



**WISCONSIN**  
**PUBLIC RADIO**  
**Annual Report 2014**

## From the director . . .

Just over 100 years ago, UW-Madison Electrical Engineering Professor Edward Bennett applied for a broadcast license from the U.S. Department of Commerce. He was granted “9XM” in 1914: “9” for the north central region of the country, “X” for experimental, and “M” for Madison. A year later, he loaned the license to Physics Professor Earle M. Terry for radio experimentation. The station Terry started with Bennett and others in Science Hall on campus was the predecessor to WPR’s WHA-AM, which still broadcasts today.

Although we no longer officially have the “X” for “experimental” in our name, WPR remains committed to exploring the possibilities of radio. The technological innovations of the internet age are remarkable, but it is the people and communities behind the technology that interest us most. In 2014, we saw tremendous growth in our online community. Pageviews to WPR websites passed 13 million, engaging interested audiences and drawing thousands of comments from people around the world. In social media, our Facebook page “Likes” grew by 62%, to more than 24,000.

As wonderful as online communities are, nothing can replace the experience of meeting people face to face. This year we launched a new initiative with Wisconsin Public Television and UW-Extension to hold a series of meetings around the state to better understand community issues. Local leaders and residents shared their perspectives and helped inform our approach to work on and off the air. This effort, along with our diversity sourcing project, is part of our commitment to ensure that everyone in Wisconsin feels included and welcomed in all that we do.

Our news and talk teams expanded their in-depth reporting this year, with special series on vital issues including gun violence, aging, long-term unemployment, LGBT issues and the state’s drinking culture, among others. And even as we mourned the loss of our dear friend and colleague Mike Simonson, we continued his legacy of educating the next generation of reporters with the announcement of the Mike Simonson Fellowship for Investigative Journalism in partnership with the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism. The fellowship, like our Lee Ester News Fellowship, helps attract some of the brightest young minds in journalism to public broadcasting.

Everything you see in this report and everything you hear on our airwaves is only possible because of your support. You keep us connected to community. You keep us innovative. You help us build the future and we are so grateful.



Mike Crane  
Director



Mike Crane with  
Keith Woods, NPR’s  
vice president for diversity.  
Keith has helped WPR and  
stations around the nation  
strengthen diversity in  
content, staffing and  
audience.



Photo by: Jim Gill



## The year at a glance . . .

**Wisconsin Life Launched on WPT** – WPR’s *Wisconsin Life* radio series expanded to television in a creative partnership with Wisconsin Public Television. The new TV series launched in February as a weekly 30-minute program.

**Celebrating 100 Years of 9XM** – UW-Madison Professor Edward Bennett received broadcast license 9XM in 1914. Bennett, along with Earle Terry and others, built 9XM into WHA, WPR’s flagship station. Bennett’s granddaughter and nephew (pictured with WPR’s Michele Good) helped us celebrate our history with a special live *Old Time Radio Drama* event in Madison in November.

**A Face for Every Name Project** – The Wisconsin Newspaper Association joined WPR and our public media partners to help volunteers around the state find hundreds of photos to match the 1,244 Wisconsin names on the Vietnam Veteran Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C.

**Saying Goodbye to Mike Simonson** – Wisconsin Public Radio Reporter Mike Simonson, our longtime friend and colleague, passed away in October. Mike joined WPR in 1990, the first reporter in the then newly opened bureau in Superior. Mike was an award-winning journalist who mentored many students over the years.

**Jim Fleming Retires as Host of *To the Best of Our Knowledge*** – After more than 20 years, Jim Fleming retired as host of *To the Best of Our Knowledge*, one of WPR’s three nationally broadcast programs. The show has won numerous awards, including radio’s highest honor, the Peabody Award.

