

Special
32-page issue
with reprints
from December's
digital version.

IOWA SNOWMOBILER

January 2016 • Volume 37 • Issue 5

**Praying
for Ice this
Month at
Clear Lake**

**Recapping November's
ISSA Convention in
Storm Lake**



DRIFTRUNNERS SNOWMOBILE CLUB

45th ANNUAL

SNOWFEST

January 21 – 24, 2016

CRESCO, IOWA

Schedule of Events

THURSDAY

- VOKATY EARLY BIRD RIDE - 10 AM
- FUN RIDE FOR SPINA BIFIDA BEGINS
- CLUB TRAIL RIDE - 7PM

FRIDAY

- LADIES TRAIL RIDE - 10 AM
- CLUB TRAIL RIDE - 7 PM



SATURDAY

- BOY SCOUT BREAKFAST 6-11AM
- VINTAGE SLED RIDE @ NOON
- HOCA CANCER FAMILY TRAIL RIDE @ NOON
- TORCHLIGHT PARADE @ 6PM WITH BONFIRE
- SNOWBALL DANCE @ 8PM WITH THE BLUE RINGERS



SUNDAY

- FUN RIDE DRAWING & BRUNCH - 11 AM
- CLUB TRAIL RIDE - 1 PM

FIND US ON FACEBOOK AT
"DRIFTRUNNERS SNOWMOBILE CLUB"
FOR EVENT LOCATIONS, TIMES, &
UPDATES

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"The Cure for the Common
Cold since 1973"

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February (digital)Jan. 15
March..... Feb. 12

Watch for
reprints from
December's
digital issue in
this month's
magazine.



COVER: A Jack Race competitor navigates the course on frozen Clear Lake last January. As of press time, the lake had yet to freeze over, causing concern for this month's event.

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President's Desk

Poor Weather Threatens Activities this Month

Wow, what a difference a year makes. A year ago, it was hard to get any snow, and so far this year, we have had two good snows early. But, unfortunately, that was followed by one of the warmest Decembers to date. Talk about a fast warm-up with lots of rain. It was very messy, to say the least. Oh well, there is still January and February to come yet; maybe we can hope for snow then.

With the first snows always come the phone calls—the kind I do not like to receive—to hear of snowmobilers trespassing on private ground. We all need to be respectful of others' property. Hearing or seeing of such actions, we all need to be considerate and remind those who are doing so to refrain from such activity.

Another ISSA Convention has come and gone again, and I want to thank all of you who attended. The road conditions on Friday were not very good, so attendance was less than what we are used to, but a good time was had by all. To get snow convention weekend does not happen much. Perhaps Storm Lake set a record for snowfall at a convention.

I would like to say "Thank You" to all the clubs that stepped forward with their donations at the convention. All are appreciated. Also, at this year's auction, there were a number of items donated with the proceeds going towards charity, club challenge, scholarship, spina bifida and the ISU Clean Snowmobile Challenge team.

At the board meeting last month, the

Region Directors all reported attending a number of club meetings throughout their areas. Membership is good with some of the clubs but slow in many other clubs. I know snowfall tends to dictate this, so we all need



Merv Hoermann
ISSA President

to keep on promoting membership. Always invite another fellow snowmobiler to go along to your next club meeting.

With the warmer weather, a number of snow activities are being threatened on whether they will be held or not: "The Jack" on Clear Lake, Winter

Games in Okoboji, and Snowfest in Cresco, plus many other club activities throughout the state. Just keep doing the snow dance and hopefully all will be held. Winter is not over yet.

Do not forget the ISSA's annual Spina Bifida ride is Sunday, Jan. 10, in Huxley. If you have never attended before, you should. To meet the kids and their families—to see their smiles—is an experience you will remember. Plus there is good food on hand to enjoy. The event will be held with or without snow.

In closing, at convention, I asked if there were any diehard Viking fans present, and a number of hands went up. I am wondering if you all are still diehard yet. I know there is still another game with the Packers to play, so I need to be careful. This may come back to haunt me. GO PACK!



Hoermann assists with auction items at November's convention.

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

Don't Get Discouraged by Lack of Snow; Try New Areas to Ride

Well, here I am a week until Christmas, and it has rained three inches and brought no snow for the month of December. Iowa is not alone in this dismay. Our friends all across the Midwest are without snow. This is going to be one of those "tough" years. But as snowmobilers, we are a resilient bunch. We'll load up and go find the snow.

There will be those who say they are done and are getting out. Encourage them to stay in the sport. Ask them to come along on a trip. Don't be afraid to try a new state to ride in. If you've always gone to the north, try out west. You don't have to have a mountain sled to go west to ride. South Dakota has a great trail system, and even Wyoming has more trails than you can cover in one trip.

Also remember that there are other things affected by a low-snow year. Dealers depend on a good season as part of their business plan. A low-snow year can really affect a dealer. Before you order parts from an online source, think about going to the local dealer and buying from them. The local dealers support your club and the sport on a local level. Show your support to them as well.

The whole snowmobile program has less dollars to work with on a low-snow year for many reasons. New and used sled sales are down, and less people register their sleds and buy trail passes. This in turn means less fuel to run groomers, fewer approvals for trail improvement projects, groomer updates, etc.

We see it with the ISSA membership as well. ISSA and club memberships are at the lowest point that I can remember. Talk to your friends and people you meet. Ask them if they belong to a club and the ISSA. If your club isn't 100 percent ISSA, ask the question, Why? I will be honest if a

club doesn't have 100 percent ISSA membership, I have a hard time wanting to help them out when they request a new groomer, have trail issues or all the other possible things that can come up.



Chris Willey
ISSA Vice
President

I'm not saying I won't help. What I'm saying is that if you're not going to back the group with one-and-only goal to represent the snowmobilers of Iowa on a state and national level, then why should I help you before a club that is backing the ISSA 100 percent? Share with them the benefits of

being a club member.

The magazine you are reading right now is funded by your ISSA memberships, and the advertising in the magazine. Producing a magazine isn't easy. It takes a lot of work by Cameron Hanson, our editor, to put everything together each month and secure advertisers. It costs between \$3,200 and \$3,500 to produce and ship one issue. We need support from you and your clubs to keep this going. Several clubs from Region 5 have offered support to help keep the magazine going. Thank you to the Wapsipinicon Snowmobile Association, Driftrunners, Allamakee Sno-Blazers and Snow Pioneers for their support. If your club would like to help, please contact your Region Director or the magazine office.

We will see snow this winter, and we will get to ride here at home. Hang in there and keep doing the snow dance. As always, if you're having a club event, please let me know. I would love to attend if possible. If I can't, I will still help you promote the event on our social media sites.

Thank You From Convention Speaker

"I would like to thank Merv Hoermann for asking me to speak at your convention in Storm Lake in November. I had one of the best crowds a speaker could ask for and truly enjoyed meeting everyone and visiting with everyone after the banquet. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to share my story. Your kindness was greatly appreciated."

~ Holly Hoffman



See story on page 22.

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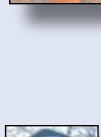
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News Briefs

**Winter Fun Day with Spina Bifida
Planned for Jan. 10 at Huxley**

Snow or no snow, the Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club in Region 7, in conjunction with the ISSA, will host the 10th Annual Winter Fun Day for families of the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa (SBAI), the ISSA's official charity, on Sunday, Jan. 10.

Preceded by the ISSA's monthly board meeting at 9 a.m., the festivities begin around 11 a.m. at the Safe Room in Huxley, a multi-use complex that also houses the middle school, park and rec division, and the police department.

Held at various locations within Huxley, the charity event began in 2007 as a way for families of children with spina bifida to interact on a personal level with the ISSA members whose generous donations have benefited their organization.

The afternoon is filled with a meal, entertainment and, weather and trail permitting, a short snowmobile trip on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail. If conditions do not warrant a cutter ride, back-up plans are to rely on utility vehicles (UTV) on city streets.

"With this being our 10th anniversary, it is a pretty significant event for our organization and for our friends with spina bifida," explained Past ISSA President Bruno Andreini, who serves as a liaison on the SBAI board. "We would love a great turnout of snowmobilers there, and if the snow doesn't arrive by then, we have other arrangements planned."

The ISSA has supported the SBAI since 1982. Spina bifida families rely on donations to help with travel and lodging costs associated with doctors' visits; crutches and wheelchairs for mobility; and promotional material to educate families on the spinal cord condition.

For more information on the fun day or if you are able to provide a cutter, two-up sled or UTV, please contact Andreini at (515) 240-3858.

**Club Donations Support
Additional Pages this Month**

Thanks to donations collected at the Annual ISSA Convention in Storm Lake in November, the *Iowa Snowmobiler* magazine was able to increase its page count this month by eight to 32 pages total.

As identified in Vice President Chris Willey's column on page 5, the Snow Pioneers, Driftrunners, Allamakee Sno-Blazers and Wapsipinicon Snowmobile Association—all from Region 5—each kicked in \$100 for the page expansion.

The fundraising mechanism was conceived by the ISSA Communications Committee as members identified ways to keep more of the magazine in print. The current contract with Editor and Publisher Cameron Hanson calls for five printed issues and two issues released digitally on the ISSA's website at www.iowasnowmobiler.com.

Although posting the magazine online helps keep the publishing season alive with seven total issues, the committee wanted to provide more content in the hands of its members by allocating the donations to more printed copy.

The additional funding was used to publish a number of articles from the December digital issue in this month's magazine. If your club is interested in making a donation, please contact Communications Committee Chair Jim Willey at (563) 920-0911.

**Plans Underway for Second
Annual David Carmichael Ride**

After getting snakebit by last winter's inconsistent snowfall and poor trail conditions, friends and family of the late David Carmichael are attempting another memorial ride this winter.

Instead of a three-day ride across Iowa, organizers are planning a two-day event in the Cresco area the last weekend in February. Base camp will be the Super 8 motel, and there is a \$25 minimum donation to ride. Additional sponsorships are encouraged.

Held Feb. 26-27, the two-day ride is intended to commemorate the contributions of Carmichael and to honor his legacy to organized snowmobiling in Iowa. He served as ISSA President from 1994 to 1995 and remained active in the association for 40 years.

Carmichael, a charter member of the Cedar Falls Sno Hawks snowmobile club of Region 4, passed away Dec. 23, 2013, at his rural Tripoli home at the age of 70.

Proceeds from the ride will benefit the ISSA Education and Scholarship Foundation. For more information on this year's event, contact Brian Carmichael at (319) 215-5006, Scott Nauman at (641) 425-9898 or Dennis Nauman at (641) 425-4141.

Clubs Invited to Recognize Snowmobile Safety Week

The ISSA is joining the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association (ISMA) in observance of Jan. 16-24 as International Snowmobile Safety Awareness Week. A safety proclamation has been requested from Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, and club-related activities and safety classes are being encouraged at the local level.

"The purpose of International Snowmobile Safety Week is to expose people to safe snowmobiling practices and to demonstrate how operating safely can prevent mishaps," explained ISMA President Ed Klim. "Snowmobiling is a fun and exciting family activity enjoyed by over four million people across the United States and Canada. The sport is a safe and enjoyable form of recreation if done properly and with respect."

In Iowa, snowmobiles are operated by men, women and children of all ages. Depending on weather conditions, approximately 8,000 miles of snow-covered trails are maintained and groomed by snowmobile club volunteers across the state and enjoyed by a variety of winter recreationists.

Activities and events held during Snowmobile Safety Awareness Week will promote responsible attitudes and actions that will foster the safe, family image of snowmobiling.

"Safe Snowmobiling means riding within your own capabilities, operating at safe and appropriate speeds for the terrain and never drinking alcoholic beverages before or while driving," explained ISSA President Merv Hoermann. "Always wear a helmet and adequate clothing, stay within design-

ated riding areas and always snowmobile with another person, never alone."

Occasionally, problems occur, and snowmobilers should be prepared for all possible scenarios.

"Take along a spare belt, spark plugs and tools to do basic repairs. You also should carry emergency supplies, such as a basic first aid kit, and overnight survival provisions, such as food, matches, flashlight and extra batteries, and shelter building materials," Hoermann recommended. "Most importantly, always use common sense and keep a clear head. Learn all you can about responsible snowmobiling and keep safety as your top priority."

