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# Open house brings skiers out

**PJ WILSON**  
THE NUGGET

ASTORVILLE - It's about five years since Jeff McFadyen strapped on cross-country skis or snowshoes.

But he ended that self-imposed exile Saturday, taking advantage of an open house at the Wasi Cross-country Ski Club to get back into the groove.

"I'm getting back into shape," McFadyen said as he sat in the small chalet after 45 minutes out on the trails.

"It's good exercise and I live here in this area, so I might as well enjoy the winter."

He was out on cross-country skis, and said it was nice to experience winter again from that perspective.

"I only fell twice," he said.

It's the first time the club has offered a try-it-for-free open house, president Kerry Somerville said. By 11 a.m. about a dozen people had shown up to check out the trails and facilities.

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# Trails 'very social'

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Somerville was convinced there would have been more, but Friday night's snowfall had continued in through Saturday morning, and snowplows were busy out on the highway scraping away the snow pack.

The trails have only been open a couple of weeks, thanks to the late start to winter, but this weekend's snowfall was helping out a lot. Groomers were out on the trails getting everything in top shape.

"Conditions were a bit of a challenge last weekend, and we had a good first week" that was spoiled by some early-January rain. But things are looking much better now, she said.

The club offers about 35 kilometres of groomed ski trails and eight kilometres of snowshoe trails, added a couple of years ago to make the club a bit more attractive to some potential users.

"We've had good response to it," she said, explaining that some of the older members of the club – it boasts a membership of about 300 people – a chance to get out and try something different.

The trails are geared toward classic cross-country skiers, she said, and is one of only a few in the province that are double-tracked, allowing skiers to ski side-by-side.

"It makes it very social," Somerville said. "You can go out and ski with a friend and chat. It makes it more of a social activity."

Mike and Janelle – they ask that their last name not be used – and their two daughters, Beatrice, two, and Eleanor, four-and-a-



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Janelle, left, and Mike, who asked that their last name not be used, check out the trails at the Wasi Cross-Country Ski Club, Saturday, while towing their daughters, Beatrice, two, and Eleanor, four-and-a-half months. The club held an open house to let visitors get a no-cost taste for nordic skiing and snowshoeing.

half months old, are among those checking out the trails. Mike is going to be pulling the two children in a sled on their circuit.

"We don't get out enough to buy a membership, but it's nice to get out once in a while," Janelle says.

Beatrice was out with them last

year, but it's Eleanor's first chance.

Beatrice "loves the snow, and especially because they have bird feeders set out here," Janelle says. "She always gets us to stop so we can watch the birds."

"It was awesome. Beautiful," McFadyen says. "The snow-covered

trees, the birds around, and this is a very nice facility. And the trails are excellent."

"And we have the nicest outhouses anywhere," Somerville adds. McFadyen laughs.

"And the bathrooms are always clean," he agrees.