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VOLUME 31, ISSUE 1

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The Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts is committed to enhancing safe snowmobiling in Massachusetts.



### New hours!

Saturday, October 17, 9 AM – 7 PM

Sunday, October 18, 9 AM – 3 PM

It's all happening at the Big E grounds, 1305 Memorial Ave,  
West Springfield, MA, [www.sledexpo.com](http://www.sledexpo.com)

PHOTOS BY DAN GOULD

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## ON THE COVER

### *The Sled Expo: The Snowmobile Superstore*

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selection of new & used sleds,  
trailers, helmets, jackets, bibs,  
boots, parts, accessories and  
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The Official Publication of the Snowmobile  
Association of Massachusetts

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## President's Message

BY DAN GOULD



# Things To Do

- ☐ Install electric start on wife's sled.
- ☐ Don't instinctively jump off my sled to start hers anymore. Love you!
- ☐ Might as well rebuild clutch, since it has to be removed for electric start.
- ☐ Oh, and fix her speedometer, too.
- ☐ Set speedo to kilometers to exaggerate speed. Take credit for added performance.
- ☐ Get shopping list together for Sled Expo. (Is a list, inside a list, a good thing?)
- ☐ Take advantage of club's early bird special and join before price increase. Save \$\$.
- ☐ Install outside carbides on skis (way better steering, they say).
- ☐ Buy a handlebar riser. Maybe?
- ☐ Remind clubs to send updated map info and points of interest.
- ☐ Update data for SAM iPhone and Android Trail Map.
- ☐ Remind local biz owners they can have locators on the map app.
- ☐ Consider new map features???
- ☐ Fix bent track clip on son's sled (Danny). Never saw a bent one before.
- ☐ Replace missing suspension bolt on son's sled (Brent). Do I sense a trend?
- ☐ Renew trailer registration. Don't misplace tiny license plate sticker.
- ☐ Install paper towel dispenser in trailer. Loading and unloading is a dirty job.
- ☐ Change oil in snow blower and give it the once-over, maybe twice.
- ☐ Install new hydraulic pump on pickup's snowplow, before snow flies this time.
- ☐ Important: Attend the 2015 Massachusetts Trail Conference on November 14.
- ☐ Edit a million-plus snowmobile photos I took last year. Enjoyable but tedious.
- ☐ Apply SAM decals and registration stickers on sleds before temps dip below zero.
- ☐ Write about awesome trip to Quebec for November magazine. Edit video, too.
- ☐ Finish RTP grant, the deadline is looming large.
- ☐ Take extra snowmobile jacket and gloves to Sled Expo for the winter clothing drive.
- ☐ Find roof rake. Did I let someone borrow it? Who has my roof rake!!?
- ☐ Continue to partner on land deals that preserve trails and access.
- ☐ Remind members to watch for land sales and transfers. Know of any?
- ☐ Fill home heating oil tank before price skyrockets in typical fashion.
- ☐ Replace worn and broken snow shovels, we're gonna need them! 🛜



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**Adams members distributed free popcorn and snowmobiling literature at the Adams Street Fair.** PHOTO BY JOE ROGGE



### ADAMS SNO DRIFTERS

by Joe Rogge,  
board of directors

We open our 2015 season looking forward to a successful year. A snowmobile club is involved with much more than simply clearing and grooming trails during the winter. We distributed free popcorn at the Adams Street Fair, distributed free snowmobiling literature at the Adams Agricultural Fair, and will soon make a sizeable donation to the Fall Run Motorcycle Rally. Thank you SAM for use of the SAM Trailer and materials. Great PR!

We are working with landowners to keep key trails open. In one case it required extensive work, i.e. verbal work, to get a major trail re-routed. Land owners need to feel they can trust our club to "do it right". Please do not take the trails for granted. Respect the trails or you may find them closed.

We have also started our regular monthly meetings at the Adams American Legion (2nd Thursday of the month at 7pm). We open this year trying to improve on last year. We have a few changes in club officers and directors. It seems many organizations find themselves lacking sufficient volunteers for key positions. Fortunately we have had several individuals step up to serve. Check out our website, [adamssnodrifters.webstarts.com](http://adamssnodrifters.webstarts.com). That's it for now.



### BERKSHIRE SNOW SEEKERS

by Randy Toth

Come and experience the excitement of snowmobiling in the Berkshires. Our first class groomer fleet consists of 3 Tucker Sno-Cats, a Thio-kol and 2 snowmobile-based groomers. Dues are only \$60 for each snowmobile (\$50 if you join before December 1) and they include a club membership, a SAM membership and a trail permit. Join via snail-mail (P.O. Box 1102, Pittsfield, MA 01202), via our website, [berkshiresnowseekers.com](http://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. See you soon!



