

MUSH WITH PRIDE News

Providing Responsible Information on a Dog's Environment - Number 28, Autumn 2004



Letter from the President

Dear Fellow Mush with PRIDE Members:

I choose not to revise my original letter but some additions are necessary. I got some good comments from folks at our annual meeting (and I will say that the PRIDE WildFire presentation was wonderful), especially that "for most of the world, PRIDE is still alive and active." Maybe I'm too close, and see just how close PRIDE is to disintegrating because of Board BurnOut. That said, in the past two years we have got the inspection program off the ground, the first aid manual is printed, and we are pretty close to having the activity book in press. But I'm tired. Read Jess's letter and act on it. I'll do my best to keep things going, but your help is essential if PRIDE is to keep going. In the meantime, we are all too close to where we were two years ago. At the annual meeting we decided to do the board by appointment, we found a new business manager (and many many thanks to Cathy for keeping us going the past few years! Do look at Maureen's bio), and I hope that with your help we can keep PRIDE alive. It is too valuable a resource to die.

As all too often happens in Alaska, the summers are way too busy, and not as much PRIDE work got done as I would have liked. That said, progress is being made. We located the supply of Equipment Guidelines, so they are available for distribution. Lynn Orbison (even though no longer on the PRIDE board, she is still one of PRIDE's strongest advocates) corrected some errors that we found in the first printing of the First Aid Manual and arranged for the printing of another 500 copies. We are presenting it to several mid- and long-distance races, with the hope that it will be adopted as the standard musher/vet book, which will help to spread PRIDE's message.

Attendance at board meetings (which have been happening about every month to month and a half) has been up thanks to the change allowing "attendance" by teleconference, and we now have regular participation from both Canada and Australia. With luck, we'll be adding Europe soon. Plus, we do welcome attendance from any PRIDE member, just be sure to contact us (I'll be better about getting the announcements to PRIDE-L listserv sooner) so we can make the arrangements. We are going to have phone-conference attendance at the Annual Meeting (October 9, noon to 1pm Alaska time) - to arrange the call, I will need advance notification so that lines are available. If you would like a guaranteed spot, I can be contacted at fnkps@uaf.edu, and I'll give you the toll free number and pass code that will be needed to access the conference call. If you are outside North America, you'll have to contact me with the phone number you will be using so the GCI folks can call you and hook you in. Take advantage of this and help PRIDE come back alive, and also help shape its future. And thanks to GCI for their help!

Probably most exciting has been the progress Hillary Schwafel made over the summer with illustrations for what will be an activity book for younger children, a book that will emphasize proper sleddog care. Interestingly, Martha Taylor, from the Uncommon Journeys Kennel in Whitehorse, told us that it will be a big seller to the tourists that visit her kennel every summer, and are looking for something to take home to their grandchildren. I

believe that most of the misconceptions about mushing that are out there are because people aren't exposed to the good side of mushing first, and this will be a big help. Martha also reports that she is finding that having a "tourist" kennel go through the PRIDE certification program is turning out to be a big marketing advantage, so gradually, I expect we will see more and more kennels applying for our voluntary inspections. Be sure to look at the article about the activity book elsewhere in this issue, and if you have a photograph for us to work from, or a puzzle, maze, or something that emphasizes good dog care and is appropriate for younger readers, get it to us for inclusion. The hope is to have a fairly solid draft together by the Annual Meeting, and get a final version out a few months after that.

On a personal note, this should be my last letter to you as PRIDE's president. I continue to believe in PRIDE's goals, and hope that I have been some help in getting PRIDE through what has been a rather difficult period. It is time for new blood with new enthusiasm to take over PRIDE's lead in promoting the proper care of sled dogs, and time for me to get busy with some new pups that, at the moment, are collapsed on the porch from puppy exhaustion. The ballot for new board members is included, make your best choices for PRIDE's future. From interior Alaska, where there is now ice on the water buckets in the morning, and the leaves are starting to turn gold and fall.

