



# SNOSCENE



## HERE'S TO THE LADIES

SOME AWESOME EXAMPLES OF WOMEN EXCELLING IN THE SPORT  
**BY ERIN HART, President**

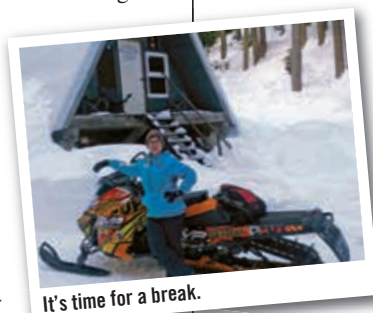
Ladies, ladies, ladies! Now that I have your attention, what direction will I actually take with this president's message?

So far this season B.C. has experienced some unusually lean snow volumes in many parts. Let's hope for some better "pow" days ahead.

Unless you have been living under a rock, you have likely noticed the increasing number of ladies involved in sledding these days. The B.C. Snowmobile Federation (BCSF) would like to officially welcome Tamara Osborne of the Betties Power Sports Network ([www.thebetties.ca](http://www.thebetties.ca)) to our board of directors. In addition, the BCSF is very proud to announce the Betties as having official club status within the BCSF. A hearty welcome ladies and we look forward to working with your club.

Tamara joins existing BCSF director, Jen Luszcz of the Lumby/Mabel Lake club, as well as office manager, Donegal Wilson, to the BCSF team.

Just look around the snowmobile landscape and you see awesome examples of ladies excelling in the sport. One of the more recent SnowTrax episodes ([www.snowtraxtv.com](http://www.snowtraxtv.com)) profiles Amber Holt and her backcountry basics riding school in West Yellowstone. To that end, we have our very own BCSF Snowmobiler of the Year 2013, Julie-Ann Chapman of She Shreds Mountain Adventures ([www.sheshreds.ca](http://www.sheshreds.ca)). Of course, we also have Carole Savage, snowmobile co-ordinator for the Canadian Avalanche Centre; Larissa McKeown, new president of the Powder Mountain Snowmobile & Outdoor Recreation Club in the Sea to Sky corridor; and, just recently, Trish Drinkle, new president of the Association of British Columbia Snowmobile Clubs (ABC). All great stuff leading to greater participation of the lady demographic in snowmobiling.



It's time for a break.



Aunt Judy enjoys a day on the trail.

On a personal note, my wife, Tammy, is also a sledhead (albeit, her participation this year has been quite sparse lately, as she has taken on the role of assistant coach for my six-and-a-half-year-old son's hockey team).

Just recently, I had the opportunity to Take a Friend Snowmobiling ([www.GoSnowmobiling.org](http://www.GoSnowmobiling.org)). This is an International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association (ISMA) initiative that runs from January 1 to March 31, 2014.

We were visiting family in Pemberton and I took my wife's Aunt Judy (well into her 60s and had never been on a sled) on a fun day adventure up the Rutherford Trail to the Pemberton Valley Snowmobile Club's safety cabin, about a 45-kilometre round trip. Previous to that weekend, I had sent her some email links to the eight safety videos that the BCSF has on its online snowmobile operator safety course. Those videos alone provided some invaluable information and then I did some hands-on instruction in the parking lot before we started the day. For a complete newbie, Aunt Judy was a champ and did great on the trail.

I encourage you all to take someone new snowmobiling. Feel free to use the videos as well. Simply go to [www.bcsf.org/learn](http://www.bcsf.org/learn). It is free to access the course and then under the Guide tab, you will find all the components of the course for review as well as the links to the videos. You don't have to pay for them unless you want to take the course (which we recommend you do).

The BCSF and our Let's Ride BC initiative are very excited to announce our YouTube contest for every snowmobile club (regardless of affiliation) across the province.

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## >> CLUB NEWS

### From the office

—by *Donegal Wilson*

I think this winter is one of the strangest winters I can remember. Here in the Similkameen we had a good, early snowfall and a cold December followed by spring-like temperatures in January. For us, areas that traditionally have lots of snow have none and we are travelling great distances to find some snow. We are not alone.

As we venture into unknown terrain, please remember that avalanche conditions have been high with many crazy layers in the snowpack from all the temperature swings. If we do get more snow it will continue to be unstable, so please be careful out there and always make sure you have the necessary gear. Be sure to check the forecast to pick your terrain based on current conditions.

