

Educational Communications Board Meeting
October 17, 2008
Executive Director Report
Gene Purcell

As I discussed during our July meeting, ECB received its state budget instructions directing that state agencies should expect a flat budget during the coming biennium; that agencies should prepare a “lapse” plan; and that agencies should also prepare a plan to prepare for a permanent base reduction of 10% in state GPR funding.

Since July, ECB staff has worked to prepare the budget request for the coming biennium including a “lapse” plan to meet the required \$225,400 cut for FY09.

In addition to that, I have asked each of ECB’s Division Administrators to prepare proposals for a 10% permanent base reduction in GPR and I will be discussing these with you in more detail during our meeting.

To help put this in context for you, a 10% cut in state GPR totals about \$458,000, and that figure is then divided among the 5 divisions based on a ratio of each Division’s budget.

Adding the required “lapse” to the cut totals \$683,000, or approximately 15% of ECB’s GPR operations budget.

These are sobering figures, particularly in light of the cuts ECB has already absorbed over the past years.

For example, those cuts have included GPR cuts of about \$1,962,000 since 2001. Those cuts, combined with consolidation of certain administrative functions at the agency have resulted in a loss of full time ECB staff from 94 in 2000 to 62 in 2008.

Through the increased use of technology and other efficiencies combined with successes in fund raising, ECB has been able to maintain its level of service to public broadcasting and education.

Maintaining those service levels while adapting to a changing technical and media environment speaks well of ECB staff and their commitment to ECB’s public service missions in broadcasting, education and public safety.

As we move forward, maintaining its level of public service will continue to be ECB’s top priority. And, given the funding challenges facing all of us, I believe it will also be ECB’s greatest challenge.

In the reports that follow, you will see that all of ECB’s divisions remain fully engaged and committed in their work. And, given the scope, quantity and quality of the work being performed, it is something of which we can all be proud.

Education Division Update
Lin Hanson
Director of Education Services

Project Updates

- *democracy it is!* (middle and high school programs) received a 2007-2008 Midwest Emmy Nomination for Outstanding Achievement for Children's Programs – Children's/Teen Single Program or Program Series. Winners will be announced on Saturday, October 18 in Chicago.
- *Into the Book* Web site for students received a 2008 Parents' Choice Silver Award.
- *World Languages Assessment: Get in the Mode!* began airing in early October. This series supports and empowers world language teachers to improve student proficiency through a variety of assessment strategies. Full-length videos are available for viewing at the Web site www.ecb.org/WorldLanguageAssessment.
- *Personal Financial Literacy* is being designed to meet the professional development needs of Wisconsin teachers in conjunction with the new Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Personal Financial Literacy. Authentic classroom video featuring exemplary Wisconsin teachers modeling effective financial literacy instruction is one of the components of this project. Schools from Northern Wisconsin, Central Wisconsin, the Fox River Valley, Madison, Milwaukee and Southwestern Wisconsin will be featured along with yet-to-be identified teachers from the Eau Claire and La Crosse areas. This resource will debut during Money Smart Week 2009.
- Datacasts continued to schools throughout the summer months. The schedule is available at the datacast Web site - www.datacastwisconsin.org. Forty-nine school districts are now receiving instructional programs through datacasts.
- State, Local and Tribal Government Project – The Advisory Committee defined the audience as teachers, students, administrators and parents and all aspects of the community. The series will create a body of knowledge about state, local and tribal government and incorporate specific, localized issues.
- PBS TeacherLine professional development courses are available for Wisconsin educators. Course catalogs are distributed at workshops and available online www.ecb.org/education/tline.htm
- CPB STEM Community Engagement Project – In September we received a grant from CPB to provide school and community outreach in the area of science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics education. We will be coordinating a multi-agency initiative with DPI and other agencies.

Conferences, Presentations and Workshops

- Education division staff will present sessions and have a booth in the exhibit hall of several conferences this fall including Wisconsin Business Educators Association (WBEA), Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC), Association of Wisconsin School Administrators (AWSA), and Wisconsin Association for Language Teachers (WAFLT).
- The education division staff held a strategic planning session in August to identify action items and begin developing a marketing strategy for the 2008-2009 school year.
- Money Smart Week's public awareness campaign October 12 – 18 included information about the educational programming available to teachers from the ECB. The "Money Smart Wisconsin" web site (www.moneysmartwi.org) featured information about instructional series relating to personal financial literacy.

