

THREE DOG NIGHT



Contrary to popular belief, dogsledding is not just a sport for snowy locales such as Alaska and Lapland. You can mush the day away right here in Maryland's scenic hill country, where dog power runs strong, snow or otherwise. Maryland Sled Dog Adventures, a small "micromushing" kennel with four Siberian huskies and husky mixes, helps visitors observe the partnership between musher and dog and learn more about dog-powered sports such as dryland sledding.

Bring your own huskies or hounds to participate in the "Run What You Brung" program, which provides introductory training for dogs without mushing experience. Catherine Benson, who co-owns the company with husband Eric, says the program is not limited to Siberian and Alaskan huskies, Malamutes, Inuit dogs or classic Northern breeds commonly affiliated with it. Any pet dog is capable of mushing, including border collies, golden retrievers, giant schnauzers, labs and many crossbreeds. The Benson's teach pets to "hike," "gee" and "haw" (or run, turn and stop). And if you're dogless, you can view dogsled demonstrations or take dogsledding tours through the woods in three- or four-dog rigs. Though temperatures need to be cool, no snow is "no problem." For more information call 443-562-5736 or visit www.marylanddogsledding.com.

— KIMBERLY TAYLOR

Many of Eric and Catherine Benson's huskies are rescued from regional animal shelters. Photo courtesy Eric R. Benson, Maryland Sled Dog Adventures, LLC.