I completed an outreach trip to the North in early February. The clubs had some great events planned and I will do a full writeup for the next issue on the Burns Lake Cold Smoke Drags, Dawson Creek's Thunder on the Mountain, Terrace's Family Day Ride and what all the clubs in between are up to.

I personally am hoping for a stellar spring of riding that continues at least into April. I have faith that the snow is coming. Please ride safe.

**Check out our website at [www.bcsf.org](http://www.bcsf.org)**





# Ten elements of a thriving club

AT THE HEART OF SNOWMOBILING IS THE LOCAL CLUB

BY RICHARD CRONIER, Vice-President

## >> CLUB NEWS

### ► PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *Continued from page 25*

We have made it really simple for a club to enter. In a two- to five-minute video, show us "why you have the best snowmobiling in B.C." Talk about your club, your trails and riding area, your local dealers, etc. You have until the end of March 15, 2014, to submit your video and the contest winner will win a \$2,000 prize.

The judges for this contest will be the sales managers for Arctic Cat, BRP, Polaris and Yamaha. Your video will reside on the Let's Ride BC website so that all visitors can see what your riding area is all about. Make it informational but also have some fun with it. All the official rules for the contest are posted on the Let's Ride BC site. Make sure you refer to them to avoid disqualification. We look forward to seeing all the entries for this fun contest.

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- Cont'd. on page 27 sidebar ►**

It's been a real privilege to travel around talking to snowmobilers from Edmonton, Quesnel and Tumbler Ridge. In some ways every area is unique, but in a lot of ways our clubs struggle with many of the same issues. At a provincial level I am learning a lot from my colleagues in the federation about provincial issues, but the beat that thumps the loudest for me is the pounding within the very heart of the local club.

A while ago I got a phone call from Ralph Sunderman of Clearwater, B.C., and he had some encouraging words for me. He said, "Richard, we need to do what's best and directly related to our local members and their clubs."

Not that what he said was anything new, but it brings me back to the reality that we won't be a federation if we don't have healthy and thriving clubs throughout all communities of B.C. You need a provincial voice and the federation will do that for you, but if we get too focused on dealing with government, politics and provincial issues we, as a federation, will lose sight of our individual club struggles.

I believe that once your club becomes stronger in your community, tourism, business and government will stand up and take notice of your local voice as well, and that is very important. I look forward to meeting more clubs and executives throughout B.C., and I encourage you to keep plugging away.

I have put together a list of things I think every club needs to consider and evaluate when your club decides a direction. Here are 10 vital elements of a thriving club:

#### 1. THE PRESIDENTIAL LEAD:

The president must have an openness and considerate attitude toward all types of people. The president takes the lead in focusing the executive board and members toward a spirit of catering to all types of individuals, riding styles, genders, ideas and opportunities. The club leadership must be able to engage, encourage and build up all members, accepting their riding style and understanding the passion for the sport each individual has.

The president must also understand the individual member's motivation for being part of the club. Did a member join because of a sense of obligation to organized snowmobiling and the hard work behind it? Did they join because they wanted to find new friends and seek the social aspect? Or did they join because they just loved to ride and explore? It is the job of the executive to engage their members and seek to fulfill the desire of the members at a grassroots level.

#### 2. THE LIVING NEWSLETTER:

One of the easiest ways to engage the member who may be a bit shy, or simply just does not have enough free time, is to enter their home or office via a simple, yet informative newsletter. How about some information about your last meeting, a positive and informative look at some club struggles or an opportunity to pat a hard-working member on the back? A written thank you for their efforts goes a long way at recognizing those who donate their time, energy and often their own money for the good of many others. Your newsletter can be the tool your club needs to put some enthusiasm into your meetings and work bees. Add some provincial news and maybe an article about a new sled or riding area. The club newsletter is a way of regaining members and rejuvenating new life in those same 10 people who seem to do all the work. I remember that feeling as a teenager after joining my first club and my mother handed me a newsletter with my name in it. It made me feel like I was a part of something real and it was my first taste of being part of something.

