

# Manitoba's Snoman REPORT



## THREE-YEAR GOALS SET

WE NEED TO KEEP THE SNOWMOBILING PUBLIC BETTER INFORMED  
**BY ALAN BUTLER, President**

Manitoba has enjoyed a winter with sufficient snow for all clubs to open their trail systems. Some clubs had their trails open by mid-December and most were open by early January.

Snoman's season started with the Snowmobile Congress in November—the event was very well attended and a great success. Plans are already underway for the 2013 congress.

On November 23 and 24 Snoman held a strategic planning session. During the session we reviewed our progress and then set new objectives for the next three years. Some of the key goals were to:

- Strengthen the governance at the region and club levels;
- Enhance the volunteer base of the snowmobile clubs;
- Improve communications with regions, clubs and membership.

To ensure the goals are achieved, committees were formed and committee members named.

As president, I received a number of phone calls and emails during the course of the riding season and it is very apparent from these calls and emails that there is a great expectation that trails are always going to be kept in top condition. As one person said, "I put up good money for a Snopass and I expect the trails to always be well groomed." I was also told Snoman should have a couple of spare groomers and drags that clubs could borrow in the event the club had a

breakdown. It is obvious that a great number of snowmobilers have no appreciation of the effort the clubs put forth to ensure the trails are kept in the best condition possible.

We really do need to do a better job keeping the snowmobiling public informed of the effort put forth by volunteers at the club level and the countless hours these volunteers put in to ensure we have safe trails to ride. The most troubling thing is that I expect some of the people that call and complain do not even purchase a Snopass. As one caller stated, "I'm not buying a pass until the trails meet my expectations." If you are reading this message and use the trails without purchasing a Snopass, next time when you are on the trail stop for a moment, look around and realize you are enjoying your ride because of the efforts of a great bunch of club volunteers. Support their efforts by purchasing a Snopass.

There is a new look starting to show up on the trails in Manitoba. Clubs are starting to install the new provincial trail numbering signs. Next season the Provincial Trail Map will have the trail numbers marked on them enabling snowmobilers to easily navigate the Manitoba trail system.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those club members that work so hard to ensure we have a safe trail system to ride on. Thanks also to the private landowners for letting clubs cross their property. Enjoy the rest of the season, ride safe, have fun and ride sober.



## A GOOD SNOW YEAR

ON TRACK TO MEET OR EXCEED PREVIOUS SNOPASS SALES  
**BY KEN LUCKO, Executive Director**

I am writing this article on a Saturday afternoon—the temperature is -11 C—we have the best riding conditions and the trails are in fantastic shape. You can have the best planning, the best of intentions for the riders, but it all comes down to one thing—snow. If there is snow, it's great. If there isn't—well, you get the drift. We

were very fortunate to have an abundance of snow throughout most of the province this season. The club volunteers have done a great job of preparing and grooming the trails.

At the Snoman office, we are extremely busy this time of year doing all of the things that are

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## >> SNOMAN EXECUTIVE

### President

Alan Butler,  
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### Vice-President

Sylvain Paquet,  
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### Treasurer

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### Secretary

Bill Musey, Swan Valley  
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#### Eastern Region

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Brad Wall,  
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Inwood Snowmobile Club  
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► **KEN LUCKO** *continued from page 25*

required for the administration of the organization. One item worth mentioning is the weekly trail condition reports that clubs are required to send to the office on Thursdays. I must mention one we recently received that stands out from all of the others. It appears that one club was having its signs pulled out and chewed up by a moose—you just have to wonder why.

We just recently had a booth in the Mid-Canada Marine and Powersports Dealers Association Snowmobile, Motorcycle and ATV Show at the Winnipeg Convention Centre. It was a great opportunity to talk to snowmobilers from around the province.

We are very fortunate to have a great riding season—we are on track to meet or exceed last year's Snopass sales. Also, we are well into developing our economic impact study survey that will give us current information as to the economic benefits to Manitoba that are derived from snowmobiling. An example of this was a local restaurant that recently had 60 snowmobiles

parked out front on a Saturday afternoon.

Our club volunteers certainly require a special mention as again this year they are providing the snowmobilers in Manitoba with safe, environmentally friendly, designated trails to ride on. The amount of commitment that is required to develop, maintain and groom 12,000 kilometres of trail is monumental.

We are also thankful to all the private landowners who allow snowmobiling on their properties—their contribution is greatly appreciated.

