Local newsrooms strive to inform communities without bias

Reporters, managers doing excellent work

My name and email address is listed at the top of the station management contact page on our station website so viewers tend to send me the most emails with their questions or concerns. I get comments about anything you can imagine, and some are downright silly. A couple weeks ago I found out how critical "General Hospital" is to several viewers in our area. I guess live breaking news coverage of a violent attack on a school resource officer and the safety of 800 local high school students was not enough of a concern for them. Some viewers can’t understand why they received six inches of snow at their house when our meteorologists predicted 3-5 inches. Others are critical of our talents’ hairstyle or wardrobe. I could do a whole column on that subject.

The concern that I have seen most often lately are the comments like, “Although I have been watching your news religiously for 25 years, I can’t watch it anymore because your news is biased.” They rarely give specifics. They just claim bias. I enjoy corresponding with these viewers so I can learn more about their accusations. It’s funny how a local news station can be both conservatively biased and liberally biased all on the same day.

Can our local news organizations survive in our markets if we served up a favored slant in our local news coverage? The last time I checked, Wisconsin is a solid purple state. We would lose half our local news audience if we actually catered to one view or the other.

I have had some conversations with others in the business, and this is what I think:

• Cable outlets devote prime-time hours to opinion hosts giving their takes and perspective on the news. Many cable show hosts would admit they are not journalists as they clearly favor a certain political view.

Continued on page 3

Grant takes new approach to helping future broadcasters

Michelle Vetterkind, CAE
WBA President and CEO

While the WBA’s scholarships continue to support students looking to start a career in broadcasting, one of our scholarships is changing to a grant aimed at helping young broadcasters who might want help paying down their student debt.

The Results Broadcasting Scholarship is now the Results Broadcasting Education Debt Assistance Grant.

Grant originators Bruce and Don Grassman are interested in helping those who have committed themselves to a career in broadcasting by providing $1,000 in student debt relief.

You can read more about the grant on page 3, including all the requirements. We’re accepting applications now through Feb. 28 and will recognize the recipient at the WBA Summer Conference.

Young Professionals of the Year

And...we have another first in this newsletter. We’re listing the first two Young Professional of the Year honorees on page 10. Heather Storm and Eric Bartos are the first two of six Young Professionals we will recognize ahead of the WBA Summer Conference where we will name one of the six as our WBA Young Professional of the Year.

Do you have a YP on your staff who you think should be honored next year? You can submit nominations anytime. Check out the details on page 10.

Fast turnaround on your survey answers

Thank you to those of you who responded to an online survey from Jacobs Media that we sent to our members. We wanted to know about the greatest challenges you’re facing regarding digital media.

The results of the survey were very clear: You want help with monetizing your digital efforts.

Continued on page 2
Well, we’re listening and so is WBA partner Jacobs Media. Paul Jacobs is coming to Madison on Tuesday, Jan. 28 to make a presentation about monetizing digital. Jacobs Media is also going to focus on that topic in their columns and we will continue to work with Jacobs Media on other ways to help members with this critical topic. Learn more on page 5.

Making a Difference

Wisconsin’s broadcasters have a lot to be proud of and it’s made so clear during the holiday season. Please be sure to turn to pages 6-7 to get a taste of what your fellow radio and TV station members did to make the season brighter for people in their communities. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised and countless hours were dedicated to making life better for the people of Wisconsin. Your generosity knows no bounds!

You might already be a member

As we wrap up the membership renewal season, it’s a fitting time to remind you that anyone who works for a station that is a WBA member is, themselves, a member of the WBA. The WBA offers memberships for retired broadcasters, associate members, but of course, most of our members are the radio and TV stations of Wisconsin and all the wonderful people who work at those stations.

I hope you and your families and friends a safe, happy, and fulfilling 2020.

2020 WBA Slate of Officers, Directors to be considered at Winter Conference

The WBA Nominating Committee has set a slate of officers and directors for consideration by the WBA general membership. As provided by WBA bylaws, Chris Bernier, Radio Plus, Marinette/Fond du Lac, the current WBA Vice Chair and Chair-Elect, will automatically be elevated to the position of Chair of the Board at the 2020 WBA General Membership meeting. The committee made the following nominations, which will be voted upon by the general membership during the WBA Winter Conference on Jan. 29.

Officers

Vice Chair—TV/Chair Elect Don Vesely, WMTV-TV, Madison
Vice Chair—Radio Lupita Montoto, La Movida, Madison
Treasurer Jan Wade, WISN-TV, Milwaukee
Secretary Michael Wright, Midwest Communications, Wausau

Two-Year Director Terms

Director (SW District TV): Judson Beck, WLAX-TV/WEUX-TV, La Crosse/Eau Claire
Director (NW District TV): Brian Burns, Morgan Murphy Media, Madison
Director (NE District Radio): Andy Gille, Midwest Communications, Green Bay
Director (SE District Radio): Chuck Sullivan, Entercom, Milwaukee

The 2020 WBA Board of Directors will also include Steve Lavin, Wabay-TV, Green Bay, who will remain as ex-officio Past Chair.

Mid-term Directors not facing re-election include: (NW Radio): Aleese Fielder, NRG Media, Wausau/Stevens Point; (SW Radio) Herb Cody, QueenB Radio, Platteville; (NE TV) Mike Smith, WFRV-TV, Green Bay; and (SE TV) Mark Strachota, WDJT-TV/CBS & Telemundo.

At-large Directors are appointed by the Board. The committee recommended the Board appoint Sean Dwyer, WXOW-TV, La Crosse; Colleen Valkoun, iHeartMedia, Milwaukee; Dean Kallenbach, Wisconsin Public Radio, Senior Regional Manager, Eau Claire (representing noncommercial broadcasting) and reappoint Paul Cameron, WEMI/WEMY/WGNV/WSTM, Appleton.

At-large mid-term Directors not facing re-election include: Anna Engelhart, WKOW-TV, Madison and Jeff Welton, Naulet (representing our Associate membership). In addition, Tom Walker, Mid-West Family Broadcasting, Madison, remains on the board as an ex-officio member, per his seat on the NAB Board, according to WBA bylaws.

Wisconsin Broadcasters Association
Officers & Board of Directors

OFFICERS 2019-2020
Chair of the Board
Steve Lavin Wabay-TV, Green Bay
Vice Chair - Radio, Chair Elect
Chris Bernier Radio Plus, Marinette/Fond du Lac
Vice Chair - Television
Don Vesely WMTV-TV, Madison
Treasurer
Lupita Montoto La Movida WLMV Radio, Madison
Secretary
Jan Wade WISN-TV, Milwaukee
Immediate Past Chair
Steve Wexler Good Karma Brands, Milwaukee

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Judson Beck WLAX-TV/WEUX-TV, La Crosse/Eau Claire
Brian Burns Morgan Murphy Media, Madison
Paul Cameron The Family Radio Network, Appleton
Herb Cody QueenB Radio, Platteville
Dave Edwards WWJN-FM, Milwaukee Public Radio, Milwaukee
Anna Engelhart WKOW-TV, Madison
Aleese Fielder NRG Media-Wausau/Stevens Point
JT Koser Koser Radio Group, Rice Lake/Hayward
Mike Smith WFRV-TV, Green Bay
Mark Strachota WDJT-TV/CBS & Telemundo, Milwaukee
Chuck Sullivan Entercom Communications, Hales Corners
Jeff Welton Naulet, Hackett’s Cove, Nova Scotia
Michael Wright Midwest Communications, Green Bay/Wausau
Ex Officio - NAB Board
Tom Walker Mid-West Family Broadcasting, Madison

WBA Team
President & CEO
Michelle Vetterkind, CAE
mvetterkind@wi-broadcasters.org
Vice President - Administration
Linda Baun
lbaun@wi-broadcasters.org
NCSA/PEP Coordinator
Liz Boyd
lboyd@wi-broadcasters.org
Director of Operations and Public Affairs
Kyle Geissler
kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org

WBA Board minutes are always available for members. Please email Linda Baun at lbaun@wi-broadcasters.org to request a copy.
Wisconsin’s local broadcast newsrooms are full of excellent reporting, thousands of miles away from where the national story is unfolding. These news consumers take out their fury on people who are with accusations of bias even when established facts are reported. Some news consumers are too willing to attack the messenger. People hear what they want to hear. Facts without speculation or emotion can be quite jarring.

