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What Will 2018 Bring for Snowmobiling?



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Florida Mountaineers

Club Photos

See Club News on page 3



Novice Rider, Daytime, Perfect Trail Conditions, Speed approx. 15 mph, cause: ICE



Some of our volunteers on the float we put together for the Hubbardston, MA 250th parade. Special thanks to Higgins Powersports for allowing us to use some brand new sleds!



Hopefully snow is arriving soon for the groomer



Florida Mountaineers

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



ON THE COVER

Earliest ride in many years. Dick DiOrio, Randy Toth, and Wanda DiOrio on top of October Mountain State Forest on Thursday 12/14/2017.

PHOTO BY BOB DIORIO

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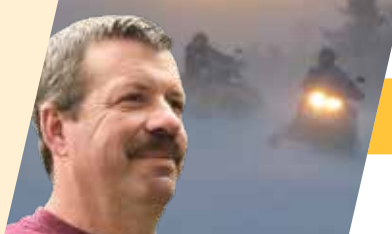
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President's Message

BY JEFF MILLER

We Bid Farewell

2017 has come to a close and it has been frigid. But before we look forward, we must look back on the last year. One of the most heart wrenching events in 2017 was that our long-time lobbyist Henry Gillet passed away on December 21st. It was unexpected and quite frankly a shock to all who knew him. He has been a mainstay at our events for as long as I can remember. He taught us all about politics, sometimes more than some wanted to know, but he trudged on informing us on all the happenings on Beacon Hill. I will always remember having conversations with Henry and at the end telling him that government relations make my head hurt, but it is so interesting. He would just say "Ahh, you have been bit by the political bug!" We will miss your wit and charm, your political insight and your infectious smile. Till we meet again Henry Gillet.

2017 also brought change to the association. For starters, a new President, a new magazine editor and a new website. All are going through growing pains, but the future looks bright. But some of the greatest news in 2017 was early snow and brutally cold temps. I LOVE IT!! Our clubs were able to get trails packed and ready to groom for 2018.

So, what does the new year hold for us? First off, we already have snow. It has been quite a while since we have had this much snow early in the season and been able to ride. This is great news for all of our club events. By this time the Vintage rides should be well underway as well as a Vintage display sponsored by SAM at the Greenfield Winter Carnival on February 4th. March 4th brings the 1st Annual Stan Kopala Memorial Ride; a statewide ride-in for the whole family. Food, fun and great riding are on tap for this event. A short loop will be available for riding as well as a 100 mile ride for more dedicated riders. Join us for a ride to the summit of Mt. Greylock and experience what Stan loved so much. For more infor-



PHOTO BY DAN GOULD

Henry Gillet

We will miss your wit and charm, your political insight and your infectious smile.

■ ■ ■

mation on the ride, go to the events page on the website (www.sledmass.com).

Always remember to get in your nominations for our annual awards. All nominations are due by March 1st. With all this going on, there can't be anything else coming up on the horizon can there? WRONG! Slowly creeping up on us is the 50th Anniversary of your Association! Yup, that's right we turn 50 in 2019. We are starting to work on the first 50 years of history for people to see where it all began and the legacies left behind to where we are today! We are excited to have a yearlong celebration to honor the Association, SAM Members and its founders. As we paw through the archives, it amazes me to see the passion and dedication that these pioneers in the sport we love had. They laid the ground work for us to flourish as an Association and it seems fitting to celebrate their grit and determination.

Stay tuned for future events. Till then, get out and RIDE! 🐾

ADAMS SNO-DRIFTERS



**By Chrissy Satko and Joe Rogge,
Board of Directors**

Post New Year's Update: At our December Christmas Party, at the Adams American Legion, we had local contributions of over sixty raffle prizes. As per our Club Policy, we focused our efforts on a local charity. This year's charity was for the family of a child who was severely burned. We proudly announce we collected \$400. It should be noted that discussions at our party also included concern about needy individuals in our area and what we as a club can do to support them. Another club topic included trail safety. As we do our trail trims, we try to be conscious of the environment, rider enjoyment and rider safety. Many of our trails have been adjusted or modified to avoid dangerous areas. Also, club leadership toured specific trails with DCR officials in the Greylock Glen area to insure proper grooming and safety for all users of the trails. Finally, we would like to remind all riders of the March 4th SAM Ride in memory of Stan Kopala, "The Godfather of Greylock". Visit us on-line—<http://adamssnodrifters.webstarts.com>.

