

# Manitoba's Snoman REPORT



(L to R) Ken Lucko, Snoman executive director; Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger; Alan Butler, Snoman president; and Ernie Smelski, past president, attended Christmas at the Legislative Building and met with the premier and the NDP caucus to thank them for their support of recreational snowmobiling during the past year.



## NORTHERN TRAILS ARE OPEN

CHECK THE SNOMAN WEBSITE FOR TRAIL CONDITIONS  
**BY ALAN BUTLER, President**

I would like to be reporting on all the snowmobile activities in the province but due to the warm temperatures and the lack of snow as of this writing there are only four clubs that have trails open and, of course, they are all in the north area of the province. Needless to say, the Snoman office is getting a number of calls, with one caller suggesting we get a snow maker and make snow for the trails—if only it were that simple.

Snoman started the 2012 year with a brand new website—check it out. There have been a number of positive comments and the staff is to be congratulated on a job well done. Clubs can now access all Snoman meeting



minutes, operation manuals, all required forms and any other documents they might need. If you are interested in signing up for the newsletter you will have your name entered into a draw for a Snoman parka.

With no snow so far this season, it is likely our snowmobiling season will be shorter than last year. The clubs are ready, the equipment is ready—all we need now is the snow.

Once the snow comes please remember trails are not instantly formed—first the signs have to be put up to mark the trail, the trail has to be groomed and then, after an inspection, the club will open the trail. All this work will likely

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## >> SNOMAN EXECUTIVE

### President

Alan Butler,  
Snowtraxx Snowmobile Club

### Vice-President

Paul Burch,  
Springhill Trailblazers

### Treasurer

Albert Wyborn,  
Valleyview Sno-Riders

### Secretary

Vacant

### Past President

Ernie Smelski,  
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#### Eastern Region

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#### Interlake Region

Joe Thievin,  
South Interlake SnoRiders Inc.

Wayne Vandersteen,  
Northern Trail Blazers

#### Northern Region

Kelly Martens,  
Thompson Trailbreakers

Rob Vipond,  
Kelsey Trail Sno-Riders

#### Western Region

Bill Musey, Swan Valley  
Snowmobile Association Inc.

Sylvain Paquet,  
Dauphin Snowmobile Club

**Check our website**  
[www.snoman.mb.ca](http://www.snoman.mb.ca)

**SLEDS2BUY.COM**



## New website debuts

SNOMAN IS EXCITED ABOUT IMPROVED ONLINE PRESENCE  
**BY KEN LUCKO, Executive Director**

We had been talking for some time about the fact that we needed a new website that would provide more information to our members as well as to the public. The purpose was to get our message out and to reach more people.

There was much discussion at the board meetings regarding this issue and at the November 25, 2011, meeting it was decided to go ahead with the development of a new website.

As a non-profit organization we are constantly looking for added revenue to help offset the costs that our volunteer clubs incur. Before designing the website we decided to seek the expertise of a marketing firm that would develop a marketing plan for us. We decided that we wanted a balance between information and advertising so the site would not become over-advertised. A company was chosen to advise us as to the best placement of the ads as well as to develop a rate card as to what the ads are worth based on market value and traffic to the site.

We then went about finding a company that would develop the site for us. We approached three companies for proposals and chose Graphic Intuitions Inc. to develop our site. After working with Shayne Sereidiuk and his team from Graphic

Intuitions Inc. I can tell you that we certainly made the right choice. Not only did they provide the things that we asked for, they also suggested many items that have certainly provided us with an excellent website.

One of the capabilities that we gained is to be able to do most of the updates ourselves. Anyone can register for our newsletter and be able to receive it. Member login is available to provide training and information to our clubs. We will be able to recognize our sponsors and provide advertising opportunities for them. We will be able to place videos on the site as well as help our clubs recruit new members with our benefits program. This, in conjunction with our existing Sled 'n Snap photo contest, CJOB Ride of the Week and safety information, makes our site an exciting visit, so please look for us at [www.snoman.mb.ca](http://www.snoman.mb.ca) and join our family.

