

DRXC Annual General Meeting, 2023/24 Season

April 28, 2024 at Balmers Bay Chalet

In attendance:

Executive members: Bob Donders, Diane Davis, Christian Kaiser, Dave Rhodes, Lindsay Dooh, Ann Matthews

Sub Committee members: Doug Killey; Stuart Craig; Ruth Elliffe, Tom Holden, Bruce Smith; Phil Davis; Marc Audet; Melanie Grant; Kevin McDonald; Aubrey Fletcher

Others: Karen Collins; Bruce Heinmiller; Yvette Plaice; Pete Rose; Bob Montague; Martin Koslowsky; Tom Moore; Hilary Veen; Romen Pruszkowski; Ewan Craig

Apologies:

Marc Audet

Melanie Grant

1. Approval of Agenda

Agenda approved.

2. Approval of Minutes from the 2022/2023 AGM

Minutes from 2022/2023 AGM were approved.

3. President's Report (Diane Davis)

Thank you to all the volunteers in the club. You make the ski club work and contribute greatly to its being such a wonderful asset for the community. Despite the extremely short ski season the DRXC managed to get a lot accomplished.

● 2023-24 Winter Activities were:

- Open House
- 2 Moonlight skis
- Adult lessons, both beginner and intermediate
- Jackrabbit program ran with only 2 days canceled due to snow conditions.
- Jackrabbit Silver Spoon Race was a very positive and successful event. (The weather even cooperated)
- The vice president is working on updating the website to make it more user friendly.

● Bridge Projects

- The **Bishops Bridge** was built and replaced the old bridge.
- A small celebration recognised this accomplishment
- Thank you to the Four Seasons Conservancy for their financial contribution and to all the volunteers.
- The Bridge committee is planning the replacement of the other three bridges.

● Safe Sport was implemented by:

- Safe Sport committee was created
- The useful CAC Sport and CAC Understanding Courses were completed by needed executive members
- The Sport Safe policies were updated.

- The policies were posted on the website and a copy of the policies was left at the Balmers Bay chalet.
- Vulnerable sector checks were completed
- No incidents reported to the Safe Sport Committee

- **Emergency planning-**

- First Barrels were placed at the bottom of M Hill, Hut and the Sidetrack Lake junction on the Bass Lake trail.
 - Barrels were placed in November and removed in March (due to bear)
 - First aid kit and a barrel with a sleeping bag are at Balmers bay chalet
 - Rescue toboggan at Balmers bay chalet, Sidetrack Lake, and the Bass Lake Hut -
- The Emergency plan is posted on the website
- We are currently working on better signage for emergency protocol (see Vice President Report) 4.

Vice President Report (Lindsay Dooh)

Website

- The DRXC website will be revamped with a new look and feel including a new logo. ● The DRXC website revamp will include consolidating a number of the web pages to improve ease of navigating the site.
- New plugins like weather will also likely be added.
- We will likely be moving to another website platform from Wordpress.com. ○ This will make it more flexible to make future design modifications, with a reduced risk of bugs and security issues
 - Wordpress.com tools and plugins are developed by independent 3rd parties. Because of this, the quality of tools and plugins can vary greatly. For example, code from differing 3rd parties may not always communicate well with each other which can result in bugs. It is difficult for a non-technical person to evaluate, creating risk of breakage, particularly during updates.
 - There are also security issues with Wordpress.com. As it is the most popular platform in the world, it has become a target. In addition, because the components are all developed by 3rd parties, there isn't as much rigor in the code as would be a platform that develops all the code in house. As a result, mal-intentioned bots are developed and sent out worldwide to search for weaknesses in Wordpress websites so they can hack them for purposes of stealing information, redirecting users to another source, or utilizing the website server to attack other computers.
- It was suggested that the DRXC website be the priority over Facebook with regards to notifications, and that any Facebook posts do reference the DRXC website.
- A suggestion was made about guidelines surrounding dog walking on the trails, and whether this is clear enough on the website. For example dogs are allowed on the Bass Lake Trails and the snowshoe trails.

Emergency Signage

- Signage has been added to the outside of the chalet so skiers know how to access the Emergency plan
- Signage has been proposed to go with the Emergency barrels throughout the trails, as people

aren't widely aware of what the barrels are for. The phone number will be a separate sign, as that number is expected to change regularly.



