

greylock-citizen-media-collaborative-12-06-2006

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00:05

For the benefit of the microphone, I'll say that I'm Bill Densmore. Thanks for coming, we're in Williamstown at the Williamstown Public Library at a meeting of something that we're calling on an ad hoc basis, the Graylog citizens media collaborative. And they're also folks here from Vermont. So we're taking that in terms of a region around Mount Greylock. And this is the second meeting that we've had, we got together a somewhat different group in August. And my motivation is to try and develop to try and determine whether there's a base of people in our region who were interested enough in community media and systems media to see if we can pull together a sort of regular collaborative that might need occasionally or that might work together to develop print, or broadcast or low power FM or web, or other sorts of multimedia based media all with the idea of trying to foster civic engagement in the region. A little 30 seconds of background on me, Mike, I was in the newspaper business with AP and trade publishing. And for nine years, my wife and I owned and published the advocate, news weekly here. And for the last, gosh, 10 or 12 years now, I've been involved in an internet startup, that's a system for making it easy to buy and sell information on the web. And then more recently, I've been working at UMass Amherst on a couple of research projects, the immediate draft project and the new in the new swarm. But there are a bunch of people here tonight who are doing interesting things. And what I'd like to do is just kind of get started initially, by going around the room and asking everybody to just say, who you are, and what you hope to get from tonight's meeting. And then then let's sort of wreak reconnoiter after we've done that, because we may learn some things that might change the agenda. Tonight, we'll discuss briefly how we want to proceed with the agenda and then get started. So you want to want to start off my name is Matt. I'm currently on the board as a public relations director. Hopefully how expensive departmental manager Brian?

02:31

Good job being the next general manager

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that I am told that there was something

02:42

else from Yes. So I'm just gonna see how we can

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continue to

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form some kind of bridge between this collaborative Alliance. I live in Siena town, but work in Albany Troy with a group called the New York Media Alliance. I've been active for quite a while with the support group for College Station W RTI. Student Run station, and variables of the web based news project called Independent Media Center, and for the past year have been working on a physical space called the sanctuary for independent media based on bringing people together physically and sharing media. Am I interested in this meeting is because of those projects, certainly. But also since I live in Stephens town, I've observed for the 15 years I've been here this bizarre phenomenon where we never hear anything about what happens on the Vermont and Massachusetts side of the mountains, and we all don't really hear much about what's happening in Berlin, in those communities. It all comes flying over us. Mr. Jeff, my name is Jeff.

04:10

I've been a involved between the journalism says

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three four

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speakers including Sheldon falls in Massachusetts, who is my second boss Daly and this has been the sermon together where you get editor and publisher up to regional newspaper.

04:42

If you haven't seen it and we're you're here to spread the word about

05:01

My name is John Thomas. I'm a senior at MC like North Adams. I mean editor of the student papers and beacons. And I was an intern for Bill's media draft conferences, the summer internships at the North Adams transcripts in good history because at Northampton I'm pursuing a graduate school. Well, I'm going to go to school for journalism. And I'm here because Phil asked me to and I'm interested in what, how old models and girls, we're going to be moving into a more community based multimedia world.

05:40

I'm on Andrew McKeever, the executive editor of the UCLA campus newspaper. I'll be editor in chief next semester. I've have done an internship with the parents get put them also from Lanesboro. Local base. So I like to see what I can do. As around for this project in trying to get a grasp for where this project is going.

06:08

I'm Sandra Thomas. I'm the Executive Director of Images Summit in Williamstown. I'm on the board of bullying at the public access station. I've had a show on WC and feminine I used to be on a show on W RPI. And I'm an exhibitor interested in learning how we can exhibit them on the public on the public airwaves and in the public spaces.

06:29

I'm Joe Proctor, one of my jobs at Williams College is to be the news director. And those of you who are on the receiving end see the hundreds of 1000s of press releases. Before I went over to the other side, the other side, the public relations, side support from televisions and magazines and radio. And I'm here because a satellite interesting things might be going on here. And since leaves colleges to the biggest employer in town, I think it behooves us to be interested in what's going on the community and to be part of it.

