



Burlington Times-News photographer Woody Marshall sat close to interview 80-year-old tobacco farmer Russell Simpson of Rockingham County, North Carolina, after the day's tobacco auction at Smothers Warehouse outside of Reidsville. Mr. Simpson, retiring after a lifetime of tobacco farming, was awaiting his final paycheck for his last load of tobacco. *(Photo by Jock Lauterer)*

# STORYTELLING:

Narratives in print and pictures

**A REPORTING, WRITING, PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO WORKSHOP**  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m. **FRIDAY, OCT. 2, 2009** at the UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY  
Sponsored by the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues

# STORYTELLING: Narratives in print and pictures



No matter how newspapers are changed by technology, new business models and factors yet unknown, their journalists will keep performing at least two basic functions: telling citizens what they need to know, and telling stories of their fellow citizens.

Storytelling is as old as the human race, and one of the things that makes us human. It is also something that could be crucial to the future of newspapers, whether through narrative accounts of people's lives; new, digital forms using photography, audio and video; or multimedia combinations.

To help community newspapers tell stories in new ways, or ways that may be new to them, The Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues will present a one-day workshop, "Storytelling with Narratives in Print and Pictures," at the University of Kentucky on Oct. 2.

The storytellers will be **Stephen G. Bloom**, *top*, author and journalism professor at the University of Iowa and writer for *The Oxford Project*, a 2008 book of photographs and narratives of the people of a small town in Iowa; photographer **David Stephenson**, *right*, who recently left the Lexington Herald-Leader after helping the newspaper break new ground in storytelling with audio, video and still photography; and **Amy Wilson**, *left*, feature



writer and roving rural reporter for the Herald-Leader and former reporter for the Orange County Register in California. Stephenson and Wilson have won many journalism awards and have collaborated on several multimedia stories for the Herald-Leader.

Bloom is author of *Postville: A Clash of Cultures in Heartland America*, which has become a textbook for rural reporters, and the forthcoming *Tears of Mermaids: The Secret History of Pearls*. He hopes to help rural newspapers publish the kind of deeply personal narratives that are part of *The Oxford Project*, which used pictures and words to tell about the lives of the people of Oxford, Iowa. It began 25 years ago, when Peter Feldstein photographed almost every resident of his town. Two decades later, he photographed them again, and Bloom interviewed them, compiling their stories into compelling first-person narratives. Filmmaker Ken Burns said, "This powerful confessional book draws its strength from the truth that so-called ordinary people, not those with bold-faced names, are actually the heroes of our American drama." Hank Steuver of The Washington Post wrote, "People don't get much more real than this." For more, see [www.OxfordProject.com](http://www.OxfordProject.com). For an independent review, see <http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reportsitem.aspx?id=100724>.

"These narratives are important stories that cut to the heart of life in rural America," Bloom says. "Yet seldom, if ever, do we see these kinds of deeply personal narratives appear in rural newspapers. I'd very much like to share with rural journalists how I went about interviewing residents, and why such journalism is essential to the future of rural newspapers."



We agree, and think such personal journalism can be helped by photos and video. We invite you to come and learn by listening to Steve, David and Amy, and by sharing with your colleagues. —Al Cross, IRJCI Director

**REGISTRATION FORM**

**Storytelling: Narratives in Print and Pictures**

**University of Kentucky Student Center, Friday, Oct. 2, 2009**

**Sponsored by the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues**



**Earlybird registration fee is \$25 through Sept. 4, 2009; afterward, \$35**

Make check payable to "University of Kentucky – IRJCI"

Name, job title \_\_\_\_\_

News organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address, City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address(es) \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch will be provided. Please list any dietary restrictions or requirements you may have. \_\_\_\_\_

To help us make this workshop as useful as possible, please tell us any specific skills that you are interested in gaining or improving.

**Also, we invite you to submit, for possible discussion at the workshop, examples of your work that involve the gathering and narrative retelling of personal stories, or narrative stories of communities.**

PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM, YOUR CHECK AND (IF YOU WISH) EXAMPLES OF YOUR WORK TO:

**Storytelling Workshop**

**Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues**

**122 Grehan Journalism Bldg., University of Kentucky**

**Lexington KY 40506-0042**

For more information, contact Institute Director Al Cross or his assistant, Janet Whitaker, at 859-257-3744 or [al.cross@uky.edu](mailto:al.cross@uky.edu). You may also use that e-mail address to submit examples of your work.

*Parking for the workshop will be available in UK Parking Structure 5, across South Limestone Street from the Student Center. The two blocks of Limestone Street just north of the structure are closed for construction, so through traffic is being detoured off northbound Limestone, but the parking structure is still accessible via that street, or via southbound Upper Street. (Limestone and Upper are a pair of one-way streets.) When you arrive, take a parking ticket; when you leave, pay at one of the machines indicated by signs.*



INSTITUTE FOR RURAL JOURNALISM AND COMMUNITY ISSUES  
School of Journalism and Telecommunications  
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