

Educational Communications Board Meeting
July 17, 2009
Executive Director Report
Gene Purcell

The fiscal year just ended proved to be one of great challenges for the ECB, and the coming year promises more of the same.

Having said that, the agency ended the fiscal year in relatively good shape and as this is being written, we are working to finalize our plans to deal with GPR cuts of about \$581,000. That figure amounts to about 12% of ECB's GPR budget and those cuts will affect all Divisions of the agency. While the cuts are substantial, we are mindful of the Board's directive to protect services. The coming year promises to be equally challenging and could very well result in further cuts to agency GPR.

Despite the budget challenges facing the agency, there is much to be optimistic about. The numbers of listeners to WPR has set new records; WPT has a new "Friends of Wisconsin Public Television" organization that will increase the presence of the network outside of Madison, ECB's Education Services Division continues to win accolades and fans for its work, and our Delivery Division is busy with the construction of a new tower in Highland, a new radio station in Coloma and the development of the next generation of the Broadcast Interconnect (BIC).

As we attempt to balance the challenges and the optimism, my goals for the short-term are to ensure the agency's services and financial stability remain on solid footing. Beyond that, I anticipate the next two years will be critical ones as we plan for the next biennium without the addition of federal stimulus money.

Before I close, I'd like to acknowledge the resilience and professionalism of the ECB staff during the past few months as they have absorbed the budget and employee furlough news. In many cases, the budget implications of ECB's cuts have required a good deal of flexibility and creativity on the part of staff and I'd like to thank all of them for their hard work during difficult times.

Education Update
July 2009
Lin Hanson
Director of Education Services

1. Project Updates

- *Financial Literacy: TEACH IT!* – This professional development series will debut in October during *MoneySmart Week*. Kevin McKinley, certified financial planner, will host. Segments will also be taped at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago’s learning center with Benjamin Franklin portrayed by Don Wagner.
- *Financial Literacy: PARENT IT!* – In October, work will begin on a parent component for *Financial Literacy: TEACH IT!* ECB received a grant from CPB to produce this program and a corresponding Web site.
- *ENGAGE: State. Tribal. Local. Government* – Production continues on three 30-minute programs for high school students. Illustrating the *process* of government, programs will focus on the connections between state, tribal, and local governments in Wisconsin. Segments have already been taped in Prescott, Paris, Trego, and Black River Falls.
- *PBS TeacherLine* professional development courses are available this summer for Wisconsin educators. Course catalogs are distributed at workshops and available online www.ecb.org/education/tline.htm
- *CPB STEM Community Engagement Project* – Work on this initiative continues with the project partners to develop an online clearinghouse of resources for all STEM-related educational, employment, and career activities in Wisconsin. www.wistem.org is collecting stories, events, and videos that tell the story of STEM education in Wisconsin.
- *Blueprint: Designing Wisconsin’s Future* – A joint project between ECB and Wisconsin Public Television, this 30-minute program aired on Thursday, May 21 on Wisconsin Public Television and June 14 on Milwaukee Public Television (Ch. 36). This program features four STEM-related business-school-community collaborations: First Lego League in Madison; the Brillion School District and Ariens Company; Westfield School District’s biodiesel project; and the Biopharmaceutical Technology Center Institute (BTCI) school partnership. The program is also available on ECB’s You Tube Channel <http://www.youtube.com/WIECB> .
- *Sound~Waves: Wisconsin Youth Radio Festival* – The radio broadcast of the 2009 winners aired on Sunday, May 10 on “Old Time Radio” on the Ideas Network of Wisconsin Public Radio. Winning entries are streamed on ECB’s web site: <http://www.ecb.org/soundwaves/soundbites.htm>

2. Conferences, Presentations and Workshops

- Education staff presented a session about the personal financial literacy project and ECB's personal financial literacy resources at the National Institute of Financial and Economic Literacy on June 24, 2009 at Edgewood College in Madison.
- The Wisconsin Association for Language Teachers (WAFLT) will award ECB's Chad Reuter the Anthony J. Gradisnik Award for 2009 at their fall conference for his work on *World Language Assessment: Get in the Mode!* This award is given annually to an individual or group, especially outside the language teaching profession, who shares Mr. Gradisnik's enthusiasm and advocacy for language education.

3. Partnership Outreach Activities

- Curriculum materials for *Hometown Stories Manitowoc-Two Rivers* are posted on line - http://www.ecb.org/hometown_stories/Manitowoc-TwoRivers/resources.htm Teachers from the Manitowoc and the Two Rivers School Districts served on the curriculum development committee.
- Education staff is working with WPT Outreach's Kid's Open House Planning Committee.

4. Print and Web Publications

- The 2009-2010 *Parade of Programs* schedule book is at the printers and scheduled for delivery to schools late August.
- The ECB Web site will have a new look in the Fall and feature news about ECB's programming and resources.
- ECB's YouTube Channel features several ECB-produced programs
- ECB's FaceBook page contains information about ECB activities.

