

Author's **BAZAAR** ONLINE

September 2010 ■ No.1

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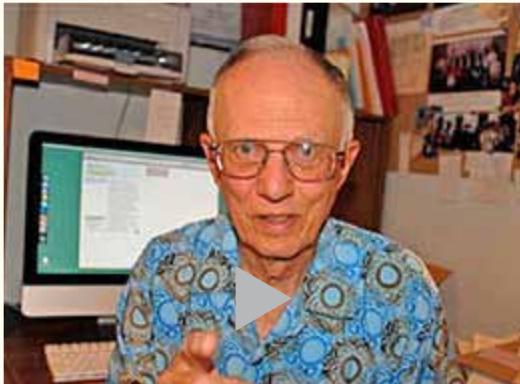
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What is Author's Bazaar all about?

Editor Dean Rea gives us the lowdown.

(Click on his photo.)



Author's Bazaar publication schedule

The precise publication schedule of *Author's Bazaar* is yet to be determined.

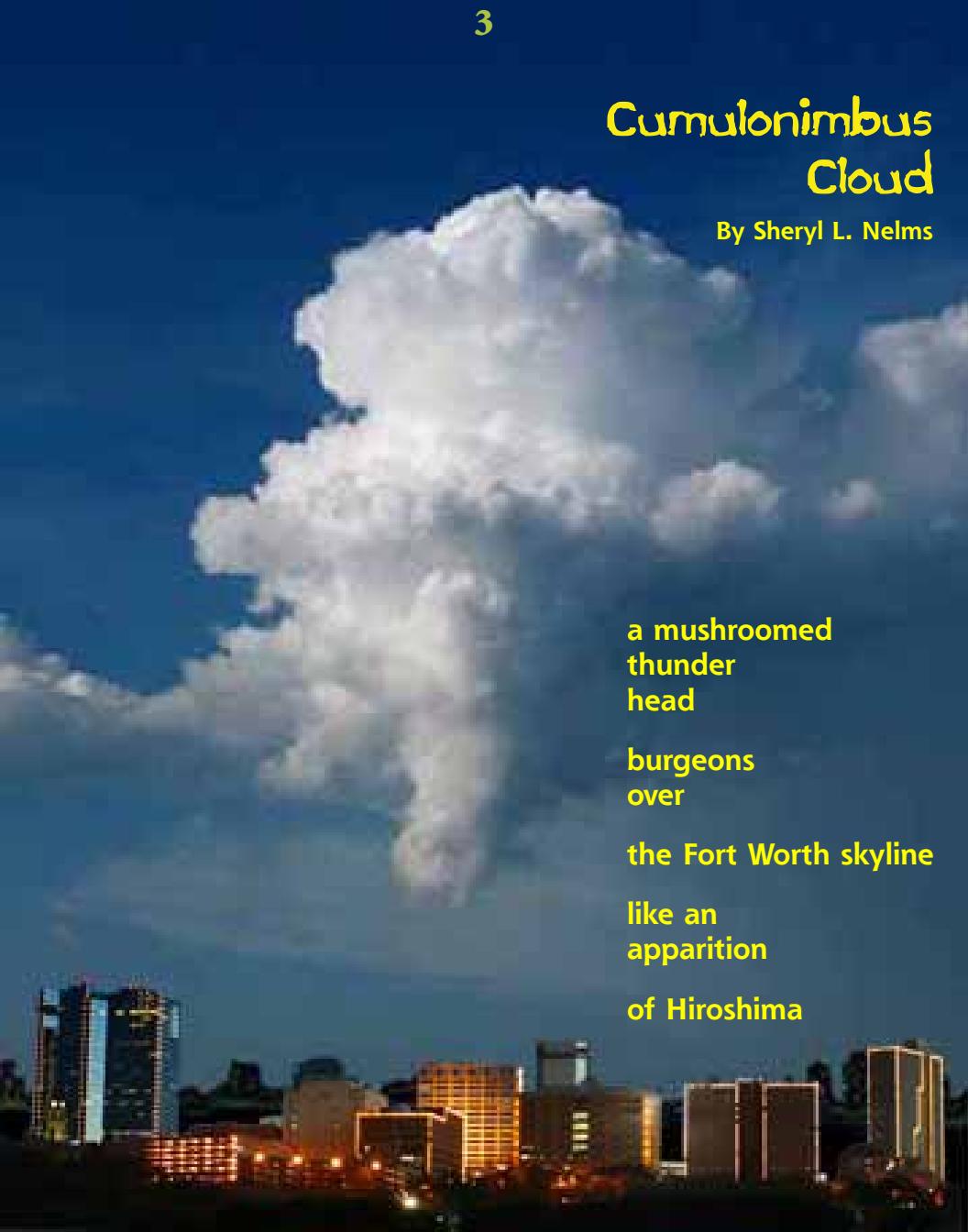
AAPA members will receive a notice of publication in the AAPA ALERT.

