

# Survivor Tales

IN DEEP WATER



Real-life story! And what you can do to be a survivor!

**This Survivor Tale is based on the real-life experiences of a disaster survivor.**

Our heartfelt thanks to those individuals who have shared their stories with us in the hope of helping others prepare to be survivors.

**Contributors:**

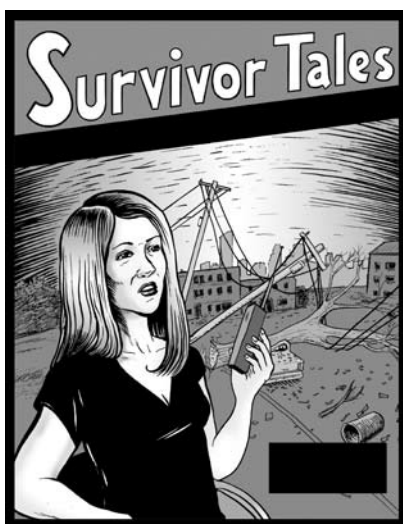
Developed by Public Health - Seattle & King County Advanced Practice Center

Story by Meredith Li-Vollmer

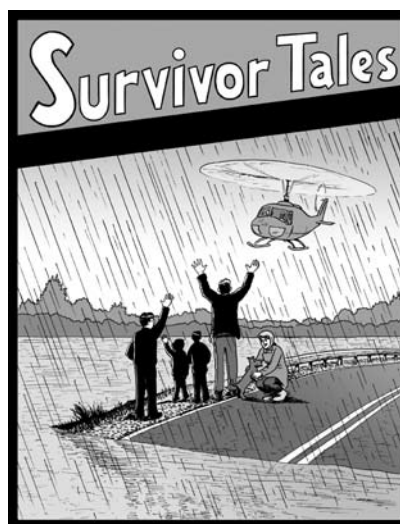
Artwork by David Lasky

Project management - Whitney Offenbecher and Jeff Boudreau

Read other Survivor Tales in this series:



**#1: Eye Over Houston**



**#2: In Deep Water**



**#3: Aftershocks**

# In Deep Water



December 2,  
2007.  
Adna,  
Washington.

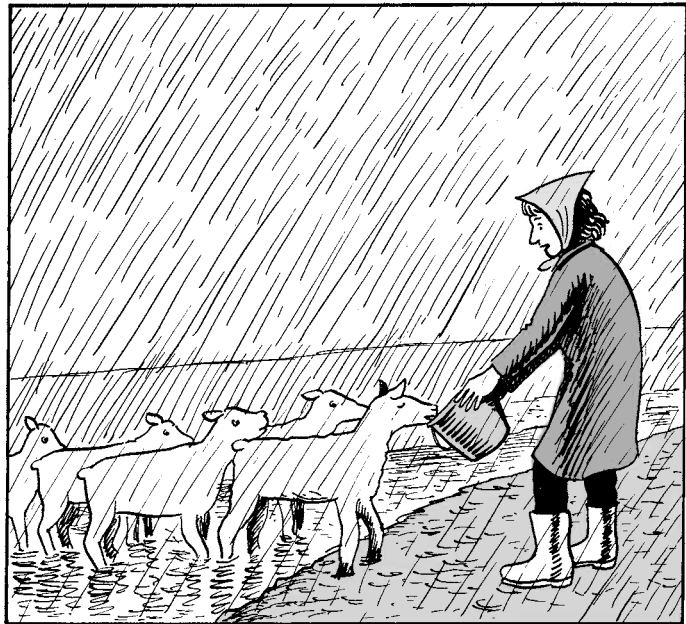
Living next to a river, you know that it rises, so you watch for signs. But it was impossible to predict just how fast and furious the river would rise this time.



Meg! The water is coming up pretty fast. I think I better get the kids from school!