### BERNARDSTON-GILL-LEYDEN

by Brad Stafford,  
club president

Yes it's that time of year already, did you blink? Well, despite all the green and warm weather the past few months, our club has been busy and it's going to get even busier! Our grants have come through to outfit another mini-truck for trail maintenance and grooming. We will be replacing one of our larger bridges on our main corridor



**Well. What are you waiting for! Randy Toth of the Berkshire Snow Seekers takes a break while grooming the club trails.**

trail. There is a list of new landowners that we will have to meet with and touch base with the existing ones.

Like all clubs, we have quite a new “to do” list this year plus the regular trail and bridge inspections. This is all done by snowmobilers just like YOU! We can always use the extra man (and/ or woman) power, whether it’s just a few hours for one day or like some weekend, from now until the end of the season.

Come join our club meetings at the Bernardston Vets club the last Monday of the month at 7pm. You can keep up with club news on BGLsnow.com and our facebook page “Bernardston Gill Leyden Snowmobile club.” Also, if you’re not on our email list, drop me a request at nvr-play2ty@yahoo.com and I will gladly add you. Stay tuned for news about our annual snowmobile swap-meet in November and always... Keep the Rubber Side Down.



### **BUCKLAND RIDERS** by Steven Howland

We are ready for another great year of snow and we’ll be grooming out trails wider than ever with one 6’ grant-funded groomer set up and ready to go and another unit to come soon. This fall we will be completing our grant work with volunteer labor in the Hawley State Forest, clearing years of brush growing in along some of the primary trails. If you would like to be included in emails regarding trail work, meetings, and events please email Steve Howland, showland@mac.com and I’ll add you to the list.

Monthly meetings are the second Mondays of the month, 7pm at the Buckland Fire Station. Our fall fundraiser event is selling stuffed baked potatoes at Shelburne Falls Moonlight Magic holiday kick-off event held the Friday evening after Thanksgiving. This is always a fun time with the main street closed off, stores open late, and street vendors and performers. Hope to see you there and on the trails for work and play.



### **BURGY BULLETS** by Jon Tobin, president

Happy summer, everyone.

As many of us have been enjoying trips to the beach, burgers and dogs on the grill and the like, I’m sure we’re all looking forward to some winter fun. We



***What an overgrown trail looks like before annual maintenance. If you can spare some time, come on out and give the Conway Snowmobile Club a hand. No experience needed.*** PHOTO BY ED SKORUPSKI



***Sled Ed, Kevin and Tobz getting ready to head out with the Burgy Bullets’ fleet.***

have a lot going on at the BBSC, including setting up a season kick-off party, fall season horseshoe league, possible Halloween party, getting ready for trails and bridges and maybe even getting another Arctic Cat Bearcat for grooming. Speaking of grooming, a big thank you goes out to “Sled Ed” Hurlburt and Frank “the Tank” Richard for the exceptional job grooming our trails last season.

Keep an eye out for our annual newsletter in the mail and check out our Facebook page for updates on all our upcoming events and club news. Trail season will be beginning in October, meeting at the clubhouse at 9am on Sundays. Can’t wait to see our Bugy Bullet friends at the club this year. Think Snow!



### **CONWAY SNOWMOBILE CLUB**

by Ed Skorupski

Pre-season trail work is already in full swing. This year’s focus is the Henhawk Trail Restoration Project which runs from

Williamsburg to Conway through one of Northampton’s water supply areas and has been in need of attention for quite a while. Crews have been busy clearing brush back installing water bars while consulting with the Northampton DPW in order to ensure compliance with all of the pertinent rules and regulation.

Another interesting part of this work has been working with the local mountain bikers. Several of our volunteers do not ride a sled, but instead choose to ride mountain bikes or horses on these trails. This serves as a good reminder that trail access and maintenance are important to a diverse group of users.

As always, the bulk of the work is being done by a dedicated few. We are always looking for more volunteers. If you can spare some time, come on out and give us a hand. No experience needed. Again this year, we will have online trail pass sales at sledconway.com, please buy your pass early and support the club. Please like and follow us on Facebook for more club information.



### **EASY RIDERS**

by Steven Conti,  
vice president

Greetings snowmobilers!

Welcome back to another snowmobiling season. Not sure if Mother Nature can top last year’s snowfall but, you never know. Not quite sure if I am personally ready yet given the beating we took last year, I am enjoying the summer time just a little bit more than before and slowly gearing up for winter because it is inevitable, it will get cold and snowy again. When it





**Members of the Easy Riders Snowmobile Club attend the annual water-skis in Union CT. Held every year for at least the last 25 years on the first Sunday in July and August. A club tradition that we try not to miss.**

does, the Easy Riders will be ready with planned trips to our usual locations throughout Mass, Maine, New Hampshire and Canada. As a traveling club, we offer many different options for destinations to travel, and different riding styles.