Partnership Outreach Activities

- Preliminary development has begun for the curriculum materials for Hometown Stories Manitowoc-Two Rivers. Teachers from the Manitowoc and the Two Rivers School Districts will serve on the curriculum development committee.

Print and Web Publications

- The Parade of Programs schedule book was delivered to schools and public libraries this fall.
- The Interconnect 2.0 newsletter is available at ECB's web site – www.ecb.org/Interconnect20. This monthly newsletter provides schedule information, program updates, and articles of interest to educators.

Instructional Programming

- Instructional programming for the 2008-2009 school year began in September. One hundred twenty-seven series consisting of over 1500 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 shared information about new initiatives in their curriculum areas. The involvement of the DPI consultants in program selection is key to the selection of programming that meets Wisconsin's standards.

Staff Update

Finn Ryan joined the education division as Interactive Media Specialist. Finn will work with school districts to implement datacasting and also assist project directors with multimedia applications. He is a former high school Special Education Resource teacher and has worked since 2003 as a Technology Consultant for UW's Education Portfolios and Career Services.

Delivery Division Operational and Project Update
Terry Baun
Director of Engineering and Operations

Division Staffing

- No Division staffing changes were made during the quarter. There is still one 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 may need to activate this position.
- In conjunction with our Division response to the ECB budget lapse, we will leave unfilled the position of Director of Regulatory and Compliance. Those duties will continue to be shared by the Administrator and the Regional Technical Managers as currently assigned.
- On the technology services sector of the Division, our new field technology position description, Media Telecommunications Technician, has been implemented for our Field Staff. This means our salary structure will be more competitive with industry norms for engineering talent, and help us retain our excellent technical staff.

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.
- Our next full Division meeting will be held in Wausau Nov. 18th-19th. The division had an informal get-together during the WBA/SBE Broadcast Clinic in Madison just concluded.

Operational Items

- Our Division study committee on our Newpoint TCAS remote control and monitoring system continues its aggressive stance with the technical and management representatives at Newpoint. Significant progress has been made, with Newpoint developing new software for the transmitter-based units which are currently being implemented. We remain cautiously optimistic.
- Paperless on-line engineering reporting is working well, with all sites now using this on-line system. In addition, paperless Purchase Ordering is being implemented, with sites sending e-mailed Purchase Order Requests and receiving confirmation of processing by return e-mail.

Project Updates

- There are no new developments on the status of the ECB/UWEX combined 8 NCE-FM applications, although UWEX has completed successful negotiations to receive a Construction Permit for a new FM station in Ashland, which ECB will construct in 2010, the same year we are scheduled to build our existing Construction Permit (CP) for ECB's new FM in Coloma.
- Installation is currently underway for HD radio transmitters for WHWC, WHBM, WHHI, WHLA, WHDI, and AM station WLBL, with the La Crosse, Eau Claire, and

Highland stations now operational with HD service. The new Auburndale HD transmitter has been installed, and is awaiting HD field commissioning by the manufacturer. Park Falls and Sister Bay should be on-air in HD by the end of October.

- Bids were let for replacement of the WHHI tower in Highland in early September, with a scheduled project completion in the spring of 2009. Completion is delayed because purchase of an additional ¼ acre of land for the project triggered federally required studies to be reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office and representatives of Native American populations indigenous to the area. These approvals have now been completed.
- We continue to meet regularly with the WPT Digital Transition Committee to further refine our efforts at both informing the public of the impending DTV transition, and offering technical help and assistance to WPT Viewer Services. Conversion of our existing six TV translator stations to digital operation is now scheduled for early November, and we are working with WPT to prepare appropriate notifications to those who may be affected.
- ECB Delivery Division has let bids for the updating and addition of digital capabilities to our existing satellite uplink facility. When completed in late 2008, this conversion will give ECB the ability to perform state of the art uplinks and downlinks in both digital and analog modes. We expect this upgrade will positively affect WPT's production capabilities by allowing easier scheduling of live interviews and news events.
- Installations are now concluding for small projects at the field sites, including air conditioning, roofing, paving projects, and tower painting and maintenance.
- The Delivery Division, under the leadership of Gene Purcell, continues to work to complete and refine our state-mandated Continuation of Operations planning. We have concluded our survey of field site readiness, tested our Phone Tree System, and have scheduled a tabletop drill for later this fall.