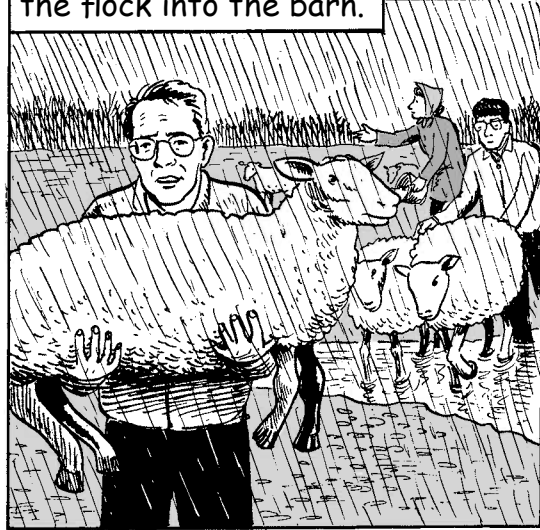
I'll get the sheep into the barn.



Such sweet relief when my husband Brad and the kids made it home!



With Brad and my oldest son helping, we carried and pushed most of the flock into the barn.



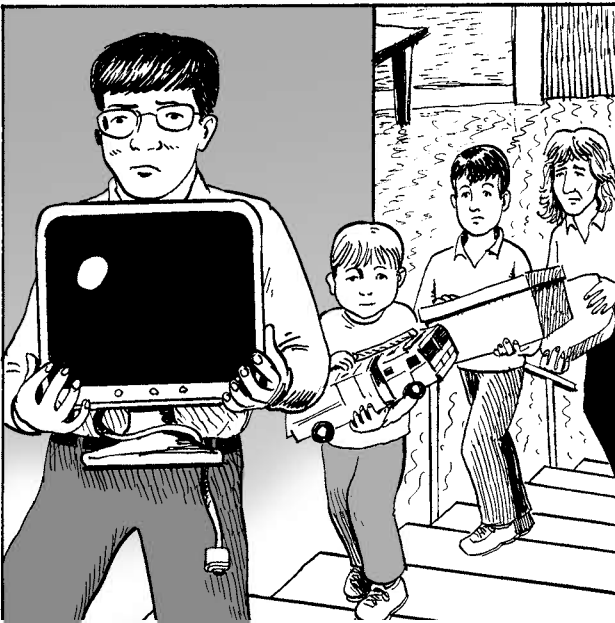
It felt good to warm up with a quick lunch. But soon we realized it was about to get much worse.



I've got to move the cars! They're in almost a foot of water!

But they were fine just 10 minutes ago!

Boys! Unplug the computer and let's start moving stuff upstairs!



I remembered to grab our most important documents, even though the file cabinets were too heavy to carry upstairs.



I shut off the electricity just in time. After that, everything went dark and cold.

We can't drive out. There's way too much water.

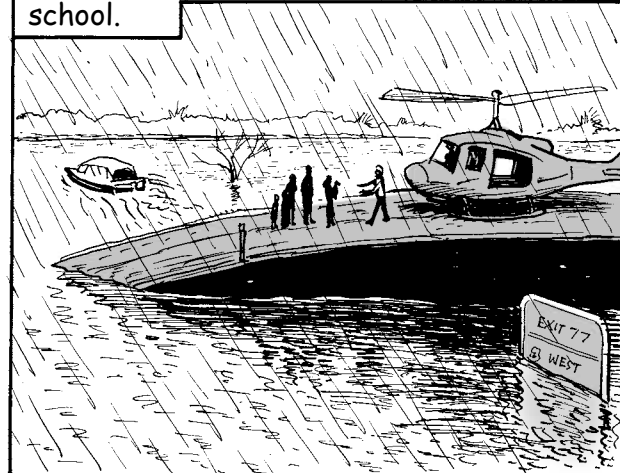
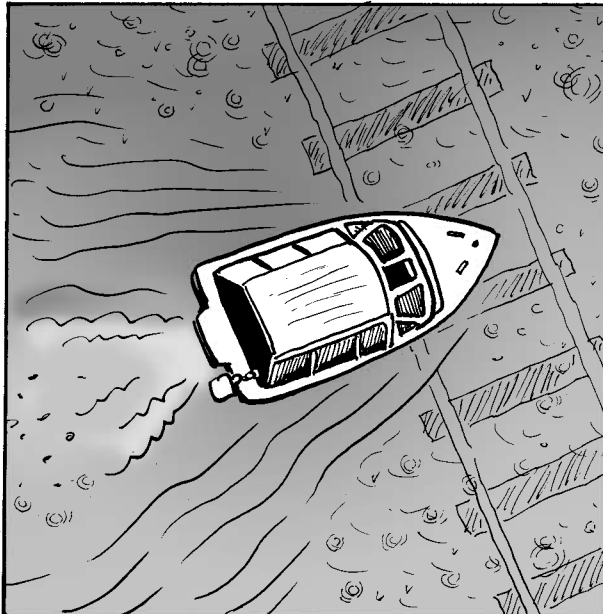
Then let's get upstairs where the boys are. The water is still rising!



