

00:02 - 00:25

V0: Welcome to 10 Frames Per Second, a podcast about photojournalism by photojournalists, but for everyone. With your hosts, Joe Giordano and Molly Roberts. New episodes drop every Tuesday on 10FPS.net or anywhere you get your podcasts. You can also catch back episodes on wloy.org as all episodes are recorded and produced at WLOY Loyola Radio in Maryland.

00:29 - 01:08

Molly: Welcome back to 10 frames per second. Today we have Angela Owens with us. Angela Owens is a photographer and a photo editor at the Wall Street Journal, where she says she's been annoying her colleagues with animal trivia since 2017. She was previously a multimedia editor at the Boston Globe Media, covering health and life science news. She began her career as a staff photographer for the Daily Item documenting communities on the North Shore of Massachusetts. Angela earned a BS in business at North Carolina State University before she studied photojournalism at Boston University. She also studied documentary photography

01:08 - 01:16

Molly: at the Duke University Center for Documentary Studies. Angela, can you tell us a little bit about your evolution as a photographer?

01:16 - 01:19

Joe: You are- Welcome to the podcast. Yeah, I

01:19 - 01:28

Molly: did say that. Angela, welcome to the podcast. You were on the business track at NC State and then what happened?

01:29 - 01:45

Angela Owens: Well, You know, I never actually wanted to study business. I was just lost. I was totally lost, had no idea what I wanted to do. And I figured, you know, I'll just do this and then I can kind of do whatever. It opens a lot of doors. I figured I could just let it done.

01:45 - 01:46

Molly: That makes sense.

01:46 - 01:55

Angela Owens: Yeah, I originally started out as a biology major going to be pre-vip until I realized if I became a veterinarian, I would cry every single day.

01:56 - 01:57

Molly: Oh, yeah.

01:57 - 02:28

Angela Owens: So pivot had a couple last years just settled on business. And then while I was doing that, I also decided to get a minor in English. And that ended up being like a really fateful decision because I was studying abroad in an English program. And I had brought my camera, I was taking a ton of photos on the trip. Cause it was just kind of what I always did. And my English professor was like, you know, these are pretty good. You should think about doing something with this. Like, why isn't this what you're doing with your

02:28 - 02:39

Angela Owens: life? And it's just like that, like little boost of confidence, that little tiny push was just all I needed. Just someone telling me that you're not bad at this. Why don't you think about it?

02:39 - 02:41

Molly: Yeah, that's a nice little push.

02:41 - 03:24

Angela Owens: Yeah. So NC State, which is a great vet school, not a great journalism program, kind of a non-existent journalism program. So I couldn't pivot there, but Duke, 20 minutes away, has a great documentary photography program. So I started taking classes there in the evening and then applied for grad school at Boston University in their photojournalism master's program and got in, had a great experience there. And from there, I got an internship with the Boston Bruins, which happened to be the year they won the Stanley Cup. So I was very, very lucky and like a great little

03:24 - 03:55

Angela Owens: boost. And then I started applying for jobs and very fortunately got 1 of like a very rare staff photography position. They're so hard to come by these days, but I got 1 at a little paper on the North Shore of Massachusetts called the Daily Item. So I spent 3 years there covering anything and everything. A lot of, you know, city council meetings and then house fires and tropical storms and then, you know, high school baseball games and so much football.

03:55 - 03:58

Molly: Excellent training ground for whatever was to come next.

03:58 - 04:30

Angela Owens: Yes, exactly. And then next I joined STAT, which is a Boston Globe project that focuses on health and life science news. And that's where I got my start as a photo editor. I had an incredible mentor there, Alyssa Ambrose, who I think is now the head of multimedia there. She was a photo editor, but she taught me how to be a photo editor, was just amazing and getting me started, taught me everything I know. And from there I went to the Wall Street Journal, where I've been for the last 7 years.

04:30 - 04:46

Joe: Wow. But then you're a photo editor also, right? So how did that kind of happen along? I guess my question, let me rephrase my question. So how do you balance being a photo editor and a photographer? Is it in a conflict of interest?

04:48 - 05:15

Angela Owens: I don't think so. A lot of times when I'm a photographer, it's for the stories I'm writing and that I'm pitching. And the Wall Street Journal doesn't have staff photographers, so sometimes our photo editors have to kind of pinch hit, step in. But I don't want to take money out of a freelancer's pocket. So going with a freelancer for my own photo editing is always the default.

