

IOWA SNOWMOBILER

February 2016 • Volume 37 • Issue 6

**Backpacking
Up One Side
of I-35 and
Down the
Other**



*Take A Friend
Snowmobiling
This Month*



**Winter Kids Ride
Marks 10th
Anniversary
at Huxley**



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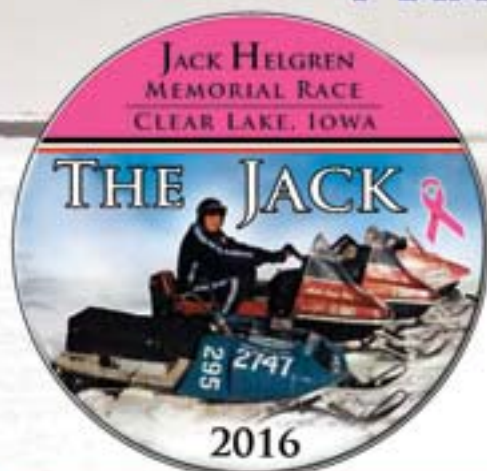


7TH ANNUAL - SPONSORED BY NORTH IOWA SNOWSEEKERS

"THE JACK" HELGREN MEMORIAL

IOWA LEMANS CHAMPIONSHIP

February 12-13, 2016



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6-9PM

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Cruise Around The Lake

SATURDAY

9am Radar Runs • 10am Lemans Style Racing
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to get their buddies out on the trail



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COVER: Matt Wilde of Ankeny emerges from the woods near Northfield, Minn., during a backpack trip in 2014.

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Guest Column

Effective Engagement with Members of Congress

For the past 15 years, I have felt it necessary to make regular trips to Washington, D.C., to promote snowmobile enthusiasts' access to public lands. These trips, initially prompted by the Clinton Administration's proposed ban on snowmobiles in all national parks, have given me a healthy perspective on the challenges facing those who petition Congress on behalf of "special interests."

For snowmobile enthusiasts, the media's assignment of a negative image to our "special interest" of maintaining public access to public lands complicates our mission. Specifically, Members of Congress from areas outside the snowbelt have been led to believe that our use of public lands is a net detriment to those lands. To counter this, most of my time in Washington, D.C. is spent undertaking non-partisan educational outreach to Senators and Members of Congress from states where it rarely, if ever, snows.

Because every vote counts, every newly-elected Congressman or Senator receives a full briefing on our issues. From the most conservative district in Texas to the most liberal in California, members and staff in each office are educated on the tremendous improvement in environmental performance from our sleds and the significant economic benefits generated by enthusiasts using a trail system painstakingly built and maintained by the dedicated volunteers who form the heart of every local snowmobile club.

As important as it is for me to educate the members, it is even more important that you effectively engage your own member of Congress or Senator to ensure that they are an advocate for your interests. While

that may sound as attractive as a root canal to many of you, it is important that you use your constitutional right to petition your elected officials. To assist you in this effort, following are suggestions on how to be effective when interacting with offices.



Ed Klim
ISMA
President

1. Research Your Topic Before Requesting a Meeting

Prior to making a call, develop a thorough understanding of the issue you wish to raise and the Member's position (if any) on that issue. On emerging issues, your

chances of securing a favorable outcome are enhanced if you contact the office before the Member has formed a policy position. If it is a settled issue, understand that Members rarely change a prior position.

2. Be Realistic in Your Expectations

A demand that Congress balance the budget in 2016 is unrealistic. Requesting a Member to embrace the tough policy choices required to generate a balanced budget by 2025 is realistic. And so it is with our issues: Demanding unfettered access to wilderness areas is unrealistic, while requesting reasonable access to non-wilderness areas is realistic.

3. Be Concise, Polite, and Positive in Your Discussion

There are slightly less than 800,000 constituents in each Congressional District. While 30 minutes of face time with your Congressman/staff does not seem like much to ask after an arduous trip to D.C. (or his/her district office,) if each constituent demanded 30 minutes of time with their member they would have a hard time doing the job we elected them for (whatever that is these days!) So:

- Craft a 10-minute script for your meeting and leave some time for dialogue with the person you are meeting with.

- Do not become agitated if the Member is neutral or disagrees with your position, as it never leads to positive outcomes. Offending a Member or staffer could change their attitude from a neutral opponent to a dedicated opponent.

- Seek out areas where a positive discussion is possible and then ease into areas of potential disagreement. Keep your radar up, and if

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2016 ACSA Legal Defense Challenge

Iowa River Riders \$100
Allamakee Sno-Blazers \$100



Proceeds benefit snowmobile access nationwide. Contact your Region Director to make a donation.

Vice President's Message

Proud to Represent Iowa Snowmobiling This Winter

As I sit down to write this, we are forecasted to get 6-12 inches of snow across the state in the coming days. The forecast is good, but will it hold true? By the time you read this, I hope it held true, and you have been able to get out and ride.

As I talk to members across the state, it's been an okay year for some and not so good for others. I've heard of clubs being able to groom the last three weeks straight, while other parts have barely been able to get out. If you don't have snow in your area, get on the ISSA website and call some club contacts. There's always somewhere to ride.

This past week, I joined ISSA President Merv Hoermann and Region 7 Director John Kahler at the Iowa Legislative Show Case in Des Moines. It was a great chance to talk with Representatives from across the state. Our main purpose was to just keep in touch with them and keep those lines of communication open.

We discussed a few topics and concerns that may come up in the future and gave them an ISSA calendar that our Magazine Editor Cameron Hanson put together. Cameron did a great job on the calendar, and if you would like one, please contact him.

I wasn't able to make it up to Cresco for SnowFest due to work commitments, but talking with Region 5 Director Matt Miner, he said it was a great success, and the trails were in good shape for riding. I promised Matt that I would be up there next year.

Klim

Continued from page 4

the feedback is negative, pull back and find something else positive to discuss.

4. Be Patient—Don't Expect Overnight Results or Miracles

Most Members—even the Speaker of the House—are very limited in what they can do. A determined opponent can be a formidable obstacle to the change you are seeking, so give Members a chance to advance your proposal. Call the office from time to time to make sure that the Member is up to speed on the latest developments on your issue. Offer to engage allies in other states to help generate support from other Members of Congress. And, make sure that your friends and neighbors are made aware of the effort being put forth by your Member of Congress.

