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Indian River County kids ignore rain, play in snow

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VERO BEACH — The rain was turning the snow to slush, but that didn't matter to the dozens of children — and a few teenagers — who threw snowballs, formed snow angels, and slid down the slope.

The rainfall didn't prevent the third annual Pointe West Winter Fest celebration from introducing snow to some children who had never seen it before.

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The 7-foot-tall "Snow Mountain" at Pointe West's polo field was formed by several tons of ice trucked in by a commercial ice-making company for the event.

The rain forced cancellation of bounce houses, Santa Claus' appearance and a performance by the Sebastian River High School Jazz Ensemble.

But the children were oblivious to the drizzle as they reveled in the snow.

Alice Stone of Fellsmere brought her son, Lee, 8, to give him his first taste of the fluffy stuff.

"I've only seen snow a couple of times myself, a little bit in Ohio and on the peaks in Colorado during the summertime," Stone said. "After seeing this, I have no desire to live up north.

"But it's good for him to see what it looks like."

Scott Weinbrecht, who moved to Sebastian from New Jersey in 1979, said he wanted his children to experience snow, but he enjoyed the experience as well.

"Sometimes I take my children back to New Jersey just to experience the seasons," said Weinbrecht, who owns a marble and granite fabricating business in Vero Beach.

"This is the closest we're going to get to snow this year," he said.

Weinbrecht's daughter, Julia, 6, got in a snowball fight with her brother, Michael, 16.

"My nose hurts," Julia said. "I think it's a little crooked because Michael hit me with a snowball."

Stomping her feet, Julia added: "Now I have to go and squeeze the water out of my shoes."

The snow mountain provided a photo opportunity for parents and grandparents.

Among them was retiree Ernie Raudenbush of Vero Beach, who brought his granddaughter, Heather, 11, to the event.

Raudenbush said he used to live in Philadelphia and New Jersey, but moved to Florida in 1977 when his water pipes froze despite being 3 feet underground.

Pointe West President Chuck Mechling said the event, co-sponsored by the Indian River County Recreation Department, is a way to bring together residents of the housing subdivision as well as outside it.

Mechling said the event's fireworks display went off as scheduled.



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Michael Weinbrecht, 16, of Sebastian, smears snow on his sister, Julia, 6, during the Indian River County Recreation Department's third annual Winter Fest at Pointe West on Saturday. Despite the rain, children waited in line with their parents for a chance to play in the mountain of snow.

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