

Rangeley Region Guides' & Sportsmen's Association

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December 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Dave Kretzing

I would like to extend my thanks to the board of directors, our many volunteers, and the membership for another successful year for RRG&SA. Although many people step up to volunteer for our functions and fund-raising efforts there is always room for more warm bodies. Some of the tasks require a strong back and weak mind but there are many more openings that just require a volunteer's time.

It is with great sadness that I announce the passing of Harold Fay. Harold was a member of the board of directors for many years until health problems forced him to step down. If any of you use the rifle and pistol range you have Harold to thank for all his hard work with Seven Islands to acquire the Fanjoy Pit and his work on the range improvement project through MDIFW to have the range we have today.

The Junior Guides program has been a staple for many years and shows no sign of slowing down. There are a few changes coming though. As I write this both Elaine Holcombe and Joyce Fay have announced that they intend to reduce their leadership roles in the program and allow for fresh faces to move the program forward. Nobody has been named to fill these large shoes but there are several people being considered. Elaine and Joyce have been involved with Jr. Guides for far longer than I have been a member of the Guides. The RRG&SA is indebted to both fine ladies for their many years running the program. You've left very large shoes to be filled.

This was the second year for our Kid's Fishing Derby. Our first year I was going to be happy if we had 50 kids show up – we had 88. Last year that number jumped to 129 kids. We passed out medals to every participant and trophies awarded for the three largest fish in each age group plus gift certificates, prizes, and a lifetime fishing license to one lucky winner.

An important project that the Guides, partnered with Rangeley Lake Heritage Trust and MDIFW, involved the

tagging of salmon and brook trout in Mooselookmeguntic Lake. Radio tags were inserted in the fish so they may be monitored as they move around the lake or enter any of the tributaries. Regional fish biologist Liz Latti presented a preliminary report at the November pot luck dinner. Some very interesting fish and their movements have been recorded. Never underestimate Mother Nature.

In closing I want to remind each of you: If you have children or grandchildren take every opportunity to get them outside and enjoy the GREAT OUTDOORS. Also, don't forget the neighbor kid or any kid for that matter who would love to learn to fish, canoe, kayak, or hunt if only given the chance. There are no words to describe the look on a young face when they accomplish something for the first time. Let's not lose the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts to video games or worse yet never having been given the opportunity to acquire the love and respect of what we as outdoors people hold dear to our hearts.

Enjoy the outdoors!

Dave Kretzing

KIDS' FISHING DERBY

By Dave Kretzing

On Thursday July 6, 2023, the Rangeley Region Guides' & Sportsmen's Association held its second annual Kids Fishing Derby. On a very hot humid day, 129 children had the opportunity to cast a line in the RRG&SA Kid's Fishing Pond in hopes of catching a brook trout. Because of the warm weather conditions, the fish catching was slower than usual. The successful anglers and their families were very excited when landing their fish. For many of the children, this was their first fish caught. All of the participants received commemorative medals, a free lunch, and an opportunity to win multiple raffle prizes.

The trophy winners in the 4–6-year-old age group were:

1st place-Noah Coy 16 ½" trout

2nd place- Abigail Gould 14" trout

3rd place- Claire Hayden 10 ¾" trout

The trophy winners in the 7–10-year-old age group were:
 1st place- Moxie Van Hook 13 ¾" trout
 2nd place- Addie Desjardins 10 ½ trout
 3rd place tie- Broden LeClerc and Nyla Minnick
 10" trout



Unfortunately, no fish were caught in the 11-15 age group. However, the grand prize winner in the drawing for a Lifetime Maine Fishing License came from this age group. Mason Poulin from Gray, Maine was the very happy winner.

With the tremendous turnout for this event, RRG&SA is already brainstorming on how to make the event bigger and better next year.



This event would not be possible without the generous support of the Rangeley and Oquossoc business community. A huge thank you to our sponsors:

Platinum Sponsor:
 Oquossoc Marine

Gold Sponsors:
 Blue Flame Gas
 Boss Power Equipment

Silver Sponsors:
 Rangeley Builder's Supply
 Morton and Furbish Real Estate
 Oquossoc Grocery
 Castonguay Docks

Bronze Sponsors:
 Morton and Furbish Insurance
 Rangeley Region Power Systems
 Rangeley IGA
 Franklin Savings Bank
 S&K Quality Fuels
 Height Chevrolet
 River's Edge Sport Shop



STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

By Joyce Fay

Mother Nature gave us a perfect day for the Annual Strawberry Festival. We had 40 local artists and crafters, many who return each year. The strawberry shortcake team was very busy and had help from Miss Maine's Teen for 2023 Leah Herrick. As always, our grill masters did a great job providing delicious burgers and Guides fries. This event could not be successful without the support of Mike Koob, the Oquossoc Fire Station and our incredible club members who volunteer their time.