### SAFETY WARNING

Due to the recent above-normal temperatures, we are still warning the public to be aware of changing ice conditions around rivers, lakes and swamps. As well, the lack of snow is delaying the opening of the trails in the southern part of the province.

## The quest to ride has begun

It is January 5, 2012, and the radio just stated it is going to be +7° today. My assumption is that this weather is beloved by the majority of the Manitoba population, but I can tell you that it is despised by all of our snowmobile riders and especially by the dealers. We have lost months of riding this 2011-2012 year versus last year and the long-range forecast does not look good. I keep telling myself that "it's Manitoba; we are due for the big one!"

For the past two weeks my phone has been going off constantly from texts to phone calls. They are from the group of guys I ride with asking if anyone knows where the snow is. I realized I was not the only one looking at the Weather Network daily and hoping for that big dump of snow on the



long-range forecast. The 14-day trend only shows two days with possible snow. The Snoman website only shows groomed trails six hours north of here. Out of frustration, two of my riding buddies have packed it up and headed to Revelstoke, B.C., for a week. That is an 18-hour drive one way. Based on the pictures they have sent back to me, it was worth it!

The quest to ride started on New Year's Eve. My phone rang and Derrick asked me if I was ready to find snow. I looked out the window at the grass blades, laughed, and said sure, why not, I have a couple of days before I have to go back to work after the holidays. The next morning I was at Derrick's place at 6 a.m. and we

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## >> CLUB NEWS

### ► QUEST TO RIDE *Continued from left*

loaded up the sleds on his 24-foot enclosed trailer. He hopped in my truck and said we have to pick up two more on the way. It was -9° C with a gusting wind from the north. We headed northwest of Winnipeg, picked up Gary and Mike and, after changing a blown-out tire en route, arrived at our destination about five hours later. I was amazed at how quickly we went from no snow to a line in Manitoba where all of a sudden there was snow!

**Day 1.** The moment we stopped the truck all the guys hopped out and unloaded their gear. We fired up the sleds, checked the oil and headed out. This was the first time I had ridden since last year and I realized just how much I missed the feeling. We headed to a gas station and fuelled up. After fuelling, I told Derrick to lead the way. There still wasn't a ton of snow, but there was enough to ride on. We went through some trees, over a few hills and then all of a sudden we found the snow. It had been blown up against the side of treelines and the eastern side of hills. There was no trail system here—it was true backcountry riding. As the day went on, we crossed a few lakes and kept looking for that honey hole of powder. As it got darker the group was getting hungry so we headed back to the cabin.

**Day 2.** We finally got mobile at about 9 a.m. All the guys were hungry and decided to go for breakfast at a local hotel. I was glad to hear I wasn't the only one feeling a bit of muscle soreness from the previous day's ride. After breakfast we once again fuelled up and headed out. It was a sunny day and about -15° C. A

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# Springhill Trailblazers

BY SUSAN ROGERS

What's happening out there? Are all you sledders forgetting to do your snow dance? My husband has done everything he can to bring on snow—he doesn't have the sleds ready, the snow blower isn't ready—what more can he do? He received a suggestion to break a shovel, which could be next! If I hear "can you believe this great weather?" one more time at my workplace, I won't be held responsible for the expletives spewing from my mouth. I do, finally, have some support; one of my co-workers got her own sled this year and possibly that is the reason for the lack of snow.

In any case, the Springhill Trailblazers carry on with the regular meetings in hopes we can encourage some real winter to step up to the plate. We had a great Christmas party. The children that attended fell in love with Santa. They kept giving him hugs and he personally told me he would certainly be back next year—he hadn't got that many hugs in a very long time. A few pictures of our party are shown here.

Our weekend destination this year was to Pinewood Lodge at Dorothy Lake in Whiteshell Provincial Park. We had booked every room in the lodge. The Men's Ride to Rosseau, Minnesota, was also in February. Our Todd Stabner Memorial Ride, which is in February as well, will be a full day's ride and an overnight stay at the South Beach Casino and Resort. We sure enjoyed this ride last year and are looking forward to it again, weather and conditions permitting, of course.



Santa's children.



Santa's elves.

