



WISCONSIN
PUBLIC RADIO

Annual Report 2018



Embracing Complexity

We live in complicated times and that's *good*. At WPR we thrive on complexity; it's kind of our thing. We embrace exploration, new perspectives and a diversity of experiences, ideas and expectations. As you'll see from the enclosed report, 2018 offered us plenty of opportunities to thrive.

As part of our election coverage, we launched a year-long series called "Beyond the Ballot." WPR reporters interviewed more than 500 people in all corners of the state — asking them about the role of government in their lives. We welcomed Kate Archer Kent as host of "The Morning Show" and toured the state with our "Politics Podcast" team. Our WPR Next project generated its first new show, "BETA." And, we collaborated with the CBC to host a special cross-border, bi-national call-in show that brought ordinary Canadians and Americans together to discuss trade issues.

Of course, we also carried beautiful music, entertainment and thoughtful conversation on topics useful to your daily routine — from personal health, to gardening, travel, cooking and more. And, we came out to meet you with events in communities big and small.

With two networks, 37 stations and dozens of programs, WPR is a complex organization — but our mission and purpose is quite simple. We're here to enrich life in Wisconsin — your life — with free and independent content that informs and inspires you and your community.

Thank you for your support,

Mike Crane, Director

2018 at a Glance

A Future for Journalism

As part of WPR's continuing commitment to training the next generation of journalists with public media's high standards of ethics and integrity, the station hired three talented reporters as part of our fellowship program: Ximena Conde in Milwaukee, Phoebe Petrovic (pictured right) in Madison and Sarah Whites-Koditschek (left) who is embedded with the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism.



“On Point” with David Folkenflik

NPR's Media Correspondent and “On Point” Host David Folkenflik (right) stopped by our Madison studios to meet with staff and broadcast the national program in the fall. NPR's Mara Liasson (pictured on the cover) also visited us in the spring.



Beyond Wisconsin's Borders

For nearly 20 years Ruthanne Bessman (right) has hosted “Classics By Request” on Saturday mornings. This year, she honored the centennial of Leonard Bernstein's birth with a special program. During the show she was surprised to receive a request from Marin Alsop, the principal conductor of the Baltimore Symphony, who wrote in from Scotland where she was conducting Bernstein that evening.



Listening to You

WPR's Audience Services department (right) responded to approximately 31,000 phone calls and almost 5,000 emails in 2018. Your questions about our programs are always welcome. Connect with us at listener@wpr.org or 888-747-7444.





New Sounds, New Voices

In 2017, WPR launched “WPR Next,” a new content incubator designed to foster talent and produce new programs for the station. After two successful pilots, “BETA” landed on WPR’s weekend schedule in the spring of 2018. According to host and producer Doug Gordon, “BETA” takes an immersive, innovative, playful and provocative approach to exploring arts, culture and technology. “I think there’s a lot more room for playfulness and irreverence on public radio,” says Gordon.

In the fall, “Wisconsin Life” producer Maureen McCollum launched a new series that answers questions listeners post about Wisconsin, its people and its culture. Called “WHYsconsin,” the project has already explored questions like “Who writes those electronic highway sign messages?,” “What song best unites Wisconsin’s diverse music fans?,” and “Why is the badger our state animal?”

WPR welcomed new hosts in 2018 as well. Melissa Ingells came on as statewide host of “NPR’s Morning Edition” and Kate Archer Kent moved into full-time hosting of “The Morning Show” on The Ideas Network.

Photos: “BETA” Host Doug Gordon in the studio (top), new “The Morning Show” Host Kate Archer Kent (bottom).



Elections & Issues

WPR's commitment to the highest standards of news and cultural content reflects its belief that Wisconsinites thrive with an open exchange of ideas and information. Our news and public affairs teams set ambitious goals during this important state and federal election year.

WPR news launched a year-long project called “Beyond the Ballot” to learn more about how Wisconsinites view the role of government in their lives and the issues they are most concerned about. More than 500 interviews were collected for use on air and online.

