



Kanata Nordic News

Issue 7: March 2010

A Season of Successes

by Mike Duivenvoorden

Unbeknownst to many, the season actually began in June when a few committed (crazy?) individuals started planning for the upcoming season. Some of the goals for 2010 were to further enhance our programs, continue to develop a club and team environment, and to support ongoing leader training. New this year were the introduction of the Sport for Life/LTAD (Long Term Athlete Development) model, a pilot Jackrabbit (JR) dryland session in November, a post JR session sprint relay, and a joint ski orienteering event with the Ottawa Orienteering Club.

The Racers kicked off the season in September with dryland activities including roller skiing, an introduction to orienteering, and extended hikes in Gatineau Park to enjoy its natural beauty. Rumour has it that at least one coach tried an alternate route on one hike and inadvertently led some Racers through a very wet swamp.

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Membership, by the Numbers

Total individual members registered with Kanata Nordic this season was 367, down from last year's all-time high of 432. The members are divided between 99 family memberships and 26 individual adult memberships.

In our programs we had:

- 22 Bunnnyrabbits
- 67 Jackrabbits
- 14 Track Attackers
- 15 Kanata Racers
- 17 Adult Novices
- 6 Adult Intermediates
- 10 Adult Tourers

Which adds up to 151 skiers trained and coached by us this season! The other 212 members were not in programs but no doubt were supporting their family members who were and were themselves out enjoying our trails.



A Family Getaway on Skis

by Marlene Alt

Learning to xc ski can not only get you fit and out in the fresh air in the midst of Ottawa winters, it can also provide a new mode of transportation. With some reliable xc gear and a comfortable large backpack or sled you can haul the family into the woods for a wonderful weekend getaway.

Gatineau Park rents several shelters for overnight use, from a basic yurt to a spacious wooden cabin with a surprising number of creature comforts. My husband Doug and I and sons Nicholas (9) and Elias (3) have gone for the latter, Brown's Lake Cabin, two seasons in a row. It's less than a 3 km ski from the parking lot near Wakefield into the cabin, which is the park's largest. The open floor plan is great for a big group with kids: along one side is a wall of windows with lake views, a seating area by the wood-burning stove, and large picnic tables.

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by Marlene Alt
Newsletter Editor

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Along the other side is the main sleeping area: 14 wooden bunks with covered mattresses. At the back is a kitchen equipped with a working stove and refrigerator and all the pots, plates, cups and utensils you need, as long as you don't mind dents and chips. There's also one 'real' room with a door, which sleeps three.

The wall between the sleeping and living areas stops well below the ceiling so it doesn't stop the snores but the kids love jumping from top bunk to top bunk and sitting up there reading, playing, chatting and looking down on the adults, who are usually chatting, drinking and eating!

The place has heat and lights but no running water. You can melt snow on the stoves and for a fee the park will cart in drinking water on a snowmobile for you. The washroom facilities are deluxe by outhouse standards -- roomy and clean with an electric light and even hand sanitizer.

Reserving one of the more popular cabins is tricky. It's a random draw system so we had several of our participating friends apply, to increase our chances. This year we couldn't get the Saturday nights we wanted but the Sunday before Family Day was free so we gladly scooped it up. The cost is \$12-\$30 dollars per person per night.

We packed in a few modest toys but the kids hardly needed them. They just ran around the cabin and found plenty to entertain themselves. There is also an impressive sledding hill beside the cabin, so once the sled was unloaded of our essentials the kids (and a few adults) made good use of it. As Nic enthusiastically stated as he burst into the cabin this year, "I love when we ski into this place!"

There are trails to explore beyond the cabin as well. I did a 20 km loop around Lac Philippe that was amazing. By the way, you can also winter camp at Lac Philippe -- but I'll save that adventure for the future! For more information on the overnight facilities in Gatineau Park visit the [park web site](#).



Photo top right: The sled was loaded with sleeping bags, clothing, food, toys, and -- when the inclines got too much for his novice ski skills -- Eli as well. Why rent one of those deluxe \$500 ski sleds when a \$19 Canadian Tire model will do!

Need something to do when the snow melts?

by **Stefan Bergstrom**

Special Contributor

When winter and the ski season ends you have to find other ways to keep active and fit and prepare for the next ski season. In Scandinavia many xc ski racers train and compete in orienteering during the summer season.

