

Adopt A Husky, Inc.

"Saving one dog won't change the world, but surely the world will change for that one dog."



VOLUNTEER NEWS YOU CAN USE



February 2006

Iditarod Comes To Morton

Every year the Iditarod is run to commemorate the race to deliver lifesaving serum to the children of Nome Alaska in 1925. While I have never been much of a history buff, my love for the Siberian breed and the activities that they are bred to do draws my interests closer and closer to this event each year. In 2004 many of us enjoyed the opportunity of a lifetime as we got to go to Alaska to see the start of the race. Unfortunately, making that trip on a regular basis is out of reach for most of us. So what is one to do when they want to be closer to the race and can't make the trip? Bring the race to us of course!

Over the past several years we simply provided dog sledding demonstrations and had folks on hand to talk about our fosters and adoption at Morton Arboretum's Winterfest activities. Over the years attendance has suffered due to poor weather conditions and declining interest from some of their other vendors. Last year they decided they were not going to hold the winterfest however, they told me that we had become such a popular part of the event that they did not want to cancel our participation. In response, we added some activities and sponsored the event by ourselves for the first time. We expected a small response but instead were blown away by the crowds that came en mass. We quickly swung into action changing our plans on the fly and in the end the Arboretum had to close its gates when the guest count had soared over 3500. They simply were not prepared to handle any more as a recent snow storm had closed many of their parking lots and they could not clear them fast enough.

This event was quickly becoming one of the largest winter time events that is held at Morton so we decided that it needed to be stretched back out to a two day event, one that would cover three different venues in the park.

First we had an education and sales room that featured ongoing educational films about the Iditarod and the Siberian as well as an education table and display board covering our breed, what they can do and how folks can adopt. The room also featured large sales booths for both Adopt A Husky and the Siberian Husky Club of Greater Chicago (our new partner in this event as of last year).



Karen (IL) and her team at Morton giving a sledding demonstration.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

IL/WI EVENTS

Feb. 12 Great Lakes Pet Expo, Franklin, WI

Mar. 17-19 Chicagoland Pet Show, Arlington Heights, IL

MN EVENTS

Feb. 18-19 Twin Cities Pet Expo, Minneapolis

HAPPY TAILS

Recent fosters that have found their forever homes.

Linus (IL) Jan. 10

In the Auditorium Carol Preble, a member of the Siberian Husky Club of Greater Chicago, and I put together a multimedia presentation to take our guests through the experience of the Iditarod - The Last Great Race. Guests heard music from the Alaskan artist Hobo Jim and viewed several film clips about the race as they entered the theater. The presentation then began with a news film on a book entitled "The Cruellest Miles" that tells the history of the Serum Run of 1925 and how it led to today's race. If you have not read this book I strongly encourage you to. Carol then narrated a slide show showing pictures from the trail from Anchorage to Nome during several of the races that our friend Wayne Curtis ran. Arrow, an AKC Champion Siberian of Carol's who ran on Wayne's team in 2004 was also there to show off and one lucky young volunteer got to hold him during the entire presentation. Arrow of course stole the show and had an endless line of fans waiting to greet him after each of the six presentations we did. All six shows were completely sold out and many guests had to be turned away as we simply could not do enough shows to accommodate all of the demand.

The most popular spot was of course the sledding field. We built a half mile trail through the Arboretum grounds that the dogs could run. Throughout the day we had teams doing demonstration runs as well as other volunteers giving presentations on the equipment used for sledding and on sports such as skijoring, bikejoring and running a sacco cart. The crowds were huge and everyone had a great time. There were numerous reporters and photographers on hand both days. We were featured on WGN, WFLD and CLTV in Chicago as well as numerous articles in the Chicago Tribune, Daily Herald, several neighborhood papers and Jeff's team, with Jenn driving, was even on the front page of the Chicago Sun Times! All in all, Adopt A Husky got a ton of press this weekend.

Even Mother Nature cooperated with the event this year. On Friday, we set the trail on bare grass and were convinced that the show was to be done with rigs, however, the snow dance you were all doing worked. That night Morton got about four inches of snow across the grounds - just enough to give it that winter feel and bring the crowds out in droves. The snow on the trail was pretty beat by the end of Saturday but the AAHI volunteers got out there and shoveled fresh snow back onto the trail and packed it for Sunday. The guest totals for the weekend once again blew the gates off of the park with over 4000 guests each day. By the end of the first day we had already received three adoption applications in the system as well!

So unfortunately when the Iditarod kicks off in a few weeks, many of us still won't be up there to enjoy it, but at least with a little ingenuity we were able to bring the spirit of the race to Chicago. My sincerest thanks once again to each and every volunteer both two and four legged that made this event a huge success!

Happy Trails!

- Mike, IL Volunteer and Morton Event Coordinator

Morton Arboretum Photos



Thank you to Tammie (IL) and Lynette (IL) for taking hundreds of photos of our great volunteers, fosters and sled teams at Morton on Jan. 21st and 22nd.

