

PenAir Spirit of Alaska Award



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Aliy Zirkle receiving her PenAir Spirit of Alaska Award from Danny Seybert, PenAir CEO during the Nome Finisher's Banquet. This award is given to the first musher to arrive into McGrath. The "Spirit Mask" award was specifically created for the event by Bristol Bay artist, Orville Lind. Aliy also received a \$500 credit on PenAir. Aliy was the first female musher to win this award.

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For a complete list of Iditarod Finishers

[Click Here](#)

www.iditarod.com

Brothers Stand As 2012 Iditarod Champions

By Terrie Hanke, Along the Trail Correspondent

They are the First Family of Iditarod 2012. Multiple generations of Seaveys conquered the Iditarod Trail in February and March of 2012 where brothers stood victorious, father was first to the Yukon and grandpa honored the Historic Iditarod Trail. If it wasn't the greatest Iditarod ever for the Seavey Clan, it had to be close!

Be it not for Sergeant Preston of the North-West Mounted Police and his lead dog, sled dogs may never have become a way of life for the Seaveys. Dan and his wife, Shirley, listened to the weekly radio broadcast of the Canadian Mounty who together with his devoted lead dog, Yukon King, and faithful steed, Rex, gave

aid and fought crime during the gold rush days of the 1890's in the Yukon Territory. According to the Ididaride website, Dan and Shirley were intrigued by the infamous Preston and King and decided to leave Minnesota in 1963 for Alaska to mush dogs. Settling in Seward, Dan taught history. That assignment brought him to the Historic Iditarod Trail and its significant role in the development of early Alaska. His friend, Joe Redington, Sr. enlisted his help in creating the trans Alaska race to celebrate and remember the importance of sled dogs in Alaska. Dan participated in the first Iditarod, leading most of the way. In 1973, wives and sweethearts bid their men goodbye in Anchorage, *(continued on page 3)*

Dallas Seavey

2012 Iditarod Champion & Youngest to Ever Win

IDITAROD XL Musher Dallas Seavey (Bib # 34) arrived in Nome, Alaska and crossed under the burl'd arch at 19:29 Alaska Time on March 13th with 9 dogs on his team claiming his first Iditarod Championship.



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Seavey now holds the record for being the youngest person to have won the Iditarod, turning 25 years old the day he left the starting line. The previous record was held by Rick Swenson since 1977, when he won his first Iditarod at the age of 26.

Seavey's team traveled up the Iditarod Trail in 9 days, 4 hours, 29 minutes, and 26 seconds. The record is still held by John Baker the 2011 Champion at a time of 8 days, 18 hours, 46 minutes, 39 seconds.

Dallas comes from a family with a long line of Iditarod finishers and was a third generation Seavey to be running in this year's race. Also in the race was his father Mitch, who won in 2004 and finished 7th this year and his grandfather, Dan Seavey who ran in the first Iditarod in 1973 finished 51st this year. His brother, Conway, won the 2012 Jr. Iditarod.

Back Row pictured left to right: Chuck Talsky, spokesman for Anchorage Chrysler Dodge Jeep; Stan Foo, Donlin Gold; Gary Samuelson, GCI; Bill Bracken, ExxonMobil. Center: Guinness, Dallas Seavey, and Diesel.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT: Donlin Gold

Providing Year-Round Support to the Last Great Race

Trail Crew from Donlin Gold working on Iditarod Trail



Donlin's

Iditarod support doesn't end at the finish line. For the past two summers, a small helicopter-supported crew from Donlin Gold helped make the Iditarod trail safer by clearing brush and debris that built up as a result of weather and forest fires in the Post River area. This volunteer work helped ensure mushers and their dog sled teams were able to travel safely, while competing in the 1,049-mile race to Nome in March.

For two years, Donlin Gold has been a Principal Partner Sponsor of the Iditarod. The company became involved in the race to honor the strong traditional ties between mushing and mining in the region where the proposed Donlin project site is located. For more than 100 years, dog sleds have been used by residents and miners in the Yukon Kuskokwim region. With the development of gold discoveries in the Kuskokwim Gold Belt in the late 1800's and early 1900's, dog teams transported supplies and miners to various settlements and mining sites during the long Alaska winters.



This year, in celebration of the Iditarod's 40th Anniversary, Donlin Gold extended its support by offering race fans something memorable. The company organized a photo tent at the ceremonial start where fans, friends and families could take a professional photo with 2011 Jr. Iditarod winner Jeremiah Klejka from Bethel and one of his winning dogs, Guinness.

The photos were free and printed on-site so participants could take them home. More than 200 pictures were taken and shared at the event. In addition to providing the new photo tent, Donlin Gold also sponsored musher Mike Williams, Jr. from Akiak in this year's Iditarod, supporting his mushing campaign to raise awareness for youth sobriety in Alaska.

Donlin Gold's participation in the Iditarod has played an important role in preserving the Last Great Race: from making the trail safer to providing fans with snapshot memories, Donlin's support helps keep Alaska's historical and cultural values alive.

2012 Iditarod Trail Committee Board of Directors

President Andy Baker
Vice President Danny Seybert
Secretary Mike Jonrowe
Treasurer Aaron Burmeister

Director John Handeland
Director Mark Moderow
Director Mike Owens
Director Rick Swenson

Director Aliy Zirkle
Director Emeritus Joe Redington, Sr.
Executive Director Stan Hooley

2012 Board of Directors Election

Three year terms for three of the Board of Directors will expire at the end of this year - At-Large Seat held by Rick Swenson, Anchorage / Mat-Su Valley Seat held by Mark Moderow, and the Nome Area Seat held by John Handeland.

