

# WISCONSIN BROADCASTER



The Wisconsin Broadcaster Association Newsletter • January-February 2026 Edition

## End-of-year efforts

### \$1.7m, 83k pounds of food

WMTV's 30th annual Share Your Holidays Campaign surpassed its goal of raising \$1.5 million for Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin. The final total raised was \$1,737,236. The campaign also collected and sorted 83,000 pounds of food, more than double the amount from last year.

Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin helps families and individuals facing food insecurities in 16 southern Wisconsin counties. The non-profit distributes food to 200 partner agencies and programs, including food pantries in local schools.

"We are simply

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### A record number raised

Big Radio's Janesville radio stations raised a record \$51,000 during annual holiday charity events during the first two weeks of December.

The stations said the events demonstrate how local listeners, advertisers, and on-air talent can unite to make a tangible impact.

An online auction ran Dec. 1-8, featuring 35 items from 18 clients and generating nearly 300 bids from listeners across the community. An on-site donation drive Dec. 12 partnered with a major sponsor

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### 'Day of Giving' raises \$21k

A fundraising effort from WISN-TV in Milwaukee to support the MACC Fund collected \$21,064 to take on childhood cancer and related blood disorders. On Dec. 12, people across southeastern Wisconsin submitted donations to help children with these significant medical issues.

"It's awe-inspiring to see how our communities came out to help the kids who need it most," said Shawn Oswald, President and General Manager of WISN 12. "These funds could make a life-changing impact on children and their families."

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### Money, toys, food donated

La Crosse TV station WKBT-TV on Dec. 5 hosted its 5th annual Joy of Sharing event benefiting local charities including the La Crosse Area Hunger Task Force, Jaycee's Toys for Tots, and the Salvation Army. Thousands of dollars in donations, along with numerous toys and non-perishable food items, were collected from WKBT

viewers and digital users.

WKBT-TV broadcast live from the Onalaska Festival Foods location throughout the day, providing updates on donation totals and sharing stories from the community.

These contributions made a meaningful impact by helping thousands of area families during the holiday season.

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FROM WBA'S PRESIDENT & CEO

### Celebrate 75 years with WBA

Your WBA is turning 75 in 2026 and we're most definitely ready to celebrate. We hope you are too!

Here are some of the highlights of what we have planned so far:

— Our WBA Summer Conference will be June 17-18 at the beautiful Grand Geneva Resort. Your WBA Conference Committee has been meeting early and often to plan some special elements to make this an extra special event, on top of being at a special venue. Watch for

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By Michelle Vetterkind, CAE

FROM WBA'S CHAIR

### Who doesn't like a fresh start? Here comes 2026!

All of us in this business are held accountable for our results. A fresh start can be hard to recognize when you are caught up in the past. That can go either way. Did you just have a brutal year, quarter or second half of the year? That's hard to shake off. It can haunt you until you turn it around. It



By Judson Beck

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## FROM WBA'S CHAIR

Continued from page 1

can affect your ability to turn it around. Conversely, did you just have an amazing year, quarter or second half? That can be equally challenging, as the bloom from that rose might last longer in your head than it does on the pace report.

Either good or bad, you've got to embrace the change a new year brings. Embrace the new year as a fresh start. Occasionally that can happen in dramatic leaps, but usually it is accomplished through small, consistent, and manageable steps. It happens by having a plan that is contributed to by many people around you. A plan that has been vetted, questioned, poked, and prodded.

Remain flexible, be prepared to amend and seize

the initiative if unforeseen challenges or opportunities arise. But if you have a plan contributed to by many and it has been vetted, execute your plan. It has been my experience that this exercise is successful and extremely gratifying, not just for you as an individual, but for your team of contributors. You'll learn from the experience and likely be able to improve the following year. Success can compound and spread. But alas, so can failure. Just remember that even failure is a learning experience. Take it for that, shake it off, and keep 'er moving.

The new year is always a good time for a fresh start. But I would argue that every month, week, day, or even a

conversation is an opportunity for a fresh start. Feel a conversation sliding sideways? Take a breath and give yourself a fresh start. Reboot, pull yourself out of that trench you might be digging with your words, and listen to what the other person or people have to say. Acknowledge a mistake if you have made one and seek contributors to a solution. You might just need someone else's perspective. You can give yourself a fresh start at any time, just try not to dig that trench too deep. Regrettably, I've done it both ways. I promise you the former is much better than the latter.

The glass is half full. The opportunities are all around you. 2026 is a fresh start, if you are willing to embrace it. ●

## Name in the News



Strauss

After 45 years behind the mic, veteran radio host **Lonnie (Scott) Strauss** has signed off from Bluejay 96.3 (WJMT) in Merrill. Strauss' broadcast journey began at WIDG Radio in St. Ignace, Michigan and WJNR in Iron Mountain, Michigan, before his voice traveled across Illinois, Missouri, to stations in Marinette, Escanaba, and at WXCO in Wausau. In 2016, Strauss returned to Wisconsin to host mornings at rock station Z104 (WMZK) in Merrill, later transitioning to WJMT "Bluejay 96.3" where he's been a morning staple since 2017.



O'Shea

**Kidd O'Shea** returned to Milwaukee, where he started his media career, to join TMJ4 (WTMJ-TV). He joined the TMJ4 morning news team as the station's new traffic anchor and community correspondent. A proud Mequon native and Homestead High School graduate, O'Shea first stepped into the broadcasting spotlight at the age of 16 with WKTJ-FM in Milwaukee. He quickly established himself by hosting popular night and afternoon programs before moving on to co-host "Kidd and Elizabeth in the Morning" on 99.1 The Mix (WMYX-FM) which was recognized multiple times as the Best Morning Show in the WBA Awards for Excellence. O'Shea moved to Washington, D.C. in 2015 where he joined WJLA-TV's "Good Morning Washington."



Shannon

**Randy "Shotgun" Shannon** has returned to the role of Brand Manager at Y100 (WNCY-FM) in Green Bay. Shannon originally guided WNCY before handling mornings in Denver and San Antonio. In 2012, he rejoined Y100 and in 2017 teamed with Charli McKenzie as co-host of the Y100 morning show.

Shannon continues to host the Y100 morning show along with brand manager duties and will handle music director responsibilities until further notice.



Gross

Y100 also added **Natalie "Nat" Gross** as the new co-host of the Y100 Morning Show. Gross brings more than a decade of storytelling experience to Y100, first in her award-winning journalism career, then as a podcaster, and most recently as host of a morning radio show at Life 102.5 in Madison.



