

Educational Communications Board Meeting
October 19, 2007
Interim Executive Director Report
Gene Purcell

The single event which captured most of my attention during the last three months was the proposal of a state Assembly budget that, if adopted, would have decreased ECB's state GPR funding for public broadcasting by 50%.

That particular proposal would have fallen most heavily on ECB's Delivery Division which handles engineering and operations for WPR and WPT. Tied in with even more serious cuts proposed for the UW-Extension side of the partnership and cuts proposed for Milwaukee Public Television, the proposals would have dramatically affected the reliability, content, and quality of public broadcasting in Wisconsin.

With the support of the Board of Directors of ECB, I worked closely with Malcolm Brett at UW-Extension and Ellis Bromberg at MPTV to develop our message points. Then, Malcolm Brett and I teamed up to carry that message to legislators.

Together, Malcolm Brett, Phil Corriveau, James Steinbach and I worked with the Friends of WHA and Wisconsin Public Radio Association to develop their own set of message points that could be used in their own communication with legislators. Ultimately, we tried to ensure that listeners and viewers were aware of the debate as well.

Within the ECB, I regularly communicated with staff about the status of the budget proposals.

Behind the headlines of the state budget debate, you'll see that the work of the ECB continues unabated and that is a credit to ECB staff and our partners.

As you'll read in the reports and hear today, during the last three months ECB now has a new permanent director of Education Services, the agency has been awarded grants to improve public broadcasting's service in radio and television, major engineering projects have been completed, and soon, we hope to name a new Director of Wisconsin Public Television.

No doubt you are familiar with the saying "May you live in interesting times". To say that the summer of 2007 was interesting is an understatement.

However, the positive achievements that have come out of ECB's day to day activities over the course of this summer will serve the ECB, its partners and customers well for years to come.

Education Division Update
Lin Hanson
Director of Education Services

Project Updates

- *Democracy it is!* – The four new programs in this series on civic engagement and service learning premiered in September. The entire series is also available on DVD for schools to purchase.
- *Into the Book* web site – Several new web components for this reading strategies series for grades 1 through 4 are in place. The remaining parts of the web site are currently being tested and will be ready late fall.
- *World Languages* – This series on assessing world language instruction will contain seven 15-minute programs; each program featuring 3 classrooms. The Advisory Committee has been meeting and identifying classrooms for taping which will begin late October.
- *Personal Financial Literacy* – Discussions are continuing with DPI's Social Studies Consultant and the Department of Financial Institutions regarding the need for classroom resources on personal financial literacy. An advisory committee is being formed with the first meeting scheduled in November 2007.
- Datacasts – Datacasts to schools are scheduled to continue through the 2007-2008 school year: The schedule and a list of series available are posted at the datacast web site – www.datacastwisconsin.org. Thirty-six school districts currently receive instructional programs through datacasts; and several additional schools are planning to set up their equipment this fall. WDSE in Duluth/Superior is now datacasting instructional programming thereby making it possible for schools in northwest Wisconsin to receive programming.
- State, Local and Tribal Government – Working with the DPI social studies consultant and the American Indian studies consultant a web survey was sent to high schools to determine resources being used to teach state, local and tribal government. The survey will assist in identifying additional resources that may need to be developed.
- TeacherLine – ECB will continue to partner with PBS to offer TeacherLine professional development courses to Wisconsin teachers.

Conferences, Presentations and Workshops

- Education division staff participated in a discussion of ECB's instructional resources and future plans at the retreat of the DPI Content and Learning Team in August.
- Education division staff will present workshops this fall at CESA 4 (West Salem), CESA 7/NEWIST (Green Bay), the Wisconsin Association for Language Teachers Conference (Appleton), and at WEAC in Milwaukee.
- ECB education staff partnered with DPI's Instructional Media and Technology Team at their Regional Meetings to co-present the *Intel Teach to the Future Leadership Forum*.
- The education division will meet for a full day planning retreat in October to develop the strategic direction, goals and tasks for the division for the next two years.

