



Pictured left to right Mary Hilke, Chair MnUSA Awards Committee, Bill Ylatupa, Fran Ylatupa and Terry Hutchinson, MnUSA President.

On February 14, 2009, Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association presented its 2009 Snowmobile Family of the Year Award to Bill and Fran Ylatupa of the Silver Trail Riders, Silver Bay, Minnesota. Ylatupas are well known in Northern Minnesota, and throughout the State. Their interest in snowmobiling began, when a typical machine could get you about five miles, without breakdown, on a good day.

Recognizing the need for reliable places to ride, they started building trails in their local area, almost 45 years ago, began the process of procuring easements across public and private land, and participated in the physical process of trail construction. They worked with local and county governments, attended endless meetings to obtain the necessary sponsorship, and worked with their local representatives, toward the creation of the Grant In Aid Program in 1973.

They were instrumental in forming their local Club, one of the oldest and most successful in the state. They have served many terms, in every leadership position of this club, and still serve as Trail Coordinator. As the need arose, and continues for funding, they actively promoted bake sales, dances, dinners, and personally ran at least three large raffles, where snowmobiles were the grand prize. They recently were successful in applying for, and obtaining a Federal Recreational Trails grant, which enabled their club to purchase a new Groomer.

They were very involved, in assisting the Department of Natural Resources several years ago, in the successful defense of a lawsuit, brought by environmental extremists, which sought to prevent the construction of one of their clubs' main trails.

They recognized the need for cooperation beyond their local club, and have served for many years, as Director and Secretary of their Region organization.

As All-Terrain Vehicles came on the scene, they assisted their club in becoming a joint Snowmobile/ATV organization, providing their members opportunity for year-round participation, and realizing the potential for increased political and financial influence, to benefit trails for both sports. They were recently very involved in organizing, and executing, one of the most unique ATV activities ever held in this state.

Now, well into retirement from regular jobs, they show no sign of slowing down from snowmobile and ATV activity, and still perform a large share of their club's trail and equipment maintenance, as well as their administrative work.