Wisconsin Public Television
James Steinbach
Director of Television

Community outreach:

Wisconsin PBS Kids:

Open House: The 11th annual Wisconsin PBS Kids Open House was Friday, August 1st at Vilas Hall, with nearly 1400 “kids of all ages” in attendance, learning more about extending the educational value of the shows on PBS Kids. The theme was “Super You!” and included visits from Super Why and Word Girl.

Early Childhood Conference: Our 9th annual early childhood conference in the Fox Valley was Saturday, Sept. 13th in Kimberly. Partnering with the Child Care Resource & Referral for the Fox Valley, this annual full-day educational event is for early childhood professionals, educators, and parents.

Wisconsin Bookworms: Wisconsin Bookworms is the continuing outreach effort of WPT, UW-Extension Family Living Programs and the Wisconsin Association for Home and Community Education (WAHCE), designed to provide free books to children who may not otherwise own books: the start of a lifelong love of reading. The 2008-09 school year is underway with 5958 children participating in 48 counties for a total of free 47,664 books.

Executive Producer of News and Public Affairs

Christine Sloan Miller is the new Executive Producer for News and Public Affairs at WPT. Christine's selection follows a nationwide search that resulted in an excellent field of candidates. And while we looked far and wide, the most exceptional candidate was right here. Christine has been the Series Producer for "In Wisconsin" and prior to that she was Associate Producer for "WeekEnd". Christine came to WPT in 1999 from Miami. Under Christine's leadership, "In Wisconsin" programs and segments have won dozens of awards including three consecutive Edward R. Murrow Awards and four recent Emmy nominations. She will provide exceptional leadership for the NPA team and continue a great tradition of service to the state of Wisconsin. Her first day was Oct. 1.

PBS Board

Malcolm Brett has been elected to the Board of Directors of PBS. He was elected by his fellow general managers across the country, so this is a signal honor, reflecting Malcolm's abilities, and the high regard of his peers. Malcolm will serve a three-year term beginning at the organizational meeting of the board on Nov. 3

HD Mobile Unit Funding

On Sept 17, the State Building Commission approved \$2,120,000 for WPT's new HD Mobile Production Studio ... known internally as "The Truck." In the following week, more good news we received an award of \$688,735 from the Public Television Facilities Program (PTFP). The total truck cost is about \$3,000,000, and the Friends of WHA have agreed to secure the remaining funds. This combined funding is built on years of planning, and even more years of great television production which has earned this support, and reflects WPT's commitment to local production.

Channel Changes

On Monday, October 6, WPT changed its digital channel lineup to provide a more consistent service. The current HD channel was dropped completely, and the "main" channel is now in high definition. At the same time, the dedicated children's channel was combined with "Create" and "The Wisconsin Channel" remains as is. Both of these are standard definition (SD) All these services – the HD and the two SD – are now full-time channels throughout our broadcast day.

Program changes

As usual, in September we'll see a few program changes, driven by audience, financial considerations, and program availability. Here is a bit of background on the most significant changes:

- "Here & Now" moves from 7:00 Friday nights to 7:30. "Washington Week in Review" moves to 7:00. This change is driven by our effort to bring more viewers to "Here and Now". "Washington Week in Review" consistently has the largest audience on Friday nights and we believe that this stronger lead-in will help bring more viewers to our coverage of Wisconsin on "Here and Now". And maybe catch a few more people back home from their fish fry.
- "Now" moves from Friday night to Sunday morning, to allow "Bill Moyers" to begin at 8:00 PM and the independent film series to start at 9.
- "Mr. Rogers Neighborhood" moves from daily to weekly broadcasts on WPT-1. PBS has reduced "Mr. Rogers" to once a week, on Saturday's, to make room for new pre-K series like "Martha Speaks". In the future, "Mr. Rogers Neighborhood" will appear daily on the reconfigured digital service.
- "The BBC News" will be replaced by "World Focus" a new global news program produced by WNET/NY, CNN, and other partners.
- "This Old House" and "Ask This Old House" will move to Wednesday nights.

Pledge

WPT and PBS moved the usual August pledge drive to September to avoid the Olympics. We raised \$297,664 on 2,160 pledges. This was a particularly difficult drive, attributable in part to the economy, and what felt like a never-ending slate of football competition. For comparison, our average drive since 2000 typically raises \$293,165 on 2,325 pledges. While we ended up just above the average, this drive was down considerably compared to last year, so we'll look to make up some lost ground in December.

