Western Reserve Public Media President’s Report

Winter 2017
Volume 11, Issue 1

Spectrum auction outcome leads to channel changes

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Broadcast Spectrum Incentive Auction concluded on Feb. 10. The purpose of the auction was to free up broadcast television spectrum for wireless broadband use.

As a result, nearly all stations—whether they participated in the auction or not—located on Channels 37 to 50 must move to a lower channel position assigned by the FCC, which is called “repacking.” The FCC has not publicly issued the final channel assignment notification, but it is estimated that approximately 1,100 stations throughout the United States will have to move within a three-to-36-month window.

Although we do not have information about other stations, we do know what is going to happen to Western Reserve Public Media’s two noncommercial public television stations: WNEO Youngstown is assigned to repack from Channel 45 to 29 and WEAO Cleveland-Akron-Canton is assigned to repack from Channel 49 to 24. Both stations have approximately 24 months to make the change.

This is not like changing a channel on your remote at home, where with the push of a button you go from one channel to another. From a broadcaster’s perspective, moving a television channel is a complicated physical and logistical undertaking. It involves changing out a semi trailer-sized antenna on top of a 1,000-ft. tower and replacing eight-inch copper transmission line that carries high-powered radio waves from the transmitter at the base of the tower to the antenna at the top. We’ll be lucky if we can figure out a way to do this without the aid of a helicopter.

Western Reserve Public Media is committed to minimizing disruption to our viewers as much as we are able but be forewarned: There is a possibility that sometime in the next two years your service will be interrupted. We asked that you please bear with us while we are “under construction.”

New Angie Haze documentary to air in April!

Local artists Angie Haze and todd v collaborated with students at Miller South Performing Arts School in Akron recently on a community outreach project to raise awareness about the importance of the arts in education.

Called The Bigger Picture, the project is the subject of a new documentary, THE ANGIE HAZE PROJECT PRESENTS: THE BIGGER PICTURE. The hour-long program premiers on Western Reserve PBS (WNEO 45.1 / WEAO 49.1) on Monday, April 3, at 9 PM.

For the project, Angie Haze and todd v worked with dozens of students from the school on a multifaceted theatrical production that used Haze’s music as a foundation. The production featured dance, art, music and drama, illustrating how the disciplines complement one another for a fully rounded education.

“The Bigger Picture is a movement that we believe can bring awareness to the arts programs and show the necessity they have on our youth and our education system,” Haze said. “We understand that a well-rounded arts education provides students with many skills as well as a place of critical thought and creative thinking, which can translate and benefit professional life as an adult.”

Singer-songwriter Haze is a one-woman band who sings while playing multiple instruments including bells, tambourine, guitar, cowbell and piano. Todd v is a prolific artist and content creator.
Saying goodbye and hello to popular shows

You may have heard or noticed some news about several of our more popular series lately. Here’s a rundown on all the latest programming news:

NEW TRICKS
The longtime British police drama ended its run after the Season 12 finale early February. For awhile, we will continue to air encore episodes on Thursdays for the many fans of the UCOS.

800 WORDS
On Saturday evenings beginning in April, we will bring you 800 WORDS, an Australian comedy-drama about recently widowed Sydney newspaper columnist George Turner (Erik Thompson). Turner sets out to make a fresh start with his teenage children by moving to the tiny New Zealand town where he vacationed as a child, a transition that proves to be difficult.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME
The current season of the Australian period drama A PLACE TO CALL HOME ends this month. The show will go on hiatus until March 20, when we will present the new Season 4. Something else to look forward to: A fifth season of the very popular series is currently in production.

RELIGION AND ETHICS NEWSWEEKLY
The highly acclaimed series RELIGION & ETHICS NEWSWEEKLY ended its run as its 20th season on PBS drew to a close in February, according to its producing station, WNET. Archives of the program will be available online. In addition, a companion website, pbs.org/religionandethics, includes transcripts of individual shows, streaming videos and related articles and resources.

NHK
NHK, which aired weekday mornings on our MHz Worldview channel (WNEO 45.3 / WEAO 49.3), is no longer available. We are told that NHK chose to discontinue its affiliation with MHz Networks in order to pursue other broadcast opportunities. In place of NHK, from 6 AM to 9 AM, ARIRANG TV will temporarily air until TRT WORLD IN ENGLISH (news from Turkey) is available.

More new programs coming soon!
Look for new seasons of the dramas CALL THE MIDWIFE and HOME FIRES in April. Also in April, PBS will present AMERICAN EXPERIENCE, “The Great War,” which explores how World War I forever changed America and the world.

In addition, we’re happy to announce that the new Season 12 of MIDSOMER MURDERS premieres April 6, and the new Season 5 of FATHER BROWN begins on April 27. Thanks for watching!

