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December 2021 • Volume 43 • Issue 4

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CHANGE NOTIFICATION

If your club has elected new officers or if you have an address change, please notify the ISSA office at issa1257@yahoo.com. Thank you.

MAGAZINE DEADLINES

January Dec. 10
 February..... Jan. 14
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Snowmobile Iowa

Ride organizers set schedule, reflect back on last season's final event



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COVER: Arlyn Wood from Rudd leads a pack of snowmobilers out of town following a fuel stop in Earlville Feb. 20. The backpacking group was heading over to Dyersville to join the Snowmobile Iowa ride.

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Back in Business

Region 7 hosts annual convention last month, drawing more than 100 ISSA members to Ames

by Cameron Hanson

A year removed from the pandemic-cancelled event of 2020, the ISSA returned to normal last month as more than 100 snowmobilers converged on Ames the second weekend in November for the ISSA's 47th Annual Convention at the Quality Inn and Suites Conference Center.

Hosted by clubs in Region 7, the three-day event began Nov. 12 and featured annual meetings, board elections, seminars, drawings and a Saturday evening banquet. ISSA Vice President and past Region 7 Director John Kahler chaired this year's convention.

"You know, I thought everything went very well this weekend," Kahler said. "We had a few hiccups along the way, but we just worked through them. You learn as you go. Every venue is different, and I just went off of what I thought worked and didn't work at past conventions. All in all, our

event went off without a hitch."

"I would like to thank John for his efforts over the last two years to put on this convention," noted ISSA President Scott Nauman during his Saturday morning address at convention.

During board elections, Nauman and Kahler agreed to another year of service. In 2022, their two-year terms will end, and Kahler will move up to the top leadership spot on the board. Kesley Bram of the Butler County Snow Snoops in Region 4 was elected to the open secretary position.

Current Treasurer Brittany Paulus of the Floyd County Groomers in Region 4 has indicated to the board her desire to relinquish those duties. She plans to stay on as chair of the Membership and Charity committees and will continue to manage the ISSA's email account.

"If you know of anyone with a background in bookkeeping who would be interested in serving as treasurer, please let us know," Nauman said at the Sunday morning ISSA Board of Directors meeting.

With 2021 an odd-numbered year, elections were held in the ISSA's odd-numbered regions during the Saturday morning session. The only change came in Region 1 where Director Jim Skinner and Assistant Kevin Winters swapped positions.

Sunday morning, 16-year-old Wyatt Willey of the Snow Pioneers became the youngest member to serve on the board after being approved as an assistant to Director Matt Miner in Region 5. A third-generation board member, he is the son and grandson of Past ISSA Presidents Chris and Jim Willey, respectively.



Opening ceremonies.

Legislative update

During the general assembly Saturday morning, ISSA Lobbyist Mike Heller up-

dated snowmobilers on the status of the bill to merge the \$15 snowmobile registration fee and the \$15 trail permit user fee in Iowa. Presently known as House File 853, the proposal passed the Iowa House last session 90-1 but was stalled in the State Government Committee on the Senate side.

Long supported by ISSA members, the bill remains alive when the legislature convenes next month. If the legislation succeeds, the trail pass will no longer be optional and will instead be rolled in with the registration fee, plus writing costs. The move is expected to generate \$75,000 in additional funding for the state snowmobile trail grant program.

Heller said he likes the bill's chances this winter and points to the success of past "grassroots efforts" from snowmobilers in Iowa, including the restoration of swept funds in 2004, the annual registration system in 2008, the implementation of the trail permit in 2013 and the transfer of the state snowmobile program in 2017.

"I think we can do it this year," Heller said. "I am encouraged. I know how good of a job you can do because I've seen it numerous times in the past. Our bill is very doable. I encourage you to get to know your legislators and contact them on our behalf."

With 2022 an election year, Heller said legislators should be very receptive to phone calls. He identified Davenport and Council Bluffs as key areas for club contacts, although snowmobilers across the state should be asking their representatives to get the bill moving out of committee.

"We do have some resistance, particularly in counties that don't get a lot of snow," Heller said. "I think it's important to use



ISSA Lobbyist Mike Heller (right) with Past ISSA President Jim Willey.

this opportunity because legislators are running for re-election. We need to do the best job that we can."

Next month will be the sixth straight legislative session Heller, his partner Paula Feltner and ISSA officials have pushed for single-sticker legislation. If the bill fails to emerge again this winter, the process will start over in 2023, according to ISSA Legislative Committee Chair Jim Willey.

"I want to thank Jim for tirelessly trying to get our bill passed last year," Heller said. "It was a brutal session, to be honest, and the environment in politics has changed a lot. Now, you have very staunch partisan differences, and it makes it difficult to get things passed."

Willey also thanked Heller for his efforts to protect snowmobiling interests at the State Capitol in Des Moines. For the second straight session, Heller and Feltner will be working without a contract with the



Tucker groomer dealer Track Inc. was a major corporate sponsor at last month's ISSA convention in Ames. Above, Past ISSA President Dennis Nauman visits with Drew Gaffney and Rick Huber at their booth in the hotel lobby.

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Following the Review and Selection Committee (RSC) update at convention, RSC Co-Administrator and Past ISSA President Terry Durby (center right) visits with (from left) Shane Braby of the Humboldt Sno-Skimmers, John McKenna of the Tri-County Snowmobile Association and John Gallentine of the Webster County Ice Breakers.

ISSA, and their only compensation will be income from the ISSA's Club Challenge, a fundraising arm of the legislative committee where clubs make lobbyist donations.

"Our lobbyists have done a great job representing us in Des Moines and, due to our current budget situation, are only supported by Club Challenge donations," Willey noted. "What they do for us is so important. If we didn't have representation in Des Moines, we wouldn't have the ability to have the trails and protections we have in Iowa."

Insurance coverage

After Heller, convention attendees heard from Kelly O'Donnell from V and V In-

surance in Cresco. Connecting virtually, O'Donnell reviewed the \$54,000 trail insurance policy in Iowa and how it relates to club liability, equipment protection and negligence.

"Our goal is to protect you, protect your industry and, obviously, protect your sport," O'Donnell said. "Snowmobiling generates a huge economic stimulus through job creation, tourism and tax revenue. The list goes on and on. The biggest thing we are trying to protect is the recreational opportunities this sport provides for people in Iowa."

Among other advantages, club liability insurance offers legal representation to landowners who are sued following a



The ISSA Review and Selection Committee held its first groomer operator certification class of the season at last month's convention in Ames. An estimated 20 volunteers attended the Saturday afternoon session, 80 percent of whom were new operators. The course was led by instructors Chris Willey and Matt Miner. Additional classes will be scheduled later this winter. To request a training, contact Willey at issa.rsc@gmail.com. Certification is good for five years, and a list of each club's certified operators is required in the cab of each groomer.

snowmobile trail incident on their property. In Iowa, landowners are “released of any and all liability resulting from the use of said snowmobile trail,” as provided by Section 321G.22 and Chapter 461C.3, Code of Iowa.