07:08

I'm Bob how, from Bennington trustee of Southern College, former owner of WB TM am in Bennington, acquired from Vermont Public Radio, bought the aim and the FM station didn't want the aim. And the aim was started in 1952. Local Station, so the idea was to keep it local, transferred it over to Southern Vermont College. And now we're really trying to develop some good things in bedding, including communication centers, some sort of, and this is Karen Truven.

07:54

From the college, and I work in advancement, do grant writing and that sort of thing. And I'm very interested in how this project overlays some of our initiatives related to development of the communications program in SVC. And I also oversee communications for the college. We were given web 10am I think about five years ago now and you know our ideas for that to be not a college radio station, but it is a community radio station serving Jevington Rather than being a college radio station. And we are seeking to build a center for community media as a function that through which we enhance our current communications program with a focus on community media and how we educate our students across all forms of media, both web TN and being one of the building blocks of that program. And we're in the midst of developing the concepts currently and hoping to have some really interesting conversation about that program over the coming year including probably convening a major think tank on this subject, and someone who is more closely involved in this David Scribner will be here later this evening, I believe to talk in detail about what we're developing.

09:09

I'm Ben chalice from Great Barrington, specifically from WBC RLP low power FM station in South County. I've been involved with that past three plus years since its inception, and it's a kind of a non formatted community radio station where we you know, we foster community voices and try and serve underrepresented populations. So in that we give a priority and emphasis on on news, public affairs issues and the community. And it's one of the more difficult things without without funding with you know, big tour a news department or public Air department, it's one of the more difficult things to get on the air when you're relying on volunteers, people who have great jobs and busy lives. And so I'm here to just to connect with people, and see if there's a way to kind of decentralize a news gathering and

public affairs or community visual issue. forums that we can bring up the airwaves and prove our, our service to the community.

10:33

Randy Potter muscle recovery VCR. And to add to what Ben said, I'm, I do a program called locally grown. And sort of the the model for locally grown is is sort of I call it sort of a catching, you know, a catch all i grabs content from, from all of our various programmers that might be producing content, I capture a lot of content, and then each week, pull it all together. And so it could be a real mixed bag of lectures in a college or lectures in the community or interview what happened. From that standpoint, one of the things that I'm always looking for, is finding that, that content, producing that content, because it's, you know, I produce a lot, I would love to share it. I have successfully used some outlets on the internet that allow for that kind of sharing, but it's a matter of aggregating that so that, you know, you could find it up there. And you know, that would be there. And so that's the kind of connections that I would like to see you fall out something like this. Because you know, there's so much going on, down south where we are, there's so much going on up here. I mean, it just seems like there's a lot that could happen.

12:01

I mean, Steve, and I drove up here from Miller to New York, actually, I know Wayne's tan college many years ago, and have an interest in web based community reporting. We've lost some radio capacity down, they report local issues, the local newspapers have been bought up and corporatized. And just a couple of weeks ago, a sister of mine who was with one of those companies that got bought up said, You know what, David, we've got to look into getting the newspaper on the internet. And so I worked do some work with Fred and Jenny with the Hill, country observer, which I think is a great newspaper. And they told me about this meeting. And here we are.

12:43

Paul Hopkinson, the Director of Community Relations for Northern Berkshire healthcare, which is North Adams Regional Hospital and affiliated groups. My background when No, before I went over to the other side, I spent 11 years reporting for Berkshire broadcasting stations, W ne, W. W. MMB. Doing news reporting and hosting a talk show for about eight or 10 years. Yeah, I'm interested in seeing what comes to this because I think the traditional media in this area have run up against some walls, but they don't quite know how to get around in terms of doing what they want to do and making it work financially. I'm worried that I see more and more copies showing up in both the eagle and the transcript every day, the same same story by the same reporter. The local radio stations have really fallen away in terms of global news coverage. There has to be a better way I guess.

