

# January 2007 Newsletter

## Toronto Outdoor Club

### Happy New Year!

This newsletter is packed with content from other club members, so I'll keep my bit straight to the point. I suggest reading Steph's article (below) in full, as it provides some interesting background about our club, and that motivational spirit that Steph is always so good at spreading to other members!

This edition of TOC news also features an article by David Block, the club's safety & operations / partner & sponsor officer, about recent activities in that portfolio. We also have a new member profile - say hello to Lorie!

As always, I can be reached at [info@torontooutdoorclub.com](mailto:info@torontooutdoorclub.com) if you have any questions, comments or ideas for the member profile.

Cheers,  
Deb (TOC PR & Communications Officer)

### Letter from the President

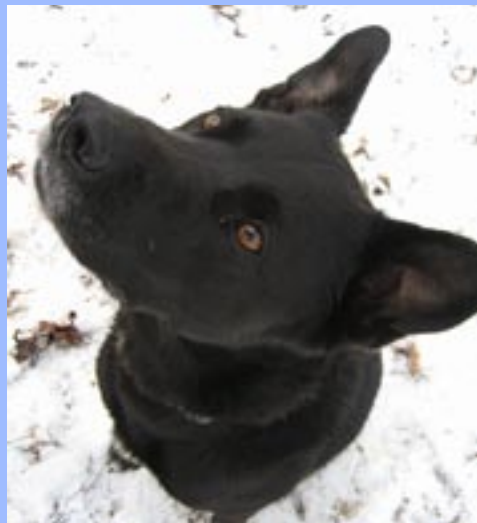
Wow. What a year we've had. In December 2005 the TOC had a total of 10 new members sign up. I had to cancel events because less than four people signed up for a hike. I was discouraged and pessimistic. I had a vision of what the TOC could become, having seen it happen in Calgary. My vision seemed very cloudy at the point.

January 2006 was a turning point. Maybe it was due to New Year's resolutions, but we had 47 new members sign up in that month. And that was the just the beginning. We picked up some new volunteers - Deb, our info chick, stepped up as a volunteer to write our newsletter and answer general questions from our members and from the media. She's changed our newsletter from a boring text letter to the fabulous layout you are reading now - with pictures and articles and our favourite part: the member profile!

Since that month, the TOC has grown into a vibrant and diverse club and the wonderful people that have joined us never cease to amaze me. They have been on hikes and bikes, on social events, in our forum and on our volunteer team. I've met some wonderful friends in the last year and the TOC has gained great support from members and volunteers.

Just last week we had our LAST full volunteer meeting - because there are just too many volunteers to put in one room - and I looked around the room and thought about how lucky I was to have such a great group of people who share my enthusiasm and vision, and how lucky our members are to have these people who want more than anything to bring more events out there so that everyone gets to participate. I see solid friendships (and a few relationships!) formed among people who would have never had an opportunity to meet if it wasn't for the TOC. I've seen shy people happy to be the centre of attention. The TOC has old folks, young people, newcomers, westerners, novices, experts, athletes, couch potatoes, singles, married couples...all on the same event, hiking side-by-side and chatting among everyone. Best of all, I've seen people come out for their first event...then return again and again and again. All because they are having fun!

*(continued on page 5)*



**The official  
TOC mascot:**

**Steph's dog,  
Rocky**



## Upcoming Events

Jan 26 2007 - TOC Book Club Meeting  
Jan 26 2007 - WinterCity Free Concert: The Philosopher Kings  
Jan 26 2007 - An Evening by the Pool (but at the Rivoli): Round 1  
Jan 27 2007 - X-Country Skiing at Scenic Caves  
Jan 28 2007 - Intro to Snowshoe and then...Tubing!  
Feb 2 2007 - Overnight - Cabin Weekend - Tubing, Snow Shoeing & X-Country Skiing  
Feb 2 2007 - Weekly Swim - Drop In  
Feb 3 2007 - Trail Run: Bluff Trail, Awenda Provincial Park (Difficult)  
Feb 3 2007 - Learn - Tour the Steamwhistle Brewery  
Feb 4 2007 - Hike - Cheltenham Badlands (Easy to Moderate)  
Feb 7 2007 - Indoor Rock Climbing  
Feb 7 2007 - Learn - Mountain Biking the Inca Trail (Multimedia Slideshow)  
Feb 9 2007 - Skate - Outdoor Waterfront DJ Skate  
Feb 9 2007 - Overnight - Snowshoe Backpack: Tetsmine Lake Loop: Frontenac (Moderate to Difficult)

## Guest article: Weather Patterns in Ski Country

The less-than-ideal snow conditions during late 2006 in central Ontario's ski country were a big disappointment to ski enthusiasts. This year, the snow came about six weeks late. Fortunately, we have snow now, and with any luck, we will be able to ski into March and perhaps early April.

