

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 10-12
ADMA
Symposium**

**October 29
Fall Membership
Meeting**

Dog Musers' Hall.
Jamie Marschner
458-0462

**November 5 and
19**

Skate Clinic
Birch Hill
Joel Buth
455-7148

Welcome to a new Season!!

Hard to believe after a busy summer that a busy winter of skiing and skijoring is upon us. As I type this, the snow is falling and I haven't even brought my skis out yet and scraped off the storage wax. I am almost using the "promise" of skiing as an incentive to finish up fall chores, like this newsletter.

Unlike most October newsletters, I'll actually have fall activities to report: the first ever ASPA September 27 Dryland race and ASPA adopting a trail at Birch Hill.

And, once again ASPA will be putting signs out on the trails at Creamer's Field. Many hands make light work. 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 upright. Additional signs will be put up on trees (cordless drills needed) on the trails that go through the woods and the buckets will need to be distributed around the field trails. In previous years, these tasks have been done on foot, on skis, skijoring, with a dog team, with a personal 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.—Veterinarian Tamara Rose will give a presentation on Dog First Aid

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. Afterwards there will be a presentation and talk by Tamara Rose, a local veterinarian. See you all there!!

Birch Hill Adopt A Trail Evening

On September 8, a group of ASPA volunteers met in the early evening and volunteered to for the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks’ new “Adopt-a-Trail” program at the Birch Hill Recreation Area. According to Andy Blossy, one of the trail groomer extraordinaires at Birch Hill and organizer of the Adopt-a-Trail program, the trails can be more easily groomed, especially initially with the first snows, if the brush is removed from the edges. The Adopt-a-Trail program was started this year and is replacing the annual Trails Day at Birch Hill. Rather than have a bunch of volunteers show up for a one day spruce up (or de-spruce up) of the trails, the Nordic Ski Club instead allotted certain trails and sections of trails to different user groups. The ASPA work party successfully cleared brush from the edges of the entire 1.5 Km White Bear Access Loop.

While most of us clipped and raked away, our organizer Brian Charlton, used a brush mower and easily cleared a 2 – foot wide swath along the edge of the trail. Helping out was a way for ASPA to say thanks to the ski club for letting us use the trails for one of our annual races. This is likely to become an annual event as our club has now "adopted" this trail.. We all agreed that skiing down this will take on new meaning.

Hardworking members in attendance were: Andy Warwick, Peggy Raybeck, Gail Davidson, Sarah Garland, Lisa Stuby, Brian Charlton, Emma Charlton, and anyone who was missed. Andy Blossy of the Nordic Ski Club helped and directed our efforts. Thanks to all for your hard work.



Sara Garland, Andy Warwick (left), and Gail Davidson (right) clip and rake away the overgrowth on the side of the trail. Maggie and Toby (right) watch mom work. Photos by Lisa Stuby



November 5 and 19,—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!

Hard to believe, but 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.

ASPA's First EVER annual Dryland Race, September 27, 2008, Chena River Flood Control Project

Fourteen competitors competed in the Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association's (ASPA) first annual dryland race on September 27, 2008 at the spillway of the Chena Lakes Recreation Area. The temperature was a cool 23°F with some snow flurries. The race classes consisted of canicross or "run-joring", bike-joring, and cart racing. The race organizers, Sara Elzey and Andy Warwick, had discussed organizing an event like this sometime during late September when the weather was cool, but about a month before the snow would usually fall. An article in Mushing Magazine last year gave further inspiration to try out such an event in Fairbanks.

Dryland races are popular in other parts of the United States and many other countries. The International Federation of Sled dog Sports sponsors one of the largest dryland mushing events in the world, the IFSS Dryland World Championship. The 2007 championships, held in Piandelagotti, Italy, featured classes in canicross, bike-joring, scooter, and rig. Dryland events have been increasing in popularity since the presence of snow is not required. Dryland events are even gaining popularity in Jamaica and the Jamaica "dog sled team" has competed internationally with some success. After all, if a bob sled team can come from Jamaica, why not dog?

