

# Klondike SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### No charity from bylaw

SUGGESTIONS TO BRING BACK THE POKER RUN ARE WELCOME

I don't know how much you've been riding but, by March 1, I can honestly say that I haven't put a second tank of fuel through my sled this year. We haven't run the groomers for six weeks because you just can't groom ice. In what was a banner year for early snow, the only real



**Mark Daniels**  
KSA President

local constraint was the City plowing the recreational trail connectors to pavement or gravel in their single-minded mission to clear everything. They even plowed the Hamilton Boulevard Trail four or five times after we asked them to stop. Out of pure frustration, I eventually filed a formal complaint against the City under the new snowmobile bylaw for willfully wrecking the snowmobile trail. Not long after we got that resolved, we got an epic melt that turned the trails to ice and stripped snow off any surface that was wind-swept or south-facing. We've had next to no snowfall since then. Now, I won't complain about clear and sunny weather but it would be nice to have something to ride on. This reminds me of a

similar season we had a few years back when the Y2K bug led to a melt over the Christmas break and there was green grass growing where there should have been snowmobile tracks. I hope we get some decent spring snow. Otherwise, I hear there's some good riding down around

the Continental Divide if you don't mind trailering to Swift River or Rancheria.

Though the weird weather makes for some tough sledding, it's not the reason we cancelled the KSA Annual Charity Poker Run after several years of successful events and thousands of dollars donated to local charitable groups. Ever since the City passed its new snowmobile bylaw and stepped up enforcement two years ago we've seen a sharp dive in attendance at the event. There were more volunteers than participants last year. Though we did raise significant funds for Big Brothers/Big Sisters Yukon, we seriously questioned whether the effort on the part of the KSA was worth it to host an event where

*Continued on page 2 ▶*



Natalie Daniels photo

The friendly staff at Trails North Car & Truck Stop are waiting to serve you with a smile.

### Trails North serves up home-style meals

by MARK DANIELS

Once again, Trails North Car & Truck Stop is a corporate member of the KSA. Now under the ownership of Rhonda L'Henaff, Trails North is ideally located for sledders just off the main Trans Canada Trail at Mile 922 of the Alaska Highway. Riders originating from Porter Creek or Crestview can fuel up on their way to an adventure or on the way home. Those passing by can stop in for fuel, drinks, snacks or a complete meal. They also offer propane, some auto supplies, ice and off-sales. There's also a motel for out-of-towners.

*Continued on page 2 ▶*



YG photo

## Caribou share their home with you. Be a respectful guest.

At the end of a great day of sledding in the backcountry, you get to return home. Caribou don't—the wilderness is their home. As a guest you should be on your best behaviour. Stay on designated trails when travelling through caribou country.

Before you head out into the backcountry, pick up your free **MULTI-USE TRAIL GUIDE**. It will help you see wildlife while minimizing disturbance. Available from the Klondike Snowmobile Association, Environment Yukon, and snowmobile service businesses.



# SNORIDERS

## SPECIAL KLONDIKE SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION REPORT

### ► TRAILS NORTH *Continued from page 1*

Speaking of meals, Trails North features home-style cooking that's difficult to find in this modern era of nuke-from-a-box restaurant fare. There's nothing like a warm bowl of soup after a cold day on the trails. They serve breakfast until 2 p.m. on weekends for those late risers.

Sledders are always welcome at Trails North. You can park your snowmobile just about anywhere on the property as long as you're not blocking access. It's a great jumping-off point for those who choose to trailer from home to the trail system. There's lots of room to park your truck/trailer combination at the back edge of the property. The trailhead is at the back corner of their lot with quick access to the main Trans Canada Trail that leads to the Copper Haul Road and points beyond.

A great loop ride from Trails North takes you south towards Icy Waters, through the Jackson Lake Trail to Fish Lake, over Mount McIntyre then north to Icy Waters on the Copper Haul Road and back to Trails North. It's about a 55-kilometre run on well-used trails—just enough to burn off that late brunch and make room for more home cooking. ■

### ► NO CHARITY *Continued from page 1*

only a handful of members attended. Organizing the annual charity poker run is no small feat. From planning, permitting and advertising to canvassing charities, sponsors and merchants to prize collection to route selection, mapping, scouting, grooming and signing the trail then hosting the event, including venue ►

► selection, set-up and tear-down, registration, arranging food and drinks, staffing field stations and running sweep to assist stragglers and collect the trail markers, the KSA invests well over 100 volunteer person-hours plus several hours of vehicle costs each time we run the event.

