

THE ALBERTA Snowmobiler



ATTENTION PLEASE!

LET'S FOCUS ON OUR MANY GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS
BY DARRYL COPITHORNE, President

So who is paying attention? At the Alberta Snowmobile Association (ASA) we try to keep our members informed via reporting at our two meetings, the semi-annual in October and the AGM in April, in four issues of this magazine, on the website and in information packages sent out to our clubs. As well, our regional directors maintain an ongoing dialogue with the clubs in their areas. Yet, somehow, some people still seem to miss the messaging.

At the last semi-annual meeting in Edmonton, our annual report was presented and talked about, various reports were given on all the great things the ASA has accomplished over the last year, but at the end of the meeting two or three people were still unhappy about what we do for them.

Pretty sad when you spend a couple of hours going over all the great things we have accomplished, only to have someone ignore this, and instead focus on minor items that they are not happy about, ending what was a good meeting on a sour note.

Our executive director, Chris Brookes, puts 110 per cent effort into his job so when a couple of poorly informed members question his work it is very disturbing. The board members are always amazed at what Chris accomplishes for us. So who is paying attention?

Last year we were maxed out managing everything on our plates, especially with the International Snowmobile Congress (ISC 2011) to organize and run, but we managed and everything got done and done well. All our existing programs will continue to grow, and our membership is growing. New this year is that we will

also be sending newsletters directly out to members from the office from time to time as newsworthy items come up.

We are excited to welcome a new program and marketing co-ordinator to the ASA family. Christie Sugden brings a great skill-set and fresh enthusiasm to our team. So take a minute and call the office, say hi and welcome her to the team.

Another thanks needs to go out to Deb and Dwayne Paynton from Back Country Access for their special model of the ABS avalanche airbag that I had the honour of demonstrating at the awards banquet. Public decorum prevents us from publishing the photo of the Airbag 5000, but it was sure funny to see at our annual awards night.

Alberta continues to have the least expensive trail passes in all of Canada and the 20 per cent of the \$60 trail pass fees that the ASA keeps for administration does not even begin to cover the costs of running the ASA. Our main source of funds and fundraising every year comes from the Alberta Snowmobile, ATV and Off-Road Show in Edmonton.

This year our new show manager was Peri Price, who brought some new ideas to the event and, wow, what a home run. I won't go into detail, but if you did not attend you really missed out. We look forward to an even bigger and better show next year. There is so much to talk about right now as things are getting started for the riding season. Following a great start with our successful show, I expect an equally great snowmobile season. Ride safe and have fun.



Alberta offers a variety of riding terrain.

>> EVENTS

Hosting an event or ride? Don't forget to post it on the ASA website calendar for all to see!

International Snowmobile Safety Week
 January 15 - 21, 2012

ASA VIP and Media Day Ride
 January 31, 2012
 Whitecourt, AB

ASA Annual Jamboree
 February 3 & 4, 2012
 Westlock, AB

National Snowmobiling Environment Month
 February 2012

ASA AGM
 April 21, 2012
 Edmonton, AB

>> NEWS



SledNSnap.com launched

The ASA, Flaman Trailers and the snowmobile associations in Saskatchewan and Manitoba have launched a new online photo contest.

Enter to win at www.slednsnap.com.

2012 Go Snowmobiling Take a Friend Snowmobiling campaign

Want to earn \$5,000 for your club? ISMA (www.snowmobile.org) is sponsoring a contest to get your friends out on the trails with you. Check details at the ASA website.

SLEDS2BUY.COM





ASA in the digital age

FROM MAIL-OUT NEWSLETTER TO FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

BY CHRIS BROOKES, Executive Director

The ASA today is a changing place. With many of our core volunteers aging and many of our riders heading to the mountains in B.C., we are a very different group than we were 40 years ago.