#### 3. A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR DEALERS:

Let's face it, nobody understands the sport of motorized recreation more than dealers do. It is their passion for riding that pushed them to take the plunge and go all out with their huge time and financial commitments, all aimed at running a successful business. A growing, enthusiastic snowmobiling club can affect their wallets and that is real and very tangible—the bottom line is that they did not go into business to fail. When dealers understand and feel your efforts are paying off and they buy into a club, they are usually the first to support you with events and give numerous donations for prizes. The province is littered with these businesses and, more than likely, you have a few in your community. Please take the time to build that relationship and respect that they are busy, overworked and, just like you, pushing the edge of being overcommitted.

#### 4. CAPTIVATING YOUR YOUTH:

No one in the snowmobiling world may have captivated the attention of youth more than the Athletes of Snowmobiling. Young people can be seen with their jaws dropped and eyes wide open, staring at brightly coloured sled wraps and the sound of revving engines. It should not surprise us that sleds camouflaged like candy wrappers grab their attention. How does your club engage these youth and make the dream a reality? If you can hook the kids on snowmobiling, you may

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## ► TEN ELEMENTS *Continued from page 26*

have a member for life. Talk to your schools and take a class snowmobiling, cook a hotdog, and engage your youth. Whether it's a colouring contest at your meeting so that children can be involved or a simple trail ride just for kids, clubs need to address their youth segment.

### 5. WHAT DOES YOUR COMMUNITY THINK ABOUT SNOWMOBILERS?

How can we change what your community thinks of snowmobilers? We know there are always a few rotten apples who spoil it for the rest of us. Don't let those rotten apples get ahead of you in your community presence. A well-written article about what your club is doing, a volunteer who gets praise or supporting a charity—these can all change what people think of snowmobilers. But you will have to take that message to the media. Once you establish that relationship with a sportswriter in your city or town, they will come to you seeking stories. In my short tenure as your vice-president, I have met some of the most charitable, friendly and community-oriented groups of organized snowmobilers, and I am often bamboozled about how the world could have such a negative attitude about such a great group of people.

### 6. MOULDY BREAD AND A STALE MEETING:

I've had those days when the kids have made their lunches and left the bread bag open in a rush to get out the door. Nothing is more disheartening than having a sandwich so dry and hard to swallow that no amount of butter can help that bread to go down.

Are your meetings productive, exciting and willing to accommodate the many faces that are part of your club? Are you all business and no fun? Have you thought about a guest speaker relevant to issues, or perhaps a speaker who just wants to talk about something relevant to snowmobiles or snowmobiling? I have heard of transceiver testing and education at meetings, of dealers bringing prototypes of new sleds to meetings, professionals teaching kids how to fit helmets, and even movie releases, games and survival quizzes. Have you researched and sought out many of the BCSF snowmobile rider programs and benefits available to members only and discussed them to educate your members? You will not attract your youth unless you are ready to deal with the next generation who want to ride, have fun and are not quite ready to deal with the politics involved with the organized element. So let's get back to club basics and our necessity to engage culture and be relevant.

### 7. TAKING THE LEAD BY MENTORING:

Some of us are beginning to show a few grey hairs and are stopping for a few too many breaks along the trail. We look around and wonder, "Who is going to do this when I'm done?" The key is not to wait until you are done, but we should be seeking, encouraging and mentoring

another capable body in the community to step in when the time is right. You can't mentor without getting involved in some way, shape or form in someone's life. You are part of a club and sometimes we forget that in the community we live in—the club was started as a way to get to know people and share in a passion together. In order to do that, sometimes we need to check our ego at the door and be willing to take the time to get to know someone. I am sure we can all look into our club and see that one individual who, with a little encouragement and a little nudge, could be brought into the fold and be groomed to take the lead.

### 8. IS YOUR CLUB TECH CHALLENGED?

There's no question in our minds that when it comes to our snowmobiles we like the new technology that comes off the line of manufacturers each year. I have never heard anyone say they wish they could just keep making those modern looking Ultras of the '90s. No matter where you go, advertising, the community and people have adapted to the World Wide Web, websites, email, Facebook and Twitter. Perhaps your club is lagging behind on this new way to communicate, chat, laugh and share. Moving forward I do not see an app for generating new members, but I do see the need to adapt and embrace the world around us if we want to become relevant in the world we are in. Somewhere in your membership community may be an Internet-savvy, technologically advanced cyber-snowmobiling-geek that could become your club's best asset.