Weber

Longtime weekday morning host on 1130 WISN in Milwaukee, **Jay Weber**, concluded his role as daily host of "The Jay Weber Show" in December, marking a milestone in his 35-year career with the station. Beginning spring 2026, Weber will host a new twice weekly iHeartPodcast, modeled after his current morning show. Weber will also remain a contributor to WISN programming and station initiatives.



Dwyer

**Sean Dwyer** is the new host of 'La Crosse Talk,' a community-focused program airing Monday through Friday in WIZM-AM. According to a release from the station, "With more than 30 years of experience in the La Crosse area, Dwyer brings a deep connection to the community and a passion for storytelling.

Dwyer was previously News Director at WXOW-TV in La Crosse.



Vucsko

**Lisa Vucsko** was named News Director at WBAY-TV in Green Bay. She started Dec. 15. She will lead the station's newsroom, overseeing editorial strategy, day-to-day news operations, digital integration, and investigative projects. Vucsko is an award-winning newsroom executive with more than 28 years of experience working in and leading Midwest, cross-platform news operations. Most recently, she served as Assistant News Director at FOX TV News in Chicago where she directed newsroom operations, led digital transformation initiatives, and managed investigative and special projects.



## WBA OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS 2025-2026

Chair of the Board

**Judson Beck** WFRV-TV, Green Bay

Vice Chair - TV

**Anna Engelhart** WKOW-TV, Madison

Treasurer

**Randy Hawke** Mid-West Family, Madison

Secretary

**Anne Brown** WDJT-TV/WMLW-TV/Telemundo, Milwaukee

Immediate Past Chair

**Lupita Montoto** La Movida Radio, Madison

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Scot Chastain** WISC-TV, Madison

**Terry Davis** Radio Plus, Fond du Lac

**Juan Galdamez** Xperi Corporation, Washington D.C.

**Brian Jackson** Mid-West Family, La Crosse

**Jessica Laszewski**

WMTV-TV, Madison

**Steve Lavin** WBAY-TV, Green Bay

**David Lee** WUWM, Milwaukee

**Chris Palmer** WKBT-TV, La Crosse

**Terry Stevenson** Seehafer

Broadcasting, Manitowoc

**Colleen Valkoun** Milwaukee Radio Alliance, Milwaukee

**Eric Voight** Results Broadcasting, Shawano

**Monica Wittkopp** iHeartMedia, Madison

Ex Officio - NAB Board

**Jeanna Berge** iHeartMedia, Eau Claire

### WBA Team

President & CEO

**Michelle Vetterkind, CAE**  
mvetterkind@wi-broadcasters.org

Vice President

**Kyle Geissler, CAE**  
kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org

Membership Coordinator

**Robin Stephens**  
rstephens@wi-broadcasters.org

WBA Board minutes are always available for members. Please email Kyle Geissler at kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org to request a copy.



# WBA expands services in 2026

Your WBA is growing its member benefit offerings in the new year, with new partnerships with Local Broadcast Sales and Media Financial Management Association (MFM).

Your WBA is partnering with Local Broadcast Sales to bring you a full suite of sales training and support. Here's an outline of the offerings:

1. **The BEST Program:** Earn the highly-coveted status of LBS Certified Seller! This extensive, broadcast-focused program is ready to go when you are!

2. **The LBS New Seller Program:** Kickstart your new seller's broadcast selling career with this comprehensive LBS program designed to equip them with the skills they need to excel in today's very challenging broadcast and digital advertising sales climate!

3. **Training On Demand:** Over 2,200 training videos that are developed & delivered by proven ad sales pros. Available 24/7 with two new videos added nearly every week!

4. **Sales Ideas:** Timely sales ideas that will produce tangible sales results when there is a need for an innovation boost!

5. **Ad Intelligence:** A sales resource center organized by category and designed to enhance consultative sales calls with over 3,000 articles!

6. **Sales 101:** Create a customized onboarding course for your new reps! With hundreds of topics for you to choose from, LBS' Sales 101 content is designed for new sales pros with little-to-no broadcast experience and provides a foundation on which to build a broadcast sales career!

7. **Ask LBS:** A virtual coach with street-smart advice. When you are stuck in the selling process with a client; ask for help, we will answer!

8. **2nd Tuesday Webinars:** The industry's best and most practical live sessions airing on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. You also have access to the very valuable archive!

9. **LBS Industry Research:** Focus your efforts

on the right categories based your their customers' buying cycle. Go into local businesses armed with the latest information that matters to them!

10. **LBS Consumer Research:** A sales tool to help you get appointments with LOCAL businesses based on consumer buying habits. Powered by Pulse Research.

11. **Sales Meetings:** Curated videos designed for your weekly sales meetings. These segments provide an opportunity for a few minutes of practical investment in your team's selling skills every week. Simply hook up to a projector and go!

12. **LBS WOW (Week of Webinars) Jan. 12-16!:** Get perspectives from your favorite LBS Experts during a special week of live LBS Webinars all focused on a single theme to start your selling year on a path

of success for you, your station, and your clients!

You can sign up for LBS at <https://localbroadcastsales.com>. This is a benefit to all WBA members.

WBA is also partnering with the Media Financial Management Association (MFM) which offers more than 25 webinars per year by media industry professionals on wide variety of topics, including AI and technology, advertising trends, human resources and personnel management, leadership skills, cybersecurity, risk management, finance and accounting issues, and many more. MFM has earned a reputation for providing outstanding educational content from best-in-class providers and we are excited to be offering this content to our membership as well.

The first event is scheduled for Jan. 21 and is titled "AI Governance – Getting the Most Out of Your People and Machines."

Finally, your WBA is also extending a long-time partnership with the Michigan Association of Broadcasters to offer third-Thursday webinars most months of 2026.

Watch the Events page on the WBA website for all the offerings as they become available.



## FROM WBA'S PRESIDENT & CEO

*Continued from page 1*

more information soon!

– Your WBA Hall of Fame is moving to a new location within our long-time home, the Hilton Milwaukee. To celebrate - we plan to hold a reception there to showcase this wonderful new space. Stay tuned for info on that.

– We will kick off the year with our WBA State Legislative Day in Madison on Jan. 21. We're thrilled to announce that our featured guest that morning will be Charles Franklin, the Director of the nationally recognized Marquette Law School Poll. Charles is always a WBA favorite and he's sure to have insightful observations about the 2026 political calendar. We hope you can join us for his presentation AND to make calls at the State Capitol.

– Our WBA Awards Gala on May 2 at the Madison Marriott West will be yet another opportunity to celebrate. The theme for 2026 will be Diamond Jubilee (highly appropriate for our 75th). We're planning to pack some surprises in for this event as well.