For those who consume a steady diet of partisan cable news programming, watching (or listening to) local news outlets reporting facts without speculation or emotion can be quite jarring.

People hear what they want to hear.

Some news consumers are too willing to attack the messenger with accusations of bias even when established facts are reported. These news consumers take out their fury on people who are thousands of miles away from where the national story is unfolding.

Wisconsin’s local broadcast newsrooms are full of excellent reporters and newsroom managers. They live and work in their local communities. They are focused on events in their communities and how events (both local and national) might affect the entire community. Their duty continues to be to inform, not entertain.

Wisconsin’s broadcasters join all Wisconsinites in their appreciation for the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Wisconsin’s broadcasters join all Wisconsinites in their appreciation for the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment. It’s an honor to be associated with Wisconsin’s radio and TV stations and the role they play in supporting and improving their local communities.”

Clara joins WBA Young Professionals Committee

Jerad Clark, the General Sales Manager at Mid-West Family Broadcasting in Madison, is joining the WBA Young Professionals Committee.

Clark started his career with Mid-West Family in La Crosse in 2010 as an account executive. In 2013 he continued with Mid-West Family with management roles in Madison and in 2015 took a position in Springfield, Illinois. He moved back to Madison early in 2018 to take up his current role.

Clark has sat on boards for the American Advertising Federation in Madison and Sangamon County CEOs.

2020 Election windows for Lowest Unit Charge

Elections  |  Election Dates  |  Window for LUC begins

Spring Primary  |  Feb. 18, 2020  |  Jan. 4, 2020

Spring Election  |  April 7, 2020  |  Before end of primary window

7th Cong. District  |  May 12, 2020  |  Before end of spring window

Fall Primary  |  Aug. 11, 2020  |  June 27, 2020

Fall General  |  Nov. 3, 2020  |  Sept. 4, 2020

Get a 2020 Political Broadcasting Rules Summary on the WBA website. Under “Members Only” look for “Political Broadcasting Resources.”

CHAIR’S COLUMN

Continued from page 1

• For those who consume a steady diet of partisan cable news programming, watching (or listening to) local news outlets reporting facts without speculation or emotion can be quite jarring.

• People hear what they want to hear.

• Some news consumers are too willing to attack the messenger with accusations of bias even when established facts are reported. These news consumers take out their fury on people who are thousands of miles away from where the national story is unfolding.

Wisconsin’s local broadcast newsrooms are full of excellent reporters and newsroom managers. They live and work in their local communities. They are focused on events in their communities and how events (both local and national) might affect the entire community. Their duty continues to be to inform, not entertain.

First Amendment campaign extended to July

Wisconsin’s radio and television stations are extending a national public awareness campaign that brings attention to the importance of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Association joined 20 state broadcast associations and state press associations in the “Think First” campaign. The WBA has asked its radio and TV members to support the campaign in-kind by airing spots on radio and television stations and putting links on the stations’ websites and social media platforms to the campaign website: www.ThinkFirstAmendment.org.

The campaign was scheduled to end at the end of 2019. It has been extended to July 31, 2020.

“Think First” is a campaign designed to express a simple directive: to encourage all Americans to think about the five freedoms guaranteed in the First Amendment.

In a 2018 a civics survey taken by the Annenberg Public Policy Center, nearly 4 in 10 people couldn’t name even one of the five freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment.

“Wisconsin’s broadcasters join all Wisconsinites in their appreciation for the critical freedoms embedded in the First Amendment,” WBA President and CEO Michelle Vetterkind said. “We hope the ‘Think First’ campaign serves as a reminder to everyone about these freedoms that no one should take for granted.”

Stations interested in running the spots should contact the WBA at 608-255-2600 or contact@wi-broadcasters.org. Learn more about the campaign at www.ThinkFirstAmendment.org.

New grant offers college debt relief for broadcasters

Results Broadcasting has established a $1,000 Education Debt Assistance Grant to help broadcasters pay off their student loans. This grant is available to individuals currently employed in Wisconsin broadcasting or related media.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

• Must be currently employed at a Wisconsin broadcast radio, television or related media company

• Must have completed a minimum of one year employment with a Wisconsin broadcast radio station, television station, or related media company

• Company must be a dues paying member of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association

• Must submit a letter of support from the current employer signed by the local manager

• Must provide proof of attendance at a university, college, technical school or broadcast school by supplying a copy of transcripts or degree certificate

• Must provide proof of current loan balance (documentation will remain confidential)

Applications will be accepted Jan. 1 through Feb. 28, 2019. The grant will be awarded at the WBA Summer Conference in June. For more information and to apply, visit wbafoundation.org.
Charting the Course for 2020

For the past several years, Jacobs Media has provided the Digital Hotline to WBA members. In this role, we have taken your questions on all things digital, including social media, mobile applications, email database marketing, and more. We’ve attended your conferences, conducted webinars, and taken your phone calls in order to help Wisconsin broadcasters identify digital opportunities and implement them.

Because digital is an ever-changing target that is wide-ranging (ask ten broadcasters what “digital” is and you’ll get at least ten different answers), we felt it was important to reach out to you, WBA’s membership, to help set our agenda as we embark on a new decade.

In November, the WBA sent out a digital assessment survey to its members. While response was fairly small (33 members), the message was clear and will help us craft our approach in 2020.

The key finding: Wisconsin broadcasters want information about monetizing digital.

We can do that. Respondents were provided with a list of digital services and categories and were asked to score them based on how important they are to your station, and then to score each based on your station’s performance. We then create what’s known as a gap analysis, where we take the “performance” score (those that gave their station a “5” on a “1-to-5” scale) and subtract it from the “importance” score (those who rated the item “very important” on a “1-to-5” scale). The larger the gap, the more we need to focus on that specific item.

We have begun planning our approach and welcome your input. Do you prefer webinars, video training, sessions at conferences, or something else? Which digital area is most important to you? Let us know so we can best serve you by reaching out to me at pauljacobs@jacobsmedia.com or Seth Resler at Seth@jacobsmedia.com.

2020 promises to be an interesting year. Traditional revenue sources are projected to remain relatively flat, but since it’s a political year and Wisconsin is in the cross-hairs, things might work out ok. But not every year is going to be like this, and our mission is to help Wisconsin broadcasters build a sustainable growth model by enhancing digital activities and revenue.

Have a wonderful holiday season. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you in the new year.

The WBA Digital Hotline is a free service of the WBA.

Why you should download the WBA app

You work in broadcasting in Wisconsin and you’re a member of the WBA, but you wonder, “Why would I download the WBA app through MemberPlus?” Here are some good reasons to do it:

--Remember the printed WBA member directory? It was handy, right? Well, you can now find the directory on the app, and unlike the printed directory, the directory on the app is updated daily.

--Our most popular website feature is available on the app: job postings. See who’s hiring and find out what positions are available. It’s updated daily.

--Find out what other Wisconsin broadcasters are doing, professionally and in their communities. Our news headlines are also updated daily. If you’re following these headlines, you’re on top of it.

–Looking for a new podcast? Wisconsin’s broadcasters are there for you. Our WBA member podcast directory is available on the app.

