



## Director Report August 2018

### Production & Programming

- In preparation for our annual report, I have been running program reports and looking at the data. This year, I am also paying special attention to viewership data on our other platforms- our own website, as well as our Vimeo and You Tube channels. Those data sets support show us that content is viewed only when we promote / publicize it, and particularly when the content is produced in collaboration with others and those people / organizations share it on their own platforms. Shows that are simply uploaded to the website, or on You Tube & Vimeo, without any publicity, get very few views. I suspect the same goes for shows being televised on our TV channels. In short, this would support the argument that we need to put resources into curating content, program publicity, and on leveraging those collaborations. These steps should be an organization-wide effort and priority.
- I will share programming data in more depth with the Board, but just want to mention a summary of the highlights here as well. If you are familiar with our current strategic plan, you are aware that our goal is to double "local program offerings" within a 5-year period (from 2015 – 2020). This can be interpreted to mean both the volume of actual programs, produced both through us and community members, as well as the program hours dedicated to already-produced "local:" programs. The number of all shows, including "local" declined from FY17 to FY18, but the proportion of program hours dedicated to "local" increased. Even with the decline in the number of shows last year, it is still 20% more than we had in FY15, when the strategic plan goal was initiated. Still, there is some more work to do in this area. And it all goes back to publicity and being efficient with our time. The 2020 goal is still well within reach, as long as the right tools are implemented and we have an "all in" effort.
- During July, we had 31 new "local" programs. This is a little less than normal months, due to several government bodies taking the month not meeting. Out of these 31 shows, 10 were meetings (all covered by our staff), and 7 were church services (also a little lower than usual), which are covered by community members. The remaining 14 were unique new shows: an Act 148 / Recycling Update studio show with the outreach coordinator from the solid waste district, coverage of the July 4<sup>th</sup> / Coolidge Birthday ceremonies at the State Historic Site, Marji Graf's farewell mixer, the Chamber of the month presentation, Natasha Fortin's History Day documentary , 3 local Summer concerts, a new "FOLA Presents", coverage of the "Homegrown Arts Festival" in Ludlow, the gubernatorial candidate forum, the 1<sup>st</sup> episode of the re-boot of "Across Our Table" w/ BRGNS, and Ralph Pace's "Spotlight" show, featuring the Weston Playhouse. Most of this was coverage that we provided (meaning staff), or they were studio shows (FOLA Presents, Spotlight, Recycling Update). Our biggest production, in terms of resources, was a 3-camera production of the gubernatorial candidate forum.
- Other new productions, which are in the editing stages and/or haven't been released yet include the 2nd & 3rd episodes of "Across Our Table", 2 new episodes of the Black River Action Team's "Black River Connections", a promo we did for the Plymouth Community Center, interviews with local native authors Rachel Carter & Asher Ellis, a fire prevention PSA from Plymouth Volunteer firefighters, a piece on Cavendish Historical Society's exhibit on Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, a promo for Fletcher Farm School for Arts & Crafts, a presentation about the "Hollywood Blacklist", & a presentation on the ecology around Lake Ninevah.
- Next Friday, August 17<sup>th</sup>, z band with ties to Mount Holly, "Bunty Station", will be recording in our studio. It will be the largest music recording we've done in the studio to-date.
- This coming week, we are lending lighting & some other gear out to Sean Temple, who grew up in Ludlow and was involved with us when he was a student at Black River. He is now living & working as a filmmaker in L.A. He is back in Vermont to shoot a short film on Lake Champlain. I will be interviewing him next Thursday (the 16<sup>th</sup>), as a set-up for showing his 2016 short film, "Aster & Sid".
- The recent interview I recorded with Rachel Carter & Asher Ellis (2002 Black River grads) and this coming one with

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Sean Temple gave me an idea to try to make a regular "where are they now" type of series.

### **Outreach & Marketing**

- Awards: at our annual meeting on June 28<sup>th</sup>, we announced this year's 4 award recipients. They are: Marji Graf ("Outstanding Achievement" award), Sharon Combes-Farr ("Community Service" award), Kelly Kingsbury / Ludlow Baptist Church ("Producer of the Year"), and Paige Kelley ("Youth Producer of the Year").
- It's time for our annual Summer membership drive! We budgeted to receive \$1750 in revenue from membership dues this year, and the Summer drive is where most of this would normally be anticipated to be received. I will be sending out an email newsletter and posting on social media. An announcement will also go out in the papers, and we are promoting it on our channels. Board members should distribute these communications widely to their own networks...get people to renew or enroll as new members. It's as simple as going to our website and making a few clicks:
- While it is easier to manage if we get everyone to renew around the same time, early in our fiscal year, most board members and some others, have enrolled or renewed at different points during the last year. If you are unsure of when you last renewed, let me know and I will look it up.

### **Administrative / Organizational**

- I have hired Tanner Bischofberger for the temporary Production Associate position. Tanner recently graduated from GMUHSA & River Valley Tech, where he was involved with the Video Production program. He was an annual participant (and past winner) of the Skills USA video competition, and he recently places 2<sup>nd</sup> statewide in a distracted driving PSA contest held by VTRANS (I was actually one of the judges). He is only with us until mid-Sept., when he goes off to college in R.I., but until then, he will be doing a lot of editing and some shooting for us.
- The Production Associate job is being re-posted as a permanent position, with an anticipated start date of late September or early October.
- VTel: progress, albeit slowly, is being made, with getting our HD channels. I have been in conversations with their new Network Administrator (my point of contact for all things technical) about the technical aspects of the upgrade, and I have continued to engage with Gordon Mathews (Legal & Regulatory Affairs), about amending the contract, who has most recently reported "we'll be able to move ahead with one of these solutions shortly".