Capitol Bureau Chief Shawn Johnson, Capitol Reporter Laurel White and Digital News Editor/Host John K. Wilson, took WPR's weekly “Politics Podcast” on the road for a series of live shows around the state that combined their first-hand reporting with a dose of humor.

CBC Radio's “Cross Country Checkup” joined forces with The Ideas Network to produce a live, cross-border call-in show. For two hours, farmers, steelworkers, politicians and entrepreneurs in Canada and the United States phoned in to share hopes and fears about trade talks between the two nations.

Photos: “Central Time” Host Rob Ferrett co-hosting “Cross Country Check Up” on WPR and the CBC (top), Capitol Reporter Laurel White and the “WPR Politics Podcast” team (bottom).



Live & Local

WPR is on air, online and in communities across the state. Reporters at our seven bureaus cover the news in depth, from Danielle Kaeding's reporting on the fire at the Husky Refinery in Superior to ongoing discussion of the Foxconn deal on "Central Time." And, regional programs like "Route 51" and "Spectrum West" feature Wisconsin artists, authors, innovators and news makers.

Our live events program, WPR Presents, takes our hosts and shows out of the studio to venues throughout Wisconsin. In addition to our "Politics Podcast" tour, "Old Time Radio Drama" performed live in Wausau, Eau Claire and Mineral Point. "To The Best Of Our Knowledge" did a live show in Milwaukee, fans gathered for a traditional Scandinavian meal at Al Johnson's restaurant in Door County and also for our second Simply Folk Shindig in Wausau.

Finally, WPR hosted free events in Eau Claire, Ashland, Stevens Point and Superior to say "thank you" to listeners. More great events are planned for 2019. Find them all at wpr.org/presents.

Photos: "Simply Folk" fans at the 2nd Annual Simply Folk Shindig in Rothschild (top), Milwaukee bassist Johanna Rose of Nickel & Rose on stage during the show (bottom).

2018 Financial Report

2018 Revenue



41% Listeners Member contributions including major gifts and bequests

25% State Support Money received from the state and university in the form of General Purpose Revenue (GPR)

12% Business Support Underwriting revenue

11% Other Investment income, public broadcasting carriage fees, merchandise and ticket sales, production fees and other miscellaneous revenue

5% 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

1% Capital Contributions State Building Trust Funds, NTIA Grants and CPB HD Grants

2018 Expenses



66% Broadcasting and Programming Acquisition, production and transmission of programming as well as related promotional materials

18% Fundraising Costs incurred in the solicitation of membership and underwriting revenue

16% Administration Management and administration including costs incurred by UW System on behalf of WPR

Revenues	FY18 Total	FY18 % Total	FY17 Total
State Support	5,872,406	25%	6,291,978
In-Kind Support	1,238,285	5%	1,283,948
Listeners	9,854,017	41%	9,907,173
Business Support	2,874,220	12%	2,979,596
CPB	1,283,350	5%	1,357,678
Capital Contributions	152,642	1%	462,550
Other	2,667,185	10%	2,583,545
Total Revenue	23,942,105	100%	24,866,468
Expenses	FY18 Total	FY18 % Total	FY17 Total
Broadcasting and Programming	13,103,070	66%	13,813,626
Administration	3,192,454	16%	3,235,628
Fundraising	3,472,960	18%	3,456,788
Total Expense	19,768,484	100%	20,506,042
Increase In Net Assets	4,173,621		4,360,426



For more than 100 years, Wisconsin Public Radio has enriched life in the state with free and independent content that informs and inspires individuals and communities.

WPR operates 3 networks on 37 stations from 8 offices around Wisconsin. More than 450,000 listeners tuned in each week in 2018 and more than 12 million pages were viewed on WPR websites.

Questions? Contact Audience Services at 1-800-747-7444 or listener@wpr.org



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Cover Photos: (Clockwise from top left) Anne Strainchamps on stage in Milwaukee, live “on air” light, fans having a laugh at the “Politics Podcast” tour stop in Appleton, Carl Nichols of Nickel & Rose in our studios, the 9XM Players on stage in Mineral Point, NPR Correspondent Mara Liasson in Madison, one of more than 500 participants in our “Beyond the Ballot” news series.