Orienteering is a running sport that, like xc skiing, requires endurance and strength. In addition, orienteering is a 'thinking sport' where aided by a map and compass you need to find your way in unknown terrain to locate checkpoints, known as 'controls'.

Kanata Nordic members Stefan Bergstrom and his 15-year old son Alexander both compete for the Ottawa Orienteering Club in the skiing off-season.

Stefan: Alex, why are you competing in orienteering?

Alex: It is fun to run in the forest and to find the orienteering flags. It is such an exciting challenge to read the map and make decisions while running.

Stefan: How do you train for orienteering?

Alex: I'm running, mostly on trails or in the forest, and as often as I can with an orienteering map in hand. I participate in as many orienteering races I can fit in. We have club training sessions where we practice map reading or compass work in different types of terrain. Most weekends there is a local race and several times a year we travel to neighbouring clubs for races, or to southern Ontario or New York state.

Stefan: How do you compare running in the forest with road running?

Alex: Running in the forest is more challenging, more technical, and more scenic. You have to be able to run in any kind of terrain, uphill, downhill, in tall grass, through wet

swamps or dense thickets. It requires more strength and all around fitness than running on a road.

Stefan: What equipment do you need for orienteering?

Alex: To try it you don't need more than a pair of running shoes and a compass. In competition we use special orienteering shoes with rubber cleats or steel studs for good grip on rock and in mud. We have thin but rip-proof pants and shirts to keep cool but protect from scratches from branches. You get the detailed orienteering map at the start.

Stefan: What is your goal for this orienteering season?

Alex: I want to have good results at the Canadian Championships in August. The 2010 Championship events are being organized right here in the Ottawa area August 18-22, 2010. For information see www.COC2010.ca.

Stefan: How do newcomers find out about orienteering?

Alex: The local orienteering event schedule and related information are posted at www.ottawaoc.ca. Each event has courses for everyone from beginner to elite. There are always instructors that can teach you the basics before you start. The orienteering season starts in mid April and goes to mid November, and usually there is an event most weekends. Races are held in the Ottawa Greenbelt, Gatineau Park, Kanata, and sometimes in city parks. Come and try it!



Kanata Nordic Skiers Shine with Map and Compass



Ski orienteering, or 'ski-O' for short, is a winter adaptation of the snow-less version of this challenging sport. Orienteering requires both navigational skills and athleticism, as competitors are given a map and compass and must navigate from one control point to the next with speed and accuracy. Kanata Nordic boasts two accomplished orienteerers, 15-year old Alexander Bergstrom (pictured here) and his father, Stefan. Both are also members of the [Ottawa Orienteering Club](http://www.ottawaoc.ca).

Alex and Stefan competed in the 2010 Canadian Ski Orienteering Championships on January 24th. Alex took 1st place in the Male Junior event, over a distance of 4 km, while Stefan outclassed the field in the Male Super Masters (7.4 km) with his 1st place finish. Well done, Bergstrom men!

A Memorable First Season with Kanata Nordic

by
S. Nadine Millet
Special Contributor
...

Our first day with Kanata Nordic didn't quite go as planned. After finally finding our way to the Y outdoor centre, despite faulty directions from Google¹, my husband Ed and son Gavin immediately disappeared into the trails. Gavin was particularly excited to be skate skiing as he wanted to do well in his Army Cadet Biathlon competition this year. I was excited that our youngest, Danielle, was starting the Jackrabbit program. Her instructor, Allan Manninen, was awesome and Danielle was enthusiastic.

The lesson was going well until Danielle refused to get up after falling for the tenth time and instead remained lying in the snow screaming at her skis with the intensity only a four-year old, oblivious to everything but herself, can have. Allan very diplomatically suggested maybe she was cold and it was time for hot chocolate. Danielle screamed she hated hot chocolate and it didn't get any better once we got to the chalet.

