

Mush! A Tribute to Sled Dogs

From Arctic Exploration to the Iditarod

VIRTUAL TOUR

For roughly four thousand years, dogs have been helping humans traverse some of the most extreme climates on Earth. From the Chukchi dogs bred in Siberia all the way to the modern purebred Siberian Husky, these steadfast animals have been integral to survival when traveling in frigid, harsh climates. The early 1900's saw the great race from European countries to reach the North and South Poles – and those that did not travel by sled dog often paid the ultimate price.

At the same time, sled dogs made it possible for prospectors to explore and settle in the Alaskan interior. The effort of sled dogs and their mushers saved countless lives in Alaska in 1925 during a deadly Diphtheria outbreak. Legendary musher Leonhard Seppala and his team of purebred **Siberian Huskies** lead by Togo ran over 200 miles during this harrowing relay in order to save countless lives.

Other breeds were also utilized as sled dogs, and their efforts are also highlighted in this exhibition. The hearty **Alaskan Malamute** bore heavy loads transporting supplies as far back as 4,000 years ago. The **Chinook** made it possible for Admiral Richard E. Byrd to explore Antarctica and complete vital Polar research. Rex the **Samoyed** lead his team to rescue a passenger train trapped in the mountains at Donner Pass Summit in January of 1952. The steadfast **Newfoundland** helped to deliver the mail in any conditions.

This exhibition celebrates these dogs and the communities that center around them. Artwork and historical objects display the beauty of these animals doing the job they were bred to do. This exhibition includes prints, paintings, drawings, as well as an original wooden sled from the Museum collection, and features work by Iditarod artist Jon Van Zyle. Using the AKC MoD app, hear the stories of the dogs and people involved with the Iditarod, and why the event means so much to them in Jeff Schultz's Faces of Iditarod® series.

Scroll to the bottom of this virtual tour for **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS!**





Anne Fisher Tatlock
Portrait of Spawn's Alaska

oil on canvas
1954

Robert Spawn's Malamute, named Spawn's Alaska, was an important Show Dog in the early days of establishing the Breed. He won Best of Breed twice at Westminster and sired Apache Chief of Husky-Pak owned by Robert Zoller.

Ancient Arctic Freighters

The Alaskan Malamute is one of the oldest sled dog breeds of the Arctic. Roughly 4,000 years ago, Paleolithic hunters crossed the Bering Strait and Migrated into North America. Accompanying them were domesticated wolf-dogs, believed to be the ancient ancestors of the modern Alaskan Malamute.

The name of the breed is derived from the Mahlemiut, a nomadic Inuit tribe that resided in the Kotzebue Sound in northwestern Alaska. The Malemiut people developed a dog that was primarily used to pull sledges, hauling heavy loads at low speeds over long distances. Unlike other sled dog breeds like the Siberian Husky, which are bred to pull lighter loads at faster speeds, the Alaskan Malamute is a freighter.

Over the years, different strains developed in the Malamute breed. The AKC recognized the original Kotzebue strain in 1935. After WWII, the breed's numbers decreased, and there were only a handful of registered Malamutes in the US. As a result, the AKC expanded the studbook to include two other Malamute strains, the M'Loot and the Hinman. The present-day Malamute gene pool is comprised of these three strains.



**Dorothy L.W. Redding
Eva "Short" Seely
with her dogs**

Oil on canvas

1988

Gift of Dorothy L.W.
Redding

Eva "Short" Seely was a legend in the sled dog world. An accomplished musher, Seely became involved with Arthur Walden's Chinook Kennels and eventually took ownership of them. From there, she bred and promoted both Siberian Huskies and Alaskan Malamutes. Though short, hence her nickname, she was a formidable figure

who championed her line of dogs at the expense of others, frequently getting into disputes with breeders and the AKC. One notable breeder she feuded with was Robert Zoller, a breeder of Alaskan Malamutes. It is ironic that the AKC owns paintings by Dorothy Redding of both protagonists on display here.

**Dorothy L. W. Redding
Robert Zoller with his Husky-Pak**

Oil on canvas

Ca. 1980

Collection of the American Kennel Club

At times, referred to as the "Father of the Malamute" Zoller was passionate supporter of the Hinman-Irwin line of the breed, while his rival "Short" Seely promulgated the more compact Kotzebue lineage. He is shown here in a painted montage of his Husky-Pak derived from photographs. Next to him is Ch. Apache Chief of Husky-Pak the whose sire Spawn's Alaska is seen in the painting on the previous page.

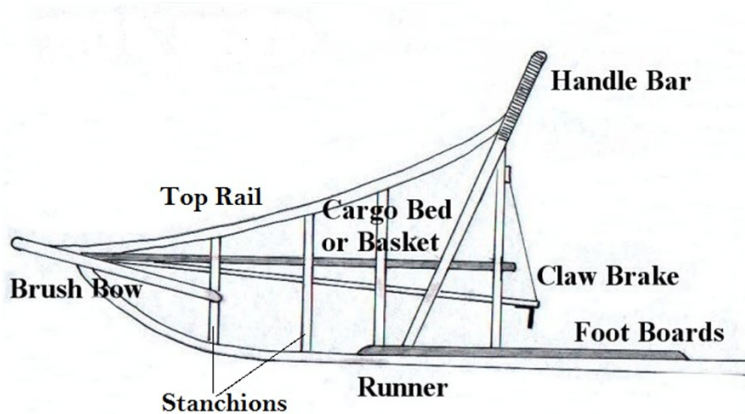




Frank Hall Dog Sled (Freighter)

Hickory, rawhide, metal
Ca. 1950

Frank Hall (1924-1987) was a legendary dog sled maker out of Jackson, Michigan. He made his first dog sled at age 14. Over his long career, he became an icon in the sport of dog sledding and constructed his 5000th sled in 1997. The sled above can be considered a freighter due to its long length to carry cargo.