Hoermann said the ISSA is encouraging its member-clubs to sponsor youth snowmobile safety courses and to host other safety-related activities. Ideas and suggestions are available online through ISMA's Campaign Action Manual at www.snowmobile.org. Also posted there is information on ISMA's Safe Riders! program.

Materials that are available from both programs include the following: posters, fact books, a safety video, public service announcements, a website and decals that highlight safety messages and enhance safety education efforts.

"We hope that you will find this web-based information useful in your organization's snowmobile safety campaign," Klim said. "The suggested activities contained there can be modified to meet your club's needs. Any suggestions or ways to improve this manual are welcome. Have a great snowmobile season!"



Students listen intently at the 2014 Youth Snowmobile Safety Course hosted by the Dickinson County SnowHawks in Region 1 last December.

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International Snowmobile Safety Week Jan. 16-24



[www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/
Snowmobiles/Snowmobile-Education](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Snowmobiles/Snowmobile-Education)

The snowmobile education course is designed to teach students the principles of safe snowmobiling and how snowmobiling affects other people and the environment.

The following age restrictions apply to persons operating a snowmobile on public land, public ice, designated riding trails or designated riding areas in Iowa:

- Persons under the age of 16 may operate their own snowmobile under the direct supervision of a responsible person of at least 18 years of age experienced in snowmobile operation who possesses a valid driver's license or an education certificate issued or recognized by the DNR.
- Persons 12 through 17 must have a valid education certificate in their possession when operating.
- Persons 16 to 17 may operate unsupervised, but must have a valid education certificate. Restrictions on operating a motor vehicle also apply to persons in this age group.
- Persons 18 and older may operate without an education certificate if their privilege to operate a motor vehicle has not been barred or revoked.

The focus of the DNR Snowmobile Education Program is to provide an education course that reduces the rate of accidents, injuries, property damage, and fatalities, while at the same time promoting the development of environmental stewards by educating our students about environmental concerns, energy conservation and proper maintenance of snowmobiles, and promoting the practice of only riding in legal areas and with landowner permission.

Students can attend an instructor-led class or take a certification course online. Students must complete a written exam with a minimum score of 80 percent to receive an education certificate. Cost of the course is \$10 payable at time of class.

Safe Snowmobiling Tips to Share ...

Download SafeRiders!
Campaign Action Manual
at www.snowmobile.org.



1. Never consume alcohol or drugs.
2. Become familiar with the snowmobile you ride.
3. Operate at safe and reasonable speeds.
4. Stay on trails and areas where snowmobiling is permitted.
5. Avoid travel on unfamiliar frozen bodies of water.
6. Use extra caution at night.
7. Keep your snowmobile properly maintained.
8. Become familiar with the terrain you will travel on.
9. Listen to the weather forecast before you leave.
10. Always wear a helmet and proper clothing.
11. Never ride alone and let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.
12. Carry emergency supplies and learn survival skills.

American Council of Snowmobile Associations Snowmobiling Hand Signals



Upcoming Youth Safety Courses

O'Brien County Snowtrackers' Youth Snowmobile Education Class for 12-17-year-olds Saturday, Jan. 16, at Northwest Iowa Community College, Sheldon. Contact Evan Bensley at (800) 352-4907 to pre-register. Visit the club's Facebook page for more information.

Trail Blaz-zers Snowmobile Club Youth Snowmobile Education Class Jan. 17 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Kuennen's House of Power, 455 Main St W, Maynard. \$5 per student. Pre-register with Kate at (563) 920-3306 or Randy at (563) 920-5989. Lunch and snacks provided by the host club. Class size is limited to 25 students.



Get
Started!

SNOWMOBILE
course.com
Educating Riders Online



Praying for Ice this Month at Clear Lake

Addition of Youth Events Increases Popularity of Annual Jack Race

by Cameron Hanson

Most snowmobilers in Iowa wouldn't have believed it if they hadn't seen it (or driven through it on their way to the 42nd Annual ISSA Convention in Storm Lake) the third weekend in November, but it did actually snow in Iowa this season... quite a bit of it, to be honest.

However, thanks to unseasonably warm temperatures in December and the rainfall that accompanied it, the foot of snow from the Nov. 20 snowstorm has vanished, and the landscape here is no longer white. Unfortunately, it appears the winter of 2015-16 is following in the footsteps of last season.

Turning into a recurring nightmare, this dismal start to winter had most snowmobilers in Iowa putting 'snow' at the top of their Christmas wish list this holiday season. With several statewide events planned later this month, time will tell if the snowmobilers in their respective regions were naughty or nice.

Praying for snow in central Iowa was the Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club and the ISSA's 10th Annual Winter Fun Day with the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa; in northeast Iowa was the Driftrunners and the 45th Annual Snowfest; and in northwest Iowa was the Dickinson County SnowHawks and the 36th Annual Okoboji Winter Games.

"This weather trend is going to affect a lot of things we have planned around the state this winter," said ISSA President Merv Hoermann at the Dec. 13 ISSA Board of Directors meeting.

Meanwhile, in north central Iowa, the North Iowa Snow Seekers



Recording the pre-120 race festivities at the 2015 Jack Race.

were simply asking for cold temperatures so ice would build on Clear Lake for the annual Jack Helgren Memorial Iowa LeMans Championship Race there. A nice covering of snow would just be icing on the cake for that popular weekend event.

Otherwise known as 'The Jack,' the race is now in its seventh installment and has yet to miss a year. Even with last year's inconsistent snow and weather patterns, this annual vintage race survived as one of only a handful of events in Iowa to go on as planned. A timely cold snap and subsequent snowfall helped make the 2015 event a success, and club members are hoping for another bailout this winter.

This month's race is set for Jan. 15-16, and the planning committee will decide at its Jan. 5 meeting if the event will take place that weekend or if other arrangements will need to be made. Race founder Gary McVicker of Hampton said they do have a back-up date set for Feb. 12-13. If they do postpone the event and there's still not enough ice and snow on the lake, then they will relocate the event to another venue on land.

"At this point, we just need to remain flexible," McVicker said. "We haven't missed a year yet, and I don't want to start now."

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



Taking the checkered flag at last year's event.

four years. The two-day event begins Friday night, Jan. 15, 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.

Once again boasting \$4,000 in prize money, this year's competition will feature up to 20 classes of snowmobile racing. In true LeMans style, each race will begin with the rider separated from his or her sled and then running to start the engine after race officials drop their arms. Racers then snake their way around an unmanicured, mile-long course with electronic lap-counters keeping track of their progress.

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. McVicker often jokes the two-day event has been extremely successful "even though we don't know what we're doing." It has since evolved into a regional attraction.

"The Jack Race has grown extensively every year," said Snow Seekers President Angie Braun. "This will be the seventh consecutive year for the event. The first couple years were our best in regards to the snow and ice conditions, but attendance has always been outstanding. It is hard to guess how many we have there, but several of us have figured we're in the 5,000 range."

Recently, the event has drawn as many as 160 race entries with competitors showing up from all over Iowa as well as from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois and Nebraska. The recent addition of youth races in the Kitty Cat and 120 categories has also helped with the attendance.

"We want to keep in mind that this is a family event, and we are doing everything we can to promote snowmobiling to our youth in our community," Braun said. "Last year, we added a children's class for kids up to 11 years old. That was a huge hit. We had the



North Iowa Snow Seekers members John Helgren, left, and Brad Johnson catch some of the youth racing action at the 2015 Jack Race. Helgren is the son of the race's namesake, and Johnson is a past president of the host club.

most spectators watch that race compared to any other race that day. This year, we are adding a race for the 12-17 age group as well."

While Braun's club serves as the main sponsor of the Jack Race, other neighboring clubs help out as well, including the Iowa River Riders, Hancock County Snowmobile Association and the Floyd County Groomers Association. The planning committee meets throughout the year and then weekly as the event nears. Volunteers then begin laying out the course on the weekdays leading up to the event.

"People are not aware of the time and manpower that it takes to put on the Jack Race," Braun said. "Volunteers are what make this race successful. It would not happen without them. There's a lot of unknown work that is done that most people are not aware of. Gary and Karen McVicker dedicate extraordinary amounts of time to this event as do several others."

Braun said the outpouring of support from the Clear Lake community has also been "huge." Several businesses help sponsor the event, and the legendary Surf Ballroom hosts the post-race ceremonies, including the awards banquet and dance. For more information on the Jack Race, see the flyer on page 11 of this month's issue or visit www.jackrace.com.

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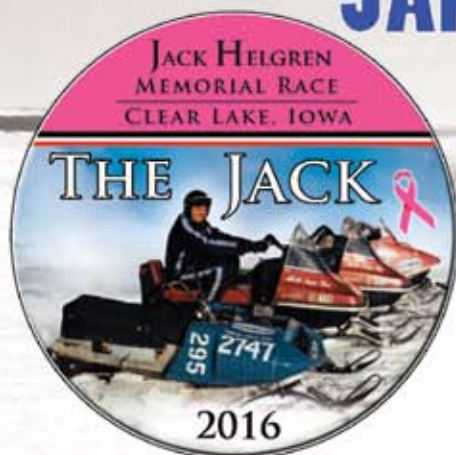
A vintage quad trac prepares the track for the youth racing on Clear Lake last winter.

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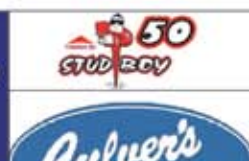


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42nd Annual ISSA Convention Recap

Members Survive Bella for Three Days of Seminars, Presentations and Banquet Festivities

by **Cameron Hanson**

Storm Lake lived up to its name the third weekend in November as storm system Bella moved through western and central Iowa, dumping up to a foot snow in some parts. While creating a great kick-off to the 2015-16 snowmobile season, the winter weather did cause some travel concerns for ISSA members attending the 42nd Annual Convention there.

According to event organizers, 120 members did survive the icy trek to King's Pointe Resort for three days of seminars, presentations and banquet festivities; but the turnout was roughly half of last year's convention, and 2015 Convention Committee Chair Merv Hoermann did acknowledge the inclement weather hurt attendance.

Representing an organization which should not complain about getting too much snow, however—especially after last winter—Hoermann, who also serves as president of the ISSA, said he was still pleased with how many dedicated members showed up and how the weekend shaped up.

"We're glad many of you made it over to Storm Lake safely, and we hope you enjoyed everything we had in store for you," said Hoermann, who entered the second half of his two-year term convention weekend. "As a group, the committee felt all of the seminars went over really well, and I thought our presenters were also very good."

While the Friday night entertainment lineup had to be scrapped due to the treacherous travel conditions, the Saturday afternoon seminars went off without a hitch, and the keynote speaker later that night also captivated the audience. As planned, each session was held consecutively to one another in the resort's main ballroom so attendees did not have to choose between events.

"The whole idea was to keep everyone together so people didn't have to scramble between rooms and seminars," Hoermann explained. "Our presenters knew exactly how much time they had on stage as well. As a committee, we were trying to think outside

*Fresh snow blankets two
new groomers on display
in front of King's Pointe
Resort, Storm Lake*

Looking Ahead from Convention Weekend

- **Downing Explains Budget Shortfalls**
- **Lobbyist Provides Legislative Update**
- **Plans to Expand Snowmobile Iowa**
- **Groomer Cards Finally Issued**
- **Raising Awareness for Diabetes**
- **Motivational Speaker Talks Survival**
- **Award Winners Recognized**

* Please note the ISU Clean Snowmobile Challenge Team and the Watercross races presented at convention were previously profiled in the September and October issues respectively.

of the box as to how to keep everyone engaged. Our speakers were diverse, we felt, and everything kept moving along."

As detailed in the upcoming pages, all sessions were roughly 30 minutes long and featured local snowmobile events, groomer discussions and engaging presenters. Earlier in the day, the general membership meeting saw very few leadership moves with only Region 3 reporting a change in directorship. Assistant Matt Trunkhill now replaces Ben Diekhuis there.