We will be manning our booth at the Big E Sled Expo in Springfield on Oct 17-18, feel free to stop by and say hello if you wish. All are welcome to attend any of our club meetings October – March at the Marlboro Moose, 67 Fitchburg St in Marlboro, just off 495. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of those months at 7pm. We discuss our trips, events and general snowmobile topics. In August a group of us traveled down to Union CT to the annual water-skis put on by the Nipmuc Trail Riders, always fun and entertaining. Hope to see you soon!



## GREATER WHATELY SNOWMOBILE CLUB

**by Robert Sabola**

What's new with GWSC? We now have meetings every month. The Club had a few tough years in the past but that's all behind us now and we are now looking forward to a bigger and better future. Meetings have been revamped. They are to the point and they last a little over an hour.

Drag sleds are getting their annual preventative maintenance checkups and the 2004 Skandic is getting a top end overhaul. A couple of bridges will get new decks.

The October meeting is our annual meeting with elections for club officers. Here's a chance for you to come and voice your opinion or even run for office. We are always looking for new ideas and fresh faces. Someone once told me that the club is only as good as its active members.

Trail passes are available starting September. Keep snowmobiling affordable the club voted to keep the cost of a membership and trail pass at \$55 per sled.

Regular Meeting: Second Monday of every month year-round. Meetings are held at the Whately Town Hall located across the street from the Whately Inn. Meetings start at 7pm. Email us at [greaterwhatelysnowmobileclub@aol.com](mailto:greaterwhatelysnowmobileclub@aol.com), visit us at [sledmass.com/club/greater-whately-snowmobile-club/](http://sledmass.com/club/greater-whately-snowmobile-club/).



## HADLEY SNOWMOBILE CLUB

**by Dan Regish, secretary/treasurer**

Once again, mostly because we're still in shock, the HSC thanks all involved in bringing our club to "Club Of The Year" status! Even Mother Nature gave us quite a boost, providing incentive for all of us to enjoy one of the most exciting outdoor sports of her first and last season of each year.

We are really looking forward to another productive and fun-filled season. Whether it's trail preparation, the Sled Expo, events, meetings, or just riding



**The Hadley Snowmobile Club is happier than a puppy in the snow after taking home the coveted 2015 Snowmobile Club of the Year Award.** PHOTO BY TODD BRISTOL

the trails, we will remain committed to improving, enhancing and promoting snowmobiling in Massachusetts. It's where we live, and good neighboring is NOT a "lost art" here.

With such an influx of new membership, trail work will undoubtedly be accomplished much quicker, and hopefully by the time this news goes to print, the HSC has had the opportunity to help our neighboring clubs prepare for the upcoming season. Until then...change the chain case oil, grease that jack shaft, charge the battery and think snow!



## KNOX TRAIL SNO-RIDERS

**by Jim Richard, media director**

While you were enjoying your summer, the Board of Directors met monthly to plan another great season!

Win a 2016 Ski-Doo MXZ600 Sport snowmobile in the Sixth Annual Raffle. Only 125 tickets will be sold at \$125 each. Entry includes a buffet dinner for two at the Stockbridge Sportsman Club event on January 9, 2016. Tickets are available from [knoxtrail.com](http://knoxtrail.com), club officers, vendors, the Sled Expo at the Big E on Oct. 17 and 18, or the Sno-Phone at 413-269-0243.

Early bird trail pass discounts end on December 1. Save \$10 per sled. Discount is available by mail, online, club officers or at the Sled Expo. After Dec 1, vendors will be announced.

On the groomer front, The Bombi is getting a new set of tracks and the Thiokol had a complete driveline overhaul. The



fleet features 5 sled-based groomers, 3 tracked groomers, and two volunteer owned machines.

As always, volunteers are needed for trail work, groomer maintenance and operation, club events, etc. Would you like to help? Call the Sno-Phone, go to knowx-trail.com, write to KTSR Box 363, East Otis, MA 01029, visit us at the Sled Expo, or attend a meeting! See you on the trails!



## PORCUPINE RIDGE RUNNERS

by Lew Starkey, president

After a wonderful winter season the Porcupine Ridge Runners have been busy clearing trails and preparing equipment for the 2015-2016 season. Our membership is up 25% and we are looking forward to this additional support for rebuilding a few bridges to connect our trails. New memberships are always welcomed, as are volunteers to help us maintain the beauty around Shutesbury, Leverett, Wendell and New Salem.

