

## Ski season called best ever for state

The 1980-81 ski season was the second best ever recorded in Michigan, despite a depressed economy and an early spring thaw which closed lodges up to two weeks earlier than normal, according to an Automobile Club of Michigan survey.

"A significant increase in snowfall over last winter, especially during the Christmas-New Year's holiday, and inflation helped lift revenues to nearly \$141 million, 23 percent higher than last season," said Auto Club Touring Manager Joseph Ratke. And it was only 2.5 percent below the record 1978-79 winter, he added.

"The 95 facilities responding to Auto Club's survey reported nearly 21 percent more skiers than last winter and only 7 percent fewer than the record set two winters ago," Ratke said.

Total natural snowfalls recorded

by the National Weather Service ranged 5 to 60 percent heavier than last winter across most of the state.

Only six ski areas — two in West Michigan and four in the Upper Peninsula — registered less snow than last winter. One resort in East Michigan and another in the U.P. reported snowfall about the same as a year ago.

AFTER THE Christmas-New Year's period, revenue at the surveyed ski hills were up an average 73 percent over the 1979-80 winter and 4 percent above the record 1978-79 season. Only two resorts reported a drop in crowds.

The mid-to-late-February thaw, which closed 13 areas for from one day to two weeks and closed two lodges for the season, helped reduce profit margins, ski area operators said.

## Pet disease boom season approaching

To keep the family pet from getting sick as a dog, the Southeast Michigan Veterinary Medical Association reminds pet owners that the boom season for many kinds of canine diseases is approaching.

Included is parvovirus, a still somewhat mysterious, usually-fatal affliction that has spread rapidly since first reports of the disease two years ago.

THERE ARE two forms of parvovirus, one striking the intestinal tract and one which affects the heart.

Most dogs which contract the disease die within 48 to 72 hours of the onset of symptoms. The vets' group recommends booster inoculation shots, even if your dog was inoculated last year.

Spring means mosquitoes, and mosquitoes mean heartworm — at least to dogs. The worms grow to six- to 15-inch lengths in the heart chambers and lung blood vessels of dogs and may be fatal.

Routine testing is best, since once dogs display the classic symptoms — labored breathing, deep coughs and easy tiring — treatment is dangerous.

SPRING ALSO means fleas.

The vets recommend vigilance here, since there isn't any easy, one-shot cure. Use effective sprays or powders weekly during the flea season, and not just on the dog. Also treat bedding, carpets, kennels or anywhere else pets spend most of their time.

Check the dog itself, especially around the tail or back where fleas prefer to live, for signs of infestation like flea droppings, which are round or comma-shaped black specks. The specks turn blood-tinged if rubbed vigorously with a moist cotton ball.

To check for tapeworm, inspect the haircoat around a pet's anal area. When dry, tapeworm segments look like grains of rice. If you find them, have the pet dewormed.

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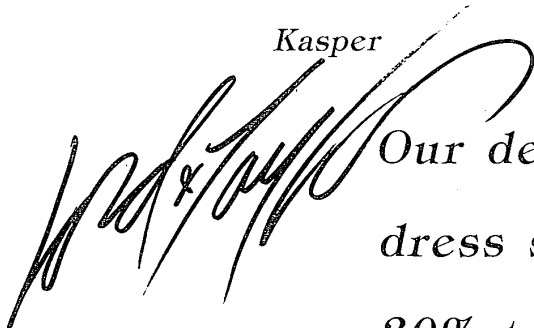
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