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**PRESS RELEASE  
For Immediate Release**

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**NORTHLAND 300 SNOWMOBILERS... ENJOY MILES OF TRAILS WHILE CHANGING LIVES**

What a GREAT snowmobile season for Northland 300 participants as they hit the trails for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Northland 300 to benefit Special Olympics Minnesota. Thursday, January 27<sup>th</sup> Opening Ceremonies kicked off the year's event at Superior Shores Resort in Two Harbors at 8am. Special Olympics Coach Howard Mallory and Lake County Special Olympics Athletes Laurie, Anne, Loni and Todd helped carry the torch to the legendary Northland 300 snowmobiler and Special Olympics Athlete Steven Eull (White Bear Lake team "The Flames") who lit the "Flame of Hope" for the first time in 2011. Kathy Karkula, Volunteer Event Director announced Guest Speakers Mayor Randy Bolen (Two Harbors), Darrin Young, General Manager (Superior Shores Resort), former Mayor of Two Harbors, Robin Glaser and Northland 300 supporters Two Harbors American Legion Color Guard. The National Anthem was sung by Jim Glaser.

Fifty eight snowmobilers departed in teams along with 17 support people destined for Grand Ely Lodge, Ely, MN. Trails were freshly groomed and trail riding was fantastic!

Snowmobilers spent two days in Ely where a free day of riding in surrounding areas and an evening of fun hosted by Grand Ely Lodge at the events "Rockin' 50's" theme party took place. Saturday, riders departed Grand Ely Lodge in teams where the Voyageurs Snowmobile Club hosted a hot chocolate meet and greet at the Yukon Trail Cloquet River Memorial Shelter. Snowmobilers continued their journey to Superior Shores Lodge for a celebratory banquet, dinner, awards ceremony and dance.

Funds raised by 2011 Northland 300 participants were \$180,850 (\$120,296 Cash + \$60,554 In-Kind). The Baker's Dozen (top 13 fundraisers) announced raising a total of \$62,347. Top Fundraisers were: Kathy Karkula \$11,056; Mike Richards \$9,444; Ken Deminsky



\$7,930; Steven Eull \$5,920; Deb Auer \$4,450; Steve Gaertner \$4,030; Laura David \$3,435; Janel Vorel \$3,333; Mike Cook \$3,286; Chad Zawacki \$3,006; Bob Adamek \$2,235; Smitty Jeffrey \$2,155; and Lisa Hagens \$2067.

Northland 300 Special Awards were presented to: Lance Rautio, "John Marschall Tough Luck Award" for tough luck but not stupidity; Mike Richards, "Tom Patterson Northlander of the Year Award" for going above and beyond the call of duty; Greg Briggs, "Steve Jaeger Spirit Award" for believing in the Team Spirit; Dan Young, "CJ Ramstad Unsung Hero Award" for the participant who quietly does good for the ride and Janel Vorel, "Old Into Gold Award" for turning in the most used cell phones. New this year was the "Gold Medal Team of the Year Award" for the team most courteous, prepared on the trail and best camaraderie. T2, the turquoise team led by Jim Reger (team members: Jeremy Bester, Scott Bohnen, Tony Frattalone, Bob Hoppe, Eddie Karow, Adam Kurschner, Tim Mitchell, Lance Rautio, Diane Reger, Greg Schmidt, Jim Soderbeck & Michael Theisen) took the special honors and Loni Staples of Two Harbors represented the athletes of Special Olympics Minnesota and presented each person with a genuine Special Olympics Gold Medal.

Northland 300 Sponsor Awards were presented to Presenting Sponsor: International Brotherhood of Electric Workers (IBEW); Gold Medal Sponsors: Grand Ely Lodge, Hitching Post Motorsports, Jimmy's Food & Drink, ManCave Worldwide, Dan Young, Merrill Lynch, Pro Paint (Metro), Riteway Forms and Mfg, Superior Shores Resort and Walman Optical; Silver Medal Sponsors: Ken Deminsky, Exposures by Moshers and Western Petroleum; Bronze Medal Sponsors: Caliber Products, Discount Tires-Stillwater, Kevin Gallahue/PSA Charities, Jude Vending, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, NAPA Auto Parts, Polaris Foundation, SMW Entertainment, U-Haul Trucks, Ultimate Mechanical and Janel Vorel and Northland 300 Partners: DeEtte Leckner, MN United Snowmobilers, MSPN, Tech Toads, Tire Proz-Stillwater & Hudson and Frito Lay.

Winners of the 2011 Northland 300 Raffle prizes are: **1ST PRIZE:** Glenn Kerfield, Circle Pines, MN 2010 Yamaha Grizzly 700 FI ATV (Sponsored by Hitching Post Motorsports); **2ND PRIZE:** Steve Olson, Deer Park, WI \$1000 Cash (Sponsored by Ken Deminsky, Northland 300 Participant); **3RD PRIZE:** Jessie Burris, Ham Lake, MN \$500 Gas Card (Sponsored by Ken Deminsky, Northland 300 Participant); **4TH PRIZE:** Jeff Nelson, Maplewood, MN Champagne Weekend for Two at Superior Shores Resort (Donated by Superior Shores Resort, Two Harbors, MN); **5TH PRIZE:** Kelly Canavan, Minneapolis, MN Grand Fishing Package-You Pick the Season-2 Nights Lakeview Room-Choice of Rebel Fishing Boat in Summer or Deluxe Fish House in Winter (Donated by Grand Ely Lodge, Ely, MN); **6TH PRIZE:** Beth Berry, Hudson, WI \$350 Store Gift Certificate-Stillwater Discount Package (Donated by Discount Tires - Stillwater); **7TH PRIZE:** Jerry's Auto Detail, Jerry Schonecker, Stillwater, MN \$400 Gift Certificate (Donated by Tire Proz - Stillwater & Hudson).

Northland 300 participants have raised more than \$3.4 Million for Special Olympics Minnesota in 23 years.

Special Olympics Minnesota provides year round sports training and competition for people with intellectual disabilities that contribute to life-long physical fitness, personal growth and achievements.

For additional information, visit [www.northland300.org](http://www.northland300.org) or [www.specialolympicsminnesota.org](http://www.specialolympicsminnesota.org) or contact Kathy Karkula at 612-604-1272 or [karkulak@somn.org](mailto:karkulak@somn.org).