

start of a Westfield-Oxford train ride on January 3, riders and officers Jack Marshall and Jim

will be used to cover area which the area's network of snowmobile trails.

Places and Faces By Fran Sprain

WESTFIELD — With the new year came SNOW and, with shouts of joy, snowmobilers brought out of hibernation the machines and paraphernalia they haven't used for three winters.

A trail ride was called for, so Jack Marshall, president of the Westfield Whitetrackers Snowmobile Club, headed a follow-the-leader train of snowmobilers from the Fairgrounds at Westfield through the Oxford bluffs to Parker Lake.

The day was cloudy but mild, with snow still clinging to tree arms and evergreen branches. From all reports, one of the greatest ways to see the incredible backwoods beauty of Marquette County is from a snowmobile.

Snowmobiling has progressed since the days, back in the mid-'60's, when the only person you knew who owned a snowmobile was Dr. Pace, or maybe Phyllis Henke who bundled her babies up for a ride around Conservation Park every afternoon.

Still to come were snowmobile suits, snowmobile clubs, snowmobile accidents, and snowmobile trails.

The craze caught on in a hurry. By January, 1968, the Marquette County Tourist Development Corp. (president, Dick Hillary) announced they had begun laying out trails across Marquette County for, as Bob Wright put it, "the increasing herd of buzz-sleds."

In February, the brand new Marquette County Snowmobile Assoc. (co-chairmen Dick Freitag and Elmer Nott) published a set of trail rules concerning littering, speeding, trail hours, age of drivers ... trails were necessary, it seemed because riders wanted a smooth path to follow and non-(and anti-) snowmobilers wanted traffic restricted to established trails and away from private property.

Responsibility for laying the trails that went from Montello to Harrisville, to Westfield and Oxford, and for keeping them in order, was assumed by the few who owned snowmobiles in those days, and the Westfield Chamber of Commerce. As snowmobile clubs were organized in each community, maintenance of trails

was taken on accordingly.

The Westfield Whitetrackers are one of the more active clubs in the county today. Membership is up around 200, and trail grooming has become a major club project.

One of the pieces of equipment that came out of moth balls with the first sufficient snowfall in three years was the Whitetrackers new trail groomer. "We got it in February of 1980, but there wasn't enough snow after that to try it out," said Jim Johnson, vice president of the Westfield Club. To pay for the expensive groomer, the club has been collecting aluminum cans, and sponsoring dances, bake sales and card parties. Now at last they will test its usefulness.

Johnson said the club looks after about 50 miles of trails stretching from Pleasant Lake in Springfield to Oxford, with branches off toward Brocks and Grand Marsh, Harrisville, and Montello. Trails intersect with others from Columbia, Green Lake, Adams and Wausara Counties, making a network of trails over this whole area of the state.

"We expect everyone who rides the trails to hold membership in this or another county," he said. "Local memberships help us finance the trails."

A trail groomer does not break a trail, it improves and widens it, like a road grader. Only after the snowmobilers have packed and subsequently roughed-up the tracks is the groomer taken out to cut down the humps and fill in the hollows. "Otherwise it gets to be a wild roller coaster ride," Johnson said.

The first groomer, back in the '60's, was a pull-type and club members took out behind their individual machines, but before long they found it couldn't keep up with the traffic.

Next they tried one with a snowmobile engine, but it couldn't handle the snow.

Then came one that was hydrolic driven. The trail it made was only four feet wide. "Glenn Schatzka was the force behind getting a wider and more powerful groomer. He said it would give a better trail and something the club could work toward together," Johnson said. "We are not funded by the state as

so many trails are in Northern Wisconsin."

The new groomer has a 4-cylinder Wisconsin air-cooled engine and hydraulic pumps that operate the track and lift the teeth. There are skis in front and the leveling surface, being in front of the driver, gives the machine stability. The red-orange fiberglass cab is heated from the engine, and a 2-way radio affords contact if/when assistance may be needed. The 2-way trail is 8 feet wide.

Grooming of trails also means looking them over in the fall to make sure they are free of debris and fallen trees, or wires and chains that may have been put up during the summer. It is necessary to get permission from each owner to cross the land.

In the spring another inspection is made to be sure easements are left uncluttered, "in appreciation," Johnson said, for the cooperation snowmobilers have always had from landowners."

Brushing, mowing and marking are undertaken during club work-bees, or by individual club members. Charlie Baner made up a supply of florescent-painted stakes. Stop signs were silk-screened in high school shop classes. Orange diamond-shaped markers are staked out all along the 50 miles of trails, with warnings, stop signs and arrows in advance of all hazards. Bridges have been built across creeks and ditches. Specific club members have volunteered to run the groomer in their areas.

All this has been done for the safety of snowmobilers and non-snowmobilers in Marquette County. Trail riders are expected to be members of a snowmobile club and club members are expected to know all regulations and abide by them.

As Jack Marshall says, "We have excellent trails and no one should have to deviate from a trail to have a good time."

CORRECTION: Last week's Places and Faces made mention of a post office at Bell Fountain near Dalton. In the interest of history, the name was Bellfountaine, location Columbia County ... Fran.

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For the first time in three years there is enough snow to put snowmobiles back in action. At the start of a Westfield-Oxford trail ride on January 3, riders and officers Jack Marshall and Jim Johnson

[standing] grouped around the Westfield Whitetrackers' new trail groomer that will be used to level and widen the area's network of snowmobile trails.

