

Story Search

(Go)

Back Issues:

[Mon](#) | [Tue](#) | [Wed](#) | [Thu](#) | [Fri](#) | [Sat](#) | [Sun](#) | [Today](#)

[Subscribe Now!](#) [Customer Service](#)

[E-mail Alerts](#) [Contact Us](#)

[NJ Lottery](#)

At Your Job: Ice sculptor

JOB OPENINGS Posted by the [Asbury Park Press](#) on 04/17/06

• [Work for Us](#)

NAME: Kevin O'Malley

SPECIAL EVENTS

AGE: 47

• [Smart Talk Lecture Series](#)

EDUCATION: I have a culinary degree from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y. I also have a bachelor's degree and I'm just finishing a master's degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University's School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management.

CONTESTS

• [Reader Rewards](#)

EDUCATION

HOMETOWN: Colts Neck

• [Newspaper in Education Program](#)

EMPLOYER: Owner, Ice Sculptures by Kevin O'Malley, Tinton Falls

MERCHANDISE

JOB DESCRIPTION: I sculpt 300-pound blocks of ice into various designs, using hand tools and electric tools. We use chain saws and electric irons to iron the ice flat. There's computer-assisted design today that a lot of ice companies are using. I don't have it yet, but I'm thinking about using it. There's die grinders you can use to write names and company logos into the ice.

• [Newspaper Store](#)

PROMOTIONS

- [5K Run/Walk](#)
- [Earn \\$600/mo.](#)
- [Kids Stuff Club](#)
- [Whatever Club](#)

MARKETPLACE I work mostly wholesale, and they sell it to the customers. For example I sell to hotels, golf clubs and caterers. About 60 percent is for the wedding business, and the rest is corporate, for which you can do some wild, crazy ice carvings. I've done a Star Wars theme, and made Muhammad Ali and the



(STAFF PHOTO: DAVE MAY)

Kevin O'Malley



(STAFF PHOTO: DAVE MAY)

Kevin O'Malley works on a carving of an Easter Bunny for his ice-

READERS!

READERS CHOICE

- [Best of 2005](#)

ADVERTISING

- [Product Rates](#)

LISTINGS

- [Valentine's Day](#)
- [Vacation Rentals](#)
- [Submit Club/Bar Schedules](#)
- [Bars, Bands & Clubs](#)
- [Things to Do](#)
- [Jersey Autos](#)
- [Weddings](#)
- [Engagements](#)
- [Anniversaries](#)
- [Celebrations](#)
- [Dating](#)
- [Births](#)
- [In Remembrance and Thank You's](#)
- [Hot Properties](#)

GANNETT NJ NEWSPAPERS

- [Asbury Park Press](#)
- [Gannett State Bureau](#)
- [Courier News](#)
- [Courier-Post](#)
- [The Daily Journal](#)
- [Daily Record](#)
- [Home News Tribune](#)
- [Ocean County Observer](#)
- [Times Beacon Newspapers](#)
- [Other Gannett Newspapers](#)



Advertisement

Eiffel Tower out of ice.

sculpting business, which he runs out of space he rents at Ice King in Tinton Falls.

HOW DID YOU GET YOUR JOB?

I'm a garde manger, which is a cold-foods chef. When I graduated from the Culinary Institute of America, I started working for Hilton Hotels in 1978, and they sent me all around the country to train for ice sculpting. You really have to do this week to week to really grasp it. It's a lot of heavy lifting, and I work in the freezer so all my ice is crisp and clear.

Later I worked for Helmsley Hotels and did ice work for the Helmsley Palace and the Rainbow Room in New York. In time, hotels would call and ask for ice sculptures and word of mouth would lead them to me.

I've been teaching cold-food preparation at Hudson County Community College for the last 23 years, teaching fruit and vegetable carvings, ice carvings, salads, pates, things like that. I'm presently on a sabbatical leave to finish my master's.

I teach four days a week, and I needed to make some extra money, so I started doing ice carvings consistently.

SALARY AFTER FIVE YEARS: If you want to start a company, there's a lot of overhead. You need refrigeration, you need storage space, you need delivery vehicles. If you work for someone else, you can make anywhere from \$30,000 to \$50,000.

WHAT IS A TYPICAL DAY

LIKE? On Monday nights I usually work in the freezer from 6 to 11 o'clock at night. I rent space at Ice King in Tinton Falls, and they're least busy at that time, so I can do my work. The other nights I prepare for my deliveries, and on Fridays I do all my deliveries.

I have everything drawn out on templates. I freeze that onto the ice and cut right through with a die grinder. Then the paper gets taken off and the design is right on the ice. Then I start cutting with the chain saw and then do chisel work. I made bunny rabbits today, and when you've been working at this for a while, you can start seeing the item in the ice; I'm just taking away the stuff that is not supposed to be there.

You can't get by with a crooked swan or a crooked logo. It's just not acceptable. If you look online at my Web site, [www.icesculpturesby-](http://www.icesculpturesby-kevinomalley.com)

[kevinomalley.com](http://www.icesculpturesby-kevinomalley.com), the ice sculptures are exact.

Every time I sculpt something, I learn something different. There's always new tools coming out. Ice is pretty strong, but if you cut things wrong or out of proportion, it can shatter. It has to be designed properly from the beginning.

The block is about 300 lbs. when I start, and by the time I sculpt it there's about 200 lbs. left. I have a special lift that will put it right up on the table. It melts about an inch an hour in 70-degree temperatures.

I like doing holiday carvings, like snowmen and snowflakes. I've done Marilyn Monroe in ice, and I've done Elvis with a guitar. I've done gorillas and giraffes. Ice bars and ice luges are very popular today. The martinis are poured through the ice and gets ice-cold and then gets caught in the martini glass.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT YOUR JOB? I love the creativity. I love being a sole proprietorship and having my own business. I try to do anything (the customers ask for), but I

don't do the more crazy objects like nude things. Some people call me up for bachelor parties, but I don't do those sculptures.

WHAT DO YOU DISLIKE ABOUT YOUR JOB? I get carpal-tunnel syndrome and tendinitis in my arms and you also get back injuries from constantly bending. You get a lot of colds and bronchitis from going in and out of the freezer. Also, as a sole businessperson you have to wear many hats. I have a good business background, and I do marketing, sales, keeping the books, etc.

I don't mind that my sculptures melt. If they didn't melt, I'd be out of business.

SUGGESTIONS FOR OTHER PEOPLE CONSIDERING THIS TYPE OF WORK: You can apprentice with an ice sculptor or take a class. You can work in a hotel's garde manger department. But the best thing to do is go to a local ice house and see if there's anyone who carves there. It might be a nonpaid position until you get some good experience. You're working with dangerous tools; you could lose a finger very quickly.

Edited for space and clarity from an interview by Assistant Business Editor Dennis P. Carmody. If you are interested in participating in this feature, please write to him at the Asbury Park Press, Business News, 3601 Highway 66, Neptune, NJ 07754-1551, or e-mail dcarmody@app.com