Partnership Outreach Activities

- The *Hometown Stories Green Bay* curriculum development team has completed its work and the teacher materials will be posted on the web site. The curriculum development team in La Crosse is currently working on the teacher materials for *Hometown Stories La Crosse*.
- *Wisconsin War Letters* invites students in grades 9 through 12 to interpret primary source narratives from Wisconsin citizen's World War II experiences by creating dramatic readings, video displays and multimedia presentations. This project is coordinated by the ECB, Wisconsin Public Television and the Wisconsin Historical Society.
www.ecb.org/warletters

Print and Web Publications

- The *Parade of Programs* schedule book was delivered to schools this fall featuring additional curricular indexing to assist teachers in identifying resources.
- The Interconnect newsletter has gone digital and is only available at ECB's web site – www.ecb.org/Interconnect20. Renamed Interconnect 2.0, the monthly newsletter provides schedule information, program updates, and articles of interest to educators.

Instructional Programming

- Instructional programming for the 2007-2008 school year began in September. One hundred twenty-five series consisting of nearly 1300 programs will air throughout the year.
- In early October ECB Liaisons from the CESAs and the DPI content consultants met to preview and evaluate new instructional series available for broadcast. DPI consultants provided information on developments in their curriculum areas and shared their vision of the effective use of multimedia. The involvement of the DPI consultants in program selection is key to the selection of programming that meets Wisconsin's needs.

Staff Update

Marta Bechtol, director of school services and instructional program development, has been selected to participate in Wisconsin's Enterprise Leadership Academy. Selected through a nomination process and limited to 30 participants, the ELA program offers a series of leadership classes focusing on developing advanced knowledge, skills, and cross-agency networks. Building cross-agency networks allows participants to collaboratively problem-solve common issues, as well as creating lifetime working relationships across state government.

Delivery Division Operational and Project Update

Terry Baun

Director of Engineering and Operations

Division Staffing

No Division staffing changes were made during the quarter. At the Operations Center sector we are transitioning one LTE position to a FTE 20 hour position in order to reduce overtime costs. There is still one unfilled FTE position in the Operations Center, which at present we have no plans to fill. On the technology services sector of the Division, we are working on creating a new level of position descriptions which will place increased emphasis on both broadcast and IT (computer/data) skills in order to recruit and retain the next generation of ECB technical talent. In the Division administration sector, the position of Director of Regulatory and Compliance remains unfilled, and those duties continue to be shared by the Administrator and the Regional Technical Managers as previously assigned.

Division Meetings

- The Division has instituted a monthly telephone conference call with all Regional Technical Managers on the first Wednesday of each month. Calls were made in July, August, September, and October. These provide an alternative to the much more expensive in-person meetings while still keeping communications and interactive discussion flowing across the state.
- ECB Field Staff attended an intensive factory course for the new HD Radio monitoring equipment October 3-4 at the Beltline.
- The Division was well represented at the annual Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Broadcast Clinic, held October 8-11th as 19 of our Operations and Technical management staff attended this cost-effective Madison meeting, which presented 20 speakers over three days of radio/TV technical presentations and exhibits. There was an informal get-together for all ECB attendees at the WBA Broadcast Clinic the evening of October 9th.

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Operational Items

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- Our Division study committee on our Newpoint TCAS remote control and monitoring system presented its report in early September. We are escalating our technical issues to higher management levels at Newpoint while investigating alternative hardware platforms within and without the TCAS system. Thanks to Jim Klas for his diligent work as chair of this committee.
- Thanks to the good work of our colleagues at WPR and WPT, and especially our IT staff here at ECB, we now have a functional discrepancy reporting system used to report technical issues and resolutions. This list greatly facilitates the ongoing quality control meetings which are designed to reduce outages and improve the presentation of WPR and WPT throughout the state.
- ECB senior engineering staff met with our FCC attorneys from Dow Lohnes and Associates at the Beltline on Sept, 10-11 to review Radio-TV rule changes, final DTV channel allocations, public TV/Radio underwriting rules, and other FCC issues.