Ballots will be mailed on Wednesday, May 16th. So, if you are interested in voting for the Board of Directors and are not already an ITC Member, you would need to join on or before May 16th. Instructions for voting will be included in the ballot mailing. **The last day for return ballots to be postmarked is Saturday, June 23rd.** (Continued on page 7)

Alaska Airlines Leonhard Seppala Humanitarian Award



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DeeDee Jonrowe receives the Alaska Airlines Leonard Seppala Humanitarian award from Marilyn Romano of Alaska Airlines and Iditarod's Chief Veterinarian, Stu Nelson. This award has been presented since 1982 to a top 20 team that is based on specific criteria to determine who has demonstrated outstanding dog care throughout the Race while remaining competitive. This is DeeDee's second time to win the award.

Fred Meyer Sportsmanship Award



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Lance Mackey receives the Fred Meyer Sportsmanship award from Bill Gallea. Lance was chosen by his fellow mushers and received an engraved trophy and a \$500 Fred Meyer gift certificate.

EXXONMOBIL Mushers Choice Award



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Dan Seavey receives the ExxonMobil Musher's choice award from Bill Brackin. EXXONMOBIL has presented this award for 10 yrs.. Each year the official finishers make the decision as to who was the most inspirational musher on the trail. Dan received an Iditarod Limited Ed Gold Coin valued at \$3,300.

Brothers Stand As 2012 Iditarod... cont'd from page 1

fearing they might never see them again. He says it wasn't easy getting to Nome. For twenty days we were finding and breaking our own trail – nothing like today with trailbreakers and lath markers. Dan is the only musher to run in the first as well as the 40th running of Iditarod. In 2012, at the age of seventy-four, Dan ran the Seavey puppy team to Nome while celebrating the Historic Iditarod Trail Centennial. Grandpa Dan has completed four Iditarod's – the 1st, 2nd, 25th and 40th.

Mitch was just a tyke when the family arrived in Seward. Ten years later he was helping his father train for the first Iditarod. What a dream for a young boy – a life of adventure with dogs! In 1982 at the age of twenty-two, Mitch ran his first Iditarod and claimed 22nd place. While he and his wife, Janine, were raising their sons, Mitch was absent from the trail for 13 years but has participated in every Iditarod since. In 1995 when he returned to the Last Great Race, he didn't just run the traditional Anchorage to Nome route. He started in Seward to run the entire Historic Iditarod Trail to Nome. In 2001, three generations of Seaveys, Mitch, Danny and Dan crossed the finish line consecutively for the 25th running of the race. In 2004, on the northern route, Mitch claimed Iditarod gold. He's a perennial contender and innovator. Take a look at his sled – it's made of hockey sticks! In 2008, Mitch won the Nome Kennel Club's All Alaska Sweepstakes to claim the largest purse in all of Alaska sport's history! This year he was the first musher to reach the Yukon River.

Dallas, a third generation Seavey musher was born in Virginia but at the age of five moved north with his par-

ents to Seward and began working beside his father and mushing mentor, Mitch, to train sled dogs. Like his father, Dallas is a wrestler and no stranger to competition and success. Dallas is Alaska's first and only National (continued on page 13)

Northern Air Cargo Herbie Nayokpuk Memorial Award



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Michelle Phillips receives the Northern Air Cargo Herbie Nayokpuk Memorial Award. This award is presented to the musher chosen by staff & officials as the person who most closely mimics "Herbie: The Shishmaref Cannon Ball" in her attitude on the trail. Michelle received a walrus ivory scrimshawed trophy, free shipping allotment on Northern Air Cargo (NAC) plus a \$1,049 in "pocket change" inside of a NAC jacket.

Rookie of the Year Award



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Brent Sass receives the Jerry Austin Memorial Rookie of the Year award from Clara Austin and Bill Crawford. This award has been presented since 1980 to the top place rookie by wife of Jerry Austin, Clara & Family of St. Michael. Brent received a trophy and check for \$1,500.

More Awards...

GCI Dorothy G Page Halfway Award



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Jim Lanier receives the GCI Dorothy G. Page half-way award. This award has been presented by GCI since 1994 in honor of the late Dorothy G Page, "Mother of the Iditarod." The first musher to the halfway point receives a trophy and \$3,000 in gold nuggets.

Wells Fargo Gold Coast Award



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Aliy Zirkle receives the Wells Fargo Gold Coast award for first musher to the Bering Sea Coast. This award has been presented by Wells Fargo since 1993. Aliy received a beautiful trophy and \$2,500 in gold nuggets. Aliy is the first female musher to receive this award.

Horizon Lines Most Improved Musher Award



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Rohn Buser receives the Horizon Lines Most Improved Musher award. This award honors the musher who has bettered his/her last previous finish by the most number of places. Rohn received an engraved trophy and \$2,000.

A Classic Race: Iditarod 2012

By Dr. Stuart Nelson, Iditarod Chief Veterinarian

Iditarod

2012 was a classic. It was about intense competition, about snow, cold and wind, about drama and about yet another, yes...I said ANOTHER year of fantastic dog care!! Do I hear any cheers?" Shortly after I made this statement during the Alaska Airlines Leonhard Seppala Humanitarian Award presentation, the auditorium once again erupted in joyous celebration.

For those who may not be familiar with the name, Leonhard Seppala is famous for his mushing role in the dog team relay which delivered diphtheria serum to Nome in 1925. He is also well remembered for his legacy of exceptional dog care. Although he established high standards and goals, they were and are attainable.

Iditarod 2012 was truly a team effort by mushers and veterinarians working together on behalf of the dogs. To the mushers, I give my sincere thanks for their focus on the well-being of their canine athletes. I am very grateful for my veterinary staff who worked long hours while performing approximately 10,000 routine exams in often difficult weather conditions.

You might be interested to know that there were forty-two volunteer veterinarians working on the trail, with an additional eight serving in various support roles. Of these, seven are from Alaska, two from Germany, one from each of Australia and France, with the remainder being from the lower 48. Eleven were rookies to the Iditarod, and the rest, of course, were veterans.