The Origin of “Mush!”

The term “musher” originally came from a mishearing of early French Canadian commands. French Canadian sled drivers yelled “Marche!” to their lead dog to command them to move, being the French word for “Go!” The word was Anglicized to “mush” and “mushers” was derived from this abbreviation. This command is still used to this day, along with “Hike!” to get teams of sled dogs moving. A number of other commands are also used to navigate, including:

- **Gee!:** Turn to the right
- **Haw!:** Turn to the left
- **Easy!:** Slow Down
- **Straight Ahead!:** To keep moving forward at an intersection of trails
- **Whoa!:** Stop
- **On By!:** Pass another team, or pass by a distraction
- **Line Out!:** A command specifically for the lead dog, to tighten the line and pull the team ahead to avoid tangles in the line.



Rescue at Yuba Gap by Nan Holt

Rex of White Way The Blizzard King

After the heroism demonstrated participants of the Nome Serum Run in 1925, Senator Clarence Dill halted US Senate proceedings to commemorate the Musher and teams who delivered precious serum to fight an outbreak of diphtheria stated: "The classic victory of these dogs and men will probably be the last of its kind..." Clearly, he did not anticipate the arrival of Rex.

Born in 1946, Rex was a purebred Samoyed out of White Way Kennels in Sacramento and trained by Lloyd van Sickle. In his youth, Rex was a leader of a mail team in Idaho, however, by 1949, he became to be better known as a rescue dog, cutting through blizzard conditions around the high passes in the Sierra Nevada to rescue anyone from stranded campers to downed aviators. He has been recorded as having performed over thirty rescues during his lifetime.

His most notable rescue came in January of 1952 when the passenger train, The City of San Francisco near the Truckee Pass not far from the Donner Pass made infamous journey just over a century earlier. The train got stuck in high drifts in a remote location, the 226 stranded travelers spent three days on the unheated train and had exhausted their supplies. When the news reached Lloyd van Sickle, Rex was with his owner Agnes Mason competing in the Golden Gate Dog Show and had to be flown into the Sierras. Once there he transported a Dr. Nelson to the stricken train to evaluate and provide medical assistance to the more vulnerable passengers.

Though Rex was not a great dog in the ring, his exploits and physical strength had a profound effect on the breed standard. In his day he was considered to long-legged and was above the height standard for the breed. The height standard for male Samoyeds was subsequently raised 1.5 inches. To this day, the majority of Samoyeds in the United States can be traced genetically to Rex of White Way.



A photo of Rex



Diana Corro Nicholi I

oil on canvas
2000
Samoyed
Gift of the artist

Diana Corro Nicholi II

oil on canvas
2000
Samoyed
Gift of the artist





Sled Dog Harness

Leather, Brass, Straw
c. Mid 20th c.
On loan from Patti Richards

Dog Boot

Leather
c. Mid 20th c.
Gift of San Francisco Dog Training Club

Northern Exposure Outfitters Alaskan Malamute Harness

c. 1990
On loan from Ann and George Cook

Two Sled Dog Boots

Nylon and Velcro
c. Mid 20th c.
On loan from Patti Richards

Old and New

Over the years there have been a number of improvements in the world of dog sledding that have improved the lots of both man and dog alike. Not the least of these are the improvements in materials. Leather, straw and rawhide have given way to nylon and Velcro. Leather absorbs moisture and can often look like an attractive chew-toy to some dogs. Harnesses made of nylon are much more flexible and conform to the individual dog's physique. Additionally, the nylon does not hold moisture as well and the harnesses are designed for air to flow through. In the case of booties, the leather could become damp and heavy. Nylon is much lighter, but also comes in an array of neon colors, not so much to aid in finding one lost on the trail, but rather the musher can see quickly if any one of their teams have lost a boot. Moreover, the introduction of Velcro straps allow them to remain secure on the feet and present less of a temptation to gnaw on.



**Laura Wright
Alaskan Child's Parky and Overmittens**

Wool, fabric, and fur

c. 1970

On loan from George and Ann Cook

**Inupaiq-Brooks Range
Pair of Mushing Overmittens**

Beaver and Moosehide

c. 1990

On loan from George and Ann Cook

Mushing Outerwear

Warmth is prime concern when mushing. This child's Parky (Parka) displays traditional Alaskan decorations in addition to several pleats that could be let out as the child grows. Overmittens were intentionally large as they were intended to fit over one to two layers of closer fitting gloves or mittens. Both pairs have mitten harnesses which are key to arctic survival. The harness allows you to take of the mittens so you can tend to the dogs but keep them attached to you so they do not go missing. The adult pair were used by George Cook in the 1992 Yukon Quest, a 1000 mile race from Fairbanks, Alaska to Whitehorse, Yukon Territory.





Camp Stove Burner

C. 1930

Metal

On loan anonymously

Although not from Robert Scott's nor Admiral Richard E. Byrd's first trip to the Antarctic, this camp stove is from Byrd's trip to the Antarctic in 1939-41 and is representative of the type of stove burners used in the early 20th c. It was brought back by Richard Moulton, Byrd's senior dog driver on the expedition. He soon thereafter joined the Army serving in the Sled Dog Ambulance Service. In his later career he became an accomplished sled dog racer winning the World Championship five times.