Further north, those who love winter sports like skiing and skijoring find the long, dark, cold winters of Fairbanks invigorating. However, during the "off" season, we still need to keep ourselves and our dogs in reasonable shape. Running with our dogs, having our dogs pull us on bicycles, and the use of several varieties of dog cart, help us pass the snowless summer months during the cooler parts of the day.

For the first ASPA dryland race all classes took the same route on a flat and compacted dirt road that was wide enough to ensure easy passing. The course was 3-miles at the longest point and was out and back. Participants raced out to the half-way distance for their particular class, turned around, and then returned to where they started. Having teams of eager dogs turn a 180 degree circle to get back to the start/finish line added more challenge to the event. Canicross participants could compete with 1 or 2 dogs at distances of 2, 4, and 6 miles. Bike-jorers could also compete with 1 or 2 dogs with distances of 3 and 6 miles and helmets were required. For the cart racers there were also the two distances of 3 and 6 miles with up to 4 dogs for the 3-mile distance and up to 8 dogs for the 6-mile distance.

The first participants to leave the starting line were the runners. Three runners participated, each with one dog. Two runners competed in the 6 mile race and the third ran 2 miles. Jodi Bailey won the 6 mile race with a very fast time of 40:40 (minutes:seconds) with her dog Jake Blues. According to Jodi, who was fresh from completing Fairbanks annual Equinox Marathon race, "when you live with dogs you are in a constant conversation with them, whether it is running in a team or working in the yard, they are paying attention to you and learning from you and your actions all the time. We may not be aware of it, but they are. SO everything you do when you are around them is part of that conversation, they learn from it what you expect and what they can expect with you. With that as a major part of Dew Claw Kennels training philosophy the dynamic of running with a dog should be similar to what you may experience when skijoring (which I have not done in over 12 years and Jake has never done) or when running a team of dogs". From Jodi's experience, getting her trained sled-dog to go from running in a team and pulling a sled to running singly and pulling a person wasn't too uncomfortable for the dog. According to Jodi, as part of the constant conversation you have with your dogs they learn what to expect from you in different situations and know how to react. As long as you are consistent in your training your dogs will understand the conversation and their role in it. Dogs tend to be more comfortable in familiar situations. With many race venues, whether running, skijoring, or mushing, you may be in a new place and situation, but you can still have the same conversation, make your actions and routines familiar. Thus Jodi made sure to have the same conversation with Jake Blues as she would have had when training him in a team, just slower, shorter, and more personal.

Indeed, when running with dogs, it is important to know your dog and yourself. For me, the other 6-mile participant with my Norwegian elkhound, Killae (55:02), middle-aged knees which have been pounded too much in the past precluded me from being able to be pulled hard by a dog for too long. I usually run with my dog off his collar and attached to a retractable leash so he knows he doesn't have to go into "pulling mode." Also, a good, comfortable pair of shoes and warming myself up beforehand were critical.

Having a good sense of humor and just enjoying yourself is also important, especially if you have a dog that is reluctant to run or is uncomfortable with a new situation. Carol Kleckner did the 2-mile Canicross class with Ivy (19:29) who refuses to be a sled dog and was quite suspicious about the entire affair on Saturday. Even at the start line, she stood in back of Carol instead of in front. Even a flirtaceous Killae, who thought Ivy was awfully cute, didn't help.

The bike-joring division had the most participants, 8. Of these, 6 did a 3-mile race and 2 did the 6-mile race. The winners of the 3-mile race, Andy Warwick with Zip and Licorice (9:34), have been bike-joring for many summers. According to Andy, bike-joring is a good way to have fun with your dogs during the summer months as it provides exercise for both the dogs and the bike-jorer.

ASPA Dryland Race (Continued)

From his experience, one dog is fairly easy, two is more fun, and three is risky, which is why there was a two-dog limit. Last year, Andy broke his collar bone while bike-joring with 3 dogs. Andy won't run the dogs when it is above 70 degrees and won't run them for more than three miles at a time since they can quickly overheat during the summer months and keeps plenty of water on hand. Andy will not run his dogs on pavement as it can be hard on their feet and joints, and rub paws raw. As a general rule, if Andy runs his dogs two days in a row, he'll then give them three or four days off to recuperate.

