

Old Hastings Snow Riders celebrate volunteers and landowners



By Bill Kilpatrick

On May 4 members of the Old Hastings Snow Riders snowmobile club, who have been active for over 35 years, held their annual dinner at the Legion in Coe Hill. Each year they hold the event to celebrate and thank all their volunteers and landowners who contribute to the success of the club. This year things were done a little differently says Mike Wilton, who is in his second year as club president. Wilton wanted to "step it up quite a bit," and make the appreciation dinner more of an experience as opposed to just dinner and awards, "We want people to say, "Wow! We had a great time," said Wilton. So, this year the club incorporated poker and other card themed games, prizes, a 50/50 draw, a catered dinner by Border Town, and music by the Coe Hill Girls. The dinner was free to all who attended along with all the games. One of the other things that Wilton did differently this year revolved around voting for the awards. Wilton had members send votes to him to tally, as opposed to the executive just picking the winners, and he then kept it a secret until the dinner. The club handed out seven awards this year under multiple different categories including family of the year, volunteer of the year, youth of the year, woman of the year, the communication award, and a new life time achievement award in honour of John Power, who had recently passed away. There was also a special gift certificate for the Granite Restaurant that was given to Wilton for all his hard work and dedication to the club. Despite the poor riding conditions this year, it was a busy year for the club. With a little luck weather wise and a lot of hard work, Wilton said that the club's trails were one of the first opened in Ontario and one of the last to close. The club also held multiple events throughout the year and participated in many other activities. They held a swap meet, a vintage ride, built a warming shack by Mayo Lake Road and Birch Lake Road, they held a free barbecue on Family Day that was attended by over 300 people and they ran out of food, they put up advertising boards and sold them out almost immediately, they partnered with the Coe Hill Riders ATV club on a major trail rehabilitation project, the club took two trail groomers to Coe Hill School and each child got to go and explore the machinery, and they also put up new highway signs. Wilton wanted to thank Karina Laton, the events coordinator for the club and Marg Elliot, who Wilton said, "does everything," for arranging the dinner along with Border Town Restaurant for providing the meal, "No one went home hungry, and everybody had a good time," said Wilton who also thanked the Coe Hill Girls and Laton for providing the entertainment. For Wilton this was an opportunity to say "A big thank you to the volunteers and landowners," he exclaimed, adding, "without them we don't have anything."