

Running into that dark tunnel is scary for some, disconcerting and disorienting, and not just for people, but for the dogs also. I love to hang lights all over the dog and myself. Lights that blink in bright colors as we steadily roll towards our destination. Going west through the tunnel fools the eyes, as one is not sure about focusing on the small dot of light two miles away or on the immediate darkness in front of the wheel. Coming east can also be troublesome, as there is no visible light, and some folks become claustrophobic. But not Sparky and I. We continue along at our steady pace, line out, passing some, being passed by others. Fellow explorers finding their own rhythm. The tunnel is cool, dark, silent and peaceful to me. Just rolling along.



A much easier way to go, to find the rhythm, keep the pace, roll on through the dark. You will arrive back in the light and heat of day, where the bustle and hubbub of beginnings announce the departure of the next group of riders.



Others, having completed their journey, are either happy to be out of the dark, or find themselves longing for a little bit more time in the silence.

I like the dark. I like autumn, winter, midnight and tunnels. Autumn is coming, the dark is swiftly overrunning the light and the time to run the dogs is here. We are approaching the dark times and as in the tunnel, the light is waiting. Keep the pace, steady and strong rolling into that darkness. Keep your friends close; recognize their strengths, just pedal along. Pay attention to the brightness as it passes. One might call the tunnel a metaphor. Sparky and I call it a good run.

***5th annual
Snoqualmie
Tunnel Run
08/11/2007***



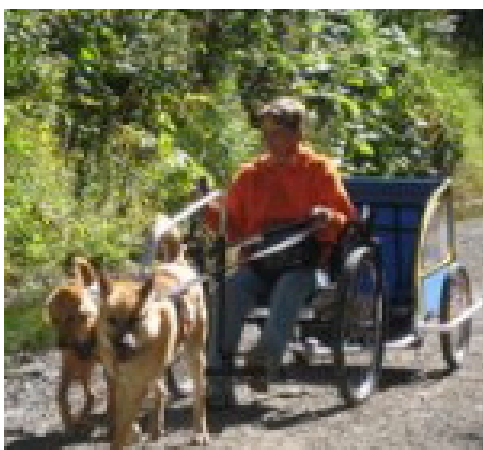
Well, the 5th annual Snoqualmie tunnel run was our best yet. I lost count of all the people and dogs that showed up. Several people from the sled dog club showed with their ATV's and large teams.

There was quite a din in the parking lot as we all prepared to head out. The bicycling groups had a ball taking pictures.

Caedmon was old enough to bikejor through the tunnel this year.

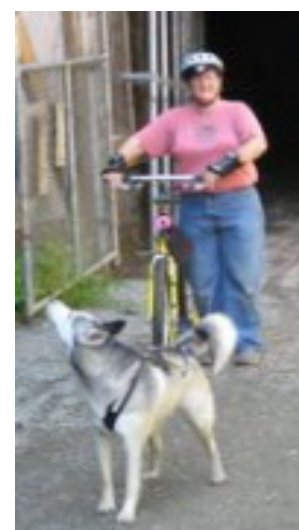


Donna and Daphne stole my idea and transported pups in bicycle trailers. A little nervous about running into and getting run over by big teams in the tunnel, Caedmon and I led the pack with Brad, Brielle and their dogs. I rode the brakes all the way through as I was worried about whacking into Caed in the dark. He was very visible with his reflective vest, but I could not see the black tugline very well. Next year I will paint it with reflective paint. Our pack of 3 made it through in record time and sat back to watch the other teams emerge out of the darkness.



Daphne Lewis pulled by Brett and Rosie, breaks into the sunshine.

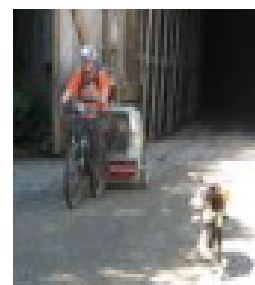
We were all rested by the time Lynne and Daphne came out, so we headed on back through. We stopped quite a bit to pass cyclists head on. It was a good run.



Lynne Angeloro and Rigby emerge from the tunnel.

Many people camped at Lake Easton State Park for the weekend. We had a grand time gathering around Sue's campfire in the evenings.

Local mushers, Mike and Doreen Johnston, did a presentation at the park amphitheatre on Saturday evening, which drew a large crowd. He then ran his 10-dog team around the RV campground loop several times. I spoke for a while with a woman who was interested in scootering or biking with her dog.



Donna, Ellie, and Lic come out of the tunnel.

