

Trail Tails



May 2010

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President's Report

"Old Board, New Board."

Spring is here, and most of us have put the sleds up and now spend weekends working on all the chores we ignored all winter. The month of May brings our annual CMM banquet – this year back at Beau Jo's in Idaho Springs May 16th. It's a fun time to hang out with people that you've only seen on the trails and now you can chat and reminisce for a few hours. We are fortunate to have some members willing to take on the unpaid adventure to become CMM board members, as seen on the ballots sent out last month. For all of those willing to run, thank you so much. We have four members running for three Director positions, so thanks also to whoever doesn't secure a board position. The club would crumble without members willing to run for Race Coordinator, Treasurer, VP, and Directors. When you see the old or new Board members at the banquet, please share a word of thanks. The two Colorado clubs held some fantastic events this year that highlighted the beauty of our state's high country. Hopefully everyone was able to attend the events you wanted to and had another great season. The CMM Board is here to run the club in the best interests of the members. If you have any comments or suggestions for the board, please contact one of us. See you at the banquet!

Mush On! Dave



Annual CMM Membership Banquet and Year-End Awards!!!

May 16 11:00 am
BeauJo's Pizza
1517 Miner Street
Idaho Springs, CO

Come share your season's tales,
meet the new board members,
and have some fun to wind up
the season.

Cost is \$5 for members, \$15 for
non-members. All are
welcome!!

RSVP by **May 1** to
colomtnmushers@yahoo.com
or call 303-697-4486

Mush with PRIDE Tip of the Month – Weightpulling

A weight pull dog should be strong, sound, in good health and have a desire to please. Before a dog is entered in a weight pull competition, it should have at least basic training and be in good physical shape. A dog that is in poor condition might pull beyond its physical abilities simply because it wants to please or because of the excitement of the activity. Avoid heavy pulling until your dog is in top shape.

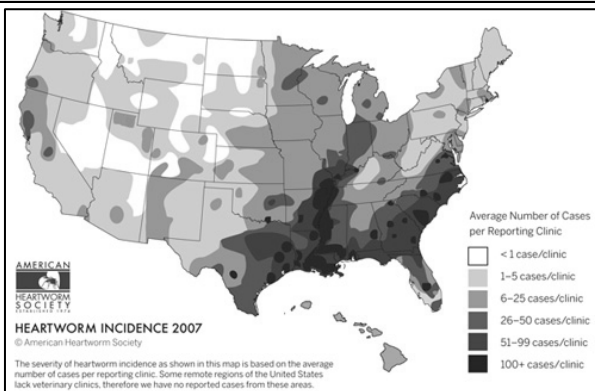
Conditioning can be accomplished in various ways: running in a team, running alongside a bicycle, skijoring, or pulling a tire. Perhaps the best method is for your dog to pull a tire with increasingly heavy loads. Be very careful to increase the loads gradually. This is important for mental as well as physical conditioning. A dog must know that when it is commanded to pull, the load will move. Many factors influence the ease with which a dog can pull: weight of the load, snow depth and conditions, and temperature. As you train, adjust the load downward if your dog has difficulty starting the load. It is important to condition the cardiovascular system as well as the building muscle. This is done by alternating days of pulling heavy and light loads.

You can't begin too early to train your dog to pull. Even a young puppy can have fun wearing a harness and pulling an empty box around. Use this time to teach some basic commands, such as those to pull, whoa, and perhaps gee and haw, as well as to sit, lie down, and stay. Be careful not to let the box bump into the dog or let the dragging noise frighten it. Gradually increase the weight the dog pulls and progress from a piece of firewood to a 12 inch tire, for instance. Give the command to pull, let the dog pull a short distance and lavish it with praise. Make it fun. Your dog will pull for sheer enjoyment and because it pleases you. Be sure to let your dog know that you appreciate its effort.

Dogs should not be entered into competition until they are at least a year old; large breeds should wait until a year and a half. This gives them time to reach skeletal maturity. When the time comes to enter a weight pull competition, your dog will know what is expected and will be ready to do it well.

Mush with PRIDE is pleased to announce the release of the 3rd edition of their Sled Dog Care Guidelines (2009). These revised guidelines are available on the Mush with PRIDE website at www.mushwithpride.org

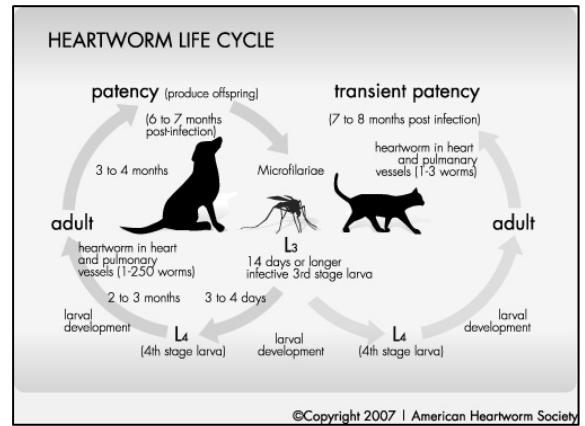
Heartworm Disease – Dr. Teresa Petterson, DVM