– To mark 75 years, we're also providing members with some additional benefits. Adding to the already popular Insight Weekly from Local Broadcast Sales, we're adding access to the LBS platform for all WBA members. We've also partnered with Media Financial Management to bring you a series of timely online events to further enhance your training opportunities. Watch the events section of the WBA website for the latest on these new events and the 2026 Third Thursday of the month events. We'll be adding content there often.

Your WBA celebrated 50 years at The Pfister in Milwaukee in 2001, complete with an event at Miller Park to celebrate its debut. We marked our 60th year at Grand Geneva. Apart from Marcus Hotels hosting these landmark events for your WBA, as mentioned above, Marcus' Hilton Milwaukee also plays permanent host to our WBA Hall of Fame. We thank you, Marcus, for this wonderful long-term partnership!

2026 is already shaping up to be a grand celebration of your WBA, and there's much more to come. We hope this celebration will be both a recognition of your past accomplishments, but also inspiration for a bright and vibrant future.

I greatly look forward to celebrating our WBA's 75th Anniversary Year with YOU, our valued members! ●

# Share this list to improve your WBA Awards entries



By Anne Paape  
WBA Awards  
Committee

For many Wisconsin broadcasters, 2026 begins with a thorough look back at 2025 as part of finalizing entries for the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Awards for Excellence. The process can feel

like both a blessing and a curse. It's inspiring to revisit the best work your team produced. But finalizing your entries can sometimes feel like choosing your favorite child.

Let's resolve to make the contest entry process more organized and less time consuming this year. Here are 10 suggestions that may help.

**1. Create an internal system** to identify and save contest worthy content daily rather than an end of the year hunt for compelling entries. Ask your team what they consider to be your best

effort/memorable moments from today or yesterday. Could this be wrapped into the show debrief or the daily story meeting with your team?

**2. Build team culture** by making sure station colleagues understand what they do is important. They each impact our ability to deliver a quality product to our consumers every day. Poor quality audio or a misspelled graphic erodes consumer confidence in our professionalism and are a contest entry killer.

**3. Minimize contest entry deadline stress** by establishing internal quarterly deadlines for some of the categories. Set yourself up for success all year long.

**4. Volunteer to judge** other contests to expose staffers to new ideas and help them understand what makes for a winning contest entry. Recruit your staffers to work together as a small team to judge

entries over pizza (you're buying!).

**5. Ask departing staffers** to identify stories they've produced that may warrant a contest entry. You can't enter what you can't remember.

**6. As you review entries**, ask whether any of your "best of" stories are worthy of an update.

**7. Encourage reporters to contact people** featured in their stories to let them know their story is under consideration for a statewide award. It's good practice and good will. Thank them for sharing their story and trusting us to tell it.

**8. Be mindful of who is not making the contest entry cut.** Schedule time to review their story entries and explain areas where they can make improvements, so they are in the running next time around. Turn disappointment into a valuable teaching moment.

**9. Having a tough time decid-**

**ing on your best entry?** Don't let newsroom think rule your decisions. Ask other department leaders for their opinions. Get buy in to build station culture.

**10. And last but not least**, make sure your team understands awards are awesome but contests do not guide our daily decision making. A good story is always worth the effort regardless of whether it falls into a specific contest category

2026 is full of promise and stories that need telling. Remember to celebrate the everyday victories along the way with your team before you get to the Gala in May.

Scan for Awards Rulebook



## Member News

### Zollar to retire from Green Bay stations

Vice President and General Manager of WLUK-TV and WCWF-TV in Green Bay, Jay Zollar, will retire on Dec. 31, concluding what Sinclair called, "a distinguished career serving the Green Bay–Appleton community and guiding through decades of market-defining growth and innovation."



Zollar

With Zollar's retirement, Todd Ziegler will continue in his current role as Station Manager and assume responsibility for the stations' day-to-day operations, ensuring continuity across news, sales, marketing, and community initiatives.

"Jay's impact on these stations is immeasurable—his stewardship helped establish WLUK and WCWF as trusted, market-leading brands. We are deeply grateful for his decades of service and confident that Todd, with his strong operational expertise and collaborative leadership style, will continue building on that foundation," said Rob Weisbord, Chief Operating Officer and President of Local Media at Sinclair.

### Larry Meiller announces his retirement after 58 years on WPR

A fixture of Wisconsin radio for nearly six decades, Larry Meiller has announced that he will retire from his Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR) program at the end of June 2026.



Meiller

Meiller has been a daily presence on WPR since 1967 and his call-in talk show is among the most listened-to programs on the statewide radio network. Featuring a mix of Wisconsin-focused subjects and guests, Meiller has welcomed listeners to join in on conversations about the environment,

consumer issues, nature, books, gardening, home improvement and more each week-day since creating WPR's call-centered show format with "The Larry Meiller Show" in 1978.

In addition to his remarkable radio career, Meiller was a professor emeritus in the Department of Life Sciences Communication at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He retired from his 102-semester teaching career in higher education in 2022.

"As Larry retires, we are so honored to celebrate one of the greatest careers in public radio," WPR Director Sarah Ashworth said. "It has been a personal pleasure to get to work alongside Larry and listen to the care he has brought to fostering valuable relationships with our listeners across Wisconsin. Larry's legacy has shaped how WPR interacts with our listeners, and how we strive to include voices from across the state."

In addition to many accolades he received for his work in radio and higher education, Meiller was inducted into the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame in 2017.

"It's something I've been thinking of a long time," Meiller said. "There are a lot of reasons for it. I have a daughter getting married in July. I have three great daughters and I haven't had enough time to spend with them. I want to do a little running around with them."

Ahead of Meiller's retirement on June 30, WPR will celebrate his career with a series of events across Wisconsin.



**Saturday, Feb. 28**  
Check in Begins at 8 a.m.

**\$25 Early Bird  
Registration**

**\$35 after Jan. 10**  
Registration Deadline Feb. 10

### 2026 Student Forum Sponsors (to date)

Hands-On Experiences



Job Fair



Keynote



Event Space



WBA Partner



**Learn more and register!**  
Or visit us at [wi-broadcasters.org](http://wi-broadcasters.org)





# AGENDA

## Wisconsin Broadcasters Student Forum

8 a.m. | Doors Open for Attendees - Enter at the Lambeau Field Atrium

8:45 a.m. | Introduction and Orientation

9-9:50 a.m. | First Sessions



### More Cow Bell: How to Get the Most out of Gathering Audio and Video

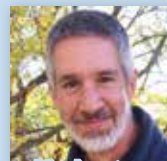
Two of Wisconsin's photojournalism veterans share with you the tips and tricks they've learned over the year to get the most out of shooting video, which includes compelling audio and video. See examples and demonstrations.



