

4th Annual Iditarod Relay Race at the Sitka Pioneer Home

The Sitka Pioneer Home (SPH) hosted its 4th annual Iditarod Relay Race on March 8, 2019 in celebration of Alaska's beloved Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. If you love the original race, then the creativity, joy and friendly competition of the SPH elders competing in their version is sure to make you smile!

The elders, volunteers and Pioneer Home staff joined together to form teams to complete in the relay race, with volunteers/staff acting as the "musher" and the elders as the "lead dogs". The "race track" was set-up on the ground floor of the home and included four "checkpoints". The musher would pull the dog sled (containing items one would need on the trail, such as toilet paper, water, and dog treats!) and the lead dog would guide them through each checkpoint, where they would complete a task that enabled the musher to remove items from their sled and allow them to move on. Checkpoint activities included physical and mental challenges as elders answered fun Alaska and Iditarod trivia questions, turned their hand at lucky dice rolling and even showed their skills in bean bag tossing. The elders on each team would take turns as the lead dog with every new lap. The relay race was complete once the sled was empty and the team with the fastest time was declared the winner!

The home's activities department worked hard to put on this wonderful event that was loved by all and sent laughter, delight and good ol' fashioned friendly competition rolling through the hallways of the Sitka Pioneer Home.

Congratulations from the Alaska Pioneer Homes to Peter Kaiser as the winner of the 2019 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race and to Team A as the winners of the Sitka Pioneer Home's 4th Annual Iditarod Relay Race, with a record time of 3 minutes and 23 seconds!



SPH elder Reginald Davis, in the role of Lead Sled Dog, is offered a bean bag by Checkpoint #2 crew member Anna Roy (a Brave Heart Volunteer) while Musher Ron Mathews helps tow the sled and manage the supplies.



At Checkpoint #3 crew member, Jude Reis, reads an Iditarod themed trivia question to SPH elder Eunavae Ballou as she has her turn as the Lead Sled Dog for her relay team. SPH staff member Jill Kollerup is the musher for this team.