

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!

February 12-14 Race Across the Valley

Different Venues each Day and Start Times
Sara Elzey
378-5024

**February 21,
Trail Tour #4,**
Location TBA
Peggy Raybeck, 457-4775 and Janna Miller, 479-5585

February 27,
ASPA Distance Race
Chena River
Sara Tabbert,
RSVP, 479-0456

March 6
8th Annual Birch Hill Races,
Jim Herriges, 455-8007

February 27, 2010 ASPA Distance Race

Over the past couple of years, folks have commented on wanting to race longer distances than have been available with our Fun Races. Well, on February 27th ASPA's Distance race will take place on the Chena River and be open to a variety of participants. We welcome runners in the 12 mile category and skijorers, winter bikers, and bikejorers in the 12, 20, and "bridge and back" (approx 28 miles – to Nordale Bridge and back to downtown) categories. Racing will begin at the Graehl landing at 11 am on Saturday, February 27. This race will differ from other events in a few ways, and we hope for a good turnout! Please watch the ASPA website for more details. The race will cost \$5 for members and \$10 for non-members.

The condition and safety of the river is a consideration. If there are dangerous spots in the trail the race may be cancelled or shortened. This is also not a race on a closed course, so racers may encounter other trail users. Snowmachines and loose dogs are always a possibility.

If you are interested in participating in the ASPA Distance Race, please RSVP to the race organizer, Sara Tabbert at stabbert@hotmail.com or 479 0456. We need to have a MINIMUM of 10 Participants.

As always, we need help with the race. Positions open for the race include timer, relief timer (it's going to be a while out in the cold!) starter, and handler. Although this is going to be an "as is" race in terms of trail conditions, we would not object to a volunteer who is willing to run the groomer up and down the trail for us! Want to help? Please contact Sara Tabbert at stabbert@hotmail.com or 479 0456.

Volunteers Needed at Fun Races!!

ASPA is a non-profit, TOTALLY volunteer organization that solely runs on and depends on volunteers. At this season's Fun Races, though, volunteers have been sparse. So, in order to try and drum up more help, ASPA is going to waive the race fee at our next Fun Race if the racer brings a volunteer to help with timing, dog handling, registration, etc. So, come to the next race, bring some help, save some dough, and have lots of FUN.



FUN RACE #4, NORTH STAR GOLF COURSE, 1/31/2010

by Andy Warwick

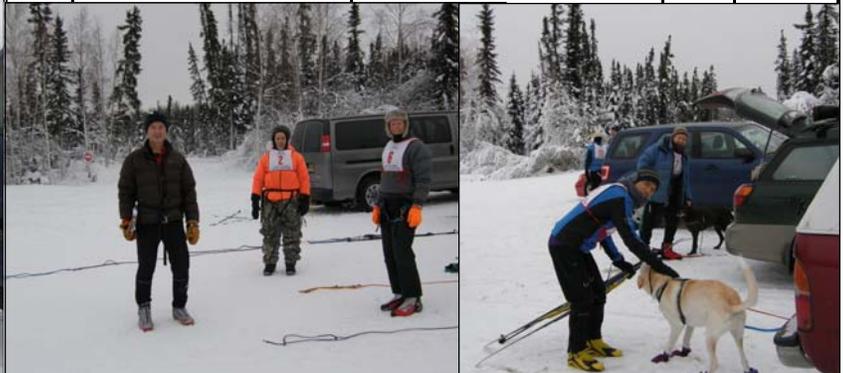
Temperature: +7 F
Trails: excellent!

VOLUNTEERS:
PAT DERUYTER – REGISTRATION
AND STARTER
ANDY WARWICK – RACE DIRECTOR
AND TIMING

Below are a few photographs taken by Pat DeRuyter at the start of Fun Race #4. Unfortunately, she was too busy starting and timing the participants to take any more.



