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# ON THE TRAIL WITH SAM

SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION OF MASSACHUSETTS

## Christmas Ride in RUSSIA



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*Delaney Kukucka of the Burgy Bullets is suited up and ready to go.*

PHOTO BY KEVIN KUKUCKA



*Snowmobilers yield and at the same time show appreciation for the Berkshire Snow Seekers grooming crew.*

PHOTO BY DON ALLARD



*Members of BGL pose for a team photo after a parade.*

## Club Photos

See Club News on page 6



*Club volunteers of the Buckland Riders prepare the trails for winter.*



*A group gathers and discusses bridges during a break-out session at a recent SAM meeting.*

PHOTO BY DAN GOULD



*Florida Mountaineers Pig & Putt Golf Champion Jeff Rose is presented the winner's jacket.*

PHOTO BY TIM KEATING

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By Terry Holland



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*Two riders crest the horizon during an outing in the northern Berkshires.*

PHOTO BY DAN GOULD



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## President's Message

BY DAN GOULD

# Indy Pit Crew

Over the past few years I've spent ump-teen hours with my two boys working on their snowmobiles. Short of an engine overhaul, we've taken apart, cleaned or rebuilt just about every mechanism on their wedgie-style Polaris sleds, an '87 Sport and a '91 Trail. The machines are crude compared to a 2014 snow-stallion but they are easy to work on. Like an old pickup truck, once the hood is open you have access to every single component. You can actually see the spark plugs!

I always thought a fixer-upper would make for a classic father-son project and in that respect, the Indys were perfect. The three of us could hunker down in the garage and have some fun. They'd learn a few things about mechanics, there might be a belch or two, you know, male bonding. I also felt it was vital that they have at least some understanding of how the contraption works.

There were moments of frustration. The amount of work was more than we'd bargained for, which is typical for these kinds of projects. It seemed every time we fixed one thing, we'd find another fragged part somewhere else. I repeatedly ignored the comments about being a cheapskate and not buying them brand new gold-anodized snowmobiles.

When the snow finally fell, we rode and rode. That's when they really appreciated the effort. The sleds were theirs in every way. They'd still talk of owning a newer sled and occasionally steal rides on my MX-Z, then ask if I'm planning on upgrading soon (hint-hint) or if they could have it if I unexpectedly died. Unexpectedly, as if I would plan such an event?

I was leading the family during the second ride of the winter when I lost sight of the headlights dancing in my mirror. No kids, no wife in sight. Hmmm, did I die after all? I pulled

The sense of pride was deeper than the snowpack. The boys smiled like magicians that just sawed a bikini babe in half.



over and waited a minute, then spun around to figure out who was taking an unscheduled bathroom break. The trail was pretty much a straight shot, so they couldn't have taken a bum turn.

I found them to the side of the trail looking at the rear suspension of the gray Indy. End of this ride, I thought. Before I could get my helmet off the boys had diagnosed a track derailment. One of them searched for a short log to use as a bumper jack while tools were being extracted from the trunk.

There were five of us on this trip, all muscle I might add, but we still couldn't sneak the track back on. There wasn't a crowbar big enough in Berkshire County to coax it. The boys knew exactly how the suspension came apart and in a few minutes the track tension was released and the rear wheels were off. I wouldn't compare our speed to Penske's crew at the Indy 500 but we had the sled back together and properly adjusted in 20 minutes. Everyone chipped in.

The sense of pride was deeper than the snowpack. The boys smiled like magicians that just sawed a bikini babe in half. We all knew that the time spent in that cold garage wasn't all about snowmobiles. It was a lesson in responsibility, self worth and most of all, working together as a family. 🐾

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# Christmas Snow Procession in РОССИЯ

By Evgeniy Borodin

**T**he Ural Mountains of Russia receive remarkable amounts of snow. The region is the perfect place for the snowmobiler and we use every chance to go on a ride and enjoy the winter, especially during the traditional tour around Christmastime. Orthodox Christmas is January 7 and for the past six years, during the festive week, we pick the closest Saturday and carry out Christmas Snow Procession. On January 12, 2013, 111 people took part in the ride.

