Western Reserve Public Media President’s Report

Western Reserve Public Media Web site gets electronic facelift

Western Reserve Public Media has introduced a new look for our Web site at www.WesternReservePublicMedia.org.

Major changes include a new splash page and a new navigation system. President and CEO Trina Cutter’s idea was to create an entry page that illustrates the breadth of our services and of our partnerships. Represented on the splash page are our four broadcast services, educational services, regional productions, social media, video on demand, regional independent producers, our consortium universities (Kent State University, The University of Akron and Youngstown State University), our state and national partners and our friends in public radio. From the splash page, visitors can link to all of our resources and to the sites of our partners.

The Western Reserve PBS home page is still our “primary” site. We have reintroduced social media. Cutter will present a weekly vlog (video log) called “CEO to CEO,” based on the segment she is producing for NEOtropolis. Vice President of Marketing and Development Lisa Martinez is blogging under the banner title “You Are What You Watch,” and Director of Education Jeff Good writes about media and educational technology in “All Hands on Tech.” We also feature blogs by NEOtropolis’ Jennifer Boresz and NewsNight Akron’s Eric Mansfield and Ed Esposito. We’ve added our Facebook link, which Communications is handling, and the feed from Programmer Don Freeman’s Twitter site.

The biggest change is yet to come. On March 1, we will launch COVE (Comprehensive Video Ecosystem), a video-on-demand (VOD) service that will blend our VOD content with national VOD content, including NewsNight Akron, NEOtropolis, Generations: Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Nature, Nova, Masterpiece, Frontline and much more. COVE has been described by one national media critic as the best-looking VOD service on the Web. It is beautiful and will take our site to a new level.

Congratulations to Paula Kritz, Western Reserve Public Media’s graphic designer and webmaster, for her work on this project, and thanks to Broadcast/IT Engineer Anthony Dennis for his help with the technical details.

Gospel Meets Symphony production to air nationally

Gospel Meets Symphony: Let Freedom Ring!, a 2009 Western Reserve Public Media production, has been chosen for national distribution by American Public Television (APT) beginning in February 2010. APT is the second-biggest distributor of programs for public television stations.

Gospel Meets Symphony: Let Freedom Ring!, which premiered on Western Reserve PBS in April 2009, features the Akron Symphony Orchestra in concert with its 200-voice Gospel Choir celebrating Abraham Lincoln’s 200th birthday. Seventy-five stations across the country have licensed the program for broadcast, including stations in seven of the top 10 television markets.
Nielsen Media Research shows growth in prime, whole-week

Programmer Don Freeman reports that results of the November 2009 Nielsen Media Research sweeps show that Western Reserve PBS’s combined station (WNEO 1/WEAO 1) viewership increased 6.3 percent in prime time and 1.7 percent sign-on/sign-off over November 2008. We now are averaging 204,000 households in prime time and 415,000 households sign-on/sign-off.

In November, our three most-viewed prime time nights (8 PM to 11 PM) were Saturdays, with BritComs averaging 21,000 viewers per show; Thursdays (Antiques Roadshow, This Old House Hour, Masterpiece Mystery!), averaging 19,166 viewers per program; and Mondays (Antiques Roadshow, American Experience), various specials, averaging 13,833 viewers per program.

Our five most-watched programs were Antiques Roadshow (Thursdays at 8 PM, 28,500 people); As Time Goes By (Saturdays at 8 PM, 28,000 people); Keeping Up Appearances (Saturdays at 9 PM, 25,000 people); Last of the Summer Wine (Saturdays at 8:30 PM, 24,000 people); and Are You Being Served? (Saturdays at 9:30 PM, 24,000 people).

In September we began a weekly hour-long block of locally focused programs on Tuesdays at 9 PM, called Regional Fusion. In November, the program block averaged 7,000 viewers for each half hour, which is a little lower than the programming we had been airing in that time period. It is interesting to note, however, that programs scheduled in the Regional Fusion hour have seen a higher average audience than their placement elsewhere in our schedule. This suggests that our viewers are interested in local and regional programs if they know where to find them; having a consistent weekly schedule makes that possible.

Feedback tells us that our new channels — Fusion, MHz Worldview and V-me — are becoming an important part of our viewers’ tune-in habits. Unfortunately, the channels do not yet have large enough audiences to qualify for Nielsen ratings.

New educational multimedia projects in production

Western Reserve Public Media has received funding from the Ohio legislature through eTech Ohio for the creation of two new multimedia kits for the 2010-11 academic year.

The first kit is being created in cooperation with the Akron Art Museum. This 5th-grade unit deals with two mathematics benchmarks (ratio, proportion and percent and the measurement of interior angles) and one science benchmark (sound). The ratio, proportion and percent module covers basic concepts by looking at the portrait work of artist Chuck Close and then finishes with a project that has students use the digital portraits they create to determine if the face matches what is called the Golden Ratio. The interior angle lessons study the work of three artists and allow students to tie mathematics to art by creating work that shows equilateral triangles and quadrilaterals. It finishes with a project in which students create a regular polyhedron that they use as a prediction tool. The third lesson deals with sound. The focus is on the art and music of former Akron resident and Devo band member Mark Mothersbaugh, who helps students decide what kind of instrument they will create.

