

Benton County Snowmobile Club

Newsletter



GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS FELLOW SNOWMOBILING ENTHUSIASTS!

March certainly didn't pan out as we snowmobilers had hoped! Nature seems to balance itself out over time and after last year's Polar Vortex, where it hit 40° below and colder, I had a hunch that the next winter might be wimpy at some point, and it sure was in March. For every yin there's a yang I guess. But, we did get some good riding the other months with the high point being the Winter Rendezvous. The club thought about purchasing a new groomer this season, but that whole process has been put on hold while we pay down some debt. The club always has to be careful as no one is truly a prognosticator, and you never quite know how winter is going to pan out. Most of our funds come from snowmobile registrations; and if it's a lean winter, those funds can become less and less, while the bills remain nearly the same. We want to keep our club solvent, that's why it's important to make as many meetings as possible. If you are a member, YOU can vote, and each vote really means something as we don't have hundreds of people (yet). So what's the near future look like? I'll prognosticate away...I predict there will be a nasty world wide virus that will keep us quarantined and that we won't have an April meeting, and that the trail down party will be canceled. I predict there will also be volunteers helping resurface a couple of bridges this summer. Make sure you find out when and where you're needed. Even if you can't do much, you can watch and learn, fetch tools, and even take some pictures we can put up on the website. Many hands make light work!!

A very special thanks to the groomer operators and repair people. a special thanks to the Youth Safety course teachers and volunteers!



AL'S CORNER:

Our party that was scheduled to be at the groomer shed in April has been canceled, along with the April meeting. On a happier note, in the second to last installment on snowmobile clothing, I'll touch on helmets. Helmets are an important safety feature. They are also your first defense against wind. There are two basic types, wedge and modular. The wedge consists of a closed helmet with a face shield that can flip open, and some don't have a face shield at all, the rider wears a pair of goggles in place of a face shield. I just think that type would be cold, as you would think that air could reach your face around the goggles. I talked to a few people about this, but they all said it didn't get cold. Maybe the foam around the goggles seals out the cold better than you think it would. I can't really speak to that as I've always worn a wedge with a flip open face shield. This has worked well over the years for me. In a modular helmet, the whole front of it flips open, face shield and a good amount of the helmet itself. These seem to be more popular and people eventually "graduate" to a modular helmet. They are more expensive than a wedge, and that always holds some people back. The weight of the helmet is important too. Riding a few hundred miles hitting bumps with a giant weight on your head certainly won't do your neck any favors. The lightest material that I've seen for helmets has been carbon fiber. Carbon fiber helmets are lighter than the old fiberglass ones. You get what you pay for though. As age sets in, in the snowmobiling world, as well as in the regular world, you want lighter, smoother...easier. Hopefully, with many years of working under your belt, you'll be able to upgrade to just that...lighter, smoother, and easier. (That's the way it's supposed to work, but in life, anything can happen.) But, if it does work that way in your life, you should be able to afford a lighter, smoother, snowmobile and gear. So if you're getting tired of a heavy helmet, and you want the lightness of carbon fiber, and you want to graduate to a modular helmet, what is that going to cost you? The helmet I've been eyeing is \$800. (Al, you would pay \$800 for a snowmobile helmet, are you crazy??) Well, it would most likely be the last helmet I would ever buy, and you ain't taking any of your stuff with you. Truth be told, we're all going to be taking the big dirt nap eventually. When you're laying there contemplating your life, you won't think about how big your bank account is, but you may contemplate the things you've done and the places you went, and the people you've helped. Get yourself a great helmet, hook up a heated face shield, and ride off into the sunset like the person in the picture above is doing, you'll remember that. **Thanks for reading folks!!**