As always, ISSA members stepped forward with several financial contributions throughout the weekend. At the top of the list, nine clubs donated \$3,200 toward the Club Challenge to support the ISSA's lobbying efforts. Coming close to that total were the donations to the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa, and another \$2,600 was raised for the scholarship program through various raffles and auction items.

More from convention weekend now follows here.



Delay in Trail Sign Order Points to Bigger Budget Issue

Overspending, Reduced Registration Income Forces IDNR to 'Tighten Belt'

by Cameron Hanson

Snowmobile trail signs arrived just in time for Christmas this year, but the boxes of colorful shapes and sizes weren't the gifts most snowmobile clubs in Iowa were expecting to show up under their trees. In fact, the shipment was about four months behind schedule, and had it not been for the mild start to winter, the signs may have been difficult to install and therefore rendered useless for this season.

In October of 2011, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) sponsored a Kaizen Study and, during it, identified that trail signs should be ordered no later than July 1 and then shipped to clubs by Sept. 1. In the four years since that study, the IDNR has had a difficult time maintaining those deadlines,

but none were as tardy as this year.

"We moved the date for signs up for a reason," IDNR Snowmobile Program Manager David Downing said in his update to the ISSA Board of Directors Dec. 13. "I can assure you this will not happen again. Period. I plan to purchase additional signs after all of the orders are delivered to give us a cushion for the rest of the season and the beginning of next."

Despite a winter storm which blanketed much of Iowa Nov. 20, the promising start to winter certainly fizzled out in December. Temperatures hovered well above freezing, and any precipitation fell in the form of rain. Those conditions kept most of the frost out

of the ground, and any trails which still needed attention could be addressed now that the signs have arrived.

Pretty safe to say the IDNR caught a break this year, but Downing and ISSA Trail Sign Committee Chair Matt Miner still heard a n earful from frustrated club members who had trails to mark and no signs with which to get it done this fall. At the Annual ISSA Convention in Storm Lake in November, Downing apologized for the delay and explained how the process has changed.

Unlike previous years, the state snowmobile program can no longer make purchases based on anticipated revenues. The money needs to be in the bank before a check can be written. In his address to snowmobilers at convention, ISSA Lobbyist Mike Heller described a "changing budget environment" in state government, and that shift has now trickled down to the snowmobile program.

Downing said he now has to prepare a capital budget for the Iowa Department of Management, and oversight on the bid letting process with the Department of Administrative Services has increased from one person to four individuals. He said he has had to educate several layers of management above him on how the state snowmobile program works.

"Everyone was keeping a closer eye on where we were at money-wise," Downing said. "The bottom line is we want to make sure that the money was in there before purchases can be made. The three drags from last year were part of that as well as the sign order for this year. We had to make sure enough money was in there so our division administrator was happy, and we were able to move forward."

Weather Impacts Registrations

As explained by Downing in the October issue of the *Iowa Snowmobiler* magazine, program income was down last season due to poor riding conditions. Fewer snowmobiles were registered in the state, and fewer trail user permits were purchased. Downing estimated the decline at \$100,000, or 10 percent of the program's total annual revenue.

"We did take a big dip in terms of registration revenue last year," Downing said. "The weather played a big role in that. It wasn't a great snowmobile year. Even the number of antique sleds took a big hit."

At 23,858, snowmobile registrations were down 3,000 units last winter, and trail permits saw roughly the same decrease, ending the season at 16,233. Normally, snowmobile registration dollars and trail pass purchases translate into \$700,000 in program revenue with additional money generated by fees associated with titling, liens and late renewals.

If the current weather pattern holds, this season may see a similar fate as snowmobile owners will undoubtedly wait to register their machines until the snow arrives. In November, only \$108,000 was collected from snowmobilers in Iowa. If the trend continues, the snowmobile budget will be forced to struggle with lower revenue numbers again, and additional equipment purchases will have to be put on hold.

"If we have another year like last year, we are going to have to wait on some stuff," explained ISSA Vice President Chris Willey. "If we do end up getting some snow, we should see more registration dollars finally coming in."

"We will have to wait and see what December and January do for

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Clay County Sno Broncs President Doug Algers, left, exchanges contact information with David Downing of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) following Downing's presentation at the 2015 ISSA Annual Convention in Storm Lake. Algers was concerned with the future of the lease agreement with his club's Prinoth groomer, given the current state of the IDNR's snowmobile program budget.

registrations,” Downing said. “In the meantime, we will continue to tighten our belt in order to continue to do what we need to do. The goal has always been to put the most amount of equipment on the snow so the volunteers can continue to do the work. That has always been the ultimate goal.”

Also affecting the budget last year was an unanticipated upgrade to the electronic licensing system to accommodate legislative changes in the way dealers and county recorders could register snowmobiles and the manner in which vintage sleds are handled. Willey said that additional \$100,000 expense “blindsided the program.”

“Any time there is a change to the registration system, there is a change order that goes along with that to the company who maintains it,” Downing explained. “They don’t work cheap. That’s what ended up happening when we moved the antique snowmobile registrations out to the county recorders offices and allowed dealers to do registrations. All of those change orders are very expensive.”

Big-Ticket Purchases

But by far, the biggest impact on the snowmobile program budget was the number of big-ticket purchases made last season. As recommended by the IDNR’s Review and Selection Committee (RSC), five new groomers were purchased at a total price tag of \$710,000. Some of that expense is supported by federal grant money, but the program still had to pay for the equipment up front and then wait for the reimbursement.

“When those groomers came in last year, we thought we were going to be able to use the reimbursement money on those groomers, but they changed the rules on us,” explained Past ISSA President Terry Durby, a permanent RSC member. “Most of the money had to come out-of-pocket, and we couldn’t get reimbursed right away for it. That put us in the hole.”

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In addition to registration dollars and trail pass receipts, the state snowmobile program has relied on National Recreational Trail grant funding through the federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP) to make groomer and drag purchases. There’s just one catch, however. The program has to pay for the purchases up front and then wait for the 80-percent reimbursement on the back-end from the federal government.

“As the NRT money turns over and comes back into the account, we are able to spend money on bigger projects,” Downing noted. “We have been very fortunate to buy all of the equipment that we have by utilizing the NRT funds and the user permit money.”

Since Downing took over the program 10 years ago, the groomer fleet in Iowa has grown from 25 units to 57 machines. Purchases were normally approved based on the anticipation of revenue coming in before it was actually there. Part of that logic stems from 2002 when the Iowa Legislature de-appropriated nearly \$1 million in snowmobile program revenue.

That depleted money has since been refunded, but the lesson learned is to obligate all funds in the coffers so it cannot be swept away again. While allowing for newer equipment to be placed on the snow, that spending philosophy has finally caught up with the state snowmobile program. Downing assumed full accountability for the budget shortfall at convention.

“Nothing gets ordered without me signing for it. I take responsibility for getting the equipment,” he said. “Over the last four or five years, we’ve gotten complacent. We’re trying to get the equipment out there. We’re trying to do the right things so clubs have the right equipment. It could have been done better. No question. Not knowing when the revenue is going to come in has hurt us.”

While acknowledging the changes in the IDNR’s budget process, Downing said he can’t blame the program’s current money woes on those new checks and balances. He said he is the manager who “ultimately” decides in the end what equipment will be purchased and assigns the money to be spent.

“Right now, the budget is tight and you guys are asking me for stuff, and I can’t pay for it until registration money comes in,” he said. “The longer you wait to register, the longer we wait to purchase equipment. We just don’t have that carry-over revenue like we used to.”

Trail Grants Awarded to Clubs

Downing said he likes to reserve 20 percent of the budget each year, or \$200,000. This year, only \$45,000 was left over. That created the delay in the sign orders and (as of mid-December) is part of the reason the 2015-16 trail grant requests have not been approved yet by the IDNR. The RSC has recommended that 52 snowmobile clubs in Iowa be awarded grants totalling \$263,445.

“This year, we gave every club \$250 more in their grant awards to use as you see fit in your operating season,” Willey said. “Every club got that because of our trail pass. You have to spend it to get it, but if you need it, it’s there.”

Part of the education process on the snowmobile program was to inform managers new to the process that grant awards are a reimbursement request and not an up-front expense. Even though a club is awarded a trail grant, it still has to produce receipts at the end of the season to receive the reimbursement. By then, the money should be available to pay the clubs.

“When this budget goes over to management, it looks like we are trying to spend \$260,000 that we don’t have,” Downing said. “But that is not the reality of it. Nobody comes for that money until May. You have to go through a layer of management and convince them that all of these clubs are not going to come in through the door tomorrow and ask for this money when it’s not there. It’s a reimbursable program at the end of the season. There’s a new player at the table, and we’ve had to explain how the program

works.”

Although there have been some growing pains over the past year, Downing said the evolving budget process hasn't been all bad. Preparing a capital budget makes good sense. “It takes a look at everything on the local side and what the state side is doing as well,” he said. “It's another step in there, but it also helps give you a big picture of what you're doing and where you are going.”

The extra scrutiny is also forcing the way in which club matches are being tracked on groomer purchases. Those clubs which provide a 10 percent match will now have their name tied to that piece of equipment in the state's inventory. Up until now, clubs were not even receiving invoices or receipts for their annual payments.

“One of the things we are doing now is when you make a cost-share payment, you attach it back to that groomer in the inventory so when after I'm gone, everyone knows that that club has contributed to that groomer and it's on record,” Downing said. “We have a list of clubs showing who has paid and who still owes.”

The concept of clubs paying for a portion of their grooming equipment has been around since the mid-1980s. While optional, kicking in the extra dough helps move clubs up to the front of the line when it comes time to determine groomer placement in the state. With groomers costing upwards of \$200,000, any additional financial help is appreciated.

“This club-match has been on the books way before me,” said Downing, whose father Roy started the snowmobile program 40 years ago. “The logic is if you have more invested in a groomer than your blood-sweat equity, then you would take better care of it. That was the original idea years ago. When you get into the equipment and the amount of money that this stuff costs, it makes it go farther if you contribute the match money.

“Your program takes great pride in the fact that it is ‘pay to play’,” Downing continued. “There are no better volunteers than

you guys. But as a program manager, we also have to have money in there to make things work. These cost-shares help.”

When Downing first took over the program a decade ago, a groomer cost in the neighborhood of \$45,000. Depending on the machine, that expense has now ballooned upwards of \$200,000. “Like most things, equipment doesn't cost what it did 10 years ago. Anyone who farms knows that,” Downing said.

An alternative to purchasing new has been to buy used equipment. The program has achieved varying degrees of success by going this route, but it's the nightmare scenarios which keep RSC members from heading down that path altogether. Used equipment is also hard to come by and is not on the market very long, RSC members pointed out.

“We have looked at used groomers, but you also have to be careful because the market is very limited in getting that stuff, and then there's the quality of it,” Downing said. “We bought a used tractor not too long ago and ended up putting three axles in it and exceeded the value of that tractor three times over. If you are volunteering your time, I feel you want to get into a piece of equipment that is reliable to operate.”

Within the last five years, the IDNR has also been entering into several lease-purchase programs, which are a little more budget-friendly to the program. The units have to eventually be purchased, but the lease payments still count against the purchase price. Downing said they try to sign two leases each year but admits this season may not see any new lease-to-purchase agreements.

“We made the decision that we weren't going to take on any more leases until we get caught up,” he said. “We're not going to get rid of the leases we currently have but may have to restructure some. Communication has been lacking on this. I have been going about as fast as I can go and doing as much as I can do under the circumstances.”



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Gas Tax, Sales Tax, Timbersleds

by Cameron Hanson

ISSA Lobbyist Mike Heller ran for office some 35 years ago and still remembers which voters let him put up campaign signs in their yards. It's that kind of relationship he encouraged snowmobilers at Storm Lake in November to build with the candidates for the Iowa Legislature during this year's election season.

Appearing at the 42nd Annual ISSA Convention at King's Pointe Resort Nov. 21, Heller reported all seats are up for re-election at the Statehouse in Des Moines next fall. Republicans currently control the House, 57-43, while Democrats hold a slim margin in the Senate, 26-24.