**Jeremy Nichols**  
Multimedia Specialist  
Wisconsin Technical College  
System



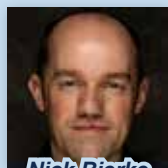
**Jim Wilson**  
Executive Reporter  
WTMJ-TV, Milwaukee



**Moderator: Adam Schrager**  
Teaching Faculty  
Member, UW-Madison

### Prepping for a Sports Broadcast

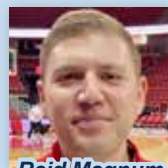
There's a lot that goes into a game broadcast, both on the air and behind the scenes. Hear from a panel of broadcasters about the work that goes into preparing for a successful broadcast.



**Nick Bjerke**  
Creative Services Manager  
WXOW-TV, WQOW-TV, La  
Crosse, Eau Claire



**Tom Hecker**  
Statistician  
Packers Radio Network



**Reid Magnum**  
Vice President  
Magnum Media



**Andrew Nelson**  
Executive Producer,  
Studio Production  
Rush Media Company



**Moderator: Bill Wald**  
Broncos Media Director/  
Manager & Media Arts  
Educator  
Union Grove High School

### Flash Forward: Your Path Ahead in College Media

This session is designed for high school students to learn about broadcasting opportunities on college campuses in Wisconsin. Hear from current college students from a variety of universities about their experiences working in college radio or television. From gaining broadcasting skills to meeting new friends with similar interests, find out what college media has in store for you!



**Moderator: Kelsey Brannan**  
Director of Student Radio  
UW-Madison

10-10:50 a.m. | Second Sessions

### Chicken Soup From Chicken Poop: Making Good Stories From Bad Days

Anyone can tell a great story when everything goes right. But how often does that happen? In this session, you'll learn to turn problems into solutions by running toward your reporting challenges instead of away.



**Boyd Huppert**  
KARE-TV, Minneapolis



**Moderator: Mark Zoromski**  
WBA Education Committee Chair

## Getting More Than Just a Foot in the Door in Broadcasting

How do you get the attention of a radio or TV station you'd like to work for? What should you expect when you get a job interview? How can you stand out as a candidate? Hear from a panel of experienced broadcasters who've seen the resumes, conducted interviews, and made hiring decisions.



**Jeff Kiernan**  
VP of Local News  
E.W. Scripps



**Jessica Laszewski**  
VP/General Manager,  
WSAW-TV, Wausau



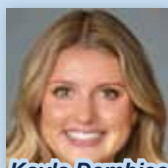
**Michelle Waldinger**  
Vice President of Human  
Resources  
Midwest Communications



**Moderator:  
Don Vesely**  
Regional Vice President  
Gray Media

## Reaching Audiences Where They Are

Your audience is out there, but more and more it's up to broadcasters to reach the audience where it is, which includes digital media, over the top (OTT), and social media. Hear from a panel of broadcasters finding new fans in new places.



**Kayla Dembiec**  
Multimedia Journalist and  
Former Badger Beat Reporter  
UW-Madison



**Samantha Lindner**  
Strategic Partnerships  
and Brand Marketing  
iHeartMedia



**Devin Willems**  
Digital Content Director  
WFRV-TV  
Green Bay



**Moderator:  
Rob Snyder**  
Professor of  
Communication  
UW-Platteville

11 a.m.-Noon

**Keynote Address  
followed by  
Lunch with Bill  
Jartz**



### Keynote Speaker: Packers PA announcer Bill Jartz

Bill Jartz is the public address announcer at Lambeau Field and a recently retired anchor for WBAY-TV in Green Bay. He's won numerous accolades in his career for his work and support for local community causes. He is a member of the WBA Local Broadcast Legends. As the WBAY sports director, Bill won the admiration of northeast Wisconsin's sports fans, performing play-by-play duties for pre-season Packer football games, and hosting the award-winning "Monday Night Kick-Off" throughout the regular schedule. In 1998 he transitioned to be a news anchor for WBAY-TV, which he did the rest of his career.

**Noon-2 p.m. | Job Fair and Hands-On Experiences**

- Conduct Interviews on camera
- Get experience in front of a green screen
- Read from a teleprompter on camera
- Mock job interviews
- Call a game on the radio
- Get free headshots
- Practice live radio reads
- Use live remote broadcasting gear
- Viewing area for photos of historic Lambeau Field!
- Networking for student advisers

2-3 p.m.

**Scholarship  
and Award  
Presentations**



### Your MC

#### Kyle Wallace

On-Air Host for ESPN Wisconsin and 101.7 The Truth and Director of Community Relations for 101.7 The Truth Good Karma Brands, Milwaukee

# So, what did we learn in 2025?



By Paul Jacobs

The past year has been marked by rapid advancements in AI, presenting both opportunities and challenges for broadcasters around the country. This is the time of year when we try to answer that all-important question: "What happened?"

So often, we are caught up in the day-to-day activities and events of our work and personal lives that it's rare we take the time to step back and assess what is happening around us in context, understand what it means, and decide what can we do about it anyway?

I'm usually the guy who looks for those big, tectonic trends. I love being able to grab the comet's tail and enjoy the ride. But, as I reflect on this past year through the lens of radio and television, it's hard to identify one new event or trend that impacted 2025 so significantly that it stands apart and will continue to impact broadcasters for years to come.

Put another way, 2025 was a bit of a slog. But that's not necessarily a bad thing, and frankly, taking the time to catch up or retrench with change is a full-time job and after the past several tumultuous years, is a luxurious break. This lull in 2025 also provided broadcasters with the time to develop strategies based not on reaction, but on a solid understanding of where the business is going.

So, the three ways I would answer the question won't surprise any of you. For some, you've "bought into" these trends and have already reacted. But for many others, all I can tell you is these forces aren't going away, and while it's not too late, taking them seriously in 2026 is significantly important.

**"Local" Matters More Than Ever.** While we constantly hear about the splintering of media as more content options come onto the market, broadcasters continue to have the "secret sauce" that sets them apart from everyone else in their back pocket: local. No competitor can match broadcast in its ability to quickly and accurately provide information, a local vibe, or bring a community together like radio and television stations.

We live in a time where if I want to find out about Congress, Putin, or what happened at Brown University, I have an unlimited number of sources. And most of them pretty much say the same things.

But if I want to find out the mood about the local sports teams, the impact of a factory opening (or closing), or the opinions of the community on a hot topic, only local media can provide that quickly, accurately and in context that matters to

your listeners and viewers.

I cannot stress enough the importance—and the value on so many levels—of retaining a significant local image and content that matters, and not only is that imperative not going away any time soon, I believe it's more important than ever.

**Talent Is the Secret Sauce.** Without compelling air personalities, radio becomes Spotify and without credible news anchors and reporters, local TV news becomes a random news feed.