The stark difference between Toronto's weather and that of the snowbelt directly north of the city which periodically gets heavy, lake-effect snow squalls is a remarkable phenomenon. These storms develop when the cold winds from the west and northwest blow across the warmer lakes, warming the air. This warmer air, which can hold additional moisture, then blows on to the cooler land. This cools the air once more, resulting in precipitation in the form of snow. Snow squalls can produce lots of snow in a short period of time. For instance, Highland Nordic Cross-Country Ski resort (just south of Collingwood and Blue Mountain) reported 30 cm of snow on January 15 and 16.

The snow is also more plentiful in this area because downhill and cross-country ski areas can be up to 500 metres above Toronto's elevation and are therefore colder. Moreover, ski trails are often in forests, which keep the sun off the snow. Conversely, the heat generated by the city of Toronto is a big city creates a heat island effect.

Enough with the theory! Now we have to hope for great conditions (which specifically means hoping for cold weather and strong west or north-west winds!) for the rest of the winter!

- David Block

*Turn to page 5 for info about where to find current snow conditions at several Ontario ski areas*



## Member Profile: Ten Questions

This month marks our third member profile section. Our feature member for December is **Lorie Williams**.

*If there is someone you'd like to see profiled, email Deb at [info@torontooutdoorclub.com](mailto:info@torontooutdoorclub.com).*

**Name:** Lorie Williams

**Nicknames:**

Actually Lorie is my nickname. My full name is Beuloria.

**TOC member since:**

I have been involved since June of 2006. My friend Linda told me about the club.

**Favourite TOC event so far:**

My first event, Bon Echo, was my favourite. It motivated me to do more events with the club because everyone was so welcoming and non-cliquey. We did a little bit of everything on that event: swimming, hiking, canoeing and camping.

**Hometown:**

My hometown is Chicago, Illinois. I came to Toronto in 2004 with my work. I am returning to Chicago and will miss everyone greatly!

**Other non-TOC hobbies:**

I am an avid music fan. I try to keep abreast of what's going on in the local and international music scene. In the summer, I enjoy rollerblading, cycling and hiking.

**Which one item could you not live without on a day-to-day basis?**

I cannot live without love. As the song says, it makes the world go 'round!

**If you had one day to spend however you liked, cost being no barrier, how would you spend it?**

I would spend it atop the ancient city of Machu Picchu. Why? To give some insight on why this city speaks to me, I would like to quote the famous Chilean writer, Pablo Neruda's *The Heights of Machu Picchu*:

*"Machu Picchu is a trip to the serenity of the soul, to the eternal fusion with the cosmos, there we feel our own fragility. It is one of the greatest marvels of South America. A resting place of butterflies at the epicenter of the great circle of life. One more miracle."*

**If you could be someone else for a day, who would you be and why?**

I would like to be Siddhartha Gautama, the historical Buddha. I would like to know how it feels to be perfectly enlightened.

**Finish this sentence: The best thing about being outdoors is...**

...finding inner peace vicariously through nature's little treasures.

Here's Lorie preparing a meal at Bon Echo:



## Want to get in touch with the TOC?

Here are some email addresses to write to:

**Steph, TOC President**

[pres@torontooutdoorclub.com](mailto:pres@torontooutdoorclub.com)

**Erik, VP and Treasurer**

[erik@torontooutdoorclub.com](mailto:erik@torontooutdoorclub.com)

**Hassan, VP Safety and Operations**

[hassan@torontooutdoorclub.com](mailto:hassan@torontooutdoorclub.com)

**Deb, PR and Communications Officer (& newsletter)**

[info@torontooutdoorclub.com](mailto:info@torontooutdoorclub.com)

**Coco, Photo Historian**

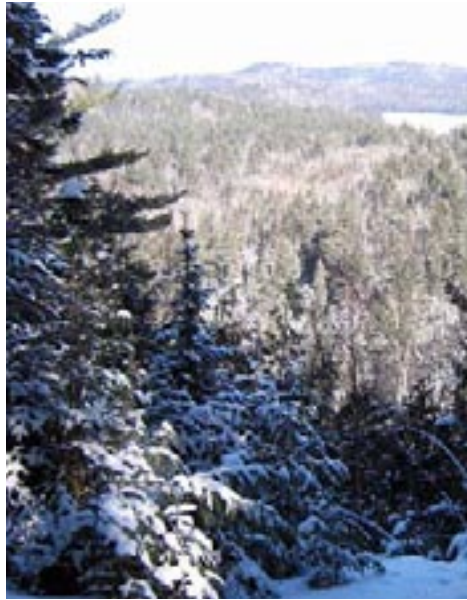
[photos@torontooutdoorclub.com](mailto:photos@torontooutdoorclub.com)

