# SNOWMOBILER

# Midwest Trail Blazer's **SADDLEBACK**

# Latest from the IDNR: TRAIL ETIQUETTE

### March 2025

The Official Publication of Illinois Association of Snowmobile Clubs, Inc.



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#### **COVER STORY** Midwest Trail Blazers' Saddlebag 2025



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Have you been on a snowmobile trip or had some great club gatherings? We'd love to hear about them.

Please Email Your IASC Club Stories to production@ilsnowmobiler.com



## PRESIDENT'S DESK



Earlier, I came across an article about the last Yamaha Sidewinder that was up for auction benefiting the ISMA grant program. It went for \$165,000.00. It got me thinking of how generous Yamaha has been to the Illinois Snowmobile Community. They have sponsored the Yamaha Challenge for many years, donating gear to our youth snowmobilers that completed

Kai Steward

the Snowmobile Safety Course in person. They donated regularly to the Scholarship Program and have supported our clubs and regions in other ways through the years. Thank you, Yamaha, for your support.

I know most of the trails in the state were able to open for a day or two. I hope you were able to get out and explore our Illinois trail system. Although the snow wasn't what we hoped it would be, I did hear some positives about how well the clubs did informing everyone of conditions and marking trails.

As this will be the last article of the season, I want to again thank all the clubs and regions who worked tirelessly to get the trails in, out and maintained. Thank you to our landowners for your generosity and permission to cross your land. Thank you to our club officers that are the face of Illinois snowmobiling at the local level. Thank you to our Region Directors and Trail Coordinators for all you to do to keep us informed and working together cohesively. Thank you to Pat Pendergast and all the Safety Education instructors for teaching this next generation of snowmobilers. Thank you to all those on the state board. I could not do what I do, without each one of you and your support. Illinois keeps getting better because of all of you.

Thank you, Kai Steward

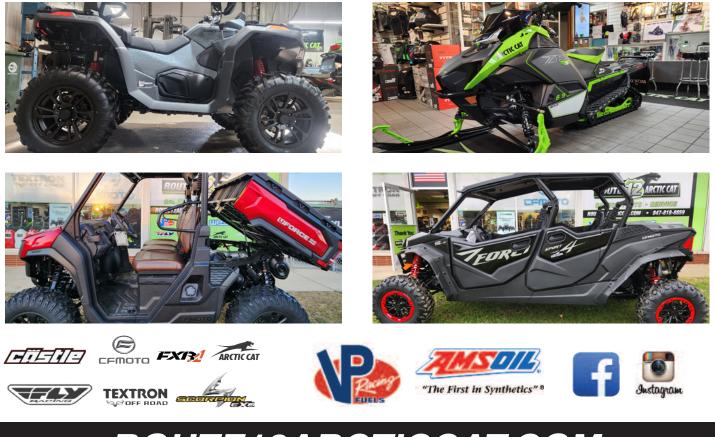


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### A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER



Soon our snowmobile trails will close. After that, we turn our attention to the next season and, in many cases, fundraising. As you know, the IASC has a couple of fundraising events each year in an effort to support our mission.

Carol Bly-Julian

As with most not-for-profit organizations, our fundraising involves selling something. Many times, when I ask people to support my fundraiser I am asked if the purchase is tax deductible. When the fundraiser is for my snowmobile club or the IASC, I have to answer no. The IASC, and most likely your club, are not registered with the IRS as charitable organizations. While all charitable organizations are not-for-profits, not all not-forprofits qualify as charitable organizations. The main distinction is that charitable organizations focus on public benefit and enjoy special tax privileges, while not-for-profits may serve a smaller, private purpose.

The benefit of fundraising goes beyond making money. Fundraising events are a good way to connect with the community, increase awareness of your organization, and encourage volunteerism.

I will see you at the next IASC fundraiser!





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#### **Region Meeting Schedule:**

Be a Part of the Process - Attend Your Local IASC Region Meeting!

