

TODAY'S QUOTE

"A change in the weather is sufficient to re-create the world and ourselves."

Marcel Proust

VARIETY



WEDNESDAY  
January 19, 2005

From frigid summer days to balmy November nights,  
Minnesotans weathered plenty of surprises.



David Brewster/Star Tribune file

The sudden power of a spring storm was unleashed on St. Paul's Como Park on May 9, dropping many wooden sentinels that had stood for more than a century. The storm produced heavy winds, funnel clouds and hail in other parts of the state.

SUMMERTIME BLUES

Usually the hues of summer are reflected in the sky. However, during the summer that barely shined, blue was more the color of our lips. The lack of warmth left ample spaces at swimming pools, beaches and picnic grounds, as sweatshirts flew off resort shelves at a record pace.

The first week of summer was a frightful indicator of what was to come. On June 22, patchy frost was recorded in the northern part of the state. The state's icebox competitors, Embarrass and Tower, had overnight lows in the 20s. With almost a month of the summer in the memory files, Duluth was still waiting for its first 80-degree day.

While the Dog Days stayed unseasonably cool, temperatures got downright ridiculous in August. On the 10th, Twin Cities residents were flipping on their furnaces and stumbling out to the stack of firewood as the high of 61 degrees set a record low maximum temperature for the date. And that was



Joey McLeister/Star Tribune  
**The dog days of summer were anything but, with cool weather the rule.**

WEATHER WRAP | A LOOK BACK

A wacky year of extremes

Compiled by Randy Miranda, Star Tribune Staff Writer,  
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Jeff Wheeler/Star Tribune file

The flakes piled up in February, with nearly an average seasonal snowfall that month. Tedla Keffne and his son, Ezena, had some fun posing for a portrait at the Lake Harriet Bandshell in Minneapolis.

reached at midnight. If you headed to the ol' swimmin' hole in the afternoon, it was a goose-bump-raising 58 degrees.

But the weekend beginning Aug. 20 was the epitome of the summer that wasn't. That three-day period saw campers shivering in temperatures as low as 20 degrees in some areas of the state and farmers watching helplessly as a devastating early frost blanketed fields of soybeans and corn.

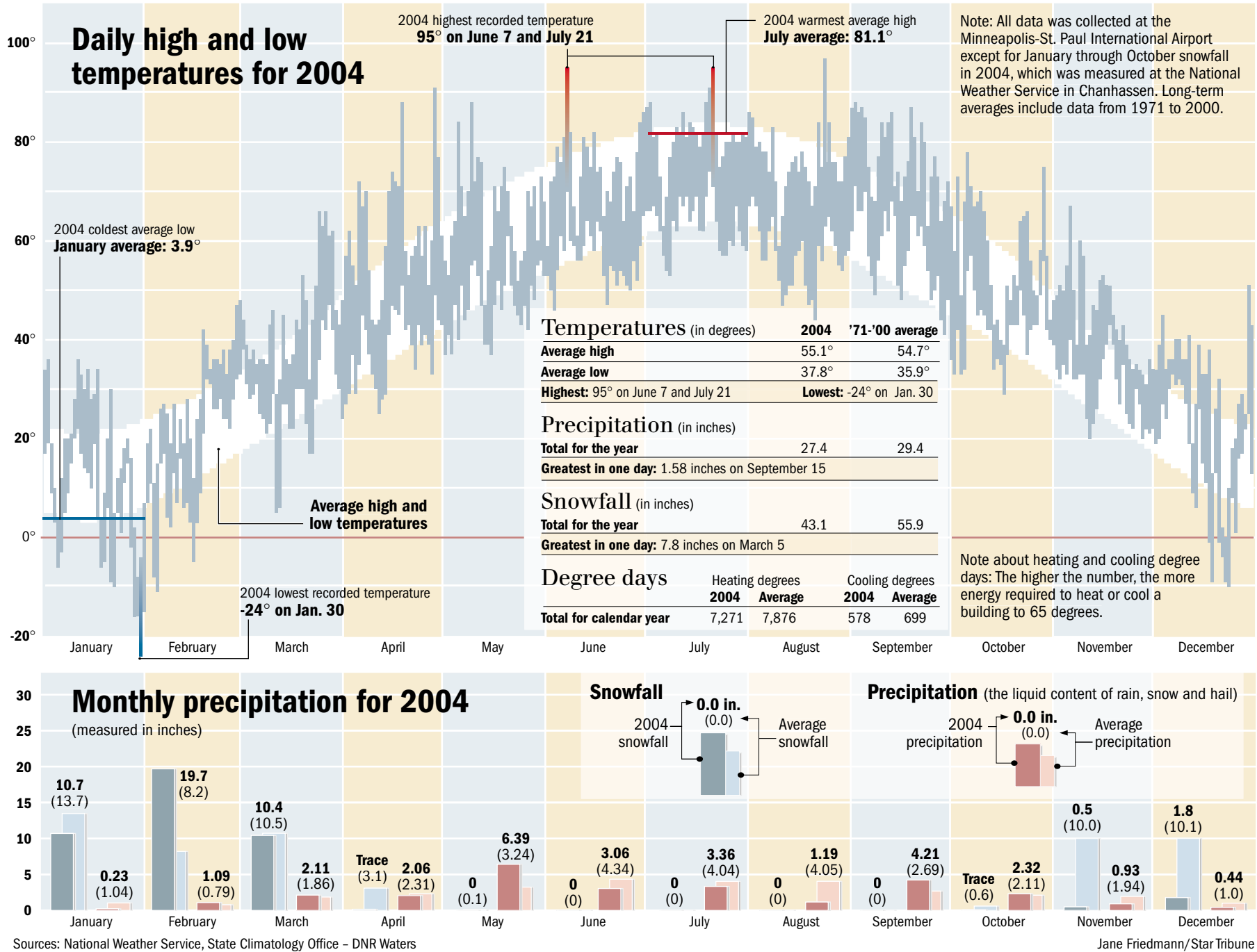
By the time Labor Day arrived, the metro area had splashed through a period of 12 straight days of rain; International Falls had checked in with the coldest May-June on record; the summer solstice arrived amid a 13-day run of below-average high temperatures; July saw 23 days with high temperatures below normal and August's average daily temperatures in Alexandria and St. Cloud were the lowest ever.



