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Ice carving show will focus on rich history of Mount Clemens

By Mitch Hotts, The Macomb Daily

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This year's ice carving show in downtown Mount Clemens will include a tribute to the city's bicentennial celebration as well as fun, whimsical sculptures.

With temperatures expected to plunge into the 20s this weekend, the weather will be near perfect for carvers to work their magic on dozens of blocks of ice for bystanders to check out.

"I pray for cold conditions and cloudy weather," said Chef Jeff Wolf of Finesse Cuisine. "Twenty-four degrees and below is ideal for us, but we'll be working up a sweat."

In honor of Macomb County's and the city's bicentennial celebrations taking place this year, Wolf and his five ice carvers will work on several carvings depicting significant developments from the past.

"We will have some carving noting the story lines behind Mount Clemens that are of historical significance," said Wolf, who has 34 years of experience of teaching culinary arts at Macomb Community College.

With 50 sculptures planned, this will be the city's biggest ice show yet, according to Michelle Weiss of the Downtown Development Authority.

"We will be telling the story of our history through signage that will be placed on the sculptures," she said. "One of the cool things about Chef Wolf is I took him some images and he is so creative, you can see his mind percolating with thoughts on how to turn those into carvings."

Some of the sculptures will feature:

- A monument to Christian Clemens, the city's founder
- Biewer's Brewery and Mount Clemens Brewing Company, some of the city's early breweries
- A work whistle from the former Mount Clemens Rose Gardens, a tribute to Michelle's husband, Paul Weiss, owner of the family business and a civic booster
- The former Waterworks Fountain

"The idea is people can walk by the sculptures and read the plaques and have some understanding of our city's history," Michelle Weiss said.

There also will be fun sculptures for the kids, such as a polar bear wearing sunglasses.

The sculptures will be placed on cinder-block platforms provided by Theut Products of Chesterfield Township.

The 13th annual Mount Clemens Ice Carving Show opens at noon Friday and runs through Sunday at the Fountain Stage on Macomb Place. Finished sculptures will be placed at the Fountain Stage, Cherry Street Mall area and on Macomb Place.

There also will be a Kids Wonderland Warming Center featuring costumed characters, life-size Candyland game, car-less drive-in movies, crafts, face painting, hot chocolate, and more.

Located at 70 Macomb Place, the warming center will be open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday. The Mount Clemens Lions Club will offer free children's vision screening 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday.

Many of the downtown's businesses will be open throughout the festival, offering an indoor place to warm up and purchase drinks at Sipping Stations.

For more information, call 586-469-4168 or long onto DowntownMountClemens.com.

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