

The Citizen Calendar

COMMUNITY

Cribbage tournament —

Friday, Jan. 16, 6 p.m., at St. Joseph Church, 96 Main St., Belmont.

Hosted by the Knights of Columbus Council 10934. Cash prizes.

Belknap County Democrats —

Monday, Jan. 19, 5 p.m., Local Eatery, 21 Veterans Square in the old train station, Laconia.

To honor Martin Luther King Jr. and consider wages and the Common Core.

For details, contact lewhenry@yahoo.com.

Books and Blooms — Jan.

20-24, at Gordon-Nash Library, 69 Main St., New Hampton.

The New Hampton Garden Club present floral arrangements using a favorite book as inspiration.

Contra dance — Saturday,

Jan. 24, 7 p.m., Ossipee Town Hall gymnasium.

Global Awareness Local Action hosts this dance, which includes instruction in basic steps. Eric Rolnick is the caller, Brier Hill is the band.

Details at www.galacommunity.org, 539-6460 or contact@galacommunity.org.

Robert Burns Night —

Sunday, Jan. 25, 5:30 p.m., at the Corner House Inn, Center Sandwich.

Join the celebration of all things Scottish, including verse, songs, piping, Highland dancing and a Scottish dinner.

For detail and reservations, call 284-6219 or email info@cornerhouseinn.com.

BENEFITS

Tubing at Gunstock —

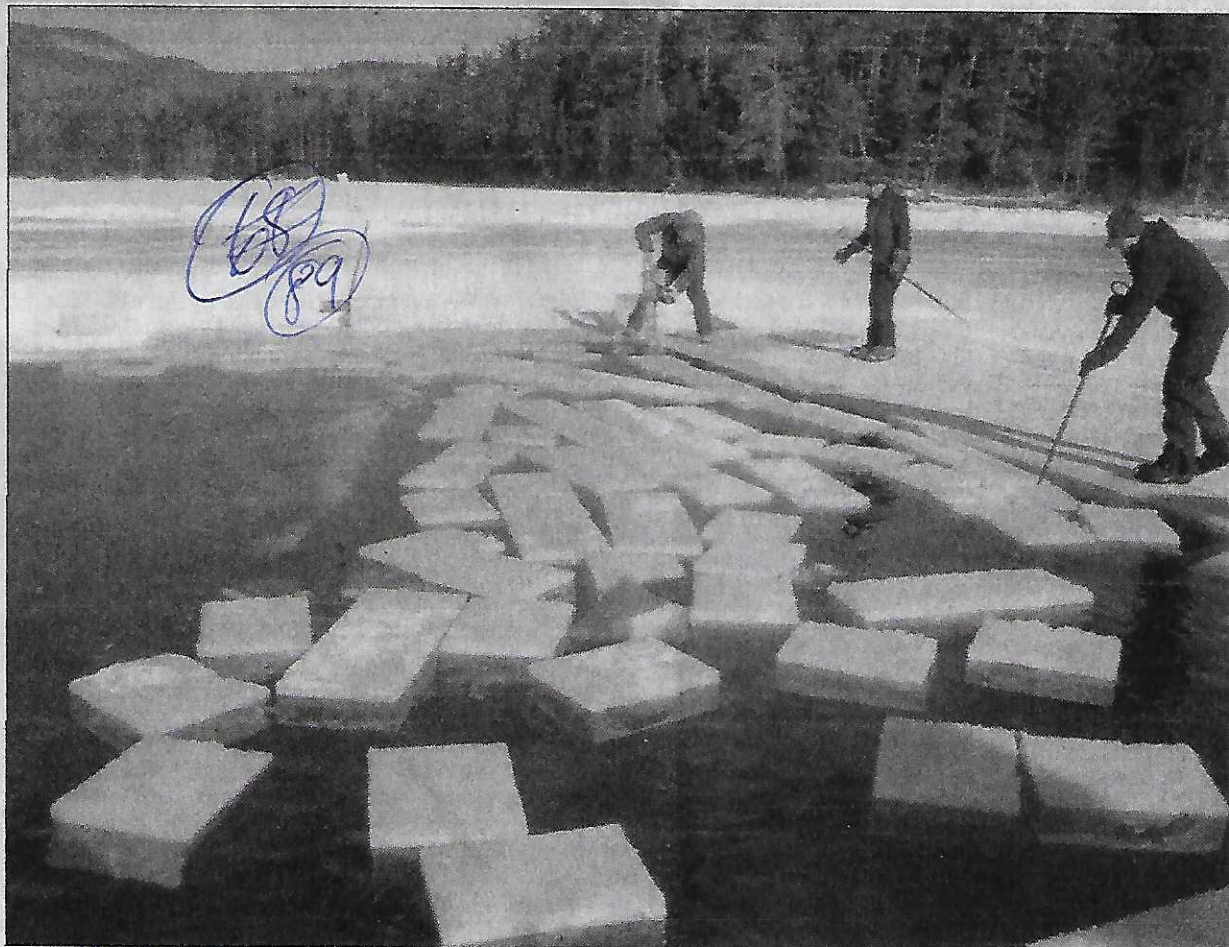
Sunday, Jan. 25, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., at Gunstock Mountain Resort.