A Race to the Poles

In the early 1900's, there was a race going on. Not a sled dog race like the All Alaskan Sweepstakes or the Iditarod, but a race to reach the North and South Pole. Fierce competition was brewing between the United States, Norway, and Great Britain – the race was on to see who could reach the Poles first.

However, one of the main players in the race, Great Britain, did not believe in using dogs as transportation in their expeditions. British explorer Robert F. Scott felt, like many British explorers, that using sled dogs on polar expeditions was "unsporting." He instead opted to use ponies to pull his sleds and supplies.

In 1909, Scott wrote that "Compared to the dog, a pony is a far more useful, animal; one pony can do the work of ten dogs." This attitude would have dire consequences for Scott and his team when they attempted to reach the South Pole in 1912. Scott failed to realize a few basic facts. Ponies, unlike dogs, are herbivores, and Antarctica is barren of vegetation. This means Scott had to bring hay and oats, which are heavy and difficult to transport. Robert Scott set out for the pole at the same time as a Norwegian explorer named Roald Amundsen. Scott took along his ponies, and Amundsen a team of Siberian Huskies.

Amundsen took great care of his dogs: he took steps to help the dogs combat seasickness on the ships to Antarctica and assigned one man per every 10 dogs to tend to the dogs' needs. Amundsen reached the south pole with five men, two sleds, and eleven dogs on January 17, 1912. Scott, his men, and his ponies did also manage to make it to the south pole – but they died of starvation on the return journey. Amundsen would later remark, "This difference between the two expeditions was exactly the difference between dogs and other means of transportation."



Fred Machetanz
They Opened up
the North Country

lithograph

1982

Siberian Husky

Gift of Mill Pond Press Inc.

Bred with Purpose

Records of the first dog sled dogs date back to roughly four thousand years ago, and were found in central Siberia, north of Lake Baikal. Ancient paintings show that the first mushers belonged to the Samoyed, Koryak, and Chukchi tribes. It is believed that the Chukchi tribe were the first to purposefully breed sled dogs. The dogs that this tribe bred, known as Chukchi dogs, were direct forerunners of today's Siberian Husky. The Chukchi were very selective about the dogs they bred, as a good sled dog team often meant the difference between life and death. Changing climate conditions made it necessary to take longer hunting trips on the ice, so the Chukchi bred dogs that were best suited for hauling light loads over long distances in freezing temperatures, without expending a lot of energy. The Chukchi dog was also bred for temperament. These prototypical sled dogs didn't just make it possible to hunt in the frozen wastelands of northern Asia: they also were companion dogs for their families. The dogs were often raised by the women of the tribe, and therefore had to be good with children.

Siberian Huskies made their American race debut in 1909 after being imported to Alaska by a man named William Goosak. A Danish sailor, Louis Thurstop, lead the team to a third place finish in the All Alaska Sweepstakes. The breed's popularity blossomed from there, and they are currently the 14th most popular breed in the US.



Irene Coloumbe Noyes' parents acquired the Kalland's Roadhouse on the Yukon River, 34 miles downstream from Tanana, where life was non-stop - in the winter, dog teams were regular visitors. Irene's team, a beautifully matched team of females led by Bubbins, was of primarily native village bloodlines.



Jon Van Zyle
Moonlit Trail

oil on canvas

2016

Siberian Husky

On loan from the artist

The Serum Run of 1925

In the winter of 1925, Nome, Alaska had only one doctor and a population of less than 2,000. Diphtheria is a disease caused by bacteria that attaches to the lining of the respiratory system, destroying healthy tissue and forming a coating in the throat or nose. The CDC reports that without treatment, up to half of patients can die from the disease. To make matters worse, it is highly contagious. In mid-January of 1925, a three-year old boy was diagnosed with Diphtheria – and died two weeks later. A seven-year old girl presented symptoms the following day. An epidemic was breaking out in Nome, and the doctor did not have any medicine that was effective.

It was decided that the serum would be transported by rail to Nenana, Alaska, and brought the rest of the way by a sled dog relay. Twenty mushers and about 150 sled dogs traveled 674 miles in five and a half days, saving Nome and its surrounding Native communities from the epidemic. The longest leg was completed by Leonhard Seppala and his team of Siberian Huskies, with his dog Togo leading the charge. Seppala and his dogs traveled 261 miles in white-out storms and at temperatures lower than -30 degrees Fahrenheit. The final leg of the relay was completed by musher Gunnar Kaasen and his lead dog, Balto. They covered the last 53 miles and arrived in Nome on February 1 with 300,000 units of antitoxin in tow. Immediately after the serum run, Washington state senator Clarence Dill halted senate proceedings to state, "The classic victory of these dogs and men will probably be the last of its kind, and is certainly a fitting finish to the long history of brilliant achievement made by dog teams in the far North."

In the aftermath of the relay, Balto and his musher Kaasen were thrust into the spotlight, and a statue of Balto was unveiled in Central Park in December of 1925. There is some controversy over the credit that Balto gets for finishing the relay to Nome – many feel that Seppala and his dog Togo were the real hero of the relay. Togo led his team over 260 miles, compared to Balto's 55. Seppala himself was upset by the snub. He would later write in his memoirs, "It was almost more than I could bear when the 'newspaper' dog Balto received a statue for his 'glorious achievements,'".



Taken during the second relay, which started on February 8, 1925, this may be the only actual photograph of the serum package in a sled basket.



