

Photo courtesy Fort St. John Arts Council

COOL CREATION

Patrice Lemelin, Suzon-Anne Trembley and Aleisha Hendry showed off their snow sculpting skills at Centennial Park last weekend.



Dustin Walker photo

TAKING SHAPE

Margaret May (pictured) and Sheila Green chiseled through a block of snow Saturday as their sculpture of a skier began to take shape during the Amateur Snow Sculpting Competition at Centennial Park.

REGION

Lighted slide first project for 'Peace Gold'

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In all, they harvested nearly 200 blocks of ice, which will be used for the ice festival and a sculpture outside city hall.

Vogelaar and Forrester put the ice to use Monday, building an illuminated slide in the spray park at Centennial Park. They cut blocks to size and then put Christmas lights underneath the ice, before adding railings and smoothing the rough edges.

"I just built one in the Kootenays...and the kids were on it all day long right until the parents had to drag them home. They loved it," he said.

While Forrester is harvesting and sculpting for the first time this winter, he hopes to carry on the practice when Vogelaar leaves.

"It's nice to be outdoors and nice to harvest ice locally as opposed to bringing it in from another location," he said. "It's quite neat the different ways you can work with it."

A portion of this year's ice still had to be imported in case the harvesting didn't work. Next year, the icemen hope to be able to supply all the festival's ice.



Submitted photo

Ice sculptor Peter Vogelaar lifts ice chunks he cut out of a pond near Baldonnel.

LOCAL ARTS

Embrace winter – with ice carving tools

CHANDRA WONG
COMMUNITY ARTS COUNCIL

One of the things I truly enjoy about living in Fort St. John is the snow!

Winters here are full of so much snow compared to memories of my Calgary childhood, where the paltry skiff of snow that we would get was quickly melted away by a brisk Chinook wind.

Here in the Peace region, snowflakes seem to tumble out of the sky on a regular basis in uncountable variety. Fat fluffy flakes softer than goose down. Small crystalline flakes like a million points of light. A dusting of flakes as light as icing sugar on a chocolate cupcake.

And how the flakes arrive is a marvel in itself. One snowfall might consist of a gentle drift from grey clouds to the ground. While the next appears as a playful game of tag, random and boistrous. Other times the poor flakes are blasted relentlessly by a stiff, frigid gale.

Once the snow hits the ground it softens the landscape. The harsh edges of curbs and roof lines are blunted into graceful curves. Sounds are muffled and muted, whether it's the roar of a diesel engine or the bark of a dog.



Submitted photo

Professional ice sculpture

Many people begin to grumble when the snow makes its appearance. Snow means windshields that need brushing. Boots and mittens must be worn to keep snow from freezing ankles and wrists. Continual snow requires continual shoveling and plowing to keep our roads and sidewalks clear. So much of the white stuff piles up on roadsides into delicious drifts that the curbs seem to disappear, and homes are hidden by a wall of snow.

And while snow on the roads can wreak havoc with so many car bumpers, there's nothing finer than taking my car through a well-executed controlled slide around a corner that's lightly 'greased' with a little snow. And judging by the number of pick up truck rear-ends that fish-tail wildly around a bend, I'm not the only one

who enjoys this aspect of snow.

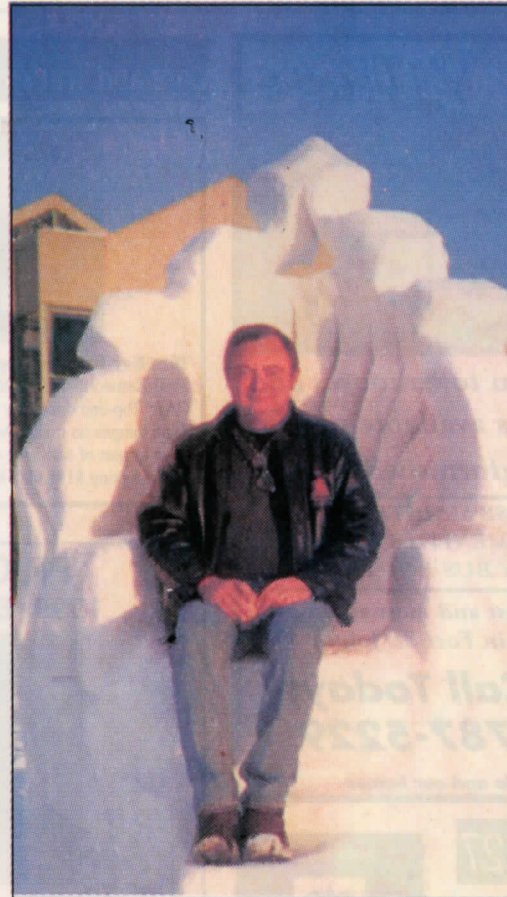
Those unfamiliar with snow may feel a little cabin fever developing, as they watch the plummeting flakes from the safety of their living room windows. But the best way to overcome this symptom of too much time inside is to embrace the beauty of the season and go outside.

The Snow Carving Competition that takes place during the 4th annual High on Ice Winter Carnival is a great opportunity to get up close and personal with snow. Using simple tools like a shovel, a hand saw, a bucket and a block of wood to act like a chisel, intricate carvings can emerge from a large block of snow about the size of a telephone booth.

The competition will take place on Sunday, January 20, 2008 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Teams of two to four people can enter, making this a great opportunity to spend time with family or build team spirit amongst workmates.

This year's theme is Celebrating Canada in the north in honour of B.C.'s 150th anniversary in 2008. The possibilities are endless and creativity is encouraged.

For more information or to register contact 787-2781 or email fsjarts@telus.net.



Submitted photo

Coun. Larry Evans gets comfortable in a throne carved out of snow.

PIPELINE TO THE ARTS

- Dec. 17-21 – Gingerbread House Contest Entries displayed at the Visitor Information Centre

- Dec 29-30 – Stage North Presents "Seussical the Musical" and New Year's Eve Family Party at North Peace Cultural Centre

- Jan. 5 – Christmas Tree Pick-up. Proceeds to the North Peace Gymnastics Club

- Jan. 12 – Bridal Fair at the North Peace Cultural Centre

- Jan. 14 – Monday Night at the Movies presents "Golden Door" at Aurora Cinema

- Jan. 17-19 – Dr. Kearney Junior Secondary presents the musical "The Nifty Fifties" at the North Peace Cultural Centre

- Jan. 17-20 – The High on Ice Winter Carnival featuring professional ice carving and amateur ice and snow carving at Centennial Park.

- Jan. 26 – Aaron Lines in Concert at the North Peace Cultural Centre

- Jan. 26 – Robbie Burns Night at the Curling Rink