

THIRD QUARTER PROGRAMMING ON KHGG-AM, VAN BUREN, ARKANSAS

JULY 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2013

The primary public service program on KHGG-AM "Arklahoma Today," a two-hour news-weather-sports and interview program heard each weekday from 7 to 9 a.m. Over the three-month period, here are the key items from determined as important issues relating to our audience:

WOUNDED WARRIORS PROJECT

Numerous efforts have been made in the area for men and women in uniform who have been injured in combat or otherwise serving their nation. The Wounded Warriors Project fund-raiser, David Ogden, was on KHGG-AM Friday, July 12, for 10 minutes to explain details of a concert to raise money for the Veterans.

STUFF THE BUS, JULY 26 AND 27

Many children look forward to arriving on the first day of school with new notebooks, backpacks and pencil boxes, but it's a different story for children whose families can't afford these items. The United Way decided to help in this effort and enlisted KHGG-AM to get the work out to Arklahoma. Mitzy Little, Marketing Director for the United Way, spoke on KHGG-AM for ten minutes on the "Stuff the Bus" program. On July 26 and 27, United Way had listeners fill a bus with supplies to be donated to children in the six-county area it serves. More than 44,000 packages of new school supplies were donated. Mitzy said the agency serves Crawford, Franklin, Logan and Sebastian Counties in Arkansas and LeFlore and Sequoyah Counties in Oklahoma. Cortney Christenson also appeared on Arklahoma Today to talk about the event.

EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY

Thursday, July 18, Rick Foti, director of the Community Services Clearinghouse, was on Arklahoma Today seeking donations of canned goods and fresh vegetables for the Emergency Food Pantry. He said they were "experiencing a marked increase in the number of cancer patients being served through the pantry and, while they purchase the majority of the food they offer their clients, donations to much to add to the amount that can be shared." Rick pointed out that 6,000 pounds of food had recently been collected, but that all of it was gone in a week's time. Helping the needy in the Arklahoma region has been an important part of KHGG-AM's outreach with the various services based here.

THE CLOSING OF THE MASSIVE WHIRLPOOL PLANT AND THE TRANSFER OF ITS OPERATIONS TO MEXICO.

At one time, the Whirlpool corporation employed 4,400 employees in Fort Smith. Many of these workers lived in Fort Smith, but many drove from outlying communities such as Van Buren and Waldron. When the plant finally closed in January, there were less than 2,000 workers there. Among the issues we developed were: what new jobs could the displaced workers find? What educational opportunities did they have to re-tool themselves for future employment? What new industries could be enticed to come to the region and possibly take over the plant?

Over the course of the three months, we continued our on-air discussion of solutions with important local leaders. Many Scott County workers were employed by Whirlpool and many are seeking new jobs. Fort Smith City Administrator Ray Gosack was on two different programs for 15 minutes each time; and monthly interviews with Congressmen Steve Womack and Tom Cotton, and Senators John Boozman and Mark Pryor. They explained the potential for dividing up the empty Whirlpool site and having several manufacturers and other firms.

KHGG-AM also helped bring information about Job Fairs specifically designed to find opportunities for the unemployed. Stacey Jones, vice chancellor of the University of Arkansas Fort Smith also presented information about degrees that could lead to new careers for the displaced Whirlpool workers.

The announcement that Sparks Health Services will hire 500 employees at high-paying jobs was made during our newscasts on KHGG-FM. John Taylor of Stearne, Agee and Leach, appears daily to go over market news and often talks with Bill about developments close to home. John provided valuable information when it was learned that Sparks Health was being acquired by another health care company. KHGG-FM was able to break the news that the merger would not affect the hiring plans in Fort Smith.

GROUND WATER CONTAMINATION BY THE WHIRLPOOL PLANT

It was discovered that several years ago, the plant discharged toxic chemicals that have entered the groundwater for some distance around the site. Mayor Sandy Sanders appeared on Arklahoma Today for two 15-minute interviews during the first quarter and on one he talked extensively on this matter and explained that the state and city were determined to see that Whirlpool removes the toxicity. However, City officials appeared on Arklahoma Today to inform listeners that the State of Arkansas trumpets the city on such matters and that the State will make determinations of how to move forward. During this time period, numerous lawsuits were filed by residents near the empty plant claiming damages.

