

WISCONSIN BROADCASTER

The Wisconsin Broadcaster Association Newsletter • Sept.-Oct. 2024 Edition

Turn to page 8 to see how **your WBA is serving YOU!**

Successful Broadcasters Clinic!



FROM WBA'S CHAIR

Busy stretch ahead for your WBA

Can you believe we are getting ready to enter the final quarter of 2024? Seriously, where did the time go? This year, your WBA has been busy supporting and educating all of us through webinars, lobbying efforts, and informative weekly updates. With the year flying by, I thought now would be a great time to share some highlights of what's still to come.

Wisconsin Broadcasters

Continued on page 5 >



By **Aleese Fielder**

FROM WBA'S PRESIDENT & CEO

Clinic invigorated with new name, partnership and format

Wisconsin is proud to host the Midwest Regional Broadcasters Clinic, which started 68 years ago.

Your WBA has been a partner with SBE chapters in hosting the event for broadcast engineers for many decades. But this year marked the beginning of some big changes to this important event:

--We've renamed it to the Midwest Regional Broadcasters Clinic to reflect the reach of the event.

--We are now partnered with

Continued on page 2 >



By **Michelle Vetterkind, CAE**

Industry leaders bring expertise to 2024 Broadcasters Clinic

I am pleased to report that the inaugural Midwest Regional Broadcasters Clinic, a collaborative effort between the engineers of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association and the Minnesota Broadcasters Association, was a success. The event was well attended, with participants from at least 34 states, as well as from Canada, Germany, and the Republic of Georgia.

The exhibit floor featured

more than 50 exhibitors. Positive comments and thanks were extended to the program committee members and Midwest Regional Broadcasters Clinic staff.

We invited nationally recognized industry leaders to present relevant topics to our

Continued on page 13 >



By **Jim Steinhart**

INSIDE:

Successful WBA Awards.....	3
AI training	4
Obituaries.....	7
WBA Action Plan	10
Young Professionals.....	12-13
U.S. Senate Debate	15

WBA team marks three anniversaries



Vetterkind

Three WBA team members recently marked service anniversaries.

Michelle Vetterkind, President and CEO, 29 years on Aug. 28



Boyd

Liz Boyd, NCSA/PEP Coordinator, 19 years on July 19



Geissler

Kyle Geissler, Vice President, 7 years on Sept. 5

Congratulations and thank you for your service to the WBA.

Wis. Army National Guard Column

A Case for Strategic Communications

Our partnership with the WBA gives us a strategic advantage, and here is proof



By LTC Shannon Hellenbrand

Post pandemic, the public's understanding of, and propensity to serve in, the military declined dramatically.

Those interested in serving were disqualified medically, physically, and academically at an unprecedented rate. Legacies of families in service, and citizens' direct connections to service members, declined. And here in Wisconsin, the Guard was not on anyone's mind.

During our recruitment crisis, your Wisconsin Army National Guard asked for help. We asked you to help us highlight events, share soldiers' stories and educate the public on who we are and what we do. You responded with

INCREDIBLE ENTHUSIASM! You put us on the air and in people's living rooms. You helped us take back our household name. We are back in the hearts and minds of our local citizens.

Want more proof? It's also in the data: your Army National Guard's Recruiting Force has increased enlistments by 40 percent since we asked for your help in 2022! We have more work to do and are working tirelessly to fill our ranks with qualified soldiers to preserve our state and nation's freedoms.

You have answered our call, and I want you to know how grateful we are. Through our partnership with the WBA and reciprocated efforts by your stations, our collaborative approach to strategic communications helped move the needle for your local Guard. Together, we move FORWARD!

*LTC Shannon Hellenbrand
Commander, Recruiting & Retention BN
Wisconsin Army National Guard*

FROM WBA'S PRESIDENT & CEO

our friends at the Minnesota Broadcasters Association.

—We added a reception and brought TV engineers in on Tuesday to consolidate the program to two days.

By all indications, these changes were a tremendous hit! We welcomed more than 50 vendors and attendees from 34 states and three foreign countries. Planning is already underway for a bigger and better 2025 Clinic!

During the Clinic your WBA Board, along with some guests, reviewed the WBA's updated strategic plan. It was an inspiring conversation that produced some impressive ideas for advancing your WBA's mission for Wisconsin's broadcasters. Expect to see the fruits of the conversation in the coming months and years.

This issue of the Wisconsin Broadcaster is a big one for us, because it showcases all the activities your WBA does in support of broadcast-

ing in Wisconsin. At the heart of it is "Serving You" which you'll find in the center of this newsletter. We also print these two pages as fliers that we use throughout the year to share with members, prospective members, and anyone who needs to know what your WBA does for its members. We're tremendously proud of it, and you should be too. It all happens because of your support of your WBA.

Also featured this month is a list of all the member stations participating in NCSA/PEP. We'd like to extend an extra special THANK YOU to these stations. Participation in this program is what allows us to do the majority of the robust list of activities you see in the "WBA Serving You" document. Again, none of it happens without YOU.

Scholarship season is upon us, which you can read about in the Foundation section on page 15. Please do what you can to promote

these financial opportunities for students. And remember, as part of your WBA's EEO Assistance Action Plan, you can receive a letter for your public file for participation in the scholarship process. Station managers, we'll be sending out information on that soon, so watch your inboxes.

Finally, I'd like to recognize only the second mentee to participate in the "MIW Mentoring and Inspiring Women in Wisconsin" program: Kori McKay from NRG Media in Wausau/Stevens Point. Our first mentorship was with Jen Kasper from QueenB Radio and was a huge success. We're looking forward to working with Kori over the coming year to prepare her for leadership in the future of broadcasting. Congratulations Kori!

For now, thank you all for all you do for your WBA and your communities. Have a safe, fun, and enjoyable fall in Wisconsin! ●

Continued from page 1



WISCONSIN
BROADCASTERS
ASSOCIATION

WBA OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS 2024-2025

Chair of the Board

Aleese Fielder NRG Media, Wausau/Stevens Point/Rhineland

Vice Chair Elect

Judson Beck WFRV-TV, Green Bay

Vice Chair - Radio

Jeff Wright Midwest Communications, Green Bay

Treasurer

Anna Engelhart WKOW-TV, Madison

Secretary

Randy Hawke Mid-West Family, Madison

Immediate Past Chair

Jan Wade WISN-TV, Milwaukee

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lyle Banks WISC-TV, Madison

Marta Bechtol Educational Communications Board, Madison/Statewide

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

Terry Davis Radio Plus, Fond du Lac

Suzanne Hoffman Sparta/Tomah Broadcasting, Sparta/Tomah

Betsy Keefe WSAW-TV, Wausau

Dennis Klas Heartland Video, Plymouth

Steve Lavin WBAY-TV, Green Bay

Chris Palmer WKBT-TV, La Crosse

Terry Stevenson Seehafer Broadcasting, Manitowoc

Jeff Tyler iHeartMedia, Madison/Milwaukee

Colleen Valkoun Milwaukee Radio Alliance, Milwaukee

Eric Voight Results Broadcasting, Shawano

Ex Officio - NAB Board

Jeanna Berge iHeartMedia, Eau Claire

WBA Team

President & CEO

Michelle Vetterkind, CAE

mvetterkind@wi-broadcasters.org

NCSA/PEP Coordinator

Liz Boyd

lboyd@wi-broadcasters.org

Vice President

Kyle Geissler, CAE

kgeissler@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 Diversity Statement

The WBA supports initiatives that improve diversity in broadcasting and creates new opportunities for women, people of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and other underrepresented communities. Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is evident in our programs and partnerships with diverse leaders through the WBA's Diversity Committee as well as other organizations and leaders in the state of Wisconsin.

More than radio

Expanding multimedia opportunities for students



By Kelsey Brannan

In my role as Director of Student Radio at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I'm often asked questions about the vitality of terrestrial radio in today's sprawling media landscape.

From well-meaning visitors who are curious about how many people really listen to radio these days to skeptical parents who are trying to assess the viability of their student's career aspirations in broadcasting, a lot of it comes down to this: Does radio still matter?

Most of us work in radio because we believe that this medium still matters and, hopefully, will continue to for a long time. Many of us also know that it is incumbent on radio stations to continue to matter – that is, to continue to be innovative in the ways we meet our audiences with the content they want, when they want it, and how they want it. Thankfully for college radio advisors, this responsibility dovetails nicely with our mission to help students acquire well-rounded, hands-on experiences in media.

Every day, I work to instill in my students the value of WSUM Madison Student Radio as not “just” a radio station, but as a multimedia organization. It's true that our bread and butter remains our terrestrial signal at 91.7 FM in the greater Madison area; this is an excellent way to serve our local

audience and to teach students about broadcasting. As a station, we are also very intentional about investing time and resources into all our platforms, including web streams, podcasts, video, and social media.

In addition to our terrestrial signal, WSUM has three internet radio streams: WSUM, FreeFlow, and WSUM Sports. As our station's volunteer base continues to grow, these streams give us ample “air” time for students to broadcast reports on current events, commentary on Badger sports, opinions about the latest in pop culture, and their impeccable music taste with listeners all over the world. Students are encouraged to think critically about how to attract different audiences to each stream, and how to leverage all three streams to cross-promote station-wide programming.