Project Updates

- In conjunction with our partners at Wisconsin Public Radio, ECB prepared applications for several new stations which were filed during the mid-October FCC public broadcasting filing window. It will be months before we learn of the status of those applications, but we are hopeful that either ECB or UW Regents will be granted one or more of these new station licenses.
- Roofing and insulation work at the WHRM and WHLA transmitter buildings has begun, with completion scheduled before the end of November.
- The Green Bay BIC relocation project is now 80% complete, with our TV and radio stations serving Green Bay and Door County now operating on the new extended BIC feeds to the Green Bay Bureau and to the Scray's Hill transmitter site. Equipment failures with the new fiber-optic interconnect and the existing Tandberg Digital Decoder at Scray's Hill marred the initial start-up but these problems were resolved quickly and the system is now running as envisioned. There were no significant outages during the long and complicated construction and transition period, thanks to good planning by the installation crew under the direction of Pete Kingslien.
- The installation of the new DTV encoding system for WPT is now scheduled for mid-November. Factory training is set to begin later this month. We anticipate this equipment will improve the quality and definition of our TV broadcasts as well as provide improved redundancy of critical equipment.
- We have received approval from the Building Commission to proceed with Phase 3 of our HD radio installations. We will be adding HD capability to FM stations WHWC, WHBM, WHHI, WHLA, WHDI, and AM station WLBL. The bidding process has begun and construction may commence as early as December.
- Grants: The following grants were received by ECB in the past quarter:
 - Digital Conversion/Upgrade for WLEF-TV, Park Falls
 - Construction of a new Adams radio station, to be called WHAA
 - Digital Conversion of WPT translatorsOf course all of this work depends upon receipt of matching funds for construction, which were included in our budget request for this biennium.

**Wisconsin Public Television
James Steinbach
Interim Director of Television**

Production & Programming

THE WAR: Ken Burn's series has the potential to become the most-watched series in public television history, which would be remarkable in our multi-channel, multi-platform digital media universe. Although we will not have national Nielsen numbers until November, here's some preliminary information:

Based on overnights for the first telecasts in 56 metered market stations, *THE WAR* averaged a HH rating of 3.8 (or 5.5 million viewers). The projected estimate of the total unduplicated viewers during the original broadcasts is well over 40 million viewers.

In addition, early traffic numbers available for *THE WAR*'s web site (pbs.org/thewar) show that it has received more than 500,000 unique visits since its September 23rd launch. More than 12% of all visitors to pbs.org since September 23 have spent time on *THE WAR* site.

The previous all-time record PBS audiences were for *THE CIVIL WAR* (1990) at 38.9 million unduplicated viewers and *BASEBALL* (1994) at 43.1 million unduplicated viewers. Based on the estimates projected by our research department today, *THE WAR* is on track to potentially surpass both *THE CIVIL WAR* and *BASEBALL* and become the most-watched programs in our history.

Awards

Emmy Awards: WPT has received three Regional Emmy Nominations: "Wisconsin Korean War Stories," "In Wisconsin," and a series of reports on PTSD among Iraq war veterans that aired within "In Wisconsin."

Way of the Warrior, a new documentary by Patty Loew, explores the high rate of military service among Native Americans. The documentary will be part of the PBS National Program Service. WPT broadcast will be Monday, November 5 at 8 pm. This puts it right at the beginning of Native American History month as well as close to Veterans Day.

Wisconsin Hometown Stories: LaCrosse and *HTS-Green Bay* are both continuing production, with extraordinary community support. *Wisconsin Hometown Stories: Green Bay* will be broadcast on Monday, November 12 at 8 PM.

Badger Sports Coverage: Working with the UW Athletic Department and The Big Ten Network, WPT has secured delayed broadcast rights to a package of UW sports which includes (approximately): 15 men's hockey games; 4 women's hockey games; 10 women's basketball games, and 3 volleyball games.

The Wisconsin Channel: In January, WPT will launch "The Wisconsin Channel" as a multicast channel during the day. The schedule will include current and archived WPT programs, programs from WMVS and other sources, and "University Place", presenting lectures and other programs from/about the campuses of the University of Wisconsin.**Development**

Award For Excellence : PBS honored WPT with an Award For Excellence at the Dev Conference last week for the launch of our Home Town Stories series. With recent gifts completing our goal in Green Bay and La Crosse, the total raised for the first three communities totaled over \$500,000 supporting documentary production, community engagement and curriculum development.