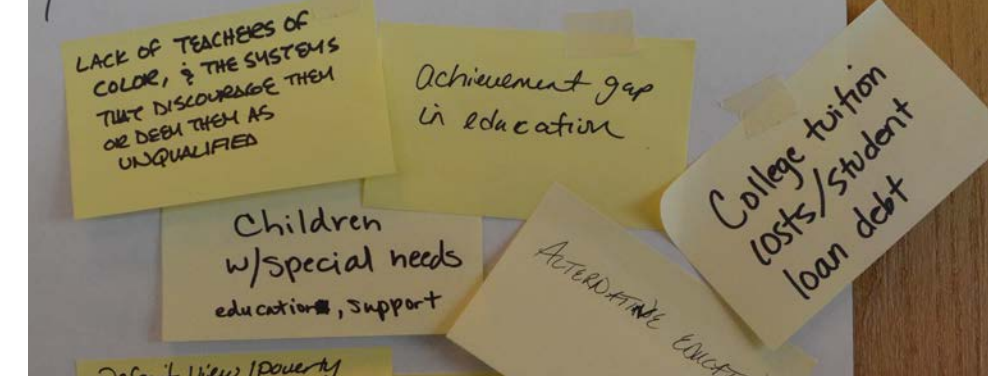
**Sustainer Membership Growth** – Steady, reliable funding is essential to WPR’s growth. We appreciate every single supporter we have and we are especially proud that the number of sustaining members, who make ongoing monthly contributions, grew to a third of our total membership in 2014.

**National Shows in Wisconsin** – *Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me!* wowed a sold-out crowd in Madison, Ira Glass enthralled fans in Door County and *Radiolab*'s Jad Abumrad (pictured) stopped by WPR studios to share his experiences with staff and students.

**Community Engagement Meetings** – WPR partnered with WPT and UW-Extension to hold a series of meetings around the state to better understand community issues. Community leaders shared their perspectives and helped inform our approach to work on and off the air throughout the state.



Photo by: Jim Gill





Melvin Beckwell of the St. Francis in the Park Nursing Home in Superior is just one of nearly 900,000 Wisconsin residents aged 65 or older.

Photo by: Jennifer Simonson

## News

Wisconsin is home to nearly 900,000 residents aged 65 or older. Providing care for these aging, often ailing loved ones impacts thousands of Wisconsin residents every day. That's why WPR's news and talk teams took a in-depth look at aging in Wisconsin in a special six-part series this year. As part of our commitment to local coverage that affects the people and communities of the state, we also focused on gun violence, long-term unemployment and more.

WPR has the largest network of news bureaus of any media in the state, providing in-depth explorations of Wisconsin's public affairs issues and ideas. We foster democracy with broadcasts and online resources that help people across the state connect with elected officials and public servants at all levels of local, state and national government.

In 2014, as in all election years, we invited ballot-certified candidates to participate in broadcast debates, forums and interviews and to record unfiltered candidate statements. WPR and WPT's non-partisan WisconsinVote.org project helped citizens find information about voter registration and candidates throughout the state.

We continued to invest in the future of journalism with our sixth Lee Ester News Fellow, Laurel White, who filed more than 60 stories during her time at WPR.

Most read WPR news story in 2014:  
"Beloit Police Ask Residents To Volunteer To Have Their Homes Searched For Guns"

**465,000**  
WPR.org Pageviews

**1,500+**  
Comments



A dedicated fan poses with Ideas Network Host Larry Meiller in the WPR booth at the 2014 Garden Expo.

## Conversation

Wisconsin Public Radio's Ideas Network provides a place for all Wisconsinites to discuss complicated issues through civil discourse and a respect for diverse points of view. During the 2014 election year, our airwaves were a town hall where residents could share and discuss ideas about election issues and community concerns.

WPR's news team and Ideas Network producers worked together to provide deeper coverage of big issues like gun violence, aging or long-term unemployment. This year *Central Time* also offered a week-long examination of Wisconsin's drinking culture, inviting experts and listeners to share their perspectives on everything from health and policing issues to the personal costs of alcohol abuse.