### 9. CAN WE GET A SENIOR'S PERSPECTIVE?

Since I've covered youth, dealers and techno wizards, where would you be without your seniors—literally. Don't ever let your club forget about your founding fathers, the men and women who were ahead of you and forged the way to make your club what it is today. Do you recognize them with awards or honourable mention? Setting up awards within your club and recognizing a sense of community spirit can not only honour those who came before, but drive those coming forward. There is a wealth of knowledge and history that should be celebrated and acknowledged within your club and your community. It is the role of the executive board of each club to ensure that the significant past of your club is not forgotten.

### 10. MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL!

How do you know if you were successful if you don't take a long look in the mirror once in a while and ask yourself how you did? My own personal life has been a mountainscape with steep rugged peaks where I could look at the view and see what I had accomplished and it was good. Other times I tripped and stumbled over some hellish rocks and the wounds are deep and the scars took a long time to heal.

If you took a look at your club over the past few

*Continued on sidebar ►*

## >> CLUB EVENTS

### March 15, 2014

Timberline Cruisers - Midnight Cruise

### April 5, 2014

Arrow Lake Ridge Riders - Poker Run

### April 6, 2014

Timberline Cruisers - Rabbits Den Eggstravaganza

### May 3 & 4, 2014

BCSF Spring Annual General Meeting

### ► FUNDRAISER SPONSORS

*Cont'd. from pg. 26 sidebar*

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Smokey Bear Campground

### ► TEN ELEMENTS

*Continued from left*

days, months or years, I am sure you made some mistakes, and perhaps you missed applauding some friends, screwed up an event or missed an opportunity along the way. But I am sure that if your club is still surviving, you did more good than you think, your club is still relevant and still has a lot more it can offer your members within your community. Whether you are sitting as a president, director or a member, don't be afraid to take a look at your club, an overview of your members and the diversity they bring, and evaluate whether you're on a mountaintop, or struggling up the next rock bluff in search of the horizon.



**Remember...  
Don't Drink & Ride!**

# Thunderstruck fundraiser rocks

BY KATHY BURKE

In late November snowmobilers came from far and wide to kick off their riding season in Revelstoke and to attend the Revelstoke Snowmobile Club/Team Thunderstruck fundraiser. This is not just any fundraiser. It is an epic event that raised funds for the Revelstoke Food Bank and the Canadian Avalanche Centre and has become an evolving tradition in Revelstoke each year.

People travelled from as far away as Saskatchewan to be present at the event and a good time was had by all. Happy hour resembled a big family reunion as sledders caught up on the news with friends and familiar faces and made new friends and future riding buddies. This was followed by a dinner and the famous auction with amazing auctioneer Randy Swenson. Jeff Rosner (Rozzy) was the Vanna White of the evening, modeling snowmobile clothing, equipment and other donated items. The evening was capped off with a showing of the latest Thunderstruck Films movie, which helped generate even greater enthusiasm for the riding season to come.



Carole Savage, the Canadian Avalanche Centre snowmobile program co-ordinator and a sledder herself, said the following about the event: "This event is amazing because it brings snowmobilers together with a common passion for some amazing causes and it is a great kickoff to the riding season. It was humbling and heartwarming for me to see the generosity and engagement of the snowmobile community and is another reason why I love this sport so much."

Gilles Valade, the new executive director of the Canadian Avalanche Centre, had this to say about the event: "This was my first involvement with the club and I was extremely impressed with the commitment to avalanche safety and the CAC. I was amazed with the auction and how much enthusiasm there was from all involved, especially the bidders."

What are you doing next November? Come out to Revelstoke for this amazing event and join the party! Consider it a great time for great causes. November 2014's event is likely to be an even bigger event. Hope to see you there.

# Snowmobile safety week

BY DONEGAL WILSON

Each year the B.C. Snowmobile Federation takes part in events relating to International Snowmobile Safety Week. During this week I travelled to Revelstoke and Kelowna for Avalanche Awareness Days.

In Revelstoke I completed snowmobile outreach in partnership with the Canadian Avalanche Centre, Revelstoke Search and Rescue and the Revelstoke Snowmobile Club. We talked to many large groups of snowmobilers out on the hill and I was pleased with the number of people that had the gear. I think we still have some work to do on getting across the importance of taking a course to understand how to use the gear and, more importantly, how to reduce the risk of being caught in an avalanche altogether.