05:15 - 05:57

Molly: Yeah, I mean, I think at small publications, A lot of times they have to do both. And people in J school learn both, you know. So Angela, it seems like you were very focused on natural history stories. Most of your website is a lot of natural history stories and including fat bears and wolves and other kinds of sort of normal natural history stories. But then Your Instagram was filled with these photographs of the devastation in North Carolina from Helene. And I just wondered what drew you there? Were you already there? Is that where your family is?

05:57 - 06:09

Angela Owens: Yes, I was already here. I was born and raised in North Carolina. And then I came back in 2020. And the Wall Street Journal has let me work from here ever since then.

06:10 - 06:18

Molly: So you're Yeah, you know, that's 1 of the pluses of photo editing now is that a lot of people can just work from home.

06:19 - 06:46

Angela Owens: Yes, exactly. Most of my teammates are spread around the world. So it has never really been an issue for me to be here. And sometimes it's actually very fortunate. When the hurricane happened, it was 1 of those situations where all the freelancers we reached out to were either already on assignment or dealing with the devastation in their own lives and unable to take assignments. So that was 1 of the times where it was great that I was here and able to jump in as a photographer.

06:47 - 06:58

Molly: I think also a lot of people couldn't get there, right? I mean, the road 40 was washed out, which is a typical path into Asheville and West North Carolina.

06:59 - 07:17

Angela Owens: Yes. So 40 is washed out from the Tennessee side. I could get there from where I am. Some of the highways were closed, but I could take this. There's a back highway. I go up there all the time to go hiking. So I know these roads very well. And I used to go up a lot when I was in college for punk shows at my friend's house. So

07:18 - 07:35

Molly: it used to, I mean, it was a great place to go see concerts at the river arts. Absolutely. And now it's just crazy to see what that looks like. So tell me about that day or that storm or like what exactly happened and how soon after did you get there?

07:35 - 08:12

Angela Owens: I went up a few days later when things had calmed down a little bit. It was still, I don't know, 3 days later when we were kind of first getting the idea of how bad the devastation was. So I drove up early that morning, I was meeting our reporter at 9 30, but I decided to go like at the crack of dawn, partially just so I could give myself some time to process and get in the mindset and take it in before I had to go into a work mode and then also just you know when

08:12 - 08:38

Angela Owens: you're working with a reporter you end up sitting through a lot of interviews and don't have as much time to photograph as you want. So I wanted to be able to work on my own for a couple of hours. So I went right at the crack of dawn and really nothing could have prepared me for how bad it is. It is just unreal. And, you know, things like that, they don't happen in, in Asheville in that area, you know, where

08:39 - 08:42

Molly: at least not for a hundred years. Tell

08:42 - 08:47

Joe: us now it's every year, right? Every, every hundred year floods now, like every year is right every year because.

08:48 - 08:50

Molly: Tell us what you saw as you arrived.

08:51 - 09:34

Angela Owens: So I went to Asheville first and I went down to the River Arts District and it's just unbelievable. The water hadn't receded yet. Not all the way had gone down significantly, but I, you would look up in the trees and just how high up the debris is, is unimaginable. Like it's hard to fathom what force could have put. There's 1 tree that had 3 tables, 20 feet up. And it looked so surreal and just, complete buildings just missing. You can see the footprint where they used to be and the whole building is just gone. And then

09:34 - 10:08

Angela Owens: the river was just propane tanks and just like big pieces of garbage just floating down. It's gonna take so long to get that water quality back. There's just so much sewage, all the smell of sewage and the water was hot. I have my shoes on a box in the garage because I can't bring them in my house. But what was really moving was just, you know, Asheville is a really kind of unique place. And the people out there doing cleanup for properties that weren't even their own was just really heartwarming. So there were a lot of

10:08 - 10:13

Angela Owens: people around these art studios trying to save other people's heart was just really touching.

10:14 - 10:28

Joe: And How are the, tell me how like, how the, like the FEMA response and like, are you documenting, are you documenting, I know, well, they're having an issue with FEMA because of lies.

10:28 - 11:02

Angela Owens: I mean, I think the response is slow because there's much to be done. But I know of at least 1 woman I know, you know, FEMA hiked out to her house to confirm that she could not live in it. And now she's getting assistance, but that's, it's going to take time. The FEMA person had to physically hike out there. I mean, I can say firsthand, I saw the first day I went out there, I saw convoys of National Guard trucks and all sorts of different aid heading in. So I mean, people think that they're not, that

11:02 - 11:04

Angela Owens: the government's not doing anything. It's like they're.

11:05 - 11:22

Joe: Is that, are you finding, does it hinder you at all? Is it, you know what I mean? Are you, are they wary of you documenting things and as far as like the news goes and FEMA and like all that. Are you just having an issue with people being wary of you being there and taking photos?