Quilt Expo

Attendance of 14,935 people was more than a 10 percent increase over last year. There were 157 different vendor companies represented at the show located plus 60 stage presentations, 144 informational lectures, 36 sit-and-sew workshops, 24 hands-on workshops, two special evening events, and a 10-category juried quilt contest and exhibit. In addition, approximately 400 community volunteers worked the event. Mark your calendars for next year's show on September 10-12, 2009.

Digital TV Transition

Two new 30-minute programs about the transition debuted on WPT on October 1. Our own WPT program ("WPT's Guide to Digital TV") features Patty Loew as host; and PBS's show with Norm and Kevin from "This Old House". Also on October 1, we set up a phone bank to take questions from viewers during the debut broadcasts. Local spots have also been produced and are airing in breaks. An 8-page supplement will be printed

as part of the November issue of Airwaves. Face-to-face presentations are slated for Wausau, Reedsburg and other locations. A new Web page has been launched at wpt.org/digitaltv which includes the television programs as streaming video.

Campaign and Election Season Local Production

WPT's election coverage this season is focusing on both the presidential race and control of the state legislature.

"In Wisconsin" is doing a series of reports regarding the economy (what things cost), the federal deficit and its impact on WI citizens' daily lives, healthcare - particularly insurance gaps for recent graduates, and the job market. Stories are told through the eyes and experiences of Wisconsin residents and include positions and plans of the major presidential candidates. Reports tie directly to additional information on the Wisconsin Vote web site.

"Here and Now" is focusing on control of the state legislature. A series of issues are being explored with the underlying question, "What can we expect with a Democratic Majority vs. a Republican Majority?" The interview series, called "Majority Rules," includes a look at natural resource management, paying for public schools, balancing the state budget, taxing and spending, state health care programs and agriculture.

We are also producing a series of "Candidate Statements" programs with Congressional Candidates invited to present their uninterrupted, five minute statements to our audience.

Wisconsin Vote

The Wisconsin Vote web site is revamped and includes resources that have been popular with users in the past as well as a new, prominent, video player and two new interactive components.

WPT received a CPB funded Station-based Election Programming Initiative (SEPI) grant. The grant is funding a localization project of Wisconsin Vote where all thirteen UW Colleges will have their own unique editions of the Wisconsin Vote web site that combine the site's statewide offerings with local coverage and voting information relevant to students at each of the colleges. Ideally, this localization project will be expandable in the future to all colleges and universities in the state.

Wisconsin Vote is also participating in NPR's Get My Vote project which NPR describes as a sort of YouTube for politics. It provides an opportunity for anyone to post a commentary, loosely based on telling politicians what they need to do to get their vote. It can be on video, or recorded as audio or written. The Integrated Media Team that combines people working in or interested by new media from WPT, WPR, ICS and ECB took on the Get My Vote project.

Education Production

The seven part World Languages teacher development series was completed and delivered at the end of July. Work on Personal Financial Literacy is underway with full scale production beginning in October. Also in discussion are production components for a State, Tribal, and Local Government project, a Science, Technology & Math (STEM) project, and a formal education component for Hometown Stories-Manitowoc/Two Rivers.

UW Sports

The UW Athletic Department decided not to fund WPT's coverage of women's athletics this season. Coverage of Men's Hockey will continue as it has in years past. We also have a contract to provide feeds of our hockey coverage to Badger Sports Properties.

Emmy Awards:

Wisconsin Public Television productions have received 8 Midwest Emmy nominations including one for an ECB educational production and four for the weekly series In Wisconsin. Specifically, the nominations are:

Outstanding Achievement for Children's Programs – Children's/Teen Single Program or Program Series: democracy it is! Programs 5-8 Composite. This was an ECB production in partnership with WPT.

Outstanding Achievement within a Regularly Scheduled News Program – Soft News Feature Series: Wolf Series that aired on In Wisconsin

Outstanding Achievement within a Regularly Scheduled News Program – Specialty Report/Series – Health/Medical: PKU Trials that aired in In Wisconsin

Outstanding Achievement for Documentary Programs – Documentary of Current Significance: War Story: An In Wisconsin Special

Outstanding Achievement for Documentary Programs – Documentary of Historic Significance

1) Fill 'er Up

2) The Oneida Speak: This was produced by independent producer Michelle Danforth with a WPT production team. It was submitted to the Academy for consideration by Native American Public Telecommunications

Outstanding Achievement for Informational Programs – Single Magazine Program, Program Series, or Segment: In Wisconsin #615

Outstanding Achievement for Individual Excellence Off Camera: Videography – Non News

Michael Eicher for The Oneida Speak.

