

HAPPY NEW YEAR, RA SKIERS!

As I write on the official first day of winter, I, like you, look out the window at the dreary weather in frustration. However, long-term forecasts are pointing to improving conditions as a slightly late Christmas gift. We have again a full slate of activities for cross-country skiers, downhill skiers and snowshoers, as well as a number of pub nights and other social activities. With colder weather and some snow in the long term forecast, by the time you read this, we will have already had several DH Meet'n'Ski outings and likely also begun our XC and snowshoe outings. We hope you will join us frequently. Bring a friend if you like. Guests are welcome to check us out for a few outings. Many of our destinations offer generous discounts. Mid-week Meet 'n' Ski outings provide a perfect way to be on the slopes with our ski friends when it's less crowded. You won't have to ski alone. We'll help you find someone at your level.

Chairs organizing these outings are always needing volunteers to lead the trips. It is a small time commitment, and a huge help. Thanks to those who have volunteered for various activities so far this year, especially the ski shows and our Open House.

We have two mid-week bus day trips to the Laurentians, one to St-Sauveur, and the other a choice of skiing either at Mont Tremblant, Mont Blanc, or Domaine St-Bernard for the XC skiers and snowshoers. These trips are a great way to ski or snowshoe in good conditions without worrying about driving!

The bus trip to St-Sauveur Jan.15 is a good opportunity to get those ski legs in shape before going to France and/or for some shopping, spa time and a luxurious lunch in St-Sauveur for those who don't want to ski. And there's the trip to the Tremblant area Mar. 21. If you wait till the last minute, it might just be too late!!! This trip, near St. Patrick's Day, is always a ton of fun. Can't wait to see what high jinks downhill Chair Andrea Conway comes up with this year! **We need to confirm the bus several days ahead of the trip date** or risk losing a pile of money. Don't delay your registration and miss out.

Our car-pool weekend trip to Val David in mid February will be an opportunity for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing on the lovely trails of the area, and enjoying fantastic food. Downhill skiers are welcome and can ski one of the many nearby ski hills. There is still time to go, but hurry. Registration closes Jan. 17.

Our three-day DH/XC/snowshoe trip to Sunday River, Maine will provide some great skiing for downhill skiers and opportunities for XC skiers and snowshoers. **THERE WILL BE SNOW.** Before Christmas there were already close to 40 runs open of their impressive 135 trails. The registration deadline is soon, January 17. Don't miss out!

65 skiers are also heading to Trois Vallee in France in late January for a week of great skiing, walking/snowshoeing in the French Alps and enjoying the scenery with our friends.

To end the ski season, we'll be having an event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the club's founding. Stay tuned for details. The Annual General Meeting will be held in April as well. When spring and summer roll around, we'll have a new schedule of activities like hiking, cycling, golfing and theatre in the park.

So stay informed by checking out our fantastic website at www.raski.ca, by subscribing to our publicity emails or by checking the SnowPhone at 613-736-6235.



Happy and safe skiing to all of you! Look forward to seeing you on some of those outings and as usual, I'll be there on all our trips and snowshoe outings and social events!

Bill Buck, Chair,
chair_2015@raski.ca

RA SKI CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday Apr. 20/16

You can thank your executive, volunteer to chair a portfolio, offer suggestions, and make your voice heard by attending the RA Ski Club's annual general meeting.

At the meeting, we will present reports on all our activities, and elect the executive for next year. We promise not to pressure you to run for a position, but please consider taking on a position if you can because there will be vacancies this year. As an added incentive, we will have a slide show of all our activities during the past year.

WEEKLONG TO TROIS-VALLEES, FRANCE

January 29 – February 6

SOLD-OUT – and then some!

In just a few more weeks, 65 RA skiers are headed to les Trois Vallées, France – the World's Largest Ski area.

This turned out to be a most popular weeklong trip (*ever?*), as we had an overwhelming response. Although we had initially booked 34 places, at the end of registration night we had 64 applicants! Within 48 hours, our super-efficient travel agent was able to acquire more airline seats, additional coach transport, and rooms, to the delight of those on the waiting list.



Because of the size of our group, we're travelling on two different flights – one group with Air Canada, and the rest with SWISS.

For those of us on the trip, our biggest problem is how are we going to ski all 274 individual pistes (600 km of downhill skiing) in only six days! The area is served by 196 ski lifts, and the vertical is 1950 m. Two thirds of us have attempted to resolve this problem by pre-booking the all-day ski tour with the French Ski School on the first day - just to set our priorities for the week! We'll access the Méribel snowfront via the Olympic gondola, a mere 200 m from our hotel.