The Fan-Club BRP and our friends at the Perm Off-Road Club organize the holiday event. Preparation normally starts a month earlier, by visiting our colleagues (dealers of Yamaha, Polaris, Arctic Cat, Kawasaki, Russkaya Mekhanika) and inviting them to join the mass tour. Everybody is equal in this event. It doesn't matter what snowmobile you ride or how much experience you have. We find a place in an appropriate team and everybody enjoys it. This is how it goes.

The event has become famous in the Perm Region, no one wants to miss it. Those who have attended before bring friends, families and regular riding buddies. Although the tour sees many experienced riders, we encourage new riders as well as those who would normally only snowmobile when hunting or fishing. It's a festive season to spend time with family and make new friends. A few Muslims even join us for the tour! There are no religious boundaries for such a good event as the Christmas ride.

We meet at 8am at a base in the city of Perm. The snowmobilers receive a numbered sticker for their sled, and are then assigned to a team and set off to ride between 9 and 11. The length of the trip is 80



km. The first to go are the “Sportsmen” and “Skilled” riders. The inexperienced teams then follow with guides. It’s best to let the experienced riders go ahead and then take your time supporting the beginners and explaining the basics to them. At the rear of the procession are two service snowmobiles. Servicemen are always needed.

Safety is a priority. The organizers use walkie-talkies, satellite and mobile phones to communicate. At the halfway point in Bizyar there is a mandatory GPS check-in. We pitch a tent where participants can rest and have hot tea. The next meeting point is the Monastery on White Mountain in the village of Kalinino, Kungur region.

Six years in the running and the trail feels different every time, it’s never boring. Sometimes there is more snow, sometimes less, and that determines the pace of the ride. The rivers in January can be frozen entirely or only in part. That adds excitement. You need to see the shining eyes of the participants as they share their emotions! Everything is captivating. One hundred snowmobiles humming in the forest as we approach the White Mountain, the bright colors of clothing, the feeling we get as we move towards our goal.

Upon leaving the forest we see the monastery covered in frost, like a snow-white meringue topped with golden domes. I wish you could see how they shine in the sun on a bright, crisp, day! Ahead we are facing a breathtaking as-



cent, a spectacular view that complements the amazing feeling as we soar up the hill on our snowmobiles. And then the finish line: well done, we did it!

Now we can appreciate the main reason for the journey: the church service, the candles, and the special spirit of Christmas. We are valued guests here. Every time our tour visits we get a church blessing and the Hieromonk comes out to talk to the team. Very happy and pink-cheeked, the snowmobilers have dinner in the refectory and each participant receives a certificate with his name and the date of the White Mountain visit. Just imagine, each year the monks fill out more than 100 certificates by hand in calligraphic handwriting, especially for the pilots of the Christmas Snow Procession. Thankful riders give donations to the monastery.



Many of them acquire icons for their families, taking them home as a keepsake of this special day. We’ve had a great time and such a warm welcome. We feel so good in our hearts... it seems this tour is a blessed thing.

We invite you to join Christmas Snow Procession, this year and every year. The modern world gives us opportunities to communicate and visit each other, and snowmobiles give us a chance to feel the flavor of different countries. Get a visa, come over to Russia and snowmobile with us. You can contact me with questions at: 2461322@gmail.com 🐾

*Evgeniy Borodin heads the Fan-Club BR in Perm, Russia and became friends with SAM members when visiting Massachusetts at ISC 2012.*





*Marge Gould and her dog ride in 1965.*



## ADAMS SNO DRIFTERS

by Chrissy Satko and Joe Rogge

It is with sadness we need to notify area snowmobilers of the passing of Margery L. Gould, 95, of Gould Road, Adams on October 1, 2013 at her home. She was born in Adams on July 5, 1918. Marge was the owner of the Gould Farm at the base of Mt. Greylock. Marge received the 2009 Friend of SAM Award. She allowed her property to be used by hikers, walkers, snowmobile riders, and skiers. Most significant was her support to our club and many of our activities including many rides. She allowed our club to use her property for a successful Vintage Ride (March 2009). When she was interviewed in 2009 she said: "As long as I can remember I liked helping out the snowmobilers and the Sno-Drifters, and I will help them as long as I can." In describing her first snowmobile all she could remember was that it cost \$500 or \$600 and went "fast enough." She last rode about fifteen years ago before she lost her balance. At the time of this writing her property is closed to all outside activities including snowmobiles. Our friend will be missed.



