



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!

Welcome to the 2016/2017 Season!!

Sorry to be a bit late with the newsletter. I've been travelling and visiting my family for the holidays. Plus Interior Alaska has been experiencing a "snow-drought" for most of November, so there wouldn't have been much to report. Happily as of this typing in early December 2016 it looks as though snow has fallen and trails are getting groomed, although much more is needed.

I've been the newsletter editor for 10+ years and this will be my LAST season. So, we will be looking for a new ASPA newsletter editor for the 2017-2018 season. It is time to get a new person with fresh ideas and enthusiasm. I'll be reminding folks of this in months to come. For anyone interested in taking the ASPA newsletter over next season, please contact me. My contact information is on the last page.

This is YOUR skijoring club and as such it is all volunteer. Race directors, trail groomers, etc. will always need help. Please consider helping out with a race in addition to participating in them. If you are interested in any of these things, you can contact any of the board members (email addresses on the website, www.alaskaskijoring.org) or send a note to the email list.

Or if you have any ideas like if you are a good skier and want to give a clinic, or create a race or event that is not on our schedule, etc., contact a board member at the above e-mail address or take from the list on the last page of this newsletter. All ideas and help will be welcomed.

To find out about upcoming events be sure to stay tuned to your e-mail and/or ASPA hotline (457-5456) for any date, time, or location changes. The first fun race was cancelled due to a lack of snow. But the second one is scheduled for December 17th, which is in between Thanksgiving and Christmas. This race will be a good way to burn off holiday calories and keep you from having to make New Years resolutions on getting into shape, losing weight, etc.

The Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association has a Facebook page for the membership. You will need to join this as a group. This will be a great way to share actual photos of trail conditions, trails discovered, dogs in action—or not, etc. So, please join and enjoy this great forum.

A calendar with all ASPA events is listed at our website (<http://www.alaskaskijoring.org/>) as well as page 3 of this newsletter and will be pe-

December 17
Fun Race #2
North Star Golf Course
Register 11:00-11:30
AM, race noon
Contact Nina Ruckhaus, noruckhaus@alaska.edu

January 14
Fun Race #3
Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or ASPA Website for details

February 6
Wax Clinic at Raven Cross Country, 6:00 PM
Pre-registration recommended.
Fred Raymond
456-5070



Welcome to the 2016/2017 Season!! (Continued)

ASPAs members will receive an electronic newsletter via e-mail during the “skijoring season” of the months of November-April. This is YOUR newsletter and you are all encouraged to submit photographs, articles, jokes, poetry, etc. Really almost anything and everything will be accepted. If you read something interesting, send it to the newsletter editor for sharing. If you participate in an interesting race or event, please share with the rest of the membership. Have any good photographs, feel free to share. It seems as though during past several years most photographs taken during races have been posted to Facebook. Maybe, in support of the ASPA newsletter you could save the BEST photograph(s) and e-mail it to me instead. During the past seasons, I had a “Trail of the Month” column, which was very well received. Also, in past years we have had a “Dog of the Month” section where folks could brag about their canine buddies. Heck, last year my dog had his own gossip column, “Killae’s Corner” and we had an “Ask the Experts” column. Neither of these can be possible without the experts (and gossip) to make it possible.

So, Please mail all articles, photographs, recipes, advice, things learned, etc. and questions to ask the experts to Lisa Stuby at lstuby@gci.net.

Here is looking forward to a great 2016-2017 season!!

SUPPORT FAIRBANKS TRAILS!

We are so lucky living in Fairbanks with our easy access to good trails. As I type this from Oakland, CA (Go Raiders), I am fresh from a conversation with a neighbor who is planning a “Ski Vacation”. Like many people who love to ski in the Lower 48 and elsewhere, a skiing venture means many hours of trip preparation and a 3-4 mile drive to ski trails, having to stay at a hotel, etc. For us, everyday during the snow season is a ski venture. I remember when I attended the University of California, Davis for my Bachelor’s degree, I knew some people who “lived to ski”. Well, getting to the snow meant a 3-4 hour drive to just get to the snow. Then they had to pay to ski at a resort on groomed trails. Here in Fairbanks, all we have to do is walk outside and/or drive a little ways, get out of our cars and GO. Remember, it costs money to groom many of the trails we’ve come to love. 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—at least not in Alaska. 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, give them to an ASPA volunteer at any ASPA sponsored event, and/or you can donate online at <http://www.alaskaskijoring.org/>.

