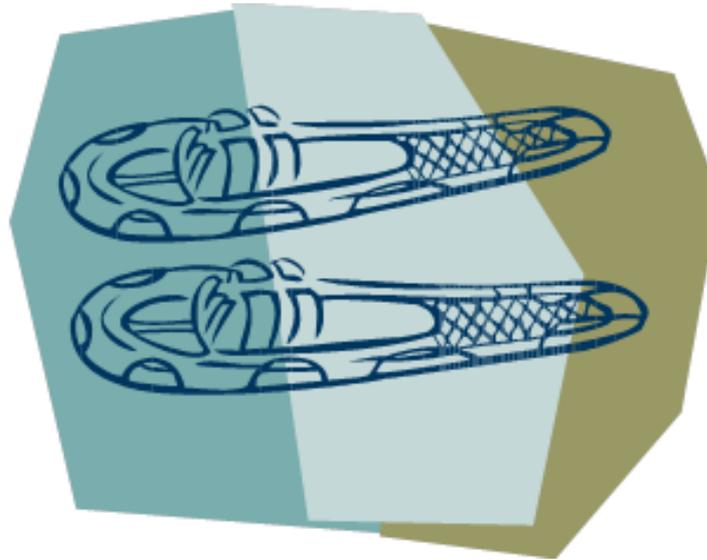


Ecorse Creek Is Ccccoldd!!





Winter came early to Ecorse, Michigan in 1940. In fact, Sam suspected that the winter of 1939 had slept over and woke up alongside the winter of 1940. The two winters had talked and decided to join forces.

One day in early November, snow trudged on silent snowshoes from Canada to the village of Ecorse. It didn't glide away until it covered the entire village with a twelve inch blanket.



Sam and his friends went sledding after they had finished school at School Number One where they were learning English, geography, history, and arithmetic. They liked to slide down the hill behind School One. Sometimes they saw Stony Bill, the steam engine that ran from Great Lakes Steel by the Detroit River to Trenton and back every day. Some of the older boys hopped rides on Stony bill and disappeared for the afternoon. They always got in trouble with Mr. Davis the principal when they did this. Today Stony Bill was covered with snow.

By the time the boys walked home so much snow had piled up along the roads and on the sidewalks that most of the stores in the village of Ecorse had closed and by morning several feet of snow had piled drifts along fences and buried the streets and houses.

Sam's sister Sarah and her friends built a snowman in their front yard.

"Bet we can build a bigger one," Sam told the girls.

Sarah accepted his challenge. "I'd like to see you try!"

Sam and his friends rolled snowballs all morning.





Sarah and her friends had practiced with their first snowman, so they were faster. They finished their snowman before Sam and his friends did.

“I told you so!” Sarah said, sticking out her tongue at Sam.

“I’ll show you,” Sam said. He got his skates out of the garage and Sarah got hers. When they opened the garage door, their dog Ralph came running out into the snow. They all headed toward Ecorse Creek Yesterday Sam and his friends had cleared a spot on the Creek to play hockey. Today as he and Sarah approached the creek, Sam couldn’t even see the spot.

“How are you going to show me anything?” Sarah asked him. “The creek is covered with snow.

“We can clear it off in no time,” Sam said. He reached down, scooped up a handful of snow, and started rolling it across the creek. He threw a snowball at Sarah. “Come on, help me!”

Jack and Amanda Brown heard Sam and Sarah and they came down to the creek to help. They cleared the snow off of a little square of Ecorse Creek. Then they played a game of hockey, using a large snowball for a puck. Ralph raced alongside them barking.