The job of providing the designated trail system is never-ending and at a recent board meeting we have begun to plan for next year's season to help streamline procedures for our member clubs and to improve the experience for the rider.

It seems that just a little while ago we were hoping for snow and now with the longer days and warming temperatures we are beginning to see the end of the season. I am extremely proud to say that the Snoman staff have certainly risen to the challenges that have been presented to them and that their commitment is inspiring.

►► **CLUB NEWS**

► **SWAN VALLEY**  
*Continued from left*

November 2012, the Swan Valley Snowmobile Association was awarded Outstanding Snowmobile Club of the Year for the 2011/2012 season. As well, Derek, Lana, Aaron and Bailey Sagert were awarded Outstanding Snoman Family of the Year. Congratulations!

In closing, the Swan Valley Snowmobile Association would like to thank all of its members and volunteers who have helped with fundraising including the food booth at the Swan River Rodeo and supporters of the Swan Valley Snowmobile Association trail map. Thanks also to those involved with trail signage and maintenance, trail clearing and trail grooming.

And many thanks to the executive, committee chairpersons and committee members, the local Department of Conservation and their employees, the landlords who so generously let us run our groomed trails across their land, snowmobile dealers and local merchants, hotel and motel owners, restaurants, fuel suppliers, Swan Sports Lounge for letting us use their facility at no charge for our meetings, groomer operators and groomer service technicians, and the towns and municipalities that continue to support our organization.

**Volunteering has many benefits**

—by *Lexie Fahey*

The Nopiming Sno-Mads has discovered a new "bush warrior," Jesse Guenther. A young keener at heart, Jesse spent Christmas Eve volunteering with club member Larry Lee doing disaster trail clearing and posting signs. Stopping to enjoy the beauty of a bowed tree along the

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## Swan Valley Snowmobile Assoc.

BY BILL MUSEY

At the beginning of 2012, we were one of the fortunate areas in the province to have snow. This brought a lot of snowmobilers from all over the province as well as from Saskatchewan and the U.S.A. This was a great economic boost to the Swan River Valley and its merchants.

Every weekend and even during the week, hotels and motels were booked not only in Swan River, but in neighbouring towns. Restaurants were full with many a sledder commenting on the excellent food and service. The four major dealers in Swan River were kept busy selling parts, oil and even sleds to out-of-town snowmobilers. There were many comments regarding the exceptional service that the dealers provided when snow machines had broken down. Thank you William's Auto Electric (Ski-Doo), Rough Country Sports (Polaris), Fire & Ice Motorsports Ltd. (Arctic Cat), and Northern Rentals and Power Products (Yamaha).

With the additional traffic on our groomed trails, the volunteers had to do additional trail maintenance and additional grooming. Thanks to our neighbouring club, the North Mountain Riders, which does such an excellent job of maintaining and grooming trails in the Porcupine Mountains and surrounding areas. Between the Swan Valley Snowmobile Association and the North Mountain Riders, snowmobilers can enjoy over 700 kilometres of well-groomed trails.

In mid-July of 2012, the northern part of the Duck Mountains got hit by a massive windstorm and there was extensive damage to the area in-

cluding our club's historic Cowan Trail, Wellman Lake Trail and the White Church Trail. Initial studies indicated that these trails would not be opened and ready for the 2012/2013 season. However, at a special meeting in September the club decided that they would go ahead and spend the money and volunteer time required to get the trails cleared and opened. Led by Barry Campbell, Vaughn Behrmann, Derek Sagert and Ray McCleary, sub-contractors were hired and many difficult challenges were overcome.

With the help of volunteers like Darryl Boychuk and George Didyk, the trails were cleared for the start of the snowmobiling season, with the exception of the White Church Trail due to wet conditions. This trail was later opened at the end of January with help from Clint Cocks and Clayton Woodley. Thank you one and all for your great effort to have these trails opened. Pictures and a video of this devastating storm can be viewed on our website, [www.svsaa.ca](http://www.svsaa.ca). Please take the time to view.

The club has received some very generous donations. They include Cook & Cooke Insurance Brokers, \$1,000; J B Construction, \$1,000; Mountainside Unloading, \$1,000; and Doug & Sandra Cooke, \$200. These donations will help with the enormous cost of clearing the trails. Thanks also to Ron Kostyshyn, minister of agriculture, food and rural initiatives, for the forthcoming donation from the Province of Manitoba.

