



Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

New Century Snapshot

Friends help Valhalla groom for the future

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Ashland, Wis. – On a cold and stormy night last February, a fund raising dinner was held at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor's Center by the Friends of Valhalla Ski Club. Neither snow, nor icy roads and high winds kept the contributor's from attending this fund raiser. And why did people come? Because they wanted to assist the Friends of Valhalla in generating funds to assist with purchasing a new Ski Doo Superwide Track Scandic Snowmobile to groom the Valkyrie and Teuton Cross Country Ski Trails at the Valhalla Winter Recreation Area on the Washburn Ranger District.

A year earlier the old grooming snowmobile began to have problems. When the snowmobile went into a local repair shop for an engine rebuild during the middle of the ski season, Teresa Maday, Assistant Ranger for Lands and Recreation, knew she needed a newer and more reliable snowmobile to continue her vision to improve trail conditions and get people to come back and ski at Valhalla. According to Maday, "I felt the Valhalla area was a gem that needed to be displayed. The previous year, I purchased a Ginsu Groomer, which is used to groom the trails for the winter Olympics. I knew I had to find a way to purchase a new snowmobile by fall so I could continue my efforts to improve the trails so more people would come to Valhalla and enjoy this wonderful trail system."

Enter Joe Groshek and Craig Scholwalter, two local residents from Washburn that shared the same vision as Teresa – to improve the trail grooming so that people will come and ski in their National Forest instead of driving over an hour to other state and



Craig Scholwalter (left) helped raise funds to buy a new snowmobile to groom the Valhalla ski trail. USFS employee Jamie Paterson is on the right.

privately operated trails. According to Scholwalter, "A lot of cross country skiers, like me, would end up going to other areas where we knew the trails would be maintained and groomed on a regular basis." Groshek and Scholwalter, with the assistance of Maday, decided it was time to send out a call for help to the local community, and they responded with enthusiasm. Quickly, the Friends of Valhalla Ski Club was organized and took action by holding a fund raiser with 100% of the proceeds going towards the purchase of a new snowmobile. A collection agreement was entered into by the Friends of Valhalla and the Forest Service so that the monies could be donated and utilized towards the purchase a new snowmobile before the season.

Thanks to the partnership between the Friends of Valhalla and the Forest Service, along with the new snowmobile and state of the art grooming equipment, the trails are being maintained to a higher standard.

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