

The Dangers of Thin Ice

by Warren Hollar

The low temperatures during the last week have caused many Alexander County farm ponds to freeze over. These frozen ponds offer a tempting location for young people and even pets to explore. This temptation for young people and pets is a safety threat that cannot be taken lightly. It is estimated that nearly 8,000 people die each year in the United States from drowning with many directly related to falling through frozen bodies of water. If one looks at the statistics of deaths from drowning and hypothermia, we see that a very high proportion of those who die are children and teenagers. And yes, there have been a number of deaths in North Carolina directly related to young people falling through thin ice on farm ponds.

Young people tend to think that farm pond ice is thick enough to walk on if they cannot break it with a foot or a heavy stick. In northern states where many winter activities are acceptable on frozen bodies of water, the minimum safe thickness for human activity is 6 inches. Our level of cold weather does not come even close to freezing ponds to a depth of six inches. Even though ice may appear to be thick enough near the shore, chances are the ice will be much thinner in the center of the pond. Under water current can cause the ice to become very thin. Snow also serves as a blanket which may speed melting and causes the ice to be thinner.

What do you do if someone falls in a pond?

1. Remain calm and do not run over to the hole in the ice or you may become a victim.
2. If you come upon someone who has broken through ice, remember that the most important goal should be to preserve yourself.
3. Call for help immediately, be it through yelling at people within earshot, or by calling 911 with a cell phone.
4. Tell the victim to try to relax and slow down his breathing and emphasize that you are going to help him get out.
5. Try to talk the victim out of the water - Tell him to get his legs horizontal in the

water, his arms up on top of the ice, and to kick, pull, kick, pull.

6. If the victim can't get out by himself, find something to throw to him, like a rope, tree branch, or even a ladder from a nearby home, if available. If you throw a rope, try to create a loop at the end of it so that the victim has something to grab onto. If he can, he should try to put the loop around his body.

What if you fall in?

1. First, try not to panic.
2. Don't remove your winter clothing. Heavy clothes won't drag you down, but instead can trap air to provide warmth and flotation. Turn toward the direction you came. That's probably the strongest ice.
3. Place your hands and arms on the unbroken surface. Kick your feet. Lie flat on the ice once you are out and roll away from the hole to keep your weight spread out. This may help prevent you from breaking through again.
4. Get to a warm, dry, sheltered area and re-warm yourself immediately.

What if a pet or other animal falls in?

1. Don't try to rescue the pet or animal by yourself.
2. Call for help by calling 911 if you have a cell phone or run to the nearest home for help.

The best advice for avoiding problems around a frozen body of water in the winter is to stay off the ice. If you have a pet with you, keep them on a leash because they do not know the dangers. Parents should emphasize the dangers related to thin ice to their children.

Sources

- <http://drbenkim.com/what-do-if-you-fall-through-ice>
- <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/ice/survival.html>
- <http://www.livingsafer.com/the-dangers-of-thin-ice>
- <http://survival.about.com/od/10/a/Survive-A-Fall-Through-Thin-Ice.htm>

Catawba Valley Camera Club year-end winners

The Catawba Valley Camera Club held its annual holiday party and year end awards ceremony at the Hickory Museum of Art on December 21, 2016. At this ceremony, awards were presented for accomplished and amateur photographer of the year, print image of the year, and projection image of the year. Also honored were first, second, third in both accomplished and amateur divisions for the year.

The Accomplished Division winners were: Photographer of the Year: Doreen Sugierski.

First place print: Doreen Sugierski with an image entitled "Leica."

First place projection: Doreen Sugierski with an image entitled "Saw Machine."

Second place print: Doreen Sugierski with an image entitled "Detrola Trio."

Second place projection: Doreen Sugierski with an image entitled "Monitor Lizard."

Third place print: Tom Devlin with an image entitled "Galleon."

Third place projection: Brady Linkous with an image entitled "Rime Ice."

Honorable Mention Print Doreen Sugierski with an image entitled "Marine Iguana."

Honorable Mention Projection Stan Bolton with an image entitled "May Day."

The Intermediate Division winners were: Photographer of the Year: Paul VanBreemen.

First place print: Paul VanBreemen with an image entitled "Introspective."

First place projection:

Brian Hargreaves with an image entitled "Clouds Meet Canola."

Second place print: Randy Knauf with an image entitled "Thanks Mom."

Second place projection: John Pascone with an image entitled "Water Games."

Third place print: Paul VanBreemen with an image entitled "Cascade Below White Oak Creek."

Third place projection: Ann Fitzsimmons with an image entitled "Minneapolis Looking Up."

Honorable Mention Print: Randy Knauf with an image entitled "Archway."

Honorable Mention Projection Ravi Patel with an image entitled "Full Glory."

Pete Minor Projection Image of the Year: Mitzi Gellman with an image entitled "Star Trails Over Grandfather Mountain."

Dwight Bowman Print of the Year: Paul VanBreemen with an image entitled "The Look."

