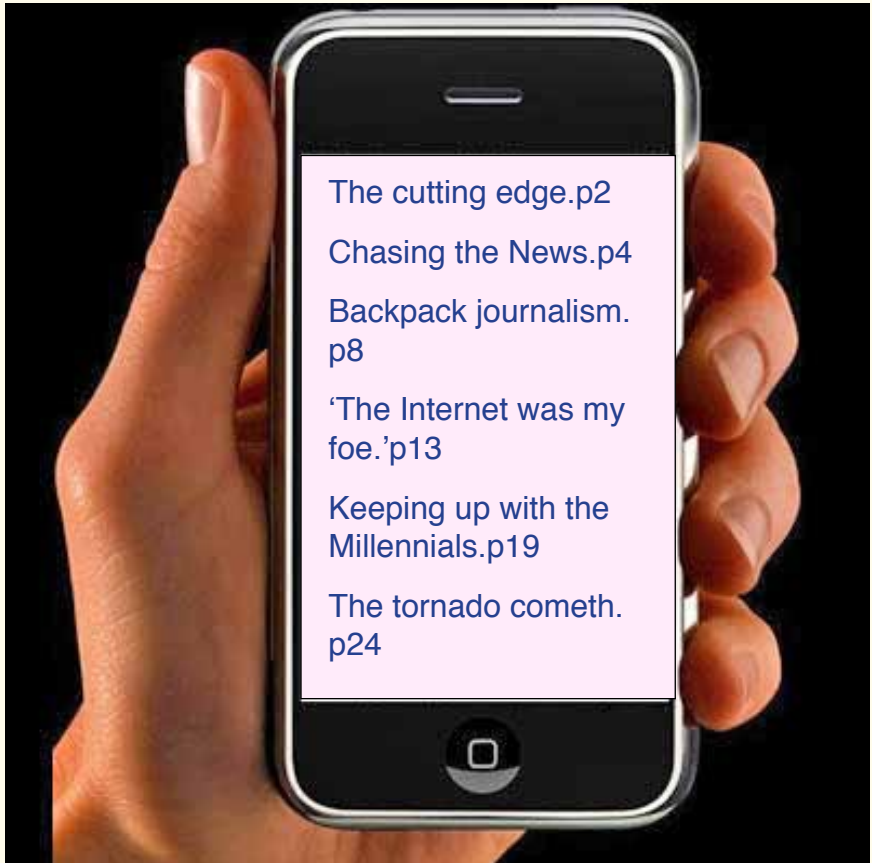


Author's BAZAAR

ONLINE

May 2011 ■ No. 6



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The cutting edge

BY DEAN REA

I used a pencil and a sheet of paper to begin my writing career when I was 5 years old.

Later, I typed my stories on a manual typewriter, then on an electric typewriter, which was made obsolete by the computer.

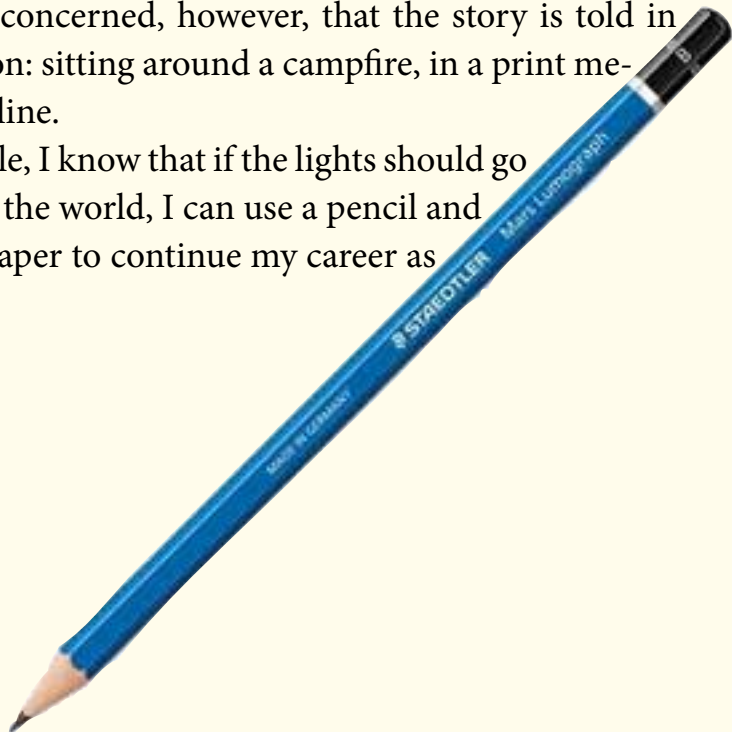
As a professional journalist and later as a university journalism teacher I stressed the importance of learning the basics of the writing craft.

