

PHOTOS BY SHARON LEWIS/Kristall photographer

'We are lucky to have this snow. It seems to be bringing people out.'

— Dave Justus
Farmington Hills



West-Bloomfield resident Dan Lupin skis through Heritage Park in Farmington Hills one recent afternoon. Though he found some icy patches, he thought the skiing was great.

Winter foliage paints a pretty scene for skiers in Farmington Hills' Heritage Park.

Snow uncovers skiing interest

By Casey Dinn,
Staff Writer

It's been several years since a thick snow blanketed the Farmington area and made conditions ripe for good cross-country skiing.

If you ever wanted to try the Nordic sport, this is your year.

Just ask the country enthusiast Don Lupin, the afternoon last week, the West-Bloomfield resident was slipping along the trails at Heritage Park in Farmington Hills for a quick workout.

Although he found some icy patches, the temperature was mild and the snow so good he didn't want to stop for an interview.

"It's great," he called as he skied by.

The mid-January snow squall and the past snowfalls have reintroduced a sport to this community which once was relegated to the status of a relic of Michigan.

"We're lucky to have this snow," said Dave Justus of the Farmington Hills Special Services Division, which manages parks and recreation activities in the city. "It seems to be bringing people out."

On Saturdays and Sundays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., the city rents out a gondola lift at Heritage Park, and a Farmington Road course of 11 Mile, and at the city-owned San Marino Golf Course on the east side of 22 Mile. The charge for adult is \$3 for two hours and \$2 for a child, plus a half-hour walk groups charge of one per person a \$7 rate.

The city also offers 12-hour lessons for \$14 including equipment for \$9 if you have your own.

For those who want to ski at their own pace over the weekend at the city facilities, the Benchmark Condominium in Farmington rents out skis for \$125 for the weekend.

Skis can be picked up Tuesday through Friday and must be returned on Monday.

Of course, with your own equipment, city facilities are open for skiing anytime during daylight hours. There is no cross-country skiing this year at Oakland County's Glen Oaks Golf Course on 13 Mile because of construction on the course.

At both Heritage and San Marino the city grooms trails and sets tracks for skiers, or you can cut your own trail across the golf course at San Marino — but Justus asks skiers to stay off the putting greens which are roped off.

EXPERTS SUGGEST a novice cross-country skier take it easy the first time out, especially if that person is not in shape.

Kim Kotlewski, a certified athletic trainer with Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine on Eight Mile in Farmington Hills, suggests stretching warm-up exercises for hips and back, calves, quadriceps and hamstrings and the upper body. Ideally, people wanting to get the most out of a ski outing should be working to get in shape 6-8 weeks before the season begins.

"I think with any activity you do, you should be in some general shape," he said. "The better shape you're in, the more you'll enjoy the activity."

Kotlewski also suggests skiers be aware of their own bodies and limits when they go out to ski. People with circulation problems might only be able to stay out a short time while others can be outside for much longer, he said.

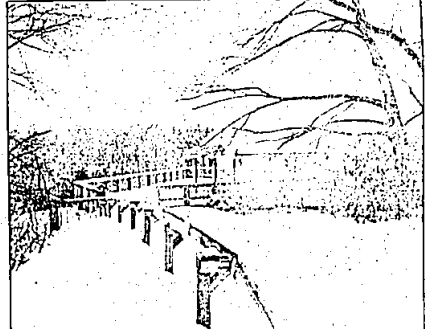
Other tips for cross-country skiing include layering clothing, keeping your head covered to keep in the heat, and changing into dry clothing if you get wet.

Injuries can also occur with cross-country skiing, though professionals at the Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine clinic see more injuries from downhill skiing.

Physical therapist Dick Milder said cross-country injuries can include knees and ankles, but more often are in the upper extremities like thumb sprains which happen when people try to break a fall.

Milder suggests people get treatment and therapy, even if an injury seems minor.

"If they let Mother Nature take its course, they are more susceptible to future injury," he said.



Heritage Park skiers can travel most anywhere in the park, even down to a gazebo south of the Visitors Center, where one can overlook the park.

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

SUSPICIOUS MAN

Three children on two different bus routes in Farmington Hills reported to a Gill Elementary School administrator that an unidentified man approached them and attempted to lure them into his car about 8:15 a.m. Friday, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

The administrator, who contacted police, said the three first-graders gave a similar description of the man who apparently was near a bus stop on Lincoln, near Nine Mile, and another stop at Crescent Court, according to the report.

The children described the man as about 40 years old and he wore a red baseball hat. He also was seen driving a brown station wagon.

Another resident, apparently aware of reports of a suspicious person near the bus stops told police she saw a man driving a medium-sized brown station wagon near Meadowhill and Klarr, the day before the first-graders reportedly encountered a man in a station wagon.

The woman told police she was driving on Meadowhill, near Klarr, when she came up behind the station wagon. The driver pulled over to let her drive past. She saw the man turn onto Klarr, then to Beauford and south of Lajon.

HILL INJURY

A 35-year-old Farmington Hills man was reportedly injured on the sled hill on Shawassee during the past week.

According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report, the man was hurt when he slipped on

hard-packed snow and injured his ankle as he came up a walkway from the bottom of the hill. Police borrowed an inflatable plastic sled from a sledder and used it to pull him up to the top. EMS transported the man to Botford General Hospital for treatment.

ASSAULT REPORTED

An 11-year-old girl who lives at St. Vincent & Sarah Fisher Center told a counselor she had been sexually assaulted by a West Bloomfield 15-year-old boy in the bathroom at Bonaventure Roller Skating Center, 24505 12 Mile, Jan. 24, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

The counselor contacted police who interviewed the girl. She told police she was at the skating center when she was known for about two years approached her and pushed her into the boys bathroom.

She told police she refused when the youth she knew asked for sex. The four youths then apparently pushed her to the floor and held her down while the same youth assaulted her.

When the girl screamed, the center's manager came in and ordered the youths to leave. The girl was later taken to Botford General Hospital, Farmington Hills, according to the report. Police are investigating the reported incident.

THEFTS REPORTED

A GMC Jimmy valued at \$22,000 was reported stolen from a parking lot on Green Hill Drive, Jan. 23-24.

A car phone valued at \$1,200 was reported stolen from a 1990 Ford at Holiday Inn, 38123 10 Mile, Jan. 24.

Approximately \$256 cash was reported stolen from the ARA Cafeteria, 31440 Northwestern Highway, Jan. 20.

Two amplifiers valued at \$500 were reported stolen from a 1988 GMC on Old Hartswood, Jan. 22-23.

Four hubcaps valued at \$300 were reported stolen from a 1991 Oldsmobile at Botford Hospital, 28050 Grand River, Jan. 22.

A 1988 Pontiac valued at \$9,000 was reported stolen from a house on Skye Drive, Jan. 25.

A 1990 Ford valued at \$8,000 was reported stolen from Bob Saks auto dealership, 35300 Grand River, Jan. 25-27.

Crystal glasses, Tupperware, linens, a pen set and prescriptions valued at \$500 were reported stolen from a unit at the Village Green Condominiums on Eight Mile, July 20-Aug. 5, 1990.

A Nintendo game and tapes valued at \$750 were reported stolen from a

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