

WVIA Community Advisory Board

Thursday, January 11, 2018 12 noon

The Community Advisory Board met at noon on January 11, 2018 at WVIA. In attendance were Jo-Ann Reif, Ph.D., chair, Dick Briden, George Coulter, Tom and Judy Hall, Carol Tome, and Midori Yamanouchi, Ph.D. Absent: Linda Keene, Elaine Herzog, Caryn Powers, and Meg Welker. Chris Norton represented WVIA. Jo-Ann Reif, chair, called the meeting to order.

Chris Norton reported that WVIA has launched a new commitment to community engagement initiatives, many of which will be directly related to PBS national programming highlights. For example, the station held a *Victoria* Season 2 preview party January 7. With special outreach grant funding WVIA hosted a preview screening of the documentary *American Creed* at the Hazleton One Community Center with special guest Joe Maddon, whose story is prominently featured in the documentary. Tom and Judy Hall attended this program and found it to be an important, positive story of Americans working to improve their communities in a nation divided in many ways. WVIA also taped a series of interviews in Hazleton for a set of online videos about the Hazleton Integration Project. Plans are also underway for two more *American Creed* events at Bloomsburg University in February: a civic engagement fair for 125 high school students during the day, and a screening of the film followed by a Community Conversation panel discussion taped for TV broadcast.

Pennsylvania's public media stations are collaborating to demonstrate their statewide impact in a *Battling Opioids* initiative to combat this addiction epidemic. PBS *Frontline* presents *Understanding the Opioid Epidemic* January 17, then on March 22 all Pennsylvania public TV stations will air the recent Pennsylvania-produced documentary *Broken: Women. Families. Opioids*. Plans are underway for the statewide collaboration to produce a new program for common carriage during the week of September 24, when all PA stations will devote prime time hours to *Battling Opioids* content. Tom Curra will be Executive Producer for the new program. In addition WVIA is exploring the possibility of partnering with Family Service Association of NEPA to convene a conference in Wilkes-Barre in November on the growing problem of opioid abuse.

The recent WVIA / Bucknell University documentary *Peoples of the Susquehanna River* has been scheduled for screening at the Dietrich Theater in Tunkhannock with a panel discussion to follow, including filmmaker Kris Hendrickson and others involved in the production. WVIA is developing plans for two more PBS priority series. Since *Civilizations* examines art treasures of the world through history, WVIA's *ArtScene* program will invite the audience to nominate museums, galleries, and public art sites as ArtScene Treasures of Our Region from April into June. And WVIA is applying for a small grant to fund some regional events in conjunction with *The Great American Read*, kicking off May 22, then returning September 11-October 23. The initial plan is to invite area libraries to a preview screening to brainstorm summer/fall events to boost reading and discussion of favorite novels as well as online voting to determine "America's best-loved novel."

A schedule of WVIA and PBS winter programming highlights was distributed. WVIA's *Our Town* series will continue with *Our Town Old Forge* in March, then *Our Town Lehigh* in May. WVIA FM recent program highlights included the November-December broadcast of the Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts jazz festival recorded in September and numerous holiday specials. Upcoming Simply Grand concerts will feature Ron Stabinsky, piano March 18 and Jennifer Cowgill, soprano April 8. The next Homegrown Music Concert is January 15 featuring blues by Teddy Young and the Aces. WVIA will host Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic chamber music concerts March 4 and March 30, in an effort to help the orchestra recover from its financial difficulties.

A brief review of WVIA's extensive education programs outlined the annual *Scholastic Scrimmage* series of high school academic quiz programs and the *Artist of the Week* series honoring outstanding student visual and performing artists. Our *PBS Kids in the Classroom* project has been growing vigorously, presenting costumed characters, themed lessons, arts and crafts activities, and distributing free books in early elementary classrooms throughout the region. WVIA again hosted the regional *Poetry Out Loud* competition among high school students, to be aired in April for National Poetry Month.

Following up the CAB's earlier concerns about federal funding for public media, Chris reported that despite the administration's proposal to de-fund, Congress has demonstrated continuing support in appropriations legislation. But the challenge is likely to remain as a political issue.

The meeting was adjourned. Next meeting: Thursday, May 17, 2018 at noon at WVIA.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Norton