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CCCC students create ice art

**BY KATHERINE
E. McDONALD**
CENTRAL CAROLINA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SANFORD — Blocks of ice were on the menu as Central Carolina Community College culinary arts students practiced their food preparation techniques on large blocks of ice, creating fun and beautiful ice carvings.

Using a chain saw was never part of their regular food preparation in the garde manger ("cold kitchen") class, but blocks of ice weighing from 150 to 300 pounds called for more than chopping knives to rough out a figure.

On May 1, the students from the Associate in Applied Science in Culinary Arts program at the college's Chatham County Campus were at



Katherine E. McDonald/CCCC
Pictured with Instructor Chef David Voelz (from left) are students Nate Jones and Rebecca Ruiz, of Sanford; Lyra Marra, of Chapel Hill, who carved the shooting star sculpture; Lara Vest, of Sanford; Brodie Hill, of Seagrave; Elizabeth Buckle, of Ramseur; and Perri Cuttris, of Durham. Not pictured are class members Allison Springer, of Siler City, Lisa Watson, of Pittsboro, and Michelle Escobedo, of Sanford.

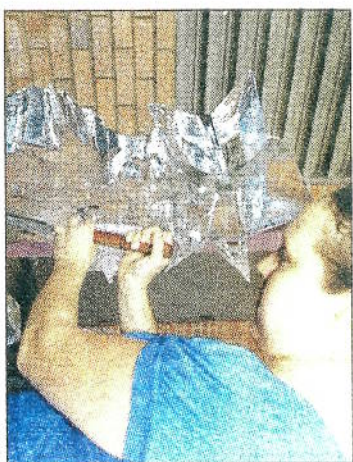
the Lee County Campus Student Center, applying the skills they had learned from instructor Chef David Voelz. When not instructing students, Voelz is the executive chef at the Highland Country Club, in Fayetteville.

"A lot of skills we have in the kitchen using knives to carve and create geometric designs in food translate to ice," Voelz said.

"Ice carving is part of our curriculum, but we save it for the end of the school year so the students can look forward to the fun."

And fun it was, with the students taking about two hours each to complete an individual ice carving. When they finished, they proudly showed off a three-foot high shooting star, an equally large owl, horse's head, duck, two dogs and other shapes.

"This was a really good experience," said



Neil McGowan/CCCC

Left: Ruiz, left, and other students in the class apply their food carving skills to blocks of ice. Right: Marra creates a three-foot tall shooting star out of a 300-pound block of ice.

Lyra Marra, of Chapel Hill, who created the shooting star. "When I signed up for the garde manger course, I didn't expect to be doing ice sculpture. Chef Voelz is a fantastic teacher."

In addition to being fun, the students learned and put to use a practical skill that can serve them well as they enter careers such as caterers or chefs.

"Of the culinary arts programs at community colleges in North Carolina, less than half offer

students the opportunity to do ice carving," Voelz said. "When a business hires a caterer or chef who knows how to do it, such as our graduates, it can mean great financial savings. To have the caterer or chef create an ice carving will cost the business about half of what it would cost to buy one."

Members of the garde manger class who participated in the ice carving project were: Rebecca Ruiz, Lara Vest, Michelle Escobedo, and

Nate Jones, all of Sanford; Alison Springer, of Siler City; Lisa Watson, of Pittsboro; Brodie Hill, of Seagrove; Elizabeth Buckle, of Ransieur; Perri Cuttris, of Durham, and Lyra Marra, of Chapel Hill.

For more information about culinary arts programs at Central Carolina Community College, visit www.cccc.edu/culinaryarts/ or call Hospitality & Culinary Arts Department Chair Chef Gregg Hamm at (919) 545-8070.