



# “State of the Station” Annual Summary July 2017 – June 2018

## Administrative / Personnel

- Our Board members at the year-end: Julie Bowyer (President), Sharon Combes-Farr (V.P.), George Thomson (Secretary), Fra DeVine (Treasurer), Sharon Bixby, John Cama, Jon Clinch, Lou Krefski, Noah Schmidt.
- We had 3 of our positions in place for the whole year: Patrick Cody as Executive Director (Full-time), Fred Marin as Programming Coordinator (.75 FTE), and Ed McEneaney as Production Associate & general support (.25 FTE). Production Coordinator Adam Sayre (.75 FTE) left the position in October for a full-time opportunity at CATV in White River Junction. We hired back Vincent Guerrero as a Production Associate (at .5 FTE) in October, Vincent had worked for us at different times over the last 5 years. He recently left the position to try out living and working in the Boston area.
- We received a big help from September – January, when Black River HS junior Paige Kelley worked with us as a work-study student. We are exploring ways to further develop opportunities for students. I have discussed this with BRHS, GMUHS, River Valley Technical Center, & Castleton State University.

## Name Change

- At last year’s Annual Meeting (June 2017), we announced that we would be changing the name of the organization from “LPCTV” to “Okemo Valley TV”, which followed a process of evaluating the marketing potential of the organization and “brand” awareness.
- Part of that process involved surveying community members on possible new names. “Okemo Valley TV” received the most favorable response.
- Changing the name of the organization had been discussed for several years. Taking action on it was directly in response to the 2015 Strategic Plan, which emphasized the need to strengthen these areas.
- We held a logo contest, inviting community members to submit drafts of logo designs. Submissions were reviewed by our Marketing & Outreach Committee, and spearheaded by Board member Jon Clinch. We received many submissions, including several from Ms. Karen Wilson’s IT class at River Valley Technical Center. The winner of the logo was Cameron Purington, from that class. The class came for a field trip in October, giving us the opportunity to thank each of the students and Ms. Wilson in person, give a little show & tell, and also present Cameron with his award, a check for \$250.
- We then spent a week feverishly updating all graphics, and on October 20<sup>th</sup>, we officially changed the name and unveiled the new logo.

## Programming & Production

- We televised a combined total of 1,311 shows on our two TV channels this year, which include a wide variety of community programming, government meetings, studio shows, local events, churches, documentaries, concerts, as well as programming from State government, regional and statewide agencies, and numerous others. This number also includes shorter pieces, such as promotional videos and PSAs, and short music recordings.
- More than half of these shows (53%) were original local and regional shows. The large majority of the remainder was received through the Vermont Media Exchange video sharing network with our regional and statewide colleagues at other community stations. These are mainly shows from state government agencies and other statewide or regional non profits. Examples include the Governor’s press conferences,

legislative hearings, shows produced through Attorney General Donovan's office, a regular series from Lucy Mackenzie Humane Society, and a regular series called "Higher Education Matters", produced by the VT State Colleges. A smaller portion of programming (23%) was "imported" from outside of the area, including the daily news show "Democracy Now!" and regular series from federal government agencies, such as "Stem in 30" from the National Air & Space Museum, and "Science 360", from the National Science Federation.

- We are here to serve the local community, so we encourage members of the community to make requests for programming that they want to see.
- We provided "gavel-to-gavel" coverage of 186 local government meetings and public hearings during the past year, including most of those held by all of the various school boards and Supervisory Union committees, in advance of the merger votes. Thanks to SAPA-TV for providing coverage of 25 local government and school board meetings that we televised, including Chester-Andover School Board, River Valley Technical Center Board, and Green Mountain Union HS Board meetings.
- Thank you to our volunteers who covered school events, community events, and meetings for us this past year, most notably Sherri Geimer, Sharon Bixby, & Mary Omrod.
- We partnered & collaborated with several organizations this year on new projects: Black River Action Team (on "Black River Connections"), Springfield Medical Carte Systems (on "The Wellness Series"), Black River Independent School Committee, Ludlow Garden Club, Calvary Baptist Church, Black River Rod & Gun Club, Better Business Bureau, & Riding Rainbow Center.
- We continued our ongoing partnerships with such organizations as the President Coolidge Memorial Foundation, President Coolidge State Historical Site, Weston Playhouse, Black River Good Neighbor Services, Cavendish Community & Conservation Association, Cavendish Fletcher Free Library, Ludlow Elementary School, Black River Academy Museum, Upper Valley Curling Club, Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce, FOLA, Ludlow Rotary Club, Black River High School, St. James Methodist Church, Ludlow Baptist Church, So. Windsor & Windham Counties Solid Waste District, and BRACC.
- Once again, we worked with BRHS student Natasha Fortin, helping to support her documentary production for the Vermont and National History Day competitions. She once again shined, winning 1<sup>st</sup> place at Vermont History Day. We also provided some support to other students' History Day projects for Ms. Cyr's class.
- In addition to all of the local programming on our TV channels, we also televise community announcements, which periodically play in between programs. During this past year, we have televised more than 200 community announcement bulletins, sharing information about events & news, from 64 different organizations. This platform is available free of charge to any non profit organization, community group, school, or government office.
- Thanks to having BRHS student Paige Kelley as a work-study student during the Fall semester, who served as a liaison with Ludlow schools, we experienced increased activity with our collaborative school projects. Paige helped produce programs with LES, BRHSMS, and the Ludlow after school program (which included the fun dance video "Can't Stop the Feeling". Who doesn't love a bunch of elementary school kids running around and dancing?).
- After School: in addition to Paige's work with Ludlow after school, we had ongoing projects with the Mt. Holly after school throughout the year. Production Coordinator Adam Sayre did one project with them ("Magic Kids), and Vincent Guerrera did another ("Little Crimes"). These are both worth watching!
- We also had one ongoing in-school science video project with Ms. Thompson's 5<sup>th</sup> grade class at CTES, led by Production Coordinator, Adam Sayre. Check out "Does the Sun Rise & Set?" from the CTES Nature Explorers. We hope to continue this collaboration with Ms. Thompson this coming Fall.
- Since Comcast has added a You Tube app on its XFINITY X1 subscription service, we have been putting more content on the Okemo Valley TV You Tube channel (primarily short-form videos), and promoting that channel more.