First aid kit in blue barrel.

Toboggan in chalet.

Call (613) 584-xxxx [and 911?].

- Also proposed is to include barrel locations on the trail maps.

5. Financial Report - David Rhodes

DRXC is in very healthy financial shape. Investments have been fruitful and as with last year, investments recovered well following the inflationary impact of the war in Ukraine. Membership was slightly lower again this year, and it is felt that emphasis should be on keeping the membership numbers up, rather than increasing membership fees.

A suggestion was made that Facebook posts could be sent out to remind skiers about membership registration throughout the season, as some of us need reminders!

(Please see detailed report in the appendices)

6. Membership Report - Christian Kaiser

Membership numbers were lower again this year, as they have been year on year since the pandemic. However, the median age of registration is lower than it has been in the past. Communication is generally sent to members through the Zone4 platform, which is private and secure.

(Please see detailed report in the appendices)

7. Emergency Planning and report

As stated above

8. Bridge Report

The first bridge on M-loop (Bishop's Bridge) was successfully replaced (2023 November 7), before the season began. It is strong enough to hold a tractor and trailer so that repairs and maintenance may be carried out on the trails.

Repairs to other bridges will commence, however it has not yet been decided which bridge will be tackled first. These will be smaller jobs than the M-Loop bridge. A bridge sub committee will be meeting to decide on the plan going forward.

The committee is studying 2 possible design options for the other bridges. Both need a signature from a professional engineer. One design is ready to go, while the other needs more information. Drawings will be sent to a civil engineering firm and a quote for the cost is needed. The cost for assessing the design

will have to be approved by the executive. Once we have the information, a special executive and committee meeting will be organized via zoom. Ultimately, the executive will have to approve the final design(s). If more funds are needed for the bridge, it may be possible to partner with the town, The Senior Friendship Club and the 4 Seasons Conservancy, to apply for a grant.

9. Subcommittee report - detailed reports in the appendix

10. Four Seasons Conservancy

Plans have been submitted for a wheelchair accessible trail to be built from the Long Term Care home, currently being built behind the hospital, into the 4 Seasons Conservancy. The town is applying for a provincial grant. The 4-Seasons Conservancy has offered their moral support toward this project. DRXC would be impacted in that the trail would intersect R-loop. However it would be deemed a 3-season trail, as it would not be used in the winter ski season. In fact, it would be of benefit to DRXC, as conditions of the trail in this area would be improved. Materials used would be "green".

Those members present at the AGM offered their moral support for developing the wheelchair accessible trail, in conjunction with the 4 Seasons Conservancy.

A new snow shoe trail has also been created between the two boulders.

Some concern was raised with regards to the criteria that would stipulate when there are too many trails, given it is a conservancy, and what the possible impact would be, when additional trails are added. The ski trails have not been extended or expanded for many years and there is no plan to do so.

11. Election of Executive

Christian Kaiser will be stepping down as membership secretary. Martin Koslowsky was nominated to take this role. No other nominations were received. This was approved and seconded.

The following were nominated for the 2024/2025 Executive Members:

President - Diane Davis

Vice-President - Lindsay Dooh

Treasurer - David Rhodes

Membership Secretary - Martin Koslowsky

Secretary - Ann Matthews

Past-President - Robert Donders

As no other nominations were received, all positions were filled by acclamation. Many thanks to Christian Kaiser for his years of service as Membership Secretary!

12. Other

Picnic bench - Yvette Plaice put forward a suggestion of a possible project to update the interior of the cabin to make it more welcoming for walkers in summer and skiers in the winter. This may include a picnic table to allow for people to gather after a walk on the trails, as well as a general decluttering and reorganization of the space. Yvette has offered to spearhead this project with any other volunteers that may be interested.

Another event that was raised as being successful in the past, to drum up support, would be an open house potluck in the fall (November) - Hilary Veen would be happy to coordinate such an event.