“Learn how to gather information, how to organize a story and how to write under press of deadline,” I told students. “The medium isn’t the message. It will change. The story doesn’t.”

In this issue of *Author’s Bazaar*, four media writers explain how escalating technological changes are influencing their careers.

As for me, I am unconcerned about technological changes. As Forest Gump said, but was misquoted, “It happens.” I am more concerned, however, that the story is told in some fashion: sitting around a campfire, in a print medium or online.

Meanwhile, I know that if the lights should go out all over the world, I can use a pencil and a piece of paper to continue my career as a writer.



NEW LOOK New page layouts, graphics and colors, plus about the changes on page 3.

The Daily Tar Heel



From a different angle, we can see the... (text is too small to read)



CHASING THE NEWS

The tools may change, but this journalist still has black-and-gray marks on her fingers.

BY KELLY PARSONS

I have to admit, there are few things I like more than the feel of newsprint against my skin. I even enjoy the black-and-gray marks it leaves on my fingers after I've flipped through the pages.

But unfortunately, that feeling is likely to be harder and harder to come by.

As a student at the University of North Carolina's School of Journalism and Mass Communication, the wool is not pulled over my eyes. Students are reminded regularly that newspapers are a dying breed. The school offers a large number of classes that focus on the electronic and multimedia aspects of journalism to prepare students for the new age of information.

I'm still going along kicking and screaming.

Growing up, my father always sat down with the *Winston-Salem Journal* every morning before he left for work, and I would watch him as he read. My grandfather has spent more than 40 years as a member of the American Amateur Press Association, and I can still remember the huge letterpress he kept in the extra bedroom.

The printed word has been a constant throughout my life, and it will continue to be as I pursue my passion in the field of journalism. But as someone who enjoys the simple pleasures of printed news, the changing face of journalism is a lot to take in.

Needless to say, it took me some time to catch on to the whole Twitter craze. As a sportswriter for *The Daily Tar Heel*, it's a requirement to be Twitter-savvy, so I learned. And I must say, it's growing on me.

We writers on *The Daily Tar Heel's* sports desk use our Twitter accounts to promote links to our stories, and we often provide play-by-play analysis of games from the press box. Last month, I was courtside at the NCAA women's basketball tournament game in which UNC played in Spokane, Wash., tweeting live stats from the game to my followers, most of whom are avid UNC fans.

Besides breaking my own news via Twitter, I've also learned that it's the absolute best tool for getting up-to-the-minute news reports. By following CNN and a plethora of journal-



Kelly Parsons says she's looking forward to her new job as sports editor of *The Daily Tar Heel*, the independent student newspaper at the University of North Carolina School of Journalism and Mass Communication. She was named to the position on April 25.

ists, I rarely miss breaking news from all over the world.

If there's one thing that the journalism school and my experience working on a daily newspaper has taught me, it's that news breaking has become a race to see who can get it out there first. And with social media and the technological age upon us, journalism continues to change.

While the tools of the trade might not be the same, journalism isn't going away. Often when I'm asked about my career aspirations by strangers or by acquaintances, people seem surprised when I tell them that I plan to go into print journalism.

"Don't you think you'll have trouble finding a job?" they'll often say.

But these inquisitors aren't bursting my bubble. I know technology and plummeting circulation numbers have lessened the need for conventional newspaper reporters.

Success in journalism may be that dream I spend my life chasing, but it's a challenge I eagerly await. Just like a lead is to a good news story, journalism has been an important structural element of my life.

Who knows whether 10 years from now I'll be working at a newspaper, magazine or some new-fangled form of media. All I know is, as long as there is news, someone will be reporting it. And who says that someone can't be me?

University student becomes a tech geek in search of a writing career

Backpack Journalism

By Jordan Eddy

“If you don’t know how to do this, you sure as hell ain’t gonna get a job,” growled Dan Morrison, my Urban Journalism teacher.

Morrison repeated this mantra often. His class was devoted to something called “backpack journalism,” a survival technique that has grown from the job climate that Morrison was warning us about.

The philosophy is this: If you want an endangered spot in a newsroom, you’d better know how to juggle a digital still camera, an HD video camera and a notepad, edit it all in your car and return to the office with a complete news

package — if you haven't already posted it online.

