



SASKATCHEWAN Snowmobiler

www.sasksnow.com



PERFECT DAYS OF RIDING

WE ARE BLESSED WITH GREAT BORDER-TO-BORDER TRAILS

BY BARRY BRADSHAW, Chairman

What a different winter than last year—we have snow and most parts of the province have been dumped on.

We have just returned from Nipawin and another festival ride. This year's ride consisted of four couples: Don and Marie Happy, Trent and Doris Kresak, Nelson and Shannon Scott, and Tyler and Jolene Kindiak, as well as single riders Brent Moore, John Cicansky, Don Thompson, Larry Wilson, Darcy Fedik and his son, Michael. Jack Powell and his son, Evan, joined us at Nipawin. We left the Good Spirit Market at 10 a.m., Wednesday, February 20.

Thank goodness for good field staking. On the day we left it was around -20 C, which isn't really bad for a snowmobiler, but then the wind got up, blowing snow into hard drifts on the trail. It was only the excellent double field staking that kept all 14 of us on the trail across the open areas from Good Spirit north to our first overnight stay at The Cove at Greenwater Park. The second day of the tour turned out to be a perfect day for riding—clear, much warmer and little wind. We rode trails No. 3 to No. 8 in the park northward to the Porcupine trails and on to Mistatim. We had great snow everywhere and most trails were in good condition and well signed. I can't help but think back even to five years ago and how much the trail signing has improved since then. Maybe all the harping about proper trail signing and having our trail inspectors working with the clubs is working.

From Mistatim it was west and then north to Zenon Park and on to the Pearl Café at Arborfield, a great place to eat. After Zenon Park we were now on the Pasquia Sno-Goers' trails—we knew that right away as their trails are like being on a railway track, straight as an arrow. This is all made possible with the guidance of a GPS in their Soucy/John Deere groomer. About one hour from Arborfield we arrived at Nipawin and checked in to the Northern Greens Hotel. It's a great place to stay as the hotel is right across the street from the Evergreen Centre, where all the weekend festival festivities take place.

Friday was the annual government ride and, as

it has been for quite a few years now, we had local MLA Fred Bradshaw and Yorkton MLA Greg Ottenbreit join in the ride. We were blessed with great weather and, as usual, it was a fun day when those two get on snowmobiles. The local Twin Lakes Trail Blazers of Nipawin put on the ride and supplied the lunch at the Tobin Lake shelter. We sledged via White Fox and returned south across Tobin Lake back to Nipawin, about an 80-kilometre ride. Friday evening was a meet and greet pre-registration night at the Evergreen Centre. Once again there was a great turnout and it gave us an opportunity to get together with some old friends and to meet some new ones. Our other Yorkton Sno-Rider groups arrived so we now had a total of 33 from our club and of that I believe 30 had ridden to the festival by snowmobile. A great evening was had by all.

Saturday began with breakfast at the Evergreen Centre. It was a full house with more sledgers registering. The four ladies in our group decided to ride in the special ladies ride that had been organized by the Trail Blazers. The rest of our group (men only) decided to ride the TCST trail across the Francois Finlay Hydro Dam (snowmobiles only). That was quite an achievement to get access for a snowmobile trail going across this very large dam. It all happened a few years ago with a lot of hard work by the local Twin Lakes Trail Blazers and the SSA CEO, Chris Brewer. It is the only safe way to get across the Saskatchewan River.

We then proceeded to White Fox, Love and to the Horseshoe Bend warm-up shelter where we cooked up some smokies. We weren't the only snowmobilers who had decided on this route as it was a packed shelter. After much camaraderie and visiting with some of the others at the shelter we were off on our way back via the Tobin Lake Trail to Nipawin by 4 p.m. in time to enjoy a refreshment and get ourselves ready for the banquet. All in all it was a beautiful day, great snow and just a great group to ride with.

The Saturday night banquet was once again spectacular with great food catered by Genie's.

