

Music, ice and sleds

Carnival returns for 96th year

Recorder Staff

GREENFIELD — Since its very beginnings, Greenfield's Winter Carnival has brought the community together in a celebration of the season.

The event, now in its 96th year, will take place Feb. 2 to 4 with a weekend full of activities with the theme, "Six More Weeks of Fun."

The carnival kicks off downtown Friday with live ice carvings by area artists. The sculptures will be on display all weekend, and people are encouraged to vote for their favorite at the ballot box on the Greenfield Common. The sculptures on Main Street will be illuminated at dusk.



Evening festivities will include the official Winter Carnival torch lighting at 4 p.m. on the Common, followed by a performance by MEGAdance at 5:30 p.m. and the 4th Annual Parade of Lights at 6 p.m.

Illuminated vehicles will travel from Newton School to Beacon Field. Parade entries are still needed. Following the parade, a warming fire and fireworks display will take place at Beacon Field.

A Winter Carnival Ball will also be held at Hawks & Reed

SEE **CARNIVAL** A2

Carnival

FROM A1

Performing Arts Center, featuring Grammy-nominated Roomful of Blues with Erin Harpe & The Delta Swingers. Other activities on Friday include an amateur photography contest, the First Annual Winter Carnival Instagram Scavenger Hunt and a hot chocolate and board game social at the library.

The celebration resumes on Saturday with the 4-mile Sleigh Bell Run. Participants will jingle their way through the course, which begins on Hope Street and winds through the Highland Park area. Participants can register online at the Recreation Department or at Hope and Olive restaurant on the day of the race.

For those looking for indoor fun Saturday, the Family Fun Fest will feature a performance by ventriloquist and comedian Sylvia Fletcher. The Fun Fest will also feature an art exhibit, face painting, crafts and board games with Greenfield Games. Popcorn, snacks and drinks will be available for purchase. Additional Saturday activities include basketball games, Find the Lost Yeti Escape Room, fatbike group ride and a cribbage tournament.

Sunday's events begin with Breakfast with Olaf at the Ninety-Nine Restaurant at 8 a.m. The breakfast is a fundraiser for the Winter Carnival. Tickets are \$6 per person, \$4 for ages 10 and under, and children under 2 are free. Tickets are available in advance or at the door.

The fun continues at Beacon Field with sledding, ice skating on the outdoor ice rink and building snowmen. A snow sculpture contest, fatbike demos by Bicycle World and snowshoe demos by Eastern Mountain

Sports will also take place, weather permitting. Horse drawn hay or sleigh rides, community wide tug of war, a live DJ, ice bowling, broom ball and a hockey match will add to the fun. There will be a cookie bake-off, chili cook-off, marshmallow toasting, hot cocoa and other warm offerings from the snack shack.

New this year, Beacon Field will host a Vintage Snowmobile Show sponsored by the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts. There will be opportunities to learn about snowmobiling in its infancy and to listen to stories of how snowmobiling used to be. Spectators will also be able to cast a vote for their favorite snowmobile.

Back for the sixth year by popular demand is the K-9 Keg Pull. Participants run, dance or do whatever it takes to urge their dogs across the finish line. Dogs will sprint for glory, pulling appropriately sized kegs. For a Chihuahua, that's a beer can, while mighty rotties or shepherds pull full sized kegs (all empty). Register in advance or on the day of. All funds benefit the Friends of the Paws Park.

The carnival will conclude with the Great Cardboard Sled Race. All sleds must be made of cardboard, and prizes will be awarded in the youth and group categories for fastest, most creative, zaniest and best crash. Adults can earn prizes for the fastest and most creative.

For businesses, there is the Corporate Challenge, where a prize is awarded for best design. An overall "People's Choice" prize is also awarded based upon votes from the public.

For a complete schedule of events and event map, visit greenfieldrecreation.com/wintercarnival. While most events are free, some activities include a fee or suggested donation.

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