The Revelstoke Snowmobile Club's network of trails is amazing and the grooming was perfect. There were a lot of people on the hill but we still managed to find some fresh snow to play in and the weather was beautiful. I wish everyone would go and try snowmobiling to experience

those views where you can see forever and the clouds that are below you look like lakes. Thank you to Mark Shaede for the use of a snowmobile for the day.

The next day I travelled to Big White for the Kelowna Snowmobile Club's Avalanche Awareness Day event. This was the first year the club hosted this event and it was also their first event hosted in partnership with the Big White Resort. The trails were groomed perfectly from Big White out into the club's riding area at Graystokes and their cabin called the Whitehouse. A few dealers had demo sleds on hand for people to try out and I think we may have had a few new friends join the sport. Many people were excited to try out the Yamaha Timersled and everyone came back with a smile on their faces. Thank you to Kelowna Yamaha & Marine, Valley Motosport and the Canadian Avalanche Centre for coming out and supporting the Kelowna Snowmobile Club, as well as introducing a few people to the sport.

## >> CLUB EVENTS



### The Frostbitten Rider —by Richard Cronier

I have realized over the past years that a man would make much wiser decisions with regard to his children if there had been a manual given out with each child. Or perhaps a toe tag with a brief description of their future aspirations that could help you steer them in a direction better suited to bluebird days and that deep, deep powder.

Don't get me wrong. I'm a father of four by our own decision and I love them all, but somehow I feel a little heads-up would have aided my decision making. So I am writing this thinking not only of myself, but also my fellow riders who may be both starting out in the sport and beginning to raise their families.

Lisa and I laugh when I tell her that I picture myself standing in the delivery room as the doctor looks at me and reads out what the toe tag says: "Born to hunt." Myself and the doctor would break into a fury of high fives. Then came the next one: "Will do well in school and loves children"—another winner! Me and the doctor celebrating again! Then the third one came and the toe tag gets read: "Loves to play hockey—you will spend all your weekends at hockey arenas across the province" and a hush falls across the room. You better do a recheck and reread the address on that one. Then came number 4 and the doc reads the toe tag: "Master of disaster and owner of Busted Knuckle Garage."

**Cont'd. on pg. 29 sidebar ►**

# Snowarama supports Camp Squamish

## >> CLUB NEWS

Brenden Parker is an ambitious Grade 11 student in Surrey, B.C., diagnosed with cerebral palsy. He's like many teenage boys—he loves watching sports on TV and going to the mall. He's also an avid sports fan who watches a lot of hockey and football and cheers on his local hockey team, the Cloverdale Colts, often travelling to see them play tournaments as far away as Vancouver Island. He'll also tell you that he's been to several B.C. Lions football games and has travelled to the United States with his family to watch NFL games! Brenden also participates in sports throughout the year and plays on a local power chair soccer team.

Brenden is a great student who is actively involved in student activities, including the student council where he helps organize events at school such as dances and sports tournaments, something every student can appreciate. He is a strong advocate for Easter Seals camps and spends many hours each week advocating for local charities.

When asked, "What does camp mean to you?" Brenden replies, "It means a lot! It's so much fun for six days and the staff and campers are so nice." At camp, according to Brenden, "everyone is so active and doing things the whole time."

This past summer Brenden got to go to Week 6 at Camp Squamish, a week of camp specifically tailored for teenagers with physical disabilities, and it was his favourite camp experience so far. He really enjoyed connecting with other campers like himself who are high school students with disabilities. Brenden especially liked hanging out with the nurses this year at Camp Squamish.

According to Brenden's dad, Baron, Easter Seals Camp Squamish gives Mom and Dad a break for a week and is their son's favourite part of the year. "When we go to pick him up at the end of the week, Brenden doesn't want to come home," his father says. "His favourite activities at camp include the low ropes obstacle course, the big swing, accessible swimming pool and, of course, hanging out at the waterfront with other campers. Our son

has been able to experience many things for the first time because of Easter Seals, including a campout night with a pizza party; we couldn't be happier to hear about these adventures."

When he gets older, Brenden wants to be a camp counsellor at Easter Seals Camp and then eventually start his own business.

Each year, Snowarama events support amazing individuals like Brenden Parker.