5. Invite Them to a Community Event

During the 100 or so annual office visits

I was at the Spina Bifida ride in Huxley in January. It was a balmy sub-zero day. But everything went as planned thanks to the careful and attentive planning of Past President Bruno Andreini. We didn't have



Chris Willey

ISSA Vice President

enough snow to use snowmobiles so we went to a backup plan of UTV's. I would like to thank Paul Bachman, owner of Maverick Powersports, for letting me use one of his units to help give the kids rides.

In amongst all the happenings here in Iowa, I was able to get a trip out to Wyoming. Talking to people out there, they said they have seen more Iowa riders than any other state. The other comment is how nice people from Iowa are, but they can't believe we'll drive 12-14 hours to ride. That's nothing new, but it goes to show that snowmobilers from Iowa are known far and wide for our passion of the sport. I feel honored to be one of you and represent our sport and Iowa snowmobiling at functions both in state and out of state.

Don't forget the Jack Race coming up Feb. 12-13 and the Second Annual David Carmichael Memorial Ride Feb. 26-27. Hope to see everyone there and have a great time supporting the scholarship fund.

In Washington, I am amazed at the large number of people who are completely unaware of the work put forth by the local clubs to make snowmobiling such a wonderful recreational and economic activity. There is nothing like firsthand experience with a knowledgeable guide to open the eyes of policy-makers to the importance of snowmobiling. Seeing truly is believing, so invite your Member of Congress for a ride with your club. The Congressional gift ban prevents them from accepting anything of value, so keep the trip simple and maximize the face time the Member has with the local club and businesses. Invite a staff member as well. They may have the time available and will pass on the good word.

6. Thank Them for Making Time for You

Never underestimate the power of a "Thank You." A kind word of thanks will pay dividends for you and your fellow club members.

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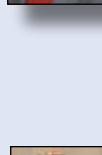
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News Briefs

Jack Race Rescheduled to Feb. 12-13 at Clear Lake

A mild December and an inconsistent start to January forced officials with the Jack Helgren Memorial Race to postpone its seventh annual event from Jan. 15-16 to its back-up dates of Feb. 12-13.

"We have decided to postpone our race until February due to inadequate ice on Clear Lake," explained race organizer Gary McVicker Jan. 5. "We haven't missed a year yet, and we didn't want to start now. Hopefully, the ice will be thick enough in a month."

If conditions do permit, the race will be held on the lake next to Clear Lake State Park, the host site for the event for the past four years. The two-day event begins Friday night, Feb. 12, with pre-registration and a vintage cruise around the lake. Radar runs kick off the following morning at 9 a.m. with racing commencing at 10 a.m.

Now in its seventh year, the race weekend honors the memory of Jack Helgren, a snowmobile dealer from Mason City who passed away in 2009. McVicker was a close family friend and wanted to commemorate Helgren's contributions to the sport locally.

For more information, visit www.thejackrace.com.



For the third year in a row, a member of the Sac County Snow Lovers of Region 6 has won the \$10,000 grand prize toward the purchase of a new snowmobile in the ISSA's annual Grand Raffle drawing. ISSA Region 6 Director and Sac County club member Gene Gerdes' name was drawn at the ISSA's annual convention in Storm Lake Nov. 21. Presenting the check to Gerdes, a mechanic at Black Hawk Marine in Lake View, is ISSA Raffle Committee Chair Gary McVicker.

Emmet County Cross-Country Race Planned for Feb. 20 at Wallingford

The Emmet County Driftbusters of Region 2 are planning a cross-country race Feb. 20 at the Emmet County Nature Center near Wallingford.

Subject to change, but tentative plans call for timed trials over both land and lake. According to club reporter Nick Hanson, the race will feature both single person events as well as team races, including a tandem category.

Classes will be split up based on engine size, studded/non-studded tracks and by age. While you do have to be 18 to race, bring the kids and their sleds along anyway as we plan to have a fun ride through the course for the youth.

If you have questions about racing or spectating, give one of these three club members a call: Tyson Enerson, (712) 209-3330; Andy Gosch, (712) 209-0749; or Trevor Enerson, (515) 450-6819. You can also stay up-to-date on Facebook.

The address to the nature center is 2303 450th Ave., Wallingford, IA 51365

Participate in Take A Friend Snowmobiling Week Feb. 5-15

by Ed Klim

ISMA President

The members of the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association (Arctic Cat, BRP, Polaris and Yamaha) join the organized snowmobile community in announcing the Take a Friend Snowmobiling Campaign for 2016.

State and provincial snowmobile association members of the American Council of Snowmobile Association (ACSA) and the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO) are encouraged to sponsor Take a Friend Snowmobiling activities throughout their states and provinces.

Events can be held any time between Jan. 1 and March 31 with special emphasis on events during the official Take a Friend Snowmobiling Week, Feb. 5-15.

The campaign was created to support all snowmobile associations of ACSA and CCSO and their clubs to enhance and expand their partnership with local Chambers of Commerce, Visitor and Convention Bureaus, snowmobile dealers and other businesses related to the snowmobiling community.

The benefits for your state association could mean such things as more trail signs, groomers and enhancements for trails in your state, with the biggest benefit of all: introducing your non-snowmobiling friends to your favorite winter activity.

All clubs are encouraged to participate in the campaign and partner with local media, radio stations, television stations, etc., in promoting your Take a Friend Snowmobiling event and your club activities.

Extensive research has shown that a vast majority of non-snowmobilers who live in the snowbelt are very interested in snowmobiling. When asked to rate their interest on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest level of interest), non-snowmobilers rate their interest at a 9!

Research has also shown us that most individuals who live in the snowbelt see snowmobiling as a great way to enjoy the scenery, get outdoors and have fun with family and friends, go to unique places and see amazing sights, have fun in the winter outdoors and be able to go home tired and ready for a good night's sleep.

The Take a Friend Snowmobiling campaign is promoted by the manufacturers which encourage all snowmobilers to take their non-snowmobiling friends out snowmobiling to enjoy the winter.

We hope your club and association will participate in a Take a Friend Snowmobiling event. Talk with neighboring clubs to participate as well. Let your association office know about your plans. The events should increase the profile of your club and attract new support and members.

