

April 2015

More than just a ski club

www.raski.ca

SNOWPHONE : 613-736-6235

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

When: Wednesday, April 15th, 7:00 PM

Where: Courtside A, RA Centre (East end of the building)

Mark April 15th on your calendar! It's our RA Ski Club's Annual General Meeting

Your executive worked hard to set up this year's program. The best way you can thank them is by coming out to our Annual General Meeting.

- See photo highlights of our activities over the past year. If you took part in any of our activities, you're probably in one of the photos.
- Let us know what you did and didn't like this year, and how we can improve.
- Hear the reports from each of the executive portfolios.
- Elect the executive for next year.

All portfolios are up for election but in particular

- Chair
- Weeklong (Vice-Chair)
- Downhill Weekend Chair
- Cross-Country Co-Chair

NOTE: The position of Chair must be filled by someone already on the executive according to the by-laws which will leave one other position vacant.

Volunteer and help us run our programs next year! Nominate yourself or someone else. Send nominations to: secretary_2015@raski.ca.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR & SNOWSHOE CHAIR

It's been a cold winter!! And because of that several of our outings had to be cancelled. But despite the weather, we still got some good skiing and snowshoeing in. The weeklong trip to France was a huge success even though there were only 30 of us and all participants enjoyed it tremendously. We welcomed several newcomers and we hope they will join us again in future. Despite the earlier travel date, the weather co-operated by providing a good amount of snow on our arrival so everyone got some good skiing in. Some of us went for a guided snowshoe tour which proved to be a wonderful experience. The weekend to Tremblant in early February at Le Grand Lodge was also a success despite the cold weather. More recently we enjoyed a great three days of skiing and snowshoeing at Jay Peak. The weather was a bit of a challenge at times, but people still got some good skiing and snowshoeing done. We also enjoyed two bus trips, the first to St-Sauveur and more recently an early celebration of St.Paddy's day to ski at Tremblant, Mont Blanc and Domaine St-Bernard for the cross-country skiers and snowshoers. Locally, the mid-week meet and skis continued to be well attended for the downhillers and cross-country outings also had a good number of skiers enjoying their sport both weekends and mid-week. There weren't as many snowshoe outings this year because January had a lack of snow and February was so cold. But the few we did have proved to be really good outings. And now spring is here and it's time to think of summer activities!

Our AGM is on Wednesday, April 15th this year and we hope you will come out and hear our reports, see photos of some of the highlights of the past year, and possibly volunteer to take on a position on the executive. As always, all positions are open but four of us will definitely not continue in our positions. So there is a definite need for your help.

The RA staff has been very helpful to us again this year. Vanessa Normore took over the reins from Nancy Kirkwood this year and Nancy was instrumental in helping Vanessa learn her new position and ensure that the transition was a smooth process. So special thanks go to both Vanessa and Nancy for all their help. We also thank Sharron Malott for her assistance as well as Isabelle da Silva who looks after posters, formatting newsletters, the display in the RA hallway and all the staff who help with the Open House and with preparing the equipment we need to attend the ski show. Huge thank you to all member of the executive for all the work you do in planning and organizing our outings and all the other work you do that benefit our club. Thank you to all of you who volunteered by being trip leader in our outings, at the ski show and open house and to those who participated in our outings and trips. You've played your part in making this club what it is - not just a ski club and also friends to ski with and be with!

Doris Dallaire, chair_2015@raski.ca

END-OF-SEASON DH/XC POT-LUCK DINNER

When: Saturday April 18th, 6:00 PM

Where: Kanata (Small community centre at 100 Pine Hill)

Directions: Take Queensway west to Eagleson Exit. Turn left onto Eagleson and go south, past Hazeldean Mall, a fire hall, and a Tim Horton's. After that turn left onto Stonehaven. At the stop sign after the traffic circle, turn left onto Pine Hill. The Community Centre is on your left after you pass three streets to your left, and has a small parking lot but you can also park on the street.

Come join in a celebration of the ski year just past and of the summer to come. We'll be celebrating with a potluck dinner at our usual location in Kanata. Bring a dish to share, and your own beverages. Guests are welcome.

A survey about RA Ski's past and future activities will be available at the potluck.

YOU MUST LET US KNOW YOU ARE ATTENDING.

Contact Louise Cameron at social_2015@raski.ca **BY APRIL 16th** and let us know if you are coming and what category of food you'll be bringing (i.e. appetizer, main course, salad, dessert).

PHOTOS & TRIP REPORTS

Photos and trip reports from most of our outings are on the RA Ski web site, www.raski.ca.