Postcards from Antarctica

In the 1930's, America was deep in the Great Depression. The economy was at an all-time low. However, the public's morale was boosted by dramatic radio broadcasts and newspaper reports detailing the Antarctic expedition of Richard E. Byrd, a naval officer and explorer originally from Virginia. Byrd's work in Antarctica raised so much interest from the American public that he was able to get the funds and resources for a second expedition in 1933, to further polar research. On Byrd's first expedition, he was accompanied by Arthur Treadwell Walden, who helped train sled dogs and rivers for the expedition. The Chinooks Walden trained proved to be the backbone of the expedition: they freighted 650 tons of equipment and supplies from the ships to base camp over a span of three months. Admiral Byrd would later write the following in his book titled *Little America*: "Had it not been for the dogs, our attempts to conquer the Antarctic by air must have ended in failure."



The New Hampshire Sled Dog

In 1896, the Alaskan frontier was wild, new land brimming with possibility for explorers that wanted a little bit of gold. The Gold Rush to the Klondike was reminiscent of the one that happened in California 50 years prior, with one major difference. Instead of traveling by oxen, gold seekers moved west across central Alaska by dog team. One such explorer was a man named Arthur Treadwell Walden, of Wonalancet, New Hampshire.

By the time Walden made his way back to his hometown, he was a devoted musher that was determined to breed his own line of sled dogs. Walden bred a mastiff-type dog and descendants of one of Admiral Robert Peary's Greenland huskies to create a breed with all-around sledding ability and a friendly nature. Walden named the breed after Chinook (a Native American term meaning "warm wind"), who was the lead dog of his sled team. In 1927, Walden would train many Chinooks to accompany him on Admiral E. Byrd's first expedition to Antarctica, where they would move thousands of pounds of supplies from ships to base camp.

Walden met his untimely end in 1947 while saving his wife's life from the fire the destroyed their Wonalancet farmhouse. In the years that followed, the breed dwindled to the point of near extinction - in 1965, Chinooks were listed as the rarest breed in the world. It is thanks to breed enthusiasts that the Chinook was slowly brought back from the brink of extinction. In 2013, the Chinook was recognized by the AKC as the 190th breed. Today, the Chinook is the official state dog of New Hampshire.



"The Mail Must go Through!"

Alaska is just over 663,000 square miles in size. For comparison, the whole state of New York is "only" 54,556 square miles! In the early 1900's, when prospectors were beginning to move into a settle in the Alaskan interior, new settlements and towns were very spread out and isolated. This made mail delivery a challenge, especially to the most far-reaching parts of Alaska, such as Dry Bourbon, White Mountain, and Otter Creek.

Back in the early to mid 1900's, mail was delivered by private contractors along what were called Star Routes. The term "Star Route" originated from a piece of legislation from 1845. It stated that contractors must deliver mail with "celerity, certainty, and security." Postal clerks shortened these words into three asterisks, thus "Star Route." In Alaska, mail was delivered by sled dog. The Star Route carriers had to figure out how to deliver mail across the huge Alaskan landscape, in snow and dangerous conditions. Their motto was, "The mail must go through!"

One route that mail was delivered on was called the Pup Mobile Express. A mine owner named Charles D. Lane spearheaded efforts to create the first Alaskan railroad tracks that ran between Anvil Creek and Snake River, going up to Shelton, Alaska, which was located about 74 miles from Nome. Sled dogs pulled wagons with mail deliveries along the tracks. The Pup Mobile Express allowed postal workers to deliver mail easier in the snow and dangerous weather conditions. The U.S. Postal Service honored the last mail delivery sled dog team in 1963.

Though more famously known for rescuing swimmers from drowning, the Newfoundland had other jobs – including delivering the mail. Many stamps honoring dog mail delivery feature this breed.

Faces of Iditarod® - 2019

Photography by Jeff Schultz – Official Iditarod Photographer

“This is a just small sampling of the thousands of selfless people involved, one way or the other, in the 2019 Last Great Race on Earth®. Mushers, volunteers, spectators, village residents and of course the canine athletes. They are all on equal footing here. The images were made during pre-race activities as well as all along the 1,049 miles of trail to Nome. Both outdoors and indoors. My hopes are that from the images here, which take the subject out of the “Iditarod elements”, combined with their stories (audio & written) and personal info, will show what this thing we call the IDITAROD® really is — An Alaskan event of real-life humans and superstar canines that is simply like no other event in the world. Period. Drop the Mic.

I’m grateful for my friends Matt Waliszek and Andre Horton who helped me conceive this project. And a big thanks to my office assistant, Trent Grasse, and trail assistant Sarah Manriquez whose photo insights and expertise made this a better project. And for my wife Joan whose done the monumental task of transcribing. And to Glenn Aronwits for posting all the work on the site here. I hope you, the viewer, enjoy the Faces of Iditarod®— 2019

Godspeed —Jeff Schultz”

To listen to the recordings from the Faces of Iditarod® series, use the MoD App (AKC MoD in the app store), hold your smartphone or tablet up to each image, and click on the headphones icon at the bottom of your screen. This works even with your computer screen!

Audio transcriptions are provided next to each photograph.

To view the entire series and see the 2020 series, visit www.schultzphoto.com





Name: Chilkat

Age: 7

Owner: Jessie Royer

Musher currently running this dog: Jessie Royer

Team Position(s): Anywhere in the team, but a good lead dog.

Number of completed Iditarod races: 4

Current Location: Anchorage, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 21, 2019

Temperature: 45F / OUTDOORS

What are his/her unique personality characteristics?

