Emily Mudgett

Hometown: Devils Lake, ND
School: ND State University
Internship: Devils Lake Journal

When I was deciding on what to do for the summer before I went to NDSU for college, I did some research into an internship at the Devils Lake Journal. I thought it was a good idea as my major was going to be journalism. I wanted to gain experience and see what the news field was really like and help me to decide if I wanted to do print or media journalism.

Once I had talked to Louise (Editor at the DLJ) about it she had me fill out the application and then I waited to hear back. Once they were approved to have me as an intern I quickly got started filling out paperwork and getting to know everyone. Once I was settled the work began and I got to learn my way around the computers.

I learned about QuarkXPress and how to use that for writing articles. I learned how to format them and add text boxes and even graphics. I also was able to play around with photoshop and use that to add in pictures with my articles and edit the pictures to fit. Chris Harris, who is the sports writer, also showed me how some of the pages are made, mainly his sports pages, but it did give me a clear idea of how much space you get for an article after advertisements and graphics.

I also got to be around a lot of the advertising department so I got to see what it's like selling ads to businesses and getting them put into the paper and what deadlines they have to follow. With that I got a little taste of what it costs for the ads and realized how important advertising is for a newspaper.

During my time at the Journal Louise let me do a lot of things like taking pictures at events and writing articles. She let me have my own creative direction in that aspect and even put me in charge of some of the picture taking for the Spring and Summer visitors guide they will publish next spring.

I got to do my first interview with one of the college professors at Lake Region because he was leaving the school. The next interviews I did were with the candidates for the school board elections and I got to get to know them and help the voters get to know them a little better before the election. I like learning about interviewing people and a good strategy I learned was to just have a conversation with them and let them lead with what they want to say also to have some good guideline questions to refer back to but make sure you are telling their story and not to put words in their mouths.

During this summer I was also a part of Fort Totten Little Theatre cast, so Louise let me do interviews with all the cast members. We published a series of those profiles on July 1, July 2, July 3 and July 5 in the Devils Lake Journal. Some other events that I got to cover were things like "The Big Show" for Devils Run, Devils Lake's graduation, interpretive events out at Grahams Island State Park, and a Kiwanis club meeting that took place in the Lake Region Historical Center museum. But I think my favorite part of this experience would have to be being able to create my own cartoons that were published in the paper, I did two and they both were published on page 4, the opinion page.

This experience was challenging at times but it did have its really fun aspects. I am glad I got to work with these people especially, Louise, who helped me a lot through this internship. I learned a lot and it really helped me to decide what I was going to do in college. From this experience I've learned that I would rather do a media track rather than work in print media. But, it did make me want to continue writing articles especially ones with tips and helpful things for people like looking for an apartment for the first time. This experience helped me to decide to double major in Journalism and English Education so I can teach newspaper and yearbook in the future.

This has been one of the most valuable experiences that I have had and it is definitely something I will carry with me always. Thank you to Louise Oleson, the Devils Lake Journal Staff, and NDNA for making this internship possible.