

Almanacs predict February as mild, cold

By SANDY CAMPBELL
Herald staff

Do you believe weather can be predicted for an entire year? Most people are skeptical of a weatherman's predictions for the weekend. Yet without fail each year The Old Farmer's Almanac and The Chase Almanac forecast the weather one year in advance.

The Chase Almanac does not say what methods it uses to make such predictions. The Old Farmer's Almanac states it uses "a secret weather forecasting formula devised by the founder of the almanac in 1792" and "modern scientific calculations based on solar activity." Weather experts are skeptical about these long-term forecasts.

Caillet Alain is a meteorologist at the Canadian Climate Centre where monthly and seasonal forecasts are made. Of almanac predictions he said, "we can only laugh. They are like a horoscope. You can read into them what you want. Everyone knows the 11-year solar cycle, but I don't think solar activity can be forecasted."

Peter Branch is a retired farmer living at Steeles Avenue and the Ninth Line. "I'd be surprised if a modern farmer consulted almanacs," he said. "Politics and rain are unpredictable," he added.

Barry Greer is Chief Meteorologist at the Ontario Weather Centre. The Canadian Climate Centre is having some accuracy predicting temperature but little accuracy predicting precipitation, he said. "I don't know anyone showing accurate long range predictions. Anyone can make a forecast. You are bound to get a certain amount right," he said.

Anyone can make forecasts, yes,

but few do. If you want to get a long range look at the weather for 1986 the best place to find it is an almanac like the Chase or Old Farmer's.

The Old Farmer's Almanac has predictions for November 1985 to October 1986. The Chase Almanac's predictions are for January through

December of 1986.

Both almanacs reveal that January will be cold with snow. The Chase Almanac said "heavy snow" and moderate temperatures at the end of January.

Again, the predictions are in agreement when it comes to the following month. February will be mild for the first half and cold late in the month.

March is to be a month of below normal temperatures, according to The Old Farmer's Almanac. The Chase Almanac indicates there will be heavy sleet changing to rain by the second week.

The Old Farmer's Almanac states temperatures in April and May will be below normal until mid May. The Chase Almanac predicts April temperatures will be moderate. May temperatures will be cold and turn cool by mid May, after which it will be stormy until the end of the month.

The Old Farmer's Almanac believes the first part of June will be stormy followed by a heat wave at the end of the month. The Chase Almanac foresees a cold first week warming up by