The second package addresses our changing earth and is designed for students in grades 7, 8 and 9. The first unit deals with the biogeochemical cycles of the earth: water, oxygen, carbon and nitrogen cycles. After thoroughly going over each cycle, students create a board game using one of the cycles as their final project. Eighth-grade students form expert groups and do research on topics related to plate tectonics. Ninth-grade students continue the study of plate tectonics but add the concepts of convection, conduction and radiation (heat or energy transfer). For a final project, students create a presentation that illustrates the concepts they have learned.

The teacher guides are ready to be edited, and video scripts are being written. Videos will be created in the music video genre along the lines of “Schoolhouse Rock.” After the educational segment of the video, students will get information that will lead them to do the final project in each unit. Production/Local Programming Manager Duilio Mariola and freelance education content producer Ria Mastromatteo are working on the projects.
NEOtropolis continues to expand and reach out to businesses, organizations and community leaders

With 16 weeks of production under its belt as of the end of February, Western Reserve Public Media’s NEOtropolis continues to evolve as the only weekly television program in northeast Ohio that looks at the business and economy of the region.

Since its launch on Nov. 6, over 40 different business and community leaders have joined host Thomas Mulready on the set to serve as panelists. The show has explored a wide variety of issues impacting the economy of our region, from workforce development to the billion-dollar bridal industry to Ohio’s burgeoning filmmaking industry.

Beginning Feb. 26, we will introduce a new segment in the show, called “CEO to CEO.” Western Reserve Public Media President and CEO Trina Cutter will host the segments in which she meets CEOs around Northeast Ohio to find out what paths they followed to their leadership positions. The on-air segments will be 90 seconds in length, but the full interviews will be featured in Cutter’s video log on the organization’s Web site.

Social media and viral marketing have become critical resources for creating content and promoting NEOtropolis. We have both Facebook and Twitter sites for the program, managed by producers Thomas Mulready and Janis Worley. Viral marketing has also been effective. The people, businesses and organizations that have appeared on the program have used their social networking tools to let their subscribers, followers and friends know when to tune in. Content partner CoolCleveland.com has brought its online resources and 80,000 followers to the table by featuring weekly promotion of upcoming programs. Crain’s Cleveland Business offers that have appeared on the program have been provided from 9 pm to 8:30 pm did not have a negative impact on tune-in.) The Web site has had over 2,000 visitors since Jan. 1.

Duilio Mariola, production/local programming manager, is the executive producer and Janis Worley and Thomas Mulready are the producers of NEOtropolis.

Funding for NEOtropolis has been provided by The Burton D. Morgan Foundation, Key Private Bank, KeyBank Foundation, MAGNET, Kent State University, Dominion Foundation, JumpStart Inc., Youngstown Business Incubator and The Raymond John Wean Foundation.

New time slots for NEOtropolis and NewsNight Akron

On Nov. 6, 2009, we premiered NEOtropolis, and to boost audience awareness we scheduled the program on Fridays at 9 pm, where NewsNight Akron had been for many years. NewsNight Akron was temporarily pushed to 9:30 pm. In January we moved NewsNight Akron back to 9 pm and NEOtropolis to 8:30 pm, following Washington Week. By all statistical measurements, NEOtropolis is progressing well while NewsNight Akron, now in its 12th season, is still the most-watched news program in our Friday night schedule.

“We are fortunate to have a strong viewership for NewsNight Akron, which enabled us to use its time slot to introduce NEOtropolis,” said Don Freeman, programmer for the stations. “Our Western Reserve PBS programming on Friday evenings now offers a comprehensive block of regional and national news programming, beginning with Nightly Business Report at 6:30 pm and also including PBS NewsHour, Now and Bill Moyers Journal.”

In addition to the Friday night broadcast, NEOtropolis repeats on Saturdays at 4:30 am and Sundays at 6:30 pm. NewsNight Akron repeats on Saturdays at 5 am. On Fusion, NEOtropolis airs on Saturdays at 9 pm and Mondays at 8 pm. NewsNight Akron airs on Fusion on Saturdays at 9:30 pm and Mondays at 8:30 pm and 10 pm.
Urban Innovators lecture series airing on Fusion

Western Reserve Public Media and NEOtropolis have been serving as media sponsors of University Park Alliance’s three-part Urban Innovators Speaker Series. The presentations of Joe Cortright (“Attracting Talent Through the Development of Vibrant Urban Centers” on Jan. 12) and Chuck Bohl (“Place Making: Developing Town Centers, Main Streets and Urban Villages” on Feb. 9) have already aired on Fusion and are available online at www.WesternReservePublicMedia.org. The final presentation, featuring Jason Schrieber, principal with the Boston-based Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates, will air on Fusion on Friday, March 19, at 9 PM and then be available on demand. Schrieber will speak on “Mode Shift: Moving From Driving to Biking and Walking.”

