

Skiers' fright, golfers' delight

Those fluffy white flakes are (s)nowhere to be found

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Usually the 40.3 inches of snow on the ground each winter enables Michigan residents to ski, slide, sled and shovel.

This year, skis, toboggans, and sho-

vels remain in hibernation as sports fans and snow buffs wonder where the white went.

As of yesterday, the Detroit area received a meager 7.4 inches of snow since November, according to the Na-

tional Weather Bureau's Metropolitan Airport office.

That's placed the area about 14.4 inches behind the average snowfall for this time of year. And it's placed in limbo most of the outdoor activities sponsored by such organizations as the Farmington Community Center and the Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Department.

But public works directors are smiling over the generosity of Mother Nature as they tally the amount of money saved in overtime and salt supplies.

"It's been a nice winter so far," said Walter Karolak of the Farmington Hills Department of Public Works.

Two foremen on call by the department have come into work on notice about 12 times since November. In each case, they were required to salt icy roads. Of the 2,800 tons of salt the department ordered, about 660 tons or

20 percent of the total supply has been used so far.

USUALLY, the department has spread about 1,200 tons of salt on Farmington Hills' roads by January.

Normally, winter spells 110 hours of overtime for each DPW employee. So far this January, there was an average of 25 hours of overtime per employee.

Karolak's looking forward to saving the unused salt for next year. It's a hope he shares with Farmington DPW head Earl Billing.

If the weather continues to frustrate skiers and snow lovers, Farmington's DPW should save about \$3,000 in labor costs and 300 tons of salt. This year, 283 hours of overtime were projected for winter. Now, the department is looking at 100 fewer hours of overtime.

But Billing isn't an optimist. As far

as he's concerned there could be snow tomorrow.

"I'm expecting several good snow storms yet," he said. "Normally between January and February, there's a good one. And there's usually one on St. Patrick's Day."

That's a prediction the National Weather Bureau contradicts. According to a weather bureau spokesman, the Detroit area is in the running for one of the mildest winters of the century.

THUS FAR it ranks as one of the three mildest winters within the last 30 years. Both 1975 and 1955 are noted for having winters with less than the average amount of ice.

National Weather Bureau records list this winter month's temperature as four degrees above the normal temperature of 32 degrees. The average

temperature during January 1979 was six degrees below normal. In February 1979 the temperature dropped to 10.1 degrees below normal.

Part of the reason for the mild temperature this winter is the smaller amount of snow on the ground. The weather is apt to be colder with snow. And there is less snow this month than last January.

During November 1978, 6.1 inches of snow fell. In December, an additional 6.6 inches fell on the Detroit area.

That means more snow fell in two months of last winter than during the entire season so far this year. In January 1979 there was 13.3 inches of snow recorded, pushing the total amount of snow for the same time last winter to 25 inches.

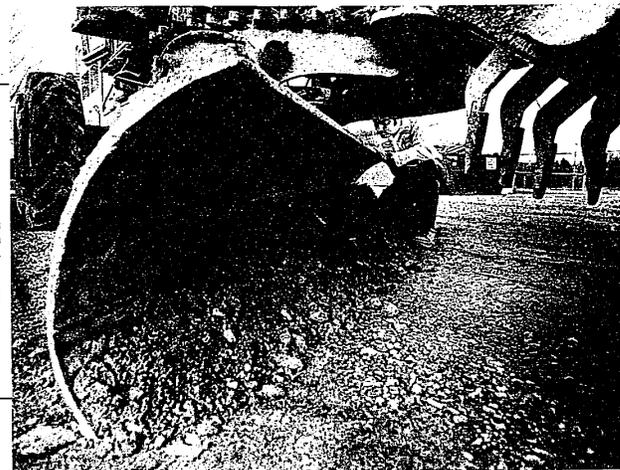
Part of the reason for our warmer (Continued on page 6A)



Glen Oaks Country Club was to have been the scene for cross country skiing. Instead, mid-winter golfers dot the frozen green. They brave such hazards as balls bouncing off the frozen fairway. Cold weather also misshapes golf balls so they come out of a game egg-shaped.

Staff photos by Randy Borst

Paul Ignash, Farmington Hills DPW foreman, inspects a plow on one of the department's graders. Most of the plows have not been attached to DPW equipment since the department usually waits until four inches of snow accumulates.