Alaska Skijor and Pulk Association				
Fun Race #4, Sunday, January 31, 2010				
Northstar Golf Course				
Bib #	Skijorer	Dogs	Time	Place
8 mile 1 dog				
4	Lisa St. Clair	Indy	34:47	1
6 mile 1 dog				
5	Bruce Miller	Roy	24:06	1
4 mile 3 dog				
6	Carol Kleckner	Shaman, Millie, Blackberry	13:40	1
1	Don Kiely	Casper, Chance, Jenny	14:47	2
2	Don Morton	Cocoa, Reeses, Toffee	21:25	3
4 mile 2 dog				
0	Andy Warwick	Zip, Joba	14:14	1
7	Gail Davidson	Tobi, Cocoa	19:06	2
4 mile 1 dog				
8	Brad Marden	Waylon	14:45	1
9	Wally Bandeff	Finney	18:37	2
10	Christy Gleason	Kenzi	21:07	3
2 mile 3 dog				
15	Sara Elzey	Raja, Loon, Zorba	8:03	1
2 mile 2 dog				
18	Andy Warwick	Boots, Licorice	7:52	1
16	Don Kiely	Borax, Pippi	8:35	2
11	Rebecca Gilbert	Sharlee, Pepper	8:50	3
3	Sara Elzey	Ayla, Dylan	14:56	4
2 mile 1 dog				
13	Rachael Saumweber	Nina	8:07	1
12	Ted Wu	Ty	8:16	2
14	Jim Altherr	Sophie	15:41	3



2010 Race Across the Valley

February 12, 13, and 14

This long-running annual skijoring event features three days of racing, each day at a different venue. This year's venues will be Creamer's Field, Chena Lakes Mike Agbaba Trails, and back by popular demand, the UAF-West Ridge Ski Trail on February 12, 13, and 14 respectively. We were originally planning on having the first leg at the Alaska Dog Musher's Jeff Studdert Race Track. However, lack of snow and very poor trail conditions have necessitated moving this venue on February 12th to Creamer's Field, where trails are much better.

Racing starts at 1pm each day. Please check-in between 12:15-12:45.

There will be two distance classes offered each day: Short & Long, and a bonus, Extra-long class offered on February 13 at Chena Lakes. The Short Distance Class will race approximately 4 miles each day and the Long Distance Class will race 6-8 miles each day. The Extra-long Distance class (Saturday only) will race 12.5 miles. Racers may participate all 3 days in either class as Stage Racers or in any class on any day as Day Racers.

Race fees are \$10/day for ASPA members, \$15/day for non-ASPA members. There will be a discount (\$25 for ASPA members, \$40 for non-members) for pre-registering for all 3 days by Feb 10th at 5pm. Pre-register by sending an email to Sara Elzey at skijorex2@hotmail.com. Include skier name, dog names, and class entering.

The temperature cut-off for this and all ASPA races will be -15°F. To know whether or not a race has been cancelled for the day, please call the ASPA Hotline at 457-5456. For complete race information go to www.alaskaskijoring.org/events.html. See you there!!

ASPA Trapping Clinic

Thursday, 24 February 2010, AK Dog Musher's Hall, 7:00 to 9:00 PM

Yes, ASPA is proud to announce that we are holding a trapping clinic. But no, not THAT kind of trapping clinic! This kind is going to give you hands-on experience with the most common traps and snares used in Interior Alaska. That way, if you ever have the unfortunate experience of having a dog caught, you'll have some idea what to do to release it and minimize the chance of injury or death.

You'll also learn some of the legalities of trapping, and have the chance to ask a trapper about what he does. The Alaska Trappers Association has been extremely helpful in organizing this event, and Pete Buist will be the presenter. You'll also have the opportunity to purchase one of the Trappers' DVDs about safely sharing the trails where traps are used.

This clinic is about the safety and welfare of dogs, not about whether trapping is right or wrong or should be banned or regulated. You'll have the opportunity to ask Pete any questions you have, but this is not the forum for trying to make a change, if you might be so inclined.

Best of all, through the generosity of the Alaska Trappers Association and ADMA, the clinic is free. Please RSVP to Don Kiely at donkiely@computer.org (preferable) or 455-6749.

If this event is successful, we'll try to make this an annual event.

Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association's 10th Annual
Birch Hill Skijor Race
 Saturday, March 6, 2010, Birch Hill Nordic Ski Trails

Your one chance to enjoy the Birch Hill ski trails with your dogs this year! Remember, dogs are not allowed there outside of this one event.