–This is a member-exclusive app. You can show it off to your friends because unless they are WBA members, they don’t get access. Remember, if you’re an employee of a WBA member station, you’re a member of the WBA.

–Learn more about upcoming WBA events and webinars. The event section is full of information, but there’s more to come, which leads us to our final reason to download the WBA app:

–Watch us grow! The MemberPlus app is going to grow and add features in the coming months. We’re excited to show you what we do with it. Come along for the ride!
Digital Revenue and Podcasting Sessions
Jan. 28 at Madison Concourse Hotel

1 p.m.
Boosting Digital Revenue
While all broadcasters recognize the need to have a digital strategy, it’s not as easy as it looks. Stations invest in websites, social media, mobile apps, podcasts, and more, but when it comes time to monetize the investment, challenges occur. In late 2019, Jacobs Media conducted a survey of WBA members and the findings were clear: help is needed to monetize digital investments. So at the Winter Conference, Jacobs Media VP/GM Paul Jacobs will share the findings of our member survey and provide ideas and approaches to help stations get started.

3 p.m.
Podcasting Panel Discussion
Developments are moving quickly in the area of podcasting, for both radio and TV broadcasters. We’ve assembled a panel of Wisconsin broadcasters that have embraced podcasting to find out what works for them and how they’ve found a way to make podcasting a part of their already robust community content offerings.

Register on the WBA Website

WBA Winter Conference and State Legislative Day
Join us Jan. 29 at the Madison Concourse Hotel
Register online at wi-broadcasters.org

Agenda
8 a.m.
Registration
8:30 a.m.
Job/Career Fair (Stations get EEO credit)
10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
EEO Session
Noon - 1:40 p.m.
Business Luncheon
1:40 p.m. - 2:20 p.m.
Legislative Briefing
3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Legislative Calls at the State Capitol

EEO SESSION
AVOIDING DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT TERMINATIONS
The decision to terminate an employee is never easy. With state and federal agencies adopting more expansive views of their authority, employers face greater scrutiny in the workplace. Employers therefore need to proactively protect themselves from legal claims based on the decision to terminate an employee. This presentation will provide an overview of the most important laws for Wisconsin employers and practical advice about avoiding and defending employment discrimination claims related to those decisions.

Paul Jacobs

Hotel Deadline is Jan. 12

HOTEL DEADLINE
Jan. 12

Call the Madison Concourse Hotel at 800-356-8293 and mention that you are with the WBA. Hotel rates are $169 for Concourse Level and $209 for Governor’s Club Level. Please note there is a $15 per night for overnight guest parking charge or $1.50 per hour ($17) per day for non-guests. The hotel address is:
1 W. Dayton St.,
Madison, WI 53703
Making a Difference

Viewers help send veterans on Honor Flight

WISN-TV’s viewers in the southeast Wisconsin provided enough contributions to sponsor a plane on the latest “Stars and Stripes Honor Flight,” so that local veterans can take a life-changing trip to Washington D.C.

The Nov. 7 flight followed a fundraising phone bank in May 2019 in which the station was able to raise nearly $60,000 for the program. This “Stars and Stripes Honor Flight” departed from General Mitchell International Airport with 120 veterans. It included two planes, one sponsored by WISN-TV. It was the seventh and final trip of 2019.

While in Washington D.C., the veterans visited the War Memorials, Air Force Memorial, Iwo Jima Memorial and the Changing of the Guard Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. On their return flight, they received a ‘surprise’ mail call and upon return to Milwaukee were welcomed at General Mitchell International Airport with a homecoming celebration with thousands of cheering family and friends.

WISN-TV anchor Patrick Paolantonio provided special reports featuring Wisconsin veterans making the trip.

Radiothon raises $120K for Marshfield Children’s Hospital

NRG radio stations in Wausau/Stevens Point teamed up for radiothon held Dec. 5-6. The radiothon aired on Y106.5 (WYTE-FM).

“This event is highly anticipated by the community and ourselves every year and continues to grow thanks to the huge hearts and incredible donations of the listeners in central Wisconsin,” Hot 96-7 middays host Robby Cruz said.

The effort got help from country artist, Chris Janson, who donated 240 harmonicas to the Music Therapy Department.

Hosts deliver trees to share holiday cheer

Madison radio station WOLX-FM delivered holiday cheer to families nominated by their listeners.

Jim McGaw and Teri Barr from McGaw in the Morning on WOLX delivered the trees as part of their “12 Trees of Christmas.” The hosts also left the families with gift cards.

10,000 coats collected for local children

A Milwaukee TV station expects to deliver more than 10,000 coats to local children after its 35th annual Coats for Kids campaign.

FOX6 (WITI-TV) held a month-long coat drive with a one-day finale event in Waukesha. For the second consecutive year, the station also partnered with Operation Warm to collect money to purchase new coats. They raised nearly $35,000.

“The goal is to get as many coats in the hands of those who need them as possible,” FOX6 President and General Manager Chuck Steinmetz said. “Adding a phone bank to the collection efforts means that those who want to give but don’t have a coat to donate can still help. Our viewers again showed their generosity with their donations.”

The event has delivered hundreds of thousands of coats to local families over 35 years.

Radio station collects $19K granting wishes

Magic 98 (WMGN) in Madison has raised $19,775 for local families by granting holiday wishes for its listeners.

The “Holiday Wishes” campaign has been around for 30 years. For 12 hours on Dec. 6 the station played any song requested by listeners in exchange for a donation.

Sponsors also contributed to the fundraising total.

Madison station provides grant to dental care nonprofit

Madison radio station 106.7 The Resistance (WRIS) is providing a $15,000 community awareness grant to a nonprofit that provides access to quality dental care to Medicaid, BadgerCare, and uninsured populations in south central Wisconsin.

The Mid-West Family Community Awareness grant will provide More Smiles Wisconsin with $15,000 in advertising over the 2020 calendar year. Nonprofit applicants were considered based on multiple factors including the organization’s history of community service, connection to the community, mission within the community, demonstration of need, population served, and geographic region served.

WRIS aims to help More Smiles Wisconsin in its goal of increasing funding and awareness so it can grow the number of patients it serves.

Station connects listeners with children looking for holiday cheer

WACD/WATK teamed up with Antigo area law enforcement and the school district to gather and distribute presents for local children.

This was the 10th year for the annual Crusade for Kids. The stations connected listeners with local children.

Station owner Bruce Grassman helped Santa distribute the gifts.
Wish-a-thon raises more than $252K for Make-A-Wish Wisconsin

A Milwaukee radio station raised more than $252,000 for Make-A-Wish Wisconsin with its 11th annual Wish-A-Thon fundraiser. 95.7 Big FM (WRIT-FM) hosted its Wish-A-Thon on Dec. 12-13 featuring on-air personalities Brett Andrews, Eric Paulsen, Hannah, and Dave Michaels who encouraged listeners to call and donate on-air or donate online.

Over the last 11 years the station has raised more than $1.7 million to benefit Make-A-Wish Wisconsin. Since its inception in 1984, Make-A-Wish Wisconsin has granted wishes to over 7,000 children and their families throughout the state.

Station helps collect 65K pounds of food

Milwaukee TV station CBS 58 (WDJT-TV) was part of a team that collected 1,215 turkeys and 65,000 pounds of food during a drive-thru food drive. CBS 58 worked with Hunger Task Force and the Milwaukee Brewers Community Foundation to host the annual Thanksgiving Drive Thru Food Drive at Miller Park. Cars started lining up early on Nov. 27 to deliver donations.

The donations were distributed by the Hunger Task Force.

“Christmas Blessing” effort raises more than $15,700 for families in need

The Family Radio Network raised more than $15,700 for families in need during its first ever “Christmas Blessing” fundraiser.

