

Iditarod

e-Runner

The Official Publication of the Iditarod Trail Committee

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Reflections on Mitch Seavey's 2013 Iditarod Championship

By Joe Runyan

Having been assigned the task of a retrospective look at the 2013 race, my first move was a phone call to the second time champion, where I recently caught him in Anchorage between appearances. I wanted to clear up a few historical notes on what was, in my opinion, the most interesting race in years. After reminding me that he didn't always agree with the account of history by the media, I later told Mitch Seavey I'm not sure what I saw on the trail either. But, here's an attempt at revisionist history in the rear view mirror!



Mitch Seavey

Four time champ Martin Buser, wearing bib #2, was first out of the Willow start chute on Sunday March 3, 2013. I remember finding him relaxed and joking around at 9:56AM in the nearly empty parking lot munching snacks at the Buser courtesy tailgate. Remarking that he was early on the job, he gave me this quote, "If you are starting out first, you better get here first." He departed at 2PM, and in a most unconventional strategy, never relinquished leading the pack until he pulled up in Rohn checkpoint for his 24 hour mandatory rest! He and team crossed the Alaska Range in about 22 hours (unprecedented in Iditarod history) and found themselves a full ten hours ahead of the nearest competitor, Paul Gebhardt.

Very unconventional, but it WAS the four time champ's team maintaining a blistering pace! Credibility was not an issue. A few mushers joked, "I hope he doesn't win because I never want to train to race 24 hours without rest."

At the same time, I remarked on my Iditarod blog that Mitch Seavey, despite being almost 11 hours behind and anonymously buried in the pack, was, indisputably, the

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fastest and strongest team on the trail. This prompted my first question. Mitch told me, “The schedule was all about maximizing my dog team. Except for a few on the fly decisions, the focus was to use the team speed to get to the next stop and get more rest. I never made a play, stayed consistent, never made a dramatic move, and tried to break up long runs between checkpoints. Having a fast team and that strategy wasn’t a guarantee to win, but I figured it would give me a good chance.”

While Mitch clicked along like a synchronome with his all-male team, Aaron Burmeister, Aliy Zirkle, and the Incredible Lance Mackey arrived at the front of the pack into Takotna and declared their 24 hour mandatory rest about 3 days into the race.

Next question for history, the all-male team? “This is the third year I’ve run an all-male team. Genetically, it seems my females are smaller than the males. The males are perfect at 55lbs but the females can be 40lbs. It just happens I prefer the bigger dogs and they happen to be males. We have a big enough kennel that I can use the males, and the really good females go to Dallas.”

Meanwhile, Martin Buser was still the four time champ with a very unusual plan and again dominated the headlines into Iditarod to the front of the pack, about half-way to Nome. He was, by conservative estimations, still four and half hours ahead of Mitch Seavey, but it seemed like seven! No matter how hard you wanted to discount Buser’s unconventional strategy, the multi-time champion was still leading the Iditarod.

Here, it should be mentioned, above freezing weather and conditions continued to be, in the words of disgruntled mushers, “mashed potatoes.” Martin continued to tenaciously protect his lead won on the first day of racing and was first to the Yukon River at Anvik. Although Aliy Zirkle parried and passed Buser resting, I still estimated that Buser was six hours

in front of the race, and barring the calamitous, Aliy was the only one in range to challenge him. Rain began to fall, the trail deteriorated, and Aaron Burmeister pursued Aliy and Martin wearing a rain suit.

In the confusion, I got a call from Dean Osmar, the 1983 champ with a photographic memory, who conceded that Martin was in command, but observed that the race was only half over and other mushers could make their own thrusts and parries. Nicholas Petit, Jake Berkowitz, and Joar Ulsom, the Norwegian barbarian who we would discover by end of the race to be a totally great guy, suddenly appeared to the front with Zirkle, Burmeister, King, et al. Oh yeah, and mention Redington, Dallas Seavey the Younger, Lindner, to demonstrate the tight group of competitors to the front on the Yukon.

By Kaltag, with more rain and “mash potatoes” it was clear that the unrelenting pack was chipping away at Buser’s “insurmountable lead”. Although he arrived first in Kaltag after leading on a horrible trail dissolved by rain, it was obvious that the pack was going to sling shot past the four time Iditarod champ. “This is going to be an even greater team next year,” said Martin, conceding that leading into Kaltag was a monumental effort. Neatly situated just out of the front, Mitch Seavey was only two hours behind. He had not put his team to the front—yet—and therefore avoided the anxiety of leading the race on unknown trail. When would he make a play?

With a tight group to the front and uncertainty, I heard myself saying to anyone that would listen, “I think this is the best Iditarod I’ve ever watched.” Suddenly, the calculating and disciplined Aaron Burmeister and Aliy Zirkle made a play to the front in direction Unalakleet on the Bering Sea Coast. Joar the Barbarian, was in the top five, and wished all his countrymen (and women) good luck on the Fin Mark Slope race in Norway.

Finally, in Unalakleet, the race changed character with the arrival of a new leader. One time champ Mitch Seavey decided

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Remembering Joe...

Joe Redington Sr. was like many Alaskans of his time. When an obstacle presented itself, there was only one thing to do—put on your creative thinking cap, get down, and FIX IT! Joe was definitely a thinker—a creative, inventive, visionary thinker. He would chew on an idea, look at it from different angles, then come up with an idea. Some worked and some didn't. The ones that didn't work were still valuable because they told him what not to do again. He was like Thomas Edison in that respect, who said, "Results? Why, man, I have gotten lots of results! If I find 10,000 ways something won't work, I haven't failed. I'm not discouraged, because every wrong attempt discarded is often a step forward..."

Here is an excerpt from
CHAMPION OF ALASKAN HUSKIES

by Katie Mangelsdorf:

"Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!" Joe shouted fruitlessly to his leader, as he stomped his break into the soft snow.

Joe's 18-dog team disappeared two-by-two over a rise leading down a bendy, blind hill dropping to Happy River.

"Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!" he kept yelling, as the steep hill catapulted his team rapidly forward.

He discovered too late that two other teams had careened headlong sliding down the steep drop-off colliding into trees, the snow bank, and each other, while trying desperately

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to go the front and defend, while Zirkle, King, Burmeister, formed a knot to the front. Now in the last third of the race, the push was on with mushers dueling for control. At Koyuk, mile 827, a sense of urgency overwhelmed the front. Mitch Seavey arrived first, but Jeff King could not resist challenging with his fast moving team. Four time champ King and one time champ Seavey are in many ways similar strategists, exhibiting great patience, a reluctance to make dramatic moves that could destroy the magic of the team, and knowledge that taking the lead is fraught with danger—unknown trail, laying down the scent to the advantage of the following pack, and possibly expending energy breaking trail for the competition. Often, leading the race is risky business. Yet, King blew through Koyuk and seized the lead from Seavey on the trail to Elim.

Question, Mitch, was it too early for King to challenge? "Of course, you'll have to ask him. But, I was going to stay on schedule and consistent." Mitch and team rested in Koyuk for a luxurious 3hours 38 minutes. (Can you imagine this pace?) King's play to the front was short lived and by White Mountain, 77 miles from the Nome finish, Mitch Seavey reassumed the lead.

Yet, through the dark night as the sleep deprived pack followed the Bering Sea Coast, a new development kept fans on the edge of their seats. Aliy Zirkle, perpetually optimistic and endeared by a huge following, closed on Seavey and arrived just 13 minutes after Seavey. Had momentum shifted?

The internet along the coast was basically paralyzed. Bandwidth was taken by thousands following one of the most exciting races in Iditarod history, and sitting in White Mountain my computer was as blank and dark as the night sky. It was like Alice in Wonderland came on just in the last minute of a Super Bowl game.

Question, Mitch, what happened, did you know Aliy was closing? "Elim to White Mountain was the twilight zone. I couldn't stay awake and fell off the sled twice. I made no attempt to push the dogs or bump up the pace and was just glad to be in a close race. It was a very difficult trail (from Elim to White Mountain.)"

Could the race get any better? Here the media observed a developing battle between Seavey and Zirkle for the 77 mile run to Nome. Mitch was brusque, tired, maybe even a little grumpy, with the media while Aliy was predictably cheerful and communicative. Her animated dogs responded by howling like wolves, to the great amusement of the crowd of fans gathered to watch both mushers leave White Mountain after an 8 hour break. Mitch didn't say a word to his stoic team and left White Mountain in bright sunlight at 1:11PM, a time normally reserved for a nap, with a tenuous thirteen minute lead. Zirkle's team, noticeably livelier, pursued, and the outcome of the race was again uncertain.