While most of us go downhill, a few will be making use of the cross-country and snowshoe trails that stretch along the brooks in the valley, where the largest offering is in the forests of Méribel and Courchevel. And then there are the spas...something for everyone!

TRIP RENDEZVOUS NIGHT

WHEN: Tuesday, January 12, 7:00 PM
WHERE: Outaouais Room, RA Centre.

We'll be handing out airplane tickets, and going over everything you need to know about the trip.

Jaime Impey, Weeklong Chair, weeklong_2015@raski.ca

DOWNHILL DAY TRIPS

Hello downhill skiers! We've had a late start this year because of the weather, but look forward to some excellent skiing this winter.

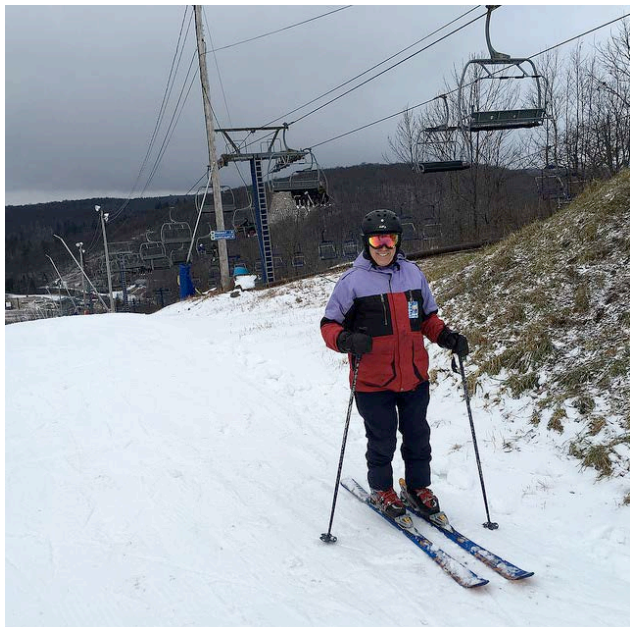
This year, the RA Ski Club's downhill day program consists of:

- Our mid-week **Meet'n'Ski** day trips to local ski hills.
- One Saturday **Meet'n'Ski** at Calabogie (January 2)
- A day **bus trip to St-Sauveur** (Friday, January 15)
- A day **bus trip to Tremblant/Mont Blanc/Domaine St. Bernard** (Monday, March 21)

See the full schedule at www.raski.ca. Why not join us on Facebook to get members' ski reports, news and comments? Visit our website and click on "Facebook".

WEEKDAY MEET'N'SKIS

As usual, we've scheduled one Meet'n'Ski per week - each week on a different day and at a different hill. There are numerous advantages to joining our mid-week outings: much shorter lift lines, lower rates, friends to car pool with and, of course, friends to ski and eat lunch with. In addition, one Saturday Meet'n'Ski has been scheduled with the working folks in mind. We'll be happy to schedule more - just need volunteers to act as trip leaders! Contact Andrea at downhill_2015@raski.ca if you are willing to help out.



Dec. 4/15 at Camp Fortune – First DH ski of the season

To see our Meet'n'Ski schedule, go to www.raski.ca and click on "Downhill". **Don't forget to call the SnowPhone before you head out - 613-736-6235!**



Jan. 2 – Meet'n'Ski at Calabogie

DOWNHILL DAY BUS TRIPS

- **DOWNHILL BUS TRIP TO ST. SAUVEUR - Friday, January 15th**

Ski, shop, or spa on our day bus trip to St. Sauveur! Ski mid-week and avoid the crowds, and relax while we drive you to the ski hill and back.

Check the web for pricing and details.

Departure time: 7 a.m. sharp! RA's west parking lot. Leave hill at 5 p.m. following a social gathering in the pub.

- **DOWNHILL BUS TRIP TO TREMBLANT/MONT BLANC/DOMAINE ST. BERNARD Monday, March 21st**

This bus trip drops the downhillers off at either Mont Tremblant or Mont Blanc. Cross-country and snowshoe enthusiasts are dropped off at Domaine St-Bernard. Following their XC ski/snowshoe, they will be picked up and bussed back to Tremblant, when they can enjoy meeting up with downhill skiers to compare notes over a tasty beverage!

