



President's Pondering—Bryan Meador

Hello Fellow Sledders,

Well, here we are, 2024. I can see by all of the wonderful white powder; you did your snow dance. Great job, just don't let up, we could use some more. I have only been out riding a few times, but as always, it is enjoyable. It makes me realize how out of shape I am in. I skipped a few gym days I shouldn't have. Actually all summer.

February meeting is the 13th. It is an election meeting, The offices of President, Treasurer, and Grooming Foreman will be up for election. We will also vote for any seat that wants to resign early if needed. But no one is, because you all love me!

Convention is February 23rd to 25th in Buena Vista. Cost is \$175 per person. This includes Dinner Friday and Saturday nights. Breakfast Saturday and Sunday. T-shirt, beer or wine tumbler and group rides. See you there!

I asked the question in the January meeting, should we start clearing for drilling and blasting of the Purgatory parking area this spring? Or start the process of a Beaver Meadows parking area? Or look into hiring a snow plow contractor to clear the current parking areas? Or purchase a truck, trailer and tractor to clear parking areas ourselves? A lot to think about. But we need input to vote on in the February meeting. I was also thinking about trying for the summer grant money for the drilling and blasting of Purgatory, if it gets awarded, we would have to ask for a year-round trail head designation from the Forest service. But Purgatory is ready to build, Beaver Meadows needs to start from scratch. We have already had people step up and offer services to help clear the Purgatory site this spring.

Don't forget to keep bugging those friends that enjoy the trails we groom to join the club. We do more than just groom, we build parking areas and a whole lot more. Let's Ride!

See you on the mountain!

Bryan Meador,

President San Juan Sledders Snowmobile Club,

Come vote me out!

Inside this issue:

President's Pondering	1
Editor's Note	2
January Ride Report	2
Burn Barrel History	3
January Meeting Minutes	4
Meeting Agenda and Pictures	5
Members	6
Business Members	7

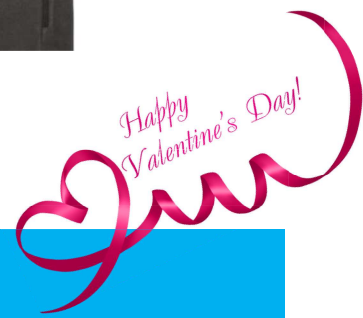
Club Officers

- President—Bryan Meador
- Vice President—Chris Hinds
- Treasurer— Kristina Blumenauer
- Secretary—Jennifer Hawn
- CSA Representative—Curt Larsen
- Grooming Foreman—Travis Leonard
- Club Reporter—Ken Hilfiker



Editor's Note—Dianne Larsen

- We are going to order some new SWAG!!! This year we're going for fleece vests. You will be getting an attachment in an email that shows the styles and color selections that will be offered. You can order by emailing a.dianne.larsen@gmail.com or by letting Kristina know at the February meeting. We will be ordering extras as well, but you should place your order to get the style, color combo, and size that you want. Pricing should range between \$25-45 depending on your selection.
- The meetings thru April will be held the second Tuesday of the month at the Fun Center. Dinner at 6. Meeting at 6:30.
- As always, please submit stories and pictures to a.dianne.larsen@gmail.com.



January Club Ride

- There was a club ride January 13th at Beaver Meadows. Travis & Curt groomed it the night before so it was a smooth ride on the groomed part! And deep powder on the non-groomed!
- Dave Sanders led the ride and the other attendees were Curt Larsen, Darby Davis, Ken and Patti Hilfiker.
- It was a beautiful sunny day to be riding!
- The airplane view is of Beaver Meadows as Dianne was flying back to Durango the day of the ride. Did not see any sledders, but did see the roof of the cabin.



History of the “Burn Barrel” up Middle Mountain Road—Carli Harriman

In the 1970's two Vallecito residents, PeeWee Botkins and Wilbur Brack, began their adventures in the area hunting and fishing in the high country as well as snowmobiling up Middle Mountain in the winters. Wanting to encourage their family members and others in the valley to enjoy the beauty of the back country during the winter months the two decided to set up a warming shelter at the top of Middle Mountain. An empty 55-gallon oil drum and tarps were hauled to Runlett Park and used to construct the first warming shelter sometime in the 1980's. Every fall the two would pack the camp in with their ATV's and then take it down in the Spring. The burn barrel as it came to be known by the locals soon became a favorite hangout for many of the valley residents as it provided a perfect spot to warm up, have lunch and socialize with friends.