13:44

I never share. I'm here representing Berkshire family, individual resources, and I am their communications person. And I edit their newsletter and the editor of the newsletter. And so part of my interest is in seeing how to help the agency increases visibility in the community through media, but also my own interest. I've been a reporter and teacher writer or publisher ego was transcript. So I'm just very interested in all kinds of media related activities. I mean, Stevens

14:26

islet transplant I, really Berkshire's over here about six months from Boston, on the web manager at MC LA and I'm here because I think that the region's ability to progress on a technical spectrum will depend on whether the region is able to have economic legs going forward. And I see this is central to that bump up against every day.

14:55

Can you just give just very quickly an example of the way you bump up against

15:00

Everything is here is done via print. And I find that when I talk to people about blogs or podcasts or things that in sort of the larger technical economy, I've been going on for a few years now, I get blank stares. And that's where news and media media is going. And introducing people to that is, is a burden, not a burden. But it's a very difficult task. And it's I'm enjoying the process of it. But I think it's got to come from more than one place.

15:35

David, we're doing an interim round.

15:36

So Hi, I'm David Scribner, I'm sorry to be late, teach a journalism class at PCC, which I told had a cut in half in order to come here. But in addition, another gay guy have since becoming one of the victims of corporate media, is teaching up at Southern rock College, several courses in journalism and broadcast writing. And also being hopefully a kind of advisor and instigator of the what we call the Community Media Center. I take Bob how to share and Karen forbid from the college to it. I don't know if you've talked about that. So I don't have to go into it that much. Well, it's a it's a concept, the college owns, as you may know, a commercial radio station. But beyond that, which was given to the college by how, in order to protect it from becoming a generic, modernized part of corporate media. And the question now is how to set up a paradigm a model for the rest of the country on how to do community journalism using radio web, print, and radio and TV, where we're going to work we're working with the public access to the station. So that's what our charges, and we hope to get this together this spring. And it will be both a laboratory for students to learn what community media can really be, but also to give voice to become a resource for the community. And to break down the walls between an ivory tower and the community so that it becomes a real acts real resource for the whole community to to express all kinds of things that otherwise wouldn't be able to do.

17:52

David neglecta dimension to those of you don't know this, that he's the former editor of the Berkshire Eagle. Yeah, two other people who have joined us since we started this round robin.

18:06

My name is Richard cask, and I'm an attorney in North Adams, I've done some journalism. And over the years, I would just echo what Paul said about Paul Hopkins said about the traditional media just not getting it done. As as an example was distributed. Did you now write two articles or those into your bio

lines, two articles that a monthly publication about the k plus nine district attorney's race? Did you write those? Refresh the thread right here, I would just say those are far and away the two best articles written about the district attorney's race, which otherwise was covered in almost a complete vacuum. And in terms of trying to understand what the issues were in that case, in that race. And, of course, from the work I do, by the way, the other thing that's striking to me on a daily basis of occasionally appearing in district and Superior Court and so forth, is just a dreadful coverage that's given legal news and the legal or transcript but the the coverage of the court system is usually just dreadful. It's wildly inaccurate.

19:07

You can call it the treacle

19:11

and you know, you hear about lawyers testifying to juries, as opposed to making arguments. So I really wish I would just echo what Paul said to traditional media just just for reasons of resources and reasons in some ways beyond our control to kind of get it done. And I have great respect for Bill's ability to come up with different ideas. So I am here tonight, just because he asked me to come

19:31

on name is how expense. I'm the general manager at WC FM which is the college radio station that Matt and Brian's hopefully becoming later. My term is almost up. Both of our terms are almost up, unfortunately, but we've tried to make we've made an effort this past semester to incorporate more community members into the radio stations open house and we were really looking to do To open WC FM app to the community so that they can all similarly employed, Mr. Scrivener was talking about, he says voice for local news and local media as well. And not just college kids playing music and how to get more students sister interested in getting on the air and doing more journalistic type stuff and also how to get community members involved.

