



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CELEBRATING "20 YEARS OF MILES AND MEMORIES"

OCTOBER 1, 2007... Ever think of what it takes to attract 606 snowmobilers over 20 years, snow or no snow, and raise over \$2.6M for the athletes of Special Olympics Minnesota? It takes the volunteers of the Northland 300. Northland 300 participants are snowmobilers who really DO care! This 300 mile, 3 day charity ride has never been cancelled. Mother Nature has tried, but has never succeeded in deterring any one member of this event to stay home because of bad weather or the lack thereof of snow. January 18, 1996, is a perfect example, KDLH TV announced the Northland 300 as "The Only Thing Moving on the North Shore during Record Breaking Weather." The North Shore headed into one of the year's worst blizzards. Snow was falling and 18 inches of snow had fallen the night before. Temperatures were 38 degrees below with a wind chill factor of 65 degrees below zero. Waves on Lake Superior were rolling like ocean waves and we had a blizzard, and lots of snow on the trails! Northland 300 riders geared up and took off from Superior Shores Lodge in Two Harbors to get to their destination at the Village Inn in Lutsen. It was a rough ride for some, helmet shields frosted over, snow blowing sideways across the trails in open areas, but all had a great time and had a lot of stories to tell once they arrived at Lutsen. Safe and responsible snowmobilers riding for a great cause!



Fundraising is a hard avenue, yet Northland 300 snowmobilers have mastered this. Each volunteer participant of the Northland 300 pays a non-refundable registration fee to hold their spot on the ride. They are required to raise a minimum amount of funds prior to the ride to be able to participate. Have no fear! Northland 300 riders don't stop at the minimum. These fundraisers go above and beyond! Over the past 19 years, the prestigious "Baker's Dozen," (top 13 fundraisers) alone have totally raised more than \$727K for Special Olympics Minnesota. This is something to be proud of. The visibility and awareness goes to both the sport of safe snowmobiling and to the athletes of Special



Olympics Minnesota. The partnership of Special Olympics and the Northland 300 is all about caring.

It's about the people, the snowmobilers, the charity, the towns and the combination thereof. The Northland 300 was built on friendships and the friendships continue to grow each year. Friendships and camaraderie of the riders and the folks we meet at our checkpoints in the towns along the way. The Northland 300 brings business to these towns, whether it is for lodging, meals, gas, or even sorry to say, snowmobile parts. That is why we have never cancelled, they are expecting us. We continually meet new people in the towns we utilize and new friendships begin.

January 23-27, 2008, the Northland 300 will be celebrating its "20th Anniversary" ride entitled "20 Years of Miles and Memories." More than 150 riders and alumni volunteer snowmobile enthusiasts will meet at Superior Shores Lodge and Conference Center, "Home of the Northland 300," to begin their journey to Ely. Thursday morning, an Opening Ceremony will kick off the event. Saturday is back to Two Harbors for a celebration upon completion of the year's event.

The mission of the Northland 300 is to raise funds for Special Olympics Minnesota through year-round activities planned by an all volunteer Board of directors. The Northland 300 is made possible by its Sponsors and Partners so that all funds go directly to support Special Olympics Minnesota. Rider donations are achieved through sponsorships, raffle ticket sales, company and general donations. Fundraising activities include Road Rallies, a fundraiser with Joey's Seafood & Grill in Apple Valley and golf outings. The success of the Northland 300 lies within its volunteer participants with hearts of gold, pure dedication to snowmobiling and fundraising, and camaraderie.

Northland 300 fundraising efforts have benefitted the growth of Special Olympics Minnesota in supporting more than 6000 athletes with intellectual disabilities in *Training for Life*. Special Olympics Minnesota provides a year-round program of sports training & competition for people with intellectual disabilities that contributes to life-long physical fitness, personal growth & achievements.

The Northland 300 has been a participant in national responsible snowmobiling programs and has been the recipient of many local, national and international awards.

Stay tuned... there's more to come... in celebrating the Northland 300s "20 Years of Miles and Memories."

Northland 300 is a 300 mile charity snowmobile ride to benefit Special Olympics Minnesota. Questions, contact Kathy Karkula at 612-604-1272 or karkulak@somn.org.