The BritCom makes way for the BritDram on Western Reserve PBS

The reign of British comedies on PBS stations is over. Make way for the booming popularity of British drama, reports our programmer, Don Freeman.

For years, British comedy was the strongest performing genre on Western Reserve PBS. However, over the last few years it had become obvious that our BritComs were not returning as many benefits as they once did, such as high viewership and pledge revenue. The older and more popular BritComs — Are You Being Served?, Keeping Up Appearances and As Time Goes By — continued to draw respectable, though smaller, audiences, and their affordable per-hour cost (since they are many years old) continued to be a good financial deal for the station. However, the new BritComs available to PBS stations — Worst Week of My Life, Outnumbered and Other Guys — were not as popular and their per-hour acquisition costs were higher than the older BritComs.

When television starts to close a door, it cracks open another viewing window. British drama (we’re calling it BritDram) is on an amazing rise on PBS stations. The recent success of BritDrams may have started with Masterpiece’s rebranding a few years ago — from Masterpiece Theatre to Masterpiece and the separation into its three distinctive seasonal sub-genres of Classic, Contemporary and Mystery! Plus, there’s that little series called Downton Abbey, which just completed its third season.

Seeing a trend in the making, Freeman began more aggressive acquisition of BritDrams, especially those that would be unique to Western Reserve PBS. At first, he acquired two seasons of Hetty Wainthropp Investigates, and its Thursday night broadcast rivaled the audience numbers of our Saturday night BritComs. Acquisition costs for the series were 25 percent lower per hour, too. Based on that success, he worked with BBC Worldwide Americas to acquire a number of new BritDrams. He redesigned the Western Reserve PBS schedule to accommodate two hours of BritDrams on Thursday nights; retain one hour on Saturday nights, with the intention of expanding that to two hours sometime this spring; and make multiple showings available on our SD channel, Fusion. Additionally, he licensed several documentaries and miniseries focused on British culture and history, such as Queen’s Palaces, Islands of Britain, She-Wolves: England’s Early Queens and Diamond Queen.

So what are the results? The Thursday night airings of Doc Martin and now Death in Paradise and Saturday’s run of Born and Bred have significantly higher audience levels than previous shows in those time periods. British culture and history documentaries are strong additions to our schedule and spike viewing levels wherever they are scheduled. If you take a look at the top 20 programs in January 2013 (left), you’ll see the full impact.

Going forward, you’ll find more new BritDrams in our schedule. Look for another season of Hetty Wainthropp Investigates; a women’s detective series called Scott & Bailey; and a new series called Hustle starring Robert Vaughan (yes, the “Man From U.N.C.L.E.”). Most of these series and documentaries are exclusive to Western Reserve PBS — meaning you won’t find them on any other local station.
Kent-based artist Joseph O’Sickey to be profiled in new Western Reserve Public Media documentary

Joseph O’Sickey, the Kent-based artist who will receive the 2013 Ohio Governor’s Award for the Arts on May 15 and whose works will be celebrated in a Canton Museum of Art retrospective this spring, is the subject of an upcoming Western Reserve Public Media documentary, thanks to funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences and Stark Community Foundation. Freelance journalist Sarah Taylor, formerly of WKSU-FM, is working with President and CEO Trina Cutter to produce the documentary, which will premiere in early May.

“Joe is 94, still living on his own, with a memory sharper than most,” reports Taylor. “He shares incredible details about moments in his life.” She visits with O’Sickey in his home to see him at work and to talk about his life as an artist. He discusses the evolution of his painting style; his devotion to the practice of sketching; and his 60+ year love affair with his late wife, Algesa.

Taylor also interviews Ken Gessford, a former student of O’Sickey’s from Kent State University, and Ron and Diane (Dinny) Bell, friends and collectors who call their home an “O’Sickey museum.”

Cleveland Plain Dealer art critic Steven Litt once described O’Sickey as “the dean of painting in Northeast Ohio.” Born in 1918, the artist has spent seven of his more than nine decades painting and teaching in Ohio, first at The Ohio State University. He joined the KSU School of Art faculty in the 1960s and retired from KSU in 1989.