Friday evening Donna and I had quite an adventure. We took Ellie out in the bike trailer for a practice run before the tunnel. As we came to a rough spot of trail along the lake, the trailer separated from Donna's bike and tipped over, almost dunking Ellie in the lake!

We tried in vain to reattach the trailer, but the trusty zip ties were back at the campsite. So we ditched trailer and crate in the woods and ran all dogs back to the tent. Left dogs there, got necessary supplies and went back for the trailer. We kept the older gentleman in the next site thoroughly entertained throughout the weekend :)

Sunday morning Daphne, Sue and I did a 4 mile run down to the dam and back. I let Caed let loose this time...no holding back. We hit 15 mph according to Daphne's speedometer. Almost crashed when I ran my bike into a trail gate going mach three, but I guess I'm getting better at not crashing as I avoided going completely head over heels. Caedmon was an absolute maniac today. Just wanted to go, go, go! On the way back we hooked him up with Brett and that went well. They match pace quite nicely and I managed to not die as we careened down the trail. The dogs had a dip in the lake before going back to the cars.

I've really been working on Caedmon's obedience and soon we will join an advanced class at the training center. Camping this weekend provided many opportunities for him to work on various skills and I'm very proud that his down-stay dramatically improved. I would take him to the bathroom with me and tie him outside in a down-stay. I would find him in the same position when I came back. One time a kid almost stepped on his tail and he didn't move position. He did well sitting quietly next to me at the campfire and didn't give in to Rosie's demands to play. What a fun weekend. We look forward to next year! Natalie

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From
Caedmon's
Corner



“Dogs love to Run.” We associate this quote with scootering and running dogs. Caedmon is the epitome of this saying. He LOVES to run. Unfortunately he’s not of the “dogs love to pull” camp. I’ve reluctantly come to the conclusion that Caedmon is not a scooter dog. He does not like to pull. In his mind, pulling is bad (Gotta love all that loose lead walking I’ve pounded into him). It makes him Velcro himself to my leg and all attempts to get him to line out and in front are futile. Since you can’t push a dog with a rope, we had to find another alternative for him to get his running in that didn’t include unauthorized forays into the horse pastures at our house.

Free running with the bike has turned out to be just the thing. He gets to run like a maniac and I get tons of exercise trying to keep up with him. We always attempt to bikejor when we are out, and sometimes he will get out front and run while being connected to the bike. If he’s in Velcro mode, then the tugline comes off and we run off-leash, if we are in an area where it’s safe to do so. When we run with other teams, lining out is not a problem at all. Trying to get him to exercise self-control and wait for Mom to be ON the bike before we catapult out of the parking lot is still a work in progress.

Once we are going, he runs and keeps the line out of the front wheel and I help by pedaling, if needed. Usually we’re going so fast I can’t pedal fast enough to be any help. Caedmon will dig in and send gravel flying in his quest to catch up to the team in front...but he won’t pull the scooter. As far as I know he’s never had an evil moment with the thing; no crashes, no instances of dragging it and getting it lodged on something. He just woke up one day and decided he liked the bike better. So, since Caed is King and we all serve the King, Caedmon and I will continue to run on- and off-tugline with the bike and have sent the scooter and sled to be rehomed with dogs that will actually pull them. After all, we’re all in this for the sake of our dogs, right? ☺

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Dogs Loving to Run



September 29-30 Carole and Jeff Parsons are holding a scooter and rig campout at Goose Creek Campground above Fish Lake. There will be a potluck on Saturday night. There is plenty of room and places to run. Contact Carole at malamute77@aol.com

October 6-7 The 2nd annual Pinewood Run. Contact alpinehsky@aol.com for information.

October 13-14 NWSDA first dirt race at Suncadia property in Roslyn, WA. There will be cart, scooter, and bikejor classes. Contact barnstormer@fairpoint.net

October 20 K9 monthly get together at Celebration Park, Federal Way 10am. This event will repeat monthly on the 3rd Saturday.

October 27-28 NWSDA presents the Pacific Northwest Championship race at Roslyn, WA

There will be a dog and musher gear swap and shop at this event. Bring your old gear that you would like to trade or sell. Buy or barter for new gear that others have brought to trade.

November 3-4 Spokane Dirt Rony contact fcaccavo@whitworth.edu

November 10-11 Dogs Across America contact daphne@dogscooter.com for trail information in WA state. Also check out the DAA website.

LaPine Mushing weekend This event is open to scooterers and larger teams. This is a get together for all skill levels. Contact tumnatki@earthlink.net for information.

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