At that point her angry protests began to include anguished cries about a stomach ache. After twenty minutes camped out in a bathroom stall that was definitely not designed for two, I decided to call it a day. Gavin had caught up with us at this point (he just followed the noise) and was dispirited because his skiing hadn't gone well and, after mistakenly telling an instructor he was not a member, he was told he had to leave.²

The car ride home was quiet. This was not the start I had dreamt about after discovering a passion for xc skiing last winter. My brother, who lives in Yellowknife, had kept bugging me to take up skiing and wanted to ski the Gatineau Loppet with me. While I wondered if his motivation to have me ski crazy distances in the cold in the middle of nowhere was revenge for some childhood pranks I pulled, I nonetheless dusted off a pair

of dirty, ancient no-wax skis I had dug out from under a pile of garden furniture and started skiing. I loved it, so this winter I upgraded to new skis and persuaded my husband and children to try it too.

My Dad had dragged my brother and I out skiing when we were young and what I remember most from those days were frozen feet, cold hands and complete terror when my father insisted that for some 'excitement' we go down steep, windy hills, dotted with trees. Yet here I was, years later, pushing my family to ski and trying to convince them that, although we had a disastrous first experience, it would get better. After much cajoling Ed and Gavin reluctantly admitted that it had felt good to be out in the fresh air doing something together plus the little bit of skiing we did manage was pretty good.

Second time around things went better. Danielle lasted the whole lesson and was even able to do a short circuit in the woods. She also decided she liked hot chocolate. Gavin, now knowing he was indeed a member, skied confidently on the track, while Ed enjoyed the trails. The car ride home was quiet but this time because everyone was tired and happy.

We've been out a few more times since and, although Danielle still has very vocal moments of frustration with her skis, it gets a little better each time. I've enrolled myself in the 29km Gatineau Loppet³ and my brother is flying in to ski the 55km. Our oldest son now wants to join us because we look like we are having so much fun. My dream to ski as a family is becoming real and while I can't promise my kids they won't get frozen feet or cold hands I can promise them I will never make them go down a steep hill, dotted with trees, if they don't want to.



Nadine, Danielle and Gavin eager for their next ski outing.



¹Indeed Google Maps places the Y camp several km north of its actual location. Use the [Bing map](#) instead.

²Non-members are certainly welcome to use our trails. We ask that regular users consider buying a membership to offset our grooming costs.

³Nadine completed the 27 km event in an impressive 2:22, despite having the completely wrong wax, making her have to double pole down hills.

Banquet!



CELEBRATE WITH

All Members are Invited to the Year-end
Banquet and 2010 Annual General Meeting

DATE: Sunday March 28, 2010

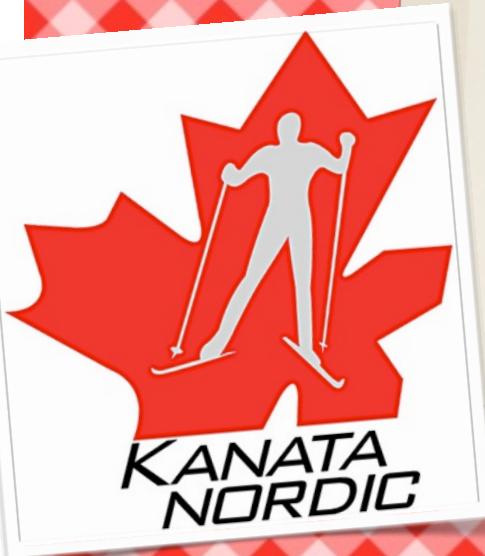
TIME: AGM starts at 3:00 pm; Banquet runs
from 4:30 - 7:00 pm

WHERE: Boston Pizza, Kanata Centrum

COST: Adults \$19.99, children (under 10) \$6.49

Includes full meal with tax and tips!

For details visit www.kanatanordic.ca. To reserve
tickets email info@kanatanordic.ca by March 24th.



Sore Muscles?

by Kristin McCaig

Registered Massage Therapist at the Wellness Centre

Cross-country skiing has been dubbed the most 'dynamic' winter sport. Whether you use the classic or skate stride, all of the major muscles groups in your body will be challenged. While it is a sport with exceptional health benefits, painful injuries can happen. There are two kinds of injuries that can occur: acute injury and overuse of muscles.