#### **Region 1**

Director: **Don Schaefer** 847-917-4202 dssschaefer@msn.com Call or Email for Information & Location

#### **Region 2**

Director: Craig Adams

815-687-2844 craigmadams@yahoo.com First Wednesday of the Month - 7:30pm August - April Rusty Nail Bar & Grill, Ringwood, IL

#### **Region 3**

Director: **Dan Damptz** 815-985-6071 dandamptz@gmail.com Second Monday of the Month - 7:00pm July - April

Uptown Lanes / Back Alley Bar, Byron, IL

#### **Region 4**

Director: Pat Pendergast

309-335-4095 ppenderg@knox.edu September, November & March - 7:00pm Third Monday of the Month Call or Email for Information & Location

#### **Region 5**

Director: **Jennifer Baumgartner** 815-509-9373 snowdiva18@yahoo.com Second Wednesday of the Month - 7:00pm August - May Red Ox Bar and Grill, Hampshire, IL

#### **Region 6**

Director: **Kirk Polhill** 815-275-3371 kdpwire@yahoo.com Second Thursday of the Month - 7:30pm September - April Buckhorn Saloon, Stockton, IL

#### **Region 7**

Director: **Dale Fritz** 815-791-6375 dalefritz2@comcast.net Call or Email for Information & Location

#### **Region 8**

Director: **Chad Wissen** 815-674-5072 cwissen82@hotmail.com Call or Email for Information

#### **Region 9**

Director: **Bob Atkins** 309-397-6922 atkinscrew@gmail.com Call or Email for Information & Location

#### **Region 10 & 11**

Director: **Bob Steele** 217-691-4701 bsteele300@yahoo.com Call or Email for Information & Location





### **EVENTS**

#### MARCH

#### March 7th-8th:

ERX Snocross National ERX Motor Park 21591 US-169 Elk River, MN 55330 Phone: (763) 772-4977 Email: info@erxmotorpark.com

#### March 14th-15th:

Hayes Brakes Snocross National World Championship Derby Complex 1311 N Railroad St. Eagle River, WI 54521 www.derbycomplex.com Phone: 715-479-4424

#### March 23rd:

Meat Raffle by The Sno-Pearls From 2:00pm-5:00pm Little John's 147 S. Main St. Pearl City, IL 61062

#### APRIL

#### April 4th-5th:

Amsoil Snocross National Spirit Mountain 9500 Spirit Mountain Pl. Duluth, MN 55810 www.spiritmt.com Phone: (218) 628-2891 Email: info@spiritmt.com

#### April 5th:

Fundraiser by Cedarville Snow Travelers From Noon-3:00pm Meat bundles, baskets, 50/50, \$5 for \$100 wheel Rt. 20 Bar & Grill 2051 N. Ayp Rd. Freeport, IL 61032

#### JUNE

#### June 11th-14th:

57th Annual International Snowmobile Congress Snowmobile enthusiasts, manufacturers, suppliers, and representatives from state, provincial and national snowmobile organizations from around the world meet to celebrate the sport and to do the business of snowmobiling at the International Snowmobile Congress. Delta Hotel and Convention Center 18 Queen Street, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island C1A 4A1 Call 902-894-7669 or visit www.peisa.ca for more information

Please Email Us Your IASC Club Events to production@ ilsnowmobiler.com

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# Midwest Trail Blazers'

#### By Robin Wall

The Midwest Trail Blazers embarked on their annual 4-day saddlebag trip starting on February 4th thru the 7th. We had 12 members participating on another wonderful adventure. Day 1: We started in Ironwood, MI for the first leg heading to Bergland, MI (Lake Gogebic). On Lake Gogebic, we stopped at the Hoop for lunch. Everyone had a great meal. We rode over to top off with fuel before heading up Trail-102. Unfortunately the trail was filled with moguls, so we turned around and went up Trail-1N to Silver City for a stop at Paul's Restaurant and Lounge. We then headed up to Lake of the Clouds to take in the sites. After a brief stop, we headed back down the mountain. We then headed down to Konteka in White Pine to spend the night finishing the day with 95 miles. Konteka is a great place to stop with an onsite restaurant, bar, and bowling alley. Several of our





riders enjoyed each other's company bowling several games in the Black Bear Lanes.