Check out the volunteer page at:

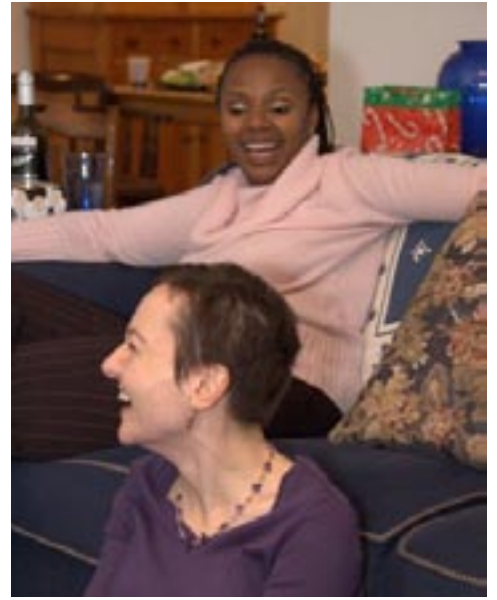
<http://www.torontooutdoorclub.com/aboutus/officers>.



The Pinery



Wolf Den Bunkhouse and Cabins



Holiday Kris Kringle



Nature Walk at Ball's Falls



Twelve Trail / Merrit Trail Loop

**December Events Photo Album**



Scotch Block



Classic Chinese Yue Cuisine



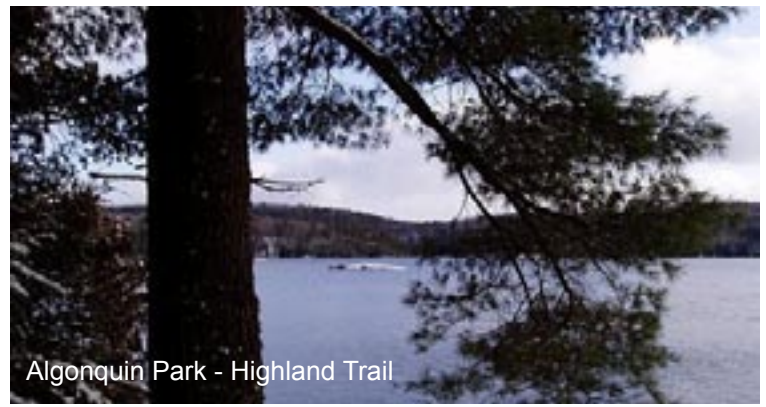
The Pinery - winter (w/o snow) car camping

*(Letter from the President - continued from page 1)*

So, here it is one year later from my TOC crisis, and my vision has returned stronger than ever. I see 2007 as one of our best years ever. This summer will be packed with hikes, bikes, camping trips and more. If you haven't come to an event yet, sign up, get on the waiting list, badger a volunteer to get them to put those events up there, or better yet, become a volunteer and get those events on the calendar yourself! I knew that Toronto wasn't a cold and unfriendly city, and the warm and friendly reception I get from our members shows me that I'm doing something that is important. I want to see more people get out and experience nature, to try camping or push themselves on a canoe or backpacking trip. Maybe try some rock climbing or riding a horse or eating at a new restaurant. I guarantee you'll meet some wonderful people and make some new friends.

I want to thank everyone who helped make 2006 such a successful year for the TOC. I could not do this alone, so a special shout out to: Deb, Hassan, JennM and JennP, Jason (El Rey!), Cynthia, Jo, Jim, David, Rob, Coco as volunteers you really stepped up to the plate when asked and to those of you that have been around early on: Alan, Erik, Alison, Mihal, Marianna, JL and Alana – your perseverance and support has been immeasurable. And to all those I haven't mention, members and volunteers – you have been the backbone of making this a successful year and will be instrumental in driving the TOC to places I only dreamed of. And finally – thanks to Rhonda, founder of the COC and the CCC, who suggested I do it and encouraged me to keep going back in December of 2005. Hang on to your lifejackets, we are going to have a great year!

Steph, TOC Founder and President  
[Pres@torontooutdoorclub.com](mailto:Pres@torontooutdoorclub.com)



Algonquin Park - Highland Trail



Classic Chinese Yue Cuisine



Wolf Den  
Bunkhouse  
and Cabins



Scotch Block Hike



Nature Walk at Ball's Falls