

. . . And Now Florida Has Sled-Riding Too

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Can you slide down a snow-covered hill in Florida on a sled?

You might ask where's the snow or the hill or for that matter, where do you buy a sled in Florida?

Well, the snow was here this weekend in northern Florida. The hill was a highway embankment and the sled was a cardboard box borrowed from a freezing gas station attendant just west of Tallahassee on U.S. 90.

Being a Snowbird from Minnesota with clipped wings, I haven't seen snow for two years . . . and I haven't really missed it except at Christmas and when I get the urge to go skiing (in the snow).

The snow fall in northern Florida Friday night and Saturday was wet and heavy with temperatures in the low 20s. For the half a dozen or so hours I was there, I couldn't believe I was really in Florida.

Just outside Tallahassee about 1 a.m. light

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flurries began to fall. Within less than an hour, the snow was coming down (in what us northerners would consider) in large, soft, wet snowflakes that you would see at any given time during a northern winter.

It was cold but not cold enough to hold the snow on paved areas except in protected zones like bridges. But in areas like this, the snow compacted and created real winter driving hazzards.

By two in the morning, small towns were ghost like because of the weather but the slow falling snow was beautiful and I couldn't help thinking about "home", especially at Christmas.

The ground was completely covered with the white stuff and in many areas the grass didn't even show through.

And there were the quiet streets in the small towns with roofs and bushes covered with snow and the spectral atmosphere created by the street lights and falling snow.

I kept thinking how this area would have looked during the Christmas holidays.

Anyway, just outside Chipley I couldn't take it any longer.

I had to get out of the car and play.

I stopped at a gas station and asked for a cardboard box to go sliding.

The attendant, who had said this was the worst snowfall he had seen in 15 to 20 years, said, "Huh?" and gave me a box.

I drove down the road until I spotted a fairly good sized embankment along the highway and stopped the car.

It wasn't much of a hill by Snowbird standards but it served the purpose . . . I was able to slide down the hill several times on my cardboard sled.

And it was wet and cold and wonderful.

But within several more hours I was back in central Florida where palm trees and moss don't have snow and the highways were dry and the only kind of sleding you talk about is on the water (without ice).