

Mush with PRIDE News

Number 18, Spring 1999

! THANK YOU !

**Members, Advertisers &
Sponsors for Supporting
Mush with PRIDE**



President's Update

Thousands attend Mush for Kids

Building Community Relations More Important than ever

by David Monson

PRIDE hosted the 2nd Annual Mush for Kids at Pike's Landing in Fairbanks April 10, 1999. The beneficiary of this event is the Alaska Children's Trust, an organization dedicated to helping children in need throughout Alaska. The event this year was a great success and is becoming THE Spring event in Fairbanks.

Several thousand people and their children attended. We gave rides to kids for 5 hours. Five teams hauled more than 700 children on sled rides. Mushers teamed up with kids from Big Brothers and Big Sisters to run in the 2nd Annual Musher's Olympics. Sled builders showed their wares, weight pullers demonstrated their sport and dogs, and veterinarians offered advice. Puppies were available to pet and mushers in general interacted with kids and had fun.

I would encourage **PRIDE** members in other areas to contact worthy organizations to explore the possibility of having a similar dog activity to support this cause. It can be as simple as school or rest home visitation with a dog, sled rides for kids at spring or winter events, or large participation events like Mush for Kids.

Good community relationships are essential in these days of growing multi-use trail areas, as well as challenges from groups who don't understand the beauty of the relationship we have with our dogs.

We have several other programs that will be worked on this summer for completion by this fall's Symposium. The First Aid book is so close to completion that by Symposium time we will be mailing it out to you all and have it available for sale at the fall event. Also we will have a preliminary report on kennel certificates and some guidelines for your examination and comments to come up with a policy by this winter season.

Please send nominations for Lifetime Achievement Award, and any suggestions as to where **PRIDE** may put its efforts in the future to continue to improve the lives of our dogs and our sport.

Have a great summer.

Thanks, Mush For Kids Volunteers!

Some of the folks who helped make Mush For Kids another huge success were:

Farren Okray, Ryan Mahan, Cathy Dimon, Randy Brown, Elizabeth Schafer, Arleigh Reynolds, Gina Merchant;

Jim Binkley, Tonya Schlentner, Buzz Otis & Gordy, Fairbanks North Star Borough Animal Shelter and Andy, Lynn Orbison;

Chris Terzi, M&M Contractor's (Pat McGlinchy), Jeff King, Alaska Industrial Hardware (Jim Gardener), Jean Lacroix, Christy Couckuyt;

Will Forsberg, Bill Steyer, Bill Merchant, Kathy Frost, Shannon Erhart, Gerry Stern, Ramy Brooks, Cathy Brooks;

Runa Inemyr, Karl Kassel, Lisa Stuby, Penny Parker, Robert Alexander, Ken Severin, Larry Miller, Carol Stewart;

Josh Benally, Mike King, Ray Mackler, and Jay Ramros, Pikes Landing owner.

Lifetime Awards

Nominations for PRIDE's Lifetime Achievement Award are still being accepted by the PRIDE board of directors. This award is presented to an individual who exemplified the goals and spirit of PRIDE throughout his or her career. A nominee should be able to serve as a role model for other PRIDE members and the mushing community as a whole.

PRIDE's goals are to (1) establish guidelines for proper sled dog care and treatment, (2) facilitate communication among mushers about the treatment and care of sled dogs, (3) educate young people about sled dogs and mushing, (4) enhance the care of sled dogs by improved husbandry and veterinary practices, (5) promote public understanding about the care, treatment, and traditional and modern uses of sled dogs, and (6) welcome and assist new mushers.

The 1998 Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Dr.

Dominique Grandjean, Professor at the College of Veterinary Science in Alfort, France. Previous Lifetime Achievement award winners have been Mary Shields, Roxy Wright Champaine, and Tim White.

Nominations should include a brief letter of no more than 500 words. The PRIDE board is slated make the final selection at a summer meeting.

P.R.I.D.E. Announces Release of FRIENDS Video

Educational Video Aimed at Protecting Children From Dog Bites

Mush with P.R.I.D.E. is proud to announce the release of the FRIENDS video. This educational video has two goals in mind. One section focuses on what younger children can do if a dog attacks. The next section emphasizes the owning and caring for a puppy along with veterinarian tips on sled dog care.

The video has already been sent to schools nationwide. The combined efforts of the Iditarod Trail Committee, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, Cabela's, Indian Health Service and **Mush with P.R.I.D.E.** have enabled distribution of the video to schools not only throughout Alaska but many in the lower 48 as well.