According to *Sports Medicine*, one of the most common injuries sustained in xc skiing is shin splints (medial tibial stress syndrome). A massage therapist can decrease stress on the shins by loosening the calves. Treatment may include work on the quadriceps, hamstrings, feet and ankles in order to address any muscular tightness. This tightness might lead to improper movement of the kneecap or over-rotation of the foot away from the body (pronation). Massage therapists may also choose to stretch the calf muscles and conclude the treatment with the application of ice. The end result of treatment is the reduction or elimination of pain, allowing the skier to return to the trails symptom-free.

Avid skiers faced with fresh snow trails are bound to try to go the extra mile. Before heading out remember a good warm-up is crucial. And don't forget leg stretches following your ski. If you have discomfort, ice can be applied. Ending the day in a hot bath with Epsom salts may also reduce inflammation and symptoms of pain.

Over time any faulty biomechanics and overuse will result in injuries. Receiving regular massage therapy treatments will improve the health of your muscles which may lessen the occurrence of injury. Massage therapy should be an important part of any skier's agenda. Whether you ski for leisure or are training for competition, massage therapy offers your muscles an opportunity to keep in balance, reduces symptoms of chronic pain, and improves healing of an acute injury. Book your massage therapy appointment today!

The Wellness Group is conveniently located in Kanata at 420 Hazeldean Road. For more information, contact Kristin at kristin@mykanatachiropractor.com.

The physiological benefits of massage include improved blood and lymph circulation, ease of excess muscle tension and general relaxation. It adds up to relief from soreness and stiffness, better flexibility and less potential for future injury.

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TRAILHEAD



2010 KANATA NORDIC SPRINT RACE

by Shelagh Ryan

2010 Race Director and Club Events Coordinator

...

Since the race's inception three years ago, word has spread through the local ski racing community that our event is unique and fun. Each year 'the Pretzel' delivers a wide variety of experiences to participants, volunteers and spectators alike and this year was no exception. From challenges to hiccups to triumphs, we had them all!

Due to the meagre snow cover the organizers were forced to adjust the lay out of the course. Even so a group of dedicated shovelers was enlisted to scrape snow from wherever they could find it and move it onto the course. Thank you to these volunteers, without whose efforts the race could not have proceeded.

The major renovations underway at the Y camp threw us another curve as there was no longer power available at the storage shed, a.k.a. our timing headquarters, so we secured a generator to run the computers and heaters. A generator breakdown during the event led to a delay in the race. But the silver lining was that this unscheduled break enabled folks to go inside, warm up and enjoy our homemade food selections.

The delay and the increasingly cold, windy weather were directly responsible for the cancellation of the fun team relay planned for the end of the day. Some volunteers were very chilled and had the relay gone ahead the cleanup and equipment takedown would have continued until after dark.

Despite the technical glitches, a few tears and some shivering in the cold, there were also beaming smiles, jubilant hurrahs, and lots of heartfelt "aaahhs" over hot chocolate and steaming chili. By most accounts the 2010 Pretzel was truly a success. But success can come in many different forms.

I witnessed many small examples of what I call success throughout the day, both on and off the course. For instance, two young boys from different clubs who had not met before congratulating each other on the race they had just completed. Good sportsmanship successfully learned! One of our youngest club members, a Bunnyrabbit, delighting in handing out the chocolate pretzel participation 'medal' to all skiers as they finished their second heat. The joy of volunteerism successfully learned. A high-level soccer player who had not had the opportunity to apply the same devotion to skiing became anxious before her second heat when learning that she'd be facing strong competition. She went out and skied her hardest, earning a place in the semi-final. Her success was in learning to never let your fears dictate your choices and to always try your best. Another young skier was severely disappointed in her results and after a hug was determined to return to racing next year after investing more training hours. The benefits of practice successfully learned.

I look forward to hosting another memorable Pretzel next year, with fewer glitches but more skiers and more of our always generous and appreciated volunteers. But before I go could I ask one favour? Please start dancing to the 'snow gods' now!

Thank you to our
2010 Race
Sponsors



Again this year we were delighted to have Geoff and Bobbie McGowan, RE/MAX realtors as the lead sponsors for the Kanata Nordic Sprint Race. Great partners in our community!