Check the web for pricing and details. Purchase a combined lift and bus package, use your Ski Max tickets or buy your tickets at the hill.

Departure Time: 7 a.m. sharp! RA west parking lot. Leave last pick-up at 5:00 p.m. following a social gathering at Le Diable.

Andrea Conway, Downhill Chair, downhill_2015@raski.ca

SKIING MID-WEEK SUNDAY RIVER, MAINE

MARCH 13 - 16, 2016

Registration deadline extended to Sunday, January 17.

Price (incl. taxes): DH/XC/SS (based on double occupancy) is \$575.00. Singles - \$798.00.

On Sunday, March 13, RA Members will be heading to Maine for three crowd-free days of alpine, nordic skiing and snowshoeing.



Skiing at Sunday River

If you've never been to Sunday River come and enjoy 3 fun-filled days with us. Sunday River is a ski resort located in Newry, Maine. It is one of Maine's largest and most visited ski resorts. Its vertical drop of 2,340 feet (710 m) is the second largest in Maine (after Sugarloaf) and the sixth largest in New England. The resort features 135 trails across eight interconnected mountain peaks, and is serviced by a network of 15 lifts. Average snowfall is 167 inches

We will be staying at The Snow Cap Inn, which combines all the charm of a cozy New England lodge with the convenience of a short walk to the slopes. Each room offers standard rooms with two queen beds. The Inn features an outdoor hot tub and is located a short walk from the slopes and is also served by the resort trolley. Included in the Group Package are 3 nights lodging, 3 day lift tickets and 3 complimentary adult perfect turn clinics. Our cross-country skiers are invited to join us to enjoy the trails at the Bethel Inn, Carters Cross Country and The Outdoor Center.

Please visit www.raski.ca to obtain further details and registration form.

Kathy Burns, DH Weekend Chair, dhweekend_2015@raski.ca

CROSS-COUNTRY

It is very hard to believe that, as of December 25, there is no snow – not even a light dusting. In fact, it is more than hard to believe - it is downright depressing. However, hope springs eternal and many of us are doing a daily snow dance to whatever gods may be listening. Once the snow does come, we have plenty of interesting outings planned this year. To see the trip schedule, go to www.raski.ca and, on the left side of the page, click "X-Country".



New Year's Day ski to Renaud Cabin – Note the new cabin!

Remember to check the website (www.raski.ca) or SnowPhone (613-736-6235) for changes to the schedule before heading out to the RA Centre. The SnowPhone is updated with the latest information about one hour before the scheduled departure time.

HELP YOUR FELLOW SKIERS TO STAY WARM

Even on the mildest winter days, it can get cold standing around waiting for everyone in the group to get ready to ski. Here are three important tips to ensure a safe and enjoyable outing for all:

1. **Meet the group at the RA Center**, rather than at the trailhead. This ensures that you receive the safety briefing, the trip leader knows who you are, and you arrive at the parking lot at the same time as everyone else.
2. If you think you need extra time to prepare once you arrive at the parking lot, **let the trip leader know**. We can give you a head start from the RA Center.
3. **Wax your skis before you arrive** at the parking lot and **be ready to ski** as soon as possible after arriving.

DAY TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

Most of our outings take place in Gatineau Park but we have planned a few other destinations that might be of interest:

- **Day Trip to Nakkertok – Wed. Feb. 10**
Try some new trails at Nakkertok North Nordic Ski Centre. Trail fees \$14 (seniors \$12).
- **Greenbelt Moonlight Ski – Tues. Feb. 16**
An easy paced ski and snowshoe outing along the Mer Bleu trails.
- **Day Trip to la Petite Rouge – Sat. Feb. 27**
Avoid the crowds at the Gatineau Loppet and try the XC trails at la Petite Rouge. Trail fee \$8. La Petite Rouge is a delightful place just 40 km north of Montebello. There are 20 km of ski trails of varying terrain and levels of difficulty.
- **Greenbelt Ski – Sun. Feb. 28**
Ski and snowshoe outing on an easy Greenbelt trail.
- **Day Trip, Tremblant & Domaine St-Bernard – Mon. Mar. 21**
The day bus trip to Mt. Tremblant and Mt. Blanc features XC skiing at Domaine St Bernard. Trail fees \$20 (50% discount with Gatineau Park ski pass).