One of the first changes that is obvious to me is in how we communicate, not just as an association but as a society in general. The first time the ASA communicated with its members was through a mail-out newsletter, *The Alberta Snowmobiler*. Amazingly, we are still publishing the *Snowmobiler* through our partnership with *SnoRiders* magazine, but this is but one way that we reach out today. In 1971, this was the only way that we could reach our members in a meaningful way. Today, the ASA has a home page (www.altasnowmobile.ab.ca), is on Facebook, Twitter (@Altasnowmobile for those of you who use Twitter) and, of course, email. We get daily requests via email from clubs, members, the general public, sponsors and government. We are never out of reach!

The ASA website and home page (the first page you visit) has been set up as a portal to all our electronic communications. On the home page you will find all the links to our calendar, safety programs and so forth. We have also added clickable links/logos that will take you to our Facebook page, Twitter page, contests and promotions. For example, simply click on the Facebook logo and you will be taken right there. So handy!

By now most of you know about Facebook and the opportunity it offers to keep in touch and update everyone about what is going on. This is where friends connect and share their news about what is happening. Friend us and you can see all our other friends!

Click on the Twitter logo on our home page and you will be taken to our ASA Twitter page, where daily, short updates and info are posted. Twitter is a site where you can post short updates or links to other web pages of common interest. We try to post something every day as relevant information comes around. Events, contests, machine and industry information or just general snowmobiling stuff—it's on there every day for the diehard sledheads. Even if you aren't too familiar with sites like Twitter, we've tried to make it as easy as possible for new users. If you have any difficulties, just get in touch with us at the office and we will help you out.

New on the home page this month (and for the

rest of this season) is a new contest we are running with Flaman Trailers called Sled 'n Snap. In partnership with Flaman, and the snowmobile associations in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, SledNSnap.com is a sled photo contest where you can post your favourite sled pics under seven categories, and users vote for the winners. The grand prize winners in each province will win a new trailer from Flaman. Pretty good for just posting a good photo!

Again, we have made this contest very easy to find and get to; just click on the SledNSnap logo on the ASA home page and you will be taken right there. Instructions on how to enter and post photos are on the site as well, so we've worked to make it super simple to use.

Also new on the home page is our new logo for our revamped Safe Riders program. A click on the logo will take you to the ASA page where program details are listed. You will also find a clickable logo on the home page to a new contest from our manufacturing partners at ISMA (International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association). The Take a Friend Snowmobiling contest can earn your club \$5,000 just by taking your friends out for a ride. Pretty good deal and it can all be found by clicking on the contest logo.

Of course there is other information on the home page. The Contact Us link will help you get in touch with us if you can't find your contacts. The calendar of events is there and includes a list of all the club events that clubs

post to the calendar. Don't see your club's events listed? Talk to your club's board and make sure someone is sending them our way.

As well, there are hotlinks taking you to other documents and pages of interest. When talking to or meeting with local officials, check out the Economic Impact of Snowmobiling link. This will take you to a report done by the Alberta Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation last year and can prove how snowmobiling can benefit your local economy.

There is also a new link to a National Member Benefits page, which will take you to a listing of sponsors of our national body, the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO). It's worth checking out before you go shopping for accessories or planning a trip. You don't know what discounts you may find!

In short, we have tried to make communica-

Continued on sidebar ►

>> CLUB NEWS

► CHRIS BROOKES *Continued from left*

tion with the ASA as simple as possible over the last few years. You can reach us by phone or email anytime. You can find a lot of information that you may be looking for on our easy-to-use home page. Changes coming in the new year will be a members-only section on the web page, where ASA documents and forms will be posted for ease of use. Of course, they will still be available by mail, courier, fax or your chosen method of communication. Just get in touch with us—we are here to help.

And of course, all this information was just presented to you through our original communications device—*The Alberta Snowmobiler*. I guess not everything changes. Stay tuned!

ASA Excellence Award winners for 2010/2011

Congratulations to all of this year's winners!