Continued on page 26 sidebar ▶

>> EVENTS

Zone 3 Meeting

April 20, 2013

Yorkton, SK

Zones 1 & 4 Meeting

April 27, 2013

Shellbrook, SK

Zone 2 Meeting

April 28, 2013

Tisdale, SK

AGM and Diamonds

in the Snow

Awards Banquet

June 22, 2013

Regina, SK

2013 Snowmobile Show

November 1 - 3, 2013

Saskatoon, SK

>> CLUB NEWS

Planning a snowmobile tour

—by Jeannie Brewer

Where to start:

- Register your snowmobile with SGI.

- Go to www.sasksnow.com and click on Snowmobile Tours. Go to Sask. Snowmobile Tours and choose a route that you would like to ride.

- Print the trail maps from the website and take them with you. It's a good idea to highlight your route.

- Plan your stops to warm up. Warm-up shelters and/or hotels and restaurants are on the trail system. It is a good idea to stop to rest and warm up every two hours.

- Never ride a snowmobile tour alone. Always ride with another snowmobiler.

- Make sure that you have the correct snowmobile cloth-

Cont'd. on pg. 31 sidebar ▶





Winter came and stayed

CLUBS MET THE CHALLENGE TO OPEN THE TRAILS EARLY
BY CHRIS BREWER, President/CEO

Winter came to Saskatchewan in early November and stayed—the snow hit the ground and the sleds came out early. Coming off a terrible snow season the previous year, sledders were happy to see all the white stuff. The early snow put lots of pressure on the clubs and volunteers to get out and get the trails opened. This was met with the additional challenges of no frost in the ground and unfrozen waterways. But the clubs persevered, they met those challenges and the trails opened early. In fact, all the trails opened this season. Snow is the magic ingredient that makes the snowmobile season go round. In many areas the snow is abundant, and we hope Mother Nature will be kind to the snowmobiler and make up for last year's season by letting us ride well into April.

Some of you may not know this but the SSA Facebook page (under Photos) has all the club's trail maps. You can save these on your smart-

phone to have with you as you ride. All you have to do is "like" our Facebook page and go to Photos, pick the map or maps you want, hold your finger on the photo until it says Save Photo, then you have it on your smartphone all the time, even if you don't have mobility coverage. Also coming soon is a new and improved SSA website that will be Apple-friendly: www.sasksnow.com.

Special thanks to Jon and Samantha Ryan from PowerSports Regina for the use of the 2013 Ski-Doo 800 E-Tec Summit 146. What an improved sled—you have to try one—it's very much fun to ride.

A big thanks to the Flaman Group of Companies for again hosting the Sled-'n-Snap photo contest. Get your photos loaded up and register to vote—this is very cool.

To everyone, have a great spring and summer. See you in the fall at the snowmobile show in Saskatoon.

Yorkton Sno-Riders

BY SANDY KONKEL

On behalf of the Yorkton Sno-Riders we would like to acknowledge our corporate sponsors: 94.1 The Fox, Apperley Electric, Auto Trim Design, Best Western Yorkton Inn, Blaze Locksmithing & Security, Brown's Leisure World, Century Glass Ltd., CK Electric, Comfort Inn & Suites, Cornerstone Credit Union, Done Rite Auto Body & Painting, DQ Grill & Chill Restaurant, D R Auto Extras Ltd., Edfield Motors Ltd., Farrell Agencies Ltd., the Flaman Group of Companies, Foam Lake Credit Union, Gifts of Gold Jewellers, Good Spirit Lake Villas & Inn, Good Spirit Market, GX94 Radio, Harvest Meats, King's Sport, Leisure & Marine, Kirk Haas Snap-on Tools, LDM Yorkton Processing GP, Maple Farm Equipment, Mark's Work Warehouse, Och's Motor Products, Outdoor Sporting & Construction, Parkland Engine Rebuilders, Penguin Refrigeration Ltd., Rocen Autosport, Rusnak Balacko Kachur Rusnak, Schrader's Motors, Sherring Gold Jewellers, Sunrise Landscaping & Design, The News Review, Tim Hortons, Weber's Construction Ltd., Western Financial Group, Windy Acres Inn Bed & Breakfast, Yorkton Co-op Association Ltd., Yorkton Distributors, Yorkton Hyundai, Yorkton New Holland, Yorkton Plumbing & Heating, Yorkton This Week and Yorkton Welding & Ma-

chine. Thank you so much for your support to the club!

