



Distant, extremely cold, a vast impenetrable forest, a place where people are exiled to. These are the pictures that come to mind when you think of Siberia. For years it had been a place of death in temperatures so cold life would seem impossible. I've heard many stories of people who survived these conditions in camps designed to be your last stop on this earth. Many of them were men and women known as Believers. One man's wife pointed out to me as we drove along in one of the cities in the north a mine where she said thousands of Believers worked during the days of exile.

## Eurasia: Siberia Royal Rangers Around the World

BY JOHN M. WILSON

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD MISSIONARY TO RUSSIA

In December of 2004 a number of workers interested in expanding the ministry of Eurasia Royal Rangers met in Saint Petersburg, Russia to organize a plan. We felt God's burden for the lost youth of our region and we knew the Royal Rangers ministry would make a lasting impact on them for eternity.

At that same time a worker in Siberia, Karla Ford, gathered all the information and all the Royal Rangers materials she could carry, and headed back out to the frozen Far East. There she began introducing churches to the Royal Rangers ministry. Plans were laid for training leaders and soon Outposts were established. Through Karla's dedicated leadership and that of Commander Alexander who committed 2 years of his life to training commanders in Siberia, the seed was planted.

The ministry of Royal Rangers in Siberia is now expanding and growing fast. In November 2009 I traveled into Siberia to join other leaders for the Fall Commanders conferences. While there I had the joy of instructing the World Class Outpost Seminar and introducing them to the new Royal Rangers materials.

Today there are 75 dedicated Royal Rangers leaders across Siberia. They are committed to evangelizing, equipping and empowering young people to become the godly leaders they are meant to be.

In January of 2010 we will complete development of Rangers training and weekly meeting materials in Russian for our Outposts to begin using. The fire has been lit which will melt the hearts of thousands of young people across Eurasia when they meet Jesus Christ for the first time and become Royal Rangers.



Local Siberian Royal Rangers Outpost



Commanders of an Outpost surrounding Lake Baikal, Siberia



◀ Commander Karla Ford

✓ Commander John Wilson awarding a World Class Outpost certificate





*The young man in the foreground of this photo is the senior guide for the Royal Rangers of the Kahawa West Kenya Assembly of God church. He went through his rite of passage under the guidance of his Royal Ranger leaders and has stayed with the church and is still serving God, as are 5 other boys in the photo.*



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## Royal Bridging Centre

One of the main goals of the Ranger ministry is keeping children for Christ. Keeping children, particularly boys, is a big need in Africa—first addressed by the nation of Malawi at the Africa Summit in 2007. Many churches begin to lose boys around their adolescent years because they do not have adequate programs for them.

In Kenya, young men are circumcised and go through a rite of passage after 8th grade, where they begin to be looked upon as adults by the community. During a two week time of separation from their parents and seclusion as they recover from the surgery, they often begin experimenting with drugs, alcohol, and inappropriate relationships with young women because the secular world of Africa tells them that these are grown-up things to do. Many boys leave the church and never come back as they seek to become “real men.”

The Royal Ranger ministry in Kenya has identified this problem and responded by creating a special home called the Royal Bridging Centre. At the Royal Bridging Centre, boys are circumcised by a Christian doctor and spend two weeks learning what the Bible says about becoming a godly man and having healthy relationships. They become “men” under the guidance of Christian counselors in a wholesome atmosphere. Some of them are from non-church backgrounds, so the project has even turned into an evangelistic outreach. In the two years the pilot church has been using this program they have retained 100% of the boys, and the boys come out of the program as strong followers of Christ. Other churches in Kenya are now expressing an interest in using the program to train and to retain their boys.

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