Jane Rau, Cross-Country Co-Chair, xc_2015@raski.ca

VAL DAVID XC / DH / SNOWSHOE WEEKEND

FRIDAY FEB. 19 – SUNDAY FEB. 21

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Extended to Jan. 17

PRICE (taxes included):

\$287 per person (double occupancy)
\$370 single



Val David – View from Mont Iceberg

Join friends and skiers at our annual visit to l'Auberge du Vieux Foyer, Val David. This traditional trip provides access to the Park Dufresne XC and snowshoe trails formerly associated with the Far Hills Inn and the trails associated with scenic Petit Train du Nord. You will have great skiing, topped off by a wonderful spa and the best of Quebec dining. Downhill skiers who join us will have a selection of available ski hills and there are also several snowshoe trails in the area.

Francoise Lecrouart, XC Co-Chair, xc_2015@raski.ca

SKI CHILE – AUGUST 2016

FRI. AUG. 12 – SUN. AUG. 28

If your idea of perfect skiing is groomed powder, uncrowded hills, long runs, and temperatures just below freezing, then join us for next summer's ski trip in the Andes! In August!

We'll have six days of skiing at two of Chile's best ski resorts – Portillo and Nevados de Chillan, interspersed with nine days of sightseeing, including Chile's capital (Santiago), Chile's main seaport (Valparaiso), wineries, a spa, and more!

Portillo, 140 km NE of Santiago, is Chile's most spectacular ski area, surrounded by 15,000 foot peaks and centred on the stunning Inca Lake. Portillo has 19 runs and 2,487 feet of vertical. The hill is not crowded, as the only skiers are hotel guests and a limited number of day skiers.

Nevados de Chillan is on a volcano, and is 480 km south of Santiago. The ski hill has 3610 feet of vertical, and has 28 runs, including the longest one in South America (13 km.)



RA skiers at Nevados de Chillan volcano, Chile

Cost is estimated at about \$6,000 (depending on the number of people), including all incidentals. We'll have an info meeting in February, once we get a firm price. Contact me if you want to know more.

Glen Campbell, Publicity Chair, publicity_2015@raski.ca

SNOWSHOE

At last we have snow and we've just enjoyed our first outing to Calabogie on January 2nd. But there are more outings planned for the rest of the winter so come on out and join us! There are mid-week outings and some weekend ones but I will be organizing a few more outings on weekends to accommodate people who work during the week. All the presently planned outings are on the web and I will be adding a few more, depending on weather conditions. So keep checking the website and the snowphone for last minute changes.

There are two specific ones I will be adding, one to Larose Forest and the other to Morris Island Conservation Area. Both are a short drive out of town but both sound really wonderful and a good place to enjoy nature and some wildlife and birds!



Jan. 2/16 Snowshoers and Frosty at Calabogie

And you never know who you will meet on the trails, yesterday we met Frosty at the start of the trail! If you want me to email you with last minute additions, just send me your email at pastchair_2015@raski.ca and I will contact you. I look forward to having you join us!

Doris Dallaire, Past Chair & Snowshoe, pastchair_2015@raski.ca

SOCIAL

RASki is about more than skiing. Join fellow members off the slopes and trails for some different activities. Check the ski news emails and the website for other activities as they are added.

This year we set a record for our latest hike of the season – Boxing Day!



Boxing Day 2015 hike to Healey cabin.

Nobody took pictures so Glen had to use his artistic skills.

Skating

- **Tues. Feb. 23** – Join the group at the Rink of Dreams at City Hall for an hour-long skate at 7:30, then head to a downtown pub to warm up. (More ambitious skaters can head to the canal for a while and meet up with us at the Rink of Dreams.)

Pub Nights

Don't miss our monthly pub nights. It's a great opportunity to catch up with other members and find out where everyone has been skiing. Pub nights are in the Fieldhouse Bar & Grill at the RA Centre at 7:30 PM:

- **Tues. Jan. 12** - after weeklong rendezvous meeting
- **Wed. Feb. 17** – following the Sunday River rendezvous meeting
- **Thurs. Mar. 17** – celebrate St. Paddy's Day with fellow club members at the Fieldhouse
- **Wed. Apr. 20** – following the Ski Club AGM

End-of-Season Celebration – April

We are looking for another venue for our end-of-year celebration. This year is a special one – the club is celebrating its 50th season!

We are investigating a couple of options.

One is a potluck and for that we need a place! If you have access to a party room, please let Chuck and Louise know at

social_2015@raski.ca, so that we talk about the possibilities.

Another alternative would be a dance at the RACentre.

Let us know how you feel about that option. All opinions and suggestions are welcome.