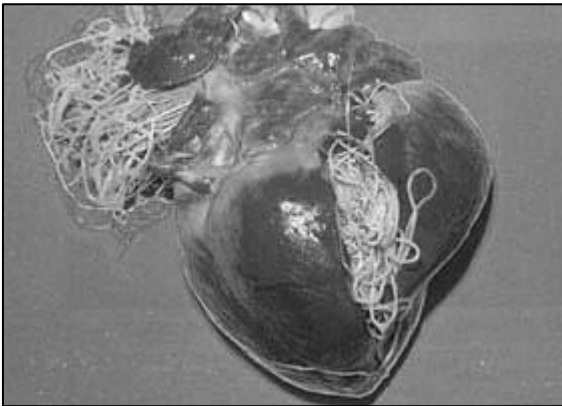
Canine heartworm disease has been detected in dogs throughout all 50 states. Although dogs are considered the definitive host for heartworms (*Dirofilaria Immitis*), more than 30 different species of animals may become infected including humans. There have been several cases of humans infected with heartworms in their lungs mistakenly diagnosed with lung cancer.

Heartworm, cont.

Heartworm is a mosquito-transmitted disease. A mosquito infected with heartworm larva bites an animal and transmits the infection. The larva then grows and matures as they migrate through the body to reside primarily in the heart and lungs. A thick hair coat does not protect a dog from this disease because the mosquito can bite the thin haired area on the nose, ears and underside of a dog. One bite from an infected mosquito is all it takes to cause heartworm disease.



Once infected with heartworms, the clinical signs of the disease vary according to the severity of the infection and the activity level of the dog. Signs may include coughing, exercise intolerance, difficulty breathing, enlargement of the heart, and or liver leading to fluid in the abdomen (ascites), to no clinical signs or sudden death.



Diagnosis of heartworm disease is usually accomplished with a few drops of blood from your dog and an antigen test that detects antigens produced by the female heartworm. The test is quick and accurate and recommend as a yearly screening test. Most tests will detect the presence of one or more mature female heartworms that are at least 6-7 months old. Dogs are not tested until they are at least 6 months of age for this reason. Radiographic changes that may be observed include right sided heart enlargement, enlarged or tortuous pulmonary arteries and inflammation in the lung tissue. The adult worms may be visualized in the heart or pulmonary arteries with an experienced ultrasonographer.

The goal of treating an infected dog is to kill all the adult heartworms with an adulticide (Immiticide by Merial) and the microfilaria with a microfilaricide. Currently, the adulticide is on backorder and is only available to approved cases. The possibility of complications and mortality are higher for dogs with severe disease. These complications are reduced by using a three treatment protocol, hospitalizing the animal during the first 24 hours, pretreating with Doxycycline for a month to kill Wolbachia, a bacteria that helps keep the heartworms healthy, using prednisone to help decrease the chance of a major pulmonary thromboembolism and restricting exercise for months.

Heartworm prevention should begin at 8 weeks of age for puppies. Prevention is easy and fairly inexpensive compared to the treatment and consequences of the disease. Some of the products for prevention include Heartgard, Interceptor, Revolution, Sentinel and Advantage Multi. The CDC (Center for Disease Control) and American Heartworm Society recommend year round prevention even in seasonal areas because many of the products also prevent other intestinal parasites, including round worms, that have a zoonotic potential to infect humans and also other dogs.

Dr. Petterson is an active CMM member and an Associate Veterinarian at the San Juan Veterinary Clinic in Montrose, CO treating small animals including exotics and equine patients. Please visit their website at www.sanjuanvetclinic.com for more information.

Stories, Lessons and Musings of a Rookie – Colette Standen

"The Good Neighbor"

In years past, our neighborhood community was a more permanent, social and cohesive crowd. We'd get together for "international night" dinners, pot lucks, summer bar-b-ques, Christmas celebrations and the usual homeowners meetings. It was a fun and pleasing time.

New neighbors moved in one year, and decided to introduce themselves to the community by inviting all of us to a Christmas get together. That is when I met Mike and Kathy. We hit it off instantly as we shared our common fascination with dog sledding. As it was, they briefly resided in Alaska, dabbled a bit in sledding and still had their two Alaskan Huskies.

