

■ SPORTS

Times have changed, but curling spirit alive and well

Karen Sotvedt
Throwing rocks



Last Friday was the first Chase the Ace for the current curling season at Middleton Curling Club. The crowd of members and community friends was keen and glad to be back after the hiatus, and cheered for the evening's winner, longtime member Jean Fry.

She won the pot for the day,

but did not draw the ace from the deck – and this too was cheered enthusiastically. Everyone was pleased with the first winner; Jean is the co-ordinator of the Afternoon League and for most of her adult life has been an active supporter and contributor to club life. She and her husband Ed tell stories of their early days in the club, when Friday nights were a bit wilder and a lot longer.

Back then curlers would have supper and then meet at the club for curling and a TGIF get-together. It was not unheard of for games to be played all night

and then curlers would breakfast together in the “wee small hours.”

The club was the centre of social activity for many in the community and most could walk back and forth from their homes. Times have changed somewhat. Everyone has cars and very few live near the club – that in itself makes a big difference to the place the club holds in everyday life. Now it is a trip and not a neighbour.

A few decades ago there was a piano and a large shuffleboard in the club room. Sing-alongs after a game were frequent and curl-

ers waiting to go on the ice, especially in bonspiels, would have a game of shuffleboard while they waited.

Those times are gone; the time between games is spent on the phone or popping out in the car. With the change in times, there is a change in social occupations. Chase the Ace is an example of the club adapting to the new ways of socializing. Curlers still meet for breakfast – but now it is once a month at the Big Breakfast (the next one is Saturday, Nov. 18). The Christmas Fete group meets weekly during the

curling season to work together on crafts and personal projects. The board of directors under this year's president Cody Spidle is busy with continuing plans for renovations and updating the club infrastructure.

Things have changed, but one thing is the same – curling members are dedicated to keeping the club alive and active and a contributing part of the community. News can be found at www.middletoncurlingclub.com

Karen Sotvedt is a member of the Middleton Curling Club.