

## A WARMING HUT EXPERIENCE

Rupal Malik, Physical Education Teacher, Ecole St. Avila  
Tytanya Fillion, Teacher Librarian, Ecole St. Avila  
Peter Hargraves, Architect, Sputnik Architecture Inc.  
David Anderson, Architect, Sputnik Architecture Inc.  
Sara Stasiuk, CEO of The Forks North Portage

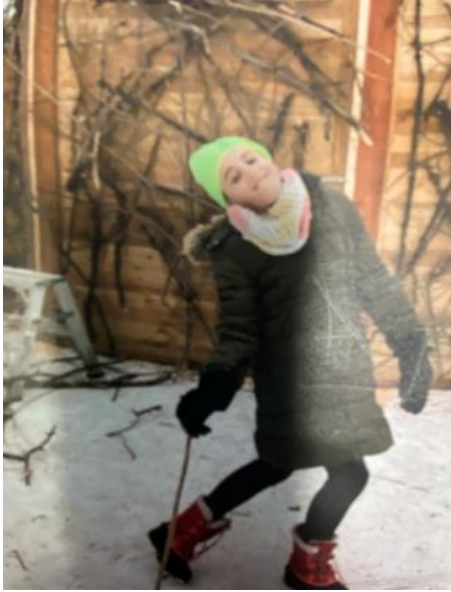
The Warming Huts is a project that is primarily about promoting physical activity in winter. There are many features to the project that are culturally specific, but in this case art and culture are used as the great motivator to move. The Warming Huts in and of themselves typically offer shelter from the wind and exposure to the sun, however, their greatest contribution to helping visitors on the walking, skating, biking and skiing trails is to encourage people to come and see the unique creative pieces of art. The Huts, typically separated by several hundred feet along the trail that is normally several kilometers long, are located to inspire people to walk, skate, ski, or bike from one installation to the next and by doing so, burn calories, which in turn is converted very efficiently into heat. And in doing this, the Warming Huts truly are warming people who visit them. (Peter Hargraves-mastermind of the Warming Hut Competition)

“At the heart of everything we do here at The Forks is community, and our annual Warming Huts competition is just that,” says Sara Stasiuk, CEO of The Forks North Portage. “These huts are designed and built by people for people. We put them down on the river trail to be explored, admired, and enjoyed by anyone and everyone.”

Ecole St. Avila submitted a proposal to create a warming hut called “Amisk” which means beaver in Cree. Amisk was chosen as one of this year’s Warming Hut builds at The Forks. Rupal Malik, physical education teacher, along with Tytanya Fillion, teacher librarian have been working since the end of September with several grade 5/6 students on Project Amisk. This project was meant to create a learning environment and a place for reflection where people come to read and acquire knowledge of Treaty 1 land as well as the true history of Turtle Island. Amisk is used as a place to warm up and to learn about Turtle Island, as well as the history of trade between the Voyageurs the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Lakota peoples of Treaty 1 land.



The Amisk student group embarked on a multi-curricular experience using an authentic inquiry-based learning opportunity to promote physical activity and wellness in our community. Social Studies, Science, Math, French, English Language Arts, Music, Art, Health, and Physical Education curriculums were all integrated into the warming hut Amisk creation. The students used technology, wrote letters, drew many images, filmed the process, sang with Ace Burpee (103.1 Virgin Radio Host), exercised, and shared their acquired knowledge with others by engaging in public speaking opportunities.



*\* Jazzing it up at The Forks*



*\* Ace Burpee singing at The Forks with students*

Authentic inquiry classrooms foster teachers to collaborate and through spiraling curriculums students take part in authentic meaningful learning. An authentic inquiry classroom is one that:

- Fosters curiosity and supports imaginative thinking
- Welcomes and encourages ideas, questions, mistakes, and reflection
- Supports both individual and collective progress towards understanding
- Is student-led, with the teacher facilitating when necessary
- Focuses more on the process of learning, not simply the end product
- Creates meaningful learning opportunities

This year many of Ecole St. Avila families and community members have had the opportunity to partake in the winter fun of skating, walking, tobogganing, snowshoeing, cross country skiing and even biking along the river trail for their very first visit to The Forks.