The weekend of February 9 was Snowarama and what a great success it was. Participation was excellent and a record amount of money was raised. A heartfelt thank you to all the club members who participated and who worked at this great function. Congratulations to those members on the Snowarama committee who did a great job organizing this event. Give yourselves a pat on the back.

February 18 was Provincial Fun Day. The club had various events for the day and once again members cooked and organized, donating much of their time to this event. We hope everyone had a fun day and enjoyed themselves.

The weekend of February 15, 16 and 17 was the winter festival in Nipawin. The Yorkton Sno-Riders had a representation of 35 snowmobile riders that made the journey on sled to Nipawin. Sounds like the event was a great success and everyone enjoyed themselves.

The trails have been heavily used here but from communicating with these sledders they are very happy with the trail conditions. There are still some ungroomed stretches where the beaver dams are. We went out again to drill and probe

Continued on page 27 ►

>> CLUB NEWS

► CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE *Continued from page 25*

The SSA awards were given out and our Yorkton Sno-Riders acquired the trophy back from the Border Explorers of Creighton. Our Sno-Riders club had 30 members that rode to the festival from Yorkton. Our youngest rider was 16-year-old Michael Fidek and the oldest was 75-year-old Shirley George—quite an age spread. The Prairie Women on Snowmobiles (PWOS) also received a boost when they received a restored 1970 Sno-Jet that was donated for a raffle for next year's ride. Shannon Scott, PWOS treasurer, was called up to receive the sled.

It was a late night for some, but all showed up for breakfast early Sunday morning and were ready for the start of the ride home with our overnight being at the Treeline Motel in Hudson Bay. We stopped for a great lunch at Zorba's Restaurant in the new hotel at Carrot River—a very nice and a much-needed facility to have in their town. We will be back there to stay. We had a great ride through the Pasquia Hills on the Pasquia Snow Goers' trails. We had stops along the way at the many great warm-up shelters through the Hudson Bay trails and then it was down the 409 (Fir River Road) to Hudson Bay. As always, we enjoyed great hospitality and great meals at the Treeline Motel.

On Monday, our final leg home, we all decided to do the longer "A" trail through to Norquay as it was decided to have lunch at the Whistle Stop Family Restaurant, always a great place to eat. They are famous for their sour cream raisin pie. Guess what—only one piece left so we had an auction to see who got the pie. Don T. won because he is the

Cont'd. on pg. 27 sidebar ►



► YORKTON SNO-RIDERS

Continued from page 26

these dams to see if the groomer would be able to cross but it appears that that would not be advisable. These little mogul sections just make me appreciate the trails more and all the hard work and time that club members donate to the trails. I

also know that there are some people who have helped out on the trails who are not club members but who are willing to give a hand. Hopefully they will become club members as we truly appreciated their help.

That's all for now. Remember the trail signs are there for you to read! Have fun, ride safe.

► CLUB NEWS

► CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Cont'd. from pg. 26 sidebar

biggest and in the most need of the pie. They told us next time to phone ahead and they would have one especially baked for us. After lunch it was off on the Norquay, then the freshly groomed Prairie & Pine Sno Riders' trails (great riding) and at the Stenen Junction it was on to the Canora Trakkers' trails. On crossing Good Spirit Lake we picked up our Sno-Rider trails at the Moose Lodge warm-up shelter and arrived at Good Spirit by 5:30, although three riders—Larry, Tyler and Jolene—still had to ride another 50 kilometres to Yorkton. Six days away and 1,085 kilometres later we were all back home safe and sound. A great time was had by all and all reports show that everyone is ready for next year's festival ride to Melfort.

I would also like to mention our support crew, Ron Blommaert and Brian Ford, for hauling our luggage around and for just being there to help us out when needed. Thanks guys.

