



What: A project to build and hold community in the midst of a Northern/ Prairie winter and COVID, using the snow and ice God gives us.

Who: Everyone- all ages. Especially kids and youth, and especially elders. Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils. (Example from Pat Bird, Prairie to Pine, below..)



Where: Everywhere, but especially: church property, the lawns outside seniors' care homes, school grounds, hospital grounds. All with permission, of course (see the details below).

Why? Let's face it: None of us really want to contemplate yet another winter with COVID dogging our every move. We're tired of restrictions, closed church buildings, constant worry and tension. We're weary of the constant fear for the health of everyone from loved ones to the medical personnel who have carried so much. We hate excluding elders and kids and those with compromised health, even if it is for their own safety. Division and frustration in all our communities is very real.

None of us can solve any of this, but we can resist it. We can practice the arts of care, community, and creativity that are God's way of showing us how to practice love of neighbour and love of God.

So let's turn those months of cold into shared outdoor art and building (practicing all the relevant precautions, of course). We'll greet the cold and use it to show we love our many and diverse neighbours.

When? As soon as the snow flies and/ or the temperatures allow outdoor freezing. But that long stretch through January and February 2022 is our prime time.

How: See the details below. If it freezes and your team can work with it safely, it qualifies! To enter the competition, you must register and submit at least three photos or video tours by the deadline, and write a paragraph explaining how it shows "love our neighbours". A panel of judges from each Regional Council will review the photos. There might be prizes, and there will be everlasting glory.

The details: What exactly are we talking about? Anything that freezes, created together by a multi-aged team wearing masks, with the results displayed in a public place. Invite your neighbours! The more the better. Maybe you can even work with your First Nation, village, community association, RM and more to have a display

day. You can keep adding and changing things as your skills increase and your back gets stronger, but we'll set a deadline for the actual competition.

Some examples:

<p>Ice art Clear or food colouring; plain or with artful berries and branches added; big or small, plain or elaborate: your choice!</p>	<p>Snow sculpture and structures These can be small or grand. Maybe there's a sculptor or grand snow architect hanging out quietly in your community.</p>
<p>Tree ornaments: decorated ice with a hole for ribbon or string, hung where it can be seen by passers-by.</p>	<p>Sculptures or snow letters carved from snow-packed snow in a 5 gallon bucket mold is a great way to start practicing.</p>
<p>Mini (or big) sculptures, molds, and candles (a great way to reuse takeout containers.) Or try a stained ice window.</p>	<p>A walled outdoor classroom or fire pit complete with ice decorations, for community use.</p>
<p>Heart Gardens: in ice! Freeze paper with messages committed to the wellbeing of Indigenous kids (and take action to accompany this.)</p>	<p>A mini castle of the kind you always wanted to build as a kid. An epic fort or three, maybe with a reasonably safe snowball fight included.</p>

Some other details: "Love your neighbour" works well in Christian communities, but if you want to expand to interfaith or community-wide, reinterpret. The point is to show love to the whole community.

This is a **team effort**, but team up COVID-safely, and every other kind of safely. Plan carefully how you will include all who want to be involved. If people can't easily go outside, can you choose a site where they can drive by, or sit in a sheltered spot? Can those who can't be outside instead contribute ice art to be built into the project? *(Photo: community-built backyard firepit shelter and mini Roughriders stadium, Saskatoon.)*

This is all about a public display of community support. **Choose your site(s) wisely!** Where can your masterpiece be seen and enjoyed? What permission do you need? Be mindful that bigger projects need lots of fresh snow, and level, open ground.

Check your insurance (the Regional Council will also get an opinion on this). For example: You may need to post grinchy warning signs about not climbing on the snow fort.



Resources on building and freezing techniques will be shared by your Regional Council, and so will online spaces to register and share stories and photos.

More information and resources: www.northernspiritrc.ca and www.livingskiesrc.ca and www.prairietopinerc.ca or contact the office under "Contact Us" on each website. Look for us on Facebook too!