Those who are not members of AAPA can have their e-mail addresses placed with us and will be notified when each issue is published. Your addresses will be used strictly for this purpose and no other.

To be placed on this list, send your request to: *Author's Bazaar*.

Cumulonimbus Cloud

By Sheryl L. Nelms

A large, white, mushroom-shaped cumulonimbus cloud rises from a city skyline at night. The city lights are visible at the bottom, and the sky is dark blue. The cloud has a dense, textured base and a lighter, more diffused top.

a mushroomed
thunder
head

burgeons
over

the Fort Worth skyline

like an
apparition

of Hiroshima



Wisconsin farms THEN & NOW

Delores and Russell added their last name to the barn after they purchased their Wisconsin farm 33 years ago. Wind took the board off the barn in the spring. Old Surge milker buckets are perched on top of milk cans.

Wisconsin has been known as America's Dairyland since it first became a state in 1848. The Irish came first, followed by the Germans. Pamphlets were printed

BY DELORES MILLER

and sent back to Germany, promising emigrants land and climate similar to Germany.

Whole villages packed up and came about 1880. They found a land covered in trees. Log buildings were constructed. Often as many as twelve people lived in these primitive hovels. It certainly was not an improvement from what they had in Germany. It was 25 years before they could build a frame or brick house.

They brought with them their Lutheran religion. Log churches where marriages, confirmations and finally funerals were held. Someone donated three acres for a cemetery. One-room school houses. Very few students went on to high school or to universities.

This was a close-knit community. Intermarriages, including my parents, who were first cousins. The first years, wheat was planted, but soon disease and blight tarnished and rusted the crop. Timothy hay, oats and corn were planted, fields rotated each year. Holstein and Guernsey

dairy cows. Pigs, chickens, ducks, sheep furnished additional income.



Cheese factories sprung up, farmers hauled milk and cream, and in turn they received a small check, plus all the butter and cheese they could eat.

Eighty acres was the size of most farms. Heavy dark soil. Plenty of rocks, which the frost heaved every spring and had to be picked. In turn, these rocks were used for barn and house walls. Nothing was ever wasted on a farm. Manure was spread on the fields and gardens. Berry patches, apple and cherry orchards. Huge gardens, potatoes, carrots, sweet corn, etc. furnished the food for the large families. A forty-acre woodlot furnished wood for heaters, maple trees with their sap boiled down for syrup.

I grew up in a setting like this in the mid-1940s. Seventy years ago. Now my nephew, Bruce, has this same farm, only he farms differently. No hard manual labor. He does everything the easy way. Pastures cows, winter and summer, round bales of hay, bunk silos hold chopped corn, a manure pit to be pumped on the fields once a year. Huge John Deere tractors. However Bruce and his young family live in this 100-year-old house, which needs replacing. Bruce says there is not enough money.

So, then because my home economics teacher told us high school girls to marry rich farmers, some of us did only to find out how hard the work was.

