



CATCHING SOME OF THE DROPS
Ashleigh Hampson (left) and Hank Vanderscheer were enjoy-

ing the rain last week in Beamsville. A few cracks of thunder sent them scurrying inside, however.

Summertime blues

July rain and cold temperatures set records

by DOUG GILLHAM
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Have you noticed there hasn't been much talk of global warming recently? With below normal temperatures being the rule since the beginning of spring, topped off by a July that was more like October, it seems as though the door of the so-called "global greenhouse" has been left open.

July 1992 is now in the Niagara District Weather Office's books as the coldest ever recorded. The average high was 23 Celsius while the average low was 14.4 Celsius.

As cold as July was, the most noteworthy weather feature of the month was the rainfall. A total of 207.2 millimetres (8.16 inches) of rain fell during July at the Niagara weather office. That annihilates the old record of 120 millimetres set in 1971. Normal rainfall for July in Niagara is 68.9 millimetres. In Lincoln, Vineland received a bit less with 180.8 millimetres.

With all the rain, sunshine was rare last month. With only 206 hours of sunshine, we had 81 hours less than average. This was our lowest ever for July.

Due to cold temperatures and the absence of sunshine, crops in the Niagara Peninsula are running 11 days behind normal and 22 days behind last year. This time last year, most lawns had fried and air conditioners were working overtime. This year, it has been difficult keeping up with the lawn, and air conditioners are sitting idle.

The reason for the unusual weather across the continent is the position of the jetstream — the strong band of winds in the upper atmosphere that move across the hemisphere. Most storm systems follow the jetstream across the country, and it separates cool air to the north from warm air in the south.

At this time of year, the jetstream is usually found across central Canada. However, this year it runs across the north central United States, bringing storm systems and cool temperatures

much further south than normal for July.

Why is the jetstream so far south? Some blame El Nino, the warming of the Pacific waters off the coast of South Africa, but most climatologists think its effects are over.

The most popular theory is that last summer's eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Phillipines left volcanic ash in the upper atmosphere, which is causing global cooling. However, western Canada and the northwestern United States are having an unusually warm and dry summer.

Perhaps after several unusually warm summers, it could be that we are just fulfilling the law of averages.

Rainy days wash away summer fun in Lincoln

A strange thing happened on the weekend — Lincoln had two consecutive days of sunshine.

But for many rain-weary residents, it may be a case of too little, too late.

After weeks of unseasonably cool temperatures and little or no sunshine to speak of, many in the Niagara area may well be giving up hope for the summer of 1992.

Below-normal temperatures have been keeping people away from swimming pools at Kinsmen Park and Jordan Lions Park. Also, local sports organizers have also been wrestling with schedules due to rain-outs.

"We've had to work really hard trying to rebook a lot of games," said Maureen Wilsack, secretary of Beamsville Minor Baseball.

Rain and cool temperatures also forced the cancellation earlier this summer of the annual 'Lincoln Day' celebration at Charles Daley Park. The event will likely be rescheduled for next month.