In the course of producing this special, Taylor has discovered that, “Joe does not view art as work, although clearly he’s a very productive artist. He views his art as a way to experience life.”

O’Sickey has won numerous awards in painting and has had more than 50 solo exhibitions throughout his life. His works can be found at the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, the Canton Museum of Art, the Cleveland Museum of Art and in many other private and public art collections.

The premiere of Western Reserve Public Media’s documentary coincides with the May 2 opening of Joseph O’Sickey: Unifying Art, Life and Love, a Canton Museum of Art exhibition celebrating the lengthy career of this respected Ohio artist. The show involves collaborations with other museums and galleries in Northeast Ohio and will include a full-color publication of his life and work. The exhibition will be open May 2-July 29, 2013.

Two new multimedia packages in production for 2013-14 school year

Western Reserve Public Media has received a $109,000 eTech Ohio grant for two multimedia projects for use in the 2013-14 academic year.

Project organizer Ria Mastromatteo, retired director of education at Western Reserve Public Media, is working with two teacher teams to develop yet-to-be-titled packages for seventh and eighth graders on poetry and research. Education standards addressed are common core language arts and mathematics. The poetry project will explore what poetry is and the purposes it serves. Students will learn about literary conventions used to create poetry and how these conventions, or tools, are applied. The research package will help students understand what data is and how to find reliable data on the Internet. They’ll discover how to use research skills in reading and writing and how to integrate valid data into a project.

Each multimedia package will include six videos — three for students and three for professional development. Additionally, the teacher teams will develop a teacher guide with lesson plans, resource pages, student handouts and a website for each project.

NewsNite takes a look at fracking

Ohioans have varying, strong opinions about harvesting the oil and gas reserves deep underground in the eastern part of the state within the layers of Marcellus and Utica shales. Recently, NewsNite tackled the issue of hydraulic fracturing — more familiarly known as fracking. This edition is now available as video on demand at www.NewsNite.net.

Host Jody Miller welcomes journalists Tim Rudell, senior reporter with WKSU-FM, and Bob Downing, environmental, parks and outdoors staff writer at the Akron Beacon Journal, to discuss the ramifications of this evolving issue. Both journalists have covered the story in depth for several years, and they share their input as to whether the fracking phenomenon will be an economic boom, environmental bust or some combination of both. The discussion ranges from the new technology enabling companies to drill horizontal wells to the hydraulic fracturing that releases the natural gas, oil and wet gases that are so lucrative. Rudell and Downing discuss state regulations for the leasing and drilling of wells, the environmental impacts of that drilling and the lack of local control over the exponential growth of this industry.
Some 2 million men fought for the Union during the American Civil War. More than 2,100 of them came from rural Portage County in Ohio. In a new documentary, The “Sojer Boys” of Portage County, Fred Endres, of Kent State University, tells the story of seven of those young men. The production premiered on Western Reserve PBS in early February.

As the nation commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, Endres, a professor-in-residence in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, uses the letters and diaries of the men to take a close, personal look at the war. The seven men he follows ranged in age from 17 to 24. One was married with two children; the others were single. One was a blacksmith, one a teacher, the rest farmers. The documentary follows them as they experience the conflict: from their enlistment and early, rudimentary training, through their encounters with different cultures and people in the South, to their reactions to the boredom of camp life and the terror of the battlefield.

Endres keeps his focus on the men in the field, not the generals or politicians. Of the 2,100 men from Portage County who served in the war, more than 300 did not return. Two of the seven “Sojer Boys” were killed, and only one escaped spending time in a hospital for a wound or disease.

Students from KSU and The University of Akron were involved in the documentary, which took more than two years to produce. They did research, uncovered old photographs and provided the voices for the soldiers and nurses featured in the program.

Support for the documentary came from the KSU School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the College of Communication and Information.