Back in the good old days, Bylaw Enforcement used to leave us alone to do our thing. Sometimes, they even showed up to have a hotdog and stop vehicle traffic at the road crossings. You know: promote safety. How things have changed. Sledders have consistently told us that they now avoid our event in order to avoid bylaw officers. In fact, we haven't heard of another reason for the lack of attendance these past two years. Participation has dropped by about 50 riders since the bylaw was enacted and enforcement was increased.

Many Whitehorse-based sledders rarely ride within city limits. They prefer the back-country and only ride in town a couple of times per year, including at the poker run. These riders don't want to go through the expense of getting the operator's card then registering and insuring their machines each year for one event. Whitehorse is the only location in the Yukon where this is an issue—\$150 is a bit much to ask of someone for one or two rides per year. Any rider caught without his or her operator card and insurance is liable for \$650 in fines. Other riders have their operator's card, their sleds are registered and insured but they want their children to share in their passion for the sport by operating under their supervision. Get caught letting your minor children drive, even if you're the passenger, and you're subject to even more fines.

The KSA strongly opposed mandatory licensing, insurance and permitting during

the bylaw consultation and continues to do so now because the City failed to demonstrate how requiring these things would improve safety on the trails. There's no evidence that safety has improved since the bylaw was enacted. Instead, these are regulatory and financial barriers to snowmobiling and a hindrance to our charitable efforts.

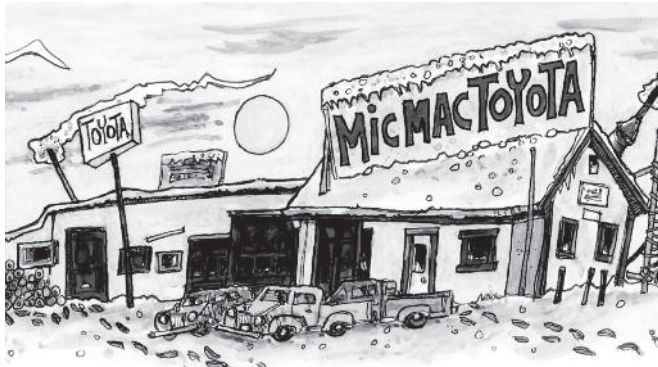
Despite all the challenges, the KSA is still interested in hosting the charity poker run in years to come. We're passionate about snowmobiling and we like to support our local charities. But we can't continue to pile resources into an event so poorly attended. We're asking you, the members, to tell us what it would take to get you out to this event.

Are enough riders willing to comply with the City's regulations to make it worthwhile to hold the event in town? How far out of town are you willing to go for this? Do you know of someone who will donate the use of a shop or other suitable venue close to town and accessible from the trail network? Do you have any other suggestions to bring back the poker run? Please let us know and maybe we'll give it a whirl next year. ■

## The Ibx Valley is a great family ride

by MARK DANIELS

The Ibx Valley is a great family ride, summer or winter. Easily accessible just west of Whitehorse via the Alaska Highway, the Ibx Valley makes an easy day trip. I prefer to trailer down the Old Alaska Highway to the intersection with Scout Lake Road. There's a large gravel pit at this intersection that gives plenty of room to turn and park your rig. Unload here and head down the Scout Lake Road being extra cautious for the ►



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# SNORIDERS

## SPECIAL KLONDIKE SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION REPORT

### ► IBEX VALLEY *continued from page 2*

first couple of kilometres due to traffic from local residents.

The road changes at about Kilometre 2 from a smoothly maintained surface to an unmaintained mix of ruts and potholes. The KSA doesn't maintain the trails in this area so don't expect a groomed surface. The turn-off to Scout Lake is at Kilometre 4. A narrow dirt road takes you a couple hundred metres to the stocked pothole lake. While I haven't fished it for years, I used to pull some nice ones through the ice back in the day. A family could spend all day on the lake fishing, playing and roasting hotdogs—but this is a snowmobiling newsletter, not an ice fishing newsletter, so let's carry on. Just past Scout Lake, you'll find Cub Lake. I don't know if there's any fish in this tiny lake but it's fun to pull doughnuts on in the winter and pretty to look at in the summer. In addition to the main road, there's an extensive grid of old woodcutting roads throughout the area. They're fun to explore but most dead-end. I wouldn't get too adventurous unless you have reverse or you like manhandling your sled a lot.