11:23 - 11:58

Angela Owens: I haven't had an issue so far. Almost everyone has thanked me for being there, which was not really what I was expecting. I kind of always go into things, you know, I move slowly, don't want to upset anyone. You know, I try to be really respectful. But just everyone I passed was like, thank you for being here. Like, thank you for telling people what's going on. Not at all what I expected. But it really, it was really a wonderful response. And yeah, I haven't had any issues with anyone. Everyone's been, oh, you should go here, you

11:58 - 12:00

Angela Owens: should go here, you should tell people about this.

12:01 - 12:09

Molly: So are you continuing to, where is it that you're based exactly? I see that beautiful mountain range behind you, but I know that's your screen saver.

12:10 - 12:29

Angela Owens: Not real. I took no, I didn't take this 1. I am based closer to Charlotte, but in North Carolina. So I'm about 90 minutes from Asheville, but some of the towns that are also, you know, facing a lot of damage are more like 30, 35 minutes away.

12:30 - 12:43

Molly: Right. And so you're continuing to document some of that and yeah. And I know that you know quickly turned from rescue to recovery sort of operations and there's still a lot of people missing right?

12:44 - 12:46

Angela Owens: Yes, yeah there's still a lot of people missing.

12:48 - 12:52

Molly: What were some of the other towns besides River Arts that got terribly affected?

12:53 - 13:14

Angela Owens: Swannanoa is very bad. Yeah, there's roads washed out. There's just, you know, brick buildings, which seem really solid, just destroyed like walls missing. A lot of homes destroyed. You know, I can see homes with like a tractor trailer going through the middle of them.

13:14 - 13:15

Joe: Jesus. Wow.

13:16 - 13:55

Angela Owens: We, we talked to this 1 couple the first day we got there, who had a little salon kind of on the main road through Swannanoa, which is near the river. And no 1 had been told to evacuate or hadn't gotten the message. And so they were inside when all this flooding happened, and they were watching, you know, sheds and houses just float down in front of them. The woman showed me videos on her phone, and it's a miracle that they survived. They had giant, like kind of sinkholes all around their property but their sons somehow got

13:55 - 14:27

Angela Owens: them out and they ended up okay but the devastation is just horrible And then there's other towns like that cave. I have tried to get there. It's, I still can't access it, but it is even worse there from what I can tell. And, you know, just driving around

the mountains, so many of the roads are like half the road is washed out. It's down to 1 lane. And I think in any other circumstance, these roads would be completely closed. But since it's so bad everywhere, people are just kind of making the best of it.

14:28 - 14:55

Molly: Yeah, the only way they can get around. Wow. Like as Joe was talking about, because of the misinformation about FEMA, FEMA ended up just moving all their stuff to 1 location so that they could make sure that their workers were safe, which is crazy. Thank you, Misinformation Network, for making people's lives more difficult again when they're already suffering. That's pretty crazy.

14:56 - 15:01

Joe: Do you see a lot of AI photos being circulated around?

15:02 - 15:12

Angela Owens: I have only seen 1 of Donald Trump wading through water. But you know I usually

15:12 - 15:13

Molly: that 1 was fake.

15:14 - 15:16

Angela Owens: Yeah. But you know I

15:17 - 15:21

Molly: get Superman body somehow imposed on his terrible.

15:22 - 15:30

Angela Owens: Yeah, that's the only 1 I've seen. But, you know, I usually I get my news from more reputable sources. So I don't don't come across a lot of it.

15:31 - 16:15

Molly: Not looking at Facebook for... Well, there's that 1 image of the little girl in the raft with the life that was circulating quite widely. And I actually don't know what the story was about that fakery, but Apparently it was fake. Anyway, this is 1 of the new challenges, right, of our fabulous new world is that there's so much misinformation, there's so much image, potential for image fakery now that already sort of the leaguered news information world is just making

16:15 - 16:18

Joe: it all harder. Are you worried as a photo editor about what's coming?

16:20 - 16:53

Angela Owens: Yes, yeah, the new world of AI definitely scares me. I

don't, not in a way that I think it's gonna put anyone out of a job. More than ever trusted news is going to be important, but just, you know, that, you know, the, like the, you know, your average person that hasn't had the kind of media training that we've had can't spot the difference. So just this, you know, age of misinformation, and then also the flip side where you're showing someone a picture that's real, and they're like, No, that's AI.

16:53 - 16:54

Joe: Right?