"The key point I want to make today is grassroots contacts," Heller said. "You should take the opportunity to invite these candidates to one of your club meetings. Try to get to know them. It doesn't matter if they are a Democrat or Republican. Our issues are pretty bipartisan."

"If they get to know you, these politicians can be crucial to our efforts...if not in the upcoming session but for future sessions for sure," Heller continued. "You would be amazed at the little things they

remember. Let them put a yard sign up. It shows that you are interested in them and care about their campaign, which is what really motivates politicians."

Advocates Since 2003

Along with Paula Feltner, Heller has been representing the ISSA at the state capitol since the winter of 2003. The Des Moines-based lawyers were retained in response to the Iowa Legislature's de-appropriation of \$1 million from the state snowmobile program coffers. Thanks to their lobbying efforts and snowmobilers' grassroots contacts, the money was eventually reimbursed.

That hard-fought victory kicked off a string of positive legislation for the state snowmobile program. Among the many achievements since then have been the annual registration period and fee increase, the introduction of a snowmobile trail user permit three years ago and last session's preservation of snowmobile access across primary and divided highways.

"That last bill (S.F. 218) passed with broad bipartisan support," Heller noted. "The legislation was important because you had one creative individual who read the law literally and the attorney general agreed with him that existing law didn't allow snowmobiles to cross primary high-

ways."

Most notable among the defeats, however, has been the lack of a refund program for the fuel taxes paid by snowmobilers in their off-road machines. The ISSA has been stumping for this reimbursement for the past 15 years, and with the passage of the 10-cent gas tax hike last session, many

leaders in the organized snowmobile community felt 2015 was their best chance at earmarking that money.

"But when we brought up the fuel tax to legislators last year and presented the idea of dedicating a portion of it to the snowmobile fund, it was



Mike Heller
ISSA Lobbyist

just not something they really wanted to do because if they did it for us, they would have to take every group's amendment," Heller said.

The proposal was an uphill battle from the beginning, he noted.

"Let's be honest," Heller began. "Last session's gas tax bill was drafted in a way that we couldn't even get an amendment on it. The reimbursement proposal was considered non-germane and procedurally out of order. It was unfortunate that it happened that way because the gas-tax hike was the only realistic chance we had at getting the taxes on the fuel used in your snowmobiles back and dedicated to your fund."

Turning Attention to Sales Tax

As Past ISSA President Jim Willey pointed out, many legislators who were contacted by ISSA members to support the gas-tax reimbursement "indicated they would support us on something else." That opportunity now appears to be moving toward recouping the sales taxes snowmobilers pay on their sleds, apparel and accessories.

"If you buy a snowmobile, it only makes sense that the sales tax goes to the snowmobile fund. Sales tax on cars goes to the road use tax fund," Heller said. "That becomes food for thought. It's money you are already paying for. We can make a good argument, and it would be a recurring source of revenue for the program."

"It will take the snowmobilers in this room and across Iowa to

**2015 ISSA
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2015-16 ISSA Club Challenge

	2015	2016
Webster County Ice Breakers.....	\$1,001.....	
Wapsipinicon Snowmobile Association	\$1,000.....	\$1000
Snowmobilers of Jackson County		\$750
Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club.....	\$500.....	\$500
Frozen Few.....	\$500.....	
Eastern Iowa Sledheads.....	\$500.....	\$500
Iowa River Riders	\$400.....	
Tri-County Snowmobile Association	\$351.....	\$376
Jones County Snow Chasers	\$351.....	
Central Iowa Snowmobilers.....	\$350.....	\$350
Snow Pioneers	\$350.....	\$350
Sac County Snow Lovers	\$301.....	
Floyd County Groomers	\$300.....	\$300
Bremer County Sno-Knights.....	\$250.....	\$250
Dickinson County Snowhawks		\$250
Cedar Falls Sno Hawks	\$200.....	
Howard County Stump Jumpers.....	\$150.....	
Palo Alto Rough Riders	\$150.....	
Driftrunners.....	\$100.....	\$200
Trails Unlimited.....	\$100.....	
O'Brien County Snowtrackers	\$100.....	
Emmet County Driftbusters	\$100.....	
Snowdrifters.....		\$100
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.



make this happen though," Willey said.

At this point, the ISSA's Emergency Funding and Legislation Committee has not made any recommendations to the ISSA Board of Directors for this upcoming legislative session, which begins Jan. 11. If board members do decide to pursue the sales tax reimbursement, Heller indicated a number of legislators would step forward to introduce a bill for it.

Chief among them is Sen. Dick Dearden from Des Moines, who has sponsored legislation in the past for the ISSA. Heller also noted Sen. Mary Jo Wilhelm from Decorah has also been sympathetic to snowmobile issues in Des Moines. Another friend of the ISSA has been Rep. Linda Upmeyer of Garner, but her recent selection as House Speaker makes it doubtful if she will introduce any legislation, Heller said.

"(Upmeyer) was helpful with the registration fee increase, and she's very in tune with the importance of snowmobiling in the district she represents," Heller said. "She is now in a very unique position to be helpful to us."

Heller acknowledged the Statehouse in Des Moines is in the midst of a "changing budget environment" and admitted that "not much was done last session after the gas tax hike was passed." Besides the sales tax proposal, another ISSA push which remains alive is the license plate initiative. This bill, which would allow for a special ISSA license plate, has already passed one chamber "so hopefully we can get it passed this year," Heller said.

While missing its best opportunity to recover the fuel taxes paid by snowmobilers earlier this year, the ISSA did enjoy its sixth consecutive session of positive legislative change. "Very few groups can say that," Heller commended. "You have incredibly strong advocates, but we need to keep it up."

"We want to thank you for what you and Paula do for us in Des Moines," Willey said. "Retaining a lobbyist is one of the most important things we do as an association. We need to make sure we stay on top of legislation which is contrary to snowmobiling and proactively work on issues in our favor. The success we have seen the last few years is due to the support we have from Mike and Paula."

"It has been our privilege to serve you," Heller said.

Beginning at a rate in 2003 of \$17,000, the lobbyist team's contract now costs the association \$23,500. This bill is a direct expense against the ISSA's General Fund, and to offset that high-ticket item, the organization has relied on its Club Challenge, to which ISSA member-clubs are encouraged to make donations. In 2015, \$6,500 was raised through this fund-raising mechanism. At this year's convention, \$3,200 was collected from clubs for this year's expense.

Legislative Issues on the Horizon

Besides the license plate request and potential sales tax reimbursement, the only other item on the legislative horizon discussed at convention for the ISSA came from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). During his presentation to the group, IDNR Snowmobile Program Coordinator David Downing indicated his department will address a relatively new player in the snow recreation market.

Similar to a tracked ATV, Timbersled, which was acquired by Polaris in April of 2015, offers a snow bike conversion kit which can turn a dirt bike into a snow machine. Most of the promotional material being distributed on this kit shows it in use in the backcountry, but Downing and others are concerned its application will migrate to a groomed snowmobile trail.

"I have no problem collecting the registration dollars for these machines, but the unknown is what impact they will have on a groomed snowmobile trail," Downing said. "Just like for the tracked UTV, we can allow for the registration and titling of those units, but we also need to define where they can be used and

where they cannot."

Presently in Iowa, an ATV or UTV equipped with a tracked conversion kit is not considered a snowmobile and therefore banned from trails. Downing did note studies have shown that tracked ATVs have no adverse impact on a groomed trail, but his concern stems from when the snow melts and those ATVs continue to ride on private land.

"The problem is you don't have Mother Nature as an enforcement tool so when the snow melts on your trail system, you are

going to stop riding your snowmobile, but a tracked ATV is probably not going to stop," he explained. "That requires one of my officers to go out and try to deal with that issue, and there's simply not enough of us to do that."

"The consequence is landowners are going to start taking away our trails," he continued. "We have in our definition that a modified ATV is not considered a snowmobile so now you have this new piece of equipment come along and it looks like fun but I also don't want to do something that gets us kicked off the trail systems we're on. These Timbersleds look fun in powder, but what do they do to a groomed snowmobile trail? It's a pretty narrow track."

"Something is going to happen with them legislatively this year," Downing continued. "We want to make sure we are leading the bus and not under it."



Groomer Cards Arrive After Two-Year Wait; Expiration Extended to 2018

by Cameron Hanson

The state's Groomer Operator Certification program is making up for a two-year delay in its card-issuing process by extending the expiration date for current operators to Jan. 1, 2018. The announcement came at the 2015 ISSA Annual Convention in Storm Lake Nov. 21.

The extension means operators who renewed at the ISSA convention at Altoona in November of 2013 will basically earn a five-year card; it also falls in line with a proposal to extend the recertification period from three to five years. The renewal period currently stands at three years, and all existing operators had to be recertified by July 1, 2014.

Causing agitation for several clubs and frustration for many within the ISSA, the unfortunate snafu in issuing the operator cards in a timely manner has been blamed on a number of factors, including distribution errors by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), inaccurate

information on training registration forms and incomplete paperwork at the club level.

"We have had some guys waiting since Altoona to receive their cards, and we sincerely apologize for that," explained ISSA Vice President Chris Willey, who jointly coordinates the groomer operator training program for the ISSA and IDNR. "The date you now have on that card is the date you will need to recertify by. Everybody gets a little extra time now."

For more than 10 years, the IDNR has required groomer operator training. Across Iowa, approximately 600 club members are certified to operate grooming equipment. That number is down about half since the IDNR called for recertification every three years. Willey took some time at convention to explain the logic behind the mandate.

"We are the only user group in Iowa which provides volunteers to operate state-owned equipment," he explained. "State lawyers are very nervous about that. They get complaints all the time by motorists who get rock chips in the windshield from debris kicked up by snow plows driven by state employees. Now, they have volunteers running state-owned groomers."

"One thing that makes them feel better about it is we have a certification and recertification program for our operators," Willey continued. "If we didn't have this program, we would have to have IDOT or IDNR employees running our groomers. How often do you think our trails would get groomed? They wouldn't. Due to the environment in which we live, we have to go down the certification route."

According to program officials, recertification also helps to keep the list of operators current with the IDNR's records. Willey said when he took over the groomer training program four years ago, state records were still showing operators who, for example, had moved to Florida or who were deceased.

In an effort to clean up the card-issuing process, Willey and IDNR Snowmobile Education Coordinator Rhonda Fowler handed out packets to club members at convention. In those expanded files were operator cards for those who have successfully completed the process as well as spreadsheets showing which operators required additional information.



By a show of hands and as listed on the enclosed paperwork, several operators in Iowa still need to complete the groomer operator checklist in order to receive their cards. Requiring an in-cab ride-along and a signature from a club official vouching for his or her performance, the checklist verifies that he or she can efficiently and effectively run the groomer.

"We need a checklist from every operator to have on file," Willey said. "Once the IDNR gets that checklist back, they will mail the card to that person. If someone took the class but didn't have enough snow last season to run the groomer and complete the checklist, they can still finish it this season and get their card."

Operators who have mailed in a completed checklist but have yet to receive their cards can still operate a groomer this winter. If a conservation officer asks for their cards while they are out grooming, they will be able to contact Willey to verify their eligibility. Willey said he keeps the spreadsheet on his mobile phone so it's available at any time.

"You can run the equipment as long as the club has signed off on it," he said.

If a club was not at convention to receive its operator packet, the materials were to be sent home with their respective region director for distribution.

"If you get a card in your packet and the operator is not a member of your club, please let us know and get that card back to us so we can get it to the proper person," Willey encouraged. "Let us know if we have wrong information on there so we can get it corrected as well."

In addition to the groomer workshop Saturday afternoon, an operator course was held at convention Sunday morning. Three others were scheduled in December, and the latest course offering is slated for Thursday, Jan. 7, at Fort Atkinson hosted by the Trails Unlimited Snowmobile Club in Region 5.

While all new operators will always be required to attend a class in person, Willey indicated the state snowmobile program is presently identifying ways to simplify the recertification process. This shift may include offering courses electronically, as adopted by other states.

"Over the next two years, we are going to develop some sort of online recertification process or offer a video with a checklist," Willey said. "We don't know what that is going to look like yet, but we do know other states are doing this. Hopefully, we will have something to roll out by next year's convention."