University of Akron Jazz Band featured in Christmas Eve concert

On Christmas Eve, Western Reserve PBS viewers enjoyed a “Jingle Jazz” concert featuring University of Akron jazz musicians. Pianist Joe Augustine, trumpeter Jack Schantz, vocalist Patty LaNasa and more musicians from the UA School of Music combined their musical talents for the concert, which took place on Sunday, Dec. 9, at E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall on the UA campus. The recording is the work of Dr. Phil Hoffman of the UA School of Communication.
Free basic computer training to continue through June

Western Reserve Educational Services continues its collaboration with Connect Ohio to offer Every Citizen Online training. This free computer training is presented at Western Reserve Public Media’s 21st Century Learning Center. The training is part of the state of Ohio’s Every Citizen Online program, which runs until July 1, 2013.

The three-part sessions are held every week as follows:

- Level 1 — Computer Basics: Mondays through Wednesdays from 9-11 a.m. Learn about basic computer operations, hardware and software.
- Level 2 — Internet Essentials: Mondays through Wednesdays from noon to 2 p.m. Learn the basics of the Internet.
- Level 3 — Web Applications: Mondays through Wednesdays from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Learn about many Internet applications, including email, social networks and online documents.

To maximize attendance, we are broadcasting promotional spots on Western Reserve PBS and Fusion, produced by Connect Ohio, to inform our viewers of the potentials of the training.

Ed Services team attends eTech Ohio Conference

Western Reserve Public Media’s Educational Services was well represented at the annual eTech Ohio Technology Conference, held in Columbus in mid-February. Our Educational Services team hosted an informational booth for the conference, and ITIP Ohio’s booth was operated by Jeff Good, our director of education. Our two 21st century learning consultants, Barb Moore and Dave Philibin, conducted learning sessions at the conference. Moore’s session focused on online resources connected with the new common core standards and Philibin’s session focused on iPad applications.

Support for Digital Learning Day

The state of Ohio and Western Reserve Educational Services were pleased to be part of the national Digital Learning Day celebration on Feb. 6. Western Reserve Educational Services collaborated with a board of professionals representing several state agencies to create and support the classroom online learning event, Fuel Up With Breakfast: What’s in Your Bowl? Each online session was age appropriate and built around breakfast nutrition concepts. The goal of the event was to build awareness of digital learning in Ohio as well as set a world record for most learners online in a single day. The month-long statewide celebration included the participation of state agencies, school districts, nonprofit organizations and legislators. The focus was on resources to assist schools and districts in offering and expanding blended learning. Support for digital learning is one of Ohio’s top priorities.

Ohio Teacher Showcase celebrates innovative “best practices” in the classroom

In December, Western Reserve Educational Services and ITIP Ohio partnered with the Ohio Department of Education to showcase the innovative practices that Ohio teachers are implementing in their classrooms. Ohio Teacher Showcase focused on the gathering of video documentation of effective teaching practices, which includes the application of common core standards and the use of technology delivered through project-based learning activities. The partners presented a three-day training course to school districts throughout the state. Then, in February, the partners supported districts involved with the project through professional development that concentrated on video editing with the iPad and smart boards as well as the use of technology to develop a professional learning network.

Western Reserve Educational Services receives professional development grant

Western Reserve Educational Services received notification in February that it has received a Quality Matters Professional Development Grant from eTech Ohio. All grantees are Ohio public regional service agencies that have the capacity and desire to deliver professional development to K-12 schools and educators in the use of the Grades 6-12 Quality Matters rubric.

Western Reserve Educational Services will launch Quality Matters training in Northeast Ohio between April and August 2013 and begin to build a sustainable model for continuation of professional development in the future. We will also work in collaboration with ITS CO, a central Ohio educational technology agency, to provide similar services in Southeast Ohio.

Quality Matters has been a developer of evaluation and training materials for higher education institutions seeking to evaluate online courses available to students. The Quality Matters Grades 6-12 rubric is newly developed for educators seeking to evaluate online coursework developed by a district or offered by national vendors. The goals of the Quality Matters Grades 6-12 rubric are to build the capacity of Ohio schools to develop and/or select high quality online and blended courses so that more students can engage in them and to ensure consistent and high quality online/blended instruction.

