

RA SKI-MAIL APRIL 1, 2016

Editor-in-chief: Glen Campbell, publicity_2015{at}raski.ca

Cross-Country Editor: G. S. Campbell

Downhill Editor: Glen C.

Sports Editor: G. Campbell

Snow Biking Editor: Jane Rau

International Correspondent: Bill Buck

Fashion Editor: Andrea Conway

TV Critic: Tom Wiley

RA SKI CLUB ADDS SNOW-BIKE PROGRAM

As many of you know, the NCC has introduced a new winter activity to Gatineau Park – snow biking or “fat tire” biking. Following this winter’s successful snow biking trial in Gatineau Park, where the bikes were allowed on four snowshoe trails, the NCC has extended the program next winter to allow the bikes on all the cross-country and snowshoe trails.

A few of our members have raised concerns about the impact this might have on the XC and snowshoe trails but the majority have emailed us to say that they are simply ecstatic that their favourite XC and snowshoe trails can now be shared and enjoyed by more outdoor enthusiasts.

As always, your executive listens and pays close attention to what members are saying. We have consulted with both the NCC and the Ottawa Mountain Bike Association on how we, as a club, can best take advantage of this wonderful opportunity and incorporate this into our program. Inspired by the success of the new snowshoe program, under the very competent leadership of Doris Dallaire, we feel confident that a Snow Bike program could also thrive in our club.

Over the years, we have seen a decline in membership that is worrisome. Our hope is that this new program will attract a younger, more active group of new members who will eventually take on leadership roles in the club. In fact, we have already signed on five prominent members of the Ottawa mountain bike community who will be encouraging their fellow bikers to join us next season.

We hope that you are as excited as we are about this new program, and that some of you will step up to help us in implementing it for 2016-17. We will be creating a new position on our executive - Chair, Snow Biking. Our Annual General Meeting is on April 20 and nominations are now being accepted for positions on the executive. Please consider putting your name forward for this new position.

Requirements for the Snow Biking Chairperson are:

- Must own or have access to a snow bike.

- Must have the ability dodge cross-country skiers going uphill when you are speeding downhill.

In the interim, Jane R. (XC Co-Chair) is putting together a tentative Snow Biking program for next year and welcomes any suggestions, comments or questions you might have: xc_2015{at}raski.ca.

SKIING BANNED IN THE U.S.

President Trump has declared that skiers are "Not nice people" and closed all ski hills. In addition he has issued arrest warrants for anyone seen in possession of a snowboard or wearing snowboard fashions, calling snowboarders "terrorists of the slopes". Anyone suspected of "un-American thought" such as liking snow will be sent to Guantanamo Bay, recently depopulated by former President Obama.

A coast-to-coast wall will be built to keep out Canadian skiers, and weather. It will be eight miles high, higher than both weather systems and snowboarders. President Trump has declared that Canada will pay for the wall.

In the tradition of the Underground Railroad of days, your RA Ski Club will organize an underground half pipe to rescue American snowboarders. Volunteers with shovels please contact our chair, Bill Buck, at pipeline@raski.ca.

SAT. APRIL 2 - CYCLE & DH SKI – MONT SAINT-SAUVEUR

Meet at the RA west wing doors at 2:45 a.m. for departure at 3:00.

Your RA Ski Club is conscious of our members' pocketbooks in these difficult economic times. So we're doing a low-cost, downhill trip to Mont St-Sauveur.

We'll cycle to St. Sauveur. Cost is only \$55. We save by providing our own transportation! Plus we get some exercise along the way, as there isn't a lot of exercise downhill skiing. The lifts take you up, and gravity brings you down.

Excercise, skiing, and low cost! It's a win-win! Sign up now before this trip fills up! Register at the RA East wing desk.

XC SKI TRIP SUN. APR. 3 – MYSTERY DESTINATION

Meet: RA west wing lobby at 8:45 a.m. for departure at 9:00.

We have a cross-country ski outing you'll never forget, to a mystery destination.

Items to bring:

- container of water
- snack

- flashlight
- pepper spray
- 50 feet of rope
- first aid kit
- matches
- machete or axe
- flares
- crampons
- life jacket

After, we'll have a late lunch at a local restaurant.