- Outstanding Snowmobile Dealership - Stojan's Power Sports & Marine
- Outstanding Groomer Operator - Lyle Birnie
- Outstanding Snowmobile Family - The Mostowich family
- Outstanding Snowmobiler - Joel Wasnidge
- Outstanding Youth Contribution - Jordan Linford
- Outstanding Promotion and Development of Snowmobiling - Alberta Beach Lions Club
- Louise Sherren Lifetime Achievement Award - Bob Lehman
- Outstanding Snowmobile Club of the Year - Northland Sno-Goers
- Club of the Year, NW Region - Northland Sno-Goers

Cont'd. on pg. 35 sidebar ►





David Thompson SnowRiders

The David Thompson SnowRiders club is one of the central Alberta snowmobile clubs.

The snow is not always in abundance in central Alberta, but club members have spent many volunteer hours developing their trail system. Last year they finished a loop trail that circles Eckville—all on private land! The other trail they maintain goes from Eckville across Sylvan Lake and then on to Bentley. Both trail systems have a warm-up shelter for the chilly days.

The club purchased a groomer last year and

club members are learning the art of grooming. Club meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month at the Eckville Legion. One of the many advantages of joining the SnowRiders is that there is free rental of avalanche beacons, shovels and probes to club members.

The SnowRiders are looking forward to a good snow year with lots of opportunity to ride their trails and perhaps even a snowmobile rally in February. Check out the club's website for details at <http://www.dtsnowriders.com>.

Are you ready for the elements?

BY VERN PEDERSEN, Southern Regional Director

A new season is underway and, according to the weather people, it is supposed to be a long, cold winter with lots of snow (gee, that really hurts my feelings).

It has been a busy time for those in the workaday world and I'm sure they are looking forward to some release—to have nothing to think about except the trail in front of the sled and the hot meal and refreshments at the end of the day. Still, there are lots of other things we should be thinking about before venturing out into the winter conditions.

So ask yourself, am I ready for the elements? Besides the sled, what about the pack? Does it have everything you may need if something should happen to yourself or others in your party? If there are no smokers in the group can you start a fire if need be? Do you have some extra food, extra water, dry clothes, and a map of the area that you will be riding? Are there others that know where you are riding and your expected return time? How about avalanche gear—is it all with you? Did you change the batteries in the beacon? Do you have some survival gear, not just for the ride, but also in your truck?

Lots of things can happen even before you get to the riding destination. I don't want to sound too cynical but we all have been known to procrastinate when it comes to this kind of stuff. Then we wish we would have or should have. Even when the uneventful happens, remember to be calm and think things through, use your best judgement and things will work out for the best. We all hope that everyone has an awesome riding season with friends and family and those who become friends as we cross paths on the trails that we ride.

As for the club activities in the southern region, meetings are being held and events are being planned. The Crow Snow Riders have put in a wood C-can at the north shelter and are planning

a wood-cutting bee for both shelters. As well as putting things together for upgrading trails, possibly a new shelter will come into play not too far down the road.

The Calgary club has also started its meetings and is planning rides. If you are interested in partaking in some of these events, check out the club's website. How do you find it? Now that's a good question. Just log onto the ASA website and let your clicker take you from there. For those of you, like me, who do not spend a lot of time on the computer, it has been made so easy to navigate though the system, thanks to our hard-working executive director, Chris Brookes. Did you know we have Twitter, Facebook and many other links to various sites that may interest the everyday users. A lot of time went into this to get the information out there for all who may be interested. Just let your mouse do the clicking.

As for the ASA—that's the Alberta Snowmobile Association for those of you who may not know who we are—it has been a busy year. For some it was very busy! Sometimes we take for granted those who work behind the scenes to really make things happen for the betterment of the association. Yes, we are an association built with volunteers but that's not all that makes this work. It takes dedicated people who work in the office to pick up the slack that us volunteers fall short on. I want to take this time to thank our office staff for all the things that they do to make this association run smoothly. Thank you!

I would also like to welcome the newest member of the team, Christie, who I'm sure some of you have met either by phone or in person at the snowmobile show in Edmonton. Which, by the way, was one of the best shows that we have been to in a long time. It's only going to get better as time moves on.

