

PAW PRINTS & SKI TRACKS

*Annual ASPA membership dues are due. If you want to continue your membership, please complete the form included, and send it in with your dues.
Thanks!*

**October 19-21
ADMA
Symposium**

**October 29
Fall Membership
Meeting**
Dog Musers'
Hall.
Jamie Marschner
458-0462

**October 31 and
November 14
Skate Clinic**
Birch Hill
Joel Buth
455-7148

Welcome to a new Season!!

Hard to believe, but winter's chill is upon us bringing the promise of snow, skiing, and skijoring!!

And, once again ASPA will be putting signs out on the trails at Creamer's Field. It is a lot of work for one person. HOWEVER, it is a lot of FUN when 6-8 people volunteer, as well as great exercise.

Like previous years, we will start working when we have about 6 inches of snow. At the trailhead the buckets will be filled with snow and a little water and sign posts positioned in them to freeze. The signs will be put up on trees with a screw (cordless drill needed) on the trails that go through the woods and the buckets will need to be distributed around the field trails. These tasks have been done walking, on skis, skijoring, with a dog team, with your own snowmachine and with the "grooming" snowmachine.

A message will go out to the skijor list when the snow is deep enough. Volunteers can meet as a group or an individual can go out and do a specific task. Contact Pat DeRuyter at patd@gci.net or 479-7853 if you are willing to help.

Fall Membership Meeting Monday, October 29

Dog Musers Hall on Farmers Loop

6:00 p.m.—Potluck

7:00 p.m.—Round Table Discussion of Skijoring Tricks
and Tips

Please join us for the Fall Membership meeting and yummy potluck! The potluck starts at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a dish to share: an entrée, side dish or dessert. After the potluck, there will be a round-table discussion on training, etc. strategies that have worked for seasoned skijorers. This should be a good discussion for experienced as well as novice skijorers.

**ADMA Symposium
October 19-21
Pioneer Park**

To see a list of presentations and special events, see www.sleddog.org/symposium

October 31 and November 14—6:30 p.m. Skate Clinic at Birch Hill taught by Joel Buth. For Beginner to Intermediate skiers (learn V1, V2). \$5 fee. Open to ASPA members ONLY. Contact Joel at 455-7148 or joel@goldstreamsports.com. A GREAT deal!

TRAIL TALK

North Star Golf Club trails

Again, we have been offered the opportunity to groom and use the trails at North Star Golf Club this year. The golf cart barn is done so we will have a heatable space (the clubhouse) to use for our events there. Stay tuned for events to be scheduled on these trails in 2007 and 2008.

We will need volunteers to both groom the trail and open the gate so skijorers can use the trails. Please contact Pat DeRuyter at patd@gci.net or 479-7853 if you are willing to help with these tasks.

Creamer's Field

We will again groom the trails at Creamer's Field. If you are interested in helping groom (Occasionally, once a month, once a week or as a backup when it snows a lot) contact Pat DeRuyter at patd@gci.net or 479-7853.

Gas is even MORE expensive this year and grooming takes a LOT of gas. If you use the Creamer's Field trails, the North Star Golf Club trails and/or the Isberg Trails, PLEASE donate to the ASPA trail grooming fund. For a frequent trail user, a \$50-\$100 donation would be appreciated. An occasional trail user should consider a \$20-\$50 donation. Mail your trail donations to ASPA, P. O. Box 82843, Fairbanks, AK 99708 or give them to an ASPA volunteer at any ASPA sponsored event.

Experienced Skijor Dogs for Sale

3-5 years old pointer mixes-not the fastest, but very motivated and steady. All are very friendly, can live outside or indoors. Good for beginners, some racing, or long distances.

Call Janet Smith @ 490-9994

What I Did During my Summer Vacation by Various Board Members and their Canines

We all love skijoring, but what about the other 5-6 months when there is little to no snow on the ground? Following are a few stories about what we and/or our dogs did during the lazy hazy days of summer.

