

Alpine Club of Canada: Regional Reps Meeting and AGM, May 2024

I represented ACC-Ottawa at the spring regional reps meeting and AGM of the ACC. Each local section receives funding from national (travel, accommodation and meals) to send one delegate to this meeting. Usually, the rep is the section chair. There is a second reps meeting in the fall that is done on-line. The meetings are a chance to talk with the local reps about what goes on in their section. There were 22 of the 25 sections represented at this meeting. It is also a chance to meet the board of directors and the national office staff and hear about what they are working on and what they feel are priorities for the club.

My takeaways from the reps meeting and AGM:

1. There are some administrative questions related to sections that have been raised by the club's new insurance provider that are being worked on. There won't be much impact on the members' experience from these. Ottawa is also interested in questions raised about limits on providing alcohol at club functions and whether extra health insurance may be required for international trips (ex. to the ADK?!?). We are awaiting more info on these topics.
2. There was emphasis on Diversity and Inclusion and also relations with the Indigenous people in our regions. Our section needs to consider what this means for us.
3. I thought it might be useful to host a section social/meeting on our connection with national. We now have five members serving on national committees (finance, fund development, leadership, nominations, and safety) and thinking they could talk about what their committee does. It could be a way for interested members to learn more about the goings on at national.
4. National is trying to post info about their courses and trips earlier so that members who might be interested can investigate these. Winter course offerings are now posted [here](#)
5. Our partnership with MEC continues to improve. Last winter there was a section gear allowance where we could get some gear for free from MEC. Our Hiking Coordinator took charge of this to pick up some items to give away at HAP and other events. There will be another one of these in the fall. Our local MEC has hosted two, member discount nights, offered us free use of their community room and a gear discount when we were needing to quickly purchase a couple of new ropes for upcoming trips. The "company" seems to be making efforts to improve relations with the outdoor community.
6. The sections from the east (Montreal, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ottawa, Outaouais and Toronto) continue to advocate for national to have more of a presence in our part of the country. Several suggestions were made for courses that could be run here. We'll see if there is any action taken on these. The President and Executive Director are hoping to make an eastern trip in November and hopefully Ottawa will be on their itinerary.
7. Financially and in terms of membership the club seems to be in good shape. National had a surplus of \$263,116 in 2023 and made \$918,000 in capital investments (mainly hut refurbishing projects). There is an investment portfolio of \$7.9 million and our capital assets grew by 8.9% to \$4.8 million. There are now 15,500 members in the club. Signup for

- courses and hut bookings have all returned to the levels they were at pre-covid. Documents that were part of the AGM for 2023 can be accessed on the [national website here](#)
8. Eighteen volunteer awards were handed out this year, including a Distinguished Service Award to Ottawa's own Calvin Klatt for his longtime commitment to both the Ottawa and Toronto sections.
 9. We were involved in discussions about promoting volunteerism and leadership in the club, what leadership programs could look like and what environmental and access issues the club should be involved in. There were lots of good ideas offered for national staff to consider.
 10. Members of the national office staff revealed the club's new branding plans and images. There is a new logo for a day-to-day use, on our social media and publications. We are returning to an original heritage logo for awards, which will also remain on huts. As with any change, reaction to the new image was mixed but the hope is that people will adjust to it over time. The club is more than its logo and, for me, who we are is captured well by this statement from the branding presentation materials: "We are a community of mountain lovers, we value our heritage and rich history, we are stewards of the environment, and we thrive on transformative experiences in the mountains." A smiling face at the top of a climb is my image of the ACC!
 11. I feel that our Executive Director Carine Salvy and President Isabelle Daigneault are building a good team at the national office. They are humble enough to acknowledge where work still needs to be done but have a strong sense of purpose and belief in where they think the club can go. They are working hard to communicate more effectively with sections and supporting us in our work. Our primary contact, Tara McConnery, Programs and Services Director, is very accessible and works hard to respond to issues we raise. I came away feeling that our club is in good hands!

Please feel free to reach out to me at: chair@alpineclubottawa.ca if you have any questions or want further discussion.

Bill Barrett, Chair, ACC-Ottawa