I will take this opportunity to also thank the veterinary technicians who checked microchips, collected blood samples and recorded ECGs on all of the dogs as part of our pre-race screening process that began the second week in February. Under the direction of Jan Bullock and Cassandra Winslow, fourteen volunteers were involved with this program. Although they are typically working behind the scenes, their roles are no less important.

And let's not forget those 2,000 other volunteers who are so necessary for a successful race. There were pilots, logis-

tics and communications personnel, checkers, dog handlers, cooks, trail breakers and sweeps, security folks and many more. Kudos to all of you.

Of course, without our sponsors and supporters, there could not be an Iditarod. Period.

Most importantly, I would especially like to give thanks to the Creator for His ultimate protection of our people and our dogs.

Trail conditions were very challenging for Iditarod 2012. Although it wasn't a record

pace, there was no lack of excitement as several teams remained quite close until the very end. Congratulations to Dallas Seavey for his victory and the record that he did set....for being the youngest to ever win the Iditarod! That will really be a tough one to beat!



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DeeDee Jonrowe was honored for her dog care by winning the Alaska Airlines Leonhard Seppala Humanitarian Award. This award celebrates Seppala's tradition of stewardship. It is extremely important to the mushers and justly promoted by the race organization. Good job DeeDee!

The Golden Stethoscope Award is annually presented by the mushers to a veterinarian who demonstrated exemplary service during the race. For the first time ever, two veterinarians received this award. Both from Germany, this was their third year of Iditarod participation. Many thanks to Tanja Kruse and Ruth Kothe for their dedication and hard work!

It's wonderful to savor the moment, but the time has arrived to start making plans for Iditarod 2013. Schedule it in now, as a year will go by quickly!

THANK YOU Doesn't Seem to Say Enough

By Deby Trosper, Membership Director & Volunteer / Auction Coordinator

This year, the 2012 IDITAROD XL was full of excitement and challenges throughout the whole race. Not only did the mushers face cold weather, high winds, and quick speeds, the volunteers were also hustling to have everything in place before the mushers left the Start Line or checkpoint. On the whole, it takes a well-organized group with the insight to be prepared for obstacles that arise during all times of day, night, weather and locations of the race. It also takes a core of veteran volunteers with the knowledge learned from previous races to lead the new volunteers through what it takes to prepare for the race.

There are too many volunteers to list personally, but for those who follow the Race, yet are not able to volunteer, here is an idea of what it takes and what they do...

The first thing a volunteer should do is fill out an application online, get an assignment, then register during the week before the start of the race at the Volunteer Check-In desk in the lobby of the Millennium Alaskan Hotel, the Iditarod's Race Headquarters.

Volunteers pack and load straw, food and dog food for checkpoints and ready everything in order for the Iditarod Air Force, professional pilots who donate their planes and time, to fly out to the checkpoints ahead of the mushers' arrival. There are the trail breakers who mark the trail and trail sweeps that bring up the rear of the race all traveling on snow machines. Before the Race begins, the Start and Restart Coordinators work with chosen team captains to plan together for the Anchorage Start and Willow Restart by applying for permits and working with other volunteers

in order to accomplish the tasks at hand. Snow removal and placement has to be coordinated with more volunteers in order to have snow placed on Fourth Ave. for the teams departure and removed from Willow Lake and parking areas to provide spaces for shuttle buses, dog trucks, volunteer and sponsor vehicles, race staff and media.



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While this preparation is taking place, another group of volunteers is working to ensure all the communication equipment is working properly and distributed from the Start, to all checkpoints, and Nome. The communication volunteers work at the Millennium Alaskan Hotel, Iditarod Headquarters, from computers to confirm the volunteers on the trail are moved from checkpoint to checkpoint to be one step ahead of the mushers.

Volunteers are flown in to checkpoints to help support the local villagers in their efforts to provide the best checkpoint on the trail. Raking, cooking and keeping the checkpoint

clean inside and out are only part of the work. Hauling water or cutting a hole in a lake when the temp may be as cold as -20+ degrees to provide water for the dogs is also a job in some checkpoints. Setting up a small lot for any dropped dogs that may need to be flown back home is in every checkpoint. The dogs are flown back to Anchorage where an important group of volunteers transport the dogs from the airport to the lot at the Millennium Alaskan Hotel where the local mushers have handlers pick up their dogs, or they are transported to the local prison where the inmates take care of the dogs until they are picked up.

During the race, a core of volunteers work with tracking and posting race stats on the Internet in order to keep the information current and available for the media and fans from around the world following the Race on the Iditarod website. A phone room is set up with yet another group of volunteers to answer questions phoned in. Students from



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local schools work with other students who call in. This room is kept open 24 hours a day from the time the first musher leaves the Start line until the final musher is packed and has their dog team out of Nome.

There are other areas where many volunteers help to track the Iditarod progress throughout the race, work as cooks at hubs, veterinarians who take a vacation from their home clinics in order to watch over the racing teams, volunteers who fly themselves to Nome to volunteer for the finish and volunteers to host both the Musher Drawing Banquet and Finishers' Banquet.

The number of volunteers and the jobs they accomplish are many in number. There is truly no way possible to put on the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race without the devoted volunteers who have become part of the Iditarod Family. The Iditarod says THANK YOU to these volunteers and looks forward to seeing them return year after year.

Every year, the last Saturday in June, the Iditarod has a picnic and invites all the volunteers to attend. The mushers are there to sign up for the next Iditarod and mingle among the volunteers for pictures, laughs and autographs. It is a family affair and begins at noon. We hope all of our volunteers can come.

For those of you who watch this race from afar, always remember, it does take a village, or two, or three ... to put on The Last Great Race on Earth!

EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT: 2012 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™

The Experience of a Lifetime!

