



Pictured from left to right Mary Hilke, Chair, MnUSA Awards Committee,
Tony Verhoeven, Terry Hutchinson, President

On February 7, 2009, Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association presented the Young Snowmobiler of the Year Award to Tony Verhoeven of the Prior Lake Snowmobile Association. This new award gives tribute to our youth...the future of our sport.

MnUSA's award winner has been snowmobiling since he was less than two years old, either in front of Mom and Dad on the sled, often taking a nap as they rode. Later he rode on a 2-Up Touring, observing his mom's driving techniques. When he was old enough to ride his own sled, he added many more miles to a Super Sport that his two older brothers had already put many miles on.

MnUSA's young snowmobiler is best described by his club as a full service snowmobiler. He's active in his club, helps with their annual swap meet parking swappers, works in the club's booth talking to people his own age and encouraging them to join his club, he helps with safety training, bringing numerous newcomers to our sport, he helps maintain and repair his families snowmobiles, he helps at the annual Land Owners Picnic, with cooking and clean up duties, and, he and his family, are responsible for an eleven mile section of trail which has been in their family for 3 generations.

Currently he's working on a bridge project as part of the Minnesota River State Trail between Shakopee and Jordan. He and his father, are looking into bridging a span that has been washed out from erosion of the river -- without this bridge this trail is in jeopardy of being closed permanently....and MnUSA's young snowmobiler is working hard to make sure it stays open.

Even though he doesn't currently have a sled of his own, his two older brothers let him ride theirs....but rest assured he's got his eye open for a good deal. He likes to tinker with his Grampa Stubber, and together, they are currently working on restoring a Fun Sports Sno Blazer, a 1972 one-ski machine.

MnUSA's young snowmobiler is definitely a full-service snowmobiler, and an ambassador of our sport to our youth. His involvement and dedication to our sport, at such a young age, is encouragement to all of those out there that carved our trail system, that our sport will live on.