Director of Education Jeff Good and 21st century learning consultants Dave Philibin and Barb Moore will participate in a 10-week online training course that will qualify them to facilitate a three-week online course to interested educators beginning in June.

Professional development update

From December 2012 through February 2013, Western Reserve Educational Services presented over 30 professional development sessions to area educators interested in the classroom integration of technology such as interactive whiteboards, iPad, iPod Touch, Google applications and more. A new professional development session, titled Organizing Your Professional Learning Network With Technology, was presented by 21st century learning consultant Barb Moore.

The professional development schedule for spring and summer 2013 includes more than 40 sessions through May, with six additional three-day sessions planned for the summer. The spring schedule will also present two of our most popular trainings for graduate credit: Smart Board Boot Camp and Project-Based Learning in Your Classroom, the latter developed by Moore. Participants that attend the four nights of training will receive one hour of graduate credit from Kent State University.

Ohio Ready To Learn update

The Ohio Ready To Learn program, dedicated to the training and development of family childcare providers, has been funded for the fiscal year. About half of the required 33 annual workshops were delivered over the fall and winter. Pam Oviatt serves as the project coordinator.
Outreach & Special Events

Downton fans enjoy “Fashion & Fandom: A Downton Abbey Evening” in December

Over 250 guests – some dressed in Edwardian-era garb – joined Western Reserve PBS for a special evening to celebrate the premiere of the third season of Masterpiece’s Downton Abbey. We hosted “Fashion & Fandom: A Downton Abbey Evening” on Thursday, Dec. 13, from 6:30-9 p.m. at the Kent State University Museum. The free event featured a one-hour sneak preview of season three of Downton Abbey, audience conversation led by Plain Dealer writer Joanna Connors, a tour of Kent State University Museum’s collection of Edwardian fashions and light refreshments provided by Akron’s West Side Bakery.

Western Reserve PBS co-sponsors sneak preview of local documentary in Kent

Despite a winter storm, history buffs found their way to Franklin Hall on the Kent State University campus for a sneak preview of The “Sojer Boys” of Portage County. Western Reserve PBS was the co-sponsor of the event on Saturday, Feb. 2. Fred Endres, producer of the documentary, introduced the documentary and hosted a question-and-answer session afterwards.

Members join Peter Yarrow for reception

In January, Western Reserve PBS members were invited to an exclusive reception for Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul & Mary fame. The reception was held at McKay Bricker Gallery in Kent, right down the street from The Kent Stage, where Yarrow was performing later in the evening.

Cat in Hat headlines Sixth Annual Family Reading Festival in Akron

Western Reserve PBS was both participant and media sponsor of the 6th Annual Family Reading Festival, held at the Akron-Summit County Public Library on Feb. 9. Over 1,000 children and their families gathered to meet Western Reserve PBS’s special guest, The Cat in the Hat. The free event provided a book to every child attending as well as live entertainment from Jim Gill.

Sid the Science Kid promotes family wellness at Akron JCC

Western Reserve PBS was a media sponsor of the Shaw Jewish Community Center’s Family Wellness Expo, held on Sunday, Jan. 20 at the Shaw JCC in Akron. Free family-friendly entertainment and information on healthy lifestyles were the focus of this event. Western Reserve PBS hosted Sid the Science Kid for meet and greets. Hundreds of families turned out for the event.

Youngstown’s Plant the Seed to Read to feature Sid the Science Kid

Western Reserve PBS will be one of the hosts of the 7th Annual Plant the Seed to Read Book Festival at Fellows Riverside Gardens in Youngstown’s Mill Creek MetroParks in April. Western Reserve PBS will have Sid the Science Kid on hand to celebrate literacy. The goal of this event is to promote literacy in the Mahoning Valley by providing community and educational resources, hosting story times throughout the day and ensuring that every child goes home with a free book. Event founders and partners are Altrusa Club of Youngstown, Mill Creek MetroParks, Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County and Western Reserve PBS.

