

HANDBOOK

Have an ice day!

This fundraiser is more fun than watching ice melt

In Colorado at this time of year, days are short and temperatures are cold. But the Rotary Club of Mountain Foothills of Evergreen provides its community with a little reminder that spring will come again.

For two decades, the club has put a colorful barrel on the ice of Evergreen Lake. Community members buy tickets guessing the exact date and time — down to the second — that the alpine ice will melt and the barrel will fall through, offering some hope of winter relief while raising funds in the process.

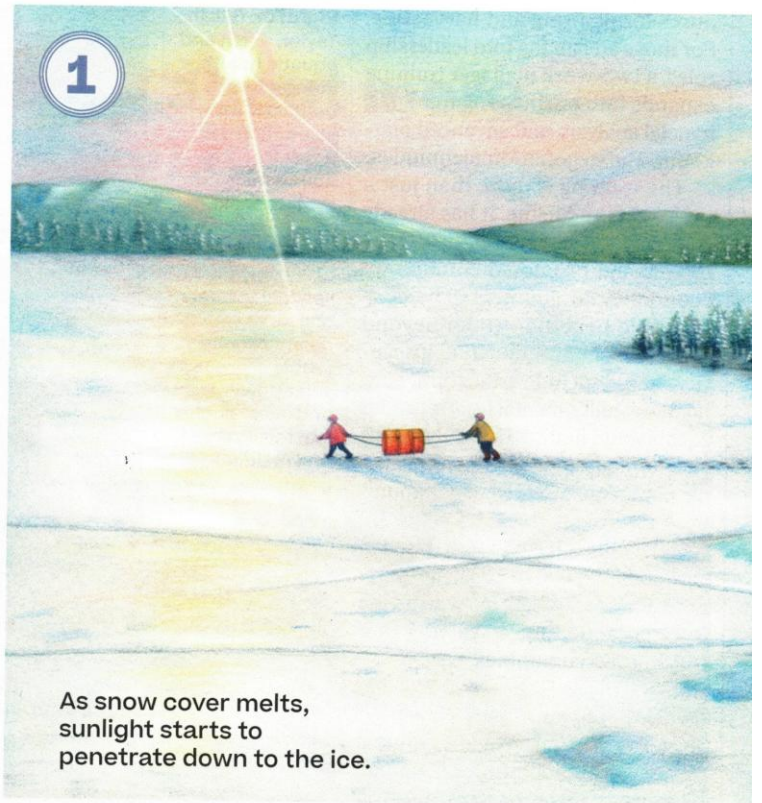
“The barrel is this promise of spring,” says Dennis Brovarone, who leads the club’s effort. “It will eventually fall through.”

Tickets go on sale early in the season as they are favorite winter holiday gifts in the community. The club partners with the local parks department to place the barrel on the ice near a main road. “You can see it very well,” Brovarone says. “People look for it all the time.”

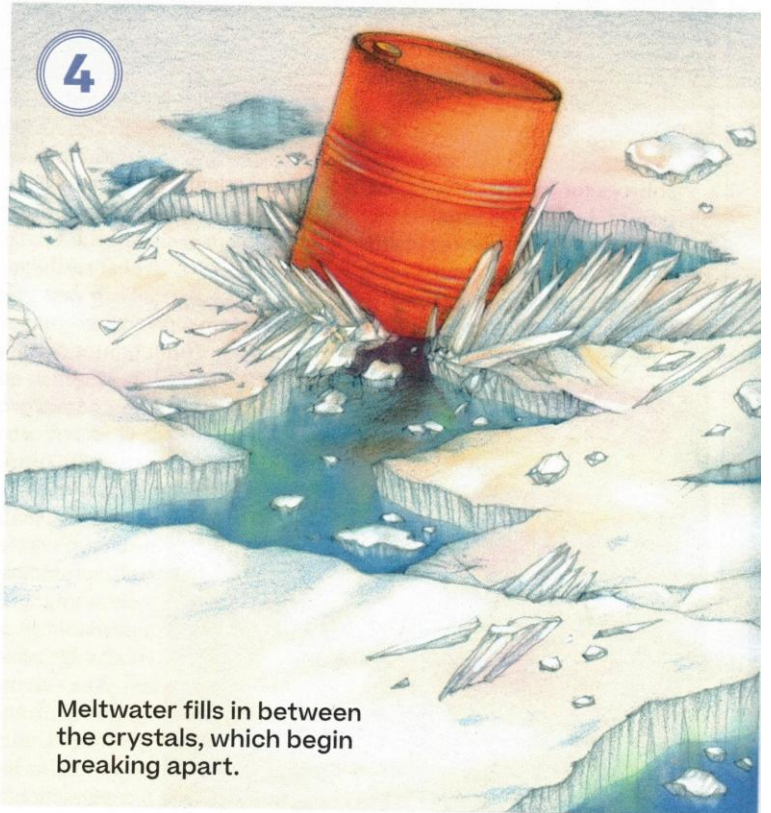
To clock what time the ice melts, organizers take the covers off the backs of two inexpensive watches, put them inside a real estate agent lock box, and chain it to the barrel. When the barrel falls through the ice, the watches short out, stopping at the exact date and time. “You have to determine it fairly quickly,” Brovarone says. “After the watches dry out, they start back up again.” The earliest melt was 5 March, and the latest was 17 April, Brovarone says, and sometimes the winning guesses come down to the second. The local fire and rescue crew retrieves the barrel from the lake, which has an average depth of just 15 feet.

The project’s beneficiaries include the Evergreen parks department’s program for people with disabilities, an organization that connects teens with mental health counseling, a ranch retreat for first responders, and Crutches 4 Africa, a project started by a member of the club that ships mobility devices to the continent.

See more about the project and join the fun at mountainfoothillsrotary.org.



As snow cover melts, sunlight starts to penetrate down to the ice.



Meltwater fills in between the crystals, which begin breaking apart.

Source: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