Laconia Rotary invites families to go tubing as a fundraiser for the Boys & Girls Club.

Gilford Rotary Pizza Bowl —

Sunday, Jan. 25, 1 to 3 p.m., Gilford Youth Center, 19 Potter Hill Road, Gilford.

Participants pick their favorite local pizza purveyors. Proceeds benefit the nonprofit activities of the Gilford Rotary. \$10 per per-



1/14/2015

CUBED — The Rockywold-Deephaven Ice Harvest is one of the last remaining commercial ice harvesting operations. David White, with the chainsaw, exchanges work for ice, and ships ice to his house in Sandwich, where he lives off the grid.

Keeping the old ways

Yes, ice is still harvested from Squaw Cove and saved for the year

By BOB MARTIN

bmartin@citizen.com

SANDWICH — It was a cold, windy start to the day and there were some minor technical difficulties, but the Ice Harvest at Rockywold-Deephaven Camps started on Tuesday morning and the participants were more than happy to be on the ice for the tradition that has lasted more than 100 years.

"It was pretty cold out there this morning, but it warmed up once the wind died down," said Camp manager John Jurczynski. "It's best if it's in, like, the mid-20s. You want it still below freezing. It was 5 when I came in, with the wind chill well below zero. But the equipment is fine. There is some current under here, so there is a section that isn't quite as thick, so we are getting some water on the saw. That froze the saw for 10 minutes or so, but that is just something that can happen."

The ice harvest is an annual tradition on Squam Lake, with the harvesters setting up shop in Squaw



BOB MARTIN/CITIZEN

DAVID WHITE SAWS through the ice in Squaw Cove during the first day of the Rockywold-Deephaven Ice Harvest.

Cove, where the ice is at the ideal level of 12 inches thick. With a cold night, Jurczynski said the ice could be even thicker today.

A crew of a little more than a dozen work on cutting through the ice, removing ice cakes that measure about 12 by 15 by 19 inches with

a straight saw. Carl Hansen is the crew's sawyer, and he works with several chainsaws. They then move the ice toward a ramp, working quickly so it doesn't start freezing back into the water.

The crew is on the ice bright and early, at about 6:30 or 7 a.m., and works until 4 p.m. The process will go on until Thursday afternoon with the ice being pulled up a ramp into a pickup truck to be delivered to two ice houses: Rockywold and Deephaven. The trucks head down Metcalf road, full of ice, and bring them to the ice houses 2 miles away at the actual camp.

On average, each weighs about 120 pounds, and there are more than 200 tons of ice harvested each year. Each day, they harvest about 1,200 blocks per day, Jurczynski said.

Once the harvest is completed and the ice is stacked in the ice houses, crew supervisor Bill Sharkey is responsible for placing

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sawdust in the walls of the houses and about a foot along the top of the cakes to keep them from melting.

Sharkey has been working for Rockywood-Deephaven Camps for 11 years, after working for 32 years at AT&T in Connecticut.

He said he went home one day and told his wife that he was getting laid off, and she said "good, let's move to New Hampshire."

Sharkey laughed about the bit of luck that he had, saying he fell into an incredible job after just responding to an advertisement in the newspaper.

Sharkey works at the camp year-round. During the summer, he takes care of college kids who work there and help distribute ice to the cabins. Each cabin has an old-fashioned ice box, and Sharkey and his crew delivers the cakes to them in old oak wheelbarrows. Guests generally stay at RDC over a 14-week period spanning the summer, and the ice boxes are used to keep their beverages and food items cold.

"After this is all done, the job really falls on me," said Sharkey. "But this part is all about Norm Lyford."

Sharkey calls Lyford "the boss." He has also gone as "the ice master" and other nicknames showing his high status around the camp.

