

The Inside Track

A newsletter for members of the Porcupine Ski Runners



Presidents Message

-Mike Kornell

Wiarion Willie is still wearing his ski toque, Easter has come and gone and the ski season continues – likely into the latter part of April. It is our 40th anniversary and the lengthy winter has allowed us to enjoy it even more.

We have had more comprehensive advertising this season – both print and TV. The message is that we have a great chalet and trails that are located close to our home and work, so let's 'embrace winter'. We have been at a solid 1100 members in recent years but there is room for growth. As current members, please spread the word for next season to your friends who have yet to embrace the Porcupine Ski Runners experience.

Lastly, a big, snowy thank you to all of our volunteers for making it all possible!

Directors Hosting a Strategic Planning Meeting

PSR Directors will be hosting a strategic planning session, at the Xstrata Copper Chalet, starting at noon on Saturday, April 27, 2013. Objectives for the afternoon planning session include developing a list of capital initiative priorities, a common understanding of a vision for the Klister Café, and exploring options for new revenue generation. Members wanting to participate in this planning session or to provide a perspective in advance of the meeting are asked to contact Greg Deyne at 235-3564.

The Porcupine Ski Runners Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, June 4, 2013 at 7:00 pm

Xstrata Copper Chalet @ Porcupine Ski Runners

All members are invited to attend.

www.porcupineskirunners.com

In this issue:

President's Message

Chalet Manager's Report

Membership

Financial Summary

Equipment and Trails

Klister Café

40 Years of Club Presidents

Jackrabbits

Midget Ski Team

Special Olympics

1000 km Club

Davidson de Laplante Loppet

40 Years of Memories

40 Years of Grooming

Spring Issue

April 2013

The Inside Track is distributed to the members of Porcupine Ski Runners to keep them informed about club activities. There are three newsletters issued each season.

Thank you to those who contributed reports and information. Suggestions and comments from members are always appreciated.

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Chalet Manager

-Jim Bielek

We started off the season wondering if the snow would ever come and ended it with some record snowfalls in March! Mother Nature certainly enhanced the snowshoeing and skiing experience for our members and guests.

Kelleigh's Klister Café was a huge success with many skiers arranging their outing around a visit to the café to enjoy the homemade soups and baking. Our potluck gang contributed to Kelleigh's efforts with a large variety of food on the menu and upwards of thirty people participated every second Thursday.

We placed additional mats in the Locker Room and we did a rearrangement of other mats. Since it went largely unnoticed, we'll assume the new mats and rearrangement were effective. Thanks to Gerry McNair, Gerry Perreault, Ray Denis and Don Sutton who assisted with the ongoing upkeep of the building by doing minor repairs, replacing burnt lights, hanging banners and dozens of other items.

For political reasons, the number of schools skiing was down by about half from what a normal year would be. The many snowshoe and weekly ski groups made a significant contribution to our revenue as some of the students took out personal season rentals for equipment. We appreciate the effort of all the teachers and administrators involved. Rosemary Lessard was very helpful with distributing information to the schools and coordinating school visits. Greg Deyne rescued one of the students who had twisted her ankle on the Blue hill. Next year we hope to welcome back all those school groups that were unable to participate this year.

Many volunteers helped with these large groups during the season and they got to see the enjoyment that these young people had. Thanks to Celine and Melissa Tarlton, Tarja Bouchard, Allan MacDonald, Brenda Griener, Diane and Lorne Luhta, Marilyn DeLaplante, Darlene Leduc, Bea MacDonald, Trish Gibson, Dennis Brûlé, Paul Kleinhuis, Rob White, Robert Coderre, Laurette Carle,

Jennifer McDonald, George and Suzanne Dasovich, Claude Gagnon, Gerry McNair and all of the other helpers who pitched in when they saw there was a need for an extra pair of hands. We got all kinds of thank you notes and expressions of gratitude for the extra efforts that our members put in.