Speaking of conditions, our groomer is ready to get out there but, well, you know—conditions permitting. It has not yet made a pass of our trail system. Our volunteers would like nothing better than to get that equipment out on the trail, although I think some may be waffling and are someplace warm, like the Caribbean or Hawaii. Rest assured though, people, when the snow comes, our groomer and groomer operators will be out there.

We have increased our membership by a few brave souls and we welcome them to the club. We are always looking for new faces, new ideas and volunteers to help keep the club functioning on a positive level and, above all else, we like to have fun. We take pride in keeping the fun part safe, including observing trail riding etiquette when we are out on our group rides.

Until next time, if you are able to get out on a trail system, keep the rubber side down and the skis between the trees.

# Springfield Pathfinders

by GLEN ELL

My name is Glen Ell and I am one of the only founding members left of the Springfield Pathfinders. I have served on many positions throughout the years and have been helping with grooming and signing of the trails for the club for the last 17 years. Our first groomer was a 1978 Alpine with a four-foot drag modified to expand to a six-foot.

We were only grooming around 29 kilometres of trail that went from Oakbank south about two miles, then west to the floodway, then north of Oakbank to the Birds Hill Park snowmobile entrance. In 1997 we upgraded to a BR 60 with an eight-foot drag. Our club then expanded our trail to connect up with Anola.

In 1998 our club had developed a five-year plan to expand our trail east to hook up with the SnoPals trail near Elma and north of Birds Hill Park to run on Highway 206 north to Highway 44 to hook up with the Springhill Trailblazers east of Highway 206 and then west to hook up with the Brokenhead Trailblazers. This gave the club a total of 140 kilometres of trail to groom. We then purchased an eight-foot Mogul Master Drag around the year 2000. Now the BR 60 was too small for the ditches and hydro line trails that we were grooming because of the deep snow that would blow in with big drifts. We had to upgrade to a bigger unit.

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### ► QUEST TO RIDE Cont'd. from pg. 26 sidebar

perfect day for riding. We took a different route today, and it was well worth it. We found some great rolling hills between roads and the ditches were full of snow. The guys were diving in and out of the ditches and breaking new trail through the fields. The stubble held the snow very nicely. I was following Gary down a hill into a treed area and through the trees we came up on a lake. Looking across the lake was an opening to a field that had pristine snow on it. Everyone crossed safely and played in the virgin snow in the field. After a few more lake crossings we still had no specific destination—we were just looking for that fresh snow.

Six hours later we finally arrived back at the cabin. Everyone seemed content to finally get a ride on the sleds. On the whole ride home, the discussion was based on the highlights of the ride and that we need more snow at home.

I have come to realize that snowmobilers will go to great lengths to get good use out of their sleds. I also realized die-hard snowmobilers spend a lot of money to ride their sleds with no regret. It is a vital economic boost for small towns and local economies and I am proud to support this year after year and am willing to take another road trip if we don't see snow close to home soon.

Make new friends—join a snowmobile club



For safety sake —never ride alone!

► **SPRINGFIELD PATHFINDERS**

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In 2004 our club purchased a 275-horsepower MP Plus. We ran our eight-foot drag with this unit until around 2008, at which time we purchased a new Mogul Master 10-foot drag that we continue to use today. This unit is a pleasure to drive compared to our last two units—you never have to worry about getting stuck. This unit will go through anything.

During the summer of 2011 my wife and I were invited to attend the 1st Annual Snoman Congress. There I was awarded the Groomer of the Year for 2010 award, for which I was much honoured. Grooming the trails is not like work for me. I enjoy grooming the trails (sometimes more than sledding) and getting the thumbs up as the sledders pass you on the trail—something that they shouldn't be doing on a freshly groomed trail, but it still feels good when they do that.

I start off every year by helping the groomer mechanic with the pre-season maintenance, which takes about 60 man hours, sometimes more. Then I work with all the trail captains, helping them get their signs up on the trails. Putting up the signs takes a total of about 50 to 75 man hours. Then once the signs are up, I am usually the first one, along with one other operator (my brother John), to go and pack the trails. It takes about 30 to 35 hours to pack and groom our trail system. Once the trails are packed and have a bit of a base, the time for grooming is a little faster—only about 25 to 30 hours to groom our complete trail system.