On Giving Tuesday, Dec. 3, The Family went on air to ask listeners to donate $100 which would provide a grocery store gift card and a Christmas tree to each family. The network operates stations in Appleton, Green Bay, Wausau/Stevens Point, and Sheboygan.

Each family in need received a Christmas tree and a grocery gift card. The generosity of the listeners was enough to help 95 families throughout northeast and central Wisconsin with an extra blessing this Christmas.

Originally, The Family hoped to help 60 families and raise between $5,000 and $6,000 in one day. Within an hour and a half, they exceeded that amount, and in only three hours, they raised more than $15,000. This meant that more families would receive a bigger blessing thanks to the generosity of their listeners.

Milwaukee station raises more than $238K for children’s hospital

Milwaukee radio station FM106.1 (WMIL) raised more than $238,000 to benefit St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. This was third time the station hosted the two-day radiothon. The radiothon featured FM106.1 on-air personalities who encouraged listeners to donate on-air and online on Dec. 5 and Dec. 6.

“Initially, The Family hoped to help 60 families and raise between $5,000 and $6,000 in one day. Within an hour and a half, they exceeded that amount, and in only three hours, they raised more than $15,000. This meant that more families would receive a bigger blessing thanks to the generosity of their listeners.

Station raises $133K for Milwaukee food bank

A Milwaukee TV station’s phone bank raised $133,082 to support the city’s only free and local food bank. WISN-TV partnered with Hunger Task Force for the “Food For Families Phone Bank” which is in its eighth year. The campaign ran Nov. 26-27. WISN-TV journalists, public officials, and more than 60 volunteers accepted donations.

On top of the viewer donations, Walmart contributed $10,000 to the fundraising effort. Wells Fargo Advisors provided staff to answer phones and a $20,000 matching gift, and Rexnord provided volunteers and matching turkey donations.

The campaign generated enough for more than 1,000 holiday meal boxes to be provided by the Hunger Task Force to families in need.

Since 2014, over $825,000 has been raised for families in need across Milwaukee and its surrounding areas.

Radio station toy drive breaks record

A Milwaukee radio station raised more than $200,000 worth of cash and toys to benefit Children’s Wisconsin and Robyn’s Nest.

WSSP held its 13th annual toy drive in December. It broke a record, topping the $160,000 it raised in 2018.

Entercom Milwaukee Market Manager Chuck Sullivan described the event as remarkable.

Station collects hats for pediatric cancer patients

Milwaukee Radio station FM106.1 (WMIL-FM) collected more than 800 hats for pediatric cancer patients during its first annual “Hatsgiving Drive.”

The drive featured on-air personalities Ridder, Scott, Shannon, Quinn, Billy Greenwood, J.R., and Hannah who encouraged listeners to donate handmade and newly purchased hats at the radio station or at various station appearances throughout the month of November.

“When we started Hatsgiving Drive we were hoping to collect 100 hats for our first year,” said Quinn, Assistant Program Director and on-air personality for FM106.1. “We are overwhelmed by the generosity of local businesses and our listeners for helping us surpass our goal by eight times.”

“Initially, The Family hoped to help 60 families and raise between $5,000 and $6,000 in one day. Within an hour and a half, they exceeded that amount, and in only three hours, they raised more than $15,000. This meant that more families would receive a bigger blessing thanks to the generosity of their listeners.

On top of the viewer donations, Walmart contributed $10,000 to the fundraising effort. Wells Fargo Advisors provided staff to answer phones and a $20,000 matching gift, and Rexnord provided volunteers and matching turkey donations.

The campaign generated enough for more than 1,000 holiday meal boxes to be provided by the Hunger Task Force to families in need.

Since 2014, over $825,000 has been raised for families in need across Milwaukee and its surrounding areas.

A Milwaukee radio station raised more than $200,000 worth of cash and toys to benefit Children’s Wisconsin and Robyn’s Nest.

WSSP held its 13th annual toy drive in December. It broke a record, topping the $160,000 it raised in 2018.

Entercom Milwaukee Market Manager Chuck Sullivan described the event as remarkable.

Milwaukee Radio station FM106.1 (WMIL-FM) collected more than 800 hats for pediatric cancer patients during its first annual “Hatsgiving Drive.”

The drive featured on-air personalities Ridder, Scott, Shannon, Quinn, Billy Greenwood, J.R., and Hannah who encouraged listeners to donate handmade and newly purchased hats at the radio station or at various station appearances throughout the month of November.

“When we started Hatsgiving Drive we were hoping to collect 100 hats for our first year,” said Quinn, Assistant Program Director and on-air personality for FM106.1. “We are overwhelmed by the generosity of local businesses and our listeners for helping us surpass our goal by eight times.”
Magnum to buy 3 stations from NRG Media

Magnum Communications is planning to purchase three southern Wisconsin radio stations from NRG Media.

An application is being filed with the FCC regarding the ownership transfer of Kool 106.5 (WKCH) in Whitewater, 107.3 WSJY in Fort Atkinson and News/Talk 940 WFAW in Fort Atkinson.

“We have been fortunate to have worked with the great people at the stations in Fort Atkinson for many years,” NRG Media President and CEO Mary Quass said. “The dedicated broadcasters at the stations will continue to provide the Fort Atkinson community with great local radio, and know they will contribute to the success of Magnum Communications going forward.”

“I’m a sentimental person so two aspects of these acquisitions really struck me,” Magnum Communications owner Dave Magnum said. “First, my maternal grandmother grew up on a Fort Atkinson farm. My mom and her remaining siblings get together at Lake Ripley each summer in her honor. Second, we’re again getting to work with NRG. Back in the 90’s, my late wife, Lynn, had the chance to speak with Mary Quass several times at conventions. I told Reid and Ty that she considered Mary a role model. In 2007, five years after Lynn passed, I acquired three stations from NRG. That transaction went as smooth as silk. We look forward to the same outcome with the acquisitions of WFAW, WSJY and WKCH.”

NRG Media is based in Iowa and owns radio stations in Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, and Wisconsin. Magnum owns stations across Wisconsin. KALIL & CO., INC. is the exclusive broker for this transaction. The purchase price was not announced.

Ashland station changes to classic country

An Ashland radio station is changing its format to classic country.

WATW is now “Bay County.” The changeover happens as the station added an FM translator (101.3 FM).

The station features a morning show hosted by Big Bill Small. Before the changeover the station was airing conservative talk.

Radio Milwaukee seeks new executive director

Non-commercial radio station Radio Milwaukee (WYMS-FM) is seeking a new executive director to replace Glenn Kleiman who is leaving in spring 2020.

The station’s board of directors has established a search committee and has begun work to identify the organization’s new leader. Board President Juli Kaufmann said the search committee has retained an executive search firm to assist in this process.

Kleiman was named Radio Milwaukee’s executive director in April 2016 after previously serving as a station consultant for 1½ years. Before that, Kleiman was founder and CEO of the digital marketing agency Fullhouse for 23 years.

Liberal talk radio gets FM signal in Milwaukee

A liberal talk radio network is on the air with an FM signal in Milwaukee.

Talk 101.7 is paired by FCC license to 1510 in Waukesha, Talk 92.7 in Madison, and WTTN 1580 in Columbus. Talk 101.7 is owned by New WRRD and part of Wisconsin’s Political Talk Network, which includes WRRD 1510 in Waukesha, Talk 92.7 in Madison, and WTTN 1580 in Columbus. Talk 101.7 is paired by FCC license to WRRD 1510 and will simulcast.

“This is the completion of my vision since the day Trump was elected,” said New WRRD CEO Mike Crute. “We’ve created a Wisconsin Political Talk Network to compete with the 81 conservative-talk formatted, Trump supportive radio stations across Wisconsin.”