“We want to make sure our clubs are doing their due diligence to make sure we are maintaining our trails properly and that we are signing our trails appropriately,” O’Donnell said. “We want to make riders aware of any trail changes because we understand landowners change and physical attributes of the land may change.”

Founded by Past ISSA President Dale Vagts in 1982, V and V Insurance has been a pioneer in snowmobile trail liability insurance for more than 30 years. In 2019, Vagts sold his agency to O’Donnell. According to the company’s website, V and V currently offers snowmobile trail coverage to 15 states, including Iowa. New for this season, the underwriter changed from Employers Mutual to West Bend Mutual.

“We appreciate your business,” O’Donnell said. “We appreciate being able to represent you and mitigate your risk as it relates to the fantastic things your association and the local clubs do for the snowmobile industry and the recreation that it provides to the people in the state of Iowa.”

Afternoon seminars

After brunch, the convention separated into several afternoon seminars, including a presentation from the ISSA’s Review and Selection Committee (RSC) and two sessions on groomer maintenance and operator training. The RSC has managed the state snowmobile trail grant program in Iowa since 2017 with 70 percent of the revenue collected from snowmobile registrations and trail passes.

Earlier in the day, the ISSA had adjusted its Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to separate the Emergency Funding Committee (EFC) from the RSC. This allows the EFC to apply for a grant from the RSC to help cover training and travel expenses for the ISSA. The EFC was created in response to the Iowa Legislature’s de-appropriation of snowmobile funding in 2002.

Also Saturday afternoon, attendees heard from the Clean Snowmobile Challenge team from nearby Iowa State University. Clubs also worked on a schedule for the upcoming sixth season of Snowmobile Iowa rides across the state. An alternative craft class was also held opposite the seminars.

During the Saturday evening banquet, ISSA members raised money for scholarship, charity, communications and other ISSA programming through raffles and silent auction. The ISSA’s fundraising campaign renews annually at convention, and the initial list for 2022 can be found



Gary Matthias (left) president of the Cedar Falls Sno Hawks in Region 4, won the ISSA’s Grand Raffle drawing at convention last month. Pictured with Matthias is ISSA Raffle Committee Chair Seth Bram.

on page 14. A preliminary total of \$11,445 was raised by ISSA members convention weekend.

Not included in that total is the \$2,620 net profit from the ISSA’s Grand Raffle drawing Saturday night. Gary Matthias, president of the Cedar Falls Sno Hawks in Region 4, won the Escape Reality drawing. He chose \$3,000 cash in lieu of a \$3,500 travel voucher. Of 450 printed tickets, 281 were sold at \$20 apiece.

The ISSA also recognized award winners during the banquet as well as this year’s scholarship winners. Attendees also heard from the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa, the ISSA’s official charity since 1982. Watch for more on convention in this and later issues of the *Iowa Snowmobiler* magazine.

Next year’s convention site remains undecided. Bids to host were due to the ISSA board prior to convention, and no club stepped forward. Per SOPs, hosting falls back on the board. The location and date for 2022 will be determined.

After a five-year hiatus, the ISSA Summer Campout is expected to return in 2022 as the Osceola County High Point Riders will be hosting the event in conjunction with its Second Annual Great Southern Snowmobile Swap Meet at the Osceola County Fairgrounds in Sibley July 29-31.

The fairgrounds features 15 campsites with full hook-ups (sewer, water and electric), and additional spaces are available with limited services. Full sites are reserved on a first come, first served basis. To make a reservation, contact Skinner at (712) 448-2567.

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Krapfl Named Andreini's Successor to Spina Bifida

by Cameron Hanson

Craig Krapfl of Ankeny has been appointed to succeed Past ISSA President Bruno Andreini as the liaison to the Spina Bifida Association of Iowa (SBAIA), the ISSA's official charity since 1982. Andreini announced his decision to step down in September.

Based on Andreini's recommendation, Krapfl—a fellow member of the Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club in Region 7—was confirmed at the Sunday morning ISSA Board of Directors meeting at last month's state convention in Ames.



Craig Krapfl

Andreini had served as the liaison for the past 16 years and personally recruited Krapfl to the position. Andreini said Krapfl's involvement in youth activities at the club level, his past participation in the ISSA's Winter Kids Day for spina bifida families and his proximity to the SBAIA's office in Urbandale all worked in his favor.

"Craig has all the qualities that I think should be there to do this," Andreini said. "I think it takes someone in that area to do a good job. The majority of families affected with this birth defect are located in Des Moines so it takes someone close to make that communication easy."

"I've never been able to say 'no' to Bruno," Krapfl confessed, smiling, about his decision to serve in this new capacity. "But I was also encouraged by my family to do it as well. I like seeing kids enjoying snowmobiling."

Krapfl knows he has "some big shoes to fill," as Past ISSA President Jim Willey stated in his motion to approve the appointment.



Carlyn Crowe (left) and Mary Helen Biller staff the Spina Bifida booth at last month's convention in Ames.

He and Andreini plan to work together over the next few months to review some of the expectations of the position. He realizes there will be a little bit of learning curve.

"We will be meeting later to find out everything about the position, but my plan is to keep everything going that Bruno started," Krapfl said.

"I'm not going anywhere soon, and I will help make this as smooth a transition as I can," Andreini said.

Their first order of business will be scheduling the annual Winter Kids Day. Typically held in early February, a date for this winter has not been set. Krapfl and Andreini plan to meet with city officials at Huxley to line everything up.

The Winter Kids Day began in 2007. The intent of the day is to bring families from both the ISSA and the SBAIA together for food, fellowship and fun. When trail conditions warrant, the highlight of the afternoon is snowmobile rides on the nearby Heart of Iowa Nature Trail.

The ride is sponsored through the Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club, and many club volunteers help out at the event, bringing two-up sleds or pull-behind cutters to provide rides to the kids and their families. It's how Krapfl got started.

"Our kids had a Kitty Kat and a Cat Cutter growing up, and then we started going to the Spina Bifida ride to help out because we had the cutter," he said.

Krapfl said one new idea he would like to incorporate for this year's ride is to put the ISSA's Trail Break trailer out on the trail so the kids have a place to stop on their short ride. Normally, the trailer is kept back at the Huxley Community Center as it houses the grill used for cooking the noon meal.

"Rather than having it set up in the parking lot, I think we should put it out on the trail somewhere where the kids can stop and have a break with us at the end of the loop," Krapfl said. "We could use it for them just like we would use it for us."

Carlyn Crowe, executive director of the SBAIA, said she is looking forward to working with Krapfl, although she did admit when they gave Andreini an appreciation gift at the 2019 convention in Burlington, she felt Andreini would stick around a little longer. At this year's convention, she thanked Andreini for his years of service and also thanked snowmobilers for their ongoing support.

"Your fundraising helps propel our success," Crowe said. "The people we are able to help is our success story. Your financial support is what helps us build our success stories so thank you for that. Thank you for making us part of your lives."

To kick off the 2022 fundraising campaign, the ISSA recognized \$4,100 in donations to the SBAIA at convention. A list of the recent donors can be found on page 15 of this month's issue.