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Participants on the 2007 Ride Across Iowa stop for a break at the vintage cabin in the Pinicon Alders Wildlife Area near McIntire in Region 4.

ISSA Officials Look to Bring Convention Booths to Life

by Cameron Hanson

Despite a lukewarm reception at the 2015 ISSA Annual Convention in Storm Lake in November, the ISSA is planning to move forward with a proposal to expand its Snowmobile Iowa program to include weekly snowmobile rides this winter.

Spearheading the effort are ISSA President Merv Hoermann and Past ISSA President Bruno Andreini. Both participated in the ISSA's snowmobile retreat to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan last March and now want to discover what their own state has to offer.

"With this idea, we want to explore your area of Iowa and get on some trails we haven't been on before and see some new points of interest," Hoermann explained during a Saturday afternoon seminar Nov. 21 to drum up support for the expansion. "Sometimes

you don't have to travel out of state to have a good time.

"What I've learned over the years is you can do that right here in Iowa," he continued. "For some of us, we don't even get out of our own area to ride. There are some really good trails here in Iowa, and you get to see a lot of variety, whether it is the ditches out west or cross-country trails the farther east you get."

"I've been at this game a day or two, and I still do not know all the trails in Iowa and all the good secrets you have in your areas that I would like to experience," added Andreini, a 45-year veteran of the sport. "That's why we came up with a plan to showcase these trails in Iowa through our clubs."

Critical to the program expansion, local clubs are being invited to sign up to host rides each weekend in January and February. They would be asked to designate a starting area or trailhead with room for trailer parking, line up a few guides to lead the tour, provide trail maps and then offer suggestions for overnight lodging.

"This is a good way to promote your community and impact your area financially," Andreini said. "Snowmobilers spend a lot of money. They spend a lot of money in hotels, gas stations and restaurants and buy other related items while traveling."

Original Platform Dates Back to 2004

According to organizers, the rides are designed to expand on the Snowmobile Iowa concept which began 11 years ago at the 2004 ISSA Annual Convention in West Lake Okoboji. Here, clubs are

Snowmobile Iowa Expansion Proposed

invited to set up booths at convention to showcase what their area has to offer and to display their maps, scrapbooks and activities.

Then Region 1 Director, Hoermann is credited with creating the Snowmobile Iowa program and now wants to bring it to life by having clubs hosts snowmobile rides in their areas of the state. When a ride is scheduled, email blasts will be sent out to the membership, and given the fickle nature of winter in Iowa, Hoerman realizes they may be last-minute decisions.

"If there's no snow or conditions aren't good enough to ride when your weekend comes up, then we'll just cancel it. We won't try to postpone it or re-schedule it," he said, emphasizing the flexibility of the program. "We know how our winters can be in Iowa. And if by chance two clubs sign up for the same weekend, then you have a choice of where you want to ride."

The intent of the rides is to share what each area of the state has

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Snowmobiles and club booths fill the lobby at King's Pointe Resort for the ISSA's annual 'Snowmobile Iowa' showcase at convention in November.

to offer and to keep riders from looking to neighboring states as destinations. As a three-time participant of the *Iowa Snowmobiler* magazine's Ride Across Iowa in the late 2000s, Hoermann knows firsthand what gems exist out there. He now wants others in the ISSA to experience them as well.

"I've ridden across Iowa three times, once along Highway 9, then Highway 18 and lastly across Highway 3, and I've learned a lot from those trips," he said. "We crossed a lot of different trail systems and ended up taking more scenic routes. We weren't just looking for a straight line. If we came to a trail that dogs off and there's something to go see, we followed it. We were in no hurry and didn't have a deadline to meet."

On the Highway 9 trip, for example, riders unfamiliar with the area ended up riding through the Hogsback Wildlife Area near Lake Mills and later on through the Pinicon Alders Wildlife Area near McIntire, thanks to guided tours by club members in their respective areas. Andreini feels more of these "secrets" can be discovered by others through expanding the Snowmobile Iowa program.

"I want to know what's in my own state," Andreini said. "I plan to make it a mission this winter to ride as much of Iowa as I can. I want to know what's here. I know other state trails better than I know my own, and that's sad. I think we have hidden secrets here, and we need to discover them. We need to have them pointed out to us. I know my area real well, and I know where to take people when they come and visit me. All of you have these same areas."

Need to Start Somewhere

Sign-up sheets were available to club members convention weekend, but many felt they should take it back to their clubs for a vote before committing to host a ride. Some pointed out the slate of activities already planned this winter in Iowa that would compete with the rides, including the Jack Race, Snow Fest and Okoboji

Winter Games in January and the David Carmichael Memorial Ride in February.

Despite the hushed reluctance and perceived scheduling conflicts, the seminar did receive some modest support from the convention crowd. Both Andreini and Hoermann admitted it might be too late to get many rides organized this winter, but they felt they should start somewhere, just like the original Snowmobile Iowa concept needed a jumping-off point in 2004.

"We realize this may be getting late in the season to do this, but if we are going to promote it for January, we need to get on top of it right now and spread the word in order for participants to attend," Andreini said.

"I think it's a very interesting idea, but I'm not positive on how to get it off the ground," shared retired Region 7 Director Steve Klinkefus, a member of the Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club. "Most people in here may have never ridden in northeast Iowa, and maybe the members in northeast Iowa haven't ridden in central Iowa. We all don't know where the good spots are so maybe we should give this idea a shot."

"The intent of this is to make a stronger ISSA out of it," Andreini said. "Just look at the 14 people who went on the ISSA trip last winter. Everyone had a good time and forged relationships that would not have happened otherwise. Staying in Iowa this year will allow people in our own group to get to know each other, and we certainly need that in the ISSA and throughout the snowmobile community."

Andreini said the organized ISSA rides would be an opportunity to invite non-ISSA members to come along as well and "see what we are about." For more information or to schedule a Snowmobile Iowa ride, contact Andreini at (515) 240-3858/awbruno3@gmail.com or Hoermann at (712) 260-4810/mebeefeater2@yahoo.com.

"Take this to your clubs, send us a contact person and let's get moving on this," Andreini said.



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MichCanSka Raises Funds, Awareness for Diabetes Research Worldwide

by Cameron Hanson

The last time Michigan native Bill Bradfield visited Iowa, he and 53 other dedicated snowmobilers had just completed a 4,200-mile trip across four time zones to Alaska. Not one to rest on his laurels, he returned to the Hawkeye State in November to share his tales of their most recent adventure across six countries to St. Petersburg, Russia.

First appearing at the 2010 International Snowmobile Congress (ISC) in Coralville, Bradfield was invited back to Iowa for the 2015 ISSA Annual Convention in Storm Lake to raise awareness for his organization's cause. A Type 2 diabetic, Bradfield is the president and founder of MichCanSka, an international snowmobile club which raises money for diabetes research.

"I chose diabetes because I am a Vietnam veteran who was exposed to Agent Orange when I served my country in 1967-68," Bradfield told the ISSA members assembled for his Nov. 21 seminar at King's Pointe

Resort. "They later found out that chemical defoliant was a cause of diabetes, and thousands and thousands of veterans like me are now suffering from it.

"But I'm also standing here before you today to say that I am still as patriotic as anyone can get," he affirmed, causing the Saturday afternoon crowd of snowmobilers to erupt in cheers. "My country made a mistake, but I know they didn't do it on purpose. We all make mistakes. The key is to get back up, dust yourself off and keep moving ahead, and that's how we make things happen."

Bradfield's message last month mirrored his club's slogan of "Dream It, Plan It, Do It." Each year, members have raised funds and awareness for diabetes research with well-publicized events and snowmobile rides to extreme destinations. His organization's name stems from its inaugural ride in 2010 from Mich(igan) to Can(ada) to Ala(Ska), and their most ambitious trip to date was earlier this year to Russia.

Billed as the 2015 World Snowmobile Tour, MichCanSka's adventure to St. Petersburg actually began three years ago when Bradfield and others started recruiting hosts and participants at the ISC in Green Bay, Wis. With Bradfield taking care of the U.S. portion of the trip, ambassadors stepped forward to coordinate the group's passage through Canada, Scandinavia and Russia.



Convention keynote speaker and Survivor contestant Holly Hoffman with MichCanSka's David Low (l) and Bill Bradfield.

Seven riders completed all three segments of the World Tour, while another 55 riders participated in varying legs of the journey. The trip began Feb. 7 in Cadillac, Mich., and ended 22 days later in St. Petersburg. Along the way, riders crossed into Canada, flew to Norway and rode across Sweden and Finland.

Equipped with satellite tracking devices, the entourage was then escorted to the Russian border and began a four-day ride to the city of Murmansk. There, they boarded a flight to St. Petersburg for the grand finale and banquet. Collectively, the group racked up 54,660 miles on their sleds with another 50,000 miles logged in the air.

"The Russians treated us more special than anybody did," Bradfield said. "I knew the people who were helping coordinate the trip over there, and I knew I could count on them. They went overboard for us."

Also providing inspiration for the trip was fellow Michigan snowmobiler David Low. Now 88, Low has participated in every MichCanSka event since the beginning, and he became "an icon in Russia" on this latest trip.

"When we rode into Russia, he was right there by my side," Bradfield noted.

Hailed as Michigan's "Supreme Senior Citizen," Low joined Bradfield on his visit to the ISSA convention last month and shared a few of his thoughts on the World Tour. "I got a little tired, but I enjoyed every minute of it," he said, smiling.

Fundraising Exceeds \$200,000

While Alaska and Russia have grabbed most of the headlines, MichCanSka has also completed shorter group rides since its inception in 2009. That first trip to Tot, Alaska, however, has been the most successful, raising more than \$100,000. To date, the club has contributed more than \$200,000 to diabetes research through pledges and donations. Not too bad for a club in only its sixth year of existence.

"I have a passion in my heart for what I do, and I'm proud of what this group has done, but I didn't do this alone," Bradfield said. "387 million people are suffering from diabetes worldwide. Someone is diagnosed with the disease every 17 seconds. We need to raise funds to get that thing cured."

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MichCanSka's World Tour outside Hearst, Ontario, Canada. For more information on the group, visit www.MichCanSka.com.

Competing on a Reality Show, Winning in Life

by Cameron Hanson

Long before the reality show of the same name made her famous, Holly Hoffman felt she was already a survivor in life. The South Dakota native came from an abusive home with an alcoholic father, and her childhood and adolescence were marred by embarrassing moments created by her dad's drinking.

Appearing at the ISSA's Annual Convention in Storm Lake Nov. 21, the motivational speaker said the smiles of her youth used to cover up the pain on the inside. Her parents eventually divorced, and her father, for the most part, disappeared from her life. In school, she sought refuge in athletics in her small hometown of Eureka and later earned statewide recognition in high school track.

"Hard work and perseverance paid off for me," Hoffman said, now making the rounds on the speaking-engagement circuit some

30 years later. She went on to college, married her high school sweetheart and raised three children. Now a proud grandmother, she also organized the local swim program and served as its coach for 17 years.

In the summer of 2009, the empty-nester sought a new challenge in life and, on a whim, submitted an application with an audition tape to join the Season 21 cast of *Survivor*, a popular reality show on CBS. The program's premise involves 20 castaways landing in a tropical location with limited resources, getting divided into two

Holly's Six Words of Survival...

- Faith
- Attitude
- Determination
- Confidence
- Desire
- Perseverance



tribes and competing for rewards for 39 days. Every three days, a team member is voted off, and the last one standing wins \$1 million.

Hoffman's entry for the 2010 show was among more than 100,000 applications sent in that season, and she didn't think her chances at earning a spot were very good. Much to her surprise and even dismay, a casting director from Los Angeles eventually called her; and after several telephone interviews and a trip to southern California, she was selected from a field of 800 finalists to join the cast.

A fan of the show, Hoffman knew her first appearance on network television would be anything but glamorous. A camera crew would capture her every move, and her will and desire to compete would be tested daily. Spending the next six weeks in the jungles of Nicaragua, she suffered from sleep deprivation, starvation and anxiety.