Classes: Fun Races (interval start)

1-dog 4 km

2-dog 6 km

3-dog 6 km

Long Races: (mass start)

One-dog 9 km

Two-dog 13 km

Relay Event: Three one-dog teams per relay team, 3 km each.
 May require more than just skiing!

Check-in 9:00-9:30 a.m. at log warmup hut, race meeting at 9:30, start at 10:00.

Save \$2 by pre-registering by sending an e-mail to herriges@gci.net or calling 455-8007 by 5pm on Thursday, March 4. Include name, phone #, class and dogs' names.

These wonderful trails and facilities provided by Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks and Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department. Thanks!

Trail route: Same as last three years. Maps will be posted at Birch Hill.

Entry Fee: \$10 Fun Races, \$13 Long Races 9K & 13K. \$5 extra for non-ASPA members. \$2 extra for registering on race day. Relay free.

Parking and cleanup: Park in far end of lower parking lot. Special attention must be placed on cleaning up after your dogs in the parking and start areas. We highly recommend that you encourage them to do their business prior to the race, eg. take 'em for a jog.

Contact: Check www.alaskaskijoring.org or the Skijor Hotline for updates (45SKIJO, 457-5456) then call Jim Herriges (455-8007).

Weather cutoff: A cancellation notice will be placed on the Skijor Hotline (45SKIJO, 457-5456) by 9:00 pm on Friday, March 5 if the race is cancelled. Once we set up the course on Friday evening, we'll ignore the thermometers and race on Saturday.

Check alaskaskijoring.org for changes and updates!

Lee's Cabin Fun Event, March 20-21, 2010

The annual Lee's Cabin Event will be held on March 20, 2010. Participants can skijor or bikejor from Mile 28 on the Elliott Hwy to Lee's Cabin in the White Mountains for a one-day fun race. The cabin will be rented for Saturday evening, for those who would like to spend the night. This activity is one of the highlights of the season, with good company and beautiful scenery and usually good food. Please stay tuned for more details and the event dates near. For information, please contact Don Atwood at dkatwood@alaska.edu. See you all in March!!

Trail Tour #3, Chena Lakes by Janna Miller

Judging from the number of participants, Trail Tour #3 was a big success. Nine people and fifteen dogs came out for a beautiful, sunny day in relatively balmy temperatures slightly above zero to skijor at Chena Lakes Recreation Area.

The start was a bit chaotic and confusing. The only person who knew where we were going was the last to hit the trail for various reasons. Fortunately, the trails loop back on each other and we all reunited within a mile or two and got redirected so we could actually see the trail markers. After passing several ice fishing parties who seemed stunned at all the skijorers blasting by, half the contingent branched out onto the trail network while the other half was content to do laps on the lake.

Two of the lake-lappers are brand new to Alaska and to skijoring and were enthusiastic to put their Fall 2009 skijoring clinic skills to use. And a third lake-lapper wanted to take it easy to save energy for Sunday's fun race. We'll know by the time this newsletter comes out whether that helped.

The trails group reported successful runs on the 6.5 and 9.5 mile circuits. If those trails are groomed anywhere nearly as well as the lake section, it was heavenly. If you haven't skijored at Chena Lakes, go immediately! It is groomed nearly as wide as North Star and Creamer's Field and is entirely flat. Reflective arrows on posts clearly mark trail junctions.

One participant arrived early in hopes of finishing with the group, but we only saw her car. We don't know whether they had a picnic or decided the day was so lovely that they would push on for a longer adventure. They undoubtedly had a great time.

The next trail tour will be Sunday, February 21st. Your intrepid trail tour organizers have some ideas but always welcome input and ideas. Contact Peggy Raybeck (457-4775 or paycheck39@hotmail.com) or Janna Miller (479-5585 or janna@alaska.net) with your thoughts