At the second annual Snoman conference in  
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# Tamara takes to the trails

BY CRYSTAL CANN

On Saturday, February 2, 2013, Tamara Shewchuk went on a snowmobile ride from Winnipeg, Manitoba, to Granite Lake, which is about 30 kilometres from Kenora, Ontario, and returned home the following day. The ride was 220 kilometres each way and took 16 hours in total to ride. What is amazing about Tamara's ride is that she is only 13 years old! She went with her father, Warren, and some family friends—seven people in total. There was another 13-year-old on the trip but on the way home his sled broke down and he had to be trailered back home. Tamara rode an '81 Yamaha Enticer 340 and had no breakdowns.

During the long trip, they encountered mostly good trails. It was occasionally icy but nothing Tamara couldn't handle. What she loves about riding is seeing new places and wildlife—last year she saw a bobcat and some deer. What makes her happy is that she can keep up with the group and is not always the last one as she grows as a rider. Overall the trip was fantastic—her wrists hurt only a little bit with the long ride and Warren says she slept for 14 hours when they got back!

Living in the Lockport area, Tamara and her dad are always on their sleds. They usually join the St. Martin Power Toboggan Club Inc. each year and ride many miles throughout the riding season. Tamara was on a sled as early as four years old and she continued to ride with her dad until she could ride by herself.

Now she is the one to make sure that she and her father have everything they need for their long trips. She makes lists, brings extra clothes and a first aid kit—she is extremely organized, leaving nothing to chance. Tamara also likes to look over the map of where they're traveling to—she doesn't like not knowing where she's going.

Warren, too, makes sure he is always safe—checking the sleds carefully and never riding alone in case something was to happen. He's been riding since he was 15 years old

and loves having something he and his daughter can do together.

Tamara loved this trip and hopes to be able to do another long one before the season is done. If she does you'll know she'll be well prepared!



# South Interlake SnoRiders

BY JOE THIEVIN

Finally a winter with snow! The winter riding season began for most of us mid-November with trails opening in early December. The club had several events and fundraisers planned that went off with some quirks. The season created many memories that will be talked about all summer.

Some of the club members organized a New Year's Eve ride on a bitterly cold night up to Frydays restaurant in Teulon for dinner and fellowship.

After planning the poker derby a year in advance, we were blessed with 15 centimetres of fresh snow, 75 kilometre-per-hour winds and colder than normal temperatures. Despite the marginal weather, the club attracted about 100 riders who braved the conditions. The club managed to raise about \$1,000 from poker

hands and an additional \$900 from the silent auction. Kudos to the club members who volunteered their day manning checkpoints, registration and setup—you deserve a gold star! The club is most grateful to Melissa for organizing the silent auction and keeping the day running smoothly—thank you again!

Annually, the club picks a select location for a group ride. On Louis Riel weekend, a group of 11 discovered the land of Polaris—yes, Polaris!—also known as Roseau, Minnesota. The weekend was full of good times

and hard riding. Two of our prominent club members (Bruce and Walter) had their precious Ski-Doos fail with one Arctic Cat (Bernice) tak-

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## >> CLUB NEWS

### ► VOLUNTEERING *Con't. from pg. 26 sidebar*

well-groomed Wolf Trail, these two generations were pleased to work together for a common goal.

Our club is extremely proud of the volunteer commitment represented by our members each year. They range from children and youth, to adults and retirees. Our young members manage to find the time to volunteer in some capacity, in addition to attending school, participating in other extra-curricular activities and working part time. As you know volunteering has many benefits. It gives us an opportunity to make new friends, learn to respect others' differences, develop leadership skills and spend time outdoors. It also provides a sense of accomplishment and appreciation. To Nopiming SnoMads club members, family and friends, thank you for coming together to make our Eastern Region community a better place.

### ► SOUTH INTERLAKE SNORIDERS *Continued from left*

ing on a six-inch tamarack. Even our youngster, George, made the trip with Old Faithful. The weekend came to an end with a ride home in a blizzard. All arrived home safely after logging nearly 800 miles. As the season drew to an end, there was a dinner ride to South Beach for some more good times.

As summer approaches, the club is planning a number of events including a camping weekend at the Rubber Ducky Resort in Warren on the weekend of June 15. The weekend is always full of misadventure and good times. If you are interested in coming, get your tent, pack your Speedo and get

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# Kelsey Trail Sno-Riders

BY KATHY SANGSTER

It has been another great year for snowmobiling in the Northern Region. Our snow came early—lots of it—and has stayed around with none of the dreaded mid-season meltdowns. By the middle of February, the Kelsey Trail Sno-Riders groomer guys had groomed 2,600 kilometres of trail in our area, which covers The Pas, Wanless, the Opaskwayak Cree Nation and Clearwater Park. We groom as far north as the Goose River where our trail connects to the Border Explorers trail to Flin Flon. To the south, we go as far as the Red Deer River, which is between Overflow and Mafeking where we link up with the North Mountain Riders trail.