Well that's it for now.

BERKSHIRE SNOW SEEKERS



By Randy Toth, Member

Experience the excitement of snowmobiling the Berkshires. Our groomer fleet consists of three Tucker Sno-Cats, a Thiokol, a tracked ATV and four snowmobile based groomers. Dues are only \$70 for each snowmobile and include a club membership, a SAM membership and a trail permit. Join via snail-mail (P.O. Box 1102, Pittsfield, MA 01202), our website (www.berkshiresnowseekers.com), a club meeting (7:00 PM on the first and third Tuesday of the month from September thru mid-April at the Skyline Country Club on Route 7 in Lanesboro, MA) or one of our conveniently located trail permit outlets at a participating local business - Pittsfield Lawn & Tractor (Pittsfield), Friendly Fred's (Windsor), Ronnie's (Pittsfield), Sangar's Store (Windsor), Hinsdale Trading Company (Hinsdale) and Lanesboro Gulf Gas Station (Lanesboro). Visit our Facebook page to see our club's scheduled events and our grooming reports for October Mountain State Forest, Pittsfield State Forest and the Windsor Area. Grooming reports are promptly posted by our trail coordinators within hours of grooming. See you out on the trails!

BERNARDSTON-GILL-LEYDEN



By Brad Stafford, Club Advisor

We are so close, yet still so far away! The ground is frozen but our snow cover is light and fluffy and a couple inches short. But despite the last few weeks of brutal cold, ice storms and some snow, our volunteers have been repairing bridges and getting the bugs out of our groomers. With this light snow, I see lots of clubs struggling with those snowmobilers who feel they are above the rules. I wonder if they usually



Burgy Bullets are ready to flatten some trails!!

drive 30 miles over the speed limit, ignore signs and maybe drive all over their neighbor's lawns without their permission. Sounds crazy! Most clubs are currently dealing with these people that are jeopardizing our trail system and our sport. So many volunteer work hours have been erased and trails closed by one irresponsible and selfish ride. As a club we have some new faces on our list of club officers, our new President is Jared Smith, Vice President Dan Hale and trail boss is Joe Lisewski. Please show them your support by coming to our next meeting. All club details, workbee times and trail updates and conditions can be found on our Facebook page and our website www.BGLSNOW.com. Until next time "Keep the Rubber Side Down"!

BURGY BULLETS



By Kevin Kukucka, Secretary

So I am writing this after just getting pounded by a "Bomb Cyclone", as the weather gurus are calling it, snowstorm leaving us with about a foot of snow. The Bullets core group will be out in force clearing downed trees and grooming trails. Hopefully, you all had already taken advantage of the early bird trail pass sales and are able to get out there and ride. If not, we still have memberships & SAM passes available at the clubhouse and at Valley Motorsports. We have events throughout the winter and we keep the updates on our Facebook page and the SAM website. Please keep in mind that we do have an operational clubhouse with a fully stocked bar and winter snacks. Winter hours are: Friday from 6-10 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. – 10 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. - 6ish p.m., if there is rideable snow. Our hall is available for rent for any type of function and has a capacity of 100 people. We have a full kitchen with industrial stove and can arrange for a bartender as we have a full liquor license (Call Kevin @ 413-559-7920). Thanks to all of our supporting members that help make this club fun and successful. If it wasn't for our core group, there wouldn't be a snowmobile club in your area. GET OUT THERE AND HELP YOUR LOCAL CLUB!!



Matt C., Brian D., and “Jungle” Wally F. doing some trail work this fall on Chesterfield Four Seasons Trails



Matt C. Todd F-Pres, Brian D. and “Jungle” Wally F. doing some bridge work.



2017 Halloween Party at the Chesterfield Four Seasons club house.

CHESTERFIELD FOUR SEASONS



By Bill Golaski, SAM Delegate and Treasurer

As I write this just before Christmas, we still have not had any ridable snow in our area.

Hopefully, that will change soon!