If you would like additional information, please visit www.gosnowmobiling.org. We invite you to post your event photos and videos highlighting your ride activities on our Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/GoSnowmobiling. Share your fun.

We look forward to seeing you and your friends out on the trails.



We live here. We love it.
Winter is more fun
on a snowmobile.



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Winter Kids Ride at Huxley

Annual Event Brings Snowmobilers, Spina Bifida Families Together

by **Cameron Hanson**

Negative temperatures and poor trail conditions didn't keep snowmobilers from across Iowa from converging on Huxley Jan. 10 for the 10th Anniversary Winter Kids Ride with the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa (SBAI), the ISSA's official charity.

The weather did cut attendance down to about half over previous years, but families and members from both organizations were able to spend the afternoon in fellowship over a meal, crafts and games and even a wheelchair basketball game at the Huxley Safe Room complex.

Highlighting the afternoon, as it has each year since 2007, was a trail ride through town for kids with spina bifida. Due to low snowcover, this year's ride once again featured utility vehicles (UTVs) parading their way through town in a police escort.

By design, the event is intended to give kids rides on snowmobiles so they can experience what ISSA members love about the winter, but when Mother Nature doesn't cooperate, organizers can easily adapt, including hosting a few hay rides in the absence of snow as well over the years.

While the ride brings everyone together, event organizer and Past ISSA President Bruno Andreini explained the real intent of the afternoon is for snowmobilers to get acquainted with the people and organization their donations support.

"We want to have kids do something that they wouldn't normally have a chance to do with their condition," said Andreini who serves as a liaison on the SBAI board. "But more importantly, we want to become acquainted with these families on a first-name basis and build a relationship with them, which will in turn give us extra incentive to do more for them."

The ISSA began supporting the SBAI in 1982. Dan Biller, chair of the SBAI Board of Directors, estimates snowmobilers have donated more than \$250,000 to his organization over the past three decades. Snowmobile clubs annually raise around \$8,000 for the SBAI and contributions are recognized at the annual ISSA convention. Some years raise more than others.

In 2015, more than \$10,000 was raised for spina bifida with the North Iowa Sno-Jammers earning top fundraising honors at the 2015 convention in Storm Lake. That Region 3 club alone

contributed \$3,000 to the organization. SBAI Treasurer Dave Siebrecht of nearby Spencer presented the award to the club and shared his thoughts on the relationship between his group and the ISSA.

"I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your support," Siebrecht told snowmobilers at the Saturday evening awards banquet Nov. 21. "The ISSA is a great support of our organization and makes a lot of things possible. You have almost been there for us from the beginning, and we truly value your support."

ISSA President Merv Hoermann first met Siebrecht at the Winter Kids Ride five years ago and has developed a relationship with



ISSA Region 2 Director Jeremy Walker buckles in Keri Siebrecht for their Gator ride.

him, his wife Jodi and their 15-year-old daughter Keri, who was born with the spinal cord defect. Despite both living in northwest Iowa, Hoermann admits they may have never met had it not been for the ride.

"We have gotten to know a lot of you people over the past years, and we really enjoy seeing you all come back again," he said. "By having this event, we have come to learn a lot more about you as a group and on a personal level. This event has been great over the past 10 years, and we have to give Bruno a lot of credit for that and all of the volunteers who show up to work at it."

Over the years, the Winter Kids Ride, officially hosted by the Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club of Region 7, has been held at various venues around the Huxley community but landed a permanent home at the Safe Room three years ago. Andreini said the community truly opens its doors for the charity event and awarded plaques of appreciation to city officials at the event.

"We have such a good relationship with the city to help do all of this. The city is just tremendous," said Andreini, a Saylorville Dam club member. "I started working with the city when we were doing trail work here on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail, and I have never once heard the words 'no' come out of their mouths."

Before the kids ride, Andreini said the interaction was limited



Two-year-old David Ecklund of Jefferson enjoys the vintage Kitty Cat sled on display in the Huxley Safe Room.

"Building relationships is so special for non-profits," Crowe continued. "To have an organization which adopts your mission and supporting it year after year is special. I'm new to this organization, but I have worked with non-profits for a very long time, and what we have here you don't always see that a lot with other organizations. That makes it very special."

"On behalf of the SBAI, we want to thank you so much," Biller said. "We truly appreciate what you guys do for us. We know that you support us not just during this time of year but also year-round, and we truly appreciate that. This is the 10-year anniversary for the snowmobile ride but we know that our relationship goes back much further than that."

In October, ISSA members participated in the SBAI's Walk-



Winter Kids Ride organizer Bruno Andreini with Carlyn Crowe, SBAI executive director. Andreini, a past ISSA president, serves as the ISSA's liaison on the SBAI Board of Directors.

between the SBAI and ISSA to awards presentations at convention each fall. The ISSA used to host charity rides during SnowFest weekend in Cresco, but according to Andreini, "that event was tilted toward snowmobilers. We would go out for rides and then turn in our donations later that night and that was about it."

"The concept of what we're doing today is so much different than it was then. We're not here to raise money today, we are here to build relationships," Andreini said. "Once you build those relationships, the money comes afterwards. I think we've accomplished everything we've set out to do and I'm glad we are able to do this for the kids."

Carlyn Crowe, who replaced Leslie Garman as SBAI executive director last summer, said that relationship-building is invaluable. The feedback she receives from her board and from the families who attend the Winter Kids Ride is positive. She said the kids are able to do something they wouldn't normally be able to do and called the event "a great opportunity for everyone."



ISSA Vice President Chris Willey gives 13-year-old Suzanne Schoemaker of Dexter a ride down the backstreets of Huxley during the ISSA's Winter Kids Ride with the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa Jan. 10.

N-Roll, a fundraising event at Principal Park in Des Moines, and throughout the year, ISSA-member clubs raise funds for spina bifida through various events across Iowa, including grass drags, raffle drawings, sponsor donations and auctions at convention.

The SBAI earmarks that funding for education and outreach programs, and its member families also rely on that generosity to offset travel, lodging and other expenses related to the care of their children. Because spina bifida children have limited sensation in their lower body, mobility and incontinence are major obstacles for the families to overcome.

But the condition is not a death sentence. Keri Siebrecht is just one of the many success stories SBAI members can share with their benefactors. Last summer, she participated in RAGBRAI and is a member of her high school track team. She also plays wheelchair basketball and has gone skiing, both on water and on snow.

