

Klondike SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Have we got a bridge for you!

REPLACEMENT SEEMS THE BETTER OPTION

Fast on the heels of our successful Wolf Creek Bridge project, we are pursuing funding for a bridge over Sima Creek. Sima Creek is just one kilometre south of the Mount Sima ski hill on the Copper Haul Road and within sight of the intersection of the haul road and the Coal Lake Road.

"Wait just a minute!" you say. "There's already a bridge across Sima Creek." True. There's a bridge just downstream from the reservoir that Mount Sima makes each year to supply water to their snow-making operations. That small wooden bridge has been with the KSA longer than I have. It met the needs of the day but it wasn't built to last. It's sagging again, despite being refurbished just a couple of years ago. It's barely wide enough to fit the groomer across. Sometimes the groomer binds between the rails and the approaches are so steep that the groomer blades catch on the deck boards.

Given the choice of repair or replace we've decided to try replacing it. In partnership,



Mark Daniels
KSA President

once again, with the City's Parks and Recreation department, we applied for funding from the Yukon Government's Community Development Fund. We're also applying to the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) Foundation for funding, as the haul road is the main TCT trunk in this area.

We're looking for a similar type of bridge as we had installed at Wolf Creek with similar goals in mind: keeping recreational traffic out of the creek bed, supporting our trail maintenance program, and providing infrastructure for emergency vehicle access in time of need.

Part of our long-range planning is to upgrade our primary trail network to eventually accommodate a full-size groomer. Large, properly engineered bridges are required because these grooming machines start at seven feet wide and several thousand pounds and go up from there. We could never stop grooming with snowmobiles because we maintain hundreds of kilometres

Continued on page 2 ►

High-mile Harris loves to groom

by MARK DANIELS

Harris Cox has been the main groomer operator in the KSA for more than a



James Connor photo

Harris Cox

decade. I always knew that Harris spent a lot of time grooming because every time I called his house, his wife would tell me he was out on the trail. I was never quite sure of the exact amount of

time he spent grooming because Harris is one of those guys who can tell you four hours of stories for every hour of grooming. He knows every detail about every metre of the trail network because he lives and breathes grooming.

I got some insight into Harris's activities when the KSA received a very generous donation of 90 gallons of fuel from a local business earlier this winter. Harris scrambled to fill all of his jerry cans and squirrel them away. Then he was off grooming again. But it wasn't long before Harris was out of fuel and asking for cash to buy more. I was shocked. I accused Harris of drinking the fuel—that would explain both the rate of consumption and his meandering stories. Of course he denied

Continued on page 2 ►



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

► **HAVE WE GOT A BRIDGE** *from page 1* of secondary trail that's less than six feet wide. However, the larger groomer can do in one pass what would take several passes with a sled-drawn grader. Having a large groomer would save a lot of time and wear and tear on the other equipment and operators while maintaining wider trails like the haul road.

► **HARRIS COX** *Continued from page 1* that, and before I could smell his breath for octane, he was fuelled up and back out on the trail again.

It really struck home, however, when Harris called me up the other day to boast that he had turned 10,000 kilometres on the KSA Ski-Doo Skandic SWT. The KSA bought this sled a few years back to replace an older SWT as our primary grooming machine after it turned 25,000 kilometres. Since new, this Skandic has been Harris's sled. He's been on it so much I swear the seat has his butt groove notched into it. It's a testament to Ski-Doo quality and Yukon Honda's service department that this machine could survive 10,000 kilometres pulling a grooming drag and still run strong day in, day out. It's a greater feat that someone could operate it for all those kilometres in the dead of the Yukon winter over vast stretches of trail.

I happened to notice when I was grooming with my son earlier this winter that our other machine, a Polaris Widetrack, is turning 5,000 miles. Though he's more apt to share the Polaris than the SWT, I can safely say that Harris logged his fair share of miles on the Polaris as well.