To view the photos, please [CLICK HERE](#) to visit AAHI's photo album at the Kodak Gallery. If you do not have a Kodak Gallery log in ID, then you will have to create one to view the photos. You will be given the option to sign up for an ID when you visit the site (it's free to sign up). If anyone orders pictures or

A young spectator at Morton receiving
Siberian kisses.

products, then part of the money will be donated to AAHI.
Enjoy!

AAHI Volunteers and the Public

A huge part of being an Adopt a Husky volunteer involves being out and talking to the public about our wonderful breed at our numerous events throughout the year. Talking about one of our favorite subjects can be lots of fun. Unlike our relatives at the Holidays, these people actually want to hear about our dogs! But it can also be challenging if you are dealing with someone who would rather argue with you about some point or issue, rather than have a meaningful dialog about our breed. We have included some tips and advice to help our volunteers when out in the public eye.

We have three basic goals for any event we choose to participate in. They are, in order, Education, Adoption, and Fundraising. With the exception of our annual Husky Hike, whose primary goal is to raise money, fundraising is very low on our priority list. It is wonderful if we can sell enough merchandise or gather enough donations at an event in order to cover our costs, but this is not our focus.

Our events such as sled demos, family pet fairs, store showings and school presentations focus on Education first and foremost. We want to educate the public about our breed. It really is as simple as that. As you know, the Siberian breed is not for everyone so we owe the public the whole story. We need to talk about the good and bad breed traits, how obedience training is a must, how wonderful a crate is in keeping a Siberian safe, how they shed year round, and most importantly, how critical containment is with our Siberians. We do not want to scare people away, but sometimes the best thing you can do is talk someone out of a Siberian if their lifestyle and goals are not suited to a Siberian.

Our second goal for doing events is Adoptions. But this needs to be qualified- our goal is not just to get applications, our goal is to get quality, screened, educated applications from individuals who did their homework and really believe a Siberian will fit into their lives. We exist as a rescue to place dogs in forever homes, so this step is crucial, but it is also completely integrated with our education. Please take the time to talk to those folks who want to apply to us and *please* tell the event coordinator about your conversation. Your input is invaluable in helping us place our dogs.

You will get those individuals you think they know more than you, who want to be argumentative, who insist their Siberian can be off leash, crating is inhumane, and that invisible fences always work with Siberians. We have found the best defense against this is to simply ignore them, smile kindly, make small talk but to not engage them in a fight. There is an event coordinator at each of our public events. Feel free to call them over to help you should you encounter someone like this.

You might also get individuals who have a Siberian or whose friend has a Siberian that they "need to get rid of." Our policy on owner surrenders is firm. Unless extraordinary circumstances (death of the owner for example), we do not take owner surrenders. We ALWAYS have a waiting list of dogs in shelters that will die if we do not bring them in. They are our priority. You can be polite, but be firm on this point. They can go to our web and see our info under owner surrender and as long as they are willing to foster their own dog and work with us, we will try as best we can to HELP them place their dog, but we will not physically take the dog in. Again, feel free to get one of the coordinators if you are uncomfortable with this, or with any other conversation.

Our volunteers are second to none. It amazes me when we do an event like we just did at Morton in which 8000 people came out just to talk to us about our dogs and because of the experience and

dedication of our group, we handle it seamlessly. Sending out a clear, concise and consistent message is crucial to our success in all our dealings with the public. And you make that happen! Thank you to all who take the time to help our pups.

- Mary Beth, IL Volunteer



Tracie sledding at the Ikidarod

Volunteer Spotlight: Tracie, WA Volunteer

Name: Tracie

Hometown: Born in Chicago, raised in Chesterfield, MO, lived most of my life in either northern IL or southern WI. Now call Eastern Washington home, Spokane area.

Family (including pets): Husband, twelve dogs, two horses, two cats, two goats. Of the 12 dogs, five are Siberians (one foster failure), five are Shelties, one is a Golden Retriever, and one is an Australian Shepherd/Golden Retriever mix we rescued shortly after moving here.

How did you get involved with AAHI? Started with WISH, branched off with Lois to form Adopt a Husky, Inc. in 1998. Been with the group ever since.

What's your favorite AAHI event? Any adoption that happens or any meeting with families who still have and love their adopted dogs. It's what it's all about for me.

What's the best thing about volunteering for AAHI? I am not a religious person in the sense that I go to church every Sunday. However, several events have happened since the inception of AAHI that have truly given me a sense of a higher power looking over us and our ability to help animals in need. Some may call it coincidence, but do rescue long enough and there are just too many things that can't be explained away by coincidence. Those are the best things.

