

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!

**December 5,
Practice Clinic#1**

Creamer's Field,
11:00 AM
Lisa Stuby
687-3761

**December 11
Wax Clinic**

Raven Cross Country
Fred Raymond, 6:00
PM, 456-5070

Dec. Fun Races

Creamer's Field
(13th)North Star Golf
Course (26th)
11:30 AM
Andy Warwick
474-9184

**Dec. 27, ASPA Trail
Tour, Location TBA**

Peggy Raybeck, 457-
4775 and Janna
Miller, 479-5585

Fall Membership Meeting, October 27, Musher's Hall

Seventeen souls braved slippery roads and a sudden date change (meeting originally scheduled to take place on the 28th) to attend the ASPA annual Fall Membership meeting that took place at the Musher's Hall. There was a lower turnout compared to previous Fall Membership Meetings, but the fun factor was the same and the potluck yummy with surprisingly diverse dishes. After eating, Don Atwood collected five digital photos from most of the participants and constructed a slideshow. We all then flipped through the photos and the photographers explained what each meant. Some were of beautiful landscapes, wildlife, skijor races, and some were downright hilarious! The names of those who brought 5 photos to the meeting were then entered into a drawing for fabulous prizes. Conversation during the meeting was predictably about dogs, skis, and snow. Below is a collage of some photographs from the meeting.



All photos taken by Bud Marschner except the lower right of the group which was taken by Lisa Stuby



Trail Talk

As I work on the newsletter tonight (November 11, 2009) it is SNOWING and I don't mean flurries, but big flakes! With the snow came e-mails from grooming extraordinaire and coordinator, Pat DeRuyter. She had rolled Creamer's trails on this day. She rolled the trails at Creamer's Field and in addition the walking trails on the Farm Road and trail to Joy School. As of this typing, the walking trails are the best trails for skijoring right now. However, PLEASE be courteous of the walkers when on the Farm Road and the trail to Joy School. Last year I heard a complaint about a skijorer with three fast huskies almost running over an elderly couple. However, soon, with more snow, the regular skijoring trails at Creamer's Field will be usable.

Pat also started packing North Star, which as of this typing, needs more snow to be able to groom. Keep checking the skijor club e-mail list as conditions may improve as of this printing and mailing. If you have been out on the trails, please send me a trail report to patd@acsalaska.net. Now, Pat is not the "lone" groomer and WILL need volunteers to help. Many hands make light work and enough groomers will spread out the work. She will also need volunteers to pack buckets and put up signs on the trails. Again, please contact her an the above e-mail address.

I'll be spending most of December in California where good, accessible trails are far away from my mother's home and VERY expensive. How lucky we are to be able to get to good trails for skiing and skijoring in a matter of MINUTES and cheaply—It is NO comparison. EVERY day is a "skiing" vacation in Fairbanks.

Training Clinic #1—December 5, 11:00 AM, Creamer's Field

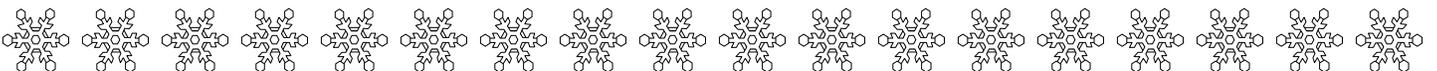
It is that time of the year again for the Practice Clinic, formally called the "Training Clinic." This is NOT a Beginner's Clinic, but more of a practice session, thus the name change. This season's first of two training clinics will emphasize the basics and is meant for novices. In my travels around town, at the dog park, Petco, etc. I've had folks who have tried skijoring, but are not good skiers and/or the dogs won't pull, etc. Well, this is the clinic for you! We will meet at 11:00 AM at the Creamer's Field farmhouse and have a 30 minute question and answer session between novices and more seasoned skijorers. Afterwards, we will practice the advice, with more seasoned people on hand for help, using the skijor training trails at Creamer's Field across from the Farmhouse for another 30 minutes to an hour. The temperature cutoff for this event is -15F. Cost is free to ASPA members and \$5.00 for non members.