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On the trail near Cresco in February of 2008



Clowning around at the Winter Kids Day in Huxley in January of 2017



Teaching kids on the simulator at Winter Games in January of 2017



Working with students at the Clean Snowmobile Challenge in March of 2019



Riding through northeast Iowa

Cancer Benefit for Hoermann Planned for Dec. 11 in Paullina

by Cameron Hanson

Officials in Region 1 will be hosting a benefit for former director and Past ISSA President Merv Hoermann at the American Legion in Paullina Saturday, Dec. 11, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Hoermann was diagnosed with colon cancer in November of 2018.

Director Kevin Winters and Assistants Jim Skinner, Steve Wiersma and Randy Magg are spearheading the event. They are planning a free-will donation meal with hamburgers and then an auction and raffle drawings. Live music is scheduled afterward from 8 p.m. to midnight.

“This will be a great way to honor Merv and recognize everything that he has done for snowmobiling in Iowa,” Skinner said in announcing the benefit at the 2021 ISSA Annual Convention in Ames last month.

A lifelong snowmobiler, Hoermann, 71, has been involved in the ISSA for more than 30 years. He started out as an assistant director in Region 1 and was then elected director before moving onto officer positions. He is the only board member to serve two separate terms as ISSA president: 2007-08 and 2015-16.

“Merv has been involved with snowmobiling for a lot of years and has done a lot for the ISSA,” Past ISSA President Bruno Andreini said. “He is very deserving of anything we can do for him.”

In addition to his roles on the board, Hoermann has represented snowmobiling interests on the Iowa Rec Trails Advisory Committee and also volunteered annually at the Clean Snowmobile Challenge (CSC) at Michigan Tech University. He has attended several International Snowmobile Congresses on behalf of the ISSA as well.

Although located in far northwest Iowa, Hoermann never thought twice about attending various snowmobiling events across Iowa, including the charity ride at Huxley, LeMans racing at Clear Lake, grass drags at Ankeny and youth events at Winter Games.

“Merv has always been dedicated to snowmobiling and has always been good about getting to several functions every year,” noted former Region 6 Director Gene Gerdes, a regular travelling companion of Hoermann’s over the years.

From Storm Lake to Dubuque, Hoermann rarely missed a convention and was involved in chairing or helping to organize conventions which landed in western Iowa. He first initiated the Snowmobile Iowa club displays at convention in 2004 at West Lake Okoboji. Due to health issues, the last convention he was able to attend was 2018 in Spirit Lake. He last helped out at the CSC in 2019.

“Being involved with the ISSA is something that I always liked doing,” Hoermann said from his home in Paullina. “I would at least like to think I made an impact with some people and made our sport better than it was. It takes work and will always need work.”

Brand loyal to Arctic Cat, Hoermann is also known for riding his snowmobile across Iowa on several occasions, particularly over President’s Day weekend in the late 2000s. In fact, the few times he gave up his trademark cowboy hat or his favorite Green Bay Packers cap was to put on a snowmobile helmet.

“It was always a pretty cool thing to do,” Hoermann said about his passion for snowmobiling. “I still get phone calls today asking about trails and riding in our area. It’s neat

that people remember you, because at convention may be the only time you ever see some of them.”

Next to snowmobiling, Hoermann has been equally devoted to the beef industry. He has remained active in the O’Brien County Cattlemen’s Association and, even as late as this summer, was working as a livestock reporter for the USDA, recording cattle numbers at local sale barns.

Cancer treatments have slowed Hoermann down lately. Three months ago, his doctor stopped chemotherapy and moved him onto a different pill regimen. His weight had dropped to 139 pounds, and he has since been able to gain six pounds back.

“I wasn’t strong enough to go through any more chemotherapy,” Hoermann said. “I wasn’t eating anything, so they took chemo away. It is surprising how much carry-over there is from those treatments, however.”

Hoermann said he is looking forward to the benefit and hopes to be able to attend. Given his well-known affinity for beef, he said he was glad to hear they will be serving hamburgers there. “If they were serving chicken, they’d be eating alone,” he joked.

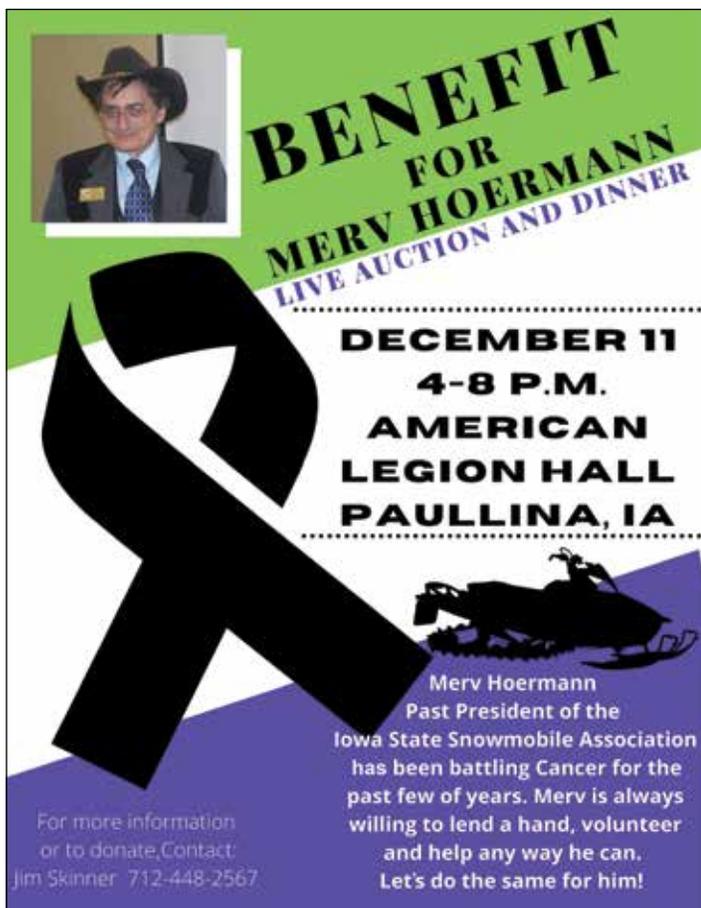
His family continues to keep a close eye on him, and now it is time for his snowmobiling family to show their support. ISSA clubs are being encouraged to make a donation to the benefit, either monetarily or through items for the auction and raffles.

“Any way you can help and support this cause would be greatly appreciated,” ISSA President Scott Nauman said.

At convention, the Dickinson County Snowhawks of Region 1 kicked off the campaign with a \$500 donation. According to Skinner, the local cattlemen’s group is providing the hamburger patties.

Checks can be made out to the Merv Hoermann Cancer Benefit and mailed to Jim Skinner, 4871 Pierce Ave., Paullina, IA 51046. For more information, contact Skinner at (712) 448-2567.

If you would like to send a card to Hoermann, his address remains P.O. Box 22, Sutherland, IA 51058.



