

Winter Outing

Where? At Dog Scout Camp in St. Helen, Michigan (map to get here is on the web site)

What? Winter Fun with your dog.

Bring 'em if you have 'em: Snow Shoes, Cross Country Skis, Kicksleds, dog sledding harnesses, weight pull harnesses, dog booties, coats, or whatever. Dog Bed for dog in dining area (cold cement floor). Warm sleeping bag, or sheets and blankets, pillows. Layers of clothes for various weather and playing/sleeping conditions.

Food: People usually bring stuff to pass. For a list of who is bringing what, see the designated food coordinator.

Dogs: Bring a dog or dogs that get along well with others, as there will be a lot of people in a very small space. When not on the trails, we'll be in the lodge, and no one likes to listen to a barking dog left alone in a room while you're having one-on-one time with another dog. If you think there will be a problem, there is a motel in town that accepts dogs. Trails End Motel 989 389-7949.

Lodging: Limited lodging is available at the camp. Reserve far in advance to be sure you will be able to have a spot. Private rooms will be given to couples first. Any private rooms remaining unreserved by couples 30 days prior to the outing will go to individuals who wish to have a private room, on a first on the waiting list, first served basis. There is no reserving a particular room, like at the summer camp. The rooms will be used to best accommodate the combinations of individuals, couples, and groups, to maximize the available space. Because the trailers are not available in winter, it limits the amount of private accommodations available. There is always the Trails End Motel 989 389-7949 in St. Helen, which charges the same amount per night as the private rooms here cost.



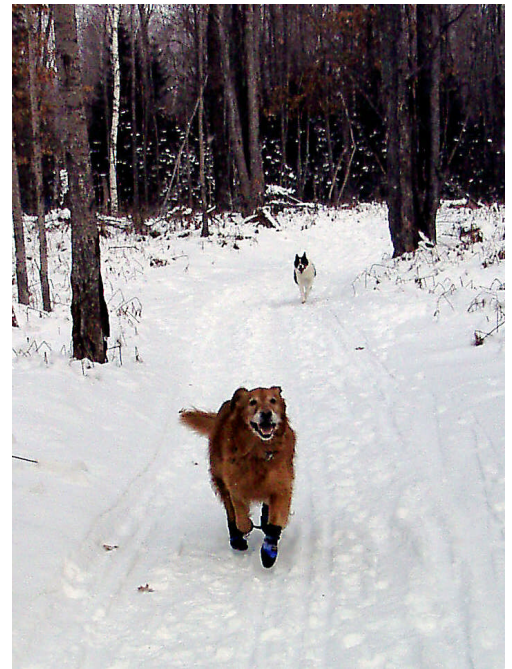
Most of the beds here at camp are Full, or Double sized. If you bring fitted sheets, that's what size to bring. There are a few twins. In the event you get one, the excess sheet can just be tucked in. Your names should be on your room doors when you arrive, and there should be a copy of the schematic chart nearby (look on a table), if you're confused.

Temperature: The weather can vary a lot in the winter. Some years, we're covered in snow, and some, we barely have enough to float a sled. The same with the temperature. One winter outing had the absolute coldest weather that was experienced during that entire winter at -17 degrees. Or, it could be in the 40's or 50's and raining. It is best to pack for a wide range of weather and temperature possibilities.

Bunkhouse Lodge: The bunkhouse is heated with an outside wood burner. The main lodge, restrooms, and private room #1 have heat vents and stay very warm. The rest of the rooms are not heated, and it would be good to allow the heat in the hallway to enter your room, by using a baby gate at your door during the day. Just before bed

time, you can run a space heater for an hour or so before going to bed, to take the chill off the room.

