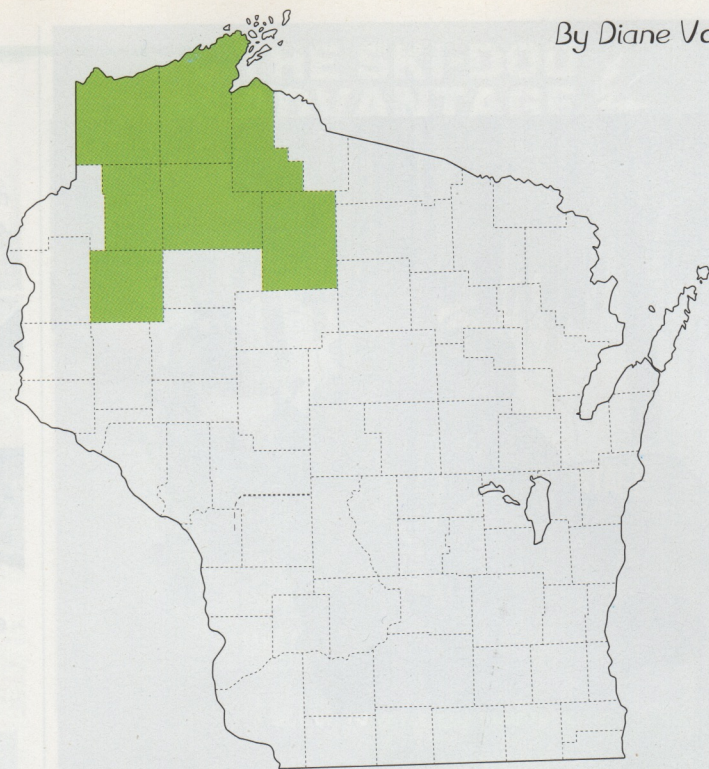


20

Years of Fun on the Trails of Northwest Wisconsin



For the past 20 years a group of women from Spooner and the surrounding area have been part of the Polk County Women on Snow, the "Bad Girls" of Washburn County and just a group of women out to have a fun weekend snowmobiling through the remarkable trail system of Northwest Wisconsin. This year's adventure included 12 participants starting in Washburn County and would take us through Barron, Sawyer, Price, Ashland, Bayfield and Douglas counties before returning to the Spooner area some 300 plus miles later.

We began our great adventure with a bit of nostalgia by meeting for our traditional hardy breakfast of pancakes (numbs the brain from the cold) and other delightful goodies at the Prime in Trego on Friday morning. With sleds loaded with backpacks we started cruising through the rolling hills and woods on the perfectly groomed trails of #39 and #140 traveling southeast through Washburn County, down onto Long Lake following the stakes to Lincolnwood Resort, and up off the lake via the steep hill now covered with old snowmobile tracks for greater traction. Thanks to the Teasdales for the upgrade!

Before long, we were cruising through Barron County along the Tuscobia Trail on our way to Park Falls, our destination for the night. After making a lunch stop in Winter (Sawyer County), we encountered our first challenge of the weekend. Tammy had a broken zipper on her coat – duct tape to the rescue! The wind was not going to get in and she was not getting out of that coat until we stopped for the night. Late in the afternoon, we hit the road routes into Park Falls (Price County) and made our way into Northway Motor Lodge. Before going to Flambeau Lanes for an awesome fish dinner, we celebrated a successful day on the trail with our



We love our groomers and the dedicated volunteers driving them.

traditional champagne toast. After an evening of soaking in the hot tub and sharing endless stories of the past years, we were all ready for bed.

Saturday morning began with a finicky sled that just wouldn't start. No worries; one of the husbands was passing through the area and stopped to help. Just so happens he is a master sled mechanic – yeah Lance! With the brief delay, we were a little behind and needed to get moving if we were to reach Drummond by nightfall. We set off north on Corridor 21 toward the Cayuga Hotel traveling through the



A frosty morning on the Barnes Trail.

dense forests of the Chequamegon National Forest. The trail winds through the towering pine trees and along the creeks and rivers. This is a must-ride for your "bucket list." Shortly before arriving at the unique, historic hotel in the middle of



Duct tape to the rescue!

nowhere, Mary misjudged a corner and encountered a few small pine trees in her off trail adventure. No injuries, and with a little digging out of the deep snow and re-adjusting the side pod with the help of more duct tape, she was good

to go and it was on to the hotel for lunch and a brief warm up. Since it was well after noon, we were a little behind schedule, though definitely enjoying the countryside, but with being only a third of the way to Drummond we would need to keep moving to reach our destination at a reasonable hour.

As we traveled further north into Ashland County the woods gave way to large rolling fields and a few glimpses of Lake Superior. We continued on to the west through Sanborn into Bayfield County, eventually reaching Mason just after dark. At Mason, we caught Corridor 63 to lead us south through Grandview and on into Drummond to the Crossroads Restaurant and the Roadhouse Bed & Breakfast where we were spending the evening. After warming Mandi's frostbitten toes, and scolding her a bit for not telling us earlier that she had a problem, we all enjoyed a delicious dinner at Crossroads and stories of the day's adventure and more stories from past rides. Before retiring for the night, we posed for a photo with the groomer parked out front.

Sunday morning was again cool and crisp, and this time



The new bridge over the Chippewa River near Ojibwa – nice!

we encountered a couple finicky sleds and no mechanic in sight. In spite of lots of strong volunteers to try to get them going, one sled would not make it back to Spooner except by way of a trailer ride. But everyone else enjoyed a beautiful ride to Barnes and on into Douglas County to catch the Wild River Trail south, leading us back to Washburn County. Our last stop of the weekend would be at Bootlegger in Wascott for brunch before the girls would start dropping from the pack to go their separate ways home. The omelets at Bootleggers are very unique. They are filled with hash browns or whatever else you may want to include in an omelet – oh, so delicious!

The 20th anniversary ride proved to be another great adventure and another “we can do it” success story for the ladies of Washburn County. We can't wait to see where the next decade of adventures will take us! **WSN**