Harris loves to groom. What really grinds his gears is when he spends ►

► hours and hours repairing trail that was damaged by the inconsiderate action of people driving cars and trucks down the groomed trails. This vandalism has become epidemic around Whitehorse lately. In an afternoon or evening ride, Harris can smooth 50 miles of trails—or he could go back and forth over the same quarter-mile filling in ruts, knocking down piles, picking up beer cans, and dragging half-burned pallets off the trail. These leftovers create a hazard for snowmobilers. Please spread the word—vehicles on the groomed trails are costly and dangerous. If you see someone driving on a snowmobile trail, please let them know that their fun is ruining yours. If you see trail damage or any other unsafe condition, please call us at 667-7680 so we can fix it up. ■

Atlin is a choice winter destination

by MARK DANIELS

Atlin—sometimes called Little Switzerland because of the surrounding mountains—was once a gold rush town and is now a haven for artists and a tourist destination. Atlin is easily accessible about 170 kilometres south of Whitehorse via the Alaska Highway to Jake's Corner and the Atlin Road or the more scenic route via the South Klondike Highway and Tagish Road. This is just a bit farther than you'd drive from Whitehorse to the White Pass with the added benefit of being able to ride right from your hotel.

Home to about 400 people, Atlin has limited services. However, it has more snow than Whitehorse most years and it's often warmer there too. Atlin is a regular destination for many Yukon snowmobilers and it's well

worth the trip for anyone looking to ride somewhere other than close to home. With lots of trails, mountains and lakes to ride on, there are plenty of options available for every level of sledder.

For a map of local trails close to town, have a look at the Atlin Whisper at <http://storage.ubertor.com/cl1890/content/document/987.pdf>. This is a shared trail network so please be respectful of other users and their infrastructure such as trail signs, markings and ski tracks. There are many other trails and seasonal roads in the Atlin area.

Atlin Lake and smaller lakes in the surrounding area make for good riding. Always check with local residents before riding on ice-covered lakes to ensure that the ice is thick enough to ride safely. Atlin Park encompasses the southern section of the lake and the lands beyond, including Teresa Island. Atlin Lake is the only part of Atlin Park where you are allowed to ride. Riding anywhere else in the park is an offense so it's in your best interest to know where the park boundaries are and avoid crossing them. A map of the park can be found at http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/atlin/atlin_brochure.pdf.

Mountains surround Atlin so the steep riding can start very close to town. There are a variety of places to ride up Spruce Creek and Pine Creek. When venturing into the mountains, it's always best to ride with someone knowledgeable with the area. Get yourself educated about avalanche safety and pack the proper gear (<http://www.avalanche.ca/cac>). It's particularly important to pay attention to the weather when mountain riding. Before you head out, you can check the forecast and webcam at the Atlin airport from the KSA website at <http://www.ksa.yk.ca/conditions.html>. ►

Proud Sponsor of the KSA



CF CANADA FLOORING ENTERPRISES LIMITED
9049 Quartz Road, Whitehorse, YT Y1A 4Z5
Ph: 867-667-7290 or 867-667-7291 • Fax: 867-667-4619

SOME SEE A MOUNTAIN. OTHERS SEE AN ENDLESS OPPORTUNITY TO GO BIGGER, HIGHER AND MORE EXTREME.



SUMMIT
FREE RIDE

ski-doo
BETTER RIDES. BETTER RIDERS.™



**YUKON
HONDA**

1 Chilkoot Way, Whitehorse, YT • 867-668-4451
www.yukonhonda.com • sales@yukonhonda.com

SNORIDERS

SPECIAL KLONDIKE SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION REPORT

► Brewery Bay Chalet has been a KSA corporate member for years. Their beautiful lake-front property and two-bedroom suites are welcome sites after a long day on the trails or in the backcountry.

Rooms come with cooking facilities and there are barbecues on the decks for us "meataterians." Call 250-651-0040 or see them on their website at <http://www.brewerybay.infosathse.com/>.