We, as snowmobilers, are very, very fortunate to have the trails we do in good old Saskatchewan. Thanks to all the snowmobile clubs in the province for their continuing volunteer work in keeping the trail system in place. We have one of the best places in the world to snowmobile—where else can you ride border to border through a bush trail one minute and then rolling farmland the next for a registration fee of only \$70.

So until next season, everyone have a great summer.



Remember... Don't Drink and Ride!

Prairie Women on Snowmobiles

BY CAROL McKNIGHT

Prairie Women on Snowmobiles (PWOS) has just completed a very successful Mission 2013. In the 13 missions to date, Prairie Women on Snowmobiles has reached the \$2-million mark.

This year the route and trail were awesome. We had some interesting days of riding through this wonderful province, finding waist-deep snow in the northern part of the province. Travelling down through the Fort Qu'Appelle Valley was another picturesque ride.

"This success is due to the truly dedicated teams for the missions as well as the corporate sponsorship that we have behind us, and the true supporters out in front of us," said Carol McKnight, president of PWOS.

The support from this year's mission will ensure that breast cancer research can continue for

another year, and together we will all assist in finding a cure, one dollar and one mile at a time. While we have ensured that research can continue for another year, we would like to take this time to remind everyone to do their breast self-exams every month, and if you feel something is not right please seek medical attention immediately. Early detection plays a key role in successful treatment.

If you know of anyone interested in riding with Prairie Women on Snowmobiles for the entire journey as a core rider, please visit our website at www.prairiewomen.ca and fill in an application to ride. All applications must be in before May 1, 2013.

We also encourage anyone to ride along for a day, or any part of the journey with us.

Pasquia Snow Goers Club

BY KATHY LINDSAY

This is always a sad time of the year when the trail stakes are pulled, the signs put away, and the trails disappear into just a memory of earlier fun times out riding on the groomed trails. Soon you might just see the faint remnants of where the trail once was.

It is getting time to put away our groomer for another season with a good once-over for a season well done. Maintenance of the stakes and signs will have to wait until the excitement of a new snowmobiling season is upon us. It's easier to do that part when the new season's trail is finalized. Care must be taken to ensure the trail does not negatively impact our landowners. It is only with their permission that we are able to continue to cross their land with our trails. So once it is determined that no crop remains in the fields and no under-seeding has taken place, we can accurately plan our trail.

Our newest acquisition, a Jeep on Soucy tracks, will also be put away for the season. This acquisition sounds like a luxury—I suspect this is the first thought of people who have never had to snowmobile for miles loaded down with chainsaws and tools, only to have them arrive frozen and not happy about starting. Even though clear-

ing bush trails is hard work, you still get cold after spending hours trimming overhanging branches and chopping up logs that have fallen over the trail and moving them out of the way. The closest warmth you will find is a warm-up shelter somewhere down the trail—the one you went to first to start a fire so when you come back frozen from clearing trail you have somewhere to thaw out and cook a quick snack. With the acquisition of the Jeep, one can now load it up with everything necessary, turn on the heater and cruise out to the bush to clear trail with warm tools and equipment. Instead of waiting until everyone is frozen before you stop for a break, you can easily jump into the waiting warm Jeep to thaw out enough to once again continue your task of clearing trail.

This year we hired a full-time and a part-time groomer operator to allow our operators an opportunity to enjoy the trails instead of spending countless hours on the groomer. With the excess snow we received in the Northeast, maintaining the trails in good condition has been a challenge. And if it wasn't the excess snow disrupting the trail, it was the gale-force winds that happened

Continued on page 28 ►

► **PASQUIA SNOW GOERS**

Continued from page 27

on a regular basis. Hence, having the extra operator has been an asset.

We look forward to seeing you out on the trails

in the Northeast when the snowmobiling season returns or at the SSA's Diamonds in the Snow Awards Night.

Have a great summer and it's not that many months before the trails return!

