

April 2017

www.raski.ca

More than just a ski club

SNOWPHONE : 613-736-6235

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

When: Wednesday, April 19th, 7:00 PM

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

Mark April 19th 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, and volunteering to be on the executive and help plan next year's activities.

- 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 we need:

- Club Chair (must have previously been on the executive.)
- Secretary

Volunteer and help us run our programs next year! Nominate yourself or someone else. Send nominations to: secretary-2017{at}raski.ca.

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

When: Saturday April 8th, 6:30 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. 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 me BY APRIL 6th and let us know if you are coming and what category of food you'll be bringing (i.e. appetizer, main course, salad, dessert).

I am also looking for people to help set up the room in the community centre. If you can help, please let me know by March 31.

Chuck Bain, Social Chair, social-2017{at}raski.ca

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The past winter has again been challenging due to its erratic nature. We have had lots of snow, but often followed by rain and icy conditions. Despite the challenges, at time of writing all major trips have had sufficient participation to run. Unfortunately, some of the day carpool outings have had to be cancelled or rescheduled, but our XC, DH and snowshoe chairs have done a great job in assuring that a good number have succeeded.

The weeklong trip to Solden, Austria was a great success. Registration was excellent, conditions generally good, and participants reported great enjoyment despite one unfortunate accident, and a nasty flu that followed some home.

The carpool weekend to Grande Lodge in early February was also very well attended. Conditions at Domain St. Bernard were excellent and the lodge treated us very well.

Our trip to Mont Ste. Anne and Le Massif was really enjoyable despite the challenge of every nuance of a Canadian winter roles into three days. A great success.

Our bus trips to Mont Tremblant and St-Sauveur also had sufficient enrolment and good skiing.

Your feedback is most welcome to help us plan for success next year. Do you want a weekend or weekday trip? Two days or three? Weekdays or weekend? What destination would you prefer? Is there a better time of the year to schedule the bus trip?

Our AGM is on Wednesday, April 19th 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, and some long serving Executive members will not be returning, so there is a definite need for your help. The time commitment is not great, and returning members will gladly help you get up to speed.

On a personal note, I wish to thank all the executive members and willing volunteers for their patience and cooperative attitude as I learned the Chair's position this year.

The RA staff has done their best be helpful to us again this year, despite several changes in staffing during the year, and difficult working conditions due to the reconstruction of the west wing where they usually work. They were helped ably by Nancy Kirkwood, who has been a friend/supervisor for our club for several years. We welcome the energy of Amy Roberts who is now established as our club's coordinator. We also thank Isabelle da Silva who does a fine job with 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.

Thanks also to Jane Proudfoot, who has worked with us in member services for many years. Jane has recently taken a well-deserved retirement ,and we wish her a long and enjoyable life after work.

This year has also had an additional challenge in recruiting new members as a new fee structure was developed which increased the gap between our membership price, especially for new members, and our competitors. Many discussions with membership Services and others have resulted in at least recognition of the problem, and perhaps a more competitive fee next year.

Bill Buck, RA Ski Chair, chair-2017{at}raski.ca

CROSS-COUNTRY NEWS

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DAY TRIPS

To say it was an interesting ski season would be an understatement. We got off to a roaring start with a huge dump of snow on Dec 12th and another mid-February. In between we experienced everything an Ottawa winter could deliver: thaw, rain, sleet, freezing rain, deep freeze, repeat.....But we RA XC skiers are nothing if not hardy and we did manage to get out between each of these weather events. Luckily for us, the groomers in Gatineau Park were able to work some wonderful magic on icy or slushy trails. And, speaking of grooming, the trails in and around Ottawa are now being groomed on a regular basis and many members took advantage of this to try some new trails closer to home.



Jan./17 – On the parkway on the way to Huron

Both weekend day trips and weekday trips were fairly well attended this year. Unfortunately, quite a few trips had to be cancelled or rerouted due to rain, ice, cold or lack of snow, but the outings, whatever the route, were enjoyed by everyone.

