

Living in Oregon, you inevitably become accustomed to gloomy weather. Grey clouds hide the sun nearly every day through the winter, biting wind leaves you cold, and you awake nearly every morning to the dreary sound of raindrops striking your window. However, northwestern Oregonians had a break from the monotonous climate last winter.

The worst time of the year for many students is the return to school after a two-week-long Christmas Break. My first period math class on that dreadful Monday was filled with resentful students. Things weren't all bad, though; our pain was eased by the prospect of snow for the Portland area.

My classmates and I argued incessantly with our teacher, who refused to share our optimistic view. He assured us that at 8:30 the next morning, we'd be seated in our desks, diligently taking notes.

I remember hoping that night that it would snow. After all, Tuesday was my birthday and I deemed that snow would make a great present of sorts.

Tuesday morning, I woke up early and habitually rolled over to get more sleep. Suddenly, I remembered. It was my birthday! Had it snowed? A look out my window told me that it most definitely had. Everything in my backyard (and the neighbors', too) was covered in pure, clean, white snow.

It wasn't much time before I was outside with my sisters and neighbors, feeling very much like a little kid again. We made a snowman in the middle of the road and had a snowball fight. Thoroughly soaked, I returned to my house and drank hot chocolate in front of the fireplace.

I was dismayed when the news reporter declared that rain

was on its way. I didn't relish the thought of going back to school the next day. The weather, however, had a different plan and saved me once again.

It did rain that night, but with the rain came freezing temperatures. When my alarm went off on Wednesday morning, I found that those few inches of blessed snow were frozen beneath a thin layer of ice. Tree branches were sagging under the added weight and items left outside the day before were trapped in the all-encasing ice. That ice provided plenty of problems for the city, but for a bunch of suburban kids it proved to be another source of enjoyment. School was canceled for the remainder of the week; our days were spent slipping, sliding, and falling as we tried not to break the ice.

When the snow finally left us that weekend, we were sad to see it go. At least we'd had several days to enjoy it; and when I returned to school on Monday, it was with the knowledge that we'd had four undeserved days away from school and I should be grateful. Nonetheless, I found myself wishing that the radio would announce another chance of snow.