

Chalk on the Blackboard

By Liane Rakow Stout

Greetings from the Historic 1916 Buffalo High School located at 303 Pearl Street in Buffalo, North Dakota, just three miles north of I-94 at exit 314. The school became the property of the Buffalo Historical Society, a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation in 2001, the same year it was listed on the National Register of Historic Properties.

We are anxious to open our doors again, but we continue to have snow and more blowing snow causing us to postpone activities, meetings, work sessions, and the basement project for our important 2022 CLG Grant. We suggest just slowing down, staying inside with a warm blanket and reading an interesting book. There are several books with historical significance that we have reviewed and would like to recommend.

The book, *Looking for Candles in the Window: The Tragic Red River Valley Blizzard of March 15, 1941*, by Douglas Ramsey and Larry Skroch, details information and many personal accounts of the historic snowstorm that caused 71 deaths in North Dakota and Minnesota. It was a fast moving storm that hit during the North Dakota Consolidated High School Girls Basketball Tournament held in Buffalo in our new gymnasium built in 1939. A very impressive group of teams were entered in the tournament including the girl's team from Ayr who had won the state championship the last three years and had a winning streak of 80 games going into the tournament.

The intensity of the storm forced about 500 basketball fans and players to spend the night in the school. The home economics students from Buffalo High School and members of the local 4-H clubs prepared food. Children slept on the floor of the basketball court, on benches and even desks while many adults played card games and visited with their friends all night. Many local families who were involved in the tournament or were suddenly caught unaware by the storm recall the impact of this devastating blizzard in the book.

The Children's Blizzard by David Laskin is another gripping story of an epic snowstorm that suddenly swept across the Dakotas, Minnesota and Nebraska in January of 1888 when more than 500 people perished, many of them children on their way home from country schools. In telling the story of this meteorological catastrophe, the deadliest blizzard to hit the prairie states, the author portrays the impact of this tragic event on the settlement of the American heartland.

We can step back in time and relive the past through books, especially the ones that document our stories and shared history. To learn more about our small town and the Historic 1916 Buffalo High School please contact me at 701-412-4485. For more information and announcements about our upcoming activities and events, please connect with us on Facebook or visit www.buffalond.com.

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