Once the grooming starts I'm up at 3 a.m. to groom the east trail, I'm on the trail by 4 a.m. and groom until 8 a.m., then two other operators take over and I head to my regular job for eight hours of work. These two operators groom until 4:30 p.m., then they switch off with one other operator (my brother John who worked all day), who finishes off and parks the unit back in the shed at around 11 p.m. The next morning I am back on

the trail by 8 a.m. and run the trail north down Highway 44 and south to the floodway, then back at the shed by 10 p.m. One thing that I dislike about grooming is when you are finished grooming for the day and it's 11 p.m., you still have to clean as much snow and ice off the groomer and drag as you can, then fuel it up before you park it in the shed. With temperatures of -30 this can take up to another 1½ hours. You're tired and you want to go home to bed but this has to be done or you end up with a big snowball-covered groomer the next time you take it out.

The worst part of our trail system to groom is north of Oakbank to Highway 44—this is one of the trails I always groom. There are tons of driveways to go over and it slows you down quite a bit trying not to leave any snow on the driveways. Sometime you do drop snow on the driveway and you either have to back up and scrape it off or turn around and repair the driveway. This all takes extra time. Going from driveway to driveway the trail gets pounded out a lot, so you have extra work on these parts of the trail. It is not a trail to put a beginner on because the club would get complaints from the sledder. It's best to train new operators on a flat trail; then once they are familiar with all the controls of the groomer and where all the rocks on the trail are they are ready to move on to a more difficult trail.

There is a lot to know about the groomer and grooming trails. Everyone thinks it is easy when they are in the passenger seat, but

put them behind the controls and they are all over the place and confused as to what to do next. It takes a couple of seasons of steady grooming for one operator to learn all the controls and how the trail reacts to you. You also have to learn how the snow works in the drag when grooming—it should be constantly turning in the drag. You don't just drop the drag to the ground and go; you

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►► **CLUB NEWS**

► **SPRINGFIELD PATHFINDERS from left**

have to pay attention to what is happening in the drag and either lower or lift the drag to control the amount of snow that you have. You have to be always looking at the trail ahead and behind you while grooming.

I put in about 175 hours on the groomer every year and another 325 hours for signing, trail and groomer maintenance. I was also the club treasurer for the last three years. I have sat at many other seats in the club over the years, even as the club's president. I've been on the Eastern Region Snowmobile Association (ERSA) since 1994 as an alternate director, and as the treasurer for the last four years. I'm also one of a few original members to sit on the ERSA table since then.

I'm married to the most wonderful woman who allows me to do all this and not complain. Maybe she should have received an award for "Wife of the Groomer of the Year." That is what she keeps telling me anyway.

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

take the better part of 10 days. So let the clubs do their jobs, check the Snoman website for trail conditions and once the trails are open get out and enjoy the ride.

This winter Snoman held its February board meeting in Brandon on February 17 with the Western Region as host.

The March board meeting will be held in the North Region in Thompson on March 23 and as they have snow we are all looking forward to a ride on the Thompson Trail-breakers trail system. I would like to invite local club members to attend the Snoman board meeting in your region.

**Coast to Coast** by Dennis Burns

# CCSO offers strength in numbers

It's time for all of us to complete our snow dance. We've had many days of cold weather, then a major break with warming temperatures and freezing rain. Remember, just a couple of degrees colder and this would have been the "Winter Gold" that we all wish would settle in so that we could groom and open the trails and begin our playtime. Watch the video on the snow dance and please dance along: [www.snowmobile.org/snowdance.asp](http://www.snowmobile.org/snowdance.asp)—all together now!

We always get asked the question: Why would I want to be member of the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO)? The short answer is strength in numbers. By working together and creating one voice for organized snowmobiling we can make a difference. The small players win big as the best business practices from all over Canada can be easily duplicated. The larger snowmobile organizations have put programs into practice, have worked out the bugs and after tens of thousands of dollars and thousands of hours of staff and volunteer input have implemented a program that can easily be duplicated. Of course not every program

will apply to your organization or stage of development. But remember that Jack Welsh, the CEO for General Electric, used to encourage his management team to steal an idea and put it to work for them! The concept is to replicate what has already been invented and put it into use; as a team you look at the potential, work out the strengths and weaknesses, then put it into practice for you.

