



Zuma's  
Paw Prints

## FIRST ON THE YUKON

March 10, 2006

Hi Girls and Boys,

I promised you that I would send you another report with some pictures from the trail. I know you are going to enjoy these photos sent to me by my good friend Jeff Schultz. His pictures are awesome.



Chef Stephan England and Brooke McGrath of the Millennium Alaskan Hotel and Emmitt Peters toast Paul Gebhart for being first to the Yukon following his 7-course meal served by the folks from Millennium.

Brooke McGrath serves Paul Gebhart part of his 7-course meal. The Millennium Alaskan Hotel presents the meal at the Ruby checkpoint to the first team on the Yukon River. Paul's dining guest is 1975 Iditarod champion Emmitt Peters of Ruby.



Paul enjoyed his 7-course meal by the Millennium Alaskan Hotel for being the first musher on the Yukon River, Brooke McGrath presented Paul Gebhart with his \$3500 cash prize. This award will be presented again in Nome and the meal will be served to Paul and his wife at the hotel in Anchorage for the race.

Paul Gebhart leaves Ruby on Friday morning after doing his 8-hour mandatory layover, but before doing his 24-hour. Gebhart wears a snowmachine helmet to avoid frostbite on his cheeks. Next checkpoint is Galena, 52 miles up the trail.

Frostbite is one of the hazards faced by mushers running in the Iditarod. I think you remember that I told you that this was the reason that Sandy McKee had to scratch from the race at Rainy Pass. She was in the Millennium today and her hands don't look too good. I can't imagine how much they must have hurt.



I am going through my pictures and will share some more with you tomorrow. But it time for me to put my furry body on the bed and snuggle close to Lois to keep her warm. I don't know why you humans don't listen to me and grow some fur. Then you would always be warm!

Until next time,



Lots of Tail Wags,  
Zuma

Paul Gebhardt, who is 49 years old and a consistent top contender, was born in Minnesota. He will be running his tenth Iditarod in '06. After a 2nd place finish in the 2000 Iditarod, Paul sold his team and took a hiatus from mushing. His 9th place finish in '05 Iditarod was with a new young team that stems from the bloodlines of Paul's Lolly Medley Golden Harness Award-winning leader, Red Dog. Paul has won the Copper Basin 300 and the Tustumena 200, as well as being the recipient of the Alaska Airlines Leonhard Seppala Humanitarian Award in the '98 Iditarod. He has been awarded humanitarian and sportsmanship awards in various mid distance races. Paul is one of a limited number of mushers who builds his own dog sleds. Paul and his wife, Evy, operate their small Morning View Kennel on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula, as well as a year-round destination lodge for tourists at their Kasilof location. When he is not mushing, Paul is a full time general contractor specializing in custom homes. He says, "My family is the most important thing in my life" and enjoys spending time working on the log home he and his wife built together. Paul is an avid hunter and outdoorsman, and enjoys exploring Alaska by dog team and on horseback. He and Evy are the parents of Kristin, 21. You can learn more about Paul at his personal website [www.aspenhollowlodging.com/itarod.html](http://www.aspenhollowlodging.com/itarod.html)

Don't forget to visit the rest of the Iditarod website at [www.iditarod.com](http://www.iditarod.com) where you will be able to find the latest updates plus terrific stories about the race. Most of these pictures are from the Ruby checkpoint today.