In June when the International Snowmobile

>> CLUB NEWS

► AWARD WINNERS *Cont'd. from pg. 34 sidebar*

- **Club of the Year, NE Region** - River Ridge Riders
- **Club of the Year, Central Region** - David Thompson SnowRiders
- **Club of the Year, Southern Region** - Calgary Snowmobile Club
- **Club of the Year, Mighty Peace Region** - Peace Valley Snow Riders
- **Gold Star Award** - Laurie Copithorne

► VERN PEDERSEN *Continued from left*

Congress was held in Calgary it was a huge task for our association to undertake what was set into motion three years prior. That is when I saw how our executive director shines in his ability to get things done. Not that the volunteers didn't do their parts—they did, and did a fine job. But it was the little things that made that week come together in grand style. That is where our office staff made our association really look awesome to the rest of the snowmobile world.

In the last few years since I have been involved, I have seen that we are on the right track for the future. It takes dedicated people from all walks of life to join and partake in the activities that the clubs and the association put together to make them part of something that we are proud to call our own. There is so much more going on than just riding as the seasons come and go. Yes, there will be times that not all of us will see eye to eye. That's human nature. That is also why we have a board of regional directors to make decisions; in my mind, they have made the right decisions for the betterment of the

Continued on sidebar ► **Cont'd. on pg. 36 sidebar ►**



Bringing youth to sledding

BY ADDAM SARUK, Northeast Zone Regional Director

On the weekend of October 21 to 23, I went to the Alberta Snowmobile, ATV and Off-Road Show in Edmonton, just like I have done for the last 15 years. Except this time I did something different—I took my teenage cousin Blayne to the show with me. It was a great time for both of us. I got to have some help working the ASA booth and Blayne was ecstatic to be surrounded by his favourite sport.

The weekend was a reminder to me of how important it is to get youth involved in the operations of our snowmobile club. Riding is great but we need to get our youth involved in the cleaning and building of the trails, building cabins and marking trails. With some proper instruction, young people can even work rally registration. Teenagers should be encouraged to come to meetings to learn how they run.

In my local club we have seven to 10 youths helping with the day-to-day tasks that come with operating a snowmobile club. They offer valu-

able labour, a positive attitude and great energy. Most importantly, their contribution is valuable because they are our next generation and the ones who need to carry on the sport.

For those youth that do become involved at the club level, the ASA offers a couple of different incentives. First, there is a \$2,000 scholarship to someone going on to post-secondary education. The winner will then be entered into the western chapter of the International Snowmobile Council, which awards another \$1,000. Secondly, at the annual awards night and banquet, the ASA offers an award for outstanding youth contribution. This year's winner was Jordan Linford from Whitecourt. Congrats to him!

I would recommend that all parents encourage their teenagers to come out to your local club meeting. It isn't often that parents and teenagers can enjoy doing something together. So buy a trail pass and come and enjoy the greatest sport ever—snowmobiling!

>> CLUB NEWS

► VERN PEDERSEN

Cont'd. from pg. 35 sidebar

association. I'm glad we have people who help us stay on track in today's fast-paced world. If you have any questions feel free to give me a call. At the moment I'm going to go outside and do a snow dance for all of us!

► JANET RIOPEL

Continued from left

contest should have some really exciting photos if we all remember to take the camera along with us on our rides. Go to www.sledsnap.com to sign up for the photo contest.

With a new sledding season upon us now would be a good time to see if your local school has signed up for a Safe Riders presentation. Safe Riders is an ASA school education program that has our instructors go into the schools and teach safe riding on sleds as well as ATVs. It is a very good course, so please check with your local school to see if they have the Safe Riders course on their schedule. If not, please encourage them to get in contact with the office to set up a course. It can save a life.

I hope that when you purchased your trail passes you asked what the club's plans are for the year. Do you know when they are having a work bee? Are you going to be there? When are the club's rides? Are you free those days to participate? What about any fundraising? Did you sign up to help?

We all have to remember that tons of work goes on every year to keep the trails open, and it's lots of fun when there is a crowd out there helping to do the work. So please don't be scared to offer time and/or money to your local club or any club for that matter.