Until recently, this idea of the journalist as a tech geek struck fear into my heart every time I thought about it. I entered the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication three years ago as an aspiring newspaper reporter, which is synonymous with "naïve dreamer" in today's media universe. I may have been skinny and bespectacled, but I had no desire to learn about computers, or anything that was happening on them.

I was able to ignore the increasing importance of the new media for a while by taking an internship at the *Springfield Times*, a weekly paper that had about 1,000 subscribers when I worked there. My editor-in-chief's theory was that if he posted small bits of his articles online, it would tease his readers into buying the print edition. Something tells me most of his audience didn't even have dial-up yet.

When my gray-haired Media Law teacher started extolling the virtues of Twitter and my Media Economics professor took to the habit of stroking her iPhone and calling it a "portal to the media," I knew I was in trouble. I decided to devote an entire term to the new media and to see what set in first: technophilia or carpal tunnel.

My winter term schedule encompassed all areas of backpack journalism. I took Morrison's Urban Journalism class,

Photojournalism 1 and a course called Journalistic Interview.

Photojournalism was the class I was most nervous about. Taking good pictures is hard enough without having to weave them into a coherent news story. For the first assignment, titled “Exposure,” I shuffled around a cemetery across the street from my house and took horribly underexposed pictures of gravestones. It was grim.

Things only grew worse when the “Sense of Place” assignment rolled around, for which we had to snap shots of strangers in public. I took to the technique called “shoot and run” and felt almost as criminal performing it as the name suggests.

Urban Journalism required that I operate a video camera as well as a photo camera. This complication sometimes induced a unique state of paralysis, my fingers hovering over several different



Jordan Eddy learns how to set type one letter at a time in an off-campus letterpress print shop while being introduced to the latest media tools required of journalism students who attend the University of Oregon.

record buttons as important moments slipped away. I managed to leave a road race I was covering with no footage of the start — I confused the “standby” and “record” modes just after the gun fired.

Journalistic Interview was a little simpler, only requiring me to learn the ins and outs of the digital audio recorder. I’d always avoided recorders based on the advice of a journalism professor I had my freshman year. “It’ll make you lazy,” he huffed, his salt and pepper moustache bristling.

For my first recorded interview, I decided to take notes just in case. This taught me an important lesson: Don’t leave the recorder on top of your notepad lest your interview is drowned out by the sound of pencil scratches.

The real trouble began in the computer lab where I was constantly navigating through labyrinths of files and battling monstrous computer programs. When you set out to edit a video in Final Cut Pro, you’re hours away from your final cut. The sound-editing program Audacity probably refers to the characteristic needed to figure it out.

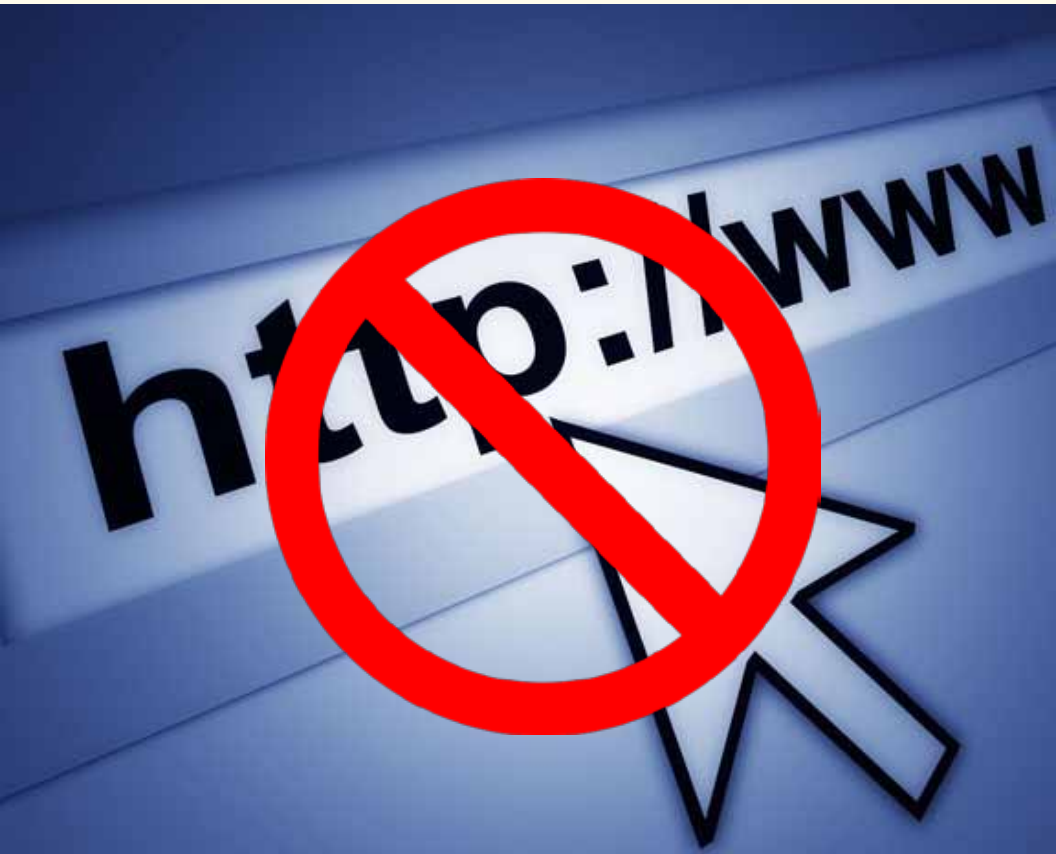
The final day of the term, I sat under the harsh fluorescent lights of the journalism school at midnight. I was facing a long night of editing a multimedia piece on a roller derby team for Urban Journalism. When I plugged in my little video camera to download the footage from the derby,