By Blynn Forke, 2012 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™

Being the Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™ this year was the most amazing experience of my life! As a teacher, I try to glean from every experience all that I can so I can share my new knowledge, and this year, the challenges opened my eyes to the challenges for our students and the need to support them in taking challenges.

There wasn't a day that I wasn't asked to do something that I had never done before, and with every success, I felt stronger. But the best thing I found on the trail was the people. There was a teacher/musher who gave me the confidence to be more; the elder who has accomplished so much in his lifetime living the Alaskan life we all admire; the volunteer in Galena who made me feel so much more special; one of the Iditarod icons who freely shared his stories with a stranger; the musher who wanted to share with the villages his own good fortune to show appreciation for everything that they have given to all of us Iditaroders; the Centennial Musher who brought the old stories out at every checkpoint he visited; Billy, in Ruby, who gave me my first snow-machine lessons and taught me how vital water is to a community and how much work it takes to keep us all supplied; the pilots, all of them – the competent caretakers of my travels; the teachers I met in Takotna, Galena, and Elim who have devoted so much of their time and energy to expanding their students' lives; and so many other amazing people challenging themselves every day and succeeding.

Probably the most valuable thing I learned on the trail was that there was nothing I couldn't do. I was challenged every day, several times a day, and I was able to rise to these challenges with the support of so many. My motto

this year as the Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™ was **Challenge Yourself**. I found that motto to be a marvelous reminder for me, but in the process I learned something I hadn't expected. We ask our students to challenge themselves every day. It is an exceptionally vulnerable position to be in. The pay off is amazing, but the risk for them is huge. What if they fail the first time or two, which most of us do? My job now is to unlock the secret of the people who supported me and gave me the confidence to put myself out there so I can better support my students when they are challenging themselves. Now I have even more reason to return year after year to continue to explore the source of this strength and inspiration.



I know that the most important element of this magic potion is the people and the incomparable level of volunteerism that is literally the lifeblood of the Iditarod. How it all comes together in this one place and time is the magic that will probably draw us back year after year.

I want to thank those people with all my heart because the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race® truly changed my life and, in turn, the lives of my students. I am waiting to hear the sound of the single-engine plane coming for me, signaling that my adventure is continuing.

Volunteers... The Race Couldn't Happen Without Them!



Debbie Smykalski & Joan Patterson- two of our amazing volunteers who cook for the volunteers. They helped me gain 7 pounds this year because of their delicious meals!



Volunteer Randy Adkins hands a dropped dog to Cassandra Winslow as Tom Marple holds onto another dog as the drop dog crew takes the to the McGrath airport, Iditarod 2012.



Sabrina Anselment, Takotna resident volunteer, brings food drop bags for Bill Pinkham's dog team, Iditarod 2012

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Winner's Purse
Award



2012 Iditarod Champion, Dallas Seavey receiving \$50,400 check from Principal Partners - GCI, Donlin Gold, Anchorage-Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep and EXXONMOBIL.

2012 Board of Director Elections ... cont'd from page 3

Results for the election will be announced at the Annual Meeting to be held at the Iditarod Trail Headquarters, Mile 2.2 Knik-Goosebay Road in Wasilla on Saturday, June 30th at 10 AM.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Volunteer Thank You Picnic - JUNE 30th!

Every year, the last Saturday in June, the Iditarod has a picnic and invites all the volunteers to attend. The mushers are there to sign up for the 2013 Iditarod and mingle among the volunteers for pictures, laughs and autographs. It is a family affair and begins at noon on Saturday, June 30th at the Iditarod Trail Headquarters, Mile 2.2 Knik-Goosebay Road in Wasilla.

We hope all of our volunteers can come!

Iditarod XL Memories: Looking Back

Anchorage Chrysler Dodge
Official Truck Award



Dallas 8 Miles
From Finish



Dallas Seavey is presented with the key to a new Dodge Ram pickup from Anchorage Chrysler Dodge representative Chuck Talskey at the finish line in Nome shortly after winning the 2012 Iditarod.



Aliy & Quito Under
the Burred Arch

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More Awards...

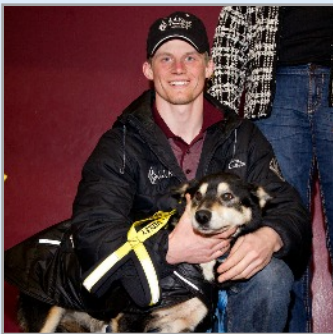
Nome Kennel Club Fastest Time From Safety to Nome Award



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Mike Williams, Jr. receives the Nome Kennel Club Fastest Time from Safety to Nome award from Kirsten Bey. This award has been presented by the Nome Kennel Club since 1973. The winner of this award must be in the Top 20 Finishers. Mike received a check for \$500.

City of Nome Lolly Medley Memorial Golden Harness Award



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Dallas Seavey poses with his lead dog Guinness who was the recipient of the Lolly Medley Golden Harness award. Originally presented by the late Lolly Medley, Wasilla harness maker & one of the two women to run the second Iditarod in 1974. Guinness was chosen by the mushers as the outstanding lead dog and received a gold colored harness.

First to the Yukon River Award



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Mitch Seavey receives the 1st musher to the Yukon River award from fellow musher Scott Janssen .

New Technology Innovations for Iditarod XL

By Andi Malard, Race Communications Coordinator

The 2012 Iditarod boasted new innovations for the Trail. Brainstorming efforts with Project Managers at GCI Communications, a Principal Partner, enabled ITC to position I-Direct satellite dishes in Finger Lake Checkpoint, Rainy Pass Checkpoint and Cripple Checkpoint. The I-Direct technology allowed Insider videographers to upload videos directly to the Iditarod



Left: GCI I-Direct at the Cripple Checkpoint. Right: Grant Jacobson, inside Cripple Checkpoint tent. Left photo taken by Grant Jacobson.

website from these checkpoints. As an added bonus, the I-Direct possessed high speed Internet communication and voice capabilities. For the first time in Iditarod history, these three tent/cabin checkpoints had telephones and high speed Internet capability.