So come and practice skiing and skijoring and most importantly, HAVE FUN!! If you would like to help out with handling, advice and/or show up with behaved dog(s) who will act as "rabbits" for novice dogs to chase, please contact Lisa Stuby at 458-7657, or e-mail at lisa.stuby@alaska.gov.

ASPA Web Site Domain Change

With the help of Dave Partee at ADMA, the ASPA Web site domain, www.alaskaskijoring.org, is now fully activated. This means that when you go to that URL, you "stay" on that domain rather than be redirected to www.sleddog.org, which is ADMA's site. If anyone has a link set to the old addresses, they'll still get to the page they want on the ASPA Web site. So, the new address won't break any links, for the time being. Over time, we'll phase out the use of the sleddog.org domain, to avoid confusion between us and ADMA.

We should start using the www.alaskaskijoring.org address exclusively. MANY thanks to ADMA for sharing their Web host, and Dave for taking the time to figure out how to configure this on the new host and Don Kiely for helping and knowing what this all means.



The 2010 Race Across the Valley is in danger of not happening!!

We do not have enough volunteers so we need your help!

Please see the table below for the list of volunteer positions, then email Sara Elzey at skijorex2@hotmail.com to volunteer. Without your help the race will not happen! Please note that many of the positions allow you to still participate in the race.

General Race Information: The race is scheduled for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, February 12, 13 & 14, 2010. There will be two classes each day, a Short Distance class racing 4-5 miles and a Long Distance class racing 7-10 miles. The race will start around 1pm each day. The tentative venues are Alaska Dog Musher's Jeff Studdert Race Track, Chena Lakes Mike Agbaba Trail and UAF-West Ridge Ski Trail.

Volunteer Positions needed to make the race happen: (see descriptions below)

Position	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Race Trail Coordinator	Tom McGrane	Sara Elzey	Brian Charlton
Pre-race publicity	Sara Elzey	n/a	n/a
Pre-registration Taker	Sara Elzey	n/a	n/a
Registration Coordinator	Lisa Stuby	Lisa Stuby	Lisa Stuby
Conduct Pre-race Meeting	Sara Elzey	Carol Kleckner	Carol Kleckner
Timing/Starter Coordinator			
Results Calculator			
Photographer			
Handler Coordinator			
Reporter	Sara Elzey	Sara Elzey	Sara Elzey
Post-race snack Coordinator	n/a	n/a	Lisa Stuby
Thank Volunteers	n/a	n/a	Sara Elzey

VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS:

Race Trail Coordinator: Coordinate with the host organization; make sure trail is groomed and marked; (and swept after the race if necessary); get map of race course to Website Master, Don Kiely for posting; and/or recruit additional volunteers to perform these duties. Explain race trail to participants during pre-race meeting.

Pre-race publicity: Write up race information for ASPA newsletter, Fairbanks Daily News Miner and email to ASPA email list. Make sure information is on hotline.

Pre-registration taker: Accept emailed pre-registrations up to 5pm on February 10th. Fill out registration forms with information received.

Registration Coordinator: Recruit 2-3 volunteers each day to register racers & accept payment of fees, record dog names, fill-out timing sheets with racer & dog info, conduct bib draw and pass out bibs. These volunteers need to be at the venue 1 hour before the race starts. These volunteers could also participate in the race. Submit list of volunteers to Sara Elzey to be thanked.

Conduct Pre-race Meeting: Explain passing rules and trail etiquette, and relay any specific information relevant to the venue. Set starting time after bib-draw is complete. This volunteer can be a racer.

Timing/Starting Coordinator: Recruit 2 timers and 1 starter for each day. These volunteers need to be at the venue approximately 15 minutes before the race starts and should plan to be at the venue for an hour to an hour and a half. These volunteers cannot be racers. Submit list of volunteers to Sara Elzey to be thanked.

Results Calculator: Recruit 1 volunteer for each day (or do it yourself) to calculate the total elapsed race time for each racer and determine the place standings. This job takes about 15 minutes after all racers have finished. Announce places and times to group of participants. Give complete results to Reporter. This volunteer could also participate in the race. Submit list of volunteer(s) to Sara Elzey to be thanked.

