

by Greg Neiman

While sun-worshippers daily smile up at the great big white ball of warmth in the sky, local skiers are beginning to take on the facial appearance previously reserved for Alberta farmers during a drought.

There just ain't no snow. The U of A ski club has recently cancelled a ski trip to Tod Mountain, B.C. because the resort has not opened for business yet.

Last year at this time Tod

Green Christmas gives skiers the blues

Mountain reported 5-6 feet of the powdery stuff with more on the way. "It's lousy all over right now," says Delcy Walker, member of the ski club.

Banff and Jasper, she says have only 4-8 inches of snow on most of their runs, and skiers have been reported to ruin their

skiis on rocks that lie immediately beneath the snow's surface.

In all, the mild weather we've been having could we spell financial disaster for some ski resorts while others are waiting impatiently for snow to fall to begin their fiscal season.

Those of a financial bent could do well by speculating the snow market, while reports of ski sales say there has been a drop of 50% in the ski market, and snowmobile manufacturers are suffering a 90% in sales.

The ski club advises that there will likely be good skiing in central B.C. this upcoming Christmas holiday, with more opportunities in Montana.

It may be comforting for some to remember the predictions of noted weather forecaster Chief Walking Eagle, who has been notoriously correct this year in predicting the meteorological happenings for the province.

Sometime last summer he said we're going to get a nice heavy snowstorm this December 15th.

It's not too far away, and many who have been reported to be scoffers of long-range weather forecasting by natural observation are actually hoping he'll be right.

In passing, it has also been reported to *Gateway* that platinum record-seller Bing Crosby is again making the hit parades with his world-famous rendition of "White Christmas"...

Alberta has only experienced four non-white Christmases in its history, these being '42, '52, '53, and '59.

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operating at maximum restrictions right now."

Platt fears the Board will take a look at the centre's budget, see the loss it suffers more month, and close it down, perhaps permanently.

"If we can hang on til the next school year, everything will be fine," she says, adding that reduced enrollments in Garneau School have reduced the centre's enrollment, not any lack of facilities or quality supervision.

She would like to see more parents bringing their children to Garneau School thus allowing them proximity to the centre.

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