

## International Snowmobile Congress 2019, Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, GRAND RAPIDS MICHIGAN

June 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> 2019, ISC / MISORVA HOSTED 2019 HISTORIC SLED DISPLAY MEDIA SUMMARY: MISORVA (formerly MSA) is proud to announce that included in the ISC they hosted this year at the Amway Grand Hotel in Grand Rapids Michigan, was an exciting display of snowmobiling's history from decades gone by. A joint effort headed up by the Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club of West Branch Michigan, along with leaders from the ASCOA (Antique Snowmobile Club of America) and The Top of The Lake Snowmobile Museum will have an exciting display of Michigan's Snowmobiling from decades gone by. Several very rare snowmobiles, including four (4) made in Michigan, were on display in a grand fashion on the upper mezzanine of the historic opulent Amway Grand Hotel. Word from staff there was that this was the first time in its over 100 year history that any snowmobiles were on display Amway Grand Hotel.

Some of the rare sleds included a 1967 Scatmobile all seasons snowmobile and summer use ATV, owned by and thanks to Matt Beemer of Lapeer. A 1967 Stanaback twin tracked snowmobile of which just two are known to have been made in Grand Rapids Mich, was on display and drew lots of attention (more on this later) Also a 1971 Big Boss, made in Ovid Michigan and one of less than 10 made. Both owned by and thanks to thanks to John McGuirk of OHIO. Lastly was a 1937 Westendorf "Pizza Oven" snowmobile, made up in the Saginaw/Zilwaukee Michigan area was on display and a huge hit wherever it goes. Thanks to Charlie and Marilyn Vallier of the Top of the Lake Snowmobile Museum for bringing all these and their wares, and all the help making this work.

There were 13 fantastic sleds on display from the 30's, 60's and 70's, as well as some clothing and memorabilia from the heyday era of snowmobile here in Michigan. Doug Lubahn who coordinated this joint effort display has been a sledder since 1967, and very committed to this hobby and the success of all 3 groups represented- ASCOA, Top of the Lake Museum, and Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club—as well as MISORVA/MSA. He is a life member of MISORVA, long time member and advocate of ASCOA and the Top of Lake Museum. He is also a long serving board of directors' member from the Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club, founded in 1967 and located in West Branch Michigan. They were selected as MSA's snowmobile club of the year for 2015, 2017 and 2018, and they host an annual Open house with a Vintage Snowmobile Show & Ride every winter. This event is open to all and next year's event is Feb 20, 2020.

The rest of the team that worked long and hard to make this such a success are all ASCOA members and big supporters of this great hobby. Huge thanks to Bryan Lehr, Mt. Morris Michigan - 4 Ski Doos; Bernie Reid, Ortonville Michigan - 2 beautiful Arctic Cats; Tim Reiter, Ray Michigan with - 2 sharp Polaris; as well as Doug Lubahn's clean 2nd owner survivor 1966 Arctic Cat D100.

All of us arrived at the Amway Grand several hours early on Wednesday June 5th, and spent over 4 hours -- unloaded the sleds from the trailers, hand dolly into the hotel, then up a long ramp, onto a

freight elevator, then another long dolly trip and eventually to where our display was. This was done 13 times for the sleds, and many extra trips for display items, and help to get the for-sale items of the museum out on display too. MISORVA was an awesome host and really stepped up to help us make this what it was - and their pride of our efforts was frequently evident throughout our four day display.

The ISC 2019 was a big success and the positive feedback on our display and participation in this event made all the work seem like a distant memory. ISC reported that there were over 300 attendees, from 20 States and 10 of the 12 Canadian Provinces. We had constant foot traffic and people stopping by and chatting with us all the time, and the stories that we shared were priceless.

Bernie and Tim had made a small “field trip” (more appropriately called Sled Shopping) trip, so Doug and Bryan took good care of their sleds-- some how for sale signs ended up on Bernie’s 1967 Arctic Cat Hirth Drone Racer (one of 6 made) and the sled quickly sold for \$500 Cash to a 94 year old gent from Idaho. Tim Reiter’s super clean survivor Polaris Mustang quickly sold for \$100 and went to a new home as a display down in the sports bar of the Amway Grand. Well at least both of these deals went great until Bernie and Tim got back from their adventure and decided against letting the sales go through—but it was fun while it lasted eh!!

All of our display team expressed pride and accomplishment in representing all of our groups and Michigan sledders at the highest level.

Some of the other quick fun stories from the event, There was a large Comic Con type event going on at an adjoining conference hall, and many of their attendees were really enjoying our displays—with all of them admitting they had never seen sleds this old or so “cool”. We had visits and photos of 3 kids done up like old Dinosaurs (guess there aren’t many new ones) , and even Shaggy and Scooby Doo from the 70’s cartoon , with their whole gang all loved our sleds and posed for photos on all the Ski Doo’s of Bryan Lehr’s.

Back to the Stanaback—one morning Charlie came down first and there was a lady dressed in business attire, and she was down low looking closely at the tracks/track clips on the Grand Rapids made Stanaback. She proclaimed to Charlie that these were “their clips” and they still make this style- and was shocked to find out the history behind the sled. Later that day two engineers from the same company came by with clipboards and cameras and were smiles from ear to ear—especially as one of them said he had actually worked on the floor and ran one of the machines that made this style track clip back when he started there many decades ago.

Another fun story was the visit from Bud Knapp’s great grand daughter late one evening. She stopped by the display and introduced herself and shared her family legacy with Bud with us, and that she was

on staff as the host of the Comic Con at the Amway Grand. She had heard her Grampas '67 Stanaback sled was on display and was hearing much buzz and excitement about our display being the first ever of snowmobiles in the Amway Grand. She shared that it was very emotional and inspiring to see his passion still be shared as we all take over as caretakers of history, just like Budd strove to do.

She also shared some inside scoop with us, that everyone from all the staff, other vendors, and attendees at other events and daily guests/patrons were all super excited and proud of the "old snowmobiles on the mezzanine" .

Each of our team was asked to provide a quote for this article, and everyone of them said basically the same thing-- "it was a great experience in such a cool old historic hotel, and an honor that we got to represent ASCOA, Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club, The Museum (top of lake) and MSA in such a cool positive way".

Article and Photos Submitted by Doug Lubahn