Grooming trails and operating a club today is a lot more work than 20 years ago. With the cost of the resources—from groomers to fuel to volunteer time—everything is so valuable that each and every one of the resources needs to be carefully managed. Volunteers give freely of their time and the main reward that they look for is a simple thank you, perhaps a hot breakfast with friends and the camaraderie where snowmobilers always seem to be having so much fun. For most, the winter is a time to hide and wait for it to pass. For the avid snowmobiler, winters are just too short as we try to fit so much into so few days. Yes, winter is just too short to revisit where I have been before or to expand to new areas to meet new friends ▶



## The CCSO would like to thank our sponsors for the 2011/2012 season . . .

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



Dennis Burns

▶ *Continued from left*

and have new adventures. So as we fit in our adventures we also volunteer our time to make the trails magically appear each and every year. Please remember to thank each other for a job well done.

As a reward for being involved in the sport, the CCSO has also developed some national member benefits, programs that put real dollars back into your pocket to help pay for that trail permit. Who could not use a few extra dollars these days! Visit the CCSO website at [www.ccsso-ccom.ca/index.htm](http://www.ccsso-ccom.ca/index.htm) and go to the member benefits section at [www.ccsso-ccom.ca/ccso\\_benefits.html](http://www.ccsso-ccom.ca/ccso_benefits.html). Each of these individually offer small discounts but if we get all of the motorsports team together the overall savings is huge.

Visit today and make sure that you add it to your Favourites. Visit often as we will add new discount opportunities in the coming months and years ahead.

From the program benefits to the partnership benefits to the information sharing—a team working together can move a mountain and make a difference. As Donnie O'Keefe in Newfoundland always states, "Many hands make light work."

### Who is the CCSO?

The Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations is the national body for organized snowmobiling in Canada. It is dedicated to providing leadership and support of safe, organized and environmentally responsible snowmobiling in Canada and serves as the umbrella group for all the snowmobile associations and

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# Porcupine Bash 2012

Here's hoping everyone had a great Christmas and New Year's, and that you are ready to hit the trails for another season.

The North Mountain Riders, like most of us, are wishing for more snow but we have a good start. We have been out packing the trails, getting the frost down and getting ready for another season.

Our next big endeavour for this year is to have our first annual Porcupine Bash. This is a fundraiser to help the club purchase our Piston Bully groomer and to invite you all to come for a visit and check out our 453 kilometres of trails.

So put a mark on the calendar for February 25th for the Porcupine Bash and February 26th for the Bellsite Derby. It will be a weekend of fun and sledding at its best—ride the popular Porcupine Mountain trails. The "Bash" is a get-together, dance and all-round great time. We will have guided rides or you can ride at your leisure during the day and then all meet at the Swan Valley Museum for the Porcupine Bash. Bring all your best sled stories and get ready to have a blast.

The next day will be the Bellsite Derby,



which offers home-cooked meals, a ride in the hills, and the possibility of going home with some cash. Last year's best hand took home \$942 and the most ghost riders got \$471. Visit our website at northmountainriders.com for more details and contact information for these events.

We are very well connected for those who wish to ride their sleds directly to Swan River for this weekend or at any time.

North, south, east or west, you can make trail connections to come on your sled. Swan River is a very sled-friendly town. Most of the hotels and motels are trail-side, with food, lodging and fuel stations all available along the trails. It's easy to get around on your sled and find what you need.

The Swan Valley Museum, where the Porcupine Bash will be held, is trail-side also. To travel to Bellsite for the Bellsite Derby is an easy ride down the rail bed for another great day on the trails.

So see you in February for the Porcupine Bash. Come ride the Porcupine Mountains!

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### ►CCSO

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federations in Canada. The CCSO/CCOM envisions a continuing, sustainable legacy connecting snowmobile trail systems across Canada that exist in harmony with our environment for now and for our future generations to enjoy.

