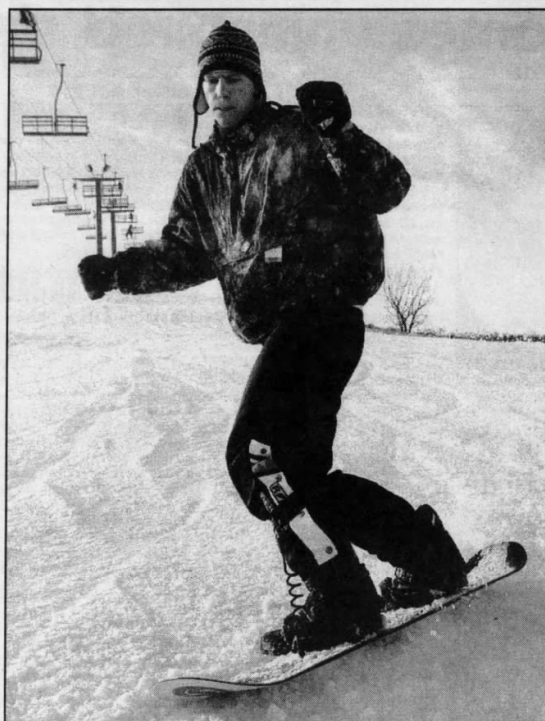


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✓cover story

‘It’s easier to become good at snowboarding than it is at skiing.’

— Eric Dooyema



Do it with style when boarding through snow

Gannett News Service

Do you want to try snowboarding?

No problem. First, choose between the sport's two distinct styles.

■ **Alpine** boards curve up at the front like a ski, require hard boots and attract generally older riders who go by the nickname "ski boarders."

■ **Freestyle** boards curve on both sides, allowing backward riding and skateboard-like tricks, require soft boots and attract the younger riders who go by the nickname "snow skaters."

Of course, you'll also want to look hip, so get a pair of super baggy pants and a wallet chain (connects your wallet to your pants), the snowboarding uniform du jour.

And bone up on the following moves, as defined by Fran Richards of *Transworld Snowboarding* magazine:

■ **Eurocarve.** A very angled turn — your chest is almost scraping the snow.

■ **Riding fakie.** Riding backward.

■ **Jibbing.** Riding on anything that isn't snow, such as picnic tables or tree stumps.

■ **Bonking.** Somewhat interchangeable with jibbing. Often used to refer to bouncing off objects on the slopes, as in "Dude, watch me bonk this log."

■ **Boning out a trick.** To extend a radical maneuver to the fullest extent possible. "Dude, did you see him bone out that air?"

■ **Food trick.** Any of a number of airborne maneuvers where one grabs the edge of the snowboard. Variations include the chicken wing, Canadian bacon and stale fish.

■ **McTwist.** A one-and-a-half back flip, with a twist.

Don't hibernate: Get out and ski, sled or skate

Cheap thrills indeed.

The best thing about the winter activities set up by the city's Parks and Recreation Department isn't the variety, although there's plenty to choose from: snowshoeing, skiing, skating, sledding and sleigh rides.

The best thing is the cost — it's mostly free, or close to it.

■ **Cross-country skiing.** The city grooms trails at Elmwood Municipal Golf Course, Spencer and Sertoma parks. The trails were in good shape after the Thanksgiving snow storm, but they hardened up during last week's thaw and freeze. Monday's marginal dusting of snow should help.

There are two miles of trails at the 18-hole Elmwood Golf Course. With semi-wooded and rolling terrain, the course is good for beginners. The trail at Spencer is 1.8 miles, with wooded passes and nice views of the Big Sioux River. The Sertoma trail is 1.7 miles long with wooded areas where wildlife is common. There's no charge to ski on the city-maintained trails.

■ **Holiday sleigh rides.** McCrossan Boys Ranch teams with the city for free rides in Spencer Park this weekend. They're offered from 4 to 8 p.m. Friday and noon to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The ride consists of a 15- to 20-minute loop through the park along the bike trail.

■ **Snowshoeing.** This is the best deal of all. The city has a few pairs of snowshoes available, and it costs nothing to check them out. "All we ask is that you bring them back," says Garry. "We tell people they have to stay within city limits, but I

don't know where they're going. I don't ask." Call 339-7060 to check on availability.