Day 2: We started at Konteka heading over to Rockland for a quick stop at Henry's. We headed to Mass City for fuel before taking Trail-12 toward Rousseau for lunch at the Rousseau Bar. We enjoyed a

great lunch, and several members found their names from past trips on the ceiling along with adding their names for 2025. From Rousseau's Bar we headed down east on Trail-12 to Trail-174 with a stop at Sidnaw Gas Station for a quick break. The group then headed North to Baraga for an overnight stay at the Baraga Casino and ended with 100 miles. We all enjoyed a nice dinner with several members trying their hands in the casino.

Day 3: We started out at the Baraga Casino with a quick stop for fuel before heading over through L'Anse to Trail-14E. We headed toward Big Bay with a stop at Mt. Arvon, the highest natural point in Michigan at an altitude of 1,979 feet. From



there, we continued over to Big Bay to Lumberjacks for a great lunch. The new owner was gracious and already had a table set up for us when we arrived. After lunch and filling up with fuel, we headed down Trail-14 to Marquette. The trails were very winding and few straightaways that made for slow going. We then took Trail-8 over to Ishpeming with a short stop at the Rainbow Bar. The group then headed over to Jasper Ridge Inn to check in after a long 156-mile day. Jasper Ridge Inn has been remodeled, and the rooms are nice. The members had good meals at Jasper Ridge Brewery and the River Rock Lanes.

Day 4: The group left Ishpeming headed for Ironwood on Trail-8. Trail-8 from Ishpeming west is almost a straight line and with fresh snow it was hard to see where the trail was at times. First stop was again at the Sidnaw Gas Station for fuel and snacks. The members then continued on Trail-8 with a stop at Loggers Alley in Bruce Crossing, already clocking in 100 miles. Next stop in Bergland, MI for lunch at Trailside Bar and Grill. The members then made a short stop at Club 28 in Wakefield before finishing the trip back in Ironwood, MI. The group finished this day with 150 miles with a total mileage of 500 miles. During the trip the members also participated in a Poker Run for fun with the winner being Greg Tate, second place to Robin Wall, and third place was Sharon Tate.



Members on the trip included: Cory & Kristen Taft, Bob & Jan Steele, Greg & Sharon Tate, Bruce (Coondog) & Fiona Gilman, Robin & Lisa Wall, Dave Stout, Shawn Mitchell. Everyone is looking forward to next year's saddlebag trip.

# Trail Etiquette

#### By Hunter Nikolai, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Snowmobiling is enjoyed by many as the result of the hard work put in by a much smaller cadre of snowmobile club and association volunteers. Many who ride do not know what goes on behind the scenes by these volunteer groups to secure access permission for trails, the physical work maintaining trails and pounding signs, or the grant processes these volunteers have to go through to secure funds for robust trail systems, signs, and grooming equipment. There is a whole lot more to it for these volunteers than simply showing up to ride when the snow comes. I can say this confidently, as I had no idea the amount of work that was put in by snowmobile clubs before I joined a club myself (proud Hampshire White Riders member).

It's also a sad and unfortunate reality how quickly a trail can be taken away after all of the work that volunteers do. Snowmobilers, after all, are a small minority of groups that want to enjoy the many competing land uses our natural resources can offer. Much of our trail systems rely on private land access that was earned over time, by volunteers, with the understanding that snowmobilers using the trails would respect the landowner's property and the posted trails that run

through it. In some cases, it can take one bad egg (snowmobiler) for a landowner to change their mind.

So, to my first and most important point in trail etiquette – ride only when the trails are open and on the nicely marked trails that the local snowmobile club volunteers marked. You might be tempted to hit the trails before they officially open or ride the fresh powder off the marked trail. Maybe you made an honest mistake, a wrong turn, or followed your leader where you shouldn't have. Ultimately, it's your responsibility to make sure trails are open before you ride and that you stay on the trail. If you make a mistake, correct it as quickly and safely as possible. Lastly, if a member of your group is going off trail, speak up and correct their action. You might just help keep that section of trail open for another year.

Of course, there's more to snowmobiling etiquette than staying on the trail, but that's certainly an important one. Here is a list of a few things to consider when you ride to respect other snowmobilers, landowner's and non-snowmobilers alike.



1) Use hand signals to communicate with your group and other riders. Turns, stopping / slowing down, groomers, wildlife, how many sleds are behind you, etc. Make sure everyone in your group is on the same page with hand signals.