Sometimes, yes, it is nice to ski alone and to work on technique and speed. For this there are the world-class trails at Birch Hill and the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. If you are frequent users of these trails, please support them by making a trail donation. PLEASE remember that dogs are NOT allowed on these trails.

Likewise, if you frequently use other dog-friendly trails like the Jeff Studdert Race Grounds at ADMA, Two Rivers ski trails, etc. please also consider a donation for trail upkeep. Can’t afford to support all of these trail upkeep efforts, then the next time there is a trail clearing “party” at any of these venues, consider volunteering your time to help get the trails into shape for the winter. Of course, on dog-friendly trails please show respect and consideration for other trail users by yielding to faster dog teams, having your dog under control, etc.

And lastly, lets celebrate the advent of winter and snow by getting out and enjoying these wonderful trails!

2016-2017 ASPA Calendar of Events.

Please check our website at <http://www.alaskaskijoring.org/> or our Facebook page or the e-mail list for any changes prior to an event or call the ASPA hotline at 907-457-5456.

Month	Day	Event	Contact
Nov.	12	Beginner's Clinic Classroom Session at Alaska Feed, 1:30-4:30 p.m., \$30 (includes membership)	Sara Elzey, 378-5024, or skjorex2@hotmail.com or Alaska Feed 451-5570. Preregistration REQUIRED!!! Sign up at Alaska Feed.
Nov.	19	Beginner's Clinic On-snow session at Creamer's Field 12-2 p.m.	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Nov.	20	Fall Membership Meeting, Mushers Hall, Farmers Loop, 4:00 p.m.	Jamie Marschner, 458-0462, jjmarschner@alaska.edu
Nov.	27	Fun Race #1, Creamer's Field	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Dec.		Check website for Sunday Trail Tours	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Dec.	7	Wax Clinic at Raven Cross Country, 6:00 p.m.	Fred Raymond, 456-5070, ravenxc@alaska.net. Pre-registration is recommended
Dec.	17	Fun Race #2, Location TBD	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Dec.	31	ADMA Preliminary #1	457-MUSH, (457-6874), www.sleddog.org
Jan.		Check website for Sunday Trail Tours	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Jan.	14	Fun Race #3, Location TBD	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Jan.	15	ADMA Preliminary #2	457-MUSH, (457-6874), www.sleddog.org
Jan.	28	ADMA Preliminary #3	457-MUSH, (457-6874), www.sleddog.org
Feb.		Check website for Sunday Trail Tours	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
		Possible Cabin Trip	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Feb.	4	Ski Practice Clinic for Beginners, Creamer's Field	Lisa Stuby, 371-6460, lstuby@gci.net
Feb.	6	Wax Clinic at Raven Cross Country, 6:00 p.m.	Fred Raymond, 456-5070, ravenxc@alaska.net Pre-registration is recommended
Feb.	18-19	ADMA Gold Run	457-MUSH, (457-6874), www.sleddog.org
Feb.	19	UAF Race	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Feb.	26	Chena Lakes Race	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Mar.		Check website for Sunday Trail Tours	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
		Possible Cabin Trip	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Mar.	4	Birch Hill Races	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Mar.	11	Twin Bears Trip	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Mar.	10-12	ADMA Limited North American	457-MUSH, (457-6874), www.sleddog.org
Mar.	15	Fun Race #4, Location TBD	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Mar.	17-19	Open North American	457-MUSH, (457-6874), www.sleddog.org
Mar.	19	Orienteering Race, Creamer's Field	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org
Mar.	26	Fun Race #5 and year-end pizza party	Jamie Marschner, 458-0462, jjmarschner@alaska.edu
Apr.		Check website for Sunday Trail Tours	Check Hotline (45-SKIJOR) or alaskaskijoring.org

Wax Clinic at Raven Cross Country, February 6, 2017

Fred Raymond of Raven Cross Country had the first of two ski waxing clinics for the 2016/2017 season for ASPA members on December 7th at 6:00 PM at his Well Street shop. Hopefully he had good attendance. If you missed this, he will be offering a second clinic on February 7, 2017. Fred is an expert on waxing and caring for skis and is a great source for advice on all things cross-country skiing. A good wax job from knowing proper technique can make a WORLD of difference that will make skiing more enjoyable!

