

October 24, 2005

Greetings to Iditarod Educators, Students and Race Fans,

Cooler temperatures and shorter days have brought color to trees in Wisconsin. The landscape is covered with brilliant red, yellow and orange. Except for pines, there are very few green trees remaining, some have dropped their leaves entirely. Kids and adults are out raking - each with a different goal. Adults intend to clear the leaves to keep their grass healthy. Kids want to create piles to play in - some of those piles are HUGE! Fall in Wisconsin is great for sled dogs too. They probably don't care about the colorful trees or piles of leaves, but they love the cooler temperatures for training runs.

Ron of Team Cortte from Quietwood Kennel in Tomahawk talks about fall training. "One aspect of training now is the pure joy of being outside with the season changing. The colors and smells in the woods have been incredible and with each run we notice things changing. More leaves off the trees, more red here, and more gold there. I travel in the dark a lot. Looking up at the night sky connects me with the universe in a special way. I love the time outside."

Now, near the end of October, Team Cortte is up to 15-mile runs, which take about an hour and a half. They are purposely keeping the dogs slow to build muscle and avoid injuries. Ron and fellow musher, Chad Schouwiller, know the dogs can do these runs much faster from their previous sprint race history but they are training more for endurance than speed. As soon as the dogs get in from a training run, they are watered, snacked or fed. They are being conditioned for Iditarod where they will get water and food at every stop. Ron and Chad want the dogs to be used to diving into their feed bowls after every run to keep weight on during the race. It's also a positive reward for their work. They'll add about 5 miles to the distance after 8 or 10 runs or when the dogs look ready.

Beyond training the dogs, Ron and Chad continue with equipment preparation, travel logistics and sled building. As mentioned last month, they received 4,000 booties. Soon they'll be packing their booties in zip top bags with 64 booties per bag. They'll plan on using 128 booties per day for two changes. They'll have extra booties in the sled at all times for preventing foot problems. Booties freeze up and need to be changed even though they may not be worn out. If they go through open water the booties need to be changed right away. Most booties will last about 100 miles on snow. Team Cortte is also planning ahead for headlamps, batteries, their own food for checkpoints, socks, clothing, etc.

Consider these problems -

- 1) How many booties does Iditarod require a musher to carry in the sled for each dog running or being transported in the sled? How many booties must Ron or Chad have with them at the start of the race?
- 2) Team Cortte ordered 4,000 booties. Ordered in large quantities, the booties cost 85 cents each. How much did Ron and Chad pay for their supply of booties?

3) What size box was necessary to ship 4,000 booties to Quietwood Kennel? A bootie is 3.25 inches wide, 5 inches long, 3/32 of an inch thick at the toe and due to the Velcro closer, 3/16 of an inch thick at the opening. The booties were sent in 2 boxes. Why was this necessary?

4) Jeff King, Mitch Seavey and Martin Buser sell booties for \$2.00 to tourists who visit their kennels. If the booties cost 85 cents a piece, how much profit do the mushers realize on each bootie sold? What is their percentage of profit?

5) If the dogs of Team Cortte are covering 15 miles in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, what is their speed in miles per hour?

LESSONS POSTED FOR NOVEMBER: November lessons include Calories In - Calories Out, Celsius to Fahrenheit, Persuasive writing - Alaska where men are men and women win the Iditarod, and Totem Poles. Following you'll find a brief explanation of each activity. Specific details, worksheets and standards can be found with each lesson.

CALORIE IN - CALORIES OUT: This Physical Education lesson examines energy expenditure while students cover the distance to Nome counting calories expended during exercise as miles. Students also address snacking behaviors and the amount of exercise it takes to burn off snack calories. An alternative form of this lesson is to specify that calories used to advance to Nome must come from exercise calories being greater than snack calories.

CELSIUS TO FAHRENHEIT: In many places, students who are familiar with the Fahrenheit temperature scale will see Celsius temperature readings. To quickly convert Celsius temperatures to a meaningful Fahrenheit number, the students will estimate the temperature using the formula $2C + 30$. A worksheet asks students to help Robert Sorlie, Dodo Perri and Karen Ramstead convert Fahrenheit to Celsius.

PERSUASIVE WRITING: Students will research the winners of the Iditarod. Based upon their findings, they will write a persuasive paper agreeing or disagreeing with the statement, "Alaska: Where men are man and women win the Iditarod."

