Heather's HARDCORE HUSKIES

Jan 2008

Heather signs autographs for USDA employees in Fargo, ND!

SIIRTOLA INSPIRES USDA EMPLOYEES IN NORTH DAKOTA

Heather Siirtola was back in North Dakota in July 2007, this time talking to USDA employees across North Dakota about her adventures during Iditarod 35. Siirtola's visit was part of Area Meetings for employees of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and their partners the local Soil Conservation Districts.

"We've always brought in a traditional motivational speaker during past meetings," said Paul King, State Administrative Officer for NRCS in Bismarck. "This time we took a slightly different approach."

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HARDCORE WEBSITE IMPROVED

In order to allow you, my supporters, to get up-to-date information about my training and updates from my races I have updated my website, www.Hardcorehuskies.com. Hopefully you will find it easier to navigate and find the information you are looking for.

With the help of Will Moore of PLD Design, several new functions have been added.

First, the newest news items will appear on the front page. No more searching through updates to find out the latest news. Second, photos are now set into categories to make them easier to locate. Just click on the group of photos you want to view and there they are! Third, it is easier than ever to sign up to receive my newsletter. Just complete the information on the front page and you'll be added to the list. During the off season we hope to send out an issue every three to four months. We'll do it more often as the Iditarod approaches and during the race.

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SPONSOR INFORMATION

It costs nearly $50,000 to train and run in the Iditarod. With your help I can train a happy, healthy team for Iditarod 36! Every little bit helps! My team and I would greatly benefit from your support. We would gladly represent you with a patch or logo on our coats, sled or truck. Be a part of the Iditarod 36!

Sponsorship Fees:

- $1000.00 - Sponsor the team - Have your logo on truck/sled/parka
- $500.00 - Sponsor Heather - Patch or logo on her parka
- $200.00 - Sponsor a dog - Patch or logo on dog coat during races
- $100.00 – Receive a Hardcore Huskies Honorary Musher Certificate

All contributions over $25.00 receive a personally autographed picture.

Please send your contribution to the address below or contact me for more information:

- Email: Hardcorehuskies@aol.com
- Address: Heather Siirtola P.O. Box 190 Talkeetna, Alaska, 99676
- Website: ***www.Hardcorehuskies.com***

SIIRTOLA INSPIRES USDA EMPLOYEES Con't

According to King, the approach was to find someone who had faced challenges and overcome obstacles. He said they wanted someone who had established goals and had met them; someone who had overcome physical and mental challenges and who had persevered; someone who knew how to work as part of a team. He said that these are attributes they want to see in their employees and they were looking for someone who had demonstrated how all these could be pulled together to accomplish something extraordinary.

"Who fit these criteria better than Heather," said King. "She's done all of these things and then some."

Siirtola made three presentations, one in Fargo, Grand Forks and Minot. She talked about her Iditarod adventure, all of the preparations that went into the race, and what she went through during the 1150 miles from Anchorage to Nome through the Alaskan wilderness.

"The race was full of challenges from falling of my sled and losing my team to crossing the Alaskan range during a ground blizzard," said Siirtola. "But through it all my dogs and I stuck together and we made it to the finish line in Nome!"

King says employees asked a lot of questions. Siirtola was asked about her equipment; bloodlines of her dogs; and the mental and physical challenges she faced during the race.

Siirtola admitted there was a time about three or four days into the race where she thought about quitting. She had dropped about half her team due to injuries and fatigue and had to return to the Rohn checkpoint because of weather.

"I thought about all the folks who had helped me and all the time and effort I had spend getting to this point," said Siirtola. "People told me just get to the next checkpoint and I did. My spirits got better and I kept going."

Siirtola received positive comments from those in attendance. King said their employees were truly inspired by Siirtola's accomplishment and many plan to follow her during the 2008 race.

"She should be proud because she is truly an inspirational example of someone who faced a difficult task, developed a plan and saw it through to the end to complete this extraordinary race," said King.

WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS Con't

I have uploaded a bunch of pictures from the 2007 race so please check those out. Some were taken along the race route and others from one of the checkpoints. I hope It gives you a better feel for the race.

Finally, we have improved the display of our sponsors. Without them, none of this would be possible. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I hope you enjoy the improvements. If you have any comments or suggestions for future enhancements, please write to me at Hardcorehuskies@aol.com.

TRAINING CONTINUES FOR 2008 RACE

Heathers training continues in earnest for the 2008 race. She has been running the dogs more than 40 miles per day and they want more. That is a good sign.

"We are certainly ahead of last year's pace," said Heather.

While the dogs have been training in earnest, Heather had to take a couple of weeks off to heal a shoulder injury.

"It was tough but thanks to my good friends for taking the dogs on their runs," Heather added.

Heather has also been working on buying her meat for the race and getting organized for the food drops later next month.

Siirtola says to start checking her website www.Hardcorehuskies.com for training and pre-race updates.

Feeding time at the "zoo." Heather gives the team some of their daily rations.