



Montana

SNOWMOBILE

Association



NEWSLETTER

November 2021



Inside, we also
talk about:

GET READY

FOR ANOTHER GREAT SEASON!

MSA Specialty License Plates

Display an official Montana Snowmobile Association Winter Wonderland license plate on your rig or trailer to show your support of all things winter.

Ordering your plate is easy. Simply request the 'Winter Wonderland' sponsored plate the next time you renew or register a new vehicle or trailer. Proceeds generate money back to the Montana Snowmobile Association to protect and support your trail systems.

Trail Pass Required

Ready for your first ride of the season? Residents must purchase a Trail Pass to legally ride on any of Montanas 4,000 miles of groomed snowmobile trails. Passes are valid for two seasons and cost \$20. Trail Passes apply to all "mechanized equipment" including snowmobiles, motorized snow bikes, and fat-tire pedal bikes.

Apply online through the online licensing system at fwp.mt.gov or purchase your pass through a participating vendor.

- From the President - 2*
- MT Snowmobile Program- 3*
- Snowmobiler's Profile - 3*
- Trans-MT Charity Ride - 4*
- Sledders Pledge - 5*
- Flathead Avalanche Grant - 6*
- MSA Club Sign Up - 7*
- MSA Scholarship - 8*
- Upcoming Events - 9*
- NEW! OnX Discount - 9*
- Club Support Request - 10*
- MSA Officers and Clubs - 11*



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Montana Snowmobile Association

By Fred Bailey

Well, the weatherman says this crazy summer heat is over. We all know what that means, it's time to get the sleds out and get them ready and the countdown for snow now begins.

The last year and a half have seen many changes due to the pandemic; we are only now beginning to see some normalcy allowing us the freedom to enjoy our sport once again. MSA offers our condolences and sympathies to everyone that suffered during these times and best wishes for better times to come. Due to the pandemic, MSA elections were put on hold last year. New elections were held September 2021 and the results are as follows, **Fred Bailey - President**, **John Zell - Vice President**, and most important **Connie Walter - Treasure**, and **Peggy Albee - Secretary**. They agreed to continue in their positions and were confirmed by the board. MSA owes **Jason Howell** a huge amount of gratitude for serving as president for five years and vice president for several years prior, leading MSA to the excellent organization we are. Jason has agreed to stick around sharing his expertise.

Even with the challenges during the previous years, we were able to continue with a lot of our goals such as voicing opposition and defending our snowmobile trails and ridings areas, being an active part of management and legislative actions regarding snowmobiling. One of our greater successes was the Trans-Montana ride, raising **\$18,000 for NAMI**, money was raised by rider pledges and online raffles. Since we were not able to hold our annual riding convention, the MSA awards were announced at the appropriation meeting held in June. The winners are as follows: **Snowmobiler of the year - Mark Smolen**, **Snowmobile family of the year - Fred & Julie Bailey and family**, **Snowmobile dealer of the year - Yellowstone Motorsports Belgrade**, **Snowmobile Club of the year - Flathead Snowmobile Association**, **Snowmobile groomer of the year - Dave Morgan Missoula**. Thanks to all of these for their support to snowmobiling in Montana. These awards are given every year so start giving thought to [nominations](#) for this year and [please submit to MSA by December 31](#).

If you are reading this it means we are publishing the MSA Newspaper again and we have a very talented person willing to take on this task, please submit your articles to the newspaper, this is the best way to stay connected with our snowmobile community.

Thank you for all your work and remember all of our active participation is what keeps this working and keeps snowmobiling alive. ~ Fred





MONTANA SNOWMOBILE PROGRAM UPDATE

By Seth McArthur

We are almost upon a new season of grooming and all the hard work it entails for the many of you who volunteer to allow grooming to occur in Montana. Fires continue to be a major part of all our lives, and it doesn't look like there will be relief until the snow flies. I have spent this summer working to repair and upgrade grooming equipment for the upcoming season. These upgrades are due to the funding from the Snowmobile Trail Pass revenues. Thank you for your support of the Snowmobile Clubs and their grooming efforts by purchasing the **Snowmobile Trail Pass**.

If your club needs funding for trail maintenance, there are **new grant programs** available to help.

One of the biggest issues all clubs face is overgrown trails. Grants are available that will allow you to rent equipment and get this taken care of. If any of you have questions, please call and we can come up with a plan to assist in getting funding for these activities. The grant process does take some effort, but it is worth it when the work is complete. I will do my best to guide you through this process. There are both state and federal funds that can be used.