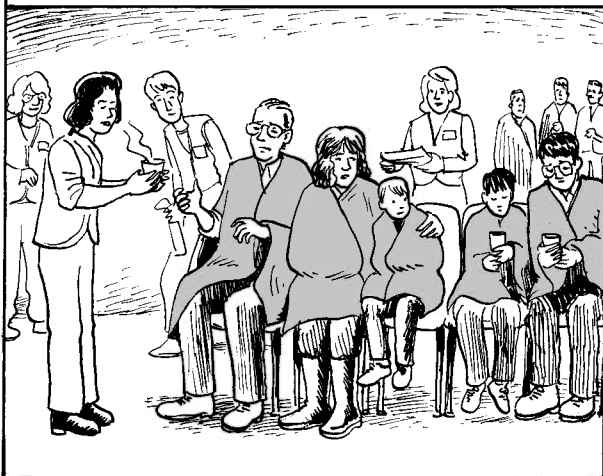
We were lucky that a rescue boat spotted us through the window.



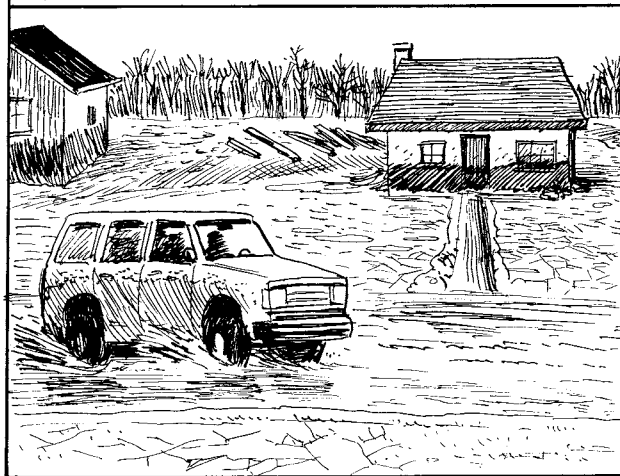
The rescue boat took us to a stretch of highway that managed to stay above water. From there, a helicopter picked us up and took us to a shelter at the elementary school.



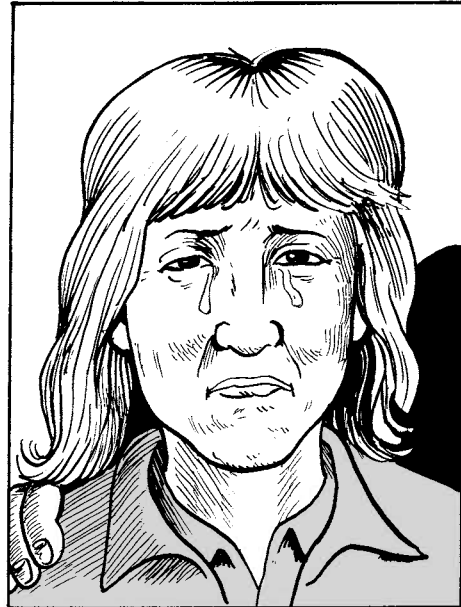
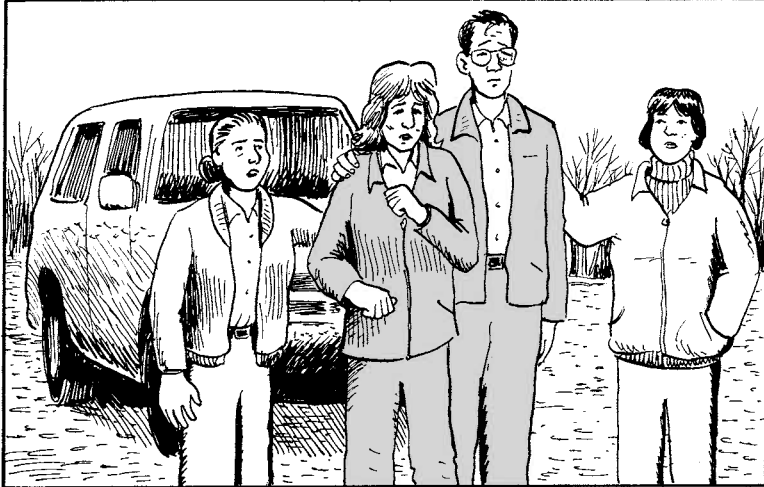
At the shelter, I was amazed at how many people were helping, bringing food, clothes and blankets and making sure we were comfortable.