We produced a new map this year and it is very easy to read. We included the new provincial numbering system on the map and also have put the new numbers up on most of our trails. We built three new outhouses for our warm-up shelters after one of our directors came back from down south and said we ladies in the north deserve better. He told

us about one biffy he saw that even had a heater inside and here we had one that didn't even have a door—but what a view of Mother Nature!

We also placed a shelter on our trail to Highway 39, necessitated by the closure of the only store/gas stop at the end of our trail. This way people can still enjoy the trail and have a place to stop and get a fire going and have a cook-up. Five of our seven shelters now have solar-powered lights, which eliminate the worry of candle-caused fires.

We also held our major fundraiser on March 9—the Cook & Cooke poker derby—and our fabulous prime rib dinner and social. The funds from Snopass sales alone do not keep up to the huge costs of maintaining our 421 kilometres of trails, so it is important for not only snowmobilers, but also the businesses that cater to snowmobilers, to support the various fundraisers of all clubs in the province. By working together, we can all make winter fun.



Volunteers are shown hauling the new biffy to the Campbell Lake shelter.



The groomer was used to place a shelter on the trail to Highway 39.

# Eastman SnoPals

BY LEN TROTTER

The Eastman SnoPals had a successful membership drive at the Halfway Hut on February 9, 2013, and we would like to thank all those who bought memberships! We also did a great deal of cleanup on the corner, splitting and stacking the large logs in the woodshed.

Many thanks to Pat Blaney and Ernie Wiebe for bringing a generator, splitter and chainsaws and to other members who assisted in the cleanup and making it a successful day. Those include Bob and Cory Solnes for cooking up the “dogs,” Don Marion, Irene Blaney and Shawn Trotter for taking care of the memberships and 50/50 poker draw, which raised over \$300 for our club.

We want to thank our many sponsors who helped make the day a success. These include Russ, Evan and Kelly Page (and spouses) of Neptune Mariner, Pinawa Solo Store,

Gary and Pina Tirschman of Seven Sisters Esso, Pat Curry of Lac du Bonnet Petro Can, Jarrod Dola of Seddon's Corner Esso, Ernie and Elaine Wiebe of Wiebe's Transport, the Lac du Bonnet Co-op Station, and Rob and Karen Tashiro. We could not have done it without their support.

The Eastman SnoPals trails are some of the best and we would like to commend our dedicated groomer operators for their tireless efforts in maintaining and grooming our over 300 kilometres of trails. This was particularly challenging this year when our Lac du Bonnet groomer broke down and was in Steinbach for approximately one month for repair. Many

of our groomer operators worked very long hours (past midnight in many cases), to ensure our trails were safe and in table-top condi-

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## >> CLUB NEWS

### ► SOUTH INTERLAKE SNORIDERS

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a spot for the weekend.

The other event is our wood-cutting venture. Last year, we earned about \$1,500 selling firewood to campers and this season should net us about \$5,000. If anyone has a few hours to donate, Bruce could use a hand cutting, bundling or delivering wood.

Once again this year, we are producing a map and seeking sponsors or advertisers who want to be recognized. We already have a list of businesses and organizations that have made the commitment to partner with our club but are always seeking more. The map program generates much-needed funds for our club and provides the opportunity for the club to recognize the businesses that support us.

On a final note, we have a vibrant and dedicated group of volunteers who put in countless hours putting up signs, maintaining trails, grooming and co-ordinating events. When you see a volunteer out on the trail, give 'em a wave or say thanks—they deserve it! For more information, visit our website at [www.southinterlakesnoriders.com](http://www.southinterlakesnoriders.com).

Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless.

### ► EASTMAN SNOPALS

*Continued from left*

tion. Our groomers are all volunteers, so we appreciate their time.

Eastman SnoPals members get around, too. Ed Yaworski organized a five-day trip leaving from Nutimik Lake to take advantage of Ontario's reciprocity weekend on February 15, 2013, where Manitoba snowmobilers could ride for

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► **EASTMAN SNOPALS**

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free for three days. Ed, Ernie and Jason Wiebe, Russ and Rylan Page and Greg Motkaluk rode over 1,600 kilometres in Ontario, Minnesota and North Dakota in only five days. They reported it was a great trip with mainly very good trails, but it was good to get home to our trails.