A special thanks goes to Ward Jones, injury prevention specialist for Alaska and Pat Hudak of Cabela's who provided the funding for this project. We would like to encourage everyone to include the showing of this video at presentations made to youth organizations, or educational facilities.

Recently, studies have shown that within the state of Alaska, the dog bite ratio per capita is 20 percent higher than the national average. This rate makes sense when a person looks at the ratio of dogs per capita within the state. However it does not mean we should accept this as an unchangeable statistic.

We can make the difference as a team.

For a copy of the new FRIENDS video, contact **Mush With PRIDE** at P.O. Box 84915, Fairbanks, AK, 99708-4915. Or send us an e-mail at pride@polarnet.com.

Dog Crusades Against Biting in New Coloring Book

And it's available for Free on the World Wide Web

A coloring book designed to teach children how to be safe around animals is available for free on the World Wide Web. "Does He Bite?" can be downloaded from the Dogs Against Drugs web site at <http://web.archive.org/web/20010602032709/http://www.sonic.net/~yofee/yofeeplace>. Dogs Against Drugs is based in Sonoma County, California.

For the last ten years, Dogs Against Drugs director Marty Schwartz and his 'K9' Yofee have taught schoolchildren about the dangers of drugs,

alcohol, and tobacco, among other subjects. Teaching children to be safe around animals is Yofee's latest crusade.

According to Schwartz, in most countries when a dog bites a child, it can no longer be covered by insurance. In some cases, the dog is put to death. Even well-trained and obedient dogs will bite children if provoked, says Schwartz.

Young children and parents can learn how to be safe around dogs and other animals by coloring the pictures and reading the stories in "Does He Bite?" The book was donated to Dogs Against Drugs by the American Dog Owners Association.

Dogs Against Drugs also maintains a www.sonic.net". Schwartz invites other dog and educational organizations to exchange links, or to join Yofee's webring. Dogs Against Drugs can be reached via e-mail at yofee@sonic.com.

Internet Letter, Website Campaign Slams P.R.I.D.E.

*The following is extracted from a letter signed by Margery Glickman. It was widely distributed on the Internet in early 1999. Also in this issue are responses from the **Mush With PRIDE** board and from Todd Hoener, the publisher of Mushing magazine.*

As responsible mushers we know that dog care comes before anything else, but unless we take the time to educate the public about our dogs and our relationship with them, through events such as Mush for Kids, we will be increasingly subjected to letters like these.

The speed and wide delivery possible with the Internet makes it more likely that we will have to respond to these gross misrepresentations.

Why publish a long letter that attacks ? We feel that it is important for all mushers to know the misinformation that is being circulated.

Letter Begins:

The Iditarod Dog Sled Race has led to an increase in the number of husky dog kennels in Alaska. In these kennels, many dogs are treated very cruelly.

If you would like to see pictures that illustrate what is said in our letter, please visit our web site at members.xoom.com/savethedogs. The address should be written using only lower case letters.

The dogs in the kennels are not boarders. All of them are owned by the kennels. Many kennels have over 100 dogs. None of the kennels is inspected or supervised by the State of Alaska.

In many kennels, dogs spend their entire lives outside chained up to their dog house. **Mush with P.R.I.D.E.** and the International Sled Dog Veterinary Medical Association contradict federal provisions by advocating the chaining of dogs.

In 1997 the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) determined that the tethering of dogs was inhumane and not in the animals best interests. Accordingly, APHIS amended its regulations to remove tethering from its list of acceptable practices. When you visit our web site,

please click the button 'Musher Group Encourages Abuse' to learn how **Mush with P.R.I.D.E.** promotes the abuse of Iditarod dogs.

In these kennels, a dog can have a chain as short as four feet long. The dogs are never given an opportunity to run free even in a fenced in area. Dogs are often forced to exercise on an exercise wheel. Many of these dogs drink water from hard-to-reach rusty cans that are bolted to their doghouses, and which are rarely cleaned or disinfected.

Injured and old, arthritic dogs are kept outside in the winter when the average daily minimum temperatures range from -24 to 15 degrees Fahrenheit. It is painful for these dogs to be in the intense cold. The only shade the dogs get is inside their dirty doghouse, or under their doghouse if they are lucky enough to have one that's raised off the ground.

