

Corner Brook Winter Carnival 2019 (February 15-24)

In February of 2019, for the first time, InclusionNL began reviewing several events in hopes of identifying possible barriers to residents attending the carnival's events. Some events that were reviewed in 2019 were, "The 570 VOCM Not Newly Wed Game", "The 20th Annual Winter Carnival Craft Expo", the "St. Michael's and All Angels Anglican Variety Show", and the "Old Fashion Kitchen Party". In reviewing these events we are beginning the process of helping the organizers become more disability confident. We are also helping ensure people of all abilities can enjoy the fun and excitement of winter through participating in the Corner Brook Winter Carnival.

The first Corner Brook Winter Carnival was held in 1972 after the local ski club, with the support of the City Council, had the idea to hold events over the course of a long weekend (Winter Carnival, 2015). Since its early planning in 1971 and its beginning budget of just \$2,500, it has expanded from three days to ten days of outdoor activities, music, comedy and food (Winter Carnival, 2015). Each year a new carnival button is designed and available for purchase allowing owners a discounted fee to attend events, but also a chance to win exciting prizes from sponsors. In an attempt to get the younger children involved, schools are encouraged to get their students to be creative and create a catchy slogan for the Winter Carnival. The chosen winner is given ultimate bragging rights and pride that is sure to last longer than the ten days of the Winter Carnival. Other honours are given to a Patron, Honorary Chairman, Special Guests, and Carnival Ambassadors who are chosen to oversee the events. While the Carnival Mascot "Leif the Lucky", an enthusiastic character dressed in a fur vest and Viking hat is invited to light the Winter Carnival torch (Winter Carnival, 2015).

Corner Brook Winter Carnival pride can be seen in the volunteers that have several carnival buttons from volunteering throughout the years. There is also pride in the knowledge that other communities across the province have used Corner Brook's Winter Carnival as a template for creating their own carnival, the most well-known being the "Frosty Fest" that happens in St. John's every year

(Winter Carnival, 2015). Each year new events and venues are added to the Winter Carnival is hopes of offering something for everyone (Winter Carnival, 2015). With this in mind, Inclusion NL has begun supporting the City of Corner Brook's efforts in creating a more inclusive and accessible community.

References:

Corner Brook Winter Carnival. (2015). Our History. Retrieved from <http://cornerbrookwintercarnival.ca/history/>

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