Hudson Bay Trail Riders

BY KAREN DOLEZSAR

Hi everyone! Our club recently held our annual Hudson Bay rally and sweetheart steak supper on February 9. We hosted around 150 sledders for the day and 215 folks for the supper. We would like to thank Bruce and his crew from Custom Catering for their work. Thank goodness the weather co-operated! The trail lunch was sponsored by Brent and Janice Dyck of Lewellin's Sales & Service. Nothing like a hotdog or smokie on the trail. Thanks to Cara Jones and Alan St. Louis for their expertise in the cooking department. No one went away hungry. Thanks to the Red Deer Saddle Club who made sure everyone was hydrated for the evening.

Our club raffled off three tables and two silent auction tables. This is a great fundraiser for our club and we thank and appreciate all the items donated by all the businesses and manufacturers from Hudson Bay and surrounding area.

The club's main raffle prize was drawn at midnight—the choice of a 2013 Polaris 600 Switchback, a 2013 Polaris 500 Ranger or \$10,000 cash. The winner was Ted Saranchuk of Hudson Bay who chose the \$10,000.



(L or R) Rick Dolezsar, vice-president; Ted Saranchuk, \$10,000 winner; Rick Watt, president; and Brent Dyck, Lewellin's Sales & Service.

With Old Man Winter providing every region with snow we can tell there has been a slight decline in visitors coming to use the trails. Those who have ventured out to visit us have sent emails, made phone calls, etc., thanking us for the great job our club has done throughout the season. As our president Rick Watt said at the steak supper, "It is a group of people who

contribute toward the same goals for the club, from early in the year clearing brush, signing, getting grants, dealing with loggers and trappers, winching out the groomer because it was swallowed up by the muskeg, selling tickets, setting

Continued on sidebar ►

>> CLUB NEWS

► **HUDSON BAY**

Continued from left

up the hall for an event, or bringing a loaf of sandwiches for the midnight lunch. Alone they are not spectacular, but put together they make a successful club." The executive would like to thank all the club members who have, over the years, donated their time and efforts for the greater good! Without you volunteering, our club would not be what it is today. Thanks all.

Candle Lake Sno-Drifters

—by Cary Painchaud

What a great year for snowmobiling! We would like to thank everyone who attended our 250 Rally March 9, 2013. It was a huge success and loads of fun. Before the year started we set some goals and, with a lot of volunteer help, we were able to accomplish a new warm-up shelter on the Clearsand Trail. If you haven't had the opportunity to visit the shelter stop by—it's very im-

Cont'd. on pg. 29 sidebar ►

Win a Trailer!

Sled'n Snap

Submit your best snowmobile photos online to win!
enter your photo at
www.slednsnap.com

Just by entering you could win:
a 2 Place Tilt Sled Trailer
OR
The Grand Prize: an Aluminum Enclosed Sled Trailer
(use for one year)

Brought to you by:

Many prizes to be won! Contest starts in October.

SSA MEMBERSHIP JOIN TODAY!

All 2012/2013 family/individual SSA memberships are entered to win one of these membership prizes:

- \$500 in Federated Co-op fuel (10 x \$50 gift cards)
- One coupon for a Free Avalanche Training Course (Avalanche Skills Training Level 1 Class and Field) anywhere in Western Canada. Valued at \$350.00.
- One coupon for a Free Avalanche Training Course (Avalanche Skills Training Level 1 Class and Field) anywhere in Western Canada. Valued at \$350.00.
- Free Rental of Sled Trailer coupon from any Flaman location in Saskatchewan for a weekend (pick up Friday before 6:00 pm and return Monday morning) valued at approximately \$200.00.
- Entry for the Grand Prize: \$500 Gift Certificate from Recreation Supply

Your membership ensures that the SSA can deliver snowmobile safety, provincial/national and international representation, accessibility to land access for trails, a strong government partnership, insurance for trails and long-term planning to keep snowmobiling alive and well in Saskatchewan. For only \$25 you receive an entry for the 2012/2013 membership draw, Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association calendar, four issues of SnoRiders magazine, snowmobile information, two reflective helmet decals, and snow/trail conditions and event information on the SSA website. Purchase your SSA membership by visiting the SSA website at www.sasksnow.com and click on membership!