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to stay on the trail and not plow into the team in front or go over the side.

First, Ron Robbins hit a tree and was lying unconscious for awhile, only to come to and see Betsy McGuire's team flying down the hill out of control right towards him.

Not much later Joe's team followed.

Seeing his brake was useless, Joe flipped his sled to cause more drag, and collided with Robbins and McGuire going end-over-teakettle. Over fifty dogs and three sled littered the trail."

What is not included in the book is something I found out after the book was published. Joe must have been thinking about this collision for all the rest of the race, because after the race he got together with Dave Olson, Joe's very good friend who also was a very creative thinker. Joe was determined to come up with a better design for his brake. He had to be able to stop an 18-dog team. People said it wasn't possible. Did Joe believe that? Nope! Nothing seemed impossible for him. You just had to be patient and keep working out the problem. Which, with Dave Olson's help, he did.

They took the sled and new brake down to Knik Lake, hooked up 18 dogs, and took off across the lake. No one dreamed it would work. But near the end of the lake the brake was applied...any, by golly, that 18-dog team stopped! Joe was so pleased, he put it on all his sleds.

There was one problem with the brake though. It was heavy and most mushers wanted to go as light as they could. Joe's response to why do you want to use that heavy brake? "I'm still alive, aren't I?" Weight was not an issue with him... safety and survival was.

– Katie Mangelsdorf

Personally, maybe it's a guy thing, I understood Mitch. "I was internalizing," he recalled, "just gathering strength. I wanted to go out slow and let the team loosen up. It's like if you and I were near the summit of McKinley. You wouldn't be hugging and high fiving the climbing team, it's peer to peer, and everybody knows they have a job to do. Tanner, my leader gets a lot of the credit, but I had three others that could have done the job."

Flying over the teams going up Topkok Hill (about halfway to Nome) it appeared Aliy may have gained on Seavey. By the time I got to Nome the internet was again in a connectivity paroxysm as fans futilely hit the Iditarod web site for gps updates. Along with others, I had no idea of the dynamics on the trail.

Question? What happened out there, did Aliy ever close? "I was snacking my dogs on a long lagoon near the Topkok safety cabin and I saw her. Definitely, she was closer than 13 minutes. I decided now was the time, so I put down the pedal and asked for more speed."

By Nome, Seavey extended his lead to about 25 minutes, won his 2nd Iditarod, and finally resolved, in my opinion, one of Iditarod's best races. The 2013 champion added, referring to Aliy's remarkable 2nd place finish in 2012 and 2013 and her gracious demeanor, "She congratulated me at the finish, and has made a point of congratulating me since. She's a great competitor." ■

Iditarod 41 –A Look Back

By Sebastian Schnuelle

As all Iditarod races in recent years, there were some perennial favorites for the race. It was a first for me to sit in the pre-race Insider Musher Interviews, during which a group of mushers is invited to talk about their expectations for the upcoming race. A lot could be learned about each mushers mind set during that interview. Some where much more determined, focused than others. For the most part, that also translated to the respective placing at the end of the race.

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The start on Willow Lake went off without a hitch, thanks to countless volunteers. Notably Martin Buser had a nice little tangle not even 1 mile past the starting line, where one of his canine athletes turned loose, but there was no challenge for the 4 time Champion. Jeff King, another 4 time Champion, passed him swiftly, with two dogs in the basket, to slow the exuberant team down a notch. And Martin Buser would dominate the headlines during the early stages of the race. It was exiting to watch him just stay minutes at checkpoints, usually to go through his food drop bags and to prepare a meal for the dogs. By Finger Lake his plan became apparent: a bold dash to the front of the race, going all the way to Rohn and declaring his 24 hour layover there. It has been many years since anyone has taken a 24 hour that early in the race, at least not a planned one. Matt Failor, a Buser protégée, did the same move. Both teams looked spry and happy during their layover. Martin not only did the longest run, he also posted some of the fastest run times along the way. But one factor was against him. The day that he had to leave the Rohn Checkpoint, right in the heat of the day. And “hot,” even by sled dog standards it was. Warm temperatures dominated Iditarod 41 strategies all the way until teams left the Yukon River in Kaltag.

Most of the other teams had used a more common race strategy of trying to get to Nikolai before the heat of the day. The pace was almost a bit too quick for that, with teams arriving in the mid morning hours and thus having to leave already early afternoon, while the sun was still blazing high in the sky. Most mushers opted to take their 24 hour layover in Takotna. Teams piled up there as usual. It is hard for a musher not to be influenced by somebody else’s race strategies. A group of strong front runners, consisting of Aaron Burmeister, Mitch Seavey and Aliy Zirkle, started to emerge, but at this point they were a full run cycle behind the leader. But while Martin Buser’s schedule had him running through the heat of the day and the deep of night, the leaders were on a much better schedule. Slowly but surely they were chipping away at his lead, which had shrunk to about 3 hours by the time teams



Sebastian Schnuelle

arrived in Anvik, where Martin enjoyed a gourmet meal with his wife Kathy who was following along the race trail on a snowmachine. Many good looking teams were hot on the heels for the front group, such as Sonny Lindner, Jessie Royer, Dee Dee Jonrowe and Jake Berkowitz. By this time some unexpected players started to show. Joar Leifseth Ulsom was running a strong race, well on the way to being rookie of the year. Nicolas Petit, running a team from Raymie Redingtons Kennel in Knik also was solidly seated in the top 10 and posting some very fast runtimes.

The Yukon River, often known for strong headwinds dished out a different card during the 2013 race. With temperatures well above freezing mushers had to contend with slow and slushy trails going upriver to the remote checkpoint of Eagle Island. Race Marshal Mark Nordman and his crew were faced with the challenge of the low clouds and rain grounding the Iditarod Airforce and assembling the remote checkpoint of Eagle Island was an even bigger challenge than it already is. I remember a long night of setting up Artic Oven tents, trying to haul supplies and repetitively getting the snowmachine stuck. It did not take long for teams to arrive, while Martin was still in lead. This was

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Sebastian Schnuelle

about to change with him having the arduous task of breaking trail for much of the way. An the trail was a true challenge, with much overflow slowing the teams progress. But not only race leader change was in the air, also a weather change

with temperatures finally dropping below freezing again. With being soaked to the bone and gear dripping wet, that posed a new set of challenges to the mushers. Frozen stiff sled bags, uncooperative zippers and ice caked gear dominated the scene in Kaltag. While most teams ran straight into the checkpoint, notably Aliy Zirkle camped out about 13 miles before the checkpoint during the warm afternoon sun. While snowmachining out to snap a few shots I was able to get a nice glimpse of each team traveling along the trail. At this point Jake Berkowitz, who was following Aaron Burmeister, had a very nice looking team as well as Mitch Seavey. Jeff King was in the process of doing a strong push, while he was about 12 hrs behind the leaders in Iditarod he had closed much of that gap. Same as in the 2012 race, Aliy Zirkle was the first team to leave

Kaltag to conquer the portage to Unalakleet. She decided to camp another time, which gave Mitch Seavey and Aaron Burmeister a chance to pass her. 2011 Champion John Baker was plagued by the heat early in the race, not ideal conditions for his Kotzebue hardened team of furry dogs. 2012 Champion Dallas Seavey was running a smaller team than most of his competitors, yet starting to post some of the fastest runtimes. The real race begins along the coast, in the final 250 miles. This stretch is particularly hard on the mushers, worn out by many hours on the trail with little sleep, and right where they could use a good nap the most, any rest more than 4 hrs is certain to cost a few places in the standings. By Koyuk Jeff King was in lead with only briefly stopping to take on dog food, but no straw. Yet the tracker showed him camped out about one and a half hours past the checkpoint. Trail conditions were once again slow and soft, nothing uncommon at this stage of the race, where the wind is blowing. Mitch ended up resting in Koyuk, same as Aliy Zirkle. Both were on a great run rest schedule in relation to the daytime hours. ... To be continued! ■

Unique Moments— Eye on the Trail Iditarod XLI

By Terrie Hanke, Recaps 2013

Iditarod XLI is in the books. The lead changed many times as did the position of Red Lantern as did the positions of mushers 2 through 53. Because of wind, snow, rain, storms and overflow all courtesy of Mother Nature as well as exceptional strategies courtesy of innovative mushers, each Iditarod is unique and the 2013 race was no exception.