5. Instructional Programming

- ECB on *Badgerlink* – we are working with the staff at DPI's Reference and Loan Library to add ECB video resources to the *Badgerlink* menu of options. Testing is taking place this summer with a roll-out planned for October 2009.
- Instructional programming will resume on Tuesday September 8, 2009.
- Datacasts of selected instructional programs continue throughout the summer.

Delivery Division Operational and Project Update
Terrence M. Baun, Division Administrator
July 17, 2009

Division Staffing

- No Division staffing changes were made during the quarter. There remain two unfilled FTE position in the Operations Center, which at present we have no immediate plans to fill. Should WPT wish to initiate 24/7 telecasting operations at some future date, we are prepared to reconsider that decision.
- In conjunction with our Division response to mandated ECB budget reductions and lapses we continue to leave unfilled the position of Director of Regulatory and Compliance, with those duties continuing to be shared by the Administrator and the Regional Technical Managers as currently assigned.

Division Meetings

- The Division monthly telephone conference call with all Regional Technical Managers continued throughout the past quarter. These have proven to be an economical and effective means of maintaining regularly scheduled Division communications without travel expense.
- A full Division meeting is scheduled in Eau Claire in August of this year. Several engineering staff attended the WBA/SBE Summer Engineering Seminar in June, and, pending budget availability, we will consider attendance at the October Broadcast Clinic and Equipment Exposition in Madison.

Operational Items

- We have now assumed full responsibility for maintenance of the Newpoint TCAS remote control and monitoring system following termination of the service contract earlier this year. We are currently about 70% complete in the planned and orderly upgrade of the field units for this system and all is proceeding well. Special note of thanks to Peter McLean for his continuing work on this project.
- Jim Klas is leading a major project to explore how ECB will deliver signals to all Partnership stations in the future. Currently we lease fiber-optic and microwave facilities from a private company, whose contract will expire in 2010, with a same-cost one year extension to 2011. We are investigating alternative delivery systems, including partnering with other state agencies to share fiber optic or microwave facilities in conjunction with our own “last mile” links to our sites. We hope to have a recommendation and a strategic plan by early fall which should give us time to implement the new system by February, 2011.

Project Updates

- Although the federally mandated digital television conversion is complete, Delivery Division engineers continue to work actively with WPT Audience Services in assisting Wisconsin residents experiencing loss of signal following the digital conversion, handling five to six calls personally every week. In Park Falls, WLEF-TV, initiated a substantial digital power “maximization” following FCC approval on July 1st, increasing the power of WLEF-TV by a factor of four and greatly improving service in the northern part of the state. All ECB full power TV stations and

translators are now broadcasting exclusively on their full power “maximized” DTV assignments and all TV antenna systems have now been optimized for DTV transmission. In what is the final stage of the conversion project, work continues on “green” disposal of the of the legacy analog TV transmitters, with equipment in Green Bay, Park Falls, and Menomonie already removed from ECB sites.

- ECB is working actively with UWEX in planning the construction of the new FM station granted to UWEX in Ashland. There are no new developments on the status of the ECB/UWEX combined 8 NCE-FM applications currently before the FCC.
- Installation has been completed for the upgrade to HD radio transmission for our stations WHWC, WHBM, WHHI, WHLA, WHDI, and AM station WLBL. We expect to initiate the permanent high bandwidth microwave connections to Sister Bay to allow HD operation there later in July, and we have already initiated improved signal delivery to Highland and Platteville. Additionally, we received Building Commission approval earlier this year to proceed with HD radio installations at ECB stations WHSA in Brule, WHND in Sister Bay, and the future WHAA in Coloma. These three projects also received federal PTFP funding.
- Foundation excavation for the new WHHI tower in Highland began in late June, and tower steel is scheduled to be on-site late in July. Project Manager Pete Kingslien hopes to have the project completed by late fall or early winter per the schedule.
- The WHAA Coloma FM project continues on a fast-tracked schedule. Tower studies have been completed as are preliminary negotiations with the tower owner concerning the timing of the necessary improvements. Project Director Dean Andrewjeski has begun to order equipment. We are still awaiting formal FAA approval of the tower height increase, but work is proceeding steadily toward the late fall/early winter completion forecast.

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

Prepared by Mike Crane, COO

July 2009

Phil Corriveau returns to WPR!

WPR Director Phil Corriveau has returned to WPR after his extended medical leave. Phil's recovery continues, and he is currently working on a 60% schedule. WPR's Chief Operating Officer Mike Crane is responsible for the supervision of the WPR regions as well as WPR's Engineering and Operations. As Phil works toward his goal of returning to a 100% appointment, these areas of responsibility will be transitioned back to the Director's office. We're thrilled that Phil has returned!