Prepare for outdoor camping, basically. Pack pajamas and bedding that will keep you comfortable in a



chilly room. I sleep with the heat down to 50 degrees, so I would not even want to be using a heater or electric blanket out there. I'm used to sleeping cold. You might not be, so pack a thermal sleeping bag or something. I don't like electric blankets, and they suck power, so I'm not recommending those, but if you have a small space heater or electric blanket and want to use it, it's okay as long as you are willing to get up and flip the breakers if the power goes out due to the draw of current. Do not leave electric blankets or space heaters running during the day when you are not in your room.

Activities: There is no schedule at the winter outing. We try to keep things informal and less regimented. Everyone usually agrees on a particular time for a hike, or smaller groups go out and hike at various times. Everyone tries to agree on what will be for the next meal, and meal times for the day will be posted on the dry-erase board. Any special activities, impromptu contests, or other hair-brained schemes will be written on the dry erase board. There may be anything from kick-sled races, to Pictionary, to letterboxing, to movies and popcorn.

Special Rules: The rules that are in effect for summer camp are in effect for the outings, with some additions. If the snow conditions are slushy, DO NOT go out on the trail under any circumstances. Do not drive a car on Dog Scout way, past the kitchen door of the lodge. To gain access to the parking lot, turn right opposite the craft annex (old camp store) and pull between the blue and yellow travel trailers to get to the parking lot. We were advised not to let people drive over the septic field, and this is the only other way to the parking lot without driving over the septic field (and without driving on the trail that is groomed for sledding).



about a mile (first rule of sledding is to NEVER let go of the sled), I've broken my leg (my stump) and I've also lost my team (cardinal sin in sled dog racing, but they say you're not a "musher" until you've done this at least once). Please don't try anything that you don't feel that you or your dog are up to, physically. And dress for the weather. You might be walking home from way out in the woods somewhere.

If you have not undertaken snowshoeing, skijoring, kick-sledding, or dog sled racing before, then I suggest you read the materials available on these subjects on our web site. If you are going to try to earn a badge in any activity, you'll have to know everything you need to know for that activity, because there will be no instruction, and no O & S. Don't expect someone who can check off for these activities to know the requirements of the badge by memory. Come prepared, or don't ask to be checked out.

Safety: If we've been experiencing warm weather, do not let your dog run out onto the frozen (or otherwise) pond. Sledding is reportedly the most dangerous sport in the world. I've seen a lot of sledding accidents, and I can attest to the fact. Broken equipment, body parts, and concussions can happen. Please exercise caution at all times, if you take a sled out. **Bring a bicycle helmet** if you have one. It's no laughing matter to fly into a tree. I've hit a tree so hard I've done a somersault over the driver's bow and landed in the basket. I thought I must have impaled my spleen or several other internal organs. I've also been dragged for

Clean up: Just like with summer camp, everyone is to pitch in and help with the daily chores and cleaning up of the restrooms, dining room, and your bunk rooms when you leave. Scouts always leave



things cleaner than they found them. Please remember to sweep your room, empty your waste basket bags, and take all of your personal belongings home with you. If your dog makes a mess of something, clean it up. If you or your dog breaks or damages something, you will need to pay for it. There are no fees charged for the outings, and the use of the facility and equipment is at your own risk, and there is no “pad” to fall back on if a piece of equipment gets lost or damaged. **Gear:** Please take care of ALL gear, no matter whose it is. Do not leave gang lines on sleds overnight. Tip sleds up against the building when done with them for the day. Put necklines with ganglines

or with sled, so they’ll be there for the next person. Bring some form of Identification for your harness if you are going to borrow one (or if your own it). There is only about 1 or 2 harnesses large enough for really big dogs. You might have to share. If you have a little key ring with your name on it, or a piece of masking tape (that you promise to remove before going home) with your name on it, that you can put around the butt loop, it will be easier to find your harness the next time you need to use it. Please don’t take borrowed equipment to your room. Someone else might need to use it. Ask before you take a sled or kick sled that does not belong to you. Some belong to Lonnie, Ed, or the camp, and some belong to other individuals, who may be perfectly happy for you to borrow them, but just ask first.

Please Read [MUSHING 101](#) before attending the outing.