On the first night of the race, I was sitting alone at the communications computer in the Skwentna Outback Cabin. All thirty-nine other volunteers who'd come together to make Skwentna Checkpoint happen had gone down to the river to welcome the first musher. Earlier than I anticipated, my little hand-held radio came to life. A counterpart down on the river announced, "Bib #2, Martin Buser, in with 16 dogs at 20:45, he's staying for half an hour." Forty minutes later, the cabin door opened and Armchair Musher, Sebastian Schnuelle entered with camera and computer in hand. The first words he spoke were, "He didn't take any straw. Martin must be

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Failor in UNK



going all the way to Finger Lake.” I replied, “He wants number five and he wants the record back.” The race was barely six hours old and we were watching bold and unique moves at Skwentna.

Russian, Mikhail Telpin ran a unique team of dogs. Chukchi dogs are shaggy, short and muscular. They’ve been called trucks for their strength and ability to pull heavy loads and they’ve been called 4-eyes because of the colored spot above each eye. Telpin has been around dogs all his life. Not pet dogs but working dogs. They are part of his subsistence lifestyle. He uses his dogs for both hunting and transportation. Living on the tundra in Russia, Telpin travels year round with his team, not just in snow. Summer sleds have steel runners and glide easily on the tundra grass. In Nome, Telpin received the Herbie Nayokpuk NAC Award. Herbie was a good and honorable man respected by all and an innovative competitive musher who made good from what he had. Peeking from the pockets of the NAC coat Telpin received at the Finisher’s Banquet

were 1049 one-dollar bills.

Matt Failor had a unique treat waiting for him in Unalakleet. A fan from Florida promised him a pizza, something to look forward to while crossing the 75-mile portage trail from Kaltag to the coast. Matt

promised each of his dogs a piece of pepperoni IF the fan came through. Arriving in Unalakleet, Failor carefully tended and feed his dogs. When he headed up to the checkpoint for his own rest, a snowmachine came down the street and stopped at the checkpoint door. The driver was carrying a square red insulated bag. The Florida fan had come through. Inside the red bag was a pizza, fresh out of the oven from Unalakleet’s Peace on Earth Pizza. Too bad for the dogs though, it was a veggie pizza, so no pepperoni.

Mike Ellis was on the Iditarod trial with his Siberians thanks to a unique monetary resource, the Seppala Heritage Grant. Mike Ellis, a very tall bearded fellow with a broad smile, said the grant made it possible for him to live his dream of running The Last Great Race. Ellis and team led by Eliza and Reba made Nome in 10 days, 10 hours and 16 minutes claiming 30th place. Ellis holds the fastest Siberian time for the Yukon Quest and can now make the same claim for Iditarod.

Each of Iditarod’s checkpoints is unique. In Unalakleet, the community ski race and annual Covenant Church pie social are not to be missed events. While the mushers are focused on their dog teams and catching a little rest at the checkpoint, volunteers and villagers enjoy the opportunities to socialize, support young skiers and consume delicious pie. At 7:00 pm on Iditarod Monday school aged skiers gather for the age group races. As each age group tackles their route, spectators cheer and offer lots of encouragement. Then on Iditarod Tuesday folks eat supper a little early, save room for the pie and head to the annual pie social. Choices abound and every choice is a good choice. This volunteer never misses either of

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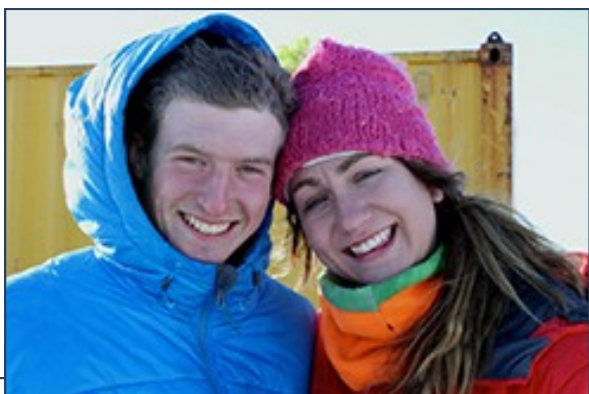


Ellis, Reba and Eliza



Unalakleet's unique events.

For an Iditarod Rookie, getting to Nome marks a great and unique moment in one's life and mushing career. When it comes to uniqueness, 21-year-old Travis Beals, the youngest musher on the trail, didn't stop with just making the burlled arch. He chose that unique time and place to propose to Sarah Stokey, his girl friend of three years. A large cheering crowd that included his parents and Sarah met Travis at the burlled arch. She welcomed her knight in shining armor—actually knight in white wind suit with a huge hug. After their welcome to Nome moment, Travis reached into his pocket and produced a little snow colored velvet box that he opened revealing a ring. Then he took a deep breath and looked into Sarah's eyes and asked, "Will you marry me?" Surprised and delighted Sarah exclaimed, "YES!" Had Travis purchased the ring ahead of the race for this unique and engaging moment in Nome? Not exactly. Sometime after leaving Willow he decided to propose at the burlled arch. His options for purchasing an



Beals proposed to Stokey in Nome



Beals leaves UNK



UNK Ski Race

engagement ring along the trail were limited. So, he called his mother back home and asked her to buy a ring and bring it to the finish. His mother met him a few miles outside of Nome to give him the box containing the ring. Travis, maybe a little nervous and excited, dropped the box in the snow. Following a frantic search, the precious box and contents were recovered and now Travis and Sarah are engaged.

Recalling two mushers' comments under the arch in Nome summarizes the race and its uniqueness for those of us who didn't stand on sled runners but watched and followed the race through technology. DeeDee Jonrowe said, "Tenth place this year was a whole lot harder than tenth place last year." The 44th musher to finish, Jodi Bailey said, "It's the same red line on the map, just different weather and different luck." ■

Conditioning and Training....

By Stu Nelson, Jr., DVM, Chief Veterinarian

Iditarod 2013 was perhaps the most exciting in history! There were numerous leaders throughout the race, and each appeared to have the winning strategy for the moment. I had the privilege of flying over Mitch and Aliy shortly after they had left Safety. At the time, there was only about a mile between the two, and the outcome was still uncertain. Congratulations to Mitch for his second Iditarod victory!

Numerous lead changes demonstrated the caliber of the competition. The fact that there are so many great teams is no accident. It typically takes many years, if not decades, to develop the knowledge, skill and expertise to be a serious contender. Excellent dog care is a prerequisite for such success, and I have a high regard for what this field of mushers was able to accomplish.

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Certainly, there are many variables that may impact the finishing position of a team, and there is little room for a mental mistake for a first place finish, but the greatest factor in performance is preparation. Genetics, conditioning/training and optimal nutrition are the keys to success, and there is no shortcut.

The words "conditioning" and "training" are often used interchangeably, but there is a distinction. Conditioning refers to the cardiovascular development necessary for endurance. Top teams will often have well over 4,000 miles during the Fall and Winter months as they prepare for participation in the Iditarod. This enables them to develop the necessary physical stamina.

Training is a mental process. Learning how to interact with other team members, respond to various trail conditions and hazards, as well as understand voice commands from the musher, are all important aspects of training. Perhaps the most important of these is to know what "whoa" or "stop" means! Ultimately, both adequate conditioning and training are necessary for a successful run to Nome.

Iditarod 2013 was probably the warmest in history, accompanied by numerous storms. Annually, one of the greatest health concerns for our marathon dogs is "overheating." This surprises many folks, as it is more logical to the inexperienced that the opposite would be true. In reality, any ambient temperatures greater than zero degrees (Fahrenheit), combined with calm (no wind) conditions and bright sunlight (radiant heat), can create a scenario where running dogs may develop "hyperthermia." I was very impressed by how closely the mushers monitored their dogs to prevent them from overheating, which was another example of the dog care provided by them.

Special recognition is due to Jake Berkowitz for winning the coveted Alaska Airlines Leonhard Seppala Humanitarian Award! This award is given to a musher that has demonstrated exemplary dog care during the race. Many were deserving, but only one could win. The recipient is chosen by a combination of voting by trail veterinarians who submit their first, second and third choices based on observed care provided at the race checkpoints, and scoring of the dog teams in Nome. Well done Jake!