16:55 - 17:00

Angela Owens: Yeah, I mean, that's like, it brings me for you know, the future of, you know, humankind.

17:02 - 17:32

Molly: Apparently, there are supposed to be, you know, technology in place to be able to tell immediately whether a photo is, if you can't tell it yourself. I mean, I think 1 of the cool things is knowing that you studied at Center for Documentary Studies. They always had this program that I was interested in about literacy through photography. And then I think they started pivoting to like news literacy as well. I mean, that's so important.

17:33 - 17:34

Joe: Super important.

17:35 - 18:09

Molly: But how many people are sort of like, yeah, I need to be more news literate. Let me like spend some of my time that I don't have and become more news literate. I don't know how we're going to address it. Like right now here in the DC area, everybody is completely freaking out about Bezos' tipping the scale on whether his opinion section would, which already had an endorsement drafted and he pulled it, you know, and how we're going to be...

18:09 - 18:10

Joe: And the LA Times.

18:10 - 18:37

Molly: And the LA Times and how we are reliant on these billionaires who have, you know, cross purposes, you know, if he did that because he doesn't want to lose some contracts with the federal government later on if, you know, Trump gets elected. I mean, we're really screwed in that way. So what do you think, Angela? Wall Street Journal, right?

18:37 - 18:38

Angela Owens: Wall Street Journal,

18:39 - 18:49

Molly: yeah. It can't be critical of your place of work, but from your vantage point, do you, How are we gonna fix this erosion of faith in?

18:50 - 19:17

Joe: At least images, right? I mean, what can photo editors do to encourage, news photo literacy at least? Obviously, I'm not gonna ask you to speak for the op-ed section, but what can you, in the future, what are you hoping to do as a photo editor as far as getting people to believe in pictures and things like that?

19:17 - 19:43

Angela Owens: Yeah, I mean, maybe some more kind of, you know, the Wall Street Journal kind of hates to do like self-referential, you know, here's how we reported the story kind of things, but you know maybe kind of opening that curtain more and showing, you know, how stories are reported, how our photographers work. Maybe something like that would help, but honestly I wish media literacy was taught in high schools.

19:43 - 19:45

Molly: Right. It's

19:45 - 19:49

Angela Owens: like a basic finance, like how to do your taxes. Like,

19:49 - 19:53

Molly: but you know, if the Department of Education is abolished, that's probably not going to happen.

19:54 - 20:04

Joe: And the federal income tax is going to go away because when Trump wins, it's going to go away. So we're good. Right. We don't have to pay taxes. Sorry, this is starting to get like a political, sorry.

20:05 - 20:14

Molly: We haven't been together for a while, so now we're starting to like go crazy on all of the news that's happening, happened between now and then.

20:14 - 20:23

Joe: So what are some stories you'd like to work on for the, I mean, the, the, the, you, but you know, what, what's coming up with you? What are you, yeah, looking forward to?

20:24 - 20:52

Angela Owens: Well, I personally am most passionate about stories with, you know, environment, climate, wildlife, very kind of science minded. Those are usually the stories I pitch. So I have 2 stories that I am writing and have photographed at the moment. So those are

next up. I don't know when this is gonna go live. So I'm not gonna tell y'all in case it's before my story's published, but 2 things that have to do. 2 weeks. 2 weeks, okay. So you're probably gonna beat my story.

20:52 – 20:53

Joe: So I'm

20:53 – 20:54

Angela Owens: not gonna tell you exactly.

20:54 – 20:55

Joe: Yeah, that's

20:55 – 21:13

Angela Owens: fine. But just the general hint is environment kind of stories. Those are the things I love to do. And I found that if I want to work on those stories, I generally have to make them myself. So I started writing and pitching that way and ended up being pretty successful.

21:14 – 21:41

Molly: That's great. Yeah. I think 1 thing that is really cool about the way you've put your career together, Angela, is that you have some skills that a lot of people who strictly knew they wanted to be photojournalists and either studied in undergrad or, you know, to have the business skills, to have the writing skills is something that not all photojournalists have, and it's a hindrance to a lot of them. They don't have much business sense.

21:43 – 21:48

Joe: Yeah, I don't know many big publications that would hire a photographer to also be the writer. Right.

21:49 – 21:51

Angela Owens: Yeah. I wasn't hired to be writer. This kind of came,

21:51 – 22:02

Joe: but I mean, but, but allow you to be the writer. Usually when you pitch a story, they, they take you like, okay, that's great. We'll get, you know, we'll, we'll get a, a writer for that.

