SNOW DAY THE LONG NIGHT

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# A CHAT WITH THE NATIONAL COMMANDER



### Hi Fellows:

This is the time of year when we usually look back at the events and achievements of the past year and at the same time look forward to greater things in the coming year.

God has certainly blessed the Royal Rangers program this past year. Annual reports indicate that over 17,000 boys were won for Christ. Also our ranks are still growing with over 115,000 boys now participating in the program.

There are great days ahead for the Royal Rangers program. The extent of our achievement depends on fellows like you. Therefore, may I encourage you to join me in pledging to do more for Christ and Royal Rangers in the future.

May I also take this occasion to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This is an age old cliché, but it comes from my heart!

Johnnie Dames

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3 DAYS AND NIGHTS OF FUN AND ADVENTURE—PAGENTS—SKILLS— RALLIES—CELEBRITIES

NTACT DIST. COMMANDER FOR INI

It was a cold, dark day in January, 1966. An overcast of gray threatened to unload more snow on the already whitened fields and woodlands. A great day to curl up by the warm fire at hearthside and tell stories of exciting adventures.

Some Royal Rangers however, would rather make adventure than talk about it. Early that morning they could be seen in various towns across New Jersey, hauling Yukon dogleds from garages and lashing them on the tops of cars and to the backs of pickup trucks.



During the fire-building contest, the contestants were required to build a fire from wood found at the site and boil a pot of water.



One of the most popular events was a ride on one of the snowmobiles.

by Oliver Dalaba



At the starting point the dogsleds from each of the outposts were thoroughly checked for their construction and loading requirements. As the drivers stood anxiously poised at the back of their sleds, and the huskies (six boys per sled) nervously shifted their feet and clenched the rope in their hands, the District Commander reviewed the trail requirements for the Yukon Derby:

"Follow the meager Yukon signs until they cross the brook in the ravine. At that area you must set up a model winter camp and cook a complete meal, consisting of meat, two (2) vegetables, and beverage. Wash your dishes, break camp, reload your dogsled and follow the trail signs to the finish line. On your mark, get set, go!!!!!"

The huskies strained at their ropes, and the cold snow squeaked under the heavily laden sleds. The sleds picked up speed with one following another until they realized the lead sled was off trail. With careful attention to trail signs, one outpost pulled into the lead. They were already setting up camp when the others arrived at the designated area.

Fire building was no simple task with frost penetrating all the wood, but success finally came and the meal was completed.

How nervous the boys felt as the inspectors checked to see that the food was thoroughly cooked, the dishes really cleaned, and the sample tents properly pitched for winter camping.

Down the homestretch they came, wet, tired, and excited. They anxiously waited the final check by the inspectors to determine the durability and workability of their sleds. What a feeling of accomplishment and history as these boys relived the excitement of the Northland trail.

A desire to just throw things on the sled and get going was tempered by the fact that the inspectors were also checking the knots and lashing techniques. "There goes a sled," someone yelled. "We'd better hurry." Just as one sled cut around another to pass, their sled veered too sharply and caught a small tree and the huskies fell in a heap in the snow. "Mush, you huskies," the driver yelled as he pulled and tugged to free the sled from the tree.



Thus concluded a typical day at the annual Royal Ranger Snow Day in New Jersey. The Yukon Derby is still a feature with compass coordinated trail replacing the Yukon signs and a list of scavenger items replacing the winter camp routine. Additional contests include single-runner snow scooter races, firebuilding contest, tug-of-war by sections, tower building, and an indoor jousting match. A hot meal is served in the camp dining hall and snowmobile rides are shared by all.

Snow Day continues to be the largest single event in the New Jersey Rangers program.



Each snow scooter entering the snow scooter race was homemade by the outposts.



A cross-country hike in the snow, using compass readings for directions.



Contestants line up for the Yukon Derby.... The most rugged and challenging of all the contests. DEC., JAN. FEB., 1973-74

### THE EXCITING WORLD OF NATURE

### **ARCTIC and ANTARCTIC**

by John Eller

The exciting world of nature takes us now to the coldest habitats on this planet, the *Arctic*, and the *Antarctic*. It seems almost impossible that plants and animals can survive in such barren, sub-zero climates, but it is nevertheless true. These giant deep-freezes, while severe and forbidding, are actually communities of nature!