**BENEFIT
FOR
MERV HOERMANN
LIVE AUCTION AND DINNER**

**DECEMBER 11
4-8 P.M.
AMERICAN
LEGION HALL
PAULLINA, IA**

Merv Hoermann
Past President of the
Iowa State Snowmobile Association
has been battling Cancer for the
past few of years. Merv is always
willing to lend a hand, volunteer
and help any way he can.
Let's do the same for him!

For more information
or to donate, Contact:
Jim Skinner 712-448-2567

Trail Sign Order Delayed

Snowmobile clubs in Iowa were notified last month by the ISSA’s Review and Selection Committee (RSC) that delivery of new trail signs will be unexpectedly delayed this season.

According to Trail Sign Committee Chair Matt Miner, an equipment breakdown at Iowa Prison Industries (IPI) has caused the disruption. IPI is the preferred sign vendor for the Iowa State Snowmobile Trail Grant Program.

As of this writing, there is no further update on sign orders. Clubs in need of signs are asked to make a request to the RSC at ISSA. RSC@gmail.com.

“If you need signs, get in touch with us, and we will divvy out what we have in reserves,” Miner said. “We are going to do the best we can until the new ones arrive.”

The order for roughly 15,000 signs was placed in September by the RSC. The committee is planning to move up that deadline in the future to guard against untimely delays.



CALENDAR

December

- Merv Hoermann Benefit Saturday, Dec. 11, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the American Legion in Paullina. Donations encouraged. For more information, call (712) 448-2567.

January

- Snowmobile Iowa ride Jan. 8 at Sibley starting at 10 a.m. at 59 Powersports. For more information, call (712) 448-2567. ISSA Directors Ride to follow.
- ISSA Board of Directors meeting Jan. 9 at 9 a.m. at Sibley.
- Snowmobile Iowa ride Jan. 15 at Stratford starting at 10 a.m. For more information, call (515) 835-8000.
- Snowmobile Iowa ride Jan. 22 at Cresco starting at 10 a.m.
- Dickinson County Snowhawks vintage ride Jan. 22.
- Theisen’s Snocross National Jan. 14-15, Dubuque County Fairgrounds, Dubuque. Visit snocross.com for complete details.
- Cor Powersports Okoboji 100 ice race Jan. 15-16, East Lake Okoboji. Presented by the Dickinson County Snowhawks at Parks Marina.
- Driftrunners’ 51st Annual Snowfest Jan. 20-23, Cresco. Follow the club on Facebook for more details.
- Snowmobile Iowa ride Jan. 22 at Cresco.
- University of Okoboji Winter Games Jan. 27-30. Visit uo-fowintergames.com for complete details.

February

- Team Iowa Snowmobilers ice drags Feb. 5 at Little Wall Lake, Jewell. Follow the club on Facebook for complete details.
- Dickinson County Snowhawks vintage ride Feb. 5.
- Midwest Sled Fest Feb. 5 at Clear Lake. Visit midwest-sledfest.com for more details.
- Butler County Snow Snoops fifth annual vintage ride Feb. 12, starting in Dumont. Follow the club on Facebook for more details. Feb. 19 back-up date.
- Dickinson County Snowhawks vintage ride Feb. 19.

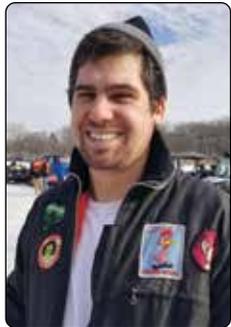
Vintage Fever

Age is just a number when it comes to snowmobiling in Butler County

by **Cameron Hanson**

Don't tell his wife, but Seth Bram of rural Packard likes to collect vintage snowmobiles. That's probably why he lives on an acreage. He has plenty of outbuildings to hide his dusty little secret.

At last count, the 33-year-old owns 25 sleds...all older than himself. Some are parts sleds, some are projects in waiting and others qualify as operable "on a good day." Looking to feed his habit, he said he's always searching for his next barn find and prefers to discover oddball machines.



Seth Bram

"The more unusual the better. I like to locate rare, one-of-a-kind sleds," he said, adding he is usually willing to travel to satisfy his addiction. "The hunt-and-chase is the best part about of all this. I also like to learn the story behind them."

With the price of new sleds reaching the mid to high teens, Bram, the ISSA's director for Region 4, said the vintage sled market provides an economical alternative for people who want to find another way to have fun in the sport. Depending on condition, the investment can start as low as \$300.

"Vintage sleds are getting more and more popular, so the prices are going up a little, but the deals are still out there if you want to take the time to hunt them down," he said. "I would say if you want to find a sled that's already running, you could spend upwards of \$500."

Each February, Bram, who also serves as president of the Butler County Snow Snoops, gets to dust off some of his old iron for his local club's vintage ride. Approaching its fifth season this winter, the event began as a small group of friends attempting to survive a trail ride from Dumont to Aredale.

"It has really grown from there," said Bram, who credited club trail coordinator Bill Boeckmann for developing and organizing the event. "We didn't realize how much this event would grow. Last year, we had roughly 50 vintage sleds and 50 newer rides. Bill really took the ball and ran with it."

In Iowa, a snowmobile manufactured prior to 1984 is considered antique and can be registered for a one-time fee. However, club organizers try to remain inclusive and open the ride up to anyone who is interested in an afternoon of fun.

"There is no age restriction on the sleds for our ride," Bram said. "I think one of our keys to success is to make it fun and exciting. That, in turn, has helped with our club growth and fundraising efforts."

As it has from the beginning, the Butler County vintage ride continues along the cross-country trail between Dumont and Aredale. The 20-mile roundtrip includes a bonfire stop halfway between each leg. Support vehicles and rescue trailers help with any carnage left along the trail.

"Every year, we have a few sleds that break down. You usually see them littered off to the side, waiting to get picked up," he said. "We try to drag them to the nearest road intersection so it's easier for the recovery guys."

This year's ride is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 12. The route can be found on the club map printed on the next two pages, and additional information will be posted on the club's Facebook page. A back-up date has been set for Feb. 19 in case of poor trail conditions.

"We just want to be safe and make sure everyone has a good time, even though most vintage sleds don't need a whole lot of snow to run on," Bram said.

This year, the club is raffling off a 1978 Ski-Doo Olympic 340 in conjunction with the ride. The snowmobile was purchased from a club member at cost, and tickets are \$10 each. To purchase, contact Bram at (641) 512-1932.

As Bram indicated, the vintage ride is a great way to raise funds for the



Staged outside the bar in Dumont.