One Day Wednesday Pledge Drive

Our One Day Wednesday pledge drive was a rousing success, ultimately raising more than 4,400 pledges and totaling more than \$430,000 dollars! Listeners are already asking if we'll do it again, and the answer is "probably yes, although not in the fall." The best wisdom we have heard about the "One Day" approach is that it works best the very first time a station tries it, and that it is a strategy that should be used as part of a larger "more programming, less on-air fundraising" effort. So we are thinking about what we'll do in the fall to continue the commitment to "more programming," and we are imagining that another "One Day" effort may be scheduled for next May.

Work continues on Adams/Wisconsin Rapids Ideas Network station

Preliminary work has begun on our new WHAA Adams/Wisconsin Rapids station. We've completed a tower study that indicates we can place our antenna there safely, and additional engineering preparations continue. We hope to have the station constructed and on the air before snow flies this winter.

WPR Programming announcements

Changes on Saturdays on the Ideas Network. Effective Saturday, May 16, two changes to the Ideas Network schedule resulted from the long-planned retirement of *Calling All Pets*. Saturdays at 7 a.m. listen for an encore of the first hour of the *Garden Talk* segment of *The Larry Meiller Show*. And at 3pm WPR airs a series of specials, including the current five-part *Five Farms: Stories from American Farm Families*. The series tracks five farm families from around the nation for a one-year cycle of the seasons. It's about families who make their living tilling the soil, planting seeds and caring for livestock, working to produce food for American tables.

WPR Documentary about Hmong-American experience earns national awards.

Encore broadcast July 25. WPR's award-winning documentary, *Bridging the Shores: The Hmong-American Experience*, airs Saturday, July 25 in the new specials time slot. Originally broadcast in September 2008, *Bridging The Shores* has won three awards so far, including the Radio-Television News Directors Association UNITY award. This award, given to just two radio news organizations nationwide (National Public Radio received the other award this year), recognizes the commitment of WPR to covering the cultural diversity of our community. The hour-long special covers an array of issues faced by Hmong-Americans today, including politics, education, settling into Wisconsin, religion and many more.

Money Matters series work begun

Working in partnership with WPT and the ECB Education Services team, WPR has rolled out a new Web site www.wisconsinmoneymatters.org which features work done by the partners to cover the effect of the economic crisis in Wisconsin, and efforts to cope with the challenges. WPR's recent addition of the Kevin McKinley *On Your Money* segment of *The Joy Cardin Show* is a part of this effort to increase our response to the economic situation.

Wisconsin Public Television
James Steinbach
Director of Television

Programming notes from the May 2009 ratings period

- The #1 show for the entire month was the UW Varsity Band Concert with a stunning 4.3 rating.
- Wisconsin Gardener was #4 in the Top Ten with a very strong 2.5 rating.
- In Wisconsin was #9 in the Top Ten with a 1.8 average.

Production

Wisconsin Hometown Stories: Manitowoc /Two Rivers

The broadcast premiere of this latest episode of the *Wisconsin Hometown Stories* series aired Monday evening July 6. The documentary had two premiere screenings in Manitowoc and Two Rivers. A formal curriculum component has been created by the ECB in partnership with educators in the Manitowoc and Two Rivers area. The fundraising goal has already been met for the next project which will be *Wisconsin Hometown Stories: Wausau*.

In a new type of partnership for a general audience production, WPT and ECB produced *Blueprint: Designing Wisconsin's Future*. The half hour program explores innovative partnerships among Wisconsin schools, businesses and communities taking Science, Technology, Engineering and Math education to creative, inspiring, mutually beneficial and often surprising new levels. The program aired on May 21 at 7:30 p.m. and will repeat later this year once school is back in session.

DTV "Update"

In one more blast of public education broadcasting regarding the analog shutoff, we produced another half-hour program that aired just prior to our analog signal being turned off forever. *WPT Guide to Digital TV: UPDATE* included important information about the shutoff, converter boxes, indoor and outdoor antennas and signal problem solving.

We're covering three *Concerts on the Square* this summer. They will air three consecutive Sundays at 6 p.m. starting Sunday July 12. Each *COS* will have an encore broadcast on the following Wednesday evening at 8 p.m.

Additional broadcast highlights from the past three months include the *Spring Varsity Band Concert* which received exceptionally high ratings. The *Wisconsin Gardener* is in the middle of a six-month run of new, prime time programs with additional repeat programs airing every Saturday morning. *Director's Cut* and *Director's Cut Presents* have wrapped up their 13 week season. We've received extremely positive feedback from viewers happy to see the work of Wisconsin's independent filmmakers in their entirety. *30 Minute Music Hour* is continuing its 13 week season of new programs. *In Wisconsin* will be wrapping up its year of production at the end of July and will be on broadcast hiatus in August and September with a brand new season of exciting reports

from around the state hitting the air in October. *Here and Now* continues its weekly work which, most recently, has focused in depth on the state budget.