Continued on page 37 ►



Sold-out show was super

REMEMBER YOUR CAMERA THE NEXT TIME YOU GO SLEDDING

BY JANET RIOPEL, Vice-President

I hope that you all took in the Alberta Snowmobile, ATV and Off-Road Show this past October at the Edmonton Expo Centre. With a sold-out show we may have to expand next year.

A huge thank you to BRP/Ski-Doo for donating—yes donating—a 2012 Summit X snowmobile for the free draw at the snowmobile show. The Summit X is valued at \$15,000. Thank you to BRP and the *Edmonton Sun* for sponsoring the draw for the sled.

Did you see the fully restored 1971 Ski-Doo TNT in the ASA booth? The sled was completely restored by the Alberta Relic Riders and then donated for the raffle with all the proceeds going to Ronald McDonald House. A huge thanks to the Alberta Relic Riders for this great donation to the raffle. Everyone loved to see the 1971 TNT and we heard a great many stories about riding a sled just like that in the past. I hope that you all make plans to attend the show next year. Our show dates will be October 26, 27 and 28, 2012.

Congratulations to all of the Alberta Snowmobile Association Excellence Award winners. Thank you for all the work that you do to help your local club. We as an association are stronger through your efforts.

The ASA Jamboree is in Westlock this year,

hosted by the Pembina Drift Busters. The jamboree is going to be on February 3 and 4, 2012. A great weekend is being planned for the jamboree so book your rooms and get your registration in for a fun-filled weekend. For more information on the jamboree go to the Alberta Snowmobile Association website (www.altasnowmobile.ab.ca). While you are on the website check out the other links, like the Ski-Doo Million Dollar Club Support program, the Safe Riders program and the Take a Friend Snowmobiling contest, just to name a few.

Another contest that is new and exciting and will be fun to participate in is the Sled'n Snap photo contest. It is sponsored by *SnoRiders*, Flaman Trailers, the Alberta Snowmobile Association, Snoman (Manitoba) and the Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association. Check out how you could win a brand new Aluma two-place aluminum tilt trailer or win the use of an amazing, fully-loaded Stealth aluminum enclosed sled trailer for a year.

There are seven different categories: 1) Trail/Scenery/Wildlife 2) Action 3) Club Rides/Events 4) Buried! (Got the Power Blues) 5) Shelters/Trailers 6) Youth/Family 7) Vintage. This

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► **JANET RIOPEL cont'd. from page 36 sidebar**

An important date to mark on your calendar is the week of January 15 to 21, which is Safe Riders Week. The Fort McMurray club hosts a ride on January 8 to help with Safe Riders Week, and they also bring out new people to enjoy the thrill of their first sled ride. Contact the McMurray Sno-Drifters for more information on this ride. January 31 is our annual Media and VIP Day ride at Whitecourt—come on out and help the media realize what a great activity snowmobiling is.

February starts off with the jamboree in West-

lock and then you just need to pick your destination for where to ride after that. There are rallies every weekend in the month of February; just check the calendar of events on the ASA website. When planning your ride don't forget that Choice Hotels Canada is one of many supporters of the ASA through the CCSO and being a member does save you 15 to 20 per cent off the room rate at any of the participating hotels.

I hope that I see many of you out on the trails again this year, and remember to ride safe and sober.

ASA raffle a huge success

The ASA, in conjunction with the Alberta Relic Riders, raffled off a fully restored 1971 Ski-Doo at the Alberta Snowmobile, ATV & Off-Road Show on October 23, 2011.

The generous time and effort of the Relic Riders in locating, stripping down and fully restor-



ing the Ski-Doo is greatly appreciated and we will be presenting to Ronald McDonald House a cheque for almost \$10,000.

Presenting the prize to winner Lorne Katerenchuk of Smoky Lake is ASA secretary treasurer George Duputat. Congratulations Lorne!

Trail sense—know before you go!