Whiteswan Snow Hawks

BY YVETTE JACOBS

Northern Exposure Rally

February 9 turned out to be an awesome day for snowmobilers; the temperature and trails were great.

We had 50 riders, sold 98 hands and had wonderful prizes for our draws. Congratulations to all winners.

Winners for hands were:

- 1st: Bob Moore \$245.00
- 2nd: Murray Jacobs \$147.00
- 3rd: Rod Stice \$98.00
- 50/50: Roxy Neufeld \$142.50

The club's proceeds totalled \$2,302.50 for the day, down from other years.

Thank you:

- to all who helped out the day of the rally and the days prior to and after to get everything organized.
- to all who donated prizes. We had awesome prizes this year.
- to all those who participated in the rally.
- to our hosts Greg and Roxy at Eagle Bay Resort for the use of their facilities and the hotdogs.

Get Ready to Ride

The 13 riders met at the storage compound and then rode to Cole's Shack for a hotdog. Thank you to those who did the work to make this event happen.

>> CLUB EVENTS

► CANDLE LAKE

Cont'd. from pg. 28 sidebar

pressive. The grooming crew spent many long days and nights on the trails this year and with the amount of traffic on our trails they did a fantastic job.

We had many new members join our club this year and we welcome anyone else that would like to join in the future.

Our children in the club played a huge part in trail cleaning, helping sign and maintaining shelters—it's nice to see that they feel so passionate about our trail system and club. The future looks good!

As the year comes to a close we are already looking forward to next year's adventures. Follow us on Facebook and feel free to contact us anytime.

Lakeland Snowmobile Club

BY MARG CLAIRE

This has been a year of extremes. Our first snow fell in mid-October ending at about a foot. Of course, the lakes were not yet frozen, but the marshes and ponds had a thin coat of ice. The snow made a blanket, with the result that the

shallow water never froze deep.

This was a big problem for this area as many of our trails cross those areas and that ice never got thick enough to carry the groomer safely.

Continued on page 30 ►



SHOW YOUR BUDDIES THE TAIL LIGHT THEY'LL BE CHASING — ONLY AT THE 2014 SNEAK PEEK

Be the first to see the 2014 snowmobiles from Arctic Cat, Polaris, Ski-Doo and Yamaha at the 2014 Manufacturers' Sneak Peek. Don't miss it!

Admission is FREE

Sunday, April 14, 2013 • 10 am - 5 pm

Prairieland Park, Hall B,
503 Ruth St. West, Saskatoon, SK

snowsneakpeek.com

ARCTIC CAT

POLARIS

ski-doo



YAMAHA



► LAKELAND SNOWMOBILE CLUB

Continued from page 29

Throughout the winter, snow fell in abundance making fantastic riding on our trails through the forest. The weather was mostly moderate and we hosted many visitors to the area. We hope they enjoyed their time and look forward to their return.

During the summer, our area had another tornado so the trail cleanup was once again a huge job that required a lot of manual labour. I would like to thank all our volunteers for the dedication they showed, resulting in a job well done.

The businesses in our area were very generous sponsors of our club, each getting their name publicized in our shelters and on the sponsorship

signs on our trails. We greatly appreciate their support of our efforts.

Our general meetings held on the third Tuesday evening of the month have been well attended. New members are always welcome. For new residents to the area, our club is a great opportunity to meet people with a wide variety of interests in addition to snowmobiling.

As you read this, the machines will be stored for the summer. Most of us move on to quadding or biking but there is still a sadness when the snow melts and we say farewell till next fall. Lakeland is the area from Emma and Christopher Lakes to Prince Albert National Park. It is a beautiful natural area that is always open for some activity. Why not visit us?

>> CLUB NEWS

Federated Co-op, member Co-ops and snowmobiling

I hear this all the time while I travel the province: "If Saskatchewan didn't have the Co-ops there wouldn't be any gas or products out there." The member-owned Co-ops continue to grow in Saskatchewan and offer snowmobilers gas, fuel and products at gas bars and cardlocks. If you're travelling by snowmobile or pulling a trailer you will find Co-op products almost everywhere. If you don't have a Co-op cardlock card you may want to look at getting one as gas and fuel is available 24/7, 365 days a year.