Associated Press file

**May showers brought September flowers, in time for this butterfly's migration.**

**WEATHER continues on E10:**  
— Last year, the first significant snowfall didn't come until Jan. 26.



MOVIE REVIEW

Assault on Precinct 13

★★★ out of four stars

‘Assault’ remake as timely as ever

By Colin Covert  
Star Tribune Staff Writer

‘You ever get in a scuffle,’ advises Detroit crime lord Marion Bishop (Laurence Fishburne), “grab hold of the Adam’s apple and squeeze.”

That’s pretty much the narrative strategy of “Assault on Precinct 13,” an action extravaganza opening today that gets a ruthless grip on the audience’s throat early and never lets go.

Based on the sturdy foundation of John Carpenter’s 1976 urban western, the new film adds star power and firepower to a foolproof story: A couple of cops and office workers resist a siege of their station house by a gang of heavily armed killers. This year’s thrill ride adds a few sociopolitical twists and turns, but loses none of the urgency in the retelling.

The film is set in Detroit, where a New Year’s Eve blizzard is paralyzing the city. Precinct 13, a little bunker of lockup cells and offices in a desolate industrial district, is emptied of everyone but a skeleton crew on the night before it is permanently shut down. Sgt. Jake Roenick (Ethan Hawke) is nominally in charge, and he’s grateful for the desk duty.

A fatally misfired drug raid some months earlier has undermined his confidence. So after locking horns with his police psychiatrist, Dr. Alex Sabian (Maria Bello), he drinks away the old year with gregarious retiring patrolman Jasper O’Shea (Brian Dennehy, who appears in Minneapolis next week in his one-man show “Trumbo”) and saucy secretary Iris Ferry (Drea de Matteo).

Unexpected party crashers arrive in the form of mob boss Bishop and several lesser crooks (including Ja Rule and John Leguizamo), whose police transfer bus has been forced off the icy roads. And soon thereafter a mob of gunmen storms the building. O’Shea thinks it is Bishop’s men come to get him out. Bishop insists it’s a squad of rogue cops bent on killing him before he can finger them. Roenick, unsure who to trust, finds himself once again saddled with life-and-death responsibilities.

**REVIEW continues on E10:**  
— Film provides a stable of strong personalities in a perilous fix.

TOMORROW

Dollars & Sense

John Ewoldt offers tips on buying a furnace.