The Emmys awards will be announced October 18 in Chicago.

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

WPR announces Lee Ester News Fellow

After an extensive national search, WPR welcomes Christina Clarkson as its first Lee Ester Fellow. She recently received her master's degree from Syracuse University, and will spend the next nine months in the WPR newsroom improving her reporting, writing and editing skills. The Lee Ester Fellowship is a nine-month, paid and benefited fellowship for a recent university graduate who is serious about journalism as a career. The Fellowship is possible thanks to a \$250,000 gift from Leota Ester of Appleton. The gift honors her late husband, Lee, who was a dedicated journalist and served on the board of the Wisconsin Public Radio Association from 1992-1998.

WPR goes digital statewide

The ECB Engineering staff, under the direction of Terry Baun, completed Phase II of the WPR conversion to digital broadcasting. With the completion of Phase II, WPR now has 13 stations converted to HD broadcasting, providing at least one digital signal in our entire statewide coverage area. All 13 conversions were fully funded with a combination of federal and state funding, through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the State Building Commission. The six stations that were most recently converted are: WLBL Auburndale, WHWC Menomonie, WHBM Park Falls, WHLA La Crosse, WHHI Highland, and WHID Sister Bay. Plans are to provide to HD Classical service on the multicasting channel of as many of these stations as possible. Congratulations to Terry Baun and his outstanding Engineering staff for bringing this project in on time and on budget!

Position Vacancies

WPR is currently recruiting for three management positions. The Music Director and Milwaukee Regional Manager will fill existing vacancies. In addition, we are recruiting for a statewide WPR Marketing Manager. This is a senior level position, reporting to the Director, to develop and coordinate our overall statewide marketing strategies, communications, promotion, public relations, branding and market research.

Pledge

WPR will be conducting its Fall Pledge Drive from October 2 – 13, with an on-air goal of \$900,000. With the extraordinary uncertainty facing our financial markets, we will be monitoring the drive very closely. We have been tracking on budget for the first two months of the fiscal year, but clearly we are looking at unprecedented events in the markets during the past weeks.

Calling All Pets weekly national production to be retired

WPR has ceased national production of new CAP programs, and will continue to offer archived programs to our affiliate stations through the end of the fiscal year. This was a difficult decision to make, after 14 years of broadcasts, but WPR faces intense pressure to

allocate resources carefully and in close alignment with our strategic planning priorities. Unlike the other WPR national programs, Calling All Pets has been without a national distribution partner for several years now, so we've been producing and providing the program to stations ourselves at significant expense without any income in the form of carriage fees. CAP host Patricia McConnell will still be available to Wisconsin audiences as a periodic guest on Larry Meiller's daily call-in program.

Joy Cardin "Week in Review" Statewide Tour

The Joy Cardin show is on tour, with live audience programs in each of the seven WPR regions. The tour began last month and here's a rundown of the stops:

September 19th – Superior, Barker's Island Inn
September 26th – Sturgeon Bay, the Inn at Cedar Crossing
October 3rd – Madison, Buck Studio in Vilas Hall
October 10th – Milwaukee, Stackner Cabaret Theater
October 17th – Onalaska, the Timbers Food Court
October 24th – Stevens Point, Dreyfus University Center
October 31st – River Falls, UW University Center

The purpose of the tour is to let listeners have the opportunity to see and talk with the host in person, and to help the staff gain a better understanding of the issues in each of the regions for future programs.

Hmong Program Debuts

WPR's one-hour documentary, "Bridging the Shores: The Hmong-American Experience" premiered September 12th on both the News & Classical and Ideas Networks. Regional stations such as the Hmong radio station operated by the Wausau Hmong Mutual Association and another in Appleton have the documentary for their own broadcast, and NPR's Latino USA has requested a copy of "Bridging the Shore" for possible inclusion for a series it's coordinating on immigration.

WPRA Award

The Wisconsin Public Radio Association was the recipient of the "Friend and Advocate" UW Colleges and UW Extension Chancellor's award. The WPRA, comprised of 19 members from throughout the state, won the award for "providing the enthusiasm, knowledge and volunteer work that help make Wisconsin Public Radio a leading statewide source for news, information and culture".