

## Press release

For immediate release, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010

### **Record registration numbers at the Morin-Heights Viking Loppet**

Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, the Municipality of Morin-Heights and the Viking Ski Club jointly hosted the 38<sup>th</sup> edition of the Viking Loppet. 440 participants registered this year, a record for this event. Temperatures were mild and the atmosphere warm and inviting. More than 140 volunteers led the way, with registrations, handing out refreshments, manning road crossings, and encouraging both skiers and snowshoers along the way to the finish line at Basler Park.

As an email from a Loppet skier shows, this community event continues to please year after year: «I would like to commend the organisers of this year's Loppet. Despite challenging ski conditions, the event was an absolute pleasure. It was extremely well organized and the staff was friendly and helpful. It was a positive experience from the moment I arrived until my last sip of coffee before I left.»

The new 5 km snowshoe run, with its 27 racers, was a great addition to the Loppet this year. We look forward to a growing participation in this event. 183 skiers took part in the 10 km race, popular with families and youth. The 20 km attracted 165 participants, and 65 skiers looking for a greater challenge, raced the 33 km. The youngest skier, Kiara Marshall was only 3 years old, and Jean Constantineau, 82, was the Loppet's most senior athlete.

After the race, a well earned lunch was served to all racers, while Guy Thibaudeau announced the results efficiently provided by the Sportstats team, thanks to their ChampionChip technology. Medals were presented by Councillor Leigh McLeod. The two fastest athletes in the 15 and under age category, Mathieu Gélinais for the boys, and Marianne Lemire for the girls, will have their names added to the Desjardins trophy.

Teams of first-responders were posted at strategic locations in case of any emergencies and for which we are pleased to report, there were none. The day ended at the town hall with a volunteers' party where they were thanked and given prizes generously donated by local merchants and sponsors.

Who knows, perhaps the record-breaking Loppet participation by citizens of all ages was inspired by being on the coat-tails of the concluding Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics!

Visite the loppet's website at [www.skiloppet.com](http://www.skiloppet.com) for detailed results.