

The Spirit of CMM

At one point in time, I had the idea of making an award for the person who embodied the true “spirit of the Colorado Mountain Mushers”. What our club stands for and what makes us truly unique. I spent this year jotting down some of my observations of CMM Spirit, and looking back at this list, I am amazed at how profoundly the Spirit thrives in our club. I would like to share just a few of these observations with you.

Where is the Spirit of CMM?

- It was in South Park when people came together to try to help a lost dog return to her owner.
- It was in the enthusiasm of newer CMM members who attended the fall workshop.
- It was at the fall campout where we celebrated the joy of working sled dogs.
- It was in Rock Springs, Glenwood Springs, Conifer, Grand Junction, Laramie and all over the region when “veteran” members extended their help to mentor or advise newer mushers.
- It was in everyone who gave a school talk, interview, or wrote an article promoting mushing in a positive light.
- It was in Utah where challenging weather conditions were met with good humor.
- It was in Snowmass when school children asked us to help with a book drive by supporting a new race.
- It was in Lander when a musher decided not to go to a race because his dogs were in season and he wanted to be considerate of other teams.
- It was in Wycolo when “competitors” met for dinner and swapped stories and enjoyed a laugh.
- It was at Defiance where two of the slower mushers stopped “racing” and started enjoying the trail together.
- It was at Redstone when some of our Junior members advised an older musher with tips for her first (ever) race.
- It was at the Sibe Rony where a new musher stopped his team to offer assistance to an experienced musher who lost her team.
- It was at Kremmling and Silver City when mushers loaned their sleds to members that had theirs stolen or broken.
- It was at Camp Hale where a brave non-musher volunteered to put together a wonderful event, banquet, and fundraiser for the community.
- It was in Alaska where CMM mushers demonstrated the love of their dogs, team determination, and a persistent spirit among the splendid vistas and difficult trails.
- It is in our quality newsletter where Sandy, Vanessa, Jolene, Jen, and Ray work to keep us informed and humored.
- It was in all the members who helped another team to the start line.

- It was in the club members who show up at a race to help, even if they are not racing.
- It was in the support from parents, school groups, veterinarians, and others who may not be mushers, but are still valued members.
- It was in every person who offered an idea, helped out, pitched in, and gave a compliment to make our club strong and our races fun.
- It is in each behind-the-scene activity that goes unacknowledged, but gets done regardless.
- It is in each member who has ever stepped forward to serve on the Board of Directors, organized a race, or volunteered to take on responsibility for the club.
- It is in the way we grieve together at any loss of a faithful canine companion.
- It is in each smile, hug, laugh, bark, and wet sloppy kiss on the trail.
- It is in the way we take care each other, rather than just focusing on ourselves.
- It is in every musher who puts the well-being of their dogs before their own desires, remembering that "it's ALL about the dogs".

These are just a few of the many, many experiences I observed that make being a CMM member a wonderful thing. We have a unique club, full of characters but brought together with a common thread – it is all about the dogs. The “Spirit of CMM” Award goes to all of our members who continually strive to make CMM a stronger, happier, more positive club.