

The storm couldn't get us down

One man bought a bathing suit—and an expensive leather coat while he was at it.

The craft teacher surrounded herself with silken flower petals, and a resourceful mother went to the backyard grill to cook hotdogs amid the banks of snow.

People warmed themselves by fireplaces and oil lamps and traveled by cross-country ski and snowmobile.

They played games, caught up on reading, engaged in special baking projects.

In short, suburbanites from Plymouth across to Rochester found that there's more to a big storm than what stalls the cars and chills the bone.

Fred Hill, a Plymouth clothier, was chortling over business never better as drifts of snow stalled activity and closed some marketplaces.

One customer, stranded at the Plymouth Hilton because roads out of the area were impassible, stopped in to buy a bathing suit so he could use the hotel pool. He also went back with a new coat.

Others stranded stocked up on basics like socks and underwear they hadn't thought they would need for a short junket in these parts.

And then Hill waited on Stan Hone, who skied into town from a subdivision several miles away, purchased a suit and skied back.

ROCHESTER TOO had its share of stranded guests. The two motels in town, Rochester Motor Lodge and Spartan Motel, were full of conventions that couldn't end when they were supposed to. There was "no room at the inn," as someone put it.

A group of professional women bowled were to have left Thursday after their tournament, but instead stayed for the weekend because, even if they could leave Rochester, it seemed futility to head for homes in Ohio and Indiana.

They wound up piling into one big car and heading cautiously for the only open restaurant in town, Chris Kavan's, for nourishment.

Stalwart members of the Farmington Family Players camped in Franklin Community Church to be ready for the Friday night opening of their first sell-off, "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory."

The players were busy finishing sets, and when Sally Sawyer, producer and founder, got to the church with her family groceries, she decided she might as well cook a potluck meal for everyone on hand.

Several of the involved families, the Steve Harfahts and the Steve Radoms, as well as Jim Morgan and Bill Lucas, had been prepared with bed rolls for an all-night stay anyway.

All classes in the Farmington Community Center were packed back a week because of the storm.

Mary Foran, whose class will involve making silk flowers, also had a dentist appointment cancelled, so she stayed home with an dining room table full of silk petals, using the unexpected time to put them together and create some beauty for those who want to think spring.

IMAGINATION appeared to be the

key ingredient when it came to coping with knee-high snow and crippled calendars in Birmingham, Bloomfield and Franklin.

Residents who just don't have the words "killing time" in their vocabularies settled down for a weekend of games, television and favorite hobbies.

Rather than wait behind closed doors for the eventual release back into frenetic activity, the communities merely changed directions and prepared to enjoy the unexpected break in routine.

Along with a change of pace came some unusual sightings.

Some hardy souls such as needlepoint enthusiast Mary Kay Davis stripped on cross-country skis for quick trips to the grocery or leisurely trips around and about the unusually quiet landscape.

Another couple traveled with ease down Woodward past Birmingham's old city toward a matching pair of snowmobiles.

It was, said Rosalind Blind of Birmingham, "a time to smell the daisies" (metaphorically speaking, of course, Rosalind) as the area took full advantage of the storm.

"We tend to be snowed in," said Isabel Smith, speaking of her Birmingham street.

When the Smith family couldn't make a planned weekend trip to Ohio, the adults settled down on favorite novels and the children happily slept through the normal school alarm.

In Franklin, Janice and Fred Morganroth were the kind of people who would see a little thing like a complete power failure mar the time they were snowbound.

With Greg, 13, Candi, almost 12, and Erik, 8, home from West Maple Junior High and Franklin Elementary school, Janice kept the youngsters entertained popping corn over and open fire in the family room.

Time whistled by faster than the wind while the children played a game of Rummy-O, which their parents had imported from Israel.

When power returned on Friday, Janice corralled the children in the kitchen and let them help make Chinese egg rolls, a treat she had planned to take to the staff at the elementary school where she serves as community education director.

Then, taking full advantage of the high snowbank covering the rear of the family's rolling Franklin property, the children, their laughing mother and pet poodle Brie spent hours outside in rambunctious snow-throwing contests and fights with giant icicles reminiscent of "Star Wars."

"There is absolutely no one moment of the day worth wasting," commented Janice, a graduate lawyer who sees her career only after her children are more self-sufficient.

"These days I'm busy being a referee."

JEAN HANDY of Redford Township was probably fulfilling everyone's dream of what to do during a snow storm when she was interrupted by a reporter. She was sitting in her pajamas reading the morning paper. She was also looking out the window. "It's really beautiful," she said, "and very peaceful."

His great-grandmother wasn't all that happy. Lack of hot water for a cup of tea seemed to her an impossible hardship.

IT TURNED OUT to be a day of bird watching, snow shoveling and, in our opinion, coming up with ingenious methods of survival.

The cats, Esmeralda and Bowdoy, joined the squirrel and bird watching session at the dining room window. Esmeralda's jaw quivered as the fat red squirrel dumped seed out of the birdfeeder for an assembly of cardinals, juncos and sparrows.

For the first time—we had nothing but time—we tried to identify the spar-

row families. The word got around that we had arranged a sort of wind-break for the feeding ground and a fine congregation of birds gathered.

Paul Butterfield, the old Siamese, didn't have time for bird watching. He was in one of his snits—wandering from register to register in a hopeless search for warmth.

