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CONTACT

Bill Unterborn
131 West Main St
Palmyra, NY 14522
Tel: 585-368-8081
Email: webmaster.palmyra@gmail.com

Curling on the Canal sweeps into Palmyra at sunset

Palmyra, NY – January 20, 2014 The ancient Scots' game of curling sweeps back into the Port of Palmyra Marina on the historic Erie Canal, Saturday, February 8 from 3-5pm. The Village of Palmyra and the friends of the Rochester Curling Club invite you to join the fun and give the most eagerly anticipated Olympic Winter Games sports a try. The afternoon includes a demonstration game, instruction for beginners, and fun for all ages.

Response to this unique event has been tremendous in recent years, with nearly 500 people braving the elements to curl on the Erie Canal in past years. Palmyra curler Irene Unterborn has been overwhelmed by the response, "It's been amazing to see so many people come out and curl right here in the heart of Palmyra. We hope everybody who's tried it comes back out and brings a friend, or five!"

Curling on the Canal typically plays out on sunny afternoons, but organizers felt that a sunset event might offer a more interesting and satisfying experience for participants. Event host, Bill Unterborn, explains: "Early sunny afternoons and hundreds of feet often lead to premature deterioration in the quality of the ice. The later hour of this year's curling should help preserve the playing surface."

So just what is curling, anyway? Curling is a jargon-rich winter sport in which opposing *rinks* (teams) take turns delivering their *rocks* (42-pound polished granite stones) down a 144-foot long *sheet* (ice alley). Points are scored in each *end* (inning) by placing your rinks' rocks closer to the *button of the house* (center of the target) than your opponent's rocks. Think bocce.

Each rink consists of four players: *Lead* (throws first rocks), *Second* (second rocks), *Vice-Skip* (third rocks), and *Skip* (the captain who throws fourth rocks). While one player delivers a rock, two of his or her teammates follow it with brooms poised, ready to pounce and sweep in front of the rock in order to extend its distance and keep its path straighter. Skips stand at the far end of the sheet reading strategy and calling the shots and sweeping. But be careful not to hog your rock or burn one with your broom, or it will be removed from play!

Confused? Well don't be, the friends of the Rochester Curling Club will be on hand to offer an introduction to, and a vocabulary lesson for, their favorite winter sport. They'll provide the stones, but please bring your boots or sneakers to wear on the ice - no ice-skates, please. Children and other folks who might be less sure of their footing on ice may wish to wear a bicycle helmet for added safety.

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Curling on the Canal can only take place if the weather permits, which, in this case, means weather *cold* enough to maintain an ice covered marina! Please check the official Town and Village of Palmyra website www.palmyrany.com for weather updates during the week leading up to the event. If necessary, a cancellation notice will be posted there. Sorry, no rain or thaw date.

About Curling

Curling is enjoyed around the world, wherever winter sports are played. Scotland is recognized as the spiritual home of curling, having originated there as early the 16th century. In fact, a curling stone was found near the city of Stirling engraved with the year 1511. Like many of the Highland Games, curling is a test of skill and stamina, performed with natural materials at hand.

The game we know today developed chiefly in North America, especially in Canada where curling is a national obsession. Curling in Canada is as popular a participation sport as bowling is in the United States.

You can learn more about this event and other local curling opportunities, including adult leagues and junior programming by visiting the Rochester Curling Club website:
<http://www.rochestercurling.com>.

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