



The blanket of snow in Eugene, including the EMU Courtyard (above), provided University senior Angela Martin (right) a chance to cross country ski outside the education building.



Photos by
Jeff Paslay



Undeclared freshman Alexa Tipel brushes snow and ice from her car Saturday morning after snow fell Friday night.

Heavy snow returns; state back to normal

PORTLAND (AP) — People who have lived in the state for decades say the snow that has barreled into Western Oregon this winter just means things are getting back to normal.

Oregon, the driest state in the Northwest this summer, now boasts its most robust mountain snowpack.

"We've had a lot of really mild winters, but now we've gone back to what we used to have," said Sue Hogland, 60, of Molalla.

"My husband was a high school wrestling coach years ago, and when I traveled with the team, it wasn't at all unusual for us not to be able to get back after a match because of snow," she said.

"But especially there were silver thaws: Rain and cold temperatures would put a half-inch of ice on the roads," she said. "We don't have those much anymore."

Hogland remembered returning from Silverton to Molalla after one match when a silver thaw sent the 40-passenger bus sliding off the road. "We went into a field, and the bus turned over in a ditch," she said. "Everyone landed on the ceiling, but nobody was injured."

Gin Mathews, 34, of Hood River, remembers the winter of 1971-72, "when we had probably accumulated five or six inches on the valley floor that stayed for five or six days and the temperatures were in the teens. And then it really snowed, maybe a foot, and the warm Chinook winds came to melt it, and the whole valley was flooded."

Susan Bartley, 37, remembers that her first Christmas in Port-

land in the mid-1980s was a white one.

"Our car was absolutely buried in snow. It was about three days before it melted, and then it started all over again in February," she said. "This year isn't unusual."

State Climatologist George Taylor agrees.

Taylor, who is based at Oregon State University in Corvallis, is predicting this winter will be about normal. Forecasters commonly define normal as the average of the past 30 years.

For instance, Corvallis has received an average of 17 inches of precipitation for the three months ending Dec. 31, and this year's total is 16 inches. "Corvallis is typical of the rest of the Willamette Valley, which gets 40 inches per year and is on target for getting that," Taylor said.

Taylor analyzes Oregon's weather patterns using data from more than 300 locations throughout the state.

Snowfall for Portland has averaged 7.3 inches during the past 50 years, said George Miller of the National Weather Service. So far this year, 4.6 inches have coated the city. On Dec. 16, the day Portland's big snow left motorists stymied in traffic jams for hours, only 1.4 inches fell.

The hefty snowpack has state officials cautiously optimistic that the beginning of the end of the drought may be in sight.

"The snow picture looks very good," said Stan Fox, who compiles snowpack measurements from 140 sites for the U.S. Soil and Conservation Service.

CLOSURE

Continued from Page 1

reasonable number of faculty, staff and students come to the campus and do their work without jeopardizing their personal safety."

The situation at the University is different than that of the lower school districts, Williams said, because of the amount of research that goes on at the University, the need to keep the steam plant operating, and provide food and shelter for the 3,200 students who live on campus.

"You can't evaluate the de-

cision solely in terms of can students get into the classroom," Williams said. "It's a little more complicated than that."

A memo sent to faculty and staff by University Director of Human Services Linda King encourages supervisors to "recognize the difficulties" the stringent closure policy has on University employees.

The memo asks supervisors to respond with "flexibility," including allowing people involved in "non-essential" work to remain at home, or allowing parents to bring their children to work with them.

University students who disagree with the decision to keep the campus open can be thankful times have changed since the turn of the century when campus was closed several times because of epidemics.

University Archivist Keith Richard said the spread of typhoid and other diseases was a great cause for concern in the early 1900s.

"In '28, Thanksgiving was canceled because of a flu epidemic," Richard said. "(The administration) just told the students they were not going home for Thanksgiving, and they went on with classes."



The campus was hit with about three feet of snow in 1969, causing the University to close for three days.