Favorite AAHI moment: There are many, but the one that brought me to tears was the surprise meeting of Ben (the Cancer Survivor/adopter) and Cheryl, who fostered Ben's surprise puppy Jenna. It took place at one of the early Husky Hikes. Not many things make Cheryl cry (she's a tough cookie) but when she did, it showed me the caring side of the get 'er done person she is. To be successful in rescue, you have to be tough and not let the emotions take over. But to see her in such a state brought me a lot of happiness. It was a small reward that meant so much to her. I was happy to share it with her.

What are your interests/hobbies outside of Siberian rescue? I train, teach, and compete in dog agility. I also love riding my horses in the mountains. And anytime I find a sale to feed my shopoholic syndrome is a good time.

In your free time, what activities do you do with your personal Siberians? I train for obedience and agility. I have done sledding and some sprint racing, but haven't hooked up in two years for various reasons. Most of all, I just like being around them. Total comic relief.

What CD are you currently listening to in your vehicle? Nickel Creek

Favorite Vacations Destination: Alaska - any time of year, any location.

What would you like to say to your fellow AAHI volunteers? Being involved since the beginning, and knowing a lot of the behind the scenes stuff, I want to let people know that any thing they donate (time, item, driving, etc.) is a huge piece of the never ending puzzle of need. Often times, just having someone do something they may think is small, makes a much bigger impact on the other folks. A ten dollar check from someone far away who cares can brighten my week and make me feel not so alone out here. This empowers me to help more dogs. Having the support of the group as a whole has been awesome. So awesome, I just took on five more fosters!

The photo is one of me at the Ikidarod, which is an event here in Spokane put on by the Shriner's Children's Hospital. Volunteer mushers give dog sled rides to medically/mentally challenged children. For some, it's the only time they smile during the year. The girl in my basket is a 12 year old patient during her first ride. The smile got bigger and bigger with each lap :-)

Thank you Tracie for your hard work and for making AAHI West possible!!!!!!

A Happy Tail

January 4, 2006

Steve, Thunder and I went through the adoption process and went to Salem three weeks ago. We went home with BeBe a few hours later. Her name is now Faolin which means "Red Wolf" in Gaelic. We decided that she needed a good Irish name to go with her red hair (which matches mine).



Thunder and Faolin (formerly BeBe)

The first week or so was exhausting. Once we got home with her, the mood changed a bit between the dogs. After a few scuffles in the beginning, we believe we are in the clear. They just had to work through some things I guess. She is doing very well. She is

such a sweet girl, a perfect match for our sweet boy. She likes giving kisses and getting belly rubs.

She is so much smaller than Thunder, she literally runs underneath and in-between his legs. We have caught them on numerous occasions snuggling and kissing each other. I just know that once we completely get through this adjustment phase, life will be much easier. Her limp is barely noticeable now; she is taking a supplement to help prevent arthritis. When she really gets running she favors the other legs though.

We are really enjoying getting to know her and all of her fun quirks. She has learned how to speak on command, and is a master at the escape game...thank God she is only escaping from one room into the other.

She became attached to us early on. When I leave the room she lays by whatever door I walked out of...even if I am gone for a second. She is so sweet. She is getting used to being spoiled, and has enjoyed her baths. She is a beautiful red now and getting very soft.

Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to meet this little girl.

We will stay in touch. Enjoy the pictures.

Sincerely,
Steven, Collette, Thunder & Faolin

CAFÉ PRESS!

A reminder that last month was the Grand Opening of the Adopt A Husky Café Press store!!! AAHI has new items for Siberian lovers everywhere! Everything from clothing with various AAHI logos to items such as coasters, clocks, pillows, aprons and much, much more. Proceeds directly benefit Adopt A Husky's rescued Siberians.

To visit the new store and start shopping please visit www.cafepress.com/adoptahusky

More items with more pictures can be added. If there's a type of item you'd like to see included with a picture you can provide with UNIVERSAL APPEAL, send it to Lois for inclusion. There's no limit to the number of items we can make available.

CONGRATULATIONS TO . . .

- Lois (WI) on Dickens earning his Canine Good Citizen Award and Rally Novice title!!!!
- MN volunteers on organizing 2 great events for AAHI, the Land 'O Lakes Kennel Club show and the Wildlife Science Center Dog Sledding Festival!!!
- Mike (IL) and Noel (IL) on organizing the Morton and Palos events!! Way to go guys!!!!
- Beth (WI) on placing 2nd in the 6 dog sprint Siberian class at Kalkaska Winterfest and placing 2nd in the 6 dog sprint Siberian class at Kinross!!!
- Paul (WI) on placing 5th in the 4 dog sport class at Kinross!!!! He ran Wilmot and Andechs, both AAHI rescue dogs!!!
- Cheryl (former IL volunteer now living in TN), on Salem's Rally Advanced title and first leg in Rally Excellent!!!

THANK YOU TO . . .

- all of the volunteers for their time, hard work and dedication to AAHI!
- Mike, Mary Beth, Lois and Tracie for helping with this month's newsletter!
- everyone that has volunteered their time to make all of AAHI's January events so successful!!

To print this newsletter [CLICK HERE](#). You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader.