



**Clockwise: Photo by: Mitch Roy JATV Fall Fun Run 2016; Photo by: Robert Brown "volunteers from the JATV re-decking a trail bridge over the Nation River just north of Weir Road; Photo by Blake Gamble "JATV Fall Fun Run 2016"**

# ATV RIDING

## Four wheels, fresh air and local trails

By Lisa Crandall

The growing membership of the Johnstown ATV (JATV) Club is proof positive that Canadians are very fond of ATV riding. Incorporated in 2003 current membership in the club stands at 150 members, appropriate since they are celebrating their 15th year in 2018.

In the mid-1960's rugged, noisy three wheeled vehicles, designed for a single rider, recognizably synonymous with the modern ATV, started to become very popular. They eventually evolved into the four wheeled version that is so common today, the go-anywhere vehicle of choice for adventurous wilderness explorers, both young and old.

The JATVC meets on the second Saturday of every month at Angelo's Restaurant inside the Husky Truck Stop, on County Road #44,

where the 401 meets the 416. The truck stop is accessible from the 401 at exit 721. After the regular business of club administration is concluded, the group often heads out for a ride, even in the winter.

The local trail system extends from the Husky Truck Stop near Johnstown to Merrickville and consists of approximately 300 kilometers of trails. The trails include something for everyone, from hardwood forests, to cedar swamps and sand dunes, including especially muddy sections if that's the challenge you are after. There are two bridges that cross the Nation River and a purpose built tunnel under Highway 416. The trails are open all year, with the exception of the local deer hunting rifle season and the obligatory "spring thaw" period.

The JATV club is one of 18 associated chapters of the Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs (OFATV) and is one of the 6 clubs in the OFATV's District #1. The function of the JATVC is essentially as an educator for riders and as a public relations ambassador for the sport at large. The local and provincial ATV organizations work with municipalities to adjust local bylaws to accommodate riders, as well, they work with local land

owners to open up new trails. Part of the incentive to landowners is that the OFATV, through the local clubs, provides liability insurance for the landowner. This only allows riders who are official members of an affiliate ATV club access to these trails.

According to club President Pat Marceau, equally important advantages of being a member of the JATVC are the camaraderie of getting to know other riders through various club hosted events, the availability of advice to beginners about safety, equipment maintenance and the buying and selling of machines, and discounts with local businesses. Becoming a member of JATVC also allows you to ride on any other OFATV club trails throughout Ontario, as well as taking advantage of reciprocal agreements with the ATV clubs under the Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance. In addition, you can now use your yearly OFATV pass to ride any of the New Brunswick ATV Club trails.

The JATVC organizes three big group rides each year. Two of the rides function as fundraisers for the local club and the third, scheduled for June 24th this year, is designated as a special fundraiser for local charities. One of these charities being "Connect Youth" ([www.connectyouth.ca](http://www.connectyouth.ca)), a local charity program that connects youth with appropriate services and programs to help them adjust during difficult periods in their lives. The money raised during the two seasonal fundraisers goes to help pay for trail maintenance. These fundraising rides are family outings and can include as many as 100 riders. There is a group BBQ at the end of the day, complete with prizes, supplied by local sponsors. **LH**

**Editor's Note:** Information about the upcoming ride for charity, as well as club news and trail maps can be found at the JATV website <http://johnstownatvclub.org/>. Annual memberships cost \$150 (individual), with family group discounts available. Day passes are also available at a cost of \$20 per vehicle.