In addition to the mushers who did such a great job with their dogs, I would also like to take this opportunity to specifically thank the twelve veterinary technicians and fifty-five veterinarians who volunteered their valuable time. Certainly, I have a great appreciation for the dedication of all of our volunteers. It takes a team effort to accomplish a successful race! Pilots, logistics and communications personnel are just some of the others that we could not do without. There are many more who served in necessary roles. I know how hard they worked behind the scenes, ultimately for the benefit of the dogs.

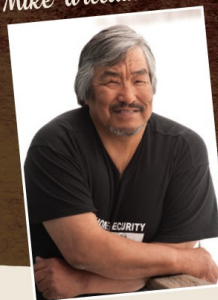
Kudos to Drs. Dirsko Von Pfeil and Sterling Thomas for being the dual winners of the Golden Stethoscope Award, annually granted to a veterinarian or veterinarians who the mushers determined to have been exceptionally helpful to them during the race. Dirsko and Sterling did a marvelous job in Eagle Island, which presented numerous logistical challenges associated with ongoing snowstorms and high winds. Thank you both for your service!

Iditarod 2013 is now in the record books, but things are already starting to "heat up" in preparation for 2014. Thanks to all of the others that made 2013 such a great race, including our wonderful sponsors and supporters! To all, have a great fall! ■

leading the way to a **HEALTHY ALASKA**



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Mike Williams Jr.

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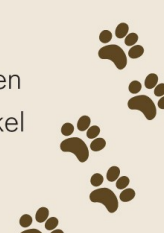
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Junior Iditarod

Junior Mushers Multiply 13 by 4

by Terrie Hanke

Ask me when Iditarod begins and I'll reply, "The last Saturday of February." Some Iditarod fans might attempt to set me straight with, "Don't you mean the first Saturday of March?" But no, I stand firm. Iditarod begins with the Junior Iditarod and that happens the last weekend of February. The young mushers that run the 150-mile junior race are the future of Iditarod. Of the 66 mushers who went to the start at Willow for the 2013 Iditarod, at least eleven had previously participated in the Junior Iditarod. The list includes but not limited to Travis Beals, Aaron Bermeister, Josh Cadzow, Jessica Hendricks, Lance & Jason Mackey, Wade Marrs, Cim & Ramey Smyth, Ray Redington, Jr. and Dallas Seavey.

The start for the 2013 Junior Iditarod was located on Knik Lake. Turn off for the lake is at mile 13.5 of the Knik Goose Bay Road. As the 13 mushers arrived, the "feels like" temperature including wind chill was 13 degrees. The starting banner is within shouting distance of the Redington Homestead. It's a great way to annually remember Joe Redington, his work in founding The Last Great Race, his desire to honor and remember the role of the Alaskan Husky in the history of the Last Frontier and the encouragement he provided when the

juniors wanted their own Iditarod.

This year the juniors headed to the Yentna Station rest stop and turnabout on a fast well marked trail. Later on Saturday afternoon, nine of the 13 Junior mushers arrived at Yentna Station within an hour beginning at



Noah Pereira

17:31. All of the mushers arrived at the halfway rest within a three-hour time span. Common report from the teens as they checked into Yentna Station was that they had a great run — the trail was excellent, their dogs were awesome and the weather was perfect. Common observation of the canine athletes, they loved the run and wondered why they had to stop and camp.

The mushers gathered straw, drop bags and a few containers of Heet then set to pampering their canine athletes with foot care, massage and a gourmet multi-course meal. Some of the mushers decided to follow the example of the canine athletes and curl up for a nap. Other mushers participated in the ageless tradition of gathering around the bon-fire. It's a time and place where the teens make new friends and keep old friendships alive.

After the ten-hour rest and differential adjustment, defending champion, Conway Seavey, pulled his snow hook and followed the snowy trail out of the checkpoint onto the Yentna River at 03:43. In just eleven minutes Noah Pereira and Jenny Greger were in pursuit of Conway on the trail. By 06:52, all the mushers were running toward the finish line at Willow Lake. The sun rose at 08:19. The temperature was a balmy 19 degrees with calm winds and light snow. The mushers might have been a little tired but their dogs were happy and energetic. From the moment booties went on their paws, every dog on every team was on its feet lunging, barking and ready to run. Over night the trail had been top dressed with a couple of inches of fluffy new fallen snow. Exceptional trail conditions

(Continued on page 12)



Jenny Greger

Junior Iditarod



Jonathan Biggerstaff

continued for day two of the race.

Family, friends, fans and volunteers enjoyed a one-two-three finish at the Community Center in Willow. Somewhere out on the trail, rookie Noah Pereira passed the defending champ and made the finish line first at 11:32. Conway Seavey was just four minutes behind. Jenny Greger

claimed third place at 12:09. During the afternoon, a steady stream of teams came down the wooded trail and across the lake. Jonathan Biggerstaff claimed the Red Lantern at 16:42.

That evening race sponsor Lynden Transportation presented scholarships to the top five finishers at the banquet. All attending enjoyed a well-stocked taco buffet. The Blue Harness Award was presented to Jenny Greger's lead dog, McGee. Jenny describes McGee as an 18 month-old dog that loves to run, thrives in the position of leader and is an inspiration to his teammates. Red Lantern recipient, Jonathan Biggerstaff, was chosen by his fellow mushers to receive the Sportsmanship Award.

Kelly Griffin spoke at the 2013 Junior Iditarod Banquet. In applauding the efforts and accomplishments of the 13 Junior mushers, Griffin said, "Getting to the start is the hardest part of any race." From Kelly's perspective, mushing gives the teenagers plenty of opportunities to hone their problem solving skills. Isn't that what life is about—recognize problems

and persevere to solve them? Not only is the Junior Iditarod a proving ground for aspiring Iditarod mushers, it provides valuable practice in life skills.

The Jr. Iditarod is grateful to Lynden for sponsorship and dedication to the Jr. Iditarod. ■

LYNDEN SPONSORS THE JR. IDITAROD

by Greg Bill

The e-Runner provides an opportunity for us to recognize the sponsors that provide the economic engine that helps to underwrite the cost of staging "The Last Great Race on Earth." But many times we overlook the fact that the Jr. Iditarod Race is part of our family, and they also need funding to stage their race.

35 years ago, in February of 1978, the very first Jr. Iditarod was run, and what an asset it has become. This race provided opportunities for the youth, ages 14 through 17, to get involved in the state sport of dog mushing. Many of these youth fell into the sport naturally having been part of a family whose parents were already involved in the Iditarod. However, as the race evolved and gained notoriety, the stage was set for many youth who did not come from a mushing background, to give it a try and maybe someday qualify to run the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

Those first 10 years provided an opportunity, but very little else. Sure, trophies were presented, as well as a few prizes like a sleeping bag, harnesses, and eventually the grand prize of a new sled, but the Board of Directors knew it needed more. So in 1978 a Scholarship program was set up that would award

(Continued on page 13)



Junior Iditarod

monetary scholarships for Higher Education involving going on to College or an accredited Trade School. The money would be held in a trust fund and then paid to the higher education institution upon the enrollment of the musher(s).

That first year \$1,000 was awarded in scholarships, not much to defray education costs, but at least it was a start. The Board created a committee to develop a 10 year plan to increase the scholarships annually. Years went by, and numerous attempts were made to increase the amount of scholarships, but to no avail. The Jr. Iditarod never really had any sponsors, mainly business supporters that provided in-kind donations of prizes for the mushers, which is still very much appreciated.

Then in 2008, Lynden, an Alaskan company with well over 50 years of serving Alaska, became the Major Sponsor of the Jr. Iditarod, with a contribution of \$25,000. This generous contribution by Lynden allowed the Jr. Iditarod to be able to award a total of \$15,000 in scholarships in 2008. In 2013 the Board was pleased to increase the scholarships to \$20,000 which was set aside in the trust in the following amounts:

- \$6,000 for 1st place
- \$4,000 for 2nd place
- \$2,500 for 3rd place
- \$2,000 for 4th place
- \$1,500 for 5th place
- \$2,000 for the winner of the Humanitarian Award
- \$2,000 for the winner of the Sportsmanship award

As you can see, today's Jr. Iditarod mushers have a very good opportunity of setting aside some scholarship money over the period of four years that they are eligible to run. This jump in scholarship amounts has also caught the attention of many youths living in remote Alaskan villages, who see a great opportunity to set a goal for higher education. It's very possible that one of today's young mushers could secure \$10,000 to \$25,000 in scholarships thanks to the sponsorship of the Lynden family of companies.

