



May 2011
Volume 3, Issue 1

www.ATV.rideupnorth.com

Cook County ATV Club
PO Box 455
Grand Marais MN 55604

ATV Club board

Mickey Brazell, president
John McClure, vice-president
Rhonda Silence, secretary
Missy Smith, treasurer
Vilnis Neilands
Gene Lashinski
Steve Fleace

Monthly meetings

3rd Monday of each month
at 6:00 PM. Location announced on
Boreal, WTIP, email to members and
the Cook County Star

2011 Kick-Off Party

Cook County RidgeRider's
snowmobile groomer building
Meridian Road off of South Shore
Drive by Devil Track Lake
Saturday, June 18 - 1:00 – 6:00 p.m.
~ Games for kids of all ages ~ silent
auction ~ food ~ door prizes ~ flat
screen TV grand prize

Two Barbecues at Tom Lake

Saturday, July 9, 10:00 AM. Ride to
Fleace's cabin for a BBQ. Great food
& door prizes!
Sunday, August 21, 10:00 AM. "Guys
& Gals Ride"

West End Ride

October 8 – 11a.m.
Meeting place to be determined
Riding to Trestle Inn for dinner.



Trace McQuatters plays Giant Jenga

Kick-Off the Riding Season!

Don't miss the ATV event of the year.
Stop by the Cook County RidgeRiders
Devil Track groomer building
(intersection of the Meridian Road &
South Shore Drive) on Saturday, June
18. We'll be there from 1:00 – 6:00
p.m. – or longer if we feel like it.
There will be a barbecue with the Sons
of the Legion—renewing members will



get a free burger
or brat!
Rain or shine, we'll
have games—yard
games if it's nice.
Cards and visiting
inside the groomer
building if it rains.
Play our games or
bring your own!
Fun raffles, booze
box and door
prizes—there will
be a prize for

whoever drove the furthest by ATV,
whoever has the oldest machine, etc.
Come on out and you could win!
And you could win the fabulous **GRAND
PRIZE**. Join or renew and you are
entered in the grand prize drawing—an
HD TV!



Highway cleanup



Presidents Message

The ATV Club board recently had a "call
night," with a few of us making calls to
members and former members, asking
for feedback about how the ATV Club is
doing and asking for more involvement.

We were happy to have a few new
faces at the last meeting. How about
you? Please consider coming to an
upcoming meeting.

The ATV Club keeps getting busier and
busier—there are maps to work on for
discussion of connections with the
Forest Service, ATV safety training, ride
and event planning and more. Please
consider helping out. Get in touch with
us to find out how!

See you at the Kick-Off!

Mickey Brazell

ATV Road Ordinance gets good reviews

In May 2010, Cook County
Commissioners approved an ordinance
expanding the county road - ATV
ordinance to allow ATVs to ride on the
shoulder of all county roads—including
paved roads—except for the Gunflint
Trail above the Four Corners (by
Gunflint Hills Golf Course).

A requirement of the ordinance is that
it be reviewed each year, which was
done in part on May 24. Commissioners
asked for, and received, a report from
the Cook County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff
Mark Falk reported that there were
nine calls for service regarding ATVs
compared to 15 in 2009. Of the nine
calls, 8 occurred in the county; one in
the city of Grand Marais. There was one
accident in the Hovland area. There
were *no* citations issued for violations
occurring on ATVs.

The county board did not yet ask for a
report from the local DNR Conservation
Officers, but from discussions with local
COs, we believe their reports will be

good as well. Congratulations to ATV Club members for riding responsibly and respectfully!

We also want to remind riders that the ordinance could be changed, so the please continue to be respectful and to ride responsibly. ATV Club safety instructors remind parents that the ordinance *does not* allow kids to run on the roads. In accordance with state statutes, the ordinance opens the road shoulder for licensed drivers only. The club continues to work to designate trails on which kids (who have had ATV safety!) can ride.

The ordinance also requires ATVs to have a left hand mirror. It's not just a requirement it's a very good idea for safety. Mirrors can be purchased at Steve's Sports, Thompson Performance, Grand Marais NAPA, or Arrowhead Outdoor.