One of the unfortunate cancellations was the trip to Montebello on March 11. We are hoping by the time this goes to press that we are able to reschedule it for March 25. We would like to continue to include one or two outings outside of Gatineau Park each season. Please let us know where you would like to ski.



Mar. 18 – XC skiers at Renaud cabin

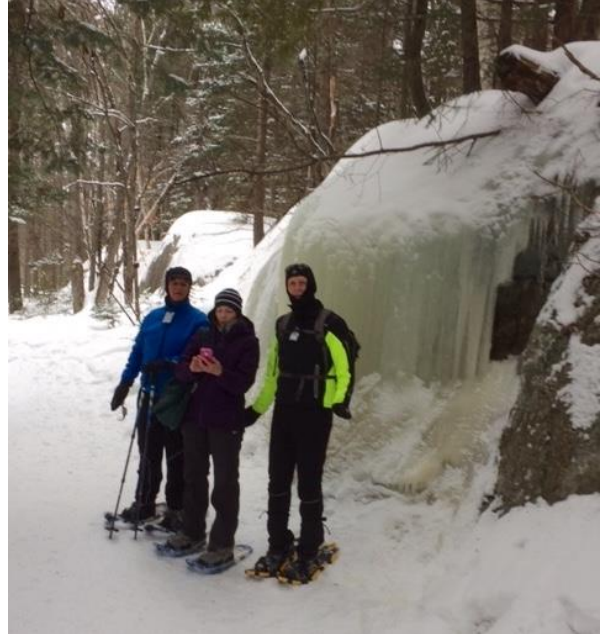
WEEKEND TRIP – MONT TREMBLANT

February 10-12 saw 22 members carpool up to Tremblant for a weekend at Le Grand Lodge, where skiing and snowshoeing awaited us at Domaine St Bernard. A few brave people ventured out on the trails on this very cold Friday, but one potential downhill skier decided not to try the mountain!

We all met up for dinner in our private room, where after dinner members competed in a trivia contest on Canada150. Sue Hoegg won the grand prize of a bottle of wine, with a few

other knowledgeable contestants winning runner up prizes. Thanks to Gillian for help in making up the quiz.

The next day was slightly warmer in the morning with some great fresh snow and it continued to warm up through the day. Ski conditions were excellent and three groups of skiers and one group of snowshoers headed out in different directions. Several skiers made it to the ski village, although using different routes. All had a fantastic day before heading back to the hotel for another great dinner.



Feb./17 – Snowshoers at Mont Tremblant

The big topic of discussion the next morning at breakfast was “how soon will the storm hit?” Most of us headed home early enough (well, almost), while four had planned to stay longer, and two others decided on the spur of the moment to book a room for the night. I heard that they enjoyed the shuttle service to the mountain and did some shopping!

Le Grand Lodge offered several amenities that were enjoyed by the group. The fireplace and the bar was a cozy place to relax, with a live entertainer in the evening. The pool area has a large hot tub and outdoors, a skating rink and evening bonfire with marshmallows provided more distractions. Overall, a great weekend!

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.



Jan. 7/17 – XC skiers at Huron cabin

Feedback on any aspect of the cross-country program is welcome. E-mail your comments to us.

Jane Rau & Louise Cameron, XC co-chairs,
xc_2017[at]raski.ca

DOWNHILL NEWS

This year's Downhill program was handled by three volunteers each taking responsibility for a separate segment. I, Roger, scheduled all the Meet n' Ski events and together with help from Glen Campbell, Louise Lefebvre, Bob Cavan, Andrea Conway and Bill Danson, ensured that there was a leader for each event. Participation was not as strong this year as many of the scheduled days happened to be bad weather days. Rescheduling at the last minute both helped and hindered participation as those who could have come now couldn't and those who couldn't come now could. So much for planning during the summer months.