What's really encouraging is that out of the 25 mushers who competed in the 2012 and 2013 Jr. Iditarod races, 14 of them are planning to go to college, with lofty goals of being an engineer, an architect, a lawyer, an optometrist, a surgeon, a veterinarian, and others going into the fields of business/

graphic design, fire science, criminal justice, and a few who just say "I'm going to college."

Recently, Barb Redington, the Jr. Iditarod Board President, and I had a meeting with Jeanine St. John, Vice President at Lynden, and she shared the following: "Lynden is proud to support these young racers reach not only their goals in the Jr. Iditarod, but their future educational goals as well. The attributes that these young people demonstrate through their race goals; hard work, dedication, having fun, and doing their best, truly exemplify Lynden's motto as well. The Jr. Iditarod, and its scholarship and youth development mission, fit Lynden's charitable giving criteria perfectly, and we are thrilled to be the Major Sponsor again for 2014."



Although Lynden is the primary sponsor of the Jr. Iditarod, we have many other volunteers and businesses who are vital to the success of this event, and our thanks go out to them as well. As we continue to grow and improve our scholarship funding, we welcome other sponsors the help underwrite the approximately \$8,000 in race expenses. This would then allow Lynden's \$27,500 contribution to be utilized exclusively for scholarships for the 2014 Jr. Iditarod Race.

If anyone is interested in supporting sponsorship of the Jr. Iditarod, helping to underwrite the race expenses, please contact Greg Bill at gbill@iditarod.com ■



Education Portal: From the Trail to the Classroom

Iditarod... The Last Great Teaching Race...

Iditarod and Education are both great races. Iditarod is a race across the wilderness of Alaska from Anchorage to Nome, challenging a musher and a team to encounter the obstacles that Mother Nature and Alaska place on the trail before each racer. Education is a race across the universe of knowledge that a child begins at an early age and an adult continues throughout one's lifetime. Knowledge gained along this educational journey is put to use to solve problems, design buildings, discover cures to diseases, run communities, and make the world a better place. Iditarod is a tool for the creation of content curriculum to enhance education. Educators using Iditarod's lessons and activities recognize that students who are involved with Iditarod education read more, write more, think scientifically and mathematically, set goals, and use technology as a resource. Iditarod in the classroom is a best resource for educators to lead students down a trail of learning to reach academic success.

The Education Portal contains hundreds of content driven lessons and activities that engage students in real time adventure learning. With a strong focus on STEM instructional lessons, teachers of students in Pre-K through high school,



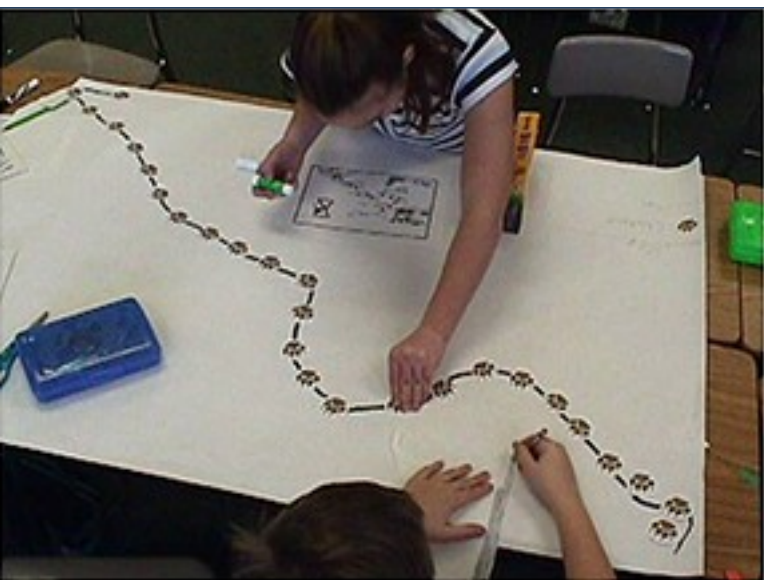
Caption

integrate Iditarod successfully into the curriculum. Each year, an Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™ guides educators through projects and lessons developed for classroom use. The 2014 Teacher is Jen Reiter from Maryland. Jen's lessons are on the website and during the race, she'll share her observations of traveling to checkpoints. (<http://iditarod.com/teachers>)

Two annual conferences for educators are held each year to help teachers develop and deliver meaningful lessons and assess student progress. The 2014 Winter Conference will be held February 25–28 in Anchorage. The Summer Camp for Teachers will be held June 21–30, in Wasilla/Willow. These events are opportunities for educators to expand their own knowledge base of Alaska and Iditarod and to fine tune pedagogy. Information about these events can be found at <http://iditarod.com/teachers>.

Iditarod—imagine the possibilities and the opportunities... Why simply imagine? Get involved!

ExxonMobil is the sponsor for Iditarod's Education Department and is in partnership in bringing real time science, technology, math, engineering, and other content curriculum to students who are headed down the trail to academic success.



Students create Iditarod Trail Maps

Iditarod
Education

Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™

Jennifer Reiter — 2014 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™

Jen Reiter is currently a teacher at Gilman School, an independent boys' school in Baltimore, Maryland. She began her teaching career in 1993 in public schools and moved to the independent schools in 2000. She holds an undergraduate degree from Towson University with dual majors in Early Childhood Education and Dance Performance, Education, and Choreography and a MA from Johns Hopkins University in Gifted Education.

Currently teaching third grade, the Iditarod is deeply infused in her curriculum and reaches its apex in a nearly three month math curriculum centered on the sport of mushing and the Iditarod. The Iditarod is a natural fit for her boys and all students—dogs, adventure, and racing—what else could anyone ask for? It is also the perfect way for her students to be exposed to the character development ideals of honor, integrity, respect, humility and excellence.

Jen has always had a bit of the adventurer spirit in her, her summer jobs have included working on archaeological digs in southwest Utah and a shark research lab in the Bahamas! Following the racers down the trail would allow her to appease her inner explorer while sharing the amazing experience with teachers, students and their families all around the world!

Follow Jennifer during the 2013–2014 school year as she leads students on a trail towards academic success in science, math, literacy, and other content areas. Jen will be putting lessons and journal entries on the Iditarod website. itteacheronthetrail.com/



Jennifer Reiter



Linda Fenton's third grade class

The Largest Classroom

By Linda Fenton,
2013 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™

As 2013 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™, I had the opportunity to teach the largest classroom during this year's race. I not only Skyped my own third graders from the Waupaca Learning Center in Waupaca, Wisconsin almost daily, I Skyped and e-mailed students and teachers from across the United States. There was even a class of students from Spain whose daily assignment was to read my website articles at itteacheronthetrail.com.

What an honor. It was infectious seeing how excited students were to talk to someone who was in Alaska experiencing the race. They not only were able to talk to me, they talked to vets, mushers, pilots and volunteers. My class even Skyped with students from Anvik and Nome. All these people were more than happy to stop what they were doing and answer questions to a classroom of students from the lower 48.

Thank you, Iditarod, for placing a Teacher on the Trail. Adventure learning is invaluable and the Iditarod—what an adventure! Teachers are inspired to teach using the Iditarod as a teaching tool and students are avid learners. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to teach the largest classroom of excited, engaged, and motivated students. It was this teacher's dream come true. ■

* Linda Fenton is from Waupaca, Wisconsin and served as the 15th Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™. Iditarod thanks Linda for her dedication, creativity, enthusiasm, and energy devoted to helping students to achieve academic success. Through the lessons Linda posted on the website and her journal entries, 2013 was the year that more students than ever engaged in higher level math and science academics and pushed themselves to read, achieve, and set goals. Thanks, Linda!



Trail Talk... Tributes and Life Events

Celebrating Lives Well Lived...



Dr. Bob Harwood, 65, passed away on October 25, 2012 at the KU Medical Center in Kansas City, Kansas. Dr. Harwood was an Iditarod Trail Veterinarian six years during the 80's and 90's and valued that experience as one of his greatest adventures.