Sesame Street’s Walkaround Bert and Ernie to headline Family Expo in Akron

Walkaround Bert and Ernie, the beloved Sesame Street duo, will be the big attraction at this year’s Summit Mall/Western Reserve PBS Family Expo, taking place Saturday, April 20. The event is part of the 26th Annual Family Awareness Month activities organized by Summit County Children Services.
Marketing & Development

Station joins Contributor Development Partnership

Western Reserve Public Media has joined the Contributor Development Partnership (CDP), a collaborative of almost 100 PBS member stations.

The CDP is a station-centric effort supported by public television’s Major Market Group and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. CDP’s mission is to help stations create stronger fund-raising practices and increase the number of prospects and contributors. A key strategy will include the development of the first-ever, system-wide contributor data reference file, which will provide unprecedented insight and analysis into the best practices in public television fund-raising.

CDP helps to solve the critical development issues all stations are confronting in declining prospects, erosion in the effectiveness of marketing channels and the lack of cohesive systems or best practices. The group focuses on acquisition, renewals, additional gifts, rejoins, corporate matching gifts, sustainer strategies and vehicle donation programs.

In the last few years, CDP has been testing innovative new techniques to acquire and keep donors, including door-to-door canvassing in targeted neighborhoods and the Thank You Call project, which involves simply calling members at the midpoint of their annual membership to say thank you with no request for funding. The canvassing program is showing amazing early results, and there is now enough data to show that the Thank You Call project is an effective way to increase member retention rates substantially.

Western Reserve PBS will be implementing many of the projects recommended by CDP.

Membership Update

Vice President of Marketing and Development Lisa Martinez reports that Western Reserve PBS’s year-end Membership campaign was an unqualified success. By the time the dust settled, $504,569 came in against a goal of $379,800. In other words, we exceeded goal by $124,754.

On-air pledge, direct mail and telemarketing campaigns were all successful, and major gifts exceeded goal by $14,000. This is the first time a single Membership campaign has exceeded the half-million-dollar mark.

Underwriting and Private Support update

As of the end of December 2012, Underwriting and Private Support is under goal by $37,745, or 28 percent. This category includes revenue generated from underwriting, nonprofit paid promotional announcements (NPPAs) and foundation and corporate grants. More than half of the shortfall is due to timing of grants that were expected to come before the end of 2012 but should come in no later than March 2013.

Western Reserve PBS welcomes new underwriters and foundations

Western Reserve Public Media welcomed support from the following new foundations, businesses and nonprofit clients since our last report: Expert Pest Management, GAR Foundation, Ohio Hardwood Furniture and the Family H. Proctor Foundation.

Yes, we make housecalls!

Call us old-fashioned, but we’ll make a housecall when the circumstances call for it.

In January, maintenance engineer Anthony Dennis (left) paid a visit to the home of Jim and Maureen Kovach (that’s Jim on the right), long-time major donors and Masterpiece underwriters. Here, Anthony talks with Jim as they work together to solve a persistent audio problem.

IT/Engineering

WARN project update

Maintenance engineer Anthony Dennis reports that work continues on the Warning, Alert and Response Network (WARN) project.

Western Reserve Public Media received a $200,560 grant from PBS for the purchase of equipment to implement phase two of the WARN Act. WARN provides for the addition of equipment at PBS stations to broadcast emergency alerts to commercial mobile service providers (CMSPs), which are then transmitted to commercial mobile service devices. The grant covers the cost of equipment that will ensure WNEO/Alliance and WEAO/Akron remain on the air for up to 72 hours in the event of a major power outage.

To date, we have awarded contracts to all vendors we need to fulfill the terms of the grant. The UPS at the WNEO transmitter site has been online and operational since Aug. 31. The WEAO transmitter site tank installation is complete and fully operational. After some delay caused by site issues in Kent, fuel has now been transferred from the internal tank of the generator and it is now operating from the new external fuel storage tank. The fence has been installed around the tank and all inspections are complete. County building officials continue to delay the work at the Salem site. The fuel to fill the tanks was not covered under the grant, and will cost approximately $10,000 before the end of the fiscal year.