We shall consider these regions separately, but first, let us note some comparisons and contrasts. Arctic means "bear," referring to the constellation Ursa Major which includes the North Star. Antarctic (anti-arctic) means "opposite the bear." The Arctic is an ocean surrounded by continents, while the Antarctic is a continent surrounded by oceans. Both the Arctic and the Antarctic Circles are imaginary lines which designate the southern or northern limits of the zones respectively in which there is at least one annual period of 24 hours during which the sun does not set and one in which it does not rise.

Knowledge of the Arctic preceded the Antarctic by several centuries owing to their differences in geographic situation. Most of what is known of Antarctica has been acquired since the mid-1950's.

Temperature-wise, the subarctic and subantarctic regions register generally colder weather than the North or South Poles. Lowest extreme temperatures in the Arctic will measure -50 degrees to -65 degrees F, while the Antarctic, considerably colder, will experience extremes from -40 degrees to -94 degrees F. The high plateau in East Antarctic has registered temperatures below -125 degrees F. Arctic

Throughout the Arctic, excluding a few maritime areas. the winter cold is so intense that the ground repermanently frozen except for a shallow

If zone, called the *active layer*, that thaws during the summer. The permanently frozen ground, known as *permafrost*, covers nearly one-quarter of the earth's surface. Continuous permafrost totally inhibits underground drainage. Consequently, shallow lakes are numerous over large areas of the Arctic, and everywhere in early summer there is a wet period before the saturated upper layers of the ground dry out.

During the summer waterlogged active layers on slopes may flow downhill over the frozen ground, a phenomenon known as *solifluction*. The effect is to grade slopes so that long, smooth profiles are common. Slopes are normally covered with vegetation unless rapid soil movement occurs, which impedes plant survival.

Although the Arctic is commonly thought to be largely ice-covered, less than two-fifths of the land surface supports permanent ice. The scant snowfall, for example, actually registers less at the North Pole than in the mountains in California.

The altitude at which ice accumulates through warming temperatures and melting snow is known as the *glaciation limit*. This varies even within short distances. Baffin Island, for example, has a limit of 2,000 feet above sea level, while Penny Ice Cap is over 4,500 feet. In Greenland, the limit rises to nearly 6,000 feet. However, most ice of the glacier variety began retreating about 1890, with the recession generally rapid since the 1930's.

The Arctic Ocean consists of the North Polar Sea and adjoining waters. Water masses in the system are: Arctic water, Atlantic water, Pacific water, and the deep water from several basins. These divide into three layers with the warmer Atlantic water lying between the Arctic surface and Arctic bottom waters.

In both physical and biological terms, these northern marine environments can conveniently and realistically be divided into Arctic, subarctic, and boreal, depending on the presence or absence of Arctic water from the upper layer of the North Polar Sea. Frost-free and growing periods are short throughout the Arctic. For the most part, there is no truly frost-free period, with frost and some snow being recorded each month.

Two main vegetation zones are found in the polar lands. In the south is the subarctic, formed by the northern subzones of the circumpolar boreal forest. To the north is the Arctic proper, where the vegetation is generally referred to as *tundra*, from the Finnish word for an open rolling plain. The two zones are clearly separated by the tree line.

Arctic plants must contend with a harsh environment including low temperatures, continuous daylight in summer, poor soil and permanently frozen ground, and in many areas, dry winds and blowing snow. Surviving species are few and dwarfed.

Arctic plants have adapted to a rapid seasonal life cycle, sometimes as short as six weeks, which accounts for a sudden blooming of flowers. The species vary but typical are those in the western American Arctic, which include blue-spiked lupine, wild crocus, mountain avens, arctic poppy, and saxifrage.