Happy Trails and Good Running!

Ken

Mush with PRIDE Board

President - Ken Severin

Vice President - Blake Freking

Secretary - Jessica Larsen

Treasurer - Scott Faulkner

Junior Liaison - Hillary Schwafel

Business Manager - Maureen English

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How Important Is PRIDE To You?

Mush with PRIDE was started in response to attempts by animal rights groups to curtail dog mushing activities, specifically targeting the Iditarod. The purpose of PRIDE is to maintain a set of guidelines for responsible sled dog ownership and care, developed by mushers, so that outside groups who know far less about sled dogs and mushing don't step in and develop regulations for us. We as mushers know the best way to run our kennels because we are concerned about taking excellent care of our dogs.

With the gaining popularity of other mushing-related activities, the term "mushing" here should also include skijoring, bikejoring, carting, weight pulling, and any other sport that involves a dog pulling a person or thing. You skijorers are not off the hook! Although Alaskan mushers have traditionally enjoyed a great deal of freedom to own dog teams and participate in mushing activities, the threat of outside regulation that could severely limit those freedoms is always lurking. Sometimes those threats surface, as has been the case recently in Anchorage where tighter controls on the numbers of dogs allowed, how much they bark, and other mushing-related restrictions are becoming reality. Once established in one community, such restrictions will likely fan out to other parts of the state. For people outside Alaska, tight regulations are probably more the norm. In this case, having a set of guidelines for sled dog care and ownership developed by the mushing community is critical. As secretary of PRIDE, I believe that you, the musher, have far more experience and knowledge of the proper care and ownership of your sled dogs than outside (governmental or animal rights) groups do. Again, you are the ones who are concerned with taking excellent care of your dogs and no one can argue against the fact that the human-animal bond is very strong among our community. PRIDE will continue to take on increased importance in the coming years, so that we can preserve a humane and accurate system of self-regulation and prevent others from doing it for us.

PRIDE is facing a critical problem at the present time. The board has dwindled to a fraction of the active members it needs to get the job done. No doubt, you have been wondering why this newsletter is so late? It came to my attention at the annual meeting Oct. 9th that PRIDE is in desperate need of a vigorous, active board who can infuse fresh insights and energy into preserving and advancing PRIDE as an international organization. In particular, our current president, Ken Severin, stepped up to the plate a couple of years ago in order to sustain PRIDE through a transition in leadership. However, one person cannot continue to work hard for an organization indefinitely without burning out. Thus, within the next year, PRIDE will also need a new president. Out of the broad range of members, we only need about 8-10 people who believe strongly in the objectives of PRIDE and are willing to spend a small amount of their time to get the job done. Not all of the tasks are glamorous, but it is often the small, mundane things (ie scooping "poop") that are the most critical to the smooth running of an organization (or kennel!).

In this modern technological age, communication is rapid and easy. E-mail is virtually free. Long distance, cell phone, and even satellite phone calls are relatively inexpensive. The internet provides easy access to information, and allows secure financial transactions to be conducted regularly. Thus, it is not necessary for the PRIDE board to reside completely within Fairbanks or Alaska. Even though some of the membership may not have access to the internet or a computer, most people do have access to a telephone and could participate in teleconferencing at PRIDE board meetings, which we do regularly with members in the Eastern US and even Australia. Therefore, don't feel you can't contribute because you live outside of Alaska. In fact, it is critical that we diversify the PRIDE membership so that we can be current on the dog care issues that face mushers all over the world.

For the sake of PRIDE, please consider volunteering. Otherwise, without the critical support of the dog mushing community, PRIDE may well dwindle away.