Concerts on the Square: In September WPT received notification of \$60,000 commitment from The Peterson Foundation funding *Concerts on the Square* broadcasts for 2008, 2009 & 2010.

Pledge

August pledge: statewide pledge totaled \$381,645 from 2,766 pledges the best August on record. That compares to \$324,397 from 2,449 pledges in August 2006.

Community Outreach

Ken Burn's *THE WAR*: On September 5th, WPT partnered with the Wisconsin Veteran's Museum, Monona Terrace and the National Archives to sponsor a preview screening of Ken Burns' *The War* with 135 people in attendance. The film was also featured in the fall Reel-to-Real library series with 11 libraries hosting preview screenings and discussions. Librarians were enthusiastic and we will build on these relationships.

Using the PBS website, nearly 50 Wisconsin stories have been collected for national archiving.

Locally, The Wisconsin War Letters web site is ready to launch, a partnership with ECB Education Services, WPT and the Wisconsin State Historical Society. The site is designed to encourage high school students to use digital images of first-person historical documents to enhance their exploration of history.

Early Childhood Conference: 175 early childhood professionals enjoyed a day of professional development at the WPT's 7th Annual conference on September 15, 2007. The keynote speaker was Tina Waganer, outreach director for Ragdoll Productions, the producers of *Teletubbies* and *Boobah*, with additional sessions including stress management, curriculum development, music and movement and yoga

Promotion, Design, Events.

Quilt Expo: Attendance was 13,545 (a 16% increase over 2006), and informal queries showed an enthusiastic response from attendees and vendors before calculating our net revenue. A total of 11,875 people participated in Quilt Expo educational offerings, which included lectures, workshops, and presentations

Green Bay: The Green Bay Press-Gazette is running an 8-week series of articles titled "Our Story" leading up to the broadcast of *Hometown Stories: Green Bay* on Nov. 12. The articles follow the same general themes as our documentary. The articles are printed on Monday and available on the Press-Gazette Web site.

Way of the Warrior: Dawn Dark Mountain has created an original watercolor image for *Way of the Warrior* thanks to a grant for the Wisconsin Arts Board. It will be distributed electronically as a poster to organizations and media in the state.

**Wisconsin Public Radio
Phil Corriveau
Director of Radio**

Budget Goals

WPR finished Fiscal Year 2007 in good financial health. Membership and Underwriting, which together make up nearly 40% of WPR's operating budget, exceeded goal. Membership increased 4.4% over the previous year to \$5,250,000, while Underwriting increased approximately 12.4% to \$1,452,000. Membership and Underwriting are "Listener Sensitive" sources of revenue, which means they are dependent on audience growth in order to increase, and our recent program

changes are starting to show results. We are also pleased that the number of individual contributors grew from 39,769 to 41,471, an increase of 4.3%.

Audience

WPR received its Arbitron ratings numbers for Spring 2007, and the statewide trend was up. Both the Ideas Network and the NPR News/Classical Network were up by 8% over Spring 2006. This is significant because program changes were made during the summer of 2006 (Immediately after the Spring 2006 ratings period) to strengthen audience, and the Spring 2007 ratings show that we are succeeding:

	<u>Spring 2006</u>	<u>Spring 2007</u>	<u>increase</u>
WPR Ideas Network	249,900	270,100	8%
WPR News/Classical	181,000	196,000	8%
WPR Total Audience	383,400	407,800	6%

State Building Commission

The Wisconsin State Building Commission has approved release of \$689,200 to match \$450,000 in federal funds from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in order to implement Phase III of HD (digital) radio providing service in six locations, at an estimated total cost of \$1,139,200. The six stations are: WHLA La Crosse, WHHI Highland, WHWC Menomonie, WHBM Park Falls, WLBL-AM Auburndale, and WHDI Sister Bay. ECB Director of Engineering Terry Baun estimates that these new digital stations will come on line by March 30, 2008. Along with the seven stations that are already converted, these stations will provide a digital signal to all the service area that Wisconsin Public Radio reaches. Most of the digital stations will carry an additional channel that can be received on digital receivers, and WPR is providing a 24-hour Classical Music Service called "HD Classical" on the second channel. We are receiving a growing number of positive comments for listeners who are purchasing HD receivers in order to pick up the HD Classical service. This has been especially true in Milwaukee, where the commercial classical station WFMR recently dropped the classical format. The WPR website has extensive information about where to purchase HD radios, which have been coming down in price to an average of between \$100 - \$200, with some sales and rebates bringing the price to below \$100. Ford Motor Company has also announced that it will start making HD Radios available as an option in its 2008 model year. WPR is also making the HD Classical channel available in a streaming format on the internet.

