

Champion Country

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Snowshoeing easier than ever at area parks



Fun winter activity offered at Crawford Lake and Mountsberg

By **ROBIN DOWNTON-POIRIER**

Special to The Champion

Miltonians can experience the beauty of winter the way their ancestors did by snowshoeing with Conservation Halton.

Being offered at both Crawford Lake and Mountsberg conservation areas on Sundays this month — with a special Saturday evening event at Crawford Lake on January 21 — snowshoeing is said to be an excellent form of winter exercise and, thanks to new snowshoe designs, is easier than ever.

Snowshoes have been around for more than 6,000 years and were used by Canada's Aboriginal Peoples. They passed on the 'technology' to the European explorers who used them to cross the continent, said Adam McDowell, event co-ordinator for Conservation Halton.

Traditional wooden snowshoes are more difficult to use than the newer aluminum type, and some instruction may be needed to help the user walk, run, climb and turn, he said.

"The most common shapes of snowshoes today are the bear paw (a more rounded style) and the tear drop with the extended tail. When using wooden snowshoes for the first time, some instruction on how to safely walk, run, turn, walk up and down hills is helpful," he said.

"Technical snowshoes with an aluminum frame and nylon and neoprene webbing or bindings lack some of the tradition of their wooden ancestors but make up for it with ease of use. They are

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Leah Gould (left) gets a helping hand from Debbie Hutchins during their snowshoeing endeavours at Crawford Lake.

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