Sincerely
Jessica Larsen
Secretary, Mush with PRIDE

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Membership in Mush with PRIDE is open to all. Rates are \$15/Individual, \$20/Family or Club, \$10/Nonvoting associate member, \$5/Youth under 18, \$100/Business (includes four business card ads in the newsletter. Members receive the newsletter, 36 page Sled Dog Care Guidelines and a ballot for elections. Memberships begin on October 1 each year. Those received on or after June 1 are good through the following membership year. Your continued support is much appreciated.

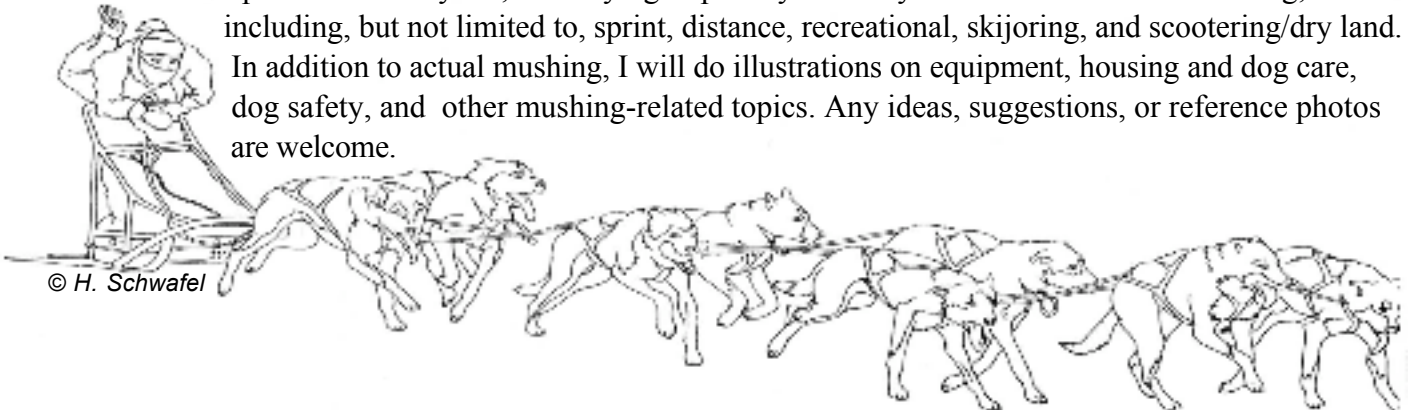
PRIDE stands for "Providing Responsible Information on a Dog's Environment." Mush with PRIDE provides information to mushers, the public and the media about the proper care and training of sled dogs. We believe that modern sled dog owners are proud of their dogs as canine athletes that are bred and trained to do what they love - run as part of a team. Mush with PRIDE aims to keep them doing what they love and doing it well. The organization includes a wide variety of mushers - recreationalists and professionals, long-distance and sprint racers, weight puller, skijorers, freight haulers - as well as sled dog veterinarians and other concerned citizens.

Officers and Directors: Ken Severin-President, Blake Freking-Vice President, Secretary-Jessica Larsen, Treasurer-Scott Faulkner
Junior Liaison-Hillary Schwafel, Business Manager-Maureen English



Junior Liaison Hillary Schwafel

My name is Hilary Schwafel, and I am working on the Mush With P.R.I.D.E. Coloring Book. My goal is to make a coloring book that is informative and correct, as well as fun and aesthetically pleasing. The current objective is to have a draft finished by September. Although I am a sprint musher myself, I am trying to portray a variety of different kinds of mushing, including, but not limited to, sprint, distance, recreational, skijoring, and scootering/dry land. In addition to actual mushing, I will do illustrations on equipment, housing and dog care, dog safety, and other mushing-related topics. Any ideas, suggestions, or reference photos are welcome.



© H. Schwafel

Mush with PRIDE Order Form

Membership

New

Renewal

\$ _____

\$15/Individual; \$20/Family or Club; \$5/youth under 18; \$10/associate; \$100/Business; quarterly newsletter & a copy of Sled dog Care Guidelines & Equipment Guidelines, First Aid Manual included with membership. PRIDE membership year states October 1st. Those received on or after June 1st are good through the following membership year.