Space is limited and pre-registration will be required. Contact Fred at 456-5070 or e-mail at ravenxc@alaska.net. Come and learn how to best take care of those new or old skis and prepare to give them the glide you and your dogs will appreciate! Clinic will be for ASPA members only.

Playing With Your Dog

In my quest to find an article to share with you for the November newsletter, I came upon this one in a free magazine called the “Bay Woof”. A FUN non-serious read. Many mushers and skijorers who take the sport way more seriously than I do or ever have, will probably read this and go, “NO you don’t want to encourage play in a serious working dog!”. However, I can tell you that with some breeds, all work and no play can lead to a sour, unenthusiastic dog, so it all depends. I never played with my former sled dogs, until a friend took care of them and introduced them to play. They loved to play afterwards and I found it didn’t take away their work ethic. When it was time to run and pull, their natural instincts came forward. So anyway enjoy and the bit about giving your dog a toy and chasing it around—that’s my dog still at the age of 12 years who used to seriously pout at the Dog Park until I chased him around all the while telling him, “I’m gonna get your freesbee, I’m gonna get your freesbee!”

Tis the season for overcommitment and stress. Lucky for you, you’ve got a dog. Dogs are masters at living in the present moment, taking time to relish in every scent trail and belly rub without worrying about the next task at hand. Following your dog’s lead can serve as a fabulous way to relax and recharge, and planning for some quality time with your canine sidekick is an excellent way to reduce anxiety and stay in touch with what matters most in life over the holiday season.

One of the primary joys of having a dog in one’s life is having a constant companion and playmate at the ready. Yet as a trainer, I’ve noticed that so few people actually know how to play with their dog. This is one of those places where our species-specific tendencies and differences can get in the way of really connecting. You may be thinking it’s preposterous for me to suggest you don’t know how to play with your dog, and maybe you are doing just fine. However, over the years I have worked with thousands of dogs and their people, and in my experience, the majority of them could up their play-game to enhance their relationship and get the most out of their play sessions. Does your dog ever blow you off when you invite him or her to play a game of tug or fetch or to wrestle? How about if you call him or her to come? If so, you may have a play problem. Here are a few examples of mistakes people make when playing with their dogs and how to correct them.

Think Beyond the Ball Game

Overall, I am a big advocate for playing ball with dogs. I much prefer it over a stint at the dog park, for example, as ball is an interactive game of cooperation that includes you in the fun. Yet some people still manage to kind of check out with the Chuckit! If you are going to play ball with your dog, why not add some spice and variety to your game? Pretend to race your dog to the ball occasionally (spoiler alert: The dog will always win). Or put your dog in a sit or down-stay and place the ball out in your yard or in a field somewhere, then pretend to hide it elsewhere in a few other locations and ask your dog to find it. Now you’ve got a dog on the hunt. Using their nose and their brain to problem-solve rather than simply doing mindless repetitions of retrieving in a straight line all of the time.

The Chase Game

Most dogs love a good game of chase, and most people do, too. This is one game that definitely works well and is understood by both species. Yet when people play chase games with their dogs, all too often they are the ones in hot pursuit. This is where we’ve got it all wrong. The smart way to play chase with your dog is to let your dog chase you. Why? Well, for one reason, nearly any canine is much faster than a human being, and, therefore, we never catch them. This sets us up for a potentially dangerous situation. If your dog is used to out-running you as a game, you may well have a very difficult time closing the distance between the two of you when you need to do so, such as if they’ve accidentally jumped out of the car, or barged out the front door, or at the dog park when it’s time to go home. You don’t want your dog to learn to play keep away. On the flip side of that, however, if you teach your dog to chase you and even take a dive occasionally and let them jump all over you joyfully, you’ll have an extra ace up your sleeve beside your formal recall if any of the frightening situations above ever occur. Letting your dog chase you builds up the strength of your attraction and closes

Playing With Your Dog (Continued)

distance quickly, both good things. Plus, dogs are predators; they love to give chase. It's a wonderful reward for a dog, and I'd much rather my dogs learn to chase me, rather than squirrels or other dogs.

