

## WinterStar Farm 2009 News and Events

### July 2009

We traveled to Waukesha WI for the Malamute Specialty Show and Waukesha Kennel Club shows - three shows and a sweepstakes competition in 3 days! We took our six month old puppies [Penny](#) and [Sassy](#) - this was their first show. They did very well; Saturday was our best day, when the judge gave Penny 1st and Sassy 2nd in their class! Tim handled Penny and our good friend Helen Schultz handled Sassy. We were able to visit alot of our family members on this trip, especially Karina's Aunt Maria and brother John who came to the show on Friday. We stayed with Tim's mother Dore and sister Ann, and also visited many extended family members and friends on this fun outing.



### August 2009

At Tim's urging, Karina started preparing to not only train the dogs in conformation, but to show them as well. This was a big change for her!

We competed in two conformation shows in August, in Marshfield, WI and the St Croix Valley and NorthStar Working Group shows in Lake Elmo, MN. For Marshfield we took our puppies [Penny](#) and [Sassy](#). They showed well and Sassy (shown by Karina) took Winners Bitch the first day, earning her first point! Karina joked that her showing career would all be downhill from here. Sassy took Reserve Winners the next two days. We enjoyed staying at Karina's parent's place for this show and were delighted to see brothers John and Joe, sister Victoria and her hubby Eric, and Aunt Maria who all came to visit or came to the show to see what it was like and cheer us on.

At Lake Elmo, we again showed Penny and Sassy but also decided to put their mother [Aurie](#) back in the ring. Aurie's coat came in very well after being nearly naked this spring from raising the puppies, and her confidence in the ring increased as well. Must be from telling all those

puppies what to do - she is now more assertive and shows herself off in the ring! Another unexpected and unexplainable change is that she no longer gets carsick, which has been a problem for her her entire life. We like that! All the dogs showed well, but we earned no points; this was a 3 point major show for the girls. Sassy took Reserve Winners on the first day, defeating several adults! Karina showed Aurie and Penny in Brace class just for fun. The girls showed incredibly well, gaiting in step all the way around the ring and impressing everyone. They took a Group 2 placement. We enjoyed seeing Karen Taylor specializing [Charger](#) at this show; also [Kenai](#)'s owners Tom, Kiki and their family came to check things out and were the best show assistants and photographers ever! We took a quick break from the show to run up and see [Kosmo](#) and his owners Bobbi and Jon. Kosmo looks great and they are very happy with him. We hope to see them this fall to train Kosmo for pulling.

Speaking of pulling, a cold snap at the end of August had us dusting off the cart much earlier than usual and starting some 1 mile runs with the team, including our puppies! We condition the dogs very slowly to allow their feet to toughen up for running on the gravel roads. The puppies quickly got the hang of carting and are shaping up as good team dog prospects!

## **September 2009**

Another month gone to the dogs! We started off Labor Day weekend with a terrific day spent with Roscoe and Nicole who bought the puppy [Rocket](#) from us this year. They brought Rocket out for a visit and a short cart run with our team to introduce him to the harness. It was a bit warm, but everyone did well. Next we all went canoeing down the beautiful Crow River, which was at a perfect level! We enjoyed the wildlife including bald eagles and a flock of wild turkeys.

The following day, Karina and [Minnie](#) met Karen Taylor with [Charger](#) and Freya at the Luce Line Trail for a 10 mile packing hike - our first ever! It was slow going with the heat and the dogs still getting in shape for packing, but we loaded the packs with ice and they just kept going. It was a great accomplishment and Karina started planning more hikes so enthusiastically that Tim decided he wanted to come too! Karina started conditioning Howler for Tim to pack with, and we all hit the trail again on September 12 at Lake Maria State Park. The weather became much warmer than forecast and we were glad we were in the shade with the packs filled with ice.

Tim trains [Howler](#) and [Arwen](#) in Rally just for fun, and his instructor had said for some time that the dogs were good enough to compete successfully. At Karina's urging, Tim entered both dogs in three shows this month. The dogs did not let him down and had qualifying scores in every show, earning them both Rally Novice (RN) titles! In addition, Howler took first place in two of the trials, and Arwen took second in two of the trials. Karina was at two of the shows to swap dogs with Tim, who was the only competitor showing more than one dog! Surrounded by Golden Retrievers, Papillons and other breeds more commonly used for Rally and Obedience than Mals, the other competitors expressed some skepticism that we had a chance. It was great to have the dogs perform so well, they were a credit to their breed!

We finished out the month with a last minute plan to get away to the North Shore of Lake Superior for a few days. We stayed at Bluefin Bay Resort, which is where we had our honeymoon an undisclosed number of years ago! Of course we took our packing dogs Minnie and Howler and had a lucky break with the weather - perfect weather for our hike surrounded by storms the rest of the week. We did a very challenging 10+ mile hike on the Superior Hiking

Trail - steep narrow trails, lots of boulders and other obstacles for the dogs, and a wide variety of terrain. They rose to the challenge and made us proud!

### **October 2009**

We were off and running this month, lots of things going on. Starting with - a conformation show close to home, the Wright County Kennel Club show. We live in Wright County but the show was actually held in neighboring McLeod County. It was nice to have it indoors, especially since it was rainy. [Aurie](#), [Penny](#), and [Sassy](#) all competed; and Tom brought [Kenai](#) as well - this was her first show. It was fun to have a big puppy class, the girls were just 9 months old. Aurie took Reserve Winners the first day and Winners the second. Sassy won the puppy class the first day and competed for Best Puppy in Show. Karina showed her and we competed well but did not place. Penny won the Puppy class on the 2nd day and took Reserve Winners as well.