■ **Outdoor walking.** The city will clear several sections of the bike trail so people can walk or jog throughout the winter. Those sections include: 12th Street and Cliff Avenue to Tuthill Park; 26th to 49th streets on Southeastern Drive; and Yankton Trail Road.

■ **Outdoor skating rinks.** The city plans to operate four supervised rinks this winter and one unsupervised rink. Weather permitting, they'll open Dec. 22-23.

There are no hockey rinks, although recreation coordinator Susie Garry says the hockey boards may find a home next year. The former site of the hockey rink, Drake Springs, is closed this season.

The supervised rinks: McKennan, Sherman, Tuthill and Campus. McKennan and Sherman are open from 4 to 8 p.m. weekdays, 1 to 8 p.m. weekends, holidays and school vacation days. Tuthill and Campus are open from 4 to 9 p.m. weekdays and from 1 to 9 p.m. weekends, holidays and school vacation days.

The unsupervised rink is at Frank Olson Park.

A tip for families: Every Friday night all skate rentals cost \$1. The normal rental fee is \$3 for adults (sizes 4 to 13), \$1 for kids. All four supervised rinks have rental skates available, and all operate warming huts.

■ **Sledding hills.** Tuthill is the only supervised hill, and it's been busy. Hours: 4 to 9 p.m. weekdays, 1 to 9 p.m. weekends, holidays and school vacation days. There's no charge to slide down the hill, but certain

rules must be obeyed: two people per sled; no standing on the sled; only one sled can go down at a time; walk up the side of the hill after you complete your run; watch out for trees.

The unsupervised hills are Spellerberg, Kuehn and Frank Olson parks. People are sledding at Leaders Park, but the city is trying to discourage it.

■ **Great Bear Ski Valley.** The little hill two miles east of the Rice Street exit off I-229 offers the only downhill skiing in the immediate area. It's open from 3 to 10 p.m. weekdays, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. weekends and during school vacation. For conditions, call 335-4309.

Chair-lift passes cost \$14 on weekends and holidays, \$11 on weekdays. Kids between 6 and 18 years old pay \$11 on weekends and holidays, \$9 during the week. Kids under 5 ski free. Season passes cost \$150 for kids, \$180 for adults. Rentals also are available — \$11 for skis, boots and poles on weekends and holidays, \$7 on weekdays and half-days on weekends.

Lessons are available, too. Group lessons for four or more people cost \$6 each. Private lessons cost \$18.

New to the Junior Ski Program this year are weekday lessons. The weekday program runs Jan. 10 through Feb. 7, from 4:30 to 7 p.m. It includes five hour-long lessons and 1½ hours of open skiing after each lesson. The classes are open for kids 4 to 16 years old, and class size is limited to six to eight students. Cost: \$90 for lessons and gear, \$60 for lessons only.

The Saturday Junior Ski lessons begin

Jan. 8 and run through Feb. 5, from 9 a.m. to noon. Cost: \$125 for lessons and equipment, \$80 for lessons only. Parents who want to ski while their kids are taking lessons get on the slopes for \$9.

There are also lessons for adult beginners and intermediates. The beginner lessons are on Tuesdays between Jan. 4-25 at 7 p.m. Intermediate lessons are Tuesdays from Feb. 1-22, also at 7 p.m. Cost: \$60 for lessons and equipment, \$50 for lessons only.

■ **Indoor recreation.** Skiing and sledding are not for everyone. Patrick Henry Middle School is open daily from 5 to 9 p.m. for walkers. Call 331-7639 for schedule changes. There's no charge.

The gym at the Coliseum and Recreation Center is open from 1 to 5 p.m. weekdays for basketball, volleyball and tennis. There's no charge. The gym is also opened on weekend afternoons when tournaments aren't open.

Also, John Harris and Roosevelt schools will be open for volleyball and basketball from 1 to 5 p.m. Sundays. Again, there's no charge.

■ **And that's not all.** If you or your group are planning a winter gathering, the city rents the Tuthill House, located at the top of Tuthill Park, for parties. The fee is \$50 for four hours, or \$15 an hour. Several groups are planning winter outings of sledding, skating and skiing at Tuthill, capping them off with a party at the Tuthill House. It's recently remodeled and can accommodate up to about 50 people. For information, call 339-7060.