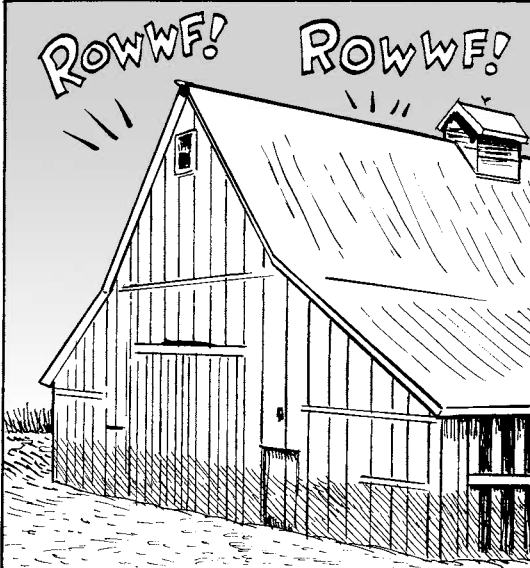
We weren't able to get back to our farm for a couple of days. On the way, we saw how every home in Adna had been damaged by the flood.



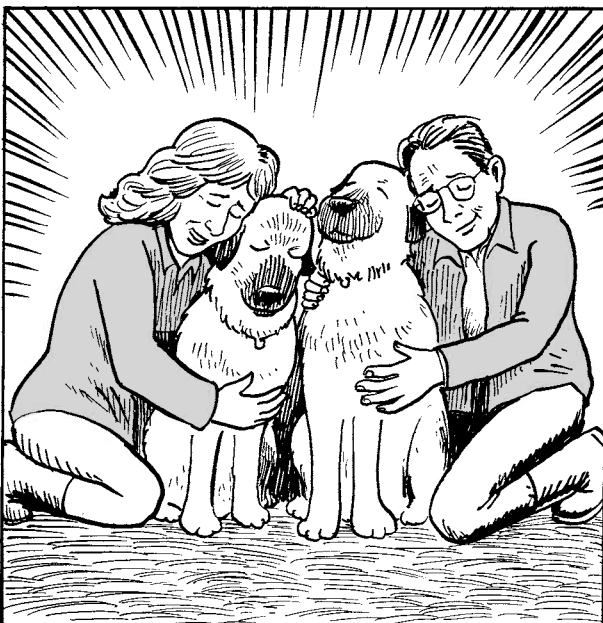
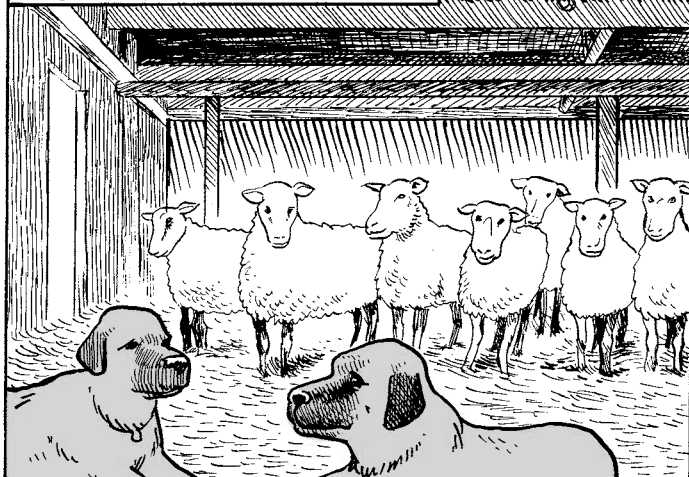
I felt numb when I saw what happened to our farm, especially the sight of all the sheep we had lost. Thankfully, my friends were there for support.