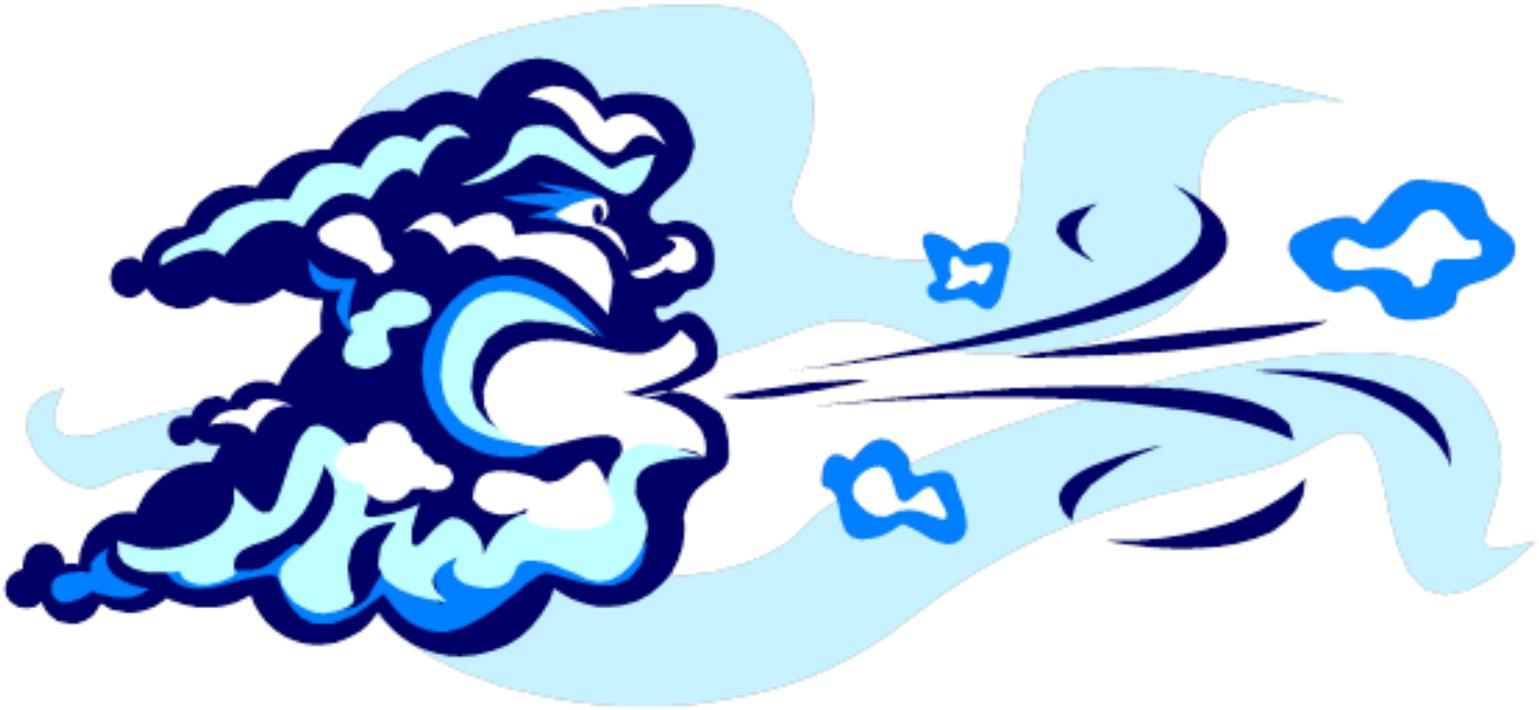


Sam and his friends were having so much fun playing hockey that they forgot how cold and snowy it was on Ecorse Creek. The wind bit deeply into Sam's cheeks. It grabbed his coat and tried to yank it off of him. The wind grabbed Sam and his friends and tried to push them to the edge of the white wintry world.



To Sam the wind felt like a stern soldier with black boots. The creek grabbed his ankles with icy fingers and pulled him in.

“Brrr,” Sam shivered. “I think I found the water in the creek. It’s cccolddddd!!!”
WHOOSH HHHHHHHH! The wind roared, making Sam even colder.





Sam turned around to tell his friends that he was going home, but everyone but Sarah and Ralph had gone. The wind slapped Sam and Sarah in the face with its fingers. It pushed Ralph into a snow bank.



Sam tried to climb onto the creek bank, but he couldn't move. "Help! Somebody get me out of here!" Sam shouted. The wind grabbed Sam's voice and blew it in Sarah's ears. Sarah stopped doing figure eights on the creek. She skated over to Sam.

Together, Sam and Sarah tried to climb over the creek but it was too icy. They kept sliding back down the bank.

"What are we going to do?" Sam said. "The sun's setting and it's getting dark and cold out here."



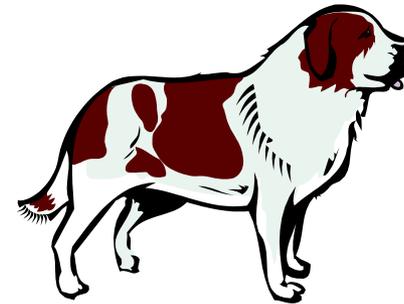


Sam kicked at Ralph's tracks in the snow. "Some rescue dog he is! He let the wind blow him away!"

"Here Ralph. Come here boy!" Sarah called.

Ralph bounded to the bottom of the creek bank.

"Fetch, Ralph!" Sarah commanded.



Then Sam caught on. “Fetch, Ralph, fetch!” he shouted. Ralph fetched Sam up the creek bank.

“He’s got something hot in his thermos,” Sarah said, taking her arms off from around his neck.





“Where did he get that thermos?” Sam wondered.

”He probably went home and had Mom fill it,” Sarah said. “She did the same thing for us last winter, remember?”

“MMMM!” said Sam, taking a sip of hot chocolate. Sam shivered so hard that he spilled some of the hot chocolate down into the creek.

“Ecorse Creek is cold but we armed her up a little,” Sam said. He and Sarah and Ralph the Rescue dog hurried to their warm house.