I don't know what else to say other than what has propelled local broadcasters to decades of success isn't content—it's relatable, authentic, and trusted local hosts. There's no other way around that.

I realize the financial pressures some broadcasters are under, but this is the time to lean in against those headwinds and retain what makes local broadcasting so relevant and essential. Talent is the "secret sauce" that will always separate you from everyone else.

**The Broadcast Business Model Has Changed ... Don't Stay The Same Or You'll Get Passed By.** Since the financial crash of 2008, broadcast revenue has been on a slow, steady decline. Sort of like a leaky balloon. Not enough to panic about each year, but a real trend. But at the same time, digital revenue has exploded—everything from display, OTT, streaming, social media, and more have grown at a significantly faster pace than broadcast has declined.

Fifteen months ago we began working with a variety of stations across the country and market sizes to help them develop and implement their digital revenue strategy. Results have been positive, but mixed because transitioning an operating philosophy that's been in place for decades is hard to change. It requires vision, leadership, and commitment. We knew that going in. Change is hard.

But to us, the biggest surprise is the number of broadcasters unwilling to make the pivot, even in small steps.

I come out of media sales, and I love going to where the dollars are, and as I often say to people, I attended a state university so I'm no brain surgeon, and even I can see where the revenue puck is going. Get there. Quickly.

Fortifying your local position, investing and retaining great talent, and leaning into digital revenue are the "big" findings from 2025. Not as exciting as new technology like AI, but fundamental to the industry's growth in 2026 and ahead. Focus on these three things and you'll be just fine.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy 2026.

## Member News



## WOMT announces year-long celebration of 100 years on the air

WOMT Radio in Manitowoc will be celebrating its historic 100th anniversary in 2026, marking a full century since the station first signed on the air on Nov. 8, 1926 at 5:30 p.m.

WOMT Radio was founded by pioneers of Wisconsin broadcasting Francis and Lillian Kadow and originally broadcast from the second floor of the Mikadow Theatre on Washington Street in Manitowoc. Today, WOMT Radio is owned and operated by Seehafer Broadcasting, a third-generation family broadcast company led by President Mark Seehafer and Vice President Terry Stevenson.

"As one of the oldest radio stations in Wisconsin, WOMT Radio has served as a trusted voice for news, sports, community information and entertainment for generations," a station release stated. "To honor this milestone and commemorate 100 years of live, local radio, WOMT Radio will host a year-long anniversary celebration throughout 2026 featuring special events, contests, and community experiences."

Throughout the year, WOMT will invite the community into the celebration through a series of major events.

WOMT Radio will officially unveil its 100th Anniversary logo on Feb. 1, marking the start of a new chapter while honoring a century of broadcasting excellence.

"WOMT Radio has always believed in the value, significance, and relevance of local radio," said Vice President Terry Stevenson. "We are honored to share this celebration with the listeners and businesses that have supported us for 100 years."

President Mark Seehafer said, "This anniversary is not just a milestone for WOMT Radio — it is a milestone for the community. Radio has shaped Manitowoc's history, and we look forward to continuing to shape its future."

For updates including event announcements visit WOMTRadio.com and follow WOMT Radio on Facebook and Instagram.



### 'Truth Summit' focuses on issues facing Black Milwaukee



Good Karma Brands and 101.7 The Truth (WGKB-FM) hosted the second annual Truth Summit presented by OneMKE on Nov. 15 at ThriveOn King. Headlined by Dr. Ken Harris, the Truth Summit was an opportunity for community voices, thought leaders, and educators to come together and address key is-

ssues shaping Black Milwaukee. Two panel discussions were held featuring accomplished and well-known figures from across Milwaukee:

- From the Highchair to Higher Education: Rebuilding Milwaukee's Educational Pipeline with Dr. Tarrynce Robinson, Superintendent of the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District and Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools.
- The Health Divide: Bridging the Gap in Milwaukee's Healthcare System with Dr. Marc Kennedy of the Gastroenterology and Transplant Hepatology Department at Aurora Health Care (Advocate Health).

The event fostered open dialogue and collaboration, turning ideas into meaningful action and lasting change.



### Northwoods NRG stations shine spotlight on Alzheimer's

NRG radio stations in the Rhinelander area helped spotlight the National Alzheimer's Association at the annual Walk to End Alzheimer's Sept. 20. NRG Northwoods Operations Manager Duff Damos and WMQA/WRHN Program Director Scott King are longtime emcees of the event and promoted it through live mentions and interviews. The event drew 450 participants, 61 teams, and raised \$172,120.



## In Remembrance

### Remembering former chief meteorologist Tom Mahoney

Former Local 5 News (WFRV-TV) Chief Meteorologist Tom Mahoney has died. He was on the air in Green Bay for more than 30 years.

Mahoney first appeared on northeast Wisconsin airwaves in 1972 before briefly leaving and returning as Chief Meteorologist in 1982. He retired in 2013.



Mahoney

The station said that Mahoney immersed himself in the people and places of Wisconsin. He often visited classrooms to inspire young students and share his passion for meteorology.

"Throughout his career, Mahoney's humor and charm shined. He interviewed Big Bird from Sesame Street, kissed the Blarney Stone in Ireland,

and once competed in the Goofy Games at Disney World. In a playful stunt, former NFL player Dexter Manley and pro wrestler Sgt. Slaughter even joined a mock 'search' for him when he jokingly 'disappeared' during the event."

He and his wife, Sue, dedicated themselves to helping families of children with cancer, inspired by their own daughter's courageous battle with the disease.

### Tommy Lee Bychinski was Reedsburg's 'Mr. Radio'

The WBA Hall of Famer known as "Mr. Radio" in Reedsburg, Tommy Lee Bychinski, died Dec. 15. He was 79.

Bychinski had a 44-year career in radio built on a strong foundation of community service and involvement. He was inducted into the WBA Hall of Fame in 2009.



Bychinski

After attending Brown Institute, Bychinski began his career in 1964 at WIGM radio in Medford and after two years began his 33-year run with Goetz Broadcasting. For Goetz he served in Marshfield at WDLB as a sports announcer and air personality from 1966-72 and then moved to their stations in Reedsburg, WRDB/WNFM, as an account executive. In 1979 he

became station manager and led the stations, even after Goetz Broadcasting was disbanded, until his retirement in 2008.

Throughout his career Bychinski dedicated himself to community service and industry service. He served the Chamber of Commerce, local school district, the city council, the county board, the volunteer fire department, his church and the Knights of Columbus, all in the Reedsburg area.

### Whitehall broadcaster loved radio and sports

A Whitehall broadcaster known for his love of radio and sports, Michael "Gilby" Gilbertson, died Nov. 20. He was 66.