The "Frank J Miller Artistic Image of the Year Award" is given annually to the club member judged to have the most artistic and creative image. This year the recipient of this award is Randy Knauf with an image entitled "Bubbles."

The Catawba Valley Camera Club in conjunction with the Hickory Museum of Art will hold the 10th Annual Open Photography Competition entitled "Image*ination" on March 3, 2017. The Club is now accepting entries into it's Image*ination Contest. This competition is open to non-club members in categories of Amateur Adult and Youth

(age 13-17). Complete information about the competition is available on the Club's website at cvcameraclub.org. The winning photographs can be viewed at the Hickory Museum of Art in the hallway to the main art gallery on the first floor beginning March 3rd.

The Catawba Valley Camera Club meets on the first and third Wednesdays of every month, at 7:00 p.m. in the North Annex of the Arts Center in Hickory. Meetings consist of competition among members as well as instructional lectures. Field trips are planned throughout the year to enable members to share and demonstrate techniques as well as spend time enjoying photography together. Upcoming meetings are as follows:

- January 4, 2017: features an open projection competition.
- January 18, 2017: features a Presentation on Yellowstone National Park by Club Members Ed Lane and Donny Teague.

The public is invited to attend, membership is not required. Further information can be obtained from the club's web site at www.cvcamerclub.org.

Pastors' Prayer Gatherings set in January, February

Rev. Alan Cunningham announces Pastors' Prayer Gatherings to be held in the coming weeks. These are planned Tuesday, January 17, at 9:30 a.m. and Tuesday, February 21, also at 9:30 a.m. at New Song Kingdom Ministries in the Wittenburg Community.

"We have had a good year of Pastors' gatherings in 2016, regardless of the numbers each meeting, [we] had good times of prayer and great uplifting Spirit-led discussions. There were meetings ranging in numbers from two to ten.

"Our prayer for this year is to see more Pastors join us and experience the unity of Spirit and fellowship that gathering together in Jesus name brings," said Cunningham.

"Personally, we believe that this will be a very important year. It's a year of new beginnings, new opportunities, and fresh challenges as we continue to come together to pray and seek God for the restoration and revival of our nation 'Under God' once again. We may have won a battle this year, but the war for the soul of this nation is ongoing and the sleeping giant, the church of Jesus Christ needs not only to stay awake it needs to stay alert and active."

The New Song Kingdom Ministries Office is located at 35 Wittenburg Industrial Road, Taylorsville. Phone: 828-632-8717 or 828-638-4820.

Alex Democrats to hold monthly meeting Jan. 17

The Alexander County Democratic Party (ACDP) will hold their next monthly meeting Tuesday, January 17, at 6:00 p.m. at the ACDP Headquarters. All Democrats are welcome to attend.

\$0 joining fee for limited time at Alex YMCA

Now, for a limited time, new members can join any branch of the YMCA of Northwest North Carolina with a \$0 joining fee. Y members have access to YMCAs across North Carolina and Virginia, as well as the Gateway YWCA in Winston-Salem.

Members belong to the branch they use more than 50% of the time, but can visit other facilities as part of their membership. Details about the membership reciprocity program can be found on the YMCA's website at ymcanwnc.org/MyYisEveryY.

Membership at the Y provides access to pool space at various branches, hundreds of group exercise class offerings, gym and racquetball courts, as well as specialty programs including Hot Yoga, CrossFit at three locations, Les Mills GRIT, and state-of-the-art Training Centers at various locations. Members also receive discounts on programs such as youth sports, summer camp, and swim lessons.

"When you join the Y, you're committing to

more than simply becoming healthier," said Darryl Head, Interim President and Chief Executive Officer of the YMCA of Northwest North Carolina. "You are supporting the values and programs that strengthen your community."

The Y also supports new members in making healthy changes with uFit appointments. Offered at no cost for new members uFit is a three-session program that provides individuals with the tools and resources they need to succeed. Trained staff help new members set attainable goals, create an easy-to-follow plan, and provide additional support.

The YMCA of Northwest North Carolina includes 16 locations in Forsyth, Stokes, Davie, Yadkin, Iredell, Wilkes, and Alexander Counties. The \$0 joining fee special applies to all levels of membership ranging from teen to household with dependents. Visit www.ymcanwnc.org to find more information about the branch closest to you.



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Alexander Senior Center holds events at Mt. Pisgah each week

Alexander County Senior Center has a Bethlehem Branch located in Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church on Hwy 127.

We are open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Offered classes are Tai Chi, Needlework, Woodcarving, Yoga, Card Making, and Ukulele Playing. Card players come at 1:00 in the afternoon for Hand & Foot- a variation of Canasta.

The fourth Tuesday afternoon is Wild Game Day for a variety of games. Every third Thursday we have Bingo at 10:30am hosted by local businesses.

Birthday lunches are on the third Tuesday at noon. Come by and pick up a newsletter and calendar. Join us for lots of fun and socializing!

For more information, please contact Kristy at 828-409-3742.