

10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT SNOW

- ❖ SNOW IS A MINERAL, JUST LIKE DIAMONDS AND SALT.
- ❖ LIES YOUR TEACHER TOLD YOU: MOST SNOWFLAKES DON'T LOOK LIKE THE LACY DECORATIONS THAT KIDS CUT FROM FOLDED PAPER. FLAKES ARE GENERALLY BUNCHES OF THOSE PERFECTLY SYMMETRICAL CRYSTALS STUCK TOGETHER.
- ❖ NO TWO ALIKE? MORE LIES! MANY CRYSTALS ARE ALMOST IDENTICAL IN THEIR EARLY STAGES OF GROWTH, AND SOME OF THE FULLY FORMED ONES ARE PRETTY DARNED SIMILAR.
- ❖ A SNOW CRYSTAL CAN BE 50 TIMES AS WIDE AS IT IS THICK, SO EVEN THOUGH CRYSTALS CAN BE LAB GROWN TO MORE THAN TWO INCHES ACROSS, THEY'RE GENERALLY FAR THINNER THAN A PIECE OF PAPER.
- ❖ AT THE CENTER OF ALMOST EVERY SNOWFLAKE IS A TINY MOTE OF DUST, WHICH CAN BE ANYTHING FROM VOLCANIC ASH TO A PARTICLE FROM OUTER SPACE.
- ❖ AS THE CRYSTAL GROWS AROUND THAT SPECK, ITS SHAPE IS ALTERED BY HUMIDITY, TEMPERATURE, AND WIND: THE HISTORY OF A FLAKE'S DESCENT TO EARTH IS RECORDED IN ITS INTRICATE DESIGN.
- ❖ FRESHLY FALLEN SNOW IS TYPICALLY 90 TO 95 PERCENT AIR, WHICH IS WHAT MAKES IT SUCH A GOOD THERMAL INSULATOR.
- ❖ ACCORDING TO *GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS*, THE LARGEST SNOWFLAKE EVER RECORDED WAS A 15-INCHER THAT BESIEGED FORT KEOGH, MONTANA IN 1867.
- ❖ THERE ARE OCCASIONAL REPORTS OF RED, YELLOW OR BLACK SNOW FALLING FROM THE SKY, PROBABLY DUE TO POLLEN, WINDBLOWN DUST, OR ASH AND SOOT.
- ❖ IT DOESN'T SNOW VERY MUCH AT THE POLES. MOST BLIZZARDS THERE ARE MADE UP OF OLD SNOW THAT IS BLOWING AROUND.