Not to be outdone, Pat and Irene Blaney, Rob and Karen Tashiro, and Len and Shawn Trotter trailered their sleds over 800 kilometres to Two Harbors, Minnesota, where they rode over 500 kilometres of trails along the North Shore of Lake Superior in three days.

The views were spectacular and again the trails were in great condition. They saw groomers on the trails every day! The only drawback would be their warm-up shelters. They are three-sided only to block the wind, with outdoor firepits, so there were no trail lunches. Instead, the local restaur-

rants got their business.

Snowmobiling is a great sport. We are fortunate in Manitoba to have trails as good as any we rode in the United States.

Our February 9, 2013, fundraiser was a success, but Eastman SnoPals still only has 25 per cent of the members of the Whiteshell Snowmobile Club, or the Lee River Snow Riders club. Members and volunteers make all snowmobile clubs work so that we can all enjoy the trails.

Many of the comments received at the fundraiser included fantastic trails, well-organized fundraiser, etc. So please buy a membership and get involved. Your \$20 membership allows our groomers to groom approximately 10 miles/16 kilometres of our trails. Eastman SnoPals members carry memberships with them, or visit our website at [www.eastmansnopals.ca](http://www.eastmansnopals.ca) to join, see pictures from our events or a list of upcoming events.

# Springfield Pathfinders

BY ROGER HRISTOVSKI

Saturday, February 16, 2013, was the official grand opening date for the Springfield Pathfinders Snowmobile Club's warm-up shelter. It was a great day and one that we will all remember.

The forecast for the day was sunny, with low winds and a high of -8 C. The day started off with a club ride. The 162-kilometre journey started in Oakbank and those that participated in the club ride travelled on trails maintained by our very own club (Springfield Pathfinders) and neighbouring clubs including the Brokenhead Trail Blazers, Mooswa Lake Snow Riders and the Eastman SnoPals. As usual, trail conditions everywhere were in table-top condition (thanks to all the above-mentioned clubs and their volunteer groomer operators). A great mix of ditch trails along highways, winding treed trails in scenic forests, and a stop at a popular warm-up shelter (Ski-Doo Hut) were enough to get everyone started off in the right direction. With every stop, a few more members joined and by the end of the club ride, approximately 20 riders took part in the trek.

Many knew of the final destination and the real purpose the day had to offer. The Pathfinders Palace (the name of our shelter) had been open since the beginning of the 2012/2013 snowmobile riding season. A project that took a few weeks to complete was created for all to enjoy for many years to come. Some thought a shelter

would be an additional burden that our club could not afford to have. That could not be further from the truth as the shelter has really brought the members of the Springfield Pathfinders closer together from the moment the first pile was laid to the last nail pounded into the deck. Furthermore, people in the surrounding communities have come to learn about the club and what it takes to keep our trails groomed and ready for the weekly onslaught of snowmobilers who partake of their favourite pastime.

Many riders came through the shelter on our grand opening day. The chili was hot, the hotdogs were aplenty (thanks to a donation from one of the members), and smiles could be seen all around. The wood stove kept the shelter warm and a fire in the outside firepit allowed riders to cool off near the pleasant aroma of burning wood. Snowmobiles of all makes and models peppered the grounds. The club ride of

20 riders ballooned to more than 40 a short while later. Some continued on their way followed by another 10 or so riders. Families, groups and individual riders stopped in as they have been doing week after week. Most were from our snowmobile club and some came from neighbouring clubs. There were a few not affiliated

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## >> CLUB NEWS

► **SPRINGFIELD PATHFINDERS**

*Continued from left*

with a snowmobile club and they were informed how membership has its privileges. By the end of the day, close to 100 people enjoyed the event and many new acquaintances were made.

There is still work to be done at our warm-up shelter, but it is the type of work that is rewarding and club members look forward to the next task. The build portion may be over, but plans are in place to spruce up the surroundings with pine, to spread more gravel around the shelter to protect the shelter and the grounds from brush fires, and firewood will need to be replenished often. Efforts will now shift to finding sponsors who can place signs within the shelter for a small annual fee. Some have signs posted already and were reaping benefits from the riders who attended the grand opening.

A big thanks goes out to the organizers of the grand opening event, especially Blaine Moffat who quarterbacked this initiative and ensured all the i's were dotted and the t's were crossed. There were many others who assisted including Cynthia, Dianne, Lisa, René, Sherry, the kids, Ken, Kocha and Perry to name a few. We all look forward to the next gathering and many years of enjoyment at the Pathfinders Palace.