Tug, Take Two

No other game is met with more resistance nor more poorly executed than tug of war with dogs. Some people fear it causes aggression and will not play with their dog. Forbidding tug is not necessary. In fact, played mindfully, with rules of engagement, tug can actually enhance your dog's jaw and impulse control. Additionally, if your dog loves to tug, it's best to name it, and put it on cue so you may control when it happens and also clearly teach what constitutes an appropriate tug toy. (Hint, it's not your leash or clothing.) Mindful tug with rules allows you to channel your dog's energy and use it as a super high-value reward in training, too. Tug is great because unlike with fetch, your dog always stays near you and completely focused on you. There is no room for a passing squirrel to interrupt your game. However, tug is the game that so many people are clueless about when it comes to initiation. If I had a nickel for every person who tried to entice a dog to play tug by shoving a toy in the dog's face, I'd sure have a lot of bones. Millions. The key is not to push your tug toy toward your dog, but rather to give your dog something to chase and catch. What do you do when someone pushes something at your face? Even if it's pie or pizza, you're most likely to pull your head away so you can bite the tasty treat on your own terms, rather than having someone else shovel it in your mouth. The same is true of tug toys. Let your dog come and get it. Sure, make it dance, wiggle, and be enticing, but do so by moving the toy erratically away from the dog. Let the dog pursue. Let your dog begin the chase and capture the prey. Because basically tug is the next step in the chase game: Once your dog has the toy, pull! It takes two to tug, so actively pull to create resistance. By the way, all of this play has a purpose beyond stress relief for both you and your dog. Playing games can be a fabulous reward in training, something besides food to let your dog know he's doing a great job. Also, play training is an excellent way to make training time inherently fun. So, please do yourself a favor and play your way through the holidays. *Kelly Gorman Dunbar is director of the Center for Applied Animal Behavior where she recruits and trains instructors for SIRIUS Puppy & Training, the family business.*

Annual ASPA Membership Meeting

The annual ASPA Membership meeting took place on Sunday November 20, 2016 at the Fairbanks Dog Musher's Hall. The weather was warm, about 40°F, and roads were very slick. As a result, a smaller than usual crowd of 10 showed up. Nevertheless, it was a fun meeting. Yummy food was brought in for the potluck. After eating, we had a short business meeting followed by two slide shows. Scott Jerome showed a video of skijoring races in Europe with pulkas. In addition, he presented a slideshow of his dogs. One memorable part of his slideshow was of one dog in particular who eats rocks and Scott showed a slide of a pound or two of large rocks that the poor dog had to have surgically removed! Nevertheless, Scott has to be careful to remove all rocks from his dog yard. Participants also watched some of Bud's past skijor photos. Bud has attended many ASPA events and taken photographs. His action shots at ASPA Fun Races have been well-received over the years. Heck, he has even taken shots of my naughty Norwegian elkhound that have made him look like he should be a sports legend! Bud Marschner has been taking photographs at ASPA events for at least the past 10 years. All and all a good time shared by all.



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!!

Please support ASPA’s sponsors with your patronage throughout the 2016-2017 season. ASPA could not conduct its ambitious program of events without the support of Fairbanks area businesses. These businesses support our organization through cash or in-kind donations. A full list of these business is on Page 7. If you are around town and get a chance, be sure to thank these businesses and show your appreciation.

Tis The Season!

Tis the season for...Holiday Pet Photos! Most of these are taken at the feed stores (at wonderful sponsors listed on back) and are for pet charities such as the North Star Borough Animal Shelter. Admittedly, some dogs don’t like this type of experience, while others like mine relish it with gusto and are hams in front of cams. Nevertheless, if you can and your dog(s) are keen, these events are always good ways to support good causes. Here is wishing everyone....

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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 _____

Membership Type:

- Individual \$20.00/year _____ Individual Lifetime \$175 _____
- Family \$30.00/year _____ (No lifetime available)
- Affiliate Club: \$10.00/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.alaskaskijoringl.org>

2016-17 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. 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 lstuby@gci.net.



Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association

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