Sincerely,
Seth

Montana Snowmobile Program Manager
Montana FWP | 406-444-3753



Economic Impact - The Snowmobiler Profile

- The average age of a snowmobiler is 46 years old.
- The average snowmobiler spends \$2,000 each year on snowmobile-related recreation.
- 50% of snowmobilers trailer their snowmobiles to ride.
- 50% snowmobile from their primary residence or have a vacation home where they keep and use their snowmobiles.
- Snowmobilers are caring neighbors, they raised over \$3 million for charity annually.
- There are 3,000+ snowmobile clubs worldwide, involved in trail grooming, charity fund raising, & family activities.
- There are over 42 registered non-profit associations representing snowmobilers in the US, Canada, Europe and Russia.
- Snowmobiling is great exercise bringing people outdoors interacting with nature and each other. It is an invigorating sport, great for stress release and good mental health.

TRANS-MONTANA CHARITY RIDE SUPPORTS NAMI MONTANA!

For eight years, the Montana Snowmobile Association's Annual Trans Montana Charity Ride has supported NAMI Montana (National Alliance on Mental Illness) raising over \$100,000! The MSA and NAMI Montana wishes to thank all the participating riders, and clubs who have hosted the ride in their area over the years--without your support this would not be possible! NAMI MT has rolled out PTSD support for our veterans and the Youth Aware Mental Health Program that includes teen suicide prevention to over 30 school districts in Montana (sadly Montana ranks one of the highest states in teen suicide).

Last year, even being Covid-challenged, 20 full-time riders and over 100 total day riders raised \$18,000! We did our best, but we need to ramp it up! If you can't ride, please help by sponsoring a rider or making a donation on our site.

To the local clubs, we would like to ask that each club make a donation that we will then use as a prize in our sweepstakes drawing. If you own a business, please consider purchasing a sponsorship--we will do our best to push our patronage your way.

The ride is a week-long ride through five to six of the best areas Montana has to offer (with the route changing every year!). Each day a local club hosts the ride and guides the riders to the best areas, trails and play areas. Snowmobilers and snowbikers are welcome for the day or the entire ride.

It is truly hard to describe how much fun we have over this week. At the end of the ride, we have an awards dinner for the riders with some prizes. Awards include the Snowed-In Award (stuck deepest and most often), Cheer-man Award (Always Happy), Dollar Scholar (Raised the most \$), and the ever-popular Dog Bone Award which goes to that "special rider". It's all in fun and we hope you'll consider joining us this year!

The MSA is looking forward to hosting another great ride starting in **Lolo Hot Springs on Feb 5th** and ending in **Cooke City on Feb 11th**. An online sweepstakes will be held and businesses are encouraged to sign up for sponsorships.

For more info including rider sign-up, dates, route details and sponsorship/donation information, check out the **Trans-Montana.org** website.



2021 Trans Montana Charity Ride

Could You Pass The Safety Knowledge Test?



You've studied the laws and rules of safe snowmobiling. Learned all parts of your snowmobile and the best practices to ensure a safe ride. Think you are ready to test your snowmobiling safety knowledge?

Put your knowledge to the test in the Safe Riders Snowmobile Safety Awareness online test!

Visit: www.saferiderssafetyawareness.org



The Sledder's Pledge

- I will operate my snowmobile only when sober.
- I will drive within the limits of my machine and my own abilities.
- I will obey the rules and laws of the state or province I am visiting.
- I will be careful when crossing roads and always cross at a right angle to traffic.
- I will keep my machine in good condition and perform a pre-ride inspection.
- I will wear appropriate clothing including gloves, boots, and a helmet with visor.
- I will let someone know my planned route, my destination, and my expected return.
- I will treat the outdoors with respect.
- I will not litter or damage trees or other vegetation.
- I will respect other people's property and rights and lend a hand when I see someone in need.
- I will not snowmobile where it is prohibited.

FEC ROUNDUP FOR SAFETY GRANT

Flathead Avalanche Training



Last year, the Flathead Snowmobile Association via their 501(c)(3) charity Friends of the FSA, was awarded a Roundup for Safety grant from their local electricity provider Flathead Electric Coop. By having their charitable organization created, they are able to take advantage of new grant programs that support charities. The Roundup for Safety program collects money from members who choose to round up their utility bill to the nearest dollar. Those few cents add up to millions of dollars which are then awarded to worthy local causes like this! Twelve people were able to take advantage of the program and receive Level 1 Avalanche Training or Avalanche Rescue Training with over \$3000 being paid out.