NewsNight Akron panel chooses 2009 Akron Newsmaker of the Year

NewsNight Akron panelists singled out Mayor Don Plusquellic in the 2009 NewsMaker of the Year broadcast, which aired on Jan. 8. The selection was made by NewsNight Akron host Eric Mansfield and an expanded field of regular panelists.

This year, for the first time, community members were invited to vote for the 2009 NewsMaker of the Year at the Western Reserve Public Media Web site. Mansfield and the panelists reviewed and factored in the voting results prior to announcing the award winner.

Nominees for the 2009 award were Bill Considine, president and CEO of Akron Children’s Hospital; Keith Dambrot, University of Akron head basketball coach; Phil Gauer, president of Akron’s fireman’s union; Craig Gilbride, retired Akron acting police chief; Paul Hlynsky, Akron Fraternal Order of Police president; LeBron James, Cleveland Cavaliers superstar; Linda Kersker, recently deceased Akron municipal court judge; The Rev. Knute Larson, retired co-senior pastor of The Chapel; Fred Krum, deceased former director of Akron-Canton Airport; Warner Mendenhall, attorney and former Akron city councilman who led the mayoral recall campaign; Jack Morrison, the attorney removed from The University of Akron’s board and from the Summit County Board of Elections for ethics violations; Linda Omobien, newly elected Akron City Council member; Don Plusquellic, Akron mayor; Caleb Porter, University of Akron head soccer coach; Luis Proenza, president, The University of Akron; and The Rev. Ben Walker, retiring executive director of Haven of Rest.

Following a spirited debate, the winner was chosen by panelists including Ed Esposito and Larry States from Rubber City Radio Group, Steve Hoffman from the Akron Beacon Journal, M. L. Schultze from WKSU and freelance journalist Jody Miller. The program is available to view online at www.WesternReservePublicMedia.org.

Previous Newsmaker of the Year awardees include Luis Proenza, Sylvester Small and Plusquellic.
Pattern ID special airs on Western Reserve PBS

Western Reserve Public Media presents its newest production on a local art installation in Pattern ID at the Akron Art Museum. For the TV special, host Jody Miller interviews artist Iona Rozeal Brown, along with funders of the Pattern ID exhibition and gallery owners who have lent artists’ works for the occasion. In addition, the museum staff describes their efforts over the past two years to bring the exhibition from concept to reality, including how they selected the emerging artists whose art is featured. At the preview party, attendees share their opinions of the new show and model their own “Pattern IDs” by wearing colorful, flamboyant clothing. Pattern ID at the Akron Art Museum is available to view online at www.WesternReservePublicMedia.org.

The Pattern ID exhibition features 15 artists of diverse origins who have seized on pattern and dress as powerful visual connectors between themselves, their histories and their audiences. “It shows how we live today; that we move from place to place, that we come from complex heritages with many countries, religions, ethnic backgrounds — all combined and merging,” said Mitchell Kahan, Akron Art Museum director and CEO. “There’s geographic diversity, there’s religious diversity, there’s gender diversity and there’s diversity of media and that is crucial to the exhibition.” Pattern ID opened at the museum on Jan. 9 and runs through May 9.

Western Reserve Public Media produces field pieces for PBS NewsHour’s Patchwork Nation project

PBS NewsHour (formerly The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer) is partnering with the Christian Science Monitor’s Patchwork Nation project to offer a unique look at how these turbulent times are playing out in different types of communities across the country. As part of this effort, PBS NewsHour and the Monitor “are reaching out to proven public affairs producers in communities we would like to track in the coming year” (their words). Western Reserve Public Media is one of 13 PBS member stations and Akron is one of 24 cities nationwide selected to participate in this project.

Western Reserve Public Media is creating four short field reports that will be used on the Patchwork Nation Web site and possibly on air on PBS NewsHour. The video packages include a piece on the money-saving efforts and efficiencies put into place at Akron Children’s Hospital; a profile of greater Akron’s higher education institutions, featuring interviews with President Luis Proenza of The University of Akron and President Lester Lefton of Kent State University; a profile of two top-ranked library systems, the Cuyahoga County Public Library and the Akron-Summit County Public Library; and a yet-to-be-produced fourth video on the regionalism movement in northeast Ohio. Working on the project are freelance producer Gary Manke and freelance education content producer Ria Mastromatteo.

Western Reserve Public Media working with Wild Ohio producers

The services of Western Reserve Public Media have been engaged by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources’ Division of Wildlife. Members of the staff will help producers increase Ohio PBS member station carriage of Wild Ohio and coordinate stations’ broadcast schedules of the series in the 2010-11 season; gather, analyze and report audience data to evaluate tune-in and scheduling strategies; facilitate conversation between the series’ producers and station programmers to improve content and relations; and resolve technical issues to create an affordable solution for distributing the program in HD format. The project will be completed by the end of June. Programmer Don Freeman and Marketing and Communications Specialist Amanda Donatelli are working on the project.