Co-op offers snowmobile two-stroke oils, an excellent product that is very reasonably priced.

Federated Co-op is a sponsor of the Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association and the provincial snowmobile festival. The company provides fuel to the hosting club to ensure the trails are in shape prior to and following the provincial festival. A litre of XLS two-stroke synthetic oil is given to each person registered at the festival, as well as some sort of a treat for each person—this year we all got a box of cookies.

Federated Co-op also supplied the SSA with 10 \$50 gift cards for a membership prize. The SSA wishes to thank Federated Co-op and all the member Co-ops throughout Saskatchewan for their continued support. Their support is important to the SSA and all our members and is greatly appreciated.

Please support your local Co-op by becoming a Co-op member and, in turn, support snowmobiling in Saskatchewan.

—Thank you, Co-op

Tisdale Snowmobile Club

BY SHANE BECKER

Snow, snow, snow! It just keeps falling! Could this be a Prairie snowmobiler's dream winter? I am beginning to think so.

As I write this, we are in the middle of a record snowfall winter. Even "the old boys" are saying that they haven't seen snow like this for years. The Tisdale Snowmobile Club is having an excellent winter, like most clubs I am sure. The abundance of snow has made for some of the best riding in years. The trails are holding up very well, except for Mother Nature being a bit windy this winter. As luck would have it, we would groom one day and the wind would blow the next—must be one of Murphy's laws.

The shelters have been seeing lots of use and

the wood piles are slowly dwindling away. The signs/stakes have needed a lift in quite a few places due to the abundance of snow, but overall things are great.

We held our annual fundraiser supper at the Tisdale Hotel on January 19. Thanks to all who came out and supported us—it was another successful event.

As the winter winds down we would like to thank all the landowners, club supporters, club volunteers and everyone who makes the trails safe and enjoyable for all. Thank you from the Tisdale Snowmobile Club.

As usual, ride safe and enjoy our great Saskatchewan outdoors!

Big River Timber Trails Sno Riders

BY BARRY NONTELL

Wow, what a year for snowmobiling in Saskatchewan! Big River had the most snow in years. We started off last fall with about 18 inches of heavy wet snow causing lots of issues with broken trees and long hanging branches. The heavy snowfalls also created issues we don't normally experience. We had large amounts of slush on the lakes; as well, we had to raise our signs in some areas due to the snow depth.

After clearing our trails we were kept busy grooming all season long. Our community hosted the kick-off banquet for the Prairie Women on Snowmobiles annual ride for breast cancer research. We had a local club member, Diana Darbyshire, selected as one of the core riders and, as well, Diana's husband Leonard was chosen as one of the pit crew for the ride. Members of our club worked hard to get the trails in shape for this

ride. We provided a lead guide and follow-up riders, as well as support riders for part of the first day of the ride. The Timber Trails Sno Riders also made a financial contribution and donated the proceeds from running the bar at the banquet. Our great group of volunteers had a busy season grooming, signing, cutting brush and hosting our annual rally on February 9. Our rally was a very successful event with riders from all over Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Big River is a snowmobile-friendly community and, by all reports, the service community was more than happy with the many snowmobilers that came to our community to ride, stay over and support our local businesses.

We thank you for your support and for selecting Big River as your snowmobile destination.

Big River—we are "Nature's Doorstep."

Trail evaluation: safety is key

BY BARRY BRADSHAW AND DON THOMPSON

Four years ago the SSA authorized the beginning of trail evaluations for the clubs across the province. As a part of the funding agreement with the provincial government it became necessary to improve our overall signage and to become more consistent from club trails to club trails. The key word at that time was safety and it remains the same today.

Since the original training, the program has undergone constant changes in required signs, changes in forms and in format. From the outset an attempt was made to have our inspectors become more like instructors and to provide critiques of trails that would lead to improvements from season to season. The results of the inspections are a part of the overall funding matrix that offers greater incentive for our club volunteers.