The Bass Lake Cabin is available for use outside of the ski season as well, and this should be communicated to members. It can be accessed via canoe, through Route X. This may increase the use of the cabin outside of the ski season.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Appendix - sub committee detailed reports

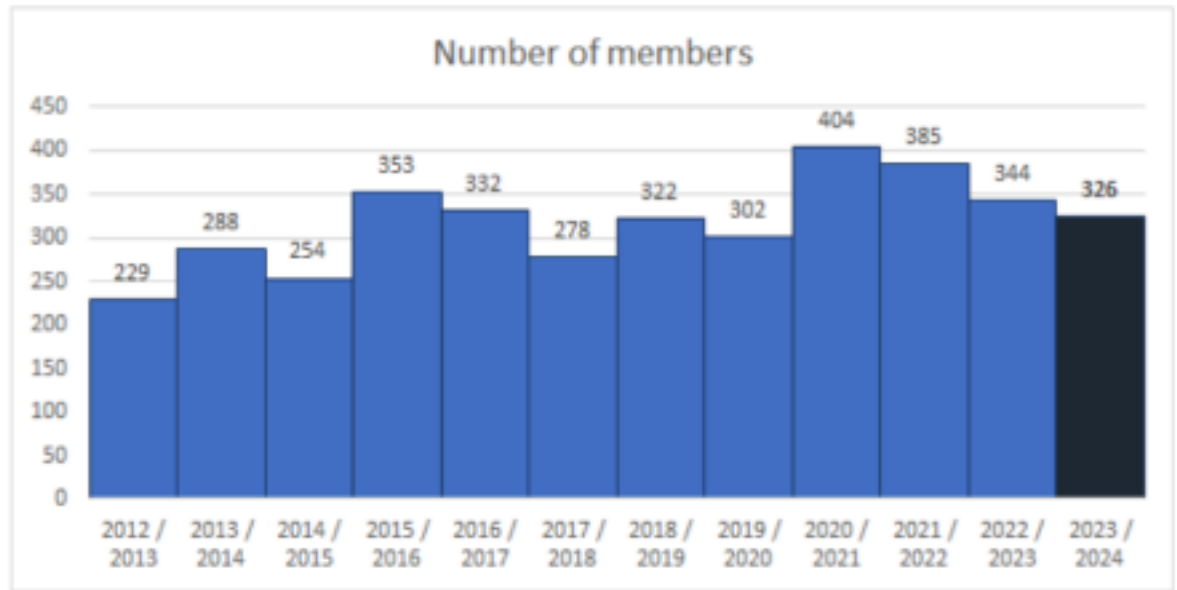
A1. Membership report for 2023/2024 (Christian Kaiser)

Highlights of the season

- The DRXC had an excellent given the poor snow conditions and short season – **326 members** (compared to 344 last season)
- The Family membership category remains popular – 40% of members joined using this category.
- **The median age of members dropped to 49**, down significantly from 58 in 2020. Almost two thirds of our members were younger than 60 years old. This is due to a significant increase in very young members.
- This year, Zone4 required that we provide an option to opt out of communications. 40 members opted out. This is a relatively large number, and we should make sure that we abide by their choice.
- We tested out new Zone4 functionality which sends an automatic welcome email to a member when they complete their registration. (Historically, I would have to manually send individual emails to each member).

Current membership

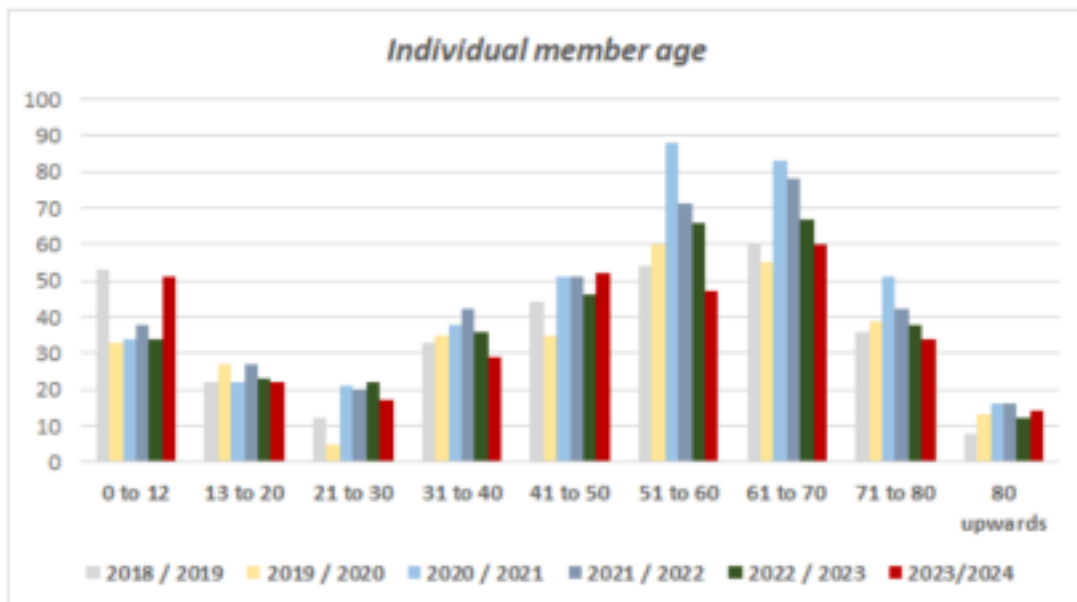
- The total number of members registered for the 2023 / 2024 season has **decreased slightly** from 344 to **326 members**.