For Race Communications, Mother Nature presented her very special challenges this year. Viewing the Aurora Borealis during March was entertaining, however, the extensive activity played havoc with those checkpoints using data satellite communications. I'd like to commend all the Comms volunteers in data satellite checkpoints and in Headquarters who worked diligently to keep communications open and running smoothly.

Finally, congratulations to the 2012 Golden Clipboard Award winner – Nulato Checkpoint! Nulato resident and volunteer Leader Larry Esmailka worked with all local and ITC volunteers to make Nulato comfortable for mushers and dogs alike. In each checkpoint, local volunteers team up with ITC trail volunteers to create a safe and welcoming area for all Iditarod competitors.



Larry Esmailka in Nulato.



2012 McGrath Northern Lights

©2012 Jansen Cardy

A Real Trail Experience - Skiing from Nikolai to McGrath

By Terrie Hanke, Along the Trail Correspondent

No way! We'll never make it that far! We can't do that! That's what the teachers heard from their students when they revealed the idea of skiing from Nikolai to neighboring McGrath along the Iditarod Trail. Their journey would commence as the final mushers of 2012 left Nikolai. They'd be following Dan Seavey as he ran Iditarod to celebrate the Trail Centennial along with sixty-five other Iditarod mushers. While it seemed impossible, the adventurous idea was appealing and sparked interest within the students. What Nikolai educators, Joyce and Denis Gardella, didn't realize was that their idea would be the beginning of a Skiing Revolution embraced by the whole community.

The plan was to cover the 50 miles to McGrath on skies. The winter camping adventure would take four days and three nights. The students along with their teachers would cover ten to fifteen miles each day. They'd have snowmachine support to carry their personal gear and group camping gear. On the first night they'd sleep in a canvas wall tent. The other nights would be spent in cabins. Once they arrived in McGrath there would be some time to enjoy their destination, perhaps shop at the Alaska Commercial Store then return home by plane. Sounds fun but fifty miles is a long way to ski!



©Joyce Gardella

they took the day off. They learned about waxing and they learned technique – best to work smarter rather than harder. They researched winter camping. What would they need to stay safe and warm while spending their days and nights away from their warm and comfortable homes? How should they dress for the highly aerobic activity of skiing? What would be the best choices for staying hydrated and energized? What foods would provide the

The students and teachers have been preparing for the trip since the spark of interest was ignited last fall. As the snow accumulated, they skied nearly everyday and on the weekends too. When it turned bitter

cold, minus 50,

nutrition necessary for day after day exertion in a cold environment? Having collected pertinent facts, they created brochures with pictures embedded in text presenting what they had discovered. With the celebration of the Iditarod Trail Centennial, they studied the history of the trail and the roll it played in area history, especially the gold rush. As the date of departure grew near, like mushers, they prepared and froze food to cover all their meals on the trail.

Then before attempting the real venture, they practiced camping. After skiing to one of their favorite destinations a few miles outside of Nikolai, they set up camp, cooked, ate and slept over night then the following day broke camp and skied back home. Mr. and Mrs. “G” along with the students had the opportunity to try everything out –



©Joyce Gardella

see what worked and what needed to be modified. The kids found out they were responsible for their own gear – no body would be out there to pack for them. The teachers worked out a better way to pack the supplies they'd need to conduct “school” on the trail. Mother Nature threw them a little curve – she dropped the temperature to minus 30 degrees. Before leaving for practice camping, the kids were concerned about staying warm, going to the bathroom outside, being in deep snow and skiing up hills. The practice camp went well. They gained confidence and felt ready for the real trip.

The first departure date was to be March 9th. The forecast was for severe cold so a new departure date was chosen – the first day of spring, March 21st. The temperatures and wind looked challenging then too but to delay further might mean canceling the trip. They'd already experienced and conquered thirty below. It would require perseverance but twenty below was doable. The evening before they embarked upon their adventure, the community came together (continued on page 10)

A Real Trail Experience ... cont'd from page 9

for a chili feed. It was a great send off and the youngsters sensed the support of parents, friends relatives and folks from outside of Nikolai who'd made donations to insure they'd be trail ready.

Just because they weren't in school didn't mean they wouldn't have school. While skiing they had lessons in natural science – tree identification and characteristics of the boreal forest. They observed and recorded weather information. They watched for animal signs – tracks as well as scat. They identified birds. They made note of interesting and unusual conditions along the trail in their journals. Daily they wrote reflections. Lessons and activities covered maps and compasses. Back at school with access to Google Earth, they are creating electronic maps, inserting text and photos and creating waypoints of where they camped and other points of interest. They'll post their electronic maps for public use as well as preserving their own electronic adventure scrapbook.

What was it that the husband-wife Nikolai teaching team intended to accomplish with this energetic fieldtrip? The Gardella's provided responses to that very question. Their goals went far beyond getting the students outdoors and get them moving although, that was one. For Joyce, the major goal was for the students to accomplish something they didn't think they could do. "We had a goal and saw it through to the end. It required perseverance and overcoming obstacles. Hopefully, this experience will translate into a life lesson to be drawn on in the future." Denis felt the skiing and the winter camping experience would expose them to big thinking and big effort and help them realize they can achieve if they really want to. "The confidence that a kid desperately needs to grow into a capable adult is built on things like this."

Each of the seven student skiers provided a short reflective statement about their incredible adventure along the Iditarod trail.

