

## WINTER CARNIVAL



Calvin Krezmiem slides down the toboggan chute on the Greenfield Common, Saturday afternoon.

STAFF PHOTO/CHRIS LARABEE

## Centennial event delights all ages

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GREENFIELD — After last year's mostly virtual celebration, what better way to return to an in-person Winter Carnival than for its centennial celebration?

With a weekend full of activities, the Greenfield Recreation Department welcomed the community back to the Winter Carnival with a variety of events for all ages. In addition, historic aspects of the carnival were brought back for the 100th edition, including an outdoor ice bar speakeasy and a toboggan chute on the Greenfield Common, along with newer traditions like the ice sculptures up and down Main Street.

Between arts and crafts events for children, salsa dancing at Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center, community tug-of-war and the traditional K9 Keg Pull, there was something for everyone over the course of the sunny weekend.

### Friday night fun

Nasty Friday morning weather gave way to a light blanket of snow befitting of the Winter Carnival as it kicked off with the lighting of the torch on the Greenfield Common at 4 p.m. and the Parade of Lights at 6 p.m.

The mood of the night was joyous, with many people, the majority of whom have attended many Winter Carnivals, emphasizing their excitement about the event returning.

Greenfield resident Dominique Fitzroy said she and Vivian Fitzroy, 4, were ready for the carnival to kick off.



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**The Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center ballroom was filled with the sounds of shoes tapping and the sight of bodies swirling during salsa lessons held during the Winter Carnival.**

"We're most excited for the fireworks," she said, with Vivian saying she wanted to see the red fireworks because that's her favorite color.

Folks gathered on Main Street outside Hawks & Reed and on the common to take in the Parade of Lights, which featured vehicles of all stripes decked out in lights with their occupants waving to the onlookers.

"I'm excited for the lights," said 4-year-old Raquel Paulding, who gave an enthusi-

astic nod when asked if she was excited for the fireworks.

Lauren Cerillo, who accompanied Raquel, said the Winter Carnival is a chance to bring the community together after some tough years.

"We're excited. ... It's a moment to get outside and be with the community in the middle of winter," Cerillo said.

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# Carnival

FROM A1

Cerillo, among others Friday night, said she was concerned the weather was going to disrupt the night's events, but the snowfall made it a wonderful evening.

"We were worried they were going to call it," Cerillo said. "We had been looking forward to it all week."

After a day of freezing rain, folks were invited to warm up at Hawks & Reed's ice bar speakeasy on Court Square. Fires in barrels warmed up people's outsides while special winter cocktails like hot toddies and evergreen martinis — along with hot chocolate and cider — brought warmth to their insides.

Chris Belskis and his family were hanging out by the fire waiting for their drinks and reflected on the fun of the Winter Carnival. He and his son, Ben Belskis, said they were most excited for the vintage sled show, which they were entering a couple of their sleds into.

"The Recreation Department does an amazing job," Belskis said.

## Saturday starts with science

Saturday morning kicked off with several events for children at the Youth Center, including a science and magic program hosted by Anne Thalheimer, who works for the science education and entertainment business Mad Science.

The several dozen parents and kids in attendance were treated to several science demonstrations, drawing oohs and ahhs from the kids watching. While the demonstrations were happening, Thalheimer explained the various processes or scientific properties at play, such as the states of matter when showing dry ice, chemical reactions when pouring acetone on Styrofoam or the creation of "fake snow" when water is poured on sodium polyacrylate, the main absorption ingredient found in diapers.

"The word for this," Thalheimer explained when children were asked what their prediction was before an experiment, "is hypothesis; it sounds like hippopotamus."

Jillian Lizotte, who brought her 6-year-old son, Oscar, to the event, said it was nice to "get out of the house" and have some fun.

"We're enjoying what the community has," Lizotte said. She added the event was "clearly starting an interest" in science for her kindergartner.

"I learned that science and magic are different," Oscar said. He said his favorite part was when "they melted the head," referring to a Styrofoam mannequin head that Thalheimer doused in acetone to show how different materials react to chemicals.

Pamela Kranz, of South Hadley, was visiting her grandchildren in Greenfield and brought them to the show.

"We were looking for something for the kids to do on this beautiful day," Kranz said. "It's amazing they have nice things for the kids in the winter."

## Salsa lessons keep things warm

Shoes tapped and bodies swirled in the Hawks & Reed ballroom Saturday afternoon as McCoy Jamison led salsa lessons for a group of dancers.

"Whether you're advanced or not advanced at all," Jamison said, "we're all good dancers at heart."