"I took an opportunity, and it became a challenge," she told the ISSA members in attendance. "It became a challenge because I was left with nothing and had to survive, facing fear, loneliness and adversity. It is in those times that we find out what our true survival skills are. Adversity is not so much contending with problems but learning more about what is inside of us."

Hoffman confessed she wanted to quit the show after just five days but decided to stick it out, leaning on the lessons of her childhood as well as on the inspiration of a fellow castmate. Heeding the advice of former Super Bowl-winning football coach Jimmy Johnson, Hoffman ended up placing fourth in the competition, surviving for 38 days in the jungle and becoming the last woman to be voted off the show.

"Quitting is the easiest thing you will ever do in your life," she said, paraphrasing the coach's words of encouragement. "But when you feel like quitting and you don't, it will be one of the greatest self-rewards you will ever discover. A negative mind will never give you a positive life. Once you quit something once, it is too easy to quit the next time."

Arriving in Storm Lake by way of Council Bluffs, where she had spent time with her daughter and new grandchild, Hoffman was invited to speak at convention by ISSA President Merv Hoermann. Hoermann had listened to her earlier in the year at a tourism conference in western Iowa and felt her energetic speech would make for an inspirational keynote address.

"Her message was very good, and what she was saying is something we can all learn from. We can all relate to what she has to say," said Hoermann, who served as chair of the 2015 ISSA Convention Planning Committee. "I figured she would be a nice alternative to what we normally see and hear at our events."

Citing articles and headlines in the November issue of the *Iowa Snowmobiler* magazine, she applied her story of perseverance to the analogy of a snowmobile trail, advising her audience to stay the course regardless of the bumps along the way. She also took note of the training opportunities that were available to ISSA members convention weekend and related to them as well in her speech.

"We are all here today because we took an opportunity. Opportunities are decisions that need to be

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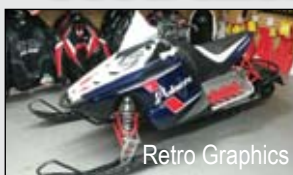
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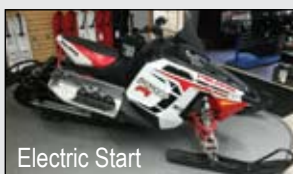
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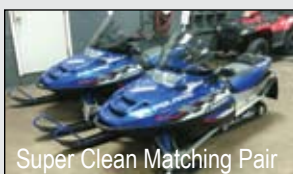
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2015 ISSA Award Winners Announced...

Each fall, the ISSA recognizes the contributions of its members through its annual awards program. For 2015, winners were honored during the awards banquet at the 42nd Annual ISSA Convention in Storm Lake Nov. 21.

What follows here are snapshots of each award winner as compiled by the ISSA Awards Committee. Each winner was nominated by his or her home club, and the entries were judged anonymously. Pictured with each recipient is ISSA President Merv Hoermann.

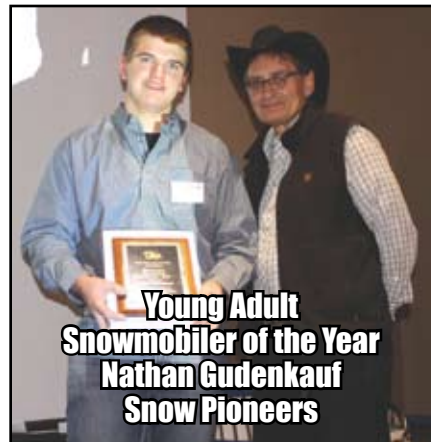
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**Snowmobiler of the Year
Bob Scott
Eastern Iowa Sledheads**

A former Region 12 Director, Bob Scott has been involved in snowmobiling for the past 18 years. Including his home club, he is a member of four snowmobile clubs in his area and has held several titles with the Sledheads. A regular attendee at convention and campout, Scott is a strong promoter of the ISSA and always takes the time to recruit new snowmobilers to the organization.

Now a student at Iowa State University, Nathan Gudenkauf joined the Snow Pioneers on his own as a 17-year-old high school student. Early on, he understood the value in the club and the work its members do to make the trails safe for everyone. He's never afraid to lend a hand and is always there to help out when he can. In fact, he took it upon himself to find a fix for several areas of trail that was causing issues during the past riding season.



**Young Adult
Snowmobiler of the Year
Nathan Gudenkauf
Snow Pioneers**

Best known for preparing the Prime Rib dinner at the 2014 ISSA Campout, Fast City, Inc., owner Steve Seelman has been a long-standing supporter of the ISSA and several local clubs. His Arctic Cat dealership offers membership applications, displays the ISSA magazine and provides club maps to prospective customers. His staff hosts an open house each fall and works with new customers to ensure they understand their equipment.



**Snowmobile Dealer
of the Year
Fast City, Inc.-Steve Seelman
Eastern Iowa Sledheads**



**Lady
Snowmobiler of the Year
Brittany Paulus
Floyd County Groomers**

Recently named the ISSA's new Membership Committee Chair, Brittany Paulus was recognized for her contributions on both the local and state level. This award follows up her 2011 honor as the Young Adult Snowmobiler of the Year. She grew up around snowmobiles and, with her family, has been a member of her home club since 1999. She currently serves as club secretary and oversees its largest fundraising project of collecting trail map advertising.



**Youth
Snowmobiler of the Year
Kelsey Craun
Trail Blaz-zers**

Riding on her first snowmobile at the age of three, Kelsey Craun has carried her love for snowmobiling throughout her school years. Now in high school, she promotes the sport to her peers by keeping them abreast of club activities and encourages them to get involved as well. She is a big proponent of safety education and is currently working on a 4-H project for the Chickasaw County Achievement Show to highlight the importance of snowmobile safety. Along with her family, she has helped to maintain a 10-mile stretch of trail the past five years and is a regular participant in the club's vintage ride each winter.



**Groomer Operator of the Year
Randy Magg
Dickinson County SnowHawks**

Randy Magg currently serves as Trails Director for the Dickinson County SnowHawks. In that role, he spearheads groomer maintenance and trail improvement projects for the club. He keeps in close contact with the groomer manufacturer to stay on top of any technological advances, and according to fellow club members, he spends more time in the groomer than any other volunteer.

taken, and when taken, they can become windows that you see beyond your expectations,” she said. “Don’t just sit and wait for an opportunity to come to you. We need to jump as quickly to opportunities as we sometimes jump to conclusions.”

Hoffman defined her decision to apply to be on the *Survivor* show as an opportunity for her as well. She knew the unsavory conditions would test her strength and determination, and despite being separated from her family for months and living without the creature comforts of home, the experience changed her life for good.

“Never let fear decide your fate because the one thing about an opportunity is that it is never lost. Someone will always take the one you were given,” Hoffman said. “We all need to take opportunities. We all need to stay on the trail. Don’t ever fall off the trail. Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but you can start today and make a new ending.”

Describing the conditions on the show as fairly miserable, Hoffman said she did pay a price for this life-changing event. She recalled restless nights attempting to sleep in the rain, eating only a quarter cup of rice for 13 days straight and getting up in the morning covered in hundreds of bug bites. Regret would visit her mind often.

“I started second-guessing myself on why I wanted to be on this reality show,” she said. “It’s not who you are who holds you back but who you think you are not. I was not fitting in very well with my tribe, and I was worrying constantly about things back home. Worry can be like sitting in a rocking chair: It gives you something to do, but it gets you nowhere.”

Hoffman admits to feeling “overwhelmed” several times on the show but would summon the strength her mother had demonstrated while she was growing up in the Midwest. She pulled herself together and finished the show with a renewed vigor. She told herself there are no more doors to hide behind and began living her life as though the cameras were always rolling on her.

“The very first thing I realized when I was all by myself in the jungle was I needed to change my attitude,” she said. “You are perceived every single day by your attitude. It is the one consistent thing you choose to control every day. You can be happy or you can be miserable. The amazing thing is they are the same amount of work so what are you going to choose?”

MichCanSka

Bradfield likened his organization’s mission to what the ISSA does and has done for its official charity, the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa. He said many children of Vietnam veterans suffer from this condition due to exposure to Agent Orange as well, and while admiring what the ISSA has done for spina bifida, he also asked the association to support MichCanSka’s goals as well.

“We would like to encourage you to keep doing the things you are doing with your charity now in Iowa, but we would also like to invite you join in our cause if you can,” Bradfield said. “I would love to help set up a program in your state and invite you on some of our rides in the future.”

Up next for MichCanSka is a pair of abbreviated trips this winter. The first leg is from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to International Falls, Minn. Later on, Bradfield will lead a group of snowmobilers from Yellowstone National Park to the Black Hills of South Dakota. After that, the next major event will take place in 2017 when members plan to ride from Maine to Alaska. Bradfield described that proposed trip as “the granddaddy of them all.”



**Snowmobile Family of the Year
Dan & Kollette Delperdang Family
Dickinson County SnowHawks**

Residing in one of the more popular resort areas in Iowa, the Dan and Kollette Delperdang family regularly promotes the benefits and attractions of snowmobiling in and around Lake Okoboji. They consistently spread the message that Dickinson County can be a winter destination for tourists and snowmobilers, while educating and reminding local businesses about the economic impact that snowmobiling has on the community.

Truly enjoying the sport as a family, the Delperdangs work closely with the chamber in promotional efforts and also lobby for the club in the off-season. They recruit new members throughout the year and are heavily involved in various fundraising activities for the club.

Dan presently serves as Region 1 Director for the ISSA, and he helped to establish the parameters for the SnowHawks to become 100 percent members of the state organization. He also encouraged several club volunteers to become certified groomer operators.



**Snowmobile Club of the Year
Trail Blaz-zers, Inc.
Region 5**

Led by President Tim Arthur, the Trail Blaz-zers Snowmobile Club was recognized at convention for being a 100 percent member of the state association and a strong supporter of its efforts. In 2014, club members served on the convention planning committee and have regularly attended conventions in the past.

In addition to the annual fall event, club members are often seen at the state campout and help raise money for the various charities endorsed by the state organization, including donations to spina bifida, ALS and breast cancer awareness. Locally, they also support a family who has a daughter with cystic fibrosis which requires several trips to Iowa City for treatment.

Club membership currently stands at 54, and members conduct regular meetings 10 months out of the year. More than 20 members are signed up with local law enforcement to provide assistance during snow emergencies and also are certified to teach youth snowmobile safety.

Club News

Region 1

O'Brien County Snowtrackers

by Zelda Buse Christensen, Reporter

At Thanksgiving time, there was hope for this winter because here in northwest Iowa, we had received nearly 25 inches of snow—very wet snow. But a combination of rain and days of 40-plus degrees of melting soon had the snow totally gone. We have much water now in ditches and in fields, but some traveling I did to Humboldt today showed me that the water along much of Highway 3 is even far more excessive!

I thought of the video at the convention showing snowmobiles racing on water—watercross at Rock Valley in Sioux County last August—and I thought of the massive lakes in so many fields. Looked about perfect for some fun with snowmobiles on lots of available water (but I did wonder a little if the black mud could substitute for deep sand for entering and exiting each time). A little messy perhaps?

Having done more traveling in the state this fall than usual, since I am always looking at how snowmobile signs are done, I noticed some variance in different areas. In one area, for example, every single small driveway culvert had a CAUTION sign in front of it—but no STOP signs were at intersections. In another area, in contrast, a STOP sign was at every intersection, but CAUTION signs marked small driveway culverts only if they were not in the usual place of the middle or on the field side.

Some signers use an abundance of CAUTION signs in an attempt to help and warn riders of any possible hazard, while other signers also use CAUTION to help riders in really bad spots, but expect riders to also use common sense and realize that anyone riding on a snowmobile in a ditch needs to exercise caution at all times.

When a rider sees an arrow, he logically should go in the direction the arrow points: If an arrow points straight to the side, the rider should make a 90-degree turn that way. If the sign is in the ditch, following the arrow would then put the rider straight across the road. But what if the signer wants the rider to just angle up on the shoulder to go up and around a culvert or a bridge or some other hazard? The generally accepted practice then is to put the arrow at a half-way angle, not pointing straight ahead or for a 90-degree turn. (If you show the arrow pointing straight sideways at every little hazard that must be gone around, how do you tell riders to really make a right-hand turn to the other side of the road if that is needed? There's not room for a footnote saying "This time, I really mean it.")