Wild Ohio is an outdoors recreation series produced by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources’ Division of Wildlife for broadcast on the state’s public TV stations.

New channel positions on Time Warner

Effective March 8, Time Warner Cable will move some of its digital channel assignments, affecting some of Western Reserve Public Media’s broadcast services. Basic and extended basic service channels will not change. However, our position on the HD tier will change. To find Western Reserve PBS in high definition, add 1000 to the basic channel number on your system. For example, if you get our station on channel 10, our HD channel position will be 1010. (Please note that Cleveland-based Time Warner customers do not currently receive Western Reserve PBS on the HD tier. We encourage you to call Time Warner to request our HD channel.) Our Fusion channel will move from 368 to 993 and MHz Worldview will move from 369 to 994. V-me will stay the same at channel 804. For more information, visit http://twcguide.com or call Time Warner.
EdTech Connects sessions scheduled for spring 2010

EdTech Connects, a statewide collaboration, continues to deliver professional development to educators via videoconferencing. In March and May, the group will present sessions on Google and Web 2.0 applications. EdTech Connects is a partnership among eight educational technology agencies, including Western Reserve Public Media, that presents professional development statewide to educators.

Western Reserve Educational Services partners with Windham schools on stimulus project

Western Reserve Educational Services continues its work with Portage County’s Windham Exempted Village schools in support of the school district’s receipt of federal stimulus money through eTech Ohio. The project, called Developing 21st Century Learning Environments, focuses on training and mentoring a team of four teachers and one administrator with the goal of developing competence in and comfort with the integration of educational technologies in the classroom and the district. Lealynd Tuskan, our 21st Century Learning Center consultant, has been busy working with the grant team and giving direction to the project. Completion date is June 2011.

Six-District Compact educators attend sessions at 21st Century Learning Center

The Six-District Compact, a team of educators from career tech sites based in our service area, attended an educational technology training session at Western Reserve Educational Services in February. Forty educators had the opportunity to attend sessions on Google Docs and Podcasting. Participants attending the Google Docs training also learned about educational videoconferencing, as the facilitator for the training was located in Toledo.

PBS Digital Learning Library update

For the last year, Western Reserve Public Media has been a participant in a PBS-sponsored pilot program called Digital Learning Library (DLL), dealing with the creation of a digital storage of assets (videos, lesson plans, photos and more) for use in PreK-12 classrooms. The pilot phase is now finished, and PBS is ready to begin phase two in which schools will actually try using the resources in the classroom. Western Reserve Educational Services has contributed videos and lesson plans to the DLL, and our management team is now in the process of determining the station’s level of involvement in the second phase.

Professional development sessions allow educators to earn KSU graduate credit

Along with the traditional schedule of professional development sessions at Western Reserve Educational Services' 21st Century Learning Center, this winter’s schedule offers several of our more popular trainings for graduate credit. The Digital Academy began in January. Five educators participated in the class, which focused on how to develop and deliver a wealth of digital educational content with video, audio and digital image resources. Participants met every Thursday from 4:30 PM to 7 PM throughout the month, and all the participants took the course for graduate credit from Kent State University. Smart Board Boot Camp began in February with nine educators in attendance. Camp Google will be delivered in March. Participants attending the four nights of training have the opportunity to receive one hour of graduate credit from KSU.

Ohio Ready to Learn update

The Ohio Ready to Learn service, focused on the training and professional development of family child care providers, has been funded for another year and we are now scheduling workshops through June. Despite a reduction in funding, the program will focus on developing and delivering 33 Ready to Learn workshops across our service area. Consultant Pam Oviatt, our project coordinator, has received facilitator training in the new materials and is now finalizing the workshop schedule. More information is available at www.WesternReservePublicMedia.org/rtl_workshops.

As one of eight educational technology agencies in the state, Western Reserve Educational Services provided information and support for educators from their shared booth at the eTech Ohio Technology Conference in Columbus in February. (Right) Director of Education Jeff Good conducts a training session on FlipVideo cameras at the conference.
K-12 professional development update

From September through January, 72 professional development sessions have been presented to 290 educators at our 21st Century Learning Center in Kent as well as at district locations.

Camp Google for Educators continues to be offered to districts in our service area. Thirty educators from Southeast Local’s primary and intermediate buildings began a three-day training project in January that will conclude in March. The sessions teach educators how to use and integrate Google applications in the curriculum. Each of the 30 educators receives a netbook as part of the training, and they also have the opportunity to receive graduate credit from KSU.

Since the beginning of December, we have presented 14 professional development workshops to 148 teachers on our multimedia packages. Workshops presented include three on Generations: Cuyahoga Valley National Park; two on Math nMotion; two on Stark Contrast: A History of Stark County; three on Who’s Your Boss?; and two on Ubiquitous Science. Two workshops that presented all of our multimedia resources were also presented.