The Devil’s Advocate Radio Show will anchor the afternoon drive, the Earl Ingram Show will air during the morning drive, and Matt Flynn-Direct airs 2-3 p.m. weekdays.

The station’s broadcast studio and offices are in Milwaukee.

WPT rebrands to PBS Wisconsin

Wisconsin Public Television has changed its name to PBS Wisconsin.

The announcement was made Nov. 4.

“We are excited by this new opportunity to better connect our essential local programs, in-school education work, and community engagement with the well-known and well-trusted brand of PBS, a strong partner of our work here in Wisconsin for 50 years.”

WHA-TV signed on in Madison in 1954. A network of stations across the state was developed in the 1970s, and those stations became Wisconsin Public Television in the 1980s.

Sheboygan station changes format, branding

A Sheboygan area radio station changed formats on Wednesday from standards to adult contemporary.

WGXI was formerly known as “1420 The Breeze” and is now known as “Love 98-5” and is branded as “Awesome Variety.”

The station is owned by Galaxie Broadcasting. Its city of license is Plymouth.

WITI-TV sold to Fox

Milwaukee TV station Fox 6 (WITI-TV) is being sold to Fox after it was recently acquired by Nexstar through the purchase of Tribune Media.

Fox is also buying a Nexstar station in Seattle and Nexstar is buying two stations in Charlotte.

“Acquiring stations in these high-performing NFC markets enhances our already strong nationwide footprint and further demonstrates Fox Television Stations’ commitment to serving our viewers, advertisers and local communities,” said Jack Abernethy, CEO of Fox Television Stations.

WPT rebrands to PBS Wisconsin

Wisconsin Public Television has changed its name to PBS Wisconsin.

The announcement was made Nov. 4.

“We are excited by this new opportunity to better connect our essential local programs, in-school education work, and community engagement with the well-known and well-trusted brand of PBS, a strong partner of our work here in Wisconsin for 50 years.”

WHA-TV signed on in Madison in 1954. A network of stations across the state was developed in the 1970s, and those stations became Wisconsin Public Television in the 1980s.

Sheboygan station changes format, branding

A Sheboygan area radio station changed formats on Wednesday from standards to adult contemporary.

WGXI was formerly known as “1420 The Breeze” and is now known as “Love 98-5” and is branded as “Awesome Variety.”

The station is owned by Galaxie Broadcasting. Its city of license is Plymouth.

WITI-TV sold to Fox

Milwaukee TV station Fox 6 (WITI-TV) is being sold to Fox after it was recently acquired by Nexstar through the purchase of Tribune Media.

Fox is also buying a Nexstar station in Seattle and Nexstar is buying two stations in Charlotte.

“Acquiring stations in these high-performing NFC markets enhances our already strong nationwide footprint and further demonstrates Fox Television Stations’ commitment to serving our viewers, advertisers and local communities,” said Jack Abernethy, CEO of Fox Television Stations.

Liberal talk radio gets FM signal in Milwaukee

A liberal talk radio network is on the air with an FM signal in Milwaukee.

Talk 101.7 is owned by New WRRD and part of Wisconsin’s Political Talk Network, which includes WRRD 1510 in Waukesha, Talk 92.7 in Madison, and WTTN 1580 in Columbus. Talk 101.7 is paired by FCC license to WRRD 1510 and will simulcast.

“This is the completion of my vision since the day Trump was elected,” said New WRRD CEO Mike Crute. “We’ve created a Wisconsin Political Talk Network to compete with the 81 conservative-talk formatted, Trump supportive radio stations across Wisconsin.”

The Devil’s Advocate Radio Show will anchor the afternoon drive, the Earl Ingram Show will air during the morning drive, and Matt Flynn-Direct airs 2-3 p.m. weekdays.

The station’s broadcast studio and offices are in Milwaukee.
Hess named to lead WUWM

John Hess has been named the new director and general manager of 89.7 FM – Milwaukee’s NPR (WUWM) effective Jan. 13. Hess succeeds Dave Edwards, who has served as general manager since 1985.

Prior to joining WUWM, Hess was chief operating officer of Arizona Public Media, where he led a management team responsible for 70 staffers in six divisions who generate integrated multimedia content. He previously served as general manager of Boise State Public Radio, where he led audience and revenue growth. Hess has 30 years of experience in media, 20 of which are in public media and 12 of which are as general manager at two university-affiliated public radio stations.

“(Hess) brings a remarkable portfolio of experience in media and he has been an innovative leader at two university-affiliated public radio stations,” Scott Gronert, dean of the College of Letters & Science said. “He is devoted to strong, independent journalism, has extensive experience in fundraising and is committed to using media to help build vibrant, inclusive communities.”

Sunrise station changes formats

A Wausau radio station is switching from an oldies format to a sports format and the owner is suggesting another station will also change formats soon. “Cool Oldies” (WXCO) changed Nov. 25 to Sports Fan 1230. A post on the WXCO Facebook page said the sports format is shared with sister station Sports Fan 100.5 (WAVL) and that WAVL will be changing formats very soon.

Both stations are owned by Sunrise Broadcasting. The company is advising fans of “Cool Oldies” to tune to sister station Blue Jay 96.3 (WJMT) in Merrill to hear the same format.

12 webinars added to WBA 2020 schedule

We know you want more professional development, and the time to get it. The WBA is providing FREE webinars for WBA members which will upgrade your knowledge without draining your time or budget. Find information on each webinar and register at the WBA website.

The WBA recently added 12 webinars to its schedule and wants members to mark their calendars so they don’t miss any of these educational opportunities:

Jan. 16, 2020
2020 Election: Making Local Reporting Resonate
Presented by Emily Lawler, MLive

Feb. 20, 2020
Re-Building Trust
Presented by Kevin Benz, i-Media Strategies

April 16, 2020
Political Refresher
Presented by David Oxenford, Wilkinson, Barker, Knauer

May 21, 2020
Working with Agencies More Effectively
Emmie Musser, Gud Marketing

May 21, 2020
21st Century Leadership – How to Cultivate Leadership in Today’s Workplace
Presented by Jeff Butler, Generation Workplace Expert

June 18, 2020
Trends in Local Sales of OT Advertising
Presented by Jack Zavoral, Local Media Association

July 16, 2020
Digital and Social Media Legal Issues
Presented by David Oxenford, Wilkinson, Barker, Knauer

July 16, 2020
It’s Not Just Selling More Digital…It’s Understanding How to Sell Against It
Presented by Derron Steenbergen, Swagger Institute

Aug. 20, 2020
What it Takes to Walk Onto a Film Set Strong
Presented by Michigan Production Alliance

Sept. 17, 2020
How to Give Your National Superstars Home Court Advantage
Presented by Kipper McGee, Media Brandwith Strategies

Oct. 15, 2020
Writing and Speaking for Broadcast
Presented by Joe Little, KNSD-TV San Diego

Nov. 19, 2020
So…What Does the Election Mean?
Presented by David Oxenford, Wilkinson, Barker, Knauer

Show us how you support your community

The WBA wants to promote our local broadcasters and let our elected leaders know of all the work you do to support your communities. We use your stories on our website and in our newsletter and we post them to social media, tagging your elected representatives in Washington D.C.

Here is an example of a recent post:
Our first two honorees are Heather Storm and Eric Bartos. They will be recognized at the conference luncheon during the WBA Summer Conference on June 18 in La Crosse. The honorees will also be announced in the May/June newsletter and awarded at the WBA. The five other honorees will be identified and profiled in the next WBA newsletter and the Young Professional of the Year will be announced in the July/August newsletter. The Young Professional of the Year Award seeks to recognize young broadcasters who have made a significant impact on their stations and communities. A subcommittee of the WBA Board of Directors selected six young professionals to recognize in 2020, and one of those six has been identified as the first “Young Professional of the Year.”

