

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!

March Trail Tours every Sunday

Janna Miller
479-5585

March 16 Fun Race

Location TBD
Check ASPA Website

March 19-20 Eleazar's Cabin Event

Don Atwood
474-7380

March 20
Orienteering Race
Creamer's Field
Pat DeRuyter
479-7853

March 27
End of Year Race and BBQ, location TBD

Stage #2 Race Across the Valley, February 5, 2011, Creamer's Field by Sara Elzey

Twenty-five skijorers and fifty dogs came out to race on a beautiful, sunny day at Creamers Field. Temperatures started off just above the temperature cut-off of -15 degrees but quickly warmed up as the sun climbed higher in the sky. It was the second stage of the Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association's annual, 3 day, Race Across the Valley. Some competitors were continuing their quest to finish on top over the 3 days of racing, others came today to race just for the day. Three competitors were racing for the first time in their skijoring career. Some racers with more dogs competed more than once using different dogs for each run. Plenty of spectators were on hand snapping photos in the brilliant sunshine. The biggest racing class was the Sprint Class, 2 or 3-dog. Andy Warwick with Zip, Licorice & Joba finished the 3.5 mile course first with a time of 12:23. He was followed by Carol Kleckner with Blackberry & Jenny and Sara Elzey with Katrina, Daria & Kate in 13:03 and 13:38 respectively. Warwick & Elzey are competing for the overall 3-day title in the Race Across the Valley series, Kleckner was just racing for the day. Five other competitors competed in this class. The Sprint Class, 1-dog was won by Bruce Miller and Roy. During the first stage Miller and today's second place finisher, Jim Herriges and Lily were tied but today Miller pulled away with a time of 14:08 compared to Herriges 14:48. Janna Miller and Lilly round out this class with a finish time of 16:08. The Mid-distance Class had 4 racers in the 1-dog and 4 racers in the 2 or 3 dog. Sunnifa Deerh and Chipper beat out Gail Davidson and Tobi over 5.5 miles of racing. In the 2 or 3 dog group Brian Charlton with Wiggy, Bonnie & Clyde came in first with a time of 20:38 beating Lisa St Clair with Indy and Lark. The Endurance Class, racing about 8.5 miles attracted only 2 competitors. Sara Tabbert with Pete & Rothko finished in a time of 30:59. Mara Bacsujlaky and Tansy (in her first race) missed a turn and ended up going about 10.5 miles, finishing up in 47:26.

In addition to the Race Across the Valley, there was also a Fun Race. Most racers chose to go the 1.5 miles distance except for Gail Davidson and Tobi. They completed one mile in 9:58. The 1.5 mile, 1-dog class was won by Kriya Dunlap and Zeus in 5:21, followed by Dale Griffin and Zammie in 6:48. The 1.5 mile, 2-dog class was also won by Kriya Dunlap racing with Boomer & Ruby in 5:01. Second place went to Julie Houghton with Flurry & Glad in 7:04.

Thanks to all the volunteers who made this race possible! Peggy Raybeck groomed the trails, Lisa Stuby handled registration, Pat DeRuyter, Clarice Dukeminer, and Janey Daley were timers, Don Kiely helped handle dogs, Bud Marschner took photographs, and Sara Elzey organized the race.