Of course, WPR also offered a great space for lifelong learning and just plain fun. Listeners always hear something they can use on *The Larry Meiller Show's* gardening, consumer issues, and how-to topics. And, in addition to current events, *The Joy Cardin Show* covers personal finance, and listeners — in Wisconsin and around the nation — turn to *Zorba Paster On Your Health* for perspective on medical concerns.


Anne Strainchamps took over as host for *To the Best of Our Knowledge* following the retirement of Jim Fleming in 2014. The team also welcomed Craig Eley, a humanities fellow, to the program and launched a national flash-fiction contest with award-winning science fiction author Kim Stanley Robinson.

Hours of original, Wisconsin-based Ideas Network programs each weekday:

9

Hours of archived Ideas Network programs on WPR.org:

30,000+



We love classical music, and we love Wisconsin, so we created *Wisconsin Classical*, a program dedicated to performances by musicians throughout the state.

## Music

Wisconsin is home to a rich array of classical musicians and this year WPR created a new program, *Wisconsin Classical*, to give those performers a chance to engage and inspire our listeners. Concert recordings from venues around the state, interviews, and performances ranging from small student ensembles to professional symphony orchestras are part of the program hosted each Sunday afternoon by Lori Skelton.

“One of our goals is to raise awareness of the caliber and diversity of music-making around Wisconsin,” said Peter Bryant, program director of WPR’s NPR News & Classical Music Network. The program is part of the more than 90 hours of classical music the network airs each week.

Live music continues to be an important part of our mission and programs like *The Midday* regularly feature performances from some of the best state, national and international talents available. We are proud to sponsor many community performances, knowing that exposure on WPR’s airwaves and website help keep local musicians and venues strong.

*Simply Folk* celebrated 35 years this year with a special program in the summer and *Higher Ground* Host Dr. Jonathan Overby was selected by the doctoral faculty of Edgewood College in Madison as the first recipient of the Dr. Joseph E. Schmiedicke Fellowship to advance his research on world music.

Recordings in the WPR  
Music Library:

**32,300**  
CDs

**15,750**  
LPs



Members of the 9XM Players onstage during a live *Old Time Radio Drama* performance at Madison's Music Hall.

## Entertainment

Every day WPR listeners rely on our news, music and talk programs, but on the weekends our entertainment programs bring smiles to thousands of households around the state and the nation.

In 2014, live performance continued to play a big role in our entertainment schedule. *Michael Feldman's Whad'Ya Know?* broadcasted live each week on public stations throughout the nation while occasional specials from *Old Time Radio Drama* and others offered live broadcasts here in the state. To mark the centennial of WPR's first broadcast license, 9XM, more than 500 fans turned out for a special performance in Madison's Music Hall.

As part of our partnership with the national storytelling program *The Moth*, WPR and Milwaukee's Miramar Theatre hosted live monthly storytelling competitions where audiences picked the winners. The performances were recorded and, local storyteller Alexandra Rosas of Cedarburg was selected for national broadcast. In Wisconsin, talent is found everywhere.

Also this year, we welcomed *This American Life* Host Ira Glass to Door County, and *Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me!* recorded a live show in Madison. WPR was pleased to hold a special meet-and-greet event where fans met Host Peter Sagal, panelists, and legendary Chicago broadcaster Bill Kurtis.

Number of times someone has asked Michael Feldman "Whad'ya know?" in 29 years of broadcasting his show:

**We don't know. Seriously.**



*Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me!* recorded a live show in Madison. Fans shared photos of Peter Sagal and legendary Chicago broadcaster Bill Kurtis (pictured) on social media.

## Digital

After an enormous effort to redesign and launch an updated WPR.org in 2013, we were pleased to see such a positive response in 2014. The new site gave Wisconsinites another way to experience the best of WPR and NPR's news, talk and music content. While online listening continued to grow, visitors were also choosing to read and comment on stories in ever greater numbers. One story in particular, on gun violence, drew more than 465,000 pageviews and more than 1,500 comments.