Demographics and Age breakdown over time

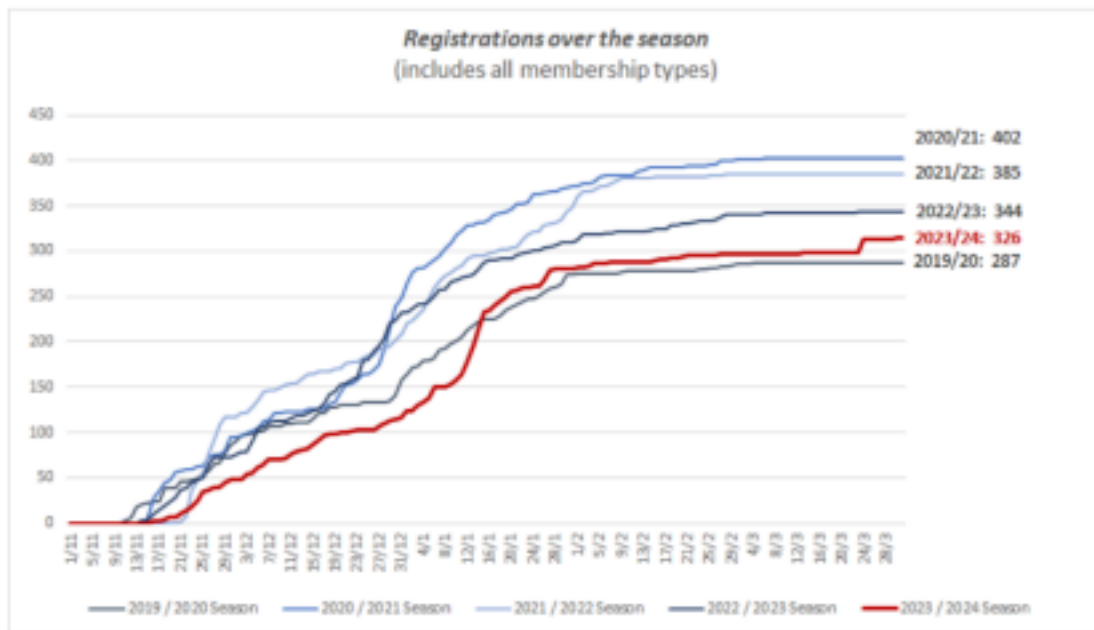
- The median age for adult members has maintained its **decrease** to 49 years old, down from 58 years old in the 2020 / 2021 season.
- **Two thirds (67%)** of our members are younger than 60 years old.

Age of adult members	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020	2020 / 2021	2021 / 2022	2022 / 2023	2023 / 2024
Median	57	56	59	58	53	53	48.5



Registration over the season time

- Registration dates are largely driven by the first significant snow falls, which this year occurred in January, much later than previous years.



A2. Trail Maintenance report (Stuart Craig)

Updates to trail maintenance topics following the 2023 October planning meeting are reported below.

Trail Signs

During this fiscal year, another 45 ski trail signs were made and installed, plus an additional 50 snowshoe trail signs to clarify intersections with ski trails. Roughly 100 more signs are currently being fabricated to identify Petawawa Research Forest (PRF) and Bass Lake ski trails. These will likely be installed this fall.

Of the 17 Ski trail signs currently available for the PRF, seven have been installed at the locations easily reached on foot. Arrangements with PRF management for automobile access will be made for the installations at the remaining locations.