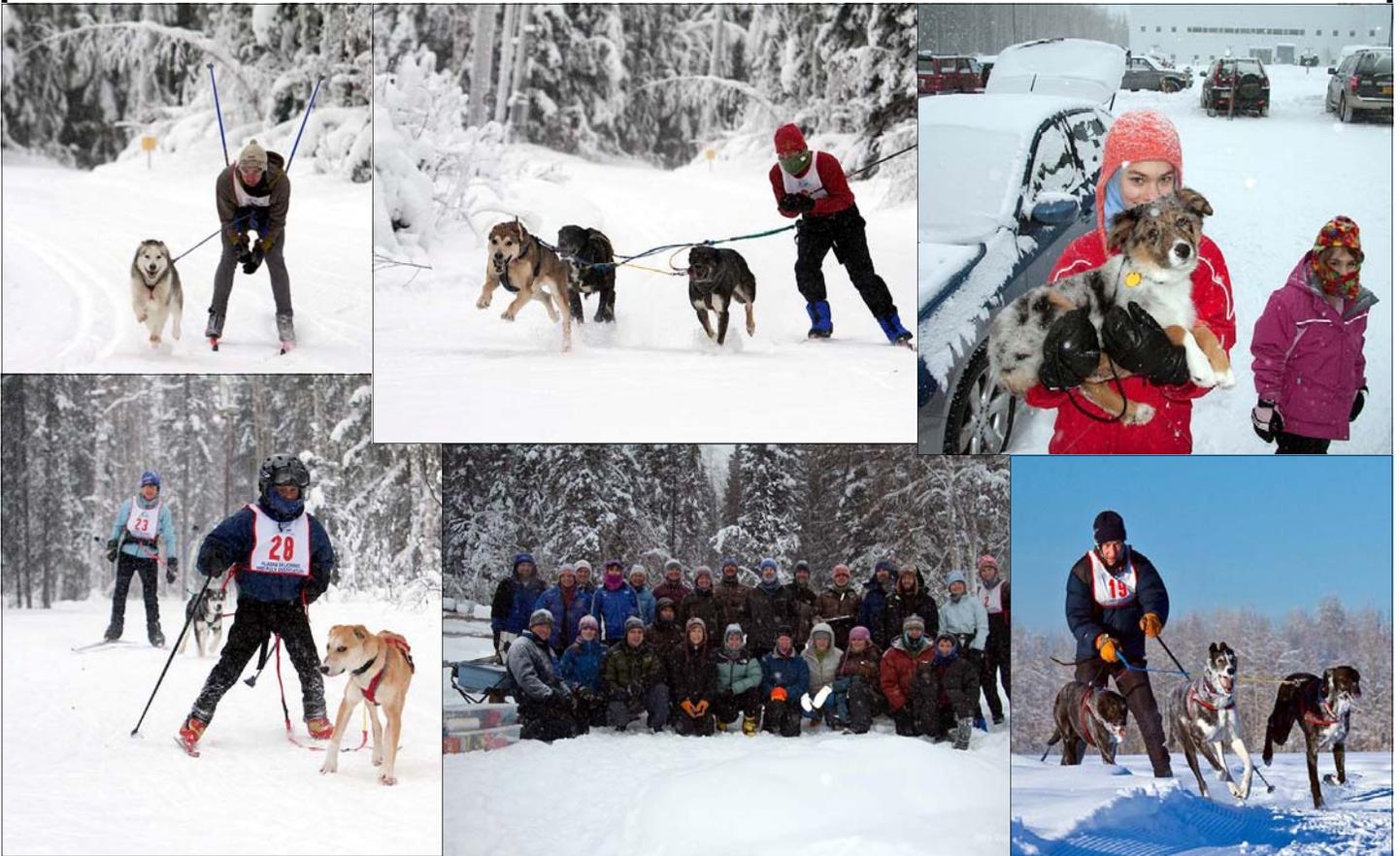
And they're off!! Sara Elzey with Katrina, Daria, and Kate; and Janna Miller with Lilly begin racing at Creamer's Field during Stage #2 of RAV. Photographs by Bud Marschner.

Stage #3 of Race Across the Valley, February 12, 2011 at UAF by Brian Charlton

The weather gods were finally smiling upon the Alaska Skijor and Pulk Association on Sunday. Warming weather combined with fresh snow and grooming resulted in an excellent day for skijoring on the UAF West Ridge Ski Trails. 31 participants competed in Sunday's race which coincided with the third day of the Race Across the Valley race series. Five skiers completed all three stages of the RAV with Bruce Miller and Roy holding on to their lead in the one dog class to edge out Jim Herriges and Lena by just 16 seconds. Third place was taken by Janna Miller. In the multi-dog class Sara Elzey with Katrina, Daria, and Dylan capitalized on a wrong turn by previous leader Andy Warwick with Zip and Joba to move into first place. Due to Warwick's misfortune Jim Herriges with Ole and Lena took second place in this class as well.