According to his obituary, Gilbertson started his radio career at WISM in Eau Claire doing play-by-play. His love for radio continued with on-air posi-



Gilbertson

tions with stations in Eau Claire, Oshkosh, and Whitehall. He also was part of a sports program with Hayes Callaghan for WQOW-TV in Eau Claire in the early '90's.

Gilbertson was employed twice by WHTL radio. His most recent stint with WHTL lasted eight years as host of the Morning Ride. He also participated in sales,

writing, and social media for the station.

With a love for baseball, Gilbertson was involved in setting up and playing for local teams, and coaching a variety of youth sports.

Memorial services were held on Dec. 2 at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Whitehall.



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE



## Platteville stations offers community trick-or-treating

QueenB Radio in Platteville hosted its annual Haunted Halloween Candy Drive Thru on Oct. 22. The event offers a safe, community trick-or-treating opportunity for families. This year 400 treat bags were distributed to more than 120 families. The station group partners with the Platteville Police Department, DuTrac Community Credit Union, and other business partners that donated treats for the bags.



## Community rallies to help broadcaster after fire

Community members and the Broadcasters Foundation of America came to the aid of a central Wisconsin broadcaster who lost her home in a fire. Patti Cavanaugh, the midday personality on WCWI in Adams, lost everything in the August fire. The station held a fundraiser on Nov. 1 that raised more than \$42,000. The Broadcasters Association of America provided Cavanaugh with a check for \$2,000 to aid in her recovery.



## NRG Northwoods stations support 1st annual 'Saluting Heroes' event

NRG Media Northwoods sponsored the first-ever Local Heroes Balloon Rally that was held at The Hodag Country Festival grounds. Twenty-seven balloons from all over the country showed up and the nighttime "glow" was a big draw. Organizers of the event thanked Duff Damos, operations manager, and the NRG team for the collaboration in promoting the First Annual Balloon Rally with interviews facilitated through NRG Media. The organizers will donate most of the money raised to local nonprofits and Camp American Legion, which needs \$30,000 to replace a cabin. Saluting Heroes and Damos are making plans for future collaborations for both the Saluting Heroes and Dairyland events in 2026.



## Station support for boat races raises money for medical care

A radio group in Rhinelander is supporting local medical care by being part of annual boat races. Duff Damos and Mike Michalak of NRG Media Northwoods have been emceeing the Minocqua Dragon boat races since it began a decade ago. More than \$1.3 million has been raised, providing funding for hospital equipment, oncology services, hospice care, the Aspirus Tick-Borne Illness Center, and autism services in northern Wisconsin.



# Telethon raises \$41K to help veterans

During the WISN 12 'Heat and Housing for Heroes Telethon,' the Milwaukee area donated \$41,573 to assist area veterans in need. The fundraiser provides veterans with financial support to keep their heat and power on during the cold winter months. It also helps ensure they have access to critical housing resources.

"Thousands of Wisconsin veterans needed our help ahead of the winter months. Our community truly stepped up to support our service members," said Shawn Oswald, president and general manager of WISN 12. "It was very touching to see!"

The telethon took place on Nov. 4. During the fundraiser, people could donate by calling into a phone bank or by submitting online contributions. The money collected helps provide energy and housing assistance to the more than 21,000

Wisconsin veterans and their families, who need financial support.

"This was a substantive and impactful way to honor our nation's heroes," Oswald said. "WISN 12 is proud to play a part in helping veterans keep warm and stay in their homes."

WISN 12's 'Heat and Housing for Heroes Telethon' supports the efforts of an ongoing partnership involving Energy Services, Inc. and the Keep Wisconsin Warm/Cool Fund. Through their collaborative Heat and Housing for Heroes Campaign, those organizations help veterans experiencing life-threatening, heat and housing related emergencies. The initiative offers assist with furnace repairs, oil supply, and utility bill payments.



## Milwaukee station collects 421 bikes during bike drive



## Listeners step up to help those in need



Milwaukee radio station 103.7 KISS FM (WXSS-FM) hosted its inaugural bike drive in collaboration with Tri City National Bank. All donations benefited Bikes for Kids Wisconsin, whose mission is to increase bicycle transportation in underserved communities by providing access, low-cost repairs and education.

"Our first-ever bike drive showcased the incredible heart of our community," said Molly Cruz, Brand Manager, 103.7 KISS FM. "We extend our deepest gratitude to every listener who donated and helped us put joy in motion for children who need it most."

Donations were collected on Oct. 25 at Pick'n Save on Miller Park Way. Morning show hosts, Alley and DZ, were on-site encouraging the community to donate and greeting donors. They were also joined by Brett Andrews, the assistant brand manager for 103.7 KISS FM and a host on sister station 99.1 The Mix (WMYX-FM).



A Madison radio station rallied listeners to help families in need during the holiday season.

Life 102.5 (WNWC) launched Christmas Kindness to help families facing financial, medical, or other difficulties. In its first year, they helped four families.

One family's home had been struck by severe weather leaving it unlivable. The couple and their one-year-old child were facing \$40,000 in repairs after insurance. Listeners were able to provide financial assistance.

Another woman nominated her mother who faced health challenges and constant car troubles, making it difficult to get to appointments and to see her grandkids. Listeners were able to provide her with a reliable car.





# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## WISN-TV raises \$171K during family food drive

Generous WISN-TV viewers spanning southeastern Wisconsin donated \$171,465 in support of the 2025 'WISN 12 Day of Giving Food For Families Food Drive.' The 14th annual campaign, in partnership with Hunger Task Force, ensures local families have healthy meals during the holidays. Through contributions from local community members, bolstered by matching funds from local business, the station is helping thousands facing food insecurity this holiday season.

"Due to the outpouring of support from our community, so many local families will have a meal to share over holidays. We're so grateful to everyone who donated," said Shawn Oswald, president and general manager of WISN 12.

The drive was hosted by the station on Nov. 25-26. Viewers submitted donations either online or through the station's



phone bank during the fundraising event. Along with individual donations, area companies including Zurn Elkay, Hydrite, and SVA provided corporate match-

ing donations totaling \$43,000. "Whether it was one of our viewers making a donation, or a community organization offering support, Wisconsin really knows

how to band together to help those around us," Oswald said. "Your kindness, your compassion, exemplifies the power of giving."

Since 2012, WISN 12 has been partnering with Hunger Task Force on the fundraising campaign. Over the course of 14 years, generous community members in our state have donated \$2,093,204 to the 'Food For Families Food Drive.'

