

# 42ND INTERNATIONAL SNOWMOBILE CONGRESS

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CORALVILLE, IOWA

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## Snowmobiling for a Cause

Pink Ribbon Riders looking to expand program to other states, additional cancer patients

Jody McKay of Battle Creek, Mich., considers herself in the "high-risk" category for acquiring breast cancer. Her mother has been diagnosed with the disease, and her cousin has battled it twice.

Although she has not been diagnosed herself, breast cancer has still had a tremendous impact on her life...so much so that she and her friend formed the Pink Ribbon Riders seven years to support patients who suffer from the disease.

A volunteer organization comprised of only snowmobilers, the Pink Ribbon Riders raise money for breast cancer victims through Snow Runs and corporate sponsorships. According to McKay, the 501(c)3 non-profit has raised \$330,000 so far and "hasn't turned anybody down yet."

"I hope to eventually reach the \$1 million mark and expand the program to all cancer patients," she said Thursday afternoon while campaigning for the program at the 2010 ISC. "I want to reach out to all cancer groups."

To date, Pink Ribbon events have been held in New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota and Wyoming. With 20 percent of the funds raised set aside for administrative costs, the balance is donated to breast cancer victims in each of the participating states.

"Nearly all of the money we raise goes directly to the patients, whether you're a man or woman diagnosed with breast cancer," she said. "One of the reasons we decided to start this up is because when we gave money to other organizations, we didn't feel it was going where we wanted it to go. We now find patients at every event from the local area to make sure the money stays home."

The money is primarily donated via \$500 gift cards to the patient's family to help offset lodging and travel expenses as well as nibble away at some of the medical bills. "Hopefully, you will consider working with us," McKay told the various ISC groups. "We are looking to move into other states, but as this is a volunteer organization, we need your help."

McKay coordinates 26 events per year and describes them as "light and fun." "We work with the snowmobile clubs in the areas we go to, and we're trying really hard to get new riders to join us," she said. "We see a lot of people renting snowmobiles just so they can participate."

"If you're a snowmobiler and you come to an event, I want it to be your organization," she continued. "Everybody who helps us out is a Pink Ribbon Rider. We want to create that family atmosphere. I want you to feel important."

If your association is interested in working with the Pink Ribbon Riders, you can contact McKay at (269) 744-5157 or pinkribbonriders@yahoo.com. Learn more about the organization at [www.pinkribbonriders.com](http://www.pinkribbonriders.com).



After spending the day campaigning for her Pink Ribbon Riders organization, Jody McKay of Michigan met up with Anne Melick of Iowa at the ISC 2010 Trade Show. McKay's group raises funds and increases awareness for breast cancer, and she hopes to eventually incorporate all forms of cancer in her cause. Melick, a breast cancer survivor and long-time ISC attendee, has been battling additional cancers for the past three years.

### Inside...

Klim's 'state of the industry' address



The Coralville Color Guard presented the colors during the 2010 ISC Opening Ceremony Thursday morning.

## Survival Training This Morning

A resident of Eagle, Colo., avalanche expert Mike Duffy will lead an Avalanche Awareness Seminar this morning from 9:15 a.m. to noon in the Oakdale Salon I&II.

Duffy has been involved with avalanche training and rescue missions since the winter of 1992-93, when he was a member of Vail Mountain Rescue Group. Four years later, he and others began providing snowmobile-related training, and in 2005, Avalanche 1 was started to provide avalanche education to meet the specific needs of snowmobilers.

“Most avalanche classes are taught by skiers and taught from a skier’s or snowboarder’s perspective,” Duffy said. “If you are a snowmobiler, you are usually told not to high point. Much of your time in class is spent learning techniques that work for skiers or snowboarders. Your instructor may not have any back-country snowmobiling experience.

“Avalanche 1 classes are different,” he continued. “The classes are taught from a snowmobiler’s perspective. You will learn techniques that work for snowmobilers by an avalanche instructor who has 20 years of mountain riding experience. You will learn how to avoid getting caught in avalanche situations that are inherent to snowmobiling.”

## Today’s Agenda

6:30 a.m.	Congress Registration Opens	Coat Room
7 a.m.	Breakfast	Coral Grand Ballroom
7:30 a.m.	Welcome, Announcements, Daily Video, etc.	
8 a.m.-8:15 a.m.	Calgary 2011 Promotion	
8:15 a.m.-8:45 a.m.	State of the Associations (ACSA and CCSO)	
8:45am-9 a.m.	Wisconsin Youth Program	
9 a.m.	Trade Show Opens	Coralville Conference Center
9 a.m.-9:15	Coffee Break	Coralville Conference Center
9 a.m.-Noon	Iron Dog Brigade Meeting CCSO Board Meeting Breakout Sessions	Oakdale Salon IV
9:15 a.m.-Noon	Avalanche Awareness-Duffy	Oakdale Salon I & II
9:15 a.m.-10:45 a.m.	Public Relations- Kelly Rossman-McKinney	Oakdale Salon III
10:45 a.m.	ACSA Silent Auction Open	Benson Room
10:45 a.m.-11 a.m.	Coffee Break	Coralville Conference Center
11:00am-noon	Constant Contact-- Social Media	Oakdale Salon III
Noon-1:30 p.m.	ISMC Lunch Meeting	Borlaug Room
Noon-1:30 p.m.	Lunch on your own	
1:30 p.m.-4 p.m.	Northeast Chapter Midwest Chapter Western Chapter IASA ISTC Meeting	Oakdale Salon I Oakdale Salon III Oakdale Salon II Oakdale Salon V Clark Room
2:30 p.m.-2:45 p.m.	Coffee Break	Coralville Conference Center
5 p.m.	Congress Registration Closes	
5 p.m.	Groomer Reception	
6 p.m.	Iron Dog Brigade Reception	Coral Grand Ballroom Salons A+B
7 p.m.	Trade Show Closes	
8 p.m.-Midnight	Calgary Hospitality	Wallace & Wood Rooms
9 p.m.	ACSA Silent Auction Closes	Benson Room



Stop by the ISSA’s SPORT booth to register to win one of three modular snowmobile helmets.