New Station in Adams County

The ECB has obtained a FCC Construction Permit for a new Ideas Network station in Adams County. This station will help to supplement the two AM Ideas Network stations in the Central part of the state (WHA and WLBL) with an FM signal, something our listeners have been requesting for a long time. Because this area is considered unserved by public radio (the AM stations have daytime authorization and must go to very low power at sunset), we were able to obtain a grant from the Public Telecommunications Facilities program for \$323,316 to cover 75% of the cost of constructing the new station. The balance of the funds required to build have been budgeted in the Wisconsin Public Radio Association Budget.

FCC Filing Window for new noncommercial radio stations

This past Spring the FCC announced that between October 12 and 19, 2007 there will be an application filing window for new FM station requests. This filing window offers an important opportunity because, most likely, it will be many years before another filing window opens up. Furthermore, most – if not all – of the valuable frequencies will probably be taken in this window, and for all practical purposes it will be the last opportunity for public radio stations to apply for new stations or to raise power when possible. Wisconsin Public Radio has conducted frequency studies in the areas of the state where our coverage is poor or nonexistent, and will be applying for eight new stations in various areas of the state. It will likely be a year or more before new licenses can be awarded, and in the case of competing applications the process could take several years. Once the licenses are granted, the applicant has three years to construct the new facility.

WPRA Retreat

The Wisconsin Public Radio Association held its annual planning retreat in La Crosse on September 27 – 28. The Board welcomed six new members to the board, including Bill Merrick (Appleton) who was elected Treasurer, Chris Powless (Oneida), Chet Gerlach (Madison), Gloria Jones-Bey (Madison) Laura Jasper (Chetek) and Paul Sturgul (Hurley). Joan Rudnitzki (West Bend) was appointed Chair of the Fundraising Committee, Bill Merrick (Appleton) Chair of the Finance Committee, and Dave Steele (Augusta) Chair of the Board Operations Committee. The Board will also be forming an Advocacy Committee, and Dave Steel and Gary Lichtenberg were appointed to form an ad hoc committee to research endowments and planned giving.

WPR Statewide Community Engagement

Wisconsin Public Radio sponsored or was deeply involved in a number of events around Wisconsin this summer and fall, including:

- Outdoor Art Festival in Kohler
- Lakefront Festival of the Arts, Milwaukee
- Riverfront Jazz Fest, Stevens Point
- the first ever Open Air Festival of the Arts in Eau Claire
- Beethoven Festival in Winona, Minnesota
- Artstreet in Green Bay
- the Midwest Renewable Energy Fair in Amherst
- “I Remember Radio” concert by the Duluth Harbormasters Barbershop Chorus
- Shawano Folk Fest
- Wausau Festival of Arts
- Lake Country Art Festival in Delafield
- Chippewa Valley Symphony Pops Concert in Eau Claire (
- Superior/Douglas County Chamber of Commerce Play Day
- Door County Festival of Arts in Ephraim
- Great River Folk Festival in La Crosse
- Fox Valley Jazz Fest
- Iron River Blueberry Festival
- Milwaukee International Film Festival
- Great River Jazz Festival in La Crosse
- Lou and Peter Berryman 30th Anniversary; live on “Simply Folk”
- “Wait, Wait, Don’t Tell Me” live broadcast, Beloit College

- “Water Engine” / Old Time Radio live show; Hemsley Theater, Vilas Hall
- Terry Gross at UW-Whitewater, October 30, 2007
- YWCA Racial Justice Summit; October 30, 2007

Pledge

Wisconsin Public Radio’s Fall Pledge Drive runs October 11 – 22 with a goal of \$950,000 in new and renewed memberships.