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This is part of an occasional series by the Sanpete County Travel and Utah Heritage Highway 89 Alliance on the people and places along U.S. Highway 89.

11th Annual Snowmobile ‘Shootout’ set for March 30 – April 1

Eleven years ago, Bruce Kahlhamer came up with an idea: every year, around his birthday, he’d gather in Utah with some of his clients for a snowmobile “shootout.”

Kahlhamer owns PSI Power Inc., now located in Ogden, which manufactures high performance equipment for snowmobiles, motocross and ATVs. The company used to be based in Wisconsin and had clients all over the United States. Every now and then, customers liked to get together to test their latest creations. “Everyone was building faster and faster machines,” he says. “They wanted to see how they compared and competed against what others were building.”

So Kahlhamer chose Sanpete County’s Skyline Drive, located up Fairview Canyon, as the meeting place. Every year, clients from all over the country would travel to the region for the annual “shootout” where snowmobilers travel at a high rate of speed and race each other up hills.

Kahlhamer eventually moved his business to Utah, and the ‘shootout’ became an official event. This year’s 11th annual Skyline Snowmobile Shootout will be held March 30 to April 1. The free event is open to the general public.

“It all started as a gathering for a customer base,” he says. “Every year, it got more and more competitive. Pretty soon, it became a full-blown, annual event and now, upwards of 500 to 1,000 people from all over the United States come out to race one another or just to watch the action.”

The popular weekend event includes plenty of “shootouts,” where riders can go as fast as 120 miles per hour, as well as other activities like snowmobile rides, drag races and hill climbs. Turbo and nitrous sleds “will be the norm,” Kahlhamer says.

There is no set schedule for the events, as most of the races are impromptu, he adds. Friday usually is the “gathering and catching up day,” and most of the shootouts are held on Saturday, with Sunday being a “packing up” day.

Kahlhamer says he originally selected Sanpete County for its central location, “people come from all over the mid-west and even Canada.” It also was chosen for its great terrain and “lots of parking places.” “It really has worked out as the ideal location.

For more information on the event, contact Kahlhamer at (801) 393-1010. More information about PSI is available online at: <http://www.psipowerinc.com/>

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