Separate from the downhill program this club also had a weeklong trip, two 3-day get-aways and a whole raft of cross country and snowshoeing events to choose from, a point I wish to make to emphasize just how many opportunities have been created by our volunteer executives to give our members the chance to enjoy the great outdoors during the winter ski season. Thank you to all who participated.

Day Bus Outings

- **Mont Tremblant/Mont Blanc/Domaine St-Bernard. Thurs. Jan. 19th**

This was our first day bus trip of the season. Twenty-five people registered for it and they could chose which destination they wanted. Eight people chose Mont Blanc, two went to snowshoe at Domaine St-Bernard and the rest enjoyed a day at Tremblant. It was a foggy sort of day unfortunately but despite the weather, everyone reported having a good day. The grooming was excellent and there were no crowds at either location. Après-ski was at the La Diable bar at Tremblant, before getting on the bus to return to Ottawa.

Leader: Doris Dallaire



Mar. 19 - Downhill skiers at Mont Blanc

- **St-Sauveur, Mon. Mar. 20**

Once again, non-members were invited to join one bus trip outing so that they might experience our friendly club and, hopefully, become members. We need people on our buses to make these bus outings viable, so inviting non-members was a Win-Win and we met a few new interesting people!

Our Monday bus trip to **Mont St-Sauveur** took place on March 20th and we enjoyed very good ski conditions especially considering the forever-changing weather forecast leading up to the trip. Nineteen downhill skiers and one shopper registered. There was a small loss on the trip.

Trip leader: Chris Hutton



Mar. 19 – Downhill bus trip to St-Sauveur

Roger Duffy, Downhill Chair, [DH-2017{at}raski.ca](mailto:DH-2017@raski.ca)

STE-ANNE / LE MASSIF WEEKEND TRIP

Friday – Monday, Feb. 24-27

Twenty-one RA downhill, cross-country and snowshoers participated in the combination Mont Ste-Anne and Le Massif 3-day trip bus trip - the club's first since 2014.

Despite less than ideal weather conditions skiers and snowshoers immersed themselves and enjoyed the beauty and hospitality of the Charlevoix region. Freezing rain, fog and limited visibility made downhill skiing on the first day somewhat challenging.

Plummeting temperatures and icy conditions on day 2 made for a few more challenges at Le Massif, restricting some to green runs. But the views of the St Lawrence were spectacular, and the micro-beer a well earned reward at the end of the day! Everyone enjoyed après-ski time at the Château Mont Ste-Anne's lovely hot tubs and the well appointed lobby bar featuring live music. Our XC and snowshoers, more protected from the elements in the forests, were very satisfied with their treks.

Day 3 was the crowning glory with the resort receiving 3 cm of snow overnight, warmer temperatures and sun, making for a truly memorable day of skiing for all. The day was also memorable because of the amazing swings in the weather conditions over periods of less than 15 minutes; described by some as "4 seasons in one day". Some skiers were lucky also enough to stumble by the on-mountain sugar shack and sample the maple syrup on ice.

By most all accounts the trip was considered fun with great camaraderie!



Mar. 21 – Downhillers at Mont Sainte-Anne

Louise Lefebvre, Weekend Chair, [dhweekend-2017{at}raski.ca](mailto:dhweekend-2017@raski.ca)

WEEKLONG TO SOLDEN, AUSTRIA

Forty-two RA skiers left on Friday, January 27 for Sölden Austria. Air Canada got us safely to Toronto, then Munich, Germany. The bus trip to Sölden took 4 ½-hours, due to heavy traffic at a ski resort along the way. We arrived at the hotel about 5 p.m.

Sunday, January 29, dawned bright and clear. The plentiful hot and cold breakfast of good variety was available at 7:30 a.m. and then we were off. DH runs were groomed and there was good coverage, but not a lot of fresh snow. Skiing was good high up on the glacier, but quickly became skied off and icy at lower levels.



