

Benton County Snowmobile Club



GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS FELLOW SNOWMOBILING ENTHUSIASTS!

Feb-brrrr-ary. That means we are in full swing in the snowmobiling season. A couple of things are just on the horizon. First is the bonfire/weenie roast. That is February 9th at 6:30 at the groomer shed. Try to make it if you can. Second, is the Lake of the Woods club trip February 15-18 up in Baudette. There are a few beds available at the rented cabin. This is during the week and so traffic should be lighter up there than normal. MNUSA listed it as a "sleeper" destination", so I'm hoping we have the trails mostly to ourselves. You're welcome to come. There was a great turnout at the youth safety training. Everyone really pulled together to help the Molitors. I was a little surprised to see about half the kids were girls. When I was young, i don't think i knew a single girl rider. Times change and sometimes they change for the better. The map committee met at Rumor's and nailed down a few minutia. Committee members will visit businesses on our trail and see if they would like to be on our map. Gas stations and restaurants are a priority. These maps will be like a book, but will have the pages that can be torn off and used. They are also seeing if we can afford some other material that can hold up to folding and moisture, vs. the traditional kind. The lack of snow for a couple of years put off any map notions, but it looks as if we are getting some snow, enough to go riding. Those Alberta clippers don't drop a lot of snow, and it definitely has low moisture content, but we're dang grateful that many of us can go riding, right from home. It doesn't get any better than that.



AL'S CORNER:

Of course by now you've heard the disconcerting news from Aitkin. Two young people on snowmobiles died in a head on crash. One was 16 and one was 18 years old. How does stuff like this happen? Well, I'm a tree person, i love riding in the woods the most of all, however, the forest can be quite thick with conifers and brush to the point that it's difficult to see through the trees to see if anyone is coming. One might have the tendency to think that the other person might be able to see you, or that they could react faster than you. You cannot do that, you must take the bull by the horns. Your safety is YOUR responsibility. So, what can we do to minimize the chances of an accident? First, SLOW DOWN around sharp corners that you cannot see around or through the trees. Stay to the far right hand side of the trail. Expect that someone IS going to be right there when you get to that corner, and plan your response ahead of time, just in case. Thirdly, if you know the trails well, drive at night. You are automatically driving slower because it's night, and a bouncing oncoming headlight is nearly impossible to miss. Granted, driving at night on unfamiliar trails isn't necessarily beneficial besides the fact that you're probably going quite slow. "Luckily", Benton county doesn't have an abundance of trees for the most part. Our trails are pretty wide too compared to a lot of other county's trails. We have excellent signage, and we are going to improve that as well. Just be safe and use your head..... please. I don't like preaching to anyone, especially the choir, but we can avoid tragedies like that on our trail system. Nobody needs to die doing something that they love.

Thanks for reading folks!