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## **Trail Bits Winter 2021**

***Pete Friedlieb***

We haven't had a formal meeting since September, the snow took a while to get here, Covid-19 has gotten here and yet we've persisted....

**The Ski Swap** was canceled but Catherine is accepting donations. Older waxless skis are still popular so if you've a pair of those in the garage you'd like to give a new home give Catherine a call.

If you're looking for equipment, she has some very nice skate skis and classic waxless skis, bindings and a pair of size 45 SNS boots for sale. She has a selection of ski boots available for lending only.

All proceeds from a sale are a donation to the Club. Catherine's phone number is 218-326-1313 or use [cat@mclynn.net](mailto:cat@mclynn.net) to contact her.

**Over 200 Youth** skiers are skiing at Blueberry Hills on Saturdays and Mt. Itasca on Sundays from 1-3

**Public Agencies:** The State DNR will be issuing a press release regarding respecting tracked cross county trails. This problem is also occurring on County trails. The State ski pass is being promoted and a lanyard to attach the pass is being developed. The Federal Forest Service will be doing some logging around the North entrance of Suomi Hills.

**Trails**-all the trails are in good to very good shape. Check them out at the Trails tab on [northernlightsnordic.org](http://northernlightsnordic.org) and use the Membership tab if you'd like help us out with a member/donation.

### **Equipment Purchases:**

**Groomers and groomers**-these terms are used interchangeably for the groomer (operator) who is driving the equipment, usually a snowmobile, pulling a groomer (equipment). Our groomers are mostly well groomed but sometimes our groomers get old and don't work so well and we look for new groomers.

**This Fall we worked with Mt. Itasca to purchase a groomer for use at a trail there that the Club grooms and we also purchased a groomer for our groomers to use at Suomi Hills. North Star Ski and Outing Club of Minneapolis gave as a generous grant as did the Trails Task Force.**

**Equipment is big a concern for the Club. Our inventory is very capably overseen by Boomer the Groomer Moritko. The snowmobiles we use are analogous to a tractor, not real fast but can pull heavy loads. We need to change snowmobiles periodically by replacing old ones as repair costs mount and they get less reliable. A groomer stuck out in the middle of a trail with a broken-down sled leads to a long cold walk and the late for dinner blues.**

**Most recently we've updated our fleet by replacing machines purchased circa 2006. Boomer's research indicated the Arctic Cat Bearcat was an exceptional sled and actually was designed with grooming in mind. Between 2015 to 2018 we purchased four Bearcats and also a Yamaha Viking when one of our old machines become irreparable and we needed a replacement immediately. The Bearcats are no longer made so we're lucky to have the ones we do as they've been terrific. A Bearcat with one of the new groomers attached is pictured below. Total cost for both runs around \$20,000  
Not in the picture is the groomer.**

May the joys of good tracks and great skis be with you.....

Pete

