

# Klondike SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### The year in review

SMALL VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION DOES A TON OF WORK



**Mark Daniels**  
**KSA President**

We held the KSA AGM on this past November 5. As usual, the meeting was sparsely attended. Except for when the membership is faced with a common cause of grave concern, such as the recent snowmobile bylaw review, we rarely hear from you in great numbers. I'm hoping this is a sign that we're doing things mostly right and I encourage you to contact us if you ever feel the need. In the meantime, we'll carry on and keep you updated on our activities through email, the website, the newsletters and on Facebook.

As is my practice for the past few AGMs, I gave a summary of the association's activities for the past operating year. When we're knee-deep in the work and up to our necks in the rhetoric, it's sometimes difficult to remember all the good work we do so I find it encouraging to recount our accomplishments at the end of each year.

The KSA continues to hold a healthy financial position for a small organization. We make good use of partnerships to leverage

funds from several sources, including government and business. We receive direct financial compensation for some of the work our board members do, such as grooming for some third parties and activities directly related to the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) program. The KSA rules

don't allow volunteer board members to collect wages for KSA business so all revenues go into the general fund to pay for grooming and other activities. In addition to thousands of hours of volunteer time, the board members contributed several thousand dollars in "earned income" to the KSA from these activities. The board membership remained stable with a healthy mix of new and old blood. We recruited a younger board member and have started to turn our attention to succession planning. Two of our directors, Jim Connor and Harris Cox, got national awards for volunteerism.

In 2011/12, the KSA membership increased to a record 725 individual members

*Continued on page 2 ►*



Mayor Bev Buckway opens the Rodney Cox Memorial Bridge over Sima Creek with Harris and Linda Cox.

Harris Cox photo

### The work of trails and trail committees

by MARK DANIELS

People ask me, "How can you handle spending all that time in meetings?" Believe me—it's not easy. When I'd rather be out riding the trails or clearing one with a chainsaw I'm stuck in meetings talking about trails instead. I used to think of meetings as just a necessary evil but, lately, I've been meeting some other trail groups who tell me how much they appreciate our work and that makes the hours spent away from the trails somewhat fulfilling. Many of these meeting commitments arise from my work with the various trail committees run by the City of Whitehorse. I'm currently sitting on two trail planning committees or, as

*Continued on page 2 ►*



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# SNORIDERS

## SPECIAL KLONDIKE SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION REPORT

### ► YEAR IN REVIEW *Continued from page 1*

and 45 corporate members. We have expanded the membership benefits and attracted non-snowmobilers by virtue of our involvement with the Trans Canada Trail and other multi-use trail programs. Other trail user groups have told me that they promote KSA memberships to their own members to support our wide-ranging trail maintenance program. Board members and other volunteers perform this maintenance work with our small fleet of equipment. We continue to manage this fleet in serviceable condition at a low cost for operation and maintenance with help from board members and local businesses.

Major projects last year involved TCT trail planning (including the Dawson connector), TCT trail designation and signage in co-operation with Highways and Public Works, the Rodney Cox Memorial Bridge at Sima Creek, the City of Whitehorse Bylaw Consultation, the Ride Smart ORV Alliance, the City of Whitehorse trail designation working groups, and the new KSA website and Facebook pages. We hosted the Annual Family Ice Fishing Day and our Annual Charity Poker Run where we helped raise \$1,500 for a local charity.

This is a ton of work for a small volunteer organization and something for all members to be proud of. Even if you didn't volunteer directly, the financial support and backing of over 700 members helps us immensely.

Phil administered the election process and, when the dust settled, we lost two board members and gained one. Gone are Terry Horsman, after one term this time around, and Rheo Bedard after ►

### ► YEAR IN REVIEW *Continued from left*

more years on the board than I can remember. I trust these gentlemen will continue their long-standing membership and support of the KSA. Their advice and mechanical expertise over the years was greatly appreciated. Doug Caldwell joined the board as a director, driving the average age down yet a bit more and, hopefully, further supporting our succession activities. I'm looking forward to another year of service to the KSA with this team.

The KSA board for 2012/13 is:

- President: Mark Daniels
- Vice-President: Jim Connor
- Secretary/Treasurer: Phil Perrin
- Directors: Harris Cox, James Connor, Doug Caldwell. ■

### ► TRAILS AND TRAIL COMMITTEES *Continued from page 1*

the city calls them, Neighbourhood Trails Task Forces.

A Whitehorse Neighbourhood Trails Task Force is a group of the City of Whitehorse and is comprised of a Parks & Recreation Department representative, community associations, stakeholders and users of the Whitehorse Trail System. A task force meets on a time-limited basis to discuss and make recommendations on the achievement of the 2007 Trail Plan's guiding principles at the neighbourhood level, with particular focus on trail locations, designations, types of use and trail etiquette. The principles that guide trail development and management in the city are accessibility, diversity, inclusiveness and sustainability.

Two committees are meeting this winter: East of the Yukon River (Riverdale) and the Above the Airport (Granger, Copper Ridge, Hillcrest, Valleyview) groups. Task forces for

other neighbourhoods will meet in later years. Each group meets for six two-hour meetings to discuss trail designation around the neighbourhoods in question. The recommendations of the committees will be put out for public consultation, then council will make the final decisions on trail designation.