Counsellor John Gill (L) and Brenden Parker are all smiles at Camp Squamish.



**Proceeds to Benefit  
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Together we can make **FRESH TRACKS** for BC'S Children with Disabilities.  
Consider hosting a Snowarama in 2014

<http://bcsf.org/events/snowarama>

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### ► THE FROSTBITTEN RIDER *Cont'd. from pg. 28 sidebar*

Well, I can tell you that the learning curve of teaching and allowing your kids to achieve their best has taken its toll on my time, tools and pocket-book. They all share my love of riding snowmobiles over fields, snowdrifts and mountains. However, the "master of disaster," as he is known around the house, has been the driving force behind the heart-break I feel every time I break out the tool box. A little older now, the children have learned how to pre-check and start the snowmobiles that I have passed down to them, but far too often the excitement of the ride has seen them throw caution to the wind. And so I spend many hours tightening chains and changing carbides, broken levers and even a couple windshields. They can truly keep a guy heavily involved in the maintenance part of the sport.

But we snowmobilers need our youth to get involved. The aging volunteer pool is getting slimmer every year. The average age of a snowmobiler is now 45 years old, so this means that we can presume statistics would put the average age of the volunteer fairly close to that number as well. More and more we see less entry-level snowmobiles for youth and the high cost of these machines keep young families out of the sport. So I keep pushing on with the master of disaster and any youth I see to try and get them involved locally, so that someday they will take over for me. We need to do our best to get the youth of B.C. outside and on a snowmobile. Please take your children snowmobiling—just remember that the learning curve can sometimes just cause you to shake your head and your pocketbook.



# BCSF CONTACTS

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## Coast to Coast by Dennis Burns

# Winter is back with a vengeance!

How about that snow! From mid-November, people in most parts of the country have been complaining about the amount of snow they have received. The newest term, the polar vortex, reminds us how quickly we all forgot how cold -35 really is. Well, over the holidays we were all made very aware of what a good Canadian winter can be. Mother Nature shook Western Canada with such a chill that when it settled, it dropped snow in Texas and as far east and south as South Carolina. What's a good cold snap or winter chill if it is not shared with our American friends?

When it all settled, many days were lost in airports as the stormy weather occurred over more than one weekend. Delays were experienced from Dallas, Texas, to Toronto, Montreal and other points east. News flash—it warmed up but . . . ice became the next terror to hit. Montreal got 30 centimetres of snow one day, then 50 millimetres of rain the next and then it dropped 25 degrees in eight hours. Then the power went out for thousands of people and businesses—some for over a week.

The point of it all is—choose your days, ride

whenever you can and enjoy what Mother Nature throws your way. By mid-January most areas had already enjoyed six weeks of winter with many areas experiencing the annual, yes annual, January thaw. One good friend in northern Ontario keeps his truck stored for the winter and for the past 20-plus years he waits for those days in January when it is above zero to start his diesel to keep it in running condition. Most years he finds the same opportunity in February as well. It's interesting to remember those mild days that normally go unnoticed.

### SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

While we debate the weather we need to think about other factors in snowmobiling—from the Code of Ethics to understanding what keeps the trails in place. From the safety and environment side of our business, we encourage every snowmobiler to ride within their limits and know before you go. This includes riding on rivers and lakes with questionable ice, mountain riding, being avalanche aware and packing your trash out—leave tracks, not trash. All of the messaging in the world only works with peer pressure, so be there for all of ▶



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Dennis Burns



▶ us, work as a team and ensure that you are there again to ride another day. Go Farther is a backcountry message focused on avalanche safety awareness.

### IS IT A RIGHT OR A PRIVILEGE TO SNOWMOBILE?

Know that we want to be trail riding and/or boondocking for years to come and to ensure that we have the access, we need to raise awareness. First join a club and get organized. There is strength in numbers and working together will help ensure that we continue to have access to riding areas. Work together with other groups, get and keep the attention of the various levels of government and earn the support of resort and business owners. Fight to maintain the current access to areas and work hard on every closure. Let government leaders know that nationally snowmobiling has an \$8-billion impact. Get the numbers from your provincial/territorial organizations, then meet with your MLAs, MPPs, MPs and senators—share with them how important snowmobiling is to the winter economy of rural Canada.

### NEW BUSINESS SUPPORTERS

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