Photographer: Recruit a photographer for at least 1 day of the race (or do it yourself). This volunteer cannot be a racer. We would expect photographer to be willing to share photos with ASPA Newsletter Coordinator, Lisa Stuby, to be used for publication along with the article and with Web Master Don Kiely for use on the ASPA website. They may be used by the Fairbanks Daily News Miner in conjunction with the race results. Submit list of volunteer(s) to Sara Elzey to be thanked.

RAV?? Continued

Handler Coordinator: Recruit 1-2 volunteers each day to help hold dogs at the start line. These volunteers cannot participate in the race. These volunteers need to be at the start line a few minutes before the race starts and plan to be there for 20-30 minutes helping racers get started. Submit list of volunteers to Sara Elzey to be thanked.

Reporter: Recruit 1 volunteer each day (or do it yourself) to write up the race results and a short article each day and submit it to the Fairbanks Daily News Miner and to ASPA Newsletter Coordinator, Lisa Stuby, and to Website Master, Don Kiely. Bring copy of previous day's results to next day's stage for racers to look at. This volunteer can be a racer. Submit list of volunteer(s) to Sara Elzey to be thanked.

Post-race Snack Coordinator: Recruit volunteers (or do it yourself) to bring some sugary snacks and hot drinks for the post-race festivities on Day 3. This volunteer can be a racer. Submit list of volunteer(s) to Sara Elzey to be thanked.

If you have any questions, please contact Sara Elzey at skijorex2@hotmail.com.

Crash Pool 2009/2010 by Sara Elzey

It is THAT time of the year again and I challenge all my fellow skijorers to join me in the CRASH POOL again this season! Last season there were only six participants but still the pool totaled \$144.25 which went to winner Don Kiely. Let's give him a run for the money this year.

Here is how it works: (I'm relying on the honor code here!)

1. Log each skijoring adventure on the log sheet provided, or use your own method. See the sample log sheet below. Note: if you take more than one trip on any given day log each trip, not just the day. If you know your distance, log that too, I'll have a special prize for whoever travels the farthest this season.
2. Set aside \$0.25 per skijoring trip to contribute to the pool.
3. Log each time you CRASH on the log sheet (be honest!)
4. Set aside an additional \$0.25 per CRASH to contribute to the pool.
5. Turn in your log sheet and your total contribution to the pool to Sara Elzey by the end of the season (exact date to be determined, depending on snow conditions!) *All entries will be kept strictly confidential!*
6. I will take your total number of CRASHES and divide it by your total number of skijoring adventures to find out your CRASH percentage. For example; if you skijored 10 times during the season and crashed 2 times, your crash percentage will be 20%. Another skijorer who skied 15 times during the season and crashed 4 times will have a crash percentage of 27%. I promise not to reveal anyone's crash percentage except the winner!

The skijorer with the **lowest** CRASH percentage (fewest # of crashes) wins the pool.

If you have any questions please email me! skijorex2@hotmail.com.

May the best skijorer win! Good Luck everyone! Sara Elzey

SAMPLE LOG SHEET:

SKIJORER NAME: Sally Skijorer

DATE	LOCATION of Skijoring Adventure	Distance	# CRASHES	Trip	crash	Total
11/1/09	North Star Golf Course	4	1	.25	.25	.50
11/4/09	Creamer's Field	6	0	.25		.25
11/6/09	Goldstream Valley	8	2	.25	.50	.75
4/01/10	TOTAL Contribution to CRASH Pool	18	3	.75	.75	1.50