2) Be safe and considerate when stopping along a trail. Don't stop side-by-side, in the middle of the trail, at the crest of the hill / around a corner, and don't block an intersection.

*3)* Always ride on the right side of the trail. Keep speeds under control around corners and over hills.

4) Yield to uphill snowmobilers when you are going downhill, as you have more control.

5) Pass only on straight aways or where there is a good sightline to potential oncoming snowmobilers. Try to make your intentions clear to the snowmobile in front of you. If you are being passed, slow down and let them safely pass. 6) Maintain a safe distance between you and the next sled. Stop often to make sure all of your group is present, sleds are operating okay and see if breaks are needed.

7) If you encounter a groomer, pull over and let it pass, or wait for them to allow you to safely pass.

8) Carry out everything you carry in.

9) Make sure your snowmobile does not exceed noise limits.

10) When stopping to get gas, go to a restaurant, or talk with someone, take off your helmet to talk to them.

This certainly isn't an all-inclusive list of snowmobiling etiquette, rather a few things you can do to increase safety on the trails and shed a better light on the sport we all love. If you have other trail etiquette tips in mind, I'd love to hear them (hunter.nikolai@illinois.gov)! ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SNOWMOBILE CLUBS PO Box 8171 Elburn, IL 60119 **815-210-0587** iasc.illinois@gmail.com ilsnowmobile.com facebook.com/iasc.inc

#### PRESIDENT

Kai Steward 815-509-0472 kastew91@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT Kaite Polhill 815-990-2652 polhill11@gmail.com

TREASURER Carol Bly-Julian 630-546-8059

bly.carol@gmail.com SECRETARY

Jessica Dicker 847-848-6576 jmdicker99@gmail.com

#### MEMBER AT LARGE

Don Schaefer 847-917-4202 dssschaefer@msn.com

#### TRAIL ADVISORS

• REGIONS 1 2 5 Bill Rieke 815-405-6065 rieke7603@frontier.com

• REGIONS 3 6 Mark Hazzard 815-985-5952 mrhazzman@gmail.com

REGIONS 4 7 8 9 10 11
Bill Brown
 815-993-4002
 littlebenny78@sbcglobal.net

#### COMMITTEES

• CHARITY Helen Cline 309-534-8322 ninr63@hotmail.com

• SEP Pat Pendergast 309-335-4095 ppenderg@knox.edu

SCHOLARSHIP
Stephanie Steward
262-745-6002
iascscholarshipfund@gmail.com

Region 1 Director DON SCHAEFER 847-917-4202 dssschaefer@msn.com

Gages Lake Snowmobile Club Mike Foye 847-902-6510 mikefoye@hotmail.com 2nd Tuesday @ 7:00 PM Timothy O'Toole's Pub 10 W Grand Ave., Lake Villa, IL

**Riverbend Benders** 

Erik Urban 847-894-3812 riverbendbenders@gmail.com 1st & 3rd Monday @ 7:30 PM Sideouts Sports Tavern 4018 Roberts Rd., Island Lake, IL

#### **Sno-Kommanders of Lake County**

Skip Schaefer 224-627-1406 skipschaefer5804@gmail.com 2nd Monday @ 7:00 PM EL Puerto Restaurant 200 N Forest Ave., Fox Lake, IL

Region 2 Director CRAIG ADAMS 815-687-2844 craigmadams@yahoo.com

#### **Harvard Snow Gophers**

Brian Camp 815-790-4237 brian.camprevolution@gmail.com Meets 7:00pm 3rd Wednesday Heritage House Restaurant 21225 Route 14, Harvard

#### Lakers/Sno-Bugs

Bill Rieke 815-405-6065 rieke7603@frontier.com Meets 7:30pm 1st Tuesday Rusty Nail Saloon 4520 Ringwood Rd, Ringwood

Marengo Snow Goers Gary Zickuhr 815-970-1732 gzickr@gmail.com 3rd Tuesday @ 7:00 PM Joe's Place 19716 E Grant Hwy., Marengo IL