22:02 – 22:33

Molly: I think the pandemic sort of shifted that a bit too, when people were just like, phew, you know, home and working from different places, and then certain people didn't have access. And so, I mean, obviously I think that photographers should become better writers so that they can have more agency over their own careers and their own things that they can do, and why not, they're there. So don't be so dependent on other people.

22:33 - 22:44

Joe: You're an eyewitness. You have to be a good writer. I mean, you have to be a good writer though. Most photographers think they're writers having dealt as a photo editor, dealt with photographers that tried to write and they're not writers.

22:44 - 22:48

Molly: Well, there are some reporters who are really not good writers either. But they are really good editors.

22:49 - 22:52

Joe: Right, but there are also reporters who are terrible photographers.

22:52 - 22:57

Molly: Definitely, that's probably the most true thing that you just said.

22:58 - 22:59

Joe: Yeah, so.

23:00 - 23:06

Molly: Yeah, to send out the reporters to be photographers would not work as well, I would say.

23:06 - 23:08

Angela Owens: Yeah, that rarely turns out well.

23:08 - 23:15

Molly: No, I don't know what's the, you know, those 2 sides of the brain. I don't know what this problem is, but it doesn't work.

23:16 - 23:25

Angela Owens: Yeah, I'm definitely not as bad as our reporters that focus on that do that every day, but I can turn out 1 every once in a while.

23:25 - 23:29

Molly: And do you have a good editor? Do you have? Yeah, really? I think this

23:31 - 23:51

Angela Owens: is Most of the time when I'm writing, I'm doing what we call an A-head, which is our kind of fun light read of the day. So the editor for those stories was Jennifer Levitz up until recently who is just incredible and has always encouraged me to follow some of my wacky ideas, which has been wonderful.

23:51 - 23:53

Joe: That's cool. Yeah, yes.

23:54 - 24:23

Molly: So Angela, we usually, you know, here we are at a college radio station. We usually ask as a first thing, but we started out with Colleen more. So because it was just so still pressing in our minds. What is your advice to college students who are studying photojournalism or photography and want to have a career which looks like an ever diminishing possibility. What's your advice for those folks?

24:24 - 24:56

Angela Owens: You're going to have to have a lot of determination. That is not easy. So be willing to hear no, be willing to hear it a lot and keep going. So that is kind of the only way. You just have to keep putting yourself out there, introduce yourself to people, pitch. Just, you have to be very, very determined. You know, I think of my graduating class, 2 of us are still working in photojournalism. Wow.

24:56 - 24:57

Molly: Which is- 2 out of

24:57 - 25:00

Angela Owens: how many? I wanna say it was, you know, 15 or something.

25:01 - 25:06

Molly: Yeah, that's pretty low odds. Yeah, the other people find to do.

25:07 - 25:33

Angela Owens: Some people are in a completely other fields. Almost everyone that I have kept up with is in a completely other field. I think 1 person is doing photography for a college. And yeah, I think everyone else has just kind of abandoned the idea, which is really sad because BU is not cheap. That was an expensive education.

25:34 - 25:34

Molly: Right.

25:34 - 25:37

Angela Owens: That I will never pay off, but that's a whole nother story.

25:38 - 25:39

Joe: Well, by all means,

25:40 - 25:54

Angela Owens: go ahead. And I think 1 thing that I think is kind of a failing of a lot of photojournalism programs is that they teach for staff jobs that hardly exist anymore. And there's not a lot of

education on how to freelance.

25:55 - 25:57

Molly: I think that's absolutely right.

25:57 - 26:18

Angela Owens: Yeah. So I had absolutely no idea how to freelance and completely bombed when I tried. You know, I didn't know how to, you know, approach photo editors. They'll had a pitch myself. You know, I was just kind of taught like make a website. And there you go.

26:18 - 26:35

Molly: Yeah. It's good to have it, but yeah, it's not necessarily, I can't say that I know a lot of photo editors who are trolling through websites unless they're sort of like, I need somebody in Western North Carolina, you know, disastrous circumstances.

26:36 - 26:49

Joe: Yeah, I mean, a lot of this wire now, right? I mean, but you're in this, like, you're a special case because you were there, but most of it is wire. Now, I think there's like so many, so many new wire services that's gonna be popping up.

26:49 - 26:56

Molly: Yeah, and the wire services, I don't know, how do they pay? Do they take half of the, you know, plus they sell the images

26:56 - 27:17

Joe: for so cheaply. My pay is minuscule, I just, my place. I think it depends on the client. I mean, how does, well, I don't know how the journal, what they pay for it. But I mean, take away AP and Reuters and get the smaller ones like the Andalusia and those and they probably not pay as much. Mine doesn't pay much and I've had stuff in Vanity Fair.