I found three fuzzy clips of interviews I'd conducted and nothing else. I walked home in the rain dejected.

It wasn't all for nothing, even if I got a B in the class. Now I can offer photos and multimedia pieces in my queries. And it's not as if this new media cancer is showing signs of remission. I recently attended a seminar called "How To Get & Stay Published" in which author Jessica Morrell bluntly stated that to get published "people have to have a huge Twitter following, a huge Facebook following." She spends at least an hour a day blogging and tweeting her heart out. That's 365 hours, or a little more than 15 days — a year.

A certain cohort of writers has always protested the capitalization of the "I" in Internet, as mandated by the AP Stylebook. Yes, it seems silly to capitalize Internet when television and radio have never received nor merited this distinction. But after coming face-to-face with the humming, all-encompassing power of the new media, I believe that writers' long-standing grudge against the "Internet" is a little more personal.

The World Wide Web has wrapped its steely fingers around the modern journalist's entire existence. I, for one, doubt that it deserves any more power or prominence than already exists. One thing is certain, though: The new media is here to stay, so I'm sure as hell gonna get used to it.



‘The Internet was my foe’

An aspiring print media journalist now tells her stories online

All it did was make life difficult.

It triggered the decline of newspapers, one of the few things I could always count on to bring me joy.

It necessitated myriad new tasks for editors, not the least of which was my charge to successfully move a student newspaper online (something I never quite figured out how to do).

It added anxiety to the already stressful lives of journalism students, who were told that to succeed in the job market they not only had to understand and to execute the fundamentals of traditional journalism, but also had to utilize the myriad technological tools that have become available for storytelling.

Now, nearly a year out of college, the Internet is my best friend. Without it, my stories would not be read by professors, students and college officials across the country and around the world. My work would not be published online regularly at *The Huffington Post*, *The Daily Caller*, *Gawker*

or *USA Today*. And, most significantly, my job would not exist.

I am a reporter at *Inside Higher Ed*, a free website based in Washington, D.C. that covers national news in higher education. (We publish daily at www.insidehighered.com.) As our competitors continue to cut back on staff and funding, we are expanding in personnel and readership. My job is, in short, everything I trained for, just without the newsprint.



Allie Grasgreen interviews a source as a reporter for *Inside Higher Ed* in Washington, D.C., a job she prepared for without the newsprint.

Because the national scope of our coverage makes it difficult and generally impossible to include the multimedia content that is now essential to local news outlets, the learning curve for me in shifting to online-only — at least in terms of content — has been relatively straight-forward. But it's been difficult in other ways.

I am not a confident person, particularly when it comes to reporting. (People say the paranoia I harbor about potential errors or lapses in stories can only make me more thorough and, inevitably, better. I hope that's true. I know one thing, however: It's not good for my anxiety.) While that insecurity created enough pressure when I worked on a daily college newspaper, it's infinitely worse now that my stories have the potential to be read around the world.

Nerve-wracking as that is, I also know it's a good thing. After all, we write to be read.