# ISMA's Klim provides ISC with annual checkup on the health of snowmobiling

The return of the International Snowmobile Congress to Iowa in 2010 also marks the 15th year of service for Michigan's Ed Klim as president of the International Snowmobile Manufacturers' Association.

The organized snowmobiling community was first introduced to Klim at the 1995 ISC in Cedar Rapids, and as he reached the stage for his annual "state of the industry" address Thursday morning, he recounted some of his initial impressions of the sport's faithful.

"We have certainly come a long ways in 15 years," Klim said, alluding to his early encounters with 2010 ISC emcee Dale Vagts, Washington's Kay Lloyd and others.

Klim transitioned to the sport of snowmobiling after serving in a similar capacity in the recreational vehicle business. He still monitors his former industry group and often uses it as a gauge to track the health of snowmobiling in North America and worldwide.

For the 2010 model year, worldwide sales of snowmobiles declined from 147,066 in 2009 to 111,492 units. In the U.S. alone, snowmobile sales dropped from 61,593 in 2009 to 48,599 machines last year. As bad as the numbers look, however, they are not as dismal as they appear in other arenas.

"Boat and RV sales are down worse than we are," Klim said. "They used to sell 425,000 boats a year in the United States, and now they are down to 100,000, not counting small watercraft. I'm not trying to be a downer, but 25 businesses have gone bankrupt in the RV industry as well."

The snowmobile industry hasn't witnessed this type of decline since 1987, when similar sales numbers were reported. In fact, 2010's figures are roughly half of the new snowmobiles sold just a short 10 years ago in 2000, when 208,297 new machines found new homes.

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"This is a challenging time. These are not real good numbers, but they are the facts we're faced with," Klim said. "I think we all know we are in a state of transition, and there are a lot of challenges in today's economy and today's society."

For Canada, sales of new sleds declined from 49,500 to 37,670 year-over-year, and in Europe and Russia, new purchases dipped from 35,963 to 25,223. "Most of our sales decline overseas were in Russia," Klim explained. "Our sales were flat in Sweden, up a little bit in Norway and down a little bit in Finland.

"There are quite a few snowmobiles registered in the Scandinavian countries," Klim noted. "I've snowmobiled there, and it was great. They are improving their trail system and are doing a really good job overall."



**Klim**

Not counting Russia, there are 510,000 snowmobiles registered in Europe. As for the U.S., 1.5 million snowmobiles were registered last year, which is down from 1.6 million registered sleds last year. Klim said most of those losses were in Michigan.

"The economy in Michigan is worse than you think," he said of his home state where job losses are mounting from the struggling automobile industry. "We have probably lost a million people in our state's population, and another two million are on their way out because there is no work."

The income level of potential consumers was one of several factors Klim pointed to when explaining the declining numbers in snowmobile sales. Other contributors included consumer confidence, the availability of snow, the price of fuel and the overall cost of the individual snowmobile.

"Most of the price increases are driven by the requirements to build new engines. New engines do not come cheap, and the standards are only getting tougher," Klim said. "You have no idea how the regulatory action and the testing the manufacturers are now subjected to has an impact on pricing. The Environmental Protection Agency is all over them all the time."

As the sport's chief lobbyist, Klim said he finds himself splitting his time among Washington, Ottawa and Brussels. He has logged three million frequent flyer miles, and his commuting overseas has increased substantially.

"The market in Europe has been expanding, and we are going through a regulatory action there as well," he said.

During his travels, Klim said he frequently pays attention to the cost of fuel. "The price of gas in the United States is reasonably priced when you compare it to what they are paying in Sweden (\$8/gal)," he said.

Other indices tracked by ISMA include demographics and consumer tendencies. According to Klim, the average age of snowmobiler is 44 years old, and last season, the average snowmobiler rode 1,040 miles.

One statistic Klim said he would like to hone in on is the sales of used snowmobiles. According to ISMA surveys, nearly three-quarters of the people who have or plan to enter the sport say they are going to buy used.

"It is a goal of mine to figure out how we can find out who's buying those used sleds," he said. "We are just about to the point of the boat industry. Most people when they buy their first boat, it is used. Now, most people who start out in snowmobiling buy a used sled.

"But that's when you get them," Klim continued. "That's when they join the club and the state association. After they get hooked, then they go out and buy a new snowmobile. There really is no substitute for snowmobiling. People want to go snowmobiling...they are just a little scared to buy new right now."



**2.5 million hits last year**



# Thursday Evening Off-Site at the Johnson County Fairgrounds



## C.J. Ramstad Memorial Scholarship Fundraiser

The International Snowmobile Media Council is selling 2011 calendars to benefit its C.J. Ramstad Memorial Scholarship this weekend. Each month is paired with a vintage photo from the archives of the late Ramstad, who was known for his race coverage and dedication to snowmobiling throughout the Midwest. The calendars are available for \$10 each and can be purchased from any media council member.

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[WoodysTraction.com](http://WoodysTraction.com)

