

# Meissner gets new groomer

Dylan J. Darling / The Bulletin Published Oct 15, 2012 at 05:00AM

Winter is on the way, and so is a new groomer for Meissner Nordic.

The Bend-based nonprofit expects a snowmobile and Ginzu groomer to arrive in the next couple of weeks. The snowmobile will tow the groomer.

“It will be ready for the first snow,” said Cynthia Engel, president of the group.

The new groomer will complement a larger snowcat groomer the group has had for four years. While the group has to pay trained drivers for the snowcat, volunteers will be able to drive the much smaller snowmobile.

“It will save us gas, time,” Engel said.

And it will make solid tracks on the close to 25 miles of trails maintained by Meissner Nordic at Virginia Meissner Sno-park, 14 miles from Bend on Century Drive, said Bob Madden, trails coordinator for the group. As the “Ginzu” name suggests, the new groomer will slice through snow while creating parallel trails for skate- and classic-style nordic skiing.

“It has a bunch of knives that cut up the snow,” Madden said.

To help cover the \$18,500 in costs for the new equipment, Meissner Nordic held a dinner fundraiser Sunday at Aspen Hall at Shevlin Park. Engel said the goal at the Meissner Nordic Fall Fête and Equipment Fundraiser was to raise about \$3,000.

The new groomer will also be able to groom when there is less snow on the ground, meaning the trails could be ready earlier than before, and its smaller size allows it to travel on more narrow trails. The new groomer is 7 feet wide while the one on the snowcat is 14 feet wide.

“It will give us more opportunities,” said Maria Madden, Bob Madden’s wife and a board member for the Bend Endurance Academy.

She said the new equipment will allow volunteers to create trails in places that haven’t been groomed before at the sno-park.

The Bend Endurance Academy is a separate Bend-based nonprofit that offers nordic skiing, cycling and rock climbing. Madden said the nordic program participants train at Virginia Meissner Sno-park.

About 40 to 50 Summit High School students on the school’s nordic skiing team also regularly glide over the trails at the sno-park during wintertime, said Rich Gross, interim nordic coach at the high school.

He is among the skiers excited about the new groomer.

“It’s going to definitely step up the quality of the trails up there,” he said.

**How to join Meissner Nordic**

Meissner Nordic members receive a monthly newsletter and other club benefits while supporting grooming at Virginia Meissner Sno-park. Suggested donations for membership start at \$30 for students, \$75 for individuals and \$125 for families. For more information go to [www.meissnernordic \(http://www.meissnernordic\) .org/membership](http://www.meissnernordic.org/membership).



Maria Madden, left, of Bend, and Meissner Nordic member Kathy Baker-Katz talk about some of the skis and poles available in the raffle during the Meissner Nordic Fall Fête and Equipment Fundraiser on Sunday at Shevlin Park's Aspen Hall in Bend.