This year, we're hoping to continue this program, but we realize we will be competing again for this money...so we are hopeful that we can help remove the barriers to entry for riders who wish to take part in this very important training. If awarded, and if funds are available, we hope to cover entirely every motorized Level 1 slot available! If we can't cover all, we will cover as much as possible for each slot.

The Level 1 Avalanche Training is a must for any rider. Even if you don't go off trail very much, think about how many trails in our great state traverse marginal or very dangerous areas where avalanches can occur? The overwhelming reaction from riders who take the course say they will think twice about riding with riders who have not taken the course--it's just that important!

The Flathead Snowmobile Association and Friends of the FSA (FFSA) work closely with the Flathead Avalanche Center who organize the training programs. One example of this close working relationship is this year's schedule. In the past, the first motorized class was usually held in January and many of the slots were taken by local guides who were required to take the course for winter guiding jobs. FFSA recommended that a separate class be organized just for guides in late December so that the first class in January would be more open to the general public and that's exactly what they are doing. We also have encouraged them to hold a Level 2 Advanced Avalanche Training and that is also being offered this year!

We hope this will inspire other clubs across the state to work with their local Avalanche Center and utilities. Look for grant opportunities and don't be afraid to ask for help or info. Last year's stats regarding avalanche deaths were the worst in many years. The FSA lost a club member and we hope our training efforts help prevent any further tragic loss of life. To riders, don't be afraid of this class--it's not hard (it's actually quite fun) and everyone should have this knowledge--even if you don't ride off trail. Ask yourself how you would feel if you rode up on a new avalanche site and you didn't know what to do...taking one weekend to get this training could mean the difference between a fellow rider going home alive.

NAMI WALK 2021

On Sunday, September 19, members of The Montana Snowmobile Association attended the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) walk in Helena. **Mark Smolen, chairman of the TransMontana Charity Ride, Mike Patterson from Jackpine Savage, Wise River Club, Cliff and Connie Walter with MSA.**

We had our Montana Snowmobile Association booth set up in Memorial Park with handouts about us and our charity ride through our beautiful State of Montana.

We took this time to present the check in the amount of \$18,000 for the 2021 ride to Matt Kuntz of NAMI. We started riding for NAMI in 2014, and have been happy to give over \$110,000. Matt Kuntz is an awesome executive director and lets us know how important our donations are to his program.



NAMI check presented by from left Mike Patterson, Mark Smolen, Matt Kuntz, Connie Walter, Cliff Walter



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2021/2022

Name(s): _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: MT Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ + _____ Email: _____
 Club: _____

Newsletter Preference: Send via Email Mail Print Copy

Membership Type

- New
- Individual / Family: \$22 _____ Number of Family Members
- Renewal*
- Associate (non-voting) \$30
- Club /Business: \$35

Mail completed application with payment to:
Montana Snowmobile Association
 P.O. Box 56
 Black Eagle, MT 59414

To assist us in obtaining accurate information, please ensure that the application is completed in full.

2022 ESSAY CHALLENGE

\$500 MSA Scholarship

MSA is sponsoring a \$500 Scholarship. Requirements for consideration are as follows:

- Applicant must be a member of Montana Snowmobile Association
- Association and have been accepted to an accredited post-secondary academic or vocational/technical school.

Essay Topic: Global Pandemic, Who Knew? Covid19 is going to go down in the history books! In the future, you will be sharing this event with your kids and your grandkids. This Pandemic has also impacted the Snowmobiler!

Essay Challenge: Share with us the following questions.

1. How did the Pandemic impact you as a snowmobiler?
2. Looking back, what would you have done differently?
3. Looking forward, what potential impacts are ahead for the snowmobiler?
4. Please tell us what you might do to prepare a future for the snowmobiler if a major global event happens again.

Essays will be judged on depth of content, clarity, organization, and persuasiveness. The applicant must include an essay (subject on the application form). The essay should be a minimum of 2 pages, double-spaced and typed. Keep in mind that a well-researched, comprehensive essay will undoubtedly be significantly longer, and we certainly encourage that.

Download the Application

To download the application go to: snowmobilemt.org/scholarship.

Applicants should fill out the Western States application and mail it to the MSA Scholarship Committee, listed below.

\$500 MSA Scholarship Entry

Deadline: Must be received by **MSA** March 1, 2022

MSA's scholarship winner will be eligible to compete for the Western Chapter \$2,000 Scholarship, held March 17, 2021.