The truth is, even though *Inside Higher Ed's* delivery platform would seem to suggest the company is technology-driven, it isn't (though that is something the editors want to eventually change). The website is only six years old with an editorial staff of five full-time reporters, two editors and a new intern each season. So, we don't really have the personnel to produce much multimedia content beyond the occasional podcast. Plus, with our national scope, there

aren't a lot of opportunities. So, rather than rely on the hot new media trends, we lean on the reporting fundamentals: truth, accuracy, value to the reader and the world.

I really did little, but more, multimedia work in college, and to be honest, I was never a huge fan of it. I still prefer to consume my news by reading it. But in journalism school we were required to explore some coverage with video, audio and photo tools that have emerged as media technology has evolved. Also, throughout my time at the *Oregon Daily Emerald*, the independent student newspaper at the Universi-



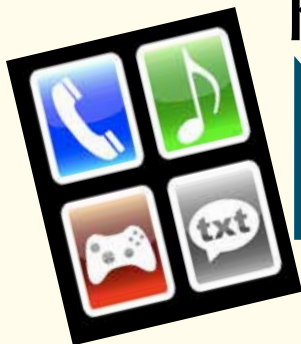
ty of Oregon, the website became a bigger focus with each year that passed. I didn't produce much multimedia content myself — neither during my first two years as a higher education reporter nor in my third or fourth as managing editor and editor in chief, respectively, but I did begin thinking about ways to use such technology to enhance our storytelling. Still, because of my focus on — and really, my bias toward — the craft of writing, I know I never paid it the attention it deserved.

I wanted to write for a large metropolitan daily newspa-

per, not a website. I just didn't see the appeal. Even though I have come around, there are, admittedly, things I miss about the newspaper business. I miss the teamwork. I miss creating a complete, physical product from scratch. I miss the puzzle of writing display text on different page layouts. But the Internet offers things that newspapers don't: instantaneous feedback, a more diverse readership, tracking analytics and, of course, the aforementioned reach and sharing of content. And the most important part of all — the reporting — besides being more remote, really isn't all that different. We still need to think critically, ask the right questions, understand context, engage with people and write compelling, honest stories. I have come to accept that the Internet does not hinder journalism. It enhances it.

In journalism, every day brings a new surprise. While I have no idea where I'll go from here, I wouldn't mind putting my bachelor's degree minor in environmental studies to use by doing in-depth reporting in that field. The health of the environment is relevant to everyone, and there's no better platform to spread that message than the worldwide web.

In college, the Internet was my foe. A year out, it's my best friend.



Keeping up with the MILLENNIALS

**By
Tiffany Woods**

With camera, laptop and Photo-shop guidebook in hand, a print journalist embarks on a quest to become a multimedia specialist.

It's 2 a.m. on a weekend and I'm tired and frustrated. I'm at home, staring at my laptop, trying to figure out why the margins on the website I'm building aren't spacing correctly. I've scrutinized the code for missing semicolons. I've validated it. I've changed the pixels. I don't know what else to do. I just want to go to bed. Why am I torturing myself like this?

I'm doing it because I want to learn new skills to survive in the changing world of journalism. I've spent the past 15 years work-

ing as a reporter, magazine editor, and now, public relations specialist. My writing has paid my bills, but I don't want to be a one-trick pony, outmatched by competitors half my age as multimedia skills become increasingly important. I want to be versatile, able to produce videos, shoot high-quality photos and make websites.

I haven't sat in a college classroom since 1994, but here



I am in Beginning Web Authoring, surrounded by Millennials, who were practically born with cell phones in their hands and iPods as umbilical cords. Computers were never my thing. But as frustrating as this class can be, I'm surprised to find myself enjoying it.

I like the problem-solving.

My brain hasn't thought like this since high school calculus. Every night, as soon as I get home from work, I turn on my computer and sit for hours, creating tables and style sheets, resizing photos, making menus and floating boxes, adding hyperlinks, embedding audio files and learning to use Adobe Dreamweaver.

I hardly cook. I lose weight. I bore my friends with talk about IDs, absolute paths, HTML tags and CSS syntax. And four mornings a week, I show up to class always

afraid, afraid I won't be able to do what the instructor asks for the next assignment. But the overachiever in me comes through; I earn an A. And this is by a person who doesn't own a cell phone, hasn't used an iPod, and at the time, hadn't ever sent a text message.

Two terms later, I enroll in a photography class on campus. Soon I'm experimenting with depth of field, shutter speed, ISO, white balance and photo editing software. Each week is a different assignment. I photograph dogs at an obedience school and neighborhood cats, then spend an entire weekend with a book on Photoshop at my side, making an image of raining cats and dogs.