WSUM's podcasts are another vehicle to reach a global audience. With multiple serial podcasts each semester, this department has seen major growth in the last year. Students who are interested in audio production have the chance to refine their skills through advanced training opportunities and project-based experiences in podcasting. From recording and editing an episode to strategizing a marketing plan, students become well prepared for careers in content development and creation.

I've been especially impressed with the creative ways students have incorporated video into WSUM's program-



ming. Every week, a different band visits our studio for a live on-air performance and, with the help of a student video team, WSUM can give these sessions longevity on our YouTube page. Volunteer videographers and editors give these sessions the “NPR Tiny Desk” treatment, which provides great online exposure for both the station and the band. Students exercise skills related to teamwork and resource management to make sure the shoot goes smoothly and the video is published on time.

Social media has been an integral part of helping students fulfill WSUM's mission of community outreach. It can be easy to lean on one-sided communication through on-air programming, podcasts, and video, but the content that students create for WSUM's social media channels is designed to be interactive and to draw our audience in. Managing the station's official social media accounts gives students practice

in stellar communication, engagement, and accountability.

As an educator, I am confident when I assure people that terrestrial radio still matters. I am even more confident that radio is one integral part of a much wider media landscape. In prioritizing our college radio stations' multimedia capabilities, we're not only able to meet our audiences with the content they want, we're also able to meet our students with the training they need. We can teach our students to be expansive and creative in their approach to content creation, which equips them with the versatility they will need to be successful in their careers. Sounds like a win-win to me.

Kelsey Brannan is the director of student radio at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the general manager at WSUM Madison Student Radio.

Run the numbers for successful WBA Awards season



By Nancy Douglas

Nobody said there'd be math!! But, if you're entering the WBA Awards, math is your best friend!

A few weeks ago, your Awards Committee held a live webinar where we answered questions, shared some insights, and highlighted a few common mistakes stations

can, and should, avoid if you want to win that coveted Station of the Year or News Operation of the Year Awards.

First, though, you must decide how you want to use the Awards program to your station's advantage! There's both internal and external value to be had – from inspiring creativity, encouraging teamwork, and celebrating each other's accomplishments, to promoting your success to both your listeners and your clients. Whether you're entering for individual wins or going all in for SOTY... what's your angle?

It's simple, really. It's about adding up the points. The more you enter, the more points you receive. The more points you

receive, the better your chances at Station of the Year.

It can be the variables that can get in the way sometimes. It's important to appoint an enthusiastic, invested, detail-oriented point person to lead the charge. Waiting until the last minute to begin entering can cause issues. Entries being even one-tenth of a second over or under the time requirements, or one minute late, can be disqualified. Not including attachments, where required, is another frequent problem. Don't lose points because of the variables. Because,

Continued on page 15 >

AI training is a must for broadcasters



By Chris Brunt

Recent research indicates employees are rapidly adopting artificial intelligence (AI) technologies across media-related industries. A comprehensive study by the University of Chicago, surveying 100,000 workers across various sectors, revealed that journalists and marketers are among the top three professions

most likely to incorporate AI into their daily work routines.

This softening stance toward AI is increasingly evident in the broadcasting sector. From client visits to broadcasting conferences this summer, we have noticed a significant shift in attitudes towards AI among broadcasters nationwide. AI has become a focal point at state broadcasting meetings and industry events such as the Morning Show Boot Camp. This marks a notable departure from the perception prevalent six to twelve months ago, when AI was primarily associated with automated DJ systems that replaces humans. Now, tools like ChatGPT are being recognized as versatile assets to help humans with programming, digital operations, and sales, offering potential for enhanced productivity.

At a time when many broadcasters have reduced staff (or are considering it), AI can become a valuable aid to increase productivity in almost any area of a station. Copywriting, sales lead generation, audio production, and more can now

augment the work that used to be done by staffs when headcounts were higher.

Interestingly, individual employees appear to be outpacing their organizations in AI adoption. A study conducted by the Marketing AI Institute, encompassing 1,800 AI-forward companies, corroborates this trend of widespread employee uptake. However, it also highlights a critical gap: only 24 percent of these companies have implemented AI training programs for their staff.

This disparity presents a clear opportunity for companies to make a positive impact on workers, particularly in the competitive media landscape. The University of Chicago study identified lack of training as a primary barrier to AI adoption, with a pronounced gender disparity – 48 percent of women cited insufficient training as the main deterrent.

Company-wide AI training initiatives can address multiple objectives simultaneously. These programs can help bridge the gender gap in AI adoption by providing equal access to knowledge and skills while providing a guide to help navigate the complex, evolving landscape.

By implementing AI training across all departments and roles, organizations enable universal upskilling, enhancing overall productivity as employees learn to integrate AI tools into their daily workflows. Moreover, AI training should also cover potential pitfalls

and ethical considerations, including the risk of AI hallucinations and intellectual property concerns.

Employees need to understand that AI can sometimes generate plausible but wrong information, and they need to learn strategies for fact-checking and maintaining human oversight. Training must also address the complex landscape of IP rights in the age of AI, covering proper attribution of AI-assisted work and awareness of potential copyright infringement risks.

By emphasizing ethical and responsible use, including data privacy, and legal and regulatory compliance, comprehensive AI training not only enhances productivity but also cultivates a culture of responsible innovation.

As digital-native companies like Meta and Google and advertising agencies fully embrace AI technologies, there is an urgent imperative for broadcasters to equip both their tech-savvy and tech-hesitant employees with the skills to leverage tools like ChatGPT effectively, ethically, and safely. The industry's future competitiveness may well hinge on it.

The WBA Digital Hotline is a free service of the Wisconsin Association of Broadcasters and is available to all members – contact Chris Brunt at Jacobs Media at Chris@jacobsmedia.com with any digital questions you have.

And download Jacobs Media's free weekly newsletter on AI – The AI Edge – at jacobsmedia.com.

Follow us!

FIND WBA ONLINE

@WIBroadcasters

@WisconsinBroadcasters

Wisconsin Broadcasters Association

f

Instagram icon

PROTECT & MONITOR YOUR TOWER SITE WITH THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY



Video Reader



\$2,750

ty@jodamedia.com
(608) 438-2946



Price includes:

- On-site installation
- All labor and travel
- Motorola Video Reader
- Motorola Controller
- Electric Strike
- Door sensor
- ReX button
- Outdoor siren/strobe
- Cabling/materials

Discounts available for Wisconsin Broadcasters

Foundation to Host U.S. Senate Debate

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Foundation is keeping up its proud tradition of hosting important political debates, something it has been doing since 1990. This year's debate is set for Friday, Oct. 18, at 7 p.m., and it will feature Democratic Senator Tammy Baldwin and Republican Senate candidate Eric Hovde.

Since its first debate more than 30 years ago, the Foundation has helped foster discussions in almost every Wisconsin gubernatorial and U.S. Senate race. These debates are shared with the public as part of the Foundation's commitment to promoting civic engagement and the political process. Radio and TV stations across the state can broadcast the debate live or on a delayed schedule, making sure voters everywhere in Wisconsin can tune in and be informed.

For more information check out page 14 and to view past debates, visit the Wisconsin Broadcasting Museum website.

AM Radio for Every Vehicle Act Update

There has recently been exciting progress with the "AM Radio for Every Vehicle Act." This bipartisan bill aims to require automakers

to include AM radio in all new vehicles, ensuring that drivers can access emergency broadcasts and public alerts when they need them most.

As of Aug. 20 (thanks to Inside Radio for the update), 260 House Members and a majority of Senate Members have expressed their support for this legislation. While it is still unclear whether it will be brought to a vote before the election, it is a high priority for lawmakers on both sides of the aisle.

Awards Season (Yes, already!)

I know, it's hard to believe, but awards season is right around the corner! Your WBA recently released the rulebook for the upcoming awards. If you're aiming for that coveted "Station of the Year" title, a recent webinar even offered some handy tips for radio and TV stations.

Even with the dreaded 'B' word looming (Budget, of course!), I am confident that our commitment to our listeners/viewers, employees, and communities will keep us pushing forward and excelling through the final months of 2024. Keep up the great work that you do every day!

Aleese Fielder, GM, NRG Media, Wausau/Stevens Point/Rhinelanders, is the new WBA chair.

Member News

Hanten to depart WLUK-TV

Long-time Green Bay television personality Amy Hanten is leaving WLUK-TV after 33 years at the station.



Hanten

Hanten is the host of "FOX 11 LIVING" and was previously an anchor on "Good Day Wisconsin."

"After 33 years, leaving FOX 11 is one of the toughest decisions I've ever made! This job has been so incredibly special, and I've loved every minute of it! That's what makes this so hard," Hanten said. "I am so grateful to those of you who have watched me over the years. I've been so lucky to meet so many wonderful people. The regular guests on my show and our clients have become dear friends."

Her last show will be on Dec. 20.

"We are very excited for Amy and for what she has planned in the future," Jay Zollar, Vice President and General Manager of

WLUK FOX 11 and WCWF CW14 said. "She has introduced north-east Wisconsin to some great local businesses and has provided thousands of great recipes for families to enjoy."

Hanten said, "... last year I got married. I am so blessed to have found a partner who loves and supports me in every way. Our five kids live all over the country and the world and we can't wait to visit them more. We also have aging parents who live in Arizona. We want to spend as much time with them as possible. Now we'll be able to do that."