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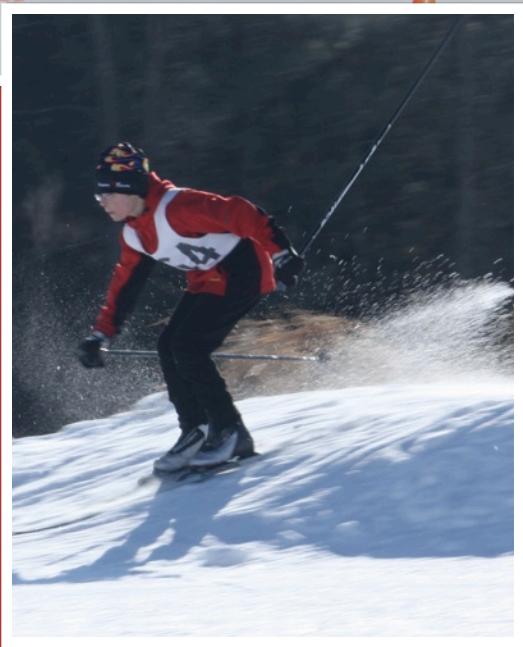
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PHOTOS FROM THE SPRINT RACE



SPECIAL THANKS TO ANDREW CANHAM, STEFAN BERGSTROM, S. NADINE MILLET, MARC LAVOIE ([ZOOM PHOTO](#)) AND STEVE HOWARD FOR THE PHOTOS IN THIS NEWSLETTER.

FOR RACE RESULTS VISIT THE [KANATA NORDIC WEB SITE](#).

continued from page 1: A SEASON OF SUCCESSES

...memorable for the lack of snow, the abundance of great race results and spirit to spare...

by Mike Duivenvoorden

Kanata Nordic President and Racing Coach

...

As the leaves fell we had a well-attended Trails Day and BBQ at the Y camp, which brought out many volunteers to socialize, get some fresh air, and prepare the trails for the season ahead. Further volunteer efforts made for a successful Ski Swap in November. Also in the fall, many hours of effort by Marlene Alt led to the unveiling of our new website.

Through November, the Racers continued to log regular roller skiing and hiking sessions, and the Track Attackers started their season. For the first time a JR dryland session was held. With the first hint of snow in Gatineau Park we were thrilled to open up the wax box and dust off the skis and head to the trails.

Snow finally arrived in Kanata in mid December. Fortunately our new grooming equipment was delivered then too. The new equipment allowed the dedicated crew, led by Pat Kirkham, to create first-class trails through regular trail renovation and recycling of limited snow over and over again. A mid January thaw did not even shut down our trails.

Our Jackrabbit Coordinator Ardeth Kirkham had the Bunnyrabbits and Jackrabbits hitting the snow in early January and they continued full speed until the programs' final Fun Day on March 6. The first ever in-club JR sprints was a resounding success with all ages and abilities racing in a mixed team relay. New BR and JR leaders joined the ranks this season and evening on-snow leader training was introduced by veteran coach trainer Ken Phillips.

By January a strong and cohesive Racer team had welcomed several new members. Coupe Skinouk was their first race and set the baseline for the Racers to measure their performance. Subsequent races saw significant improvements in times and finish position including Brendan Howard capturing the Eastern Canada midget boys championship. In February another successful Kanata Nordic Sprint Race, master-minded by Shelagh Ryan, brought out an army of volunteers and welcomed other clubs to an energy-packed series of heats.

The highlight of the race season may have been the Gatineau Loppet, with Kanata Nordic fielding 20 Racers, Track Attackers, Jackrabbits and parents and achieving impressive results: numerous personal bests and a collection of medal finishes.

While all this was going on our adult para-nordic racers Margarita Gorbounova and Alexei Novikov were competing in World Cup events in Europe, accompanied by coaches Harris Kirby and Robert D'Arras. Margarita and Alexei were vying to increase their points to solidify their positions representing Canada at the Paralympics in March. As I write this the Paralympics have yet to start, but as you read this they will be well underway. Be sure to catch Margarita and Alexei in action on CTV! You can also watch Games highlights on the [official Paralympics web site](#) and follow [my own blog](#) from there. Margarita and Alexei's participation on the world stage for our sport will be a marvellous conclusion to a memorable ski season.