## BERKSHIRE SNOW SEEKERS

by Randy Toth

Come and experience the excitement of snowmobiling in the Berkshires. Our first class groomer fleet con-

sists of 3 Tucker Sno-Cats, a Thiokol and 2 snowmobile-based groomers. Dues are only \$60 for each snowmobile (\$50 if you join before December 1) and that includes a club membership, a S.A.M. membership and a trail permit. Join via snail-mail (P.O. Box 1102, Pittsfield, MA 01202), via our website ([www.berkshiresnowseekers.com](http://www.berkshiresnowseekers.com)), via a club meeting (7pm on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month from September thru mid-April at the Skyline Country Club on Route 7 in Lanesboro, MA) or via one of our conveniently located trail permit outlets at a participating local business: - Pittsfield Lawn & Tractor (Pittsfield), Ronnie's (Pittsfield), Friendly Fred's (Windsor), Sangar's General Store (Windsor), Hinsdale Trading Company (Hinsdale) and Lanesboro BP Gas Station (Lanesboro). Please visit the SAM website to see our club's scheduled events and our grooming reports covering the October Mountain State Forest area, the Pittsfield State Forest area and the Windsor area. Grooming reports are promptly posted in the SAM Forums by our trail coordinators within hours of grooming. Think Snow!



## BERNARDSTON-GILL-LEYDEN

by Brad Stafford, president

Winter is on its way, snowlovers, are you ready? Is your sled ready? Better yet, are your club and its trails ready? All of these questions we need to ask and the answer to be yes! Our club has been busy this fall especially with events. We had a booth down at the Sled Expo. I hope you all got a chance to go and participate because without continuing attendance, all the hard work that SAM and its volunteers do will be for nothing. Our booth saw lots of interest, especially our club's online registration where you can take advantage of using your Paypal account. (Join before Dec 1 for early bird family pricing.) Check us out at [bglsnow.com](http://bglsnow.com). We also contributed to the Town of Bernardston's "Scarecrow in the Park" Fall Festival. On Nov 10 we had our 12th annual swap meet to help raise funds for lots of bridge updates

that our trails need. As always I urge you all to go attend one of your club's meetings and get involved! Keep the Rubber Side Down.



## BIRCH HILL RANGERS

by Gerry Balchuinas, secretary

The air is getting crisp and riding is just around the corner. We have been out checking the trails and getting things ready to finish our grant. We already have two meetings under our belt and attendance is picking up. Hopefully if Mother Nature cooperates we will have a few club rides this season. Keep an eye on our SAM website to see what is happening.



## BUCKLAND RIDERS

by Steven Howland, secretary

Thanks to all that came out in support of our fall fundraiser at Moonlight Magic in Shelburne Falls. It was a fun event as always. We did a lot of work on the trails in November so they are ready for the season, but that doesn't mean the work is over. There is always more trail work to be done and we are happy to train groomers if anybody is interested. There is nothing like seeing a perfectly smooth trail rolling out behind you. If you're interested, come to our monthly meeting, the second Monday of each month at the Buckland Fire Station. We will also be updating both our SAM page and our own webpage with grooming and trail reports on a regular basis once the snow flies. Check out [bucklandriders.com](http://bucklandriders.com) for the latest news.



## CHESTERFIELD FOUR SEASONS

by Bill Golaski, president

I'm writing this at the end of October, things are just starting to get chilly. Hopefully by the time this comes out in December we may have seen some early snow to get started. The club has been working all fall and early winter to get the trails and groomers in order for the upcoming season. Thanks to all that



help with these projects so others can have fun. As always we can use more help, so think about getting involved with the club to promote the sport we love. Come to a meeting on the 2nd and last Tuesday of the month at 7pm or call at 413-296-4048. Thanks to all that do help at the club, without you, we would be/have nothing, so take a bow. Meetings or Club phone number will have info on membership and trail passes. Please get your pass early and make it easy for you and us, don't wait till the last minute. Check the SAM website for the latest information about our club. Remember our club raffle for a New Trailer or Cash, \$20 per ticket, only 400 tickets will be sold. Think white !



