

Thomas A. Silvestri
President and Publisher, Richmond Times-Dispatch

On page four of a 10-page career development worksheet, Tom was asked this question: If you were to leave the company tomorrow, what would you want your legacy to be? He answered: "He moved us to higher places and standards. We learned a lot on the journey that made us smarter, innovative and better prepared."

In January 2005, Tom became president and publisher of The Richmond Times-Dispatch, Media General Inc.'s second largest newspaper that also oversees a chain of suburban weeklies. The 160-plus-year-old business is in the midst of transforming from a regional newspaper into a full-fledged multimedia source of high-quality news, advertising, commentary and information delivered where and when the customer wants it. In 2007, The Times-Dispatch survived a major fire at its Hanover County Production Plant that destroyed one of its three presses -- without ever missing a day of publication, an accomplishment that amazed its readers.

Prior to rejoining The Times-Dispatch, he had been president of Media General's community newspapers, responsible for 20 daily newspapers, more than 25 weeklies in five Southeastern states, and Media General's statewide business magazine, Virginia Business. He also served 2½ years as director of news synergy and Newsbank editor at the Richmond-based company.

A journalist for more than 25 years, Tom is a former deputy managing editor of the Richmond Times-Dispatch, where he helped create three news departments and several stand-alone sections, and launched a training program that attracted national attention for its breadth and reality-based approach. Before joining The Times-Dispatch, Tom was a reporter and editor for the Gannett Westchester (N.Y.) Newspapers.

Tom received a Bachelor of Arts from Pace University and holds a Master in Business Administration degree from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is a frequent discussion leader for the American Press Institute, where he is on the board of directors, the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association (SNPA), where he is a foundation trustee, the Virginia Press Association (VPA) and other journalism organizations. He is past president of the VCU School of Business Alumni Board and the Virginia Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. He is on the executive committee of the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce and is a board member of the World Affairs Council. He serves as co-chairman of the VPA Professional Development Committee and chairman of SNPA's Education for Journalists Committee. He is a 1997 graduate of Leadership Metro Richmond and later this year will become chairman of the regional group.

He and his wife, Sue Kurzman, live in Richmond, with their two cats, Choo-Choo and Lou-Lou. Tom's annual resolution is to get a hobby.