

Arctic winter games take place every two years

Q. I understand the people of the Arctic have their own winter games. Can you tell me how they were started and what events take place?

A. The Arctic Winter Games were first held in 1970 and take place every two years to provide northern athletes with opportunities for training and competition. They were also initiated to promote cultural and social interchange among northern peoples, according to the Canadian Encyclopedia.

The first games were held in



Trivia

Mark Kearney
Randy Ray

Yellowknife and drew 710 participants from Alaska, Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories. In 1972, Athletes from northern Quebec and observers from the Soviet Union and Greenland joined

the games, which have since been held in a number of centres, including Anchorage, Alaska; Schefferville, Quebec; Fairbanks, Alaska and Hay River, NWT. The 1992 Arctic Winter Games were held in White-

horse. The games feature some events you'd expect to find in any winter games, such as cross-country skiing, curling, figure skating and hockey and some traditional Arctic sports developed over the years by

Inuit to test stamina, strength and endurance. One such event is the high kick in which athletes leap into the air with one or both feet in an effort to reach a higher level than their competitors.

Keep fire-safe for Christmas

Decorating for Christmas should be done safely to avoid fire hazards. Here's how:

Always make sure you buy a freshly cut tree. A dry tree may create a serious fire hazard. If the needles are shedding, or break when bent, choose another one. Keep the tree outside with the trunk in a snow bank or in water until you can decorate it. When you are ready to bring it indoors, cut two or three inches off the base diagonally and place it in a sturdy tree stand. Make sure the tree stand has a good reservoir and keep it filled with water until you take the tree down.

Place your tree away from any heat source and out of the exit

ways. Discard all lighting sets that are frayed or damaged. Keep electrical bulbs away from curtains or combustible materials and never use candles on or near a tree.

No more than three sets of lights should be used on an extension cord. Overloading cords can start a fire. Unplug all lights before leaving the house or going to sleep. Keep children and pets away from candles, electrical cords and fireplaces.

Never burn trees, decorations or wrapping paper in your fireplace. Wrappings and evergreens burn rapidly at high heat, throwing sparks which can set the roof on fire.

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