### Mission Statement

The Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO/CCOM) is dedicated to providing leadership and support to organized snowmobiling in Canada. It is a not-for-profit entity formed in 1974 to serve as the umbrella group for organized recreational snowmobile associations in Canada. The CCSO/CCOM board of directors consists of representatives of the 12 provincial and territorial organized snowmobile associations. They meet three times a year to exchange ideas, identify and prioritize national issues and provide the CCSO/CCOM with mid- to long-term planning.

### Objectives of the CCSO/CCOM

- To promote, foster and encourage by any and all proper and lawful means the welfare and betterment of the snowmobile recreational activities.
- To provide a medium of co-ordination on matters of mutual interest for all organizations and persons concerned with any aspect of snowmobile recreation and to co-operate with other industries, organizations, the general public and the Provincial and Federal officials on matters affecting the user of snowmobiles.

- To co-ordinate legislative activities regarding snowmobile groups with the Federal and/or Provincial governments and to provide user groups with necessary information regarding the way of obtaining

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## Fire extinguisher care and use

BY ROB READ

Over the last few years I have donated quite a few fire extinguishers to various Manitoba snowmobile clubs. Most of them have ended up in the warm-up shacks as was the original intention of the extinguishers; however, some have also been mounted in groomers and clubhouses. With the snowmobile season well underway I thought it might be timely to discuss maintenance and usage.

Maintenance is the easy discussion so I will cover it first. Extinguishers mounted in buildings should be inspected monthly. This is a quick visual check to ensure they will operate when

needed. You have to take a look at the gauge to ensure it is in the green—this confirms proper pressure levels inside the cylinder. Then visually check the discharge hose to make sure there are no obstructions, and you have to look the extinguisher over for any damage. These checks should be performed every time the groomer goes out on the trail.

Usage is a little more involved and while I hope this article is helpful it will never replace a full fire extinguisher training course. We teach the PASS course, which stands for Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep. *Continued on page 31 ►*

► **FIRE EXTINGUISHER**

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**Pull** - The first step is to pull the pin that prevents the handle from being squeezed.

**Aim** - The second step is to aim the attached hose nozzle at the fire. Aim low at the base of the fire.

**Squeeze** - The third step is to squeeze the handle to spray the contents. Remember—a standard fire extinguisher has less than 30 seconds of spray time.

**Sweep** - The final step is to sweep back and forth as you spray the base of the fire.

Following these steps will increase your

chances of extinguishing the fire. The smaller the fire the better the chances of extinguishment. As a fire grows, the heat increases and makes putting it out more difficult with each second. Once an extinguisher has been used, even if it still feels full and there is pressure showing on the gauge, it will need to be recharged. Dry chemical has now coated the internal valve, allowing the nitrogen expellant to leak past.

Bison Fire Protection offers a full fire extinguisher training course. The difference between panic and action is training. For more information visit our website at [www.bisonfire.com/fire-extinguisher-training.htm](http://www.bisonfire.com/fire-extinguisher-training.htm).

## Snowmobiling Environment Month

February is National Snowmobiling Environment Month. Snoman and the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO) celebrate today's quieter snowmobiling and advocate strong enforcement of existing laws against muffler modification for snowmobiles. Other ongoing initiatives include working with government and environment groups on seeding, tree planting, protecting sensitive habitats and species, erosion control, installing bridges and culverts to protect rivers and streams, and ongoing education and outreach efforts within the snowmobiling community.

Powered by cleaner-burning, advanced four-stroke and next generation two-stroke engines, today's snowmobiles help keep nature beautiful by operating with significantly reduced sound levels. Since 1974, the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) have reduced the sound levels of snowmobile engines by 94 per cent. In fact, replicating the noise from just one of those early machines would take 256 current snowmobiles revving simultaneously at full throttle. Today's more advanced sleds, benefiting from cleaner, advanced technology, sophisticated engine de-

sign and improved sound suppression techniques, are up to 50 per cent quieter than previous models built as recently as the late '90s.

To put the sound of a snowmobile in perspective, engineering groups have completed numerous studies over the last few years, comparing the sound of snowmobiles to those of road vehicles. Interestingly, when tested using the SAE J-192 test procedure, many road vehicles emit a higher level of noise than a snowmobile. Many commonplace items such as car horns, snow blowers, lawn mowers, chainsaws, leaf blowers and vacuum cleaners are rated at 80 decibels (A) or more. These tests are set, reviewed and updated regularly by the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) and ensure that a stock snowmobile, operated in the most extreme condition at wide-open throttle, will not exceed 78 decibels (plus or minus 2) to pass the procedure.