The festival is always the 2nd Thursday in July, so mark your calendar for July 11, 2024. For info call (207) 864-2651.

JUNIOR GUIDE PROGRAM

By Elaine Holcombe

The Rangeley Region Guides' & Sportsmen's Association's Junior Guide program for 9-12 years old celebrated its 27th year offering a fun and challenging indoor/outdoor nature program for youngsters in the area.

The Rangeley Guides & Sportsmen's 2023 Junior Guide Program concluded on July 25th with a morning visit to the Forestry Museum in Rangeley. Our presenter was Ron Haines who highlighted Maine's rich cultural heritage of the forestry industry and its role in conservation. The advanced group were driven to Haley Pond where wildlife photographer, Nick Leadley, expertly showed how to best photograph wildlife in its natural habitat. Both groups spent the afternoon at the Rangeley Park swimming and picnicking. The group returned to the RRG&SA Clubhouse to receive certificates of completion and engage in the making of ice cream sundaes.

Despite the rain events that either cancelled or rescheduled certain activities, both groups managed to have wonderful, new experiences that will be happily remembered for times to come.



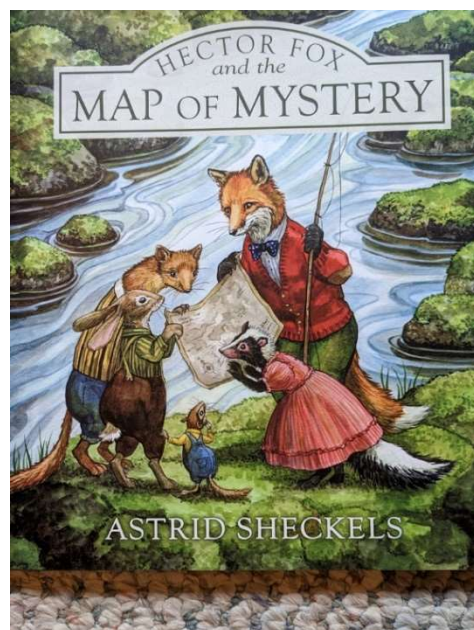
We're so grateful and appreciative for all our volunteers and expert presenters who help make our Junior Guides program such a unique and successful experience.

Pre-registration is mandatory and will take place in the spring of 2024. We expect to repeat our new schedule of two days per week for three weeks. Please contact Joyce Fay at 864-2651. For more information go to www.rangeleyoutdoors.org or check out our Facebook page, @rangeleyjuniorguides, for more information.

STORYBOOK WALK

By Elaine Holcombe

Once again, we presented a storybook walk using the Tim Baker Nature Trail behind our clubhouse in Oquossoc. This year, the story was *Hector Fox and the Map of Mystery*.



Each year, the storybook walk is available from June to October. Come out and enjoy next year's at your convenience.

FISH FRIENDS

By Elaine Holcombe

The Rangeley Guides and Sportsmen's Association held their annual membership potluck on July 20th. Highlighting the evening was a presentation by RLRS sixth grade science teacher Sarita Crandall, assisted by student Kala Brewer, of this past spring's "Fish Friends" project. A program of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the project entailed the raising of eyed salmon eggs to the fry stage and then releasing them in the Sandy River.

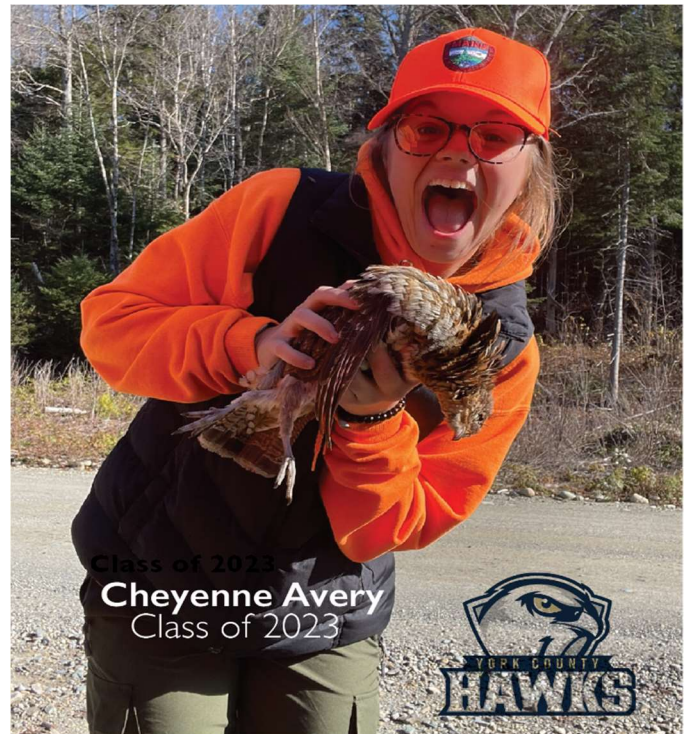
As sponsor of this project, RRG&SA provided the chilled aquarium and other specialized equipment from profits of our first landlocked salmon derby. Although the same species as our local landlocked salmon, Atlantic salmon have a very different lifecycle, occurring partly in fresh water and partly in salt water. They differ from Pacific Salmon which die after spawning in that they return to the ocean after spawning and return to streams to spawn again. This unique lifecycle provides many multidisciplinary educational opportunities for students to learn basic biological concepts.