Jan. 2017 – DH skiers on the glacier at Sölden

For dinner, we asked to be seated at 6:30 p.m. each evening. Food was plentiful and promptly served. Each meal started with self-serve soups, breads, and a variety of selections in the salad bar. There was usually an appetizer, choice of three main courses, and dessert served each evening. The dining room hostess, Martina, and her team were exceptional wait staff and very good to us.

Monday, January 30, was overcast with sunny breaks and occasional low clouds in the summit areas. Skiing was pretty good at the higher levels, but icy lower down. The XC skiers reported good snow on the valley trails.



Jan. 2017 – Snowshoeing at Sölden

Tuesday, January 31, brought rain to the lower elevations and snow with very poor visibility at higher elevations. A number of people took the day off to explore the town, visit the Aqua Dome thermal spas, or go snowshoeing with a guide. Skiers' days varied in length, with some quitting after one or few runs due to icy conditions lower down, others hanging in until the afternoon.

Wednesday, February 1, was overcast again, with some poor visibility at times, but fresh snow overnight and more at the end of the day. A majority of people skied for a good part of the day.

Thursday, February 2, was a bright and sunny day. Fresh groomed snow and wide-open vistas on the glaciers led to a perfect ski day. Some folks enjoyed another guided snowshoe outing. Lots of excited chatter at the dinner tables that evening.

Friday, February 3, was overcast, with some poor visibility at higher elevations (blowing snow) and flat light at lower elevations. Most folks stuck it out until after lunch and then went back down for some last-minute shopping and exploring in the town.



Jan. 2017 – XC skiing at Sölden

Saturday, February 4. Rather than having to get up at a ridiculous early hour to catch the plane, we had an afternoon and night in Munich, Germany. The Hotel made arrangements to start breakfast at 7 a.m. to give us lots of time in the morning. We were on our bus by 9:20, and we experienced a great deal of traffic along the way. Consequently, we arrived at our hotel in Munich after 1:30 p.m. The Hotel Maritim was an excellent 4-star hotel.

In Munich we had a walking guided tour and we split up into two groups. The tours were fun, informational tours and final stops at various beer houses.



At a pub in Munich, Germany

Sunday, February 5. We departed the hotel around 8:45 a.m. by coach. Check-in at Munich was relatively quick and painless. However, the multiple levels of security checks and the long distance to the gate meant that there wasn't a lot of time for shopping or dilly-dallying along the way.

Upon arriving in Toronto and clearing customs, we discovered that our flight was delayed 1.5 hours due to snow conditions. By the time the plane was de-iced, we were about two hours late arriving in Ottawa.

[Editor's note: Thanks, Jaime for the excellent job you did in organizing the trip, both before departure and during the trip!]

Jaime Impey, Vice Chair & Weeklong Coordinator
weeklong-2017[at]raski.ca

SNOWSHOEING

Despite being a very unpredictable winter with lots of snow, rain and freezing rain then flash freezes really icing up the trails, we still managed to do some snowshoeing under reasonable conditions. Some trips had to be cancelled and several had the location changed.

We snowshoed at Cascades to begin our season in early January and although we had only had one snowstorm, the trail was beautiful, I would say the best conditions this season. We had several outings in the Greenbelt in the west end, east end and south.



Jan. 11/17 – Snowshoers at Bruce Pit

We also had two guided snowshoe outings in Austria during the weeklong trip to Solden which were very enjoyable and informative. The trip to Domaine St-Bernard in January was enjoyable and conditions were really good. We enjoyed feeding chickadees along the way. The trip to Mont Ste-Anne area gave us a chance to snowshoe three days in a row along some beautiful trails in very good conditions. We even enjoyed seeing a couple of moose and three deer one day.



Feb. 2017 – Snowshoeing at Mont Ste-Anne

In general all outings saw a good number of people, several who were new to the club and some new to the sport. I hope they enjoyed themselves enough that we'll snowshoe together again next year. Unfortunately, the weather became even less cooperative in early March and the season ground to a halt for snowshoeing.