Our club and its members have really been stepping it up with events and our trail clearing. I have not seen this much involvement in the last 20 plus years. Great job from everyone that has volunteered to make all this happen. If you're not a member please think about joining our club, as we are a club “On The Move”. Once again thanks to all the people that make this happen! Without you we have nothing.

When the riding season breaks we hope to have the club house open, Friday evenings, Saturday's from noon into the evenings, and Sunday from noon until 5 p.m. It is always best to call first, since it is run by volunteers, 413-296-4048. This season, our club will have six units grooming our trails for your enjoyment.

The club is running a Super Raffle with choice of one of three major prizes. Tickets are \$20.00, and the drawing will be held on February 28th at the Groomer Benefit. Please buy a ticket and help support the club.

Upcoming Events:

- January 27th: Game Supper, both game + domestic items served. Tickets are \$25.00. Contact Bill at 413-246-7071.
- February 28th: Groomer Benefit price TBD. For tickets contact Paula at 413-584-9149.

More club information will be available on our website.

COLDBROOK



By Michael Wetherbee, Vice-President

A wise former club president once told me, “it's always snowmobile season, just not always riding season”. That being said,

Coldbrook Snowmobile Club has embraced that philosophy. Over time, and fewer people stepping up to the plate, Coldbrook had admittedly become a bit stagnant. We have had a change in leadership and a reinvigoration of our membership.

Before going on, I wish to publicly thank Gerry Balchu-nais, our former president, for all he did for the club during his 20-something year tenure. He had many accomplishments and continues to provide his knowledge and guidance without having to shoulder the load.

Some of the things we accomplished this year are: clearing more miles of trails than ever before, we were able to get every piece of grooming equipment repaired and in place before any snow fell, trails were signed earlier than ever, and our seasonal bridge, which connects our northern and southern trails, has already been installed, and our trails have been ridden for one weekend only. We had the same core group of volunteers plus some new face really step it up this year, and I couldn't be more proud! Thank you everyone and I hope to see you out on the trails.



First tracks of the 2017-18 season over the Coldbrook seasonal bridge.



Replacing a track on one of the Coldbrook's Tucker Sno-cats.

FLORIDA MOUNTAINEERS



By Melissa Fortini

Happy snowmobile season! We are off to a great start for 2018. With the early December snow and cold temperatures we had a great jump on the season.

The club would like to thank everyone who came out to help with the trail trims. Your donated time is what makes our trail system so wonderful. We are very lucky to have you. Our groomers have been out and things are looking good!

Our Holiday party was a success and we were able to make some local children very happy! Thank you to all who attended and donated. You showed the true meaning of Christmas with your caring and giving. Please visit our club page on www.sled-mass.com for our schedule of events.

And lastly, we are very excited to be part of the SAM Ride In Silver Fox endurance ride on March 4, 2018 in memory of Stan Kopala.

We hope the snow continues to fly and everyone has a safe season.



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GREATER WHATELY



By John Devine, Outreach/Promotion

We're really excited about the awesome job our trail crews and volunteers have done with the trails. Right now, everything is marked or flagged and ready to go! Be aware of some rerouting along Long Plain Road in Whately. These fields belong to a strawberry farmer who is a significant land owner with no tolerance for snowmobiles on his fields. Please stay on marked trails! If you're trailering into town to ride, please use the parking area at the intersection of Route 5 & 10 and Swamp Road. At this point, we're just waiting for the snow to fly! If you have an idea for an upcoming event, we encourage you to attend our club meetings. These occur during the third Monday of the month from September through April. Our meeting location is the Whately, Town Hall at 4 Sandy Lane in South Deerfield, 01373.

Questions can be directed to our President- Bob Sabola, (413) 478-0733, to our Vice President- Curt Hale (413) 687-3523, or to the club website at <https://www.sledmass.com/clubs/greater-whately-snowmobile-club/>. The website is also a good resource for trail conditions and the latest club information.