The vast majority of our local clubs have bought into the program and are consistently scoring the highest score on the matrix, a 4. Always, the key to attaining a high score is the group of dedicated volunteers in those clubs who are willing to sign trails, maintain signage, maintain shelters, and provide wood for shelters so

that snowmobilers are able to enjoy the safe trails and warm shelters.

In our travels, we occasionally find clubs that are having a difficult time getting their trails up to the standard that has now been established. Consistently the reason is lack of volunteers. Many of our very dedicated volunteers are getting older and find it too difficult to perform the tasks required. Some clubs are finding themselves in a state of transition from one group of dedicated volunteers to a new group of volunteers who are attempting to take up the slack. The key is they need more help. So if you are reading this article and you are not involved, please consider contacting your local club and offering to lend a helping hand. You won't be disappointed—snowmobilers are a fun group to be associated with and you can continue the legacy of true volunteerism.

Our evaluations for this year are going along very nicely. We want to thank all of our trail inspectors—or should we call them trail evaluators—for their dedication and their spirit of volunteering. Yes, we are all volunteers.

Helmets off to a great course

BY SHANNON SCOTT

Congratulations to everyone who contributed in making the Saskatchewan Online Snowmobile Safety Training Course a huge success!

From the first meeting with the RCMP, SGI, Ministry of Tourism, Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority and Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association the idea of an online snowmobile safety training course had positive feedback from all parties. SGI came on board with the Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association and on November 19, 2012, the online snowmobile safety training course was launched.

The online snowmobile safety training course does not replace the present classroom course that has been, and still is, available but it is another option that can be used to reach more snowmobilers throughout our province. That has certainly become apparent—since the middle of November there have been approximately 700 snowmobilers that have completed the online course. There has been a wide range in the ages of the students: 38 per cent are age 16 and younger; 52 per cent are age 17 to 29 years; and 10 per cent are age 30 and older. The gender distribution has been 76 per cent male and 24 per cent female. Remember, if you were born on or

before January 1, 1989, it is mandatory that you take a Saskatchewan snowmobile safety training course.

You can go online at www.sasksnow.com to obtain the course at a cost of only \$45 including GST. It is available to complete whenever you are. You don't have to complete the course in one sitting—you can work in your own time frame. Taking this course is not only for your benefit but for everyone who snowmobiles with you. In the end you may be saving a life and it may be yours.

With the abundance of snow this year the number of people snowmobiling on the trails has increased, which is what they are there for. For the safety of everyone—not just for you and your family—please, no drinking and riding because you never know what is going to be around the next corner.

Thank you to all the snowmobile clubs! You again have worked extremely hard this year to make the trails in your area the best they can be. Please remember that by registering your snowmobile you are helping in covering the costs of maintaining the awesome trail system that we have in our province.

>> CLUB NEWS

► SNOWMOBILE TOUR

Cont'd. from pg. 25 sidebar

ing to face the elements of the outdoors. Visit your local dealer and their helpful staff will assist you. You will need a small weather-proof bag that attaches to your sled to carry minimal personal items if you plan to overnight.

- Pre-book your hotel accommodation prior to departing on your tour.

- Make sure that your snowmobile is in perfect running condition. Again, visit your local dealer for assistance.

- Carry water and a light snack in your tank or handlebar bag.

- Obey the posted trail signs. If it says: Stay On Trail—we ask you to do just that!

- Please respect the landowners and ask permission to ride off trail on private property.

- Please operate your snowmobile quietly when entering and leaving communities—quiet in, quiet out.

- Always remember—don't drink and ride.

For Safety's Sake...

*use the buddy system
never ride alone!*

*Tell others about
your plans—just in case.*



**Make new friends—join
the SSA today!**



Saskatchewan
LOTTERIES



For snowmobiling info visit www.sasksnow.com
Register your sled; call SGI at 1-800-667-8015

NEW!



**GET YOUR
SASKATCHEWAN
SNOWMOBILE SAFETY
CERTIFICATE!**

**ONLINE SNOWMOBILE
SAFETY TRAINING!**

**\$45.00 per person
visit www.sasksnow.com**