In 2012, Hanten started her own business, brand, and website, "The Cooking Mom." She will continue to share recipes on television stations across the country. Hanten also continues working on her third cookbook. She also owns a growing popular group vacation business where she plans and hosts group trips in the U.S. and internationally.

The station said it plans to make an announcement in the near future regarding the new host of "FOX 11 LIVING" and expanded content.

WOZZ Wausau flips to rock

Midwest Communications radio station WOZZ in Wausau is switching formats from Variety Hits to Rock.

"The Beast" has taken over the airwaves at 94.7 and 102.9.

The Beast is a mainstream Rock station that plays the best Rock from artists like: AC/DC, Five Finger Death Punch, Foo Fighters, Led Zeppelin, Linkin Park, Metallica, Nirvana, and Shinedown.

The Beast will launch initially without air talent for the first few days. Long-time central Wisconsin air personality Terry Stevens will be joining the 94.7 The Beast lineup on afternoons.



Acoustic Solutions for Recording, Editing, Control & Broadcast Studios

- Acoustic Doors and Windows
- Sound Absorbing Wall and Ceiling Panels
- Wall, Ceiling, and Floor Sound Isolation Systems
- Contact us to help with your next studio upgrade!

noiseproblems.com • 262 367-6700 • Hartland, WI 53029

Names in the News



Jarboe



Schoeneberg



Bjorson



Manek

The Mid-West Farm Report has added **Ben Jarboe** from Paxton, Illinois to its team of reporters. Jarboe grew up on a corn and soybean operation. He attended Illinois College in Jacksonville, where he received a bachelor's degree in agribusiness management. Farming helped spark Jarboe's passion for agriculture. It's how he developed an interest in learning about different types of farming and farm technology. Growing up around farming left him wanting to learn more about the industry.

Elizabeth Schoeneberg from DeForest is joining Mid-West Farm Report as a summer intern. Schoeneberg is preparing for her junior year at DeForest Area High School, with plans of going into agricultural communications. Schoeneberg grew up surrounded by agriculture and the agribusiness world at her family's Sesquicentennial Farm in Poynette, Wisconsin. The farm, Creek Bed Farmacy, includes a small-scale dairy beef operation, plus a few acres of cash crops.

Audacy has named **Jason Bjorson** Senior Vice President and Market Manager of its Madison market. In this role, Bjorson will oversee the market's portfolio of 94.9 WOLX (WOLX-FM), MIX 105.1 (WMHX-FM), 105.5 Triple M (WM-MM-FM) and CHANNEL Q (WOLX-HD2). Bjorson will continue to serve as Market Manager of Audacy Milwaukee, a role he has held since joining the company in 2023. Bjorson succeeds Andrea Hansen, who is departing Audacy.

WLUK-TV anchor **Rachel Manek** is celebrating a milestone anniversary with the Green Bay TV station. The Good Day Wisconsin morning show anchor marked 30 years at the station on Aug. 31.



Robb Edwards

Radio broadcaster, former WTMJ radio host, and former Brewers in-stadium voice Robb Edwards (Romant) died June 26.



Edwards, 79, was the host of the morning show on WTMJ from 1985 until 2000. He also spent time at WOKY-AM and WRIT-AM in Milwaukee. Edwards became the Brewers Public Address announcer in 1999 and held that role until his retirement in 2019.

"Robb's career was unique in many ways. He did what is very difficult to do: He evolved and remained a relevant and

beloved personality and member of the Milwaukee community over decades," former WTMJ General Manager Steve Wexler told WTMJ. "First as a personality in Top 40 radio, then as host of WTMJ's signature news morning show, and ultimately as public address announcer for the Milwaukee Brewers."

Wexler and Edwards worked together as on-air talent in the 1980s before Wexler became his manager at the station in the 1990s.

"Robb's familiar and friendly voice made us all feel good," Wexler said. "Off the air, he was just as warm

and fun. Robb set the bar high for professionalism and inspired and influenced generations of broadcasters. I join Robb's legions of fans in sending condolences to his family."

Edwards' obituary said he, "was captivated by music and baseball from an early age."

"Bob was the ultimate pro, and his booming voice was familiar to multiple generations. Behind the scenes it was his kindness, humor, and penchant for helping others in the industry that made him beloved. All in all, Bob would say he had hit a home run in life."

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to the St. Camillus Foundation.

Justin Cooper

Afternoon radio host and Assistant Program Director Justin Cooper, known publicly as Ian McCain, died Aug. 12 after a brief illness. He was 54.



Cooper held the positions at WLUM since 2011 and also served as the Digital Program Director for the whole Milwaukee Radio Alliance cluster.

"Ian's passing has created a massive void in our hallways and our hearts," said Michelle Rutkowski, Vice President of Programming and Operations. "His spirit, his love of music, his sheer volume, and his wickedly funny wit have left an indelible mark on the MRA, our partners, and our listeners. It's been our absolute privilege to have called him our co-worker and, more importantly, our friend for the last 13 years."

An Omaha, Nebraska native, Cooper previously worked in WKQX and AOL Music in Chicago, KJMY/KSOY and KJQN in Salt Lake City, KKNB-KSLI in Lincoln, Nebraska, KMYZ in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Saga Communications in Des Moines, Iowa, KNRX in Kansas City, and KJDE in Omaha.

A spokesperson for the family said, "We want to thank all of the people who knew and cared for Justin. Milwaukee welcomed him in with open arms and he returned that embrace with all of his heart. We so appreciate all of the love and support the city has always given him, and now to us in this heartbreaking time."

Information about services has not yet been published.

Bill McCollum

WBA Local Broadcast Legend and beloved member of the Beaver Dam community Bill McCollum has died.



Known as "Uncle Bill," he started his career in Beaver Dam in 1963. Ten years later, he joined the late John Moser on the WBEV Morning Show and the pair's friendship quickly grew both on-air and off. They co-hosted the program together until 2016 when McCollum stepped away for health reasons.

Both were named WBA Local Broadcast Legends in 2021.

The news of McCollum's passing was announced by WBEV/Good Karma Brands Founder and Chief Executive Officer Craig Karmazin during the Barn Show on Spet. 12.

"Bill was more than just a voice heard on the radio for the last 61 years; he was a pillar of the Dodge County community, a cherished friend, and played a foundational role in what Good Karma Brands has come to represent, both in his humbleness and in how he loved and cared for fans, partners and teammates," Karmazin said.

The Barn Show with Uncle Bill is the longest running program in Beaver Dam's radio history. On the air since 1974, the show was a staple for polka-enthusiasts. McCollum was also the top biller in the sales department of the radio stations for 50 years, growing close relationships and lasting friendships with his partners.

WBEV and 1430 ESPN Station Manager Sheri Sackett said there are no words to describe the impact McCollum made on Good Karma Brands and in the community. She said he constantly worked for what was best for his fans, partners, and teammates.

During his last broadcast on the Morning Show in 2016, fans called in for 90 minutes to wish McCollum well and told him about the positive impact his show had on their lives.

McCollum's career was also celebrated in 2017 when Stoddart Street, which runs for about two blocks in front of the radio station, was renamed Bill McCollum Way.

Sean O'Flaherty

WTMJ-TV News Operations Manager Sean O'Flaherty died June 26 after 53 years at the Milwaukee station. He was 74.



While in college at UW-Madison, O'Flaherty reported on the 1970 Sterling Hall bombing for WTMJ-TV and joined the station full-time when he graduated in 1971. Over the following five decades, O'Flaherty held virtually every role in the newsroom from producer to editor to photojournalist to News Operations Manager, a title he held for the past several decades.

Of the more than 5,000 people employed by The E.W. Scripps Company, O'Flaherty stood alone as the longest-tenured Scripps employee.

In 2021, then-Mayor Tom Barrett proclaimed June 5 "Sean O'Flaherty Day" throughout the City of Milwaukee to mark O'Flaherty's 50th work anniversary at WTMJ-TV. In the proclamation, Mayor Barrett described O'Flaherty as a "trailblazer within the journalism community" and as someone who has "earned the enduring praise, respect and gratitude of his colleagues for his exemplary leadership and devotion to the community."

According to his obituary, veteran journalists liked O'Flaherty as one of their own, but so did colleagues who weren't even born when he reached the quarter century mark at TMJ4.

A Celebration of Life was held July 31.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Sean's name can be made to the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Foundation. Please choose the "scholarship fund" option.

Wayne H. Smith

Wayne H. Smith, of Merrill, worked in radio for more than 40 years. He died July 22 at the age of 96.



After serving in the Navy during the Korean War, Smith attended broadcasting school in California. He and his wife lived in several different states including California, Tennessee, Louisiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Smith worked in numerous aspects of broadcasting, including sales, engineering, and management. In 1990, Smith moved to the Wausau/Merrill area to be closer to their daughter and son-in-law. He worked at WJMT, and also started the Z104 classic rock radio station in the area.

According to his obituary, Smith was involved with many civic organizations and was an active member of the community. He made friends everywhere he went.

A memorial service was held July 31.

NRG's McKay named newest MIW, WBA mentee

The WBA and MIW "Mentoring and Inspiring Women in Wisconsin" program announces Kori McKay from NRG Media in Wausau/Stevens Point as their newest mentee.

