

Note to mother nature: HOLD THE ICE

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Last March after the huge snowstorm, I wrote a piece for *The Guilfordian* with the headline "Snow is cool." Now, I'm sure all of you loyal Guilfordian readers remember virtually every story published by us (yeah, right!), but I'll take a minute to refresh your collective memory, just in case.

Basically, the thesis of my story was that snow is a very cool thing. (This coming from a native Floridian who had never before witnessed snowfall.) I went on to make interesting and earthshaking revelations about snow, such as that snow is not as wet as rain, etc.

So, why am I rehashing old stories? Because last week I had a not-so-pleasant experience with winter precipitation. Namely, ice.

Ice is evil. At least, this particular episode was. It is impossible to walk on, even for the length of five feet.

Through no particular fault of my own (other than wearing shoes with worn-down tread), I fell a total of three times last Monday. The

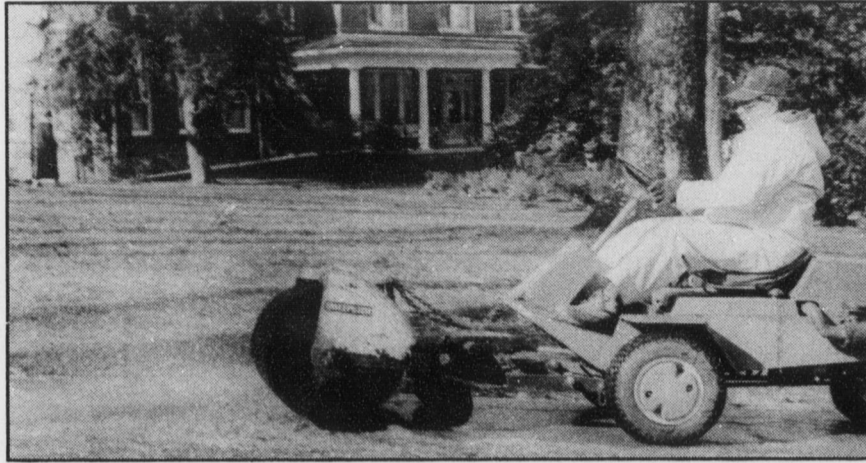


Photo by Daphne Lewis

A groundsworker quickly removes ice from the lawn after the ice storm.

first two times were tolerable, amusing almost. The second time my feet actually flew up in the air and I landed on my back with only my trusty back-pack to protect me. Sure, I walked a bit slower for a while, but I had learned a valuable lesson with that fall: walk on grass whenever possible.

Later in the day, I had a more traumatic experience, one that led me to my present opinion of ice. I was at work, and had to go from the library to the Duke mailroom

to check the mail. As I exited the library, I discovered, much to my dismay, that it was raining again, which only served to make the ice treacherous, rather than merely annoying.

Well, I got down the library steps fine and up the Duke steps. No problem. However, I anticipated that the return trip would be tricky, and so I proceeded down the Duke steps with caution.

My hand hovered over the railing (I say hovered because my

I slid down the three stone steps in no time.

At this point, I was about to give up and stay put. I was tired of walking, and I didn't seem to be very successful at it anyway.

The *only* thing that motivated me to move on was the guy who had seen me fall. There he stood, under his umbrella, dry and safe on the grass.

And that's all he did. He didn't come over to try to help me up or anything humane like that. Well,

gloves were in my room—where else—and I couldn't bring myself to grasp the ice-covered metal with my bare hand). I slowly, ever-so-slowly, lowered my foot down to the first step....

BAM, it was all over.

he *did* offer a feeble "Are you ok" to which I responded "Oh, yeah, I'm just great." (I *really* wanted to say something else, but I, in an uncharacteristic moment, restrained myself.)

Anyway, I got tired of having him stare at me, so I got up and went back into the library.

Now, I know other people sustained far worse injuries due to the ice, so I'm not really feeling too sorry for myself. What's another bruise in my life? But I do want to share some little bits of wisdom I picked up that day:

First and foremost, ice sucks. Second, don't laugh when people fall. Well, at least check to make sure they're alright before you do.

Third, if you witness a fall, either help the person up, or move on. Don't just stare.

Hopefully, we won't need to implement this knowledge again this semester. *Hopefully*, we'll get some snow, not ice. But just in case, store this story in your memory banks (as I know you will), and retrieve the information as situations merit.

That's all, thanks for listening.

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