KNOX TRAIL



By Jim Richard, Media Director

Storm Grayson is here making this fourth of January a great time to write a report. Our trails are still closed but it appears this snow combined

with the existing solid base will allow the trails to open soon! The annual raffle will be history. One lucky winner will have taken home a 2018 Ski-Doo MXZ 600 Sport snowmobile. If you entered but are not that person, thank you for your participation. Go to knoxtrail.com for the results and info about the next raffle. The funds raised help the club maintain a fleet of snow grooming machines and trail equipment. New to the fleet this year are the Kubota L3901 tractor and Arrowhead drag and most recent the 1993 Bombardier BR-60 and drag. It has a turbo-diesel, automatic transmission, and, for the first time on any KTSR groomer, an 8-foot 4-way plow. Some minor repairs will get this unit out grooming soon but a major make-over is in order this summer. A Poker Run is scheduled for January 28th and a Vintage ride is to take place on February 18th, departing from L&M Gulf. Congratulations to the new owners of the Knox Trail Inn. The presence of the facility and the hospitality they provide is a great asset to area riders. Due to space limitations, the owners prefer not to allow trailer parking but there is a new entrance and snowmobile parking area in the rear. The new sno-phone number is 413-931-3000. Call it for a trail report or to leave a voice message. Go to knoxtrail.com for the latest info. See you on the trails!

LEICESTER



By Frank Bond, Vice President

The Leicester Snowmobile club hopes everyone had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Hopefully, all your snowmobiling gifts ended up

Charlene Whitaker Snowmobile Scholarship



Submit an application to the Charlene Whitaker Snowmobile Scholarship. One \$500 scholarship will be awarded by S.A.M. Details and application are available at sledmass.com or by calling (413) 369-8092.

THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS MARCH 1, 2018.

under the tree. As I am writing this, the weather forecast looks gloomy which to us looks fantastic. Lots of snow in the forecast and hopefully some riding has happened before this goes to print. We had a great turnout at our last meeting so the word is getting out about the lower December 15th deadline for the discounted passes/memberships. At our last meeting, it was said that we need help clearing and signing the trails. So if anyone can help out it would be great. Remember everyone has a hand in what could be a fantastic season with wonderful trails or just being lazy and having mediocre trails. We always need people to help groom the trails so don't be scared to reach out to the club email if this at all interests anyone. I will be sure to get everyone's info into the proper hands. Always think snow and try to make a meeting, we would love to see all the new faces. Meetings happen on the second Wednesday of the month at the Leicester Rod and Gun club at 7:00PM. E-Mail: LSCBoardDirectors@gmail.com

SAVOY KANARY KATS



By Al Neal, Webmaster

The season has started off better than some; we rode three times before the New Year on great trails, directly from our house! Been many years since we have done that. Thanks to our small but dedicated group of trail volunteers; our trails were ship shape for the start of the season!

We have club rides scheduled including the Annual Old Timers' Ride and annual sled raffle on January 27th this year at Bass-

water Grill in Cheshire at 6:00 PM. The 13th Annual SKK Winter carnival is February 17th at our Groomer Garage on Tilton Rd. in Savoy. A season highlight will be the Silver Fox Greylock endurance ride held in honor of the legend of greylock snowmobiling, Stan Kopala, on March 4th.

Please support your club! Remember, they are nothing without the member volunteers.

WARE RIVER



By Jay Pease, Trail Boss

Hopefully by the time this issue of On the Trails with SAM gets printed we will have rideable snow. That being said, trails are getting improved to accommodate our new (to us) Tucker T1000. The Ski Dozer has worked well (thank you Dean Zuppio) but will be retired to Colorado at the end of the season. I was told that's were grooming machines retire to.

I would like to thank the people (members and non-members) who have given great amounts of time over the years to help build our club to what it is today. Special thanks to Dan "Gus" Hanson without you and your generosity we would not be where we are! A shout out to all the landowners, THANK YOU, you are the best!

As you navigate our short 20 miles of trail, please respect the property so all of us may enjoy our sport for years to come. Happy riding keep the shiny side up. 🐾

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BIT BY THE BUG 3

“LET THE GAMES BEGIN”

By Brad Stafford

In the first 2 chapters of this story, I spoke of how my wife had found a 1972 440 Arctic Cat Cheetah. For years I had mentioned that “IF” I ever decided to refurbish a vintage sled, this one was on the top of the list as it was my dad’s favorite ride. We ended up with three more in different states of repair and random extra pieces. Our long term goal had changed from getting one running to

putting together a pair of usable rides. It was now time to start bringing them back to life. The new short-term goal was to get the two sleds together, so we could get them through the necessary state vintage inspection and then registered. We had about two months left to do this as the mobile Environmental Police Office would be at our club’s, Bernardston Gill Leyden Snowmobile Club, annual swapmeet.