McKay, known to her listeners as 'Kori with a K,' has been the Program Director for WHTQ in Wausau/Stevens Point area since 2019, and been with NRG Media as the morning host since 2016. Before that, she hosted nights at WAZY in Lafayette, Indiana and farm markets at KDSN in Denison, Iowa.

She said, "Growing up I knew I wanted to make people smile. I remember sitting in my car in college listening to the radio, looked right at the radio and said 'I want to do that,' got out of my car and starting Googling 'radio



McKay

schools!' I came across Brown College in Minnesota. And the rest is history."

The first mentee to go through the program was Jen Kasper from QueenB Radio.

Wisconsin was the second state to partner with Mentoring and Inspiring Women in Radio (MIW) after the first partnership was launched in 2022 with the Minnesota Broadcasters Association. This state-focused program pairs mentees aiming to advance into higher management roles within radio broadcasting with established female mentors. The mentor provides ongoing coaching and guidance to their mentee to grow their essential skills and techniques, making them an effective leader in radio.

MIW is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of female leadership in radio broadcasting. It hopes to expand this program to all 50 states.

"Partnering with the WBA is so productive and such a joy," MIW Board President Ruth Presslaff said. "We're excited for Kori and look forward to another great year working together."

"We continue to have intense interest in this mentorship," WBA President and CEO Michelle Vetterkind said. "Kori was selected from a list of fantastic candidates. It bodes well for the future of broadcasting."

"The next step in my career is to inspire, empower, and uplift the next generation of broadcasters," McKay wrote. "It's an ever-changing industry that I look forward to seeing where it goes. When you find your 'career' and your home that you get to make your own, everything just falls into place."

For more information on MIW Mentoring Programs, visit: radiomiw.com



Nelson Andrew Lent

Nelson Andrew Lent, who spent 46 years on the air on Wisconsin radio stations, died Aug. 9. He was 84.

Lent started his radio broadcasting career at WHSM in Hayward in 1959. In 1960 he moved to WJMC in Rice Lake and in 1961 was the first voice on the air for a new radio station in Eagle River. In 1963 they moved to Black River Falls where

he started working at WWIS-AM as the station's engineer and on-air announcer. In 1968 he became general manager.

According to his obituary, Lent is perhaps best remembered as the voice of the Buy Line program. He retired in 2005.

Memorials can be directed to Interfaith Volunteers or the Jackson County Animal Shelter. Lent did not wish to have a service or funeral, so nothing is planned.



Thom Gerretsen

WBA Hall of Fame inductee (2021) Thom Gerretsen died Sept. 7 after a brief battle with pancreatic cancer. He was 71.

Gerretsen touched millions of lives during his long career covering news and sports in Wisconsin. His writing and his voice were on the air in every market across the state.

Gerretsen started his career in 1974 at WCLO-AM and WJVL-FM in Janesville. In 1975 he was named news director at WPDR-AM and WDDC-FM in Portage. He joined Goetz Broadcasting in Marshfield in 1978 where he served as assistant news director before being named news director in 1986. He contributed to networks that delivered news and sports content to many of the top radio stations in Wisconsin. He interviewed presidents and sports legends and covered many Wisconsin sports teams, including the Green Bay Packers.

Gerretsen's philosophy was to "provide more

local news to the community than any other station in the surrounding markets." His stations were known for having the story first. News directors from around the state called Gerretsen "the best in the business."

Gerretsen joined Wheeler News Service in 2002 as chief editor where he wrote dozens of news stories each day that were distributed statewide.

According to his obituary, Gerretsen retired in November 2017 but continued to contribute columns for the Hub City Times in Marshfield and Packerland Magazine and share his expertise about issues and topics on social media.

Funeral services will be held Friday, Sept. 20 at 11 a.m. at Faith Lutheran Church in Marshfield with visitation prior to the service from 9-11 a.m. With Thom having been an avid fan of all sports, the family is encouraging everyone to wear their favorite team attire. Livestreaming of the service will be available.

Making a Difference

Radio stations help veterans in need

The radio stations of Woodward Community Media (WCM) and Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin recently joined forces to wage an all-out battle against veteran hunger at the 6th Annual "Combat Hunger 2024" event on June 27 in Appleton.

From 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. the stations helped gather non-perishable food items and monetary donations to help support food-insecure veterans and their families. Donors could choose which military branch their donation went to—Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard.

With donation matching hours, live radio broadcasts from Woodward stations, including KISS FM Mornings with Otis, Katie & Nick and WHBY's Focus Fox Valley with Hayley Tenpas, and several different ways to give, the event was a team effort to combat veteran hunger in northeast Wisconsin.

With a contribution of over 2,300 pounds of food and an impressive \$16,300 in funds raised, the collective effort will result in more than 67,000 meals being provided to food-insecure veterans and their families, the most significant impact for this annual event.

"This remarkable achievement underscores the unwavering spirit of generosity and support for veterans within our community," said Roxanne Steele, Woodward Community Media Marketing Director.



Serving YOU!

In the last 12 months,
your WBA has:

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- ✓ Promoted the community service efforts of broadcasters from around Wisconsin, including posts on social media using the #WeAreBroadcasters hashtag promoted by NAB
- ✓ Stations aired approximately 300,000 important public service messages through the NCSA/PEP program
- ✓ Promoted Severe Weather Awareness Week as part of a partnership with Wisconsin Emergency Management and the National Weather Service
- ✓ Marked 21 years of shared leadership with the Wisconsin Department of Justice in the Amber Alert Child Abduction/Silver Alert Plans. Since the inception of Wisconsin's Amber Alert program in 2003, we have had 63 Amber Alerts with the successful recovery of 82 children.
- ✓ Assisted the Wisconsin Army National Guard with public awareness of recruiting shortfalls
- ✓ Maintained a PSA clearinghouse for non-profits to share PSAs that stations looking for PSAs can easily access

EDUCATION

- ✓ Added student WBA memberships for participants in the WBA Student Forum
- ✓ Rebranded the Midwest Regional Broadcasters Clinic, began a partnership with the Minnesota Broadcasters Association, and reconfigured the event into a two-day event with an opening reception
- ✓ Partnered with P1 Training to provide members with access to the Ten Minute Trainer platform that offers broadcasters training on numerous industry-related topics
- ✓ Hosted numerous educational sessions on company culture, diversity, recruiting, artificial intelligence, and work-life balance at the WBA Summer Conference in Fond du Lac
- ✓ Shared with members resources aimed at addressing the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI)
- ✓ Provided two EEO sessions to members
- ✓ Hosted a webinar with the Wisconsin Newspaper Association on media law
- ✓ Partnered with the UW-Madison Center for Journalism Ethics to provide training sessions on artificial intelligence in reporting
- ✓ Continued our Jacobs Media/WBA Digital Partnership, a free member service, created in conjunction with media consultant Jacobs Media. The service also includes a weekly email regarding developments in AI, access to Jacobs Media webinars, and contributions to the Wisconsin Broadcaster.
- ✓ Shared the very popular WBA Insight Edge Weekly Member Service featuring highlights of key advertising categories

ADVOCACY

- ✓ Amended a Wisconsin legislative bill aimed at regulating the use of artificial intelligence in political advertising to protect broadcasters. The bill was signed into law with our amendment.
- ✓ Released promos identifying Wisconsin broadcasters as, "Local. Trusted. Connected."
- ✓ Majority of Wisconsin's Congressional delegation cosponsored the Local Radio Freedom Act
- ✓ Promoted passage of the AM Radio in Every Vehicle Act in response to industry pressure to remove AM radio from the dashboard
- ✓ Encouraged members to take advantage of the state sales tax exemption for broadcast equipment
- ✓ Organized legislative visits to Washington DC to give members the opportunity to meet with Wisconsin's Congressional delegation
- ✓ Asked federal lawmakers to encourage the FCC to adopt the ATSC 3.0 standard for television
- ✓ Called for passage of the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act which would give broadcasters leverage to negotiate with Big Tech for the use of their local news content
- ✓ Asked House members to consider joining the Broadcasters Caucus
- ✓ Joined a federal filing supporting FCC efforts to make the regulatory fees process better reflect the benefits of the agency's work
- ✓ Called for state lawmakers to consider guidelines for judges to determine when cameras should be barred from the courtroom
- ✓ Supported a legislative fix to a loophole opened in state law by a State Supreme Court ruling that made it possible for a record custodian to avoid legal fees in open records cases
- ✓ Monitored proposals to expand broadband in Wisconsin to make sure viewers and listeners would not be affected
- ✓ Partnered with the Democratic and Republican parties in Wisconsin to make available their Weekly Radio Addresses to our members via WisPolitics and on your WBA website
- ✓ President and CEO Michelle Vetterkind served on the Competitive Wisconsin Board of Directors.
- ✓ Tagged lawmakers on social media posts regarding broadcasters performing acts of public service in their local communities
- ✓ Actively monitored and lobbied on federal and state issues to serve, protect, and promote the broadcast industry in Wisconsin, in addition to providing the WBA's perspective in many FCC proceedings
- ✓ Represented broadcasters on the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council which advocates for open records and open meetings laws
- ✓ Advocated for the establishment of a tax certificate to encourage investment in broadcast station ownership for women and people of color