She's super sweet. She's like a big teddy bear. She's so great on the coast. She's not a great everyday lead dog, but she's an awesome coast lead dog; because when you get in storms, and wind and whiteout, I think she doesn't even notice because she has so much hair. It doesn't bother her a bit. She's just happy, happy all the time and is just happy when she goes through the storms.

What is that litter's "theme" name and other siblings' names from that litter?

Ranges. So there's only 4 in the litter. Chilkat and Brooks were the 2 girls and Wrangle and Elias were the 2 boys.

What is the bloodline?

Actually, my whole team is related, even though actually they have more hair, they are related to everything else on my team. I have no idea where the hair came from. Her mother was a dog named Tessa and Tessa finished, I think, multiple - 7 Iditarods

with me. And Tessa was a granddaughter of Elmer, Doug Swingley's leader when he won Iditarod; so kind of a long line of Iditarod dogs there.

Name: Melissa Stewart and Ellen

Age: 28 with daughter Ellen, 18 months old

Residence: Wasilla, Alaska

Occupation: Self-employed

Years involved with Iditarod: 28

Iditarod Role: Volunteer. And in the past? I've been a volunteer and a musher, comms, go-fer - wherever I'm needed.

Current Location: Airland Transport Warehouse, Anchorage

Date of Photo: February 15, 2019

Temperature: 60F / INDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

We're here today to pack the volunteer food for all the volunteers out on the trail. And I'm involved in Iditarod because it's what I've always done. It's what I grew up doing. I've run the race now five times and this is what I do every year.

Tell me about your most rewarding experience on Iditarod?

Well, I would say the most rewarding experience is every time I finish. One of the most special finishes was when I finished pregnant with my daughter.

What do you know for sure?

Nothing is for sure, but whatever happens, we're going to have fun doing it.





Name: Carol

Age: 3

Owner: Brett Bruggeman, Skinny Lake Sled Dogs

Musher currently running this dog: Brett Bruggeman

Team Position(s): She runs anywhere from Swing Back to Wheel and occasionally lead.

Number of completed Iditarod races: Last year was her first so this will be her second.

Current Location: Willow, Alaska - Restart

Date of Photo: March 3, 2019

Temperature: 24F / OUTDOORS

What are his/her unique personality characteristics?

Well, probably the main one is, she has a sister Judy, who is her twin. I call them the twisted sisters because they love to run together, but they don't like many other dogs. So they like to gang up on other dogs and single them out and beat up on them. So they two of them together are great, but separate, they can be trouble.

What is that litter's "theme" name and other siblings' names from that litter?

It was our – I shouldn't say it, but it was our plain people name littler. Greg, Carol, and Judy.

What is the bloodline?

Swingley, they're all Swingley.

Name: Pete Kaiser

Age: 31

Residence: Bethel, Alaska

Occupation: Dog Musher/Construction

Years involved with Iditarod: 3

Iditarod Role: 2019 Iditarod Champion

Current Location: Nome, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 14, 2019

Temperature: 20F / OUTDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

Well, I enjoy the dogs and the lifestyle, but honestly I've been keeping at this trying to win it, so it's kind of a relief now. And it hasn't all sunk in yet, but that's kind of been our goal since we started, to win. And now that we've done that, it's kind of like "where do we go from here?" so I guess we'll figure that out over the next few months.

Tell me about your most rewarding experience on Iditarod?

Watching the team come together and perform real well after a tough season of training was pretty rewarding. I knew it was a talented group of dogs, but our training was such that I wasn't sure how it would all play out. It was just real rewarding to see them come together and really take control of the race there late. some challenges were different sections of trail that were – like one in Iditarod; real bumpy and 20 miles of that. and then the run from eagle island to Kaltag was real tough. a lot of ice and slush and overflow. but a lot of those are just typical Iditarod challenges. you go 1000 miles across the state, you're going to run in to stuff like that.





Name: Pita
Age: She's very young, she's 2 1/5
Owner: Jeff King
Musher currently running this dog: Jeff King
Number of completed Iditarod races: This is her 1st race.
Current Location: Kaltag, Alaska
Date of Photo: March 10, 2019
Temperature: 31F / OUTDOORS

What are her unique personality characteristics?

So loveable. Yesterday coming into Shageluk, I took a break and bedded them down. And I like to let them go like I just showed you. And I wanted to talk a walk just to keep my blood moving. So I took a long walk, and I heard something and turned around, and Pita was following me. And I was 200 yards from camp, and I go "What are you doing? You're supposed to be laying down." She's just coming along.

What is that litter's "theme" name and other siblings' names from that litter?

She's named from a litter of sandwiches. She's Pita, and her sister is Reuben, and Hogie is with Jessie Holmes.

What is the bloodline?

Well, Solomon comes back to John Little that went on to me and then Jake Berkowitz. But Solomon has thrown some really great dogs. There's some in Richie's team, right here that you're looking at, as well.

Name: Dick Mackey
Age: 86
Residence: Here in Wasilla, Alaska now
Occupation: I'm retired
Years involved with Iditarod: Since before it started. Actually, I was involved in the centennial race in 1967. And in 1966 I started working on the trail out of Knik.
Iditarod Role: My role here today is just a spectator, man.
Current Location: Willow, Alaska - restart
Date of Photo: March 3, 2019
Temperature: 23F / OUTDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

Well, Joe Redington got me hooked on trail work. And I was a sprint musher. And I happened to be one of the guys that believed in long-distance racing. And because when you're a sprint musher, back in those day - back in the '60s - you'd come home from work, run a few miles, and then you were ready for the weekend. And long-distance racing, you had to spend more time with your dogs. And that was my joy.

