

Newsday

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SOCK SKATING AND OTHER COOL
HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS **B4**



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Ali Sachdev, India Sachdev, 3, and Greg Sachdev from Stewart Manor skate together at the seasonal sock skating rink at the Long Island Children's Museum in Garden City.

Gliding into winter

Indoor sock skating 'ice' rink reopens with holiday exhibit at LI children's museum

BY BETH WHITEHOUSE

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Snowflake Sock Skating brings the popular indoor "ice-skating" activity back to the Long Island Children's Museum through Jan. 8 — with the addition of an indoor campfire pit where visitors can roast pretend s'mores, and the Frosty Café, where kids can sell imaginary hot cocoa from inside a 9-foot-tall snowman.

"It feels like the perfect thing to get people in the holiday mood," Maureen Mangan, museum director of communications, says of the exhibit, which first launched as a test pop-up for several weeks in summer of 2021. Snowflake Sock Skating will likely return annually in the fall to mark the holiday season, she says.

The 800-square-foot rink — about the size of a four-car

garage — features color disco-like displays and festive music and is cordoned off with candy-cane striped poles. The rink floor isn't actually ice; it's made from a high-tech synthetic polymer surface that lets users slide as if on a polished wood floor. No blades are needed — the museum instead offers disposable booties that visitors slip on right over their shoes in the beanbag chair area next to

the rink. A perk of being indoors? "No running noses or cold hands," Mangan says.

ROLE-PLAY OPPORTUNITIES

Ali Sachdev, 44, a creative director of design from Stew-

ON THE COVER Skyler Powell, 2, and Rebecca Powell, from Queens, skate together at the Long Island Children's Museum.



Lydia DeFrances, 2, from Lindenhurst plays at a ticket booth at the Long Island Children's Museum.

art Manor, and her husband, Greg, 47, who is self-employed, brought their daughter, India, 3, to sock skate recently. "We had literally the best time," Ali says. "All the kids were having so much fun. And the parents, too."

In the nearby Snowflake Village, fake money is traded as children sell laminated child or adult tickets to enter the skating rink. At the Frosty Café, kids serve hot cocoa using a toy cash register to make change. "We know how much kids like the idea of taking on different

roles," Mangan says.

A digital fireplace is surrounded by tree-stump-like chairs and children can roast fake marshmallows and use toy graham crackers and chocolate bars to make s'mores. Kids can pose for photos with their heads in the place of the heads of gingerbread men; they can make holiday music on a wall filled with jingle bells, triangles, a tambourine and a xylophone.

SPIN, SKATE BACKWARD

"Are you ready to move your bodies?" Aimee Terzulli, museum director of education, asks a group of first-graders as they put their booties on to enter the rink recently. She challenges them to spin and to skate backward.

"It's slippery," says Jacob Lobos, 6, of Westbury. Classmate Genesis Hernandez, 6, also of Westbury seems to enjoy falling on the "ice" as much as spinning and skating on it. Does it hurt to fall? "No," she says.

The atmosphere is also inviting for parents, Terzulli says — she jokes that the museum staff wants to have their holiday party at the rink. To complement the exhibit, free craft activities are offered on specified days. From 1 to 3 p.m. on Dec. 10 and from noon to 2 p.m. on Dec. 24, make a beaded necklace and a decorated gingerbread friend; from 1 to 3 p.m. on Dec. 11 and Jan. 8 make your own colorful construction paper skates.

Leslie O'Connor, 40, a program manager from Lindenhurst, says

PLUS, A HOLIDAY CLASSIC

An interactive version of the Charles Dickens holiday classic "A Christmas Carol" that includes music and humor will take the stage at the Long Island Children's Museum theater during the month of December.

Families will meet the cast as they enter the theater, and puppets will be used to represent the ghosts of past, present and future, says Maureen Mangan, museum director of communications.

The 45-minute show is \$9 with museum admission and \$12 for show only. Check licm.org for dates and times.

— BETH WHITEHOUSE

Snowflake Sock Skating

WHEN | WHERE through Jan. 8, 2023, at the Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave., Garden City
INFO Free with museum admission of \$15, younger than 1 get in free; 516-224-5800, licm.org

sock skating at the museum on a recent weekend was a new experience for her daughter, Lydia DeFrances, 2, who has never been ice skating. "It was funny watching my 2-year-old fall and shuffle," O'Connor says. "We had a blast."



Abigail Murphy, 3, from Queens, plays with a s'mores toy set at the Long Island Children's Museum.



Santa and company will come to the Longwood Estate in Ridge on Saturday.

Sleigh rides, Santa and more visit estate in Ridge

BY BETH WHITEHOUSE

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Taking a jaunt on an antique sleigh — the kind Santa likes to ride — is one of the activities when the big guy comes to the historic Longwood Estate in Ridge from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday.

Upon arrival, visitors will first be met by elves and Mrs. Claus, walk through the historic house from the 1790s, and see two train displays, one with a Disney theme and the other a Victorian scene. Santa will meet children and parents can take their own photos, with an assist from the elves, says Diane Schwindt, Longwood Estate director. Kids should bring their letters to Santa and include the child's name and address in the letter so Santa can reply. On the lawn, have roasted chestnuts and take pony rides.

Inside the grounds' one-room schoolhouse from the 1800s, enjoy hot chocolate and face-painting. Outside the schoolhouse, take the ride on the antique sleigh — it sits atop a flatbed that's pulled on a short path through the woods by a motorized vehicle. The sleigh, which is considered antique because nobody but Santa uses them anymore, fits about three people, Schwindt says.

The event is run by the town of Brookhaven. No advance registration is necessary, and there's no rain date. The cost is \$5 for children 12 and younger; those over 12 and grown-ups don't pay. New, unwrapped toys will be collected for children in need. The only other cost is for pony rides; that fee will be determined by the vendor providing the rides. The estate is at the corner of Longwood and Smith roads in Ridge.