Pat Koch, 76, passed away on June 28, 2013, in Desoto, Texas, where she had resided with her daughter, Cindy, since 2008. Pat was the mother of former Iditarod volunteer and President of the Iditarod Board of Directors, Rick Koch. During the 80's, Pat worked tirelessly as a volunteer during the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

Dick H Barnum, 70, of Fairbanks, Alaska, passed away on Jan. 7, 2013, after a valiant fight against cancer at the home of his sister, Ann. While living in Michigan during the 60's, he developed a love of dog racing and dreamed of coming to Alaska to run the Iditarod. And in 1983, he did enter the Iditarod. Later he ran the Quest in 1987 and 1988.



Rosemary Hanrath passed away on October 6 after a brief battle with cancer. Rosemary, aka KL7LA (Love Alaska) and her husband, Del- aka KL7JKW were avid ham radio operators. Headquartered in their Montana Creek rustic cabin, they spent many hours talking' to ham operators. In the early days of the Iditarod, they were a main communication point - helping to ensure the safety of the mushers and pilots.



Guy Blankenship, 66, passed away peacefully in his sleep in Denver, Colorado, on July 8, 2013. Guy moved his family to Fairbanks in 1971 to take a teaching job and fulfill his dream to become a dog musher. He later became a three time champion of the North American Freight Race and a finished the Iditarod six times, always in the top 20 and twice in the top 10. His last Race was in 1989.

Walt Palmer, 84, died at his home in Chugiak from Alzheimer's disease and liver cancer on February 8, 2013. . Palmer ran the Iditarod in 1975.



Ken Stout, 83, a decorated Army veteran and father of musher DeeDee Jonrowe, died at the home in Anchorage, Alaska, that he shared with his wife, Peg, an Iditarod volunteer since the beginning of the Race, on May 1, 2013. Ken was well known to the Iditarod family as he was always there to support DeeDee in her mushing and Peg in her volunteering. The above photo of Ken was taken in Anchorage at the start of the 2010 Iditarod while Ken stood with DeeDee and Peg as fans took pictures of the family.



Deby Trosper, 61, passed away at her home in Olympia, WA, after a courageous battle with cancer. Deby, a longtime race staff member, is remembered for her friendship, her dedication to the race, her sense of humor, and for seeing that IditaRiders had the adventure of a life time at the start of the Iditarod. Deby's work at Iditarod over the years included many areas from volunteer coordinator, to membership, to restart coordinator. Deby enjoyed spending time out on the Trail during the race as well as working in Nome during the finish of the Iditarod. Some of Deby's ashes have been spread at Rainy Pass.

Trail Talk... Tributes and Life Events

Celebrating Lives Well Lived...



Wasilla resident **Angela Mae Hubbard**, 25, died November 7, 2013, from carbon monoxide exposure at her home in Wasilla. Angie is the daughter of Rick and Lori Townsend, both of whom competed in the Iditarod in the mid 90's.



Lori Louise Egge, 53, while surrounded by her deeply caring family and friends, passed away November 7, 2013 at her home in Wasilla. Lori courageously fought a 16-month battle with an exceedingly rare form of small cell carcinoma. Northern lights filled the sky as Lori died casting a glowing tribute over her life steeped in bold adventure, confidence and a profound joy in sharing her love of Alaska and its

people. Lori's Celebration of Life was held on held Sunday, November 17th from 2 p.m until sunset at Kathy Chapoton and Martin Buser's Happy Trails Kennel in Big Lake. Lori's friends and family recall that Lori lived every moment of her life with gusto. Lori is remembered as an incredible business woman and a part of Iditarod's family of friends and associates. Lori was the founder of Sky Trekking Alaska.

Our Thoughts and Condolences to....

Condolences to Rudy , (Ivan Rudy) and his wife Marcia, on the passing of their son, Zachary Lane. Zachary died August 31, 2013 at the age of 42. Rudy is a longtime race volunteer.

Condolences to the family of Mike Williams, Sr. on the passing of Mike's brother in law .

Our sympathy goes out to those of you who have lost a loved one. May you find comfort in the memories and with each passing day, gain strength.

Wendy McDonald, wife of Iditarod Musher, Wattie McDonald, Scotland, passed away on Saturday, October 5, after a courageous battle with cancer. A celebration of life for Wendy was held on Friday October 11, at 1.35 pm at the Aberdeen Crematorium West Chapel and after at the Wardsat Portlethen Golf Club.



Sheila Jo (Redington) Aamodt, 65, passed away on September 28, 2013 from complications associated with her battle with cancer. Shelia was born August 2, 1948 in Winfield, Alabama to Catherine L. and Joseph E. Redington. At 6 weeks old, Shelia moved permanently to Alaska, flying in to Anchorage with her mother Cathy and her brother Raymie, to join the rest of the family at their newly

homesteaded land in Knik. A Celebration of Life was held on Saturday October 12, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. at the Evergreen Memorial Chapel in Anchorage.

Patricia (Pat) Rannebarger Ford passed away Friday, November 15, 2013 at Decatur Memorial Hospital. Pat was a huge Iditarod fan and race volunteer. Pat attended many Iditarod and John Bear Grease races over the years. Condolences are expressed to her family and friends.



Trail Talk... Tributes and Life Events

Weddings



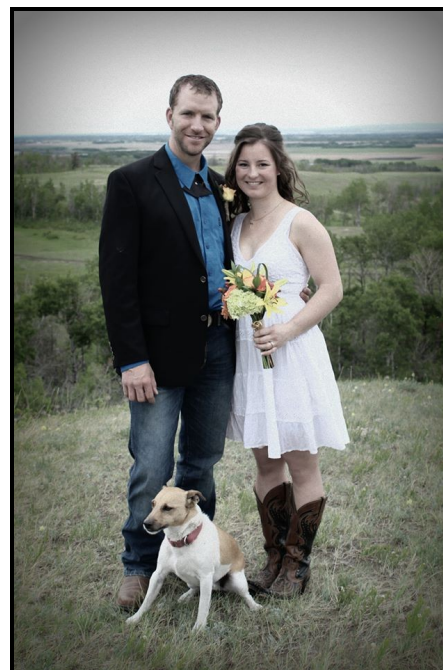
Neil Heisner and Pauline Potter were married at Clam Gulch lodge on Sunday, July 14, 2013. Both have been long time Iditarod volunteers. They met during Iditarod about 10 years ago and remained friends until recently, when the relationship became more than "just friends." Neil volunteered with Lois Harter answering e-mails from school children and Pauline volunteered at the Millennium and at the Palmer fair. One year, Pauline she was the lucky winner of one of the four dodge trucks given away in the Iditarod Raffle

On July 21, Iditarod Musher, Mike Williams, Jr. married Phyllis Charlie at the Bethel Moravion Church.



Raine Hall and Alan Rawlins were married at Lighthouse Gardens, home of Susan and Donald Brusehaber in Eagle River, on Saturday evening, July 20, 2013. Raine became involved with the Iditarod in 1977 when she was living in Ruby and published the first "Iditarod Runner." She later became the Executive Director, a position she held until 1982. She has stayed close to the Iditarod over the years and currently is very involved in the writing and publishing of a book about the first 10 years of the Race.

Iditarod Musher Aaron Peck married Eva Kristina on May 31.



Congratulations!

Trail Talk... Tributes and Life Events

Celebrating New Life! Babies!



Iditarod veteran Kelly Maixner and wife, Margaret are parents of a baby boy, Vendelin, born June 26, 2013 at Mat-Su Regional Hospital in Wasilla. Vendelin is welcomed by 18 month old sister, Rosemary. Kelly will run his third Iditarod in 2014.



Allen Moore and Aliy Zirkle welcomed GRANDAUGHTER Khloe Grace Smith, born on October 1, 2013. (Allen's daughter, Jennifer)

Iditarod Musher Jake Berkowitz and his wife, Robin, welcomed daughter Ruby into the world on born August 15, Mat Su Regional Hospital in Wasilla.



Mike Williams and his wife, Phyllis are the parents of twin boys, born November 15.



Bill and Jodi Pinkham welcomed William D Pinkham IV, to be called Will, born October 9. Will joined sister Grace Ruby who is 3.

Congratulations! Welcome to the Trail!

