



# Press Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Inukshuk to Reunite With His Rescuer at his Official Debut New Snowmobile Museum to Open on Same Day**

**Cochrane, Ontario – October 19th, 2012:** – After a week in the holding building, followed by several weeks of familiarization with his new surroundings and Zookeepers, Inukshuk will make his hugely anticipated official public debut on Saturday October 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am.

But the debut won't just be special for the Habitat and its' guests, it will mark a reunion 9 years in the making. Provincial Constable Wayne Menard who rescued Inukshuk in 2003 from hunters near Fort Severn, Ontario, will be making the trip from the Thunder Bay area for the occasion.

"I'll be excited to see him after all this time, and was very pleased to hear he was a father," said Menard. "I don't think I'll be getting into the enclosure with him now, though." Menard hasn't seen Inukshuk since he was about 10 weeks old and 30 lbs. Now almost 10, Inukshuk can reach to a height of 12' and weighs over 1100 lbs. Considering Inukshuk's mother and sister were already killed before Menard arrived on the scene in Fort Severn, and the fact Inukshuk now has 3 children and appears to be a very happy, well adjusted polar bear, the magnitude of Menard's life-saving actions may be even more poignant today.

Constable Menard is being flown in for the occasion, courtesy of Air Canada. "Like all Canadians, we at Air Canada were touched by the story of Inukshuk and so we are pleased to be part of this happy occasion. Everyone has a role to play in protecting the environment, whether it is through the selfless actions of individuals like Constable Menard or far-reaching sustainability programs at companies such as Air Canada, and we hope Inukshuk's reunion with his rescuer highlights that we can all make a contribution," said Samuel Elfassy, Senior Director, Corporate Safety, Environment and Quality.

As well, his accommodations are being provided by the Best Western Swan Castle. "This is fantastic news," said Renée Vezeau Beaulieu, General Manager. "This shows that we need more people like Mr. Wayne Menard to help save polar bears in danger. The Best Western Swan Castle Inn is very grateful for his courage and devotion on saving Inukshuk. We wanted to show our support and appreciation by making sure Mr. Menard would be well rested for the big debut!"

"Without the support of organizations like Air Canada and the Best Western, this reunion would never have happened," said Habitat Manager, Karen Cummings.

But that's not the only reason to come to the Polar Bear Habitat on October 27<sup>th</sup>. The Cochrane Classic Vintage Snowmobile Museum (CCVS) will also open its new doors for the first time. Much bigger and better than the previous museum which was located in the Heritage Village, this new facility is adjoined to the Habitat's Welcome Centre and will have "ride up" access for snowmobilers.

Greg Shanks, Vice President of the C.C.V.S is excited about the opening. "The Cochrane classic vintage riders are looking forward to having one of the largest and well displayed snowmobile museums in Ontario if not Canada. This new building will provide us with the back drop we need to realize that goal. A special thanks



goes out the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund (N.O.H.F.C) and the town of Cochrane as well as the board of directors of the Polar Bear Habitat for supporting us throughout this entire project.”

“It will be a great day for the Habitat,” said Cummings. “We have two new attractions – and a chance to tell a story with a real life happy ending.”

Polar Bears and Snowmobiles ... other than adding hockey ... what’s more Cochrane and Canadian than that?

- End -

Additional Info:

Regular Admission Fees Apply

Debut Agenda for October 27th:

- 10:30 am Zookeeper Mireille Caron “Meet Inukshuk”
- 10:50 am Polar Bear Habitat Manager Karen Cummings
- 10:55 am Cochrane Mayor Peter Politis
- 11:00 am Habitat Committee Chair and Cochrane Councillor Fernand Gravel
- 11:05 am Provincial Constable Wayne Menard
- 11:10 am Special Thank You from Paige Genier

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