

# Carrboro Citizen - Media Giraffe Profile

## Carrboro Citizen

Kirk Ross - Editor

"I wanted the site to be very active, very changeable, and usable and also this shows small newspapers that they can build themselves a top notch website without a lot of money."

**Address:** 309 Weaver St, Suite 300

**Location:** Carrboro, NC, 27150

**Email:** editor@carrborocitizen.com

**Phone:** 919-942-2100

## About

Kirk Ross, a veteran journalist, is the editor of the community website The Carrboro Citizen. The web site is a community based news source that informs the city of Carrboro, North Carolina of relevant daily news. Before Ross became the editor of the site he began to blossom his interest in the field at the age of thirteen when he worked for the Orlando Central Star.

"I actually started as a stringer for what was then called the Orlando Central Star in 1973 when I was thirteen years old," said Ross.

Ross had worked as a photo stringer for a bureau at the Orlando Central Star where he also had his own photo feature page until he was fifteen years old. Ross mentioned having two exceptional mentors while he was at the Orlando Central Star whom he learned a great deal about the field from.

Because Ross's family moved around quite a bit in his younger years, Ross then began working for a college radio and then in 1985 worked for a little country weekly print paper. Following that he worked for the Chapel Hill newspaper which was owned by Dow Jones, where he served as a business editor. The Chapel Hill newspaper eventually was shortened to the Chapel Hill News during in which Ross evolved into a beat reporter covering mostly government.

A little over two years ago Ross quit this and started the Carrboro Citizen web site. A piece of the site was launched in November of 2006 while simultaneously anticipating the release of a regular weekly print newspaper. Although the web site is funded directly through the newspaper the site ended up starting before the newspaper did.

The information found on the web site in some ways leads the information found in the newspaper. Ross prides the accessibility to blogging on his web site.

"I really wanted to take advantage of the blog software out there, which is very good at archiving, its very searchable, its very clean, and its free," said Ross. The Carrboro Citizen is composed with using word print, "I wanted to build a newspaper or a news website using word print because I saw it had a lot of potential," explained Ross.

Ever since Ross has become acquainted with the field he has exhibited a great passion for both journalism and the media. He is most concerned with making sure his web site truly connects with the community, it is

open source journalism, open source media said Ross. What makes his web site unique is the fact that it is directly correlated to a print paper.

"I think newspapers spend a lot of time and do a lot of thinking about the web, those days need to be over with they need to do a lot of doing, they need to act more than they're always trying to find the latest craze, by the time they do it's over with," commented Ross about getting active with web journalism.

Even though Ross entered the career well before the age of web media, he is well-versed with the new age of technology. Ross especially recognizes the importance of blogging as a beneficial implement to the new direction of journalism. He feels that it allows for a strong connection between the readers and the news. The readers can share their thoughts and concerns with others through posting blogs on the site, this is essential to a community news source.

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