THE INSIDE * ANGLE

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

GIVE ME an S, give me an N; give me an O; give me a W. What does it spell? In Farmington and Farmington Hills — mud. And on really good days, it means ice and mud. Since there's no way to cross country ski on mud, Angles suggests we invent a winter sport to accommodate this weather. It would be nice if our fictitious sport involved that ski jacket or skis we received during the holidays, but Angles is always willing to improvise. Any suggestions? Drop IA a line at 23352 Farmington Road, Farmington 48024.

THE WEATHER outside may be frightful but that won't stop indoor swimming at the high schools. The Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation department is sponsoring a group swim for Boy Scout or Girl Scout troops, religious organizations, business groups, fraternal organizations and any other groups. Children's tickets are 25 cents each and adult tickets are 50 cents. The swim evenings will be conducted from 7-9:15 p.m. Mondays through March 24 in North Farmington High School; and from 7-9:15 p.m. Wednesdays through March 26 in Farmington High School. For further information call the parks department at 474-6115. Groups will have access to two hours of swimming, diving and the use of locker room facilities.

THE ASSOCIATES of Internal Medicine will provide complimentary blood pressure checks and diabetes testing to area residents from 6-8 p.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays and from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturdays at their office, 23700 Orchard Lake Road, Suite K, Farmington Hills. The service will be available during February. For further information call 476-2291 during business hours.

THOSE OLD newspapers have a way of stacking up. Get rid of them and do somebody a favor at the same time when the Antioch Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills conducts a newspaper drive from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Jan. 27 in the church parking lot at 13 Mile and Farmington Road next to North Farmington High. The Social Ministry Committee of the church is sponsoring the drive. The proceeds will be used to fund a housing loan program conducted in cooperation with the Farmington Head Start program. Newspapers will be sold for scrap and the money will be used for interest-free loans to needy persons who want to finance minor home repairs. The Church also hopes to be able to establish a pool of volunteers to assist in the repairs. Papers donated to the drive should be tied or bagged. Cardboard will be accepted but magazines won't. Antioch and Head Start would like to expand the program with other groups. For further information call Bob Matz, 553-0338.

SPEAKING OF collections, the Jaycees recent bottle collection caper raised a few eyebrows around the Farmington Community Center but only momentarily. The bottles were stored in the center's library until they could be taken to distributors for the deposit. One regular walked into the room and later queried of a center administrator: "Did you have a party?" No, not unless you count loading and unloading bottles and cans fun.

THE FARMINGTON Amateur Hockey Association will host the State District 5 Playoffs from Feb. 2-10 at the Novi Ice Arena. For further information call the arena at 1-369-9180. (This has to be better than watching the Red Wings learn to skate.)

THE AMERICAN Lung Association of Southeastern Michigan is offering two seminars during February and March dealing with respiratory care. The first seminar "Infection Control in Respiratory Care" is designed to instruct medical personnel in the methods and procedures used to reduce the incidence of infection in the treatment of respiratory patients. Infection control personnel, nurse anesthetists and respiratory therapists are invited to this day-long seminar from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Feb. 27 in the Health Science Building at Mercy College of Detroit, 8200 West Outer Drive. Staff nurses, VNA nurses and licensed practical nurses are invited to attend the second seminar "Physical Assessment of the Respiratory System." The class is designed to give nurses introductory skills in the assessment of patients' pulmonary status. This program will be from 8:30-8:30 p.m. March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1 in William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak. Both seminars have been submitted to the Michigan Nurses' Association for approval. The fee for the infection control seminar is \$25. The physical assessment seminar is \$55. For further information call Sue Gibson, at the American Lung Association, 961-1697 by Feb. 20.

DO YOU KNOW an unsung hero? Want to make sure someone sings your hero's praises? Enter your hero into the Observer's Unsung Hero contest. Jot down your name, and the name, address and phone number of your hero. Also, drop us a line on the deeds done by your nominee. They don't necessarily have to be brave storybook stuff. We're looking for persons who carry on bravely and quietly against all odds. Send your package to: Unsung Hero, 23353 Farmington Road, Farmington 48024. The staff will choose the winner the first week of March. The winner will receive tickets to the Fisher show of his or her choice.



15% off every Stiffel lamp, a shining event during Stiffel Week

Sale ends Sunday, January 27. Till then, you can save 15% on the entire Stiffel line-up, even special order types. Everything from simple antique brass finished models to dramatic swags and classic floor lamps. Of course, all have the high-quality workmanship and careful attention to detail that is synonymous with the name Stiffel. You are invited to see the largest assortment of the Stiffel collection at Hudson's Northland and Eastland. But you can enjoy the savings at any one of our stores. Selection varies by store. 1000 units* in Hudson's Lamps, all stores but Lansing.

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