Spring Hiking

Our first hike of the season will be an urban hike. We'll explore yet another Ottawa neighbourhood on Saturday, **April 23**.



Oct. 11/15 – Hike to Lusk Falls

Louise Cameron, Chuck Bain, Social Co-Chairs social_2015@raski.ca

SKIFIT

SkiFit Hikes

The RA Ski Club has offered SkiFit hikes as a way to get out and improve fitness during the autumn months. This was a new addition to our program approximately six years ago, to compliment the weekend activities. It has given members and friends an extra opportunity to accommodate those who are so lucky to have some time during the week to enjoy the trails when there is less activity in the Gatineau Park. Weekday hikes in Gatineau Park were a joy in which to participate, and at times, we had the entire cabin to ourselves. Only one hike had to be cancelled because of rain.

After hikes, we usually went to a coffee house or restaurant to continue our conversations and plan our winter activities. All participants agreed that they enjoyed themselves tremendously on these hikes. Thank you for participating.

Ski-Fit Classes

The ski-fit classes have come to a close after 10 weeks of challenging exercises to improve balance and upper as well as lower body strength. Many skiers and a few guests registered and came out with enthusiasm to strengthen and make their bodies ready for the demands of skiing, snowshoeing and snow-boarding. The exercise program was very rewarding.

This activity also attracted some new participants who have made new friendships. We spent our après ski fit time at the Fieldhouse restaurant, sharing experiences and enjoying each other's company.

For those of us who have already been out on the trails or on the slopes, hopefully our bodies are less fatigued after skiing. Thank you, Felicity, for leading us to being stronger and fitter and having fun doing it! Until we meet again, happy skiing!

Marian Barton, Member-at-Large, skifit_2015@raski.ca

KEEP INFORMED

How can you find out about what events are planned?

- **WEB SITE**
Check out the RASki club's amazing web site www.raski.ca
- **SKI-MAIL**
Subscribe to the RA Ski club's Ski-Mail e-mail list. (Go to our web site at www.raski.ca, and click on "E-Maillist", in the box on the left.) The Ski-Mail provides you with the latest information on ski club events. Ski-Mails are issued weekly during the ski season, and as events occur during the rest of the year. As we use Yahoogroups to distribute the Ski-Mail, you have to put yourself on the list – we can't do it for you. You can un-subscribe at any time you choose.
- **SNOWPHONE**
Check the **SnowPhone** at **(613) 736-6235**. This phone message is updated regularly, and provides the latest information on upcoming events.
- **ONE-TIME E-MAIL**
Send an e-mail to currentevents@raski.ca for a one-time bounce-back e-mail of what events are coming up

RA SKI ON FACEBOOK



We are on Facebook under "RA Ski and Snowboard Club of Ottawa".

On our Facebook page you will find:

- Our members' reports on snow conditions (both downhill and cross-country.)
- RA Ski Club news, including upcoming events
- Facebook posts from local ski hills.

PHOTOS AND TRIP REPORTS

TRIP REPORTS

Downhill and cross-country trip reports for the last month are put on our home page at www.raski.ca. For older trip reports, click on "Trip Reports" on the left-hand box on our home page.

PHOTOS ON THE WEB

On the RA Ski website, you'll find lots of photos of all our activities.

1. Go to www.raski.ca, and click on "photos" on the left side.
2. Click on the set you want (Cross-country, Downhill, Snowshoeing, or Social).

To see the photos as a slideshow:

1. Double-click on the little square icon on the top right under the number of photos. Wait a few seconds and the slideshow will start. Click on the right arrow to advance to the next slide.

Downloading photos: (Unfortunately you now need a Yahoo account.)

1. Double-click on the photo.
2. On the bottom right, click on the down arrow with the bar underneath it.
3. Click on the size you want (i.e., "Original".)
4. Click on "Save File", then click on "OK."

Your file will be downloaded to your directory "Downloads."