Please mail your completed application to:

Montana Snowmobile Association

Scholarship Committee

P O Box 56

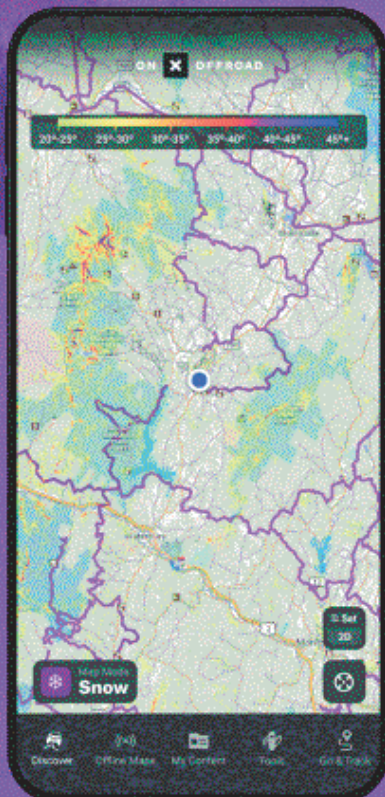
Black Eagle, MT 59414



- November 17, 2021 - Avalanche Awareness Class - Kalispell
- November 29, 2021 - NAMI Club Response Due (see page 10)
- December 1, 2021 - Avalanche Awareness Class - Whitefish
- December 2, 2021 - Montana Trail Grooming Officially Opens for the Season!
- December 4, 2021 - Groomer School - Helena - CANCELED
- December 18 & 19, 2021 - Avalanche Fundamentals - Gallatin NF
- December 31, 2021 - MSA Award Nominations Due (see page 2)
- January 15 - 23, 2022 - International Snowmobile Safety Week
- February 4 - 12, 2022 - MSA Trans Montana Charity Ride - Lolo Hot Springs - Cooke City
- February 5, 2022 - MSA Annual Guided Ride - Lolo (Open to all Club members)
- February 5, 2022 - MSA Annual Riding Convention Banquet - Hamilton
- February 12 - 21, 2022 - "Take a Friend Snowmobiling" Campaign
- March 1, 2022 - MSA Scholarship Entry Deadline (see page 8)
- March 17, 2022 - Western States Scholarship, MSA Award Winner Submission Deadline
- TBA - MSU Avalanche Rescue Course
- TBA - Flathead Avalanche Safety Training (Check the FSA website for upcoming details.)
- Seasonal - Free Avalanche Safety Training - Cooke City (Every Friday/Saturday)

REGIONAL EVENTS

- November 19-20, 2022 - Idaho Snowmobile Show - Nampa, ID
- March 24 - 27, 2022 - 45th Annual World Championship Snowmobile Hill Climb - Jackson Hole, WY



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Attention Clubs:

TRANS MONTANA CHARITY RIDE SEEKS YOUR SUPPORT

By Mark Smolen

Winter is coming! And with that, it brings me to planning this year's Trans Montana Charity Ride. With Covid, it's been very hard to plan banquets and auctions (last year we had to cancel) and this year, it's hard to ask a club to put the effort in only to face possible cancellation.

So I would like to do a bigger sweepstakes giveaway where we sell entries (similar to a raffle, only not a raffle, which is technically classified as gambling).

My goal is to have a giveaway where we have at least 20 prizes and do a drawing every day for 20 days! I believe this will attract more participants. Tickets will be \$5/ticket or 5 for \$20 (same as last year). To that end, I need you and your club's help. I'd like to ask each club to make a donation towards one prize. It could be \$300 or whatever your club thinks is the right number for your club. I will also be seeking some other large prizes, but cash prizes are easier to transport in Montana!



DEADLINE
November 29, 2021

"CLUBS REPS: YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED! WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU."

I will still do paper tickets that you can sell to friends and co-workers. So just let me know how many books of tickets you'd like!

Our timeframe may seem way off in February, but we need to get this rolling soon. **I'd like to ask that your club discuss and decide if you can support us this year by the end of November.**

Many may wonder why we do this. We support NAMI Montana and they provide support for teen suicide prevention programs in the schools as well as PTSD support for our veterans. I can tell you as a resident of the Flathead Valley, this is hitting very close to home this year. The Flathead Valley has seen 8 suicides in the last couple of months (one was a neighbor of mine). Covid has stressed our youth more than any of us would have ever imagined. Now is the time to show our support in a meaningful way.

Thanks in advance for your support. This year's Trans Montana Ride is planned and the route info is online at www.trans-montana.org. We hope you'll consider coming on the ride with us!