Courtney 7th grade - *I know I can do hard accomplishments like the ski trip to McGrath. I can probably ski to Telida. I know that I am strong.*

Kaleb 4th grade - *The boring part of the trip was when the adventure was over. It was amazing because not all people ski to McGrath.*

Tim 7th grade - *The greatest thing about the ski trip was skiing to other camps. It was because you got to see more of the land. I saw a lot of birds and moose tracks. Another thing I saw was McGrath. Finally, I improved skiing.*

Katy 6th grade – *The greatest part of the ski trip was seeing interesting things like cabins and the cave at Stewart's cabin. I learned that I am tough and I can ski a long ways. I also learned I could go on bigger adventures in the future.*

Corbin 8th grade - *The greatest thing about skiing is that skiing made me ski a lot better. I was skate skiing most of the way to McGrath and that's how I got better at skiing.*

Greg 9th grade - *The greatest thing about the ski trip was that I could ski long distances. We had to encourage ourselves to continue because the only thing that was on our minds was getting to McGrath. We could push ourselves to the limit and complete something we didn't think we could. Finding out we could ski long distances was the greatest thing about the trip.*

Josh 3rd grade – *The ski was long. I felt happy at the first. My Mom took my backpack and it felt good. Then I could move faster.*

Thanks to the Iditarod Education Department, kids in thousands of classrooms around the world experience the Iditarod Race and the trail virtually. The students from Nikolai, living right on the trail, are able to experience the race first hand as it passes through their community. Taking their classroom out on the trail was an exceptional very real adventure education experience – nothing virtual about it. What are their plans for adventure in the future? They're talking about canoeing from Nikolai to McGrath, a distance of 95 miles! Congratulations on your perseverance and effort put forth to accomplish this monumental goal!

Trail Talk

Happenings In and Around the World of Iditarod



Ken Anderson



What has the 2012 Champ been up to since his win?

2012 Race Champion, **Dallas Seavey**, has been traveling a lot since the end of the Race and will be on his way soon to visit his sponsor in Wisconsin, J.J. Keller. He will be back in time to be the keynote speaker at the Iditarod Sponsor Luncheon, June 1st at the Millennium Alaskan Hotel in Anchorage.

Congratulations to ...

Ken Anderson on his Kobuk 440 win and to **Sigrid Ekran** on winning the award for Best Dog Care. Sigrid went home to Norway the end of the month and plans to return for the 2013 Iditarod.



Sigrid Ekran

Nicole Freking



Kathy Cappa, center

What about the "Mushing Mortician" winning one of the grand prizes in the Iditarod raffle? Watch out for **Scott Janssen** on the highway as he buzzes around this summer in his brand new Dodge Charger!

Kelly and Margaret Maixner on the birth of their first child, Rosemary. "Rosie" Maixner was born at Providence in Anchorage on December 27, 2011.

Blake and Jennifer Freking, Finland, MN, both Iditarod veterans, welcomed little Nicole Elizabeth on Friday, May 4, Her big sister is two year old Elena Marie. Congratulations to all the Frekings.

Iditarod volunteer, **Kathy Cappa**, for winning BP's Teacher of Excellence Award for the Mat Su Valley. Kathy teaches the deaf children at Shaw Elementary in Wasilla. She moved to Alaska several years ago after attending the Winter Camp for teachers and falling in love with the Iditarod.

Condolences to ...

The family and friends of **Dean O'Malley** of Anchorage, who passed away on April 12. Dean, a retired Anchorage School District librarian and a member of the Iditarod Trail Committee since membership began. He was a true fan and will be missed by all those who knew and loved him.

Brenda Johnson and her family in Nome on the death of **Charlie Johnson**, who died in Anchorage on April 12 following heart problems. Charlie is a former chairman of the Alaska Federation of Natives and a longtime Native leader from Nome. He served on the Board of Directors of the Iditarod Trail Committee from 1988-1991.



Dean O'Malley



Charlie Johnson

More Awards from Nome

Additional awards awarded in Nome, but no photographs available:

Golden Clipboard

Award:

Nulato

This award has been presented since 2000 by the mushers to a special checkpoint.

Golden Stethoscope Award:

Tanja Kruse & Ruth Kothe

This award is presented by the Iditarod Official Finishers Club (IOFC) to the veterinarian(s) whom they feel was the most helpful on the trail. Tanja & Ruth received a beautiful plaque.

Northern Air Cargo

4-Wheeler Award:

Peter Kasier

A new 4-wheeler was given to a musher who finished the race and whose key, which is chosen at random starts the 4-wheeler as they approach the stage. This is second time Peter has won this award.

Wells Fargo Red Lantern

Award:

Jan Steves



©Jeff Walters

This award has been presented since 1993 by Wells Fargo to the last musher to finish the race. Jan received a trophy made from a red lantern.



Ray Redington



Cripple Checkpoint



DeeDee Jonrowe



Travis Cooper between Rohn & Nikolai

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Other Trail Talk Around the Dog Lot

Ray and Julia Redington wasted no time after Iditarod in heading to Hawaii for a vacation in that magical paradise.

Mike and DeeDee Jonrowe are also visiting Hawaii where they will also get to be at the graduation of their nephew.

Has **Chuck Schaeffer**, Iditarod Race Judge and musher switched from dogs to another mode of transportation? Check out his new bike on his Facebook page.

After spending some time in ANWR in forty below temperatures, **Aliy Zirkle** and **Allen Moore** enjoyed a trip to Texas to visit family and sponsors.

After enjoying a vacation in Hawaii, 2012 Yukon Quest champion, **Hugh Neff** returned to Tok for a few days before heading to the Midwest to begin his annual school tour.

It's always good for the Race when mushers talk about their experiences at various meetings. **Ed Stielstra** will be telling his Race Tales and showing videos at the St. Peters Lutheran Church in Macomb, Michigan in early May. Hope this gets to you time for any in the area who'd like attend.