The 4 mile one dog class had the most competitors with 19 racers. Greg Jurek won the race in 16:30 followed by Herriges in 17:46 and Miller in 18:12. The multi-dog 4 mile class was won by Nina Ruckhaus with Sam and Sasha in 13:10 followed by Elzey in 15:11 and race organizer Brian Charlton in 15:36 with Clyde, Bonnie, and Wiggy. Three skiers conquered two laps of the hilly UAF trails to cover 8 miles. The one dog class was won by Allen Spangler with Galena in 42:44 and the two dog, 8 mile class was won by Sara Tabbert with Pete and Rothko in 36:54, edging out Erin Trochim with Itty Bitty and Tarsis in 37:13. Quinn O'Brien and Pauly were the winners of the beginner, 1 mile class in 8:26. Three children under age 12 completed this challenging race, finishing with big smiles on their faces.

ASPA would again like to thank UAF and groomer Jason Garron for their help and support. Please remember this is the only time of year that dogs are allowed on UAF Ski Trails during the winter. Also, many thanks to race organizer, Brian Charlton. Also thanks to volunteers Matt Sprau, Lisa Stuby, Bill Cable, Brandon McGrath, Laura Gutierrez, and Jeff Yacevich. RAV results can be found at: <http://www.alaskaskijoring.org/results/2010-2011/RAV.html>



Rav #3 at UAF From top clockwise: Allan Spangler with Alpine; Brian Charlton with Clyde, Wiggy, and Bonnie; future skijoring dog and skijorer; Kristen O'Brien with Lena (front) and Van Levy with Rye (back); Group photo of race participants; and Andy Warwick with Zip, Licorice, and Joba coming in for the finish in Stage #2 at Creamer's Field. All photographs taken by Bud Marschner.

Trail Tour, February 6, 2011, Super bowl Sunday by Janna Miller

Seven adventurers skipped Super bowl XLV on February 6 to toe the line on the Rosie Creek trail system instead. Although temperatures were borderline for the cutoff on the official phone line, we were pleasantly surprised to find this area was well above zero at start time.

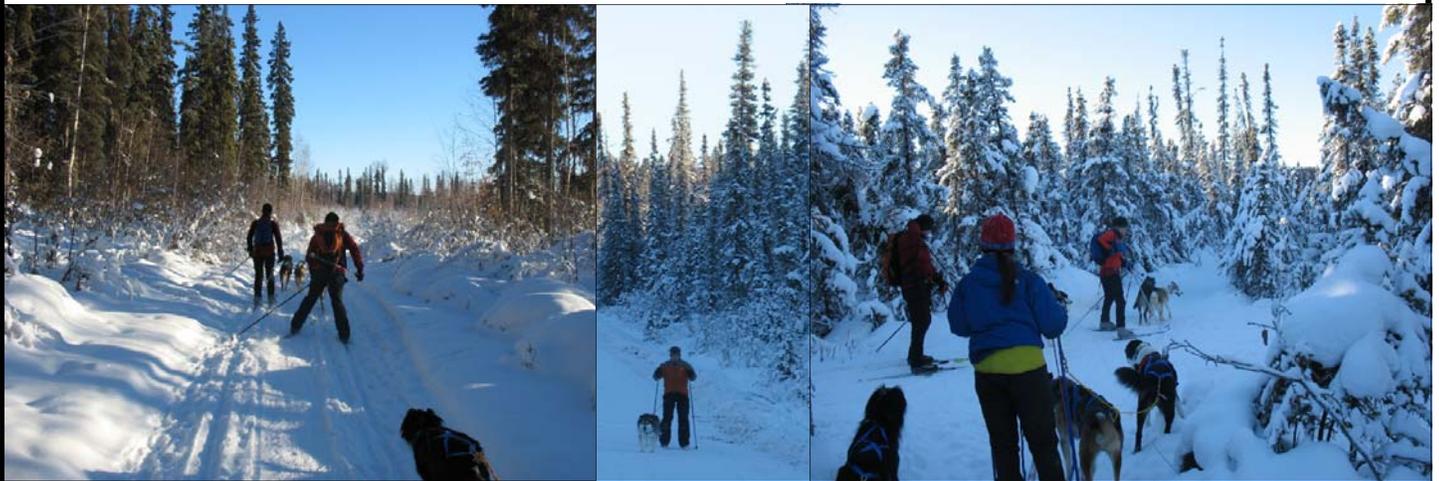
After a stern warning about an abrupt 18 inch drop from the trail onto Rosie Creek, we all opted to walk the first quarter mile of trail to the creek then strap on our skis. The group quickly broke into three groups which was a bit of a challenge as only one person knew the route and there are several trail junctions. Before long we had a system worked out, though, and were on our way.