"Keri does a lot of things now that we had no idea she would be able to do when she was born," her proud father said. "We visited with a surgeon at the time who said she won't be able to do anything and will always be stuck in a wheelchair. We know now that is not true. She has always been able to overcome her challenges, and it's amazing all the things she gets and wants to do."

Keri Siebrecht was among several spina bifida kids who were able to go on the UTV rides. ISSA members countered the chilly temperatures by providing helmets and gear and wrapped the riders in heavy quilted blankets. From the safe room, the 15-minute ride headed south toward the fire department and back north toward the high school. Three laps ensured everyone had a chance to participate.

"I can see the cold weather doesn't keep the snowmobilers away," Biller said. "We thank you for coming out today and celebrating what we do. In addition to getting together for some fun recreation, this event also allows

Turn to page 20



North Iowa Sno-Jammers Named Top Fundraiser for Spina Bifida

The North Iowa Sno-Jammers of Region 3 were named the top fundraising snowmobile club for the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa (SBAI) at the 2015 ISSA Annual Convention in Storm Lake Nov. 21.

Through various fundraisers, the club donated \$3,000 to the non-profit charity. The club also contributed six snowmobile prints to help promote raffle ticket sales at convention for the ISSA's annual SBAI drawing. Over the past two seasons, this special drawing has raised more than \$1,000 for spina bifida.

Above, junior club members Jacob and Carter Trunkhill draw Don Helgeson's name as the winner of a vacation package to Pat's Landing in Hayward, Wis.

Below, Matt and Carter Trunkhill accept their club's award as the top fundraising club at the Saturday evening banquet at convention. Presenting the award are SBAI's Keri Siebrecht and ISSA President Merv Hoermann.

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Looking to Improve on Last Winter's Performance

by Cameron Hanson

The Iowa State University Clean Snowmobile Challenge team is returning to the Keweenaw Research Center in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan the second week of March and is looking to improve upon the momentum gained there last winter.

"The biggest thing we are working on this year is testing and validation," explained team president and ISU senior Cameron Pomeroy. "At the end of the day, this is an engineering competition so a lot of what you are graded on are, 'How well do you support your ideas?' and 'What data do you have to back it up?'. Those are our big plans this year."

2015 marked the first season a college from Iowa had fielded a team in the 16-year history of the Clean Snowmobile Challenge (CSC). Taking home eighth place, the Iowa State group finished ahead of 12 other colleges and also garnered Rookie of the Year honors. Pomeroy, who succeeded Dan Clemens as team lead, described last season as a "testing year" for the engineering students.

"We basically started the club as a bunch of buddies getting together to do something. Let's have some fun and see what we

can do with it," he said during a presentation at the 2015 ISSA Annual Convention in Storm Lake Nov. 21. "Then reality set in. You really can't get a free sled and then all those donations and not try and accomplish something with it."

Sponsored by the Society of Automotive Engineers, the six-day competition is hosted on the grounds of Michigan Tech University north of Hancock-Houghton and is designed to promote ingenuity, improve snowmobile technology and reduce the sport's environmental footprint. On campus in Ames, Pomeroy said their project is a conversation starter at many events.

"We tell people we are making an environmentally-friendly snowmobile," he said. "To many, that sounds slow and not fun so we really strive to keep everything upbeat and fast. With that comes a ton of testing. You don't know how your sled is going to do until you put it on snow. We are doing this because we want to push this industry and get new people involved in the sport."

To recruit new members to the team and keep their interest in the project high, Pomeroy said they allow the younger members to actually test the sled on the field next to their shop. That strategy as well as the success of last season have appeared to pay off. Pomeroy estimates 15 students participated in last season's project, whereas this year, close to 40 students are actively engaged in the effort.

"You'd be surprised," said Pomeroy, who grew up riding Arctic Cat snowmobiles. "We have a very good mix of members. There are a lot of guys this year who live, eat and breathe sleds, and about half of the members who have never even sat on a snowmobile. What we really try to do is get these younger guys involved so they can follow in our footsteps."

Donations Sought

Donated by Polaris Industries, the ISU team is modifying the same chassis and engine as last season. Subsidized by the university, the team also purchased a dyno machine last year, and this year, the team is expecting to spend close to \$3,000 on testing and tuning in preparation for the event. That will eat up close to a quarter of their \$12,000 overall budget.

"This year, we are trying to push the limits and bring more innovation to the sport," Pomeroy explained. "We are working on making our own oil injection system and running with a catalytic converter, which will make everything very interesting. Two strokes don't tend to like catalytic converters so we will see how that goes. We have a lot of guys who are putting a lot of time into this."

Defined as a student organization, the Cy-Clean team is an arm of the ISU Engineering Department. Their project is not graded, but according to Pomeroy, the work is a "great resume-builder" for the



Cameron Pomeroy, president of the Iowa State University Clean Snowmobile Challenge team, addresses attendees at the 2015 ISSA Annual Convention in Storm Lake.

student participants. The team meets every other Thursday during the school year and spends most of their weekends wrenching on the project.

"In my job interviews and my job offers, I spend more time talking about CSC than I do about my year of industry experience through an internship," Pomeroy said. "This project is something that people are genuinely interested in and gives companies and employers a good look at a student's work ethic. The fact that this competition is not graded helps us get more creative with our project."

Besides equipment purchases, the rest of the team's budget is made up of travel and lodging to the actual competition. Last season, nine students made the nine-hour trip to the U.P., and more are expected to attend next month. Other expenses include outreach programs, registration fees and truck and trailer rental. Pomeroy said the team relies heavily on donations to meet its financial obligations.

Last year, the ISSA kicked in \$1,000 toward their effort, and three Iowa snowmobile clubs also made significant contributions. If you or your club is interested in making a donation, visit the team's website at <http://www.me.iastate.edu/snowmobile/sponsors/>. Any and all donations are appreciated, Pomeroy said at convention last fall.

"I tell everyone we come into contact with that ISSA has been the biggest proprietor of our success in our first year," Pomeroy said. "We don't get much money for what we do, and we all volunteer our time. We are all students, and snowmobiling is an expensive sport. You all know that. Your support has been an absolute groundbreaker for getting our club up off the ground."