## **COLDBROOK**

**by Michael Roy, secretary**

The Coldbrook Snowmobile Club has already held

two monthly meetings for this season on September 9 and October 7 at the King Phillip Restaurant in Phillipston. The first meeting welcomed Jean Black at her new role of club secretary in charge of memberships. The main topics of discussion for both meetings were the upcoming tasks for the club to complete pre-season preparation for the groomer fleet and the trail system. Volunteers will be needed to help out with trail clearings and prep work for the groomers. Members willing to help were encouraged to contact club president Gerry Balchuinas. Upcoming events such as a chicken barbeque for possibly January along with a radar run are being explored as fundraisers. Please check the club's website at coldbrook-snowmobilers.com for the latest dates for trail clearings, upcoming events, and be sure to rejoin our forum section which has been redesigned. Let's hope us snowmobilers have a great upcoming season and please remember to volunteer when and where you can for our and your club because without volunteers we cannot be successful.



## **COLRAIN SNO-DRIFTERS**

**by Thomas Benz, secretary**

Snowmobile trails are being worked on for the upcoming season and snow is just around the corner! Our holiday Christ-

## **Colrain's Christmas Party is being held December 11 at the Colrain Clubhouse**



mas Party is being held December 11 at the Colrain Clubhouse starting at 6pm. It will be a potluck supper, but please bring your favorite beverage. Also, the club is cooking two hams and sponsoring Toys for Tots, so please bring a gift if you'd like to donate. This will also be the last time to purchase early season passes at a discount. Looking forward to seeing you then! The trail by Rusty Coombs' will have a small reroute crossing Provolitch Road, so please stay on the trail as marked. Our club is working on a new trail to link up with the Conway trail at Bardwell's Ferry crossing. So by the time you're reading this I hope we have a lot of snow on the ground! Please respect our landowners for the upcoming season, and stay in the marked trails.



## **EASY RIDERS**

**by Steven Conti, board member**

Hello and happy holidays

from the Easy Riders Snowmobile Club. We wish all of you and yours a very happy, safe and enjoyable holiday season. This is a special time of year for family and friends to enjoy the season together with laughter, gifts, food, and being thankful for what we have. Hope you all enjoy it. One Christmas wish we should all share in common is a lot of snow this year. Speaking of Christmas, the Easy Riders will be holding our annual Christmas party on Dec 14 at 7pm. The party includes a buffet and the very much anticipated and most enjoyable, Yankee Swap. The swap never gets old and is truly a lot of fun. Dick Nicoli is in charge of the buffet and as always, the Moose Lodge will provide the refreshments. At \$15 per person it is very reasonable. With any luck Santa will pay us a visit. As always all are welcome to attend any of our club meetings at the Marlboro Moose Lodge. Always a fun time whether we are talking trips, snowmobiling, or goofing on our new tech talker. Well, that's all for now. Always thinking snow.



## **GREATER WHATELY**

**by Bob Sabola**

Welcome to the Greater Whately Snowmobile Club

(GWSC). Here's an update on the Mass Fish and Wildlife Christian Lane project. All approvals are in. To date the club has spent \$4500 on fees and engineering services. An additional \$2100 will be needed for building materials. Help get the new bridge in before snowfall. Buy your trail pass early! The funds are needed to purchase materials for the bridge. For those of you who ride Whately, be on a lookout for rerouted trails off of North Street. The new landowners graciously have given permission to have a trail on their property. Please stay on the marked trails. The Great Swamp Trail (Mass Fish and Wildlife Property) will be closed for the 2013/2014 season. Trail pass/club memberships are available at meetings. Cost per sled is \$55. After Dec. 22, cost is \$60. GWSC meetings are held on the second Monday of the month starting in September and ending in April. Time: 7pm. Location: Whately Town Hall (across the street from the Whately Inn). Your support is greatly appreciated, without it GWSC would not exist.



## **HARVARD**

**by Joseph Gibbons, board of directors**

By now we have had a whole bunch of Sunday mornings working on our trails. The swamp trail got a big boost with a new bridge and a clearly marked trail. In late October we had a Bridge Barbecue! For the first time in several years you can avoid the swamp bypass trail if you wish. Trails were widened behind the horse farms off Mill Road and efforts are still being made to work with the Fish and Game with regard to Bolton Flats. It is our hope that we will build an engineered bridge to enter this area and with the approval of Fish and Game. Our goal is to keep everyone on the trail. This area will lend several miles of trail and also access to a second gas station. Wish us luck! Come join us, we are the most eastern club in the state and you're always welcome. For membership or trail conditions you can call Joe Gibbons 617-460-1239. Merry Christmas! Safe sledding.