Tell me about your most rewarding experience on Iditarod?

My personal most rewarding experience has to be my 1978 finish when I beat not only Rick Swenson when he was the champion, he was 20 years younger than I was. I was 45 at the time. And I won it by one second. It's the only photo-finish the Iditarod has ever experienced, so I can brag on that anyway.

What do you know for sure?

Life is good, Jeff. It's long and it's good.





Name: Dodge

Age: 5

Owner: Joar Leifseth Ulsom

Musher currently running this dog: Joar Leifseth Ulsom

Number of completed Iditarod races: This is his first to finish.

Current Location: Nome, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 15, 2019

Temperature: 26F / OUTDOORS

What are his unique personality characteristics?

Well, he's kind of the biggest goofball in the whole team. He's just super happy. Like, he barks at stuff and came in single lead different places, and he just stops and barks at a camera and then goes over and sniffs at the drop bags just looking for food. He's definitely very food-driven. He loves food. He's kind of just a goofball; a knucklehead.

What is that litter's "theme" name and other siblings' names from that litter?

No, I don't have very many teams in my kennel. Well, I guess I do. His brother is Viper, so he's a Dodge Viper.

What is the bloodline?

Dodge is after a dog named Ambler. She's been on my team a few years. And her sister, Missy, has been my best lead dog. And Yumpa. And on the dad's side is Hunter, which is a dog I brought with me from Norway. It has some Swingley and Buser and King lines in it.

Name: Donna Erickson

Age: 57

Residence: Unalakleet, Alaska

Occupation: Station Manager for Bering Air

Years involved with Iditarod: For many years

Iditarod Role: Volunteer Cook

Current Location: Unalakleet, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 11, 2019

Temperature: 32F / OUTDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

I host Iditarod people every year back in the day when mushers used to stay at home, we used to host mushers. And then, when it changed to the checkpoints, we started hosting the media and followers of mushers.

Tell me about your most rewarding experience on Iditarod?

Most rewarding experience with Iditarod was the 2009, or was it 2010 Iditarod, when most of the top mushers ran for my son Logan and raised money to get him a service dog that helped him for many years with his disability, which is severe autism. And we had a quite famous search and rescue dog named Juke who saved my son's life many years. But it was thanks to the mushers.

What do you know for sure?

No matter if they don't believe it or not, everyone has really deep value. And I know for sure that telling the truth will never get you in trouble. No matter what to always tell the truth.





Name: Bernard

Age: Bernard is about 8 or 9 years old.

Owner: Paul Gehbardt

Musher currently running this dog: Victoria Hardwick

Team Position(s): He can actually run any position but lead. He runs swing pretty good, he runs wheel really great. He's a really solid team dog.

Number of completed Iditarod races: About 8 trips to Nome.

Current Location: Alaska - Restart

Date of Photo: March 3, 2019

Temperature: 19F / OUTDOORS

What are his/her unique personality characteristics?

He's a hopper. He's probably like upper 60's, low 70-pound dog. Huge dog. And he bounces around everywhere. And right before you feed him his front paws will do this little prancy dance. And he just gets super excited. And for his size, he likes jumping on his house up and down. You would never guess that he's a big dog.

What is that litter's "theme" name and other siblings' names from that litter?

You know, I'm not sure about that. He was from a, I think, Norwegian team.

What is the bloodline?

You, bloodline. So he got purchased from a Norwegian or Swedish team. I'm not positive, but Scandinavian. Do you know any

siblings' names? No, but he has a lot of offspring. He has a son named Beast.

Name: Dr. Jennifer Hennessey

Age: 41

Residence: Houston, Texas, in a suburb called Cypress

Occupation: I'm an ER Veterinarian

Iditarod Role: My role is a trail veterinarian this year.

Current Location: Finger Lake, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 4, 2019

Temperature: 9F / OUTDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

My key motivation is certainly to step into a new element. And the more I expose myself to something that's foreign or new, I always grow from those experiences. So I'm hoping to gain certainly new friends and new connections here, but also kind of a whole new sector of work of veterinary medicine outside of my day-to-day in-hospital care

Tell me about your most rewarding experience on Iditarod?

So far I would say, it's the relationships with colleagues from all over the U.S. – actually, all over the world. It's phenomenal to be standing shoulder to shoulder with them, kind of sharing our stories and experiences and then combining what we know certainly to be here for these athletes.

What do you know for sure?

What I know for sure is that limitations we set for ourselves and certainly the more unsure we are or the more new we get ourselves in, like in a situation, we either hold ourselves back and miss quite a bit.





Name: Kelly

Age: 6

Owner: Jeff Deeter

Musher currently running this dog: Jeff Deeter

Team Position(s): Kelly really runs anywhere in the team. She'll run in lead at the right time with the right trail conditions. She does a lot of running at the front of the team in training. This race she's been a little bit kind of frazzled by the trail conditions and the bigger dogs that make up most of my team. So she's been at the back primarily almost all of the race.

Number of completed Iditarod races: This will be her 5th.

Current Location: Unalakleet, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 11, 2019

Temperature: 32F / OUTDOORS

What are his/her unique personality characteristics?

Kelly wats to be the top female of the kennel. And we have a lot of those, so she runs around posturing and showing off to the other ladies, but then flirting with all the boys. But she's great about prickling up all her hair. She looks like a little porcupine when she runs around the kennel. All the way down her tail, like her whole – everything about her gets puffed up. It's pretty funny.

