

# On the COVER

## “Horrible Devastation”

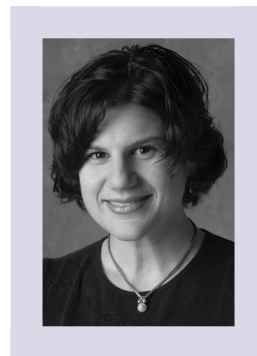
Jaime Oppenheimer, Staff Photographer, *Wichita Eagle*

I knew something must be wrong when my cellphone rang at 7 AM on Saturday, May 5, and my photo editor's name was on the caller ID. I hadn't scooped up the newspaper off the driveway or turned on the television, so I didn't know that an EF-5 tornado had demolished Greensburg.

My editor, Brian Corn, told me he needed me to catch a ride on a helicopter as soon as possible. Before lifting off from Augusta, KS, the pilot said that another storm was headed toward us and there was no guarantee that we'd actually make it to Greensburg without having to turn back.

We decided to take our chances.

Once we reached Greensburg, I had only 10 minutes to shoot pictures. In a short amount of time I was able to fire off about 400 frames. It was surreal. I didn't have time to fully grasp what I had seen during that brief adrenaline-filled, bumpy ride. When we landed, I was a very sour shade of yellow. I handed my disks to Brian, who edited them while I tried to regain my land legs. It wasn't until the next day, after seeing one of my photos run the width of the front page, that I fully understood the horrible devastation that had occurred.



*Editor's Note: The cover photograph for this issue was submitted not by a health care worker but a journalist. In the broadest sense and in keeping with the editorial philosophy of Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness, we welcome such input from the media and intend to reach out to this sector as a significant and important component of the overall public health preparedness and response system.*