McHenry Co. Snowmobile Assoc. Dave Rudolph 815-560-1656 dave.rudolph@hotmail.com Meets 7:30pm 1st Wednesday Rusty Nail Saloon 4520 Ringwood Rd, Ringwood

#### **CUUBS 2024-2025**

Polar Bares Mike Flaherty 847-848-1204 flaherty3107@comcast.net Meets 7pm 2nd Tuesday Sides Out Eatery, 4018 Roberts Rd, Island Lake

#### Richmond Trailblazers Chris Stevens

815-216-5669 richmond.trailblazers@gmail.com Meets 7:30pm 1st & 3rd Thursday Rusty Nail Saloon 4520 Ringwood Rd, Ringwood

#### Spring Grove Sno-Grovers Dave Rudolph

815-560-1656 dave.rudolph@hotmail.com Meets 7:30 2nd & 4th Thursday Rusty Nail Saloon 4520 Ringwood Rd., Ringwood

#### Woodstock Snowmobile Club

Jim Ponstein 815-382-4818 jponstein@sbcglobal.net Meets 7 pm 2nd Wednesday Napoli Pizza 135 Washington St., Woodstock

Region 3 Director DAN DAMPTZ 815-985-6071 dandamptz@gmail.com

#### Blackhawk Snowblazers of Oregon Keith Stranberg

815-508-9129 kstranberg@gmail.com 2nd Tuesday @ 7:15 PM Oregon VFW, Post 8739 1310 W Washington St, Oregon, IL

#### **Byron Sno-Blasters**

Andy Politsch 815-712-5619 andypol911@yahoo.com Meets 7:30 1st Thursday Uptown Lanes /Back Alley Bar & Grill 106 W 2nd St., Byron

**Durand Ditch Riders** 

Mark Wilson 815-713-9626 Mowilson1974@gmail.com Meets 1st Tuesday 7pm Best Dam Bar 13965 Best Rd., Davis

German Valley Sno-Riders Jeff Becker 815-238-8441 farmer01@hotmail.com 1st Tuesday @ 7:30 PM

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Midway Sno-Busters Nick Kuhlmeier

815-703-3830 nkuhl22@hotmail.com Meets 7pm 2nd Wednesday Call for location

**Neboshone Trail Riders** 

Mike Johnson 815-985-5589 mdj\_55@yahoo.com Meets 7pm 1st Monday Fritz's Wooden Nickel 208 Walnut St., Stillman Valley, IL

**Oaks Ridge Riders** 

Shane Hatfield 815-985-8834 shane@ame.com 3rd Tuesday @ 7:00 PM Roscoe VFW Post 2955 11385 2nd St, Roscoe, IL

Polo Snow Rangers Ashley Nelson

815-590-2595 ashleynhouck@yahoo.com Meets 7pm, 2nd Tuesday Chesty P's Bar 104 E Mason St, Polo

Rochelle Rail Riders Stuart White

815-716-0843 slwhite61068@gmail.com Meets 7pm 3rd Tuesday Moose Knuckle Bar & Grill 341 E IL 38, Creston

#### Rockford Moonriders Royal Taylor

815-874-4502 rltsnow@comcast.net Meets 7pm 2nd Thursday The Image 5524 Auburn, Rockford

#### **Tri-County Alliance**

Jeremy Garas 815-209-7019 jeepster0817@gmail.com Meets 7pm 2nd Monday 7pm Uptown Lanes / Back Alley Bar & Grill 106 W. 2nd St., Byron

Winnebago Sno-Gliders

Dave DeRosso 815-985-4807 detailingbydavid@gmail.com Meets 7pm 3rd Tuesday Bago Lounge 817 N Elida St., Winnebago

45 Church St, German Valley, IL

Region 4 Director PAT PENDERGAST 309-335-4095 ppenderg@knox.edu

Corn Belt Driftbusters Grant Barnard (563) 343-8150 gbarnard2012@gmail.com 1st Tuesday @ 7:00 PM The O Kitchen & Tap 306 10th Ave, Orion, IL

Prairie Drifters Kevin Schwartzkopf 309-299-4347 clayhillfarm@divcominc.net 1st Monday @ 7:00 PM Genisio's 249 N Division St, Woodhull, IL