Trip Reports

On the sidebar on the left, click on "Trip Reports", then on either "Cross-Country" or "Downhill".

Photos

For photos, on the left sidebar, click on "Photos", then on the appropriate album ("Cross-country", "Downhill", "Snowshoeing", or "Biking Hiking and Skating".) To see the photo larger, double-click on it, then click on the down arrow on the lower-right, then click on "View all sizes."

We also put "RA Ski Photos of the Week" on our home page [raski.ca](http://www.raski.ca)

Thanks to our RA Ski photographers for providing us with some great pictures of our weeklong, weekend and day trips.

CROSS-COUNTRY NEWS

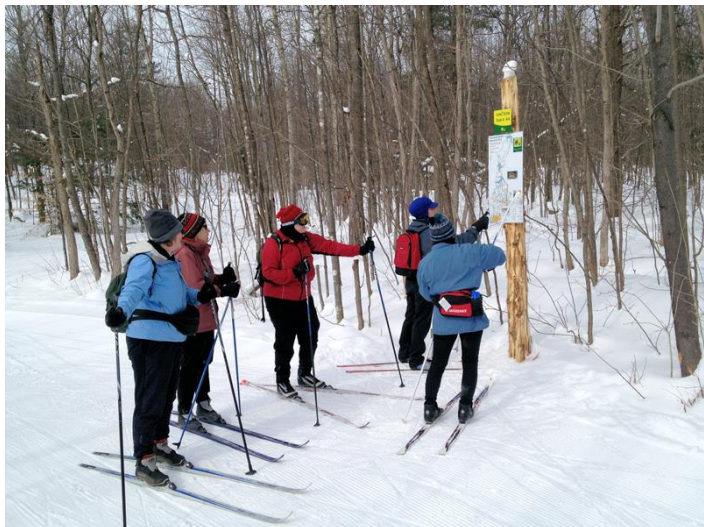
It's been an interesting season for skiing. However, it takes more than extremely cold temperatures and a lack of snow to keep RA XC skiers indoors. Fortunately, by early March, we returned to near normal temperatures. This combined with a few decent snowfalls has made the skiing quite delightful. Hopefully the good snow base will continue well into April so we can enjoy some glorious spring skiing.

Both weekend day trips and weekday trips were well attended this year. A few trips had to be cancelled or rerouted for lack of snow or poor conditions, but generally trips went as planned.



Jan. 2015 – P17 Wakefield to Lac Philippe

We enjoyed two day outings to locations outside of Gatineau Park. For the third year in a row, we skied at the Nakkertok Nordic Ski Centre and, on Valentine's Day, we skied the trails at Montebello and enjoyed a relaxing lunch in the historic lodge. We will continue to include one or two outings outside of Gatineau Park each season. If you have recently skied at another locale, let us know. We are always looking for ideas.



Feb. 11 – XC skiers at Nakkertok

There were 15 participants on our Mont Tremblant trip in February this year, enjoying excellent conditions for cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing. This was our first time staying at le Grand Lodge and it was delightful. We had great meals and quiet accommodation. We gathered each evening in front of the large fireplace before dining in our private dining room. During our Friday dinner, we all played a wonderful game of Ski Trivia that two of our members put together. Even though it was cold, the XC trails were well-groomed with no ice. The snowshoeing was also very good according to the groups who snowshoed each day. We plan to return to either Val David or Mont Tremblant next year.



Feb. 2015 – Snowshoers at Mont Tremblant

Your XC co-chairs would like to extend a very special thank you to the people who led trips this year. To put it quite simply, without these generous volunteers, we would not have a XC program. If you haven't volunteered in the past, you might want to consider this for next year. Speaking from experience, it is a very satisfying and rewarding opportunity and the more leaders we have, the better.



Feb. 2015 – XC skiers on Tremblant weekend

Your feedback on any aspect of the cross-country program is welcome. E-mail your comments to:

Jane Rau & Maureen Adamache, xc_2015@raski.ca

PUT YOURSELF ON OUR SKI-MAIL LIST

Keep up to date with our weekly Ski-Mail e-mail. Learn about late-breaking events, like hikes or bike trips. But... you have to put yourself on the list. It's easy! Go to our web site www.raski.ca, and click on "e-Maillist". Ignore the part about you needing a Yahoo account.

OTHER WAYS TO KEEP UP-TO DATE:

- Call the **SNOWPHONE** at **613-736-6235**
- Check out our web site www.raski.ca
- Send an e-mail to currentevents@raski.ca for a one-time bounce-back e-mail of upcoming events.