The rental room services were expanded this year with the addition of the full range of waxing supplies and a glide waxing service for skis. We also offered the rental of a pull sleigh which some parents took advantage of to introduce their very young kids to skiing, and then we added a second sleigh in March which helped reduce wait times. Our new boot drier has improved the rental service. We can now have damp boots ready for use inside twenty-five minutes on those busy weekend days or special days like the Loppet or Family Day. Brent and Dennis were better able to give advice to customers and members as they became more accustomed to our trail systems and they actually got on the trails to try them out. They were able to process a larger volume of customers in a relatively short time period because of their increasing familiarity with the equipment. This year we had about a 25% increase in the revenue brought in through the rental room. We are already in the process of planning improvements for next year.

In my opinion the increasing awareness that Porcupine Ski Runners is a world class facility can be attributed to a combination of :

- word of mouth,
- a well coordinated advertising campaign,
- the members of PSR who encourage more people to participate and,
- promotions that Guy Lamarche and Tourism Timmins have initiated.

Have a great summer!



Membership Update

-Cheryl Allard

Membership this year was down slightly from the last two years. One can speculate that it may have had something to do with the delay of the season, or people believing we would have a short season, as we have had in the past. Mother Nature threw a curve with this extended ski season and all members are getting more than their money's worth this year! An interesting fact about memberships is that new registrations continued up to and including March. People must have been thinking the price for membership is so good they would get their money's worth even with the limited number of weeks to ski/snowshoe.

A reminder to all, if you have not paid your locker registration as of yet, your lock will be removed and your belongings will be moved to the office for you to retrieve prior to next season.

Please contact Cheryl to make arrangements at 705-235-4456 or email skiingtim@live.com

See you all next year!

Summer Chalet Hours

During spring, summer and fall the chalet does not have regular hours of operation. If you need to get into the chalet, please call one of the following to make arrangements:

Gerry McNair	705-264-9093
Jim Bielek	705-235-8355
Neal McNair	705-267-2820
Gerry Perreault	705-264-6939

2012-2013 Financial Summary

-Beverly Beaven

What a great year it was for skiing and snowshoeing. The weather was really cooperative, providing us with a lot of snow. Both ski and snowshoe rentals proved to be beneficial to those wanting to participate in the fun without buying the equipment. Afterwards, they could easily sit by the fireplace enjoying something warm and tasty from our kitchen, which opened up this year.

The club's fiscal year is from June 1 to May 31; however, the fiscal summary is up to February 2013, which has the majority of revenues and expenses reported.

REVENUE	Memberships	66,805
	Rentals	8,375
	Day Fees	7,855
	Lockers	9,425
	Donations	1,301
	Jackrabbits	2,135
	Kitchen (New)	1,733
	Events	3,883
	Other	1,782
Total Revenues:		103,294
EXPENSES	Payroll	12,809
	Insurance	20,268
	Trails	14,199
	Utilities	12,362
	Property taxes	6,881
	Kitchen (New)	1,402
	Other expenses	13,641
Total Expenses:		81,562



Equipment / Trails

-Gerry Perreault

It was a very slow and long awaited start to this season but with the new equipment we were able to start grooming when the snow finally came. After that we were able to ski every day with the exception of two days due to rain, and we may still be skiing into May.

December 17th was the first day that we were able to pass the large groomer. The new and improved Olympic trail was a bit of a challenge, especially for track setting. We even tried tracking in the reverse direction, but that did not help. With a few trials, we finally figured it out.

The Loppet trail was opened shortly after the New Year and it turned out really well on the first attempt. From mid-February to mid-March, it was snowfall after snowfall. Fortunately, Greg Deyne retired and he is now one of the grooming team. From Greg's point of view, he picked a really bad year to join the team because we normally get 10 to 14 days with no grooming or track setting required, which gives us a break. Not this year – it was a constant battle.

Dave Stiles, who has been with us for a few years, is a real asset. He manages to keep our trail equipment checked and serviced all season long. Thanks to our team: Ray Denis, Dave Stiles, Germain Lauzier, Greg Deyne, Rob White, Dale Columbus, Denis Brûlé, Phillip Manseau, Lari Korkka and Gerry Perreault.