The five other honorees will be identified and profiled in this and the next WBA newsletter and the Young Professional of the Year will be announced in the May/June newsletter and awarded at the WBA Summer Conference on June 18 in La Crosse. The honorees will also be recognized at the conference luncheon.

Our first two honorees are Heather Storm and Eric Bartos.

**Heather Storm**

- **Company:** Woodward Radio Group
- **Position:** Music Director and Air Talent for WKSZ and WKZG
- **Years at station:** Coming up on a decade!
- **Started in broadcasting (year):** Interned at Pittsburgh’s WQED in 2004, starting getting paid as a board op in 2005 (owned then by Infinity Broadcasting).

**How did you get into broadcasting?** I chose Broadcast Communications as a college major with an interest in news. With a choice of four practicums, radio was listed first so I assumed it was required and fell in love from there.

**How do you view the role of young professionals in broadcasting?** The role of the young broadcaster is to keep everyone evolving and moving forward. The world and how we consume news and information changes rapidly, and so must our forms and style of broadcasting. We tend to learn more when we are uncomfortable with change, and those already familiar with it help move us forward.

**What advice would you give to other young broadcasters?** Dive right in. Get involved in as much as you physically can. This is one rule of thumb that has not changed and most likely will never will.

**What does the future of broadcasting look like to you?** The future is bright. It just looks different than it did 50 years ago, or 10 years ago, or even one year ago. This is a profession that reflects the world surrounding us and we must evolve to mirror those changes. Our community is full of young, intelligent people who are ready to hustle.

**Eric Bartos**

- **Company:** Wisconsin Public Radio
- **Position:** Broadcast Network Manager
- **Years at station:** Two
- **Started in broadcasting (year):** 2013

**How did you get into broadcasting?** I have been interested in all things audio since probably middle school, however I didn’t take a huge interest in radio until I found out there was a college radio station at Michigan Tech University, WMTU. The first thing I did when I got to Michigan Tech was go to a WMTU meeting, I started as just a DJ, but slowly worked my way onto the all student staff in the productions department making liners and underwriter announcements. I was then the production manager for about a year before the station needed a head audio engineer. I took on that role for about two years then I spent a little bit of time as the general manager until I graduated. Once I graduated, I was then hired on as a full time broadcast engineer for the station. I then left that position in 2017 for my current position at Wisconsin Public Radio.

**How do you view the role of young professionals in broadcasting?** As a young professional in broadcasting I think the most important role we have is to keep finding ways to improve radio and use all this new technology to our advantage, while sharing the knowledge with the older engineers. The radio engineering industry as a whole seems to be falling behind when it comes to technology. Using the old stuff is not going to be sustainable for much longer, which is why it is so important for young professionals to keep pushing the boundaries of technology and not letting radio fall behind or become irrelevant in the future.

**What advice would you give to other young broadcasters?** The best advice I could give is to learn a little bit of everything. Don’t just focus on one aspect of broadcast engineering. It’s just as important to know how to configure a Cisco network switch as it is to troubleshoot a transmitter. The studio side of radio is turning into a data center with audio in it. If you know how to run a VM host and a solid network you will be able to learn the radio side of it in no time. However, if you don’t want to deal with the IT side of things as much, learn all things RF. Good RF engineers are starting to become a rare breed. If you have a solid RF background or a solid IT background you will have great success in the broadcast industry.

**What does the future of broadcasting look like to you?** To me, the future of broadcast is leaning more towards a fully virtualized radio studio, meaning that the entire station could run on a pair of servers and a pair of network switches. I could even see this letting hosts run shows from anywhere in the world, and not be tied to a studio anymore. I do think it is possible that someday a radio station could run in the cloud, however I don’t think that will be happening any time soon.

Join us June 18 at the WBA Summer Conference to recognize the Young Professionals of the Year. More honorees will be profiled in the next WBA newsletter.

Nominations for next year’s Young Professional Award can be submitted via the WBA website. Look for the link in the “Members Only” menu. Nominations close Sept. 30, 2020.
WBA searches far, wide for awards judges

After all your award entries are submitted for the WBA Awards, you might ask yourself who will be judging the results of your hard work. Your WBA makes sure award entries are being judged by professional broadcasters who can review your entries impartially.

Once submitted, your entries are judged by professional broadcasters in a rotating series of other states. Each year there’s one state designated to judges Wisconsin’s entries. Broadcast associations in other states help the WBA find judges. In return, the WBA asks our members to help when other states are seeking judges for their awards contests.

In recent years, because of a record number of submissions, we’ve had to ask for judges from numerous states. Thankfully, broadcasters are generous and we’ve always found volunteers. We’ve also been known to bribe other states with Wisconsin cheese curds.

8 WBA member broadcasters win 22 Midwest Emmys

Eight Wisconsin broadcasters won 22 awards from the Chicago/Midwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

The following stations won awards Nov. 16 in Chicago:

- Milwaukee PBS (3)
- PBS Wisconsin (4)
- WGBA-TV, Green Bay (2)
- WISC-TV, Madison (1)
- WISN-TV, Milwaukee (1)
- WITI-TV, Milwaukee (9)
- WMTV-TV, Madison (1)
- WTMJ-TV, Milwaukee (1)


Names in the News

A meteorologist at Wausau station WAOW-TV is moving to Milwaukee. Sam Kuffel will serve as the station’s weekend meteorologist. She started Dec. 2. Kuffel was at WAOW for three and a half years.

News 3 Now (WISC-TV) Assistant News Director and political reporter Jessica Arp left the Madison TV station at the end of the year. Arp was with the station for 15 years and was a veteran reporter at the State Capitol. Arp is joining the University of Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association as its managing director of communications.

Sarah Gray has been named news director at WISC-TV in Madison. Gray previously worked as news director at WSAW/WZAW-TV in Wausau.

But being a professional broadcaster in a different state isn’t enough. We look for broadcasters who have experience with the talents and skills associated with the category being judged. Further, we also make sure that entries aren’t being judged by stations that have the same ownership as those submitting the entries. As you can imagine, that’s quite the complicated puzzle to sort out, but WBA Vice President Linda Baun excels at finding judges who can fairly evaluate your submissions.

When you or your station wins a WBA Award for Excellence, you can take pride in knowing that the judges were professional, experienced, and impartial.

If judging isn’t already underway when you read this, it will be underway shortly. We can’t wait to help you celebrate your excellent work at the next WBA Awards Gala, May 2, at the Madison Marriott West.

And the next time you’re asked to judge award entries from another state, please take the time to share your experience and expertise. Broadcasters in other states are returning the favor year after year.

During Gray’s two and a half years at the station, WSAW-TV was the recipient of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association’s award for Station of the Year for small market both in 2018 and 2019. Gray’s last day in Wausau was Dec. 20.

Mike O’Brien has started a broadcast consulting and training business, O’Brien Betterment, LLC. After 40 years in sales management, general management, and training, he is offering consulting services for fellow broadcasters. His emphasis is on top-line growth through retention, training, and consistent standards in each department. O’Brien retired from Bliss Communications in 2019 as the General Manager of WCLO/WJVL in Janesville.
OBITUARIES

WPR mourns loss of former director

The former director of Wisconsin Public Radio, Phil Corriveau, is being remembered for his leadership, optimism, and commitment to WPR’s mission.

Corriveau died Nov. 4. He was 66.

Corriveau served as director of WPR for six years starting in 2004. He was a Wisconsin native who received both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from UW-Madison. As he told the Isthmus weekly in 2010, he discovered his love of radio as a freshman board operator working a summer job in 1971 at WPR’s flagship station, WHA. That summer job turned into a career.

