

The winter of 2013 has been a busy one here at Mahoosuc. It started off with a flurry of day trips before Christmas , Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Clients flew all the way from Arizona to celebrate with family on the back of a dogsled being pulled across beautiful Umbagog Lake!

We had the pleasure of our first overnight trip immediately after Christmas with two well disciplined and experienced campers from boy scout troop #603 from Delaware. There were five eagle scouts among them as well as three Mahoosuc staff who hold the proud accomplishment of being Eagles as well. It was great to hear 25 men and boys singing scout vespers together at the end of the trip.

In November we had a very nice article come out about us in the Washington Post written by Lindsay Westley who had been on a trip with us last winter. The article was picked up by Associated Press and went across the country. We have had many people flying in from Washington DC and have found the flight a short 1 ½ hour from Portland very doable for a weekend trip.

Thank you Stephen Jermanok for the mention in the Boston Globe article January 11th titled “Six New England winter adventures that skirt the crowds”.

Our pups from last summer are slowly learning “the ropes” of being sled dogs. Angus is growing by the day and will most likely be one of Kevin’s biggest dogs as he is already 80 lbs. at 8 months. Polly’s Damara is built very strong and a steady personality in the team.

We are blessed to have good apprentices this winter who are helping to spread the work load. We want to thank Eliot, Kate, Anna, Stephen and Allie for all you do here and it’s nice to see their skills improve and become more comfortable on the back of a dogsled.

Bradey is recuperating slowly but surely from his knee surgery. He is back in the dog yard slowly getting in shape for some pulling later in the winter.

WE DO HAVE ROOM LEFT ON A COUPLE OVERNIGHT TRIPS IN MARCH AND DAY TRIPS IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH.

For any of you interested in learning more about a Native culture and immersing yourself in the experience and in the bush or “on the land” don’t forget our special trips to northern Quebec with Cree guides David and Anna Bosum March 26 – April 5th or Inuit guide Allen Gordon April 12-20th. These are both very unique trips!

Polly’s Mom just turned “80” and we hosted a very fun family weekend for the big event in the lodge. What a nice space for community and celebration!

We are looking ahead to some fun canoe trips this summer (can see our summer calendar on our new website). Kevin will be doing a Maine River Guide Training on the East Branch of the Penobscot in May. He is offering a new fly fishing trip on the Aroostock

River in June. For the fourth year in a row he will be going to the renowned Miramichi River in New Brunswick for Atlantic salmon fly fishing trip.

Polly enjoys our cabin based canoe trip at Loon Lodge in the Allagash Lake area where we spend our days paddling around looking for wildlife and evenings in the comfort of our pond side cabins.

Another favorite is the women's trip in the Grand Lake Stream area learning about wild edibles and their medicinal uses. We finish off the trip with a stay at Weatherby's Lodge and the Grand Lake Stream folk festival.

The Allagash and West Branch of the Penobscot remain a couple of our more popular river trips.

This spring/summer we are welcoming a couple individuals who would like to live here, help with care of the dogs, go on some canoe trips and learn some woodworking skills in the workshop. Please contact us if you are interested.

As I write this newsletter it is a picture perfect day here in the Mahoosucs with a beautiful blue sky day, nice snow cover in the woods and my dogs and dogsled are calling me for a run this afternoon!

Hope to be able to share this passion with some of you in the future! Polly & Kevin & all the doggies

From the mailbox:

Dear Polly,

I don't have enough words to thank you. You have given such a good attention and care through out this entire weekend. I am so thankful that both days you tied my laces on my boots. That made the whole day comfortable. When we were all relaxing in the cook tent you went and started the fire for our tent. And first thing in the morning I see you again starting the fire so we can get ready comfortably!! You have worked very hard almost every minute of the day. You are amazingly organized, composed, efficient, diligent, soft spoken, kind, effective, punctual and very very disciplined person. Dogsledding experience is unique. I was comfortable all the time because of your and Carolyn's kind considerations. Your staff is very respectful and attentive to every one.

Surekha – New York – January 2013

Dear Kevin,

David and I were/are absolutely pleased with our back country mushing/camping experience. Although we thought we had experienced a dogsledding event years ago in Canada we certainly now know that it was a very poor example.

Your patience with our inexperience and our efforts to assist was magnificent. And we thank you for that because you helped us to feel a part of a larger team – people, dog, nature.

We also marvel at the labor intensity of the weekend from your point of view. To hear in my mind the voices of the dogs in the blackness of the icy night will be a cherished memory.

Hugs and “big leans” to Nanook (the polar bear) and Ossian, the fearless and wonderful leader of the teams that pulled David and me. And great admiration and special rump scratches to all the other magnificent members of the four legged teams.

Pam – Maine

Dear Polly,

It has been about 10 days since our life changing dog sled trip with you. I definitely needed that trip in many more ways than I even thought. I feel much more hopeful about the future as I grow older. I loved your relationship with all of your dogs and of course the great outdoors. I sometimes feel I was born in the wrong era.

I teach classical piano, you don't need electricity for my piano. The dogsledding was right up my alley. And of course I liked Millie. If things don't work out here maybe we can move to Maine. That's is what I am thinking and it's because of your dogs.

Thank-you.

Holly – Washington DC – January 2013

Dear Kevin,

As I unpacked my gear from our trip over the weekend I found a bungee cord that belongs to you and have enclosed it. That's really just an excuse to write and thank you again for a very special and memorable guided trip. I have thought about it nonstop since I left. What the trip allowed me to do was to feed a dream of someday having some dogs and working with them. That alone was special but I really wanted to express my appreciation for the way that you guide – of learning about Inuit and Cree and northern people's lifestyles, of canvas wall tents, of goodies cooked by a local lady and her daughter. You go beyond the “how to” and into the why and in a quiet way support that with your actions.

Nini - Maine

Quotes from apprentices Anna & Kate:

Working at Mahoosuc Guide Service the past two months has been incredibly rewarding, as it has allowed me to share my passion for the outdoors with people and dogs alike. I am in love with all aspects of the lifestyle here, whether it is the long, satisfying days of work, the view of Old Speck at sunset, or the strong sense of responsibility that comes with caring for and running dog teams. I feel very lucky that I can call Mahoosuc my home.

Kate –Apprentice – winter 2013

Every morning as I go out to the dog yard I am treated to a spectacular mountain sunrise. However, as spectacular as it is I soon forget all about it; the dogs demand my full attention. They twine about my legs as I attempt to clean up and water them and look at me with mournful eyes until I go to pet them at which point they act as if they were the

happiest creatures on Earth. How many people are lucky enough to get that reaction from someone every day?

Anna – Apprentice – winter 2013