The Springfield Pathfinders Snowmobile Club is based out of Oakbank, Manitoba. Monthly meetings are held on the third Monday from September through April. For more information about the club go to [www.springfieldpathfinders.com](http://www.springfieldpathfinders.com) or email us at [spsc@mts.net](mailto:spsc@mts.net). We welcome new members and we hope your visit is safe and enjoyable.



# Springhill Trailblazers

BY SUSAN ROGERS

Yikes, it's almost the end of snowmobiling season in southern Manitoba. I think that most sledgers would agree that this has been a banner year. All clubs have been doing their best to make the trails smooth and safe for all of us.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the gentlemen in our club for getting out there, spending their precious time sitting for hours inside the groomer just so we can enjoy the ride. Often it is in the middle of the night, while the rest of us are dreaming about the next big snowfall or blasting through the powder on some open field—but not one that is planted with crops, right people?

The frigid cold hampered plans for some of our rides but most went on as scheduled. Our weekend away was once again at Pinewood Lodge on Dorothy Lake. We had a great time and lots of laughs. Bridget organized a Friday night trivia game, which I can honestly say most members took part in. We broke up into three teams. I can't believe that the farmers on my team didn't know the proper name for the silk on the top of the corncobs. Team 1 won the event—most of the team members were women. How about that, guys?



The Saturday morning deep freeze



The winners of the Friday night trivia party

Saturday morning we woke up to a temperature of -38 C. It was just amazing how everyone came together to get sleds started because I have to say that it was a struggle. Booster cables came out, hair dryers were in use, our son had to pour gas into the cylinders on our sleds and in the end only one machine didn't make the ride. I won't say what make or whose it was but he knows! You

know when that happens, you just feel for the guy, but he got to ride anyway—he took the wife's machine. That is the beauty of being a member of Springhill; we all look out for each other. We didn't let -38 C stop us from our day of riding through Whiteshell Park. Greg led 21 machines out and brought 21 back all in one piece. The trails were well groomed; the only problem was that the warm-up shelters needed to be warmed up when we arrived. No problem—Steve and Dean got a roaring fire going in the wood stove and we all enjoyed some good old hotdogs. Nothing better! The shelter was warming up just as we were leaving. Oh well, the next

visitors there would appreciate a place to get out of the cold. The nice things about Pinewood Lodge are the beautiful accommodations and ▶

## The Canada Connection

BY TREVOR LEVEY, Assoc. of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs Youth Advisor

*Reprinted with permission from the January 2013 issue of Wisconsin Snowmobile News.*

It was still dark outside when the four of us got up to head to the airport. Brittany Thompson and I arrived the night before at the home of Mike and Mary Holden to prepare for the trip. By 6 a.m. we were out the door and on our way, passports and luggage in hand. The flight out of General Mitchell in Milwaukee was on time and all went well. We landed in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Airport in Minnesota where we had a couple hours layover and a little lunch. Finally we arrived in Winnipeg, Manitoba, where we all had to go through customs before being allowed to enter Canada.

Once we were allowed into the country, we went to our hotel, the Canad Inns. After settling

in, we were welcomed by Alan Butler, the president of Snoman (Snowmobilers of Manitoba) and his wife, Linda. We were invited to attend the annual meeting. It reminded me of our general session workshop meeting held on Saturday morning, but they had theirs on Friday night. We were introduced at the meeting in front of everyone, so naturally after the meeting we talked to many people in the hall and at the hospitality room.

It ended up being a very late night because we decided to go over things one last time for our presentations the next day. We had to make certain that things were finalized for our two three-hour presentations. We reviewed the Power Point, decided who would speak when, and made

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### >> CLUB NEWS

#### ▶ SPRINGHILL TRAILBLAZERS *Continued from left*

warm hospitality, the food and fuel available on the premises as well as a hot tub, which was certainly a welcome sight when we got back from our ride.

We once again held a grooming rodeo in March. Those who participated realized that there is a lot more to grooming than just sitting in the cab and listening to tunes. I noticed that our president, Pat, conveniently scheduled the date on the weekend I have to work—again! I think there is a conspiracy to keep me away from that machine.

In December we lost a good friend and a very active member of our club, Paul Burch. He passed way too young and we sure do miss him. Paul was always quick to volunteer for the club in many capacities, and always with a smile. It's true what they say; you never really miss someone until they are gone. Paul is gone but not forgotten!