Some kennels have few employees, so that each dog gets little attention. These dogs are unhappy prisoners with no chance of parole.

The sponsors of the Iditarod and those who sponsor mushers (someone who operates a dog sled) in the Iditarod have a responsibility to help insure that the dogs in the race come from kennels where they are humanely treated.

Inspection teams should be created composed of independent veterinarians who, together with animal welfare people, inspect each participating kennel to make sure that basic animal welfare standards are met. The standards should be established by animal welfare groups. Dogs from kennels that fail to meet these standards should not be allowed to race.

Kennels like these don't exist in the lower 48 states. Please help these dogs. It would be wonderful if you would publicize their plight by telling people to visit our web site, by forwarding them this letter, by having a link to us on your site (we are happy to reciprocate and put in a link to you), or in some other way.

And, it would be wonderful if you wrote or petitioned companies that sponsor the Iditarod, as well as those that sponsor mushers telling them to support my proposal or a proposal that you might have along these lines.

There has been much discussion about the Iditarod, but there has been no publicity about inhumane kennel conditions. Please let me know if you need more information. I have kennel pictures. If you need to verify what I am saying, please contact Roger Caras, president, ASPCA (212-876-7700).

I am including a sponsor name and address list at the end of this letter with the hope that you and other people will contact them to press for independent kennel oversight. At the bottom of this page, after the list of musher sponsors, there is a sample letter which you may copy to send to all the sponsors. Any ideas are appreciated. Please help.

End of Letter

Counter Shock Tactics with Positive Communication

PRIDE, too, disapproves of poor conditions and abuse of dogs. Preventing these is the reason that **Mush With PRIDE** exists.

The goal of the web site promoted in the above letter is to shock the visitor into writing an e-mail to **PRIDE's** sponsors, begging them to withdraw their sponsorship.

It is tempting to respond by giving the webmaster of this site or Ms. Glickman a piece of your mind via e-mail, but attacking this site is probably useless. A better strategy is to contact the sponsors listed there, and the sponsors of your favorite mushing events, and let them know that you appreciate their support of mushing.

What exactly is on the website that attacks **PRIDE**? The home page has three color pictures of an unidentified dog lot. The text on the home page is virtually identical to that found in the letter published above, and there is a link to another page devoted to bashing **Mush with PRIDE**.

Notwithstanding the intent of the website, the author is clearly unfamiliar with the concepts of mushing and of dogs as working animals. Among the outlandish claims made on this website include a challenge to the fact that many sled dogs do not make good pets. "If these dogs are unsuitable as pets," claims the author, "it is because of the mistreatment they received during their lives. Training dogs to pull great weight goes against the dogs' natural instincts." The website criticizes putting down old, deformed dogs because many of them "still enjoy life." As one may expect, there are also complaints about tethering dogs. "The USDA has determined that tethering causes many injuries. It eliminates normal dog interactions and severely limits the dog's ability to exercise."

What group is responsible for this website? Hard to say, since the author/webmaster doesn't identify himself or herself. However, the "links" of a website are often a good indication of the author's orientation. Among the links on this site are: "Echo: Golden Earth Girl: Linda McCarthy," "Biospirituality," "Dreampower Animal Rescue Foundation," and "The Hedonistic Imperative" (under the Paradise-Engineering heading).

Contact the sponsors of your favorite mushing event and let them know how much you appreciate their contributions to our sport.

Harmful Letter Needs Factual Response

by Todd Hoener, Publisher, Mushing Magazine

Fellow interested mushing enthusiasts,

I believe it is imperative to quickly and responsibly respond to each instance of such correspondence with documented and historical facts provided in a letter by the President of **Mush with PRIDE**. **Mush with PRIDE** is THE designated organization to provide the response (perhaps co-signed by the President of the ISDVMA).

Regardless of the response time involved (and I will do whatever *Mushing* magazine can contribute), such a slanderous statement perpetuates a harmful image and provides many in the general public with the usual distorted perception. And as we know, such perception -- unchecked -- becomes reality.

PRIDE, and many of us, have worked hard over the years to establish a reliable reputation based on sound practices and standards, and each time such an instance occurs we, collectively, must use our accumulated experience, knowledge and resources to quash such perceptions through this communication tool we support. For our part, we should augment any necessary data that **PRIDE** requests.

Please keep us informed (editor@mushing.com and info@mushing.com) of what is being done to respond not only to these charges but to those sponsors and the APHIS which the writer has also targeted.