If you have any questions, I would be happy to discuss with you or your club **(406) 407-0301**.
Email: leader@trans-montana.org



MSA Officers and Clubs

Association Officers



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Vice President
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vp@snowmobilemt.org

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treasurer@snowmobilemt.org

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secretary@snowmobilemt.org

JASON HOWELL
Past President
406-461-0123

LAURA MEHRER
Membership Chair
406-788-6027
membershipsmsa@gmail.com

CLIFF WALTER
Charity Chair
406-750-6282
snowdriftinn@msn.com

SNOWMOBILEMT.ORG

Anaconda Snowmobile Club
45 Fire Lane
Anaconda, MT 59711
406-563-7789

Beaverhead Sno-Riders
P.O. Box 867
Dillon, MT 59725
406-925-0501

Big Hole Snowmobile Club
P.O. Box 141
Wisdom, MT 59761
406-370-2587

Big Sky Snowriders
PO Box 365
Livingston, MT 59047
406-220-0803

Bitterroot Ridgerunners
P O Box 265
Hamilton, MT 59840
406-363-3224
www.ridgerunners.org

Cabinet Ridge Riders
PO Box 1577
Trout Creek, MT 59874
406-827-3226

Flathead Snowmobile Association
PO Box 5041
Kalispell, MT 599-3
406-871-4606
www.flatheadsnowmobiler.com

Gallatin Valley Snowmobile
Association
PO Box 3164
Bozeman, MT 59772
406-600-6063

Great Falls Snowmobile Club
PO Box 70
Black Eagle, MT 59414
406-899-5126
www.great-falls-snowmobile.org

Helena Snowdrifters
PO Box 5505
Helena, MT 59624
406-431-3659
www.helenasnowdrifters.org

Jackpine Savages Snowmobile Club
PO Box 65
Wise River, MT 59762
651-983-4985

Lincoln County Sno-Kat Club
PO Box 1180
Libby, MT 59923
406-827-0524

Little Belt Snowmobile Club
PO Box 213
Hobson, MT 59452
406-366-8924

Meagher County Little Belters
PO Box 315
White Sulphur Springs, MT 59645
406-547-3966

Midland Empire Snowgoers
PO Box 3554
Billings, MT 59103
406-628-5202

Mining City Trail Riders, Inc
P.O. Box 4885
Butte, MT 59702
406-782-4613

Missoula Snowgoers
PO Box 2441
Missoula, MT 59806
406-251-3301
www.missoulasnowgoers.org

Montana Nightriders
PO Box 420242
Haugen, MT 59842
406-544-5416
www.montananightriders.com

Ponderosa Snow Warriors
PO Box 933
Lincoln, MT 59639
406-362-3334

Seeley Lake Driftriders
PO Box 174
Seeley Lake, MT 59868
406-677-7777
www.driftriders.org

SledMonkeys
740 Conway
Billings, Mt 59105
406-671-7470
kirk.hansen@usbank.com

Summit Snowgoers
PO Box 301
Cut Bank, MT 59427
406-229-0665

Sweet Grass County Recreation
Association
PO Box 922
Big Timber, MT 59011
406-930-1396
www.sgcra.com

Ten Lakes Snowmobile Club
PO Box 404
Eureka, MT 59917
406-297-3377

Troy Snowmobile Club
PO Box 1002
Troy, MT 59935
406-295-4322
www.troysnowmobileclub.org

Upper Yellowstone
Snowmobile Club
PO Box 1111
Cooke City, MT 59020
406-838-2207

Vigilante Snowmobilers
PO Box 145
Virginia City, MT 59755
406-581-1776

West Yellowstone Chamber of
Commerce
PO Box 458
West Yellowstone, MT 59758
406-646-7701
www.destinationyellowstone.com



Montana Snowmobile Association Districts

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Libby, MT 59923
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DISTRICT 4 - VACANT
DISTRICT 5 - VACANT

DISTRICT 6
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DISTRICT 8
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DISTRICT 9
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406-535-4852
ralbee2000@yahoo.com

DISTRICT 10
Kemp O'Neill
406-539-6143
kempo@wispwest.net

DISTRICT 11 - VACANT
DISTRICT 12 - VACANT
DISTRICT 13 - VACANT



FWP Trails Coordinator
Open

Legislative Lobbyist
Margaret Morgan
406-431-9836
mgtmorgan@consults.com

Join MSA online by going to
snowmobilemt.org



Seth McArthur
Fish Wildlife and Parks
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smcarthur@mt.gov



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Black Eagle, MT 59414

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West Yellowstone, MT
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