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**PRESS RELEASE  
For Immediate Release**

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**NORTHLAND 300 PARTICIPANTS MAKE HISTORY ON 21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL SNOWMOBILE RIDE**

Special Olympics Athlete Steven Eull and Coach Jason Reinsch participated in their first ever Northland 300 on January 21-25, 2009 making history for the Northland 300 and Special Olympics Minnesota. This was the first time that an athlete and a coach have ever participated in the 3-day, 300+ mile event to raise funds for Special Olympics Minnesota, a cause they truly believe in, benefit from and support.



Photography by Bruce Mosher

Thursday morning, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, kicked off the event with an Opening Ceremony, where athlete Steven Eull from the Special Olympics Minnesota team the “Flames” (White Bear Lake) walked with Laurie Mallory, Special Olympics Minnesota athlete from “Lake County Special Olympics” (Two Harbors) carrying the torch and passing it to Steven who lit the Special Olympics cauldron, the “Flame of Hope.” Guests who wished Northland 300 riders well were Two Harbors American Legion Color Guard, newly elected Mayor Randy Bolen (Two Harbors) and Darrin Young, General Manager, Superior Shores Resort & Conference Center. The National Anthem was sung by Anna Sells, a Senior of Two Harbors High School.

Eighty nine snowmobile riders and support team members including Steven’s mom Patsy and Jason’s wife Lynn, began their journey at 8:30 a.m. destination Grand Ely Lodge, Ely, MN. Steven and Jason rode on the “Voyageur” team with Marc Williams (team leader) who is a 21 year participant of the Northland 300. Upon completion of 150+ miles, the team arrived in Ely at 5:45 p.m. Athlete Steven Eull commented, “it is really a fun ride” and was very excited to ride 150+ miles the first day of the journey.

Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, the “free day,” participants rode trails around the Ely area, relaxed, and later that evening attended a “70’s Party” hosted by Grand Ely Lodge with a DJ, food and prizes. Costumes were terrific and a fun time was had by all.

Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, with temperatures at -18 and windchill of -37 didn’t stop Northland 300 participants from continuing their journey back to Two Harbors. Northland 300 riders were concerned for Steven as a passenger and braving the cold. Steven’s concern was that he wanted to finish the ride

and let the deciding parties know that he “didn’t mind the cold. He was a tough cookie.” Riders returned to Superior Shores Lodge commenting on the great trail conditions thanks to local groomers for their efforts.

Steven and Jason arrived at Superior Shores Lodge in Two Harbors at 2:45pm making history of the event. When asked of Steven “how was it?” Steven responded, “Everything is totally great! I really love being a part of the event!” When asking Steven, “Are you going to do it again?” Steven exclaimed, “Yes, Of Course!”

Participants attended the Banquet and Awards Ceremony Saturday evening where it was announced that 2009 Northland 300 participants raised \$204,974.21 (\$140,275.35 Cash + \$64,698.86 In-Kind). This set another fundraising record for the Northland 300 of over \$3 Million for Special Olympics Minnesota in 21 years.

The “Baker’s Dozen” (top 13 fundraisers) totaling \$69,922 was announced by Special Olympics Minnesota Board of Directors Member Chris Wrobel. First time participant and Special Olympics Minnesota Athlete Steven Eull took 8<sup>th</sup> place raising \$3,734.

A special “Finish Line” checkered flag and a banner signed by all participants and Northland 300 friends were presented to Special Olympics Athlete Steven Eull and Coach Jason Reinsch.



Photography by Bruce Mosher

Special Olympics Minnesota Board of Director Member Dorothy Guanella and former Board Member Nancy Paradise recognized and presented Northland 300 Sponsor Awards to Gold Medal Sponsors: Farmington Eagles #4031, G & K Services, Grand Ely Lodge, Hitching Post Motorsports, Jimmy’s Food & Drink, Merrill Lynch, Pro Paint (Metro), Riteway Forms and Mfg, Superior Shores and Walman Optical; Silver Medal Sponsors: Exposures by Moshers, The Gallup Organization and Wal-Mart (Oak Park Heights); Bronze Medal Sponsors: Jude Vending, Live Nation – Motorsports, MyCull Fixtures, SMW Entertainment, U-Haul Trucks and Vorel Sod; and Northland 300 Partners: DeEtte Leckner, Discount Tires (Stillwater), MN United Snowmobilers, MSPN, RedBull, Tech Toads and The Toro Company.

Upon completion of the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Northland 300, Steven’s Coach Jason informed the Northland 300 of the many moments of joy that he and Steven had participating in the event. The most important one was at a stop just before coming into the finish where Steven asked Jason, “Are you proud of me?” Jason could hardly answer the question because of the impact of feelings this question posed. He replied to Steven, “Of course I am buddy.” This truly was a moment in history between athlete and coach and the pride of what the Northland 300 event means to all participating volunteers and their efforts.

Congratulate Steven and Jason on their history making journey at [nl300@northland300.org](mailto:nl300@northland300.org). Keep up-to-date on Northland 300 Events at [www.northland300.org](http://www.northland300.org).

Special Olympics Minnesota provides year round sports training and competition for people with intellectual disabilities that contribute to life-long physical fitness, personal growth and achievements.

For additional information, visit [www.northland300.org](http://www.northland300.org) or [www.specialolympicsminnesota.org](http://www.specialolympicsminnesota.org) or contact Kathy Karkula at 612-604-1272 or [karkulak@somn.org](mailto:karkulak@somn.org).