Our meetings continue to be held the second Monday of each month at 7pm at the Shutesbury Athletic Club. Please join us at a meeting and look forward to seeing you on the trails!



*The grooming crew of the Porcupine Ridge Runners take care of the club trails.* PHOTO BY LEW STARKEY



## SAVOY KANARY KATS

by Doug Decoigne

Greetings from the high altitude club! Summer goes by so quickly. We started trail work on September 13. In the off season several club volunteers have been busy with numerous projects, chiefly going through SKK's newest grooming acquisition, a third LMC 1800 groomer.

This machine, although in very good shape when we got it, has had many repairs, improvements and general TLC. This addition to the fleet will make a very capable stable of equipment even stronger which translates to even better trail conditions!

Our VP, Tom Wandrei, was at the popular Motorama in N. Adams on 8/30 with our raffle sled. A 2016 Ski Doo MXZ TNT 600 liquid cooled machine. We will also have a booth at the Sled Expo at the Big E in W. Springfield October 17 & 18, with the raffle sled, selling tickets for it, and providing club info, clothing, merchandise and upbeat sled conversation.

Tickets are \$20 each and only 750 will be sold. They are available at Savoy Store, LP Adams in Dalton, at club meetings, trail trims, or by calling the Sno-Phone at 413-448-8866. Also please try to attend a trail trim, we meet every Sunday, 9am at Savoy Store. More people we have, more we can do.



## SNOWBIRDS

by Brad Rand,  
vice president

Hello Snowmobile Riders!

Willie Davies is the club's new President for the upcoming season. We would like to thank the officers that donated their time last year to help improve the club and make it better.

The club's meetings for the season will be held on the last Thursday of the month, September through March. The meetings begin at 7pm.

Trail clearing and groomer crews are getting organized at this time. Please find time to donate your time to the club. Any work done helps the club and also can be beneficial for you. Every hour you donate comes off of your membership costs. (Up to \$25.00) Please contact the club by email through the website or on Facebook. We look forward to meeting you at this season's meetings! 🐾

NOVEMBER 14, DOUBLE TREE HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER, LEOMINSTER

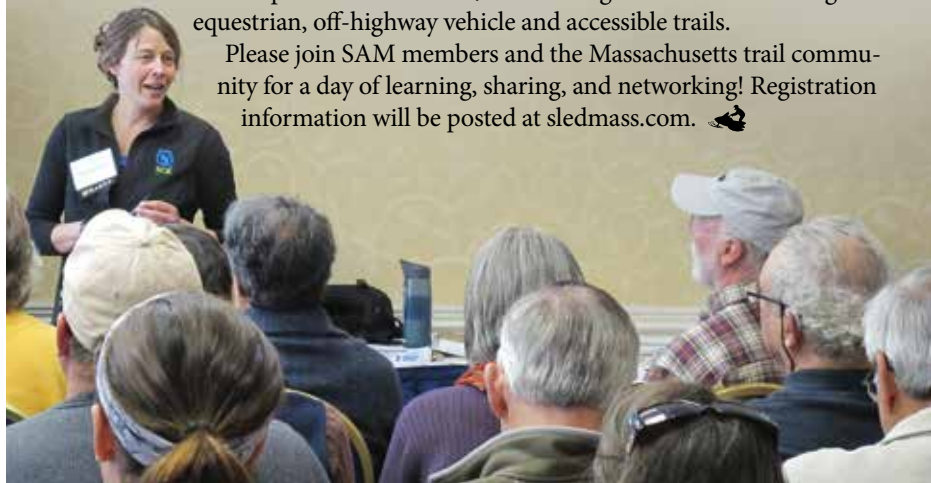
# 2015 Trails Conference

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) in partnership with the Massachusetts Recreational Trail Advisory Board (MARTAB) presents the 2015 Massachusetts Trails Conference on Saturday, November 14, 2015 at the Double Tree Hotel and Conference Center in Leominster, with an optional day of site visit and field trip scheduled for Friday, November 13th.

The conference is funded through the Recreational Trails Program, which supports trail and trail-related facility construction and enhancement projects across the Commonwealth.

The keynote speaker is Woody Keen, owner of Trail Wisdom LLC, a trail consulting firm primarily focused on education. He is also the founder and former President of Trail Dynamics, a trail design-build firm with a national reputation for innovative sustainable trail design and construction projects which have addressed the full spectrum of trail use, from hiking and mountain biking to equestrian, off-highway vehicle and accessible trails.