Klister Café

-Kelleigh Manseau

Thank you to the PSR board for allowing me this season and the use the chalet kitchen for the development of the Klister Café. Trial and error was carefully mined for learning, and I was pleasantly surprised by some of the findings.

It was shown that there is a strong demand, especially from the membership with younger families, for reasonably priced, healthy, high quality choices. People seemed to be most interested in exotic elements and were not afraid to experiment with unknown ingredients. On the other hand, there is a love for sweet indulgences, and calories don't seem to matter.

Food has the wonderful quality of unifying the many different facets of our club culture, thus strengthening the values of inclusion, fairness, excellence, and fun that are core to the cross country ski/snowshoe community. If the Café is allowed to continue, it will add another element of excellence to the other established segments of service our club already provides.

Thank you to all the volunteers and members who supported this endeavor. The Klister Café would not have been successful without you.

40 Years of Club Presidents

-Diane Luhta

1973 - Dr. Raymond Tesluk	1984 – Gerry McNair	1995 - Stan Kaczmarek	2006 – Denis Brule
1974 - Dr. Raymond Tesluk	1985 – Ray Ginglo	1996 - Stan Kaczmarek	2007 – Denis Brule
1975 - Bruce Jeffery	1986 – Diane Luhta	1997 – Bob Taylor	2008 – Lorne Luhta
1976 - Don Perry	1987 – Diane Luhta	1998 – Bob Taylor	2009 – Lorne Luhta
1977 - Lorne Luhta	1988 – Ken Lessard	1999 – Keith Morin	2010 – Greg Deyne
1978 - Lorne Luhta	1989 – Ken Lessard	2000 – Dave Morrisette	2011 – Greg Deyne
1979 - Gary Moore	1990 – Gerry Perreault	2001 – John Londry	2012 – Mary-Anne Church
1980 – Hans Neuteboom	1991 – Gerry Perreault	2002 – John Londry	2013 – Mike Kornell
1981 – Lorne Luhta	1992 – Doug Barrett	2003 – David Mader	
1982 – Frank Wilson	1993 - Doug Barrett	2004 – David Mader	
1983 – Gerry McNair	1994 – Stan Kaczmarek	2005 - Lorne Luhta	



Jackrabbits

~Mireille Fortier

Our little jackrabbits had a great season, which could have been extended much longer. Hopefully you were able to enjoy the prolonged winter!

This winter, we had 42 children registered in the program. The coaches were wonderful and our concerted efforts made for great snack times! Many participants appreciated the availability of ski rentals.

Racing Rocks was a great success and the kids had a great time. Needless to say the moguls were enjoyed long after that day! We also participated in the Cross Country Canada Toque Design Contest. Thank you all artists!

Thank you to all the volunteer coaches, assistants, helpers, parents, snack makers and snack-time volunteers. Your efforts contributed to a fantastic Jackrabbits season.

Stay tuned for next year's registration in November.

Nos petits lapins ce sont bien amusés cet hiver, malgré que mère nature nous aurait permis de continuer beaucoup plus longtemps. J'espère que vous en avez profité!

Cet hiver, le programme comptait 42 enfants, des entraîneurs dévoués et des efforts concertés qui ont fait des goûters superbes! Plusieurs ont pu profiter du service de location.

Notre journée Formule 1 fut un succès. Et sûrement vous avez entendus parler des bosses de ski (moguls) préparées pour cet événement. Elles ont été une attraction continue tout le reste de la saison! De plus nous avons eu de belles créations pour le concours de tuques de Cross Country Canada. Merci à nos artistes.

Un gros merci à tous nos bénévoles : entraîneurs, assistants, aidants, parents, tous ceux et celles qui ont préparés et aidés avec les goûters. Tous ces efforts ont assuré une merveilleuse saison.

Garder l'œil ouvert pour l'inscription en novembre prochain.

Midget Team

~Mike Kornell

Isaac Rondeau-McNair and Kristen Kornell were joined this year by Hanna Hickey, Jennifer Perreault, Maddie Long, Andraya Johnstone, Caleb Rondeau-McNair, Kaylee & Jenna Mainville. Diego Ciccone also came on board later in the season. Coaches Lorne Luhta & Mike Kornell, assisted by Denise Kornell, ran the practices with a focus on technique development.

