

CONTACT: Jessica Booth, Newport Parks & Recreation Director

EMAIL: [JBooth@NewportRecreation.org](mailto:JBooth@NewportRecreation.org)

PRESS RELEASE

## THE ICE IS OUT IN NEWPORT!



After months of waiting, spring finally made it's appearance with a splash in Newport this Saturday. The Lake Memphremagog ICE OUT Contest, now in it's 5th year garnered a record 1,444 guesses this winter.

"Between the newspapers, television and social media, the contest drew a lot of attention this year. We even had a visit from NBC News Channel who did a story on 'Vanilla Ice'" says Jessica Booth, Director of Parks & Recreation. "The number of guesses more than doubled this year, largely thanks to our Recreation Committee who put a lot of volunteer time and energy into selling tickets."

"Predictions came in from across the country online too," said Laura Smith who had the pleasure of entering all 1,444 guesses into an electronic spreadsheet at the Parks & Recreation office. "A lot of submissions from Vermont and New England, but also some from farther away like Colorado, South Carolina, Wisconsin and Georgia. Entering them was a little tedious, but it was interesting to see where the guesses were coming from and which dates and times were most popular. Five different people chose April 1 at 11:00AM for example. April 20th at 4:20 was a popular guess too" she said with a smile and a shake of her head.

Parks Foreman Mac McKenny happened to be at Gardner Park on Saturday fishing with his sons and nephew when "Vanilla Ice" broke through near the Causeway Bridge at 11:07AM. "It was cool to actually see it go down! It started to tip and after a few minutes the whole thing dropped. We got to see the clock stop, which was a first for sure."

While all are relieved that spring has finally arrived in Newport, the announcement is most exciting to first-time ICE OUT contestant Steve Lawson who submitted two predictions on Town Meeting Day in March. His winning guess of 10:05AM on 4/13/19 was just one hour and two minutes ahead of the actual time. "My first prediction one was way too early," he admitted and couldn't attribute his strategy for the winning prediction to anything more than a lucky guess.



The Lake Memphremagog ICE OUT contest is an annual fundraiser for Newport Parks & Recreation. This year the event brought in \$3,166 toward the Gardner Park Playground and Splash Pad project. Steve takes home \$1,583 as his half of the 50/50 cash prize and while he's not in a rush to see ice on Lake Memphremagog anytime soon, he's fairly certain he'll be submitting a few guesses again next winter.

Tickets can be purchased year round at the Newport Parks & Recreation Department office or online at [www.NewportRecreation.org/ICEOUT](http://www.NewportRecreation.org/ICEOUT).