Terrie Hanke, Along the Trail writer for Iditarod, is preparing to visit Chippewa Falls Middle School's Annual History Day to present about Iditarod, which is home of 2010 Rookie of the Year, Dan Kaduce. She also just returned from presenting in southern Wisconsin - three elementary schools and a church pie social.

ITC's New Communication's Director

Erin McLarnon joined ITC in January. Erin came to Alaska from Indiana back in 1993 to attend Sheldon Jackson College (SJC) in Sitka. She graduated from SJC in 1995 with a B.S. in Fisheries Science and has since dabbled in many things and lived in many different places across Alaska. Most recently she was the Executive Director of Alaska Trails, Owner-Manager of Wind Diesel North America and Director of Business Development for K2 Aviation and Rust's Flying Service.

Erin is also a 15 year dog musher from Willow, with a kennel of 45 dogs. She was the Founder/President of the Willow Dog Mushers Association for 6 years and has been involved with the Norman Vaughan Serum Run '25 since 2002 as the Musher Coordinator / Board President and made the trip to Nome with her dog team 6 times. She also holds the recreation seat on the State of Alaska Board of Forestry.



Chuck's New Ride!



Chuck's 4-Legged Ride!

Hugh Neff



Ed Stielstra

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Terrie Hanke



Erin McLarnon

Submit Trail Talk Tidbits to: emclarnon@iditarod.com to be included in future newsletters.

Brothers Stand As 2012 Iditarod... cont'd from page 3

Wrestling Champion! He's run the Junior Iditarod four times, earning the sportsmanship award twice. In 2005, Dallas finished the Junior Iditarod and then in the meantime, having celebrated his 18th birthday, was eligible to run Iditarod to Nome the same year. He is the youngest musher to ever run Iditarod and now at the age of twenty-five is the youngest to ever win Iditarod. Rick Swenson was twenty-six when he claimed his first Iditarod gold. Seavey holds the same honor for the Yukon Quest. For his Quest victory in 2011, he was twenty-three years old. Seavey's youth and athleticism are and will continue to be a great asset. Dallas and his wife, Jen, reside in Willow with their one-year-old daughter Annie and operate their kennel. Jen completed her rookie Iditarod in 2009. Dallas says his hobbies are breeding, training and racing sled dogs.

Fifteen-year-old Conway Seavey was mighty happy to run his second Junior Iditarod. He had some business to attend to. Seems that on his return from the Yentna Station half-way checkpoint in 2011, Conway and another competitor took a wrong turn and found themselves traveling an extra 40 miles. Coming from a family of trail-experienced siblings and ancestors one can imagine the ribbing young Conway must have taken around the dinner table. Conway set the record straight in a big way. He claimed the 2012 Junior Iditarod title by one minute over friend and fellow competitor Ben Lyon. All four of the Seavey sons have run the Junior Iditarod. Only Conway and older brother, Tyrell, are champions of the event. As the Junior Iditarod Champion, Conway had the honor of driving the dog team and sled that carried honorary musher Dave Olson for the Ceremonial Start. While the older brothers have gone off to school and have returned to some aspect of the sled dog world, Conway, a home schooled freshman, says he'll run dogs through high school but his passion and intended career lie in singing and songwriting. Conway's motto is "Give everything you have, everywhere you go."

Is mushing a way of life for the Seaveys? Will little Annie follow in the mushing footsteps of her mother and father? Will Conway run the Iditarod? Will there be more victories for the Seavey clan? Does the wind blow on the Yukon River? As Sergeant Preston would say, "On King! On you huskies!"

Mitch Seavey



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Dan Seavey

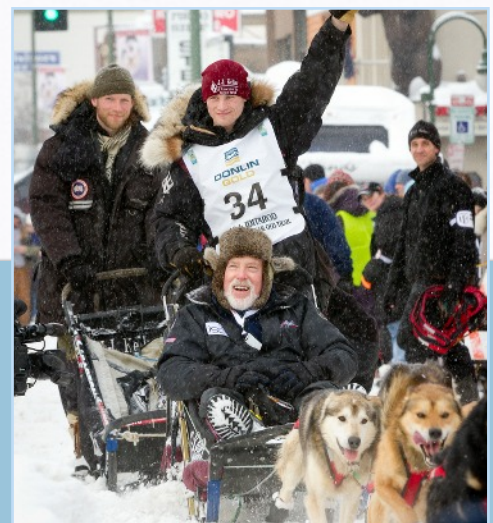


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Conway Seavey



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Dallas Seavey

2012 Jr Iditarod Mushers Conquer Heavy Snow

By Terrie Hanke, Along the Trail Correspondent



#4 - Ben Lyon Leaving the Starting Chute on Knik Lake. ©Terrie Hanke

Even before the first musher left the start chute for the Yentna Station half-way stop, mushers, parents and volunteers were looking forward to the Junior Iditarod Banquet on Sunday evening. There's a lot to celebrate at the dinner, not just the awards - Rookie of the Year, Humanitarian, Blue Harness, Sportsmanship and Halfway as well as the scholarships awarded by race sponsor, Lynden Transportation, there's perseverance, compassion, organization, accomplishment and a whole lot more. From the perspective of the starter/timer, here's a run down on the 2012 Junior Iditarod.

If you'd been out on Knik Lake on the last Saturday morning of February for the Junior Iditarod start, you'd have seen young mushers, parents and dedicated volunteers in action. The morning was bright and sunny with the temperature in the single digits - crisp but not really cold. Winds were calm. It couldn't have been nicer but the forecast promised a change for overnight and into Sunday.

There was a special feeling amongst everyone on the frozen lake - I think it had to do with Joe Redington, Sr., Iditarod's founding father, looking down upon the start of the 35th junior race. Joe's old homestead and kennel were within shouting distance of the starting line. He would have been very please that the Junior was once again starting by his place.