Places and Faces

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The new groomer has a 4-cyl-

Whitetrackers meet

The Westfield Whitetrackers met August 30 for the election of new officers.

Jack Marshall will be guiding group as president with Jim Johnson as vice president and Anne Turner as secretary.

They need your aluminum cans. Please continue saving. Call Gen. Winkler, 608-296-2429 if you'd like them picked up.

The Tribune, Montello, Wis. September 17, 1961

Whitetrackers at state convention

The Westfield Whitetracker Snowmobile Club was represented at the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs annual convention by President and Mrs. Jack Marshall and Mr. and Mrs. Ken

Marshall. The club's main business was trail development and maintenance were discussed and the 800 delegates present were urged to write to representatives voicing their opinions as the motto is: "United We Trail, Divided We Fail."

On Saturday evening, a banquet was held with John A. Ehlert, publisher of Snowmobile Magazine, as guest speaker. Dancing

Snowmobilers attend "Kick-Off"

On Saturday night Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Johnson and Mr. and Mrs. Jack Marshall attended a "Kick-Off" for the coming snowmobile season at Silver Springs Campground at Rio.

They were invited guests at the pig roast and dance sponsored by the Columbia County Snowmobile Association. Jack is director from Marquette County to the Wisconsin Association of Snowmobilers. The Columbia County Association has been very helpful in sharing their knowledge with the Marquette County Association as to ways and means of working on the state funded trails in Marquette County.

Whitetracker cook-out

1963

On January 31 at 1:30 p.m., the Westfield Whitetracker Snowmobilers will hold a cook-out at the Kenneth Johnson home.

That evening at 8 p.m., their regular meeting will be held at the Village Hall. All members are urged to attend.

Snowmobilers meet

The Westfield Whitetracker

he Tribune, Montello, Wis.
September 17, 1981

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On Saturday evening, a banquet was held with John A. Ehlert, publisher of Snowmobile Magazine, as guest speaker. Dancing followed to the music of "The Old Lager Band."

All snowmobile club members in Marquette County are urged to attend the county meeting at Westfield Village Hall on March 11, 8 p.m. Guests from A.W.S.C. will be present to help Marquette County in state trail development so that the club may be able to receive monies from the State Registration Fees and Gas Tax Refunds.

The regular monthly meeting of the Whitetrackers Club will be held on February 28 and please don't forget the Benefit Dinner on March 6 at Grand Marquette Community Hall.

Whitetracker Snowmobilers who enjoyed a ride on Sunday followed by a cook-out at the Kenneth Johnson home were the David Quinns, Chuck Quinns, Jack Laings, Allie Winklers, Jack Marshalls and Vicky, LaVerne Janichs' and the Jim Johnsons.

Snowmobile group to meet July 1982

A Marquette County Snowmobile Association meeting will be

Whitetracker cook-out

1983

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Snowmobilers meet

1982-83

The Westfield Whitetracker Snowmobilers met on Sunday evening and elected new officers for the coming year.

Those elected were: Jim Johnson, president; Larry Denman, vice-president; and Jeanie Turner and Geneva Winkler were re-elected as secretary and treasurer, respectively.

Briggsville woman named to state snowmobile council

Governor Anthony Earl has appointed Susan Hillard of Briggsville to the Snowmobile Recreation Council. Susan is co-owner of the Pheasant Inn in Briggsville and is President of the Marquette County Snowmobile Association.

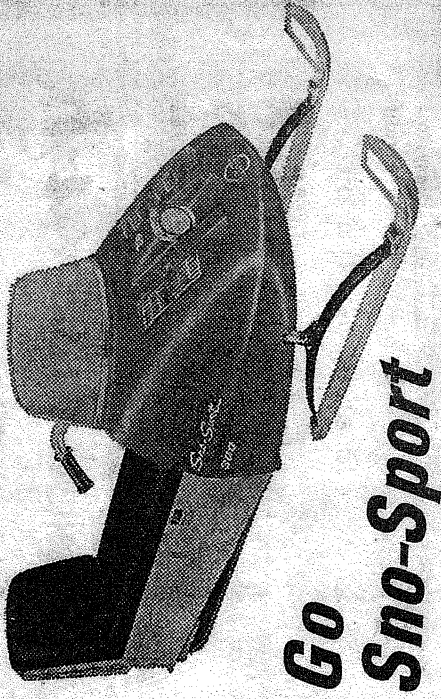
Her term of office will run through July 1, 1986 and requires Senate confirmation of the appointment.

Westfield Legion Plans Snowmobile Races at Harrisville February 11

The booming sport of snowmobiling will get another boost in this area on Sunday, Feb. 11 when a Snowmobile Derby will be run on a course laid out on the ice of Harris Pond at Harrisville.

The Westfield Legion Post is the sponsoring organization and they will provide prizes and the course — dealers and individuals will provide the snowmobiles.

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mine, I'd like to meet him; he must be a wierdo, indeed.

Taken at their best, the notes I hastily jot down while
porting a news story resemble the tracks left by a herd of st
peding ducks or perhaps a picture of a plate of spaghetti a

is the biggest trail ride
to year history of the
suntly Snowmobile As-
machines were photo-
tly before leaving for

Harrisville via the Hungry Hills
trail. Three more machines joined
them en route. In all, about 60 per-
sons made the trip.

A second trail ride for all snow-

mobilers will leave
Montello Resort next Sunday at
1:00 p.m. for a repeat ride on
the same trail.

Dec 1969