This year Ms. Crandall's class released 183 fry into the Sandy River in Madrid. Through raising these salmon to fry stage, the students gained hands on experience of the biological conditions that must exist for the eggs to mature as well as having fun observing egg development, hatching, and other behaviors.

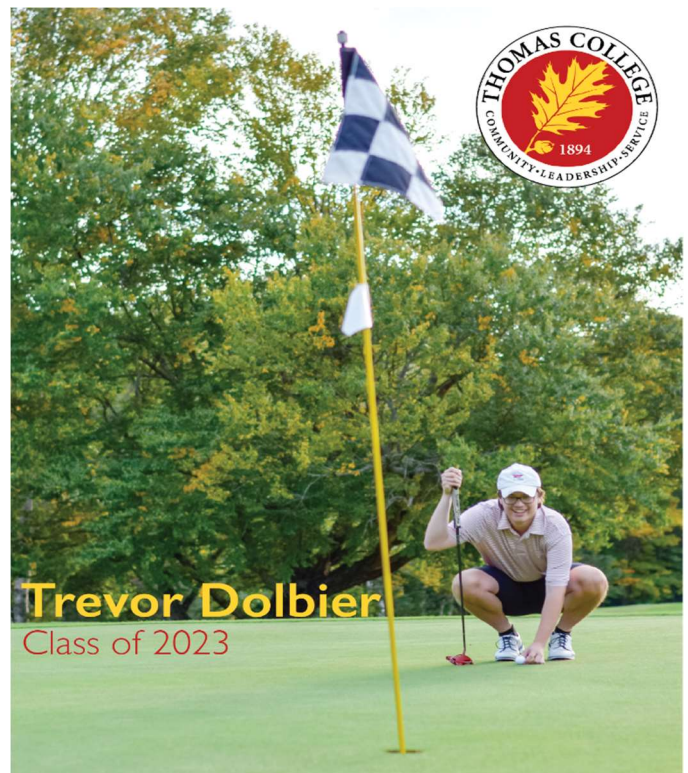
JUNIOR GUIDES' SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Congratulations to Rangeley Lakes Regional School students, Cheyenne Avery and Trevor Dolbier, who were the 2023 recipients of the RRG&SA Junior Guides scholarships.

Cheyenne Avery was awarded \$1,500 and Trevor Dolbier was awarded \$1,000. We wish them both well as they continue their education at the collegiate level.



As a reminder, RRG&SA continues to build our endowment in support of advanced education. Each year any money you donate above your selected membership level is directed to our scholarship program.



RANGELEY SKEET and TRAP ASSOCIATION

By Dave Kretzing, President RRSTA

This past year was a mixed bag at the shotgun range. The up side we welcomed quite a few new shooters to the range - both experienced and novice. The down side this year was the weather. In the ten years I have been running the range we have never lost so many shooting days due to rain.

Please remember that your RRG&SA membership allows you to shoot at RRSTA member rates. At RRSTA, we shoot trap, skeet, wobble trap, five-stand, and traditional sporting clays.

This past year we added six new automated throwers. We have a great deal of fun setting up novel and challenging presentations for your enjoyment and frustration. Like I tell people. If you're breaking all the birds and not complaining about the presentations at the stations, I'm not doing my job. Come out and see how much fun can be had on windy days!

You can check out our website www.rrsta.org for further information about our 2024 events and shooting schedule.

RIFLE AND PISTOL RANGE

Our Rifle and Pistol Range continues to be one of most-used resources. We estimate that we get more than 3000 person-visits to our range each year.

This year we refreshed the tent tops. There are new gun racks and benches. We have also begun to provide target frames for your use. Simply bring your own paper targets that you want to attach. As a reminder, do not bring lumber, glass, or anything that will create a dangerous situation. Never shoot at rocks or the target bases.

