



RA NEWS

volume 70 number 1

MARCH 2011



Celebrating 70 Years of Excellence

On January 8, 2011 the RA officially became 70 years young.

This is a significant accomplishment for our organization, originally designed as the recreation hotspot for all federal civil servants. Membership is now open to all citizens within the Ottawa area and at last count we had over 23,000 members partaking in over 50 different recreation, sport, fitness programs and activities at the Riverside Drive complex, the Rideau Tennis Club and our Government Fitness Centres. To celebrate our history and accomplishments over the years, a number of events will be held to commemorate this exciting milestone. To kick off the party, RA members and guests enjoyed birthday cake in the East and West lobbies on Thursday, January the 13th and signed our giant birthday cards which will be displayed at different functions throughout



(left to right) Rick Baker, CEO/General Manager and Gilles Vézina, President, serve up 70th Anniversary cake.

the year. Events are also being planned with the Club Executives and league participants to ensure that everyone gets into the festive spirit.

All events will be published in the "What's New Section" of our website www.racentre.com as well as this newsletter and postings throughout our premises. A sample of events being planned with our 70th Anniversary Committee, will be: a historical showcase display, Club events, league celebrations with a 70's theme, and a Gala in October featuring live music and celebrity guests. Check our website often to make sure you don't miss out on the celebrations.

e-Communication

As part of our "Going Green" initiatives we have instituted an e-communication philosophy which encourages everyone to be more conscientious and friendly to our environment. With the next issue of the RA News, we will be moving to an electronic distribution process. It is expected that this move to paperless communication will not only minimize the RA's carbon footprint, but will allow for more timely communication with our members.

If you would like to receive this newsletter by e-mail, please contact Member Services to update your membership file and provide us with your correct e-mail address. By providing us with your e-mail, you will receive corporate communications directly in your inbox, plus you will be able to register for the programs and activities of your choice by using our on-line registration tool. To find out more about this great member service, go to www.racentre.com and click on the "PLAY RA" on-line registration icon.



New!!! Spring/Summer Guide
Pick up a copy from Member Services or download it in PDF at www.racentre.com.

Spring TRAINING! It's time to get moving!

When the sun comes out and the clothes come off most of us are faced with the reality what a cold winter created. Spring can be likened to a cold shower for how we want to look and feel for summer – it wakes us up! **If you're looking to spring forward... Pull on your sneakers and get moving!**

Getting in shape not only requires physical changes, but mental ones as well. For anybody to succeed they must have the will power to resist temptation. One of the ways to resist is to take up something new! Not only will it help keep your body active, but new activities can do wonders to keep the mind alert. "In the health and fitness division alone... spring brings lots of new and fun things to do!" says Janet Van Bakel, Manager, LifeFIT Canada. Whether it's early morning Boot Camp, grooving with the latin inspired "Zumba" class, stepping up your golf game with RA's Golf School or signing you and your partner up for Ballroom Dancing classes, Janet and her team will be happy to help you get started on a new program for spring!

Age doesn't matter at the RA. You are never too young or too old to kick up your heels! With over 50 different programs and activities under the RA umbrella, we are certain that you will find something new and fun to do! Check out the Spring/Summer program guide for details.



Spring is just around the corner

– It's time to start filling your roster.

Spring is approaching FAST and with spring comes the new season of the RA Sports Leagues. The first to get going is the RA's Spring Ball Hockey League. Game action gets under way in early April. We have openings for men's, ladies and co-ed teams.

This year, a Co-ed Ball Hockey House League has been added on Thursday nights! "Everyone can play in this league. The teams will be made as fair as possible. The goal is to provide a fun atmosphere where people get to meet some new friends, enjoy a game of friendly competition and share some socializing afterwards." says Mark Fish, League Coordinator. "With the great success of our other house leagues, we are confident that Ball Hockey will follow suit!"

RA Sports Leagues management is also now accepting team registration for the summer sports. Co-ed Beach Volleyball, Men's & Ladies Soccer, Co-ed 3-Pitch Softball and Co-ed Slo-pitch softball will get underway in early May. It is going to be an awesome experience for everyone involved!

Interested in registering a team or signing up as an individual player? Contact Pat Coyne, Manager, League Operations at pcoyne@racentre.com right away so you don't miss out! For further information visit



RA sportsleagues.com

Success on Sussex

The RA has been a partner with the employees working for Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada since 1993 in the operation of the DFAIT Fitness Centre. This "petite" fitness centre, located in the Lester B Pearson Building has filled big shoes over its 14 years of operation. The club, governed by employees, is well-known for its friendly work-out environment and trainers who genuinely care for the health and well-being of employees.