Race experience was gained from the Ontario Cup race in Walden, the Temiskaming loppet and our local loppet. As well, the team participated at the Provincial XC Ski Championships in Owen Sound on the February 23-24 weekend. There were 125 skiers (aged 9 to 14) representing 17 clubs from across Ontario. Weather conditions were mild which made the waxing difficult. The races were in both the skate and the classic techniques. In the Midget category, Isaac Rondeau-McNair placed 9th & 11th and Maddie Long placed 7th & 10th. In the Peeewe category, Kristen Kornell placed 2nd and 3rd, and Caleb Rondeau-McNair placed 10th (classic technique only). The top 3 skiers for cumulative distance for the season were: Issac at 700km, Kristen at 403km and Hanna at 275km.

Special Olympics

~Gerry Perreault

The Timmins Special Olympics Snowshoe and Nordic Athletes want to extend a special thank you to Porcupine Ski Runners for allowing them to practice and hold their training at your facility.

Snowshoeing was held every Saturday in January and February under the coaching staff of Bob Boisvert and Diane Sauvé. Nordic Skiing was held every Sunday and that program started in December and continued until April with six athletes who came out regularly. They really enjoyed the trails and facility. Thanks to the coaching staff: Gerry Perreault, Tory Kullas, Pat and Penny Boiley and Cathy Davis.



1000 KM CLUB

Congratulations to all who took up the challenge.

Greg Deyne	2333	Marcel Paquette	1135
Raimo Peltoniemi	1508	Jessica Demers	1042
Claude Gagnon	1500	Karl Laiho	1042
Jane Schultz	1500	Sue Dasovich	1041
Kevin Montgomery	1407	Diane Luhta	1037
Denis Brule	1271	Mike Cousineau	1030
Brenda Smith	1270	Real Paquette	1026
Claude Castilloux	1241	Bea MacDonald	1011
Rob White	1240	Mike Kornell	1010
Robert Coderre	1175	Dave Kapias	1005
Sue Kaczmarek	1174	Mary-Anne Church	1000
Nick Kanya-Forstner	1163	Neal McNair	1000
George Dasovich	1141	Al Heino	1000

Almost there...

Norm Disley	891	Ron Zgud	612
Colton Labine	850	Kevin Kerkhof	600
Lorne Luhta	838	Gerry McNair	575
Dave Schultz	826	Kim Wagner	571
James Gosselin	764	Darlene Leduc	570
Denise Kornell	752	Trish Gibson	564
Ray Denis	746	Gerry Perreault	555
Brenda Griener	731	Mike Allaire	554
Joe Vodusek	730	Rick Demers	546
Celine Tarlton	730	Marilyn Delaplante	520
Isaac Rondeau-McNair	700	Laurette Carle	500
Brenda Finnila	659		

2013 PSR Loppet sponsored by Davidson de Laplante Insurance Group

-Greg Deyne

The Nordic gods looked favourably upon this year's Loppet, proudly sponsored by Davidson de Laplante Insurance Brokers, which was held at the Porcupine Ski Runners on February 17th. The day started out very chilly but the sun warmed up the cold winter day to bring some slow, but beautiful, Nordic skiing conditions for this year's Loppet.

Over 125 participants, ranging in age from ages 3 to over 75, either donned a pair of skis or snowshoes to complete over 850 kilometers. The organizing committee's goal of 120 participants was surpassed and there was lots of great food and fun times to be had by all. Past and present members of the PSR community continue to set the Loppet on their schedule so they can meet with old friends and have some friendly competition.

This year organizers started a new competition that stressed participation. Northern College, Ministry of Natural Resources Regional Office, Northern Connections and Frank P. Krzmaric Whitney Public School were presented with participation awards and PSR buffs.

This year, being PSR's 40th anniversary, was well supported by our members and the community at large. We would like thank all the volunteers and participants and encourage others to come out and join us next year to celebrate skiing.