THE AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE ACT

The State of Arkansas launched plans to join the federal government's health care plan known as Obamacare. Almost immediately, Arkansas teachers were notified that their health insurance charges would be going up by 50% or more. Gov. Beebe called a special session of the Legislature to deal with the situation and paid off the deficit with surplus tax revenues. KHGG-AM reported on these actions and interviewed numerous officials in charge of signing up citizens to the Obamacare exchanges. Sen. John Boozman appeared on Arkklahoma Today several times to express his desire to delay the fledgling health care law. He said, "The Obama administration recently announced its plans to delay implementation of a key component of the president's health care legislation—the employer mandate." Boozman said that while this pleased him, he went on to tell our listeners that "this proves that the health care law is unworkable." We are continuing to get input from all sides on this important topic. Sen. Mark Pryor also appeared on Arkklahoma Today and spoke of his support for Obamacare.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS-FORT SMITH

While the region's economy has suffered recently, one of the bright spots has been the expansion and success of the University here. Students from throughout the area and nation have carried it to its largest enrollment ever. Chancellor Paul Beren, appeared on September Arkklahoma Today, calling on our audience to take advantage of the new degree programs available. UAFS has joined with the Regional Chamber to find programs that will lead to job expansion.

CHANGE IN MISSION OF THE 188TH ARKANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Regional leaders worked with intensity to try to retain the A-10 Mission of the pilots and personnel of the 188th Arkansas Air National Guard Base in Fort Smith. There were several key reasons why there was hope this could happen. KHGG-AM carried announcements and information about the visit of the Secretary of the Air Force's visit here in mid January. However, after making a tour of facilities, he said on our newscasts the decision would stand, but that drone aircraft would be operated from the air base and that citizens may be surprised at the economic impact of the new operation.

ENTERTAINMENT AND ARTS IN THE ARKLAHOMA REGION

KHGG-AM has been instrumental in getting the word out on various entertainment venues and shows in the Fort Smith Region. From appearances by Mark Moore talking about a special African American Valentines comedy show, to Parks Director Mike Allsup promoting a Father-Daughter Dance, we gave ample time to these positive events, often done for charity. Teresa Schlabach of the Alma Performing Arts Center, Stacey Jones with UAFS Season of Entertainment, and Tom Watkins of the Van Buren Performing Arts Center were our guests on the show.

The new Regional Arts Museum (RAM) was opened and director Lee Ortega was a guest of host Karen Pharis several times, including discussion of "The Secrets of Mona Lisa."

RETAINING THE HISTORY OF THE BORDER REGION

Fort Smith was named the Number One Real West Town in the United States by Real West Magazine during the first quarter. The region is the home to Judge Isaac C. Parker's Courthouse, operated by the National Park Service, the Old Fort Museum, and the future U.S. Marshal's Museum. .

Claude Legris, director of the Fort Smith Visitors and Convention Bureau, appears once a week on Arkklahoma Today to discuss tourism and events in the area.

Jeremy Lynch of the Parks Service is on the program once a month to discuss events at Parker's Courthouse. The interviews are about ten minutes on length.

BETTER HEALTH OPTIONS FOR LISTENERS

Arkansas and Oklahoma have been listed in recent surveys as in need of better health facilities and options. Several local medical agencies have been striving to do just that. Sparks Regional Medical Center has sent several physicians to appear on Arkklahoma Today. For example, Dr. David Miller appeared for approximately ten minutes to explain the benefits of Beating Heart Surgery and a seminar he had scheduled. Other doctors appear explaining details of their specialties and treatments people may not have heard about that could improve their health and quality of life.

PROTECTION OF NATURE, WILDLIFE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Karen Westcamp-Johnson and Chad Lowe of the Janet Huckabee Center at Chaffee Crossing are special guests once a month. They talk about the various weekly sessions there: boating safety, hunting safety, crafts creation, turkey calls, owl calling, eagle watching, all of this and more are on their agenda. They also have special nights devoted to skywatching.

CONTINUOUS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Jayne Hughes, director Downtown Development in Fort Smith, is on Arkklahoma Today twice a month to explain the various things happening in that widespread area. Her work has been copied in many area communities. She and Claude Legris appeared together to praise an article in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette praising the efforts of the Fort Smith Downtown Development District. Author Rex Nelson said other parts of Arkansas could take a page from Fort Smith's book.

PROVIDING LEADERS FOR ALL OF THE ABOVE

Leadership was stressed by a number of our guests during the period. Fay Dancer and Jimmy Poole of Leadership 360 guested twice. Their group brings in speakers who have attained success through their ability to lead. Kim Snipes also appeared from that group. The interviews were ten minutes in length each. A talk by Razorback color broadcaster Keith Jackson was promoted.