I pay a model \$65 and photograph her naked with a lampshade on her head. I dress a friend up in a red boa and fishnets and shoot her leaning against a lamppost in a film noir style. I shoot my mother pretending to be a dog peeing on a fire hydrant. I spend a day at the farmers market, clicking away at eggplants and brussels sprouts and shoppers with their dogs. At night, I roam dumpster-lined alleys, rain-splashed sidewalks and quiet railroad tracks, alone. But I do not feel like a loner. My tripod and camera make me feel normal, and oddly, invisible. I am not an oddball walking in self-absorbed thought, someone others might feel sorry for. I have a purpose.

Another term, I enroll in a video production class. More weekly assignments. I film my tango class and persuade my co-workers to pretend to be players in a poker tournament. I recruit international students on campus to appear in a 30-second public service announcement about the university. I film vet med students with their arms up the birth canals of dairy cows. (You can find footage of the dairy cows — minus the pregnancy checks — on the web



at <http://bit.ly/ezSHgE> as well as videos about snooks and the spotted wing drosophila at <http://bit.ly/gAOqDP> and <http://bit.ly/fSAfOi>.)

A year later, I sign up for video editing. Each week, the instructor flies through a different software program: Final Cut Pro, Motion, Soundtrack Pro, DVD Studio Pro, Compressor. Meanwhile, the guy next to me watches NBA games on his computer. Video editing appeals to me. I'm a detail-oriented person. Just like when I'm writing and searching for the right word, it's easy to lose myself in fine-tuning audio levels and selecting just the right endpoints

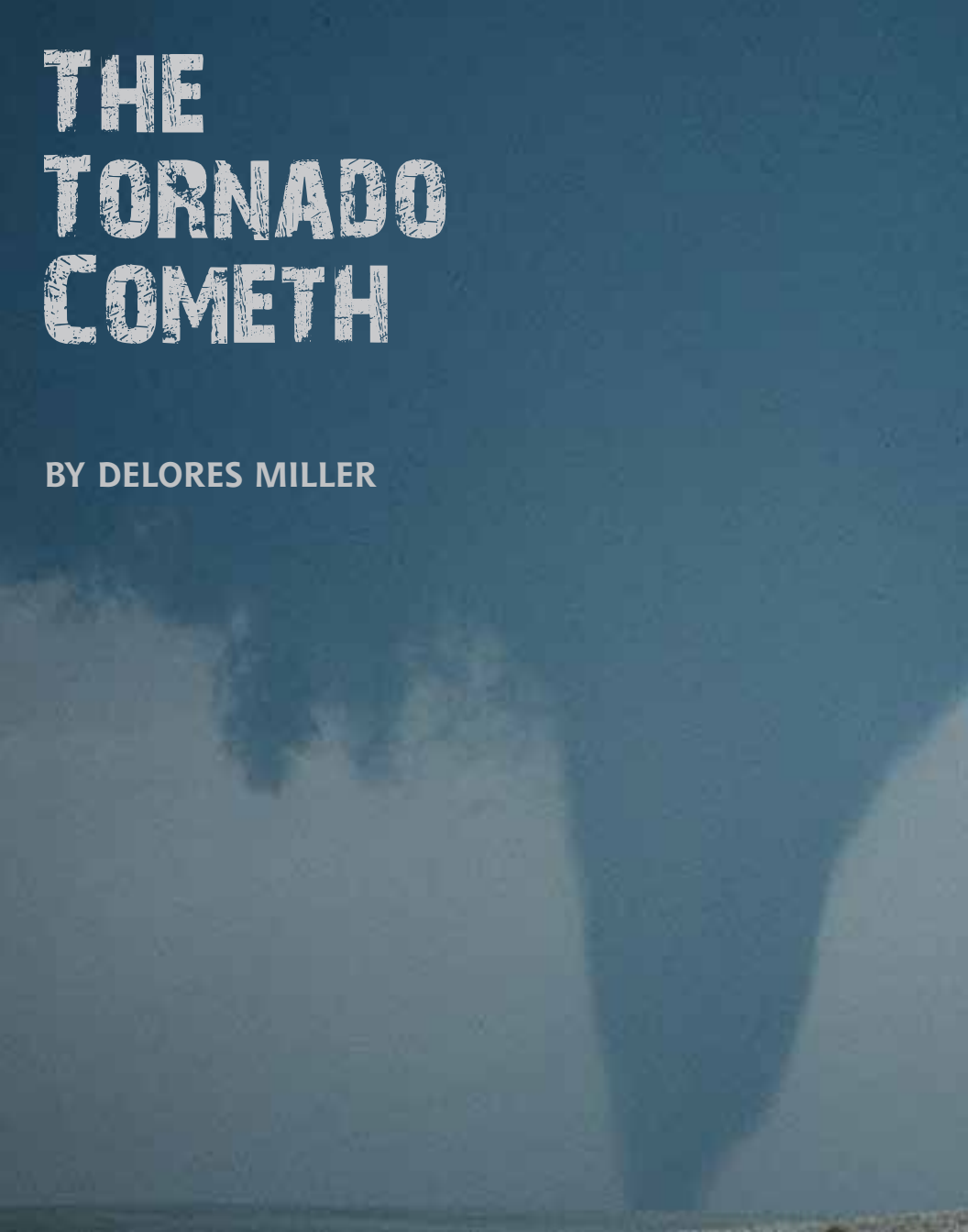
on a clip. The hours slip by. I love to see it all come together, the same as when I'm writing an article. For my final project, I produce a DVD that's an interactive portfolio of my work, showcasing my videos, writing, editing and photos.