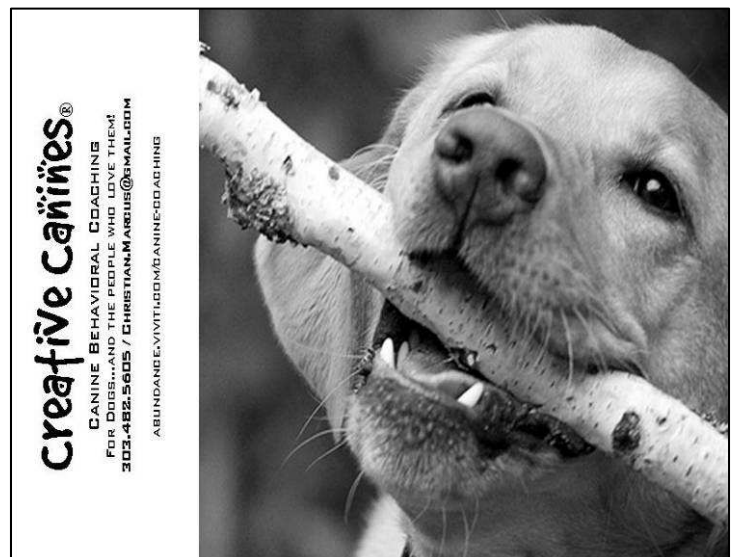
Nancy, our hostess, joined the conversation and having observed our two kids, bored to no end at a grown up party, played "Iron Will" in a downstairs bedroom. I spent most of the rest of the evening checking in on the kids so I could watch the developing story of Iron Will. I remember being startled at how fast the sleds went and how at ease Will and his father were with the speed. It frightened me a bit, thinking, when I started sledding I wouldn't go that fast....it's too dangerous!

Some months later Mike and Kathy called on me to discuss selling their home. With the business formalities aside, I intently listened to their Alaska tales. With great animation, they talked about living in Alaska and dog sledding. They bought two Alaskan Huskies up there, along with their sled. After several hours, they offered to share a viewing of a VHS recording of some pretty gnarly sledding crashes and I was enthusiastic to see them. The trails and fails of the onscreen drivers didn't bother me a bit, that wouldn't happen to me because I'd be extra careful.

It was a monumental break thru when Mike offered to sell his sled and gear. The sled had been made by an Alaskan Eskimo and was in great shape to my amateur eyes. It seemed larger than life and as I learned later, was a touring sled. This was the moment it truly started for me financially and emotionally. This became my first important step in committing to the dream.

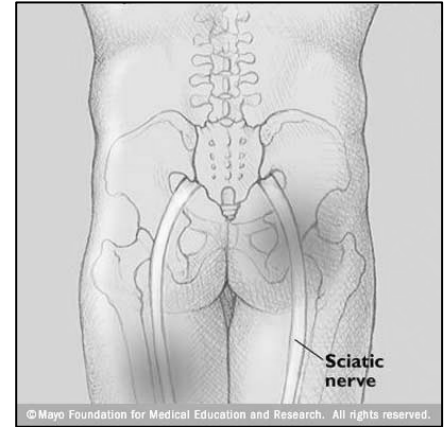
It was a long time waiting for the hamstring to recover before I could run again. It was obvious the little red wagon was not going to work, but the new sled would.

Next Time: "Lo-lo-lo-lo-Lola"



Healthy Musher: Sciatic Nerve Pain – TC Wait and Judy Wait

Many mushers are plagued with occasional or chronic sciatica. Sciatica often corresponds with lower back injuries and is characterized by shooting pain, numbness, or weakness down the back of one or both legs. Sciatic nerve pain is a symptom of a problem somewhere along the sciatic nerve path. The sciatic nerve is the longest nerve in your body, extending from your lower back through the back of your buttocks and down each leg. It is important to have a doctor diagnose the root of the problem so that you can find appropriate treatment solutions.



One of the more common non-injury causes of sciatica is the piriformis muscle. The piriformis muscle is located deep in the hip and is one of the many muscles that connect your femur (thigh bone) to your pelvis. It also works to rotate your leg outward. If this muscle is too short or too tight, it can irritate the sciatic nerve. Some common reasons for piriformis muscle issues are poor posture, gait disturbances, exercising on uneven ground, rapid increase of exercise intensity or duration, ill-fitted or worn-out shoes, sitting for prolonged periods of time, tight muscles in the lower back and buttocks, walking with your toes pointed outward, or spine problems.

Treatment of sciatic nerve pain is dependent on the diagnosis of the cause. Many cases can be helped with physical therapy and specific stretching and strengthening exercises to target muscles sets that may be contributing to the problem. Relief can also come from acupuncture, yoga, chiropractic work, or changing your ergonomic environment (chair, desk height, bed firmness, etc). Acute onsets can also be relieved with alternating cold and heat packs or over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications.