Current WPR Director Mike Crane said he embraced that optimism when Corriveau hired him as chief operating officer in 2008. "There are so many positive things that started with Phil," Crane said. "He set the stage for expanding our radio networks. He believed in growing our Major and Planned Giving effort. He had a vision for us reaching new audiences across the state. He was an incredibly positive force. I’m really going to miss him." Crane said.

During his time as director, Corriveau made investments in wpr.org, marketing, and fundraising that helped position the station for years to come.

Corriveau’s time at the helm of WPR was cut short by a stroke suffered during heart surgery in 2008. In 2010, he officially stepped down from his role as director and became director emeritus.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Corriveau’s name to Wisconsin Public Radio, www.wpr.org.

Espeseth started WAXX, led WEAU-TV

A lifelong broadcaster is being remembered in Wisconsin for starting radio station WAXX-FM and serving as general manager at WEAU-TV, both in Eau Claire.

Allan Howard Espeseth, 81, died Nov. 20 near his home in Roseville, CA.

His obituary states that Espeseth knew at age eight that he wanted to be a broadcaster. He started while in high school at a radio at a station Thief River Falls, Minnesota and graduated from Brown Institute of Broadcasting in Minneapolis. He worked at stations in Minnesota before moving to Eau Claire where he started working in ad sales and delivering weather reports on WEAU-TV.

After starting WAXX and leading WEAU-TV, he moved on to stations in Texas where he eventually became GM of KHOU in Houston.

His obituary stated, "He left each station higher in the ratings than they were before he arrived. He was known throughout the industry as the turn-around man."

Espeseth received the Pioneer Broadcaster of the Year Award from the Texas Association of Broadcasters in 1995. He was leading KKTVD in Sacramento when he retired in 1998. He continued to do voice-over work until his passing.

Espeseth was actively involved in numerous organizations, including the Lion’s Club, Rotary, Houston Symphony, Salvation Army and the California Railroad Museum.

Dunlap remembered for leadership, generosity

The chair of the Wisconsin Public Radio Association (WPRA), Ron Dunlap, has died.

According to WPR, Dunlap joined the WPRA board in 2011. He was elected vice chair of the board in 2016 before becoming chair in 2018. As head of the WPRA board he also served on the state’s Educational Communication Board (ECB) with other government appointees.

“Ron led with a strong and quiet style,” WPR Director Mike Crane said. “He was universally loved by the board and our staff. We will miss him.”

Dunlap was a career educator and administrator with the Appleton School District where he served as Lincoln Elementary principal and director of minority student services. The Ronald Dunlap Award for Student Success was named in his honor. In 2016, Madison365 named him one of their “44 Most Influential African Americans in Wisconsin.”

Dunlap was 72.

La Crosse station group GM dies battling cancer

Howard Gloede, the general manager of six Mid-West Family stations in La Crosse, has died after a year and a half battling cancer.

Gloede died Nov. 18. He was 61.

An article posted on the WIZM website called Gloede a sales guru and La Crosse media legend.

Gloede joined Mid-West Family in 1979 as an intern in the sales department. He was later named sales manager and has served as general manager for 10 years.

Gloede mentored more than 100 sales representatives. He was considered a top manager in Mid-West Family Broadcasting.

Wisconsin Rapids news veteran dies

A man known as the voice of news and talk radio in Wisconsin Rapids since 1981 has died.

Carl Hilke began his career as a reporter for WFHR and WWRW and later served as news director, according to his obituary.

Hilke’s work was recognized by the AP and WBA. He was a past President of the AP Advisory Board and the Central Wisconsin Press Club.

In 2011, Hilke received the Community Spirit Award from the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce. In 2016, he also received the Wisconsin Rapids Elks Lodge Distinguished Citizenship Award.

Most recently, Hilke hosted WFHR’s “Morning Magazine” and “Over the Back Fence” programs. He also co-hosted “The Good Morning Show” and for many years, “The Morning Report.”

Hilke died Nov. 8. He was 64.
Workshop in Madison to prepare reporters for 2020 elections

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Association with partners Google News Lab, UW School of Journalism and Mass Communication, and The Poynter Institute are offering an intensive day of training to help journalists cover the 2020 Presidential election. This training is led by Poynter’s Senior Faculty Al Tompkins. Wisconsin is one of four states selected to host the training.

The workshop is perfect for reporters, MMJs, producers, news managers, online and social media producers and assignment editors. Stations are welcome to send teams to attend.

In addition to Wisconsin being a toss-up state, nearby Milwaukee is also where the Democrats will hold their National Convention. We will be hosted at the University of Wisconsin School of Journalism and Mass Communication. The university has been doing national studies on voter behaviors and hot topics.

The workshop will be held Saturday, Jan. 25 at the UW -Madison School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

The day is aimed at helping journalists move beyond typical horse-race political coverage to deeply and meaningfully explore key issues that will shape the nation’s future.

Find the full agenda and register online at wi-broadcasters.org.

WTMJ-TV dedicates program to positive stories

Today’s TMJ4 (WTMJ-TV) is launching a weekly show dedicated to telling positive stories from southeastern Wisconsin.

The show’s title, Positively Milwaukee with Carole Meekins, comes from the station’s long-running weekly news segment which highlights positive people, organizations, and events in the community. TMJ4 also produces The Positively Milwaukee Awards, an annual televised event honoring unsung heroes.

Journalist Carole Meekins will host and executive produce the program. Meekins will be joined behind the scenes by Supervising Executive Producer Kim Buchanan who will also continue to oversee The Morning Blend on TMJ4. Meekins is stepping back from some of her nightly newscast duties in order to focus on this new project. She will continue to anchor Live at 5:00 Monday-Friday evenings, but will step down from Live at 10 starting in January.

Meekins has been the force behind the Positively Milwaukee news segments since the early 2000s when she took over the franchise from anchor/reporter Bill Taylor. Meekins has been with TMJ4 for 28 years.

The weekly Positively Milwaukee with Carole Meekins will air on Sundays at 9 a.m. following NBC’s Meet the Press, starting Feb. 16.

Free help for legal reporting

The State Bar of Wisconsin and the WBA are offering you, at no cost, a new version of the Wisconsin News Reporters’ Legal Handbook.

For more than 40 years, this handbook has served as a reference for new journalists and experienced reporters covering Wisconsin courts. It covers the basics of working in a courtroom, offers judges’ considerations for working with the media, and highlights judicial proceedings, considerations, definitions, and terms.

The handbook also covers some of the top legal issues facing reporters, including:

—Wisconsin’s Shield Law
—Defamation
—Public records requests
—Open Meetings Law

Access the handbook, in PDF file format in “Legal Hotlines” under the Members only section on wi-broadcasters.org or in the State Bar of Wisconsin’s newsroom on wisbar.org.

If you have questions about the handbook, or need help finding a source for your legal story, please contact Mike Wiltse, public relations specialist, State Bar of Wisconsin, at 608-250-2522.

Wausau newsroom among 10 to get free watchdog training

A TV newsroom in Wausau is one of ten newsrooms across the country to get free watchdog training from Investigative Reporters and Editor’s Total Newsroom Training program.

WSAW/WZAW-TV will get two days of intensive, in-house training on watchdog journalism. This is the seventh year IRE has offered the free program, which is supported through a grant. The training is customized and includes two days of sessions ranging from public records battles to hands-on data analysis.

“We’re excited to continue to grow our newsroom with the tools and training that Investigative Reporters & Editors can provide, said WSAW/WZAW-TV News Director, Sarah Gray.

The newsrooms were chosen from more than 35 applications this year.
Students, broadcasters to connect at WBA Student Seminar

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Association (WBA) Student Seminar is set for Saturday, March 7, 2020 at the Marriott West, Madison (Middleton). Director, voice actor, film producer, and screenwriter Phil Johnston will present the keynote address. Johnston, who is a UW-Madison grad, wrote the screenplay for Walt Disney Animation Studios’ “Wreck-It Ralph” (2012) and “Zootopia” (2016). He is also an Emmy winning news reporter at KARE-TV, Minneapolis. Johnston is featured on a panel in the morning and will hand out the 17th annual “Student Awards for Excellence” during lunch. In addition, the four recipients of the WBA Foundation Scholarships will be introduced.