27:17 - 27:18

Molly: Yeah. And

27:18 - 27:19

Joe: I got 3 bucks

27:19 - 27:55

Molly: for it. Yeah, the old Corbus model was like that too. I mean, I remember I took my images out of Corbus when I got a paycheck for \$35. That was like a full page spread in time or something. I'm like, no, I don't wanna sell my images for \$35. So, you know, so in that way it hasn't changed. But I'm interested Angela in your focus on environmental stories. And even though you can't tell us exactly what you're working on now, what do you think is important for to be covered? I mean, it's isn't it crazy that

27:56 - 28:13

Molly: no 1 in North Carolina knew that that event was coming or seemingly no 1, you know, didn't get warned or they didn't get warned in time. How can we prevent that? And what's what's important about covering environmental stories in the future?

28:13 - 28:55

Angela Owens: Yeah, I think, you know, first of all, just kind of accepting that climate change is real, and, you know, not making it a political issue, but just looking at science and doing kind of science based reporting. And you know, in that instance, you know, in the mountains, you know, near the rivers, people are, you know, they expect, you know, 1 or 2 feet of flooding, but no 1 expected 14, 16 feet. No 1 thought it would be flooding the second floor of a building. Unheard of. So I mean, I don't know how that could have been

28:55 - 29:12

Angela Owens: done differently other than, you know, better, I don't know if there's a better modeling. I that's way above my head, but people should have been evacuated if it was even thought to be a risk. It's just horrible.

29:13 - 29:17

Joe: And it's just, you cover climate, it's just gonna get worse,

29:18 - 29:20

Angela Owens: right? Yeah. I mean, we already know that

29:20 - 29:35

Molly: the beaches are untenable on the East coast. And now we have this interior sort of threat as well, I guess, you know, It's all part of the education curve of what exactly are the problems that we're gonna be facing.

29:36 - 29:41

Angela Owens: Yeah, and it's 1 of those places that was thought to be kind of a safe haven from climate issues.

29:41 - 29:42

Molly: Yeah, you would think, hey, I'm in

29:42 - 29:45

Joe: the mountains. I'm not gonna be. Yeah, but the river,

29:45 - 29:45

Molly: look at Europe.

29:45 - 30:17

Joe: I mean, most of Central Europe flooded this year, they're all in

the mountains. They're nowhere near the sea. I mean, it's the rivers that swell, like, you know, because of climate change. But how do you, I guess, and you don't have to answer this. This might be a, This isn't a gotcha question, but I'm genuinely curious about this. So when you work for a publication, it doesn't exactly encourage climate science because it tends to skew, right? And you take, you know, you're on the ground documenting stuff in real time and knowing that this stuff is real

30:17 - 30:43

Joe: and not made up, woke, whatever. How do you, as a, as a photographer, how do you reconcile those, those 2? You know what I mean? Like you're, you're, you're showing people what's happening, but yet the publication that you work for, it tends to publish people who are climate change deniers. Like, you know what I mean? How do you reconcile those 2 things? And again, this isn't a gotcha question. I'm genuinely curious.

30:44 - 30:53

Angela Owens: Well, I think that's more in the opinion section, which is not part of our newsroom. It's completely separate. We have nothing to do with them and they do not influence our reporting.

30:53 - 30:58

Joe: But can you say like climate change in a caption? Can you, can you, and they don't have any problem with

30:58 - 31:01

Angela Owens: it? I have never had any pushback on bringing up climate.

31:03 - 31:09

Molly: Good. Awesome. Excellent. We're definitely gonna need some more really good climate science reporting.

31:09 - 31:20

Joe: But from publications like yours that are very prestigious, kind of to the right publications, When they start stepping up and saying it, it's only gonna help the cause more, I

31:20 - 31:34

Angela Owens: think. Yeah, I was actually working on a story about polar bears a couple of years ago, and 1 of the people I was interviewing said, My dad didn't believe in climate change until he saw it in the Wall Street Journal.

31:34 - 31:40

Molly: Wow. So that's great to know that you can be an influencer to people who are more skeptical.

31:41 - 31:44

Angela Owens: Yeah. Yeah. So important.

31:44 - 31:44

Molly: Yeah, that

31:44 - 31:45

Angela Owens: made my day, maybe even my month.

31:45 - 32:00

Molly: Angela, were there any photographers as you were getting started who were sort of like mentors or just heroes in terms of like, these are the kinds of stories and the kinds of images that I want to create when I'm out there in the field?

