



ASDRA has received a grant of \$10,000 from the Anchorage Centennial Celebration. The purpose of the grant is to commemorate the rich history of the Fur Rendezvous Open World Championship Sled Dog Race and educate the community about its significance in Anchorage's history. To fulfill this purpose, ASDRA will consider partial sponsorship for two qualified Alaskan rural teams of dogs and drivers to participate in the Race. The designated teams will represent the village teams that dominated the race for 30 years. As part of the sponsorship the selected drivers and dogs are required to appear at various venues in Anchorage to educate the public about the rich tradition of sled dog competitions regionally and at the Fur Rendezvous. Applications for this sponsorship will open in October 2014.

The Fur Rendezvous Open World Championship Sled Dog Race began as a demonstration event in 1946 initiated by Earl Norris. The event proved so popular that it has continued to this day. By 1950 the race attracted pooled dog teams from the rural villages. Family village dog teams were often used for trap lines and transportation. Each family could only afford to feed a limited number of dogs. A pooled village team consisted of the best dogs from that village driven by an experienced racer. Each village had distinct bloodlines of dogs retained for toughness, health, and speed. The race during Fur Rendezvous was a way to test the best dogs of a village against other villages.

The race evolved from the Alaska State Championship four-day event to the Open World Championship three-day event of today in 1961 with competitors coming from as far away as New England and Canada. Throughout the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's village teams were dominant. A famous Alaska Native mushing icon - George Attla - is one of many racers who began with a village-pooled team. George went on to a sled dog racing career with more wins of the Fur Rendezvous Open World Championship race than any other musher to date.

The general purpose of the Anchorage Centennial Celebration is to commemorate the centennial and educate the Anchorage Community and broader audiences on the history and culture(s) of the City of Anchorage over the last 100 years. By commemorating the rich history of the Fur Rendezvous Open World Championship Sled Dog Race, ASDRA is helping to fulfill this purpose.

If you would like to participate in this exciting and significant event, and would like to have your qualifications considered for sponsorship, please email asdra@asdra.org for an application. Applications will be sent out in October 2014. Sponsorship is only for teams fitting the specific purpose of the Anchorage Centennial for the 2015 race.