White Ash Broadcasting, Inc.

Annual Report
2018/2019

April 9, 2019
Valley Public Radio

Mission:
Expanding your world through voices and sounds that inform and inspire

Vision:
Bridging artistic expression and diverse perspectives of our community
April 09, 2019

The last twelve months have been filled with both change and excitement at Valley Public Radio. We entered the year with interim station leadership and questions about what direction the station would be headed, at the same time as we reflected on our past, as the organization celebrated the 40th anniversary of its first broadcast.

We closed the year with new leadership, new faces on our staff, and a mandate to look to the future and help chart the next 40 years of broadcasting excellence on the FM89 airwaves. In the process we honored those who came before us, celebrated our successes and continued to bring our audience the quality news, information and music they have come to depend on, delivered on the platform of their choice. From community events, to strengthening our news department and re-focusing our broadcast engineering and technology work, the station took major strides in a number of areas. We continue to enjoy membership numbers that are at the highest point in the history of the station. We sought to focus on-air and online promotions in a unified way, and saw resulting gains in our annual radio raffle, and the biggest membership month in the history of the station in December 2018. We also solidified our relationships with our foundation partners, securing renewals at higher levels for all of our major content-related grants, and continued to pay down debt on our broadcast center mortgage.

As we look ahead to a new year, we are working hard to use data and best practices from stations across the country, as well as insights into our own unique communities to chart the future of Valley Public Radio. We will continue to serve our communities with voices and sounds that inform and inspire. We’ll seek out new ways and technologies to bring the power of public radio to more and more people, and raise the awareness of what Valley Public Radio has to offer. Above all, we will continue to do all that we can to maintain our well-earned reputation for stewardship, prudent leadership and bold vision that has helped the station become such a trusted asset in the community.

Sincerely,

Joe Moore

President and General Manager

Valley Public Radio
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Valley Public Radio has a forty-year history of prudent financial management. For the last five years, the station has earned the coveted “Four Star” rating by the independent website Charity Navigator, which evaluates the financial and governance status of non-for-profit organizations. Less than 10 percent of non-profits nationwide have earned this distinction. The following information is drawn from the station’s audited financial report as prepared by Price Page & Company, CPAs. A link to the complete report can be found on our website at KVPR.org/financial-statement.

Revenue:

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018 the station had a total revenue of $2,525,267. As a non-commercial radio station, Valley Public Radio relies on individual and corporate donations for the bulk of the station’s revenue. Multi-year grants from foundation partners including the James Irvine Foundation, California Health Care Foundation, and the California Endowment were renewed this year and helped support the station’s local journalism. The station also received an annual community service grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting totaling $193,666. This federal funding accounted for just 7.7 percent of the station’s overall revenue for the fiscal year. Events including the station’s annual wine tasting, radio raffle and a speaking appearance by NPR's Tamara Keith also contributed to station revenue. Total revenue for FY 2018 increased by 21 percent over FY 2017 ($2,089,702).
Expenses:

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018 the station had total expenses of $2,057,890. Programming and production, including locally produced news and music, plus programming purchased from NPR and other program distributors made up the largest share of station expenses. Broadcasting and technical operations associated with operating KVPR and KPRX also made up a significant share of overall expenses. Together these two categories account for nearly 75 percent of the station’s expenditures. Total expenses for FY 2018 decreased by 2 percent over FY 2017 ($2,131,731).

Endowment:

The station’s endowment includes both donor-restricted funds and unrestricted funds. Total net endowment assets totaled $635,618 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018. This is an increase of 55 percent from the total net endowment assets as of September 30, 2017 ($408,742). The increase was largely attributable to new estate gifts from station donors.

Mortgage:

Valley Public Radio moved into a state-of-the-art 10,000 square foot broadcast center in May of 2016. The approximately $4 million project doubled the size of the station’s production and broadcast facilities, and replaced a leased facility that was nearly 30 years old. As of September 30, 2018, the station’s mortgage with United Security Bank had an outstanding principal balance of $1,335,502. The note is payable in monthly installments of $7,429 including interest at 3.95 percent.
PROGRAMMING

The last year saw many highlights when it comes to station programming. It was a year of major changes, with the addition of new voices to our air and our newsroom. Alice Daniel was hired as the station’s News Director. A veteran of KQED and a Columbia Journalism School graduate, Alice has brought new energy and ideas to Valley Edition and the station’s news department. The station also welcomed Monica Velez to the airwaves. A veteran of the Merced Sun-Star, Monica is covering issues related to immigration and diverse valley communities. We also welcomed other new voices to the air, including weekend All Things Considered announcer Angelica Hernandez and news producer Sarah Thrasher as part-time staff members.