## INDIANHEAD

**by Matt Crowningshield,  
president**

Hello snowmobilers, hopefully by now everybody has their sleds tuned up and ready for snow. If you haven't got your SAM pass don't forget they go up after the first of January. You can go to our website indianheadsnowmobile.com and download a form for your trail pass and mail it in. We have been working on the trails and repairing bridges getting everything ready. Thanks to all the volunteers that help make the trails possible, without you we would have just fields to ride in. Hope to see you on the trails.



## KNOX TRAIL SNO-RIDERS

**by Jim Richard,  
media director**

The Knox Trail Sno-Riders hope this report finds you knee-deep in snow and having a great holiday season! October was a good month for the club. The Sled Expo was successful, with sales of trail passes, shirts, and the very last raffle ticket. If you missed out, stay tuned to knoxtrail.com for info on the next raffle. It will be announced in April. For those of you who did enter, see you at the dinner and drawing event at the Knox Trail Inn on Friday, December 27, 2013 at 6pm in East Otis. Call the Inn at 413-269-4400 if you need more info. If you are an entrant unable to join in on the dinner, you can still win the sled. Just give a friend your ticket stub for admission for dinner for two. There will be many other prizes for attendees, plus a live band. Before you hit the Knox Trail, get the latest trail conditions on knoxtrail.com, the sledmass.com trail forum, or by calling the sno-phone at 413-269-0243. The new trail maps are being included with every SAM pass and are also available by mail or at trail pass vendor locations. The mailing address is Box 363, East Otis MA 01029. See you on those snowy trails!



## SAVOY KANARY KATS

**by Al Neal and  
Douglas DeCoigne**

Hello and Happy Holidays. We had a great time at the Sled Expo, it seemed like a lot more people knew who and where



*Savoy's new groomer building is coming along nicely.*

we are. A lot of people were talking about either riding our trails last season or trying them this season. The day went by very quickly with all the interest in our club and trails. This is a good indication for all the SAM member clubs, I would say. Work is progressing nicely on equipment, the groomer building and trails, but we can still use all the help we can get. Tickets are still available for the sled raffle, which will be drawn on Saturday, January 25 at the Hilltop Restaurant, Rt. 116, Plainfield. Tickets are \$20 and are available by calling Terri Bird, 413-822-5265 or Sandra LaFrance, 413-743-2556. The machine is a 2014 Ski-Doo MXZ 600 Sport, 600CC Liquid Cooled, Electric Start and Reverse. Our Holiday Party is Saturday, December 7 at the Hilltop, cocktails at 6pm, dinner at 7, \$25.00 per person, more info on our website. Don't forget to get your SKK trail passes before December 15 to take advantage of the early bird special. Think snow and cold temperatures!



## SNOWBIRDS

**by Brad Rand, president**

Hello Snowmobilers,

The trails are being cleared and we are gearing up for the snow. Trail crews are meeting at the 4H and Charlie's Diner on Sunday mornings at 8am to finish up projects.

Grooming crews are being formed at this time also. If you are interested in grooming this year, please contact Dave Macleod at 508.892.0040. He would like to hear from you and get as many people out there as possible. He is looking for volunteers that have common sense and basic ability to handle the drags. Schedules are very flexible so the more the better.

We will be drawing the winner to our annual fundraiser, (2) chances to win an overnight trip to the Inn by the River Resort at the Forks, Maine during the December meeting. Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. The meeting will be our Pizza / Sign Up party. Show up and grab some dinner and the possibility of a winter vacation! Please remember to be careful celebrating the holidays but have a good time. Think Snow!



