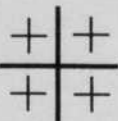


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**Miles of thanks to those who helped this Duck find feathers**

2,250 miles. That's how far it is to my next home — my next university — in the great state of Illinois.

As a high-school junior, I remember calling my friends the day I decided to become a Duck and telling them, "I'm growing feathers." I suppose that would make the stage I'm going through now something like molting. And that's just what it feels like — an awkward time of change and loss.

Graduates — seasoned veterans of the Oregon University System — we've all experienced this before, and we signed up for another step. A step we probably hoped would get us further or higher or simply make us better. Why else would we invest so much for so long? At 21, I'm a stronger, smarter, happier person than when I moved here from the mountains of north Idaho four years ago, and there are a few thanks I need to give for that.

To my mother: You have always

been two parents in one. You have sacrificed so much to bring me here, to make my life better, to give me opportunities I would have otherwise not had. You are a great, beautiful, strong woman. I love you, my rock.

To my grandfather: Thank you for stepping into my life in a major way. You have taught me some interesting life-lessons and have been a reliable force in making my education happen.

To my best friend: You have brought such happiness into my life. Your humor, work ethic, optimism — and most importantly, your love — have made me a better (more sports-loving) person. See you in Chicago, baby.

To my adviser: John Russial, you were the person I called when I was accepted for my first major newspaper internship and needed advice. You have been a trusted adviser for me and for many other students and a major contributor to my academic success.

To Professor Dean Rea: You're a

legend in journalism. Thank you for your newsroom stories and for getting me into a courthouse to stretch my reporting comfort zone. The immense effort you put into your teaching shines every time you step into a classroom.

To the Oregon Daily Emerald: The most powerful positive influence over my time at the University and over my career path. The more I know about newspapers, the more I see just how great this paper is. This campus is lucky to have such a talented, professional staff working on the paper every day. Thank you for the late nights and for the mountains of personal growth. And thank you for letting me sit at the helm this year. It was a wonderful experience.

And to the 2005 University graduates: Good luck. I know how you feel as you also shed your feathers and get ready to leave, but not forget, this place. I can only hope you have been able to take as much away from your experiences and have had such wonderful people with which to share them.



JEN SUDICK  
HEADING EAST

**Asbury: Sailing, ad work, Emerald all A-OK**

Continued from page 19B

Again, I underestimated the change I was about to face. Being from Portland, it was my understanding that Eugene was just a southern extension of the city I grew up with. Sure, the streets were probably a bit less crowded. It would be harder to get a burger at 3 a.m. These things I expected. What I didn't expect, though, was the intense variety of like-minded people I would meet.

I joined the sailing team and learned

how to talk like a skipper. Incidentally, I also learned how to drink like one. Trips all over the West Coast showed me the warmth and camaraderie that exists between teammates.

Following the misery that was Info Hell, I was admitted to the school of journalism. Somehow I was chosen to participate on Ad Team, a small group of advertising students selected to build a campaign and compete against other schools. The experience and practice gained by learning skills with other quality students will last me the

rest of my life.

Working at the Oregon Daily Emerald, sailing for the school and building an ad campaign out of nothing were the biggest moments of my stint here in Eugene. I've grown enormously and have met once-in-a-lifetime people in the process. While Canada was an essential and electrifying experience, the personal discoveries I've made in Eugene make this place the hardest to leave. So, it is with a sad heart that I say goodbye to all of you. You've meant worlds to me.

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