32:00 - 32:23

Angela Owens: I definitely look up to Amy Vitale quite a bit. She's, I think, kind of living the dream, it seems. So I looked up to her quite a bit. Also when I was, you know, in school, I, you know, naive and thought I was going to be kind of like a Lindsay Adario and like get sent overseas, which is, you know, not something that really happens with like recent graduates. Right,

32:24 - 33:06

Molly: yeah, probably to your safety benefit. I mean, Lindsay is really incredible and she is also always really, really prepared. I worked with her on a crazy story about women warriors and she has a whole safety protocol. She knows how dangerous it is and she's really, really experienced. Who really gets to gain that experience anymore? You know, people aren't sending untested photographers into the field. They're sending themselves into the field sometimes, which I worry about. But yeah, the path to those kinds of careers now is sort of fuzzy to see how that can happen.

33:06 - 33:25

Joe: I mean Svet worked she's been there for almost 2 years before anybody really remember we talked about this like her work's incredible. I mean a little bit I mean it has to be noted it is gatekeeping you know like There's no reason like the New York Times Magazine, thankfully that Wall Street Journal's picked her

33:25 - 33:27

Angela Owens: up. Yeah, she's worked with us quite a bit.

33:27 - 33:37

Joe: Yeah, no, her work is great for, you know, kudos for the journal. But like they're going to send somebody from Brooklyn over who they know, who's usually a guy.

33:37 - 34:06

Molly: Well, they want to send also, I'm not making excuses because I know all about like, you know, just sort of the gatekeeping aspect, But also, you know, as a photo editor, which I did for 30 years, you don't want to send someone in harm's way if they don't know what the heck they're doing, you know. So the fact that's been there for 2 years now, okay, she's proven. But when she first got there by herself on her own ticket, I would not have hired her.

34:06 - 34:07

Joe: I mean, I want her

34:07 - 34:09

Molly: to be killed on my you know,

34:09 - 34:24

Joe: you know, she's already there for that. It's just, I don't know, I just I just kept seeing the same Magnum people covering the same stuff she was and she was doing it much better. And her and I, we've, we've discussed this, you know, it's, it is a hundred percent gatekeeping. They don't,

34:24 - 34:25

Angela Owens: I don't think that they really.

34:25 - 34:27

Molly: Also she's your friend. So there's that. Yeah.

34:27 - 34:52

Joe: But her work, I mean, her work is like, she's in like 2 Ukraine books and she still hasn't been in the New York Times. You know, like it's incredible, but the same people that they have fly around the world everywhere are getting the same thing. So kudos to them. My point was kudos to you guys for picking her up. But I think there is an aspect of gatekeeping, even when it comes to, especially women photography, in general, right?

34:52 - 35:01

Molly: I mean. Yeah, well, look at all of the, and now finally some of those stories are being told, like the Lee movie, or, you know, and.

35:01 - 35:03

Joe: Oh, which comes out pretty soon, actually.

35:03 - 35:05

Molly: It's I've seen it.

35:05 - 35:05

Joe: You did.

35:05 - 35:47

Molly: Yeah. What did you see at AFI in Silver Spring? Oh, yeah. And now it's going to be streaming and it's really worth seeing. But and also just like, yes, women have always had a harder time and no, it's not getting that much easier for women as, as you know, the opportunities shrink. You know, women are still a very small percentage of news photographers, even though the photojournalism schools are filled with women, but maybe when it becomes really difficult, the jobs as a college photographer or whatever seem more like they could mesh with a person's, a regular

35:47 - 36:15

Molly: person's lifestyle. If you're going to be a war photographer or, you know, traveling photo journalists all the time, you do give up a lot, you know, in terms of just a normal lifestyle of having friends and family and children and a home. Yeah, what do you think about that Angela? Opportunities for women photojournalists, are they growing or are they staying the same? Are they shrinking?

36:16 - 36:51

Angela Owens: I can't speak to staff jobs or anything like that, But I can talk to my own experience as a photo editor and say that I personally hire overwhelmingly women, you know, not to discriminate against men. But, you know, I've kind of looked at my assignments over the last couple of years and it's been more than 50% women, which is great. There's so many incredibly talented women there. It's shocking that the numbers aren't higher in staff jobs and wire photographers. What is going on here?

36:51 - 37:07

Molly: Yeah, no, it is, yeah, well, but what about saying something positive before we, before we say goodbye, Angela? Got some positive words for our listeners?

37:09 - 37:30

Angela Owens: I just think there's so much wonderful work being done by our colleagues in the photojournalism community and especially the women, who are so talented and just, there's so much talent And I am excited to see what everyone is working on and keep your heads up.

