

MEDIA GIRAFFE Project

*Innovation for democracy;
Standing above the crowd*

<http://www.mediagiraffe.org>

Journalism Program
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“Journalism that Matters: Looking Beyond the Newsroom Walls” A two-day action seminar for news professionals and other stakeholders Fri./Sat. June 30-July 1, University of Massachusetts Amherst Campus Center

The next newsroom will operate differently from those of today. Of course there will still be the professional journalist. There also will likely be unpaid community journalists, activists and citizens who are helping shape and deliver the news. The newsroom walls will extend to kiosks, coffee shops and cell phones on your belt. What will the news look like, how will it be distributed, and who will pay for it? Join a two-day seminar in which you will pose answers and begin to lead these changes rather than be swept up by them.

On Friday, June 30 and Saturday, July 1, at UMass Amherst, the Media Giraffe Project is hosting a convening of “Journalism that Matters” seminar facilitated by Stephen Silha, of the Journalism that Matters project and Chris Peck, one of the nation’s most widely respected daily newspaper editors. Designed for those who want to roll up their sleeves and create experiments in journalism and community storytelling, “Journalism that Matters” explores new economic models, journalism as a conversation, teaching and learning, as well as change leadership in the newsroom and the community.

Three times during the last year, small groups of journalists and other citizens met in Michigan and Missouri. The seminars were part of the “Journalism that Matters” initiative, supported by the Fetzer Institute, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Blandin Foundation.

Participants took a step back from daily routine, asked and answered a series of questions. The answers led to a several specific insights and initiatives, large and small. A few are underway. More important, the sessions provided journalists with a chance to share concerns, dreams and actions . . . to begin thinking above the crowd -- like “giraffes.” Together they agreed the essential purpose of journalism is to give people the information they need to make informed decisions about their lives. One insight was to view the future of journalism as no longer encapsulated in newsrooms, but rather as part of a broad news ecosystem -- an *ecology* that involves citizens, government, institutions and journalists, each of whom plays multiple roles newly enriched – and complicated -- by the interactive, many-to-many technology of the Internet.

At Amherst, we’ll take that insight a step further:

1. “What are the implications of technology and the changing news ecology on the way news is gathered and delivered?”
2. “What are new ways to practice journalism that make it cool for citizens to be participants in democracy? “
3. “Working collaboratively and practically, what can we pledge to do today?”

Participants will:

- Conceive experiments in “journalism that matters” you can apply at home
- Expand the informal network of people creating the new news ecology

(Please see the next page for the seminar schedule.)
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“Journalism that Matters: Looking Beyond the Newsroom Walls”
A special seminar for working journalists and other stakeholders:
On Days 2 and 3 of the Media Giraffe Project summit and conference

Friday, June 30

- 8 a.m.-9 a.m. Media Giraffe plenary: “What’s the future of news and the web?”
A bloggers’ report on the previous day’s “Future of Journalism”
summit; an overview of issues facing the field.
Speakers: Andrew Nachison, The Media Center at the American Press
Institute and Lee Rainey, Pew Center on the Internet & Society
- 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Media Café: Understanding “Journalism that Matters: The New
News Ecology.”
With Stephen Silha, and Chris Peck, “Journalism that Matters” conveners.
Small-group discussions to ask and share: What aspects of the new news
ecology have you already experienced? What experiments would you most
like to try? Identifying themes and opportunities; scheduling sessions.
- 10 30.m.-10:45 a.m. Bio break. Media Café
- 10:45 a.m. –11:30 a.m. What is the new news ecology and how do we create it?
Intro by Stephen Silha, Washington News Council and Journalism that
Matters facilitator.
- 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Open Space Session #1 –Developing ideas for action.
- 12:45 p.m.-2 p.m. Media Giraffe luncheon and speaker:
“What’s happened to main stream media’s audience,”
Tom Stites, (Center for Public Integrity)
- 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Open Space Session #2 – Developing ideas for action.
- 3:30 p.m.-4:15 p.m. Optional Media Café – Ice Cream Social & Cake
- 4:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. Open Space session #3
- 5:15 p.m.-5:45 p.m. Evening News – An interactive report
- 5:15 p.m.- 10:30 p.m. Join general MGP conference reception, dinner and discussions.

Saturday, July 1

- 7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast with general conference attendees
- 8:30 a.m. –9:30 a.m. The Morning News: Interactive Report on session outcomes.
- 9:30 a.m.-10:45 a.m. Getting it Done: From ideas to experiments – recording plans
- 10:45 a.m.-11:15 a.m. A closing circle: Making commitments
- 11 a.m.-11:15 a.m. Bio break.
11:15-12:45 Media Giraffe Closing plenary

“Journalism that Matters” Seminar conveners and speakers

Chris Peck

[Chris Peck](#) is editor of *The Commercial Appeal* in Memphis. As editor, he oversees all news and opinion operations and directs a staff of approximately 180 reporters, editors and photographers. Peck came to Memphis in 2003 after serving for one year as the first Belo Distinguished Chair of Journalism at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Before that, he was editor of *The Spokesman-Review*, in Spokane, Washington. Under his direction, *The Spokesman-Review* was cited by Columbia Journalism Review as one of the 25 best papers in the United States. He is a former president of the Associated Press Managing Editors association and has chaired ethics and wire-content committees of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He can be reached at 901-529-2390 or peck@commercialappeal.com.

Stephen Silha

[Stephen Silha](#) is a communications consultant, writer and facilitator. He has reported for magazines and newspapers including *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Minneapolis Star*, and *Yes!*. He has worked with a range of philanthropic and nonprofit organizations, including the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Libraries for the Future, Children's Express News Service, and Digital Partners. He co-convened the first national symposium on the Media and Philanthropy at the *Chicago Tribune*, which spawned the Puget Sound area research project Good News/Good Deeds: Citizen Effectiveness in the Age of Electronic Democracy (www.goodnewsgooddeeds.org). For three years he has co-convened the Media That Matters seminar at Hollyhock Retreat Center in Canada. He is president of the [Washington News Council](#), a forum for media fairness. Silha can be reached at 206-567-4363 or ssilha@comcast.net

C. Thomas Stites

Tom Stites is editor and publisher for the books, and periodicals for the national Unitarian Universalist Association. In the fall, he will become a fellow at Harvard Divinity School and on Jan. 1 the associate editor of The [Center for Public Integrity](#) in charge of its “Buying of the President: 2008” project. From 1990 to 1997 he was a vice president and publisher at Andrews McMeel Universal in Kansas City and from 1985-1990 he served as national editor of the *Chicago Tribune*. Earlier he was managing editor of *The Kansas City Times* and served in editing roles at *The New York Times*, *Newsday* the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *Chicago Sun-Times* and the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*. He is a graduate of Williams College and has studied at the University of Missouri-Kansas City school of business and at Harvard Divinity School. Stites can be reached at 617-948-6504 or stites@uua.org.

HOW TO REGISTER for "Journalism That Matters":

- **Go to the Media Giraffe Project [online registration page](#).**
(<https://www.aux.umass.edu/forms/conferenceservices/mgp/index.htm>)
 - **Check the first box marked "Summit & Conference."**
 - **Also check the "Special Registration" box**
 - **In the "other information" field near the bottom, write:
"Journalism that Matters: \$250"**
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