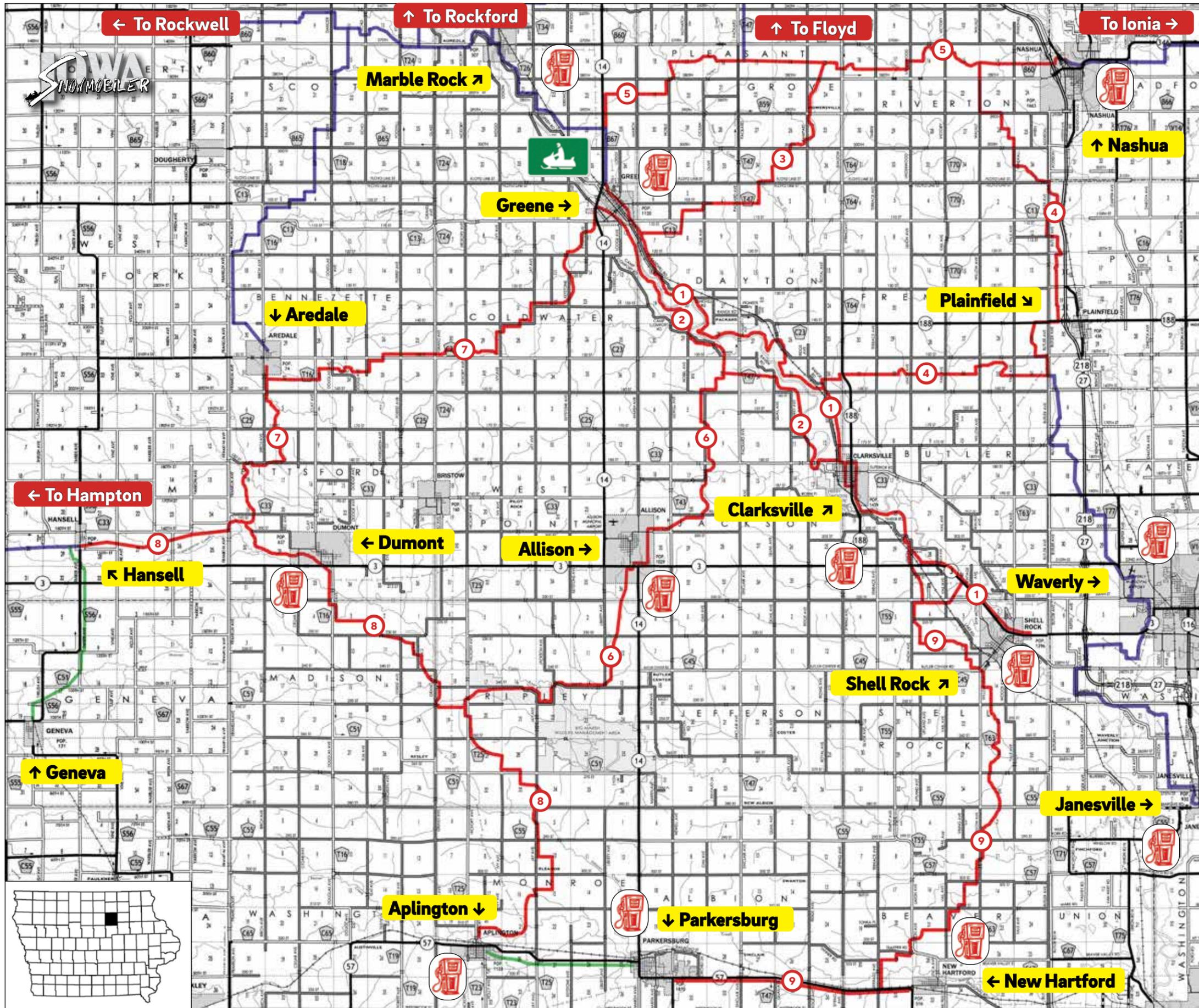
Bill Boeckmann and son Fletcher leading the way.



The more unique the better.



1978 Ski-Doo Olympic 340 raffle prize.



LEGEND

Use map for reference only. Follow all signs and respect private property.

- █ Primary Trail
- █ Secondary Trail
- █ Neighboring Club Trail
- █ Proposed Trail

 Trailhead Parking:
• Freeze Frame, Greene

 Fuel Available
(91 Octane in Greene)

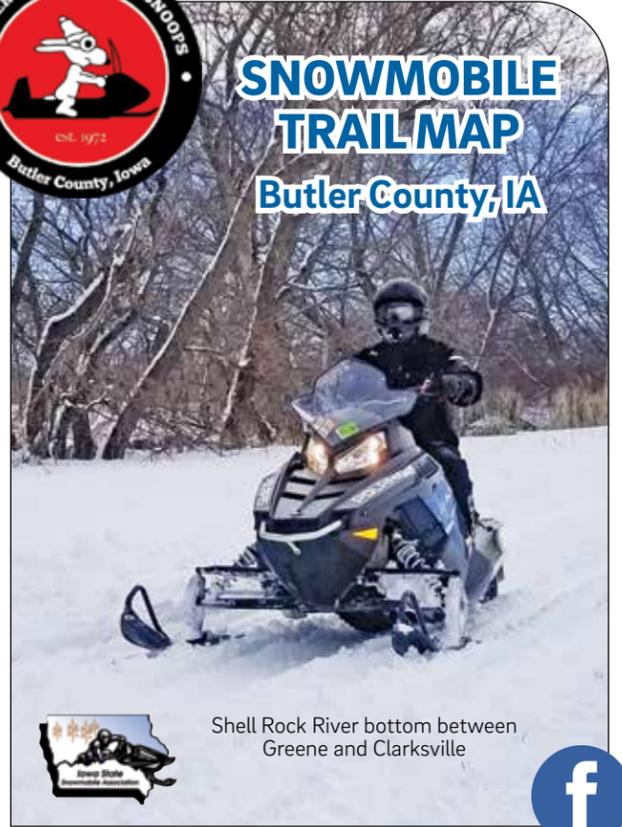
 Trail Number

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SNOWMOBILE TRAIL MAP

Butler County, IA



 Shell Rock River bottom between Greene and Clarksville



2022 DONATIONS

Friends of the ISSA

| | |
|---|-------|
| Best's Powerhouse, Dunkerton | \$100 |
| Bob and Judy King, Council Bluffs | \$100 |
| Dickinson County SnowHawks..... | \$200 |

ISSA Lobbyist Club Challenge

| | |
|---|-------|
| Tri-County Snowmobile Association | \$407 |
| Floyd County Groomers Association | \$300 |
| Cedar Falls Sno Hawks | \$250 |
| Iowa Snowdrifters | \$200 |
| Snow Pioneers | \$200 |
| Team Iowa Snowmobilers..... | \$200 |

Spina Bifida Association of Iowa

| | |
|---|---------|
| Driftrunners..... | \$1,250 |
| Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club..... | \$1,000 |
| Cedar Falls Sno Hawks | \$500 |
| Eastern Iowa Sled Heads | \$500 |
| Tri-County Snowmobile Association | \$407 |
| Floyd County Groomers Association | \$300 |
| Iowa Snowdrifters | \$200 |
| Snow Pioneers | \$200 |
| Team Iowa Snowmobilers..... | \$200 |

ACSA Legal Defense Fund

| | |
|---|-------|
| Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club..... | \$250 |
| Floyd County Groomers Association | \$200 |
| Iowa Snowdrifters | \$200 |
| Team Iowa Snowmobilers..... | \$200 |

ISSA Scholarship Foundation

| | |
|---|-------|
| Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club..... | \$250 |
| Floyd County Groomers Association | \$200 |
| Snow Pioneers | \$200 |
| Team Iowa Snowmobilers..... | \$200 |
| Butler County Snow Snoops..... | \$100 |

ISU Clean Snowmobile Challenge

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Scott County Sno-Seekers | \$360 |
| Team Iowa Snowmobilers..... | \$200 |
| Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club..... | \$150 |
| Dickinson County SnowHawks..... | \$100 |

ALS of Iowa

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Team Iowa Snowmobilers..... | \$200 |
|-----------------------------|-------|

Please mail all donation checks to the ISSA Office,
1924 270th St., Marble Rock, IA 50653.