The purpose of the trail task forces is to develop, maintain, promote and encourage a sustainable, inclusive, diverse and accessible Whitehorse trail network for all trail users, stakeholders and stewards. This exercise is especially important for Riverdale. Over the years, the city and community groups have developed an extensive array of non-motorized trails in the Riverdale area. Despite the fact that there's an extensive bush road network and motorized recreation activities have been going on there for decades, no motorized trail designation has happened anywhere around Riverdale. The city has recognized this shortcoming and is working with the committee to designate some out-and-away trails from Riverdale. **These trail designations are vital for summer use as the ATV bylaw restricts usage only to those trails, whereas the snowmobile bylaw permits us to go anywhere we're not specifically excluded.** So, you could ride the trail along the fence line behind your neighbour's houses but it would make much more sense to find an out-and-away trail and leave them in peace.

Once the local trail designation is complete, the task forces are dissolved and the larger Whitehorse Trail and Greenways Committee will be formed comprised of city representatives along with stakeholders and users of the Whitehorse Trail System. This committee will meet on a monthly basis to discuss and make recommendations on ►



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### ► TRAILS AND TRAIL COMMITTEES Continued from page 2

the achievement of the 2007 Trail Plan's guiding principles, with particular focus on stewardship, public education and respectful use of Whitehorse trails.

In meeting its purpose, the committee will discuss areas of concern with regard to trail stewardship, public education, trail promotion, identification of city-wide issues, and dispute resolution between trail user groups within the context of the Whitehorse Trail Plan's guiding principles of sustainability, inclusiveness, diversity and accessibility.

Unlike the task forces, this committee will exist in perpetuity. Any resident, stakeholder or association will be able to bring a trail matter before the committee. The resident could bring up the matter through an association or submit it in writing to the committee as a whole. Issues may also arise through the committee's review of trail operations, accidents, safety inspections or safety literature. The committee has an advisory role to the city and it's not responsible for the implementation of various measures or the maintenance of trail standards. That work falls to the city and trail stewards such as the KSA. I'm hoping that having more user groups at the table will result in more boots on the ground when it comes to trail improvements and maintenance.

Right now, a few groups, like the KSA, are doing the majority of work on the trail system while other groups enjoy the results of our work but don't contribute. ■

## What happens when volunteers disappear

by RANDY TOTH

*The following is an excerpt from an email circulating through organized snowmobiling in North America courtesy of Randy Toth from Massachusetts. The context is American but the issues are universal.*

One chilly fall day in the not too distant future, as you prepare for the upcoming snowmobiling season, you will remember that you have not received your state association magazine yet. You go to the state association's website only to find a notation that the domain name is now available for sale to any interested parties. Huh?

You call up a friend and ask, "What's up with the state association?" He informs you that last spring they disbanded due to lack of volunteer support. "Well, exactly what did they ever do for me?" you say. Then you call one of your local club officers only to find that no one volunteered to run for club office and that the current president and vice-president had retired and moved south. Your club has also disbanded and sold your grooming equipment to an out-of-state club and donated the remaining club money to charity. Your buddy says that the club two towns over is still active, so you decide that you will join there. He then mentions that the dues have gone way up since the state association is no longer around to provide some much needed grooming money.

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 2012/2013 season:

☐ Single \$20 ☐ Family \$30

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



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### ► VOLUNTEERS *Continued from page 3*

You decide you had better go to a club meeting to find out what's really happening. The meeting holds a few surprises for you as they discuss their huge loss of former friendly landowners. Apparently when they found out that they were no longer covered by the state association-sponsored liability insurance, they immediately revoked permission to ride on their land. You also find out that you can no longer ride from one state property to another because of the lack of private landowner connector trails. "OK," you say, "I will just ride in my local state forest then." Of course, without your old local club there is no grooming or snowmobile trail maintenance in your local state forest. There is still riding there but only on about 15 miles of unmaintained and ungroomed trails. Furthermore, you no longer have riding access to any food or gas because those connector trails were located on private land.

The next day you read in the paper that snowmobiles are being banned on a number of state lands due to damage caused by wheeled vehicles. Incredibly, no one attended any of the planning meetings and spoke up and defended snowmobiling, which has virtually no negative impact on trails. With no organized opposition, snowmobiles were simply banned along with wheeled vehicles. There is also a notice that an environmental group is fighting hard to pass a state law banning all internal combustion engines on state land to protect the health of native miniature snails. Who do you turn to? "I'll just call my local politician," you decide. The call goes something like, "Hi, I'm Joe and I like to snowmobile so you need to help me." The response is something like, "Thank you for calling to express your opinion. We will tell your representative that you called—

what organization did you say you were representing?" Now you start to sweat and remember how the association used to make these calls, and you realize that your encounter didn't go as you had planned. OK, so you and your friends decide your club should hire a lobbyist. Now, just how will you find one and pay for him or her? Your club will just have to raise lots of money somehow. Of course, you always voted against dues increases on principle in the past. You then remember that in the past, revenue from memberships helped fund these key access-related activities. Furthermore, many of your friends said they weren't even going to join the club until there was rideable snow because they remember a year in the past when there wasn't much snow. You call some like-minded friends and you all agree to organize to fight these injustices, but you have no clue how to begin. You also realize that it might already be too late. You want to turn to the guys who have always maintained and groomed the trails for help. Did you know the average age of an active three-man trail crew in the western part of the state, that maintains snowmobile trails on a very large tract of state land, is now over 70 years old? No answer when you call. You call your friend back only to learn that two of the three have retired from trail work and the other is no longer around. Now what? Where are all of the younger folks who were supposed to take over? You then cringe at the thought that you personally have said many times, "I'll help when I get around to it," but you never did.

If you think that this scenario can't happen, just sit back, put your feet up, do nothing and wait. It may now be later than you think! ■

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