



## Director Report July-August 2021

### Programming & Production

- As far as production, the last two months, and the first of our new fiscal year, have been filled with coverage of hybrid meetings & events, as well as the Go Wild! Summer Camp
- Hybrid meetings: we continue to work with various board and community organizations in the implementation and production of hybrid meetings & events. The need arose during the earlier days of COVID but it has been growing ever since and my feeling is that it's here to stay. We are well-positioned to help support those who wish to leverage the technology and to make recommendations, including Town government. Some of the Towns in our area are exploring the use of COVID-relief (ARPA) Funds towards this, and I have been assisting with that process.
- Summer Camp: We partnered with TRSU's Go Wild Summer Camp from late June through early August. We ran a digital media camp, splitting it up into 3 main sections: iPhones & gimbals, Go Pros, & drones. We hired Wendy Reynolds (our marketing contractor & a licensed drone pilot) to run the 2-week segment on drones. We ended up with a lot of dynamic footage, all shot by the kids, which I'm in the process of editing. Most of the equipment plus half of Wendy's time was funded by TRSU.
- Since the beginning of July, in addition to all of the government meetings we've covered (25 of them in total) we have provided pro bono staff coverage for:
  - Cavendish Fletcher Community Library- Eric continues to work with Kata Welch on the production of Story Time readings
  - Mount Holly Community Historical Museum- Eric is producing a video about the mammoth discovery & research findings. He also recently covered a presentation by the researcher about those findings, which is being used as a separate "stand alone" piece
  - Mount Holly Conservation Trust- I recorded the grand unveiling of the new Okemo wildlife corridor and will be putting together a video for them this Fall
  - Summer Concert Series- We have recorded a few local concerts recorded in Proctorsville & Mount Holly
  - Chamber of Commerce- 1) "Best of Summer Festival". We will have a camera & drone there this Saturday. Eric & Wendy are teaming up to shoot some of the festival; and 2) We covered the Chamber's Annual Meeting in June
  - Expeditionary School at Black River- We covered a performance from Summer theater camp
- Lake Rescue Association Annual Meeting- we were hired to provide coverage of the hybrid meeting, which was held a couple of Saturdays ago next door in the Community Center
- We have received programming from a number of different local sources over the last two months, including: Liza Eaton (Yoga with Liza), Zachary McNaughton (VT Master Anglers), Pat Moore (The Missing Links in Concert), Ludlow Baptist Church, St. James United

Methodist Church, & Calvary Church.

### **Administrative / Personnel / Finance**

- Welcome new Board members Susan Haefner, Zachary McNaughton, & Newt Rose; and welcome back George Thomson for another term!
- With our new budget adopted at the Annual Meeting, we have some money towards filling the staffing need. I have advertised for a part-time Field Producer position. With the labor market being so tight, and staffing shortages abound, I expect that this could take some time to fill. We may need to get creative; with that in mind, and from building on discussions I've had with colleagues in the region, I am exploring the idea of shared staffing with other stations in our area.
- Sarah Devereux, who was working on a limited part-time basis for us since last Winter, has gone off to College (she's starting her Freshman year at Emerson in Boston).
- Last year, during FY2021, due to COVID and the increased workload, the only PTO that was taken by either Eric or myself was for holidays (we have 7 recognized federal holidays that are a part of our PTO). I am proposing that we be allowed to carry forward our unused remaining days and spread them out over two years, with half of the remaining days added onto the PTO total for this year (FY2022) and the other half next year (FY2023).
- And along those lines, as Fred is a part-time employee, in recognition of the extra effort during COVID and with the transition to remote work, I began offering paid holidays (for the 7 ones we recognize), starting with Independence Day last month. There was previously no benefits offered to part-time employees.
- As you may know, we contract with both Comcast & Vtel to provide PEG Access TV services. Our contract with Comcast expired at the end of 2017, but renegotiations were tabled while the Comcast v Vermont case was going through litigation. Since that was settled in 2019, Comcast has started the renegotiation process with us all (we are not alone, several others are in same boat). COVID slowed down the process some. Last year, in an effort to better streamline the contracts, a Vermont Access Network committee completed a proposed template for us all to use, which was negotiated with Comcast. The idea is that the template would serve as a starting point, and that each station, which may have specific needs, could negotiate with Comcast on top of that. In December, we then received a proposed draft from Comcast, which incorporated much of that template. I then had some discussion over email with Melissa Pierce, Comcast's manager of regulatory affairs for Vermont.; and then, a couple of weeks ago, we had a video conference call. I outlined what our primary needs are, apart from what's outlined in the contract template:
  1. HD channels
  2. Expansion of service area to include the Towns of Andover, Reading, & possibly Shrewsbury
  3. Cleaning up the cable replacement work that was started but abandoned by Comcast in 2018.

### **Community Engagement / Marketing & Outreach**

- We continue to send out weekly e-newsletters, featuring programming highlight and other news. We have been using it to plug the Summer membership drive as well, and because of it, we are off to a good start. Here is a list of all of the new members for FY2022: Alan Isaacson, Susan Haefner, Bruce Zanca, Pat Moore, Noah Schmidt, John Cama, Wendell Perkins, Patrick Cody.

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