

Campaign intensifies following the deaths of two snowmobilers

The deaths of two Ontarians in separate snowmobile mishaps already this winter signals the continuing need for greater community involvement in Ontario's snowmobile safety campaign.

The Ontario Snowmobile Safety Committee launched the second year of its expanded "Ride Safe, Ride Sober" campaign Oct. 22 in Sudbury, emphasizing that snowmobile safety across the province depends on effective coordination at the local level.

However, two people have already lost their lives this season. A man died when his snowmobile plunged through the ice on Clear Lake, northwest of Sturgeon Falls Dec. 5. A teenager was killed and three others were sent to hospital following a snowmobile collision Nov. 3 in Fort Frances.

The figures relating to snowmobile collisions in Ontario are revealing—113 people have been killed and another 1,316 were injured between 1988-89 and 1990-91. This has prompted a number of communities and snowmobile clubs to hold special events and education campaigns that will help people enjoy snowmobiling and come home safely. They have been using community action kits supplied by the Ontario Snowmobile Safety Committee to help effectively plan and manage their own campaigns.

"I am distressed to hear about the two snowmobilers," said Acting Minister of

Tourism and Recreation Ed Philip. "But I take heart in seeing so many communities and clubs respond by joining us in urging people to think safety

Ride Safe, Ride Sober. Vas-y Sûrement, Vas-y Sobrement.

Ontario Snowmobile Safety Committee
Comité ontarien sur la sécurité en motoneige

first before heading out on their snowmobiles. This is the best method we have to reduce fatalities and injuries. Snowmobiling can be both safe and fun, if we all act responsibly."

A pilot project is being initiated within the Sudbury region designed to train selected trail wardens as Provincial Offenses Officers. They will empower the wardens to enforce the Snow Vehicle Act in the areas that fall under the jurisdiction of the Sudbury Trail Plan. This project symbolizes the joint partnerships that will help make snowmobile safety a household term; in this case, the community, the O.P.P. and Sudbury Regional Police.

Examples of other community events or projects associated with safety campaign include SNOWFEST in Haliburton, Feb. 5-7, 1993, and YAMAFEST, also to be held Feb 5-7 in Sudbury. The two events are expected to attract hundreds of participants from across Ontario.

Three new sub-themes will complement the provincial "Ride Safe, Ride Sober" campaign. They include the legal rules of the trail, riding safely on ice and at night.

Response has been positive to the new province-wide Snowmobile Safety Contest, which features a 1993 Yamaha Phazer Deluxe Snowmobile as the grand prize. Participants are being asked to answer questions relating to snowmobile safety.

Toronto Maple Leafs captain Wendel Clark is a spokesperson for this year's campaign and is encouraging everyone to heed the call.

"We can all have a great time snowmobiling," Mr. Clark said. "It's a natural high. We don't need drugs or alcohol. They can be a deadly. Let's play it smart and Ride Safe, Ride Sober everytime out."

The Ontario Snowmobile Safety Committee is spending a total of \$125,000 on the campaign during the 1992-93 snowmobiling season. Many volunteers across the province are donating their time toward this important effort.



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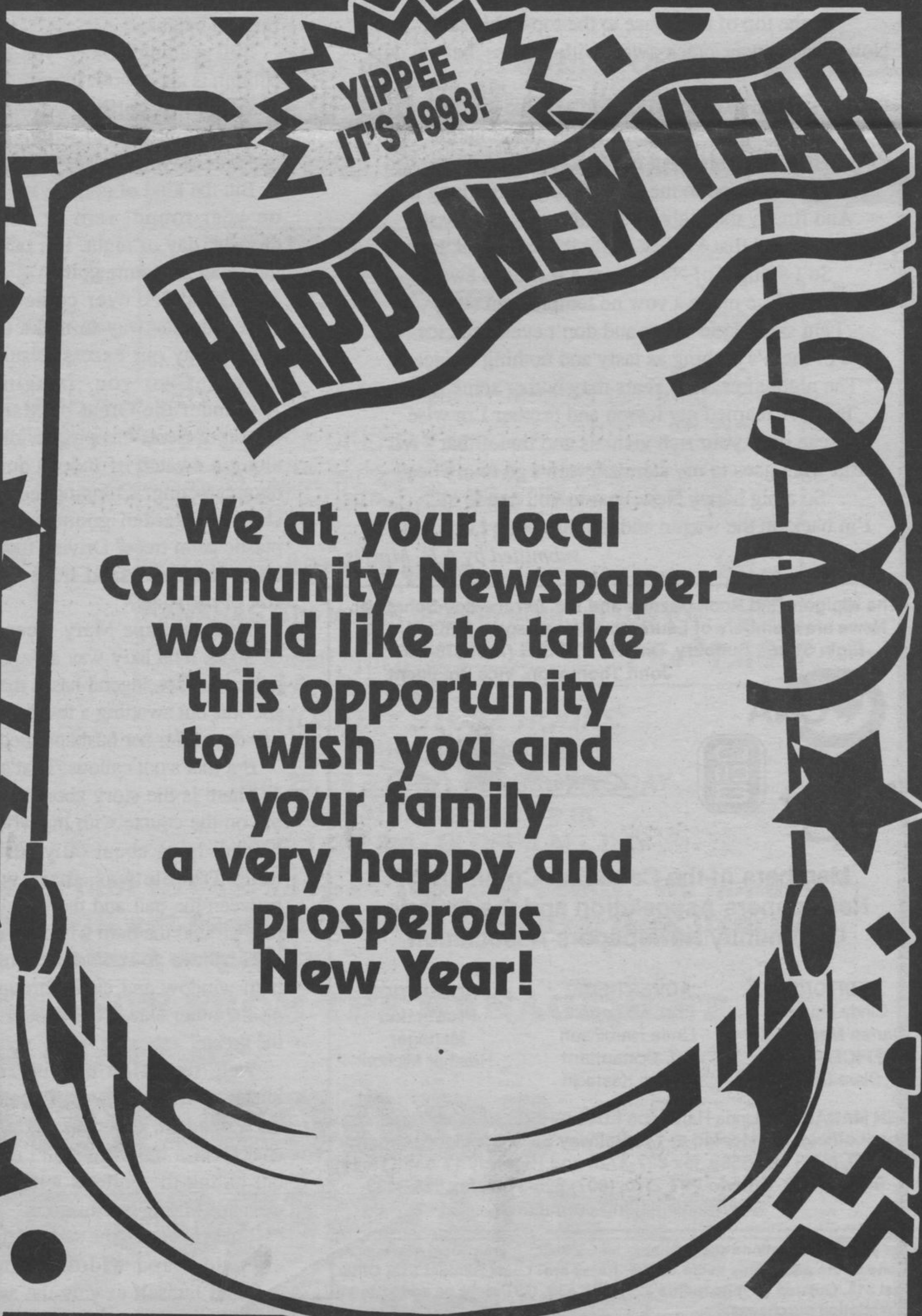
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