What is the bloodline?

Kelly is from a breeding that Wade did with a dog from Raymie Redington and a dog from Matt Hyashida. And I think, if I can remember right, her parents are called Disco and Alpine.

Name: Martin Buser

Age: 60

Residence: Big Lake, Alaska

Occupation: Dog Musher

Years involved with Iditarod: Since 1980

Iditarod Role: Dog Musher

Current Location: White Mountain, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 14, 2019

Temperature: 26F / OUTDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

I think I'll call it the reset button. I like it to a comparison: the accountant has fiscal years, the student has school years, the family has calendar years, etc. I have Iditarod years because my lifestyle affords me to live with my dogs, so I run the Iditarod to reset the button for the next season to start.

Tell me about your most rewarding experience on Iditarod?

There's so many. I would be remiss not to talk about the first championship. You know, so much work goes into it. In fact, this year being 2019, there's a lot of parallels between Pete Kaiser winning his first and us winning our first. You know, as I'm camping my way to Nome, I'm thinking about his young family and his big success. He was successful, but now he has won the Iditarod. So there are so many parallels.

What do you know for sure?

Well, I know for sure that the dogs are true. And I think that's one of the things why I keep doing what I'm doing with my animals. They are just – we call it lessons from the dogs. They don't B.S.





Name: Mr. Beans
Age: 5
Owner: Martin Buser
Musher currently running this dog: Martin Buser
Team Position(s): Leader
Number of completed Iditarod races: 3
Current Location: Kaltag, Alaska
Date of Photo: March 10, 2019
Temperature: 33F / OUTDOORS

What are his unique personality characteristics?

He's a screamer. He requires me to wear a hearing aid – head protection and the radio, the construction radios when I train him, because he screams. And he has that high-pitched – it's just a piercing – the kind of sound that even an old man can still hear.

What is that litter's "theme" name and other siblings' names from that litter?

The coffee litter. The litter mates are, I have a Java in the team, I have Arabica and Grinder. And at home we have a few more of those dogs, so it was a fantastic litter.

What is the bloodline?

He's a hybrid from my old-time blood line, and a Dave Sheer out-cross. I got a dog name Suzette that was a line-bred dog to the famous Mackey that they're actually the Dave Sheer lines. He's a really, really good dog.

Name: Brian Hickox
Age: 28
Residence: Weymouth, Massachusetts
Occupation: 8th Grade English Teacher
Years involved with Iditarod: Since September of '17
Iditarod Role: I'm the 2019 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail
Current Location: Takotna, Alaska
Date of Photo: March 7, 2019
Temperature: 25F / OUTDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

I'm here primarily because, as an educator, it's incredibly important to find curriculum and content that will engage the students in the class room.

Tell me about your most rewarding experience on Iditarod?

There's so many of them. The scenery is beautiful. I think a general statement has been, getting to know the mushers and their backgrounds and their stories. And hearing a lot of what inspired each musher. Every musher has their own individual story and reason for racing.

What do you know for sure?

I know that there's hope for humanity and I truly believe that people are overall inherently good. And the people who I've met through Iditarod, the mushers, but especially the volunteers and especially the people in the small villages along the race route, are unbelievable people. And they're incredibly welcoming and really will put others before them. And those are great attributes and qualities to have. And it's a positive thing to see because it goes to show you that there's good in this world.





Name: Hondo

Age: 4

Owner: Jessie Royer

Musher currently running this dog: Jessie Royer

Team Position(s): Usually he runs wheel or anywhere in the back half of the team. But wheel is a tough position and he handles it really well.

Number of completed Iditarod races: 2

Current Location: Nome, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 14, 2019

Temperature: 26F / OUTDOORS

What are his unique personality characteristics?

He likes his food. He's definitely a ham. Very, very personable. Like, he'd just as soon crawl into your lap and curl up, you know, and get lots of loving as anything. So he's a very sweet dog.

What is that litter's "theme" name and other siblings' names from that litter?

Well, with Hondo and Spur, which is a cowboy theme, I guess. There's only two in the litter. But his mother's name is Twix, and she was one of my main wheel dogs, too. She finished, like, multiple Iditarods with me. And that litter was like, M&M, Twix, Reeses, Rolo. They all finished like 6 Iditarods with me. So his whole lineage, he comes from a long, long line of Iditarod finishers.

What is the bloodline?

So my entire kennel is related, even though they all look different.

I had a female name Reba who was out of Doug Swingley's Elmer. You probably remember Elmer. So Reba was out of Elmer. And I got two females out of Reba: Cooly and Tessa. Cooly was my 2009 Gold Harness winner. Everything here in my kennel is either out of Cooly or Tessa, or grandchildren of Cooly and Tessa. And Hondo is a grandson of Tessa. So it goes back to Golden Harness winners. Elmer was a Golden Harness winner, too. Cooly was and Hondo comes from at least 5 generations of Iditarod finishers.

Name: Lea Dopler

Age: 8

Residence: Takotna, Alaska

Occupation: Student

Years involved with Iditarod: 2

Iditarod Role: I'm helping doing stuff with my brothers,

Current Location: Takotna, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 7, 2019

Temperature: 25F / OUTDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

Because we get to do the work. And the work is fun because we get to put wood up and make a fire.

So what's your most fun thing to do during the Iditarod?

Stack up the wood.

Are you glad the Iditarod is coming through Takotna?

Yes.