Trail Captains and Volunteers

Allan Everatt has volunteered to take on X-Loop, with George Doubt as a mentor. The position of Trail Captain for the east half of M-Loop is open. All other Trail Captain positions are currently filled.

Yet another chainsaw operator course is being held the week of May 8. Of the five DRXC students two are chainsaw-experienced Trail Captains; hence, the somewhat unusual offering of the course just one year following the previous offering.

R & P Re-Route

The re-routing of P and R loops to accommodate the loss of property to the hospital seems to have been successful.

Equipment

There were no major equipment problems. The club's brush saw and wheeled weed-whacker both ran well. Minor maintenance expenses were for a replacement brush saw blade and

chainsaw brake/handle parts to repair damage a volunteer's chainsaw incurred during club work.

Trails

Following the autumn planning meeting the Bass Lakes trails were cleared. As was done in 2022 a three-day group outing enabled a complete sweep of the trails. This year included significant work on the new portion of the BLISS snowshoe trail the runs along the shore of Little Bass Lake. We also assisted in transporting material and constructing a new bridge for the outlet of "Hut Lake", and collecting/splitting some firewood for the cabin.

Perhaps it was the result of such a low snow-load this winter, but there was little call for trail clearing during the ski season ... such as it was.

A3. Trail Improvement report

A4. Grooming report

A5. Chalet report (Doug Killey)

We were once again fortunate to have a full roster of 14 people to look after the chalet, starting the stove and closing up at the end of the day. We began opening the chalet just before Christmas despite the lack of snow, since the trails were nonetheless pretty busy over the holiday break. We closed for the season on March 11 - probably the shortest that we've had, not counting pandemics. I'm not aware of any issues that arose over the winter and there is nothing of note needing attention this year. Many thanks to everyone for their help.

A6. Bass Lake Cabin report

Finances

In spite of the lack of decent snow this past winter, the Cabin saw more visitors than in the past two years. The fiscal year income is expected to be \$1360, anticipated expenses total \$581, and the anticipated profit is \$779. Most the income was from user fees. Our GIC earned \$125 and was reinvested at 5% in a 2-year GIC. The largest expenses are the land use tax and bridge building supplies.

The recent increase in user fees and the increased number of users has helped to grow our reserves. The balance started this season at \$2968 and is expected to be \$3748 by the end of the fiscal year. We plan to continue to build up the reserves so that we will be better prepared to address future needs.

Usage

The following table summarizes the monthly overnight use of the Cabin starting in 2023 May.

Cabin Usage in 2023-24 (as of 2024 April 28)

Month	Groups Booked	Groups Stayed	Nights Booked	Nights Occupied	People Stayed	Person Nights
2023 May	1	0	1	0	0	0
2023 June	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023 July	1	1	1	1	1	1
2023 August	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023 September	1	1	1	1	9	9
2023 October	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023 November	5	4	6	5	16	23
2023 December	3	1	6	1	2	2
2024 January	3	3	5	5	10.5	19
2024 February	3	2	5	3	9	12
2024 March	3	2	7	5	8	22
2024 April	1	1	1	1	2	2
Total	18	13	30	20	47.5	80

In spite of the very poor winter weather this past year, the number of visitor nights was up to 80 this season as compared to 43 in 2022/23 and 75 in 2021/22. Over the past season, 5 out of 18 bookings were cancelled, often because of the poor weather conditions. The most visitor nights were in November and March. This move away from mid-winter usage is likely due to the poor snow conditions this winter, and the increasing interest from snow shoers and hikers.

Maintenance and Improvements

Bill Graham and Hugh Boniface rerouted the BLISS snowshoe trail between the railway bed crossing and the junction of the Bass Lakes. The new route runs through the forest closer to the Lower Bass Lake and avoids much of the road that the old route used.

This past season, trail captains were assigned to look after each of the Bass Lake trails (see appended list). As in the past few years, over a three day period in the Fall a chainsaw wielding group walked all of the trails to remove fallen trees. This year the group included Stuart Craig, Helena Rummens, John Heffler, Diane Davis, Roman Pruszkowski, Bruce Smith and May Zhang. While we were there, Karen Colins drove in to join the group at the Cabin in order to build a new and much sturdier bridge over Hut Creek near the Cabin (see photo below).