If you ever decide to jump into a project like this, I can’t emphasize that you can never have too much information. I had tracked down a parts breakdown with stock part numbers for every piece of this sled. I also was lucky enough to find on Ebay a 1972 factory Arctic Cat shop manual. I also became a member of a couple different chat rooms for vintage sleds. With all this and being a self-proclaimed “Jack of all trades and master of none” and with wrenches and WD-40 in hand I was ready to let the games begin! Or so I thought.

“Cheetah-1” as she has been named was the unit I got from the Hopkinton Mass area. It was the cleanest of them all and figured would need the least time. Yeah right! With the initial assessment, I found good spark, matching 115psi cylinder compressions and a dry and fairly clean gas tank. The rear skid was straight and still moved freely through its 2" of travel. During my online research I found that on these sleds the track drive sprockets were usually brittle. The ones on this sled were exactly that and I found my starting point.

I had built a giant skate board type sled dolly with an old scissor jack in the rear. The sled's tongue hitch bolts to this so I could lift the track off of the dolly and safely spin the track. This investment of time and materials from around the garage has been priceless.

I pulled the rear skid which I was pleasantly surprised as it came out a lot easier than I thought. Next was the task of opening up the chain case and pulling the drive gears and chain. After a few rounds of “are you kidding me” and flipping through the manual for the proper step by step process, I was able to get the bearings and drive shaft out of the tunnel. I then started the process of looking up part numbers and internet shopping for everything I needed which included bearings, track drive sprockets, gaskets, suspension slides, bushings and a shock. Another suggestion, for this type of project... shop around! The price difference I found for the exact same part from different Ebay vendors, vintage sled part shops and aftermarket parts stores was huge in some cases.

With parts on their way I started on cleaning the suspension and drive shaft. Using lots elbow grease, patience, the usual tools and perhaps a few summer beverages, it went well. Once the parts showed up it went back together easier then it came apart. When does that ever happen? The track and cleats were in good shape and everything rolled nice and smooth.

I pulled and cleaned the gas tank and replaced all the lines to the original Walbro carb. As I had zero experience with these carbs, I decided to take a chance that the old gas lines were dry and that it might actually be clean enough



to work. Not expecting much, I put just enough “premixed” gas in the tank to see if it would run. Then while holding my breath I gave the pull rope a few tugs. The look on my face must have been hilarious when she started to pop. 3-4 more times and she was actually running! I let it idle a bit and then throttled it up a bit. Both drive clutches moved freely and she was purring like a kitten, just as I remember from my childhood. If you have read part 1 you will understand when I say, YES I had goosebumps.

After a few laps around the lawn I was able to drive Cheetah-1 on the trailer to go to the swapmeet. Cheetah-2 was just dressed up and unable to dance. I'm happy to say they both got inspected and have their paperwork. What I'm not so happy to share is what happened when we got back home. That will be chapter 4... Until then “Keep the Rubber Side Down” 🐾

If you ever decide to jump into a project like this, I can't emphasize that you can never have too much information.



WHAT WILL

2018 BRING FOR

By Lawrence Tucker

As I am writing this article the outside temperature has dropped low enough to make any snowmobile hard to start. The temperature is at a near record -2 deg. F. and the weatherman is predicting a blizzard for tomorrow with temperatures plummeting even further. As a “diehard” snowmobiler who has been riding since the late 1960’s, what else could I ask for? This is what we all dream about! And, if my sleds stay running, I will be enjoying some great riding.

So, why is it then, that there is something nagging at me? I find myself trying to find answers to some “big picture” questions, like “What is the health of our sport?” and “What can we look forward to in 2018?”



Snowmobiling?

