

Media Future Now
BLOG HOME: www.mediafuturenow.com
Reports, Discussion and Idea Exchange
AGENDA for Wednesday, April 22, 2009

- I. Introductions/Announcements**
- II. Presentations and Discussion**

OUR GUESTS TODAY:

Gary Bivings, The Bivings Group (President and Founder).

Carol C. Darr, George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management (Associate Professorial Lecturer).

John Shea, FEMA (Public Information Officer (specializing in New Media)).

Carol Darr of **GW's Graduate School of Political Management** will present new research that she and Stephanie Cacace recently completed on surprising differences between ordinary donors and **Political Influentials** or "**Poli-fluentials**" -- the well-connected and hyper-active opinion leaders who play an outsized role in American elections. Carol's study found that while the demographic differences between the two groups are small, the differences between their civic and political behavior are, as Mark Twain said in another context, as stark as the differences between lightning and lightning bugs.

Next, **Gary Bivings** of the **Bivings Group** will bring us a behind the scenes look at the successful online campaign of the **Pickens Plan** (the wind energy plan). Gary will talk about the strategy, and how his firm has used the web to identify, organize and mobilize nearly 2 million advocates to help the Pickens Plan frame the debate over alternative energy issues in the presidential campaign and to secure significant legislative victories.

FEMA's John Shea will speak about how **FEMA** uses technologies like **Twitter** to communicate externally to promote an open, quick and relevant dialogue with citizens. For FEMA, Twitter is not just a "trend" technology; it's a tool helping the agency achieve its communication goals and priorities. FEMA does not take external communication lightly - when engaging in new technologies, FEMA really investigates and thinks about strategy and appropriate application.

*Thank you to **Larke Paul, Alex Treadway and Richard Parker** for planning our April lunch, and to **Rachel Eason and her colleagues at USTelecom** for hosting our April lunch. We welcome participation and ideas from all members and guests. Thank you all for joining us today.*

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OUR GUEST SPEAKERS TODAY

Gary Bivings, The Bivings Group, President and Founder (www.bivings.com)

Gary Bivings is President and Founder of The Bivings Group, a Washington, DC, strategic web consulting firm. The company offers a full-range of technology, web development and social media services. Current clients include the Pickens Plan, Pew Charitable Trusts, the Peace Corps, AMD, and Hewlett-Packard. Gary started his professional career as a Peace Corps volunteer in Malaysia, and worked for the U.N. and U.S. government in various jobs in Asia and Africa. He established The Bivings Group in 1998.

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Carol C. Darr, George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management, Associate Professorial Lecturer

Carol Darr is an Associate Professorial Lecturer at The George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management. From 2001–2007 she was the director of GSPM's award-winning Institute of Politics, Democracy & the Internet, before leaving to teach "New Media and Contemporary American Politics" at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government as an Adjunct Lecturer in the fall of 2007. Carol has spent most of her career in national politics and government and served as the General Counsel to the Democratic National Committee in the 1992 presidential election. During the Clinton administration, she served as the Acting General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Commerce and as the Associate Administrator of NTIA for the Office of International Affairs. Carol was Chief Counsel to the 1988 Dukakis/Bentsen Committee and Deputy Counsel to the 1980 Carter/Mondale Presidential Committee. She received an M.Litt in history from Christ's College, Cambridge University, and a J.D. and a B.A. from the University of Memphis. She is the co-editor of *Poli-fluentials: The New Political Kingmakers* and co-author of *Political Influentials Online in the 2004 Presidential Election*, as well as several other IPDI publications.

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John Shea, FEMA, Public Information Officer (specializing in New Media) (www.fema.gov)

John Shea joined FEMA External Affairs in 1999. Since then, he has fielded multiple positions within FEMA headquarters, Region 9 and many field operations. John was officially named the Public Information Officer for New Media in June 2008. He developed the strategies and SOPs of FEMA's social media / new media efforts to integrate existing and future communications needs encountered by the agency for preparedness, response, recover and mitigation messaging. The core principles of community-driven communications and customer service have been instilled in the practices and products FEMA is developing for the social media environment. John graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park, with a degree in print journalism. While at Maryland, John had the opportunity to intern for DigitalInk, an early venture of the Washington Post online.