

# Keeping winter traditions alive

## K-9s fight off seasonal blues at Greenfield carnival

By **CHRISTIE WISNIEWSKI**  
Recorder Staff

GREENFIELD — It was a chilly, overcast Sunday, but that didn't stop adults, children and dogs from coming to Beacon Field to enjoy the last day of the 96th annual Winter Carnival before going home to enjoy the Super Bowl.

Pieces of grass and dirt poked through the snow on the ground, but plenty of young children still launched themselves down the hill on plastic sleds. The homemade sleds

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**Milka the Husky, owned by Mark Theriault, competes in the K9 Keg Pull during the 96th annual Winter Carnival on Sunday at Beacon Field in Greenfield.**

## Ice sculptures, safe from vandals, attract admirers

By **SHELBY ASHLINE**  
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GREENFIELD — Five-year-old Conor O'Connell tugged his parents along Main Street Saturday afternoon, eagerly hurrying from one ice sculpture to the next with an expression of awe on his face.

The 11 ice sculptures, from a Bruins hockey player to a family of penguins, were a welcome presence downtown as part of the 96th annual Winter Carnival. Throngs

of people, especially families, walked up and down both sides of the street to admire each sculpture, while others pulled over their vehicles to take a quick glimpse.

But without the selflessness of volunteers, it's possible the ice sculptures would not have lasted until Saturday morning. In previous years, many of the sculptures have been subject to vandalism. Four of seven sculptures were de-

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came later, during cardboard sled contest, but not before the county's four-legged residents showed their strength in the K9 Keg Pull, another one of the carnival's most celebrated events.

Recreation Department director Christy Moore expressed excitement for the weekend crowd.

"The weather has cooperated and turnout is good," she said.

## Furry athletes

The snow in Beacon Field soon became trodden with plenty of boot prints and dog prints alike. Dozens of residents and their furry friends lined up to prepare for the sixth annual K9 Keg Pull.

From tiny Chihuahuas to a hefty Saint Bernard named Clarence, all shapes and sizes of dogs were welcome to participate or cheer on their fluffy friends from the sidelines.

Each canine was fitted with a keg on a rope to pull behind. In an effort to not leave any dog out, there were multiple sizes of "kegs" to pull.

Charlie, a little pug outfitted in a winter-themed sweater, pulled a four-pack behind him. Maximus, a handsome German Shepherd, was the first out of the contestants to pull a full-sized keg. Macho, a Chihuahua, managed to pull two cans.

The dogs raced individually and were timed on how long it took them to get from the start line to the finish line. Faster dogs completed the race in 6 or 7 seconds. For some, visiting with bystanders seemed to trump the glory of winning, and they had to be coaxed to



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**Girls from Girl Scout troop 64792 compete in the cardboard sled contest during the 96th annual Winter Carnival on Sunday at Beacon Field in Greenfield. Riding in the sled are Evie Flynn, Holly Babineau and Alexis Smith.**

the finish line. No matter the size or breed, all dogs seemed to have fun whether they were in it to win it, or just in it for the experience.

Even the dogs that didn't participate barked their support from the sidelines. Children cheered for their favorite dogs along with their parents.

Clarence, the Saint Bernard, was not an official contestant but he showed the other pups how it's done by pulling two full-size and two quarter-size kegs and a four-pack all at once.

The fastest dog, a pitbull/husky/greyhound mix named Riley, completed the pull in 4.15 seconds with a half keg, winning the "Best Overall" title.

## Sled contest

Another one of the biggest events at the Winter Carnival

is the cardboard sled contest.

All sleds had to be 100 percent cardboard with no plastic or wood underneath to help with speed. Parents could help children make their sleds.

Among the winners in the youth category for sledding was Seamus Collins, who slid down the mountain inside a cardboard igloo with penguins and won "Most Creative" for the youth category.

The "Zaniest" award went to Eric Waite, who entered the Ruth Bader Sledburg sled.

In the group category, the Shepherd family of six won the "Zaniest" award for their yellow sled, "Cool Bus."

In the adult category, Mike Sullivan won the "Fastest" award, as well as "Fastest Overall" with his drag racer sled. He completed the hill in 7.35 seconds.

The "People's Choice" award went to the X-wing fighter sled by Desitini and Winter Sullivan.

## Food

A carnival isn't complete without food, of course. Chilly carnival-goers could warm up at a fire pit and roast marshmallows, sample chili from one of the five cook-off contestants, taste cookies from cookie bake-off contestants or support their local Girl Scout troop by buying boxes of cookies.

All cook-off contestants were local restaurants, and

Brad's Place won the people's vote for "Best Chili."

Applesauce cookies made by Anira Dahlstrom won the award of "Most Original," while the "Best Overall" was awarded to classic chocolate chip cookies made by Lanie Bowse. Seamus Collins won a "Best Decorated" award for his groundhog cookies.

## Other amusements

The crack of hockey sticks against a puck could be heard as the Franklin County Sheriff's hockey team faced off against the Franklin County Firefighters for a game of ice hockey at the Beacon Field Outdoor Rink.

*All sleds had to be 100 percent cardboard with no plastic or wood underneath to help with speed.*

At 12:30 p.m., teams faced off for a tug o' war in the middle of the field. To complete the wintry scene, a horse-drawn wagon circled the field from noon until the end of the carnival, giving rides to those looking to sit for awhile.

Moore mentioned that the carnival would not be possible without all of the volunteers who took on tasks from timing K9 Keg Pull participants, to judging cardboard sleds and overseeing the carnival as a whole.

"Overall, it's been a successful event," Moore said.

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**Mike Currie, front, leads the puck ahead of Matt Kempf during an ice hockey match between the Franklin County Sheriff's and the Franklin County Firefighters' teams during the 96th annual Winter Carnival on Sunday.**



# Ice

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stroyed during 2017's Winter Carnival.

A knight riding a dragon, carved by Mark Bosworth, seemed to be a crowd favorite. People gathered on the sidewalk in front of the Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center, taking turns photographing the sculpture.

"This is our community, and (the ice sculptures) are a really important gift," said Keleigh Pereira, of Turners Falls, who came to Greenfield to see the ice sculptures with her friend Lev Ben-Ezra, also of Turners Falls.

"It's the ice sculptures, but it's not just ice sculptures," Pereira said. "It's an opportunity to pull people out into the community, even when it's cold and people might not be out."

## Two-hour shifts

This year, the Greenfield Recreation Department arranged to have volunteers patrol the downtown area, by foot or in their vehicles, in two-hour shifts from 8 p.m. Friday to 6 a.m. Saturday. Ef-



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**An ice sculpture created by Mark Bosworth depicting a knight riding a dragon in front of the Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center, as part of the 96th annual Winter Carnival, on Saturday in Greenfield.**

forts were planned to continue Saturday night into Sunday morning, with the Greenfield Police Department also patrolling the area.

"It's really sad to have to do that," Pereira said, adding how thankful she was for the volunteers' help. "It's amaz-

ing people were staying up and out in the cold."

"It's unfortunate," agreed Conor's mother, Liz O'Connell, of Greenfield.

The O'Connell family has made it a tradition to check out the ice sculptures since Conor was born, and it's a feature of the Winter Carni-

val he's come to love.

"This is probably his favorite part next to the cardboard sled race," O'Connell said.

Winter Carnival activities continued into Sunday, with the K9 keg pull at 1 p.m. and the cardboard sled contest at 2 p.m., both at Beacon Field.