

outdoors

Ice fishing is off, but lessons are on

By Lem Messee
outdoors writer

Don't blame me for a brown ground. I didn't buy a snow cover this fall.

If I had bought one, you could have bet big money southeasterly Michigan would have had a pre-1975 winter, with only 10 snowy days in this month. But we've had a autumn inter-ay.

Almost every year I can recall, we've had a zero snap New Year's Eve — just the ticket for good fishing ice. Not this year.

The balmy holiday weather in the 50s and 60s ruined what little ice fishing there had been. I checked popular Kent Lake New Year's day. At Turtlehead Island, where anglers normally dip waders for bluegills, and along the I-96 freeway dropoff, where they use minnows to entice crappies, there

was open water.

Even tiny farm ponds looked blue — ice too thin to support even a single angler.

NEVERTHELESS, there are more places than ever to learn the techniques of ice fishing. It's a good thing, because usually that knowledge is passed on only from father to son.

Jan. 8 — 1 p.m. this Saturday, an ice fishing pole workshop for 7-12 year olds will be conducted at the nature center of Indian Springs Metropark near Clarkston. Park naturalists will help the youngsters construct ice fishing lures and poles. There is a \$1 charge to cover cost of materials, and you'll need to call the nature center at 825-3781 to register in advance.

The same 37 Huron-Clinton Metroparks vehicle permit that gets you into Kensington and Stony Creek Metroparks will admit you to Indian Springs, one of the newest parks in the system.

Jan. 9 and 23 — at 2 p.m., a two-part series on "Ice Fishing for Beginners" will be held at the nature center of Stony Creek Metropark northeast of Rochester. The first session will be held indoors and cover clothing, ice safety, bait and tackle. The second will be on the lake, so bring tackle, bait and license. There is no charge, but register in advance by calling the nature center at 781-4621.

Jan. 12 — at 7:30 p.m. the Four

Seasons Fishing Club will see a demonstration of ice fishing tackle and methods by representatives of Livonia Tackle shop. Meeting place is the Daniel A. Lord Knights of Columbus Hall, 39050 Schoolcraft (west of Newburgh), Livonia. Visitors are welcome.

The club will also plan its Jan. 22 ice fishing outing at Walden Woods, said club spokesman Tony Brehrer.

MY ICE fishing buddy, C.O. Jones, has unlocked the secret to keeping warm when you're sitting out on the ice with the wind whipping at you: "If they're blin', you're warm. If they ain't, you freeze. Don't matter what the temperature is."

THIRTY VOLUNTEERS are needed to assist a cross country skiing program for the blind this winter at Glen Oaks Golf Course in Farmington Hills.

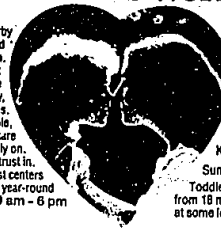
You must be at least 18 and have intermediate skiing ability to assist blind skiers on a one-on-one basis. A training session is set from 10:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. this Saturday.

The ski programs for the blind are set for Jan. 15 and 29 and Feb. 5 at Glen Oaks, according to Anne Clinton Cirocco, Oakland County recreation volunteer coordinator. She can be reached at 625-8133 during business hours weekdays.

Glen Oaks is on 13 Mile between Orchard Lake Road and Middlebelt.

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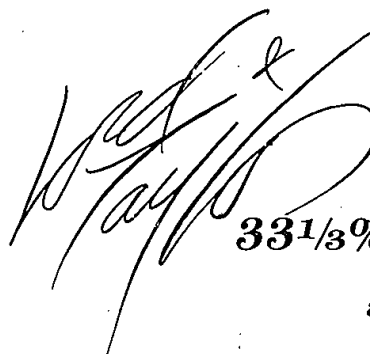
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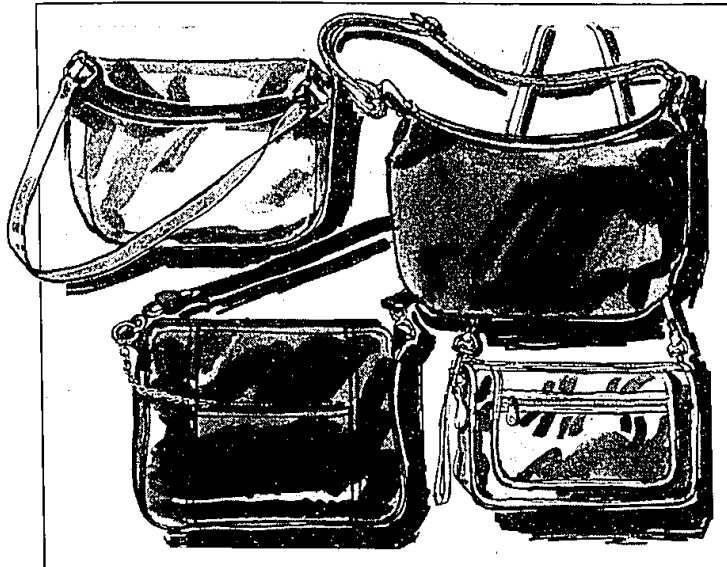
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