Also, if there are additional ideas on who else or how ever else we should respond, let's discuss that, too. We should be prepared for this at anytime in the future - especially around the Iditarod time or when congressional

hearings are pending.

Bits and Pieces

P.R.I.D.E. financial report Sept. 1998-March 1999

from PRIDE treasurer Kathy Frost

PRIDE bank account balance as of April 1, 1999 was \$5,908.

Income this fiscal year (since September 1998):	Bills paid:
Memberships: 7,228	Postage: 1,322
Guidelines: 489	Copying: 969
Equipment guidelines: 360	Utilities: 411
Patches: 310	Clerical: 1,618
Video: 865	Editorial: 627
Other (postage, donations): 223	Misc.: 420
TOTAL: 9,475	TOTAL: 5,367

Montana mushers consider P.R.I.D.E. guidelines

The Montana Mountain Mushers board is moving forward with a proposal to accept Mush with PRIDE's Sled Dog Care guidelines as their own. Mountain Musher President Dave Torgerson of Elliston, Mont. said the wording has been approved for an amendment to the groups' by-laws. The group plans to hold a membership vote on the amendment during their fall meeting. The 36-page Sled Dog Care Guidelines contains basic sled dog care and training advice from dozens of the most respected mushers. The book costs \$5 each, or \$3.50 for orders of 10 or more. Please see the Mush With Pride [order form](#) for more information.

New Editor/Publisher for Mush With PRIDE News

In April, Erin M. Lillie of Fairbanks took over newsletter duties from the capable hands of Diane Herrmann, a former PRIDE board member who founded *Mush With PRIDE News*. Lillie is a former newspaper reporter for *The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* and *The Nome Nugget*. Lillie enjoys mushing and covered three Iditarods for the *Nugget*.

PRIDE Sled Dog Rescue

The goal of **Mush with PRIDE's** Rescue Committee is to help mushers take good care of their dogs. We want to assist in preventing and alleviating the suffering of sled dogs living in inadequate kennel conditions. Kennel owners or others who seek advice will be given support through information and advisory resources. Cases of unwanted animals will be referred to agencies or shelters mandated for that purpose. If you know of someone

who may need help, please call any of the following (if none of these volunteers is in your region, please call anyway--we'll still try to arrange for help). We need volunteers wherever **PRIDE** has members - let us know if you can help.

Interior Alaska David Monson, 907-479-3825 Ken Severin, 907-455-6552 Rick Swenson, 907-488-0393 Tonya Schlentner, 907-455-6861	Southcentral Alaska Dee Dee Jonrowe, 907-495-6691 Martin Buser, 907-892-7899 Vern Halter, 907-495-1197 Susan Whiton, DVM, 907-495-1197
Colorado Caroline Griffiths, DVM, 970-613-0639	Kentucky Paula Ciniero, 502-829-0339
New York Arleigh Reynolds, DVM, 607-253-3486	Wisconsin Amy Cooper, 608-857-3615 Nick Vukich, DVM, 920-468-5800 Margaret Terhar, DVM, 920-468-5800
North Dakota Eric Hansen, 701-882-3272	

MUSH WITH PRIDE NEWS is published quarterly by **Mush with PRIDE**, PO Box 84915, Fairbanks, AK 99708-4915 USA; telephone 1-800-50-PRIDE, 1-907-457-6421; e-mail pride@polarnet.com; Internet: www.ptialaska.net/~pride1. Contents copyrighted 1999 by **Mush with PRIDE**. Submissions are gratefully accepted and considered for publication. Classified ads can be placed for 50 cents per word. Display ads are run for \$20 for a business card, \$48 for 1/4 page, \$95 for 1/2 page, and \$190 for a full page (all U.S. funds). Call or write for more information.

Membership in **Mush with PRIDE** is open to all. Rates are \$15/individual, \$20/family or club, \$10/non-voting 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 Oct. 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 "**P**roviding **R**esponsible **I**nformation on a **D**og's **E**nvironment." **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 pullers, skijorers, freight haulers-as well as sled dog veterinarians and other concerned citizens.

Officers and Directors: David Monson, president; Ken Severin, vice president; Chris Terzi, secretary; Kathy Frost, treasurer; Kimberlee Beckmen, Larry Carroll, Daryl Darnell, Bill McKee, Mark Nordman, Arleigh Reynolds, Tonya Schlentner, Kris Swanguarin, Susan Whiton, Dick Westlund.