



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Yukon Quest Welcomes New Additions to Alaska and Yukon Boards**

**June 13, 2018 (Whitehorse, YT & Fairbanks, AK)** – The Yukon Quest 1,000 Mile International Sled Dog Race recently held its Alaska and Yukon AGMs, in Whitehorse and Fairbanks, respectively.

The Alaska AGM was held in Fairbanks on May 30<sup>th</sup> where they elected three new members to their Board of Directors. Louise Russell, Isaac Jackson and Michael Stepovich join John Dixon, Nancy Flannery, and Scott Chesney on the board.

From dogbooties.com, Louis Russell has been a longtime supporter of the race and sled dog racing. Opening her business 25 years ago in Minnesota, she moved to Alaska in 2009 to be more closely connected to the sled dog community. She brings a wealth of experience to the table having sat on the boards of the John Beargrease Sled Dog Race, Goodwill of Duluth, MN, and Rotary International.

Isaac Jackson moved from Minnesota to Alaska in 1985. He is an Environmental Engineer for Doyon Utilities who has extensive experience managing training opportunities, projects, employees and consultants. Jackson brings a lot of energy to the board with a vested interest in growing the race field and keeping younger generations involved.

Michael Stepovich brings great financial experience to the board in his current employment as a Financial Specialist at Doyon Utilities. A lifelong Alaskan, he has been a Yukon Quest supporter for years and is looking forward to increasing community involvement and assisting in the preparation and preservation of the race.

The Yukon Board elected five new board members at their AGM which was held in Whitehorse, Yukon on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Anne Tayler, Geoff Kooy, James Cummings, Kate Nimmo, and Rhonda Kotelko, and join President Bev Regier, Vice-President Michael Peterson, Treasurer Sabine Morehouse (re-elected), Secretary Virginia Sarrazin, and Director Nicole Horlbeck and musher representative Jason Campeau.

Long-time Yukoner, Anne Tayler brings much experience to the board having handled in 14 Yukon Quests and followed the race since its inception. She has volunteered in many different arts, culture and environmental organizations over the years and has also served on the Yukon Board in the past.

Geoff Kooy is an experienced musher and outdoor educator who has led and managed backcountry expeditions around the world. He is looking forward to sharing his experience and background with the Yukon Quest board.

James Cummings has called the north home for over 24 years, the last three and a half in the Yukon. As a member of the Parks Canada team of the Yukon Field Unit, he has enjoyed a lot of what the Yukon has to offer and will be taking his same passion for the great outdoors, wide open spaces and all of nature's beauty with him to the boardroom of the Yukon Quest to continue to build on the race's legacy.

With a passion for volunteering and love for dogs, Kate Nimmo became involved with the Yukon Quest in 2013. Doing everything from selling raffle tickets, to volunteering at the start line, to organizing QuestFest, and much more, she is looking forward to continuing her support as a board member.

Rhonda Kotelko works as a Flight Service Specialist for NavCanada and enjoys recreational mushing in her spare time. She has been volunteering with the Yukon Quest for 10 years which includes the high-stakes role of managing the start/finish line in Whitehorse for the last three years.

The Yukon Quest would like to thank out-going board members Presidents Ryan Hughes and Jean-Marc Champeval, Vice President (YT) Elisabeth Weigand, Directors Susan MacDonald, Heike Fielder-Phelps, Dylan Soo and Jill Peterson, and musher representative Andrew Pace. The organization wishes them the very best in their future endeavors.

The 2019 Yukon Quest 1,000 Mile International Sled Dog Race starts Saturday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> in Whitehorse. For up-to-date information and news about the race, visit [www.yukonquest.com](http://www.yukonquest.com).

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