As an off-road experience, snowmobiling is an inherently risky activity. It is assumed every rider understands and accepts that:

- Operators and passengers know and will obey all Alberta laws, bylaws and regulations which pertain to the operation of snowmobiling, including the Alberta Traffic Safety Act;
- Operators and passengers will not consume drugs or alcohol prior to or while using the trails;
- Operators and passengers know how to snowmobile competently and understand that the operation of snowmobiles requires full cognitive abilities;
- It is recognized and accepted that snowmobiling is essentially an off-road activity taking place in an unpredictable natural environment;
- It is not practical, possible or desirable to maintain all trails uniformly or to remove all potential hazards;
- Operators and passengers will be prudent and responsible and shall ensure that snowmobiles are operated with appropriate care, caution and control at all times;
- Trail access is without any guarantee of service or quality or safety;
- Operators and passengers know that snowmobile trails are not engineered highways or roadways;
- Operators will stay to the right of the trail, notwithstanding that there are no centre lines;

- There may be permitted users on the trail other than snowmobilers;
 - All operators and passengers willingly use trails at their own risk;
 - Operators and passengers are aware that there are generally no legal requirements for signage on trails and, when provided, it is only for assistance and convenience of the user;
 - The grooming and maintenance of trails, when provided, is meant solely to enhance the comfort and enjoyment of the safe and prudent operators and passengers;
 - Operators know that there may be grooming or other maintenance activities underway at any time of the day or night, which may take up the whole or any part of the trail and have the right-of-way;
 - Operators and passengers are aware that emergency and cellphone service may not be available;
 - Operators and passengers know the unique and particular hazards associated with ice crossing and travelling in mountainous regions;
 - Operators and passengers will dress appropriately for all conditions and will have appropriate safety and emergency equipment at all times.
- Snowmobile safety while riding trails is related to rider responsibility for their own safety.
Safe Riders! You make snowmobiling safe.

>> CLUB NEWS

Economic impact of snowmobiling in Alberta

The province has released its study on the economic benefits of snowmobiling in Alberta. The report is on the home page of the Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation, under the Spotlight section heading at <http://tpr.alberta.ca>.

A big thank you to our sponsors!

ski-doo



BRP/Ski-Doo

The ASA was pleased to receive from BRP/Ski-Doo a brand new 2012 Summit-X Ski-Doo, which was the grand prize at the Alberta Snowmobile, ATV & Off-Road Show. This tied in so nicely with our 40th anniversary raffle where the prize was a fully restored 1971 Ski-Doo. Thanks so much Ski-Doo!

BRP/Ski-Doo also launched again this year the Million Dollar Club Support program, supporting Alberta snowmobile clubs.

POLARIS

Polaris Industries

The ASA was pleased to receive a cheque from Polaris Industries for \$1,550 as a donation from their Winning Riders program. This program is simple: for every new Polaris snowmobile sold in Alberta, the association receives a year-end donation from Polaris.

These funds will be used to sponsor our Safe Riders program, presented free of charge to Alberta schools and community groups, teaching young Albertans how to ride safely and in an environmentally respectful manner. Thanks Polaris!





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ASA CLUB MEMBERS

Snowmobile clubs are an integral part of this popular sport with activities including development of trail networks and staging areas, competitive events, trail rides, picnic/bonfire rides, safety clinics, fundraising for charity, camping trips, search and rescue and maintenance clinics. Club activities are often family oriented, so all ages join in the fun and also the work to make the fun possible. Check out the list of member clubs. Is your club a member? The ASA can help you form a club if there isn't one in your area. Call us at our office (780) 427-2695 or visit www.altasnowmobile.ab.ca.

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Pembina Drift Busters
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Dennis Maksymiuk,
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dmaksymiuk@mcsnet.ca • Fax 780-724-2211

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780-656-4142 • dketsa@mcsnet.ca

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Swan Hills Snow Goers
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Trail Seekers Snowmobile Club
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Tri-County Snowmobile Club

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jim.zadorozny@lakelandc.ab.ca

Watt Mountain Wanderers

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Coast to Coast by Dennis Burns

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