BE OUR FACEBOOK FRIEND

www.facebook.com/groups/123160745055

You don't have to have a Facebook account to check out our Facebook page and find out about our activities. Our members post info on our activities as well as trail reports from our skiers. Only if you want to get e-mails of our ski reports, or if you want to post something, do you need to have a Facebook account and join the group: RA Ski & Snowboard Club.

DOWNHILL NEWS

This season, our frigid temperatures definitely surpassed last year's complaints! RA skiers braved the extreme cold, however, and once again enjoyed the great outdoors. Local ski hill operators worked diligently to keep us skiing on well-groomed hills and conditions were excellent, even near the end of March.

Meet 'n' Ski Outings

Despite the chill, the twenty mid-week Meet 'n' Skis drew hearty skiers, and numbers were a little higher overall than last winter. We could rarely identify who we were skiing with because of the face masks, worn to combat frost bite! Skiers who braved the elements were surprised and delighted by the typically excellent snow conditions and the pleasant company. Many thanks to our trip leaders who kept track of our skiers and ensured that everyone was included, both on the hill and during our lunch breaks.



Dec. 19/14 – DH Meet'n'Ski at Mont Ste-Marie

Day Bus Outings

This year I instituted a new practice of inviting non-members to join one bus trip outing so that they might experience our friendly club. The hope was that they would enjoy our venues and our hospitality, and become members. We need people on our buses to make these bus outings viable, so inviting non-members was, potentially, a Win-Win.

Our mid-week bus trip to Mont St-Sauveur took place on January 9th. The weather gods prevailed and we had fresh snow with -8°C and no wind. Twenty-two skiers and three Getaway enthusiasts registered, for a total of twenty-five registrants. The trip was in jeopardy of being cancelled due to registration numbers, but RA staff were very supportive and we managed to make it a GO. Taking into account the RA fee, we were in the red by approximately \$113 after paying bus, lift tickets, gratuity, and snacks. We had six non-member participants, and received very positive feedback from all of them.

Our second bus trip to Mont Tremblant / Mont Blanc / Domaine St-Bernard took place on March 16th. A total of thirty-seven people registered including twenty-eight downhill skiers, two cross country skiers, five snowshoers, and two 'Getaway' participants. We not only covered all costs, but made enough to cover our shortfall at St-Sauveur. Our St. Paddy's Day contest was again a huge success and fun for all – especially Grand Prize Winners! We had seven non-member participants who spoke positively about the trip, so we will hopefully have new members next season.

The ongoing marketing in the form of Specials, E-Blasts, web notices, publicity email notices and Facebook advertising is keeping the bus trips in people's minds and, ultimately, seems to be paying off.

Andrea Conway, Downhill Chair, downhill_2015@raski.ca



Mar. 16 – Our trip leader on the bus to Tremblant



Mar. 16/15 – RA skiers at Mont Blanc



Winners of the St. Paddy's Day contest on the bus to Tremblant



Mar. 16 – RA skiers at Tremblant

WEEKLONG TO MORZINE, FRANCE

It was only after Moe discovered an abandoned RASki ski bag at the Geneva airport that we realized we had a serious ski mix-up situation on our hands that ultimately had more twists to it than an Agatha Christie novel. Details cannot be revealed at this time as our three skiing lawyers are currently in the midst of contract negotiations for the movie rights.

And so began the RA Ski Club Weeklong Trip (2015) to Morzine France. As hoped for, there was plenty of snow on the ground when we arrived at our hotel, no matter that it had only fallen the day before. The mountains however had plenty of snow and with this fresh layer sparkling beneath our skis, a bright blue sunny sky above, and crisp dry air at -5C, we were in skiing heaven. Even those who hadn't been skiing till now found themselves letting loose in mid-season form right off the bat. Our elation was practically euphoric with everything being so perfect.



Jan. 2015 - RA skiers at Morzine, France

Like stones shaken in a can, it only takes a few runs for skiers of similar level to find each other and from then on everybody has someone to ski with for the whole holiday. That's one of the pleasures of skiing with a big group. Nobody need ski alone unless they choose to. On one snowy day James and Marg advanced to level 1, or 10, whichever is the highest, and skied all the black runs while the rest of us worked our way through the heavy snow, quitting of exhaustion in the early afternoon. To compensate, we wet our sorrows, not drowned, in a Main Street pub with some comfort food, followed by some downtown shopping. Nobody ever buys much. 'Shopping' is really just an excuse to enjoy the ambiance and flavour of a European Alpine village, all part of a skiing holiday.