40 Years of Memories

~Diane Luhta

In January 1973, Diane and Lorne Luhta initiated a meeting for people interested in cross country skiing. About 30 individuals attended that first meeting and organized themselves as a non-profit club.

1973 ♦ The club was incorporated and joined the Northern Ontario Division of the Canadian Ski Association. Skiers met at the All Season's Park on Kraft Creek Road.

1974-75 ♦ The club moved to Kamiskotia Ski Resort and volunteers, led by Lorne Luhta, cut 10 km of ski trails. The club hosted the Northern Ontario Ski Championships and the club racing team was started.

1976-77 ♦ The club moved to the present location in Schumacher on land owned by McIntyre Mines Ltd. Volunteers developed two 5 km trails, a 3 km trail and used a small shelter attached to the old Croation Dance Pavilion as their first "Wax Shack".

1978-79 ♦ Volunteers and students cut an additional 5 km of trails to produce the Yellow Trail (not quite the same as it is today). The club hosted the Northern Ontario Championships and the first Canadian Championship medals were won at the Canadian Junior Championships.

1980-81 ♦ Volunteer trail developers at the club layered wood chips for the first time on the trails to even out the surface and make early season skiing possible. The club organized their first loppet at Kettle Lakes Provincial Park with 103 skiers completing the 22 km distance.

1982-83 ♦ The club began its tenth year in an expanded chalet thanks to work led by Gerry McNair. A government work program assisted the club in cutting a new section of trail to South Porcupine. The loppet was moved to the club trail system and the first Jackrabbit Program was organized by Diane Luhta.

1983 ♦ Student workers led by volunteers cut the 7.5 km Olympic Loop. Frank Ferrari became the club's first overall age group Canadian Champion winning the Junior Men title.

1984-85 ♦ Skate skiing was becoming popular and the club's executive began planning to cope with new trail and equipment needs to accommodate the new technique.

1986 ♦ The club hosted the selection race for the World Cup Team for the Canadian Ski Association (now called Cross Country Canada). Elementary schools began using the club, free of charge, for after-school skiing.

1988 ♦ Volunteers, led by Gerry Perreault and Lorne Luhta, built a new garage (now G88), widened the trails and cut new sections of trail to accommodate the ERG mining project. The "Big Red" machine was purchased to cope with grooming wider trails. All grooming was done by volunteers. Former club racer Jamie Kallio competed at the Calgary Olympics in Biathlon.

1989 ♦ Leanne Luhta became the second club racer to win overall age group championships as a Juvenile Girl at the Canadian Championships and repeated the feat in 1990.



1992 ♦ The club hosted over 200 entries in the Ontario Cross Country Ski Championships, led by Doug Barrett. In the summer, a low section near the chalet was partially filled with gravel from a highway construction project. A large trailer that was donated to the club was moved onto the site. In the summer of 1993 this trailer was remodelled by volunteers, led by Gerry McNair, to provide additional chalet space.

1993-94 ♦ As the 20th Anniversary was celebrated, the membership count surpassed 1000 for the first time. On April 1st, the first Twelve Hour Challenge was organized and 38 participants skied a combined total of 2013 km as each attempted to complete a personal objective of 25, 50, 75, or 100 km within a twelve hour period. Blizzard conditions in late afternoon did not stop skiers from reaching their goals. Stan Kaczmarek led the organization of a bi-monthly Bingo, which was run for 10 years by volunteers from the club, to raise money to offset the cost of activities for children.

1994-95 ♦ A used Bombardier BR400 grooming machine was purchased and another garage was built to house it. An agreement with Royal Oak Mining Company gave the club a long-term arrangement for land tenure.

1995-96 ♦ Club membership reached a record 1114 members. Wood chips were spread on additional sections of trail to complete approximately 13 km of wood chip covered trails. 115 tractor trailer loads of wood chips were spread in the spring while the ground was still frozen. Volunteers were led by Lorne Luhta and Gerry Perreault.