Karen Collins working on the New Bridge near the Cabin

A survey of the plans published on the internet has shown that the logging operations in the area will not affect the Bass Lake trails for the next season.

While the new solar/battery lighting system has made the Cabin much more inviting after dark, it has proved to be difficult to keep the batteries adequately charged with the solar panel through the winter. While plans continue to be discussed to allow more solar charging to take place earlier in the day, the problem was alleviated this winter by more careful use of power and by two expeditions organized by Helena Rummens where a battery was carried in to charge the Cabin battery.

With the prospect of new users, many of whom are not skiers, and the trends in the weather, we see a need to make the Bass Lake trails more accessible to non skiers. The new signs that we expect to be installing soon should help a lot. When we revise the trail maps and Cabin manual identifying the best routes for accessing the Cabin in different seasons would be helpful to new users. Clearing and marking a new portage route from the Chalk River is an idea worth considering.

Acknowledgements

Stuart Craig was awarded an honorary share in the Cabin for his many years of dedication to maintaining and improving the Cabin and the Bass Lake trails. This is in addition to all his work on the Silver Spoon and Forestry trails. In typical fashion, Stuart insisted on paying for his honorary share.

After 33 year of dedicated service, Erik Hagberg has given up his last responsibilities with the Cabin Committee. Bruce Smith has now taken over Erik's duties as treasurer. We wish to thank Erik for all those years dedicated to maintaining this special facility and its trails.

Ski Cabin Committee - Bruce Smith, Karen Colins and Hilary Veen

A7. Rental report

A8. Jackrabbits report

A9. Adult Ski Instruction report (Tom Holden)

The weather for snow this year was poor and several postponements were needed both for the two beginner lessons and the intermediate lesson. (Klister was needed for the first beginner lesson.) In spite of this the groomers produced excellent conditions for which we were very grateful. Sixteen people signed up for beginner lessons on Zone 4 but, of these, only twelve showed up, perhaps because of the postponements and less than ideal conditions. Five people signed up for the intermediate lesson which was taught by Ewan Craig. The number of people wanting lessons has fallen compared with the last three years again probably due to the weather in the early part of the winter.

Comments on the lessons were favourable, for example. "We are very grateful to the club for making this sport so accessible and giving us such a warm welcome to it. We are skiers now, beginners or not." "The basics were covered well and the group size was great at two per instructor." Switching up instructors was good and hitting one of the trails was a great way to end." "I was happy with the lesson length which was long enough to have the techniques practiced." "The instructor delivered feedback in a direct and kind manner and I do feel like my technique improved after the lesson." Finally, I would like to thank all the instructors, Ewan Craig, Nick Cox, Audrey Hagberg, Rob DeAbreu, Adrian Cecco, Diane Davis and the groomers who gave their time generously.

A10. Junior racing report

A11. Financial Summary report (David Rhodes)

Deep River Cross-Country Ski Club – 2023-2024 Financial Status Report

2024 March 24 Some values are estimated.

Fiscal year is August 1 to July 31		— 2023/24 —		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
		To Date	Budget	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
REVENUE	Membership Fees (Note 1)	\$17,377	\$20,000	\$19,915	\$22,597	\$22,019	\$16,198
	Deep River Community Grant	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,000	1,000	1,000
	Jackrabbit/Challenge Fees (Note 1)	1,465	1,000	1,060	950	875	2,063
	Adult Lessons	75	100	95	120	120	0
	Donations	410	500	1,149	892	1,046	520
	Investment Income (Note 5)	6,724	1,000	4,408	-8,446	4,227	4,502
	Miscellaneous (incl. day use box & special grants) (Note 2)	-2	100	11,565	2,750	1,117	395
	Ski Equipment Rental (Note 3)	6,949	4,500	4,782	4,235	3,135	3,717
	Total Revenue	34,198	28,400	44,174	24,098	33,539	28,395
EXPENSES	Chalet Operation	1,315	1,700	1,315	1,275	1,230	1,144
	Trail Grooming	3,056	4,000	2,704	2,738	3,205	4,863
	Trail Maintenance & Improvement (Note 4)	3,401	3,300	2,533	1,118	1,656	3,018
	Junior Programs, Direct Expenses (Note 1)	577	1,900	1,314	665	862	1,022
	Administration, NCD Registration (Note 1), Miscellaneous	8,629	8,500	8,095	8,446	9,374	5,813
	Ski Equipment Rental (Note 3)	5,594	2,500	4,072	2,690	1,542	1,077
	Total Expenses	22,572	21,900	20,033	16,932	17,869	16,937
OPERATING SURPLUS = (Total Revenue) – (Total Expenses)		11,626	6,500	24,141	7,166	15,670	11,458
	Contribution to Equipment Fund	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	2,000
	Contribution to Building Fund	3,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	3,000	2,000
	Contribution to Trails & Bridges Fund	5,000	3,000	8,000	5,000	10,000	4,000
	Contribution to Community Events Fund			11,432			
	Surplus less total fund contributions = contribution to Operating Cash	626	-1,500	-291	-2,834	-330	3,458
	Fund expenditures (negative) (Note 6)	-15,165	-11,000	-4,026	-11,878	-6,000	0