The 'WISN 12 Day of Giving Food For Families Food Drive' is part of the 'WISN 12 Day of Giving' initiative, which supports local non-profit organizations throughout southeastern Wisconsin. In the ongoing campaign, the station features a different non-profit each month to help advance its mission, pursue its goals, and most importantly, improve people's lives. This initiative aims to promote the power of community through the power of giving.

## END-OF-YEAR EFFORTS

*Continued from page 1*

### \$1.7m, 83k lbs of food

overwhelmed by the continued generosity of our communities," said WMTV Regional VP/GM Don Vesely. "Thanks to our viewers, community partners, and Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin, our... campaign was a tremendous success...area families, children, and seniors will have the chance to nourish and thrive. Our team could not have done it without you."

This year's theme was "The Power of One." One family, one business, one school, one organization, one person – all coming together to make a difference in our communities.

### 'Day of Giving'

Donations were collected both online and in-person at Candy Cane Lane, an annual holiday lights display in West Allis. In addition, WISN-TV contributed \$1,000 to the initiative and North Shore Bank provided matching contributions for individual donations up to the first \$5,000 raised. The money will be used to advance the MACC Fund's mission in funding local research to find a cure for childhood cancer and related blood disorders.

In 2025, the station raised a total of \$1,274,846 for non-profits in Wisconsin.

### A record number raised

to collect toys, food, and monetary donations.

When the totals were processed, Big Radio was proud to be the promotional vehicle that delivered an estimated \$51,205 to two vital organizations, E.C.H.O. and The Salvation Army.

"Local radio isn't just about music and talk—it's about community," said Big Radio owner Ben Thompson. "This event shows the incredible power of local radio and its advertisers to come together and make a real difference. Every bid, every donated item, and every sponsor proves that when local businesses and listeners unite, amazing things happen."

### Money, toys, food donated

The Hunger Task Force focuses on food distribution and nutrition programs, while the Salvation Army provides comprehensive social services including emergency assistance, shelter and holiday programs. Toys For Tots ensures children from low-income families receive new toys during the Christmas season.

The station said, "The Joy of Sharing event has been an overwhelming success since its inception and continues to grow each year, showcasing the community's spirit of giving and support for those in need. The Joy of Sharing event continues to grow each year, showcasing the community's spirit of giving and support for those in need."

# Nominations open for WBA Hall of Fame, Local Broadcast Legends

Nominations are now open for the WBA Hall of Fame and the Local Broadcast Legends.

The WBA Hall of Fame Committee made a number of changes to the process starting with the 2025 cycle:

- A nominee for the Hall of Fame can now be a person that has contributed to the growth and success of broadcasting through areas such as teaching, technical development, consulting, and service to the broadcasting industry.

- Nominations can now be made by the general public for the Hall of Fame and Local Broadcast Legends.

- To be eligible for the Hall of Fame, nominees must have served a minimum of 20 years in, or in support of, Wisconsin broadcasting.

- To be eligible for the Local Broadcast Legends, nominees must have served a minimum of 20 years at one specific Wisconsin station, or in one specific Wisconsin community or market.

Nominations for both recognitions must be submitted through an on-line form. Those forms are available by scanning the QR codes on right.

Nominations are due on Jan. 15. The 2026 Hall of Fame inductees will be recognized at the WBA Hall of Fame dinner on June 18. The 2026 Local Broadcast Legends will be rec-

ognized at a luncheon on June 18. Both events are a part of the WBA Summer Conference which will be held at the Grand Geneva Resort in Lake Geneva.

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Hall of Fame was established in 1989 and formally dedicated by then FCC Chairman Alfred Sikes. Its purpose is to honor individuals who have dedicated their professional lives to the advancement of broadcasting in Wisconsin. Since then, 168 broadcasters have been inducted.

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Local Broadcast Legends Award was established in 2015 under the direction of Bruce Grassman, who at the time was owner/president of Results Radio. The Local Broadcast Legends Award is a great honor and recognition for individuals that work behind the scenes and within their communities fulfilling the commitment broadcasters have made to serve their local communities. They are individuals that exemplify localism. This award is a means to extend recognition of these individuals beyond their local communities.



Hall of Fame  
nomination forms:  
[wbafoundation.org/hall-of-fame/hall-of-fame-nomination-form](http://wbafoundation.org/hall-of-fame/hall-of-fame-nomination-form)



Legends  
nomination forms:  
[wi-broadcasters.org/awards/local-broadcast-legends](http://wi-broadcasters.org/awards/local-broadcast-legends)

## Applications accepted for Student Leadership Award

The "WBA Student Leadership Award" is given to a broadcasting or broadcast journalism student of junior standing or above at a Wisconsin college or university who has most noticeably developed and exercised effective and creative skills in leadership.

The student must be nominated in writing by an adviser, supervisor or faculty member. The nomination letter must include specific examples when citing how the student meets the following criteria:

- Is actively involved in a student broadcasting

community;

- Demonstrated instances where they provided a positive influence;
- Demonstrated instances where they motivated others to accomplish a mission, despite challenges or obstacles;
- Encouraged others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of a broadcast-related organization or project;
- Goes consistently above and beyond the scope of their job or project assignment;
- Demonstrated the ability to lead in an ethical

and moral manner.

**The student must also submit a 2-3 page paper describing how their experiences in student media have shaped them as a leader or helped them develop a leadership style.**

WBA Student Leadership Award nominations should be sent by Jan. 15, 2026 directly to: Kyle Geissler at [kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org](mailto:kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org).

# Scholarship established to recognize Ken Beno

The Lake Land College Foundation has established a scholarship to recognize broadcasting educator and WBA Hall of Famer Ken Beno.

The Foundation wrote:

*Ken Beno's journey in broadcasting began in Southern Illinois, and led him to become a transformative figure in media education. After earning his bachelor's degree from Southern Illinois University Carbondale and a master's from Eastern Illinois University, Ken dedicated his career to nurturing the next generation of broadcasters.*

*At Lake Land College, Ken's vision materialized with the establishment of WLKL 89.9 FM in 1975. He not only compiled the original license application but also constructed the studios, laying the foundation for a hands-on learning environment that has benefited countless students. His curriculum, enriched by real-world experience and industry insights, bridged the gap between academic learning and professional broadcasting.*

*Beyond Lake Land, Ken's influence extended through two terms on the Board of Directors of the Illinois Broadcasters Association (IBA) and his long-standing role as Chair of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association (WBA) Education Committee. In the 90s, Ken was the Chair of the committee that planned IBA student events and awards. In addition,*



*he was part of a committee that insured LLC Broadcasting courses would transfer to four-year schools. In 1997, WLKL switched to all digital in the studio which was one of a few college stations nationwide. Ken designed the new studios when WLKL moved from the basement of the library to the Northwest Building. The TV curriculum also expanded at that time. Ken was named Chair of the Humanities in 1999, but still taught broadcast courses and managed WLKL. He*

