

THE WEIRS TIMES

AND TOURISTS GAZETTE

"How blithely might the bugle horn
Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!
How sweet at eve, the lover's lute
Oh me, when the groves were still and mute."
—Lady of the Lake.

"Their wigwams that clustered o'er the vale,
Have fled away like withered leaves
Before the Autumn gale;
But the memory liveth on your hills,
Their baptism on your shore."—Stourney.

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF LAKE WINNIPESAUKEE & VICINITY.

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THE WEIRS, LAKE WINNIPESAUKEE, N.H., THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2017

COMPLIMENTARY



In a Lakes Region Curling Association curling match between the Irish Stone Rovers & the Stone Agers at Pop Whalen Arena in Wolfeboro Skip Peter Goodwin (left) works his broom to sweep an stone from the house removing it from scoring. Irish Stone Rovers team members looking on are Wayne McBride (center) Bob Patterson (center right) & Susan McBride (right).

PHOTO COURTESY MIKE SPENCE

First Annual Fire & Ice Festival

WOLFEBORO - Celebrate winter at the second annual Fire & Ice Festival at the Wolfeboro Inn.

The outdoor festival will be held Friday and Saturday, February 17 and 18, from 5pm to 10pm

Sponsored by Pinnacle Vodka, the event will have bars carved out of ice, fire dancing, music and great giveaways each night.

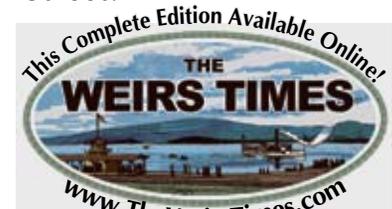
Known for great food and comfortable lodging, the Wolfeboro Inn is excited to host an event that will showcase the beauty of Wolfeboro in winter.

The cover charge is \$5.00 per person, tokens for all items sold at the ice bars will be available for purchase at the event.

Wolfe's Tavern will be open for dinner from 4pm to 9pm

For more information about this fun weekend festival, contact the Wolfeboro Inn at 603-569-3016.

The Wolfeboro Inn is located at 90 N. Main Street.



AN AGE OLD SPORT THAT CAN BE PLAYED BY ALL AGES

by **Brendan Smith**
Weirs Times Editor

What if you started a curling league and no one came?

Now in its fourth season, the founders of the Lakes Region Curling Association were asking themselves just that question when they de-

ecided to start a league back in 2014.

The sport of curling has a long history and can be traced back to medieval Scotland's a Curling Stone was once found that was inscribed with the date of 1511. Still its increasing popularity only began in the United States after curling first became part

of the Winter Olympics in 1998.

Mike Spence of Wolfeboro was watching the 2014 Winter Olympics from Russia and became intrigued by the curling competition, eventually won by Canada.

The next day Mike printed out some information on curling and gave it to

his friend Bud Booth.

"I said to Bud 'why can't we do this here?'" said Spence. "And that's where the idea first took root. Neither one of us had ever curled before."

A couple of weeks later, Spence's daughter, who lives in Gilford, told him about a group that curled
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CURLING from 1

on Tuesdays there.

“Bud and I went there to see what it was all about,” said Spence. “The people were great and we enjoyed it.”

Mike Spence retired in April and he and Bud continued to learn more about curling. Others came on board including Hugh Crawford, Carl Crosley and Rich Masse who all became incorporators in what would become the Lakes Region Curling Association. They met with some folks who were involved in curling in North Conway and also spoke about a curling league with Ethan Hipple, who is the Parks Director in Wolfeboro, which runs the Pop Whalen Ice Arena.

Once the decision was made to start a league it was October and they felt it was too late for that winter. The group contin-



Roger Murray of Stone Agers delivers his stone during a match against the Irish Stone Rovers. Roger is from Wolfeboro.

PHOTOS COURTESY MIKE SPENCE

ued to meet regularly and also formed a non-profit organization.

The plan was to have the first season be in the fall of 2015.

“We also got a lot of

curling league open house which was to be held in the summer of 2015.

“We put up flyers, sent out news releases to organizations, newspapers and local cable TV,” said Rich Masse. “When the time came for the open house, we didn’t know if five people or fifty people would show up.”

As it turned out, fifty people did show up and forty-five people signed up for the league.

They were in business.

“People came from as far away as Laconia, Barnstead and Tuftonboro,” said Masse. “A few had been involved with curling before, but for most it was brand new.”



Hugh Crawford delivering a stone. Andrea Dudley pushing his chair during a game with the Golf Nuts - both play for On the Rocks and live in Wolfeboro.

help from Dave Gyger, who runs the Arena at Plymouth University,” said Spence, “He gave us an understanding of the equipment needed, preparing the ice for games, things he learned in establishing curling at

Plymouth, as well as the activities we undertook to get ready and become more knowledgeable into the particulars of what we were getting into.”

The group began a fairly extensive information campaign about the new

Still, running a curling league isn’t free. The incorporators supported the league through not just personal time, but also with financial support. They also knew that they would need a mini-

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Brian Gately & Lorie Taliento of Curling Curlers follow a stone to the house during a match against the Wolfe Pack. Brian resides in Center Barnstead and Lori lives in Mirror Lake.

CURLING from 20
 mum number of players in order to pay for ice time as well as the significant expense of the curling stones.

Curling stones look like teapots (the Gilford players use actual teapots filled with concrete according to Spence). Official ones are made of granite and weigh forty pounds each.

“We needed sixty-four stones since we had forty-eight players and four sheets (the lanes the players use to play) and sixteen stones are used for each game,” said Masse.

They went through a curling stone broker in the Dakotas who buys and sells used stones.

“At \$250 each, the stones cost us \$16,000 and they were purchased on a lease to buy thing,” said Masse. “There is also the cost of ice time, but with the amount of people who signed up we had enough to cover expenses.” (The stones were just recently paid off.)

The first curling season was held at the Pop Whalen Arena in Wolfeboro in October of 2015. After it was over the group reassessed how things had gone and to see whether or not to continue. They ended up proposing a second season in the winter and just about everybody signed

back up.

“We had about forty plus players for the Sunday winter league and that has been the constant ever since,” said Masse. “With this winter season we are now in our fourth season.”

The age range in the league goes from people in their 20s up to retirement age and beyond.

Curling with the Lakes Region Curling Association isn’t exactly as you might see it on TV during the Olympics and there are modifications to make it easy and accessible to everyone.

“On TV you see people sliding across the ice and then just gently releasing the stone and a lot of people can do it that way,” said Masse. “Some people have knee problems and things like that and so they use what is called a push stick. It is like a broom handle that goes

around the handle of the stone so you can simply walk forward until you reach the delivery line and you push the stone.”

A curling team usually has four people but the LR Curling Association allows from four to six with any four playing at one time.

The winter season is in full swing and no new players are being currently accepted.

“We don’t have room at the moment for more than eight teams,” said Masse. “To add more we

would have to paint a fifth sheet on the ice and buy sixteen more stones. We would do that if the interest was there.”

If you want to come down and check out some curling action, the Lakes Region Curling Association will meet every Sunday until March 12th. Matches go from 5:20 to 7:20pm.

Visit their website at www.lakescurlingnh.org.



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Save The Date!

Remembering Annie



March 10, 2017

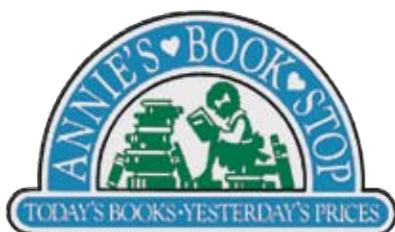
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