1997-99 ♦ The club's 25th Anniversary was celebrated in January 1998. Washrooms were installed and a second BR400 groomer was purchased in the summer of 1998. Another garage was built in the summer of 1999 to store this additional equipment. In March 1999, the Porcupine Ski Runners Club hosted the Nordic Skiing competitions of The Special Olympics.

2001 ♦ Stan Kaczmarek started the Masters Racing Team.

2002 ♦ Club members were elated when Kinross Gold Corporation donated 355 acres of land to the club including that on which the chalet is located. A sprint trail was cut within the Green Loop by volunteers, in preparation for hosting Ontario Cup races and the Canada Winter Games selection races. Lights were completed on the 3 km Blue Loop. Seventeen more loads of woodchips were spread in October.

2004 ♦ The Light the Trails campaign, headed by Stan Kaczmarek, raised about \$300,000 and 4 km were lit for night skiing. Natasha Kullas became the third club member to win overall aggregate champion status as a Juvenile Girl at the Nationals.

2005 ♦ Larry Labelle initiated snowshoe trail development and 3 snowshoe trails were opened. Lorne Luhta was awarded Cross Country Canada's Dave Rees Award for outstanding contribution to cross country skiing. Bibiane Mahy won the overall Canadian Junior Girls Champion and the PSR Racing Team was ranked 7th out of 59 teams at the Nationals.

2006 ♦ A campaign to raise funds for a new chalet was well underway.

2010 ♦ The Xstrata Copper Chalet was opened in March. The project, which included an improved parking lot, cost \$1.7 million. Xstrata donated \$50,000 and earned the right to have their name on the new building. A number of government grants assisted with the financing of this project with the Ontario government contributing the most. The Noella and Gerry McNair Room was named in recognition of the leadership and countless hours of work put into the chalet project by the McNairs.



Forty Years of Grooming at PSR

~Lorne Luhta

The club's first groomer was an old 12.5 horsepower Snowbug which towed a single bed bedspring to level the trail and then towed a crude wooden track setter which I made at home. I remember we bought the Snowbug from Don Perry for \$250.00 and he had to wait until the end of the season to see if we had enough money from memberships to pay him. Next we purchased a new 25 horsepower Snowbug. These machines were made in Sudbury and were real workhorses. Later we purchased a double track Skidoo Alpine since it would pack wider. We eventually got another one so that packing, grooming and track setting could be done with 2 volunteers to save time. We also purchased a narrow factory made groomer to replace the bedspring and also a metal track setter. These Alpines were very hard to steer especially when pulling a groomer and it was hard to keep them on the trail. When these Alpine's got stuck, they really got stuck and it was backbreaking work to get them back on the trail. Pulling the groomer also had its discomforts. Sometimes it would get stuck on a stump or rock suddenly stopping the snow machine and the operator would fly over the front. I cut and broke my nose once hitting the windshield as I was going over. This was before we smoothed out the trails by blasting, using machinery and laying down wood waste.

In the 1980's skate skiing was becoming popular which put a real burden on our club. Not only did we have to widen 30 km of trails we also had to buy a bigger machine for grooming. The first one was a Bombardier Bombi. We had a roller and a drag made to pull behind it. We soon realized that this machine was too small for the job. As an example, after dinner one evening, I asked Frank Ferrari, who at the time was on the National Ski Team, to come out and help me pack the Olympic trail after a really heavy snowfall. The other trails were done the evening before. I told him it would be easy and should only take a few hours. After getting stuck on almost every corner on the uphill, we had to unhook the roller, pack with the machine, hook the roller up with a chain, pull it onto the packed snow and then attach it to the machine again. We also had the engine stall a few times since snow would get