Front row (left to right): Peter MacArthur, Director General; David Plunkett, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister; Joanne Bertrand, Deputy Director; Brenda Hamm, LifeFIT Canada; Morris Rosenberg, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (USS)

Eight months ago, the club doubled in size, just not in the same building! With the support of the Department's Senior Management, a second location opened in old City Hall at 125 Sussex Drive. "Although some members might have liked one larger club", says Brenda Hamm, Manager, LifeFIT Canada Corporate Division, "having the two locations is very well suited for the winter season especially when the wind is blowing! We have twinned the facilities and have been able to offer greater variety of programs". Members are welcome to use either location.

Two buildings and two fitness centres side-by-side. This is a recipe for one happy club!

DFAIT Fitness Centre is one of twelve corporate fitness centres managed by LifeFIT Canada, the RA's Health and Fitness Division. Through this initiative the Association provides support to 3,700 individual RA members!



Check it out!

Pick up a copy from Member Services or download it in PDF at www.racentre.com.

Serve's up at the Rideau Tennis Club

Not everyone can wield a tennis racquet skillfully, but all can aspire. "There's always something to learn, and a new way to make that racquet become an extension of your hand, arm and will" says Zhenya Kondratovski, Head Professional at the RA's Rideau Tennis Club! Zhenya has been teaching at the Rideau for over fifteen years and is in his third year as Head Pro. Along with Professionals Ryan Berman and Adrian Frei, and Junior Pro Sacha Krishna, his team has built an outstanding line-up of lessons, clinics, workshops and everything tennis!

Since joining the RA family in 2004, the Rideau Tennis Club serves over 800 RA members on an annual basis. Although tennis is the primary activity, the club offers a variety of other services such as fitness programs, summer camps and has hosted some of the RA Ski Club events. In addition, Rideau has become a perfect venue for weddings and business meetings and other social gatherings!

As an RA member, it is worth stopping by to visit! Give Club Manager, Nancy Kirkwood a call to set up an appointment. She would be pleased to show you the Club! Nancy can be reached at 613-749-6126. If you know that tennis is your summer sport of choice, make sure you visit well before the first of May. This way you will be able to take advantage of the Early Bird Fees on Summer tennis!



"In Recognition" – The Recreation Association of the Public Service of Canada Volunteer Award Program

The Association's many clubs, sports leagues and fitness programs that members enjoy every day, have been built on the foundation of amazing and dedicated volunteers. While every member is a valued part of our organization, the Association honours those volunteers who have been recognized by their peers for outstanding contributions to their activity through three specific awards: the President's Award, the Club Life Membership Award and the Association Life Membership Award.

In addition, the Association proudly supports the Hall of Fame. There are two prestigious awards. The first is the Builder Award honouring individuals who have made a major contribution to the development of the Association and the second is the Sports Award honouring those who through their efforts on the National and International stage have brought special attention to the Association.

The Association is in search of those special members who should be included in the nominees for this year's "In Recognition" Gala, planned for June 1, 2011.

To nominate an outstanding member, please review the various award criteria as well as the nomination guidelines. You can view the criteria and guidelines, as well as download a nomination form on line at www.racentre.com. The deadline for nomination is April 20, 2011.



70th Anniversary Update

*A message from Gord Aitken, Chair
70th Anniversary Committee*

It is with great excitement that we celebrate 70 years of the RA Centre in 2011!

Over 750 members helped us celebrate on January 13th with a kick-off birthday cake celebration and signing our giant birthday cards. Watch for another chance to sign our cards at future events!

A dedicated group of staff and volunteers are excited to plan and organize a number of great events throughout the year to mark 70 years. Please look to the RA Centre Website for more details and announcements as new events are planned.

Here is a look at events or activities that you can mark on your calendar:

Tuesday, March 1st

Launch of Fieldhouse Diner Specials

Each week a new special that harkens back to the diner specials of the 1950s. Add an ice cream float to complete the experience. Check out our weekly flyer for details

Tuesday, April 5th

Grand Hallway Showcase Display

Watch for our showcase which will feature memorabilia from the past 70 years. A real chance to walk down memory lane and see the RA Centre of old!

Friday, June 3rd

RA Winter Sports Leagues Celebration

Fieldhouse Bar & Grill

We take a night to celebrate the history and excitement of the RA Winter Sports Leagues.

Saturday, October 22nd

RA Centre 70th Anniversary Gala Dinner

Our premiere event for RA Members to come out and celebrate our history. A four course dinner will be followed by the sweet sound of the STEVENS and KENNEDY BAND! More details to follow but save the date for an event you won't want to miss!