WPR used individual show pages on Facebook so listeners could post questions, share information and engage with our hosts and guests. Our main Facebook page "Likes" increased by 62%, to more than 24,000, as users increasingly turned to WPR's social media to stay up to date on everything from breaking news to healthy recipe recommendations from Dr. Zorba.

Our increased online presence also allowed us to expand our service to listeners beyond our broadcasts. *To the Best of Our Knowledge's* special series on death included online-only essays and videos, curated resources on death and dying, and photo essays that portrayed our interaction with death. Several new blogs were also launched, including *Vintage Wisconsin*, which dove into the history behind Wisconsin's historic photographs.

Our dedicated election site WisconsinVote.org was especially valuable during this election year, and WisconsinLife.org was an archive of the people and places that make Wisconsin home — both sites were collaborations with our friends at WPT.

Pageviews on WPR websites in 2014:

**13.2 million**

Increase in WPR Facebook "Likes" in 2014:

**62%**





WPR partnered with WPT and UW-Extension to hold a series of meetings around the state to better understand community issues.

## Community

In an effort to better serve all the people of Wisconsin, WPR collaborated with WPT and UW-Extension to hold a series of meetings with residents and leaders in communities around the state. In this first year of what we expect to be an annual process, we held meetings in seven communities, big and small. Staff from across our organization, including reporters, hosts, membership and administrative staff attended to listen and learn about the issues and concerns of Wisconsin's residents.

Partnerships are essential to our community work, and this year we were pleased to have the Wisconsin Newspaper Association join our project to find a photo of every Wisconsinite listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. To date, more than 1,000 of the 1,244 needed images have been found, and we hope to find the remaining images in 2015.

Each year our seven regional bureaus build partnerships with local nonprofits, arts organizations and venues to raise awareness of educational and entertainment opportunities at the local level. And our hosts — like Stephanie Elkins in Eau Claire, Kathleen Dunn in Milwaukee and Larry Meiller in Bayfield among others — made special appearances for broadcasts and promotion throughout 2014.

In our programs, we encouraged listeners to experience the state from diverse perspectives. *Wisconsin Life*, our most recent collaboration with WPT, built on this commitment by featuring stories of unexpected Wisconsin people and places not just on WPR, but on WPT and online at [WisconsinLife.org](http://WisconsinLife.org) as well.

WPR Audience Service calls in an average month:

**1,350**

Community engagement meetings held in 2014:

**7**



WPR's vehicle donation team was presented with Car Talk's "Rusty Hubcap Award" for Outstanding Performance of a vehicle donation program signed by Tom and Ray.

## Awards Received in 2014

### Wisconsin Broadcasters Association

#### CONTINUING COVERAGE

**3rd Place:** "Solidarity Sing Along" (Gilman Halsted & Shawn Johnson)

#### SPOT NEWS

**2nd Place:** "Mine Site Confrontation" (Danielle Kaeding & Mike Simonson)

**3rd Place:** "Germann Road Wildfire" (Danielle Kaeding & Mike Simonson)

#### HARD NEWS/INVESTIGATIVE

**1st Place:** "Affordable Care Act Series" (Gilman Halsted, Rich Kremer, Maureen McCollum, Shamane Mills & Patty Murray)

**2nd Place:** "Heroin in Wisconsin Series" (Kristen Durst, Gilman Halsted, Rich Kremer, Maureen McCollum, Shamane Mills & Glen Moberg)