When 10:00 arrived, the start was a thing of beauty. Rookie Ben Harper brought his team to the chute just after the honorary musher was announced. After his two-minute count-down, he was off. Immediately from across the parking area, veteran Jesse Klejka directed his handlers, Piglet and the rest of his team to the chute. Two-minutes later they were on the trail. So it went for all eleven teams - absolute clockwork.

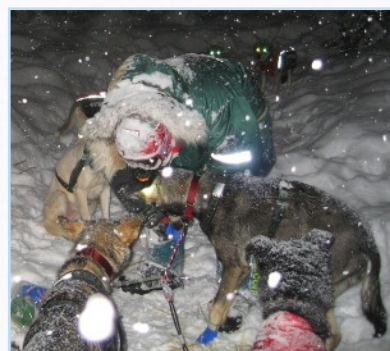


#2 Ben Harper's team getting ready to leave the starting chute on Knik Lake. ©Terrie Hanke

Compared to the return from Yentna Station, the trip out for mushers, snowmachiners and race officials was deceptively easy. The trail was packed and fast. Snowmachiners led the way and were interspersed between teams to watch for moose. Race officials left Willow in Iditarod Air Force Cessnas for a perfect flight to the Yentna River checkpoint.

Teams arrived at Yentna Station in a flurry. Mushers Lyon, Seavey, Vitello and Harper climbed off the river into the checkpoint within five minutes of each other beginning at 17:31. Another group of four - Klejka, Gregor, Davis and Ferraro filed into the checkpoint in the next twenty minutes. Along with the mushers, the predicted snow arrived too.

These young mushers are very skilled at dog care.



Abby Brooks putting booties on before leaving Yentna Station Checkpoint. ©Terrie Hanke

They're very focused and business like. When the dogs are fed and sleeping, the mushers join as friends around a bon-fire. Well before the sun rose, the kids fed their dogs again and pre-

pared to depart for the Willow finish. The trail would be much different for the second half of the 150-mile race. It'd been snowing steadily for ten hours and it continued to snow - sometimes at the rate of two inches per hour.

Conway Seavey, departed Yentna Station at 03:35 followed closely by Bailey Vitello at 03:38, Ben Lyon at 03:54, Ben Harper at 03:56 and Jesse Klejka at 04:03. Snowmachines preceded the mushers breaking through the fourteen inches of newly fallen snow. Anticipating that the Iditarod Air Force would be grounded, race marshal, Melissa Owens, rode with the trailbreaker back to Willow to officiate the finish. As snow continued to fall, the return trip for the juniors took anywhere from 4.5 to 6.5 hours longer than their speedy run out.

With the exception of Race Marshall Owens, none of the other midway volunteers would make the much-anticipated (continued on page 15)

2012 Jr. Iditarod Champion Conway Seavey



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<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>
1	Conway Seavey
2	Ben Lyon
3	Ben Harper
4	Jesse Klejka
5	Jenny Greger
6	Chelsea Davis
7	Bailey Vitello
8	Aiyana Ferraro
9	Mattie Cobb

2012 Jr. Iditarod ... cont'd from page 14

Junior Awards Banquet. As snow continued to fall all through Sunday and well into Monday, the Iditarod Air Force was grounded. Between 30 and 36 inches of snow fell depending on if you were out at Yentna Station or back in Willow. Even snow machines are useless in that depth of snow.

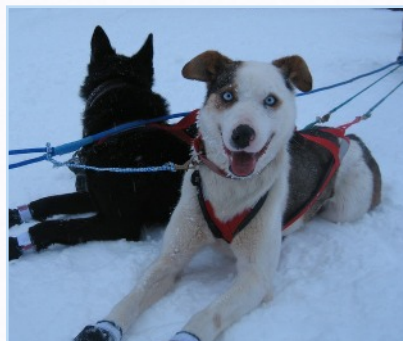
As we ate a hearty Yentna Station breakfast on Monday morning, a loud rumble filled the room. Snow was sliding off the lodge roof. What didn't slide off the roof will be avalanched later. Having had to clear the roof on many occasions, there is a plan in place. The plan is to make the job fun – climb to the peak and slide down taking snow along then landing in the piles of soft snow below the eaves. Maybe you shouldn't try this at home especially with asphalt shingles.



Snow avalanching off Yentna Station roof.

©Terrie Hanke

The Gabryszaks who own and operate the Yentna Station Roadhouse advertise an open runway year



©Terrie Hanke

Cute blue-eyed Piglet from Jesse Klejka's team -Yentna Station Checkpoint.



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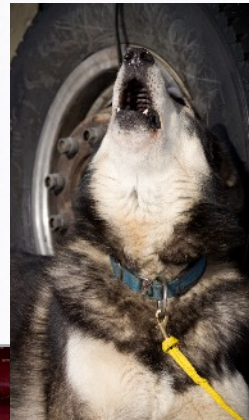
round. Snow won't be removed from the runway on the frozen river as there are no plows or blowers like airports have. Out there on the Yentna River, wide track snowmachines and tenacious drivers pack the snow and then wait for Mother Nature to help. As the temperature drops over night, the packed snow surface sets up and becomes solid enough to support ski equipped bush planes.

What normally would have been an 18-hour stay for the volunteers out at the midway checkpoint turned into a three-day Yentna Station vacation. Veterinarian, Phil Meyer says that in his thirty plus year history of volunteering for the Junior Iditarod, they've been snowed in just one other time. Being in the hands of the Gabryszaks at their bush lodge is a great place to be. Even so, volunteers with other Iditarod jobs or professional positions were anxious to get back to the road system. The runway became firm enough for the Iditarod Air Force pilots to begin transporting people back to Willow at noon on Tuesday. Until then the three dropped dogs were the center of attention. Every hour of the day somebody was outside to keep them company, offer a snack, provide fresh straw and scratch where they liked to be scratched.



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