The final *Teen Connection* of the academic year aired in May and focused on youth whose parents are in the military, particularly those deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Plans are in the works for the first *Teen Connection* of next academic year which will focus on personal financial literacy. *Teen Connection* is produced in partnership with ETPNEW and NEWIST.

Community Engagement

2009 Reading Rainbow Young Writers & Illustrators Contest: WPT celebrates a national grand prize winner: Abigail Helser, a 3rd grader from Portage. You can see Abby's story, "Finding Grandpa," on-line (and narrated by the author) at <http://www.wpt.org/kids/readingrainbow.cfm>

Reel to Real: The collaboration with the Wisconsin Library Association is working to wrap up the Critical Condition grant, with 17 library screenings and discussions on the issues of the uninsured throughout the state. In the upcoming year, thanks to a grant from the UW-Extension and UW-Colleges Chancellor, we will expand this training and community engagement project to the UW-Colleges libraries.

Kids Open House: Friday, August 7, 2009, 9-11am, featuring Sid the Science Kid, Curious George and the Man in the Yellow Hat.

Development

Very successful screenings of HTS: Manitowoc-Two Rivers last week. About 270 people at each of our public screenings in Manitowoc and Two Rivers. The companion curriculum managed by ECB staff has been a terrific component that inspires tremendous enthusiasm for building on documentary work to provide a new tool for area schools.

Auction was down about 4% to \$370,000. We could see the impact of the economy on sales of trips and other "luxury" items. Necessities went very well. Donations for the Auction were pretty solid -- just didn't see bidding that went quite as well as in the past.

We have reached our Go! amount in fundraising for HTS: Wausau -- \$137,000 in commitments to date. This really shows the power of the idea. We raised the money in record time in Wausau - - after a lead gift from the Community Foundation, all the other gifts came within about one month's time. That project will begin early next year. We are especially interested in working with the Wausau and DC Everest school district because they have done some of the most creative work -- especially the work of Paul Aleckson at DC Everest who has been a great resource to our veterans' projects.

Engineering and Operations

The AVID Interplay installation is nearing completion. Recent weeks have seen extensive and intensive training for editors, producers, and system administrators. When fully implemented, this will bring greater consistency, flexibility and reliability to production workflow; and will be integral to the digital asset management system.

WPR in our Communities

Through our regional offices, WPR is deeply involved in communities throughout Wisconsin. Here are just a few recent examples of our community connections:

Joint Finance Committee Live on KUWS Continuing a longstanding tradition, WPR's Superior, WI station KUWS broadcast gavel-to-gavel coverage of that region's meeting of the Joint Finance Committee.

Listener Dinners WPR held listener dinners to thank listeners and volunteers in the Eau Claire and Central Wisconsin regions recently. The Eau Claire event featured a wonderful talk from WPR's Norman Gilliland about how he got into radio, while the Central region event featured the Wisconsin premiere of the PBS documentary *American Masters: Garrison Keillor, the Man on the Radio in the Red Shoes*.

The Kathleen Dunn Show in Appleton, July 23

Thursday, July 23 *The Kathleen Dunn Show* visits The History Museum at the Castle, in Appleton for a live remote broadcast, discussing the history and issues of the area.

Other News

Regional Manager changes

We're pleased to report that Lisa Nalbandian is WPR's new permanent Southeast Regional Manager. Lisa had been covering duties in Milwaukee and Green Bay, and recently agreed to relocate to the Milwaukee to become the full-time manager. This has left a hole in Northeast Wisconsin, and we're grateful to note that Rick Reyer has agreed to add the duties of our manager in Green Bay to his work. Rick has past experience in the area to help him get right up to speed. We've made the change in Milwaukee due to the scope of the position and the immediate need to build our efforts there. However, as part of our cost containment planning we've elected not to fill the Northeast Wisconsin Regional Manager position permanently until a later date to be determined.

National and WPR Audience at all time high New NPR President Vivian Schiller reported recently: "At a time when all of our economics are under increasing pressure, it is affirming to know that we are more relevant to the audience than ever. According to just-released Arbitron ratings for Fall 2008, the total number of listeners to NPR member stations has grown by an impressive 6% in the past year, reaching an all-time high of 32.7 million weekly listeners. In addition, NPR programming and newscasts now reach 27.5 million weekly listeners on NPR stations -- that's 7% year-over-year growth."

WPR audience followed suit in the same ratings period of Fall 2008: the NPR News and Classical Music Network rose 5% from the previous record, now reaching 222,700 listeners in an average week. The Ideas Network also found record strength, with a weekly cumulative audience of 309,700, up 1% from Spring '08. Overall, statewide listening to WPR is 467,500, up 2% from the previous record set in Spring '08.