After an initial couple miles on flat ground, the trail climbs up for about half a mile to a major trail junction. We took a right turn, descending back down and into a narrow, winding trail with sharp turns and trees at every corner. There was a lot of "easy!" and scraping of skis to control speed but everyone got through just fine. At another major junction we turned left then followed a series of smaller, shorter trails which probably all connect back together eventually. We worked our way up a short, steep hill. Back on the main trail, we traversed up the long, gradual hill to our side trail and back to our vehicles.

This was the first time most of the group had been on this system and everyone agreed it was a lot of fun. The beautiful, clear sky and plentiful snow surely helped. Two of our party were novice skijorers and although it was quite a challenging course, they both returned smiling.

The trail system is seemingly endless with so many inviting twists and turns to explore. You can see the Parks Hwy in many spots and may use that as an orientation landmark.

To access this jewel of a trail system, turn left off the Parks Hwy onto Cripple Creek Road. About two miles in, take the first right after the pavement ends, Rosie Creek Trail. Proceed exactly one mile to a small pullout on the right, barely big enough for two cars to pull off the road. The trailhead is right there.



From left to right: Sara and Brandon enjoy the wide, fast downhill to skijor in tandem; Chris Burrow successfully finishes his inaugural skijoring adventure; and, most of the group waits at a junction for the stragglers to catch up (in the photo are Kimberlee, Sara Tabbert and Brandon McGrath, and Nina Ruckhaus). All photographs by Janna Miller.

John Hallsten

John Hallsten was a long-time skijorer and member of ASPA. Sadly, he passed away on February 8, 2011 after a long battle with cancer. He and his German Short Haired pointer, Chipper, attended many races. John spent most of his life as a Lutheran minister and found fellowship and spiritual comfort in the community of his church. He was a counseling psychologist, practicing in the Fairbanks area until his retirement. Happily, eight-year old Chipper is now in the care of Sunnifa Deehr, who has attended many races with her this season and they both have done very well. Chipper is a littermate of Jim's Lena and Ole. It is good knowing that Chipper has gone to a good home.

2011 Birch Hill Race, Saturday, March 5, 2011

Reported by Jim Herriges

One day a year skijor enthusiasts can challenge themselves on the hilly, well-groomed trails of Birch Hill thanks to the support of both Parks and Recreation Department and the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks. On Saturday, nearly 30 skijorers and over 40 dogs enjoyed sunny trails at the 11th Annual Birch Hill Skijor races. The interval start races began the morning's events. Sara Elzey with Katrina, Dylan and Daria started second but caught and passed Don Kiely on the course only to encounter a moose on the trail. She apparently didn't lose much time however, winning the 6K three-dog class in 14:10. Carol Kleckner (with Jenny and Blackberry) won the 6K two-dog class in 14:57 and Don Atwood and Harley finished first in the 4K one-dog class in 14:43.

The largest class was the 7.5K mass start one-dog event. Bruce Miller pushed the pace hard up the first hill in an attempt to distance himself from the competition knowing that dogs love to chase. That strategy seemed to be successful as he and his speed demon Roy captured the win, finishing the course in an impressive 20 minutes 22 seconds. Erin Trochim and Itty pulled to the finish line next in 23:01 and Janna Miller with Lilly, came in third in 23:01.

In the two-dog 9K class, Jesse Warwick with Joba and Zip moved to the front of the pack early and gradually pulled away from Jim Herriges and his dogs, Ole and Lily. Out on the White Bear loop, Jeff Wells used his greater speed on the downhills to catch and eventually pull ahead of Herriges. Warwick finished in 22:42, Wells in 23:12 and Herriges in 23:43.