The WARN Phase II project originally was set for completion by Oct. 31, 2012. The big challenges with completing the project have been the long permitting process with three different municipalities, the early onset of winter weather and unexpected site conditions, all of which were beyond our control or anticipation by the contractor and normal for outdoor construction projects. As a result of these challenges, Western Reserve Public Media has applied for and received an extended deadline and now expects project completion by April 30, 2013.

Air conditioner fails in Kent-based Master Control

Several leaks in the condenser coil of the 8.5-ton air conditioning unit in Master Control at the Kent office have made it necessary to replace the 12-year-old unit. The maintenance engineering team is in the process of obtaining competitive bids while temporarily using outside air to cool both Master Control and the server room.

Western Reserve PBS will be implementing many of the projects recommended by CDP.
Iris E. Harvey joins NETO board as KSU representative

Iris E. Harvey, vice president for University Relations for Kent State University, has been appointed to the board of directors of Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio Inc. (NETO).

Harvey serves as the university’s chief strategist on branding, marketing and communications, regional development and corporate affairs. Since joining the university in 2008, she has contributed to its ranking as the second largest university in Ohio; helped quantify the annual economic impact of KSU to the state of Ohio as $1.19 billion; and raised the global visibility of the university, which contributed to its recognition as a “Top University in the World” by the Time Higher Education World University Rankings.

Harvey comes to higher education with a strong background in marketing and business development from the private sector. Her career in higher education includes senior administrative positions with Wright State University, where she was responsible for brand management and enrollment marketing; and with the University of Maryland University College, where she directed the global recruitment of faculty for online degree programs as well as for the university’s brick-and-mortar campuses in Europe and Asia.

In the private sector, Harvey was the CEO and founder of a multifaceted international consulting firm that she established and operated primarily in Japan. She was one of the first American women to own a business in Japan without benefit of a Japanese business partner. Her firm helped large multinational organizations such as JPMorgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, Prudential Investments, Citibank, General Motors and the Financial Times enhance their global brands and develop loyal relationships with their customers.

For nearly a decade, Harvey was with Citigroup’s Global Consumer Bank as vice president of marketing for a $1 billion revenue division. She managed financial products that were distributed in 120 countries. Her earlier careers included marketing and consulting positions in the fast moving consumer products sector, where she specialized in new product development and brand management.

Harvey has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Small Business Administration and the U.S. Department of State for her global marketing expertise.

A two-time University of Southern California alumna, Harvey holds a B.S. in business administration and an M.B.A in international marketing. She also holds an Ed.S. degree in educational leadership from The George Washington University.

Dr. Cynthia E. Anderson announces retirement

Youngstown State University President Cynthia E. Anderson will retire effective July 1, 2013. She also serves on the board of directors of Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio (NETO), and her successor at YSU will fill her position on the NETO board.

Anderson became YSU’s seventh president in July 2010. She is the first woman, the first Youngstown native and the first YSU graduate to serve as president in YSU’s 104-year history. Prior to becoming president, Anderson served in a succession of faculty and administrative positions at YSU, including 15 years as vice president for Student Affairs.

Among the many accomplishments during Anderson’s tenure as president: development and implementation of the 2020 Strategic Plan, including improvements in academic achievement, business practices, enrollment management and community engagement; the introduction of three new bachelor’s degrees, three new master’s degrees and the university’s first Ph.D.; plans to significantly expand distance and online course offerings; successfully administering balanced budgets in the face of unprecedented cuts in state funding; and the opening of the Watson and Tressel Athletics Training Site, construction of a new sports complex and plans for a new Veterans Resource Center.

“For nearly 40 years, Youngstown State University has been my home, and you have all been my family,” Anderson said in a memo to campus. “It is because of you that YSU has been such a success, and for that I thank all of you.”

