

Lifestyles

Snowboarding certainly isn't just for the young

By **FANNIE SUNSHINE**
The Champion

If trying to balance while your feet are strapped to a board, constantly falling in the cold snow and sliding down a hill while the wind blasts in your face sounds like fun, you're not alone.

"Snowboarding started to get popular about six years ago," said snowboard instructor Carey Matthews, who teaches at Glen Eden Ski and Snowboard Centre.

Mr. Matthews, who's been a snowboarder for the past nine years and an instructor for five, said the sport is for anyone of any age.

"We have a wide variety of snowboarders, from age 9 to 50, both male and female."

Snowboard lessons are offered at Glen Eden for both the beginner and more advanced snow enthusiast, he said.

Glen Eden has several instructional programs available to suit individual needs.

Group lessons, which consist of up to nine people, are offered to those aged eight and up. The centre also offers special Christmas and March Break group lessons, as well as private lessons.

"We put people of the same age range and experience together," he said, adding a young snowboarder won't be in the same group as an older person.

And if you're out of shape, you can expect your body to be getting a wake-up call after only one lesson.

"It (snowboarding) works everything, your legs, stomach," Mr. Matthews said. "If you're



Chris Kargel carves an edge as he snowboards at Glen Eden.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

just beginning, depending on your age you'll probably be out there for an hour."

If Mr. Matthews is teaching beginners, he'll go

through the fundamentals of mastering the snowboard.

"I teach them about the board and basic mobil-

ity, like how to slide on the board. We'll practice standing on the board on flat ground first and then go down the hill. One of the hardest things to do is getting up on the pitch on the slope. We'll do straight running and side flipping and turns and balancing on one edge and then flipping to the other."

And if you're going to be one with the snow, you might as well dress for it.

"Snowboarders should wear ski pants, gloves and a toque, along with a helmet, no matter what level you're at," he recommended.

Kylie and her sister Amanda were enjoying a day of snowboarding Wednesday at Glen Eden.

"I just started, so I'm not that good yet," 11-year-old Kylie said. "It looked like fun so I wanted to try it. I fall a lot, but it's fun sliding on the board."

Ten-year-old Amanda followed in her sister's footsteps after she saw Kylie trying to master the art of snowboarding.

"We fall, but it's fun," she said, shaking snow out of her hair. "I know I'm not good, but I try."

Both girls are currently taking lessons and said most of their friends do so also because it's "cool".

Mike Hutton, who's been snowboarding for two years, said he got hooked while watching his older brother take off down the slopes.

"It looked so cool, like you're flying or something," the 14-year-old said. "It hurts when you fall, but that's the risk you take."

Mike said he tries to snowboard a few times a week and also takes lessons. "It's more fun to be out here than staying indoors, playing video games or something. Most of my friends ski, but I like snowboarding better."

Here's some good advice, guys, for Valentine's Day

With Valentine's Day right around the corner, it's a good time to reveal the fundamental difference between men and women when it comes to buying presents.

Men buy women presents they think will get them into the woman's good books; women buy presents after careful thought and consideration about what they think the man will like.

In other words, men don't know what the heck they're doing.

That's no major revelation, but don't worry, I'm going to help you.

What makes me such an expert? Well, I've done pretty much everything wrong that can be

done wrong, so trust me.

The thing about Valentine's Day that I don't get is that it seems to be a time for men to do things for women. Why not the other way around? Aren't we all equal, or are we just equal when it suits women? I only mention this because if you think the same way, never ever say it to your wife or girlfriend.

Start off with the card. They are full of the most ridiculous mush, it's almost enough to make you vomit. Women want the mush, and actually read the card. Do not, under any circumstances, buy an intentionally-funny Valentine's card. The mushy ones are funny



On the
loose

with **MURRAY TOWNSEND**

enough and they will appreciate them.

Don't fall for this trick. If your significant other suggests not buying each other a present to

save money, by all means agree with her. You still buy the present, though. To not do so is just plain stupid. If by some chance she doesn't buy one for you, that's even better because you have one over on her and she will be extra nice to make it up to you.

The key to buying gifts for women is to be as impractical as possible. Never ever buy them something they need. I once got a good mop as a present, I'm not kidding. I really liked that mop, but chances are extremely high that buying a mop for your lady on Valentine's Day will earn you a spot on the couch for at least a week.

• see **BE PREDICTABLE** on page 30

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