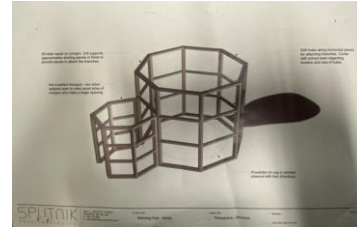
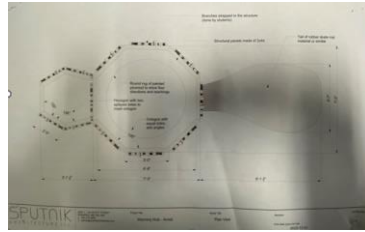


*Student reading and reflecting with a cup of hot chocolate*



*Skating at The Forks*

*(photo- left -The Forks Staff / \* photo-right Pembina Trails School Division)*



*Architectural building plans created and supplied by Sputnik Architecture Inc.*

A model of Amisk was created by the students prior to the construction at The Forks. The students worked closely with Sputnik architects, Peter Hargraves and David Anderson. With this hand-built model, the architects were able to create a plan for the physical construction of Amisk at The Forks.

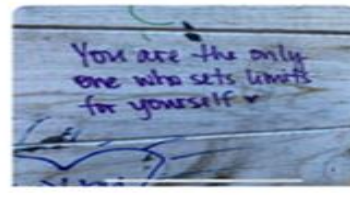


*(photo- The Forks Staff) -Amisk group*

***Front left: Jack, Nolan, Jesse, Kevin, Justin, Rupal Malik (Physical Education Teacher)***

***Back row left: Terik, Maxim and Tytanya Fillion (Teacher Librarian)***

Visitors are encouraged to add words of wisdom to the walls and weave branches around the body of the beaver.





***Yoga at The Forks led by Rupal (Photo-Pembina Trails School Division)***



***Running on the stairs at Ecole St. Avila would't be a good idea, but running on stairs before a big presentation at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Manitoba calmed the nerves of team Amisk. (photo - Pembina Trails School Division).***



*Feeling confident and calm after a bit of exercise (Photo - Pembina Trails School Division)*



*Amisk - photo taken by Nolan using his drone*



*Amisk - photo taken by Nolan using his drone*



*Getting some exercise and fresh air while walking through the community collecting branches for Amisk*

*Photo-Pembina Trails School Division*

From the start of the whole Warming Huts experiment we have attached great significance to the idea that the project is about learning. We all learn by doing and seeing and Warming Huts are no different. We learn that being outside in the cold is fine if you are active and moving. We learn that art is a great motivator to engage in space and time and place. We learn that there are endless possibilities to creative thought with the invitation to give thoughts.

The Amisk Warming Hut by the students and teachers of Ecole St Avila is the epitome of this concept in action. The teachers created a learning opportunity and the students who signed up soaked up that opportunity and in turn, the community around them soaked up the enthusiasm by which the students engaged the project. We, as organizers and producers, gain a huge amount of inspiration from watching this process unfold. The Forks as host to the project, and the larger community of citizens in Winnipeg and Manitoba also flow forward towards a future of hope through the actions of these young people who represent the very best set of possibilities for us on the horizons of our lives both individually and collectively.

This is the priceless gift of collaboration and the Amisk project is the model for this value.

(Peter Hargraves)

Engaging in opportunities like this creates memorable and powerful learning experiences that promote physical activity, wellness as well as developing a better cultural understanding and in turn, allowing us to move toward Truth and Reconciliation.



**Photo- Parks Canada Parka, Parks Canada mascot, stopped by to visit the students**



Rupal has a great passion for the visual and performing arts. She has presented art workshops nationally for elementary school teachers. In addition, she has presented multicultural dance internationally and throughout Canada. Ecole St. Avila students have had their talents displayed during the International Winter Cycling Congress, Artist on the Avenue, in conjunction with the Juno Awards and the Canada 150 celebration.

Below is a very inspiring book about the Warming Huts.

**Warming Huts: A Decade + Of Art and Architecture on Ice** by Lawrence Bird (Author), Peter Hargraves (Author), Sharon Wohl (Author)



The Warming Huts are a public art and architecture installation held annually at mid-winter on the major rivers of Winnipeg, Canada. The huts are selected through an international design competition, and via the invitation of select designers or artists. This book, published to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the project, celebrates and discusses the annual project as a critical body of work foregrounding the poetics and politics of public space, while highlighting the variety of architectural narratives expressed in the Huts. A comparative analysis of the more than one thousand entries is included in the volume.