So we aren't expected to have a white Christmas—there could be a lot of winter after Christmas, with snow coming to start out 2016! We'll hope...

Powder Players

by Jim Skinner, Vice President

Thanks to the nice snowfall the beginning of December, a group of 13 riders met in Remsen, rode the 20 miles to Germantown for supper and then came back to Remsen. It was nice to see our trails getting used.

On Dec. 2, approximately, 16 members were able to ride their sleds to attend our monthly meeting at The Triangle in Remsen. Though they all started off as a group, some showed up a bit late. WHY? Because ONE guy ran out of gas and none of the others riding had any spare gas cans with them. These are definitely the FUN ones that you want to ride with on every snowmobile adventure...whether here or out west somewhere, as they make for memorable times.

Thirty-six attending members enjoyed a monthly meal provided by the club. This month's awesome meal was smoked pork loin sandwiches, baked potato and cole slaw.

Several Powder Player members volunteered to help roast marshmallows and operate the snowmobile simulator at the annual Le Mars Pioneer Christmas Wonderland. Over two consecutive weekends, approximately 300 kids enjoyed taking a ride on the simulator. Even more kids, as well as many adults, also enjoyed roasting marshmallows. It is always such a joy to watch some of the older folks roast a mallow as they smile and admit it has been years since they last roasted one.

It is also always great to see our members volunteering to get involved and help out at these public events and what a great way to promote our sport and possibly get new families involved.

The weather has been beneficial in getting trails marked since there is still no frost in the ground. Hopefully Mother Nature will stop being so temperamental, stop with her hot flashes and get back on track and remember it IS winter. Until then, we will continue to enjoy our monthly meetings, our awesome meals and our time with others that appreciate this awesome sport.

You can always find us on our facebook page-Powder Players Snowmobile Club or

ISSA CLUBS

Clubs in red reported
100% ISSA Membership



REGION ONE

Buena Vista Blizzard Busters

President: Jeffrey Sassman
709 Hudson St., Storm Lake, IA 50588
(712) 732-6500

Clay County Sno Broncos

President: Doug Alger
912 E 14th St., Spencer, IA 51301
(712) 260-6855, eliteautodoug@hotmail.com

Dickinson County SnowHawks

www.dickinsoncountysnowhawks.com
P.O. Box 504, Spirit Lake, IA 51360
President: Kathy Fahy
411 Hill Avenue, Spirit Lake, IA 51360
(605) 359-7177, kfahy@mchsi.com

Lyon County Sno-Lyons

P.O. Box 576, Rock Rapids, IA 51246
President: Eric Borman
405 N. 4th Ave, Rock Rapids, IA 51246
(712) 470-0190, ebconst@yahoo.com

O'Brien County Snowtrackers

President: Kelly Jongerius
Visit club's Facebook page at www.
facebook.com/pages/O'Brien-County-
Snowtrackers/149959738392476.

Osceola County High Point Riders

www.highpointriders.com
President: Jeremy Wollmuth
5992 200th Street, Melvin, IA 51350
(712) 461-1510, wollmuth@mtcnet.net

Powder Players Inc.

P.O. Box 154, Remsen, IA 51050
www.powder-players.com
President: Dee Jay Kellen
23657 Marble Ave., Le Mars, IA 51031

Sioux County Snowmobile Club

www.siouxcountysnowmobileclub.com
Search Sioux County Snowmobile Club on
Facebook under club info in Iowa Snowmobiler
President: Dave Taylor
313 Hunter Ridge, Rock Valley, IA 51247
(712) 449-5556, Dave.Taylor@interstates.com

REGION TWO

Emmet County Driftbusters

President: Tyson Enerson
4591 195th St., Estherville, IA 51334
Enerson747@gmail.com

Humboldt Sno-Skimmers

President: Brian Ricklefs
P.O. Box 72, Dakota City, IA 50529-0072
(515) 368-0384, bricklef@goldfieldaccess.net

Kossuth County Drift Skippers

President: Jeremy Walker
1402 170th St., LuVerne, IA 50560-8552
(515) 295-8721, jikwalk@gmail.com

Palo Alto Rough Riders

President: Kurt Bonnstetter
111 Iowa St., P.O. Box 62, Cylinder, IA 50528
(712) 424-3011, kbbonste@iowatelecom.net

Sno-Pak

P.O. Box 122, Rockwell City, IA 50579
www.snopak.com
President: Kolby Wagner
749 South Street, Rockwell City, IA 50579
(712) 830-3821, kolbywagner@yahoo.com

REGION THREE

Hancock County Snowmobile Assn.

President: Dan Stromer
1840 Hwy 69, Klemme, IA 50449
Stromer@yahoo.com

Iowa River Riders

President: Al Muhlenbruch
206 Highway 3, Alexander, IA 50420
(641) 425-2700, iowariverriders@yahoo.com





ISSA CLUBS

Clubs in red reported
100% ISSA Membership

Lakota Sno-Eagles

President: Jordan Valvick
4410 Highway 169, Lakota, IA 50451
(515) 538-0290, jordanvalvick@gmail.com

North Iowa Sno-Jammers

P.O. Box 103, Lake Mills, IA 50450
www.northiowasnojammers.com
President: Valere Holtan
38320 210th Ave., Forest City, IA 50436
(641) 567-3674

North Iowa Snow Seekers

President: Angie Lien
northiowasnowseekers@yahoo.com
(641) 494-6133

Worth County Fence Stretchers

P.O. Box 27, Northwood, IA 50459
President: Steve Arnold
(641) 390-0567, k44arnold@gmail.com

REGION FOUR

Bremer County Sno-Knights

President: Dennis Koehler
805 9th St NW, Waverly, IA 50677
(319) 352-5576, (319) 240-5756
koehler805@gmail.com

Cedar Falls Sno Hawks

President: Brian Carmichael
14784 290th St., Aplington, IA 50604-9368
319-215-5006
snohawk68@gmail.com

Chickasaw Sno-Riders

President: Dan Feenstra
1310 Jasper Ave., New Hampton, IA 50659
(319) 404-5482

Dewar Snow Chasers

President: Cory Allspach
4016 Round St., Cedar Falls, IA, 50613
(319) 404-2878

Floyd County Groomers Association

President: Philip Schrage
P.O. Box 7, Marble Rock, IA 50653
(641) 397-2775, schrage@windstream.net
www.floydcountygroomers.webs.com

Howard County Stump Jumpers

President: Nathan Hale
4145 Hillcrest Dr., Riceville, IA 50466
(641) 985-2699.

Mitchell County E-Z Riders, Inc.,

President: Keith Popp
1408 Pleasant St., Osage, IA 50461
(641) 732-3625, keith@poppexc.com

Snow Snoops Snowmobile Club

President: Derek Buss
(641) 228-0954
drb@butlerrec.coop

REGION FIVE

Allamakee Sno-Blazers

Allamakee Sno-Blazers
PO Box 94 Waukon, IA 52172
President: Brandon Fahey
snoblazers@yahoo.com

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



Powder Players members operate the ISSA/IDNR snowmobile simulator at the Le Mars Pioneer Christmas Wonderland in December.

www.powder-players.com.

Region 2

Emmet County Driftbusters

by Nick Hanson

What a crazy winter it has been so far. At this writing, it looks like we are going to have a White Thanksgiving and a Brown Christmas! The snows that we have had to date have been significant; they just didn't stay around long enough. I guess you shouldn't dwell on what is out of your control, but we would have had a great base set for this winter if El Nino wouldn't have brought in the warm temps for a good share of December.

It was great to see fellow snowmobilers from across the state gather together in Storm Lake for the Annual Convention. We had several from the club make the trip down to take in the sessions throughout the day as well as the awards banquet and groomer and youth training certifications. It really is a great opportunity to share ideas on what has worked well in different parts of the state so that we can keep our passion for the sport heading in the right direction.

We held our annual membership drive on Dec. 1 at J&K Snowmobile in Estherville. Thanks to Kenny and Cory at J&K for hosting the event again this year! They had the new Arctic Cat 2016 models on display for all to view as well as a ton of accessories and clothing. As always, we had a great meal and a meeting followed. It is always great to see new faces at our membership drive.

Plans are in the works for the Cross Country Race to be held by the Emmet County Nature Center in late February (provided that the lakes freeze and we receive some snow). We will have more details forthcoming in the near future, but current plans are to have a timed trial over both land and lake. We plan on running both single person events as well as teams of three. Classes will be split up based on engine size, studded/non-studded tracks and by age. If you have questions about racing or spectating, give one of these three guys a call. and they would be glad to answer all your questions: Tyson Enerson, (712) 209-3330; Andy Gosch, (712) 209-0749; Trevor Enerson, (515) 450-6819

The next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 5 in Ringsted at 3G's. We will get started at 7 p.m. and would love to see you there!!!

Region 5

Cresco Driftrunners

by Bob Martinek, Treasurer

Well, the Driftrunners are ready. The trails are marked with bridges repaired and put back in place. Second season deer hunting is over. We have done our part. I am sure Mother Nature will do hers very soon. Whatever the case, I would like to invite everyone to our 45th annual Snow Fest Jan. 21-24.

Remember, Snow Fest is the club's main fundraiser for our spina bifida donation. The "Fun Run" starts on Thursday with the Early Bird Ride meeting at the Hideaway in Cresco

Iowa River Riders Youth Training Draws 21 Kids in Early December

Chad and Stephanie Mulford of the Iowa River Riders snowmobile club in Region 3 hosted their sixth annual Youth Snowmobile Safety Course at Hometown Pizza in Coulter Dec. 5.

Twenty-one youths completed the course, which is up from previous years. "We had a really nice turnout," Chad said. "We had kids show up from all over, including Sheffield, Rockwell, Clarion, Rockford and even Des Moines."

Chad said they normally see between 10 and 15 young riders so it was promising to see all the interest this year. Their largest turnout was 30 in 2009, their first year teaching the course and also the largest snowfall season in the last 15.

"It gives you hope for the next generation," Chad said. "Most of them came from snowmobiling families, and most of them already had brands that they like best."

Due to opening shotgun deer hunting season, Mulford said they were unable to secure a conservation officer for the training but did have EMTs from the ambulance service in nearby Hampton to assist with the first aid, survival and emergency portion of the training.

Mulford said the classroom training is more effective than the online offerings through the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. "This is way better," he said. "The kids get a lot more out of it with the hands-on training."

at 10 a.m. The "Fun Run" continues all weekend with card turn-in at Bubba's in Schley on Sunday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. We have club trail rides planned for Thursday and Friday nights meeting at 7 p.m. Also there is a Ladies' Trail Ride on Friday. Please check out driftrunners/Facebook.com for more information on the trail rides.

Saturday starts at the Expo building in Cresco with the Boy Scout breakfast from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. At noon leaving from the Expo will be our third annual HoCA Cancer Awareness Ride, featuring any vintage sleds that show up. Saturday evening, we line up at the Expo at 6 p.m. for our Torchlight Parade on Vernon Springs millpond that ends with a huge bonfire right by the rock falls. Very neat to see and participate in! Then from 8 p.m. to midnight at the Expo again will be our Snow Fest dance and party featuring the "Blue Ringers" band from Austin, Minn. We had them last year, and they are "GOOD". Also during the dance will be our raffle drawings and silent auction items to bid on.

We wrap up Snow Fest at Bubba's in Schley with his famous Snow Fest Sunday Buffet serving from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Also from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., I will be dealing your "Fun Run" cards.



The Driftrunners collected Christmas gifts for the local Toys for Tots program at its winter kick-off dance in November.

ISSA CLUBS

Clubs in red reported
100% ISSA Membership



Driftrunners, Inc.

Join Us on Facebook under 'Groups'
President: Dean Zakostelecky
124 Fourth Ave. SW, Cresco, IA 52136
dean@decorahautocenter.com

Dyersville Driftskippers

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

Snow Pioneers

President: Steve Vorwald
1582 210th St., Manchester, IA 52057
(563) 927-5362, ssvorwald@iowatelecom.net

Trail Blaz-zers Inc.