Then we heard a familiar sound.



Brutus and Jewel, our guard dogs, had bravely done their job. A small group of surviving sheep had been herded to the highest point in the barn.



Our house was still standing, but everything on the first floor was soaked and there was muck everywhere.



There was even more mud and muck all over the farm and inside the barn. Chemicals had also contaminated the mud and the well water.



And so the work of recovery began, and I learned how many wonderful people there are in the world.



The very first day, fifty people showed up to help us clean, and I didn't even know some of them!



My friend Laura was a gem. She figured out what needed to be done and coordinated all the volunteers.



Our phone lines and internet were out, so a friend living miles away became a communications hub for us.



Over the course of a year, over 500 people came to help us.  
Some were friends and neighbors, and some were strangers from out of town.



February, 2010.

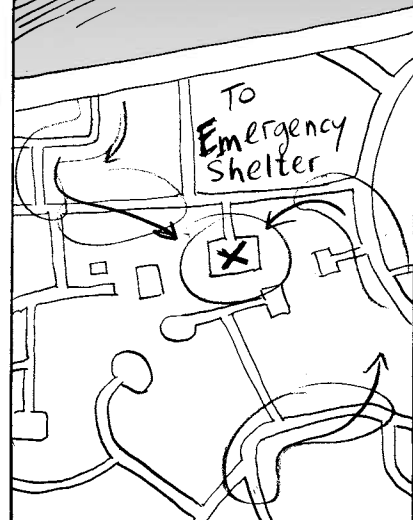
It's been a couple of years, but our farm is now back to full production.



If you live in a flood plain, I'd say you better consider the worst scenario. And get flood insurance!



Know what your escape routes are.



Keep your important documents and valuables in a safe place, up high.

I now put my important paperwork in plastic bags and store them in boxes that are easy to carry upstairs.



Plan for your pets. Find a safe place for them to stay, or take them with you if you must evacuate.

Store pet food and water in your emergency kit.



Learn how to shut off your water, gas, and electricity.



Children may need extra support. Share emergency plans with your kids.

Call Grandma if you're not with us when an emergency happens.



After a disaster, talk with children about their feelings. Let them know that you will be there to care for them.

I'm sorry all your books got ruined. It's OK to be upset.



And I learned how important it is to have my own support network.

You don't want to have to go through something like this,

but when you do, you learn that people are good.



# Get Ready to be a Survivor

## Make an emergency plan.

**Learn what hazards can cause disasters where you live.** Determine your family's needs and how you can survive these hazards. Consider the special needs of others, such as the elderly or persons with disabilities.

**Develop and practice a communications plan.** Would you know what to do if phone lines shut down? Have an out-of-state contact for family members to call if local lines don't work.

**Develop and practice an evacuation plan should you need to leave home.** Be ready to follow evacuation requests and orders issued by local leaders.

## Build an emergency kit.

This is a list of basic items for your kit. Add more when you can.

- Water (1 gallon per person per day)
- Nonperishable food (3-5 days of food per person)
- Clothes (1 change of clothes and shoes per person)
- Medications (3 days worth)
- Flashlight and batteries
- Can opener
- Battery powered radio and batteries
- Hygiene items (soap, toilet paper, toothbrush)
- First aid (bandages, antiseptic, nonprescription medicine)
- Blanket
- Special needs items such as extra eyeglasses, charged batteries for wheelchairs and hearing aids, pet food, diapers

## Get involved.

For more information about getting ready for emergencies:

American Red Cross

*redcross.org*

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

*ready.gov*

Centers for Disease Control

*cdc.gov*

Federal Emergency Management Agency

*fema.gov*

Public health planning resources for communities:

Seattle & King County Advanced Practice Center

*www.apctoolkits.com*

NACCHO Advanced Practice Center (APC)

*www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/APC/index.cfm*

Developed by Public Health – Seattle & King County Advanced Practice Center

The Advanced Practice Centers Program is coordinated and managed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and receives its funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under Award Number 1H75TP000309-01. The contents of this publication are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of CDC.