As the years passed and numerous snowmobile suits and gloves fell victim to the open flames of the burn barrel, the two old timers built a wood stove out of an old hydraulic tank repurposed from Wilbur's construction yard. It wasn't long after that the Forest Service caught wind of the shelter as the popularity of the barrel and its creators become well known in the surrounding Bayfield and Durango communities. Forced with having to remove the shelter, and unsuccessful in negotiating with Forest Service, the two old timers turned to Travis Leonard, Kevin Walters and San Juan Sledder's Snowmobile Club for assistance in challenging the Forest Service removal order. Eventually the Club was allowed to include the shelter under its annual grooming permit with the

Forest Service, which currently continues to do.

Today the original wood stove built by the old timers has been eulogized with metal name plates attached to the door of the stove for all to remember. Both were legends to the local residents and are sorely missed by those fortunate enough to have known and ridden with them. Wilbur's last trip to the barrel on a snowmobile was at the age of 85 and Peewee's was at around 93. Wilbur passed away in 2020 at the age of 87 and Peewee in 2023 at the age of 96. Both were long time members of San Juan Sledders Snowmobile Club and knew the value of membership numbers, always encouraging other sledders to become members to join the fight in keeping public lands open to motorized use.

This year's Memorial ride for the two will be held on February 17, 2024 beginning at the Weminuche Bar and Grill in Vallecito. The ride will be led by Travis Leonard and Kevin Walters who were schooled in snowmobiling by these two old timers. As we honor them on the memorial ride, please know Peewee and Wilbur were responsible for creating the area we all know and enjoy as the “burn barrel.”

Travis and Kevin are now the caretakers of the stove and have done a fantastic job in keeping their memory alive as well as making sure the community has a safe and warm place to go while snowmobiling. A lot of work gets put into this every year and as long as we all respect it, keep it clean, help keep firewood cut and honor the people that work hard to make this happen we will continue to have this privilege.



Wilbur and PeeWee



Travis and Kevin at the barrel

January 9th 2024 Meeting Minutes—Jennifer Hawn

Meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by President Bryan Meador

Member & New guest introductions

MOTION: Minutes from December 12, 2023 meeting approved as presented - accepted by Dianne Larsen; 2nd Travis Leonard

Treasurer's Report – Kristina Blumenauer

- Balance: \$31,900
- Revenue: \$174 swag, \$600 memberships
- Expenses: \$856 trailhead signs, SPOT \$39.95; Insurance \$894.19; Oversized truck permit \$404; Checks for Club \$24.50
- Paypal account: \$690
- **MOTION:** Accept Treasurer's report as presented – accepted by Stuart Allen; 2nd Richard Hott

Committee Reports –

Club Rides – Landon Tate

Landon has a calendar to post club rides on

Grooming – Travis Leonard

Travis reported 21hrs of grooming to date

Travis will have Beaver Meadows groomed before club ride on Saturday

Membership – Kristina Blumenauer

132 members

Unfinished Business –

- Bryan reported that the signs put up at Wolf Creek were not put up by cross country skiers it was the Forest Supervisor to deter people from snowmobiling in that area.
- Send snowmobiling pictures to Dianne so that she can use them in the newsletter
- Forest Service Signage that Ken Hilfiker is working on – Bryan is making the stands, Ken will buy chains and padlocks for them, waiting on nuts and bolts to assemble, and Curt would like to have the padlocks all keyed the same.

New Business –

- Bryan has replaced Roger Pennington as the Safety Instructor for the club
- CSA Elections – Club Rep position is open and Dan Lucchesi is interested in position
- Steamboat Club sent email to everyone they are not grooming. They have a 10yr grooming contract and the Forest Service is making it impossible for them to groom.
- Bryan, Curt, and Dianne attended the Rio Grande Over the Snow Travel Meeting. It is important to track and save all of your rides. This information will be vital to protect snowmobiling areas.
- Purgatory Parking Lot – Club could incur costs to excavate, drill and blast to get parking area started. Try to get the designation of the parking lot changed to multi use so that is could also be used in the summer. We are waiting on the Forest Service for the change of designation. If the lot is changed to multi use the club could go after summer grant money.
- February meeting will be held at Fun Center

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28pm – accepted by William Hall; 2nd Darby Davis