At first sight many parts of the Arctic are rocky wastes without soil or vegetation. Closer inspection shows that some plant life is always present and even on permanent ice there are often algae. The bare rock surfaces support thin brown, black, or gray crustaceous lichens generally known as "rock tripe." Some of the large variety are edible.

Higher plants grow in rock crevices and succeed in forming *tussocks* (compact tufts of grass) on patches of soil. Near the southern edge of the Arctic dwarf shrubs are found in protected sites on these rock deserts.





Tundra areas have a continuous cover of vegetation and many different *tundra associations* (plant communities) may be recognized. Drier areas support heath tundra, made up of lichens, mosses, and isolated flowering plants. When there is more moisture, sedges and grasses become more important and form tussock or hillock tundra, while willow and dwarf birch may be found between individual mounds along the tundra grassland.

Warmer, parts of the Arctic support woody dwarf shrubs, willow, birch, juniper, and locally, alder. On sheltered south-facing slopes, scrub woods become bush-like "trees," up to ten feet tall. The Eskimos once used these for arrow shafts, bows, spears, and boat building.

The Arctic is poor in variety of animal life, but often rich in individual numbers. Included are: the polar bear (as much a marine as a terrestial animal), caribou, Arctic wolf, Arctic fox, Arctic weasel, Arctic hare, musk-ox, and brown and collared lemmings, ptarmigan, gyrfalcon, and snowy owl.

The seas are by the far the richer part of the Arctic. There are bowhead or Greenland whales, sperm whales, porpoise whales including white whales, the narwhals, and killer whales. Pinnipeds are represented by walrus, bearded seals, (squareflipper), little ringed seals, ribbon seals, and harp or hooded seals.

Seabirds are represented by the auk family, sea ducks, gulls and terns, many of the herring gull group, the jaegers, and the waders. The Antern makes a remarkable migration to *subantarct*. *ters!* A few fish are found in Arctic waters, but

they are comparatively insignificant ecologically.

(Continued on page 10)



# THE LONG NIG

Jack heard the moan and turned toward his father. In that second he knew that this would be the longest night of his life. Blood turned the snow crimson at his father's feet.

Yesterday morning they had started out full of confidence, full of strength, and with a fresh dog team.

Jack Barker's parents were missionaries, and it was their responsibility to reach every Cree Indian in this area—sometimes by plane or canoe, sometimes on foot or by dog team. It was important that every Indian hear the Gospel.

However, it was essential also that the missionaries eat, and right now they needed meat-fresh caribou meat. They started east, moving slowly, for there was no rush. They were confident of an east, catch. But as the day wore on and evening came, they were fifteen miles from home and had not seen one caribou. They pulled into a small clearing to make camp.

The dogs dropped immediately and lay panting in the deep snow. It had been a hard pull for most of the trip had been off the beaten track.

Jack unstrapped his snowshoes and rubbed his aching legs. He was ready for his sleeping bag, but he knew there was work to do. He coaxed the dogs to their feet and staked them in a circle around the fire his father was building. He runmaged in the toboggan and tossed each dog a frozen fish.



Darkness came quickly. The fire cast a thousand shado among the tall spruce trees. Jack turned his head and listened. There was a mournful, lonely howl. The next time it came from a different direction. That meant there was more than one wolf lurking in the inky blackness.

The hair on Jack Barker's neck stood up, and a shiver ran down his spine that was colder than the frigid night air around him. What other dangers lay in the tall spruce trees that surrounded them he did not know.

He watched his father cut a dry tree with strong, swift motions and throw the four-foot lengths on the blazing fire.

"Nothing like a good fire to keep you warm,"

laughed his father. Jack knew his. dad was disappointed in not getting a caribou. He also knew that the fire was there for other reasons than warmth. It was there to keep the timber wolves away.

The dogs whined and tugged at their chains.

"I'll cut enough wood to last through the night," said his father as he sent a shower of chips flying from the dry log.

It was then the log rolled, and a groan escaped his father's lips.

Jack's face was ashen white as he bent over his dad. The axe had cut clean and deep across the arch of his foot.

(Continued)

"W-what should I do?" he pleaded.