Snow Snoops charity director Sadie Smith (left) with North Butler Elementary School Principal Jaymie Odell.

club and to increase its exposure. One hundred percent ISSA, the Snow Snoops finished the 2020-21 season with 66 members, down from a high of 74 members two seasons earlier. They hope to increase that number with year-round events.

Whether it's a car cruise, holiday party bus, highway clean-up day or fair booth, each month seems to offer a different club function. During the offseason, the club also hosts an annual golf outing. Last summer's tournament was so popular a second four-person best-shot event was added a month later.

Among other benefactors, the club is raising money to pay for their match of a new groomer and drag. As announced at last month's ISSA convention in Ames, the club is first in line for a new groomer from the ISSA's Review and Selection Committee.

According to Bram, club members also believe in giving back to the community. Earlier this fall, club members donated brand new winter coats to children in need at six elementary schools served by their trail system. The club also made a sizeable donation to Compassion Flights in nearby Hampton.

Founded by Doug and Robyn Pralle, who used to own the bar in Dumont, Compassion Flights consists of volunteer pilots and supporters who arrange free aerial transportation to patients who need medical care throughout the Midwest. To learn more, visit compassionflights.com.

Donations like these help fulfill the club's unwritten mission statement. "I feel we are a young and energetic club and like to do things which make a difference in our communities," Bram said. "Hopefully, people can see that commitment through our efforts."



Snow Snoops president Seth Bram hands a donation check to Compassion Flights founders Doug and Robyn Pralle.

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Heritage Trail between Dyersville and Farley Feb. 20.



State Rides

Reflecting on last year's efforts, looking ahead to this season

by **Cameron Hanson**

The ISSA's Snowmobile Iowa program enters its sixth season this winter, and coming off last year's successful campaign, ride organizer and Past ISSA President Bruno Andreini is excited about the prospects for this season.

Andreini met with interested snowmobile clubs at last month's state convention in Ames to set the schedule for 2022. The program was expanded by a week to include seven consecutive Saturdays, and three regions have already stepped up to fill the first three weekends.

The first organized state ride is planned for Jan. 8 in Region 1. Riders will depart 59 Powersports in Sibley at 10 a.m. and follow a 50-mile route through O'Brien, Clay and Osceola counties before heading over to the Iowa Great Lakes Region and Dickinson County trails.

With the ISSA Board of Directors meeting set for the following Sunday morning in Sibley, a special 'Directors Ride' will commence after the state ride on Saturday for anyone wishing for a longer day of riding. For more information, contact Region 1 Assistant Director Jim Skinner at (712) 448-2567.

The following weekend, Team Iowa Snowmobilers in Region 7 will host a Snowmobile Iowa ride near Stratford on Jan. 15; and after that, the Driftrunners in Region 5 will coordinate a state ride on Jan. 22 as part of the four-day Snowfest weekend, similar to last winter.

Four dates remain open—Jan. 29, Feb. 5, Feb. 12 and Feb. 19—and as Andreini stated at the Saturday afternoon planning session at convention, he understands members may need to return to their clubs to get final approval before committing to a date.

"I would like to see Snowmobile Iowa added to each club's upcoming meeting agenda to discuss the schedule and to see if they are interested in hosting a ride," Andreini said. "If need be, I can make calls as well to see if we can fill up the rest of the dates."

Scheduled rides and current contact information have been added to the ISSA's Calendar of Events on page 10 of this month's issue. Trail conditions and ride updates are normally communicated via email and social media as the dates get closer.

From booths to trails

Snowmobile Iowa is a spin-off of the long-established club showcase at convention of the same name, where clubs set up booths to display their trails, maps and event photos. Starting five years ago, Andreini wanted to take that concept a step further by encouraging clubs to host organized snowmobile rides and to brag

about their areas firsthand.

"The purpose of this program is to educate riders on where the best snowmobile trails are located in Iowa," Andreini said. "We also want to establish a good and lasting relationship with other riders and help keep tourism dollars in our state since we will be riding closer to home."

Each ride starts at 10 a.m., and Andreini said he prefers the planned routes to stay within 40 to 50 miles. Host clubs are asked to provide a 'Ride Captain' to lead the group and then have two or three members follow up at the rear to make sure participants stay on course.

Last February, ride organizers with the Humboldt Sno-Skimmers wore hi-visibility safety vests to bookend each group of riders as they split into faster-paced and slower-paced packs. This may be an option for other clubs as the distinct designation helps to define the coordinated event.

Andreini said he would like host clubs to provide a trail map to each participant as well and to suggest overnight lodging accommodations for those who may be travelling from out of the area. Each ride should also have scheduled fuel and warming stops.

If your club is interested in hosting one of the four remaining dates, please contact Andreini at (515) 240-3858 or awbrunoa3@



Snowmobile Iowa coordinator Bruno Andreini (center left) with nephew Ryan Andreini, son-in-law Donnie Dorrian and nephew Toney Oliver outside Dirty Ernie's in Farley Feb. 20.

gmail.com. He said is looking forward to this year's schedule and hopes to match the success of last year's campaign.

Excellent conditions

Last winter, the Snowmobile Iowa program completed four of its six scheduled dates, and even the two remaining weekends weren't cancelled due to a lack of snow but rather over travel concerns: blizzard conditions Jan. 16 and subzero temperatures Feb. 13.

The last event of the season came Feb. 20 in eastern Iowa, hosted by the Dyersville Driftskippers of Region 5. Located along the Highway 20 corridor, this club had enjoyed above-average snowfall last winter and, at one point, had built up a trail base of nearly two feet.

As Andreini experienced personally, the conditions were excellent for a state ride, as club president Ryan Ameskamp led the group from Farley to Holy Cross and Luxemburg before returning back through Dyersville. They ended back at Dirty Ernie's in Farley with close to 50 miles on for the day.

"I just wanted to tell this club this is probably the best ride I've ever had in Iowa in a long time," said Andreini, who drove three hours from Dallas Center to get there. "The temperature was perfect. The conditions were perfect. The trails were groomed perfectly, and the snow depth was perfect."

Among the 30 or so participants, Andreini was joined on the ride by his son-in-law and two nephews. In addition to cross-country trails, riders enjoyed about seven miles of the Heritage Trail, a 26-

mile multi-use corridor that stretches from Dyersville to Dubuque.