*Worthington is ready to groom!*



## WORTHINGTON

**by Jeffrey Smith,  
president**

Friends, Countrymen, Fellow Members: Winter is upon us. Alas, the long days have given way to longer nights and before long the first snow will hit the ground. In anticipation of the upcoming snowmobile season, let me be the first to say our local clubs have done a dynamite job getting ready for the winter, especially those clubs that have trails that link up with ours, Berkshire Snow Seekers, Hilltown, Savoy, Chesterfield and Goshen. I have to say that our members ride those trails as much as our own and those trails rarely disappoint. For those of you familiar with the Big Hill in Cummington near Route 9, on Trail 9, there will be a trail reroute so don't be confused, trust the signs and stay on the trail, you will get where you want to be. Thanks to the members who make it possible. Broken record time: If you see some renegade riding, take a mental note of sled make, color, anything, and let a club officer know. If members knew how much damage we have to undo to keep trails open, there would be more vigilance with enforcement. Don't be the guy who says he wished he did more after the trail is closed. Think snow and pay your dues! ❄️



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# SAM: Created by snowmobilers in the past, for the snowmobilers of the future. PART 1

By Brad Stafford

While back I wrote about a conversation with a fellow snowmobiler. He was bragging about how he didn't get screwed by the state and saved some money by not buying a SAM trail pass during a "Green Winter." I then tried to explain how SAM isn't a state-governed entity, but is one that works *with* the state agencies like DCR, Dept of Fish and Wildlife, Mass Environmental Police and many others, that SAM is a self-governed group whose officers are volunteers that are actually elected by the snowmobile clubs, and that all of the funds raised from the SAM trail pass end up, one way or another, back on our trails and that the club dues stay right with the clubs.

Knowing that conversations like this have taken place before and will again, I contacted Dan Gould, the SAM President, to get some facts and figures. He sent me one of the earliest SAM newsletters on file, dated 1972, which will be posted at sled-mass.com for all to view. Below are some of the reasons why snowmobilers created the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts and why we need to continue supporting SAM every season, so it can support us.

SAM was started back in 1969, by a group of snowmobilers who banded together to protect the sport that they had come to enjoy. By reading through the newsletter, I learned that back in the late '60's our sport was growing fast, and like today, not everyone was a fan of snowmobiling. As more and more sleds hit the trail they rode wherever they could, unorganized, which was not so popular with the landowners or some of the general public. There were accidents and confrontations between snowmobilers, landowners and the police. The news media was exploiting



*SAM's 1972 newsletter is fascinating. At left, a cartoon that appeared in the 1972 edition of the SAM Newsletter.*

the situation, trying to depict snowmobiling in a "less than enviable image."

These snowmobilers realized they needed a voice to work with state legislators before laws and regulations were created. They wanted to control their own destiny. They knew they had to organize clubs throughout the state, to be connected with legislators, landowners, other state snowmobile associations, the manufacturers and the public. They already understood that riding our sleds on private property was a privilege and it came with responsibilities and a need for respect for the landowners.

Here is a quote from the 1972 newsletter. "All of us feel that we have the right to snowmobile when and where we choose, but how many of us acknowledge the duty that cannot be divorced from that right?"

*As for the future, the Snowmobile Asso-*



ciation of Massachusetts will continue to promote the sport of snowmobiling as a safe family activity, not only through legislation, but by working with the manufacturers through our dealer and distributor members, and also by working with the International Snowmobile Industry Association to produce safer more reliable machines. S.A.M. will also continue to work along with the various state agencies and local clubs to develop and mark trails. Hopefully, the future holds a full time lobbyist at the State House and a full time secretary whose job will be to keep everyone informed."

Because this group had the vision to build the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts we have many miles of trails and are supported by state agencies, private landowners and countless volunteers and their clubs. How many miles, clubs and snowmobiles you ask? Tune in next time to read about those facts and more! Until then "Keep the Rubber Side Down" 🐾



## The Vintage Corner

BY ANDY HOLLAND

# Antique Registration Bill

**T**he holidays are just around the corner, which signals the end of fall sled shows. It was a great season, which started off with the Old Iron Dogs show at the Spencer Fairgrounds. And then there was the Sled Expo, where the oldest sled was a 1963 Arctic Cat and the newest sled was an '81 Yamaha. We had a good mix.

I also made it to a nice show in Turner, Maine. It was the first time I ever saw a 606 Wankel. Yup, this was two 303 Wankel motors melded together. I can only imagine the sound and power that engine can put out. If you've ever driven a sled with a 303 Wankel, you know what I'm talking about, that motor is very snappy.