Harvey attends President’s inauguration

Board member Iris E. Harvey was invited to and attended President Barack Obama’s 2013 inauguration on Jan. 21, 2013.

Bonnie Deutsch Burdman named to APTS Leadership Council

Board member Bonnie Deutsch Burdman has been appointed to the Association of Public Television Stations’ Leadership Council. The council is an interactive forum through which local citizens work together to better tell the story of public television to their members of Congress. The council’s January meeting focused on the importance of “grassroots” advocacy in 2013 and the group’s strategy to ensure continued federal funding for public broadcasting.

APTS is a nonprofit membership organization whose mission is to conduct – in concert with member stations – advocacy, planning, research and communications activities in order to achieve strong and financially sound noncommercial television and advanced digital services for the American people.
Western Reserve PBS sponsors two tables at Canton Ex-Newsboys benefit

Trina Cutter sponsored two tables on behalf of Western Reserve PBS at the 53rd Annual Ex-Newsboys Benefit, hosted by Pizza Oven Charities at the Canton Civic Arena on Jan. 11. The Canton Ex-Newsboys Association is a charitable organization whose proceeds pay for shoes and clothing for needy school children.

Accounting functions move to NETA Business Solutions

National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA) Business Solutions is now handling all of Western Reserve Public Media’s accounting functions. The decision to outsource accounting was made in coordination with the retirement of Accounting Supervisor Carolyn Raley in December. NETA Business Solutions handles accounting functions for over 15 public television stations in the country.

The changeover began in 2011 when NETA Business Solutions took over accounting for the station’s tower rental business. At the beginning of FY 2013 they assumed responsibility for our weekly cash and monthly financial reports. The last step in the process was taken in January when NETA assumed full responsibility for payables, receivables, invoicing and contracts.

Larry Dankner to serve as Western Reserve Public Media chief financial officer

Larry Dankner of NETA Business Solutions will serve as Western Reserve Public Media’s chief financial officer, effective January 2013.

Dankner is a senior controller for NETA Business Center. He recently retired from the University of Florida at Gainesville. There, his final position was as director of administration for the University of Florida’s Multi-Media Properties Division, which includes WUFT public television; WUFT/WJUF-FM public radio; WRUF-AM/FM commercial radio stations; WRUF–TV, a commercial low-power television station; Rock 104.com, an Internet radio station; a reading service for the blind; and Gator Vision, a collaborative venture with the University of Florida’s athletic association. Dankner was responsible for all financial and human resources aspects of the division, plus development activities for the public broadcasters. He maintained oversight for the public TV and radio stations’ programming and governmental relations. During his 27-year career at UF, Dankner held the titles of CFO for the public broadcasting properties, general manager for the commercial radio stations and interim general manager for the Multi-Media Properties Division. In 2009, after the final consolidation of all the University’s media properties, he was named director of administration. He was also treasurer of the Florida Public Broadcasting Service and served more than a decade on the board of directors of the Public Broadcasting Management Association.

Toni Kayumi named chief business development officer

Toni Kayumi has been named chief business development officer at Western Reserve Public Media. She joined the staff on Feb. 1. She is responsible for major and planned giving and corporate support as well as the cultivation of new revenue initiatives.

Kayumi comes to Western Reserve Public Media from the YMCA of Greater Cleveland, where she was vice president of mission advancement and collaboration. There, she led the nonprofit organization’s financial development, government relations, operational expansion and diversity and inclusion efforts. Prior to that, she served as vice president of marketing and development and an on-air host for WFWA-TV PBS39 in Fort Wayne, Ind. She was a news anchor and public affairs show host for WFFT-TV Fox 55; media director and account manager for Ad-cetera, Inc.; and a morning show disc jockey for WMEE-FM 97.3.

Kayumi is a graduate of Syracuse University and holds bachelor’s degrees in broadcast journalism and psychology. She is married to Michael McCullers and has a five-year-old son, Mateo.

