

# THE TRIPOD

Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance

March 2015

## Lack of snow moves Iditarod Race start to Fairbanks

This year's Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race started in Fairbanks due to lack of snow on the southern part of the trail. The ceremonial start was held as usual in Anchorage on March 7 in a constant drizzle with the temperature about 40 degrees above zero. Due to lack of snow in Anchorage, 200 dump loads of snow were laid down to create the 8 mile length of the ceremonial start from downtown Anchorage to the Bureau of Land Management's Campbell Tract, where the Campbell Creek Science Center featured Iditarod National Historic Trail exhibits, activities, hot cocoa and a place to warm up for visitors. Free shuttle buses ran to race viewing areas on Campbell tract from parking lots at Kasuun Elementary and Abbot Community Park. Campbell Tract and Campbell Airstrip provided forest-lined viewing, open viewing and access to the area where mushers packed for their trip to the restart of the official race in Fairbanks, which took place on Monday March 9.

## Hike the Hill



Hike the Hill, an annual event of the American Hiking Society and the Partnership for the National Trails System, took place on February 7-12. Our president Judy Bittner joined trail advocates from around the country in Washington DC to make their collective voice heard on Capitol Hill. She met with Alaska congressional members' staffs and with Bureau of Land Management and Forest

Service administrators, explaining the mission and the needs of the Alliance.

## George Atlla dies



George Atlla, 81, died February 15, 2015 of bone cancer. Atlla, an Athabaskan, who live in the village of Huslia, gained fame with a sprint mushing career that began in 1958 and ended in 2011. Over the course of 54 years he won a record ten Fur Rendezvous World Championship titles, eight North American Open Championships and became known as the



The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance promotes public awareness of the Iditarod Trail and its gold rush and Alaska Native heritage by encouraging education programs and historical research, assisting in the protection, improvement, maintenance and marking of the trail, developing partnerships that foster stewardship commitments and support from land owners, local communities, organizations and others.

### The trail for all seasons



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**Remember** when you file for your 2015 Permanent Fund Dividend on line, you can donate all or part of it to the Alliance through the Pick, Click, Give Program.

“Huslia Hustler.”

The son of George Attla Sr., a famous Koyukuk River trapper, young George Jr. contracted tuberculosis as a child and spend nearly a decade in and out of hospitals. The disease left him with a fused knee and a permanently stiff leg, but that didn't handicap Attla. He won his first major championship at the 1958 Fur Rendezvous in Anchorage at age 24 and his last major title at the 1987 North American Open in Fairbanks at age 53.

Attla was known and respected for his dog care and his instinctive ability to raise and race sled dogs. The late Iditarod champion Susan Butcher said, “George has forgotten more about mushing than most people have learned.”

### From the past...

“Iditarod Pioneer” March 20, 1915

#### TRAP SHOOTERS ORGANIZE CLUB

A great deal of interest was taken in the trap shoot held near the tramway at the edge of town last Sunday afternoon. There was a large crowd in attendance, among those present to witness the contests being a number of ladies. The day was perfect and the sport was thoroughly enjoyed.

Being the first time that many of the contestants had shot at clay pigeons, and even the experienced not having had an opportunity for practice in some cases for years, the scores made were not high, but it was demonstrated that there were some experts with the shotgun among Iditarod's sportsmen, and some record scores maybe looked for in future shoots.

A number of the ladies present were induced to try their skill with the shotgun, but Mrs. John C. Currin was the only one who succeeded in breaking any of the blue rocks, making three out of five on one occasion, which was considered excellent shooting under the

circumstances, and was a better score than some of the male contestants made.

In the main event of the day, 25 singles at unknown angles, Earl Byers made the top score, with 17. Henry Weir and Harry Watson tied for second place, and in the shoot-off Watson won out.

The interest aroused in last Sunday's shoot has encouraged local sportsmen to organize a gun club. At a meeting held at the fire hall last Monday night an organization was effected and plans laid for the holding of regular contests.

Harry Watson was elected president of the club and Dick Button secretary. A board of directors, consisting of the president, Henry Weir, Ira Wood, Earl Byers and John C. Currin, was also elected, and was instructed to draw up a constitution and by-laws for the government of the club, and also to make the necessary arrangements for regular shooting contests.

The organization has met with much encouragement, and it is expected that a membership of at least twenty-five will be achieved. There are at the present almost a score. Besides the Iditarod enthusiasts, many sportsmen on the creeks have signified their intention of joining. Those desirous of becoming members should communicate with the secretary, Mr. Button, at the bank.

### National Recreation Trails Photo Contest

The National Recreation Trails Photo Contest sponsored by American Trails is an annual contest for photos of designated National Recreation Trails across the country. The 2014 winner in the bicycling category was Susan Summer, with a photograph of the Bird to Girdwood Pathway, Alaska.

See this photograph and all the other National Recreation Trail contest entries at [www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails)

### International Trails Symposium



American Trails sponsors the International Trails Symposium every two years to bring together trail and greenway advocates, managers, planners and users as well as tourism and business interests from around the world. It provides countless opportunities to network with the trails community from across the country and around the world

This year the Symposium will be in Portland, Oregon, May 17-20.

Symposium programs will explore the theme of “Solutions for Success,” the many pathways to success for all types of trails, from cities to the backcountry. Read more about the symposium theme at:

[www.AmericanTrails.org/2015](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/2015)