Trip leader: Glen Campbell

TEST YOUR SKI KNOWLEDGE

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If you answer all the questions correctly, you win a free downhill lift pass for Camp Fortune's magic carpet for June, July & August 2016.

1. Which of the following people are on the Canadian downhill ski team?

- a) Justin Trudeau
- b) Stephen Harper
- c) Manuel Osborne-Paradis
- d) Tom Mulcair

2. Where were the first Alpine World Ski Championships held?

- a) Tucson, Arizona
- b) Portillo, Chile
- c) Miami, Florida
- d) Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

3. In 1956, Montreal's Lucile Wheeler won Canada's first Olympic alpine medal – a bronze in downhill in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy. What was the number of the flight that she took to return to Montreal?

Answers in our next Ski-Mail.

RA SKI Q&A CORNER

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The RA Ski Club reached into its mailbag to answer some ski-related questions from our members.

1. Q: I'm 5'10". How long should my cross-country poles be?

A: It's very important that your poles be the correct length for your height, so that you get the maximum push with each stride. The RA Ski Club has a strong cross-country program, and we go out every week, alternating Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons. Most of our outings are in Gatineau Park, but several times we ski elsewhere, such as Nakkertok and Montebello.

2. Q: I have never downhill skied before, but I want to take it up. Which of our local ski hills is the best one for learning to ski?

A: There are two local ski hills that are best suited for the beginner skier. The RA Ski club caters to downhill skiers of all levels. On our bus trips, whether you are a beginner, intermediate skier, or like the black and double-black runs, we make sure you have someone to ski with at your level. Our club motto is "Friends to Ski with and to Be With."

3. Q: I want to take up snowshoeing. What kind of snowshoes do you recommend that I buy?

A: Excellent question. The RA Ski Club has a strong snowshoe program. Snowshoeing is easy to do, is a safe activity, and not much equipment is required. It's often free of charge to use the trails, and a good way to get outdoors in the winter with some friends. Our schedule includes both weekends and weekdays, and we car-pool to local trails including Mont Cascades, the Greenbelt, Gatineau Park, Wakefield and a moonlight outing to Mer Bleu.

SEEN ON A T-SHIRT

I might look like I'm listening to you, but in my head I'm skiing.

SPORTS CORNER

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World Cup Skiing

Canadian men and women surprised everyone at last weekend's downhill races in St. Moritz, Switzerland, by how well they did. Here are the final results for the Canadians.

- Ladies' Giant Slalom: Marie-Michelle Gagon 2:27.35
- Men's Downhill: Eric Guay 1:40.98
- Ladies' Downhill: Larisa Yurkiw 1:42.47
- Ladies Slalom: Erin Mielznski 1:48.10

Congratulations to our Canadian skiers! We're proud of you!

AND FOR THE DOWNTON ABBEY FANS...

It has come to light that the writers and producers of Downton Abbey were extremely divided on how to wrap up this most acclaimed series. In the end, they chose the feel good option and tied up all the loose ends felicitously. Our investigative reporting team has determined that the following darker alternatives were given serious consideration by the Downton writing team:

- Bates gets a job – what does he do anyway other than hang around the kitchen?
- Anna’s baby looks just like Carson.
- The hospital is torched and the Dowager is led off in chains.
- Cora runs off with Thomas. Turns out his purported unnatural proclivities were merely a cover for his longstanding licentious and lascivious liaison with Lady Grantham. As they flee hand-in-hand across the open fields of Downton, Cora is heard to exclaim: “I never could stomach that stuff shirted dirt bag.”
- Tom’s unexpected return is finally explained when it comes to light that he has been convicted of running a Ponzi scheme in New York. He disappeared and fled to England while out on bail awaiting sentencing. Now he is being extradited back to the States. Unfortunately, he used the deed of Downton Abbey as bail. Consequently the Abbey falls into the hands of a Louisiana brothel entrepreneur.
- But we need some good news. Henry gives up racing, but only after running over Lady Mary under suspicious circumstances and marrying Lady Edith.

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