Next it was on to packing hikes! [Howler](#) needed two more 10 mile hikes for his Working Pack Dog title; [Minnie](#) needed one. Karina was determined to accomplish these hikes before her elective foot surgery laid her up; but it was complicated by her being out of town for work for a week. Then the weather turned crazy - we had 4" of snow in mid-October, followed by a week of cold, windy rain! Still Karina managed to squeeze in a hike with Howler at Lake Rebecca Park Reserve (finished it a few hours before the snow started) and both Karina and Tim hiked with Howler and Minnie at Lake Maria State Park (just a couple of days before Karina's surgery)! We sent in the paperwork and are awaiting the official word that our dogs have earned these titles!

Lots of carting this month, with the weather so cold and overcast it was cool enough to get the dogs out often and they really enjoyed pulling. By Halloween, the team went 5 miles - this is the earliest we have had the dogs in shape for this distance. Dreaming of snow and more working titles....

### **November 2009**

Forced into idleness due to elective foot surgery, Karina put the down time to good use for the dogs! She worked a lot on website, did all the paperwork to join both the [Minnesota Malamute Club](#) and the [Alaskan Malamute Club of America](#), and planned future carting and sledding events. Be sure to check out the new slideshows on the [Photo Gallery](#) and [Puppy Photos](#) pages! She attended dog class and sat holding the dogs ringside so that Tim could quickly swap dogs and be sure to work them all in each class! Our puppies [Penny](#) and [Sassy](#) started Beginner Agility class this month; they are the stars of the class since they have trained in Puppy Agility since they were eight weeks old. They are always excited to be at agility class.

We were happy to stay in touch with people who bought Winterstarz puppies this year - Tom visited with [Kenai](#), Bobbi and Kai brought [Kosmo](#) out, and Wayne met us at the Luce Line trail with Nora to hook them in harness and train them to cart with our team. It was terrific to see everyone and gratifying to see what nice dogs our puppies are growing into. They did very well in their first outings as working dogs!



Tim has been getting our team out with the cart 3-4 times a week, and they have pulled five miles on their longest run, which is great for this early in the season. The cold weather has allowed us to condition the team faster than usual, and we hope for a good sledding season ahead. We purchased a second dog cart, so will be able to run two teams when Karina is back on her feet. [Pegs](#) and [Aurie](#) have been trying out a new position on the team - single lead - and are doing very well. We are looking toward possible Working Lead Dog titles for these girls this season, and also hoping our puppies will earn Working Team Dog titles in 2010.

In show news, we showed Aurie and Penny in one conformation show, the Minneapolis Kennel Club show in Shakopee, MN. Although they looked good and showed well, we did not earn any points this time. It is a hard decision for us to show at all during the fall and winter - there are some good showing opportunities close to home, but if we go to a show we cannot also work the team. Summer shows are more fun for us as it is too warm to work the dogs and we are not at those shows feeling like we are missing out!

### **December 2009**

We started off the month with a conformation show, the Granite City Kennel Club Show in St Cloud, this is about the closest dog show to us, geographically. So we decided to enter four dogs, [Aurie](#), her daughters [Penny](#) and [Sassy](#), and our lead dog [Major](#), who we have not shown for a couple of years. Major had a great weekend, taking Winners Dog/Best of Winners both days and earning 4 points toward his championship! The girls showed well; Aurie took Reserve Winners Bitch on day 1 and Penny took Reserve Winners Bitch on day 2.

As soon as we finished showing on Sunday we raced home and hooked everyone up to the cart. The show dogs had been kenneled all weekend to stay clean and everyone was raring to go! We ran the team an exuberant 5 miles and made it home just as the sun was setting.

The winter weather has been excellent so far. We had a cold snap early this month with temperatures getting down to about 10 below zero. This froze the ground and the river. Next we had a snowstorm, and the snow stayed around with the ground frozen. We got just a few inches, barely enough to sled, so sometimes we sledded and sometimes we carted. Tim took the team down the river for the first time on December 22, which is pretty early compared to other years. Winter may seem like it lasts forever in Minnesota, but we can tell you "usable winter" when conditions allow dogsledding is not all that long - last year we only had about 5 weeks. Our best Christmas present was a Christmas Eve and Day blizzard which left us with real snow, about a foot and a half. The forecast is for cold now and we are hoping to play and sled on this snow for some time. Unfortunately Karina's foot is still healing and her surgeon has grounded her from skiing until New Year's Day at least. Bummer!

In other news, Penny and Sassy completed their Beginner Agility class in style. The class will continue without us, and we will start agility again when the snow is gone. Now is the time for sledding! Karina is busy planning the CrowDitarod, a dogsledding excursion on the Crow River that we plan to host here at WinterStar Farm in January. Several mushers are bringing their teams and also people new to dogsledding are bringing their dogs and coming to try it. We are thrilled with the weather so far and it looks like conditions are shaping up well for a great day. With the help of our friends we will host a weight pull on the same day and are looking forward to trying this activity again after a ten year hiatus!

And we got great news from the Alaskan Malamute Club of America Working Dog Committee! [Howler](#) and [Minnie](#) were officially awarded their Working Pack Dog (WPD) titles! Since Minnie is the 5th offspring of our foundation dog [Procyon](#) to earn a working title, Procyon was awarded the Register of Merit - Working Dog title. We are very proud of our dogs for their many accomplishments!

Happy Holidays everyone and think snow!