With winter we hope for snow, and with snow we ride! Check [sledmass.com](http://sledmass.com) for the dates of the three vintage rides this winter. There just might be one near you!

At the Sled Expo I was asked about the Antique Registration bill. It's alive and still in the process of going through the State House. You can help move this bill along by contacting your State Reps and asking them to support it. It's going to take more than just a few calls to get this passed! Thank you for all of your help. As always, we will keep working on preserving the history of snowmobiling. 🐾



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## The Tech Corner

BY JIM TUCKER

# Lights, GoPro, Action!



PHOTO BY JIM TUCKER

**W**ant a better way to capture photos and video of your snowmobiling adventures? Read on shutterbugs as this article will review a sharp tool to shoot your very own sledding action.

Taking pictures with a standard five-megapixel camera became a chore over the years for many reasons, so your intrepid reporter was looking for something new to cover this task. I had been looking at the array of helmet cams out there and thought this would be a way to really get lifelike action seen only on the big screens at movie theaters.

A quick check revealed two key players here, the Contour and GoPro. I selected GoPro as the weapon of choice for its ease of use, terrific YouTube tutorials and available options. After plunking down my hard earned cash (\$300 U.S.) for a Hero2 Motorsports Edition, I proceeded to open the box and examine the contents. (Please note that the Hero2 is now replaced by the Hero3, which has a number of upgrades but the basic camera package is similar.)

I chose the Motorsports edition because it came with many options to mount the camera, such as on handlebars, helmets, hoods and the like. The sticky marine-grade 3M adhesive mounts are tough as nails and so far have not dislodged, no matter what the application. I won't bore you with specifications like weight, length and height, but suffice it to say, the camera itself is small, fits in the palm of my hand, has a waterproof plastic case, and is easy to use.

The unit comes with a USB to mini connector so you can upload to your computer and charge the battery. It also has a 12-volt car adapter that plugs into my sled's "cigarette adapter" to charge while riding. There are adhesive mounts and a number of other adapters to round out the deal, all in a tidy little package.

After a short charge cycle of about an hour I mounted the camera on my helmet with the supplied adhesive mount and off I went. The first tripping point was aiming the GoPro. One has to really adjust the camera at just the right angle to capture the trail perfectly. The supplied clamp loosens up sometimes which changes the angle and makes for some great video shots of snow. Bogus! Okay, how do you know what the correct angle is? Unfortunately one has to take video and see if its any good: basic trial and error.

There's an app for that! Remote control of the camera is possible with an iPhone, Android or Windows Phone. A really nice feature that I didn't get to test as it requires a WiFi Remote. This device attaches to the handlebar and you control the camera from there. The accessory is appealing but I balked at paying an additional \$80. I don't know about you but I don't like to purchase

**After riding, I  
upload the video  
to my computer,  
and viola, a  
day's sledding  
captured on  
video.**







expensive accessories to make a product work after I just plunked down mucho dinero for the device itself.

However, I did buy two accessories that I did deem necessary: A 32GB SD card, so that I can shoot a lot of video, and an extra battery. The battery only lasts a half-day in very cold weather, so a quick swap at lunchtime gets me through the day.

After riding, I upload the video to my computer, and viola, a day's sledding captured on video. I chose the erase after upload feature, so the SD card can be reused again and again. The video was sharp and enjoyed by the whole gang on the computer's "big screen." There's a supplied cable adapter to connect from computer to TV but the television must have USB capability. The camera also has a still-shot mode so you can take it out of the waterproof case and use it like a regular camera. Nice!

I've had the camera for two years now and it's worked well with just a few minor glitches. One is the loose angle mount discussed above and a broken camera mount. The new Hero3 now comes with the WiFi remote standard, which mitigates the pain of buying extra accessories, but the price reflects the upgrade. Despite the minor glitches, the GoPro camera system is still a game-changer in the world of photography and video. This writer considers it a must-have on any epic adventure. Check out GoPro.com and don't forget to watch my YouTube Channel Teamgreen71111 for GoPro videos shot last year.