Marketing & Development

Membership update

Vice President of Marketing and Development Lisa Martinez reports that as of the end of January, we are $32,432 behind goal in Membership. However, meeting goal by fiscal year end is still very achievable, said Martinez.

A few factors have contributed to the shortfall. We eliminated two of our three planned acquisition (cold mail) campaigns this year — the first of the two in December. We eliminated acquisition because it costs much more than it makes in the first year, so we will save money on the expense side. However, Martinez explains, “It’s not a good idea to cease acquisition mail in the long term, as it is the only other source we have for new members besides on-air pledge campaigns, and members acquired through cold mail have fairly high multi-year renewal rates.”

At the end of December, we reported that renewal mail was down about 5 percent and renewal telemarketing was down 40 percent. In January we saw recovery in both areas. Renewal mail is now up 1 percent and telemarketing, while still down, is now down by 27 percent. Martinez expressed confidence that we can catch up on renewal telemarketing by fiscal year end. Pledge is also down slightly, but a few revenue lines are over goal, including lapsed member mail, major gifts and Web support.

Underwriting & Private Support update

Vice President of Marketing and Development Lisa Martinez reports that, as of the end of January 2010, corporate underwriting and nonprofit paid promotional announcement (NPPA) sales are $150,353 under goal. Corporate, nonprofit and foundation support has been slower to recover in this economy than anticipated. February is shaping up to meet the monthly underwriting and NPPA goals, and it is our expectation that revenue generation in these areas will improve as the fiscal year goes on. Local production funding is also under goal. This is largely a timing issue, so we have flexed much of the expected revenue for this line item to the end of the fiscal year. This revenue has an expense corollary, and we do not spend money on productions until revenue is secured.

New Membership software installed

Western Reserve Public Media recently acquired a new Membership software system called Allegiance. This system replaces Scout, the software we had been using since 1990.

In early 2008, Western Reserve Public Media was informed that the company that owned Scout was going out of business, but that the company would continue to support the software through November 2008. After this date, the organization was given permission to continue use of the software in perpetuity but at our own risk. Since December 2008, one of Scout’s technical support staff had been available on a freelance basis to troubleshoot problems that arose with the software. However, this arrangement became increasingly risky as time passed because Scout no longer provided support, software upgrades or any kind of service to protect the integrity of the product. We made the decision to use Scout through the remainder of FY09 and replace it in FY10.

Installation and intensive training took place the week of Feb. 5. Membership Specialist Becky Tarka, Membership Services Assistant Pat Amberson and Vice President of Marketing and Development Lisa Martinez received thorough training in the software. Other staff members — Amanda Donatelli (marketing and communications specialist), Pat Weed (communications specialist) and Joanne Brooks (accounting specialist) — were also trained in some of its functions. Broadcast/IT Engineer Anthony Dennis provided technical support to get the system up and running.

Help with expenses for the software has come through grants from The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation and The Glenn R. and Alice V. Boggess Memorial Foundation.

Station welcomes new underwriters, nonprofits and foundations

Western Reserve Public Media welcomed the following new businesses, foundations and nonprofit clients since our last report: Canton Ballet, Covelli Centre, The Glenn R. and Alice V. Boggess Memorial Foundation, Magic Arts & Entertainment, The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation, Mills Entertainment, Sewing Expo, Ulmer & Berne LLP and The University of Akron College of Creative and Professional Arts.
Meet Our Staff

Trina Cutter, President and CEO

Basic Info
Job description: “The buck stops here”
Hometown: Canton

Random Interests
Volunteer work: Stark County United Way Women’s Leadership Council, Stark County Government Leadership Academy
Favorite PBS show: NEOtropolis (airs Fridays at 8:30 PM)
Hobbies/pastimes: Reading cookbooks, baking, dinner parties, bike riding
Favorite movie: “Breakfast at Tiffany’s”

Exclusive Interview
Last book you’ve read: “A Whole New Mind”
What you wore to work today: A dress — I always wear dresses or skirts.
Person you would most like to meet: My future husband
Tell us a fun fact about yourself: I was a bossy little girl.

Jeff Good
Director of Education

Basic Info
Job description: Work with educators to integrate technology in their schools and classrooms
Hometown: North Lima

Random Interests
Favorite PBS show: This Old House (airs Sundays at 10:30 AM and Saturdays at 11:30 AM)
Hobbies/pastimes: Photography, working around the house, watching sports
Favorite musical group: The Police

Exclusive Interview
What you wanted to be when you grew up: A landscape architect
Person you would most like to meet: Neil Armstrong
Tell us a fun fact about yourself: In my senior year of high school, I played the part of Curly in “Oklahoma”
If you didn’t have this job, what would be your dream job? Beer brewer

Screening of new American Experience documentary to take place at National First Ladies’ Library

Western Reserve Public Media and the Canton-based National First Ladies’ Library (NPLL) will co-host the national premiere of the new American Experience documentary Dolley Madison with screenings on Saturday, Feb. 27, at 10 AM and 1 PM and a private reception and viewing at 4:30 PM. All three screenings are full. Muffie Meyer, the filmmaker, and Ron Blumer, the writer, will attend the event to introduce the film and do Q&A afterward. President and CEO Trina Cutter will make introductory remarks along with the NPLL Executive Director Pat Krider and NPLL Board President and founder Mary Regula.

