

Local teen musher trains to compete in the Alaska's Jr. Iditarod, 2018

Meet and greet planned for Talia Martens and her lead dog, Keisha, at
Yappy Hour next Tuesday

Duluth, MN Talia Cismoski-Martens, 16, from Brule, WI will hold a meet and greet for the public and press to officially announce her intention to compete in the 2018 Jr. Iditarod. The event will be held at the Boat Club Restaurant in the Fingers Courtyard during Yappy Hour next Tuesday, August 29th at 6:00 pm.

The 150 mile Sled Dog Race starts near Willow, Alaska, is patterned after the Iditarod and is for mushers between the ages of 14-17. Youth mushers must have two references to qualify for the race. John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon Champion Jamie Nelson is providing a reference and has been training and mentoring Talia and her team for months. Nelson states, "Talia has the work ethic to do this and now it's up to her to not let up. She needs to eat, sleep and think dog training from now on". Ryan Redington, of Moquah, WI (grandson of Joe Redington-Father of the Iditarod) is her second mentor and will also provide Talia with a reference.

Talia has four additional months of training before she competes in the Gunflint Mail Run in Grand Marais next January. She has competed in numerous regional races such as: The Bayfield Island Sled Dog Race, The Wolf Track Classic, Ely, MN and the eighty mile John Beargrease Jr. Race.

Talia is the daughter of Tim and Janet Martens. She has a younger brother, Morgan who is also a musher. She is a Junior at Northwestern High School where she competes in cross country and track, she is also a musician and cares for and trains her own dog team.

With the help of her father, they will make the 3100 mile drive to Alaska with the dog team. She will compete in the Willow Jr race as well as the Jr. Iditarod. Talia states, "This journey will challenge me and my team both mentally and physically. It will also deepen my relationship with the Creator of this beautiful world. I hope to be an example to other kids to pursue their dreams."

Talia is seeking support from the community and corporate sponsors to make this quest possible. There will be a waffle breakfast and silent auction held on September 23 at the Mission Covenant Church, 5161 S Co Rd P, Poplar, WI, from 8:30 am to 11:30 am. Talia has a website where her followers can get race updates and make a contribution.

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