Region 5 Director Jennifer Baumgartner 815-509-9373 snowdiva18@yahoo.com

DeKane Sno-Trackers Matt Linden 815-739-4225 dekanesnotrackersclub@gmail.com Meets 7:00pm 1st Wednesday HD Rockers, Maple Park

Elgin Cold Ducks Karl Schmidt 847-370-4169 Meets 7:30pm 3rd Tuesday Village Squire 480 S Randell Rd., South Elgin

G.K. Trailblazers Jay Schaack 224-339-4266 jschaack@yahoo.com Meets 7pm 2nd Thursday Five Points Pub 105 Main Street, Kingston

Hampshire White Riders Dwain Stadie 847-683-0140 duey683@msn.com Meets 7:30pm 1st Wednesday Red Ox Restaurant 129 Oak Knoll Dr., Hampshire

Huntley Penguins Henry Regard 847-910-0142 hank56@comcast.net Meets 7:30pm 1st Tuesday Huntley American Legion 11712 Coral St, Huntley

#### OLUES 2024-2025

Prairie Riders Snowmobile Club Jeremy Baumgartner 815-509-1180 stangslayerss@aol.com 1st Thursday @ 6:30 PM Coach's Corner Bar & Grill 622 S State St Belvidere IL

Region 5 Association of Snowmobile Clubs Jennifer Baumgartner 815-509-9373 snowdiva18@yahoo.com Meets 7PM, 2nd Wednesday Red Ox Restaurant 129 E Oak Knoll Dr., Hampshire

Region 6 Director KIRK POLHILL 815-275-3371 kdpwire@yahoo.com

Cedarville Snow Travelers Brad Pfile 815-541-8778 bpfile@gmail.com Meets 7:30pm 3rd Wednesday Route 20 Bar & Grill 2051 AYP Rd., Freeport

Elkhorn Creek Runners Tom Plog 815-631-6270 kingcub@jcwifi.com (Alan) Meets 7pm 3rd Thursday The Other Bar 436 N Main St, Milledgeville

Lena Blackhawk Trailblazers Kory Polhill 815-275-1299 korypolhill@gmail.com Meets 7pm 3rd Thursday Coach's Sport Bar & Grill 621 W Lena St, Lena

NWISA Alan Bracken 815-631-6270 kingcub@jcwifi.com Meets 7:30pm 2nd Thursday 7:30 The Bottle Shed IL Route 20, Stockton

Pearl City Sno-Pearls Jered Nesemeyer 815-291-7050 nesemeyerfarms@gmail.com 1st Thursday @ 7:30 PM Pete's Gaming & Cocktails 1 N Broad St, Shannon, IL

Thomson F.A.S.T. Trax Marvin Green 815-821-5341 mc\_green4@hotmail.com Meets 6:30pm 3rd Thursday The Riverview Lodge 5403 Riverview Rd., Thomson Whiteside County Snowbirds Tim Geiger 815-499-3720 chevymudder@hotmail.com Meets 7pm 3rd Wednesday Kickback Saloon 102 N Main St, Tampico

Warren Winter Warriors Brian Saunders 815-541-1031 saunders@aeroinc.net Meets 7:30pm 2nd Monday Call for location

Region 7 Director DALE FRITZ 815-791-6375 dalefritz2@comcast.net

Evergreen Snowmobile Club Rick Lesniak 815-791-6016 sledhead521@gmail.com 1st Tuesday @ 7:00 PM Beggers Pizza 15600 S Cicero Ave, Oak Forest, IL

#### **I&M Trailblazers**

Dale Fritz 815-467-2836 dalefritz2@comcast.net Meets 7pm 2nd Thursday Channahon Lanes 25306 W. Eames St., Channahon

IL Valley Winter Sports Club Anthony Caselli 815-712-1552

8snowmobile@gmail.com Meets 7:30pm 1st Thursday VFW, 571 Rutland St, Marseilles

Region 7 Association of Snowmobile Clubs, Inc Dale Fritz 815-791-6375 Dalefritz2@comcast.net Meeting, call for date and location

Rusty Runners Paul Killa 630-391-3645 paulki@sbcglobal.net Meets 6:30pm 3rd Wednesday Beggers Pizza 300 Veterans Parkway, Bolingbrook Region 8 Director Chad Wissen 815-674-5072 cwissen82@hotmail.com

