

Festival of Outdoor Rinks celebrates winter in style



By Michael Riley

The Festival of Outdoor Rinks returned to Whitney on Feb. 16, celebrating all things ice and winter with a myriad of activities to enjoy with family and friends alike. Cancelled last year due to the weather being too warm and not being able to keep ice on the rink, it was back with a vengeance and was held at the Lester Smith Community Centre. Hosted by the Whitney recreation committee, the event boasted s'mores, popcorn, hot and cold beverages, exciting rink games and the homemade cardboard sled races, which proved to be very popular with everybody.

The Whitney recreation committee thanked everyone who braved the weather and joined them for the festival in a Facebook post on Feb. 16.

?Our first event of the day, the cardboard sled race, was a huge success! We had so much interest and 15 incredible sleds made it to the hill. The creativity and decorations were out of this world ? it was truly amazing to see!?! they said in their posting.

The winners of the cardboard sled race were as follows; Keelin and Brynlee in first place, Riley in second place, and MacKenzie and Xavier in third place, with Rose getting a nod in the most creative category. They gave a big congratulations to the winners and all who participated and said they can't wait until next year's race. Footage of the multiple heats of the race can be found on the Whitney recreation committee's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/whitneyrec.

The rec committee said the canteen was in full swing, serving up hot dogs, s'mores, popcorn, chocolate, tea, coffee and hot chocolate after the race, warming everyone up. They said a massive bonfire was also there to gather around, helping everyone stay cozy while roasting those perfect s'mores.

?A huge thank you to everyone who volunteered to make this event a success ? from the wood and hay delivery to packing down the snow on the hill (that was no small task with all the relentless snow!) and to those who made sure everyone's bellies were full after the race. You all helped make this day unforgettable! We had an incredible lineup of prizes for our winners, and the smiles were priceless. When the cold got too much, everyone took a break indoors to enjoy some fun games and activities. Inside or outside, there was something for everyone! A huge thank you to everyone who came out, volunteered, and helped make this day so special. Until next year!?! they said in their posting.?

Councillor Joan Kuiack, who is on the Whitney recreation committee had the following comment on the festival for Bancroft This Week on Feb. 17.

?Overall, despite the winter weather, the day was enjoyed.?