

Problems/Programs Report

July 2015 – September 2015

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WQPC airs locally produced news reports at 7am, 8:30am, 12:30pm and 5:00pm. A community affairs/interview program airs weekdays at 9am.

In 2015 WQPC added additional newscasts to the morning drive at 6am, 6:30am, and 7:30am. Extra newscasts were added on Saturday morning, as well.

In the Fall of 2015, we added a second part-time reporter, Doug Wagen to the staff. He brings over three decades of news experiences to the team. His availability will increase our coverage efforts in Grant County – especially in Fennimore, Lancaster, and Platteville. This compliments our already strong coverage efforts in Prairie du Chien and Crawford County, and our growing coverage capabilities in northeast Iowa.

WPRE airs locally produced news reports at 7am, 8:30am, and 12pm. A community spotlight interview program airs at 10am.

A number of significant local news stories were covered. Some of the highlights include:

- The timing of the second phase of the major Marquette Road construction project became unstable as the state budget looked to include less money than anticipated for road projects. It began to appear that phase two of the project will be delayed a year from 2017 to 2018 because of the funding cuts. We spoke with City Administrator Aaron Kramer about the ripple effects of a potential delay to the project. (July 2015)
- As the state passed it's budget, we spoke with local representatives Travis Tranel and Lee Nerison about the positives and negatives in the budget for rural southwestern Wisconsin. (July 2015)
- A major renovation of the St. Feriole Island Ballpark got underway. We spoke with Dan Shickert about the details of the project and it's costs. (July 2015)
- The River Ridge school district held an Elector's Meeting, then promptly walked out en masse to protest actions by the River Ridge school board on it's plans for spending money on building renovations after two failed referendums. We spoke with several concerned citizens and district administrator Jeff Athey after the meeting. (July 2015)
- Crossing Rivers Health has decided to demolish the old building that housed the hospital for decades before their move to a new facility earlier this year. Some community members were upset that another business wasn't found to fill the space. Hospital officials and the board underwent an extensive process to find a potential suitor/use for the old building, but ultimately decided it would be the best for the community to have it demolished – rather sit for years and become a blighted property. We spoke with hospital CEO Bill Sexton, board president Charlie O'Connell and others about the decision making process. (July 2015)

- The American Queen riverboat made a stop in Prairie du Chien for the first time in years. The Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Council and other organizations coordinated a widespread effort to welcome the passengers. We spoke with various tourism/chamber representatives about the visit. (August 2015)
- The Prairie du Chien School District is offering new tech and trade classes this year. We spoke about that, plus financial challenges, and other start-of-school topics with Administrator Drew Johnson. (August 2015)
- The routes of the SMRT Bus transportation system have been modified after a review by stakeholders. The system provides bus transportation throughout southwest Wisconsin. We spoke with PdC City Planner Garth Fribley about the process. (September 2015)
- The Prairie du Chien School District is hosting a series of public meetings to seek commentary on what to do with pressing financial challenges the district is facing. Ultimately the school is looking at holding a referendum to address the situation, with the possibility of other school building modifications as part of it. We spoke with various board members, the group facilitating the discussions and building plans, etc. (September 2015 / October 2015)
- A group of students, chaperones, and Father Weighnor from Holy Family Parish attended the Pope's visit to Philadelphia. We spoke with them as they prepared for their trip to be a part of the mass/festivities. (September 2015)

In addition to the coverage of significant news stories and community issues, WQPC/WPRE continued to broadcast interviews with local and regional elected officials, including (but not limited to):

- Dave Hemmer, Prairie du Chien Mayor
- Aaron Kramer, Prairie du Chien Administrator
- Various Prairie du Chien city council and committee members
- Representative Travis Tranel
- State Senator Jennifer Shilling
- US Senator Ron Johnson
- Governor Scott Walker

Other local community events, services, people were featured on our news and interview programming. Some of the highlights include:

- Healthy Roots of Crawford County program (July 2015)
- Summer activities in Clayton County Iowa with Darla Kelchen (July 2015)
- Great River Relay for Life (July 2015)
- La Riviere Horse Park Trails (July 2015)
- Prairie Dog Blues Fest (July 2015)
- Country on the River (August 2015)
- Art in the Park in Elkader (August 2015)

- Crawford County Community Fund (August 2015)
- Crossing Rivers Health Hospice Art Fundraisers (August 2015)
- Driftless Wisconsin Grown Harvest Dinner (September 2015)
- Villa Louis Carriage Classic (September 2015)
- Bluff View School Community Garden (September 2015)
- Kickapoo Brave Ride (September 2015)
- Music Fights Back event (September 2015)
- Driftless Area Arts Festival (September 2015)
- Mississippi Mud Run (September 2015)