Note 1. Starting in 2021/22, Jackrabbits purchased a club membership, so the this portion of JR fees & NCD cost is tallied separately from JR-specific income & costs.

Note 2. \$11,432 in 2022/23 from SS Committee for future community events.

Note 3. \$2000 gift in 2023/24 for purchase of equipment for TrackAttack is included here, as is the expense for this equipment.

Note 4. There is still \$1000 of additional unclaimed trail sign costs that will likely be covered by the Friends of the Forestry next year.

Note 5. There was a sudden downturn in the value of our "low risk" investments at the beginning of 2022 due to the Ukraine war and inflation. Since then, there has been a full recovery.

Note 6. In the last two years, \$14.6k of bridge costs have been paid by the Four Seasons Conservancy, and \$19k by DRXC.

ASSETS (values as of July 31)

	2024 Mar	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Cash							
Bank of Montreal Community Account	34,429	44,692	28,985	25,251	19,808	12,851	35,430
Credential Mutual Funds	114,428	107,704	103,296	111,742	107,515	103,014	68,663
Total	148,857	152,396	132,281	136,993	127,323	115,865	104,093
Asset Replacement Funds (included in above)							
Equipment Replacement Fund	32,000	29,000	26,000	23,000	20,000	18,000	16,000
Building Fund	29,000	26,000	24,000	22,000	19,000	17,000	15,000
Trails & Bridges Fund	47,146	57,311	53,337	60,215	56,215	52,215	50,215
Community Events Fund	11,432	11,432					
Total	119,578	123,743	103,337	105,215	95,215	87,215	81,215
Fixed Assets							
Grooming Equipment (10% annual depreciation)	19,879	22,088	24,542	27,269	30,299	32,580	35,032
Chalet & Equipment Sheds	26,200	26,200	26,200	26,200	26,200	26,200	26,200
Trails & Bridges	51,669	36,504	17,878	-	-	-	-
Rental Ski Equipment (10% annual depreciation)	18,421	15,823	14,530	11,700	12,960	14,400	16,000
Wilderness Cabin	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Total	131,169	115,615	98,150	80,169	84,459	88,180	92,232
Total Assets	280,026	268,011	230,431	217,162	211,782	204,045	196,325

DRXC FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2023-2024 (Interim)

The financial health of the club is excellent. Membership income was down but still better than pre-COVID years, even with the lack of snow. Expenses were less than budget. Jackrabbits is recovering after COVID lows. Equipment rental was popular. In the last two years we have purchased significant new equipment, but some gaps in sizing still exist. Investments recovered the remainder of the temporary loss two years ago caused by the Ukraine war and inflation worries. The club is making substantial investments in new bridges, towards which the Four Seasons Conservancy contributed ~\$15k. Last year, the FSC, the Community Foundation, and the Friends of the Forestry contributed \$7k+ towards material for additional signage, with a small contribution this year.

	--- 2023/24 ---	--- 2022/23 ---	
<u>Cash Flow</u>	<u>To Date</u>	<u>Actual</u>	
General Operations (income minus expense)	\$8,183	\$22,485	
Junior Programs (income minus expense)	3,443	1,656	
Operating Surplus (income minus expense)	11,626	24,141	
Net Contribution to Capital Funds	-4,165	8,974	Junior Programs include Jackrabbits, TrackAttack, high school program, and the rental program.
<u>Assets</u>			
Cash & Securities	148,857	\$152,396	
Fixed Assets (Equipment, Buildings, Bridges)	131,169	115,615	