Jamison led the group in an introduc-



STAFF PHOTO/JULIAN MENDOZA

Tug-of-war Sunday at the Winter Carnival at Beacon Field.

tory lesson to salsa, emphasizing the dance style is "simple, yet complicated." Focusing on basic rhythm and spin techniques, the ballroom was filled with dancing as people picked up the lesson quickly.

Dancers of all experience levels took joy in the lesson and praised Hawks & Reed for hosting events like this.

"I love Hawks & Reed," said Dan Reardon of Brattleboro, Vermont. "It's a great space."

Turners Falls resident Larry Bates said he's been pursuing Latin dance for 22 years and the lesson was a nice refresher.

"It was a good, basic lesson," Bates said, "with some important details."

Bates' dance partner, Liz Hanssen, said she just began practicing salsa and had a great time at the lesson.

"It was great, I learned a lot," Hanssen said. "I think we need more events like this."

## Sunday steeds usher in carnival's third day

Hubbard Farm's Morgan horses, Cash and Prince, stood regally beside Beacon Field just before noon, poised to take attendees around the park like royalty.

"See, you always want to fold your fingers down so he doesn't think you're trying to feed him," carriage driver Ryan Hubbard instructed children who approached to pet the animals.

Hubbard said he's enjoyed being a part of the carnival for many years and was disappointed when COVID-19 impeded its occurrence. This year, he said, it feels good to be out and about with the local community.

"I like working my horses and meeting new people," the Winchester resident said. "I hope they have an excellent turnout today."

## Slick ground adds excitement to community tug-of-war

With the ground entirely frozen over, it was difficult to maintain balance walking across Beacon Field on the well-below-freezing Sunday. Little was left to the imagination in terms of what might happen if fun-loving local residents took to a tug-of-war rope.

Those sure of their footing took their positions at around 12:30 p.m. for the community tug-of-war, an annual carn-

ival tradition. After being randomly divided into teams by organizers, participants old and young were all smiles as they locked eyes with their opponents.

"It's a beautiful day," said Greenfield resident and tug-of-war participant Reynolds Whalen, who came representing the Episcopal Church of Saints James and Andrew's youth group. "I can't imagine better weather for it."

Whalen, who had never participated in the tug-of-war before, said he was most excited to "hopefully win" prior to the first match.

Others who stepped up to the rope did so spontaneously.

"We had no plans to actually participate," said Greenfield resident and participant Jocelyn Rice, who was present with her son, Everett Turner. "We just saw it and Everett said, 'Let's go!'"

As expected, tug-of-war participants were immediately affected by the day's conditions once the event began. The matches were typically quickened by a number of participants losing their footing and collapsing to the ground with a laugh. The defeated team was often the one with the most behinds on the ice.

"So far, it's living up to its reputation," Rice said after her first match. "We're having a lot of fun."

Whalen noted that the mere ability to have fun at the carnival was wonderful, considering that the pandemic had put so many public events on hold.

"It's amazing," he said. "It's a breath of fresh air."

## Dogs of all shapes and sizes pull forward tradition

The "aww"-inspiring K9 Keg Pull tradition returned Sunday at 1 p.m., featuring dozens of dogs from all over the region.

Collectively buzzing with energy as they geared up to approach the starting line, each canine was outfitted with anything from empty beer cans to a full-size empty keg as excited spectators gathered around the track's perimeter. One by one, each trainer was tasked with leading their pet across the finish line as quickly as they could by any means necessary.

Colrain resident Jessica Mattson turned heads with her companion prior to the races, a massive 7-year-old Irish Wolfhound named Crow. Mattson said Crow was a veteran, having participated in the keg pull for six consecutive years.

"This event is probably one of the best-run dog events in the area because everyone is so dog-savvy," she said. "It's just nice to be part of that community."

Despite Crow's experience, Mattson said she treats the competition simply as a way to have a good time.

"It is a really short track for a Wolfhound," she said. "We do it for the fun."

On the opposite end of the spectrum was Roger, a Cardigan Welsh Corgi. Roger's stumpy legs had him standing in comical contrast to many of his opponents, but that didn't discourage owners and Greenfield residents Bill and Sue Louisignau.

"I like this size," Bill said. "He's a herding dog, so he doesn't take off."

"The larger dogs, they have larger strides, but this guy's fast," Sue added. "They all have their special talents."

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STAFF PHOTO/JULIAN MENDOZA

Roger, a Cardigan Welsh Corgi and K9 Keg Pull competitor, was incentivized by a tennis ball to cross the finish line with a four-pack of empty beer cans.