Name: Uncle Jesse

Age: 4

Owner: Paige Drobny

Musher currently running this dog: Paige Drobny

Team Position(s): Lead and swing generally

Number of completed Iditarod races: One, he just finished the Yukon Quest as well.

Current Location: Downtown Anchorage, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 2, 2019 – start day

Temperature: 21F / OUTDOORS

What are his/her unique personality characteristics?

He loves giving big bear hugs. He's a big boy and he likes to, when you go to put his harness on, he sits on his house and just puts his front paws up on your shoulders and wants to bear hug you that way. Not like a super big-dog aggressive way, but just like really gently puts his paws on your shoulders and wants a big hug.

What is that litter's "theme" name and other siblings' names from that litter?

Daisey Duke, Cletus, Rosco, Pat Coletrain, and Boss Hog. Dukes of Hazzard.

What is the bloodline?

We got that littler from Jeff King. He asked us if we wanted puppies and he'd do the breeding for us, and he let us pick two dogs in his yard to breed. So it was really generous of him.

Name: Richie Diehl

Age: 33

Residence: Aniak, Alaska

Occupation: Carpenter

Years involved with Iditarod: 7th

Iditarod Role: Musher

Current Location: Island, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 9, 2019

Temperature: 34F / OUTDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

Because, you know, I just love being by myself and I love being with dogs. I mean, to raise them as puppies and to watch them grow over the years and turn into these ultimate athletes, it's really fun to watch.

Tell me about your most rewarding experience on Iditarod?

Most memorable probably running into the tree for sure. Where did you run into that tree? About 23 to 24 miles from Nikolai.

What do you know for sure?

I don't think there's anything that I know for sure in life.





Name: Quintus

Age: He's going to be 5 this summer.

Owner: Kristy and Anna Berington

Musher currently running this dog: Anna Berington

Team Position(s): He's a front-end dog. He's a good leader.

Number of completed Iditarod races: This is his 3rd

Current Location: Kaltag, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 10, 2019

Temperature: 31F / OUTDOORS

What are his unique personality characteristics?

Like I said, he's a cheerleader. He's super excited and some dogs take that energy in a negative way, so he gets in a couple of scrapping fights here and there, but not aggressive, just some people can't deal with him. He's just so much: he's just "on" all the time. But it's really good to have that because then he gets everybody else jacked up. So he's fun like that. He's a really sharp leader, too, so he's a good asset to the team.

What is that litter's "theme" name and other siblings' names from that litter?

Yeah, they're named after the characters in the Gladiator movie, so... I think Jessica Klejka has his brother, Lucius, and then I can't remember the other ones that Wade said he had, but... I have to ask him.

What is the bloodline?

He's a Wade Marrs bloodline. I think Rebok is the dad.

Name: Anna and Kristy Berington

Age: 35

Residence: Both - Knik, Alaska

Occupation: Both - Musher

Years involved with Iditarod: Anna: This is my 8th running of the Iditarod.

Kristy: This is my 10th running.

Iditarod Role: Both - Musher

Current Location: Kaltag, Alaska

Date of Photo: March 10, 2019

Temperature: 31F / OUTDOORS

What is your Why?.. Why are you here today and involved in Iditarod?

Anna: Because I love dogs, endurance sports, exploring Alaska. Kristy: Took the words right out of my mouth: same answer.

Tell me about your most rewarding experience on Iditarod?

Anna: Definitely I think my first finish was, but maybe before that it's watching Kristy finish her first Iditarod; watching her come up front street of Nome. And just - even though I didn't do it with her, I could feel the feelings that she had as she did; it was very overwhelming.

What do you know for sure?

Anna: That Kristy is my best friend, that I love my dogs more than anybody. And I don't know, maybe I should think about this question. It's deep and I can't come up with a good answer. Kristy: I know I'm going to the dentist after Iditarod because I fractured a tooth on the trail.





Arty Says...

Thanks for virtually touring Mush! A Tribute to Sled Dogs from Arctic Exploration to the Iditarod.

We hoped you learned a thing or two about sled dogs. Here are a couple discussion questions you can think about to imagine what it is like to be a real life musher!

Feel free to answer the questions on social media and tag us at Museum of the Dog on Facebook and @museumofthedog on Instagram.

The Iditarod Sled Dog Race has 26 checkpoints where mushers and their dog teams stop to rest. Imagine you are a musher racing in the Iditarod. How would you spend their time at the checkpoints? What are some things you would have to do to take care of yourself and your dogs?

What kinds of things would you pack for an expedition to Antarctica? Why?

Create your own sled dog team! Your team consists of 10 dogs. Think of dog names and personalities for the following team positions:

- **Two Wheel Dogs.** Wheel dogs are the dogs in the very back of the team, closest to the sled. What kind of personality should these dogs have? What are some of the challenges unique to your wheel dogs, being close to the sled and behind the rest of the team?

- **Four Team Dogs.** The team dogs are in the middle of the team, in front of the wheel dogs. There are two rows of team dogs on your team. These dogs provide speed and power to your team. What kind of dog makes a good team dog? Do you think a large dog or a small dog is best for this position? Why?

- **Two Swing Dogs.** Swing dogs are located behind the lead dogs, close to the front of the team. They help the lead dogs turn the rest of the team and the sled around corners, which is why they are called "swing" dogs. How would you choose which dogs should be swing dogs?

- **Two Lead Dogs.** The lead dogs are the dogs positioned at the very front of the team. They choose which path to take and set the pace for the rest of the team. What temperament would make a good lead dog? What personality traits would you avoid putting in the front of your team?