Audience:
The station continued to see strong audience numbers, despite a decline from the 2017 calendar year. This is consistent with national audience numbers, where declines from the highs of 2016 and 2017 have been attributed to “news fatigue” following growth involving the presidential election and immediate aftermath. In Fall 2018, the station had 54,600 weekly listeners according to Nielsen, a decline of approximately eight percent from the prior year. News programs continue to be the station’s most popular, with over two-thirds of stations listeners reporting that they listened to Morning Edition. 49 percent of station listeners reported listening to Clearly Classical, and 51 percent reported listening to All Things Considered.

News Department Highlights:

Struggling For Care:
Valley Public Radio’s on-going series on the shortage of physicians in the San Joaquin Valley won a major national award from the Association of Health Care Journalists. Reporter Kerry Klein’s coverage took first place honors nationally for health policy reporting (small market) in AHCJ’s annual awards. Other first place winners in the contest included the New York Times, the Washington Post, ProPublica and the Boston Globe. Klein was also invited to be a panelist at the annual AHCJ conference. Kerry continues to follow the story, including new developments locally that could lead to more doctors serving the valley in the future.
Contaminated:
In 2017, Valley Public Radio launched a reporting project called Contaminated, which helped shed new light on the drinking water crisis facing rural communities in the San Joaquin Valley and Sierra foothills. Thousands of residents in small communities there have tap water that is tainted with everything from nitrate to uranium to arsenic. And while some communities have seen success getting funding to help build infrastructure to clean up the problem, in some cases, that equipment is sitting idle as communities can’t afford to operate it. In part through the work of KVPR reporters, the issue has come to greater attention in Sacramento and has inspired new legislation to provide funding to clean up the problem.

“Part of the Job” Violence in the Health Care Workplace:
In California, one of the job sectors with the highest rates of on-the-job violence is healthcare. In 2018, reporter Laura Tsutsui was awarded the California Health Journalism Fellowship from the USC Center for Health Reporting for coverage of this topic. From a shooting at a Bakersfield hospital to threats of violence between co-workers, our coverage sought to explain why the industry has tolerated a culture where violence has been considered “part of the job” and examined efforts to try to change it.

Immigration:
With a large population of undocumented immigrants, in some ways the San Joaquin Valley is ground zero for the tense political fight over the fate of immigrants. Reporter Monica Velez has covered all sides of the story in the past year, from the fate of high school students in Delano who are fearful of coming to class due to recent raids by agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, to the challenges valley farmers and labor contractors are facing finding workers to pick their crops. She also profiled a Yemeni family now living in Visalia, who was the center of the U.S. Supreme Court case over the Trump administration’s travel ban. They moved to California to seek medical care for their 11-year-old
daughter. Monica’s reporting also brought new elements to light on familiar issues: she explained why some immigrant rights activists are actually opposed to efforts to close an ICE detention facility in Bakersfield, and how valley swap meets and flea markets are seeing a drop in business due to the administration’s zero tolerance immigration policy.

**Homelessness:**
Reporter Laura Tsutsui has developed a beat covering issues of homelessness and housing insecurity in the Fresno area. Her coverage examined new strategies to address the problem, as well as a look at the effectiveness of the city’s much-debated “camping ban.” Laura also brought us personal stories from the streets, including a powerful tale of a young mom’s transition to a better life.

**Valley Fever:**
Kern County and the southern San Joaquin Valley is ground-zero for this regional, airborne fungal disease. While most people who contract the illness have mild symptoms, in some people, the symptoms can be severe, even leading to death. Reporter Kerry Klein continued our coverage as part of the Center for Health Reporting Collaborative, including partner organizations Vida en el Valle and The Bakersfield Californian. Coverage produced by KVPR for the series this year included a report about how programs aimed at helping cancer survivors with wigs are seeing a spike in new patients with valley fever, and an in-depth report about the special challenges and tough choices expectant mothers with the disease face when confronted with treatment options. We also covered two new bills that address different areas of the fight against valley fever that were signed into law in 2018 by Governor Jerry Brown, both of which were inspired in part by the reporting of the Collaborative.
Golden Mike Awards:
Valley Public Radio's news department has received two more honors for its outstanding work at the 69th annual Golden Mike Awards. The ceremony was held in Los Angeles on Saturday January 19, 2019. Station reporter Kerry Klein received "Best Investigative Reporting - Division B" for her report on a previously undisclosed Immigration and Customs Enforcement "hold room" in downtown Fresno. The station also received honors for "Best Public Affairs Program - Division B" for Valley Edition.

Music Department Highlights:
This year marked a number of changes on the music front. Most significantly we celebrated a new regular addition to our music lineup, with Early Music Now. The program is heard after Sunday Baroque on Sundays at noon and features selections from pre-baroque composers. Classical host and programmer David Aus has also joined the Valley Edition team, and is contributing artist interviews to that program, as well as to Clearly Classical with his interviews featuring Rei Hotoda of the Fresno Philharmonic.