RECOGNITION

- ✓ Processed more than 1,500 awards submissions as part of the WBA Awards for Excellence and hosted a near-capacity awards gala at the Madison Marriott West
- ✓ Recognized the fourth WBA Young Professional of the Year and four other co-honorees
- ✓ Honored four WBA Local Broadcast Legends: JD Barber, Jim Callow, Bill Jartz, and Bob Lindmeier. This award provides recognition to individuals who have actively engaged in fulfilling the commitment broadcasters have made to serve their local communities.
- ✓ Updated the WBA Awards for Excellence program to address changes in the broadcasting industry and current events
- ✓ Organized and presented the WBA Student Awards for Excellence, including 273 entries from high schools and colleges
- ✓ Supported the Watchdog Awards which recognizes those who demonstrate the importance of transparency in government

WBA SERVICES

- ✓ Hosted two job fairs, one at the WBA Student Forum and the other at the Midwest Regional Broadcasters Clinic, to help stations recruit new employees and assist with EEO compliance and credit
- ✓ Continued a mentorship program for Women in Radio aimed at advancing female leadership in radio broadcasting
- ✓ Supported the SBE publication of broadcast station self-inspection guides
- ✓ Promoted a high school apprenticeship program through the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
- ✓ Maintained a member service through a partnership with JournalList using membership in the WBA as a signal of trust giving members' websites a boost of credibility with search engines
- ✓ Continued the WBA Alternative Inspection Program that offers members the opportunity to have their stations inspected by an FCC-experienced engineer to identify issues that a member can address before the issues become a matter of concern for the FCC
- ✓ Grew a relationship with SkillsUSA, DECA, and FBLA to connect broadcasters with high school students seeking careers in broadcasting
- ✓ Advanced work with the WBA Board of Directors on an updated long range plan for the WBA, with a primary focus on recruitment and building broadcasting's local brand
- ✓ Offered assistance to young broadcasters through the WBA Mentorship Program initiated by the WBA's Young Professionals Committee
- ✓ Continued to support and grow the WBA Young Professionals group which represents our younger WBA members and future broadcast managers
- ✓ Continued our free legal services for our members with the WBA Legal Hotlines provided by Washington D.C. counsel, David Oxenford at Wilkinson Barker Knauer LLP, and by Madison counsel, Godfrey Kahn
- ✓ Updated and maintained the WBA Assistance Action Plan for EEO Compliance, which set an industry standard and helps the WBA help member stations achieve compliance under the FCC EEO regulations
- ✓ Continued to host www.wisconsinhonorflight.org, a one-stop shop for all Wisconsin Honor Flight Hubs
- ✓ Grew audiences on the WBA's Facebook, X, Instagram, Threads, and Snapchat accounts, spreading news about Wisconsin broadcasters
- ✓ Published the Wisconsin Broadcaster, our e-newsletter, bi-monthly newsletter, and published all articles as they were available on the WBA website



- ✓ Hosted the Wisconsin Broadcasters Student Forum at Lambeau Field, welcoming 200 high school students and 200 college students to the legendary venue to learn about careers in broadcasting
- ✓ Updated the WBA Hall of Fame at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center to make space for future expansion
- ✓ Held the WBA Duke Wright Media Technology Institute in conjunction with the WBA Summer Conference
- ✓ Awarded the fifth Results Broadcasting Education Grant to provide college debt relief to young broadcasters. The grant was originally the Results Broadcasting Scholarship.
- ✓ The Bob Barry Unearthed Interviews podcast passed 250 episodes. It features celebrity interviews from WBA Hall of Famer Bob Barry's long career as a radio personality in Milwaukee. WBA Hall of Famer Terry Baun provided additional funding.
- ✓ Inducted four broadcasters into the prestigious WBA Hall of Fame, bringing the total number of inductees to 164: Steve Brown, Matt Lepay, Patty Loew, and David Robinson.
- ✓ Raised money for the Foundation with a raffle at the WBA Awards Gala and WBA Summer Conference
- ✓ Awarded four scholarships. All four recipients were recognized at the WBA Student Forum.
- ✓ Produced a half-hour WBA Hall of Fame Show for distribution to Wisconsin television stations
- ✓ Awarded the seventh round of the Rick Jowett Fellowship to support training for photojournalists and honor WBA photographer and dear friend Rick Jowett
- ✓ Continued the successful 3-Day Walker Broadcast Management Institute at UW-Madison which has graduated 174 in the 26 years it's been operating
- ✓ Represented broadcasters on the State Superintendent's Advisory Council for Business, Marketing, and Information Technology Education. The WBA's Vice President, Kyle Geissler, serves on the Council.
- ✓ Continued to update WBAnewsroom.org. All content has been updated and is kept current to reflect "what's going on" in news in Wisconsin. This online resource provides quick, easy-to-search results for newsroom questions. It's a valuable resource for all reporters, editors, producers, students, and news junkies.
- ✓ Recognized 32 members of the WBA Foundation's Legacy Club. The club provides a formal procedure and recognition for those who make bequests or agree to make bequests to the WBA Foundation in their wills.
- ✓ Updated the online Wisconsin Broadcasters Museum with new artifacts from Wisconsin broadcasting history
- ✓ Offered stations new radio and TV spots promoting the WBA Hall of Fame
- ✓ Offered students an online networking opportunity where they connect with professional broadcasters in scheduled online meetings
- ✓ Prepared to host a statewide political debate following the WBA's 34-year history of promoting an informed electorate

NCSA/PEP program offers many benefits

The NCSA/PEP program run by the WBA offers your stations and the association many benefits. If your station is not airing the NCSA/PEP spots we send you, we hope that you will consider doing so. Your WBA, and your broadcast colleagues, would welcome your participation and support.

A non-commercial sustaining/public education partnership announcement (NCSA/PEP) is an announcement that is sponsored by a nontraditional advertiser (typically a non-profit or governmental organization) whose resources

are not sufficient to ensure the placement and frequency of a normal commercial buy, but whose broadcast coverage needs cannot be met solely by public service announcements. NCSA/PEP announcements are broadcast using air time donated by stations to the NCSA/PEP program of a state broadcasters association.

The NCSA/PEP program provides the association with funds to provide benefits to WBA members and the entire broadcast industry. The funds are used for a variety of WBA programs, including educational seminars, conferences and conventions, and its scholarship program. The NCSA/PEP program has the added benefit of allowing non-profit entities and government organizations who are not normally broadcast advertisers to see the benefits of broadcasting, and the program allows them to get their important messages out to the public in a cost-effective way. We think that this is a win-win proposition, helping broadcasters, the association and the organizations running the PEP spots. The program clearly

serves the public interest.

The NCSA/PEP program is not a substitute for a licensee's general obligation to be responsive to the local needs and interests of the station's service area. Broadcasters need to continue to serve their community with issue-responsive programming. As part of that community-oriented programming, all Wisconsin radio and television stations are encouraged to continue their strong commitment to airing PSAs free of charge. The PEP program supplements

that service while also providing support to WBA programs.

NCSA/PEP announcements should not be logged as a "commercial" or "PSA," but rather simply as "NCSA." This characterization promotes consistency among all of the state broadcasters associations

as well as among all participating stations while affording each station broad flexibility to characterize, for accounting or other purposes, the NCSA/PEP announcements in the most appropriate way.

In a 1988 ruling, the Federal Communications Commission held that NCSA/PEP Programs, and the announcements carried by stations under them, do not affect a station's lowest unit charge or otherwise factor into any political broadcasting analysis. The program has been established and is administered by the WBA in a way that is substantially related to the Association's tax-exempt purposes.

Following are the stations that have participated so far this year in airing the NCSA/PEP announcements of a variety of NCSA/PEP sponsors:

We think that this is a win-win proposition, helping broadcasters, the association and the organizations running the PEP spots.

TELEVISION

WYOW-TV	Eagle River
WEAU-TV	Eau Claire
WEUX-TV	Eau Claire
WQOW-TV	Eau Claire
EXOW-TV	Eau Claire/La Crosse
WACY-TV	Green Bay
EBAY-TV	Green Bay
WBAY-TV	Green Bay
WFRV-TV	Green Bay
WGBA-TV	Green Bay
WCWF-TV	Green Bay
WLUK-TV	Green Bay
EKBT-TV	La Crosse
OLAX-TV	La Crosse
WKBT-TV	La Crosse
WLAX-TV	La Crosse
WXOW-TV	La Crosse
TVW	Madison
WISC-TV	Madison
EKOW-TV	Madison
WKOW-TV	Madison
HMTV (The CW)	Madison
WMTV-TV	Madison
EITI-TV	Milwaukee
EVTV-TV	Milwaukee
WBME-TV	Milwaukee
WDJT-TV	Milwaukee
WISN Justice TV	Milwaukee
WISN-TV	Milwaukee
WITI-TV	Milwaukee
WMLW-TV	Milwaukee
WTMJ-TV	Milwaukee
WVCY-TV	Milwaukee
WVTV-TV	Milwaukee
WYTU-TV	Milwaukee
KBJR-TV	Superior
KDLH-TV	Superior
NBJR-TV	Superior
OBJR-TV	Superior
EAOW-TV	Wausau
WAOW-TV	Wausau
ESAW-TV	Wausau
JSAW-TV	Wausau
WSAW-TV	Wausau
WZAW-TV	Wausau

