

Spring 2012 Newsletter
Mahoosuc Guide Service and Mahoosuc Mountain Lodge

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Happy spring!

Puppies have arrived with the peepers and the soft hues of green in the Bear River valley. Life is good! We both LOVE this time of year with the feeling of freshness around us!



Spring has been busy at Mahoosuc...nothing new there! We did our last winter trip to Ouje-Bougoumou, Quebec with Cree guides, David and Anna Bosum, and a handful of privileged clients at the end of March/early April. We attended the winter festival at the cultural center and welcomed the snowshoe walkers who had been on a three-week walkabout. During our camping bush experience, we helped trap beaver, snare snowshoe hare, set a fish net under the ice for a variety of species—including northern Pike and whitefish—help tan moosehides, prep and stretch black bear hides, snare grouse and listen to stories by our exceptional guides Anna and

David. The visit to the new museum in Ouje was also a treat.

Next spring, we plan to offer a trip during the annual goose break, which will be a unique cultural experience of spending time with many families “in the bush” hunting for goose and “living together” away from town in a more traditional way. This will be in mid April.

We hosted another wedding at Mahoosuc Mountain Lodge for one of our guides, Ray Cooley’s daughter, Jennie, and her new husband Ron. It was a beautiful day and an event that will be remembered by all the family and friends. The décor of bright spring tulips was very colorful in the lodge.

Polly took a break from work on the farm and guiding and joined some women friends for a week of sea kayaking in the Bahamas. We got wind bound on an island for a few days and we were all forced to relax and rest from our busy lives. Life is simple there and the country and water



so beautiful. Polly especially liked dancing to the live music under the stars before and after the camping trip.

Kevin is heading to Alaska in June for some fly fishing in the interior and to visit his old friend, Denali, which he climbed and guided on for several months back in 1982. This will be a big trip for him after being away from Alaska for 30 years. We have many friends up there, so he will have many people to catch up with as well.

We just hosted our annual "Spring Fling Barn Dance" in the lodge. As usual, people had a great time eating, visiting and dancing. We were honored to have musicians Jessie and Greg Boardman here. Greg was the founder of the Maine Fiddle Camp in 1994. Polly used to dance at contra dances with him back in the late '70's!!!



Megan had seven puppies on May 3. Cormac is the proud father. Since they are both black and white, guess what, six of the seven puppies are the same color with one that is brown and white. We will keep some to replace the older dogs who are retiring and some will be sold to other mushers.

Susan Morse's tracking workshop at the lodge the end of April was a great success. We will be offering another in December. She is a wealth of knowledge, and there are many animal signs right out the door behind our house and the lodge. We spent all day Saturday on a hike looking for animal signs and talking about behavior and habitat. On Friday and Saturday evenings, we looked at amazing photos in her slide shows. On Sunday morning, we were treated to an "in the field" walk to another area, this time a wetland for viewing different animals' tracks.



Canews: Summer Trip Update

We have two spaces left on the fly fishing canoeing trip to the Miramichi River in New Brunswick June 25-30.

We are excited to be offering a new trip this year which will be cabin based from Loon Lodge, owned by one of our friends and guides, Ray Cooley, in northern Maine by Allagash Lake. There is much wildlife in this relatively undisturbed area so the days will be spent poking around the waterways looking for wildlife

and the evening meal will be back in the comforts of the lodge and some of Lesley Cooley's homecooked food. This trip is scheduled for August 6-10th.

We have some contract Allagash trips that are not on the schedule if you are interested in doing this trip and the dates on the calendar don't fit yours maybe some of the others will.

One set is July 30-August 4.

The Cree cultural trip August 21-29 with guides David and Anna. Experience northern travel by canoe, setting fish nets, smoking fish, tanning hides, sewing moccasins, etc.

The Green River is an outstanding river for beauty, remoteness and ease of travel. This trip is scheduled for October 10-20, but some clients are interested in going the week before. Contact us if you prefer earlier dates.