#### BEST RADIO SHOW

**Large Market 3rd Place:** *The Joy Cardin Show*

**Medium Market 2nd Place:** "Meth and Heroin on the Rise in Western Wisconsin" (*The West Side*)

**Medium Market 3rd Place:** "Food Insecurity ... At Risk of Hunger" (*Newsmakers*)

#### INTERVIEW

**Medium Market 3rd Place:** Lisa Lampanelli (*Spectrum West*)

#### WRITING

**1st Place:** Shawn Johnson

**3rd Place:** Mike Simonson

#### FEATURE

**3rd Place:** "Harbormasters Quartet Sings Valentine's Classics" (Mike Simonson)

#### AUDIO

**2nd Place:** "Threshold Singers Bring Music to the Dying" (Terry Bell)

#### PROMO

**1st Place:** "One Day Wednesday"

**3rd Place:** "Afternoon News"

### Midwest Broadcast Journalists Association

#### GENERAL REPORTING

**Award of Merit:** "Solidarity Sing Along" (Gilman Halsted & Shawn Johnson)

#### SERIES

**Award of Merit:** "Affordable Care Act Series" (Gilman Halsted, Rich Kremer, Maureen McCollum, Shamane Mills & Patty Murray)

#### WRITING

**1st Place:** Shawn Johnson

#### INVESTIGATIVE

**Award of Merit:** "Common Core Debate Series" (Kristen Durst)

#### AUDIO

**1st Place:** "Threshold Singers Bring Music to the Dying" (Terry Bell)

#### TALK/PUBLIC AFFAIRS

**Small Market Award of Merit:** "Meth and Heroin on the Rise in Western Wisconsin" (Rich Kremer, *The West Side*)

### Milwaukee Press Club

#### ONGOING NEWS STORY

**Silver:** "Mine Site Confrontation" (Danielle Kaeding & Mike Simonson)

**Bronze:** "Germann Road Wildfire" (Danielle Kaeding & Mike Simonson)

#### FEATURE

**Gold:** "1963: The Year That Changed America" (Gilman Halsted, Danielle Kaeding, Chuck Quirnbach & Mike Simonson)

**Silver:** "Nonprofit Restaurant in Milwaukee Trains Veterans in Food Service Work" (Chuck Quirnbach)

#### DOCUMENTARY, INVESTIGATIVE, PUBLIC AFFAIRS or SERIES

**Silver:** "Heroin in Wisconsin Series" (Kristen Durst, Gilman Halsted, Rich Kremer, Maureen McCollum, Shamane Mills & Glen Moberg)

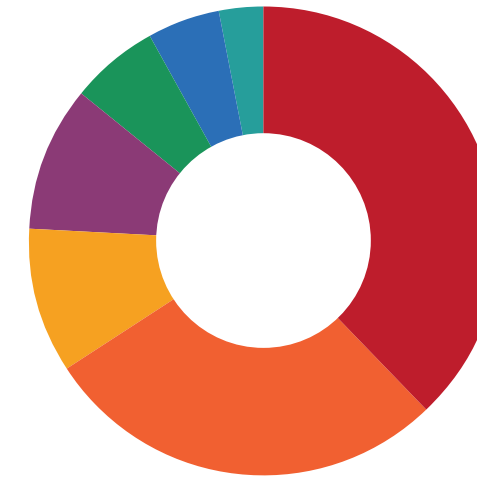
\* We are also very proud of our student journalists who were honored for their work this year, including: Joe Gigliotti, Jessica Hamilton, Alyssa Palmer, James Pfitzinger, Brad Phenow, Jessica Sharpee and Geraldine Tong.

# 2014 FINANCIAL REPORT

## Statement of Financial Activity

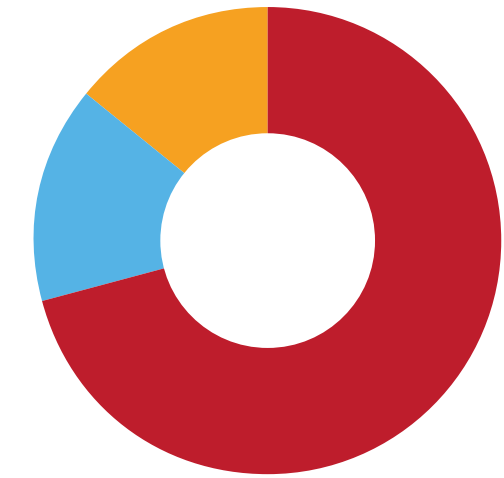
	FY14 Total	FY14 % Total	FY13 Total
<b>Revenues</b>			
State Support	6,461,168	28%	5,933,322
In-Kind Support	1,427,526	6%	1,913,907
Listeners	8,638,659	38%	7,358,004
Corporate Support	2,288,817	10%	1,952,034
Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)	1,251,423	5%	1,216,684
Capital Contributions	585,130	3%	1,010,792
Other	2,387,455	10%	1,963,836
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>23,040,178</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>21,348,579</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Broadcasting and Programming	14,183,943	71%	17,522,429
Administration	3,059,189	15%	3,386,561
Fundraising	2,801,704	14%	2,453,562
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>20,044,836</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>23,362,552</b>
<b>Increase In Net Assets</b>	<b>2,995,342</b>		<b>(2,013,973)</b>