It seems more working people than retired ones come on these outings and this will be kept in mind again when scheduling for next year, although there will still be weekday ones. We just have to hope for good snow next year to enjoy more outings. And now we're looking forward to keeping fit by hiking and cycling and some golfing.

Doris Dallaire, Snowshoe Chair, snowshoe-2017@raski.ca

SOCIAL

The Past Year

The official social start of last year was the pub night following the AGM on April 5th.

We then celebrated the ski season last year with our annual potluck dinner in Kanata on April 16th, with about 30 attendees who shared a great variety of food. During the evening, a slideshow ran to show some of the highlights of the weeklong trip.

A group of RASki walkers participated in the ALS walk in June in memory of Arlene Buck to raise funds for the society that provided so much help during her illness.

On June 22 we cheered on the Ottawa Champions baseball team.

The Company of Fools entertained us again outdoors in Strathcona Park this year with "The Amazing Adventures of Pericles" on July 18. Then a group saw Odyssey Theatre's production of "The Servant" in Strathcona Park on August 16.

RA SKI POTLUCK DINNER

Sat. Apr. 8, 6:30 p.m.

Pine Meadows Community Centre at 100 Pine Hill Drive, Kanata. See page 1 for all the details.

AND MORE...

We are still lining up more:

- **Theatre-in-the-park**
- **Baseball**
- **Golf**



July 2016 – Watching an Ottawa Champions baseball game



July 2016 – Company of Fools play "Pericles"

Keep checking the RA Ski website, Facebook, or sign up for our Ski-Mail e-mails to keep up with events as they are added.

Chuck Bain, Social Chair, social-2017@raski.ca

HIKING

The RA Ski Club also offers hiking in the spring and fall - a good way to stay in shape for skiing.

This year we enjoyed 14 Gatineau Park hikes on old and new favourite trails such as King Mountain, Ramparts, Lusk Falls, Pink Lake and Skyline; 3 urban hikes in Sandy Hill, Beechwood cemetery, and the Rideau Canal; and 3 greenbelt hikes at Mud Lake, Morris Island, and Shirley's Bay.

Our first few scheduled hikes for 2017:

Meeting point (unless otherwise posted):

Supreme Court Building (east side) on Wellington at 9:55 a.m. for a 10:00 a.m. car pool departure

- **Sat. Apr. 29 – Urban hike - Exploring Manotick.**
Meeting point TBD. Leader: Louise Cameron
- **Sun. May 7 – Gatineau hike** – P16 to Herridge Cabin – Leader TBD. An easy hike for the first Gatineau hike of the year. The wildflowers should be in bloom!
- **Sat. May 13 – Gatineau hike** – P7 to King Mountain – Leader TBD



Sept./16 – Mud Lake hike

If you have suggestions for 2017 hiking destinations, please contact me.

Maureen Adamache, Hiking Coordinator
hikes-2017{at}raski.ca

CYCLING

As all RASki members are aware we are MORE THAN JUST A SKI CLUB, and part of our varied program is biking, more commonly known as cycling.

However there is a difference. A cycling club is generally composed of keeners riding super lightweight bicycles while wearing the approved 'uniform' of skin tight multi labelled polyester tees, the latest in cycling shorts, clip on shoes/pedals, gloves, helmets and who knows what all. Our biking club is way more casual than that. Cycling shorts, helmets and hybrid bikes are us. And by hybrid I don't mean electric bikes but they would be welcome too.

So how casual are we? There is no Biking Chairperson to speak of in our club, all rides are organized by whoever wants to lead one. As a result we have enjoyed a wide variety of rides during the past summer. Doris led to Aylmer, Jane to Shirley's Bay, Glen to Lac Lemay and an urban ride, Louise Cameron to Point Petrie, Cathy along the Long Sault Parkway (and provided dinner in her charming summer home in Iroquois), and I [Roger Duffy] led a Roddle from Burritt's Rapids to Merrickville. And those are just the ones I went on. There were others.