WBA Action Plan helps stations with EEO compliance

Your WBA has conducted its annual update to its EEO Assistance Action Plan that outlines how the WBA helps members earn their EEO compliance through the FCC. These are the main components:

Recruitment for Vacancies

- Make sure you're reaching a good cross-section of your community with your recruiting
- WBA maintains list of recruitment referral resources
- Stations can use list for recruiting

Notification to Community Groups

- WBA provides an online job board
- Run announcements promoting posted job openings and the WBA job board
- WBA provides template ad copy for job board promotion

Get Credits for Your Outreach

- Participate in WBA Job Fairs
- Host or sponsor a job fair
- Participate in job banks
- Participate in scholarships/internship programs
- Get EEO training

The full detailed plan is available on the WBA website at: wi-broadcasters.org/eoo

RADIO

WCWI-FM.....Adams/Friendship
WALK-AM.....Amery
WATK-AM.....Antigo
WACD-FM.....Antigo
WRLO-FM.....Antigo
WAPL-FM.....Appleton
WEMI-FM.....Appleton
WFZZ-FM.....Appleton
WGEE-FM.....Appleton
WGNW-FM.....Appleton
WHBY-AM.....Appleton
WSCO-AM.....Appleton
WATW-AM.....Ashland
WBSZ-FM.....Ashland
WJH-FM.....Ashland
WNXR-FM.....Ashland
WBEV-AM.....Beaver Dam
WBEV-FM.....Beaver Dam
WGEZ-AM.....Beloit
WISS-AM.....Berlin
WWIS-AM.....Black River Falls
WWIS-FM.....Black River Falls
WOGO-AM.....Chippewa Falls
WWIB-FM.....Chippewa Falls
WOTE-AM.....Clintonville
WJMQ-FM.....Clintonville
WERL-AM.....Eagle River
WRJO-FM.....Eagle River
WAXX-FM.....Eau Claire
WAYY-AM.....Eau Claire
WBIZ-AM.....Eau Claire
WBIZ-FM.....Eau Claire
WCFW-AM.....Eau Claire
WEAQ-FM.....Eau Claire
WECL-FM.....Eau Claire
WIAL-FM.....Eau Claire
WISM-FM.....Eau Claire
WVCF-FM.....Eau Claire
KFIZ-AM.....Fond du Lac
WFDL-AM.....Fond du Lac
WFDL-FM.....Fond du Lac
WFON-FM.....Fond du Lac
WTCX-FM.....Fond du Lac
WVFL-FM.....Fond du Lac
WFAW-AM.....Fort Atkinson
WDUZ-FM.....Green Bay
WEMY-FM.....Green Bay
WGBW-FM.....Green Bay
WIXX-FM.....Green Bay
WKRU-FM.....Green Bay
WKSZ-FM.....Green Bay
WNCY-FM.....Green Bay
WNFL-AM.....Green Bay
WOGB-FM.....Green Bay
WQLH-FM.....Green Bay
WTAQ-AM.....Green Bay
WYDR-FM.....Green Bay
WZOR-FM.....Green Bay
WBZH-AM.....Hayward
WBEL-AM.....Janesville
WCLO-AM.....Janesville
WJVL-FM.....Janesville
WWHG-FM.....Janesville
WLIP-AM.....Kenosha
WLX-AM.....La Crosse
WLXR-FM.....La Crosse
WLKG-FM.....Lake Geneva

WGLR-FM.....Lancaster
WHIT-AM.....Madison
WIBA-AM.....Madison
WJJO-FM.....Madison
WJQM-FM.....Madison
WLMV-AM.....Madison
WMDX-FM.....Madison
WMGN-FM.....Madison
WMMM-FM.....Madison
WMHX-FM.....Madison
WOLX-FM.....Madison
WOZN-AM.....Madison
WRIS-FM.....Madison
WTLX-FM.....Madison
WTSO-AM.....Madison
WWQM-FM.....Madison
WXXM-FM.....Madison
WZEE-FM.....Madison
WCUB-AM.....Manitowoc
WLTU-FM.....Manitowoc
WOMT-AM.....Manitowoc
WQTC-FM.....Manitowoc
WAGN-AM.....Marinette
WHYB-FM.....Marinette
WLST-FM.....Marinette
WMAM-FM.....Marinette
WSFQ-FM.....Marinette
WDLB-AM.....Marshfield
WOSQ-FM.....Marshfield
WYTE-FM.....Marshfield
WJMT-AM.....Merrill
WGNV-FM.....Milladore
WAUK-AM.....Milwaukee
WGKB-AM.....Milwaukee
WISN-AM.....Milwaukee
WJMR-FM.....Milwaukee
WJOI-AM.....Milwaukee
WKKV-FM.....Milwaukee
WKTI-FM.....Milwaukee
WLDB-FM.....Milwaukee
WLUM-FM.....Milwaukee
WMIL-FM.....Milwaukee
WMYX-FM.....Milwaukee
WOKY-AM.....Milwaukee
WRIT-FM.....Milwaukee
WRNW-FM.....Milwaukee
WRXS-FM.....Milwaukee
WSSP-AM.....Milwaukee
WTMJ-AM.....Milwaukee
WVCY-FM.....Milwaukee
WXSS-FM.....Milwaukee
WZTI-AM.....Milwaukee
WZTI-FM.....Milwaukee
WLKD-AM.....Minocqua
WMQA-FM.....Minocqua
WEKZ-AM.....Monroe
WBGR-FM.....Monroe
WCCN-AM.....Neillsville
WCCN-FM.....Neillsville
WNAM-AM.....Oshkosh
WOSH-AM.....Oshkosh
WPKR-FM.....Oshkosh
WVBO-FM.....Oshkosh
WWWX-FM.....Oshkosh
WVCY-AM.....Oshkosh
WVCS-FM.....Owen
WCQM-FM.....Park Falls
WPFP-AM.....Park Falls
WPVL-AM.....Platteville

WPVL-FM.....Platteville
WSTM-FM.....Plymouth
WPRE-AM.....Prairie du Chien
WQPC-FM.....Prairie du Chien
WRJN-AM.....Racine
WRDB-AM.....Reedsburg
WCYE-FM.....Rhineland
WHDG-FM.....Rhineland
WNWX-FM.....Rhineland
WOBT-AM.....Rhineland
WRHN-FM.....Rhineland
WAQE-AM.....Rice Lake
WAQE-FM.....Rice Lake
WJMC-AM.....Rice Lake
WJMC-FM.....Rice Lake
WKFX-FM.....Rice Lake
WRCE-AM.....Richland Center
WRCO-FM.....Richland Center
WOWN-FM.....Shawano
WTCH-AM.....Shawano
WBFB-FM.....Sheboygan
WEMP-FM.....Sheboygan
WHBL-AM.....Sheboygan
WHBZ-FM.....Sheboygan
WLKN-FM.....Sheboygan
WXER-FM.....Sheboygan
WCOW-FM.....Sparta
WFBZ-FM.....Sparta
WKLJ-AM.....Sparta
WHTQ-FM.....Stevens Point
WPCN-AM.....Stevens Point
WSPT-FM.....Stevens Point
The Pirate-FM.....Sturgeon Bay
WBDK-FM.....Sturgeon Bay
WDOR-AM.....Sturgeon Bay
WDOR-FM.....Sturgeon Bay
WRKU-FM.....Sturgeon Bay
WRLU-FM.....Sturgeon Bay
WSBW-FM.....Sturgeon Bay
WDSM-AM.....Superior
WRVM-FM.....Suring
WBOG-FM.....Tomah
WVCX-FM.....Tomah
WJJQ-AM.....Tomahawk
WJJQ-FM.....Tomahawk
WKPO-FM.....Viroqua
WVRQ-AM.....Viroqua
WVRQ-FM.....Viroqua
WEGZ-FM.....Washburn
WPCA-AM.....Waupaca
WDUX-FM.....Waupaca
WAVL-FM.....Wausau
WBCV-FM.....Wausau
WDEZ-FM.....Wausau
WIFC-FM.....Wausau
WKQH-FM.....Wausau
WOZZ-FM.....Wausau
WRIG-AM.....Wausau
WSAU-AM.....Wausau
WXCO-AM.....Wausau
WRYU-AM.....West Bend
WSLD-FM.....Whitewater
WAUN-AM.....Wisconsin Dells
WDLS-AM.....Wisconsin Dells
WFHR-AM.....Wisconsin Rapids
WGLX-FM.....Wisconsin Rapids
WIRI-FM.....Wisconsin Rapids
WRVN-FM.....Wittenberg

WBA program helps stations plan for crisis

Radio and TV stations throughout the state can take an easy step toward being prepared for an emergency by getting Broadcaster Emergency Personnel ID cards for engineering staff members.

Many stations already participate in the Broadcaster Emergency Personnel ID program, but all WBA member stations are invited to participate.

Broadcaster Emergency Personnel ID cards are issued by Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM). They're the same cards local police officers, fire-

fighters, and EMTs use in emergency situations.

The cards can be used by engineers to help them gain access to a crisis area in order

to keep their station's transmitters up and running.

The cards contain the engineer's name, company name, title, and photo.