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Hawn, Club Secretary



Committee Chairs & Volunteers

- **Bryan Meador**, Safety Instructor
- **Landon Tate**, Rides Chairperson
- **Ron Corkish**, Search & Rescue Liaison
- **Dianne Larsen**, Newsletter Editor
- **Chris Hinds & Ken Hilfiker**, Website Administrator & Facebook Administrator

Meeting Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call / Introduction of Guests
- III. Reading of Minutes
- IV. Treasurers Report – Kristina Blumenauer
- V. Committee Reports
 - Club Rides - Landon Tate
 - Equipment/Grooming/Truck To Do List– Travis Leonard & Kevin Walters
 - Membership – Kristina Blumenauer
- VII. Unfinished Business
- VIII. New Business
 - Elections
- IX. Motion to Adjourn

The February meeting will be at the Fun Center Tuesday the 13th. Dinner at 6pm, meeting at 6:30pm

Club Rides

- 2/10/2024 - Barlow, led by Glenn and Trevor Pauls. Meet at 10am at the Barlow parking (Clayton Campground) which is 7 miles north of Rico. RSVP 970-318- 0113
- 2/17/2024 - Vallecito Poker Run—Travis Leonard. Signup at the Weminuche between 9 and 10am. RSVP 970-759-1995
- Call Landon Tate at 505.327.0320 if you want to lead a ride



Wendy Craig—West Mancos



Doug McCormick—Middle Mountain



Jay Stroud—West Mancos



Drew Barber—West Mancos



425 Degrees Take & Bake Pizza
970-799-0425—Michael Gunn



Advantage Repair Service
970-903-7340—Lynn & Lee Parks



970-946-9008

BAYFIELD BUILDERS LLC
Concrete to Cabinets

Bayfield Builders
970-946-9008 Jordan Frane



Blouin Brothers Construction
970-759-2179—Lyndsey Blouin

BOLETUS CREEK APPRAISALS

Boletus Creek Appraisals
Phone: 9709034416—Geoff Bourque

BUILT TO LAST AUTOMOTIVE

Built to Last Automotive
970-259-8777 Jeff Howard



Home Roots Hardwood Flooring
970-749-6821
Jesse King

Comfort Air MECHANICAL

Nic McDonald
970-565-7893



Dale R. Willbanks Agency
970-247-5828—Dale Willbanks



DPF Alternatives
505-330-0904—Jason Groen



Durango Dog Ranch
970-259-0694—Greg & Gretchen Dubit



La Plata County Search & Rescue
970-946-4437—Ron Corkish



**** Handlebar Motorsports**
970-247-0845—Jim Udkie



Leonard & Sons Excavation
970-759-1995
Travis Leonard



Lucchesi PROPERTY GROUP

Residential • Commercial • Investment
"Total Realty Advisors"

Lucchesi Property Group

Dan Lucchesi 970-799-5354



Phantastic Screens
970-247-7907
Marty & Ann Gunn



McCormick Construction
970-946-6857—Doug McCormick



McDonalds
970-247-9391
John Bronson



Durango Adventure Rentals
970-335-9311—Chuck Schultz



Silverline Construction
970-759-2327
Wes Harriman



Spellbring Construction
505-325-5600
Aaron & Tami Spellbring



The Bug Masters
505-325-7477
Delbert Raney



Twin Buttes
970-259-3883
Glen & Dianne Pauls



Welch Automotive
303-324-7185
Jack Welch



Weminuche Grill
970-884-7153—Joe Zebas

FUN CENTER

Fun Center, Inc
970-259-1070—Joe Washburn & Pete Tabor

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Mailing Address:

San Juan Sledders Snowmobile Club

PO Box 591

Durango, CO 81302

New Member _____ Renew Member _____ Business Member _____

Single Membership \$43/Year _____

Family Membership \$48/Year _____

Business Membership \$68/Year _____

CSA Right to Ride Donation _____ (Optional)

CSA SEEDS Donation _____ (Optional, SEEDS—Support, Education, Events, Development, and Safety)

Total: _____

Please make check payable to the San Juan Sledders Snowmobile Club & mail to the address above.

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Children: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

of Snowmobiles: _____ Sponsors' Name: _____

Dues to San Juan Sledders Snowmobile Club includes membership dues to the Colorado Snowmobile Association.

To join or renew online, go to www.snowmobilecolo.com.