Russ and I have farmed for over 50 years. Holstein Dairy Cows, 120-acre farm, same crops: corn, oats, alfalfa hay. The five children helped. We



couldn't have done the work ourselves. Alas, they grew up, kicked their heels, shook the manure off their feet and went on to universities. All five have their master's degrees; three are in the education field; the other two in private industry. No longer will they milk cows or bale hay.

And what of Russell and Delores who are 78 and 72 you ask? We reflect back on a good life well spent. Found out this last year that we are too old to bale hay and may let it go to seed.

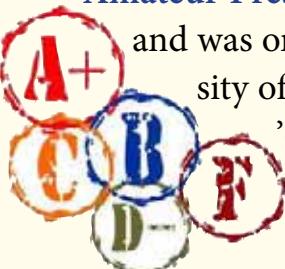


BY ROSS CARLETTA

Writing was never my strong suit. Ask Dean Rea.

Dean is a long-time member of the **American Amateur Press Association**

and was one of my journalism professors at the University of Montana in Missoula. I'm from the Class of '65.



He still has his grade books from that time, and I'll bet I never got more than a C grade in any of his reporting classes.

After college, I started my newspaper career as a reporter. I was a laborious writer. I can remember more than once peering over my typewriter at my city editor as he impatiently glared back minutes before deadline. I'd be sweating BBs. This was not fun.

I spent the better part of 1966-'67 in Vietnam as something the Army called a combat reporter. That wasn't any fun either.

After I returned home and resumed my newspaper career, I switched to the copy desk as soon as I could. I was a

Writing for the AAPA

much better copy editor, headline writer and page designer than reporter/writer.

A few years ago, I wrote a biography of a friend who was killed in Vietnam. I learned from that six-year project that I could write. The copyediting skills I'd honed improving the writing of other people had improved my own writing.

I let Dean read the biography. He decided it suggested I could write. I think he was surprised. Then he told me about the AAPA. Would I like to write for it?

Well, now, isn't this interesting? I thought. Here's my ex-prof who gave me nothing but mediocre grades all through college now asking if I'd write for the AAPA.

With Dean's urging and sponsorship – including the \$15 membership fee – I joined the AAPA and wrote about a guitar I'd recently purchased and my efforts to play it; I wrote about my first newspaper job as a reporter in the Butte, Mont.; I wrote about fly fishing in Idaho; I wrote about my cowboy days working on Idaho cattle ranches. Some appeared in Dean's hobby journal *Oregun* while others appeared in Lee Hawes' journal *Gator Growl*.

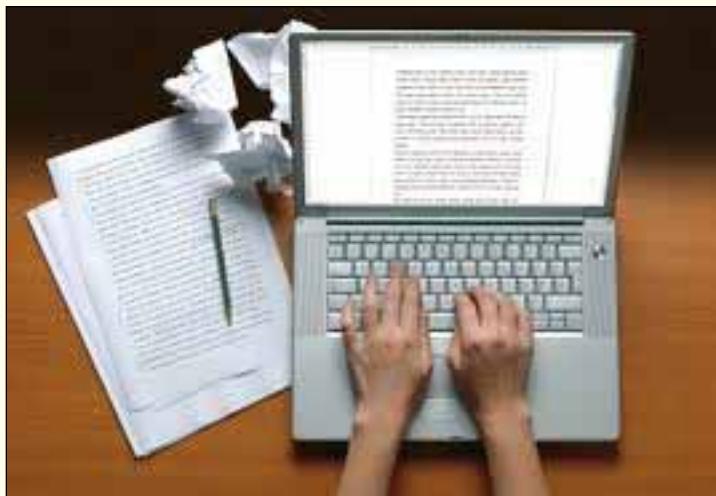
For the first time in a long while, I'm having fun writing. This isn't reporting, and I don't have to deal with deadlines or glaring city editors. This is creative writing, an opportunity to write about things I know and care about.

