

Park & Recreation Commission Item

February 25, 2025



Item	February Festival Evaluation
Item No:	H.1
Agenda Section	<u>REPORTS</u>
Prepared By	Priya Wall, Recreation Manager

SUGGESTED ACTION

SUMMARY

The City of Chanhassen's 32nd annual February Festival was held on Saturday, February 1, 2025 from Noon-3 p.m. on Lake Ann in Lake Ann Park. It is estimated that 1,000 people attended this year's event.

BACKGROUND

DISCUSSION

Ice Fishing Contest

A total of 573 ice fishing contest tickets were sold, 135 of which were pre-registrations and 438 of which were day-of. A total of 121 fish were caught during the contest, so all top 50 fish prizes were given away. The largest fish by weight went to Lukas Kehagias of Chanhassen, who caught a 2.062 lb. Northern Pike, and won a Vexilar FL-20 Pro Pack II Fishing System donated by Automotive Unlimited in Chanhassen. Over \$6,500 in total fish prizes were given away as part of the contest with contributions coming from 10 local businesses. Special thanks to the Rotary Club of Chanhassen for drilling over 1,000 holes for the ice fishing contest.

Fishing Contest Marshals

Ten Chanhassen Lions Club members volunteered their time as ice fishing contest marshals again this year. They helped at the event by checking fish participants as they entered the contest area, educating participants of special regulations and contest rules, and weighing fish at the weigh station. Staff hope to continue working with the Lions Club in future February Festivals as they do a fantastic job as contest marshals and are a huge asset to the event.

Food and Drink Concessions

The Rotary Club of Chanhassen coordinated and operated the concessions at this year's festival. The Rotary sold a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, as well as snacks, and Grill Star Catering sold burgers, fries, cheese curds, and chicken tenders. We appreciate the service of the Rotary Club of Chanhassen and Grill Star Catering and are looking forward to partnering with them at future FebFests.

Door Prizes

Each person in attendance at the festival could register for one door prize ticket for a chance to win over \$4,000 in prizes. The door prize tickets are separate from the ice fishing contest tickets and were free to all participants. Twelve local businesses contributed to the 2025 door prizes.

Bonfires

Two bonfires were placed on opposite ends of the festival area. Both were very popular throughout the day, especially as it was fairly cold outside. It is recommended that we continue to have fires to ensure an area to warm up and roast marshmallows.

S'mores and Bait Sales

Chanhassen BSA Scout Troop #330 sold s'mores kits and live bait on the ice. Many people take advantage of the bait sales on the ice and we appreciate the annual service of Troop #330. One thing to consider for 2026 would be expanding the options of bait available.

Snowshoeing Demo Hikes and Kids' Bingo

The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District (RPBCWD) returned to February Festival this year and offered free snowshoeing demos, snowshoeing information, a kids' Bingo activity, and educational information about the watershed district. Though snow was limited this year, the snowshoeing demo hikes are always popular and it is recommended that we continue inviting the RPBCWD back to offer this activity.

Skating Rink

Many event attendees utilized the skating rink for ice skating and kick sled demos, provided by Carver County Parks. Kick sled demos are always a popular activity and were especially so in 2025.

Horse-Drawn Wagon Rides

The horse-drawn wagon rides provided by Klaers Family Farms continues to be extremely popular and provides another activity not related to the fishing contest. It is a fun family event that should continue in the future.

Snow-ga

8 people participated in snow yoga "Snow-ga," which was run by Chanhassen nonprofit Onelove.yoga for the first time this year. It is recommended that this activity is offered again next year, then evaluated on its growth and popularity.

Medallion Hunt

The FebFest medallion was found on Friday, January 31st by Erik Vieyra of Chanhassen. The medallion was found at Rice Marsh Lake Park, underneath a log in the woods across from the ballfield. Erik received a prize basket from Nicolet National Bank in Chanhassen valued at over \$500. Nicolet has been the title sponsor of the medallion hunt since 2020.

Comments for Next Year

- Tonka Cycle and Ski of Hopkins expressed interest in providing fat-tire bike demos, but was unable this year due to staffing limitations. It is recommended to work with them next year to provide this activity.
- The youth ice fishing demos from the Future Anglers of Minnesota were cancelled. Staff were notified Feb. 1 that FAM was not able to make the event. It is recommended that in future years a back-up plan is set with FAM and/or another organization assists with the youth ice fishing demos.
- New this year, the top 50 fishing contest prize list was updated and displayed digitally every 10 minutes during the fishing contest. Participants enjoyed viewing live results during the contest, and it is recommended that the digital display be utilized in future years.
- It is recommended that new promotional strategies continue to be explored for this event after the loss of the *Chanhassen Villager* and *Chaska Herald* local papers.

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

[Expense Report 2025](#)

[Top 55 Fish 2025](#)

[Annual Ticket Sales & Temperatures](#)