Winona Yellow Streakers Kevin Connell 815-257-6772 traciekjbc@gmail.com Meets 7pm 2nd Tuesday Boardwalk Tap 124 N Chestnut St, Wenona

Region 9 Director BOB ATKINS 309-397-6922 atkinscrew@gmail.com

Woodford County Snowmobile Club Larry Griffith 309-360-8582 ogriff42@yahoo.com 1st Monday @ 7:30 PM Resident 1102 S Main St, Washington, IL

Region 10 & 11 Director BOB STEELE 217-691-4701 bsteele300@yahoo.com

Central IL Ditch Riders Drew Bartolozzi 217-306-4751 bartolozzi5@aol.com Meets 7:30pm 3rd Wednesday Bunkers 220 Old Route 36, Illiopolis

Heartland Polar Riders Kyle Timmermann 618-973-4331

tmann1987@gmail.com Meets 7pm 3rd Wednesday Call for location

Midwest Trail Blazers Robin Wall

217-433-4503 rbarw@live.com Meets 6:00pm 2nd Thursday Gusto's Family Pizzeria 10230 Old Rte. 36, Dawson, IL

#### **REGION** 1

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#### Skinners Auto Body

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#### **REGION** 4

Tempo Marine & Sport 1235 14th Ave. East Moline, IL 61244 309-752-0868 sales@tempomarine.com

Triple E Sales 1301 Division St. Orion, IL 61273 309-526-3443 tripleesales.com

#### **REGION** 5

Hammertime Sports Polaris, Yamaha 2252 Anderson Dr. Belvidere, IL 61008 815-544-5800 hammertimesports.com Pleasant Street Tavern 6828 Pleasant St. Garden Prairie, IL 61038 815-597-3002

#### Red Ox Restaurant & Bar 129 E Oak Knoll Dr. Hampshire, IL 60140 847-683-2300

#### **REGION** 6

Eastland Motor Sports 110 E IL Route 64 Lanark, IL 61046 815-493-6835 eastlandmotorsports.com

Full Throttle Powersports 11003 US Route 20 W Lena, IL 61048 815-369-2153 fullthrottlepowersports2@gmail.com full-throttle-powersports.com

Pilot Construction Co., Inc. Concrete, Construction and Excavating PO Box 707 Herscher, IL 60941 815-674-2046 pilotccinc@gmail.com

#### **REGION** 7

American Legion Post 235 571 Rutland St. Marseilles, IL 61341 815-795-4404

Leone's Polaris 3061 E 103rd Rd. Peru, IL 61364 815-220-1780 leonespolaris@hotmail.com http://leonespolaris.com/

#### Little Benny's Garage 415 Johnson St.

Utica, IL 61373 815-993-4002 littlebenny78@sbcglobal.net

#### **REGION** 8

To List Your BUSINESS Contact the IASC Office 815-210-0587 iasc.illinois@gmail.com

#### **REGION** 9

Hendren's Sport Center 304 Gridley Rd. Gridley, IL 61744 309-747-2596 hendren@gridcom.net hendrensportcenter.com

#### INDIANA

To List Your BUSINESS Contact the IASC Office 815-210-0587 iasc.illinois@gmail.com

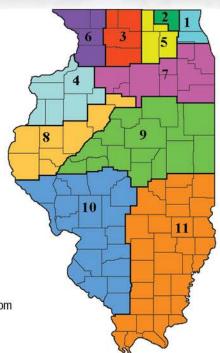
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BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS 2024-2025

V&V Insurance Agency PO Box 159 Creston, IA 52136 563-547-2161 insurance@vandvins.com vandvins.com

#### WISCONSIN

Arrowhead Groomers/ Hamblen Equipment 6351 State Hwy. 70 E St. Germain, WI 54558 715-479-4200 info@arrowheadgroomers.com arrowheadgroomers.com



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# Safety & Education Image: Safety & Education



Pat Pendergast

How can I be writing the last article of the season already? I haven't even unloaded my sled from the trailer yet! It's hard to deny something isn't going on with our climate these days. When Pensacola, FL gets a 9 inch snowfall, something is wrong. I certainly hope these crazy weather patterns turn around one of these days. So do the business owners up north, sled dealers all through the midwest, manufacturers, and the list goes on.