Ameskamp said that all-season rail-trail has been part of the club's system for several years, and snowmobilers are allowed access to it with their current snowmobile trail pass. "That's a biking and hiking trail that's been around forever," he said. "We have permission to groom and ride it when there's a good enough base."

The Driftskippers maintain close to 150 miles of trail in eastern Delaware County and western Dubuque County. They finished last season with 53 members and have about 20 trail bosses to spread the work around. The club meets monthly during the season and tries to stay active with a membership drive and fundraisers.

"This year has been really good for snow for us, and for our club, everything's getting better year to year," Ameskamp said last winter. "The trail marking is getting a lot better. We have a very good crew with a lot of great volunteers, and we have a lot of active members, which helps."

Last February was the first time the Dyersville club had hosted a Snowmobile Iowa ride, and Ameskamp said he did not hesitate when asked to fill the last date on the schedule. "Bruno called me, and I agreed to it right away. I thought it would be fun to do," he said. "The more events you have, the more people you can bring in and the more members you get."

As evidenced by the number of sleds parked behind the bar in Farley, the Dyersville event was quite popular. Already impressed by the trails and snow cover, Andreini said he was equally pleased by the turnout. He was having a hard time containing his enthusiasm.

"The hospitality today has just been 100 percent," Andreini said. "Everyone made us feel very welcome. I was able to take my family with me on the ride and that means a lot to me. I am just thrilled to see all of these sleds here and all this activity happening under our program. Maybe the Snowmobile Iowa program is doing some good."



Ryan Ameskamp



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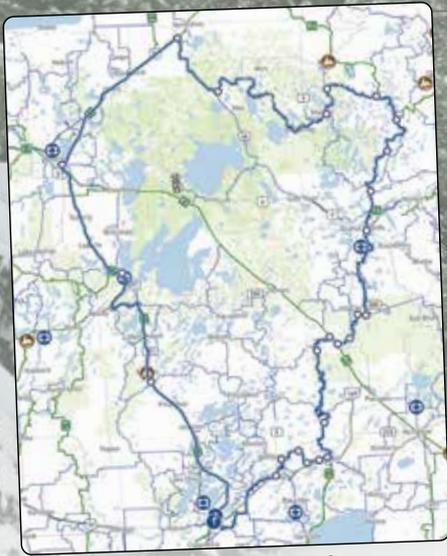
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Three days. 403 miles.

Weekend Getaway

Backpacking around northern Minnesota

by Cameron Hanson

Extended weekends are perfect for timely snowmobile escapes to the Northwoods. Offering valuable respite from the daily grind, these quick trips use up less vacation time from work but typically require easy access to trails so you spend less time driving and more time riding.

For my gas money, Rice Lake, Wis., and Brainerd, Minn., fit the bill. Both destinations are a manageable four-hour drive from home, so you can usually leave right after work on a Friday and still have two or three days of solid riding ahead of you, depending on what your schedule allows.

Both vacation spots offer rail-trail corridors to get you where you want to go. From Rice Lake, Hayward and Park Falls are popular destinations; and from Brainerd, Bemidji and Grand Rapids are easily within reach. Over the past few winters, I've visited both places and will focus on Brainerd here.

Destination snow

After an easy pull on mostly four-lane roads, we arrived at the Days Inn at Baxter the first weekend in February of 2019. This hotel in Brainerd's sister city is conveniently situated just two blocks west of the famed Paul Bunyan Trail, a 123-mile former railroad grade that runs from Brainerd to Bemidji.

Always a fan of backpacking, the plan for the weekend was to make a loop northeast to Grand Rapids and then over to Bemidji.

In my head, it seemed like the three-day ride would create a triangle, but after mapping it on the Polaris Ride Command app, it definitely took the shape of a deflated balloon.

By design, we saved the Bemidji-Brainerd leg for the third day of our journey as that was our travel day back home, and we knew the rail-trail would get us back to our trailer in a timely manner.

A shout-out to the hotel there for letting us keep our tow vehicle parked for three days.

Well rested, we departed the Days Inn the first morning and crossed the beautiful Paul Bunyan Trail bridge at the Excelsior Road crossing in Brainerd. We then turned northeast toward Crosby for breakfast. Crosby is the birthplace of Scorpion snowmobiles and is also well known for mountain biking.

After breakfast, we continued on to Aitkin for our first fuel stop of the day and then turned north toward Hill City, eventually crossing the Soo Line rail-trail and meeting up with two other members

of our group who decided to trailer farther on up to Grand Rapids.

After reuniting for supper at the Corner Club near Haypoint, we picked up Corridor 41 and followed the through-town snowmobile route into Grand Rapids for refueling and for the first overnight stop of the trip. We hit the kill switch at the Super 8 there with 136 miles on the trip meter.



Groomer sighting on the Taconite.

Longer middle day

Bitterly cold temperatures greeted us the following morning, and a jumpack from the front desk at the hotel helped to get my sled started. After a lengthy warm-up period, we exited Grand Rapids on the north side to hook up with the Taconite Trail, shown as Corridor 88 on the Itasca County trail map.

Based on several previous trips to the area, the Taconite Trail is one of the best trails in the area in my biased opinion. Stretching 165 miles from Grand Rapids to Ely, this evergreen-lined trail is wide with generous corners and a well maintained snow pack. In fact, we passed the first of two groomer sightings for the day shortly after leaving town.

After an energetic 36-mile run to start our second day, we quickly reached the intersection with Corridor 84, also known as the Herb Brandstrom Trail. At this point, we turned due north for an obligatory stop at the Scenic Pines Bar and Grill for an early lunch or late breakfast, depending on what you ordered. From there, we continued northwest on Trail 84 before cutting west on the Cameron Lake Trail and passing by the Antler Lodge.





Finding plenty of snow around Marcell.

Twenty-four miles later, we turned south toward Marcell, first warming up at the Timberwolf Inn and then fueling at Frontier Sports. From here, we picked up the Bowstring Trail and passed our second groomer of the day. Spoiled by the generous curves of the Taconite, we found this winding trail a little slower with tighter turns and fewer opportunities to warm up.

Eventually, we emerged 46 miles later, albeit a little more cranky but grateful to find another rail-trail in front of us. After stopping just outside of Northome, we followed the Blue Ox Trail down to Tenstrike for an extended supper break. Refreshed, the final jaunt for the 166-mile day brought us into Bemidji from the north, guided by the bright lights outlining frozen Lake Bemidji.

Eventually connecting back with the Paul Bunyan Trail, we end-

ed up for the evening at the new Candlewood Suites. Following a good night's sleep, we fueled up at the gas station across the road the following morning and headed 30 miles south for breakfast at Walker. Not long after there, our foursome split in half as the other two riders returned back east toward Grand Rapids for a few more days of riding.

As previously laid out, we continued south along the Paul Bunyan Trail for another 70 miles of leisurely riding before reaching our trailer early in the afternoon. We had been to Hackensack, Backus and Pine River on previous visits to the Paul Bunyan Trail so it was easy to count down the miles to the end. Before long, we were loaded back up and heading back through the Twin Cities before rush hour, fully recharged from our 403-mile weekend getaway.