Although we are glad that the county road ordinances has passed, there is still work to do. We are trying to develop an alternative route for ATVs to reach businesses up Gunflint Trail, since the county shut off the Gunflint. We continue to work with the Forest Service and MN Department of Natural Resources on this. Wouldn't it be great to take a ride from Grand Marais to Trail Center, Hungry Jack or Windigo? Help us work toward this goal by joining the club—there is strength in numbers!

Gas tax myths from MRR

You may have heard or seen editorials from Jeff Brown of the Minnesotans for Responsible Recreation (MRR) claiming that gas tax money is being "diverted" from roads and bridges to fund ATV "playgrounds."

If you hear anyone saying this, please set them straight! Brown is right that some of the gas taxes collected go to ATVs. That is because we are paying gas taxes, like snowmobiles and boats, but are not riding on state roads. The

legislature commissioned the University of MN to calculate how much gas ATVs are using. ATVers get a portion of the money they spend on gas back via DNR funding. Gas tax money goes to the DNR funds sustainable trail construction, youth safety training and DNR law enforcement.

Brown and his MRR friends claim that "everyone is chipping in" for ATV trails. That is absolutely false. Between the gas taxes and the vehicle registration that ATVers pay, our trails are fully funded.

Brown should look at the 2006 study funded by the ATV Association of MN and clubs like the Cook County ATV Club. The study entitled *All-terrain Vehicles in Minnesota: Economic impact and consumer profile* looked at the economic impact of ATVs in the state. The university reported that ATV related expenditures bring our state a total of \$641.9 million annually.

The study also affirms what the ATVers have known all along—ATVers enjoy their recreation for the same reason as hikers, bikers, horseback riders, snowmobilers, skiers and others. Survey respondents said motivations for ATV riding are: 'being with friends and family,' being in a natural area,' 'relaxation' and 'getting away from it all.'

Jeff Brown forgets that we are all motorized. The difference between MRR's Jeff Brown and us is that he drives his car to a scenic location and we use our ATVs. A big difference between us is that we don't attack other forest users under the guise of promoting responsible recreation. We quietly work with our tax dollars and volunteer hours to get it done.

Another ATV Safety Class conducted

Anyone born after July 1, 1987, who operates an ATV on public lands in Minnesota, must successfully complete the independent study ATV Safety Training CD course. Youth ages 11-15

must complete the ATV CD Course **and** riding component before riding on public lands. It's not only the law, it's a good idea. The Cook County ATV Club wants everyone to ride safely, which is why we sponsor Youth ATV Safety, which was held this year on May 18 and May 21. Only 8 youths took part this year—we congratulate them, but hope to see more kids next year.

The ATV provides scholarships for the \$20 fee for families that cannot afford the class, gives the successful students an ATV Club t-shirt and sponsors a pizza party after the field test. This pizza party is always a hit and gives kids, parents, volunteer instructors, DNR Conservation Officers the opportunity to get to know one another. Thanks to our members, who sponsor this valuable training!



ATV safety GM - CO Mary Manning instructs



ATV safety GM - Dick Parker instructs

DNR Conservation Officers Mary Manning and Tom Wahlstrom, with volunteer instructor Dick Parker supervise as Devyn Deschampe practices driving an ATV on a slope during the May 2009 field test.

The ATV Club provides snacks for the classroom session, a pizza party after field training and gives each student who completes safety training an ATV Club T-shirt. The club also offers a

scholarship for families who cannot afford the fee for training. Don't let your child ride without this important safety training!

ATV Safety for adults

Recent DNR statistics show a decline in youth-involved incidents, largely due to safety training requirements for those age 16 and under. It's the adults, those who have not completed DNR ATV safety training, who are most at risk.

"Because most adults are experienced automobile drivers, they think they possess the skills to handle a powerful, 600-pound ATV," Capt. Mike Hammer, DNR Enforcement Education Program coordinator said in a recent interview. ""But an ATV handles differently from other vehicles. A rollover can occur quickly, even during routine maneuvers such as turning and driving on hills and over obstacles, if a driver fails to take proper precautions."