The health of our sport: How do we measure the health of our sport? One way is to ask if snowmobile sales are increasing. Obviously, we would like to have sales always on the increase because more snowmobilers mean more of society will be supportive of us. Reports from the International Snowmobile Manufacturer's Association (ISMA) state that sales of new snowmobiles in the US during the winter of 2015/2016 were at 56,006 units and during the winter of 2016/2017 sales figures dropped slightly to 50,659 units. This drop may simply reflect the result of poor snow conditions last winter.

But, what other measure for the health of our sport should we use? What is nagging at me is that I know that with some new trails, or more precisely new trail connections, our sport could be taken to the next level. New trails would provide more adventure, longer rides and vital connections with other clubs. Building and maintaining trails offer their own challenges. But, creating new trails has always brought special challenges and obstacles and this is especially true in today's society. The creation of new trails brings us all in direct contact with local, county and statewide agencies and this can, at times, seem overwhelming.

Let's take a minute to view what is happening with trails both good and bad across the 27 snowbelt states. On some positive notes: in Hearst, Ontario, local organizations have re-established a 124-mile trail that has been closed for seven years. In the Upper Peninsula (UP) of Michigan a 443-foot abandoned Rail Road bridge is being redecked and repaired as a key link in a snowmobile trail stretching 49 miles.

On some sour notes: In Polk County, Wisconsin, a recent State Law change took effect which now allows snowmobiles on multi-use trails. However, a small group of anti-motorized people filed lawsuit and have blocked their use on a short section of trail. In New York State, a project initiated by the state to create new snowmobile trails in the Adirondacks has been blocked since 2013 by a lawsuit brought by an anti-motorized group. And, the stakes are even greater as a Federal National Forest Supervisor has implemented a BAN on snowmobiling on a remote 400 square mile section of the Idaho-Montana border. This is particularly troubling as the anti-motorized groups are hoping to leverage this ban with the hopes of extending it to specific target areas such as the Northeast – yes, the Northeast!

Looking forward to 2018: In our State of Massachusetts, members of the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts (SAM) are

continuing their efforts towards new trail creation and especially new trail connections. 2018 not only presents challenges for us, but it also presents the opportunities to enhance our overall trail system. I am looking forward to working on the projects that will extend and connect our Statewide Snowmobile Trail System (SSTS) for 2018.

And remember, all Snowmobilers are part of the Trail Creation Team! 🐾

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Trespassing on Private Property

By Robert DuPuis

When I was a kid, before I rode or walked on someone's property I checked with the property owners to make sure it would be okay. I would also inquire if there was anything I could do to show my appreciation. Being one of those property owners now, it amazes me how few people check to make sure it is okay to be on my property! Just because someone's property has a trail on it DOES NOT mean it is open to the public! All land is private property, period! All private land is closed unless posted open to the public for use, and it would be specified for what types of activities!

Very few places that have trails are actually open for the public to use, but people trespass just the same. When I confront them, their excuse is that it is not posted! I ask them "if their property is posted?" Of course, they say "no", so I ask them if I can go on your property? They say "of course not!" Really, trust me it goes on a bit longer!

Since this is a snowmobile magazine, I will try and keep it about trails snowmobiler's use! Since I was a kid in the sixties I watched people go across the family property with snowmobiles and listen to the family complain about it every now and then. At first, it was easy for family members to recognize people riding, because helmets weren't used much at all and the sleds did not go fast. Back then people would stop by and say hi, and sometimes claimed they got lost and hoped it was okay to cross the property.

Think before crossing someone's property, if the property was yours how would you feel about what you're about to do! If you feel its wrong trust me it is wrong! And, remember, when in doubt always ask for permission.

My name is Robert DuPuis, a Belcher-town resident, and I share a signed snowmobile trail on my property with the public, especially Mill Valley Snowmobile Club. 🐾

Marketplace

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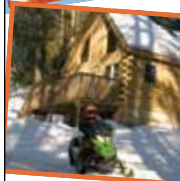


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ANNUAL AWARDS ARE DUE MARCH 1**

SAM volunteers are the heart and soul of snowmobiling. Without them there wouldn't be anywhere to ride. No trails, no clubs, no events, no leadership, no future. Snowmobiling would simply cease to exist.

Take a minute and nominate a volunteer right now at sledmass.com/awardsscholarships/. Nominate as many people as you want. You can even nominate a person in multiple categories.

