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Cold doesn't stop ice cream fans in Lodi

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The jackets have been pulled out from the back of the closet, long pants and warm sweatshirts have replaced shorts and T-shirts -- for most people, anyway. Even so, ice cream aficionados can be seen on a daily basis around town, partaking of their favorite ice-cold treat.



From left, Ethan Baker, Haley Baker, Andrea Deeter and Stephanie Deeter don't let chilly weather deter them from their favorite chilly treat Saturday in downtown Lodi. (J. Paul Bruton/News-Sentinel)

As temperatures dip to a downright chilly 45 to 50 degrees during the day and have even reached the 20s in recent evenings and early mornings, thoughts of wrapping chilled fingers around a hot cup of coffee or a mug of steaming hot chocolate have eliminated even the die-hard ice cream eaters, right? Wrong.

As you walk by in your jacket and sweatshirt, just ask any of the hearty souls you see eating an ice cream on these wintry days. They'll tell you that ice cream is a year-round affair.

On Saturday evening, four Lodi youths, Ethan Baker, Haley Baker, Andrea

Deeter and Stephanie Deeter, entered the Cold Stone Creamery. The temperature outside was 50 degrees and dropping, yet all four walked out happily eating ice cream.

One of the four, Stephanie Deeter, was visually shivering. But it seems that for true ice cream fans, the urge for the treat overrides the need to stay warm.

"I don't care if it's freezing out. When I want ice cream, I want ice cream," she said, taking bites between shivers. Her companions agreed: Cold doesn't matter -- ice cream matters.

Three fellow cold-weather ice cream eaters soon followed.

T.J. Bettenhausen, Blake Ballard and Linda Butorac also strongly agreed with Deeter's appraisal concerning cold weather ice cream consumption.

"Nothing stops me from eating ice cream," said Bettenhausen.

"Me either," said Ballard. "I'm not even cold. Well, just my mouth, from the ice cream," he added.

One might think an accompanying adult would think the 45-to 50-degree weather too cold for cradling a bowl of ice cream in the hands, but not so.

"Ice cream all the time," Butorac stated with conviction. "Especially the seasonal varieties, they draw you in."

At the Honey Treat Yogurt Shoppe, another cold-treat venue, a worker said that the winter weather has slowed down sales some, and that they were even considering closing an hour earlier than usual. Still, she said the store gets its share of regular customers, even if it's rainy or stormy or freezing.

Two of those customers sat on an inside bench scooping away at a frozen yogurt. The Bank of Stockton's sign on School Street read 45 degrees.

"This is our lunch! I don't think it's too cold for it," Dianne Schnabel said.