Style icon, extravagant hostess, humanitarian, doting mother, trusted political advisor and diplomat. These are the roles we now expect in a first lady, roles created by President James Madison’s wife, Dolley. Dolley’s beauty attracted attention, but it was her political acumen that set her apart in a time when women held no overt political power. As the “first first lady,” she used her unelected position to legitimize the nation’s new capital and to create a political and social style for the new country.

Clifford and Curious George to make Youngstown appearance

Two of PBS Kids’ favorite animals will be on hand for Plant the Seed to Read Book Fair on Saturday, March 27, from 10 AM to 4 PM at Youngstown’s Fellows Riverside Gardens in Mill Creek MetroParks. Children will get a free photo with Clifford the Big Red Dog and Curious George and a free book. Authors, illustrators, storytellers and other special guests will make the free event fun for the entire family. The event is presented by Western Reserve PBS, Altrusa, Mill Creek MetroParks and the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

Western Reserve Public Media has launched a Facebook fan page, and Don Freeman is regularly posting tweets at Twitter.com/WRPMguy. Follow us for program updates, announcements, fun links and more.
**Outreach & Special Events (cont’d.)**

**Family Expo scheduled for April**

The annual Summit Mall / Western Reserve PBS Family Expo, presented by Summit County Children Services, will take place Saturday, April 10, from 10 AM to 5 PM at Summit Mall in Fairlawn. Western Reserve PBS is proud to present two special guests for the event: Buddy, from the PBS Kids series *Dinosaur Train*, and Miss Rosa, the national PBS Kids host. Families will enjoy a magical PBS Kids performance with Miss Rosa at noon, 2 PM and 4 PM on the event stage. Each show will be followed by a meet-and-greet. Summit Mall will be filled with family-focused entertainment and informational booths. The event is free and open to the community.

**Second Cleveland Museum of Natural History Viewer Appreciation Day scheduled**

Western Reserve Public Media viewers will enjoy a special discount on tickets for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History exhibit Amazing Feats of Aging on Sunday, April 18, 2010. Members and viewers will be given a special discount for entry to the exhibition, open Jan. 23 through May 2.

Amazing Feats of Aging solves the mysteries of why and how animals, including humans, age. Visitors will learn about the biology of aging, aging across the animal kingdom, healthy aging and aging of the brain; look into the future as they watch their faces age up to 25 years; track the U.S. population’s incredible increasing life span; search for the biological secrets of aging (what causes aging and is there a way to slow down the process?); and be amazed at the astonishing giant tortoise that never seems to age and other extraordinary feats of aging in the animal kingdom.

**Viewer discount for David Sedaris appearance**

Enjoy An Evening With David Sedaris on Saturday, April 21, at 8 PM at EJ Thomas Hall in Akron. Western Reserve PBS viewers get a $5 discount on tickets normally priced $44.75 and $39.75. To get the discount, go to www.WesternReservePBS.org/sedaris and follow the link. At the ticket purchase site, choose Promotions and Special Offers and use the discount code “PBS.” You can also get the discount (use the PBS code) at the EJ Thomas Hall Box Office or by calling 330-972-7570.

With sardonic wit and incisive social critiques, NPR humorist and best-selling author David Sedaris has become one of America’s preeminent humor writers. The great skill with which he slices through cultural euphemisms and political correctness proves that Sedaris is one of the most observant writers addressing the human condition today.

**Free Shred-It Day scheduled for April 24**

Western Reserve Public Media will collaborate with the local franchise of Shred-It to host a free Shred-It Day in the organization’s parking lot on Saturday, April 24, from 9 AM to 3 PM in conjunction with Earth Day. The public is invited to bring up to five boxes of paper materials for shredding as well as computer hard drives and other e-waste for crushing, all of which will be done on site. A complete list of items that will be accepted will be posted at www.WesternReservePBS.org. Shred-It will provide trucks and personnel to do the shredding securely and in an environmentally responsible manner. All materials will be recycled. While the event is free, donations will be happily accepted.

**Doo Wop concert set for June 5 in Kent**

Western Reserve Public Media announces A Doo Wop Celebration IV with The Platters, The Crystals and The Dubs. The concert is set for Saturday, June 5, at The Kent Stage, with shows at 4 PM and 8 PM. Gold Circle tickets are $65 each and include best-in-house seats and a light dinner reception and meet-and-greet with the bands. Regular reserved tickets are $35 each. Tickets go on sale March 1 through Western Reserve Public Media. All proceeds benefit the organization.

Herb Reed’s The Platters are best known for hits such as “Smoke Gets in Your Eyes,” “The Great Pretender,” “Only You” and “Twilight Time.” The Crystals made the charts with “Da Do Ron Ron,” “Then He Kissed Me,” “Baby It’s You,” “Will You Love Me Tomorrow” and “He’s a Rebel.” The Dubs sang their way to stardom with “Baby Oh Baby,” “Blue Velvet” and “Could This Be Magic?”

