

Broken Bone Hill from page eight

I saw Gary at the top of Broken Bone Hill. He was far less confident now. "Pretty good," he said.

My only lament was that I had worn the orange mittens that had accompanied my snowmobile suit instead of my leather gloves. The mittens were a tad warmer, but my grip was more tenuous than the gloves would have been. But there was no going home and changing just then.

One thing the mittens did have was a string that attached them to the suit. I took my right mitten off and wrapped the string around the handle of the saucer. In this way, I assured myself that I would at least stay attached to the saucer, if nothing else.

The other kids had all taken notice at my previous run. They all watched in anticipation as I prepared to fly down that hill again. Pammie, who I had a crush on and Gary, my friendly rival, were both waiting, their breath coming out in steamy puffs. The rest of the kids were watching, too.

"You can do it, Ronny," said Myron Flatt.

I took a running start, which was allowed by rule, and lunged forward. I squinted against the cold and the tiny ice particles that were kicked up by my rocket saucer, the bottom of Broken Bone Hill was coming fast, and I

was definitely still gaining speed.

Once on the straightaway, I looked ahead. I was perfectly lined up for the ramp, I wouldn't have to adjust my vector at all. And so, I went full speed right at it. In the distance, up the hill, I thought I



The rocket saucer kept going as I cursed my father's faulty workmanship. I watched it, first in fascination, and then in horror as it kept going, jumping the ditch onto Highway 8, where it was promptly run over by a tractor-trailer...a Kenworth, to be specific.

I stood up in the deep snow, unhurt but dazed.

Gary had the good grace to inquire if I was alright before gloating about still being the record holder. Pammie muttered something about an asterisk as we made our way to the highway to look at the remnants of my rocket saucer.

"We should find a new place to sled," Tony Freeman said for all of us.

I looked pretty shaky as Peter Harris and Becky

Hartwell gathered the flattened saucer for me. Pammie Hoffman held my hand for the first time that day. It's forty years later, and we still hold hands.

So, now, as I peddle life insurance for a living, I feel I have an advantage over my cohorts on the 30th floor. Would the saucer have dragged me all the way to Highway 8? Maybe not. But maybe so. As you sell life insurance, it sure helps to have your own near-death experience to look back on. Had my father had just a little more experience welding aluminum, I might be one of the statistics I so often relay to my customers.

heard a cheer.

Keep your grip, I kept telling myself. Hold on!

I hit the ramp and immediately felt as if I were now a pilot instead of snow saucer enthusiast. I saw the snow-covered blue spruce ahead and to the left. Dear God, I'm going to fly right past it, I thought.

Then, the unthinkable happened. The saucer that my father had so lovingly and painstakingly created for me failed. The handle, on which I had a death grip, and on which I had tied my snowmobile suit, came off in my hand and I flew off the saucer, just five yards short of Gary's ice aided record.

"No!" I hollered as I fell.

Take a breath . . . enjoy winter in Forest County

FEBRUARY

- 6 Hiles Fishere, 10 a.m., Pine Lake
- 6 32nd Annual Sno-Mo-Wheelers Poker Run
- 12-13 Wabeno Area Players, "Love Letters" 7 p.m., Essenhaus
- 18-21 Wabeno Area Players, Comedy Playn, Ladies of Harmony, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m., Essenhaus
- 27 Laona Fire Department, Silver Lake Fish-o-ree

MARCH

- 5-6 Mole Lake T.R.A.L.S. Pow-wow
- 17 Wabeno Area Players, St. Patrick's Day Themed Theater, 7 p.m., Essenhaus
- 19-20 Forest County Potawatomi Winter's End Pow-wow, Crandon H.S.
- 26 Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt, Courthouse Square, Crandon



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