IN AN ATTEMPT to keep one room comfortable, we installed a makeshift curtain in the arch between the living and dining rooms.

Candles were lit and everyone exhaled over their warmth. Water from the taps still was reasonably warm. Three one-gallon milk jugs were filled with hot water and dis-

tributed around the room. They were supposed to radiate warmth.

A large pot of coffee was perked at a neighbor's house. To keep it hot, we wrapped it in newspapers, then slipped two shopping bags over the whole thing. With an opening cut for the spout, it retained its heat for hours.

An antique, double-wick oil lamp was revived, and gave a cozy glow. But the fumes of the scented red lamp oil overpowered its aesthetic quality. We blew it out.

A stone crockery "pig" or bed warmer, another antique, was filled with hot water. It was the best foot warmer of all—especially with a blanket over your knees to contain the heat.

Another "bright idea" didn't work out so well. Recalling that plastic garbage bags had served as foot warmers at football games, I decided they should work as well at Scrabble games. With a gallon jug of hot water in there, and the plastic bag held in place by sitting on it, it was perfect.

It worked so well that in a short time, my feet started to perspire. My fuzzy socks actually felt soggy. And yet, it wasn't all that warm. It wasn't until the end of the game that I discovered the jug had been leaking. My feet were sloshing around in an inch of water.

DINNER WAS a picnic-style repast

in the living room—warm soup, bread and cheese.

The camping out atmosphere continued when grandson was allowed to spread his sleeping bag on the living room floor for the night.

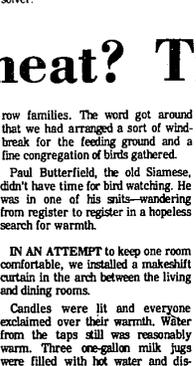
Outside, the snow removal continued. A neighbor cleared the walk with his snowblower. The city snowplow cleared the street and another neighbor helped clear the driveway.

Finally everyone was snugged down with hot water bottles and extra blankets.

Suddenly there was a flash of light, just about every light in the house came on; the furnace purred like a cat and a radio blared.

The blackout was over.

the white stuff for a romp with family poodle Brie. (Staff photo by Steve Cantrell)



What do you do to have fun in a snowstorm? If you're the Morgans—mother Janice (right), son Greg and daughter Candi, you use

When the electricity went out early Thursday, she wrapped her three sons warmly and played charades beside the fire. At dinner-time, she stood in snowdrifts in the middle of her back lawn and cooked hot dogs on the barbecue.

Some of her neighbors were stuck in the snow and some went to a hotel for the night, but Sherri Lumberg, who lives with husband and two children in the same area, decided there is some advantage to being stranded at home in a blizzard.

"I love to go outside and get together with all the neighbors who are out shoveling snow," she said. "It's the only time we see them in the winter."

Some Southfield residents didn't think the storm was as bad as it was made out to be. "We see by television that many people had a bad time, but in our family it was 'What blizzard?'" Sydney Reiter said. She kept all her planned appointments Thursday and her husband went to work as usual.

They had a moment of worry when the electricity—and with it the heat—went off, but an hour later it was on again. And Sydney was wishing she could go back to her job at Oakland University.

The same casual attitude prevailed at the Franklin Road apartment of Myron and Adele Cohen.

"We're senior citizens and as long as we have each other we're fine," Mrs. Cohen said. "I went shopping Thursday to stock up for the weekend and then we snuggled in by the fire."

"I'm a big reader, so it doesn't bother me to be snowed in."

Mrs. Cohen added that she and her husband are better adapted to being snowed in than most people because he has arthritis and just can't go out much in cold weather.

"But our activities have always revolved around each other anyway," she said.

PERHAPS THE AREA'S coping Oscar should be awarded to Sheila Holden, who lives in the Wood Creek Farms subdivision of Farmington Hills.

Her electric clock stopped at 9:09 a.m. Thursday morning, and that was when all power in her home went off, including the heat.

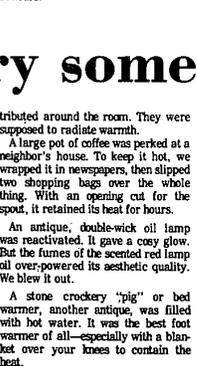
Mrs. Holden, a senior citizen who calls herself the original bionic woman because of the surgical metal that pins the bones of her hips together, has osteoporosis and lives alone.

She's used to coping—with a sense of humor and a cane if necessary—so she gathered all her candles together and drew the curtains to conserve the heat from her non-dead electric furnace.

At 6 p.m. she telephoned a friend, but before she could be reassured the electricity came on again, so Mrs. Holden decided to stay home. Half an our later the lights and heat were off again.

She read Ellery Queen by candlelight and shivered in her bed until 7 a.m. Friday, when she called the police and asked them to deliver her to the home of a friend.

A couple of hours later, cold but still smiling, she had her first hot drink in 24 hours.



Or you might go traveling on cross-country skis. (Staff photo)



Or perhaps just curl up with a good book. (Staff photo)



No lights, no heat? Try some bird-watching

By ELINOR GRAHAM

The offer of a ride home in a four-wheel drive vehicle was too good to turn down in the midst of Thursday's blizzard.

With an electric typewriter and a police scanner from the office, copy for Monday's paper could be turned out at home while keeping an ear on goings-on in the community.

It wasn't to be.

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