The Atlin Inn is back in business with their grand opening in February of this year. They joined the KSA as a corporate member for 2011/12 and are offering discounted room rates for snowmobilers. They'll host fancy dinners on weekend evenings by reservation and offer pub food in the evenings as well as after-ride beverages. They're looking forward to serving snowmobilers. Give them a call at 250-651-7546 or check them out at <http://atlininn.com>.

City of Whitehorse bylaw update

by MARK DANIELS

The snowmobile bylaw consultation process is winding down and, as the bylaw reaches its final format, we'll post the information to help keep you informed. The KSA spent a considerable amount of time and energy on this process: we were on the working group, we met extensively with city officials, we attended public meetings, and we spoke up in the media. In the end, we had some issues with how the process unfolded

and we don't agree with some of the provisions in the bylaw. However, there was a process and we did have the opportunity to say our piece.

Similarly, the citizens of Whitehorse got to speak up. Some of what they say makes sense. We all know there are yahoos on snowmobiles who tear around the streets and trails endangering others, just like there are yahoos in cars and trucks who tear around the streets endangering others. And, just like with cars and trucks, there is no sense in vilifying the machine. Nobody has suggested that we outlaw motor vehicles though their use results in exponentially more injuries and deaths each year than the use of snowmobiles. Who's heard of a 20-sled pileup on a freeway?

Motor vehicles are also one of the greatest sources of hydrocarbon emissions on the planet. As with snowmobiles, we strive to make motor vehicles more efficient and cleaner running every model year but nobody's talking about banning them from use like some people want to ban snowmobiles. Snowmobiles make for a very small percentage of total hydrocarbon emissions annually given their limited and seasonal usage. To hear some people rant, you'd think snowmobiles are singularly responsible for global warming. However, a new four-stroke or injected two-stroke is cleaner than an old two-stroke and a well-tuned engine runs cleaner than one out of tune.

Still, there are some people on the fringe

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 2011/2012 season:

Single \$20 Family \$30

Corporate \$100 Gold Corporate \$300

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
- 10% off at Klondike RV Rentals - www.klondikerv.com
- 10% off snowmobile rentals at Kluanne Ridin' - Haines Junction
- 20% 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
- NEW special rates at Choice Hotels - see www.choicehotels.ca/ccso for details; only available for online bookings
- NEW special prices on Haber Vision sunglasses and goggles - see 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@yknnet.ca



SNOWMOBILE OPERATOR COURSES AND ATV & UTV RIDER COURSES

- 3 certified instructors
- Nationally recognized by the Canada Safety Council
- All courses WCB approved

MAIN STREET DRIVING SCHOOL

7213 - 7th Ave., Whitehorse, YT
867-633-2355 • ravens@klondiker.com

KSA Members receive
20% OFF
YOUR MEAL
when you present your membership card



i'm lovin' it™ 4227 4th Ave., Whitehorse • 867-668-3502

This offer is only valid at participating McDonald's Restaurants in Whitehorse and subject to change at any time.

KSA corporate members

- Alpine Aviation - Whitehorse
- Alsek Valley Contracting - Whitehorse
- Arctic Response - Whitehorse
- Atlin Inn - Atlin, BC
- Braeburn Lodge - Braeburn
- Brewery Bay Chalet - Atlin, BC
- Capital Helicopters - Whitehorse
- Centennial Motors - Whitehorse
- Challenger Construction - Whitehorse
- Checkeder Flag Recreation - Whitehorse
- Choko Design - St. Leonard, Quebec
- City of Whitehorse
- Fireweed Helicopters - Whitehorse
- Heritage North Funeral Home - Whitehorse
- Kanoe People - Whitehorse
- Keno Community Club
- Klondike Visitors Association - Dawson City
- Lister's Motor Sports - Whitehorse
- Locksmith Services - Whitehorse
- Nomad Air - Whitehorse
- Philmar RV Services - Whitehorse
- Quality Bearing - Whitehorse
- Quest Engineering Group - Whitehorse
- SnoRiders Magazine - Cranbrook, BC
- Tourist Industry Association - Whitehorse
- U-Brew Yukon - Whitehorse
- Up North Adventures - Whitehorse
- Village of Mayo
- Wilderness Tourism Association - Whitehorse
- Yamaha Motor Canada
- Yukon Avalanche Association
- Yukon Meat and Sausage - Whitehorse
- Yukon Trappers Association - Whitehorse
- Yukon Quest
- Yukon Wide Adventures - Whitehorse
- Corporate Gold:**
- AFD (Alberta Fuel Distributors) - Whitehorse
- Canada Flooring - Whitehorse
- Main Street Driving School - Whitehorse
- McDonald's - Whitehorse
- Polaris Industries - Winnipeg, Manitoba
- Safe Trails North Training Services - Whitehorse
- Yukon Honda - Whitehorse
- Yukon Yamaha - Whitehorse