We will be having a Bingo Bowl on April 6, 2013, at the Selkirk Bowling Lanes. We try to have social events outside of the snowmobiling season as well, to keep the membership active and informed. Our annual general meeting will be April 10. In the meantime we have more trails to ride and fun to be had.

Once again I would like to thank all those people involved in the Springhill Trailblazers past and present that make our club what it is today. You know who you are. I need not list names but just know that we appreciate what you have done, and still do on a regular basis, to make this sport one that we are excited to be a part of. Happy sledding and, as they say, keep the rubber side down.



► CANADA CONNECTION

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sure the props were ready for the games before finally heading to bed.

In the morning we put on our K.A.O.S. shirts—after all, we wanted them to know who we were, and we wanted to look good. The first presentation was from 9 a.m. to noon. There were almost 40 people in the room, and I was a little nervous. I looked over at Brittany but after being Miss Snowflake she is a pro and didn't show any nervousness. We talked about how youth groups started and how to keep youth involved; basically everything and anything to do with K.A.O.S. We had a great time showing them some of our icebreaker games, like Face Cooke and Butt Darts. We all shared a laugh. So you could say they were successful and we did it all over again two hours later.

Saturday night we attended the Snoman awards banquet. This reminded me a lot of our banquet at our workshop when we give out our "Of the Year" awards. At this awards presentation, we ate a wonderful buffet dinner, followed by entertainment. A comedian was brought in to give everyone a good laugh before the excellence awards were presented for outstanding dealership, snowmobiler, groomer, fam-



Trevor Levey and Brittany Thompson had the honour of representing the AWSK K.A.O.S. program in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

ily, and snowmobile club. It was a very nice evening, and we all felt special because president Butler introduced us to everyone, and we wore boutonnieres. After the banquet, the socializing continued as we were invited to president Butler's hospitality room. Everyone was again very nice, and complimented us on our presentations. I had such a good feeling inside that I knew something was up. So I looked outside, and sure enough, it was snowing! What a beautiful sight.

Funny thing about snowmobilers, they all love the snow and can't wait to play in it. I looked out my window later that night to see a groomer that was on display cruising the parking lot. It was rather interesting watching it. Turned out to be the Snoman office girls getting a head start on their driving lessons.

Sunday morning we expected delayed flights as we awoke to six inches of snow on the ground. The loaders were in the parking lot moving the snow. Mike and I didn't want to leave as the snow was mighty inviting. But home we must travel and flights were on time. It was a wonderful experience; one I will never forget. We are so lucky to have wonderful sponsors who helped send us on this trip so we could share our knowledge with others.

>> CLUB NEWS

► NOPIMING SNO-MADS

*Continued from left*

ies served up by our membership director, Karen Wiebe, and secretary, Lexie Fahey. The minister praised the hard work of all the volunteers and members who work so hard to keep the trails so well maintained. It was pointed out that all the clubs in the region have an amazing volunteer base to keep things going. He acknowledged the economic impact that snowmobiling has on the province as well.

The minister also complimented our groomers on the fantastic condition of the trails and was very taken with the amazing terrain along our trail system.

After an hour's break, the group set out again heading towards T.J.'s Way, a trail named after T.J. Wiebe who was a victim of a homicide at the time Mackintosh was the minister of justice. Active club members, Floyd and Karen Wiebe, as well as the minister, were moved to tears as they had a picture taken at the trail-head.

Nopiming Lodge was the last stop where the minister had a photo taken with Blaine Guenther and his wife, Brenda Adair, owners/operators of the busy lodge. At that point the minister returned to the Tulabi Falls Campground where he said his goodbyes.

Our executive and members appreciate the time the minister took to visit our area. We certainly hope he enjoyed his visit as much as we enjoyed having him. He did comment at one point how much he enjoyed his work when it included events like this.

We would also like to thank all the people who came out for the ride and helped put it together—all showing the minister how amazing our little club is.

## Nopiming Sno-Mads

BY WENDY MITCHELL-DIETZ, President

After an incredibly difficult start to our season, the Nopiming Sno-Mads Snowmobile Club put together a great event designated Ride with the Minister. The idea was spearheaded by past president Martin Enns who had been working on getting the minister of conservation and water stewardship, Gord Mackintosh, to come for a ride on our fabulous trails in Nopiming Provincial Park.