INSIDE

Kim Ode

People who are moved to protest on Inauguration Day probably can do better than withholding their dimes.  
**Turn to E2.**

Dear Abby . . . . . E2

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Carolyn Hax . . . . . E3

Jacquelyn Mitchard . . . . . E4

Comics . . . . . E6-E7

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# In May, Twin Cities had precipitation on 22 days

## STORMY WEATHER

It's déjà vu all over again. The lack of snow this winter has many folks in a funk, but that may be a case of selective memory. Last year, the first significant snowfall of the season didn't come until Jan. 26, when almost 25 inches in Duluth was just shy of the 24-hour snowfall record. The totals were impressive throughout the state, from 19 inches in Staples to 8.3 inches in the Twin Cities. The abundance of white pleased everyone from resort owners to farmers.

Twin Cities drivers weren't quite as thrilled by a midday surprise on March 3. A fast-developing weather system caught everyone from forecasters to Minnesota Department of Transportation officials unprepared. While only 3 inches of snow fell in the Twin Cities, the quick blast caused nearly 150 accidents. The fast flakes were so heavy at times that two sections of Interstate Hwy. 94 were closed in St. Paul to prevent more accidents.

On the flip side, a squall line of storms sent residents in central and southern Minnesota running for cover on May 9. The thunderous system flattened trees in St. Paul's Como Park, spawned funnel clouds and hail as big as an inch, dumped as much as 5 inches of rain and brought hurricane-force winds to several areas of the state. The storm was an exclamation point on a soggy

spring. In the Twin Cities, 22 of 31 days in May saw some measure of precipitation. And Lake City was the wettest spot in the state, with 12.19 inches of rain, the most there for any month of the year — ever. The old record was 11.67 inches in July 1987.

And just to make sure ice is remembered as something more than an ingredient for iced mochas, Dec. 20 dawned with icy rain glazing the Twin Cities. Motorists skidded through intersections, hundreds of accidents were reported, and three people died in southwestern Minnesota and Anoka County.

## BRAGGIN' RIGHTS

With backbone and bravado, Minnesotans play almost any hand Mother Nature deals us. Almost. The last week in January pushed us to the limit. On Jan. 30, the Winter Carnival Ice Palace in St. Paul closed for a few hours, ski slopes in Duluth were shut down by mid-afternoon and public school students had their fourth day off in five days. All this due to temperatures well below zero and wind chills hovering in the 50-below range. Fosston, in northwestern Minnesota, was the state's coldest spot, recording a temperature of 50 below zero — that's temp, not wind chill. Believe it or not, we were about 40 degrees colder than Moscow and a few degrees colder than Nome, Alaska.

As if that weren't enough



Joey McLeister/Star Tribune file

**There was no chance of the ice sculptures in St. Paul's Rice Park melting during the Winter Carnival. On Jan. 30, sinking temperatures and unbearable windchills forced the Ice Palace to close for a few hours.**

## Monthly data for 2004

	High temp.	Low temp.	Avg. temp.	Diff. from avg.	Precip. (inches)	Diff. from avg.	Snow (inches)
Jan.	36	-24	11.2	-1.9	0.23	-0.81	10.7
Feb.	48	-11	21.6	1.5	1.09	0.26	19.7
Mar.	66	5	36.0	3.9	2.11	0.25	10.4
April	91	25	49.9	3.3	2.06	-0.25	trace
May	88	37	56.6	-2.7	6.39	3.15	0
June	95	46	65.4	-3.0	3.06	-1.28	0
July	95	53	72.2	-0.9	3.36	-0.68	0
Aug.	86	44	66.3	-4.3	1.19	-2.86	0
Sept.	88	41	67.4	6.4	4.21	1.52	0
Oct.	78	29	50.1	1.5	2.32	0.21	trace
Nov.	67	20	37.7	5.3	0.93	-1.01	0.5
Dec.	51	-10	22.6	4.0	0.44	-0.56	1.8

Source: National Weather Service

Star Tribune

to test our spirit, a wet winter weather-maker brought more than a foot of snow to the Twin Cities on Feb. 1. And the snow seemed to never stop during the month. By Feb. 12, the total accumulation for the season was approaching the average snowfall in the metro

area for an entire winter. With the inch that fell that day, 53 inches had fallen, about 3 inches shy of the season average.

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