Now a highly anticipated annual Western Reserve Public Media event, A Doo Wop Celebration has been a sell-out every year, with doo wop stars such as The Drifters, The Tokens, Gene Chandler, The Chiffons, The Marcels and others.

**WordGirl and WordWorld’s Dog meet fans at Family Reading Festival**

Western Reserve PBS was one of the sponsors of this year’s Family Reading Festival, hosted at the Akron-Summit County Public Library on Saturday, Feb. 6. PBS Kids characters WordGirl and WordWorld’s Dog did a meet-and-greet and participated in storytime with celebrity readers including a fire captain, a police officer and Akron mayor Don Plusquellic. Each child received a free book. The event was presented by This City Reads, a community alliance of organizations to champion and leverage the power of reading to promote the future success of families, individuals and businesses in greater Akron and Summit County.

**Fans pile into buses for December Doo Wop Bus Trip**

Youngstown State University names new president

Cynthia Anderson, vice president for Student Affairs at Youngstown State University for the past 15 years, has been named the seventh president of the university.

At a meeting in mid-February, the nine-member YSU Board of Trustees voted in favor of Anderson’s appointment.

A graduate of YSU who has served in a succession of faculty and administrative positions at the university for 31 years, Anderson will take office July 1. She will replace David C. Sweet, who retires after 10 years at the university’s helm.

As the president of YSU, Dr. Anderson will also serve in an ex officio capacity on the board of Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio Inc., which owns and operates Western Reserve Public Media.

Anderson will be the first woman, the first Youngstown native and the first YSU graduate to serve as president in YSU’s 102-year history.

“Today, Dr. Anderson becomes one of Youngstown State University’s most prominent success stories,” said YSU Trustees Chair Scott R. Schlick, who also chaired the Presidential Search Advisory Committee. “She has lived the YSU dream and will go down in the history of the institution for entering as a student and ending her career as the university’s president. We, as a campus community and community at large, should be very proud of that fact.”

Anderson earned a bachelor’s degree in business education from YSU in 1973, a master’s in business education from The Ohio State University in 1976 and an Ed.D. in education administration (higher education) and student personnel services from The University of Akron in 1990.

After five years of teaching business education at Westerville South High School, she joined the YSU faculty in 1979 as an instructor of business education and technology. She was named assistant professor in 1985, associate professor in 1990 and associate professor of marketing and public relations in 1994, and was promoted to professor of marketing and public relations in 2000, a post that she currently retains. She was assistant provost for academic planning from 1993 to 1995 and was named vice president for student affairs in 1995.

As vice president, she has been responsible for all matters pertaining to the areas of enrollment management, student services, student life and campus security, including recruitment and retention efforts, direction and coordination of student activities, student government, student registration, records, scholarships and financial aid. She also has overseen the Center for Student Progress, testing services, health enhancement and student health services, career services, housing, auxiliary services, student counseling services, academic support services, disability services, student recreation center, campus police and many other areas pertaining directly to service to students.

Initiatives under her leadership include development of the Enrollment Management Plan and Student Recruitment Plan, the first formal New Student Orientation program known as SOAR, the first New Student Convocation program, the Office of Veterans Affairs, the Center for Student Progress, the Office of the Student Ombudsman, the Office of Campus Recreation and Intramural Sports, the Presidential Mentors Program, the Emerging Leaders Program and campus safety programs such as the Student Threat Assessment Team and the YSU Alert emergency notification system.

New equipment to improve HD operations

Thanks to funding provided by eTech Ohio, we were able to purchase and install a Snell/ProBel HD Master Control Switcher. Technician Jay Volts from Snell/ProBel assisted our broadcast/IT engineers Rick Patterson, Anthony Dennis and Horace Chong in installing the equipment and the cabling. This unit will allow us to access more HD program sources and air them on Western Reserve PBS.

Broadcast/IT Engineer Anthony Dennis sent back to school

Broadcast/IT Engineer Anthony Dennis will be going back to school … transmitter school, that is, on March 29. He’ll be heading to the Thomson manufacturing facility in Massachusetts for a week of training on the operation and maintenance of the 250kW channel 49 Thomson digital transmitter that serves the Cleveland-Akron (Canton) market.

Funds sought for master control upgrades

Station Manager Bill O’Neil submitted a capital grant request to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)/Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) on Feb. 2. If granted, the funds will help us purchase master control equipment that will allow local insertion of interstitials on MHz Worldview and V-Me. (Currently, the organization can only do local insertions on Western Reserve PBS and Fusion.) It will also provide equipment redundancy for several critical components in the master control system. Awards will be announced in October 2010.

