Jonathon Corbitt

Social science major, 22

I was on Gallatin Road in front of the main entrance of Volunteer State Community College and a police officer came down the middle of the road and told people to roll down their windows on the road. He told us to get into as much of a fetal position as we could on the floorboards, then when I turned to my left I saw the tornado …. it was spinning in the field and then I saw it hit the old house next to Vol State.

It hit the house and it was picking up parts of the house and going around in a circle and I could hear it hitting the house. I could hear it breaking the trees in half, it sounded like it was a giant that was picking up itty bitty things and snapping them in half. You could hear the trees popping and hitting the house and you could hear the wood hitting the house. It sounded like a freight train.

Then I closed my eyes immediately. When I opened my eyes at one point I saw that it was actually on the campus of Vol State because it jumped and went straight across to Gallatin Road and the next thing I know I opened my eyes and there were fire trucks and the police were yelling at me to move my car.

I don't know where the six cars went that were in front of me. But it was all over and done with.

After that the police officers were asking me where I needed to go, but the electrical wires and stuff were down and they told me to go around and go to Gap Boulevard.

Dr. Tim Farris

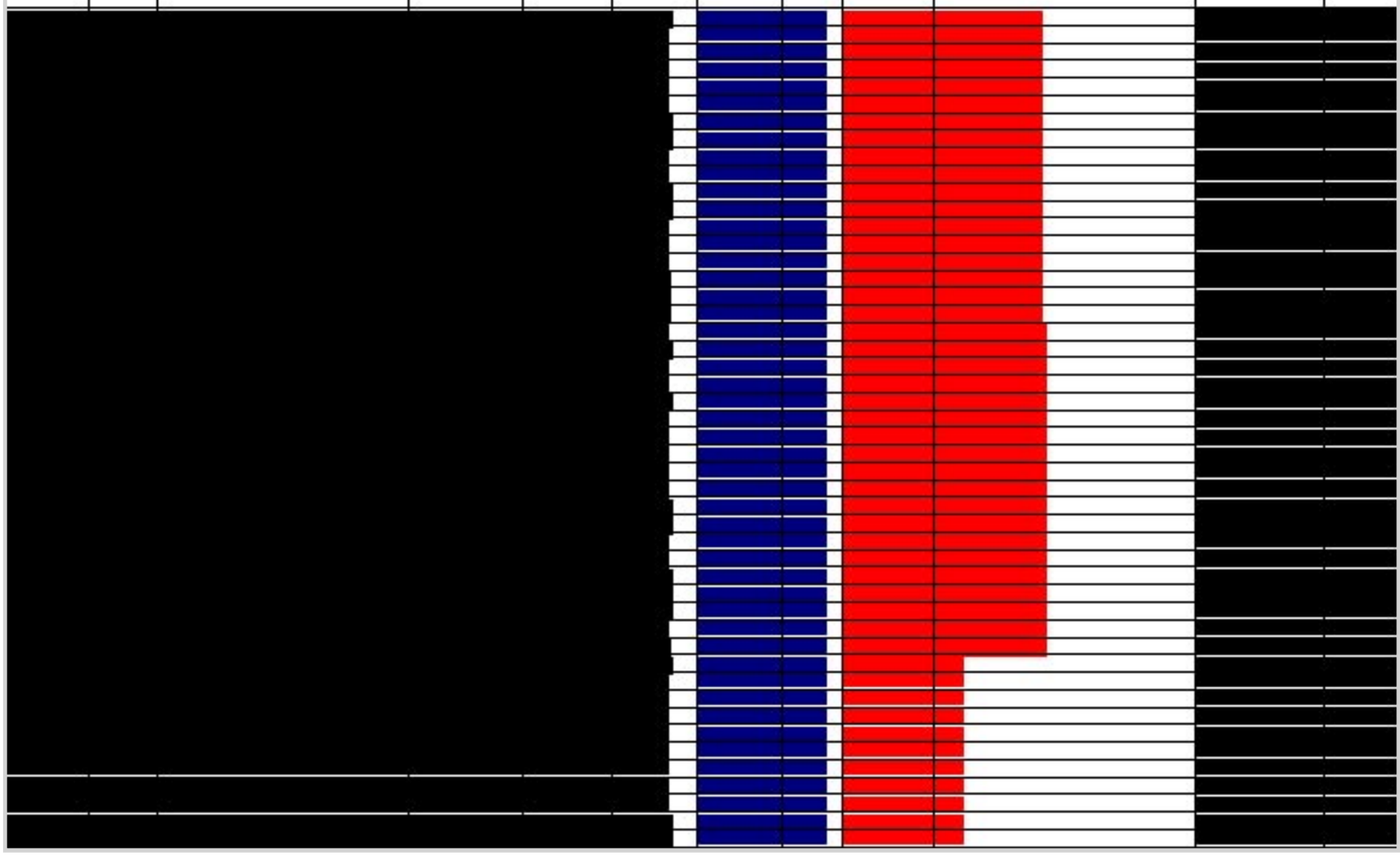
Associate professor of physics

"I was finishing up a physics test when the storm hit. I printed the thing out and I was listening to the radio and they issued the tornado warning....there were a couple of guys weed eating in the courtyard and I went into the courtyard and told them about the warning and that they needed to find a building. A student of mine was walking down the library towards Warf so I told him he needed to get in the building. There were only a dozen or so people in the building.

PHOTO BY HOLLY BROWN

We looked out at one point and it was dead calm …. so we opened the doors up one more time and the wind was just starting to pick up and within 45 seconds it was over.

When it started hitting it sounded like a cross between a rush of wind and a train. We were trying to hold the fire doors shut and it was like riding a bronco bull….we were pulling with all of our weight and it was still jerking us around. Then we heard the metal latch break- it was a big pop- and we got under some tables and as soon as the door blew open the ceiling panels came crashing down.

Then it was over, maybe 30 seconds or so. When it stopped I went outside, I'm not really sure why I went outside, maybe I was thinking about the two guys who were weed eating or whatever, and I saw what happened to Caudill and Ramer and I turned around saw the tornado heading down towards Gallatin.

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