Six three-person teams were entered in the relay event. Colored bandanas were used like batons and also to identify the teams. Team "Blue's" first leg racers Herriges and Lena arrived in the hand off zone first, just ahead of Trochim and Itty of the "Flag" team. Team "Blue" lost considerable time as Herriges frantically searched for the team bandana that had migrated from where it had been tucked into his shirt. During leg two, Bruce Miller and Roy gained the lead despite dropping the team bandana shortly before crossing the hand-off line and needing to turn around and go back to pick it up. Lisa St. Clair and Indy maintained the lead for team "Pink", but by less than a second as they were almost overtaken at the finish line by Dana Moudra and Cooper. It was actually a three-way battle for first with Sara Elzey and Faero of team "Stars and Stripes" finishing only a couple of seconds back. A list of race times and places can be found at <http://www.alaskaskijoring.org/results/2010-2011/BirchHill.html>. ALL photographs below are taken by Bud Marschner. **Bud took TONS of photographs during RAV #2 and #3 as well as the Birch Hill race. If you would like to view and/or order any prints, please see his website at <http://budsalaskaphotos.smugmug.com/>. Print costs are very reasonable for professional-quality photographs. We thank Bud very much for showing up to the ASPA events and taking photographs.**



Comin' round the mountain!



Sara Tabbert with Rothko and Irene



Bill Schnabel with Chewka



Sunnifa Deehr and Chipper



Come on, time to go! Kimberlee Beckmen with Lily.



Happy dog, Matt Sprau with Tarsis

ASPA Orienteering Event Open to Skijorers and Dog Walkers/Joggers

The challenging activities of skijoring and orienteering will be combined in the Ninth annual ASPA Orienteering event at Creamer's Field on Sunday, March 20, 2011. This year we will have 8 classes of competitors. There will be 30 and 60 minute SKIJOR classes as well as 30 and 60 minute WALK/JOG with your dog classes. Each of the classes will have adult and child divisions. Children are under 16 years old and will need a parent or guardian to sign his/her permission slip. More than one child may accompany a single dog.

We encourage all the people who enjoy Creamer's Field with their dogs to come and join the fun. You may take one, two, or three dogs. All dogs must be on leash or line at all times. Registration will begin at 3:30pm and starts will begin at 4:00 p.m. and final start time will be 4:30 p.m. The cost is \$5 and all participants will receive a prize.

The Format is to gather as many points as you can in the 30 or 60 minute time allotment that you choose. Thirty "Controls"(sheets of paper with removable numbered tabs attached to wooden stakes) will be placed around the Creamer's Field and ADMA trails between the ADMA Musers Hall and 19.7 mile turns on the "Outer Loop" and on parts of the "Inner Loop," (27-mile extension). The "Controls" will be assigned point values from 10 to 100 points each depending on how easy it is to find them or how close to the trailhead they are. Ten "Controls" will be for walker/joggers only; Ten "Controls" will be for skijorers only; Ten "Controls" will be for all participants. The controls will be color-coded.

The control locations and point values will be indicated on a map and score card handed out to each competitor. Competitors will choose to spend either 30 or 60 minutes on the course to score as many points as possible by collecting tabs from the Controls and bringing them back to the start area. A competitor does not have to go to the controls in a specific order or from a specific direction which means there is the possibility of two-way traffic on any of the trails. Creative shortcuts are perfectly legal if you can get your dogs to take them. Competitors who are late returning to the finish area will be assessed ten (10) penalty points for each minute after their designated finish time. The course will be set so competitors do not need a compass for navigation.

When you arrive at Creamer's Field, go to the Farmhouse to pay your entry fee and fill out a registration form. At that time, you will be given a map and a score card. Write your name and circle your class (30 minute or 60 minute) on the score card. You must start between 4:00 and 4:30pm. The starter will record your time when you start. You have 30 or 60 minutes from that time to return without penalty. The Starter/Timer must sign you back in when you return. When you are finished, after checking in with the Starter/Timer, put your dog away and take your control tabs into the Creamer's Farmhouse for scoring.

Helpful tip1: You can put the race map in a gallon sized zip lock bag and pin it to the front of your jacket. This will keep your hands free. Safety pins and zip lock bags will be provided.

Helpful tip 2: Wear a watch and synchronize it to the "official" race clock. This is important so you know how much time you have spent on the course and know when to return to the finish area without being late and getting penalized.

Helpful tip 3: Wear a vest or jacket with a deep pocket where you can keep the Control Tabs. Remember, the Control Tabs are the only means of verifying you visited a control, so you must bring them back to be scored.

To volunteer to help with this event, to pre-register or for more information, contact Pat DeRuyter at patd@acsalaska.net or 479-7853.

