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NAPLES, ITALY

Marianne Migliori, RIMJ graphic designer, accessed the journal archives on the rim of the crater at the top of Mount Vesuvius. The ‘Gran Cono’ is currently 2000 feet in diameter and 650 feet deep. Steam continuously escapes through vents in the crater walls.

Mount Vesuvius is an active volcano located on the Gulf of Naples in close proximity to metropolitan Naples. It is considered one of the world’s most dangerous because a population of 3 million reside in its shadow.

The massive eruption of 79 CE buried the Roman towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum under more than 20 feet of ash and pumice. Before that, Vesuvius stood 8000 feet high. The blast reduced it to its current 4200 feet.

Vesuvius still looms over the excavated sites of Pompeii (lower left) and Herculaneum (lower right), which were buried so quickly they were preserved like time capsules.

Its most recent eruption was in March 1944, during World War II, and lasted for 10 days, destroying three nearby villages.

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