eventually, “all good things come to an end,” as the song lyric goes. But that doesn’t make the end of a good thing any easier. And it was a really good thing having Laura Carter on the Dartmouth Medicine staff for almost a decade.

The day in the fall of 1999 that Laura called me to say she’d heard there was an opening at the magazine, and was I still accepting applications, was a happy one indeed. For more than nine years, she was Dartmouth Medicine’s associate editor.

During that time, she wrote dozens of features, on subjects ranging from the impact at Dartmouth of the 1918 flu epidemic to the behind-the-scenes workers who make a hospital hum. She also turned out numerous shorter pieces; in fact, her name appears 246 times in our office’s electronic index. But the quantity of her output did not come at the cost of quality. Her work has won many awards, including the top national prize from the Association of American Medical Colleges.

She was also the only institutional journalist accepted to a 2007 New York Times Company Foundation Fellowship on the ethics and science of stem-cell research. And she did a stellar job of coaching neophyte writers—clearly, our readers will miss Laura—though happily she contributed a few final pieces to this issue. And I’m missing her for sure—though I’m thrilled that she has this opportunity to apply her skills in such a stimulating new milieu.

Here are two more silver linings to the sad news of her departure. One is that it gave me a chance to recognize two talented staff members whose positions have been part-time, by slightly increasing their hours and splitting Laura’s major responsibilities between them. Jen Durgin, who’s been on the staff since 2004, has taken over the internship (and will also continue to write; anyone who remembers her compelling Fall 2008 cover feature on her daughter’s cochlear implant—see dartmed.dartmouth.edu/08/01)—knows that’s very good news). And Amos Esty, who joined us in May 2008 after three years as assistant editor of American Scientist, is taking over many of Laura’s editing responsibilities (he, too, will continue to write—see page 42 for proof that that’s very good news). So as much as I miss Laura, thanks to Jen, Amos, and the magazine’s unflappably competent assistant editor, Matt Wiencke, I’m confident about the future.

The second silver lining is that not fully replacing Laura is allowing us to do our part in responding to the economic crisis. Just how it will affect DMS and DHMC is still playing out; we’ll share details when they’re clear. In the meantime, be assured that Dartmouth’s commitment to medical education, research, and care is undimmed.

Maybe not all good things come to an end.