The seminar will begin with introductions and a brief orientation. Students will choose from three from the options below during the morning. Three interactive groups of no more than six students will meet with professionals in radio and/or television news reporting, sports play-by-play, and on-air radio. Phil Johnston discusses his “Experience in the Film Industry.” Dave Black, WSUM Radio, Madison, will facilitate a discussion of “Campus Radio Stations.” Chris Shofner, UW-Stevens Point, will talk about “Campus TV Stations.” Don Vesely, General Manager, WMTV-TV, Madison; and Mike O’Brien, O’Brien Betterment, will examine “Marketing and Money.” Shar Hermanson, Local Sales Manager, Midwest Family, Madison; Juli Buehler, News Director, WLUK-TV FOX 11 News, Green Bay; and Holly Chilsen, Producer/Anchor, WSAW-TV, Wausau will discuss “Women in Broadcasting.” Dominique Clare, Content Director, Midwest Communications; Cutter (Andrew Puyleart), Woodward Communications; Kenny Perez and Nate Imig from Radio Milwaukee; Andrew Haese, UW-Oshkosh student; and Pat Hastings, UW-Madison will describe “What Makes a Good Podcast Session.” “Expanding The Reach of Your Newscast or Radio Show” will feature Kaytlye Kelly, Digital Content Coordinator, Woodward Communications, Appleton; Jeff Thelen from WSAW-TV, Wausau; and Andy Riggs, Entercom, Milwaukee. “Live Reporting for News and Sports – Advancing the Story and Understanding the Technology” will include a demonstration of “LiveU” by Bill Hubbard, Technology Survivor, and Kevin Ruppert, WISC-TV, Madison along with a multimedia journalist. A group of hiring managers will go over “What They Actually Want to See From You.”

Prior to lunch, two general sessions will run concurrently. The first explores “Putting Together a Resume” with Randall Davidson, UW-Oshkosh, and the second is “Speed Networking,” featuring individual six minute “one-on-ones” with professionals in radio and TV news, production, sales, social media, and entertainment.

This outstanding program was made possible through the cooperation of the members of the WBA Education Committee and with the financial support of the WBA and the WBA Foundation. Stations interested in sponsoring the Student Seminar should contact the WBA at 608-255-2600.

Please check the WBA website for updates on panelists and speakers.
Recognize Hall of Fame broadcasters, Local Broadcast Legends

Nominations close Feb. 15

It’s time to nominate place your nominations for broadcasters who you believe deserve to be added the WBA Hall of Fame or honored as Local Broadcast Legends. The nomination deadline for each is Feb. 15.

**WBA Hall of Fame**

Nominees for the WBA Hall of Fame must have 15 years of service as a broadcast professional that includes 10 years of service in the state of Wisconsin. This is the minimum requirement that must be met in order to qualify for a Hall of Fame nomination. Individuals may be cited posthumously.

Selected nominees will be inducted on June 18, 2020, during the annual WBA Hall of Fame Dinner. The dinner will be held at the Radisson Hotel in La Crosse in conjunction with the WBA Summer Conference.

Submissions for the WBA Hall of Fame should be made on the official nomination form and sent to the WBA Foundation office. Find more details and the nomination form at wbafoundation.org.

**Local Broadcast Legends**

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.

Individuals may be nominated by their company, co-workers, community leaders, family members, etc. The nominee’s station or organization will be responsible for submitting the nomination on behalf of the nominating person or group along with the required supporting documentation. Nominees must have 15 years of service as a broadcast professional in the state of Wisconsin. Individuals may be cited posthumously. Local Broadcast Legends will be honored at WBA Summer Conference luncheon.

Submissions for Local Broadcast Legends should be made on the official nomination form and sent to the WBA Foundation office. Find more details and the nomination form at wbafoundation.org.

**UW diversity, inclusion expert to address Walker Institute**

**Hill to speak April 15**

Binnu Palta Hill, the Assistant Dean for Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Wisconsin School of Business, will be the guest speaker at the 2020 Walker Broadcast Management Institute dinner.

The dinner will be held at April 15 at the Fluno Center on the UW campus as part of the 2020 Walker Broadcast Management Institute.

Hill’s address is titled, “Enhancing Employee Engagement, Innovation and Performance by Leading Inclusively.”

Managers have a direct impact engagement and performance of their team members. Research shows that leaders who practice inclusive leadership are able to nurture cohesive teams with lower turnover and higher performance than their counterparts. In this session, we will examine the signature traits of an inclusive leader, including the mindset and behaviors that enable us to become more effective and influential.

Hill leads the Office of Diversity by developing and leading the school’s diversity and inclusion strategy. She is responsible for integrating diversity and inclusion strategic goals in all programs, departments, and units through partnerships with chairs, faculty, program leadership, and staff.

The 2020 Institute marks the second year of another 3-year cycle. Students may join the cycle at any time. It is designed for broadcast managers and those seeking or being prepared for broadcast management positions.

The 2020 sessions are:

- April 14 – Financial Management for Broadcasters with Tom Walker, President, Mid-West Management.
- April 15 – Customer Service with Moses Altech, UW School of Business marketing instructor and President of Altech Marketing
- April 16 – Investigating Leadership Style with Steve King, retired Executive Director of the UW Business School’s Center for Professional and Executive Development

For registration information please call the WBA office.

**Bob Barry podcast episodes set through 2020**

A podcast from WBA Hall of Famer Bob Barry is hitting its stride with episodes scheduled through 2020 and early 2021.

The Bob Barry Unearthed Interviews podcast features interviews conducted by the Milwaukee radio legend with musicians and celebrities from the 50s, 60s, and 70s. It debuted in October.

The podcast is available on all major podcasting platforms and all episodes can be found on the Wisconsin Broadcasting Museum website.

The podcast is supported by a generous donation from WBA Hall of Fame member Terry Baun.

**Recent Episodes**

- Ray Charles
- Dave Clark Five
- Bing Crosby
- Gene Autry
- Gregory Peck

**Upcoming Episodes**

- Peggy Lee
- Rolling Stones
- Lou Christie
- Paul Anka
- Jan and Dean
Calendar of Events

Jan. 16, 2020
Webinar: 2020 Election: Making Local Reporting Resonate
Presented by Emily Lawler, MLive

Jan. 25, 2020
Covering the 2020 Election Workshop
UW-School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Madison

Jan. 29, 2020
Winter Conference and State Legislative Day
Madison Concourse Hotel

Feb. 20, 2020
Webinar: Re-Building Trust
Presented by Kevin Benz, i-Media Strategies

March 7, 2020
Student Seminar
Madison Marriott West

April 14–16, 2020
Walker Broadcast Management Institute
UW-Madison

April 16, 2020
Webinar: Political Refresher
Presented by David Oxenford, Wilkinson, Barker, Knauer

May 2, 2020
WBA Awards Gala
Madison Marriott West

June 17–18, 2020
WBA Summer Conference
Radisson Hotel, La Crosse

Wisconsin broadcasters continue to face opportunities and challenges navigating digital, social, and mobile space. The Jacobs Media/WBA Digital Partnership is here for you. All WBA members will receive the following:

• The weekly “Connect the Dots” Monday memo from Seth Resler
• In 2019, station consultations at WBA conferences
• Access to the Digital Hotline

Call us with any questions relating to digital, social media, or mobile.

Jacobs Media is as your disposal at (248) 353-9030 or info@jacobsmedia.com.