Please join SAM members and the Massachusetts trail community for a day of learning, sharing, and networking! Registration information will be posted at sledmass.com. 🐾



## **JUNIOR SNOWMOBILER OF THE YEAR: MOLLY MILLER, BERNARDSTON GILL LEYDEN SNOWMOBILE CLUB**

This young leader is heavily involved with SAM and her club. Often spotted volunteering at SAM events, Molly Miller typically spends dozens of hours annually setting up and tearing down everything that goes into the Sled Expo weekend.

A founding member of the Future of SAM youth organization, she also finds time to support her club by selling raffle tickets and helping with events. No one seems to like entering all the data from trail passes into the club's membership list, luckily Molly takes on that task.

As a member of her community, she travels to a local elementary school once a week to teach kids Spanish. She also has gone after school to her "old" elementary school to help her 6th grade teacher prep kids for MCAS.

This high school senior was recently sworn into the US Air Force Reserve and left for bootcamp in June. She will be attending Franklin Pierce University in Ringe, NH this fall, studying physical therapy.



*Jeff Miller and Dan Gould applaud Molly Miller receiving the award and being chosen as the recipient of SAM's 2015 Charlene Whitaker Scholarship.*



# 2015 SAM

**Photos by Randy Toth**



*Senator Jennifer Flanagan was honored at the SAM Annual Meeting for her support of safe snowmobile riding and trail access.*

## **LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR: SENATOR JENNIFER FLANAGAN**

Senator Flanagan, (D) of Leominster, has served the Commonwealth in various roles on Beacon Hill: legislative aid, state representative, and currently State Senator for the Worcester and Middlesex District.

While serving as Vice Chair to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, she and her senior staff championed the passage and the enactment of legislation dealing with the registration of vintage snowmobiles. H3858 is now Chapter 502 of the Acts of 2014.

SAM gives special thanks and recognition for her 16 years of high profile advocacy for safe snowmobile riding and trail access.



### ■ SNOWMOBILER OF THE YEAR: JON TOBIN, BURGY BULLETS SNOWMOBILE CLUB

As a volunteer, Jon Tobin takes a leadership role in every aspect of club activities: trail clearing, grooming, equipment maintenance, membership, running meetings, record keeping, newsletters and club events. His professionalism, combined with a love and appreciation for snowmobiling, has opened many doors with landowners, the DCR, local police and fire departments, as well as the public water department.

As president of the Burgy Bullets Snowmobile Club since 2009, he rarely has time to actually enjoy riding because he puts so much time and energy into making it happen for everyone else. He takes time to spend with his family, leaving little time for him to actually snowmobile.

He makes this sacrifice because he truly loves the sport. All year round, snow or no snow, he continues to dedicate himself to the sport. His passion for snowmobiling is in his blood and it's what keeps him ticking, literally.



*Jon Tobin receives a well-deserved honor and a loud applause.*

# Annual

### ■ CLUB OF THE YEAR: HADLEY SNOWMOBILE CLUB

This club is on the move! They have done an astonishing amount of work and networking to make snowmobiling grow as a whole in their community and our state. Ending the 2013-2014 season with a measly 33 members, of which only 2-4 were active, they have grown to over 110 members in 2015 with 25-plus showing up at meetings and volunteering with club duties.

They recently raised enough money through trail pass sales and raffles to help purchase their very first snow groomer! Their trail system has vastly improved and they are actively working with local businesses to help bring business to them via snowmobile traffic and support the local economy in the winter months.

The club always attends and participates in SAM monthly meetings and were active at the Sled Expo. They understand the benefits of connecting with others in social media and how to use it to promote snowmobiling. They are particularly proud of their participation in SAM's Toys for Tots charity this past season. They went the extra mile in 2015 and plan to continue.

# Awards



*Mark Britton, Steve Szymkowicz, Dan Regish, Todd Bristol accept the 2015 Club of the Year Award.*

## FRIEND OF SAM: BOULEVARD MACHINE & GEAR, KNOX TRAIL SNO-RIDERS



*Susan and Kaz Kasa of Boulevard Machine & Gear.*

Boulevard Machine & Gear has generously supported the Knox Trail Sno-Riders monetarily, by way of purchasing raffle tickets and making groomer donations. They joined the club at our Annual Raffle in December to celebrate the season and partake in the festivities.

When Susan Kasa, owner of Boulevard Machine & Gear, learned the club was building new bridges and repairing existing ones they donated key materials from their shop. It was just what the club needed for repairing the decking of the bridges. Not only did they donate the material but they shipped it to the location. One of the crates was so large the club was able to create a storage building out of it. It's used to house a groomer in the off-season.

There are times when the club required specialty fabricated parts for the groomers. Not only did they open their personal residence to aide in the cause, they designed and created the parts needed for the Thiokol. They have been generous with their time and material. They have done all of this and ask for nothing in return.