The cards are good for seven years, but the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, as



[Learn More](#)

responsible for cards issued to broadcasters, sends renewal notices to stations annually to make sure the WEM database has the most updated cardholder information.

Cards must be requested by a station manager. Instructions and application documents can be found on the WBA website. Look in the menu for "Emergency Planning" and click on "Broadcaster ID" or go to: <https://www.wi-broadcasters.org/emergency-planning/broadcaster-id/>

Anyone with questions about the cards is asked to contact Kyle Geissler at kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org.

Young Professionals of the Month

Young professionals are making their mark on broadcasting in Wisconsin and the WBA is recognizing them. The WBA Young Professional of the Month is a nominee for the WBA Young Professional of the Year Award. The 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 will select the Young Professional of the Year, who will be recognized at the 2025 WBA Summer Conference on June 18 in La Crosse. Meet July and August's Young Professionals of the Month below.



July's YP: Dario Melendez

Dario Melendez was nominated by WISN-TV sports reporter Jerad Fialko who wrote of Melendez, "Dario is beyond deserving of this award. Since joining WISN two years ago, I have seen him take our department to new levels. He challenges us to find the story that needs to be told and doesn't take the easy way out. That philosophy has led to multiple Emmy, WBA, MBJA, and Milwaukee Press Club nominations and wins."

How did you get into broadcasting?

During a football practice my freshman year at Sacred Heart University (a small Division 1 school in Fairfield, Connecticut) Jon Corto, an insanely talented linebacker who went on to play for the Buffalo Bills for five seasons, LEVELED me on a crossing-route, and that's when I knew, playing wide receiver at the

next level was NOT in my future.

So, if I couldn't play sports after college, I wanted to at least talk about sports after I graduated.

I spent the next four years taking advantage of EVERY opportunity SHU had to offer. From being Co Editor-and-Chief of the university newspaper, to hosting a weekly sports radio show on WSHU, to covering multiple events for the school TV station, to landing a handful of internships, I just tried to absorb every experience possible and set myself up for my post-grad future.

And when I was given my first chance of getting into "the business" (something I'll get into a little later) I jump at the opportunity and as they say, "the rest is history."

How do you view the role of young professionals in broadcasting?

Continuing the standard of

excellence that those before me established.

My predecessors, Dan Needles and Tom Sutton, were two of the most talented, knowledgeable and respected sports broadcasters that the state of Wisconsin has ever seen. And it has been my mission, since taking over as Sports Director in 2022, to not only continue the standard they set, but also grow the department and push-the-envelope.

I constantly challenge myself, and those in my department, to find the tough story, ask the tough question, do hard things, to better deliver the BEST product for our viewers.

What advice would you give to other young broadcasters?

Never say "No." Because there are hundreds of people who are willing to take any opportunity that you



Company
WISN 12

Position
Sports Director

Years at station
**2 consecutive,
4 total**

Started in
broadcasting
2008

turn down. The available opening might not be the one you want but it might lead

Continued on page 13 >

August's YP: Genesis Lois

Genesis Lois was nominated by Seehafer Broadcasting Vice President Terry Stevenson who wrote of Lois, "Throughout her time with us, I have seen tremendous growth and maturity far beyond her age. Gen is always willing to take on additional roles and responsibilities, and she excels at each of them." "Where Genesis really shines is through her ability to connect with people," he wrote. "From her coworkers, to advertising partners and on-air guests, as well as community members, Gen

has the ability to read each situation and put people at ease. She brings these skills to her interactions with advertising partners, whether she's checking in with them, communicating with them regarding logistics, or welcoming them into our offices and studios. She works with advertising partners to record their spots, and she has even taken on the role of co-hosting some of our on-air partner programs."

How did you get into broadcasting?

I was a nanny for one of Terry Stevenson's best friends and

when Terry needed an assistant his friend recommended me, and the rest has been history.

How do you view the role of young professionals in broadcasting?

As a challenging yet rewarding job.

What advice would you give to other young broadcasters?

Always be willing to learn and grow.

What does the future of broadcasting look like to you?

Very Bright :)



Company
Seehafer Broadcasting

Position
**Executive Assistant and
Marketing Consultant**

Years at station
2

Started in
broadcasting
2021

September's YP: Aisha Morales



Aisha was nominated by fellow WBAY-TV anchor Emerson Lehmann who wrote of Aisha, "Aisha is the definition of a 'team player' when it comes to the WBAY newsroom. Over the past year, she has led the charge in our new 'Safety' campaign, bringing new and innovative content to our viewers every morning from our First Alert Safety Desk. She has set the standard for Gray Television and many Gray stations around the state, and even the country, have reached out to her for guidance as they start their own versions of the concept." "Not only does Aisha do all of this work well, she does it proudly. She serves as a mentor to younger reporters and anchors and is a voice of reason in what can be a hectic profession."

How did you get into broadcasting?

I always lost myself in reading and writing as a kid. I loved reading newspapers too, and knowing what was going on in the world. In high school, a local TV news anchor spoke to my class and a lightbulb

went off in my head. I knew at an early age that I was destined to be a writer or journalist, but it was that "ah-ha!" moment that sent me down the path of researching what it takes to get there. I was fortunate to live in Arizona, home of one of the most prestigious journalism schools in the country, the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication. I graduated from the program in 2011. It is an honor to be a "Cronkite Kid."

How do you view the role of young professionals in broadcasting?

It's about building each other up. Learning and growing together in a fast-paced career and society. Young professionals in broadcasting are the future and we have such a big responsibility of carrying on the journalism excellence that came before us. We can't do this job without working together and helping to create well-rounded/informed communities. I work alongside the best in the business who inspire me every day.

What advice would you give to other young broadcasters?

My advice is to not be so hard on yourself. This job can be hard. I am a huge mental health awareness advocate. This job can be tough – but you are tougher. One great piece of advice I received from a mentor and friend was "remember your 'why.'" Why are you in broadcasting? Why do you love this job? Why do you still do it? Always remember your 'WHY.' Most importantly, take care of yourself. If you step with gratitude, grace, and learn from your mistakes, you will be successful. Challenge yourself to learn from each day, and never be afraid to ask for help.

What does the future of broadcasting look like to you?

To me, the future of broadcasting looks diverse. Diverse in technology and diverse in the people. It is already changing. I think our audiences want more authentic

conversations and coverage. We have focused on our digital platforms lately through livestreaming – and I can tell, that is what the future looks like. We can still inform our communities and relay important information, but in a new, extended, and fresh way.

Company

WBAY-TV 2

Position

First Alert Safety Desk Anchor

Years at station

8 years

Started in broadcasting

2011

Clinic Report

Continued from page 1

radio and television attendees. The topics included:

- "Radio AI 2024 Demonstration"
- "What's Up and What's New with ATSC"
- "Site Safety – Because We All Work Alone, Even When We Shouldn't"
- "The FCC and Your Station, and How ABIP Can Help"
- "Automation Systems: Disaster Planning and Recovery"

On Tuesday, there was the always popular "Nuts and Bolts" discussion on "What Were They Thinking?" which included a meal of fried cheese curds and brats—a perennial favorite. The National Society of Broadcast Engineers held a meeting on Wednesday after the Clinic ended.

The Clinic program committee appreciates the continued support of the WBA Board, Michelle Vetterkind, Kyle Geissler, and Liz Boyd, as well as the Minnesota Broadcasters Association, Wendy Paulson, and Tim Hyde.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Steinhart, Broadcasters Clinic – Program Chair

Dario Melendez

Continued from page 12

to it.

Example: From the day I graduated college, I wanted to be an on-air talent. But after being turned down by HUNDREDS of stations, I finally received ONE offer: A part-time sports producer role at WINK-TV in Ft. Myers, Florida. This was NOT a job I wanted. But it turned out to be the job I needed.

For the next year I learned the ins-and-outs of our industry: Learning how to produce and stack a show, how to edit, how to shoot, and how to write. And, when there was time, I'd tape sports segments after the 10 p.m. show on Saturday nights.

When I felt like I had enough experience and skill need to move into an 'on-air' role I met with my bosses and presented them with a list (and reel) of all the things I had done over the past year. And the very next week, I was the new weekend sports anchor.

Moral of the story: NEVER SAY NO!

What does the future of broadcasting look like to you?

On-the-go and non-stop. With many advances in technology and different avenues for our viewers to get information, our job will be taking advantage of this avenues and master them.

There will always be a need for a formal newscast and sportscast in order to give viewers a condensed and palatable look at the "news of the day." But the viewer's thirst for more information is growing and that is where the different avenues: social media, websites, webcasts, and podcasts will come into play more and more. We already see the industry shifting to those avenues. Allowing viewers to digest information on the own time, in their own way, and at their own pace.

News never stops. The thirst for news never stops. News organizations can't stop evolving can't to help quench that thirst.



WBA Foundation announces journalist teams for U.S. Senate debate on Oct. 18

The WBA Foundation Board is proud to announce the names of the journalists from across the state who will continue its 34-year tradition of conducting broadcast debates. The WBA Foundation will be hosting a U.S. Senate debate on Oct. 18.

Qualifying U.S. Senate candidates Democratic U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin and Republican Senate candidate Eric Hovde have agreed to participate in the debate.

The debate will be conducted by diverse teams of broadcasters from stations and communities across Wisconsin.

