

INSIDE AURORA: Winter Tired

By Scott Johnston

I used to laugh whenever I came across those signs that noted that street parking was forbidden in Aurora up until April 15 to ensure that snow plows could properly clear the roads.

After all, since the last Ice Age, when has enough snow ever fallen in April that actually resulted in any sort of accumulation?

Well, Mother Nature certainly seems to be getting the last laugh now. Or maybe she's making us pay the price for last year.

If you remember, March of 2012 managed to bypass the spring season completely, and went right from winter to summer.

One minute there were cold winds and snow, and the next there were sunny days in the high teens, hoards of coatless pedestrians, and flowers blooming everywhere. It was amazing.

Compare that to this year.

Well into April we see overnight temperatures below freezing, winter boots and clothing still piled inside doorways, and snow on the ground in places - even before it was nicely replenished by the dumping we had last Thursday.

As for the groundhogs that predicted an early spring, they're all in witness protection programs.

The days may be longer, but the shirtsleeves certainly aren't getting any shorter.

Some folks rely on local events to get them into a more temperate frame of mind. But even the traditional Aurora harbingers of spring are having a hard time convincing people that the season's here.

There were probably more questions about snow blowers and de-icing salt at the recent Home Show than there were about patios and pools. And in the annual Rotary Club frog race in Tannery Creek, the winning entry was actually a chunk of ice.

In this week-end's Mayor's Clean-up Day, I wouldn't be surprised if there are areas of town where participants will need to shovel the snow off of the ground first before they can see if there's any trash to pick up.

At this stage, apart from the ski-hill operators, many of whom are still doing a booming business, I don't think there's anyone out there who isn't anticipating the change in seasons.

That goes for animals, too. The chipmunks and raccoons are probably getting tired of rolling over and hitting the snooze alarms on their hibernation alarm clocks.

On the plus side, the delayed spring may mean that we'll just bypass it again like last year, although a month or two later, and go right into the warm temperatures.

But that has problems of its own. In a quick seasonal transition the tasks you'd normally spread out over several weeks are compressed into a shorter timeframe.

For example, in a morning where you would normally rake and seed the lawn, you may also have to fit in cleaning off the patio furniture, changing the snow tires, putting up the screens, servicing the lawnmower, and for the real procrastinators out there, and taking down the Christmas lights.

But even if spring (or perhaps summer) is closer, it doesn't seem to be here yet, so just in case winter is hanging in there, I better move my car from my street parking spot. Since the 15th has come and gone, I'm no longer worried about getting a ticket, but there's no guarantee that I won't wake one morning to find my car's been buried by a passing snow plow.

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