There are no words that can thank them enough for the support they have provided. They do so much for the club and they don't even snowmobile! They are amazing people and we appreciate all they do. Their website reads, "We believe the heart of our business is our people."

## PRESIDENT'S AWARD: CHRIS BAKER, MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICE

Chris Baker, former acting Director to the Department of Environmental Law Enforcement, has a long and productive history with SAM. During his career as an EPO, he earned a law degree and quickly became the person we all turn to for advice. Whenever legislators or legislative committee staff needs clarification on proposed legislation or budget amendments, Chris was the "trusted resource." H3858 would not have become law without his personal leadership. When 11th hour issues arose, he and his senior staff worked after hours and on the weekend to clarify, modify, and commit to getting the job done. Chris has returned to a position he cherished most. He is now back to being on the front lines, and works directly with people living in and visiting our state.

## PRESIDENT'S AWARD: JANICE SANTOS, CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

Janice Santos, Chief of Registration, oversees all boat and motorized recreational vehicle registration for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Bureau of Environmental Law Enforcement. She has worked in various capacities within the division.

During the past 36 years of service, she has been responsible for training and supervising personnel in the Boston office, as well as satellite offices in Springfield, Fall River, Hyannis, and Worcester. She has

demonstrated a very strong respect for SAM, and has shown herself to be a supporter of snowmobiles. Never afraid to make tough decisions, or to tackle complex problems, her decisions have been objective, balanced, and fair. She has been quick to provide needed data to us and to Environmental Police Officers, (EPO's), to keep everyone safe and compliant with current law. 🐾



*Janice Santos accepts the award from SAM president, Dan Gould.*



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October 17 & 18



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# A Gift From My Grandfather: The Golden Age of Snowmobiling

By John Ruffo

**I**n 1969 my grandfather Paul Bogos, or Slim, as he was known, along with his best friend George, tried snowmobiling for the first time. It started with a ride on a new sled that belonged to a local farmer. After a lap around the field, banging off snow banks and snowdrifts, they knew then and there that a sled had to be in their garage.

After a year of saving, it was decision-making time. They wondered which sled to buy? Many came to mind, as there were over 300 different snowmobiles available. Would it be an Arctic Cat, AMF-Ski Daddler, Moto-Ski, Scorpion or Polaris? Those were all popular in the area. Smith Sled Shop had a pair of sisters, two 1971 Ski-Doo Olympiques on the showroom floor, but not for long!

No sooner than Slim and George got them home, they were blazing trails all over Wyben and Montgomery. The next day the trails to Tekoa Mountain were widened-up, along with a trail to a friend's house. Soon there were trails all over the neighborhood and surrounding towns, leading to different homes and restaurants.

The "Oly" was well used that first year, especially since the whole family took turns riding. Slim decided to buy a sporty new '72 Ski-Doo TNT 340 the following season. He became good friends with Jimmy and Penny, owners of Smith's Sled Shop in Huntington. After some cylinder porting and tuning there was a new hot machine in the garage, ready for action.

One day on a routine trip down Tekoa Mountain my grandpa got some unexpected action. Cruising at about 35mph he crossed paths with a huge bear in the middle of the trail with no intentions of moving! Thanks to his quick reflexes, and the narrow but swift TNT chassis, he was able to go into a controlled skid off the trail and avoid an un-bear-able collision.

You would think things couldn't get worse, but they did. The off-trail excursion was jarring and soon after the weld on the handlebars broke, and with it went





the steering. Luckily in his toolbox was a handy set of Vise Grips which held everything together long enough to limp home.

After another hard week at work he welded the handlebars back and braced them for good measure. That weekend the two friends took their sleds up the mountain to check out an old Revolutionary War spy bunker. Afterwards they decided to head down to the Purple Onion to get a bite to eat. While inside Slim got a weird feeling about the sleds parked outside, so he bundled-up and ventured out. A snowmobiler's worst fear became a reality. The TNT was gone! His friend George, a detective at the time, called his son and directed him to come in from the other end of the trail, hoping to trap the thief on the stolen sled.

With his son on the way and the sun fading, they spotted a rider on a sled without lights. Back in the day, if the lights weren't on it was more than likely stolen, due to tampering with the ignition system. They followed the tracks back to

the culprit's home but found nothing. The next day George discovered that the sled thief was arrested, but sadly the TNT was gone forever. After a summer of being bummed-out, Slim bought a used TNT from a buddy, just like the stolen one.

As winter approached he got a call from someone at the registry, they asked if he could do some welding on their broken Raider snowmobile. He fixed it and gave it a good overall servicing too. They rewarded him with a special registration number, SM1PB. With the special registration and "new" sled, he was ready for old man winter!