ASPA 2010-2011 Crash Pool

Attention all 2010-11 Crash Pool Participants! The deadline to submit your results will be Wednesday, March 23. Please send your tally sheets to Sara Elzey at skijorex2@hotmail.com. Then come with your money to the Fun Race & BBQ on March 27. I will announce the winner and pay out the pool. All actual percentages will be kept confidential. Thanks!

THANKS!!!!!!! ☺

Many thanks to the almost downright heroic trail groomers. During the last two-weeks of February, the weather gods dumped over 2 feet of snow with accompanying 50 mph winds that wrecked hours of hard work. Many thanks to Pat DeRuyter, Peggy Raybeck, Andy and Jesse Warwick for tackling the mess and current trail smoothers Carol Kleckner, Jim Altherr, Don Atwood, Jim Herriges, and anyone I might have missed.

2011 North Pole Race Results, Sunday, March, 6, 2011 **Reported by Sara Elzey**

It was a day that skijorers dream about – brilliant sunshine, temps just above zero, a brand-new well-groomed race trail. The first annual Alaska Skijoring & Pulk Association Race was Sunday, March 6th. It started from the ball fields behind the Star of the North School on Badger Road looping west on the north side of the Richardson highway for 5.7 miles. Cooperating with the Alaska Dog Musher's Association's North Pole Championships the skijorers raced around the same course that the 4-dog sled classes raced later on in the day. Ten skijorers and 18 dogs completed the race, everyone finishing with a big grin. Racers started in reverse of the usual order, 1-dog teams went out first, then 2-dog, then 3-dog at one minute intervals. This made for some exciting passing right near the end of the course within view of the finish line. Five teams finished within a minute of one another, 2 more crossed a minute later. Skiers had navigate 2 road crossings and look their best for what seemed like a bunch of paparazzi photographers along the course. No moose were reported but many squirrels were sighted. Spring must have been in the air! In the end Greg Jurek with Tar and Rib held off Sara Elzey with Katrina, Daria and Dylan by 11 seconds to win the 2or3 dog class. Andy Warwick with Joba, Zip and Licorice was just 10 seconds behind them. Their final times were 20:10, 20:21 and 20:31, respectively. In the 1-dog class, Bruce Miller and Roy easily out-distanced their competition finishing in 22:31. Jim Herriges and Ole finish second in 26:58. Race times and places can be found at: <http://www.alaskaskijoring.org/results/2010-2011/NorthPole.html>

Thanks so much to the Alaska Dog Musher's Association for putting in the trail, timing the race and inviting us to join them!

A Club of a Different Name

The Board of the Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association (ASPA) has talked about changing the name of our club. We would now like to extend the discussion to the entire membership with the intention of voting on the topic at the spring barbecue meeting.

The arguments for change are that: 1) we are a Fairbanks organization, 2) the current name is unwieldy; and, 3) many folks have no idea what a "pulk" is.

The arguments for keeping our current name are that: 1) it is part of our history, 2) current name recognition; and, 3) it will take effort to affect the change.

One name that has been discussed as an alternative is the Fairbanks Skijor Club.

Feel free to send your thoughts on the topic (pro or con) to Jamie Marschner at marschne@arsc.edu. Alternative name suggestions are welcome as well.

We will vote on this proposal at the spring meeting on 27 March 2011.

2011 Dogs and Traps Clinic

On 9 March 2011, ASPA and the Alaska Trappers Association hosted a "Dogs and Traps Clinic" at the Noel Wien Library. A movie showed participants how to spot trapping activities on multi-use trails. This was followed by an opportunity to handle and explore different types of traps and snares, some of which can be exceedingly difficult to open. Pete Buist of the Alaska Trappers showed participants how to calm entrapped dogs and use available resources to free them. For anyone who has had the misfortune to find a dog in a trap, you realize that an efficient response is critical. Hands-on familiarity with traps can help to save your dog's life. Thanks to Don Atwood for organizing this important event.

2011 ASPA White Mountains Event

The annual White Mountains Trail Tour and Overnight will be held on March 19, 2011. Participants can skijor from Wickersham Dome Trailhead, Mile 28 on the Elliott Hwy, to Eleazar's Cabin in the White Mountains for a one-day fun event. The cabin is 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, beautiful scenery, and hearty food. Departure is 11:30 A.M. To reserve an overnight stay, contact Don Atwood, dkatwood@alaska.edu. Snow machine support for gear will be available.

2010-11 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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