Hoermann Instrumental to Success

Pomeroy singled out ISSA President Merv Hoermann for his mentoring of the team over the past year and a half. Hoermann



To donate, visit www.me.iastate.edu/snowmobile/sponsors

has been volunteering at the CSC for nearly a decade and helped prepare the college students for what they may expect when they reached the competition. Part of the learning curve was following the competition's 60-page rule book.

"We spent a lot of time last year looking at the previous year's tech papers, presentations and learning from what other teams did," Pomeroy said. "There is a ton of industry relevance coming out of this competition. It's great that everyone is spreading the word because this is something that we want to have a good connotation behind."

Another piece of advice Hoermann shared with the students was to arrive in the U.P. with their project finished and assembled for the competition. He said he wanted to see the first-time team prepared for the event and showing up "to compete and not complete," as CSC organizer and research center director Jay Meldrum would often put it.

"I told them to promise me one thing that when they get to the U.P.: Make sure the machine is finished and ready to run," Hoermann said. "Don't pull the sled off the trailer and then start wrenching on it. It doesn't look good because it tells the judges that you weren't prepared for the competition."

Hoermann said the ISU team represented Iowa well and heeded his advice. The machine passed inspection on its first attempt, and "there are not very many teams who can say that. I tip my hat to them."

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Divided by the ISU CSC sled in the lobby of King's Pointe Resort, Stan Wolf of the Cedar Falls Sno Hawks visits with Ron Sexton of the Eastern Iowa Sledheads during a break at the 2015 ISSA Annual Convention in Storm Lake last November.

Backpacking Up One Side of I-35 and Down the Other



Following the wooded trails south of Waseca



Taking Advantage of Polaris Trail Map App During Five-Day Trip Into Minnesota

by **Cameron Hanson**

My Android smartphone has quickly become a snowmobile writer's best friend. The built-in camera with its enhanced resolution produces magazine-quality photographs, and the voice recorder app makes trailside interviews a breeze.

More than a communication device, the handheld gadget enables surfing for overnight lodging on extended trips; and when the trail signs don't seem to be pointing in the right direction, you can always verify your location by viewing an online trail map.

Two years ago, my trip planning was enhanced even further when I learned of the new Polaris Rider X trail map app. The mobile software was unveiled that November at the ISSA Annual Convention, and I was able to download it to my smartphone for a backpack trip three months later into Minnesota.

Being the old-school rider that I am, I still carried with me a pocketful of outdated trail maps from previous trips across the border, but admittedly, the new app rendered those cumbersome papers useless. Pinpointing our exact location on the trail, the app became a security blanket for our five-day excursion.

No Destination in Mind

Leaving Iowa on Saturday, Feb. 8, we learned quickly the app zapped a lot of battery life from my phone; so after my first 60 miles, I decided to cease recording my trip and rely only on the program for map checks at trail intersections.

Accompanied by my high school buddy, Matt Wilde of Ankeny, we departed my place near Floyd in the morning; and as a sign of the good trails to come, we met the Mitchell County E-Z Riders groomer manicuring the trails five miles

north of town.

A fresh snow had just fallen, and the excitement created by the anticipation of the ride ahead was high. From Floyd County, we charted a course due north into Minnesota, and as is the case with most of my backpacking trips, we really didn't set an overall destination. I try to ride where the snow is best.

Let's face it. Setting a destination just leads to disappointment when you don't plan enough time to get there. Sure, I would have liked to ride all the way to International Falls, but five days is not near long enough time for that sort of run.

Plus, we definitely lack the discipline to get the job done. Knowing our limitations, the loosely-organized trip basically



Following the trail through St. Peter





Trailside relics

became a loop ride up one side of Interstate 35 and down the other.

Easy Riding First Leg

By noon, we had reached the Minnesota state line and picked up Corridor Trail 79 north of Stacyville. This part of ride was very familiar to me as we had taken this route on previous backpacking adventures to Willmar, Minn., and Hayward, Wis.

In fact, the terrain here was not much different than what we had left behind in Iowa. The trails followed fields and square miles, and visible water towers made for easy navigation that first day.

In what would become a quick ride, we followed Corridor 79 up through Dodge Center and Dennison before merging onto some local trails for our first overnight stop in Northfield. The first day ended with 150 miles on the odometer.

The next morning, Sunday, we began

working our way to the west side of I-35. From Northfield, we continued through the adjacent community of Dundas; and after crossing the busy thoroughfare, we picked up Corridor 37, a north-south trail that eventually leads up to Brainerd and Bemidji and ends in International Falls.

We followed trail 37 off and on that morning, taking local spur trails as the spirit moved us. We eventually managed to make it to the Ridges At Sand Creek golf course near Jordan and spent our first break of the day sharing brunch with the church crowd. Let's just say we were not dressed for the occasion.

From the country club, we cut back to 37 and crossed the Minnesota River at Belle Plaine. We continued on this wooded trail until the intersection with Norwood-Young America. Here, Corridor 13 would take us to the west edge of the Twin Cities metro area.



Groomer sighting in southern Minnesota



By now, the terrain, while still crossing farmland, was becoming a little more scenic. At one point, we came across some vintage pickup trucks buried in the snowdrifts along the trail, and the contrast against my late-model snowmobile was irresistible so I reached for my smartphone to capture the image.

After turning north on trail 13, we began making plans for our second overnight stop. A quick surf on the Android recommended the Super 8 at Buffalo in the northwest suburbs of Minneapolis. This prompted a call to friends and family who lived in the area to meet us at the local watering hole after hitting the kill switch for the night.

Sunday was a little shorter than our first day, as we made regular app checks to ensure we would not end up where we didn't belong. It was still close to 130 miles for the second day, and as the following day would serve as hump day, we knew we would have to start heading back home to Iowa around noon.

Cold Weather Hurts Riding

Subzero temperatures greeted us Monday morning, but we suited up for the weather anyway and headed northwest from the cities. Departing neighboring Monticello around 10 a.m., we crossed Interstate 94 and followed an apparent railbed towards St. Cloud.

Roughly a third of the way there, our gas tanks and the clock told us it was time to turn south so we crossed back over I-94, fueled up at the truck stop and headed down toward Maple Lake for lunch at the local bar and grill.

The noon lunch crowd seemed impressed we had ridden up there from Iowa so our break was stretched a little longer than necessary. But that was alright. The noon sun hadn't warmed us up much, and the extended stop helped bring feeling back to our extremities.