At about Kilometre 10 the road forks. You can either go right (west) or continue south. The trail south leads you along a narrow road that skirts the bluff above the IbeX River. Kilometre 13 features a pullout that overlooks what seems to be a government water testing station on the river. It's a scenic place to stop and stretch your legs. There's another small lake on the left of the



Patrice Tremblay photo

It's break time on a Leblanc family trail ride.

trail at about Kilometre 15. The trail follows the IbeX River and carries on south but, for the purpose of a family day trip, it effectively ends just past the lake. A clearing in the woods near where Jackson Creek flows into the IbeX River makes for a nice picnic spot and turn-around. There's a residence nearby. Please be respectful of their privacy. If you head straight back out to the truck, you'll have clocked about 30 kilometres plus side trips down the woodlot roads—a nice distance for a family ride.

The trail heading west from the fork follows a narrow valley between Mount Ingram to the south and a steep ridge to the north. This trail offers spectacular views of the mountains above and the opportunity to do a bit of off-trail hillclimbing if there's enough snow. As you meander alongside the IbeX River from about Kilometre 2 to Kilometre 4, there are plenty of nice vistas below as well.

**Continued on page 4 ►**

## Membership Form

Time to renew your KSA membership. Do you know someone who should become a member?

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues for the 2013/2014 season:

Single \$20  Family \$30

Corporate \$105  Gold Corporate \$315 including GST

Please make cheques payable to:

**Klondike Snowmobile Association,  
4061 - 4th Ave., Whitehorse, YT Y1A 4H1**

## Membership Benefits

- KSA membership card
- KSA newsletters (four per year)
- KSA licence plate and decals
- Input into the development of KSA policy
- Assistance with problems, projects and trail development initiatives in your area
- A strong, unified voice with government and other agencies
- A guarantee that volunteers are working on your behalf to enhance and promote trails in the Yukon Territory
- Five free issues of *SnoRiders* magazine
- 5% discount on Airport Chalet rooms
- 6% off gas at Tags 4th Ave. Whitehorse (not valid during gas wars)
- 10% off at Mark's Work Wearhouse on regularly priced merchandise; separate card required, which is issued with membership
- 10% off at Mt. Lorne Bed and Breakfast - [www.klondikeriv.com](http://www.klondikeriv.com)
- 10% off at Klondike RV Rentals - [www.klondikerv.com](http://www.klondikerv.com)
- 10% discount at McDonald's restaurants - Whitehorse (not valid with other offers)
- 20% off at Sandor's (Chilkoot Mall) on regularly priced goggles, gloves, toques, snowpants, jackets and snowboards
- Special rates at Choice Hotels - see [www.choicehotels.ca/ccso](http://www.choicehotels.ca/ccso) for details; only available for online bookings
- Special prices on Haber Vision sunglasses and goggles - see [www.habervision.com](http://www.habervision.com) for details; member code is "CCSO"
- Corporate Members can link to our website
- Gold Corporate Members get two free single-issue 1/8-page ads per year in our newsletters.



If you have comments, photos or story ideas for the Klondike Report send them to:  
**Mark Daniels, Klondike Snowmobile Association**  
4061 - 4th Ave., Whitehorse, YT Y1A 4H1  
Phone 867-667-7680 • Email: [klonsnow@ykn.net](mailto:klonsnow@ykn.net)

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Patrice Tremblay photo

Overlooking Fish Lake, the viewpoint is nothing short of spectacular.

#### ► IBEX VALLEY continued from page 3

At about Kilometre 5, the trail veers north away from the river. Though not as abundant as on the main route, there are still plenty of side trails in the area to explore. Kilometre 7 provides some low, open, swampy areas and another opportunity for off-trail riding as long as everything is satisfactorily frozen. At about Kilometre 11 there's a short offshoot to the left that leads to a nice little lake. A large clearing overlooks the lake and makes a great rest spot. The lake itself is large enough to play on if you want to practise carving or you just want to blow the carbon out of the top end.

Again, this is about as far as you'd probably go on a family ride. Round trip from the truck is about 40 kilometres. However, if you feel up to it, you could continue for about

another 15 kilometres northwest and you'll end up on the gravel pit road just off the Alaska Highway by the Takhini River Bridge. I haven't ventured past the lake for a very long time but I'm sure it's still doable. Once you get to the highway, you can either return the way you came or make it a loop by riding the ditches about 20 kilometres back to the Old Alaska Highway and another couple of kilometres to the truck for a grand total of about 60 kilometres.

If you're interested in sledding a particular area but don't have any information on it, just drop us a line. We've probably been there and can let you know what to expect. If we get more than one request about a place we may write an article about it. And if we don't know it, we may just ask to come along and discover it with you. ■

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