The last two years have suddenly come together on this one disc. The late nights, the hair-pulling, the four-hour evening class, the homework, the anxiety, the lost weekends. It was all worth it. I'm still a writer at heart though. Will that always be how I earn my bread and butter? I don't know. That decision could be out of my control. The job market and the changing industry will dictate that. But what I do know is that I enjoy the creativity involved with producing videos, slide shows and photos. In the end, whether I'm putting words on a page or putting images on a screen, my goal is the same: to tell a story.



THE TORNADO COMETH

BY DELORES MILLER





Sunday, April 10, 2011, was a beautiful spring day, temperature 75 degrees. My husband Russell and I worked around the yard all day cleaning debris that had collected over winter. Yes, the weather channel on television said tornadoes were in the forecast, but then April is Wisconsin tornado season. We were not worried.

Dark boiling swirling clouds came from the southwest. Sporadic rain, constant rumbling thunder and lightning. Tornado sirens kept blowing. I was watching TV at about 7:30 p.m. when Russell screamed to get in the basement.

Whistling greenish wind went past the house in about 15 seconds. All was destroyed and blown away. We had no time to hover or hide in the basement. Electricity went off, the power poles and lines had tipped on the highway by the force of the wind.

All our farm buildings had a rolled, crimped metal type roof. The wind tore this off in pieces first and flung them into the power lines, over the road, over the hills,



A tornado destroyed a 40x143 barn, a 4-plus stall garage and a hog house on the Russell and Delores farm where they have lived for 34 years. They were in the house 50 feet from the path of the storm. This was a working 100-acre dairy farm until 1993. The Millers still "make hay" each summer on 79 acres and a 30-home subdivision is located nearby.

on neighbors' houses and as far away as a mile. Next, the wind took the roof boards off the barn and garage and hurled them in sheets over a half-mile radius.

Then the rain came down, about 2 inches within 15 minutes. That stopped and the moon and stars came out. The Hortonville Fire Department worked its way to our area



and checked on all our neighbors and us to make sure we were alive. No one had electricity. Everyone was in shock. We gathered in a small open area, and jokingly said we were all alive. With our flashlights. The fire-

fighters forbade us to walk around in the dark as our power lines were lying in water in the yard, and some may have had electricity.

Because we in Wisconsin have basements, and in the spring have sump pumps to foist the water outside in a big hose. With no power, 3-4 inches of water backed up flooding and covering the floor.

It was no sleep that night. We crowded around our candles, reading the insurance papers to see what was covered. It seems we have adequate insurance.

In ten hours daylight came like always, but before the sunrise, neighbors came and started picking up debris,

stacking it in piles. Fifteen to 20 people worked like beavers, many strangers, helped clean up. Food came, a thermos of strong good coffee, a loaf of bread, honey, eggs. More food, plates of homemade cookies. A roasted chicken, egg salad, carrot cake. More cookies. More cakes, meat loaf, milk, bread, candy bars, all wandered in our house from strangers. This is Wisconsin hospitality.

All of our farm equipment was damaged: hay wagons, Oliver tractor, 300 bales of hay, tools, grandchildren's toys, Myrt Hanson's typewriter, Frances Spiegel's dresser. Most valuable was Regina Mauel's 100-year-old Fernwood piano.

Because we had ordered new carpet and congoleum in the house, we had moved much of our furniture and antiques in the garage only to have the tornado blow it all away. One must not become too attached to material possessions.