37:31 - 37:35

Molly: Yeah, and pitch your stories to Angela Owens at the Wall Street Journal.

37:35 - 37:41

Angela Owens: Yeah, especially if it's about, you know, bears or wolves or I could use a good move.

37:43 - 37:48

Molly: Animals and how animals and people are adapting to our new climate reality, right?

37:49 – 38:09

Angela Owens: Yeah. There's that and the kind of rapid growth of human development into previous wilderness areas, I think. That's another pressure. Yeah. That's another pressure. That's another area of interest to me. So yeah, anyone wants to talk about animals? Always here.

38:09 – 38:11

Molly: Can you tell me what fat bear week is?

38:15 – 38:23

Angela Owens: So that bear week. So it's based in Katmai National Park in Alaska. It started out as fat bear Tuesday has 6 6.

38:25 – 38:26

Molly: Turned into a whole week.

38:26 – 39:01

Angela Owens: Into a whole week plus a little like pre show with a chubby cubby showdown where the young cubs get to face off and then the winner goes into the main week event. Kind of a March madness style bracket and they have a selection of bears, kind of the more well-known ones that visit the river. And they'll show a photo of them at the beginning of the season and a photo of them at the end of the season, the season being kind of the salmon run. And you are supposed to vote for the 1 that has had

39:01 – 39:04

Angela Owens: the best kind of fat bear glow up.

39:08 – 39:08

Molly: Okay.

39:09 – 39:15

Angela Owens: Well, for their favorite bear. This year there was some drama, which was great. I love drama.

39:16 – 39:17

Molly: Drama with the bears.

39:18 – 39:42

Angela Owens: Yeah. The bears are fascinating. I am too obsessed with the bears. But Grazer Wan, who is this really fierce mama bear that is close to my heart, so happy for her. But yeah, it's such a fun event and it gets people excited about animals and then hopefully also about what the animals need to be healthy and a healthy ecosystem and maybe gets people interested.

39:43 – 39:45

Joe: It was on CBS Sunday morning.

39:45 - 39:46

V0: Thank you

39:46 - 39:50

Molly: for clarifying that for me because it was on Angela's website too.

39:51 - 39:52

Joe: Yeah, I saw it on CBS Sunday morning so

39:52 - 39:53

Molly: I didn't

39:53 - 40:00

Joe: want to butt in and be like, well, you cover Fat Bear Week. So it was bare nip for CBS Sunday morning.

40:01 - 40:02

Molly: I miss that.

40:02 - 40:07

Angela Owens: Yeah. This is actually the first year I haven't written about fat bear week, so.

40:07 - 40:24

Molly: Oh, well, you have a little bit of a more important story that you're covering down there. Thank you so much for coming on and talking to us and telling us about the coverage. Do you have any idea how long it's going to take Western North Carolina to recover? I

40:24 - 41:03

Angela Owens: think years really. No 1 had flood insurance. We talked to these 2 women who had just opened their business 6 months ago, and their flood insurance would have been \$6, 000 a year. And 1 of their husbands was a contractor, so they thought, okay, if we get a foot or 2 of flooding, we can replace the drywall ourselves, the labor's free. It's cheaper for us to just not have flood insurance. And, you know, now they've got a whole brick wall of their building is missing. It's completely gutted, it flooded up past the second floor. Just everything

41:03 - 41:26

Angela Owens: they had is gone. People are working really hard, but it's absolute devastation out there. I don't know, it'll never be the same, honestly. I think people are gonna be, they're gonna rebuild. People are very resilient there, but I don't think it'll ever be what it was. It's gonna be something different and I'm sure it'll be great, but it's...

41:27 - 41:36

Molly: It's- I hope they won't rebuild right in harm's way again. I hope there'll be a lot of thoughtfulness about how we have to change our building.

41:36 - 41:41

Joe: We don't do that. Yeah, I know. We

41:41 - 41:42

Molly: don't have long term.

41:42 - 41:44

Joe: We're not proactive at all.

41:45 - 41:47

Molly: Thanks, Angela. Take care. Thanks for coming on. Oh,

41:47 - 41:49

Angela Owens: my pleasure. Thanks for having me.

41:49 - 41:50

Joe: Be safe.

41:50 - 41:51

Molly: Thank you. Bye.

41:59 - 42:13

V0: New episodes drop every Tuesday on 10FPS.net or anywhere you get your podcasts. You can also catch back episodes on WLOY.org as all episodes are recorded and produced at WLOY Loyola Radio in Maryland.