Members are permitted to use these facilities, free of charge. That's a terrific resource! Simply stop in to River's Edge and sign a release. Each participant must sign, each year. When you do, you will receive the gate code.

Please observe the range rules and encourage safety and respect. Your compliance and diligence will help us to operate this valuable resource for years to come.

YOUTH HUNT BREAKFAST

We held our annual Youth Hunt Breakfast again this year. Thanks to all who participated. With the changes to Maine's Youth Hunt Day schedule, we will make some

changes for next year, offering a fantastic breakfast to hunters of all ages! Kids will still eat free and get some neat gifts. Look for more details next year.

TREASURER'S REPORT

By Jack McNulty

I would like to report that RRG&SA remains in very sound financial condition. This year we introduced very modest price increases across most membership categories. We had not changed prices in recent memory; and we expect to hold steady at this level for several years. This increase allowed us to handle increased expenses in insurance, fuel, services, etc.

We had a better year of fund-raising after some unfortunate weather in prior years. We added the White-Nosed Pete Trout Fishing event early in the season. We are grateful to the sponsors for our Kids' Fishing Derby. Their generosity allows that event to be self-funding. We hope to repeat our performance in 2024.

We continue to do well with our insurance program for the rifle and pistol range. To maintain pricing stability and keep this popular venue available for all our membership at a nominal cost, we implemented a more rigorous risk management process two years ago. Risk transfer agreements are now signed by all users every calendar year. This effort has allowed us to determine usage more accurately, and provide assurance to our underwriter that we are a sound risk. All of this has helped us maintain insurance premiums at a reasonable level. We ask all users of the range to be diligent with these forms on a yearly basis.

I would like to express the Board's appreciation to Karen Seaman. For those that don't know, Karen handles our bookkeeping. We continue to make small, incremental improvements in how we budget, report, and administer both our operations and our balance sheet. As a small organization, we're fortunate to have her patience partnership and services.

In summary, the club remains in sound condition, with positive cash flow, and a balance sheet that will allow us sufficient buffer to handle any necessary repairs and invest in efforts that align with our mission. Thank you to all for your generous support. We couldn't do it without you.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

We had another strong year of membership. We remain slightly less than our record post-Covid year, but still very strong. We will finish 2023 with right around 1000 members.

Our membership drive is also the largest source of funds for our scholarship programs. This year, we received more than \$2600 while granting \$2500. Thanks to all those who help support our scholarship program.

For 2024, expect to receive an email invitation to renew in late January and a paper renewal form in late February. Our membership year runs from January 1 through December 31. As a reminder, you can always point prospective members to the membership tab on our website where they can either print out an application or complete the process online. You can also direct them to River's Edge Sport Shop where they are always happy to take a membership in-person.

If you have any questions regarding your membership, please contact us at membership@rangeleyoutdoors.org

2024 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

For 2024, we plan on holding regular monthly meetings from May through December. Meetings are normally held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at starting at 5:30 p.m. A potluck dinner is followed by a short business meeting and then a different guest speaker. Meetings are held at the Clubhouse on Old Skiway Rd in Oquossoc.

- May 15: Rifle & Pistol Range opens for season
- May 15: Shotgun Range opens for season
- May 16: Monthly Potluck Meetings resume
- June 1: Archery Range opens for season
- June 15: Tim Baker Nature Trail and storybook walk opens
- July 3: 3rd in the Park Event
- July 6: Kids' Fishing Derby
- July 8: Junior Guides begins, ages 9-12
- July 11: Strawberry Festival
- July 18: Annual Membership Meeting and Cookout at Clubhouse
- August 25: Shotgun Tournament
- October 13: Annual Turkey Shoot
- October TBD: Hunters' Breakfast
- October 31: All Ranges Close

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

At our Annual Meeting, we confirmed a slate of officers and directors for the upcoming year. Thanks to all of those who assist us in so many different ways.

If you are interested in helping out with a particular program or as a Board Member, please reach out. We'd love to have you with us.

The current leadership is shown below:

The RRG&SA Board of Directors

PRESIDENT: Dave Kretzing
VICE PRESIDENT – Scott Hatfield
SECRETARY – Elaine Holcombe
TREASURER – Jack McNulty
DIRECTORS:

Vincent Catrini,
Joyce Fay,
Patrick Hayden,
Nick Leadley,
Sam Spaulding,
Sonny Pierce

STAY CONNECTED ONLINE

Stay up to date on the club activities by frequently visiting our web site: www.rangeleyoutdoors.org or our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/RangeleyRRGSA.

