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Will SNC bring back Winter Carnival?

Alex Downing

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December 2022

Question:

Dear Abbot Pennings,

Will SNC bring back Winter Carnival? Many alumni I talk to ask about this regularly.

Alex Downing '23

Answer:

My dear Alex,

Your question evokes happy memories of a storied tradition on our campus. The Winter Carnival was enjoyed by generations of alumni over five different decades. The event, typically lasting several days, offered students, faculty, staff and alumni a wide range of activities to celebrate the winter season and express school spirit.

The first carnival commemorated in Des Peres, our college yearbook, was held in 1962. Sponsored by the Chicago Club, it featured a variety of competitive events on the ice-covered Fox River, if you can imagine! One memorable contest was snow sculpture in the theme of "Disneyland," with the winning scene, "Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs," crafted by Alpha Delta Gamma. Other events, which became fixtures at subsequent Carnivals, included broom hockey, tug-of-war and snowshoe races. This iteration of the carnival concluded in 1999 and is still remembered fondly today.

From 2012 to 2014, the Winter Carnival was revived by a new generation of students. Activities included the classic snow sculpture contest, sled races, karaoke, a formal dance and broom hockey on an outdoor ice rink in the heart of campus. The 2014 Carnival also hosted the Big Ideas Competition, which featured 10 student teams competing to present their best ideas on how to move SNC forward in new and innovative ways. The judges' top pick was a suggestion for a new undergraduate program in entrepreneurship and innovation – a well-timed choice, as just days later, our board of trustees approved a new MBA program and the founding of the Schneider School of Business & Economics. Big ideas, indeed!

While this rebirth of the Winter Carnival brought joy to new and returning attendees alike, it was not without challenges that limited participation and made it impractical to continue staging the event. Most notably, warmer winters brought less snow and a less consistent frost, which thwarted efforts to freeze ice for the rink and build sculptures suitable for the occasion. However, while the Winter Carnival may be gone – at least for now – its legacy lives on: SNC students, alumni and community members having fun and making memories to warm even the coldest winter's day.

And, dear Alex, I think you will share in my joy and delight when I tell you that our dedicated E2K planners are, in fact, already working on a January Jamboree



Ask the Abbot

As the founder of St. Norbert College, and having a prime seat in the center of campus throughout the years, I, Abbot Bernard Pennings, hold the answers to many of your burning questions about the college.

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to welcome students back after their Christmas Break. I'm reliably informed there will be mini golf at the Campus Center, bowling, carnival games, food, and so much more.

Responses to "Ask the Abbot" questions are penned by St. Norbert College staff in the name of Abbot Bernard Pennings, who founded St. Norbert College in 1898.

St. Norbert College

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