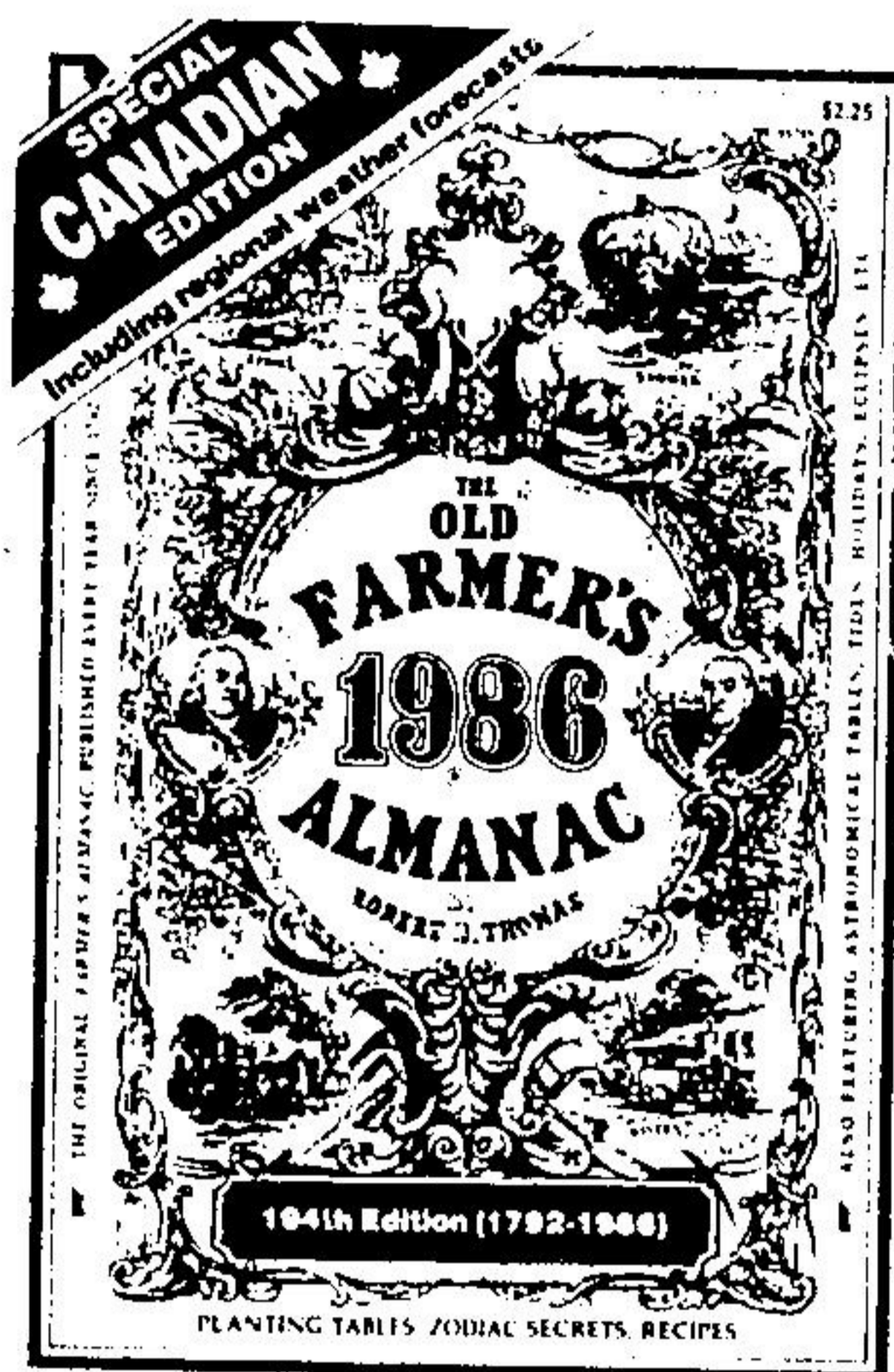
the tenth followed by plummeting temperatures and rain by the end of the month.

Those cool temperatures will continue into July until a heat wave begins early in the month which will stop by July 17, states The Chase Almanac. The Old Farmer's Almanac predicts it will be a warm July with brief hot spells that will continue into August and early September.

The Chase Almanac predicts heavy rain early in August followed by a heat wave and below average temperatures at the end of the month. September will be colder until the last half when it will be very cold.

The Old Farmer's Almanac indicates temperatures in September and October will be variable and that storms will come by mid October.

Ice and snow will come in October, reveals the Chase Almanac frost warnings begin by Oct. 12. November will be a month of moderate temperatures and rain changing into snow by the end of November. Early December will begin very cold, followed by moderate weather until December 7 and by mid December bitter cold and snow will set in.



Fitting ski boots for kids

Like haircuts, fitting boots can be a traumatic business for youngsters, and your child may not be able to tell you that the boots aren't right.

With the foot in the boot, you should be able to get one or two fingers just behind the heel, with the toes just touching the front of the boot.

After buckling up, most children can tell you if the boot is too loose or too tight

but, if yours isn't in the mood, make a game of it by holding the boot on the floor with both hands and daring him to move his foot in the boot. You should be able to feel excessive movement.

To make sure the boot isn't too tight, challenge him to pretend he's skiing like a racer or to walk around pretending to be a gorilla. If the boot hurts, you'll hear about it.



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