David is also serving as host for our annual series celebrating talented young musicians in our region: Young Artists Spotlight. In addition to the live radio broadcasts that originate from our Barmann Chaney Performance Studio, fans can now watch these performances live via our Facebook Live video stream. From Bakersfield to Fresno these amazing young musicians are an inspiration for us all.
Broadcast Operations & Technology:
The past year has also been one of change when it comes to our broadcast operations. Our longtime engineer Scott Dean retired in Fall 2018, and died in early 2019. We have since contracted with Paul Kleinkramer of Broadcast Technical Solutions from Exeter to serve as chief engineer for KVPR. In the six months he has been working with the station, we have made great strides in addressing a backlog of deferred maintenance, and have resolved some technological hurdles at both our transmitter sites and at our Clovis Broadcast Center. We have deployed new technology to make our on-air interviews that used to happen over the phone sound much better, and we have made other critical software and hardware upgrades to streamline operations. In addition to broadcast technology, we have purchased and installed a new multimedia system for our conference room to aid in training and video conferencing.

Public Events:
This past year saw the station host a wide variety of community events, celebrating the 40th anniversary of KVPR’s first broadcast on October 15, 1978. In lieu of a gala celebration we instead took our “show” on the road to visit listeners in communities up and down the San Joaquin Valley, including events in Fresno, Clovis, Visalia, Madera, Bakersfield, Kingsburg and Hanford. The celebration culminated with a broadcast featuring rare archival highlights from Valley Public Radio’s first on-air day, and an interview on Valley Edition with the station’s first program director Von Johnson.

Our annual Wine Tasting event was a financial success, generating $73,000 in net profit for the station. Individual ticket sales were up 140 when compared with the previous year, while silent auction sales were down.
We also held a special event at our Clovis Broadcast Center in January, where we named our studio complex in honor of late President & General Manager, Mariam Stepanian. The station unveiled a concrete monument sign bearing the name “Mariam Stepanian Studios.” It is accompanied by a plaque in the station lobby honoring Mariam’s leadership and accomplishments with the station.

Operations:
During the past year the station completed a thorough update of its policies and procedures manual, EEO policy, bylaws and code of ethics. The station also hired a third-party safety consultant who provided active shooter training, other safety related training on a quarterly basis and helped write a new Injury and Illness Prevention Policy for the station.

We also had staff participate in a number of professional development activities, including attendance at the NPR Super Regional meeting in Atlanta, participating in the GM101 workshop led by John Hess, and attendance at the NPR Compact Meeting in Culver City. The station also hired noted talent coach Marilyn Pittman to work with on-air staff on their broadcast sound and production techniques.

Collaboration:
Valley Public Radio continued its partnerships with a variety of organizations during the past year. The station had several pieces air nationally on NPR, including coverage of the Ferguson Fire, a mass shooting in Bakersfield, and the launch of the World Surf League in Lemoore last May. The station remained a valued partner of the Center for Health Reporting Collaborative, and also produced a one-off project with the Washington, DC-based Center for Public Integrity reporting on high-speed rail and issues in West Fresno. The station also produced over a dozen pieces for KQED’s The California Report, and hosted the TCR team in March 2019, where they presented their statewide broadcast from our studio in Clovis.
Community Outreach & Giving Back:
Over the past 12 months the station donated media sponsor packages to over 20 local non-profits or governmental agencies, ranging from the Kegley Institute of Ethics at CSUB to the Fresno County Public Library to help promote their activities on-air. Our community calendar aired over 3,200 free messages on-air as public service announcements, and thousands more online at the online version of the calendar at KVPR.org. Station staff were also active in the community, participating in a number of community activities, demonstrating our leadership in the community, including the Pink Tea Party at Kaweah Delta Medical Center in Visalia, the Bench/Bar/Media group in Fresno, and the annual Read Across America Day at Hamilton K-8 School in Fresno, where station staff read Dr. Seuss books to children.
Valley Public Radio By the Numbers

- 54,600 Total broadcast listeners (Fall 2018 Nielsen)
- 5,519 Active members as of April 1, 2019
- $2,525,619 Total revenue for the FY ending 9/30/2018
- 379,846 Unique users for KVPR.org (Google Analytics)
- 891,473 Page views on KVPR.org (Google Analytics)
- 404 Local news reports on KVPR.org
- 2 Golden Mike Awards for broadcast excellence
- 11,018 Average monthly online listeners (Triton WCM)
- 4,340 Total Facebook followers
- 112 Vehicles donated (CY 2018)
- 50 Weekly broadcasts of Valley Edition
- $1,298,987 Outstanding mortgage balance (as of 9/30/18)
- 4 Four-star Charity Navigator ranking, 5th year