USEFUL LINKS

RA SKI CLUB

RA Ski SnowPhone 613-736-6235

RA Ski Web Site www.raski.ca

CROSS-COUNTRY

Gatineau Park XC phone line 819-827-2020

Gatineau Park XC ski conditions – NCC website
www.canadacapital.gc.ca/places-to-visit/gatineau-park/ski-conditions

Gatineau Park XC Trail Map
(Note : There are two pages. This is a large file and will take awhile to download.)
www.ncc-ccn.gc.ca/sites/default/files/pubs/gp_wintertrailmap_cartesentiershiver_2015-16.pdf

Reports from skiers about Gatineau Park trail conditions
http://skitrails.xcottawa.ca/skitrails_gatineau_park.php

List of XC ski areas in Quebec
<http://www.cross-countryski.com/quebec.html>

List of XC ski areas in Canada
www.canadatrails.ca/xc_ski/index.html

List of XC ski areas in Canada and the US
<http://www.cross-countryski.com/resorts.html>

List of XC ski areas worldwide
http://xcski.org/snow_conditions.php

Daily photos of outdoor activities in Gatineau Park
<http://musicianonskis.ca/blog/>

DOWNHILL

Local DH ski conditions www.skiottawa.com

Quebec DH ski conditions
www.maneige.com/en/ski-areas/snow-conditions.html

World-wide ski conditions
www.skicentral.com/skireports.html

SKI HILLS

	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Website</u>
Bromont	1-866-276-6668	skibromont.com
Calabogie	1-800-669-4861	calabogie.com
Camp Fortune	819-827-1717	campfortune.com
Cascades	819-827-0301	montcascades.ca
Edelweiss	819-459-2328	skiedelweiss.com
Jay Peak	1-802-988-2611	jaypeakresort.com
Killington	1-802-422-6200	killington.com
Le Massif	1-877-536-2774	lemassif.com
Mont Blanc	1-800-567-6715	skimontblanc.com
Mont-Ste-Anne	1-888-827-4579	mont-sainte-anne.com
Mont Ste-Marie	819-467-5200	montstemarie.com
Pakenham	613-624-5290	mountpakenham.com
St-Sauveur	450-227-4671	montsaintsauveur.com
Sugarbush	1-800-53-SUGAR	sugarbush.com
Tremblant	1-888-215-4419	tremblant.ca
Vorlage	819-459-2301	skivorlage.com
Whistler	1-800-766-0449	whistlerblackcomb.com
Whiteface	518-946-2223	whiteface.com

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS



Sept. 24 – Louise Cameron awarded RA Ski Club life Membership



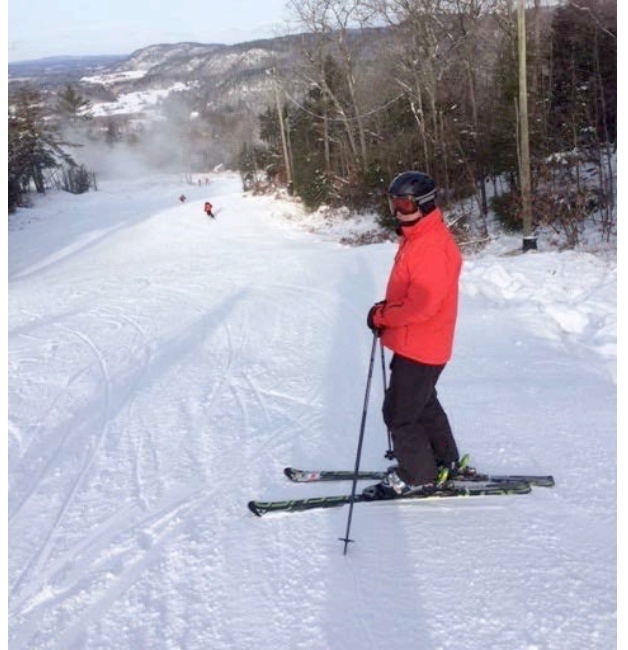
Oct. 28 – RA Ski booth at Ottawa Ski Show



Nov. 15 – Wolfe trail hike



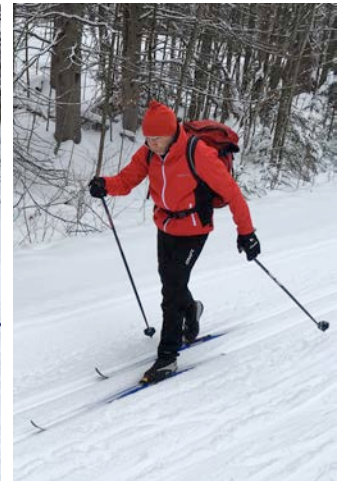
Jan. 2/16 – RA skiers & snowshoers at Calabogie



Dec. 28/15 DH Meet'n'Ski at Edelweiss



Jan. 2 – More RA skiers at Calabogie Meet'n'Ski



New Year's Day XC skiers



More New Year's Day XC skiers