Snowshoeing at Morzine

On the fourth day eight of us plus three other couples, also guests at our hotel whom we incorporated in our activities went on a 60+km circle tour of the Portes du Soleil region guided by Raymond, a 70ish year old mountain man with a rugged complexion from years in the outdoors, natural skiing ability, warm but authoritative manner, and most important, two hollow screw topped ski poles that just happened to be filled with schnapps. Naturally we all had a slug. One must guard against the cold you know. I don't think any of us will ever forget Raymond. We had a great time with him.



Jan. 2015 – RA skiers on the guided tour

The hotel we stayed at was perfect. There is no other word to describe it. Small and intimate enough for a group our size, comfortable, cozy, all the body soothing amenities needed for after skiing relaxation, plus the friendliest and most involved staff we have ever encountered on a Weeklong trip. Not only did they cater to our needs, as did the others, but they interacted with us in a nice friendly way, providing a totally unexpected evening of rousing entertainment and games, making a big production of cooking/serving raclette on the chef's night off (not quite sure how to describe that properly), inviting us to visit the wine cellar to meet the owner's 'goat' (you had to be there), assisting Sam to show his videos, and many other homey touches.

Our dinners, prepared with loving care by Chef Henri, were both delicious and an art, each serving meticulously arranged so carefully that many cameras came out to record French cuisine at its' best. Following the main course, a cart with an enticing array of local cheeses was wheeled to each table where individuals could make personal selections. And always on hand, wonderful fresh breads for accompaniment. Many wine'd, but no one whined.



Jan./15 – RA skiers at border with Switzerland

While this was basically a ski trip, other activities were enjoyed with equal pleasure. Cross Country skiing of course, snowshoeing, two hockey games attended in the local arena, scenic photography, organized tours sponsored by the town of Morzine and so on. Naturally there were a few incidents, such as Moe's spectacular crash on the tour when he sent snow flying in a display worthy of a Warren Miller highlight, Ron's 'missing skis'.....that weren't, and of course, the initial ski mix-up. And this is only my version of the trip. There are 29 other versions out there. They can write about the fabulous skiing, the fireworks, the fondue, the

Thanks for a great trip everybody.

Roger Duffy, Trip leader
Weeklong_2015@raski.ca

DH/XC/SS TRIP TO JAY PEAK

On Sunday, March 1, RASkiers returned to Jay Peak after a long absence, eager to see the new resort bases and hit the trails. Our driver, J-M, was extremely helpful and as we passed Bromont, we were able to settle our dinner plans for the trip home Wednesday evening.

We experienced a bit of an adventure with the bus upon arrival. Jay Peak isn't really bus friendly and when we drove to the Tram Haus to drop off one participant, there wasn't any real place to turn around. Then we were sliding on a hill covered with snow and ice until our valiant driver managed to get the bus backed up and turned around. We had to get the resort to move some cars parked on the road before that could happen though.

During our stay, we found everyone to be extremely friendly, lifties, ski hosts, resort workers, shuttle drivers, restaurants and stores staff. You could ask questions of anyone wearing Jay insignia or for directions and most of them would even walk you there!



View from the top of Jay Peak

On the first morning, one RASkiier met a Jay Host at the Stateside Cafeteria and upon mention of our group, she offered her services for a morning tour. Eight RASkiers spent the morning learning the ins and outs of Stateside and Tram side, which trails should be skied at which times of day, and where the fun glades can be found. Elsa, daughter-in-law of Chic (of the Jay Peak first-timers video <http://www.jaypeakresort.com/lodging/first-timers-video>), is a wonderful ambassador for Jay. She apparently enjoyed our company enough to offer to meet RASki again the next morning – her day off – and brought a friend to show us some of the fun black trails and the seriously fun glades.

Jay holds a number of events or excursions each week. The Monday night welcome event was fun – 2 drinks, lots of snacks, info tables for resort offerings – and well attended by the majority of our group. We all met Chic, who was handing out drink tickets at the door. It was a good chance for our group to meet up and exchange stories before dinner.



Skiing in the powder at Jay

Our 2015 RASki weather luck continued and the flurries that started upon our arrival turned into a full storm overnight. We awoke to inches of fresh powder in March! However, Vermont must be an honorary Maritime province, because weather-wise, it really was a case of “if you don't like it, wait 5 minutes!” We experienced cloud cover, low visibility, snow flurries, gusty winds, flat light, bright sunshine and clear skies, and misty snow - all in the same hour some days. Plus snow again on Tuesday night for more powder on Wednesday!

