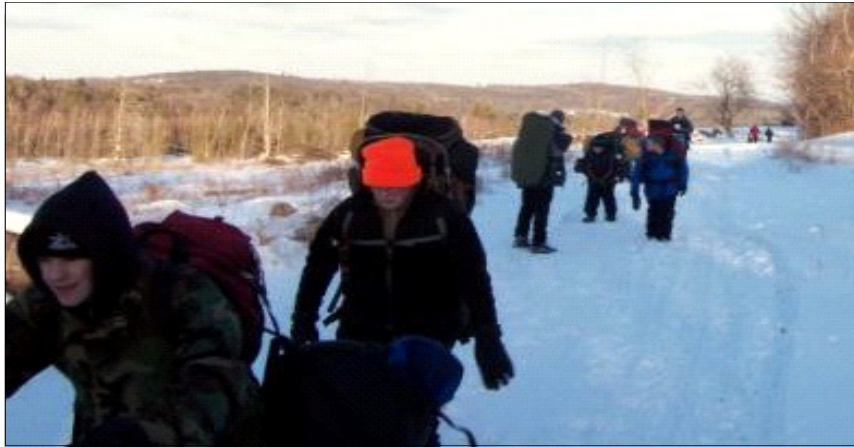
ever at MYD? As Commander Ken put it during the final assembly, "I really feel bad about the way we drug you New Hampshire Rangers around that lake."

Many brave boys (and some brave men) participated in one of three different outdoor treks. Commander Ken Beaufort of Outpost 21 in Madison, ME, led the Yukon Jack Snowmobile Trek, which was a 24-hour snowmobile adventure with plenty of challenges; however, six boys completed this trek. Led by Commander Charlie Poissoner, also of Outpost 21, 15 boys and four Commanders participated in the Yukon Jack 10-Mile Trek, which, as the name implies, involves traveling ten miles on an overnight winter hiking trip! However, the most popular outdoor trek is the Polar Bear Club, which was led by Commanders Tim "Red Oak" Hatch, Kendall Sperrey, and Don Allard. 40 Polar bear patches were earned for completing this outdoor over-nighter, which involves building snow shelters or pitching a tent and sleeping overnight in them. It has exposed many men and boys to winter camping for the first time each year it takes place, and many want to do it again the next year! Commander Ken noted, "It was the most number of boys on the 10-Mile Trek and Polar Bear Club." Commander Beaufort and Jonathan Haynes scouted the snowmobile route prior to MYD, and deserve credit for going the extra mile in preparing for the Snowmobile Trek!

On Saturday night, regardless of whether you slept indoors or outdoors, everyone came together for the evening service. Following the next round of songs, skits, and yells, and the recognition of awards for boys and leaders, our Guest Speaker, Commander Ken Obert from Southern New England, came and gave the evening devotion, building on the chosen MYD Scripture verse from Ezekiel. Many boys responded to the Holy Spirit during the altar call, and some boys accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior for the first time! Following the service, boys on the snowmobile trek got a night ride back to their camp site.

On Sunday morning, the top patrols were announced, and boys could pick prizes in the order of the most patrol points. Outpost 11 from Auburn, NH was named the Top Outpost at Maine Yukon Day 2007! For patrols, Outpost 21's Courageous Crocodiles won top Discovery Ranger Patrol, Outpost 3's Commandos won Top Adventure Ranger Patrol, and Outpost 40's Flint n' Steelers won Top Expedition Ranger Patrol!

Maine Yukon Day was an event for men and boys, but ladies definitely played a big role in making it work! Bethany Philbrick, daughter of Commander Rick Philbrick, led the Ranger Kids activities. She was assisted by Commander Obert's wife Pam, who brought J.B.



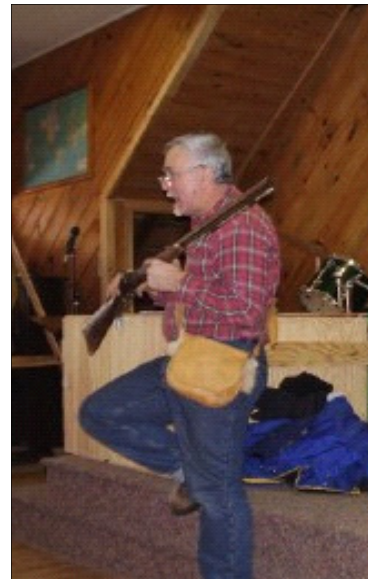
Beaver along with her as well! Also, as they have for several years now, Sue Haynes, Grace Beaufort, Linda Blomerth and Rhonda Clark worked wonderfully together and oversaw the kitchen duties, keeping the men and boys well-fed and happy! Thank you ladies!

After all the awards and recognitions, Commander Jerry led the crowd in a moment of silence to remember Nathan Doege and Commander John Hutchinson, who had both passed away recently and are now home with Jesus. Then, the District Commander gave the dismissal, and Maine Yukon Day 2007 drew to a close.

Maine Yukon Day was a great success. As Commander Ken put it, "This was perhaps our premiere MYD event. It marked our tenth year at Brooks. The snow conditions and weather couldn't have been better. Several improvements in the scoring system, Patrol Guides taking more of a leadership role, the development of a Patrol Advisor, Advancement Coordinator and Activity Coordinator, all contributed to taking MYD to a new level. Perhaps the most significant improvement was the amount of support from Leaders and Dads volunteering for KP, Gym Monitoring, night watch, you name it. In fact, this was our first year having someone on watch throughout the night, and we had no problem getting volunteers. Again, the only regret I have was pulling those NH brothers across the lake as they clung to the tug-of-war rope. I just thank the good Lord none of them got hurt." Commander Jerry commented on the tug-of-war and the Top Outpost Award, "Well, you Mainers can win all the tug-o-wars you want, but when it comes right down to it, we'll be happy to take the trophies across the Kittery Bridge to New Hampshire." Already, there are plans to make MYD 2008 even more exciting than this one! As you can see, the men and boys of NNED Royal Rangers are definitely on "A New Trail!"

Top: Boys and leaders heading out on the 10-mile overnight trek.

Below: Special Guest Speaker Ken Obert gives the Saturday morning devotion at MYD.



Border Wars: NH vs. Maine

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- Camp Commander Ken Bustard

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