into the engine, a common occurrence, and wait until it thawed before moving on. I got Frank home at 4 A.M. He had to nap in the afternoon between his 2 workouts later that day. An interesting event happened one night when Gerry Perreault and I were grooming the South Porcupine trail with the Bombi. It was -30°C and as we were approaching the end of the trail we saw what appeared to be a log on the trail. I jumped out to move it and discovered it was a person lying unconscious in the snow. He was wearing a summer jacket, baseball cap and thin gardening gloves. We lifted him into the Bombi, went to the end of the trail and carried him to the South Porcupine Hospital, which is now the Spruce Hill Lodge. We brought him into emergency, dumped him on the floor and left. The staff wanted questions answered, reports written etc. but we said we were busy. I saw him walking on a street in South Porcupine about a week later so I guess he survived. The only really unpleasant memory I had from our time with the Bombi was on a Saturday morning after a heavy snowfall. Our few volunteers started at about 4 A.M., packing with the Bombi and tracksetting with the Alpine. It was another tough session and we didn't finish until after 10. We were greeted at the club by an irate woman who didn't hide her feelings by telling us that she was a paying member who skis at 9 o'clock sharp and was quite upset that the trails were not ready. We told her we were really sorry.

The next groomer we bought was a Thiokal Sprite we called "Big Red". It cost us about \$13,000 and was about 40 years old at the time. It had a 6 cylinder gas engine and mechanical steering (as opposed to hydraulic). We did some minor modifications to it and it served our purpose quite well. It pulled a big drag which we had fabricated. One memorable experience happened on a -35°C evening to Gerry Perreault and I at the junction of the Yellow and South Porcupine trails. We broke through the ice at the edge of the pond. The water wasn't deep enough to get to the engine, so it was still running, but we couldn't move because the drag held us back. Gerry jumped in the waist deep water, bent down and got completely submerged to



unhooked the drag and attach a chain to it. I drove Big Red out of the pond, we hooked the chain to the drag, pulled it out and re-attached it on land. Big Red had a temperamental heater which only worked some of the time but when it did work it heated the cab up like a sauna. Fortunately it was working that night. Another day, Gerry Perreault and Rick Mahon were out with Big Red. A track broke and the boys, using great ingenuity, put it back on by positioning the machine and using a come-along and a piece of chain to tie the track back together. There was no grooming done for a few days until the track was repaired.

In the nineties, we purchased a 1984 Bombardier BR400 with a tiller. A few years later we purchased another one to act as a back-up and to cut the grooming time in half. These machines, which we operate at present, are quite sophisticated with hydraulics, including a hydrostatic drive. As in the past, grooming is done by volunteers and time is precious. We are continually trying to make grooming better, easier and faster. One of the drawbacks is that as the machines get bigger, more complicated and more expensive, we get bigger and more expensive problems with breakdowns, repairs and maintenance. The track setting is done with the Skidoos and also with one of the BR400's which has hydraulic track setters attached to the tiller.

In the last few years we replaced 2 old Alpines with new Skidoo Scandics. We also purchased up-to-date Yellowstone Ginzu grooming/track setting equipment for the Skidoos. These are used early in the season when we don't have enough of a snow base for our BR 400's,

and during the season after a light snowfall or to quickly freshen the skating and classic tracks without having to use the big machines. Our next project is to raise money so that we can replace one of the BR400's with a new groomer. Even though these machines are running well right now, they are obsolete and getting parts for them is becoming a real problem.

Over the years, there have been times where breakdowns have occurred on the trail and operators had to walk out and get assistance to tow the machines back. Other times, operators had to cut their way through trees which had fallen across the trail. One year, in the nineties after a major ice storm, it took a big part of the winter to cut through all the fallen trees. Grooming is done at night or started very early in the morning (4 A.M.) so that it doesn't interfere with skiing. Over the 40 years, many dedicated volunteers have donated their time and energy to the cause. Most people are not even aware of who these people are since they groom when the rest of the members aren't there and during the day, they are hidden in the garages servicing the equipment. Even though it is definitely the most important job at the club, it's not high profile. Their rewards are seeing a job well done and being appreciated. There is great camaraderie among the groomers. It's like a club within a club. I've been retired from active grooming for a few years but I still feel I'm part of the club.

Throughout the last 40 years I have seen our grooming equipment grow from a value of \$250 to well over half a million dollars. Instead of a tarp covering a snowmobile we now have 2 well equipped garages.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have been such a valuable part of the Porcupine Ski Runners throughout our 40 years.