The gusty wind did cause our intrepid snowshoers to change their plans one morning when they tried to make their way across the base to the trailhead, but fought the winds the entire way, never making the shelter of the treed trails.



Four RA skiers at Jay Peak

The shuttle service was reasonably frequent, convenient and ran until midnight or so to carry us back and forth from side to side. The gale force winds on Tuesday night kept all but the hardest from heading out to Tram side in the evening for Trivia Night at the Tower Bar.

Our return trip was very smooth. Our driver arrived early to scout out his best approach and departure. Everyone was ready to go by loading time, so we left at 4:00 instead of 4:30, sailed through Customs, permitting a leisurely dinner in Bromont, and home by 9:30 PM.



Our trip leader, Jaime, on Jay's people mover.

Jaime Impey, DH Weekend Chair, dhweekend_2015@raski.ca

SOCIAL

RA SKI ANNUAL POT-LUCK DINNER – Sat. Apr. 18

6 p.m., 100 Pine Road, Kanata

Join your fellow skiers for delicious food! See page 1 for all the details.

HIKES

Meeting point (unless posted otherwise):

Supreme Court Building (east side) on Wellington at 9:45 AM for a 10:00 AM car pool departure.

- **Sat. April 25:** Urban hike to explore another neighbourhood in Ottawa, destination TBD after some reconnaissance forays. Meeting place depends on the destination. Check the SnowPhone and the website.
- **Sun May 3:** Gatineau Park, Pine Road to Herridge cabin. 10 k round trip on an easy trail. Bring a lunch.
- **Sun. Aug 16:** on the some of the trails behind Vorlage near Wakefield, followed by a chance to explore the town.



Oct. 2014 – Hike to Lusk Lake

CYCLING

Note that we are leisurely cyclists, and are not training for the 2016 Olympics.

- **Mon. May 18:** A short, easy bike ride from the RA to Mooney's Bay, along the canal, Dow's Lake (to see the tulips), and back along the Rideau River. 19 km round trip. Meet at the West desk of The RA Centre at 10AM.
- **Sat. May 30:** Bate Island to Shirley's Bay. Depart 10:00 a.m. (from Bate Island, Champlain Bridge). Bring a lunch.
- **Sun. June 14:** destination to be decided – check the Snowphone and the website!
- **Sat. July 11:** RA Centre to Lac Leamy. Departure time (from RA west wing) 10:00 a.m. We'll bike from the RA, along the Rideau River, across the MacDonald Cartier Bridge to the beach at Lac Leamy, where we'll stop for a picnic lunch. We'll return via the Ruisseau de la Brasserie, the canal and Rideau River to the RA. 32 km round trip.
- **Tues. July 21:** Bearbrook Road to Petrie Island. Bring a lunch. Departure time (from the P25 parking lot on Bearbrook between St. Joseph and Innes) - 10:00 a.m.



Aug. 2014 – Cycling to Lac Leamy

OUTDOOR SUMMER THEATRE

In July, join us for some outdoor theatre with the Company of Fools in a local park. This summer's production is Shakespeare's "A Comedy of Errors". Check our web site and SnowPhone later for all the details.

In August, we will see Odyssey's Theatre's annual Theatre Under the Stars. They haven't announced their play yet, so check our SnowPhone and website later for details.



Theatre-in-the-Park – Watching a play by *The Company of Fools*

AND MORE...

We are still lining up more hikes and bike rides for the spring and summer. There will be more cycling and hiking in the fall and we may add other summer events as they come up.



July 2014 – Cycling to Parc Mousette

If you would like to lead one of these events or have ideas for other RA Ski Club social activities, please contact Louise Cameron, Social Coordinator at social_2015@raski.ca. We welcome your input, especially over the summer holiday months. Please keep checking the RA Ski Club website, SnowPhone and Ski-Mail for updates and for news of more upcoming social events.

Louise Cameron, Social Chair, social_2015@raski.ca



Jan. 2015 – RA Skiers at Morzine, France



March 2015 – Snowshoers at Domaine St-Bernard



Dec. 2014 - XC ski from P9 to P5



Dec. 2014 – RA skier at Mont Ste-Marie



Feb. 2015 – RA snowshoers at Bruce Pit



**Mar. 2015 – XC skiing with a deer at
Domaine St-Bernard**



Aug. 2014 – Cycling at Lac Leamy



Mar. 2015 – RA skier at Vorlage