I know Dean and Lee were happy to get the stories. I don't know much about how things work at the AAPA, but I would guess finding things to publish can be difficult.

I don't know anything about the people who run the association either. But it seems to be a good place to come if you like to write and like to see your stuff in print. It certainly opens your work to a wide audience,

Don't expect to get paid – not even a penny a word. In fact, to get anything published, you have to pay the AAPA the \$15 annual membership fee. So, why do this? Why join the AAPA?

For one thing, it's fun. You'll meet new people with a similar interest, you'll gain support and story ideas, peo-



ple all over the country will be reading your stuff and you might even learn something about yourself.

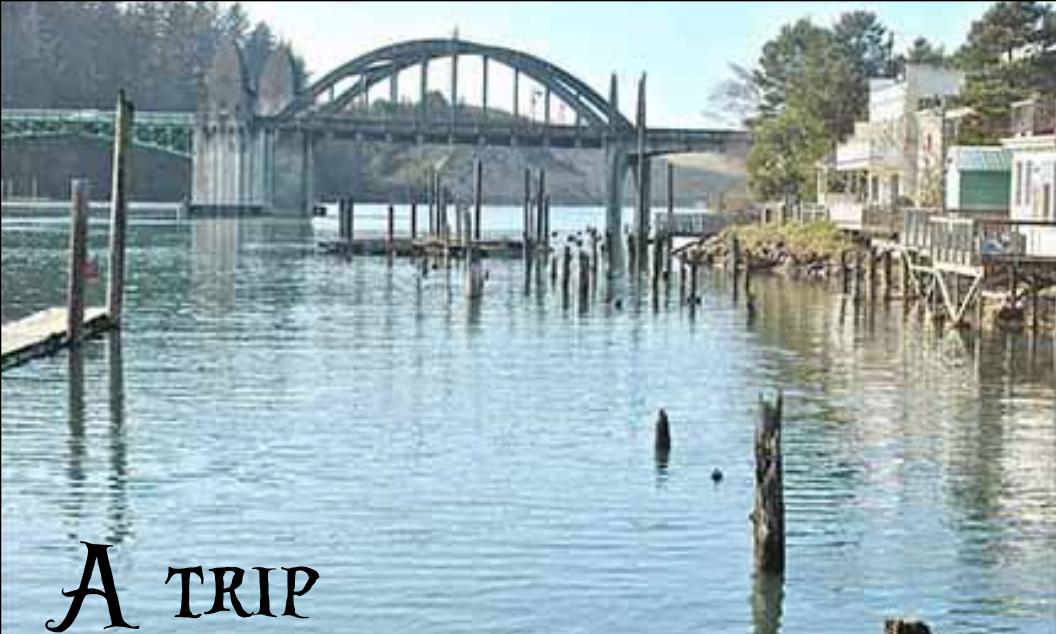
Writing has power. Strange things happen when you write. You might become reacquainted with people from your past. I learned this recently.

I offered Dean a story called “Combat Reporter,” which was part of my ongoing treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

After Dean published it, he and I received several e-mails from AAPA members praising the story and thanking me for writing it and Dean for publishing it. The responses surprise me. Apparently, the story touched people. I even recognized the name of one of the e-mailers.

The name I recognize is a former newspaper managing editor. In the early '70s, a few years after I had mustered out of the Army, a time long before I knew about PTSD or that I had it, a time when I was lost and was mentally more in Vietnam than back in The World, I'd applied for a job at his paper. During the interview, he could see that I was a mess. He didn't hire me. He did the right thing.

As I think back on that interview, I wonder: If he is reading this, do I ring a bell?



A TRIP TO THE OREGON Coast

Diners who chow down on chowder at Mo's café are treated to this view of Florence, Ore., near the Pacific Ocean. The café that sits atop pilings is a popular stopping place for visitors who fish for salmon in the Siuslaw River, walk a sandy beach in search of driftwood or view migrating whales from the rugged coastline. (Photos by Dean Rea)



(above) Much of Oregon's coastline is rugged, and the Pacific Ocean water is too cold for swimming even during the summer. (left) Dead sea lions wash up occasionally on beaches. This object, however, is a piece of driftwood.

