



Cover Photo: Snow at NWS Des Moines on April 17, 2020. Just over 4 inches of snow was measured at the office, while portions of southern Iowa reported 8–12 inches of snow!

# The Weather Whisper

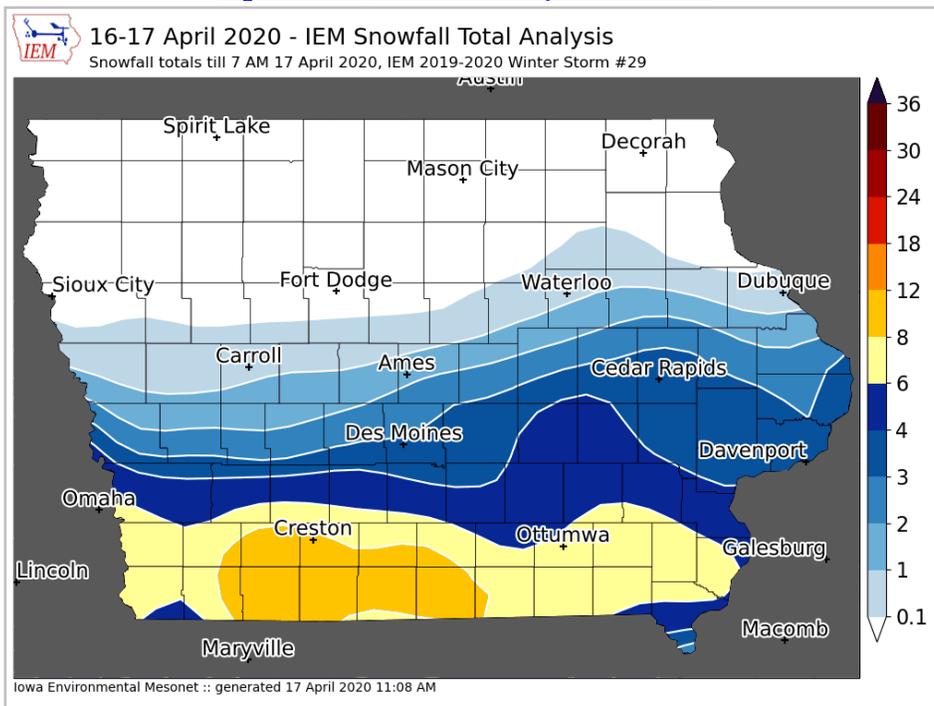
May 2020

## Spring Snow Storm Provides Scenic Photos

*Kenny Padrazik, Meteorologist*

A spring snow storm (or late winter storm) brought a heavy band of wet, sticky snow to central and southern Iowa on the evening of Thursday, April 16 to the early morning of Friday, April 17, 2020. A sharp gradient of the snowfall setup and generally Interstate 80 was the cutoff of the heaviest snowfall to the south and lighter amounts to the north of the highway. In fact, north of I-80, reports widely ranged from trace to around 4 inches and 3-4 inches was common in the Des Moines Metro. Further south, especially the two rows of counties in far southern Iowa (see snow map below), had a band of 8-12 inches with a few isolated higher snowfall reports in Wayne, Decatur, Ringgold, and Taylor Counties. The snow stuck to trees, bushes, power lines and made for some amazing photos across central Iowa. We received over 250 snowy photos from across the southern half of the state and you can find a collection on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Sunshine quickly melted off the snow later Friday morning and into the afternoon hours and all the snow except a small batch across southern Iowa had melted off by the time the sun set Friday night. An event summary page has been created and you can find it here:

### [April 16-17, 2020 Heavy Wet Snow](#)



Monroe County, Photo courtesy of Rebecca Sanford



Sun Valley Lake near Thayer, IA. Photo courtesy of Lindsey Jay Mohr



Ottumwa, Iowa. Photo courtesy of Curtis Waten

## Spotter Spotlight—Gerald (Jerry) Madero

NWS Des Moines recognizes the importance of an active spotter network. Without these volunteers, getting ground truth—whether it be snow or rain totals, severe storms reports, etc.—would be much more challenging and make the job of our meteorologists that much more difficult. This month, we recognize Jerry Madero for consistently providing timely, accurate and useful information benefiting operations.

Jerry Madero, 78, attended Lincoln High school and later Drake University in Des Moines. Jerry served in the U.S. Air Force throughout the Vietnam era before returning home to work for the Des Moines Police Department as Principal Public Safety Dispatcher for 30 years as well as several years as a volunteer firefighter for Waukee in the mid 1990s. After retirement Jerry spent time as an airline dispatcher for Access Air before moving to Arizona with his wife. While in Arizona Jerry worked as Communication Director for the Sedona Police Department before retiring for the third (and final!) time. Jerry has since returned to central Iowa and enjoys playing baseball, softball, and slow pitch, golfing, and amateur radio.

“Back when I was a kid we had four consecutive backyards with plenty of room, flat, and no fences, perfect sandlot baseball. Most of us were 10-13 years old and we had a game going and it was hot. Then a thunderstorm blew up and we all took off for our homes. When we came back most of us were wearing light jackets. I was absolutely amazed at how it went from being so hot to wearing a jacket. From then on I kept tabs on the weather and my interest only grew as I got older.

Historic Arizona weather event I was NOT involved in. After my second retirement my wife and I moved to northern Arizona for 13 years. Not a whole lot of storm chasing out there. At the very end of September 2010 we headed for Des Moines to visit family. The end of September in Arizona is also the end of the Monsoon Season so normally in October there is not much going on. Except for this October. I won't rewrite the whole two days of Oct 5-6, 2010, there is a Wikipedia page, “October 2010 Arizona tornado outbreak”, that covers it all. Suffice it to say that while we were in tornado prone Iowa the worst tornado outbreak in tornado starved Arizona occurred. Nine tornadoes Oct 6 including two

EF2's near the NWS Flagstaff office in Belmont, AZ and another EF2 south of Belmont a few miles. Also there was almost 3 Billion dollars in hail damage, a lot of that occurring south in the Phoenix Valley. When we got back I checked my weather station records and while we had T-storms and I was told, hail, my stations peak wind gust was 49 mph so fortunately we were between the tornadoes and the damaging hail. But, I sure would have liked to have been there chasing.” - Jerry Madero



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