Hammer said adults are less likely to wear a helmet that could prevent head injuries, which are very common in ATV accidents. He recommends all adults complete the ATV safety training independent study course and wear a helmet.

"ATVs are dangerous if you don't respect them," Hammer said. "You have to be trained. You have to know what you're doing."

The ATV Club encourages everyone to complete the MN DNR ATV safety training CD course. If you'd like a CD, call 287-9844 or e-mail loonybin1314@msn.com.



Memories of 2009 Kick-Off

What do you get for your membership in Cook County ATV Club?

In addition to being a social club, enjoying rides and get-togethers, the Cook County ATV Club advocates for ATVers in many ways.

- The ATV Club represents the interests of ATVers at Cook County commissioners meetings and the Grand Marais City Council—our ATV Task Force members worked diligently for many years to get the ATV ordinance passed.
- The ATV Club is in constant contact with the MN DNR and US Forest Service, working to keep traditional routes open and to get trails designated in Cook County.
- The ATV Club has numerous ATV Safety Instructors who help with DNR safety training. The Club also provides scholarships for safety training for youths who cannot afford to take the training and gives a t-shirt to every youth who successfully completes the course.
- Since 2004, the Cook County ATV Club has performed clean up along a section of Highway 61 in Hovland.
- Every year since its formation, the Club has taken part in the Cook County Fair in some manner, as well as a number of other community events—riding in parades on the 4th of July, Fisherman's Picnic or the Grand Marais Christmas parade.
- The ATV Club is a member of WTIP local community radio, taking part in the fall pledge drive as a "challenge" sponsor, with a financial contribution and by asking ATVers to pledge to support to WTIP.
- The ATV Club serves as a

connection for local riders to the ATV Association of MN (ATVAM), which funds a lobbyist to protect our right to ride in Minnesota. Our board member Steve Fleace is an ATVAM regional director, helping us stay connected and united with other ATVers across the state.

- The ATV Club also serves as a connection to the Blue Ribbon Coalition, a national organization fighting to keep public lands open to all.

What would YOU like your ATV Club to be doing? Let us know!

Join! Run! Vote!

All of the current members of the Cook County ATV Club board have served for six years or more. There are no term limits in our club bylaws, but it would be nice to give some other members the chance to serve. We will be holding elections at our June 18 Kick-Off Party—would you like to join the board? Send us an e-mail or call and we'll put you on the ballot! Have questions about serving? Talk to one of our current board members. And speaking of bylaws – we'll have updated bylaws for members to approve as well. Come to the Kick-Off and exercise your right as an ATV Club member to VOTE!

ATVers ride—and read!

ATV Club Member Marcy Bolinger loves to spend time with her grandkids, scrapbook, ATV—and she's an avid reader. In fact, Marcy's collection of books has become too big and she wondered what she could do with all those books. Someone mentioned the Cook County Library Friends Used Book Sale and a perfect solution was found. Marcy is donating her books to this worthy cause, which raises money for Cook County school libraries. And—

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Marcy is encouraging others to do the same.

Do you have a shelf sagging with story books? A pantry full of paperbacks? An annoying number of novels? Clean out those spare rooms and closets and recycle your reading material! Bring your gently-used books to the Kick-Off Party on June 18 and the Cook County ATV Club will handle the delivery to Library Friends.

Renew your membership

Come to the kick-off party or mail your check to the Cook County ATV Club at P.O. Box 455 in Grand Marais. Family memberships are \$20.00 per year or

three years for \$50.00. Business memberships are \$30.00 per year. Your business will be listed in the newsletters and on the website. With your membership you will receive a cheery yellow sticker with our logo on it for your ride or door.

Be sure we have your current email address to stay up to date with Club activities.

Thanks and happy trails



Cook County ATV Club
PO Box 455
Grand Marais MN
55604

Subscriber Name
Number Street Address
City, State Postal Code
Country

Address Correction Requested

www.ATV.rideupnorth.com

Check out the on-line store – lots of great new styles & part of proceeds benefit the ATV Club!

Remember – if you are riding on Cook Country roads, the county ATV Ordinance requires you to have a Left hand mirror.

Mirrors can be purchased at Steve's Sports, Thompson Performance or Grand Marais NAPA.



