Snow much fun

A few flaky facts to ponder (with thanks to the geology faculty):

- About 14,000 years ago Tacoma was buried under more than 2,000 feet of ice.
- Snow is not white. Seen through a microscope, individual snow crystals look clear. (They’re made of water, after all.) Snow flakes appear white because they scatter and reflect light.
- When a snow crystal forms, its shape is determined by temperature and humidity.
- It really is true that no two snowflakes are exactly alike, at least on the molecular level. Most aren’t even symmetrical.
- A typical snowflake contains about $10^{18}$ water molecules.
- The most complex scheme to classify snowflakes includes 80 different snow crystal types.
- The first scientific reference to snow crystals was made by Johannes Kepler in 1611.
- In the western United States, mountain snowpack contributes up to 75 percent of year-round surface water.
- The world record for the most snow angels made simultaneously in one place is held by the people of Bismarck, N.D., who, on Feb. 17, 2007, recruited 8,962 citizens to lie down in the snow on state Capitol grounds and flap their arms and legs.