Lyford, an 88-year-old resident of Ashland, has been on the ice for 70 years. He learned from his father Colby Lyford, and even Lyford isn't sure exactly when his father started harvesting. The camp began in 1897, and organizers can only speculate how long the tradition has really been going. They just know that things were done much differently back in the days before trucks and chainsaws.

Lyford said on Tuesday that despite the windy, frigid start to the day, the sunshine and the mid-teens temperatures were perfect to work in. He said he has seen it all before.



BOB MARTIN/CITIZEN

NORMAN LYFORD, 88, has been a part of the ice harvest for 70 years.



BOB MARTIN/CITIZEN

CARL HANSEN created the straight saw and is known as the sawyer in the process at the ice harvest.



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THE ICE HARVEST will continue through Thursday. Spectators are allowed to watch.

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perfect to work in. He said he has seen it all, working in wind and snow and other conditions far less ideal than what they have encountered this year.

While the ice harvest is generally for RDC guests, there is one Sandwich resident living off the grid who has exchanged work for ice cakes for the past 13 years. David White and his wife live in a cabin they built that runs on so-

ice cakes for their refrigeration.

White said he lived a fairly conventional life in Maine before moving to Sandwich, but he said one thing about life that is interesting is that it takes you a long time to figure out what you don't want. For the past 13 years, he said they have found their love of living in the woods of Sandwich with no utility bills in a self-sufficient

homestead they built themselves.

"We use the ice for refrigeration all year round," White said. "We have a nice ice house that is about 8 feet square on the inside, insulated with sawdust the way it always was, with a little extra foam for good measure, and it holds ice for a little more than a year. About 15 months. In the house, we have a nice box that I built. It's a great barter

here. One of the rare ones. Trading my time and work for ice."

The harvest will continue in Squaw Cove until Thursday evening sometime. Those who would like to see the process can do so by traveling down Metcalf Road in Sandwich. Organizers ask that drivers use caution on the road and steer clear of the trucks that are bringing the cakes to the ice houses.

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harvesting ice on Squam Lake for 70th consecutive year

By ROGER AMSDEN
FOR THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

SANDWICH — The annual ice harvest which will fill the antique ice boxes at the Rockywold-Deephaven camps on Squam Lake next summer got underway yesterday at Squaw Cove, a few miles up Rte. 113 from the camps.

Taking part for the 70th straight year was Norman Lyford, 88, of Ashland, who first started working on the ice harvest with his father, Colby, back when they used horses to pull the blocks of ice from the lake and haul them to ice houses.

"We used a one-lunger engine with a saw like you'd use for cordwood. It had a wide belt which ran the saw," said Lyford, explaining that a one-lunger was an engine with only one cylinder that made a distinctive pop and chugging sound while running.

The three-day harvest will see about 3,600 blocks of ice, weighing between 125 and 150 pounds each, cut from the ice and pushed and pulled through a 16-inch wide channel where they are winched up a ramp and layered into the back of a pickup truck, which hauls them away 15 blocks at a time as a new pickup truck comes onto the ice to handle the next load.

John Jurczynski, manager of the Rockywold-Deephaven camps, over-see ICE page 13

Norman Lyford guides the ice slabs up the channel for loading during the Rockywold Deephaven Camp Ice Harvest on Tuesday afternoon. Lyford has been working the annual ice harvest for 70 years. (Karen Bobotas/for The Laconia Daily Sun)

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sees about a dozen workers during the three-day harvest and says that about 20 years ago the camps tried to switch to electric refrigerators but got no support from their customers, who wanted the old, historic ice boxes instead.

He said that the ice harvest tradition stretches back over 100 years at the camp and usually takes place in mid or late January, when the ice reaches a depth of at least 12 inches on one of the two coves used as harvest sites.

Ice harvesters use a 36-inch motorized ice saw attached to a sled-like undercarriage to cut 40-foot-long, 16-inch wide ice blocks which are then sawed across the long cut at 20-inch intervals. They use power saws to complete the cuts, using power saws

with no lubrication on their chains to keep the lake water free of contaminants.

The blocks are then pushed with long hooked poles across the open water to the narrow channel where they are lined up for loading.

Helping push the blocks along was CeeCee White of Sandwich, whose husband Dave was working with a power saw, and will spend all three days at the harvest.

"We get to keep about 150 blocks of ice for our ice house," says White, who says that she and her husband use an ice box instead of a refrigerator at their home, which produces its own electricity and is not connected to the electrical grid.

"We've been taking part in the ice harvest ever since 2002 and think it's a great tradition," says White.

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