► BYLAW UPDATE from page 3

who absolutely hate snowmobiles. This is a small but very vocal group. They try every possible avenue to discredit our chosen activity and us. In the past, they've tried the environmental route, the safety route and the lifestyle route. Recently, they started attacking our funding sources in an attempt to halt our trail-building activities.

So far, we're doing OK. But remember, regardless of what the bylaw states, enforcement is done mainly on a complaint-driven basis. If you want to ensure the future of snowmobiling, you need to act responsibly: wear your helmet, keep your speed in check, slow down and pull to the side when approaching other trail users and, if you just can't help yourself and you need to put a can on your sled, wait until you're clear of the suburbs before making it sing. You're far less likely to attract negative attention if you're acting responsibly. ■

Scoping out the new avalanche beacons

by MARK DANIELS

I was at an avalanche seminar recently and took the opportunity to scope out some of the new beacons. Avalanche transceivers, also known as "beacons," "peeps" and some other slang terms, are a requirement when going into the backcountry where the risk of avalanche exists. They're worn on the body, generally between the inner layer of clothing and your jacket. When set to Send, they emit a signal that can be found with other beacons that are set to Find. This signal leads rescuers to a buried victim.

Old analogue beacons were fairly simple devices that sent a signal out in a circular pattern. It took quite a bit of practice to be

able to track another beacon, and tracking more than one beacon (multiple burial) was even more difficult. They had one real advantage though: analogue avalanche beacons have a big search range and are excellent for picking up a signal from a greater distance. The analogue avalanche beacons are almost out of the market by now as digital beacons have become more popular.

The main aim of digital avalanche beacons is to cut searching times by providing the user with simple directions. Every digital avalanche beacon has a microprocessor that filters data for the user and communicates through distance numbers and direction arrows, much like a GPS unit navigates toward a known point. Digital avalanche beacons are easier to use than analogue beacons. This makes them a great choice for any type of users, particularly those who do not use their beacon regularly. Digital beacons have a smaller range than analogue beacons but the microprocessor capabilities can greatly compensate, thus cutting down the search times. Most digital beacons can distinguish between signals so are less confusing in multiple burial scenarios.

There's no need to be concerned about compatibility if you buy a new beacon because all avalanche beacons operate on the same frequency (457 kHz) and are therefore fully compatible.

No matter which avalanche beacon you buy there is no substitute for practice. Each beacon behaves a bit differently from the others and it is best if you get to know yours intimately through practice. And there's no need to ditch your old beacon when you upgrade. You can keep it as a spare in case one of your riding buddies forgets to bring one or you could use it for practice by burying it in a bag and searching for it with your new one. ■



SAFETY TRAINING FOR SNOWMOBILE AND ATV/UTV

- WCB recognized operator courses
- Workplace and recreational training available
- Mobile training services available to meet your needs

Safe Trails North Training Service
Canada Safety Council/BC Snowmobile Federation Courses • Professional Instruction Services
Whitehorse, YT • 867-335-1932 • safetrails@elr.ca



We've Got You Covered
in men's & women's outdoor armour

New Yamaha Clothing Has Arrived

YUKON YAMAHA
8:30 - 5:30 Monday to Friday, 10 - 4 Saturday
867-668-2101 or 1-800-661-0430
Alaska Hwy., Whitehorse, YT

YAMAHA