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Killarney

It's for the Town

Killarney residents love to go to the beach in the summertime, and lately the town hotspot is getting a lot of traffic in the winter too. A community-wide effort has resulted in a new facility for ice-skating at the beach on Killarney Lake, complete with a warming shack, picnic tables, and even a unique zamboni to clear the ice. The local CDPI committee partnered with the Killarney Foundation and Healthy Killarney to complete the project, which was assisted by community volunteers at every step. “Everyone’s really been helping out when people find out they’re doing it for their town,” said CDPI Wellness Facilitator Stephanie Outhwaite. “When I’d ask people to come and help and asked how much it would cost, they’d just say ‘Oh no, it’s for the town.’”

Local electricians and plumbers volunteered their time for the project, and Manitoba Hydro chipped in with materials as well. A physics teacher helped his students to build a skate-propelled

zamboni complete with a solar-heated water tank that siphons water from the lake. School classes regularly skate at the site, which also hosted a CDPI-funded Groundhog Day event last winter that included a barbecue and family-oriented activities – and of course a lot of skating.

Cross-country skiing is also being promoted in Killarney through a joint program with the local school, CDPI, and Manitoba in motion. Forty sets of durable waxless skis have been purchased, ranging in size to fit five-year-olds to seniors, and they can be rented for only \$2. Newcomers to the sport can pick up some trail tips at workshops run by a local volunteer coach who is also an avid cross-country skier. Many kilometres of groomed trails are ready for skiers in Adam Lake Provincial Park, and the CDPI committee is working on an all-season trail complex that will connect with the town’s park, lake, seniors’ home and hospital.

For those who prefer to get their exercise on solid ground, the Killarney Mileage Club offers three groups you can join – walking, learn to run, and the half-marathon group. An in motion 19-member team travelled to the Manitoba marathon, and an in motion grant received through the CDPI committee paid the travelling expenses of the coaches to this event. All 19 runners met or exceeded their goal in the run. The committee has also been able to purchase dry-fit t-shirts for all Mileage Club members who meet their personal goals.

Walking is a popular activity in Killarney, and over 300 people came out for an

evening Earth Day Walk that raised awareness for the walking trail network being planned for the town. Killarney's recreational options have been expanding exponentially recently, and many activities are taking place in the brand new Shamrock Centre. In addition to official-sized hockey rinks and a 600-person meeting hall, the Shamrock Centre features facilities for exercise classes and circuit training.

All the activity is making a positive difference. A two-week exercise Boot Camp this year included an hour and a half every day of skating, aerobics, circuit training, yoga, walking, and running. Many of the

participants embraced the challenge and reported amazing results. One Boot Camp participant said, "I'm a better mother - I'm making healthier food and exercising with my kids in the evening." Another woman, who had gained 30 pounds, attended the camp. She lost four inches off her waist in two weeks and has kept the weight off. "She was so happy," reported facilitator Outhwaite, "that she went out and ran the half-marathon."

Contact Information:

Stephanie Outhwaite

204-523-3335

stephanieouthwaite@hotmail.com



Take Note

Fitness and medical professionals agree that cross-country skiing is one of the best cardiovascular fitness activities:

- The sport keeps the heart pumping at an elevated rate for an extended period of time.
- It boosts "good" HDL cholesterol and helps control blood pressure.
- Cross country skiing also builds endurance, strengthens the spine and helps maintain normal weight or aids weight loss.
- A 175-pound man can burn up to 800 calories per hour on cross-country skis.
- Cross-country skiing is also an ideal low-impact sport (easy on knees and joints).

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