On Our Own by Lisa Stuby

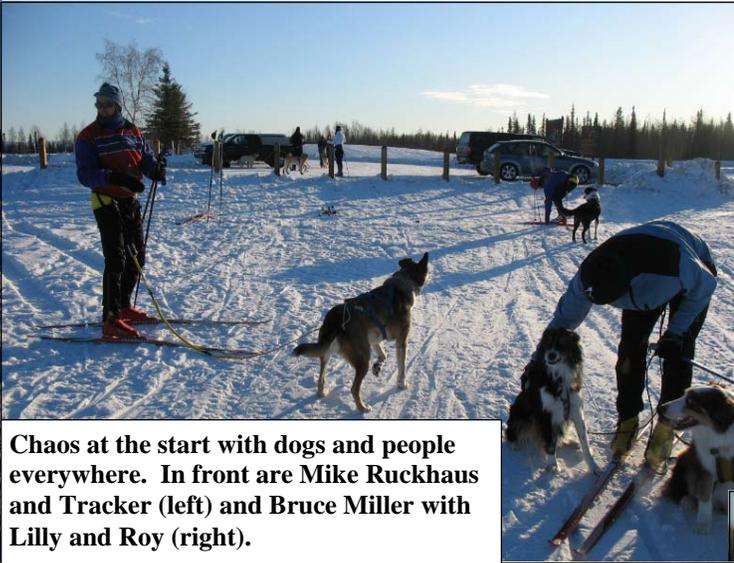
Oops, we just missed Janna and Peggy's group for Trail Tour #3. Given our usual "slowness" my dog, a Norwegian elkhound who is not built for speed, we got started 30 minutes earlier than the other Trail Tour participants, hoping to meet up with them later in the afternoon. I was also hoping to do the 12-mile circuit. Janna mentioned the surprised looks on the "ice fishing parties who seemed stunned at all the skijorers blasting by" but two of these we had visited and one even gave Killae some hotdog to eat. Killae is a social butterfly who loves to meet new people, especially children. So, I stopped and talked and told two groups that my friends would be coming through in about a 1/2 hour and to tell them HI and that I was up ahead. However, with a combination of pets and hot dogs, good trail conditions, and a happy momma glad to get out of town, Killae was feeling good and we never met up with the other Trail Tourists.

Overall, the lake trail was very good. However, the 9.5 and 12-mile loops swing onto the Chena Lakes bike path and I had to dodge a bit of gravel and did cause some minor scuffs to my skate skis. As the 12-mile loop left the bike trail and swung back in towards the lake, there were a couple of bare spots. As the trail straightened out, it got good again. A winter trail map for Chena Lakes can be found at:

<http://www.co.fairbanks.ak.us/ParksandRecreation/Forms/CLRA/CLRAWinterGuide-print.pdf>

Of course, with a couple more inches of snow, the 9.5 and 12-mile loops would improve where they incorporate the bike trail, but that is the truth for pretty much all of the interior Alaska trails. Next week is the Race Across the Valley and leg #2 is at Chena Lakes. I hope the fishermen are still there.

Trail Tour #3, Chena Lakes photos by Janna Miller



Chaos at the start with dogs and people everywhere. In front are Mike Ruckhaus and Tracker (left) and Bruce Miller with Lilly and Roy (right).



Bruce Miller and Roy lead the way for Janna Miller with Chico and Lilly (Way Above). Nina Ruckhaus and Sam finish strong (Left). Wally Bandeff and Peggy Raybeck's dogs at the finish (Above).



Temperature Surfing Just Got Easier!!

For those of you, like me, who are always trying to figure out the “correct” temperature in Fairbanks, given there is so much variation depending on where you are, what elevation, etc. and find yourselves “Temperature Surfing” through numerous websites put on by the National Weather Service, Birch Hill, MSNBC, Fairbanks Airport, Mesonet, etc., now your searches have just become easier. Don Kiely has compiled several temperature stations around town into ONE website, the new “Fairbanks Skijoring Weather” at <http://www.fairbankswx.com/>

This site shows real-time temperatures around Fairbanks. This site presents a table that gathers in ONE place all the current temperatures for the most relevant weather reporting stations of interest to skijorers and mushers. The table is organized by elevation, so that the higher entries are higher elevations. So please visit this site and thanks to Don Kiely for putting this together.

Valentine's Day Dog Humor

What would you get if you crossed a dog with a valentine card? A card that says, "I love you drool-ly!"

Please Remember! Be extra careful that there is no Valentine's Day candy where your dog can reach it. Candy is not healthy for your dog and Chocolate can be very dangerous.

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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