Another friend had just taken delivery of a brand new 1973 TNT 292 twin, with dual carbs. They were eager to race and upon heard reports of snow in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, they headed north. Skunk Stripe vs. Silver Bullet, fan-to-fan, man-to-man, that old 340 took the win by a sled length! He soon forgot about the stolen sled.

After years of fun trips to Vermont and

Old Forge, New York, he decided it was time to give the '72 a little rest, so in 1977 he bought a used '74 TNT 440. He found some minor flaws in the sled and didn't care for the riding style of the short-track either. It was prone to fishtailing and spin-outs, and that 440 engine sucked up gas like nobody's business, which wasn't good for long trips.

That winter he was riding with a group, one of the guys was new to the sport. About halfway through the week the greenhorn's sled was acting up. The clutch loosened just a couple miles from the cabin, a common problem for that machine. My grandfather sacrificed his riding time and fixed the guy's sled the next day. After the weekend was over and they were loading up, the newbie walked up to my grandfather and said, "I don't care much for it, if you want it you can have her." So that day he hauled double with a cherry 1973 TNT 340 free air in the bed!

When he got home he took it for a ride and fell in love. It was extremely fast, re-



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sponsive, and better on gas. Later that day he unloaded his '74 Ski-Doo. He'd have to wait until next winter to really put the 340 to the test.

The following year they ventured to the far end of a Vermont lake to watch some racing. A short time after they left a snow squall moved in. They decide to press-on rather than risk being stranded. Concerned about losing their way on the lake, and thin ice, they decided to hold the throttles open, praying to make it across, but old man winter took a turn for the worst, a total whiteout struck the lake. Visibility was at a low, but fortunately one of the guys left earlier and they were able to follow his tracks. The free air never let him down.

Years went by, the winters weren't as snowy, the golden age of snowmobiling faded away too. Many people stopped riding but not my grandfather. His loyalty was to Ski-Doo, and he had to have the new 1984 SS25, their 25th anniversary sled. It featured a liquid-cooled 462cc rotary valve Rotax twin with oil injection and a improved rear suspension.

That was the last new sled he bought. My grandfather watched as hundreds of brands dwindled to just four, Yamaha, Skidoo, Polaris and Arctic Cat. After years of great riding his health began to fade as well, and he retired from snowmobiling in 1992.

Since I was knee-high to a grasshopper he had taken me for laps around the house. He realized that I enjoyed snowmobiling as much as he did, and decided to get his old girls running again. We started with the SS25, getting the seat reupholstered. He then taught me how to do a thorough tune-up, not just changing spark plugs. He taught me how to clean the carbs, change the gear oil, the whole bit. Soon after we worked on his free air, which needed a new seat and fuel lines. A few squirts of gas and she fired up, but one carb wasn't sucking fuel. A new diaphragm kit, along with a good polishing, and she was ready to go!

Then came the news that his buddy Bob still had my grandfather's '72 TNT and wanted to know if we wanted it back. I was 14 years old and excited, but had doubts he wanted it. Later on I heard rumors that someone else was going to buy it. The following week after school I stopped by my grandfather's to help with



chores. He told me to go out to the barn and get a hammer. When I opened the door there was the beautiful '72 TNT, all shined up, sitting right in front of me! As I walked back to the house I tried not to laugh or smile, and just bring him the hammer. He said, "Well she's clean. I'm picking up fuel line and premix oil tomorrow."

The next day we took the hood off, cleaned the tank, and put it back together. With fresh 93 octane pumping through her veins, she came back to life for the first time since 1997.

Our last project was a custom sled. We wanted to build something unique, something no one else would be riding. We searched several swap meets and just could not find the right sled. Finally, at the BGL swap meet, we found a 1973 Mercury Max 440. It was all there, it was cheap, but it was rough.

We started work immediately, painting the steering parts and skis. That was the easy part, deciding what color to paint the hood was another story. It had to stand

out but still hold a vintage cross-country racer look. One day the Dukes of Hazard was on the tube and we thought, why not bright orange? It stands out but still has that 70's look. A quick run to Westfield Auto and some time at Smith Vocational and the hood was painted.

Next was the powertrain. It had to be a sleeper, with an engine that no one would recognize as being out of place, it had to look pedestrian. We felt it would be sacrilegious to throw something other than a fanner in there. Then it hit us. It would be most appropriate for a Yamaha EX 440 engine, with swapped-out jugs from a 485cc Phazer for a little more oomph. The plan is to install a nice pipe with a respectable can for trail use and have it ready to go in 2016.

