

State of the Station Report

Jeffrey Parker, General Manager, 29 January 2018

As we stride into 2018, a burst of innovation is creating a fresh, infectious sense of community engagement and public service at Mendocino County Public Broadcasting, building on nearly three decades of broadcast excellence from our family of dedicated KZYYX programmers and a full slate of regional, national and international programs from National Public Radio, Pacifica Network, Public Radio International and Public Radio Exchange.

In January, we established a new broadcast and programming studio at the Redwood Coast Senior Center in Fort Bragg, positioning KZYYX reporters and programmers to illuminate the challenges facing the county's coastal capital as residents address issues including the mill pond site, the crisis of affordable housing and the trauma in the crab and abalone fisheries.

Our year-long collaboration with Mendocino College reached a fresh milestone in January as the Recording Arts & Technology program began integrating KZYYX public affairs and news programming into its curriculum. Working in the College's world-class studios and a soundstage earmarked for KZYYX collaboration, students are training with KZYYX programmers to engineer shows for broadcast. We're teaming up with KQED, KRCB, Capital Public Radio and public radio allies nationwide, sharing training, programming and innovation. We take seriously our commitment putting public radio in service of education, and look forward to recruiting many college and younger students into the joys of community broadcasting.

New productions already are flowing from the College collaboration. Students are engineering Rural Resilience, a fresh series about children in foster care, and the ongoing season of the Ukiah Community Concerts. Rural Resilience and Mendocino Works, a program focusing on local innovation and entrepreneurship, are the first in a planned variety of programs targeting specific issues of critical importance to our county: affordable housing; affordable healthcare that is accessible to all; a healthy, local, sustainable foodshed; a vibrant local economy with ample jobs that leaves no one behind, including our immigrant and Native neighbors. We'll reach into Mendocino's far corners with a major oral history project exploring a half century of the "Back to the Land" era and its profound impact on our arts, politics and government.

We're determined to move beyond mere broadcast of our great programming, making it easily accessible to listeners anytime, anyplace. Under the Town Square banner, we're archiving programs on KZYYX.org, and using social media to reach the broadest online audience.

To ensure member donations have the greatest impact, we've cut operating costs by dropping corporate telecom services in favor of local telephone and internet services. Our year-end campaign was the best in years, with many members donating a little extra in thanks for the public safety edge our broadcasts provided during the October fires.

Our strategy in 2018 is simple: To put KZYYX into the greatest possible service of our neighbors and institutions, earning longtime listeners' trust and support, engaging young listeners with opportunities to make their mark, building new audiences by reaching the unserved, all in a common quest to make Mendocino County the truly wonderful place we all aspire to enjoy.