"C-cut off my boot," gasped Mr. Barker, his face distorted with pain.

With trembling fingers Jack lay bare the open wound. On instructions from his father he made a pressure pad and strapped it on. The blood continued to seep through. Another pad was added as other enemies, in the form of wind and dropping temperatures, moved in. The mercury rested at fifteen below zero.

"Bring the toboggan here, son," urged his father. Jack used almost every ounce of strength within him to drag the heavy Indian-type toboggan closer to his father. Finally, he had his dad lying in it.

The wolves had picked up the scent of blood, and were moving closer. The dogs growled deep in their throats.

"We'll have to move out," shouted Mr. Barker above the noise of the rising wind in the treetops. "B-but, Dad."

"This cut is too deep, son," answered his father. "We have to get help."

His dad lay back, his face white and strained. Jack looked around him. He was tired. The dogs were tired. The wolves were moving in, and he would have to leave the protecting circle of light from the fire.

It was a big job for a boy of fourteen. He wondered if they would ever be able to get home.

And still he knew that if his dad were to live he would have to get home tonight.

Suddenly, an impelling urge lifted his eyes above the treetops and on beyond the stars.

"Oh, Lord," he prayed, "I've taken You as my Saviour, and You've promised to help me. I need Your help now."

He moved quickly from one  $\alpha$ og to another removing and strapping them into their harness. The lead dog was nervous and tired. He'd had a hard day, and his responsibilities were greater than any of the other dogs. He whined and shifted uneasily in the harness.

"Good boy, Good dog," soothed Jack. "The Lord's going to help us."

He broke the frozen snow loose from the runners of the toboggan and snaked the long whip over the heads of the dogs. It fell short from his inexperienced hands and fell to the ground.

"Mush," he shouted, but his voice choked with emotion.

The huskies, unaccustomed to a strange driver, jerked slowly into motion and moved out beneath the trees. It was dark under the trees and the moon wouldn't show until they reached the ice on Buffalo Lake. The tree trunks moaned as they brushed together, and every forest noise shot terror through the boy's heart.

"Steady, son," coaxed his father. "God will help us."



His father's voice brought new strength to him, and they covered the first few miles with no difficulty.

They broke upon the frozen lake suddenly and headed across the white expanse. A quarter-mile out the team stopped amid a tangle of harness. They bunched together, and their coarse winter fur rose up along the ridge of their backs.

The sharp howl of a timber wolf spun Jack around in his tracks. Following the fresh scent of blood, they had been staying close behind. They stood silhouetted in the moonlight not fifty yards away.

Jack shouted, but they held their positions-four savage, hungry beasts, their yellow fangs glistening.

He leaned heavily against the back of the toboggan, his knees trembling. Then in a flash certain words burned themselves with an indelible impression upon his brain: "GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND ELIGITI." He said it aloud to the wind and the wolves and the dogs and to his father, who lay helpless before him.

"God is our refuge," echoed his father weakly.

The wolves moved closer and began to circle in. He reached for the hunting rifle from the toboggan. It felt heavy in his hands compared to the .22 he used for target practice. His father's aves followed every move.

"They're after blood, son," said his ... Any blood. Get the leader and they'll eat him and be satisfied."

Jack pushed a bullet into the firing chamber and braced his feet. Carefully he walked to the head of the team and crouched by the lead husky. The dog stiffened, but did not move. Jack sighted along the barrel at the nearest timber wolf. It crept ever closer waiting for the youngster to make a fatal mistake.

"Steady, son," came his father's voice weakly from the toboggan.

The rifle held steady moving with the pacing animal. His finger tightened on the trigger ever so slowly, and the long mournful howl that cut the frosty air was never finished. The wolf dropped in its tracks. The starving pack was upon it immediately. The recoil, which Jack was not prepared for, hammered his shoulder and sent him sprawling amid the bewildered huskies. Quickly he jumped to his feet and straightened the team.

They moved on faster now, for Mr. Baker was showing signs of weakness from the cut, which continued to bleed.

Five miles from home the dogs were fatigued and Jack was half running and half dragging behind the toboggan.