Making our way down the Paul Bunyan Trail at Hackensack.

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Region 5

CLUB NEWS

Driftrunners, Inc.

by Zach Gooder, President

Hello Everyone!

Fall is definitely here! Fall harvest has been progressing nicely in our area. Hopefully, within a few weeks, we can get out and get the majority of our trail system marked. We are working on a few changes to our trail system, and as most years entail, brush work, bridges and re-routes are needed. Anyone looking to get involved in our club is invited to our next board meeting.

We last met on Nov. 8 and also held our Winter Kick Off membership drive on Nov. 27 at The Mint in Protivin.

We have begun preparation for our 51st Annual Snowfest Jan. 20-23. We will continue working on that and hopefully have copious amounts of snow to work with!

Region 7

Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club

by Barry Starmer, President

As I write this article looking out the window, I see snow flurries coming down. Hopefully, this is a sign of what's going to be a good riding season.

We attended the state convention in Ames last month and enjoyed seeing fellow club members from across the state. We also had a good turnout at last month's club meeting, and it was good to have Region 7 Director David Eide attend.

With the help of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at Big Creek State Park, we have made our trail there one way. We have installed 'One way' and 'Wrong Way' signs. This should make the trail safer for riders.

We have completed marking all 120 miles of our trail system and have completed maintenance on the groomer SO BRING IT ON! We are ready.

Region 9

Iowa Snowdrifters

by Derrick Parker, Member

The Snowdrifters have been active the past few months. Starting in August, we held a successful BigTown ShowDown Truck and Tractor Pull. With somewhere around 1800+ people attending the event, the Snowdrifters' volunteers were busy.



house and to join social events, which we think contributed to the turnout.

Food was the biggest challenge for us this year, and we had two vendors run out before the pull even started. Luckily, that was not the case for the beer. That might have caused a problem. The Event Committee completed a review shortly after, and we have areas to continue to improve the event next year. The team is making this a significant event; we hope it is enjoyable for everyone.

In October, we had our club and trail coordinator meeting. At the meeting, we had around 20 people show up as leads and volunteers who brought a lot of excellent planning for the year. The club meet-

ing was held at the Legion in Swisher, and we filled the room. One of the members brought the newly purchased DR mower which certainly generated some excitement and spirited conversation.

Everyone seems excited about winter. Several trail coordinators have already been meeting with the various town leaders, the county management teams, and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, with mixed results. North Liberty is slowly getting too complicated to get through and Johnson County can be challenging to get bridges in the right of way approved, but Swisher, Ely, Solon, Tiffin and Shueyville all seemed a go.

The Snowdrifters clean-up day was October 15. Early in the season, the club focuses on the wooded trails around the lake and some of the rights of way to clear and mow. Several groups went off and cleaned up trails 3, 7, 1A, 8 and 4A. The trails looked great as far as the groups could get to; however, several fields are not picked yet. Over the past few weeks, several crews have also been out working to make sure our portion of the system is marked and ready to go. Now, we are waiting for the harvest to finish and final fertilizers to be applied in order to get out there and finish marking.

We are looking forward to a few new trails this year. One will be into Swisher from the east side and lead to the Legion or the Black Squirrel Tap. Both are great places to stop. Another new trail will be from Wild Hogs in Walford to Norway. This will remove some challenging ditches and now be on a Level B road with farm fields in between. Another change will be a reroute in Fairfax, now that the construction there is done. More to come on that one as the trail coordinator meets with the city. Other changes may be in the works. Be sure to watch our Facebook posts for more updates.



The Scott County Sno-Seekers hosted their third annual Turkey Day Shoot-Out Nov. 13 at the Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds in Davenport. The event drew 35 racers in three classes.

Scott County Sno-Seekers

by John Behrens, Member

Season's Greetings from the Sno-Seekers!

Snowflakes are beginning to fly in Iowa, and we are anxiously awaiting the first measurable snowfall. Trail signs have begun to dot the roadway ditches and trails in Scott County. Our club has many more trails to get marked, but we were really busy preparing for our third annual Turkey Day Shoot-Out event, held on Nov. 13.

The grass drags, vintage/modern snowmobile show and swap meet event attracted snowmobile enthusiasts from across the states of Iowa and Illinois! The event hosted over 35 racers in three race classes and plenty of fun runs for others who brought sleds to compete.

The Sno-Seekers also hosted the Iowa State University Clean Snowmobile Challenge team who participated in the event. A \$360





The Clean Snowmobile Challenge team from Iowa State University participated in the Scott County grass drags last month. The club donated \$360 to the college program.

check was presented to the ISU team during the event as a donation to support the collegiate club in competition.

Additionally, 19 vintage and modern sleds participated in the sled show competition. Thank you to our local sponsors, club volunteers and participants who came to the event. Without them, this event wouldn't be as successful as it continues to be. It was a great day of pre-season fun.

Overall, the event was a huge success and was a great way to kick off the upcoming season! The club welcomes any suggestions or comments from those who participated to try and make the event better for next year.

In other news, we have been working on our groomer. We are waiting on a few final parts to arrive but will have the track and bogie assemblies changed out before the snow sticks. We are look-

ing forward to a busy season.

As we await the arrival of a white winter, we will begin preparations for our annual Women's Day ride event in January with the Quad City Women's Outdoor Club. This is a wonderful event to give women in the area the opportunity to ride club members' snowmobiles on a closed course after a short snowmobile safety education training session with our local conservation officers. The event is usually a sell-out event for participants and a great fundraiser for the club.

We hope all Iowa Snowmobilers have a great holiday season with friends and family, and enjoy safe riding throughout the New Year!

For more on the Sno-Sneakers Turkey Day Shoot-out, visit the club's Facebook page.



The Scott County pre-season event also featured a sled show which attracted 19 vintage and modern entries.

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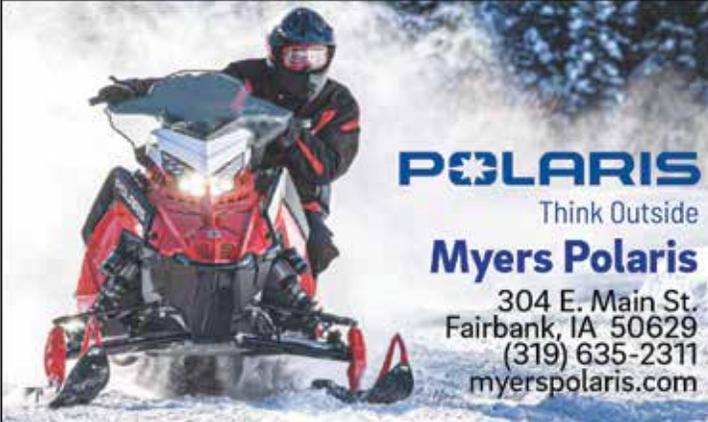
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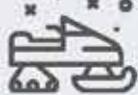


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