Trail Talk... Tributes and Life Events

Worth Celebrating! Congratulations!

Congratulations DeeDee Jonrowe!



Representing his region of Russia, Mikhail Telpin carried the Olympic Flame with his dogs in Chukotka, Russia.

The picture is from the official 2014 Olympic Games site. The two dogs in lead are Ayvacal and Bumba. They finished the 2013 Iditarod with Mikhail.

Congratulations to Mikhail for the honor of carrying the Olympic Torch and a 'thanks' to him for bring a little bit of Iditarod with him on his journey!

On Sunday, July 21, 2013, DeeDee was inducted into the Musher's Hall of Fame. This honor was bestowed on DeeDee by the Wasilla-Knik Historical Society. More than a hundred fans attended this event which included a ceremony and a picnic.

DeeDee began her mushing career in 1979. The next year, she ran her first Iditarod. DeeDee has placed in the top ten a total of sixteen times and two of those times, finished in second place. More than a hundred fans attended this event which included a ceremony and a picnic honoring DeeDee's accomplishment.

DeeDee joins more than a dozen other mushers as recipients of this award.

We extend our congratulations to DeeDee for gaining this honor.

The photo of DeeDee and Greg Bill, Development Director for Iditarod, was taken at the Knik Museum by Dave Schwantes. Dave is a long time race volunteer who among other volunteer jobs, volunteers at the Iditarod booth at the Alaska State Fair.



Congratulations!

Trail Talk... On the Calendar

Upcoming Events and Notices

Calendar of Events

Volunteer Registration for the 2014 Iditarod is open now. Visit <http://iditarod.com/resources/volunteers/> for information and to sign up to volunteer!

Last Day to Enter the 2014 Iditarod: November 29

IditaRider Bidding Begins: December 1

IditaRider Bidding Ends: January 17, 2014

Mandatory Rookie Meeting: December 7- 8

Events in 2014:

Volunteer Meeting in Anchorage: January 7

2014 Jr. Iditarod: February 22 - 23

2014 Jr. Iditarod Banquet: Feb. 23

Iditarod Teacher Conference: February 25 - 28

Mandatory Musher Meeting: February 27

Mushers' Drawing Banquet: February 27

Start of the 2014 Iditarod: March 1

Restart of the 2014 Iditarod: March 2

Awards Banquet: Sunday, March 16

Summer Camp for Teachers: June 21 – July 1

Annual Iditarod Membership Meeting , Volunteer Picnic, and 2015 Musher Sign Up: June 28

**Check the online calendar at our website for additional information, location, dates and times for volunteer training, additional volunteer opportunities, and other events. Our website and our Iditarod Facebook page are important resources for you to stay updated.
<http://iditarod.com/resources/calendar>
<https://www.facebook.com/IditarodTrailCommittee>*

A few Words About....

The IditaRider Program...

This is event is a major fundraiser for Iditarod. Winning bidders receive an 11 mile ride in a musher's sled on Saturday, March 1, as a part of the Official Start of Iditarod.

Here's what Jerry Spindler had to say about the experience...

"My ride with James Volek and his team through the streets and trails of Anchorage was worth every penny. My excitement was only surpassed by that of Jame's team being on the trail and doing what they love. With the enthusiasm of the dogs and the scenery of Alaska, it is easy to see why one would want to put in the time and work to be a dog musher."



Photo by Jerry Spindler

Trail Talk... News from HQ

Gearing up for the 2014 Iditarod

As of November 21, a total of 63 mushers have signed up to run the 2014 Iditarod. The list isn't complete. More mushers will be signing up. Signup deadline is November 29th. [View the current list on our website at this link.](#) Check the website over the next few months to watch the starting line up grow and build to be the most exciting race start ever!

With mushers from Alaska and other parts of the United States, Canada, Norway, Jamaica, Sweden, New Zealand, and Australia, the 2014 Iditarod will be an event bringing fans together from around the world via the Internet and Insider. The field of competitors includes 6 past Iditarod Champions. More than a dozen rookies and the veteran mushers will follow the Iditarod Trail and take the northern route to Nome.

The 42nd running of Iditarod will begin on March 1 in downtown Anchorage. This ceremonial start is an 11 mile adventure for the dogs, mushers, and winning bidders called [IditaRiders](#). The morning's run will start beneath the start banner with a countdown that echoes through the air. The day will be one filled with dogs, waves, good luck chants, photographs, the tossing of muffins to passing mushers. The streets will be lined with race fans. The clock won't start here but the enthusiasm and excitement that begins with the first 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, go! - will last for days and days as the teams participate in the Last Great Race on Earth®.

At 2:00 PM, Sunday, March 2, crowds of race fans will line up along the fencing and cheer the mushers and dogs as the 'real' race begins. The cheering won't end until the last musher arrives in Nome.

[Read the bios](#) of the mushers and learn the story of each musher. Pick your favorites and get ready to follow the mushers during this year's race.

At Iditarod Headquarters, staff and volunteers are working hard on areas of race preparation. Each detail is being addressed. We are planning, organizing, training, and getting ready for The Last Great Race on Earth®.

[The 2014 merchandise](#) is on the shelf and waiting for you, the loyal race fan, to get geared up for the race. If you haven't purchased your order yet, there's no day like today to get started. If you are looking for that perfect holiday gift, order now.

Our Insider team is planning to bring you the best race coverage ever. We have also been working on the website and starting in a week or so, we'll be all set [to renew Insider subscription packages and sign up new subscriptions](#). If you've experienced renewal problems, we're sorry for the inconvenience. We'll be up and running again very soon! During this renovation, subscriptions which normally expire at the end of June, have remained active to allow you to review your favorite video clips from the race. You'll soon find your subscription 'expired' and the renewal time will be at hand. If you need assistance, [email](#).

Our reporters have started providing you pre-race coverage to be [found on our website](#). The 2014 Race Guide (to be out in February) and the Winter eRunner (to be out in January) are in production mode.

Classrooms around the world have begun Iditarod educational projects. Teachers have discovered lessons from our [Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™](#) and at the [Education Portal](#).

Volunteers have been signing up by using our [website](#) to communicate the areas that they'd like to work.

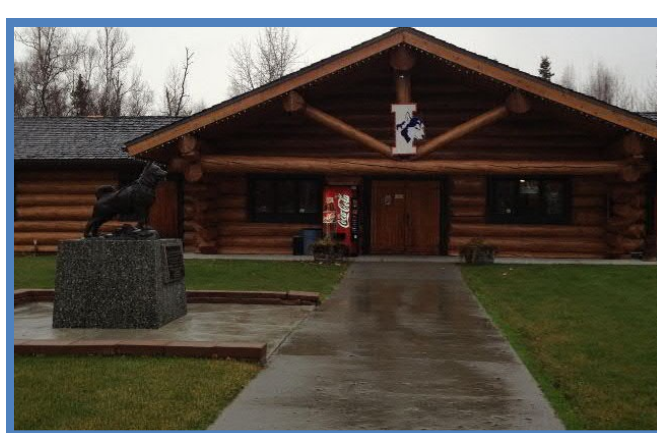
We're gearing up for the race! What are you doing? Share with us on our [Iditarod Facebook](#) page your Iditarod plans or share your story with [us via email](#).



Trail Talk... News from HQ

News from Headquarters

Over the summer months, Iditarod Headquarters went from 'old' to 'new again'. Thanks, Charlie!



New Again!

Trail Talk... News from HQ

News from Headquarters



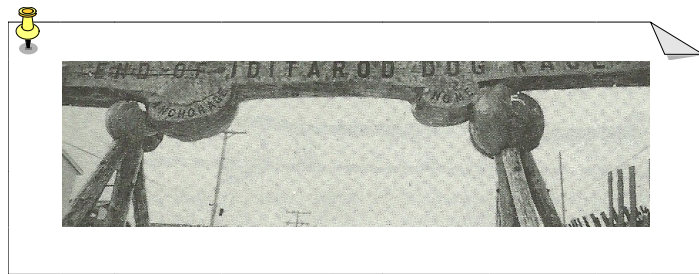
Over the summer, the Burlled Arch in Nome got 'all dressed up' for the next Iditarod. The arch stands proud and ready to greet the finishers of the 2014 Iditarod and mushers in future races. About 30 hours were spent giving the arch an important facelift.