"God is our refuge and strength," he sobbed, as he urged the dogs on. But it was no use, the dogs had to rest.

He dug some frozen fish from the toboggan and threw one to each dog. They ate them lying down. He broke off a piece of frozen bannock and gulped it down hungrily, scooping up snow to quench his thirst. He prayed as the dogs rested.

Ten minutes later he mushed them on over rugged ridge ice. One mile from their cabin the lead dog began to stagger again. In it's struggle for footing, it's feet were cut and torn. Jack eased it from the harness and left it to limp sadly alongside.

The dog team was useless without a leader. Jack stood on the frozen lake and balanced the life of his father in his next decision. He needed a lead dog in order to save his dad's life. He stepped into the harness. He would have to be the lead dog.

Every step was torture and tears froze on his cheeks as he jerked the team ahead. His legs were leaden, and his body seemed to pound with pain.

"Mush," he sobbed again and again, and now the cabin seemed to sway and move, but it was getting closer. "God is our refuge and strength," beat within his brain as he placed one foot ahead of the other. Then everything became hazy....

When he awoke he was in his own bed with his mother bending over him.

"Father is going to be all right, son," she smiled through her tears. "The doctor said you got him home in time."

She tucked the big wool blanket around his shoulders. H had done a man's work, but now he felt small h He was tired. He wanted to sleep awhile longer. As he closed his eyes he saw a motto on the wall: "God is our refuge and strength." He had read it so many times over the years. When he needed it, God had brought it out of his storehouse of memories. Reprinted by Permission from the "Young Pilot."



### WONDERFUL WORLD OF NATURE (continued)

The Antarctic, a land mass, is almost wholly obscured by a continental ice sheet, lacks an indigenous human population (unlike the Arctic), and is without an economic base. Nevertheless, it has become an important point for international conservation, and logistic operations.

Antarctica is the fifth largest continent, the coldest continent, and contains 90 percent of the world's ice. It is a feeding region for myriads of pelagic sea birds, the world's largest population of seals, and of whales. Forty-five species of birds live south of the Antarctic Convergence, but only nine species nest on the continent exclusive of the Antarctic Peninsula.

Only 4 to 5 percent of the land area of Antarctic is clear of snow, which results in vegetation which is scant and impovished. The flightless penguins also prevent the establishment of vegetation wherever they congregate.

Most of the surface vegetation consists of simple, sparse, one-layered plant communities likened to a very poorly developed tundra. Eight hundred species of plants have been tabulated, however, of which lichens are the dominant group.

Vegetation is greenest and most visible on the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula due to more favorable conditions for plant growth. A few flowering plants flourish and are well-established at sea level, growing and reproducing under the long and cool, but fluctuating, summer days.

There are also areas which favor certain microenvironments close to the ground-microcosm where Lilliputian thickets of lichens and mosses provide food and cover for a minuscule land fauna (small insects). Arid conditions and drying winds prevent widespread establishment of vegetation on the continent.

A few species of mites, ticks, and lice are present in the seal and penguin communities. Only one solitary flea is known from Antarctica. When the breeding season is over, the flea hibernates until the birds return the following year.

The oceanic region around Antarctic consists of the southern extremities of the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific oceans. Several important factors influence these waters, not the least of which is the ice shelf which surrounds the continent. Easterly and westerly winds, caused by the earth's rotation, influence water masses and oceanic circulation. These factors work to produce both the Antarctic Convergence and Antarctic Divergence.

Comparatively few men ever visit the frozen regions of the Arctic and Antarctic. Those who have braved the negative temperatures and incredible wind chills supply us with information that plant and animal communities can survive in perfect ecological balance even in the coldest and most forbidding regions of the earth.



Pull each arm straight up, one arm at a time. Good for biceps, triceps and back. Here's a good exercise for strengthening arms and back.

This is a good time of the year to start your own physical fitness program.



RUBBER TUBE GYM by RUBBER TUBE GYM



Start with bar down, tubes relaxed. Slowly bring bar up across chest and over head. Then lower slowly. Good the top for arms, back and chest.