After spinning a few stories and fearing we might overstay our welcome, we hopped back on the sleds and continued south toward Waverly. From there, Trail 32 took us west to Cokato for another fuel stop and a reunion with Corridor 37. A short 10 miles later, we abandoned 37 for Trail 28 and reached our third overnight destination at the Americinn in Hutchinson.

Monday's temperatures kept the ride short at just over 100 miles.



Cruising near Monticello

Indicating just how early we shut it down on this third day, we made it to the hotel during the daylight, a feat we normally don't achieve. Nestled warmly into our room, we tuned into the Weather Channel to see what tomorrow's thermometer was going to bring us.

After sleeping in, the morning brought slightly warmer conditions, and we set our course for Waseca, again staying on the west side of I-35 for our loop back home. From Hutchinson, we followed local trails down to Gaylord and picked up Trail 13 just east of there. We followed 13 south for a short stint and hung a left on Trail 16 into St. Peter. Local trails directed us south of out of town, and we ended up at Lake Elysian for an early dinner.

After fueling our tanks and our bellies, the Polaris trail app came in handy once again as darkness had fallen, and some of the local trail intersections were not marked as well as we had experienced earlier in the trip. Verified by the flashing blue arrow on my phone, it was two more left turns before picking up Corridor 12 leading into Waseca.

Journey Home

The trip from Hutchinson to Waseca racked up 135 miles, and we faced about the same distance home the following day. After a pit stop to replace some thinning carbides, we darted south from Waseca around 10 a.m. Trail 17 led us through a nice wooded area before straightening out towards Albert Lea. Before reaching town, we turned east and crossed back over I-35.

At this point, we were back in familiar surroundings, and the need for the phone and trail maps soon dwindled. Our path basically shadowed Interstate 90 before cutting over at Hayward and angling down through Myrtle and Lyle. Here, my smartphone made one last appearance, capturing our last groomer sighting of the trip as well as a unique club carving at London.

After Lyle, it was south to Carpenter and St. Ansgar—our hometown—before one last stop at Osage. From there, it was a quick jaunt south back to Floyd, ending the day at 130 miles and close to 640 miles for the five-day journey.

While the trip seemed a little aimless at times with no real destination in mind, we did get in some good riding, saw some new scenery and gained a new appreciation for my smartphone. While I may never experience its full potential (I don't do social media), it definitely suits my needs quite nicely.



Carver County Trail Shanty #2

Join the ISSA Today!

If you enjoy the sport of snowmobiling in Iowa, you are not alone. In 2015, more than 23,000 sleds registered with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and more than 50 clubs around the state maintained a 8,000-mile trail system.

The glue that bonds us together is the Iowa State Snowmobile Association and its network of 2,500 dedicated family members and associates. Since 1973, our organization has helped to maintain an expansive fleet of groomers and lobbied on behalf of snowmobile-friendly legislation.

Without the ISSA over the past 30 years, snowmobiles—for example—would have been held to a 15 mph speed limit, and

there would not have been any night riding, ditch riding nor access to state parks. Our efforts continue, and your support would be greatly appreciated.

Fill out the form below and join the ISSA today.

With your paid annual membership, you will receive a free subscription to the *Iowa Snowmobiler* magazine (our official publication) as well as a complimentary accidental death and dismemberment insurance policy. In order to receive the full \$3,500 benefit, though, please list each family member in the space provided.

Thank You!

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Club News

Region 1

O'Brien County Snowtrackers

by Zelda Buse Christensen, Reporter

The key word here in northwest Iowa by now (it is Jan. 15) is—believe it or not—SNOW!! It would be nice to report that all of the snow has been ideal for snowmobiling, but that is not exactly the case. However, the groomer got a new wheel put on and some other minor maintenance work and has been out grooming some welcome trails in some rough ditches—the most it has been used in a couple of years!

When a few members met recently for pizza and a discussion of the present circumstances, it was decided to wait till conditions were more suitable for a fun run. When conditions are more promising, we will work fast—rather than making detailed plans for a more distant weekend and then having no snow available then. We are optimistic with at least half of winter remaining.

When I ride alone during daylight hours, I have an advantage in usually having no set destination. I mostly decide at any intersection which direction the snow looks best—whether it be in a field or a ditch—and then head that direction. Also, if I hit an obstacle that seems too great, I can backtrack and pick another way to go. I can give some personal proof that we have gotten some snow this winter. Last year, I put less than 700 miles on my sled (an all-time record low), and that included a week in Wyoming. So far this year, I have put on over 500 miles just riding in O'Brien County.

Having snow—even minimally good for riding—is great and appreciated. We hope for more.

Powder Players

by Jim Skinner, Vice President

Another month has passed and so has another meeting. Our January meeting was shortly after New Year's with an awesome meal of smoked chicken quarters and some yummy side dishes. It was a short meeting as there was not much to discuss. One interesting point, which is being seen across the state, is that both sled registrations and membership numbers are down, especially over the past three years, due to the lack of snow.

Last year, we registered our three sleds and only one left our property, and that was on a trailer to head west to ride with the best group of guys a person would want to travel with. The other two sleds made some nice looking, but expensive, lawn ornaments.

Some members discussed, after the meeting, the trips out west that they just returned from. Some spent time at Vega Lodge in Colorado, and a good time was had due to the deep snow conditions.

We are finally thinking that we have enough snow here in northwest Iowa to get our groomer moving and get our trail system done.

That subject brings another thing to my mind...many times people question, "What has

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Humboldt Sno-Skimmers.....	\$250
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Allamakee Sno-Blazers	\$100

Send your contribution to your Region Director or ISSA Treasurer Kim Herman.
Contact information can be found in the front half of this magazine.

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Clubs in red reported
100% ISSA Membership



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President: Kelly Jongerius
Visit club's Facebook page at www.
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Snow Snoops Snowmobile Club

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REGION FIVE

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Asbury Snowhawks

President: Tom Spalla
3309 Brook Hollow Dr., Asbury, IA 52002
(563) 582-8893, tnspsalla@hotmail.com

Clayton County Snowbirds

12469 Hwy. 18, Postville, IA 52162
President: Mark Bries
21352 Highway 18, Monona, IA 52159
(563) 539-4555, mbconstruction@neitel.net

been groomed?”, “Is the groomer going out?” and “Why haven’t the trails been groomed?” The last question is the one I have the biggest problem with, especially when asked by non-club members. I have tried to explain to these people that they have no idea what it takes to run the groomer and all that is involved to groom a club’s trail system, from the volunteers who spend their time staking, marking and maintaining the trail system, to the training each volunteer is required to take to properly run the groomer and the time spent away from ones family to donate/volunteer their time to groom the trails.