Accounting software upgraded

In February, our accounting software from Solomon was upgraded to what is now called Microsoft Dynamics SL 7.0. Key features of the new version include a new menu style based on Microsoft programs such as Office Outlook; personalized menus; traditional and interactive reports; and access to new Web-enabled project maintenance through the business portal.
Trina Cutter to produce “CEO to CEO” segments for NEOtropolis

Western Reserve Public Media President and CEO Trina Cutter will introduce a new segment to NEOtropolis, our weekly series on the regional economy, called “CEO to CEO.” In this weekly segment launching Feb. 26 at 8:30 PM, she meets CEOs around Northeast Ohio to find out what paths they followed to their leadership positions, putting a unique twist on the “business as usual” interviews one typically sees with organizational leaders. The on-air segments will be 90 seconds in length, but the full interviews will be featured in Cutter’s vlog (video log) on the organization’s Web site at www.westernreservecpm.org.

Lisa Martinez and Jeff Good attend NETA Conference

Vice President of Marketing and Development Lisa Martinez and Director of Education Jeff Good were in Henderson, Nev., in January to attend the National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA) conference. The conference covered a wide range of issues impacting public television stations, from new media to education outreach to fund-raising. While at the conference, Martinez and Good accepted two awards on behalf of the organization — one for Rebranding Campaign (Corporate/Institutional) and another for Instructional Media Product. Thirty-one trophies in the areas of program production, promotion, outreach and instructional media were awarded in all.

Good presents sessions at SOITA conference

In December, Director of Education Jeff Good presented two sessions at the annual Southwestern Ohio Instructional Technology Agency (SOITA) technology conference in Dayton. His two hands-on sessions covered cell phones in education and developing digital content.

Good and Tuskan participate in eTech conference

Western Reserve Educational Services was represented at the eTech Ohio Technology conference by Director of Education Jeff Good and 21st Century Learning Consultant Lealyn Tuskana. Both Good and Tuskan made presentations on educational technologies and hosted a booth in the collaborative display area that was shared among the eight Ohio educational technology agencies.

Freeman attends webinar on new video-on-demand technologies

In January, programmer Don Freeman participated in a webinar called “Competitive Environment for TV.” The focus was on Internet-connected TVs and other units, called OTT (over-the-top) by industry insiders. Set-top boxes connected to the Internet to provide additional viewer services are becoming very common. New models of Blu-ray DVD players now provide instant access to Netflix movies, and Xbox videogame machines (along with PS3 and Wii) now let users watch movies, TV shows and YouTube using their electronics. According to experts, the new OTT units will become even more popular in the next five years, and those experts predict that television viewing will decline by 30 percent, while TV-based video on demand (VOD) will increase by that very same 30 percent.

Bill O’Neil working part time

Station Manager Bill O’Neil has gone to a part-time work schedule effective Jan. 1, 2010. He will continue to oversee broadcast engineering and IT functions and work on federal grants and FCC issues for the station. Some of his responsibilities will be shifted to others. Director of Education Jeff Good will oversee buildings and grounds and the master control operations. Human resources responsibilities will be handled by consultant Linda Wilkins (see next article).

Trina Cutter, president and CEO, said, “Bill has devoted his entire career to the television industry. You won’t find a more sincere, dedicated and committed broadcaster.”

Services of human resources consultant retained

The services of Linda Wilkins have been retained to handle human resources for Western Reserve Public Media. She will provide a myriad of HR functions including internal audits of existing employment policies, procedures and systems and wage and hour practices; advice and support in all aspects of the recruitment and hiring process, including new employee orientation and onboarding; the development and administration of a performance management system; support as needed with common, daily HR issues; and support in other areas as needed.

Wilkins is an attorney and is certified as a senior professional in human resources by the Society for Human Resource Management. She works with the law firm of Kastner, Westman and Wilkins in Akron. We anticipate that she will be on site six to eight hours per week and be available on call.

The annual Western Reserve Public Media holiday party in December was kicked up a notch this year with the debut of the Prime Time Fringe Players. (Pictured left to right) Vice President of Marketing and Development Lisa Martinez as Santa Claus and elves portrayed by Director of Education Jeff Good, Broadcast/IT Engineer Anthony Dennis and President and CEO Trina Cutter serenaded (or frightened — we’re not sure which) the staff with a holiday version of Queen’s “Bohemian Rhapsody.”
Western Reserve PBS ...

- Is watched by over 700,000 viewers in Northeast Ohio and western Pennsylvania each week. (Source: 2009 Nielsen audience research) Serving viewers in Northeast Ohio and Western Pennsylvania, the station not only embraces regionalism, it is regionalism. Western Reserve PBS is the only local broadcast television service that spans almost all of northeast Ohio. Our digital broadcast services are available to 4.4 million people in 1.8 million households.

- Is available to 99% of all households in the market. Cable and satellite access represents, on average, 85% of those same households. Western Reserve PBS is carried on every cable and satellite service in northeast Ohio and western Pennsylvania, usually in a top tier position.

Western Reserve Public Media’s over-the-air broadcast service area is extended by carriage on cable systems and satellite services in Northeast Ohio and parts of western Pennsylvania.