Kayumi attends PBS Planned Giving conference

Chief Business Development Officer Toni Kayumi traveled to Dallas in February to attend the two-day PBS Planned Giving Seminar. Participants received instruction for improving their current plan and will continue to receive support and resources over the next three years.

Dan Hluch announces retirement

Senior Development Officer Dan Hluch will retire on Feb. 28, 2013. Hluch joined the station as a development officer in 1999. In his 14 years with the organization, he has secured over $2 million for Western Reserve Public Media from for-profit and nonprofit organizations. The staff wishes him the greatest joy in his retirement!

Membership has a new team

In December, the Membership department became the new work home of Jessica “Jessie” Deeds (left) and Amaris Scipione (right). Deeds had served as the marketing and development specialist with Western Reserve Public Media since 2010. Scipione had been working with the station as a freelance on-air spot producer and production crew member. Working with Vice President of Marketing and Development Lisa Martinez, Deeds and Scipione process membership cash, manage all aspects of our thank you gift program, serve as pledge producers, handle mass mailings, organize some station events, provide customer service and more. Additionally, Deeds provides support for Development staff engaged in underwriting sales, and Scipione continues to produce on-air spots.

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Toni Kayumi has been named chief business development officer at Western Reserve Public Media. She joined the staff on Feb. 1. She is responsible for major and planned giving and corporate support as well as the cultivation of new revenue initiatives.

Kayumi comes to Western Reserve Public Media from the YMCA of Greater Cleveland, where she was vice president of mission advancement and collaboration. There, she led the nonprofit organization’s financial development, government relations, operational expansion and diversity and inclusion efforts. Prior to that, she served as vice president of marketing and development and an on-air host for WFWA-TV PBS39 in Fort Wayne, Ind. She was a news anchor and public affairs show host for WFFT-TV Fox 55; media director and account manager for Ad-cetera, Inc.; and a morning show disc jockey for WMEE-FM 97.3.

Kayumi is a graduate of Syracuse University and holds bachelor’s degrees in broadcast journalism and psychology. She is married to Michael McCullers and has a five-year-old son, Mateo.

Kayumi attends PBS Planned Giving conference

Chief Business Development Officer Toni Kayumi traveled to Dallas in February to attend the two-day PBS Planned Giving Seminar. Participants received instruction for improving their current plan and will continue to receive support and resources over the next three years.

Dan Hluch announces retirement

Senior Development Officer Dan Hluch will retire on Feb. 28, 2013. Hluch joined the station as a development officer in 1999. In his 14 years with the organization, he has secured over $2 million for Western Reserve Public Media from for-profit and nonprofit organizations. The staff wishes him the greatest joy in his retirement!

Membership has a new team

In December, the Membership department became the new work home of Jessica “Jessie” Deeds (left) and Amaris Scipione (right). Deeds had served as the marketing and development specialist with Western Reserve Public Media since 2010. Scipione had been working with the station as a freelance on-air spot producer and production crew member. Working with Vice President of Marketing and Development Lisa Martinez, Deeds and Scipione process membership cash, manage all aspects of our thank you gift program, serve as pledge producers, handle mass mailings, organize some station events, provide customer service and more. Additionally, Deeds provides support for Development staff engaged in underwriting sales, and Scipione continues to produce on-air spots.
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“Up on the Roof,” “On Broadway,” “Save the Last Dance for Me”

SHIRLEY ALSTON REEVES original lead of The Shirelles
“Soldier Boy”

THE COASTERS
“Charlie Brown,” “Yakety Yak,” “Young Blood”

SONNY TURNER former lead of The Platters
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Available to 5.13 million people in 22 counties, Western Reserve Public Media serves the largest population of Ohio’s eight PBS member stations. (The second largest station reaches 1.2 million fewer people.) Our over-the-air broadcast service area is extended by carriage on almost all cable systems and satellite services in Northeast Ohio and parts of Western Pennsylvania.

Sources: 1 2010 A.C. Nielsen audience data; 2 2011-2012 Media Audit, Cleveland-Akron