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Award-winning journalist Kathleen Koch explores loss, hope, and rebuilding in *Rising from Katrina: How My Mississippi Hometown Lost It All and Found What Mattered*

Winston-Salem, N.C. (April 5, 2010) — As CNN correspondent Kathleen Koch covered the Katrina aftermath on the Gulf Coast, she made a promise to the hurricane victims in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. The day she left, she told them, “I promise I won’t let anyone forget what happened here.” The pledge would be difficult to keep, as most Americans didn’t realize Mississippi caught the brunt of the storm.

Despite her two award-winning documentaries and countless reports on Mississippi’s recovery for CNN, it is Kathleen’s inspiring new book that fulfills her promise. *Rising From Katrina: How My Mississippi Hometown Lost It All and Found What Mattered* takes readers on a journey from the eve of preparations and the crushing landfall of the monster hurricane to the town’s determined and ongoing efforts to rebuild. “I want people to see what I saw, hear what I heard, feel what I felt,” Kathleen says of the book, which also traces her own personal path from devastation to recovery.

Kathleen spent much of her childhood on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, where on August 29, 2005, entire towns were reduced to shoulder-high rubble by Katrina’s roaring winds and unprecedented thirty-plus-foot storm surge. Her assignment to cover the storm and its aftermath was a personal one for the veteran reporter. Kathleen reported from the sites of once-beautiful homes—including her own—stripped to their concrete pads. Old friends asked her to search for loved ones whose bodies would soon be found.

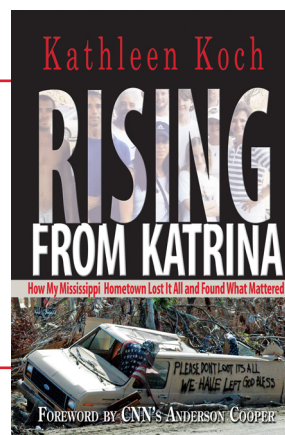
But *Rising from Katrina* is not just a story of destruction and disaster; it’s a tale of the kindness of strangers, of minor miracles—and, above all, of how communities rolled up their sleeves and rebuilt. It tells of the bravery and resilience of Gulf Coast residents, who—when no help came—helped each other restore their homes, their towns, and their lives.

Kathleen explores how the hurricane changed not just the landscape, but also the people. It is a story of loss, transformation, and resurrection that resonates in these tough economic times.

As Kathleen wrote *Rising from Katrina*, she kept a brick from her former Bay St. Louis house on her desk. It was her way of staying connected with home and the people she loved. One corner was broken off, and the brick was speckled with mortar, but it was still solid and strong, just like the communities that build up the Mississippi Gulf Coast. *Rising From Katrina* is their story, one that Kathleen calls the most important she’s ever covered.

Kathleen Koch is an award-winning broadcast journalist and former longtime CNN correspondent based in Washington, D.C. Her two documentaries on Bay St. Louis’s recovery received a New York Festivals Gold Medal. She also shared in the Peabody Award CNN won for its coverage of Hurricane Katrina.

John F. Blair, Publisher, has been publishing books on the southeastern United States since 1954. Based in Winston-Salem, N.C., this independent, family-owned company specializes in history, travel, folklore, biography, and fiction. Learn more at www.blairpub.com.



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