Loosing our Furry Friends by Lisa Stuby

I am surprised how relatively quickly this newsletter has been coming together. A cup of strong coffee at 5PM is working wonders, although I may not get much sleep tonight. However, I have saved this portion until last and am having some difficulty in getting this section going despite my buzz. Unfortunately, the one sad thing about owning and loving a pet is they don't live as long as us humans. Euthanasia is never an easy subject to talk about. We all know what The American Veterinary Medical Association says about when to know if the time comes to humanely put your pet to sleep. That is, "if your pet can no longer experience the things it once enjoyed, cannot respond to you in its usual ways, appears to be experiencing more pain than pleasure, if your pet is terminally ill or critically injured, or if the financial or emotional cost of treatment is beyond your means." Still, knowing when it is the right time is NEVER easy. My first dogs were sled dogs, Bears and Moon, and they lived to be 12.5 and 14.5 years respectively. Both were "rejects." However, I better like the categorization people of the show world categorize their dogs into "pet quality" and "show quality." Bears and Moon were definitely "pet quality" and were my best buddies and constant companions. There was so much more to them than skijoring. Bears was great around horses and car-ride-loving Moon and I made a trip to Dawson each year during early September. Both were love sponges and very loyal. I was their human as much as they were my dogs and oh the adventures we had! Loosing them was something that never occurred would happen, but it did. However, as memories do start to fade with time and age and always being a big fan of sled dog art, I commissioned a drawing from Miriam Cooper, one of our sponsors. Having this beautiful piece of artwork on my wall is keeping a lot of dear memories alive. After loosing them I was ready to NEVER have another dog. Thankfully friends talked me into getting a Norwegian elkhound puppy. I couldn't bear having another sled dog at the time and wanted my third dog to be "different," Getting another dog has not been a "replacement" but an enrichment.

A Summer of Sadness & of Joy by Sara Elzey

This summer I said good-bye to one of my nearest & dearest friends, my dog Shadow. Many of you knew him. He was tall and black with super long legs and a curly tail and sharp, bright eyes. I competed in nearly 100 skijoring & running events with him in the nearly 15 years we were together. He was my first dog and the reason I got into skijoring. He was exceptional in so many ways. He was smart and independent which sometimes was a mixed blessing! But he was also very loyal and devoted to me. He would not skijor with anyone but me, and he preferred being with me no matter what the circumstances. I think his most exceptional quality was how he seemed to be able to read my mind. Whenever I was doing something new or different and not sure if he would be able to understand or cope with the situation he always surprised me and came through with flying colors. His one failing was that he was irrationally afraid of thunder and fire works to the point of even biting me once in fear! Letting him go was one of the hardest things I've ever done, but his body could no longer keep up with his heart & spirit. He was almost deaf and he had trouble walking but he loved to ride with his head out the car window and take walks together until his last day.

After several months of mourning I was ready to open my heart to a new love. It came in the form of a skinny, red, pointer-husky mix named Dylan. She is a funny, good-natured dog who actually smiles when she's happy. She has a small (only semi-destructive) shoe fetish and loves sleeping on dog pillows. She runs like a gazelle and can jump obstacles like a steeple-chaser. She was afraid of the cat at first (and he of her) but they've agreed to mutually ignore one another. She follows me around constantly and thinks pretty highly of my hubby too. We are looking forward to spending many joy-filled years together. And I've found that throughout the seasons of life it is good to know there will always be a 4-legged, fur-covered, tail-wagging companion to share my life with.



Left PrismaColor original drawing of Bears (left) and Moon (right) by Miriam Cooper. Photo by Miriam Cooper.

Right, Shadow living his final days as a spoiled senior citizen. Photo by Sara Elzey.



Canine Quotes

The great pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself too.

-Samuel Butler

A dog can express more with his tail in minutes than his owner can express with his tongue in hours.

-Anonymous

If dogs could talk, it would take a lot of the fun out of owning one.

-Andrew A. Rooney

If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man.

-Mark Twain

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. Gas doesn't look like it is going to be getting any cheaper in the future. 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.

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 Club: \$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.

Payments can also be made on the ASPA Website using Pay Pal at <http://www.alaskaskijoring.org/join.html>

2009-10 ASPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COORDINATORS

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Trail Grooming: Pat DeRuyter, 479-7853, patd@gci.net
Beginner's Clinic Coordinator: Sara Elzey, 378-5024, skijorex2@hotmail.com
Stage Race Coordinators: None so far!!
Board Members at Large:
Sara Tabbert: 479-0456, stabbert@hotmail.com, Don Atwood, dkatwood@alaska.edu; Rebecca Gilbert rgilbertmchs@yahoo.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.

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