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Ed and Cathy Rasmuson named Iditarod's 2019 Honorary Mushers

Wasilla, Alaska – Two of Alaska's most respected philanthropists will be recognized this year as the Iditarod Trail Committee's 2019 Honorary Mushers. At a recent board meeting, the Iditarod Trail Committee Board of Directors selected Ed and Cathy Rasmuson for that distinction. The honorary musher wears bib No. 1 in the race each year and leaves the starting line first during the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race's ceremonial start in downtown Anchorage.

Iditarod Trail Committee Board President Mike Mills said the couple epitomizes what the Iditarod looks for in its honorary musher.

"Ed and Cathy live their lives by the principles of helping their fellow Alaskans. You can see that through the work at the Rasmuson Foundation and with their everyday lives as a third-generation Alaska family. They also embody many of the characteristics of what makes this race a treasured Alaska tradition, including perseverance, strength and hard work," said Mills.

Ed's roots in the state go back to 1901 when his Swedish grandparents came to Alaska to serve as missionaries in Yakutat. Ed himself attended part of high school in Anchorage before returning to Alaska in 1964 – Ketchikan specifically – to begin a long, successful career with the National Bank of Alaska. In 1974, Ed became president of National Bank of Alaska and chairman of the board in 1985. When National Bank of Alaska merged with Wells Fargo, he became chairman of the Statewide Advisory Board. Through his professional journey, Ed has always been a great advocate for the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race and was instrumental in ensuring that both National Bank of Alaska and Wells Fargo did their part to support the Last Great Race on Earth.

Cathy is also no stranger to the Iditarod. In 1993, she was part of a group that travelled with Joe Redington, Sr. from Knik Lake (the northern route trailhead of the Iditarod Trail) to Nome via dog sled. Named the "Iditarod Challenge," she recalled that the nearly 1,000-mile trek was a life-changing experience. The couple offered their thanks to the Iditarod Honorary Musher Committee and the Iditarod Board of Directors for the accolade.

“Both Cathy and I are touched to be named the 2019 Iditarod Honorary Musher. This race has been an integral part of both of our lives and it epitomizes what Alaska is all about. Our family is most excited about the honor too,” said Ed Rasmuson.

Members of the Rasmuson family will be in attendance for the ceremonial start in downtown Anchorage on Saturday, March 2. Ed and Cathy will be out of state for the event but will be with all the fans, mushers and canine athletes in spirit for the 47th running of the Last Great Race on Earth.

About the Iditarod Trail Committee

Headquartered in Wasilla, Alaska, the Iditarod Trail Committee is charged with preserving the historic tradition of the sled dog and the Iditarod Trail, by promoting and staging the annual Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. For more information, visit:

www.iditarod.com.

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