I'm seeing lots of Facebook posts of folks getting rides in and parking lots full of sleds, even with

intermittent good riding conditions. Upper Peninsula clubs are doing wonders rolling, grooming and brushing, just making trails as enjoyable as possible for the large numbers of sleds showing up from all over to get some riding in. A huge thanks for all of those volunteers who made it happen. One of the posts and responses that concerned me was of this woman raving about her solo rides and how awesome they were. While I do get it, and the trail pic looked beautiful, when someone commented that you should never ride alone she responded that this ain't her first rodeo. I'm sorry, but there are way too many things that can go wrong. Whether it's your fault or not, that can make riding alone a terrible idea. Have you ever had a deer run across the trail in front of you when you're at speed? It happens in a hurry and doesn't leave much time for reaction. I certainly wouldn't want to hit one in the midsection going 40 mph. Maybe round a curve to find a downed tree in the middle of the trail? Hit a rock and end up off trail, possibly get thrown off and hit a tree? The list of things to go wrong is endless, and if something bad happens when no one is riding with you, what are you going to do? What

if your cell phone is crushed, not accessible, or there is no service? Or it's -10 degrees and you're knocked unconscious? Who is going to call for help, or ride to get help? Believe me, I understand the pleasure of riding alone, but the risks just aren't worth it to me. And I used to ride alone plenty in my younger, invincible years, but one rollover accident that happened to me in a heartbeat cured me of that. I rarely venture very far alone nowadays when I do get to ride. Hopefully this young lady will figure it out the easy way vs. the hard way.

You don't have to ride in a big group. Just one or two other people is fun. Large groups can be fun as well, but they can also be difficult if folks aren't compatible in their riding skills. I could fall back on February's article about riding in a group, but I think having you read that once is punishment enough. So whether you are in a large or small group, or there's just two of you, you are doing the right thing. Riding alone can seem pretty exhilarating, but there is always a chance it can end badly. Use that thing your helmet is protecting and make good choices, please. We don't all get a lot of chances to ride these days and we want to make every trip a round trip, not a one-way trip. Ride safe, folks.

EST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Safety question from the IL law digest: A snowmobile operator involved in an accident is required to make o ut an accident report when the accident results in:

a) Injury requiring medical attention c) The death of any person b) Total damage of \$750 or more

Answer: d) Any of the above

D) Any of the above



**Class Date** Location Address

Time

Registration

NO SAFETY CLASSES SCHEDULED AT THIS TIME



Pre-registration is required. Call the number listed by the date and location of the class you wish to attend. Please note that most class sizes are limited. Instructors are volunteers and are not paid. Please remember to cancel your reservation if you find you cannot attend the class so that your spot can be filled by another student. For additional classes scheduled after the magazine deadline, please visit the IASC website or call the IDNR office at 800-832-2599 or 216-557-9206, the IASC office at 815-210-0587, Pat Pendergast at 309-344-2554. If you have lost your Snowmobile Safety Certificate verifying that you have passed the required safety class, visit the IDNR website at www.dnr.state.il.us/safety/safety.htm.

The Safe Riders! Snowmobile Safety Awareness Program provides basic essentials about snowmobile safety and includes short quizzes to help test your knowledge about safe snowmobiling practices. It is meant to supplement information provided by the state or province in which you register or ride your snowmobile, so be sure to check local rules and requirements before venturing out on the snow.

This Program has been produced through a partnership between the American Council of Snowmobile Associations (ACSA), the International Association of Snowmobile Administrators (IASA), and the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association (ISMA) with financial assistance from the Recreational Trails Program administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation — Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).



#### **Test Your Snowmobiling Knowledge**

Visit www.saferiderssafetyawareness.org to test your knowledge about safe snowmobiling practices. If you're an experienced snowmobiler, you may try a quiz first to see how much you think you know — and then take the quiz again after you've reviewed a section's materials to see how much you've learned. If you're new to snowmobiling, work through each section first before taking the quiz to enhance your learning experience. Snowmobile Safety Awareness Program



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