Even after he stopped riding, my grandfather was a diehard enthusiast to the end, at 84. He passed away this spring, and I do miss him, but the memories and the snowmobile legacy he left will live on forever. He was an authentic leaf spring banger! Be bold, ride old! 🛷

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*(L-R) Secretary Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, enjoys an afternoon of riding with SAM members.*

# Snowmobiling with Matthew A. Beaton

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs

**By Rena Sumner**

**M**atthew A. Beaton, the Massachusetts Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEA), snowmobiled with key members of the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts and the Harvard Snowmobile Club in March.

With Mother Nature delivering record snowfall last season, SAM members took part in the national Take a Friend Snowmobiling Campaign. The national campaign, which began five years ago, is a great opportunity to introduce non-snowmobilers to our winter activity of choice. It is also a great opportunity to share the

experience with state and town officials.

Tony Shaw, a SAM Board of Director and President of the Harvard Snowmobile Club, along with other members of the club, hosted an afternoon ride that explored the great trails in the town of Harvard. The club has more than 27 miles of snowmobile trails that is a result of both public and private collaboration. The ride crossed property owned by the town of Harvard, conservation lands, including property owned by private landowners and the Fruitland's museum.

Secretary Beaton oversees the Commonwealth's six environmental, natural resource and energy regulatory agencies: the Departments of Environmental Protection, Public Utilities, Energy Resources,



Conservation & Recreation, Agricultural Resources and Fish & Game. He also serves as Chairman of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, the Energy Facilities Siting Board, and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center.

Prior to his appointment to the cabinet post, Secretary Beaton served as a State Representative for the Eleventh Worcester district. He was a member of the committees on Ways and Means; Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture; and Ethics.

In the private sector, Secretary Beaton has worked as an environmental engineer and sustainability consultant. Beaton earned an undergraduate degree in biotechnology from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and a master's degree in energy and environmental analysis from Boston University. Secretary Beaton and his wife, Laura, live in Shrewsbury with their two young children. 🐾



(L-R) Tony Shaw, president of the Harvard Snowmobile Club, talks to Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, and Scott Sumner, SAM membership chair, before a snowmobile ride in Harvard.



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# Winter Weather Clothing Drive at the Sled Expo

By Marcia Miller, Charity Chair

**S**AM is once again promoting our first charity of the season, the Winter Weather Clothing Drive. We are looking for new or used, good quality, clean, winter clothes. We will take hats, gloves, mittens, coats, snow pants, boots, just about anything to keep a person warm. These items will be distributed to the Big Brothers, Big Sisters of America, so the older youth in our communities can stay toasty this winter, too.

Even with the knowledge that you are helping those in greater need is reward enough, those who donate will get a chance to win a SAM Trail map autographed by X-Games champion Levi LaVallee. Please bring your items to the Kid's Zone at the Sled Expo, October 17 & 18, held at the Big E grounds.

So, clean out your closet, donate your winter clothing at the Sled Expo, and consider upgrading to something new while you're there. Your donation will go to a great cause. 🐾

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# Will this be the Future of Snowmobiling?

By Mark Kenyon

**A**lthough there is some humor in the picture, this in fact may happen someday. Why? Because of a lack of volunteers! We are not the only club with this problem, and our recreation is not the only one in this predicament.

Nevermind having groomed trails, someday there may not be any trails at all. Someday clubs may be a thing of the past that people will talk about, remembering back in the good old days. In my club the same group of volunteers that prepare the trails and bridges for the upcoming riding season also repair the groomers, and volunteer to run events. They volunteer to do anything and everything that comes

up unexpectedly. Some of our volunteers even have taken money out of their own pockets to pay their employees to work on trails and work on groomers.

Our current group of volunteers do a great job, but they are getting older each year. Back problems and other ailments are taking their toll. Currently there are very few, and I might be able to say, no younger people stepping up to the plate to take over. At least not in our club.

I hear the same thing from many people, "I have a full-time job," "I have a family," or "I have other commitments." Well, guess what? The current volunteers are in the same boat. The only difference is that one of their commitments is volunteering for the club.

Chances are this article may inspire a couple of people to volunteer, but what if no one steps up to the plate? If in time, there are no additional volunteers, you may see less events, less trail work, less grooming. And unfortunately, in time, you may see snowmobiling die out in the state of Massachusetts.

If people do not step up to volunteer, the only other possible solution to maintaining a trail system would be to pay someone to do the work. This would mean that trail pass costs would have to increase dramatically. Nobody wants that, but nobody wants to volunteer either.

The future of snowmobiling in Massachusetts is up to each and every one of you. If you don't volunteer, who will? 🐾

*Mark Kenyon is the treasurer of the Berkshire Snow Seekers and a longtime snowmobile volunteer and advocate.*





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