Sled Dog Care Guidelines

Quantity _____ \$ _____

Basic Sled dog care and training advise from dozens of the most respected mushers. Includes information on dog yards, feeding and watering, training, husbandry, puppies and more. A 36 page book \$5 each or \$3.50 each for 10 or more.

Equipment Safety Guidelines

Quantity _____ \$ _____

Based on a survey of experienced mushers, covers the basics of safe equipment choices and use. Includes chapters on dog gear, lines, sleds, rigs, skijoring, dog yards, travelling etc. A 36 page book \$5 each or \$3/50 each for 10 or more.

Rookie Distance Mushing Video

Quantity _____ \$ _____

Professionally edited video based on a PRIDE rookie distance-mushing workshop in Alaska. Experienced distance racers and veterinarians discuss kennel safety, husbandry, nutrition, goal setting, qualifying races, paperwork and race rules, and checkpoint procedures 6 hours \$30 NTSC.

Mush with PRIDE Patch

Quantity _____ \$ _____

Navy on sky blue background, gold highlights, \$5 each

Jon Van Zyle 1995 "Mush" Poster (unavailable at this time)

Quantity _____ \$ _____

PRIDE edition signed by Iditarod winners Swenson, Butcher, King, Swingley. 13" x 24" full color \$85

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Prices include postage in the U.S. If ordering from outside the U.S., please include an additional 15% for postage (except membership). Please include payment with your order, and allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery. Mail orders to : Mush with PRIDE, PO Box 84915, Fairbanks, AK 99708 USA.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Country: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Questions? Call 1-800-507-7433 or e-mail info@mushwithpride.org

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

PRIDE workshop/seminar at the ADMA Symposium

Alaskan Wildfires - Is Your Kennel Ready?

Wildland fire plays an important natural role in the landscape of Alaska. Wildland fire provides for regeneration of forests, creates age diversity in forests that increases the diversity of wildlife habitat, and provides variation in ages of trees that increases resistance to large scale insect and pest infestations. Wildland fire is beneficial in these roles. However more and more Alaskans enjoy living in or near the wildlands. Firefighting agencies classify these areas as wildland urban interface (WUI).

Wildland fires that occur in or near these WUI areas, whether caused by lightning or by careless human behaviour can pose significant threats to homes and structures. Research shows that developing a Firewise action plan can help reduce your wildland fire risk. Listen to Kathryn Pyne, fire information officer at the Alaska Division of Forestry, discuss the elements of **FireWise Action Plan** which includes managing your landscape vegetation, reducing the amount of fuel available to any fire approaching your property, and developing an emergency plan.

Jodi Bailey and Dan Kaduce successfully evacuated 50 dogs and 8 puppies safely to a gravel pit 1.5 miles away from their burning Dew Claw Kennels. Learn first hand from Jodi & Dan what happened during the very first night at the Boundary fire evacuations, what they had to do, what they would plan if they had more time, and what they learned from the whole event.

Mush with PRIDE First Aid Manual

All PRIDE members will receive one copy of the manual. Please let us know if you have not received yours yet. There are also copies available at \$5.00 each US funds

Introducing PRIDE's new Business Manager...

My name is Maureen English, PRIDE's new business manager. I live with my husband, Scott Chesney, and our 37 huskies in Fairbanks, Alaska. We moved to Fairbanks, from Colorado, in 1993 with 16 huskies. Scott is the musher in the family, but I play handler when he runs races and I take out the retirees on weekends. We've also taken a few camping trips with the dogs, and we hope to get chosen to participate in the Serum Run in February, 2005. I'm looking forward to working with PRIDE and learning more about how we all can help promote good dog care in our community.

Visit us on the web at www.mushwithpride.org



MUSH WITH PRIDE
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send email to info@mushwithpride.org*

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