Sciatica Prevention Pointers:

- Warm up adequately before becoming active or exercising.
- Strengthen your core (abdominal and back muscles) to improve your posture.
- Maintain proper posture when you sit with your knees level with your hips and good lower back support.
- Be mindful of your body mechanics: how you stand, how you lift, even how you sleep. If your body spends a lot of time in awkward positions, it is likely to develop muscle memory of poor alignments.
- Stretch your lower back and hamstrings with slow, steady stretching (no bouncing or straining) to increase flexibility. Your physical therapist can show you stretches to target specific muscle sets in your buttocks and hips to also help improve flexibility and reduce inflammation in those areas.

TC Wait has been living with sciatica for many years. Judy Wait is a licensed, practicing physical therapist in Buena Vista, CO with 40+ years of experience.

Summary of Board Activities – Lindsey Owen

Online Discussions:

4/12 – Dave asked Jen to reimburse Sandy \$501 for La Plata Paw expenses.

4/12 – Dave sent the reservation agreement to BeauJo's for the banquet.

4/19 – TC forwarded a message from Tami Thurston about a possible race site in the Yampa Valley on a private ranch. Dave will send Tami some RGO info, and TC will send Tami Aaron's phone number.

4/21 – TC moved to spend \$50 for a booth at the Westmuttster Dog Event in Idaho Springs. Colette and Chelsea Standen volunteered to sit the booth for CMM. Jolene seconded. Yea: Jen, Steve, Lindsey, Sandy, Aaron, Lizzy. Nay: None: **Motion Passes.** Jen will send a check on 4/28 when she returns from Vegas.

4/24 – TC sent out a reminder to the membership about Banquet RSVP, bylaws/race rules review, and election ballots.

Next board meeting will be held on Sunday **May 16** at the Membership Banquet.

Current CMM members are welcome and invited to attend. Please contact a Board Member for details.



Where did the snow go? (Photo by TC Wait)

Announcements

Race Organizers Needed: Have an idea for a fun CMM race or event? Step forward and volunteer to organize it for next year! Now is a great time to approach local communities about having an event in their area, finding good locations for trails, and starting to think about permits for next year. Without our wonderful race organizers, CMM cannot host races, so the more the merrier! Let's hear your ideas and get working on them! Contact Race Coordinator **Steve Bethka** for more info.

PACFA Advisory Meeting: The next PACFA Advisory Committee meeting will be held May 11 from 9am-3pm at the Department of Agriculture building in Lakewood (700 Kipling St. Lakewood). This meeting will focus on proposed rule changes to the PACFA licensing process before the Advisory Committee makes their final recommendations. If you would like to learn more or provide comment, please email Dr. Kate Anderson, DVM at kate.anderson@ag.state.co.us and/or plan on attending the Committee meeting on the 11th.

In Our Thoughts: We are saddened to learn that long-time CMM member **Judy Rogers** has been diagnosed with Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, a terminal brain condition equivalent to Mad Cow Disease. Judy was an international flight attendant and traveled all over the world. Before her recent move to Idaho, Judy was very active in the mushing and showing circles, and has been a good friend to many, many CMM members. Anyone wishing to send her a card please do so quickly. Her disease will eventually destroy her brain and soon she may not be able to know that she has gotten your messages. Address: Judy Rogers c/o Sherman Home, 5801 E Mayo Blvd Phoenix, AZ 85054
Our thoughts are with Judy, her family, and her close friends during this very difficult time.

HUSKY

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Deadline for reserving advertising space is the 1st of each month. Send all artwork as jpeg or tiff file to: tcwait@yahoo.com

Colorado Mountain Mushers
PO Box 476
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Annual Membership Application



Membership includes subscription to "TRAILS TAILS" Newsletter

Date _____ Membership Type: New _____ Renewal _____
Associate _____ \$15.00 Individual _____ \$25.00 Family _____ \$35.00 Business _____ \$80.00

Optional: I would like to make a donation of \$ _____ to Colorado Mountain Mushers.

Full Name _____ Spouse/Partner _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

- Permission to use photos of you and your dogs for club publicity? YES NO
- Have you or any member of your household ever been investigated or charged for animal abuse/neglect/ cruelty? Yes No
If yes, please explain *in detail* and indicate if there was a conviction.

Signature of Applicant(s) _____

Signature of parent (if applicant under 18) _____

AGREEMENT: I agree to abide by official rules governing each CMM event. I agree not to hold Colorado Mountain Mushers or its officers, RGOs, race organizers, race vets, or its agents, sponsors or property owners/agencies liable for any injury or accident which may occur during a CMM event. I further attest that my dogs are in good health, have received all vaccinations required by state law, and are physically prepared for each event in which I participate. I will be solely responsible for the conduct and safety of my dogs, handlers, and family members at CMM events. Membership and election voting rights run September 1st through August 31 of the following year. Please make checks payable to COLORADO MOUNTAIN MUSHERS and send the application and payment to **CMM PO Box 476 Conifer, CO 80433**