

Track & Trails



SNOBIRDS Snowmobile Club
P.O. Box 666
Menomonee Falls, WI 53052

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(for latest info, call 252-I.N.F.O.)

Snobirds meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 8 pm, Aero Park Propwash, on Lannon Road between Lisbon and Silver Spring, UNTIL JULY, then we are moving - see article.

Please join us! Guests are welcome!

-- May 2003

1	General Meeting	Aero Park Propwash, 8 p.m.
8	Board Meeting	Kelly Wellhausen, 7:30 p.m.
10	Adopt-a-Highway cleanup <i>see article this issue</i>	Joe Mingari 9 a.m. Whiskey Corners

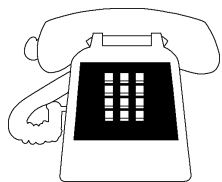
-- June 2003

5	General Meeting	Aero Park Propwash, 8 p.m.
12	Board meeting	John Palmer, 6:00 p.m.

-- July 2003

4	Independence Day	
8	General Meeting	2nd Tuesday each month -- Note: we've moved!! <i>New location,</i> Village Bowl, Menomonee Falls, 8 p.m.
16	Board meeting	Gary Breuckman, 7:30 p.m.
17	Adopt-a-Highway	Whiskey Corners, 6 p.m.

Cover picture by Bill Schultz,
George Caritis sitting on the second Polaris snowmobile made,
factory tour during the MN trip...

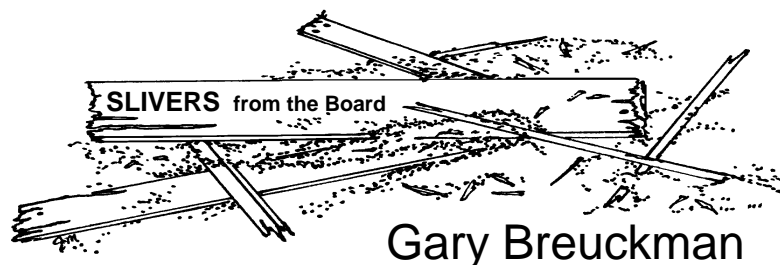


Event Hotline, **252-INFO** (252-4636)

see our club information on the Internet
at <http://www.snobirds.org/>

Views expressed in this publication are those of the Author of the Article, and may or may not reflect the views of the Snobirds Snowmobile Club. Opposing viewpoints will be tolerated, and may even be printed. Correspondence may be sent to Snobirds Snowmobile Club; Gary Breuckman, Editor; P.O. Box 666; Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin 53052-0666.

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First, the Smelt Fry... in the next issue I'll have some pictures, and more details of how everything went - but for now I can tell you that the attendance was down from the last two years, we fed 750 happy customers. That's about the same as three and four years ago, we had numbers between 725 and 750 consistently for years, but last year it was about 850. We had ordered more smelt, because last year we went about halfway into the 'emergency' frozen smelt, so this year we had fresh smelt for sale at the end. In any case, I'm sure we did fine dollar-wise, and the raffle wheel and beer/soda sales also went well.

We have completed arrangements for a new meeting place. As you know, Aero Park's status is somewhat in the dark, and we were told after June we should meet elsewhere. We've signed a six-month agreement with the Village Bowl in Menomonee Falls, with meetings on the second Tuesday of each month starting in July. More information will follow in upcoming issues.

We accepted one new membership at the last Board meeting, we now have 65 families.

There have been two deaths recently that we would like you to remember in your prayers. Joe Mingari's mother passed away, and just last week we lost a long-time club member, David Schwebel. Some of you may have talked with Dave at the Smelt Fry, he passed away the next day. I'm sure the Board, Officers, and members join me in expressing our condolences to the survivors.

Minnesota Trip Goes, *continued...*

of lake and about 40 miles of river – nice riding.

We stopped at Nelson's store in Birchdale. The town has one store, one café and a few houses. Nelson's Store sells gasoline, groceries, hardware, plumbing, clothing, liquor and has a small dining area where you can get a meal and upstairs has sleeping rooms. It is owned by Ralph and Joy Nelson who are so very accommodating. We were told elsewhere to try their hard salami. We bought some to try, a little more and then some more. That, with slices of Colby cheese and pop, made a great snack.

That night we stayed at the Island View Lodge which is on Rainey Lake east of International Falls. It was nice and had a restaurant and bar so we did not have to leave the place.

Friday, our last day of riding, we headed to see Kettle Falls and the Kettle Falls Hotel. The Kettle Falls was no more than a dam to hold up the water level of the lakes. The Kettle Falls Hotel was built by a timber cruiser and financed by "Madame Nellie Bly" in 1913. It was sold in 1918 for \$1000 and four barrels of whiskey. The Hotel was closed for restoration by the State so the Hotel and Falls were not worth seeing. We did have nice riding mostly on lakes which was lucky because the temperature went up to the mid-forties and the trails were getting slushy and bare.

Saturday morning Jim Bozich of Fast, Inc. brought two Blade snowmobiles to Fortune Bay where we were staying so we could test ride them on Lake Vermillion at the resort. It turned out to be a disaster. The first machine wore a hole in the anti-freeze container making it unusable. The second machine lost a cylinder. After all the briefing we got on Monday at Fast, Inc. I'm afraid they convinced me they lack quality control.