My First Dog Show by Killae Stuby

At the end of May I got to go to my first dog show!! Momma entered me into a three-day Rally Novice competition. It was fun meeting all of the other people and dogs, especially those doing conformation. Those dogs were clean, groomed, and their owners all dressed up. I couldn't do conformation because I am way too smart! You see, when I was 6 months old I was "tutored." Anyway, on the first day we bombed big time. The judge was tough and I wanted nothing more but to leave the ring and visit with a cute malamute. Day 2 I did great, but momma got nervous and turned right when she should have turned left and left when we were supposed to turn right and we were disqualified again. Day 3, we passed. Momma was nervous again, so I had to lead the way and we have our first leg towards a Rally Novice title. (Rally is a sport where the dog and handler complete a course of designated stations. Each station lists a designated task. Scoring is not as rigorous as traditional obedience).

Tracking by Lisa Stuby

Tracking is a canine sport that demonstrates a dog's natural ability to recognize and follow a scent, and is the foundation of canine search and rescue work. Unlike obedience and agility trials, where dogs respond to the owner's commands, in tracking the dog is completely in charge, for only they know how to use their nose to find and follow the track. Owning a hunting dog has been quite a different experience than owning a husky. He has the instinct to want to lead me to potential prey. Given I am not much of a hunter, I wanted to give Killae an opportunity to do what he has been bred for centuries to do; to follow a scent and lead me to something. The best way to understand our dogs is first to understand the breed. We began by tracking short distances to gloves with treats on top. Over time the distances became longer with changes of direction. Unfortunately, field work in August kept me from being able to enter Killae in a tracking test so he could earn a Tracking Dog certificate, but like skijoring, tracking is an activity I can do with my dog that we both enjoy.



T-Shirts For Sale

After a too-long hiatus, ASPA will be selling club t-shirts. The artwork, courtesy of ASPA board member and artist extraordinaire, Sara Tabbert, features a skijorer with dogs enjoying the interior trails. The t-shirts come in a variety of colors and in short and long-sleeve styles. Cost is \$15.00 for short-sleeved shirts and \$20.00 for long-sleeve shirts. The t-shirts will be available during the Fall Membership Meeting on October 29 and at the Fun Races. Pins and patches will also be available.

What I did last summer

By Ayla Elzey

Last summer was reely grate. I went running & walking alot with my Mom and my brother Shadow. Sometimes I went walking with Mom and my sister Myst. She cant go running becuz her nees hurt. Sometimes I went running with my Mom and Opal and her Mom. Opal lives next door to me. She has lots of brothers and sisters. Sometimes I played with my other brother, Jasper in the back yard. Jasper is not reely my brother becuz he is a cat but I like him anyways. I reely like to chase him but sometimes he scratches me with his claus. I also like to chase the birds that come to bird feeder. I have never catched one but maybe someday. I also reely like to chase squirrels. They are very fast. I even saw a bunny once last summer too. But it wuz reely reely fast. I couldnt find it in the woods. I got to go swimming a few times. I used to swim alot where we used to live but not where we live now. I like to swim. I also got to chew bones sometimes. I reely like the ones that taste like chicken and the ones that taste like peenut butter. My brother Shadow likes the green ones. I think they are ok but not as good as peenut butter. I also got to go to work with my Mom almost every day. I gess that my sister and my brother and Me are reely lucky to go to work with my Mom. We have to be veery quiet when we are there and just sleep on our pillows. It is still fun to go. We like to ride in the car veery much.

What I did over the summer (by Bree and Kazan Marschner)

We spent a lot of time in the kennels this summer, sniffing and barking at other dogs, while our owners were out watching bears in Katmai and Wrangell and hiking the alps in Switzerland. Our biggest thrill was when our owners won the Denali Road Lottery and took us with them. Two wolves walked right up to the car and checked us out. We were pretty nervous as they looked like they were hungry and we looked like lunch!

She wolf photo by Bud Marschner



Beware of the "Bungee Cord" by Pat DeRuyter

I accidently stepped into the current "fashion" world this summer by piercing my nose. Although there was much talk of all the jewelry I could place in the hole in my nose, I went with the emergency room doctor who took three stitches to sew it up.

This started with my taking a bungee cord to "tie down" the lawn mower handle which was sticking out the back of the pickup truck. I had safely used bungee cords for many years, however, on this day, the bungee cord slipped and hit me in the nose (Fortunately, it missed my eye.). I won't go into gory details, but I am sure you all know how a nose bleeds. Clarice suggested that I would have been seen a lot faster in the emergency room if I had left the bungee cord hanging from my nose (my immediate reaction was to remove it so Clarice didn't even get to see it). The emergency room doctor got a laugh when we asked if they would have charged extra to remove the bungee cord before they sewed me up. He also said the leading cause of eye injuries was bungee cords. So, my advice is "be careful with bungee cords".

