



## Shank and Williams Celebrate 25 Years of the Yukon Quest

For Immediate Release

**Fairbanks, AK (February 7, 2008)** – It was an evening filled with heartfelt remembering as race founders Leroy Shank and Roger Williams emceed the 25<sup>th</sup> Running of the Yukon Quest.

The notoriously odd couple -Shank is a chatty career musher who wore denim overalls and a bow tie made out of blue tarp, while Williams is a subdued historian who wore a linen dinner jacket - regaled the crowd of 450 mushers, fans, volunteers and Yukon Quest staff gathered at the 2008 Yukon Quest Start Banquet, held at the Carlson Centre in Fairbanks, with stories dating back to the race's humble beginnings.

“My crowning achievement in this is that I was the (race's) first volunteer,” said Shank, who went on to praise the hundreds of volunteers each year - some of whom have been around the entire 25 years - that make the race possible.

The two men designed the race in 1983 over beers at an old saloon called the Bull's Eye and later brought their vision to avid mushers from across Alaska and Yukon in a tavern called 60-Below.

“It wasn't a family tavern, that's for sure,” recalled 60-year-old Frank Turner, who ran the inaugural Yukon Quest in 1984 and will embark on his 24<sup>th</sup> Yukon Quest this Saturday, February 9. “They pushed it like the north wind coming down now,” said Turner, adding that the Yukon Quest would never have become a reality had it not been for the persistence of these two men.

The culmination of events was the bib-draw in which mushers selected out of one of Shanks's old bunny boots the order number (and the musher's bib numbers) for Saturday's start line.

Didier Moggia, 47, a rookie from Whitehorse, Yukon, will be the first to leave the Start Chute at 11 a.m. from the Chena River in downtown Fairbanks. The next musher will leave three minutes later in a spacing trend that will repeat itself until the final musher has departed. Becca Moore, 36, a rookie from Willow, Alaska, who pulled Number 24 out of the boot, will leave last. The time difference between mushers will be corrected at the halfway point in Dawson City, Yukon, where there is a mandatory 36-hour layover.

For more information and for updates on individual mushers during the race, please visit the Yukon Quest's new website at [www.yukonquest.com](http://www.yukonquest.com).

-30-

Attachment: Team Start Order

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2008 Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race Team Bib Number/Start Order

1. Didier Moggia Rookie, Whitehorse, Yukon
2. Bill Pinkham Veteran, Glenwood Springs, Colorado
3. Michelle Phillips Veteran, Tagish, Yukon
4. Anne Ledwidge Rookie, Dawson City, Yukon
5. Dan Kaduce Veteran, Chatanika, Alaska
6. Phil Joy Rookie, Fairbanks, Alaska
7. Jean-denis Britten Rookie, Whitehorse, Yukon
8. Brent Sass Veteran, Fairbanks, Alaska
9. Paul Geoffrion Veteran, Whitehorse, Yukon
10. Hugh Neff Veteran, Skagway, Alaska
11. Lance Mackey Veteran, Fairbanks, Alaska
12. Kyla Boivin Veteran, Whitehorse, Yukon
13. Cor Guimond Veteran, Dawson City, Yukon
14. Andreas Moser Rookie, Zurich, Switzerland
15. Frank Turner Veteran, Whitehorse, Yukon
16. Bill Cotter Veteran, Nenana, Alaska
17. Donald Smidt Rookie, Van Dyne, Wisconsin
18. Kelley Griffin Veteran, Wasilla, Alaska
19. Bruce Milne Veteran, Two Rivers, Alaska
20. Ken Anderson Rookie, Fairbanks, Alaska
21. Julie Estey Rookie, Fairbanks, Alaska
22. David Dalton Veteran, Healy, Alaska
23. Mike Ellis Rookie, Rumney, New Hampshire
24. Becca Moore Rookie, Willow, Alaska

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