



PHOTO BY JON TATTING

MSA Flagship member Jim "Fuzzy" Deminsky and general manager Ken Olson take in the view of Mille Lacs' east shore from the dining room at MSA Flagship, located near Big Point between Isle and Malmö.

by Jon Tatting  
Messenger Staff Writer

A part of Jim "Fuzzy" Deminsky's connection to the Mille Lacs area relates to his membership aboard Flagship, a military service association many know as one of the social hot spots located off the eastern shore of the big lake between Isle and Malmö.

Deminsky, who once served the U.S. Army before a dislocated shoulder pulled him out, retired to the Hunters Point area three years ago after working 28 years for a waste water treatment plant in the Twin Cities metro area.

## Special Olympics

For the past nine years, he's also been committed to the annual Northland 300 Snowmobile Ride — an event that's raised \$2.485 million for Special Olympics Minnesota. For 18 years an all-volunteer board of directors has planned year-round activities to help support Special Olympics.

Special Olympics Minnesota provides a year-round program of sports training and competition that contributes to life-long physical fitness, personal growth and achievement for people with mental disabilities.

"We have to raise at least \$600," Deminsky said of one's commitment to participate in the snowmobile ride, a journey that begins and ends in Two Harbors with a mid-way stop at Ely.

Through the years, he has received mone-

etary support from organizations, clubs and individual sources, which have helped him remain involved on the event's support team. Support crews, accompanied by trailers, are stationed at certain check points throughout the ride in case any emergency maintenance or medical assistance is needed.

## Why get involved?

Thanks to a nephew and a good family friend who chairs the event, Deminsky got involved with the snowmobile ride almost 10 years ago.

"I don't mind doing volunteer work, and the ride itself is a lot of fun. You meet new people," he said, noting Northland 300 participants may get to meet Special Olympic athletes who attend opening ceremonies and event-related banquets. "Some of these athletes go to the World Special Olympics."

In addition to the snowmobile ride — a January event that totaled 85 sleds this year — other Special Olympics Minnesota activities include a road rally with motorcycles and cars in June, a garage sale in August and the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon held in January.

"They all are going for a great cause," Deminsky said.

Businesses, clubs and individuals looking to donate or contribute to Special Olympics Minnesota can call Flagship, attention Fuzzy Deminsky, at (320) 676-3556. Or contact Kathy Karkula at (800) 783-7732, ext. 272.

More details on the Northland 300 Snowmobile Ride can be found at [www.northland300.org](http://www.northland300.org) or [www.somn.org](http://www.somn.org).

## Reaching out for Special Olympics Minnesota

A modest Jim "Fuzzy" Deminsky considers himself a "little spoke in the wheel" concerning his involvement at an annual snowmobile ride that benefits Special Olympics Minnesota.

Penetrating that modesty, Deminsky's friend Ken Olson is quick to point out another perspective: "But it takes every spoke to make the wheel and whole thing work."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Special Olympics athlete, Lori Mallory, is carrying the Flame of Hope (the Torch) at the Opening Ceremony of the Northland 300 Charity Snowmobile Ride.