A special thanks to the City of Nome for their support in this renovations project. [Learn more information about the arch at this link.](#)



<http://iditarod.com/the-burled-arch/>

From our archives...

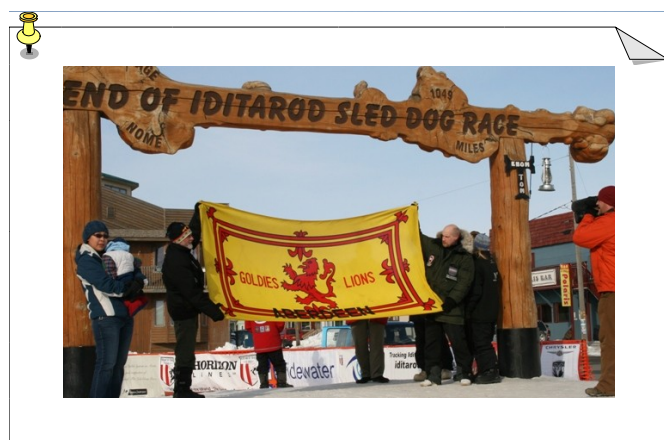


The 'Original' Burlled Arch



the Nome volunteers gathered together under the finish line arch — where is all the snow and dogs? Left to right: i, Nichole Johnson, Andy Anderson, Rosalie McCreary, Tena Staples, Nancy Knudsen, Mark Rogers, Jenny Atowa, n. Josie Niles, Steve McComb, Paul Swales, Edna Cook, Paul Cook, Ted Cook, Bill Cook, and...

1986



2011

Trail Talk... News from HQ

News from Headquarters

Scenes from the State Fair in Palmer and Fairbanks-Race staff and volunteers enjoy the opportunity to visit with race fans and mushers, sell merchandise, and yes, sell Iditarod Raffle Tickets! We also set up a booth and attended the fair in Fairbanks, as we have for many years. Thanks, volunteers, for working the booth, selling tickets, and helping to celebrate Iditarod! Thanks fans mushers and fans, for stopping by and saying hello!



30 Plus Years at the
Alaska State Fair!



Jodi Bailey helps sell tickets in Fairbanks!

Photos by Julie Busch, Barb Redington, and Joanne Potts

What does it mean to be a Member of the Iditarod Trail Committee?

For more than 30 years, the Iditarod Trail Committee has been membership-based. The Iditarod was the brainchild of founders Dorothy Page and Joe Redington, Sr. Their vision was to capture the bond between canine and musher so future generations would understand the historical and cultural values of the Iditarod Trail. This piece of history has continued in large part because the support of the members, volunteers and sponsors. Be a part of this exciting event year round by becoming a member of "The Last Great Race on Earth" at your preferred level.

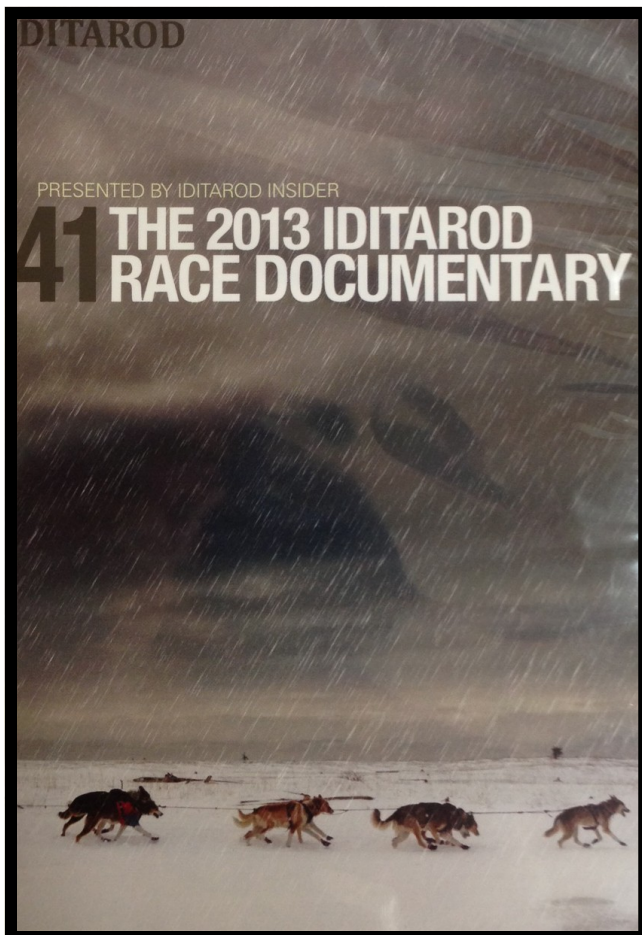


The pride in being a member of the Iditarod Trail Committee goes far beyond the monetary value of a membership level. You become a part of one of the most prestigious and exciting sporting events in the world. Every year as each team leaves the start line in Anchorage and strives to reach Nome, you will know you have helped to make dreams come true by supporting the Last Great Race on Earth. If you are not a member of the Iditarod Trail Committee, please consider joining. If you are a member, don't forget to renew your membership!

Learn about membership at this link: <http://iditarod.com/resources/membership>

Purchase membership or renew at our online store. <http://www.iditarodstore.com/browse.cfm/2,90.html>

We value your membership and thank you for your support!



Don't miss a recap of the 2013 Iditarod!

Copies of the 2013 Race DVD can
be purchased at our online store

[http://www.iditarodstore.com/
index.htm](http://www.iditarodstore.com/index.htm)

While visiting our store, be sure to
check out our [retro merchandise](#).

Purchase merchandise for the 2014
race season at our online store.

IDITAROD TRAIL

RAFFLE



4 GRAND PRIZES: 2014 Dodge Ram 4x4 Pickup Trucks or any similarly priced New Dodge, Jeep or Chrysler vehicle

PRIZE

- 2014 Dodge Ram 4x4 Quad Cab, you pick color & options, or a NEW similarly priced Dodge, Jeep or Chrysler vehicle
- Caldera Spas "Tarino" 5 person Hot tub w/ 2 Lounges
- 2014 Ski-Doo Renegade Sport 550F Snowmobile
- Finnleo Far - Infrared 2 person Sauna
- 1988 A/P Iditarod Collectors Print, "A Welcome Rest," signed by Susan Butcher & Libby Riddles
- Roundtrip Airfare for 2 to most PenAir Destinations
- 2014 Dodge Ram 4x4 Quad Cab, you pick color & options, or a NEW similarly priced Dodge, Jeep or Chrysler vehicle
- Set of 4 Cooper Tires with Custom Wheels
- Tohatsu 5hp Four Stroke Outboard Motor
- 1989 A/P Iditarod Collectors Print, "Leading the Way," signed by Nollner, Vaughan, Norris, Wilmarth, Lindner, Buzby & Swenson
- Five Day Motorhome Rental within Alaska
- DeWalt Tool Collection
- One Way Car Shipment between Tacoma, WA & Anchorage, AK
- 2014 Dodge Ram 4x4 Quad Cab, you pick color & options, or a NEW similarly priced Dodge, Jeep or Chrysler vehicle
- Honda EU1000iA2 Inverter Generator
- #1 Official Iditarod Race Bib signed by 2014 Champion
- Spenard Builders Shopping Spree
- Base Camp McKinley Tour for 2 w/Glacier Landing
- John Deere HR-G1100 Generator
- 2014 Dodge Ram 4x4 Quad Cab, you pick color & options, or a NEW similarly priced Dodge, Jeep or Chrysler vehicle

VALUE

\$39,200
\$7,995
\$7,732
\$4,530
\$3,000
\$1,500
\$39,200
\$1,500
\$1,599
\$2,450
\$1,250
\$750
\$1,845
\$39,200
\$950
\$1,500
\$500
\$550
\$799
\$39,200

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Craig Taylor Equipment Co.
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TOTAL \$195,250

TICKET PRICE \$100 - ONLY 4,000 TICKETS AVAILABLE!

Drawing held at The Great Alaska Sportsman Show in Anchorage (April 6, 2014) NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN.



Credit & Debit Cards
Gladly Accepted



**TICKETS AVAILABLE BY
CALLING IDITAROD TOLL FREE
1-800-545-MUSH**

ALL PRIZES ARE F.O.B. ANCHORAGE



All proceeds benefit the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

Permit No. 13-0131 & 14-0131

\$195,250 IN PRIZES