Vme Spanish-language channel to end
Effective March 31, Vme Spanish-language channel, which we have aired on WNEO Channel 45.4 and WEAO Channel 49.4, is ending its service for public television stations. At this time, we are not considering a replacement for the channel.
Educational Services

Media sponsorships help to promote area arts events
Western Reserve PBS has several long-term partnerships with regional nonprofit arts organizations. We welcome the start of one such arrangement with The Massillon Museum and the continuation of another with The Akron Art Museum, serving both through media sponsorship.

At the Akron Art Museum’s new exhibition, account executive Debra Racey is greeted by artist and exhibitor Olek’s crochet friends.

Blind Spot: A Matter of Perception
Massillon Museum, Feb. 18—May 23
Experience a one-of-a-kind exhibit featuring 10 abstract paintings from the Massillon Museum collection, made accessible to patrons with blindness or low vision for the first time, through multisensory experience.

Each painting has been translated into sonic iPad screen apps and tactile models. Typewritten and braille labels, produced by Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, enhance the experience.

President and CEO Trina Cutter and Account Executive Debra Racey attended the exhibition’s opening reception.

New PBS video distribution system is coming
As part of a national initiative, our station will soon begin using a new system called Media Manager for uploading and updating our video content. This major initiative improves the way stations, producers and the general public search and view digital assets and provides the ability to organize, relate and present content in ways that streamline searchability. Better organization of our content allows us to provide a richer experience for users.

Paula Kritz, our graphic designer, attended Media Manager training webinars in January to prepare for the transition. PBS has scheduled us to begin using the new system on Tuesday, March 21.

Turn the Page: The First Ten Years of Hi-Fructose
Akron Art Museum, Feb. 11—May 7
The Akron Art Museum is the only location in the Midwest chosen to exhibit 51 remarkable contemporary artists who have been featured in the pages of the popular art magazine Hi-Fructose. View the original works beyond the flat worlds of paper and digital screens, where they are most often seen.

Teachers learned about computer programming and coding in the Makey Makey and Scratch training in January.

Participants in the One iPad Classroom training learned about how to work with a single iPad in today’s classroom.

Educational technology professional development
Over the fall session of 2016, we offered area educators 18 in-person professional development opportunities. This winter, 24 professional development sessions are available to educators.

Ohio Ready to Learn receives new funding
The Ohio Ready to Learn program, which offers training and development for family child-care providers, has been funded for the coming year. Nine workshops have been delivered over the fall and winter for 108 participants, with an additional 21 workshops planned through the end of June.

Station participates in state technology conference
Western Reserve Public Media was well represented at the Ohio Educational Technology Conference held in Columbus in mid-February. The organization had an informational booth for the conference; Director of Education Jeff Good facilitated two sessions about favorite iOS and Google apps; and Laurie Green, 21st century learning consultant, conducted two learning sessions about our two new multimedia projects.

Station hosts Maker group
The Northeast Ohio Maker Users Group met in January at Western Reserve Public Media, with participants from Wayne County and Cleveland’s Mobile Fab Lab attending. The meeting was streamed as a Facebook live event for those who could not attend.
Trina Cutter’s recent activities

On Dec. 6, President and CEO Trina Cutter attended the Leadership Stark County Spotlight Program’s closing ceremony. Cutter serves on the Leadership Stark County Signature Program Selection Committee.

Representing Western Reserve PBS, Trina Cutter sponsored two tables at the Pizza Oven Charities event held on Jan. 13. The Canton Ex-Newsboys Association sponsored the event.

On Jan. 19, Cutter attended a partner meeting of Leave a Legacy Summit/Portage/Medina, held at the Akron Community Foundation. The title of the meeting was, “Using Retirement Plan Assets for Charitable Giving.”

On Jan. 30, Cutter participated in a webinar conducted by American Public Television Stations (APTS). Attorney Bob Winteringham offered helpful information about compliance with Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) issues.

On Feb. 21, Cutter participated in CPB’s TV Spectrum Repacking webinar, which takes into account new data and other information that has come out about how the recent spectrum auction will affect public television stations.

Trina Cutter and Debra Racey attend local expo

On Feb. 23, Account Executive Debra Racey (pictured) and President and CEO Trina Cutter attended the Stark Business Expo, presented by Mercy Medical Center and held at Kent State University Stark Conference Center.

Jeffery Good receives board appointment

Congratulations to Jeffery Good, our director of educational services, who is now a board member of The Mahoning County Educational Service Center. MCESC cited his experience in education to be a great asset to the organization. It also noted that Good’s father, J. Paul Good, was a dedicated and longtime board member of MCESC.

MCESC currently serves 22 school districts and nearly 46,000 children in the counties of Mahoning, Columbiana, Portage and Trumbull.

Laurie Green offers technology training in Dayton

Laurie Green, 21st century learning consultant, is working in collaboration with an Ohio educational technology agency in the Dayton area to support its efforts in working with local school districts. During February, Green is offering training on the Google suite of products to teachers from the Miami Trace School District.