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Storms bring powder galore

**SUBMITTED BY
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Winter has only been here for ten days, yet it seems like ages since winter-like conditions began in late November.

That's because this winter has been fairly atypical compared to those of recent years past.

Baker County, and other neighboring counties, have seen moderate snow in the last month.

"What seems different

is that we've been below freezing at most elevations for quite a long time, which has left a pretty light and preserved snowpack without many layers. It went from warm to winter very quickly in November," says Brian Sather also of La Grande Ride, Inc.—a leader in recreation information.

The Pacific Northwest has been getting hit with consistent shortwave troughs, or surface low weather systems. These impulses of energy and moisture are responsible for the consistent series of

snowstorms.

The cold temperatures can be attributed to a persistent cold, Canadian air mass dipping down over the region.

Most storms had a west to northwesterly flow aloft, instead of a southwest or southerly flow.

This type of flow aloft has been bringing constant snow to the Blue Mountains, while the Willamette Mountains have seen comparably less snowfall.

Blowing and drifting snow has been reeking havoc on local roads and their travelers, with "the

daily closure" of Interstate 84 and countless motor vehicle accidents.

Local road crews have been doing their best to remove snow.

On the up side, the snow has set forth a great start to the snowmobile and ski season.

Snow has been falling across all the local mountain ranges, but the Blues have become the predominant, premier recreation spot as of now.

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Photo by Brian Sather.

Hurd, after setting off a soft slab storm avalanche.

A village in miniature



Samantha O'Conner/ The Baker County Press

One of Wilma Edwards' many displays showing 751 pieces total, for viewing over the holidays.

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR
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Every Christmas, Wilma Edwards invites friends and family to see her collection of miniature Christmas houses and towns.

Edwards dedicates a month to setting up the seven hundred and fifty-one piece towns for friends and family to enjoy.

Edwards began assembling the display on November 1 and finished the towns at the end of the month. She often leaves them on display until around the beginning of March.

This year is the twenty-first year Edwards has set up the displays in her house. She started her collection with the first five pieces her mother gave her and her collection has grown over the years. Her collection includes houses, trees, animals, and miniature people. She now has two hundred houses; some play music and many light up.

"I have several friends who bring them to me," Edwards explained. "They find them at yard sales and stuff. Some family sends them quite often and once in a while I buy a new one but not very often. Ace used to have them and they weren't that expensive and so I bought quite a few at first."

Edwards began her annual display when a friend commented that she should have more people over to see the miniature houses and displays.

Edwards and her husband Dave have lived in Baker for 45 years, having moved here in 1971. Edwards was born in Pomeroy, Washington, and met her husband in college. They moved to Klamath Falls in 1956, then to Lakeview Oregon, then Bend, and finally Baker City.

As well as collecting houses for her miniature towns, she works on wall hangings, sewing them and giving them to her family.

Edwards explained that she enjoys crafts and she also makes ornaments.

41 elk perish in icy waters



Photo by Audrey Beam.

Broken ice remains a testament to the deaths of 41 elk Tuesday morning.

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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On Wednesday morning, roughly 150 elk safely crossed the ice near the Powder River arm of Brownlee Reservoir near Richland—but such was not the fate of the 41 elk that attempted to cross just the morning before.

On Tuesday at roughly 9:30 a.m., Nick Myatt, Grande Ronde Watershed Manager for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), said a call came in from a Richland resident to report that she had witnessed a large number of elk having broken through thin ice, falling into the frigid waters. The hope at the time was that at least some of the animals might be salvaged for their meat, or even saved.

Word quickly came back from ODFW District Biologist Brian Ratliff and fellow employee Phillip Perrine, said Myatt, that "the majority of the elk were already deceased" when the pair arrived on site.

From there, Myatt's fears were validated—the situation would simply have to play itself out as nature intended. And sometimes nature can be cruel.

Ratliff confirmed that when he arrived on scene, all but a handful of the elk had already drowned. Four elk remained alive, struggling to swim and survive. One lone calf had made it out, standing by itself on the ice and left to an uncertain fate.

"The closest elk were 300 yards out into the water," said Ratliff. "The condition of the ice was incredibly unstable."

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Burglary reported in Richland

On the 21st, around 8:53 a.m., deputies responded to a burglary complaint at 42539 Old Foothill Road in Richland.

Witnesses described seeing a male subject wearing dark clothing with

a sleeveless shirt enter an outbuilding at the residence.

A vehicle description was also provided to the deputies.

Around 10:53 a.m., deputies located the reported

suspect vehicle and the suspect, identified as Dock Miles, age 39, near the victim's residence.

Upon investigation, Miles was taken into custody and charged with Burglary in the Second

Degree, Criminal Mischief in the Third Degree, Theft in the First Degree and a Parole Detainer. Miles was transported and lodged in the Baker County Jail. The investigation is continuing.

	Friday Partly sunny with a chance for snow showers. Little to no snow accumulations are expected. Highs in the mid 20s. Lows in the single digits.
	Saturday Mostly sunny and cold. Highs in the upper teens. Saturday Night: Mostly cloudy with a chance for snow showers. Little to no accumulation expected. Lows in the low single digits.
	Sunday Mostly cloudy skies with a chance for snow. Highs near 20. Light accumulations expected. Chance of precipitation is 60%. Lows near 10.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.



Our forecast made possible by this generous sponsor:



Official weather provider for The Baker County Press.

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