The following broadcasters will be participating:

Question Team

(pictured left to right, top row)

Aditi Debnath, Reporter, PBS Wisconsin

Allison Fergot, Reporter, WKBT News 8 Now, La Crosse

Neil Johnson, Reporter/Producer, Big Radio, Janesville

Shannon Sims, Anchor, TMJ4, Milwaukee

Jeff Thelen, Anchor/Producer, WSAW-TV, Wausau

Data Team

(pictured left to right, bottom row)

Darrielle Fair, Political Reporter, WKOW-TV, Madison

Jonathan Krause, Director of Multimedia Journalism, Woodward Community Media, Appleton

Harm Venhuizen, Political Reporter/Multimedia Journalist, WGBA-TV, Green Bay (and WTMJ-TV)

Elizabeth Wadas, Lead Investigative Reporter, WMTV-TV, Madison

Moderator

Jill Geisler, Bill Plante Chair in Leadership and Media Integrity at Loyola University, Chicago

The question team will work with the data team to research issues important to voters and to produce debate questions that elicit specific, meaningful answers from candidates. During the debate, as members of the question team address the candidates.

The data team will share the sources behind the research on the debate website and on social media after the questions are asked the evening of the debate. The goal of the data team is to provide voters with transparency to the data behind the questions asked of the candidates.

It also enables the audience to access reliable material that adds context to complex and contentious issues. The WBA's debate data-rich website will be accessible during and after the debate.

The debate will be moderated by WBA Hall of Fame inductee Jill Geisler. Geisler holds the Bill Plante Chair in Leadership and Media Integrity at Loyola University Chicago. The lifelong Wisconsinite was one of the first female news directors of a major market affiliate as news director at WITI-TV in Milwaukee. She's moderated numerous WBA Foundation debates since 2014.

The WBA encourages its members to inform the public by airing this debate and their own programming to help educate voters ahead of the election.

The WBA Foundation debate is sponsored by the Wisconsin Counties Association.

The WBA is a non-partisan statewide trade association representing radio and television broadcasters across the state. Questions or inquiries about the debates should be directed to debate@wba-foundation.org.



Jowett Fellowship recipient passionate about visual storytelling

A passionate photographer and videographer is the 2024 recipient of the Rick Jowett Fellowship.

Re'Nesha Donson has worked at WTMJ-TV in Milwaukee, WKOW-TV in Madison, and at WSIL-TV in Caterville, Illinois. She's a photojournalist who also has experience as a producer and in many other newsroom roles.



Donson

She was awarded \$2,000 to pursue Adobe After Effects courses, specialized photography training, and in-depth videography workshops on lighting and narrative editing, while enhancing her shooting ability, using a variety of cameras such as DSLRs and drones. She said, "Mastering these skills will enable me to craft engaging visuals for my social media platforms, elevate my video editing and shooting skills, and potentially give me the opportunity to produce powerful and inspiring feature segments."

She will also pursue both online and in-person training opportunities via MasterClass and Poynter workshops.

The Rick Jowett Fellowship was established in 2017 by the WBA Foundation to support educational opportunities for photographers and videographers who work in media in Wisconsin. Recipients of the fellowship can use the grant for professional development in the areas of photography and videography.

Applicants can learn more and apply on the WBA Foundation website. The annual submission deadline is June 1.

Rick Jowett grew up in a media family and spent his career in photography working for the Wausau Herald and WMTV-TV in Madison. Rick began working with the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association in 1985 as the Association's event photographer. He served graciously and unconditionally until his passing.

OFFICERS

Chair of the Board
Al Lancaster
Retired Wisconsin Broadcaster

Vice Chair
Bruce Grassman
Small market radio sales consultant

Secretary
Dick Record
Mid-West Family, La Crosse

Treasurer
Tom Walker
Mid-West Family, Madison

President & CEO
Michelle Vetterkind, CAE
Wisconsin Broadcasters Association
Foundation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Judson Beck
WFRV-TV, Green Bay

Greg Bell
Retired Wisconsin Broadcaster

Chris Bernier
Radio Plus, Fond du Lac

Lynn Bieritz
Mid-West Family, Eau Claire

Scott Chorski
Retired Wisconsin Broadcaster

Anna Engelhart
WKOW-TV, Madison

Aleese Fielder
NRG Media, Wausau/Stevens Point

Bill Hurwitz
Retired Wisconsin Broadcaster

R. Perry Kidder
Retired Wisconsin Broadcaster

Tom Koser
Koser Radio Group

Dean Maytag
Retired Wisconsin Broadcaster

Chris Palmer
WKBT-TV, La Crosse

Kelly Radandt
Woodward Radio Group
Appleton/Green Bay

David Sanks
Retired Wisconsin Broadcaster

Chuck Steinmetz
Retired Wisconsin Broadcaster

Student scholarship competition underway

Do you know a student who could use assistance with educational expenses?

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Foundation offers two \$2,500 scholarships and two \$1,500 scholarships. Students who meet eligibility requirements are encouraged to apply for these scholarships.

The application process is online. It's available on the WBA website at wi-broadcasters.org/scholarships

Students who have completed at least one-half of their degree or graduation requirements in

a media or media-related course of study are encouraged to apply.

Applicants must have either graduated from a Wisconsin high school or be attending a Higher Educational Institution in Wisconsin that has been designated as eligible by the WBA Foundation Board.

Applicants must be planning a media career that includes audio, visual and digital/social media platforms.

• Previous WBA scholarship winners are not eligible.

The deadline for application is Friday, Nov. 1, and all applica-

tions must be received by the WBA office by this date.

The WBA Education Committee, and the stations that utilize the scholarship menu option for EEO credit, will screen all scholarship applications. The final determinations for scholarships will be made by a vote of the WBA Foundation Board of Directors. The two highest ranked applicants by the WBA Foundation Board will receive the \$2,500 scholarships and the next two highest ranked will receive \$1,500 scholarships.

The scholarships will be awarded at the WBA's Student Forum, Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025 at Lambeau Field in Green Bay.



Would you like
your station to
participate?
[Learn more here.](#)

Awards

again, it's all about adding up the points to win Station of the Year and News Operation of the year.

And then, the Awards Gala. It's the incredible celebration of the thousands of hours your team has invested in your station, your audience, and your community. We gather to congratulate and commend our colleagues, as well as recognize the Best of the Best. We play a snippet of your winning entry as your walk to the podium – because you are an example of Excellence in Broadcasting. (Author's opinion – it would be wonderful if we could keep the volume down during the snippets at the Gala. Many times, the audience cannot hear the snippets over the chatter, which is the entire reason why we are celebrating.)

Also, please know – the awards program is not a fundraiser. It is mostly self-sustaining, thanks to a bit of financial support from the WBA Board.

The secret is math. Add up the points. Enter as often as the rules allow. You all should have your awards brochure by now. Read it. Ask every-

one to read it. Appoint your office Awards chairperson and start working on it today, if you haven't already!

Add up the entries, subtract rule disqualifications, multiply the motivation, and divide the pride. See, it's just a little math!

This article is just a fraction of the information you can find on the WBA website.

We encourage you to watch the webinar. See the link to the right.

We encourage you to ask all the questions. Just email Kyle at kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org.

We encourage you to send the brochure to everyone on your team. See the link to the right.

The WBA Awards Gala will be held Saturday, May 3, 2025, at the Madison Marriott West.

Well, that sums it up! We are looking forward to seeing you in May!

Nancy Douglass
WBA Awards Committee
WLKG, Lake Geneva

Continued from page 3



[Webinar video](#)



[Awards brochure](#)



NVLT Series
3.5 – 10 kW FM

**Outstanding Efficiency
at Exceptional Value**

nautel
nautel.com

Here's A Thought
with Dr. Gary Probst

Let the positive message of "Here's a Thought" attract new advertisers and larger budgets.

Broadcaster and Psychologist Dr. Gary Probst brings you a weekly feature that helps people improve their lives. The program is barter, with a :30 sec ad embedded, for a 1:30 total. Sell adjacent spots and Dr. Probst will record promotional messages for the local sponsor, enabling your sales department to encourage a local, market-exclusive opportunity for image advertisers.

For more information, contact Keith at Radiolinx: <https://radio-linx.com/heres-a-thought> or email: Drprobstwisconsin@gmail.com

**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.

Visit nationalguard.com




Your wba Calendar

Sept. 19, 2024
Webinar: Seek to Resonate, Not Just To Be Seen: Social Media + Video in 2024
with Lori Lewis

Oct. 27, 2024
Webinar: Psychological Safety in the Workplace
with Binnu Palta Hill

Nov. 21, 2024
Webinar: The Election is Over - What it Means for Broadcasters for 2025 and Beyond

Jan 22, 2025
WBA State Legislative Day
Wisconsin State Capitol

Feb. 22, 2025
WBA Student Forum
Lambeau Field

April 15-17, 2025
Walker Broadcast Management Institute
UW-Madison Campus

May 3, 2025
WBA Awards Gala
Madison Marriott West

June 18-19, 2025
WBA Summer Conference
La Crosse Radisson, La Crosse

June 17-19, 2025
WBA Duke Wright Media Technology Institute
La Crosse Radisson, La Crosse

Sept. 16-17, 2025
Midwest Regional Broadcasters Clinic
Madison Marriott West



More details
registration at
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