Dogsledding Trips

We will be offering our trips on Umbagog Lake this winter along with the cultural trips that are a bit longer and more expensive and take some long-term planning. Here are the dates:

Dogsledding with the Cree: December 12-19 and March 26-April 5

Dogsledding with the Inuit: April 12-20

In Recognition...

Polly's Great Aunt Olga Mrytle MacTavish died May 1 after 100 years of life. Polly was fortunate to see her for her 100th birthday party last December. She grew up on a farm in Halcomb, New Brunswick in the Miramichi Valley. Until the age of 99, she lived at home alone and heated with wood until the age of 98. Her advice to living a long healthy life was hard work, community, and humor. We try to live in her footsteps here at Mahoosuc.

We hope to see some of you this year on a trip or at an event at the lodge!

Until next time,

Polly, Kevin, and all the doggies:

Sinead, Mickey, Roanan, Cathal, Nola, Jeremiah, Josey, Jasmine, Aidan, Aiofe, Donal, Billy Bob, Jarvis, Hermes, Keagan, Brianna, Orla, Mabou, Awnya, Patrick, Kieran, Maura, Deidre, Millie, Bradey, Murphy, Dougette, Dougal, Connor, Jazel, Travis, Vixen, Mrytle, Keefy, Sonya, Nanook, Kerry, Roisin, Cormac, Maeve, Teslin, and seven little puppies!



Summer and fall events at Mahoosuc

- June 8 Day paddle through Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge
- June 8 Maine Canoe Symposium—"Paddling as a Lifestyle" slide show by Polly and Kevin (www.maine canoe symposium.org)
- Sept 21-23 Common Ground Fair—folk arts, dogsled construction (www.mofga.org)
- October 13-15 Wilderness First Aid Course by WMA
- November 17 Concert by Tricky Britches (www.trickybritches.com)
- December 7-9 Tracking Workshop with Susan Morse of Keeping Track (www.keepingtrack.org)

From the Mailbox



Dear Kevin and Polly,

In doing the (dogsledding) trip I was mainly interested in seeing you two in your element and seeing more of that country I had seen the edges of, off and on, many years ago. I was interested to get some experience of dog sledding, being a winter person and having read a lot about northern life, but I am a little surprised how it got under my skin a bit. I really enjoyed being on the sled with Kevin, and I learned a lot that I hope my body and my old brain remember. The dogs are now like some students in my mind, remembering faces and names and trying to keep them together.

*Best wishes,
Michael Boylen
Marlboro, Vermont*

Dear Polly and Kevin,

Words of gratitude are inadequate to describe our appreciation for the wonderful evening and great dinner last week. It's my impression each time we visit that hospitality is your true calling.

Also got to thinking that when the band comes with their music in the fall they'll hear your dogs greet them in chorus and may want to compose a canine sonata on the spot. Even, I, a non musician hear music when they send out their enthusiastic barks and howls.

*Thanks so much,
Ed Beers
Madison, Wisconsin*

Dear Polly,

Just a quick note to thank you and to tell you how much we all enjoyed our time with you, Alana and Janell as well as your teams. The ride down tonight was uneventful and we all got home safely.

Everyone agreed on the ride home that it was a really special weekend. Your ears must have been ringing, too, because a dominant topic of the ride was how you lead with such peace, power and grace in a way that quietly commands obedience through reverence while empowering others to achieve to their potential (dogs and people). It is quite an effective style—one that is not easily imitated because it takes a special person to pull it off!

*Jill Ellison
Boston, Massachusetts*

Dear Kevin and Polly,

I am writing because I don't think I've ever fully expressed my gratitude for the experience you gave me. Thank you for giving me the trust to work with your beloved dogs. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to go north.

That is an experience I greatly treasure and that trip was a time when many dreams came true. And in retrospect I realize that the most important thing I learned was to not be so narrow minded and set in thinking that there is only one way to live. I think I can now say that I truly understand and agree with the saying "don't judge someone until you've walked a mile in their shoes". I cannot express my gratitude enough for learning this lesson from you. It was much needed in my life. And remembering this lesson helps me a lot now in my life.

*With great respect and best wishes,
Tom Rosenberg
Apprentice at Mahoosuc Guide Service
Portland, Maine*