A critical part of bike-joring is making sure the towline attaching the dogs to the bike doesn't go slack and get tangled in the tire. Thus, the bike-jorer must always be cognizant of where the line is in relation to the bike and be able to brake when needed. Andy Warwick has found that a lightweight mountain bike with knobby tires and disk brakes has worked well for him. Amanda Byrd, who came in 4th in the 3-mile class with Tas and Avril (11:27) agreed that having a good set of heavy-duty disc brakes is the best way to stop a couple of over exuberant huskies. Of course, whether racing or just getting out for exercise, the bike-jorer absolutely needs to wear a good fitting helmet. Dogs running on dirt and gravel roads will throw up rocks, dirt and mud into the rider's face, so eye protection is also recommended. John Schauer who came in 2nd and 3rd in the 3-mile class was wearing BMX elbow pads on his arms for added protection. After completing the course the first time with Willow and Riley (10:36), John switched Riley for Tsaina and went out again (11:03). Gloves, jeans or other long pants, and long sleeved shirts can provide additional protection for hands, legs, and arms.

Most of the participants in the bike-joring class had their dogs attached to their bike just below the handlebars with a skijoring-type line equipped with a bungee to absorb the initial shock of pulling. Melissa Rouge with Galloway and Mona, winners of the 6-mile distance class (22:00), used retractable leashes to hitch her dogs to her bike as a way of avoid a slackening line getting caught in the tires. Andy Warwick used a skijor belt and had his dogs hooked directly to him instead of his bicycle. Andy has found that he has better control over his dogs and can avoid the bike getting dragged away from him if the dogs should get away.

There were 3 participants in the cart class, two for the 3-mile distance and 1 in the 6-mile distance. After blazing the 3-mile bike-joring class, Andy Warwick then hooked Zip, Licorice, and Boots up to his Outlaw dirt sled (10:46). The dirt sled is essentially a high tech tricycle. It weighs about 50lbs, is made of aluminum, and has front shocks and rear disk brakes. It is very stable and stops pretty well as your weight is right over the brakes. Andy had his three dogs in a fan setup. The cart is not as fast as bike-joring because with a bike you can peddle, and with the dirt sled you can only kick to add less resistance.

The second-place winner (14:25) in the 3-mile class, Thomas Swan with Amazing Grace and Scooby Doo raced in a Sacco Dog Cart from Norway. This light-weight cart is a bit different from the Outlaw dirt sled. Thomas' cart was set up with a seat in the middle. A steering handle bar fit over the back of the dogs and hooks to the harnesses. This enables the driver to steer the dog in the direction you wish them to go along with the correct mushing commands. The driver can't really kick, but can be more comfortable as he cheers his team on. As with bike-joring, cart racers/runners should always wear a helmet, protective eyewear, and long pants and sleeves are a good idea too.

The first-place winner (25:27) and only participant in the 6-mile cart class was Beth Callis with 8 dogs attached to a traditional toboggan sled that was equipped with what appeared to be ATV tires. Her younger sister was sitting in a chair that was secured to the inside of the sled. Instead of shifting her weight to help turn the sled, the sled was equipped with a bicycle-type handle bar that will steer the front wheels and handle brakes that could be used to slow and stop the ATV wheels. According to Beth, her family uses this set-up to condition and train her family's team of sprint dogs in the fall and has hooked up to 12 dogs. The entire Callis Family (Mom, Dad & all the brothers & sisters) showed up to support Beth in the 8-dog cart class. They traveled to/from the race in style with dogs and cart safely and comfortably housed inside a horse trailer. Below are the Dryland Race Results.