Sources: Audited financial statements of WHA Radio and the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board.  
 Issued audits are available at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lab/CurrentReportsByDate.htm>



**2014 Revenue**

- 38% Listeners**  
*Member contributions including major gifts and bequests*
- 28% State Support**  
*Money received from the state and university in the form of General Purpose Revenue (GPR)*
- 10% Corporate Support**  
*Underwriting revenue*
- 10% Other**  
*Investment income, public broadcasting carriage fees, merchandise & ticket sales, production fees and other miscellaneous revenue*
- 6% In-Kind Support**  
*Primarily administrative and facilities support which are allocated costs incurred by the UW System on behalf of WPR*
- 5% Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)**  
*Community Service Grants (CSG) based on the amount of Non-federal Financial Support (NFFS) generated by WPR*
- 3% Capital Contributions**  
*State Building Trust Funds, NTIA Grants and CPB HD Grants*



**2014 Expenses**

- 71% Broadcasting and Programming**  
*Acquisition, production and transmission of programming as well as related promotional materials*
- 15% Administration**  
*Management and administration including costs incurred by UW System on behalf of WPR*
- 14% Fundraising**  
*Costs incurred in the solicitation of membership and underwriting revenue*

Wisconsin Public Radio operates three statewide networks — the Ideas Network, NPR News & Classical Music, and WPR HD Classical — that broadcast from 35 stations around the state. More than 440,000 Wisconsinites tune in each week and our websites hosted more than 13.2 million pageviews in 2014.

If you have questions about WPR programs and activities in your community, you can contact our Audiences Services team at 800-747-7444 or email [listener@wpr.org](mailto:listener@wpr.org). You can also contact your local regional manager directly (see below):

Dean Kallenbach, Eau Claire Area Regional Manager  
[Dean.Kallenbach@wpr.org](mailto:Dean.Kallenbach@wpr.org)

Ellen Clark, Green Bay Area Regional Manager  
[Ellen.Clark@wpr.org](mailto:Ellen.Clark@wpr.org)

John Gaddo, La Crosse Area Regional Manager  
[John.Gaddo@wpr.org](mailto:John.Gaddo@wpr.org)

Lisa Nalbandian, Milwaukee Area Regional Manager  
[Lisa.Nalbandian@wpr.org](mailto:Lisa.Nalbandian@wpr.org)

John Munson, Superior Area Regional Manager  
[John.Munson@wpr.org](mailto:John.Munson@wpr.org)

For the Wausau Area, contact Jane Ritger  
[Jane.Ritger@wpr.org](mailto:Jane.Ritger@wpr.org)

For the Madison Area and general questions, contact  
Jeffrey Potter, WPR Marketing Director:  
[Jeffrey.Potter@wpr.org](mailto:Jeffrey.Potter@wpr.org)

Wisconsin Public Radio's mission is to inform, entertain and engage citizens and communities. Our objective is to be our state's best source of news, talk and cultural content.



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Cover: *To the Best of Our Knowledge's* (L to R) Rehman Tungekar, Anne Strainchamps and Charles Monroe-Kane in WPR's Madison studios.

All report photos by Jeffrey Potter unless noted on the image.