

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

JANUARY 1 TO MARCH 31, 2013

The primary public service program on KHGG-AM is "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:

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 discussed these topics with Fort Smith City Administrator Ray Gosack (Jan 17) on two different programs for 15 minutes each time; a ten minute interview with Paul Harvel, executive director the Regional Chamber of Commerce; 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.

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-AM. This hopeful sign is being taken that the economy can be turned around by everyone working together and seeing that spirit attract new investment. John Taylor of Stearne, Agee Investments, appears daily to go over market news and often talks with Bill about developments close to home. He praised the work of everyone involved in bringing the firm to the River Valley.

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.

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, who has appeared this year on Arkklahoma Today has called 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. Host Bill Pharis interviewed him after a Lions Basketball game in Edmond, Oklahoma and presented the interview on the morning show.

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 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 out 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.

The Riverblenders Barber Show Quartet sang for listeners leading up to Valentines Day. They are Ron Bergenstock, Jim Cheyne, Scott Monroe, and Bill Terrell.

National Cemetery was decorated with wreaths for the Christmas holidays and in January, City Director Phillip Merry came on the show to thank everyone and ask for volunteers to remove the wreaths from hundreds of graves. He tells is it was done by our listeners in less than an hour.

RECOGNIZING MINORITIES IN THE COMMUNITY

In January, KHGG-AM carried a live broadcast of the Dr. Martin Luther King Parade. It was also videoed and archived at Arklahomavision.com. Ms. Debra Woodard appeared on Arklahoma Today to reveal the parade participants and urge listeners to attend.

THE NEED FOR FOOD FOR THE LESS FORTUNATE IN THE REGION

Rick Foti is a frequent guest with Karen in studio talking about the Community Services Clearinghouse. The agency is especially helpful in providing meals to youngsters whose parents are unable to provide adequate food supplies.

Capt. Carlile Gargis of the Salvation Army is also a monthly guest with Bill, most recently explaining the food outreach to adults in the area.

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 Arklahoma Today. Fort 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 appears 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 Arklaoma Today twice a month to explain the various things happening in that widespread area. Her work has been copied in many area communities.

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.