It has taken a couple of years to find an available weekend during the best part of snowmobile season. Minister Mackintosh said he had some experience riding on some classics but hadn't ridden in about five years. Chris Atkin from Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship brought Minister Mackintosh out to the park early Saturday morning February 16. It was a beautiful sunny morning when the minister arrived at the newly constructed campground office in the Tulabi Falls Campground. Most of the Sno-Mads executive were there to meet him as well as club members and friends. Robin and Annette Cadzow, friends of the Sno-Mads, had coffee, tea and treats for us before we had some pictures taken with the minister and got ready for

our eagerly anticipated ride.

The first stop made was at the beautiful Tulabi Falls, which was made even more spectacular by the snow and ice all around. We hopped back on the sleds and headed across Tulabi Lake before entering the bush trail at the end of the lake. Minister Mackintosh and the rest of the group travelled along the Bear Trail until we got to the Davidson Lake brush pile. At this point we stopped and had a look at some of the remnants of the damage caused by the October 5 storm. As we continued on, Minister Mackintosh was able to see more of the bent and fallen trees in the forest along the trail system. We had a few more stops along the way where there were other issues that we, as a club, deal with year after year, such as an abundance of beaver dams. Our ride continued past the Cougar Trail and on to Shane's Shelter just south of Birse Lake.

We had a stopover at Shane's Shelter where more members joined us while the minister had an opportunity to casually chat with members and indulge in hotdogs, hot chocolate and cook-

*Continued on sidebar ►*

## Coast to Coast by Dennis Burns

# How to keep a volunteer happy

Snowmobiling may have started slowly in some parts of Canada but a winter storm has hit again all across the Midwest and a new storm is building in the central U.S. that will travel north into Canada for more late-season “winter gold!”

As we reflect over the season we must recognize the hard work and efforts of the thousands of volunteers who make the trails magically appear each year—from brushing and clearing, to installing thousands of signs, to staking lakes and fields, to building or re-decking a bridge, to putting a track back on a groomer at 2 a.m. on a -30-degree day! Whether Celsius or Fahrenheit, -30 is much colder than a warm bed. Yet they do it willingly for the sport they love.

Join me in also thanking all of the landowners who allowed access on or through their properties. This allows the trail system to be truly inter-connected with day loops and community-to-community touring capabilities. Let’s also say thank you to individual landowners, to the many corporations and to the local or national business partners who support our vision and passion for snowmobiling.



Let’s work together to encourage our governments at all levels—municipal, provincial and federal—to continue to partner with the largest organized trail managers and operators in Canada. Organized snowmobiling represents 50 per cent of all known organized trails in Canada. Over 10,000 kilometres of the Trans-Canadian Snowmobile Trail are in operation today and many sections are under investigation or re-view by local teams. One section that is very hard to finalize is the trail from Alberta to British Columbia as the area is affected by the national parks of Jasper, Banff and Yoho. More work still needs to be completed to identify the right corridor through this scenic section.

The efforts of volunteers can and should be recognized. It shows appreciation for their hard work, long hours and time away from their families and other activities. Remember, we are competing with other needy volunteer groups. Volunteers will go where they feel valued and are having fun. So keep the workload manageable and keep the person doing what they are good at or like to do. As the leader, president, ►

► committee chair or just an eager volunteer, another huge job to be completed each year is recognition of your team.

Here are the “3 Rs” of working with volunteers:

1. **Recognition:** If you have a great volunteer, consider a human interest story on your web page or in the local paper, introduce them at a local club meeting or get a town councillor to speak at a meeting where many of the volunteers get a thank you and a few minutes in the spotlight.

2. **Reward:** Everyone who shows up to volunteer should be acknowledged for their time with a simple thank you; recognition by their peers could include a plaque or pin or perhaps dinner for two at a local restaurant.

3. **Recruit:** Challenge everyone to bring a friend for a ride or join in on a brushing and clearing day. For every new recruit you may get two or three more.

Once you recruit the new folks, listen to them as they have ideas. Some may have been heard before but you have to help them grow and learn. Just think—how did you get so good at what you are doing? Match up your volunteers so that the new ones have a mentor identified to work with them. Check on them and make sure that your teams are working well together. If not, mix them up or ask them who they would like to team up with. The 3 Rs of volunteering can go a long way in building larger teams. Volunteers create magic as they do all of the hard work to make trails a reality. What many do not fully understand is the hard work to close the season to make the trails magically disappear until next season.

## The CCSO would like to thank our sponsors for the 2012/2013 season..

Please support businesses that support the CCSO—the national voice of organized snowmobiling!



Dennis Burns