Our club is lucky to have such a great crew with approximately 20 trained groomers, a couple members with awesome mechanical skills, a president that does a fabulous job in coordinating the grooming of the trail system, as well as phone numbers of many members who are willing to help if the groomer gets stuck or has any mechanical issues while out grooming the trails.

Our club is, also, very lucky to have so many members willing to get involved and volunteer their time for so much that is needed to keep a club going, from members who take great care in doing all our documents, landowners required paperwork, two members who cook the meal for our monthly meetings, those who keep up our website and facebook page, and the many members who are willing to volunteer in helping out at events in our community.

Our club meets the first Wednesday of every month, November through March, at 7 p.m. in Remsen. Feel free to “JOIN” us. Also feel free to look us up on our facebook page-Powder Players Snowmobile Club or on our website-www.powder-players.com

Region 2

Emmet County Driftbusters

by Nick Hanson

Well, it wasn’t exactly what I would call a White Christmas, but just a few days later, we got the snow that was on all our Christmas lists. Our ditches are full, fields are ride-able and the groomer is running!

The rain we received late last fall has kept the water levels high. The Des Moines River is still open and flowing at a quick pace...might not freeze this winter. Even the lakes have some inconsistent ice depths at this time, and where tiles are still bringing in water, it is open. So, enjoy the snow, but if you head out on the ice, be careful and ride with a buddy!

Our January meeting was held on Jan. 12 at 3G’s in Ringsted. We had a full crew in

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February

- Take-A-Friend Snowmobiling Week Feb. 5-15.
- Allamakee Sno-Blazers annual club ride Saturday, Feb. 6, starting at noon from Green Valley Getaway, Waukon. Raffle/dance to follow at 7 p.m. snow or no snow.
- Marlin Benson Memorial Ride Feb. 6 starting at Iron Saddle Saloon, Dayton.
- Driftrunners’ Charlie’s Chili Feed Feb. 13.
- The Jack Race Feb. 12-13 Clear Lake.
- Emmet County Driftbusters Cross Country Snowmobile Race Feb. 20 at the Emmet County Nature Center, Walingford. For more information, contact Tyson Enerson, (712) 209-3330; Andy Gosch, (712) 209-0749; or Trevor Enerson, (515) 450-6819.
- Second Annual David Carmichael Memorial Ride Feb. 26-27 Cresco.

March

- ISSA Board of Directors meeting TBD

April

- ACSA DC Fly-In April 16-19.
- Scholarship applications due April 15.

May

- 2015-16 Trail Grant Reimbursement Requests due to IDNR May 1.
- 2016-17 Trail Grant Applications Due to IDNR May.

June

- ISSA Award Nominations Due June 1.
- International Snowmobile Congress June 9-11 Rapid City, S.D.



Members of the Floyd County Groomers Association of Region 4 hosted a club ride on Jan. 16. Above, riders cross the Cedar River on the multi-purpose Charley Western Recreational Trail in Charles City.

attendance. The main topic of discussion was the Cross Country Race that will be held on Feb. 20. The race will be held on High Lake next to the Emmet County Nature Center. We will run both single and three-man teams. Classes will be broken up by CC and studs for both. For some entertainment (for both racers and spectators), we will also run a two-up tandem class. Two riders on one sled and drivers must alternate. While you do have to be 18 to race, bring the kids and their sleds along anyway as we plan to have a fun ride through the course for the youth!

The Emmet County Nature Center address is 2303 450th Ave, Wallingford, IA 51365. If you have any questions, feel free to call one of the members listed below or check us out on Facebook. Tyson Enerson, (712) 209-3330; Andy Gosch, (712) 209-0749; and Trevor Enerson, (515) 450-6819.

Stay safe and enjoy the snow!!!

Region 5

Cresco Driftrunners

by Bob Martinek, Treasurer

Well, winter sure can't make up her mind! Seemed like all we were going to get was rain, and then finally, we did get enough of the white stuff to ride. SnowFest has come and gone. What's next, you ask? Charlie's Chili Feed on Feb. 13. Pots of chili, brats, beverages and lots of fellowship at the bin site just south of Granger on the trail to Cresco. You won't miss it. We have food from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. (or when we run out). We do freewill donation and all the money goes to the club for operating expenses. Win! Win! Fun, food and good for the club. Please check on driftrunners/facebook.com for details

2016 ISSA Magazine Makers

Driftrunners, Inc.	\$100
Allamakee Sno-Blazers	\$100
Wapsipinicon Snowmobile Association	\$100
Snow Pioneers	\$100

This new fundraising mechanism is intended to offset the costs of keeping the *Iowa Snowmobiler* magazine in print. Send your contribution to your Region Director or ISSA Treasurer Kim Herman.

For more information on this program, contact ISSA Communications Chair Jim Willey at (563) 920-0911.

ISSA CLUBS

Clubs in red reported
100% ISSA Membership



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Join Us on Facebook under 'Groups'
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dean@decorahautocenter.com

Dyersville Driftskippers

www.dyersvilldriftdrivers.net
President: Phil Helle
610 6th Ave NE, Dyersville, IA 52040
(563) 590-0549, philhelle@yahoo.com

Snow Pioneers

President: Steve Vorwald
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(563) 927-5362, ssvorwald@iowatelecom.net

Trail Blaz-zers Inc.