*retired in 2006, but kept teaching Radio-TV marketing seminars to college students and broadcast companies for the WBA. His efforts led to over 800 students obtaining the nationally recognized Radio Advertising Bureau's "Radio Marketing Professional Certificate." He also spearheaded initiatives like the WBA Student Awards for Excellence, which saw a fourfold increase in participation under his leadership. His commitment to education and broadcasting excellence earned him a rightful place in the WBA Hall of Fame in 2017.*

*In 2018, Ken was named one of the 50 most influential people in the College's history and, in 2021, he was inducted into the Lake Land Retiree Wall of Fame. Both of these honors recognized his profound impact on the institution and its students.*

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## 2026 Election Windows for Lowest Unit Charge

2026 Elections	Election Dates
Spring Primary	Feb. 17, 2026
Spring General	April 7, 2026
Partisan Primary	Aug. 11, 2026
General Election	Nov. 3, 2026

### Window for LUC begins

Spring Primary	- Jan. 3, 2026
Spring General	- Feb. 6, 2026
Partisan Primary	- June 27, 2026
General Election	- Sept. 4, 2026

\*LUR (lowest unit rate/charge) runs from the stated "begins" date through Election Day.



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# Enrollment open for 2026 Walker Management Institute

This year's session will be held April 14-16 in Madison

The Walker Broadcast Management Institute is now in its 27th year. The 2026 Institute marks the third year of another 3-year cycle (although you may join the cycle at any time) and is designed for broadcast managers and those seeking or being prepared for

broadcast management positions.

The 2026 session will be held April 14-16, 2026 in Madison.

For registration information please call the WBA office: 608-255-2600.

Register  
Here



## AGENDA

### Day 1

#### Developing the People Around You – A One-Day Program for Broadcasting Professionals



Presented by **Betsy Hagan**

In broadcasting, careers don't follow a straight line—they unfold as a journey, filled with milestones, detours, and opportunities to grow with and through others. This one-day program is designed to help you reflect on your own professional journey while strengthening your ability to support and develop those around you.

Through interactive discussions and hands-on practice, you will:

- Explore your professional goals and values, clarifying the direction of your career.
- Learn what peer coaching is (and isn't), and discover the many ways it can benefit you and your colleagues.
- Build practical coaching skills in listening, questioning, and giving constructive feedback.
- Gain insight into how coaching can bridge generational differences in today's diverse broadcasting workforce.

Whether you are an emerging leader, an experienced professional, or someone who wants to contribute more to your team's success, this program equips you with tools to enhance both your own growth and the growth of those you work with.

Join us for a day of learning, reflection, and skill-building that will help you bring out the best in yourself and in others.

**Evening - dinner with group**

### Day 2

#### Leading with Emotional Intelligence



Presented by **Patricia Clason**

Research by the Carnegie Institute concluded: "15% of success is technical skills – 85% is people skills." Emotional Intelligence is all about people skills – how well you know yourself and your emotions and how well you read and interact with others and their emotions. Learn about how the brain, the body and emotions affect each other, and then how to better manage your own emotions and the emotions of others so you can have clearer, more accurate communications that create cooperation and collaboration in the workplace. Each participant will complete an emotional intelligence assessment in class and will receive access to the online version of the assessment to complete in six months to measure their progress. This assessment reflects one's style or approach to emotions. Participants will also complete an assessment that will help them determine specific skills areas to develop for a higher EQ.

What you will learn:

- The Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence
- 54 Characteristics of high and low emotional intelligence
- Tools for increasing emotional intelligence
- Practice in identifying emotions in others

### Day 2:

#### Evening Guest Speaker at the Fluno Center



#### Wisconsin by the Numbers: Perspectives on the Economy now and into the Future

Presented by **Matt Kures, UW-Extension**

Wisconsin is facing demographic and economic shifts that impact communities, businesses and labor markets. A rising share of residents approaching retirement age, disparate rates of urban and rural development, and technological changes will influence labor availability, economic growth, sources of revenue, housing and transportation demand, service delivery and health care needs throughout the State. This presentation will explore these changes in greater detail and consider responses at the local, regional and state levels.

### Day 3

#### Strategic Marketing for Broadcast Media Professionals



Presented by **Brian Lee**

This presentation explores how broadcast media can stand out in a crowded market. Brian Lee, APR, of Revelation PR, Advertising & Social Media, will discuss how to strengthen and protect your brand, craft compelling messages, identify and engage audiences across multiple platforms, set up and budget for outbound and inbound marketing tactics, and use AI and other tools.

## Fox Valley AM station to sign off

Neenah-Menasha area AM radio station WNAM is signing off after more than 78 years on the air.

The Cumulus-owned station posted the announcement to its website on Dec. 17.

"We've had the privilege of being a trusted voice in your homes, cars, and workplaces. From timeless music and unforgettable personalities to vital storm coverage and community connection, WNAM has been more than just a radio station—it's been a part of the fabric

of our lives."

The station signed off Dec. 31 at midnight.

"This difficult decision comes in response to evolving listener habits and economic realities that have reshaped the media landscape," the announcement stated.

The station thanked local listeners and advertisers.

"Your unwavering support over the past 78 years has meant everything to us. You made WNAM a part of your daily routine, and for that, we are deeply grateful."



**WE LIVE HERE.  
WE WORK HERE.  
WE SERVE HERE.**

Wisconsin Broadcasters help keep our ranks full so we can serve when called upon. What you do matters. Thank you for your support.

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**Jan. 21, 2026**  
**State Legislative Day**  
Wisconsin State Capitol

**Jan. 21, 2026**  
**AI Governance – Getting the Most Out of Your People and Machines**  
Online Event

**Feb. 27, 2026**  
**Lambeau Field Reception**  
Lambeau Field, Green Bay

**Feb. 28, 2026**  
**WBA Student Forum**  
Lambeau Field, Green Bay

**April 16-18, 2026**  
**Walker Broadcast Management Institute**  
UW-Madison

**May 2, 2026**  
**WBA Awards Gala**  
Madison Marriott West

**June 17-18, 2026**  
**WBA Summer Conference 75th Anniversary**  
Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva

**June 17, 2026**  
**Golf Outing at WBA Summer Conference**  
Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva

**June 16-18, 2026**  
**WBA Duke Wright Media Technology Institute**  
Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva

More details  
registration at  
[wi-broadcasters.org/events](http://wi-broadcasters.org/events)



## Stay on top of how AI is affecting broadcasters

Follow developments from Jacobs Media Director of AI, Chris Brunt, and sign up for his weekly newsletter