## **Equipment & Building Improvements**

- The new HD studio cameras were installed a year ago; we have enjoyed having a 100% compatible facility, and offering that to our users. This is critical in order to meet our goals of being current and pertinent in the contemporary media landscape, so that we may, in turn, be of value to our users and core constituents (students, members, producers, staff, volunteers, and the community-at-large).
- And now that we are 100% HD with our workflow and in our facility, there is one limitation from being a truly HD station: our channels are only telecast in SD. With Comcast, we are stuck, at least for now, in the SD world. However, now that we are on VTel as well (as of 2016), we have an opportunity for HD channels. The other community stations on VTel have HD channels, but we do not. We have been working for the last 18 months to try to get our contract with VTel amended, to include the 2 HD channels. I believe we might be close. Regulatory Affairs Manager Gordon Mathews just expressed to me this week that they would re-evaluate the technical requirement to make this happen on their end, and have an answer for us later this week. So, hopefully, in the very near future, we can finally say that Okemo Valley TV is available in HD on VTel.
- Last Fall, we built a 12'x12' storage shed. Our own staff member Ed McEneaney was lead carpenter on the project.
- Just recently, we added a new roadside sign, replacing the old one seemed to go unnoticed by nearly everyone. You can't miss the turn into the driveway now!
- We have continued with the fundraising period for the 3rd and final phase of the facility renovation. The remainder of the build-out is estimated to cost \$175,000 (of which \$65,000 has been raised so far). The plans include walls, flooring, & ceilings for the editing suites, the "Digital Learning" lab / classroom, the master control room, studio control room, lobby / welcoming area, and support areas.

## **Community Outreach**

- We, along with Plymouth Historical Society, were recognized by the Northeast Region of Alliance for Community Media (ACM-NE) for our collaborative work with the documentary "Irene: Ruin to Renewal", which premiered in August 2016 and has since been periodically running on our channels. The documentary earned 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the documentary category at the ACM-NE film festival & awards, back in November.,
- We are pleased to announce the following 2018 Okemo Valley TV award recipients: Outstanding Achievement Award: Marji Graf, Community Service Award: Sharon Combes-Farr, Producer of the Year: Kelly Kingsbury / Ludlow Baptist Church, and Youth Producer Award: Paige Kelley.
- As a means to continue to diversify and embrace different media platforms, we launched our Instagram account last Summer. If you're on Instagram, please follow us!

## **Fundraising**

- We were awarded 2 grants during this past fiscal year: a \$25,000 "Building Communities" grant from the State of Vermont Department of Buildings & General Services, and a \$5,000 grant from the Cricket Foundation of Boston. The \$30,000 is being used as part of our building fund, towards the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final phase of the facility renovation project.
- The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Kentucky Derby Gala was held in May at Willie Dunn's Grille at the Okemo Valley Gold Course. Over \$4000 was raised for Okemo Valley TV. We are fortunate to have the support for this event, including the community members who attend and participate, and to Willie Dunn's for hosting. A big "thank you" goes out to our event sponsors: Okemo Mountain Resort, Ludlow Insurance Agency, The Book Nook, William Raevis Real Estate/ Vermont Properties, Jim Alic, Four Seasons Sotheby's International Realty, Wine & Cheese Depot / Stemwinder, and Ludlow Sidehill Cronchers Snowmobile Club.
- We have generated over \$180 in revenue through underwriting, which is a means for local businesses to

support our efforts with distributing the thousands of hours local programming each year. This has developed into a primary form of annual fundraising for our organization. Thanks to this year's underwriters: Okemo Mountain Resort, William Raevis Real Estate / Vermont Properties, The Book Nook, People's United Bank, Wine & Cheese Depot, and Springfield Medical Care Systems

- Thank you to the Town of Ludlow, Plymouth, Cavendish, and Mount Holly for their continued support through their respective municipal budgets. In total, \$3450 in revenue was generated through this support.

### **Other Notes**

- BRHS student Trey Bortlein volunteered as a photographer for us on a few different occasions during the past school year. He took some great nature and landscape stock photos for us to use in backgrounds of videos, and for bulletin board announcements. We appreciate his efforts as well as the level of enthusiasm for photography that he displays.
- We helped former Board member Jamie Ward produce audition videos on two separate occasions for the Late Night with Seth Meyers show. And he got the part... on both occasions. This is just an example of the kind of "value added" service we can offer, and leverage.