The GoPro Hero Rated 4 out of 5 carbides for its stellar video quality, excellent construction, and optional accessories. 🐾

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## Legislative Corner

BY LARRY TUCKER

# Conservation Restrictions

The topic of Conservation Restrictions (CR) is involving an ever-increasing amount of SAM's time and attention, since it is within these CR's, that to a great extent, the future of our recreation lie. In the October and November issues of "On The Trail With SAM," Dan Gould presented two excellent articles highlighting several examples of the positive results, through the efforts of SAM and the clubs, that have garnered protections for some of our trails through CR's.

What is a Conservation Restriction? Most of us have a general understanding of the concept of a CR, but for clarification, it is defined as "a voluntary agreement in which a landowner limits specified uses of his or her property while retaining ownership of the land." Most, if not all CR's, are unique as they are tailored to the desires of each landowner. The most familiar restriction in a CR is one in which the landowner precludes future building development of the land. The CR



PHOTO BY DAN GOULD



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**A CR can prohibit certain recreational activities such as motorized recreation or snowmobiling.**

■ ■ ■

would become part of the recorded deed. And, to qualify for federal tax deductions, a landowner would generally partner with a conservation commission or land trust.

A CR, however, can impact our trail system. In addition to limiting or eliminating development, a CR can also set limits or prohibitions on everything from forestry rules to hiking, and it may also have embedded in its language, restrictions that prohibit certain recreational activities such as motorized recreation or snowmobiling. That is why we must be proactive.

In today's land-use arena, our trails are generally on property being increasingly viewed as a good application for a CR. Not only are land trusts looking to increase CR's, but organizations such as watershed associations, open space committees, conservation commissions and advocacy groups are all ramping up efforts that utilize CR's. SAM is actively involved in the process, too.

A large user of CR's is the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). In FY2012 the DCR spent \$3.6 million for 26 land transactions that conserved over 2,000 acres and the DCR also has an active program to preserve a 20-mile corridor from Quabbin Reservoir to Mount Wachusett. The Franklin Land Trust just passed the milestone of preserving over 25,000 acres since their inception.

We can all help with this process by being ever vigilant of potential land transactions. Remember, action is needed before the land trades hands or a CR is implemented. We can also have a greater impact through increased awareness within SAM and by developing partnerships with the land protection community. This new awareness is evident, and as Dan's article inferred, some of the older standard templates used to create CR's have been updated to recognize snowmobiling as an accepted, low impact, environmentally friendly, family activity. Remember, snowmobilers are environmentalists. ❄️

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## Member Profile

BY TERRY HOLLAND

# Ed Morrin



**Club:** Mill Valley

**Club position:** Second Vice President

**Years snowmobiling:** 10

**First Snowmobile:**

1973 Arctic Cat Panther

**Current snowmobile:** 2006 Yamaha Nytro 1000

**Sled mods:** I do all the maintenance on six sleds ranging from 1973 to 2006. That keeps me pretty busy.

**SOUND OFF:** I just wish everyone in our sport would leave the trail behind them in as good or better shape as the trail in front of them.



**VOLUNTEER WORK:** I've been working with club members to re-route the snowmobile trail around the Amherst Water Shed. It's been four years and we are making headway on landowner permissions. I also groom trails, do tree work, scout new trails, rock pick, park cars at the Belchertown Fair, help store club equipment, build bridges, take meeting attendance, and so on.

**FAVORITE RIDING AREA:** Right out of my back yard in Pelham/Belchertown. It's the best thing to be able to leave from home on a sled or groomer. I also like Savoy, Conway, Rutland and Spencer.

**TELL US A STORY:** I was introduced to snowmobiling by my father-in-law ten years ago and got hooked. After moving from Connecticut to Belchertown, I joined the Mill Valley Club and got totally involved.

**TELL US SOMETHING INTERESTING ABOUT YOU:** I still have my first sled, an old 1973 Arctic Cat Panther. I rebuilt the engine and took it on the SAM vintage ride a few years ago. My kids are just as active and love to ride snowmobiles. My two boys ride a 2005 Polaris, my girls ride an Indy Classic. The family enjoys riding out to dinner from the backyard. I have been spending February vacation with my sons and some friends in Pittsburg, NH. 🐾

Know someone interesting? Contact [terry.holland@sledmass.com](mailto:terry.holland@sledmass.com).



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