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01/15/1949 First Annual Winter Carnival Speech, Norway, Maine

Louis-Phillippe Gagné

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Jan. 15, 1949

I wish to thank your committee for the kind invitation to attend this first annual Winter Carnival. As Mayor of Lewiston, I am very proud to be here because your town of Norway and our City have much in common. I remember very well that most enthusiastic evening, more than twenty years ago, when the town of Norway made the front page in all the American papers. An international fiddlers' contest was taking place at the Lewiston Armory, and

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your community gave a new champion to the world. Mellie Dunham was the man, ~~and~~ **A** few days later, your town was ~~again~~ making history when Henry Ford invited your champion to play for him at Dearborn, Michigan.

Today, Norway and Lewiston join hands again. At six-thirty, this morning, a group of young men and women from our textile City left for Norway. They were the vanguard of hundreds of others, and they arrived here this afternoon,

after walking the entire distance.

Our own community has been the cradle of ~~the~~
organized snowshoe clubs in the United States
and ~~your/town~~ ^{community} is rightly called the "Snowshoe
~~Town of America~~ [†] The thousands ^{of} snowshoers of
Lewiston are among the greatest boosters of
your product which is the best snowshoe in
the world.

As Mayor of Lewiston, I am also proud of the

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fact that two of our citizens who walked to Norway today are on their way to Montreal where they hope to arrive in ten days, for the International Snowshoers' Convention. They are Jerry Levesque and Arthur Lizotte, and will have travelled, on foot or on snowshoe, some 275 miles. I am sure they carry with them your best wishes for a successful achievement. Ladies and gentlemen, the gigantic sign that has just been erected is a symbol. To some

people it may look as a mere commercial vehicle of advertising, but to most of us it is something else, something greater. It represents an ideal. That sign will tell the world that here, in this corner of America, with Nature at its best, the most efficient diplomacy for good relationship, and the best good-neighbor policy lie in a man-made product called a snowshoe. It makes you happy, healthy, and with it you become acquainted with the joy of living.

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Men and women of Norway, you are to be complimented for the fine spirit you have displayed today. You deserve to be commended also for this great contribution to the "Boost Maine" campaign

I am sure

~~In fact,~~ the entire nation will become appraised

of the fact that a progressive community of our State, Norway by its name, is proudly and justly hailed as "The Snowshoe Town of America". And Lewiston, the City of Snowshoers, is mightily glad to tell you its admiration and good wishes.