

## The Last Winter Storm of 2023 Blows Through!

The weekend of Friday, March 10 through Sunday, March 12, we experienced another violent winter storm that shut down virtually everything in the region for three days. It was a situation that has been faced regularly during the past nearly four months.

No matter how often you get beat up by the weather conditions, you never get used to it or like it very much. This latest three day blow was just more of the same.

Weather forecasts had predicted a huge storm moving through the region on March 10 through March 12. The weather forecasts were correct but not necessarily for the Barnesville area. Predictions called for over a foot of new snow to fall. That new snow would be accompanied by winds in excess of 50 miles per hour.

We got the gale-force winds but not much else. We got some new snow, estimates range from four to as much as eight inches of snow in the immediate area. That's a pretty wide range but it's hard to get an accurate reading on snow coming at you horizontally. That's the direction



This kind of scenery is getting old. Rothsay residents should be looking at flowing water and shrinking snowbanks. Instead we continue to see snow handling equipment still operating as we head in to the last third of March.

most of the snow came at us over that weekend.

While driving conditions were not great, you could get out and go anytime you needed to. But most

folks wisely stayed home and let Mother Nature blow outdoors.

Visibility was very limited but the only thing blowing was the new snow. A few days of warmer

temperatures prior to the storm had put a crust on the old snow that was already on the ground so that stayed pretty much where it was. Only the new snow was moving.

The high winds and snow blowing across the highways reduced visibility and slicked up the roads with polished ice. But travel was possible locally. You did not have to go very far either north or west before conditions got really nasty. As close as Detroit Lakes over 10 inches of new snow came down and blew around. From there to the Canadian border and most points west, travel was not possible or was not advised. In some cases roads were shut down by law enforcement agencies.

The blizzard was supposed to blow through on Saturday, calm down for a little on Saturday afternoon. It was then supposed to come back with a vengeance on Saturday night and Sunday morning. Temperatures were supposed to drop from the high 20s down to single digits.

That second storm never really developed locally. Sunday was mostly clear as residents dug out yet again from another blast of winter. The cold temperatures did move in and all of last week was chilly with lows in the teens and highs in the 20s for most days.



We might have missed out on the worst of the new snow events but we have taken the brunt of any old wind that blows. There have been gale force winds throughout this winter season, now stretching out past it's fourth month stage. The flags on the Rothsay Post Office indicate another windy day, this time clear with no new snow but still frigid temperatures.

But the seasons, they are a-changin'. Even with only mid-20s for high temps, there has been considerable thawing on clear, sunny days. The sun is really starting to get some power this time of the year and even with cold air temps, the black road surfaces warm up. There is water flowing, snow banks shrinking and ice disappearing.

This was the last storm of the 2023 winter season. This statement can be made because we survived last week with little or no adverse conditions in the weather department. The first day of spring was officially logged on Monday, March 20. Any blizzards that blow through now will be spring of 2023 storms and not winter

blizzards. That's kind of splitting hairs and trying to make the best out of a bad situation. We're due to see some decent spring weather come our way, sooner rather than later. Most years we would have had at least a few 40 degree days by now. Temperatures in the 50s and even 60s are not unusual for March.

Not this year and not last year. We're stuck in a cold holding pattern that simply will not give us a decent slow spring thaw. What we're looking at now is no real improvement in the daily temperatures in the near future.

What that means is that we will likely get a sudden warm-up and snow melt that will do nobody any

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## Area Deer Herds Are Feeling The Winter Stress . . .

For those who could not find a deer during season last fall, there are a lot of them around now and they are easily visible. That is not necessarily a good thing.

You can see deer out on fields just about any time of the day right now but especially at dawn and dusk. They are struggling to make a living and just stay alive. The deer are not nearly as scattered as they were last fall. They are herded up and where you see a couple, there are undoubtedly a lot more in the near vicinity.

Likely spots to see deer are the tall cane north of Rothsay. There are a lot of deer in the Lawndale area. Any grove of trees from Rothsay to Barnesville is likely to have a few or a lot of deer in it. The standing corn on the Walt Palmer farm a dozen miles east of Barnesville in Tansem Township has roughly a hundred deer hitting it on a daily basis.

Fields with any kind of stubble are likely seeing deer come to feed. The animals have given up on their usual shyness. They are coming right into town to try to find a few groceries to eat. Deer are walking right up to elevators and feed mills to find spilled grain.

This is a crucial time of the year for whitetail deer. They have been

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It has become a regular routine. At dusk the deer move right into Barnesville. They check out the Feed Mill and the shipping containers looking for a morsel or two to chow down on. The deer around here are still alert, active and in good shape. That may not be the case north of us in the deep snow where there are packs of timber wolves.



Deer are yarded up all around the region. When times get tough during the winter the whitetails tend to gather in big herds. That has been especially obvious this year with the white background provided by the snow. The deer will disperse when melt conditions allow them return to traditional summer range. Hopefully that is sooner rather than later.

## Ohe's Earn Red River Valley Emerging Leader Honors

Marshall and Mary Ohe, Rothsay, are Otter Tail (West) County's participants in the 2023 Red River Valley Emerging Leadership Program.

They, along with individuals from 15 other counties in northwestern and west central Minnesota, have taken part in educational sessions since October 2022.

Marshall farms, raising row crops and forage, and beef cattle. Mary is the manager of Nature's Garden World Greenhouse.

During the educational sessions, Marshall and Mary have networked with leaders from across the region and gained insight into personal leadership styles, communication, rural issues, and facilitating effective meetings.

The group will gather once more in Crookston to focus on setting goals for how they will lead and follow in their work and community roles, and to celebrate their completion of the program.

The theme for the Class of 2023, "Legacy," encouraged participants to think about what it takes to learn from, live with, and grow their personal legacy.

Jody Horntvedt, Extension Educator with the program, stated, "I am so excited for these leaders to inspire everyone around them with the amazing legacies they are building."

The University of Minnesota Extension coordinates the Emerging Leadership Program and provides educational content. The program



MARY AND MARSHALL OHE

is funded by many donors from across the region, including the Red River Valley Development Association, ag producer groups, electric cooperatives, community businesses, financial institutions, and individuals in counties throughout northwest and west central Minnesota who contribute each year. A regional partner, Northwest Minnesota Foundation, has provided fund management for the program since 1998.

The Ohes will be recognized for their commitment to leadership and their community during the Emerging Leadership Program's annual banquet March 25 in Crookston.

Family and friends are invited to join program alumni at the event.

Check out this link for more details and registration: <https://z.umn.edu/ELBanquet>.