President: Tim Arthur
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(563) 578-5417, trail.blazzers.inc@gmail.com

Trails Unlimited

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President: Bud Winter
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Wapsipinicon Snowmobile Association

P.O. Box 802, Independence, IA 50644
www.wsaiowa.com
President: Morgan J. Kuper
1916 Central Ave., Jesup, IA 50648.
(319) 239-0590, mkuper3@jtt.net

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(563) 380-6747, jakeludeking@gmail.com

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President: Jamie Rohlf
408 Center St., Wall Lake, IA 51466
(712) 830-2196

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High Bridge Trailblazers

President: Ryan Lowman
(515) 230-1181, lowman700@gmail.com

Raccoon Valley Snow Chasers

President: Mike Patten
5204 Neva Pt., Panora, IA 50216
(641) 755-3863, mjpatt76@aol.com

Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club

Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club
P.O. Box 3133, Des Moines, IA 50316
www.saylorvilledamsnowmobileclub.org
President: Craig Krapfl
3614 SW 29th, Ankeny, IA. 50023
(515) 707-7237, ckrapfl@gmail.com

Team Iowa Snowmobilers

www.teamiowasnowmobilers.com
President: David Eide
3339 Stagecoach Rd., Stratford, Iowa 50249
teamiowasnowmobilers@hotmail.com
(515) 835-8000

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President: Jim Suchan
3374 Garfield Ave., Gowrie, IA 50543
(515) 352-3039, jsmgr@lvcta.com

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Central Iowa Snowmobilers

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50158, President: Kevin Weese
(641) 485-0123, yamaha.family@yahoo.com

Jasper County Ditch Bangers

President: David Huffaker
P/O Box 311, Baxter, IA 50028
(641) 751-0622, huffaker-dave@hotmail.com





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Tri-County Snowmobile Association, Inc.

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President: Jamie Erhardt
312 Mill St., Traer, IA 50675
(319) 415-8189, jhardt88@yahoo.com

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President: Steve Peiffer
916 - 6th Ave. SE, Cascade, IA 52033
(563) 599-1875

Eastern Iowa Sno-Riders

President: Dylon Bousset
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(563) 210-4002, Polarisdude90@gmail.com

Frozen Few

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President: Jamie Prull
1101 First St., Palo, IA 52324
(319) 851-2522, jprull@aol.com

Jones County Snow Chasers

P.O. Box 492, Anamosa, IA 52205
President: Brett Benter
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Snowmobilers of Jackson County

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brittany-farrell@hotmail.com

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Southwest Iowa Snow Scooters

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trentlarson@gmail.com

Stag Island Skol Patrol

President: Brad Landhuis
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Cedar County Winter Warriors

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Eastern Iowa Sledheads

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scott4@iowatelecom.net
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www.iowa-snowdrifters.org
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Jeff.Wardenburg@Titanmachinery.com

Scott County Sno-Seekers

www.snoseekers.org
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President: Kevin House
(563) 505-3385, khouse805@yahoo.com

Southeast Iowa Ride Blasters

President: Aaron Dorothy
502 E. Cedar Ln., Mt. Pleasant Ia 52641
(319) 986-5188(h), (319) 217-6361 (c)
aarond65@hotmail.com

and updates. Thanks and hope to see you there or on the trails.

Allamakee Sno-Blazers

by Brandon Fahey

The New Year came with around 10 inches of fresh snow in Allamakee County, and our website and Facebook page lit up instantly. We had inquiries from all over Iowa and parts of Wisconsin wondering about trail conditions, food and lodging recommendations and favorite routes. It actually felt like winter for a week or so! We were able to completely groom our main trails, and there was more sled traffic over New Year's than we have seen in a long time.

Well, they say that all good things must come to an end and they did. The week after the holiday brought us three days of rain and 30-plus degree temperatures, forcing us to close our trails. We still have a lot of snow on the ground but will need another blast before our fundraising event on Saturday, Feb. 6, to make it a complete success.

The Sno-Blazers have our second annual club ride and dance at Green Valley Get-away in Waukon scheduled for the 6th. With good snow, we will have the ride starting at noon and live music, raffles and silent auction to follow that evening. If you're looking for some weekend fun or just want to get away and support our club, please try to join us!

Region 12

Snowdrifters, Inc.

by Ron Roe

Hello, everyone. It is now the time of year we all have been waiting for. We just need snow. At least it is getting colder now to freeze things up for us. I haven't been out here to ride, but by the snowmobile tracks I see, people have been riding the trails. They could sure use a lot more snow. Some people I talked to said that around Waterloo they had better snow to ride on.

I have been wanting cold weather, but I am not sure I wanted it this cold, or maybe I am not used to it yet. For sure, this is January weather, and it beats all the rain in December.

I am planning on a trip up north Jan. 15. I am getting different reports on snow and trail conditions. Some are good, and some not so good. Maybe the snow is not uniform in all areas. The web cams are showing some snow in areas this week; you just don't know how much it really is.

As of this writing, our snowmobile meeting is Jan. 14 so I am short on news this month. All trails are ready and bridges in place. We don't have any winter races or parties planned yet. Maybe I'll have more next month. I hope everyone can find some good riding.

Think snow! Safe riding!

Charity

Continued from page 10

us with our association to visit with other members, networking for us is so important. Talking about the issues we have and the challenges we have and visiting with all the other people who face the same thing. We appreciate the opportunity to get together."

According to Crowe, the SBAI currently serves 150 families. In addition to the Winter Kids Ride and Walk-N-Roll, members network through other events throughout the year like the upcoming Education Day and a potential camp retreat for adult members in the spina bifida community. Improving its outreach to older members is one of Crowe's goals for the organization in 2016.

"We've done pretty well getting all of the families who have kids involved in our organization, but we are starting to look at ways to include more of the adult population," she said. "We're trying to come up with new ideas, and that's where the funding from the ISSA comes in,



Members of the Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club of Region 7 participate in the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa's Walk-N-Roll last October at Principal Park in Des Moines.

enabling us to do more."

"It's great for us network with each other and give each other hope," Dave Siebrecht said.


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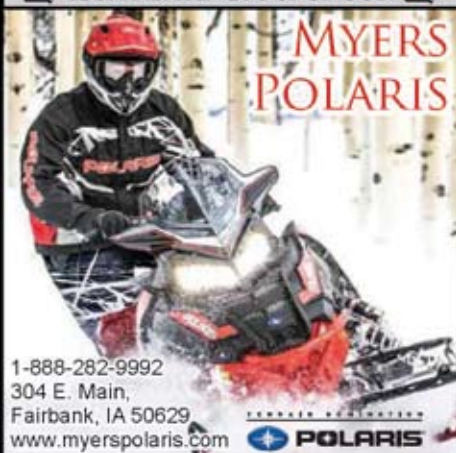
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