The goal with our club is to enjoy the ride, not to race. The tempo is geared to getting some exercise at a comfortable pace, something suitable for everyone. Even so, there are some who would like an easier pace yet.

Enter the Roddle. A Roddle is a bike ride at the pace of a toddle, sort of. Designed for the 'I'd like to try it but I'm chicken' crowd, and the 'I just want to cruise' crowd, a Roddle is an easy ride with enough rest stops as are needed. A perfect introduction ride. In summary, we have something for everybody who wants to bike with friends. While this is supposed to be a report on the past year's rides it is also an invitation to participate in this year's rides. The first ride in 2017 will be a Roddle on the long weekend in May. See you then.

- **Sat. May 20 – Roddle.**
Location TBD. Leader: Roger Duffy
- **Wed. May 17 - RA to Dows Lake to see the tulips.**
RA - Mooney's Bay - Dow's Lake - canal to Ottawa U - cross Rideau River at Strathcona Park and return via the Rideau River. 19 km round trip. Meet: 10 a.m.
- **Sun. June 4 – Bate Island to Shirley's Bay**
Flat bike path. 40 km round trip. Meet: 10 a.m.
- **Sat. June 24 - RA to Lac Leamy.**
Via Rideau River, MacDonald Cartier Bridge, returning via Alexander Bridge, Rideau Canal and Rideau River. 32 km round trip. Meet: 10 a.m.
- **Thurs. July 20 - Bate Island to Lac Leamy**
Bate Island is under the Champlain bridge, just off Island Park Drive. We'll stop for lunch at the Mill St. Pub. 24 km round trip. Meet: 10 a.m.
- **Sat. Sept. 16 - RA to Mousette Park**
RA – Mooney's Bay - Dow's Lake – O-train bike path – Champlain bridge – Mousette Park- MacDonald-Cartier bridge – Rideau River. 33 km round trip.



July 23/16 – Cycling to Lac Leamy

If you would like to lead one of these events or have ideas for other RA Ski Club social activities, please contact me. 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 cycling events.

Chuck Bain, Social Chair, *social-2017{at}raski.ca*

PHOTOS & TRIP REPORTS

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

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

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.

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."

We also put "RA Ski Photos of the Week" on our home page raski.ca

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

SOCIAL MEDIA & SNOWPHONE UPDATES

You can find or receive news and updates about Club activities through a number of methods:

- **SnowPhone** 613-736-6235. The SnowPhone gives you last-minute status, changes and additions to our trips.
- **Website** www.raski.ca
- **Ski-mail** Sign up for our e-mail with the latest club news: go to www.raski.ca and click on "e-Maillist" in the "Stay Informed" box on the lower left side of the page.
- **Facebook**  Visit us on Facebook to learn about upcoming events, read members' comments, and much more! Go to **RA Ski and Snowboard Club of Ottawa** and ask to join in.

MORE PHOTOS OF AUSTRIA WEEKLONG



Solden group photo



Jan. 2017 – RA skiers on the glacier at Solden, Austria



Jan./17 - Ski tunnel at Solden, Austria



Jan./17 - RA skiers at Ice-Q restaurant made famous in James Bond film "Spectre"

MORE PHOTOS



Jan. 22/17 - Snowshoeing at Mer Bleue



Jan. 13/17 – DH Meet’n’Ski at Edelweiss



Feb. 25 - Snowshoeing at Mont Sainte-Anne on day 1



Mar. 20 - St-Sauveur: Après ski in the T-Bar 70



Mar. 18/17 – XC ski, Taylor Lake loop



Jan. 20/17 – DH Meet’n’ski at Cascades



Mar. 9/17 – XC skiers at Shilly Shally cabin



Feb. 14/17 – Snowshoeing at Mont Tremblant weekend