Click on photos for enlargement.

The Knife

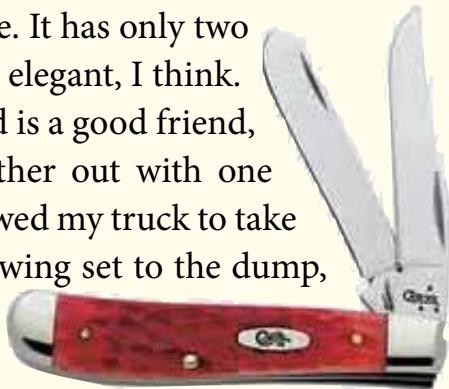
BY DAVID GRIFFIN

Sometimes I feel bad about it. Old Willard is such a nice guy. It must have been 20 years ago that I stole his knife. There's no other word for it. I stole it.

I tried pretending I was going to give it back, and frankly I would have at one time. But eventually I realized I was never going to return the knife. So, I didn't borrow it, and Willard didn't loan it to me. I stole it.

I've always wanted that kind of knife ever since I was a kid. Larger than a penknife, Willard's is just the right size to fit in my pocket. The smooth wood sides of walnut make it a handsome looking piece. It has only two blades, so it's slim and even elegant, I think.

But I feel so bad. Willard is a good friend, and we often help each other out with one chore or another. He borrowed my truck to take his granddaughter's rusty swing set to the dump,



and the next day I found his knife on the floor near the brake pedal.

Twenty years is a long time. I'm sure he doesn't miss the knife, or he would have asked me about it. If I tell him now, he'll have good reason to resent my not getting around to mentioning it — for two decades. He'll get pissy, like the time I forgot to pick him up after the Fish and Game Club meeting. He had to call his wife for a ride, and she was already in her nightie. That's a thought I won't dwell on.

Willard can get sort of nasty when he feels he's been

wronged. He has not spoken to his next-door neighbor for 10 years, just because the guy had a loud party once.

And I saw Willard almost get violent last summer with his wife's dog



when the poor pooch pooped in the back seat of his new car.

Ya know, people who are nasty and violent shouldn't

be allowed to have weapons. And I should have never allowed him to borrow my truck in the first place. He probably dropped the knife as he was getting ready to throw it at another driver.

Willard is lucky to be without that knife. Think of the trouble he would have gotten himself into. He'd be in jail by now for some offense. Then he wouldn't be allowed a fork or a spoon, let alone a knife.

Sometimes you just have to go against your honest nature to protect your home and family, or even to protect a friend from himself. It's a terrible affliction of anger poor Willard has, and I won't be adding to his temptations by giving his knife back very soon. After all, what are friends for?



OK, Full Disclosure. I made this up. I gave Willard his knife back many years ago. He didn't recognize it, and so I began to wish I'd kept it. Every once in a while I ask Willard when he's going to give me back the knife he borrowed.

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Authors



Sheryl L. Nelms has written more than 5,000 poems, many of which are described as “tasting of earth” and “emanating from deep family roots.” She is an AAPA laureate winner and can be reached at this [e-mail address](#).



Delores Miller received a special AAPA laureate award in 1990-91 for her continuing “down home” narrative in *Farmer Miller*, a hobby journal she publishes. Delores can be contacted at this [e-mail address](#).



Ross Carletta is a retired newspaper journalist who won an AAPA prose non-fiction laureate in 2009-10 for his story, “Combat Reporter.” When he’s not fly-fishing, you can get in touch with him at his [e-mail address](#).



David Griffin, who won an AAPA prose fiction award in 2009-10, has written dozens of stories, a number of which appear in books. You can read more of his stories and learn about books he has published at his [web site](#). Dave can be contacted at this [e-mail address](#).