A number of club and league activities this year will also feature 70th Anniversary themes so stay posted.



The RA Members' Best Ball Golf Tournament

Friday, May 27, 2011 at Hylands Golf Club

Open to all levels of golfers! This tournament is a great opportunity to get out and have fun with friends. The 1:30pm shotgun tournament is followed by dinner, awards and prizes held at the RA Centre.

For more information and registration: Contact tournament organizers, Steve Mitchell at smitchell@racentre.com or Susie Farmer at sfarmer@racentre.com. **Registration begins March 22.**

A Summer Tradition!

Since the mid 1950s, the RA Day Camp has been a summer tradition at the RA's Riverside Drive campus. This year there are a multitude of summer camp opportunities with the RA! With 15 different programs to choose from, your child will make new friends, learn new skills and enjoy summer vacation to its fullest.



Here is the list of what is planned!

1. Junior Day Camp
2. Day Camp
3. Junior Multi-Sports Camp
4. Multi-Sports for Girls
5. Super Athletic Camp
6. Junior Aqua Camp
7. Senior Aqua Camp
8. Lifesaving Camp
9. Tennis Fun Camp at the Rideau Tennis Club
10. Tennis Competitive Camp at the Rideau Tennis Club
11. Badminton Camp
12. Fencing Beginner Camp
13. Fencing Developmental Camp
14. Fencing Competitive Camp
15. Computer Camp

For complete details, visit the RA website at www.racentre.com, give us a call at 613-733-5100 or check out the Spring/Summer Program Guide.



Val Gardena in February!

Hotel Hell! Not the name you would think would entice skiers to sign on for a week long trip to Val Gardena Italy. But the name of one of the hotels did not stop 34 members of the RA Ski Club from spending a fantastic



first week of February on the slopes. Located high in the Italian Dolomites, and with 175 km of downhill slopes and 98 km of cross-country trails Val Gardena is dramatically beautiful. Although the majority of activity is in the winter season, the RA Ski Club operates year round.

Those interested in finding out about the club should contact the RA's Member Services at 613-733-5100 or visit the web site at www.racentre.com.

Beating the odds!

You could liken an eight ender in curling to a perfect game in bowling or a hole in one in golf, as everything must go right for one team in order for this to happen. On Friday January 14th, the team of John Linard, Susan Lamb, George Ireland and Sharon Smith had everything go right. This foursome, skipped that night by Susan, is one of thirteen teams playing in the RA Curling Club's Mixed Fixed Draw on Friday night. It was the fourth end and, after a little help from the opposition team, all that was left was to draw in to score eight points. She did – and yes, they went on to win the game. An eight ender is when one team scores eight points in a single end of play and is an extremely rare occurrence. Since each team only delivers eight rocks per end, all eight rocks for one team must be closer to the button than any other rock of the opposition. Rock on, Team Linard!



Fencers take top spot!

The Canadian Fencing Federation explains fencing as "a modern and exciting sport, often described as trying to play chess while running the 100-metre dash". It seems that today, the RA's Fencing Club is brewing some very brilliant fast runners!

Since its inception in the 1960's the RA Fencing Club has formed a habit of developing athletes who compete at the National and International levels. This is evident by looking at head coach Paul ApSimon's track record. Paul represented the Club and Canada at World and Commonwealth Championships and led the Canadian Fencing Team at the 2000 Olympic Games.



This month, some of the Club's young fencers have been selected for both the Junior and Cadet National Fencing Teams. They have been invited to compete at the World Championships in Amman Jordan in early April. The team members are: John Wright (Junior Men's Epée), Sam Broughton (Junior Men's Foil), and Alastair Keyes (Cadet Men's Foil). John, Sam and Alastair will be joining Kelleigh Ryan, an Ottawa fencer and one of the Club's development program coaches. Kelleigh is a member of the Senior Women's National Team.

Also of note are the accomplishments of Club members Philip McCully, Joe Wright and Yasmin Cazrola-Bak who have been named alternates in Cadet Men's Foil, Cadet Men's Epée and Cadet Women's Foil, respectively.

Interested in exploring fencing? The Club's spring session begins the first week of April. Intro classes are available for both adults and children. The Club also hosts a Summer Fencing Camp for youngsters which offers a great opportunity to experience this Olympic sport. Details on the spring sessions and camp are available on line at www.racentre.com.

At your Service!

On February 15th, the RA went live with a new telephone system.

"In making this move, the Association has increased the number of lines and improved the platform for better support behind the scenes" says Ross Rankin, Director, Facility & Property Services.

By the end of March the telephone system at the Rideau Tennis Club will follow suit.