



**RECREATION AND CULTURE
SERVICES
MEMORANDUM**

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Pending #:

TO: MAYOR A. NUTTALL AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

FROM: D. BELL, DIRECTOR OF RECREATION AND CULTURE SERVICES, EXT. 4352

NOTED: D. MCALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES

M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RE: WINTER EVENTS RECAP

DATE: APRIL 26, 2023

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with a recap of the fantastic events offered by Recreation and Culture Services staff this past winter.

DOWNTOWN COUNTDOWN

The Downtown Countdown brought the community together to ring in the New Year outside City Hall on December 31st starting at 6pm, returning to a full-scale event for the first time since the pandemic. The event was a great success with over 9,000 in attendance. The line-up featured Juno Award winning family performers Splash'n Boots to kick-off the evening, followed by local acts The Straits and Grant Boyer, and Canadian headliner Sloan. In addition to the musical performances, the Downtown Countdown featured face painting, inflatables, a tube run, roaming buskers, bonfire warming zone, food vendors, and fireworks.



HELLO WINTER!

The Hello Winter campaign celebrates Barrie's winter spirit, with Winterfest as the official kick-off, and continued all month long throughout February, featuring activities at partnered locations throughout the community such as Downtown Barrie's hot cocoa trail, Family Day Adventure, February Blues Festival, Barrie Film Festival Screen One film screening, Barrie Public Library family programming, MacLaren Art Centre programming, Barrie Farmers' Market, skating, Nature in Winter Forest Bathing, and snowshoeing.



WINTERFEST

The City of Barrie's annual Winterfest event took place on February 4th - 5th with activities and programming in Heritage Park, downtown Barrie and other venues in the city. Winterfest is a community tradition attracting visitors from all over the province. The outdoor activities hosted at Heritage Park and Meridian Place included ice sculptures, lumberjack shows, "Nature in Winter" programming, shows by Speaking of Wildlife, horse-drawn wagon rides, mini tube slide, inflatables and games, buskers and family entertainment, fire pit warming zone, marshmallow roasting on a wood-burning fireplace and vendor market. Activities that took place at other locations included the polar bear dip at Centennial Beach, Winterfest Pancake Breakfast, Downtown Barrie's hot cocoa trail, Barrie Farmers' Market snowflake hunt and February Blues Festival performances at various locations.



FAMILY DAY

The 8th Annual Family Day Winter Adventure took place on February 20th at the Barrie Community Sports Complex. Choosing your adventure was no easy task given there were so many activities to choose from! Drawing almost 1,500 participants, the day's activities included axe throwing, tobogganning, birdfeeder craft, trail walking, broomball on our outdoor rink, horse and wagon rides, kicksledding, large outdoor games and a warming bonfire. Snowshoeing and skating were postponed due to lack of snow and ice coverage.



Recreation and Culture Services looks forward to the winter of 2024 and continuing to provide winter-based program opportunities for City of Barrie residents and visitors alike.