Understanding Dog Food Labels summarized by Lisa Stuby

I was reading an interesting article in the November 2007 Dog World magazine that was written by Liz Palika, a writer who has extensively written on pet foods. With the huge recall earlier this year on contaminated pet food, I've become interested in what pet food labels mean, whereas in the past, I paid little attention. Below, I've summarized the Dog World article. I've also incorporated information from the Pet Food Institute (PFI, <http://www.petfoodinstitute.org/>) and Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO, www.aafco.org).

Just like our diet, if our dogs eat junk food with cheap or inappropriate ingredients, their health will eventually suffer for it. The first commercially prepared pet food was a dog biscuit introduced in England about 1860. Since then, pet foods have expanded to include canned, dry and semi-moist foods to meet a wide variety of nutritional needs.

Dog food manufacturers cannot label dog foods as they wish; they are required to follow a number of different regulations as to what must be on the label. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has a division called the Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM). The CVM specifies what ingredients are allowed in foods and what manufacturing processes are allowed, and they set the standards for food health claims. For example, if a manufacturer says a food will prevent or help treat a specific condition, that claim must be substantiated through the FDA first. Other groups, governmental and non-governmental, such as the non-governmental AAFCO and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) oversees and sets standards on what can and can't be present on the labels and in what format so the consumer can readily decipher the pet food contents. Other organizations such as the National Research Council (NRC) evaluates research that has been done on pet foods and pet nutrition and makes recommendations. The PFI represents pet-food manufacturers and is a primarily a lobbying group that promotes pet-food issues with the government. Individual states are also involved, although there is a necessary synergy between the state feed-control officials and the USDA.

The first required element on the food package is the product name. Like all advertising, the catchier the name, the more you are likely to purchase it and/or think about purchasing it in the future. The package must also have the manufacturer's name and a means of contact, what it contains, and the net weight. The package must also have a nutritional adequacy statement. Before a dog food can be labeled "complete and balanced", it must adhere to the AAFCO guidelines. The food must be tested in feeding trials or show that it has been formulated according to AAFCO's nutritional guidelines. Proof of the food quality is often done with feeding trials over a period of time. The label must state if the food was made for a specific purpose, such as for puppies, senior dogs, etc.

The Guaranteed Analysis provides the percentages of several parts of the food. The analysis lists the minimum percentage of protein, fat, fiber, and moisture in the food. However, according to Liz Palika, the label does not have to state anything about the quality or digestibility of the food or the percentage of carbohydrates. These percentages are of the food as it is packaged, so the differences between kibble that is low in moisture cannot be directly compared to a canned food with a lot of water.

The FDA requires that pet foods be nutritious and that they contain no harmful substances, or "Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS)." The foods are listed on the label in decreasing order by weight (not amount). According to Liz Palika, choosy consumers must be careful since manufacturers who are still legally following the rules for listing ingredients may still trick consumers. For instance, if a label lists, "Beef, wheat germ, wheat flour, wheat middling's, and so on, you may think the food is beef-based." In reality, the second, third and fourth ingredients are all wheat, so there is far more wheat than beef.

So, you love your dog and want what is best for him/her and are thus drawn to labels that list the ingredients as "natural." The AAFCO stated that the word "natural" cannot be used on a pet food label if any of the ingredients are chemically synthesized. If the vitamins and minerals are chemically synthesized then the label can read "natural with added vitamins and minerals." The quality of the ingredients are not described in most commercial foods. It is not unusual for one batch of dog food to have slight differences from another batch depending on the cost and availability of ingredients.

Understanding Dog Food Labels (Continued)

Six Dog-food Ingredient Definitions

Here are some commonly used ingredients and their definitions that were abbreviated from the AAFCO website for the Dog World article. Some, like beet pulp and barley, are controversial as they are believed to contribute to allergies.