TOTEM POLE: In conjunction with Native American studies, students will create Totem Poles, an art form of the Pacific Northwest Coastal Indians. Small groups of students are formed to represent a class clan that cooperatively plans and constructs the totem they wish to use to tell their history or story. The material used for the understructure of the totem can vary depending upon availability and space. Students in Middleton, Wisconsin used gallon milk jugs; one per character then joined 4 or 5 together to create the pole. Students elsewhere have used 12 inch sections of cardboard tubing like that used for concrete forms or carpet tubes. Smaller totems can be created over PVC, toilet paper tubes or wooden blocks. After adding features, place papier-mâché over the understructure. When dry, paint the animals with



predetermined clan color tempera paint. Finally, assemble the totem over an infra structure for support, placing the animals in order with the head-spirit at the top. Students can write a description of either the building process or the meaning of their clan's totem. Because the activity involves art, social studies, and language arts, it's an outstanding example of an interdisciplinary Iditarod project. The totem pictured stands at Team Cortte's Quietwood Kennel in Tomahawk, Wisconsin. Maurice Norman, a professional totem pole carver, carved the totem. The 17-foot by 18-inch structure was carved from a 400-pound Douglas fir tree. It shares the legend of animals that did important things. At the bottom of the five-figured pole is a smiling beaver; then a sly, old fox; in the middle is a wise old owl; sitting on top of him is a sneaky raven; and on the very top is a thunderbird looking down upon the others. Good luck creating your totem!

EIGHT TRAITS OF IDITAROD: The third trait of Iditarod is "I" for Integrity. Throughout the race, mushers demonstrate the quality of possessing and steadfastly adhering to high moral principles or standards. Integrity applies to what you do when you think nobody is watching. It's like an iceberg; integrity is about the largest part of the iceberg that's hidden under water rather than the smaller visible portion that's above water. In *Iditarod Classics*, Lew Freedman shares a story told by Kathy Halverson that demonstrates the integrity. Kathy was in the leading group of rookie mushers traveling between Ophir and Iditarod when they came upon Mike Madden who had fallen off his sled but wasn't getting up. Kathy and the other mushers realized he was very sick. They built a fire, and put Mike in some warm clothing and sleeping bags. Two of the mushers in the group, Linwood Fiedler and Mitch Brazin, went on to Iditarod to get help. Later that night, Mike turned delirious. In the 30 below temperatures with only toothpick size trees for firewood, their main objectives were to keep Mike warm and keep him hydrated. Mike willingly took a few sips of water and ate a little bread during the first 8 hours of the ordeal but after that he pushed Kathy away. So for nearly 10 more hours he refused any liquid and got worse. After 18 hours a helicopter arrived. The doctor who came in with the chopper told Mike that his friends had saved his life. The hopes and dreams Kathy and Jerry had for rookie of the year dissolved in the 18 hours they cared for Mike. Kathy says, "I sleep better at night knowing that I helped save the life of a fellow musher rather than having selfish reason for not stopping to help. What we did and the feeling we have means more to us than some rookie-of-the-year award." By Unalakleet, they heard Mike had suffered from salmonella poisoning and had fully recovered. Mike was at the finish line with tears in his eyes to thank the people who helped him. The Iditarod Trail Committee created the Good Samaritan Award to present to the mushers who helped Mike. The other mushers voted to give them the Good Sportsmanship Award.

APPLICATIONS FOR 2007 TEACHER ON THE TRAIL™

The December 1st deadline for receiving applications for TOTT™ 2007 is fast approaching. Whether you are just beginning the application process or are putting the final touches on a product that you're very proud of, consider these helpful hints.

1) Submit the required number of copies. The committee members each need a copy of your application to give it careful consideration.

- 2) Answer the questions in a clear and concise manner. Say what you need to but don't over state your point. Stay focused on the topic.
- 3) Make sure your application with multiple copies arrives at Diane Johnson's in Aberdeen, South Dakota on time. Know the deadline and remember that the Thanksgiving Holiday can affect shipping and delivery.
- 4) Organize your application packet according to the instructions provided. Placing your application packet in a 3-ring binder with labeled dividers to identify each segment is a good organizational strategy. How your packet looks creates an important first impression for the committee members - organized is a good quality!
- 5) Connect your lessons to standards - local, state or national. It's important to show administrators that in using Iditarod as a theme in your classroom, you're teaching to standards.
- 6) Proof read your final product. Ask other people who owe you a big favor to proof read your application packet. Ask them to be candid and truthful with their comments. Give those folks the directions for the application and have them check to make sure your final product is organized as directed and that everything is included in the quantities requested. After they certify your application, proof read it again.

If you can't quite decide whether you should apply, sit down and make a list of the pro's and cons. If the pros outweigh the cons then begin working on the application NOW. There is still time to produce a quality product. Getting the support of your principal and school board is a big first step. I had their endorsement but didn't actually begin completing the application until the first weekend of November. I spent every spare waking moment I could find right up until Thanksgiving working on the application. Even on Thanksgiving morning, I was more interested in putting the final touches on a lesson for my packet than I was about the 12 quests that were coming for dinner. I sent my packet off the next morning. With so much of me in that packet, I didn't know whether to laugh or cry when I left FedEx. Completing the application is by itself a great experience. Good luck to all who decide to apply.

Happy Trails to all,
Terrie