

Celebrate winter

Skating party set for Sunday

A4



Winning weekend

Falls skaters compete in Moorhead

A9



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STAFF PHOTOS BY LAUREL BEAGER

Jim Strandlund, Mora, leads the Live on Skis 2014 start of a trail ride Saturday morning dressed in a Hudson Bay coat and fur hat.

What's old is new again

Live on Skis 2014 hits the ice

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Exhaust hung in the air over a frozen Rainy Lake as vintage snowmobiles were pulled into action Saturday morning.

Live on Skis 2014 drew vintage snowmobile enthusiasts to Thunderbird Lodge where they traded stories, recalled the sleds of their youth and helped one another get their sleds ready for a trail ride.

Despite below zero temperatures for the start of Saturday's gathering, few mingling on the ice were concerned about the weather, with several pointing out a warming sun and lack of wind. Black ribbons trailed sleds on the ride in memory of vintage sled aficionado and International Falls resident Mike Dickson, who died recently.

The group met up with members of the International Voyageurs Snowmobile Club on the Hagerman Trail for a hot dog roast, that was bound to include lots of snowmobile talk. Club president Jim Bigler said more than 200 people were served at the roast.

Lee Resler, of Owatonna, is friends with some of the people who started the ride in 2007 after years of discussion on the vintagesled.com website. He came to his first Live on Skis the next year and has come back ever since.

"It's all about guys that like

sleds," said Resler. "I swear we're just a bunch of old guys that are reliving our childhood. It's a blast and I would never miss it for anything in the world."

Resler owns an auto repair shop and said he's taken on the role of helper when the vintage sleds have trouble. "Some are a little stubborn or temperamental, just like some guys and women, but we have fun doing it," he said of riding the old sleds.

And he said the cold isn't a concern. "The guys are great, the atmosphere is perfect, we've got snow," he said. "The cold temperature don't bother me. I can put enough clothes on to stay warm, but during the summer I can't take enough off without offending someone."

Resler rode his 1974 Raider. "I always wanted one as a child, couldn't afford one and back in 2006, found this on the internet, went south of Indianapolis, Ind., and picked it up, and tore it apart, went through it all to make sure it was working and been riding it ever since," he explained.

On the back of his snowmobile sat a small stuffed icon. Resler explained he found the stuffed tow truck and strapped it to his machine after 2008, when vintagesleds.com hooked up with New York Make A Wish Foundation and brought Forrest Hess to the event. Hess had



Dale Neduzak, of Manitoba, shows off his classic-style helmet. He said the Polaris racers of the 1960s were his heroes.



Like herding cats, a rider sets out for a chase in the bay before lining up for the start of the trail ride.

asked to ride a 1974 John Deere Liquifier and a '74 Massey Ferguson Ski Whiz.

The Liquifier broke down on the trail and... nobody wanted to pull it, but Resler offered to pull it with his Raider. "Some-

body came up with the nickname Tow Mater for me for the rest of the ride," he said. After he found the stuffed truck stitched with the moniker Tow

Snowmobile to A7 ►

Cold, fuel shortage, costs nearing crisis

Local leaders consider how to help and keep people safe

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Persistent cold weather combined with high heating costs and propane shortages are creating near crisis situations for many Borderland residents.

Concern drew community and regional leaders to the Koochiching County Board meeting Tuesday to discuss how to help and keep residents safe.

Locally, 13 applicants in the county have exhausted all energy assistance benefits and are not able to pay to heat their homes, said Dana Herschbach, KOOTASCA Community Action Inc.'s director of asset/housing development.

Herschbach met with county commissioners who said they would consider at the next meeting taking action to provide money for a safeguard for people who cannot pay to keep their homes heated. KOOTASCA is a nonprofit agency serving Koochiching and Itasca counties.

Commissioners credited state officials for taking action, but also asked what they could do to help the situation.

Fuel to A7 ►

MNsure up and running

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Despite a troubled start with website issues, MNsure, Minnesota's health insurance marketplace, is up and running and processing Koochiching County residents.

Jeff Poenix, health care promoter with KOOTASCA Community Action Inc., met Tuesday with Koochiching County commissioners to answer questions.

KOOTASCA is a partner with MNsure and helping low income families and people to obtain no- and low-cost health insurance. The nonprofit agency that serves Koochiching and Itasca counties has five site navigators available to assist with the enrollment process and make sure that people receive coverage prior to the March 31 federal deadline.

Commissioner Wade Pavleck asked what would happen should

MNsure to A7 ►