After the test rides we drove home hitting temperatures as high as 70 degrees. This was March 15th and we all thought this may be the end of this snowmobile season. We will see!

Minnesota has well-maintained, excellent trails and many of them. They mark many intersections with a T or two arrows, but no information which trail goes where. The trails and intersections on the lakes were perfect. If you cannot ride in Wisconsin, which in my opinion is the best, I would pick Minnesota.

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY 2003

Joe Mingari

Hello fellow Sno Birds.

It's time to set your summer highway cleanup schedule. We will clean up Hy. 74 between Lannon & Sussex as we have for the past ten or more years. It's hard to believe that we have been at it for such a long time. The roadway is better for our efforts.

It is also some of the best public relations that we can have for the club.

Through the years, it has been your efforts and dedication that has made this possible. Without your help, we could not have accomplished this feat.

As is the norm, we will go out three times to clean up the right of way, two Saturdays and a Thursday evening. The dates are as follows: May 10 July 17 and October 25.

Please mark your calendars.

The Sat. starts will be at 9:00AM and the Thurs. time will be at 6:00 PM.

Whiskey Corners will be the starting point as in the past.

Adopt a Highway is a good time and fair exercise. After we finish we will again "de-brief" at Whiskey Corners. This is my way of thanking all who participate. I'm looking forward to seeing all those old friendly and some new faces.

Joe M.

MINNESOTA TRIP GOES!

BILL SCHULTZ

The trip was planned last year but no snow. Eighteen people signed up to go in January – no snow. Finally, in March there was enough snow in northern Minnesota, so I re-planned the trip for one day shorter and only the northern part of the original trip. Only eight people (6 Snobirds) were able to participate.

We started sledding on Monday from Fortune Bay Resort and Casino near Tower, MN. Our first destination was Fast, Inc., in Eveleth MN, maker of the Blade snowmobile and the M-10 suspension system. Eveleth is south of Tower, about 60 miles (by sled) and the snow was very minimal.

Jim Bozich of Fast, Inc. gave us a very interesting tour explaining all the advance technology of the Blade snowmobile. He offered to let us test ride the Blade snowmobile on Saturday when we came back from our saddlebag ride. Most everyone was anxious to ride a Blade.

Eveleth is the home of the world's largest hockey stick. It is huge; ask someone to show you a picture.

Our destination for Monday night was International Falls. I made that impossible. The front shock of my M-10 suspension literally came apart. The only way I could continue was to remove the front shock and spring assembly. With the help of Don's tools and Bud's expertise, it was removed. Now the sled rode like an early 70's sled. I felt every little bump and had to go slow over big bumps making our pace very slow. We had to stay at Orr, MN that night.

Tuesday morning I arranged to have Shane Johnson, owner of Glendale Sales and Service, replace my shock. He turned out to be the right person. He knew all about my RX-1 motor from working on motorcycles and was an M-10 dealer. He drove me 50 miles by car to Fast, Inc., to get a replacement shock under warranty and 50 miles back, put my sled together and then only charged me \$100 + tax.

I got back to the hotel at 1:15 P.M. Ron won the pool by being the closest to the time. At 2:00 P.M. we were ready to ride. 173 miles by 8:00

Minnesota Trip Goes, *continued...*

P.M.! You know the trails were perfect and only a couple breaks on the trail and one pit stop. We were back on schedule.

We stayed at the Sportsman Lodge in Barudette, MN. The Lodge is located on the shore of the Rainey River at the mouth of the Lake of the Woods. We walked in and the owner offered to show us places of interest to see the next day. The Lodge had rooms, cabins, 2 restaurants, a lounge and a four-piece band playing at night. Their main clientele was fishermen. Each room and cabin had its own freezer where you could store the fish you catch. In the morning there were six track vehicles warming up ready to take the fishermen to their favorite spot on the Lake of the Woods. Lake of the Woods is 100 miles long and 70 miles wide.

Next morning we hopped on our sleds and headed toward the Northwestern Angle which is the northern most point of the 48 states. About 40 miles on a marked trail on the Lake of the Woods. Hundreds of stakes! Along the way we saw the groomer coming. I flagged him down and it was Jerry, owner of the Sportsman Lodge. He had been out grooming since 6:00 A.M. The guy owns the Sportsman Lodge, 48% of the Wigwam Resort and as of May 1st will own the Bonnie Brae Resort. All big resorts with cabins, lodge rooms, restaurant and bar and yet he goes out at 6:00 A.M. to groom a snowmobile trail.

We could not spend as much time on the Lake of the Woods as I would have liked because we had to be at Roseau, MN at the Polaris factory at 4:00 P.M. for a tour. The tour was great. I wish I could have spent the whole day touring. The tour is limited to one hour. If you have a group of 15 or more you can set your own time and have a longer tour. The organization is fantastic. Parts are only in the factory for two days before production, so figure out the planning that must be done so some part is not missing and the whole line would be stopped. All the people seemed happy working at Polaris and have great benefits.

After the tour we went next door to the Polaris Connection. It is a museum of Polaris, has a gift shop and an excellent restaurant. Both George and Bud sat on the second Polaris snowmobile made and had their pictures taken. We stayed in Roseau that night.

Thursday our destination was International Falls, MN. We ran trail to Warroad, MN, across the bottom of Lake of the Woods and on the Rainey River to Birchdale, MN. Thirty miles of trail, a little over 30 miles