The last week in March, Keith, Russ and I went to Washington, D.C. to see the Marine Corps Museum and other sites, traveling 2,000 miles in our 2-year-old Ford Taurus. Came home, parked in the garage, and the tornado crushed the Taurus, my little Ford Focus and our two pickup trucks. Only the Focus is drivable, but it has many bumps and bruises. Our two riding lawn mowers were smashed, one a new Sears Craftsman. Our 300-gallon overhead gasoline tank rolled around with wind.

Finally found enough batteries and gasoline to get the generator started to pump out the basement and to run the refrigerator. Neighbors shared their precious generators and gasoline to help others pump their water. No neighbors went to work that Monday, saying they had no electricity or hot water to shower so stayed to help clean up. What wonderful people.

Later we found out that the tornado was traveling about 25 miles per hour with five fingers. The inside wind traveled at 140 miles per hour. So the path on our farm was about 500 feet, and it took 2 to 5 seconds to destroy all the buildings.

We called all of our children to say we had problems on the farm, which needless to say, was an understatement. Monday four of them, schoolteachers, came to help and give support. Grandchildren made sandwiches, offered to whomever. And they manned the telephones. Richard in Boston began calling for legal advice and cleanup workers.

The town chairman, building inspector and fire chief came to give us advice, burning permits, permission. People picked up iron for scrap metal. More cookies, cakes, potato soup, mac and cheese.

A friend sent a poem:

*This wish is meant to give you the kind of support
That comes from those who care about you*

*And to let you know you're thought of
And wished the best.*

The plan now is to hire salvage crews to reclaim the barn boards and beams and rafters. Eventually the concrete, silos and stonewalls will be buried and we no longer will have farm buildings. So be it.

Meanwhile, work begins and an assessment of what the future brings for us old people. We believe the Lord has a plan for us all. We were within inches of being sucked into the tornado. The Lord must have work for us here yet, or else the paint was not dry in our Mansion he is preparing for us in Heaven.

Never underestimate the power of a tornado.



Authors

Kelly Parsons

Kelly Parsons is a sophomore journalism and political science major at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and sports editor at *The Daily Tar Heel*. The aspiring journalist will intern for the Durham Bulls and ACC *Sports Journal* this summer and one day hopes to be a beat writer for a college team. She enjoys spending time with her family, watching movies and rooting for the Florida State Seminoles. Parsons and her sister, Meghan, are members of the American Amateur Press Association, and the two publish their journal, *another flimsie excuse*, for the monthly bundles. You can follow her on Twitter @_kellyparsons or reach her by [e-mail](#).



Jordan Eddy

Jordan Eddy is a University of Oregon junior studying journalism and Spanish. His journalism career began in high school, where he was assistant editor-in-chief of his school newspaper. Eddy also wrote for the 20Below column in his hometown daily *The Register-Guard* in Eugene, Ore. This work inspired him to study journalism at the University of Oregon with a focus on a magazine career. While in college, he has written for *Ethos Magazine* and the *Comic Press* and has interned for the weekly *Springfield Times*. Eddy is also a four-time marathoner, a Presidential Scholarship recipient and an Eagle Scout. [Email Jordan](#).



Allie Grasgreen

Allie Grasgreen is a student affairs reporter at *Inside Higher Ed*, a free, daily



website publishing national higher education news out of Washington, D.C. She graduated from the University of Oregon in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in journalism, focusing on news/editorial and magazine with a minor in environmental studies, and was editor of the national award-winning student newspaper, the *Oregon Daily Emerald*, her senior year. Previously, Allie interned at *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Inside Higher Ed*. She has no idea what her journalistic future will bring, and she likes that, but she hopes to return to the West Coast before too many years pass. [Email Allie.](#)

Tiffany Woods



After completing a print media journalism degree at the University of Oregon, Tiffany Woods spent nine months perfecting her Spanish in Barcelona, Spain, then worked for several newspapers, became a freelance writer in Lima, Peru, and eventually joined Reuters as a reporter in Santiago, Chile. After returning to the United States, she was an editor for *The Rotarian* magazine. Today, she is a public service communications specialist at Oregon State University in Corvallis.

Delores Miller



An article written by Delores Miller about Wisconsin farms appeared in the first issue of *Author's Bazaar* last September. This month Delores explains how a tornado destroyed the barn on a farm she and her husband Russell own. You can read other accounts about farm life in Farmer Miller, a hobby journal she publishes. [Email Delores.](#)