For this exercise, cross tubes and lean from waist.



With arms stiff bring tubes to sides and back.



Loop tubes around solid object and pull arms up from sides as far as you can. Move out to keep tension.

This one is good for arms and chest. Do all exercises slowly.



## Rangers in Action

In February 1972, Richard Brokaw and Paul Clark were ice skating on Thompson Lake near Howell, Michigan. Unknown to them, warm springs in the lake had caused thin ice at some locations on the lake. Paul Clark hit one of these thin spots and the ice broke beneath him. He immediately fell into the frigid lake. As Paul floundered in the ice cold water,





Richard Brokaw went into action. Uncoiling a piece of rope he was carrying for emergencies, he moved as close as possible to the broken ice. He then threw the rope to Paul with the command to hang on. He then proceeded to pull his endangered friend through a thin layer of ice to solid ice. After pulling the freezing boy clear of the water, he rushed him to shelter and into warm clothing.

For his prompt and courageous action and for following proper rescue procedures, Richard Brokaw was awarded the Certificate of Valor by the National Royal Rangers Committee.

P'.hard is a member of Michigan Outpost No. 69 in Howell, Michigan. His commander is Lester Mohler.





# ROYAL RANGERS



JIM: "Our new next-door neighbors must be very poor." SLIM: "Why do you say that?" JIM: "You should have heard the big fuss when their baby swallowed a penny."

> Warren Bebout Morro Bay, CA

At Sunday services the minister noticed that as usual the congregation had seated themselves to the rear of the church—all except one man. At the end of the services the minister met that one man outside and asked, "Why is it that you chose to sit in a front pew?"

We'll," replied the man, "I'm a bus driver and I just come down to see how you get everyone to move to the back."

> Ray Lambert Middleburg Hgts., OH

LADY: "Can you come right over? There's a one-inch leak in the basement." *PI UMBER*: "That doesn't sound

too serious. LADY: "A lot you know. We're in a houseboat!"

STRANGER: "I was born in Canada." NATIVE: "What part?" STRANGER: "All of me, of course." Craig Minor Longview, WA A frontiersman was watching a store clerk open a package of gaily colored men's pajamas.

"What's them?" he asked. "Pajamas."

"Pajamas?" echoed the frontiersman. "What are they for?"

"You wear them at night," the clerk explained. "Want to buy a pair?"

"Not me," said the frontiersman. "I don't go nowhere nights 'cept to bed."

#### Warren Bebout Morro Bay, CA

MOTHER: "Johnny, when your aunt Jessie arrives, she won't kiss you with your face so dirty." JOHNNY: "Great, Mom, that's what I figured."

DAD: "I was hoping you would be unselfish enough to give your brother the largest piece of candy. The birds can teach you a lesson. A bird gives all the nicest food to her little birds and only once in a while takes any for herself." JOHNNY: "I would do the same,

Dad, if I were giving out worms." Ray Lambert

Middleburg Hgts., OH

COMMANDER: "Can you start a fire with two sticks?" PIONEER: "Certainly, if one of them is a match." Ray Lambert

Middleburg Hgts, OH

TED: "My dad has a genuine George Washington watch." NED: "That's nothing, my dad has an Adam's apple."

Warren Bebout Morro Bay, CA

BEGGAR: "Could I please have \$1,000 for a cup of coffee?" RICH MAN: "Why in the world do you need \$1,000? A cup of coffee costs 15 cents."

BEGGAR: "I want to get a fresh cup in Brazil."

Ray Lambert Middleburg Hgts., OH

A tourist in the back country stopped at a combination service station and general store for gas. He noticed an old-timer basking in the sun and holding a piece of rope. The tourist walked over and asked, "What have you there?" "This, sonny," the old-timer replied, "is a weather gauge."

"But how can you possibly gauge the weather with a piece of rope?" the tourist protested.

"Simple, sonny," came the answer. "When the rope swings back and forth, it's windy. When it gets wet, it's raining."

> Ray Lambert Middleburg Hgts., OH