President: Tim Arthur
20197 130th St., Sumner, IA 50674
(563) 578-5417, trail.blazzers.inc@gmail.com

Trails Unlimited

Trails Unlimited
15778 282nd St., West Union, IA 52175
President: Bud Winter
(319) 231-3337, bwinter@acegroup.cc

Wapsipinicon Snowmobile Association

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

Winneshiek Trail Twisters Inc.

P.O. Box 154, Decorah, IA 52101
President: Jake Ludeking
2005 Centennial Rd, Decorah, IA 52101
(563) 380-6747, jakeludeking@gmail.com

REGION SIX

Sac County Snow Lovers

P.O. Box 464, Lakeview, IA 51450
President: Bradley Garrels
307 Adams St., Lake View, IA 51450
(712) 210-4262, garrelsbrad@hotmail.com

REGION SEVEN

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

Webster County Ice Breakers

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

REGION EIGHT

Central Iowa Snowmobilers

P.O. Box 1751, Marshalltown, IA
50158, President: Kevin Weese
(641) 485-0123, yamaha.family@yahoo.com

Jasper County Ditch Bangers

President: David Huffaker
P/O/ Box 311, Baxter, IA 50208
(641) 751-0622, huffaker-dave@hotmail.com





ISSA CLUBS

Clubs in red reported
100% ISSA Membership

Tri-County Snowmobile Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 231, Traer, IA 50675
President: Jamie Erhardt
312 Mill St., Traer, IA 50675
(319) 415-8189, jhard88@yahoo.com

REGION NINE

Cascade Snow Punchers

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

Eastern Iowa Sno-Riders

President: Dylon Bousset
2687 178th Ave., Calamus, IA 52729
(563) 210-4002, Polarisdude90@gmail.com

Frozen Few

P.O. Box 184, Coggon, IA 52218
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
607 N. Birch, Monticello, IA 52310
brettbenter@hotmail.com
(319) 480-0586

Snowmobilers of Jackson County

President: Aaron Michels
39014 308th St., Bellevue, IA 52031
brittany-farrell@hotmail.com

REGION TEN

Southwest Iowa Snow Scooters

President: Trent Larson
25817 208th St., Crescent, IA 51526
trentlarsn@gmail.com

Stag Island Skol Patrol

President: Brad Landhuis
3046 210th St., Clarinda IA 51632

REGION ELEVEN

Appanoose County Trails, Inc.

P.O. Box 825, Centerville, IA 52544

REGION TWELVE

Cedar County Winter Warriors

ccwwarriors@yahoo.com
President: Jerry Meier
1241 Jackson Ave., Tipton, IA 52772
(319) 325-6021, jmeier@hupp-electric.com

Eastern Iowa Sledheads

P.O. Box 519, Lone Tree, IA 52755
easterniowasledheads@aol.com
President: Mindy Scott
P.O. Box 435, 204 W. Dougherty Dr.
Lone Tree, IA 52755
scott4@iowatelecom.net
(319) 629-4630(h), (319) 325-8917(c)

Snowdrifters, Inc.

P.O. Box 5135, Coralville, IA, 52241
www.iowa-snowdrifters.org
President: Jeff Wardenburg
1745 Radio Rd, Marion, IA 52302
Jeff.Wardenburg@Titanmachinery.com

Scott County Sno-Seekers

www.snoseekers.org
P.O. Box 2332, Davenport, IA 52809-2332
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), 319-671-0329 (c)
aarond65@hotmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January

- ISSA/IDNR Groomer Operator Certification Course Thursday, Jan. 7, at 7 p.m. at 1222 Highway 150, Fort Atkinson, IA. Hosted by Trails Unlimited Snowmobile Club. Please bring your own seating.
- ISSA Board of Directors meeting TBD.
- Winter Fun Day with Spina Bifida Jan. 10 at 11 a.m. at Huxley.
- The Jack Race on Clear Lake Jan. 15-16.
- O'Brien County Snowtrackers' Youth Snowmobile Education Class for 12-17-year-olds Saturday, Jan. 16, at Northwest Iowa Community College, Sheldon. Contact Evan Bensley at (800) 352-4907 to pre-register. Visit the club's Facebook page for more information.
- International Snowmobile Safety Week Jan. 16-24.
- Trail Blaz-ers Snowmobile Club Youth Snowmobile Education Class Jan. 17 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Kuennen's House of Power, 455 Main St W, Maynard. \$5 per student. Pre-register with Kate at (563) 920-3306 or Randy at (563) 920-5989. Lunch and snacks provided by the host club. Class size is limited to 25 students
- Driftrunners' SnowFest Jan. 21-24 at Cresco.
- University of Okoboji Winter Games Jan. 29-31.
- Allamakee Sno-Blazers annual club ride Saturday, Jan. 30, starting at noon from Green Valley Getaway, Waukon. Raffle/dance to follow at 7 p.m. snow or no snow.

February

- Take-A-Friend Snowmobiling Week Feb. 5-15.
- Driftrunners' Charlie's Chili Feed Feb. 13.
- Second Annual David Carmichael Memorial Ride Feb. 26-27 Cresco.

April

- ACSA DC Fly-In.

May

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

Wow! An awful lot of activities and a tremendous amount of "FUN"! All events and updates are posted on driftrunners/ Facebook.com. I also want to mention that Charlie's Chili Feed is set for Feb. 13 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. More details on Charlie's next month. Thanks for now and until we meet on the trails...and oh yes THINK SNOW!

Region 12

Snowdrifters, Inc.

by Ron Roe

How do you write a letter in December about snowmobiling when it is 40 degrees outside and no frozen ground or waterways? I can only clean and polish my sleds so many times thinking that it should be snowing outside. I try to convince myself if we don't get snow, at least up North they'll have plenty. Well I've been checking the weather forecast up North and I had to double check to be sure that I was not reading our forecast. It seems that they are receiving the same lousy weather that we are having. Nothing is freezing for them either. We get rain, but they are getting rain too. Can't win, but I haven't thrown in the towel yet. I still think they will get the white gold pretty soon. We have our first trip planned for a month from now. A lot can happen in that much time.

We had our club meeting last week and had a good turnout of members. A lot of guys were talking about new sleds and waiting to ride. Some were planning trips when it does snow. A lot of summer things are being planned now to make money for the extra things the club wants.

I could write about the upcoming Holidays and what's taking place, but it will all be over by the time this comes out. I hope everyone had a very good and happy holiday. We will be watching the Rose Bowl to see how the Hawkeyes do.

More next month maybe even some snow to help ones spirit.

THINK SNOW! LOTS OF SNOW


REGION 1

Glen's Sport Center, Inc.
Yamaha & Ski-Doo snowmobiles
Polaris ORVs
208 16th St., Sheldon, IA 51201
glens1@qwestoffice.net

**Okoboji Boatworks
Sled Rentals**

1401 Lakeshore Dr., Okoboji, IA 51355
(712) 332-9904
rentals@okobojiboatworks.com
www.parkmarina.com

**Project Mayhem Power Sports
509 Inc.**

133 W 1st St, Sioux Center, IA 51250
(712) 441-0934
jesse_wynia@hotmail.com

REGION 2

Big Ride Restoration

2031 Tabor Ave., Manson, IA 50563
(712) 210-1267
bigriderestoration@yahoo.com

Brian's Construction

206 4th Ave NE, Pocahontas, IA 50574
(712) 335-3229
brianslama@hotmail.com

Carlson Auto Body Repair

504 High St., Rockwell City, IA 50579
(712) 297-5517
carlsonauto@hotmail.com

J & K Snowmobile

2703 7th Ave. S., Estherville, IA 51334
(712) 362-3031

Klocko Construction

114 1st Ave E, Knierim, IA 50552
(515) 571-5724

Rasmuson Electric

2781 Valley Ave.
Rockwell City, IA 50579
(515) 467-5748

Ramthun Trucking, Inc

2271 Upland Ave., Manson, IA 50563
(515) 480-3970

Sedlacek Snowmobile Salvage

135 Lake St., Rockwell City, IA 50579
(712) 210-0718
Find us on Facebook!

Wagner Truck Sales

404 Broad St., Rolfe, IA 50581
(712) 848-3443
wagnertruckandauto.com
www.wagnertrucks.com

REGION 3

Auto Parts Wholesale

621 4th St SE, Hampton, IA 50441
(641) 456-2594
apwhampton@yahoo.com

Boone's Removal

3133 200th St.
Rowan, IA 50470
(641) 430-9705

Buffalo Lanes, LLC

120 1st St. NW
Buffalo Center, IA 50424
(641) 562-2611

C R Fuel

223 N Main St., Clarion, IA 50525
(515) 293-1569
nelsoncurt2@yahoo.com

Chappy's on Main

122 S Main St, Clarion, IA 50525
(515) 532-2727
ragingcy@yahoo.com

Crystal Lake Bar

130 State Ave, Crystal Lake, IA 50432
(641) 565-3030

Dave's Auto Service

101 W Main St., Lake Mills, IA 50450

(641) 592-9951, daves66@wctatel.net
Non Ethenol Premium Fuel

Deb's Wild Horse Saloon

1932 Nettle Ave., Hampton, IA 50441
(641) 892-4922
DebLaRue@rocketmail.com

DK Arndt, PC

116 East I St., Forest City, IA 50436
(641) 585-4631
dkafe@dkaarndtcpa.net
www.dkaarndtcpa.net

Don's Motor Mart

401 W. Main St., Lake Mills IA 50450
(641) 592-9966
www.facebook.com/dons_motor_mart

Duck's Bar & Grill

112 E Main/PO Box 4
Aredale, IA 50605
(641) 894-3312, ducksbar@live.com

Dudley's Corner

648 Highway 3, Latimer, IA 50452
(641) 866-6999

E & E Repair

1410 Olive Ave., Hampton IA 50441
(641) 425-4553

Farm & City Insurance

PO Box 248, Forest City, IA 50436
(641) 585-2925
www.rvadvantage.com

Forest City Ford-Mercury, Inc.

P.O. Box 448, Forest City, IA 50436
(641) 585-5555

Goody's Welding & Metal Art

304 S. 4th Ave E., Lake Mills, IA 50450
(641) 909-4660
agundmonson@hotmail.com

Hair Designs

236 E J St., Forest City, IA 50436
(641) 585-2405, sbenson@wctatel.net

Hansell Ag Repair Inc.

1612 Vine Ave., Hampton, IA 50441
(641) 456-2034
dannek2034@gmail.com

Hickman Chiropractic

820 4th St NE, Hampton, IA 50441
(641) 456-2280
hickmanjr@hotmail.com

Holland Contracting

1400 S. 4th St., Forest City, IA 50436
(641) 585-2231
www.hollandcontracting.com

Hometown Market

11717 Hwy 9, Thompson, IA 50478
(641) 584-2300

Hometown Pizza & Pub

103 Main St, Coulter, IA 50431
(641) 866-6771, kaminor@wfbrec.com

House of Sports

Hwy 122 W., Mason City, IA 50401
(641) 424-2861
houseofsportsmc@gmail.com

Howie Equipment and Tire

Trailer & Tire Sales
1273 Mallard Ave, Hampton, IA
50441 (641) 456-5651

J-T Machine & Tool Co.

602 S Federal St/PO Box 304
Hampton, IA 50441, (641) 456-4513
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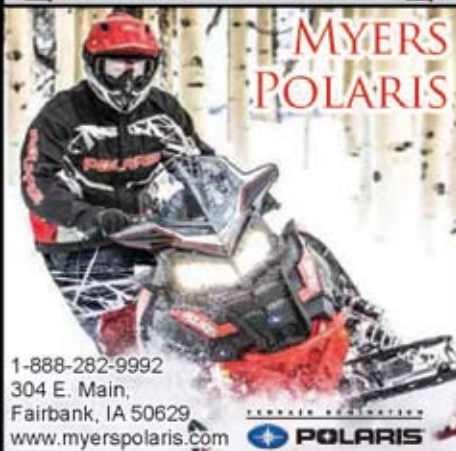
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