BRENDAN ON HIS WAY TO WINNING THE 2010 EASTERN



JACKRABBITS HAVING FUN



RACERS HAD A GREAT SEASON

Racing Parent Becomes Racing Participant

by **Michèle Charrier**

Special Contributor

...



Michèle Charrier celebrates her completion of the Gatineau Loppet. (Photo courtesy of Marc Lavoie, [Zoom Photo](#))

For many years I have watched and supported my daughter Elyse as she competed in xc ski and triathlon races. While I have never myself raced in either sport, I often shared with her my expert (armchair) knowledge of racing, mental preparation, race strategy, handling jittery nerves and the competition.

With encouragement from Elyse, I finally took the plunge this year to participate in the 16 km Gatineau Loppet classic event. I stress 'participate' because, while you are considered a racer as soon as you strap the timing chip to your ankle, my novice skiing skills and lack of ski fitness would definitely exclude me from the podium. My more realistic intention was to finish the race without embarrassment (to my daughter) and injury (to myself).

Though still a novice skier, I was pretty confident I could handle the 16 km course. I had completed the P10 to Champlain Lookout loop in Gatineau Park on several occasions, so the distance seemed reasonable. I had new

classic skis and comfortable clothing and I dutifully went out on Tuesdays and Saturdays with my daughter and the Kanata Nordic Racers to 'train'.

Ski racing is a little more complicated than just doing the course, as I found out on February 20. I was surprised at how anxious and nervous I was at the start. I found the cheers and noise from well wishers distracting. While I lined up according to my strength (at the back of the pack) it was a challenge to break away from the congestion once the race started.

The conditions were far from ideal. My wax was virtually useless (another novice mistake) and they changed the course so I ended up climbing many big hills with little or no grip. Normally this would not be so bad, but the week before the Loppet I had a bad fall coming down a hill and bruised my face. I was mindful of this, so at each downhill I was terrified of falling again. The worry, fear and mental concentration tired me out early. By the time I reached the last 1 km my legs felt like jello and I was struggling with balance. I contemplated walking the rest of the course.

I finally skied crossed the finish line 20 minutes later than I had anticipated. My beautifully fit daughter was waiting for me. No big cheers, no wild applause, just me, her and a few volunteers. I was overcome with emotion. I just wanted to cry. It was a curious feeling – part elation, part anger.

I was humbled by the Loppet race. It's one thing to talk about racing and quite another to actually do it. Next year (yes, I will do it again) I will start training much earlier so I am in better shape both physically and mentally. My goal will be to ski relaxed, confident (overcome my fear of downhills), and enjoy the experience. This will take time, as coach Mike Duivenvoorden often tells me -- at least four years to really get comfortable skiing any distances. Steve Howard, another racer and racing parent, tells me I will eventually figure it out and it will get easier!



What is Klister?

by **Dave Morton**

[Bushtukah](#)

...

Klister. You may know it is as the gooey, sticky stuff that instills fear in classic nordic skiers every spring. This year, have no fear. With new product development in easy-to-apply quick-klisters, everyone can use it. When would you use it? Klister is a staple grip wax for after Easter, for icy tracks, and for snow that has melted and frozen again and has high humidity.

Klister in its original form is a sticky paste that comes in a tube, and takes a bit of experience to apply it properly. An important thing to remember is that klister generally adheres in a thicker layer than hard grip waxes, so you have to shorten your wax-pocket by about 10 cm in the front, and 5 cm in the back, depending on your ski (any ski shop should be able to tell you what your wax-pockets are).

Once you know the wax-pocket, apply the klister in a thin smooth layer. It is easier to get it smooth using a wax iron to heat the klister on the base of the ski, and then smooth it out with your thumb or palm of your hand. Remember to keep wax remover nearby. A traditional klister wax is a bit more durable. If you are a recreational skier, the easy-to-apply quick-klisters on the market will work great, too. They come with a foam applicator and it is just a matter of stroking it on like your regular wax, and you're ready for some fantastic spring skiing.



For more advice on waxing and how to put your gear away for the season properly, visit [www.xcottawa.ca](#).

Photo courtesy of [www.xcottawa.ca](#)

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Have an idea?

Please contact Kaleigh or Marlene if you are interested in contributing, have an idea to pass along or a comment to share.

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