1. **Animal Digest:** Material which results from chemical or enzymatic hydrolysis of clean and undecomposed animal tissue. The animal tissue used shall be exclusive of hair, horns, hooves and feathers, except in such trace amount as might unavoidable occur in good factory practices.
2. **Chicken by-product meal:** Consists of the ground, rendered, clean parts of the carcass of slaughtered chickens, such as necks, feet, undeveloped eggs, and intestines. The animal tissues used shall be exclusive of hair, horns, hooves, and feathers, except in such trace amounts as might unavoidable occur in good factory practices.
3. **Animal fat:** Obtained from the tissues of mammals or poultry in the commercial processes of rendering or extracting.
4. **Barley:** Consists of at least 80% parley and must not contain more than 3% heat-damaged kernels, 6% foreign material, 20% other grains or 10% wild oats.
5. **Beet pulp:** Consists of the dried residue from sugar beets which has been cleaned and extracted in the process of making sugar. It is supposedly a good source of fiber.
6. **Ground corn:** The entire ear of corn ground, without husks, with no greater portion of cob than occurs in the ear corn in its natural state. I can't help wonder what nutritional value is in a corn cob?

The best thing you can do for your dog's health is become an educated consumer. Ask your veterinarian what he/she recommends, contact food manufacturers and ask them about where their ingredients come from and quality control. Also, if you do contact food manufacturers, ask them if they have conducted any digestibility studies. Pay attention to your dog. Make note of their weight, skin and coat, muscle and energy, stamina, and overall attitude. I used a particular and popular brand of food for years when I had two huskies and several years later after they crossed the rainbow bridge and I had a new puppy, I used the same food. Killae's coat was dull and he started scratching and licking his paws. I switched to a small holistic food brand and those symptoms cleared up within a week. Nevertheless, as I conclude this article, I will be reading the label on the dog food box.

I had room so I thought I'd add this:

When comparing dry kibble to canned foods and/or raw frozen, etc. be sure to compare them on a "dry-matter" basis. Linda Bren, author of "Pet Food: The Lowdown on Labels" from the May/June 2001 FDA Consumer, states, "Canned foods typically contain about 75% water, while dry foods contain only about 10%." So, at home look on the label of a food type. Take the percent moisture and subtract that from 100%. What remains is the percentage of dry matter. To find the dry-matter percentage of another nutrient, such as fat, divide the percentage of fat by the percentage of dry matter.

As the newsletter editor, I encourage folks to submit articles. My e-mail is located at the end of this newsletter. I had a space and am including a recipe I copied from the Tanana Valley Kennel Club Newsletter, of which I am also a member. This actually looks appetizing.

Chicken Chips (for Fido)

- 2 cooked (boiled) chicken breasts
- 1 pinch garlic powder
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup cornmeal

Puree chicken and garlic in a food processor or blender. Add in chicken broth. Transfer mixture to bowl and stir in remaining ingredients until it's not sticky anymore. Cut dough in half and shape each into a 1 1/2-inch diameter roll. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill thoroughly.

Slice into thin chips. Bake chips on lightly greased baking sheet at 350 degrees F for 25-40 minutes, turning halfway through baking time. Chips will harden as they cool.

Membership Form for the Alaska Skijoring & Pulk Association

Name _____
Last First

Mailing Address _____
Street or P. O. Box

City State Zip Code

Phone (optional) _____

E-mail _____

Are you interested in receiving the newsletter on-line? Yes ____ No ____

Membership Type:

- Individual \$15.00/year _____ Individual Lifetime \$150_____
- Family \$25.00/year _____ (No lifetime available)
- Affiliate \$5.00/year _____ (If already a member of your local skijor club.)
- Trail Donation \$ _____ (\$5/day or \$50/season suggested)

Club Name _____

Club Address _____

Club Website _____

Mail membership form to: ASPA, P. O. Box 82843, Fairbanks, Alaska 99708.

*Membership year is from October 1 through September 30.

2007-8 ASPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COORDINATORS

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Paw Prints and Ski Tracks is a monthly newsletter published during the winter season by the Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association. Computer and photo shop consultancy has been provided by Bud Marschner. The coordinating editor of Paw Prints and Ski Tracks is Lisa Stuby. Your comments, articles and pictures are greatly appreciated. Please e-mail the information before the 25th of every month to lisa.stuby@alaska.gov.

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