The CCSO is also using National Snowmobiling Environment Month to remind riders to leave tracks, not trash; to maintain sleds at peak operating efficiency; to avoid noisy after-market pipes; and to ride on trails within officially designated riding areas.

## Snowmobile industry growing

BY ED KLIM

The snowmobile community continues to expand and thrive throughout Canada and, in particular, in the beautiful province of Manitoba. Registrations and permit sales in Manitoba continue to increase, coinciding with the improvement to and management of the trail system throughout the province.

In 2011, new sled sales in Canada showed a slight increase from the previous year. Over 40,878 new snowmobiles were sold in Canada with an average sales price of \$9,360.50. Sales of new 2012 sleds are progressing. Initial sales in

Canada showed strong growth with sales in Manitoba also showing growth early in the season.

2012 is a very important year for the snowmobile community throughout Canada with the Canadian adoption of the international snowmobile emission regulation by Environment Canada. The strict emission standard was adopted in its entirety in April 2011 with full certification under the regulation achieved on January 1, 2012.

The manufacturers have been working diligently to achieve the internationally recognized ►

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► **CCSO**

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governmental support and grants.

- To provide user groups with necessary information and support regarding the means to obtaining governmental support and funding.

- To act as a liaison agent and representative of snowmobile organizations in Canada at the Federal and Provincial government levels.

- To act as information agent from members or member organizations involved in snowmobiling in Canada.

- To be the public relations agency among all Canadian citizens regarding the advertising and promotion of safety programs in practise.

- To promote a code of ethics applicable to the practice of snowmobiling.

- To the conservation of Canada's natural environment and to preserving organized snowmobile trails and designated riding areas for future generations to enjoy.

► **SNOWMOBILE INDUSTRY**

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standard, which now allows snowmobilers to enjoy fuel-efficient, exceptionally low-emission products.

Updated reports from Consumer Insights—an internationally recognized research firm—report the interest in riding a snowmobile continues to be high amongst the vast majority of Canadians. When asked to rate their level of desire to go snowmobiling, the majority of Canadians give it a 9 on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest level of enthusiasm.) This high level of interest and desire to go snowmobiling indicates a positive future for the entire snowmobile community.

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► SNOWMOBILE INDUSTRY  
*Cont'd. from pg. 31 sidebar*

Growth of snowmobiling, realized by the manufacturers, is being enjoyed by snowmobile suppliers who are realizing solid growth as snowmobilers continue to update and improve non-current, slightly used snowmobiles, as well as refreshing their riding wardrobes.

The snowmobile community is proud of its strong partnership with government agencies at the provincial and federal levels. Snowmobiling is recognized as an important part of the winter economic engine throughout Canada and is now receiving recognition and strong support from the federal government in Ottawa. Key ministries and agencies important to snowmobiling access and snowmobiling growth are aware of the major technological improvements that have been made to snowmobiles and the fact that snowmobiles now meet the most rigid international emission standard.

Snowmobiling is an important part of the Canadian culture and that culture is recognized worldwide. International travellers are finding that snowmobiling in Canada presents a unique vacation getaway and offers an exhilarating, breathtaking experience that cannot be duplicated anywhere else in the world. The growth in international travel to Canada to enjoy snowmobiling is assured with the continued improvement of the trail system, and the supporting services and facilities serving snowmobilers and snowmobiling tourists.

The high quality and dependability of today's snowmobiles will continue to attract new enthusiasts, new tourists and new business to Manitoba and all of Canada.



Snoman president Alan Butler, past president Ernie Smelski and executive director Ken Lucko met with the Honourable Stan Struthers, who was presented with an award of appreciation for his continued support of the snowmobilers of Manitoba.



President Alan Butler and past president Ernie Smelski present Assistant Deputy Minister of Conservation Bruce Bremner with a plaque of appreciation for his support of organized snowmobiling in Manitoba.