



## Nicholas Windsor

### The Flood of 2011

Water has the power to do many things. It can be used in the form of recreation such as boating or for work like using the force of water to create electricity. It is a very strong force and can lead to many amazing things. The most vivid memory regarding water would be during the flood of 2011.

When the flood was first announced my family was still on vacation for my brother's college graduation. We learned of what was to happen from a family friend asking if we needed any help in preparing for the inevitable. My father quickly agreed and before we had even made it back home, our house had completely been cleaned out. Our family friend gathered the community in order to help us prepare for what was to come.

At this point it was released that city officials were expecting water levels of up to eight feet in our house's location. This gave my parents a sense of despair and my father decided to not attempt to sand bag or put a barrier up as a protection for our home. He didn't think there was a way to make a dike tall enough and long enough to surround our house with the time we had left. My older brothers stepped up and told my mom they wanted to at least try. They immediately called our family friends and asked for their help once more. Quickly more and more people showed up to help my family try to save our home. We worked tirelessly side by side filling sandbags, hauling them to the house, and building the barrier. The community continued to help us through the completion of the dike, which was over a week later. This was still before the water came and would save our house.

Once the water levels rose and the flood began my father, siblings, and I continued to make the journey to our now flooded house in order to fuel pumps and check the integrity of the dike and house. These times were very stressful, but also some of my most fond memories I have with my dad. It was a time that I was able to ask him questions and help to save our house.

As I look back on this memory I think about how much the water from the 2011 flood had an impact on my childhood. This time showed me many things and helped me develop as a young child into a man. I was given the opportunity to see the community of Bismarck and how truly connected we are. The fact that enough family and friends from this community came to help us gave me an understanding of what being a North Dakotan means. It showed me that no matter the struggle or hardships that everyone is going through, there will always be a person willing to help and stand by your side. I also learned that being a dependable person who when called upon shows up is one of the most important things. North Dakota is not just a state but a community where everyone knows and helps each other. Seeing this during the flood has helped me grow into the man I am today and has given me the characteristics of a true North Dakotan.

Through the flood and memory of 2011, I have gained very many meaningful things. The lessons it and the people involved taught me have helped shape me as I grew up. I learned what true friendship and family is. I learned through my father how to ask questions and which ones to ask. I learned the importance of community and friendships. I learned that no matter what is happening in my life, if I can help others, I should. I learned what it means to say you are a North Dakotan. The power of water has caused me to become the man I am today and has been the source of many important lessons in my life.