CANICROSS OR RUN -JORING

2 mile

1 Carol Kleckner Ivey 19:29

6 mile

1 Jodi Baily Jake Blues 40:40

2 Lisa Stuby Killae 55:02

BIKE-JORING

3 mile

1 Andy Warwick Zip & Licorice 9:34

2 John Schauer Riley & Tsaina 10:36

3 John Schauer Riley & Willow 11:03

4 Amanda Byrd Avil & Tas 11:27

5 Karsten Hueffer Addie & Pence 11:44

6 Jennifer Probert Oscar 13:31

6 mile

1 Melissa Rouge Galloway & Mona 22:00

2 Greg Jurek Rib 22:49

CART

3 mile

1 Andy Warwick Zip, Licorice & Boots 10:46

2 Thomas Swan Amazing Grace & Scooby Doo

14:25

6 mile

1 Beth Callis eight dogs 25:27

Of course the Dryland race could NEVER have happened without our volunteers: Kimberlee Beckmen, Peggy Raybeck, Brian Charlton, Nate Callis, Lynn Orbison, and Laurie Hueffer and the organizers Sara Elzey and Andy Warwick. Below are some photos taken by Sara Elzey.



Clockwise from lower left: Greg Jurek and Rib at the start; a smiling Brian Charlton helping out with registration; Andy Warwick blazing to the finish with Zip, Licorice, and boots; Lynn Orbison giving pep talk and directions to Grace and Scooby Doo; the three runners, Lisa Stuby and Killae, Carol Kleckner and Ivey, and Jodi Bailey with Jake Blues at the start.

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.

2008-9 ASPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COORDINATORS

President: : Jamie Marschner, 458-0462, marschne@arsc.edu
Vice President: Carol Kleckner, 479-0430. kleckner@ptialaska.net
Treasurer: Sara Elzey, 378-5024, skijorex2@hotmail.com
Secretary: Lisa Stuby, 458-7657, lisa.stuby@alaska.gov
Show & Go Coordinator: Peggy Raybeck, 457-4775, paycheck39@hotmail.com
Race Coordinator: Andy Warwick, 474-9148, warwick@gci.net
Hotline: Carol Kleckner, 479-0430, kleckner@ptilaska.net
Newsletter Coordinator: Lisa Stuby, 458-7657, lisa.stuby@alaska.gov
Program Coordinator: Jamie Marschner, 458-0462, marschne@arsc.edu
Website Coordinator: Don Kiely, 455-6749, donkiely@computer.org
Trails & Development: Jim Herriges, 455-8007, herriges@gci.net
Trail Grooming: Pat DeRuyter, 479-7853, patd@gci.net
Beginner's Clinic Coordinator: Sara Elzey, 378-5024, skijorex2@hotmail.com
Stage Race Coordinators: Don Kiely, Sara Tabbert, and Brian Charlton (see above and below for contact information)
Board Members at Large:
Sara Tabbert: 479-0456, stabbert@hotmail.com, Brian Charlton: 479-3665 bcskior@yahoo.com, Laurie Hueffer: 458-0858, llantagne@hotmail.com

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.

ASPA SPONSORS

49er Feed Distributors
 AK/J Architecture, Inc.
 Alaska Feed Company
 Alaska House Art Gallery
 Animal House & Noah's Ark
 Apocalypse Design
 Aurora Animal Clinic
 Beaver Sports
 Canine Caviar Pet Food
 Cold Spot Feeds
 Denali Chiropractic
 Food Factory/There from Here Inc.
 Gambardella's Pasta Bella
 Golden Heart Veterinary Services
 Goldstream Sports/Joel Buth
 Hausle Johnson Tile
 Jammin' Salmons Physical & Nutritional Therapies
 Lead Dog Graphic Arts
 Mountain Sports
 Mushing Magazine
 North Pole Veterinary
 North Star Golf Club
 Play it Again Sports
 Raven Cross Country
 Sara Tabbert/Marmot Press
 SkijorNow.com
 Warwick & Schikora, CPAs



Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association

P. O. Box 82843 ♦ Fairbanks, Alaska 99708-2843

Hotline: 907-457-5456 ♦ Website: <http://www.sleddog.org/skijor>