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I should mention to a couple of people came late that the little box there's a tape recorder from the Great Barrington community radio station, and I asked them to make a podcast it is so that we so that I don't have to take notice. And so that some people who want to be here tonight who can't be here, would be able to hear what happened. I ran, we ran out of agendas, because I'm just absolutely overjoyed at the number of people who are here. But on the agenda, I thought it would be a good idea to just ask if anybody has anything you want to add to the agenda tonight, because we now have exactly an hour left. And a lot of great stuff to talk about. But I don't want to leave something out that somebody thinks we really need to cover. If not, what I'd like to do is start by kind of doing a little interview for the group here with Paul Hopkins and rich Taskin. about something that they did on election night, which was pretty unique in the area. And I'd like to ask you to talk a little bit about it. What they did is Adelphia cable used on the cable franchise in North Berkshire is now part of Time Warner. But there is an interconnect that allows public access programming to be received by Adams, North Adams and Williamstown. And what these two guys did is using Paul's experience for years and years and years as a radio announcer on W nnB MMB. They did a live call in commentary show on election night. And what I wanted to ask you guys is what was the reaction from the community? Being

realistic about what is the potential for doing anything like that on any kind of regular basis? What would it take in terms of volunteer help resources? And what do you think it would do for the community?

22:14

Real quick, I went into this thinking, this will be a blast, it's cable access, there's going to be 25 people. So I can say anything and do anything and 25 people tell me that they saw it, which tells me many more than 25 people were watching. It was very low tech, it was just rich. And I'd behind the desk. We had a telephone literally that you could see on the desk and we would push the button, there was a microphone mounted on the on the telephone to capture the signal, we were able to bring up some other election results on on a laptop that they could they could bring the image up on on TV, we had a blast, we went for two hours, which was long enough to bring in results locally. And that was really our main function was to be a source for local election results. I used to do this on the radio station for years and years before electronic voting, when we would be on the air until two or three in the morning waiting while the hand counted ballots were finished. This was just entirely new. I think we did a reasonably good job. We're going to next time assuming there's a next time try to go a little more high tech, use more electronic resources. And but it's gonna it's going to involve a lot of people. And if you pay people or don't pay them will make a big difference in whether or not it goes forward. You know, David will tell you that it's all about the money in the end. unfortunate things happen.

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Unfortunately, that's about corporate profits. Rich, what was your What was your reaction?

24:00

Well, I think you know, people serve on election night. Pretty suspect when they got the large number of people obviously saw since I've done in the past for the Polunin now to see spreads for about but you know, you just sort of hear over time what had happened for me was on primary nights. I was pretty interested in the State Senate race. And the eagle had promised I guess they were going to have lifelogging at about 830 they finally had some information I mean it was just dreadful note that again, not the take shots here but the the commentary was just terrible. And what we did was we were able to get the candidates to come out on the phone, very fired up David capes King copier, and we may have to get some of the other people on. Matt Kinnaman did not call in. He had been scheduled calling but we did get down early and we got Bosley Of course, and a few other people's as other people whose names was on the ballot were on the ballot, we have volunteers to collect local returns, which we were able to get from Adams Weems town, North Adams Cheshire still hand counts, and a few other communities as well. So I think you know, I think people are pretty starved for information, I think part of the theme you get is that people out there, there's a market for the information or whatever the proper word is. That sort of niche, and that's not being fulfilled. And I think that the, the intensity response we got was wasn't

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any better. And I've done a number of things on cable TV, and I think that is still the novelty of seeing someone you know, on TV. I know, it's, it's such a base thing, but it's like, Hey, I know him, I'm gonna watch this instead of ABC, you know, something like that. But that's okay. If they watch, that's all better.

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So you, you, you evolve. In your own minds, there's an appetite on your own personal parts to doing this again, but how, how was, how much could you do it as a volunteer without getting in the way of the rest of your life?

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I mean, limited. You know, I've had conversations with people who said you should do a nightly newscast, just a quick wrap of the day's events in our brochure, easy to say, that's, that's a number of people working several hours each day to put something like that together. But but doing something like that, you know, once an election season or spring elections and fall elections? Absolutely, we can do that. And do you have enough volunteers involved in northern merchant community television to make that happen?

26:36

Yeah. At the radio station in Great Barrington. Have you guys been making an effort to do news per se?

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It's been a very individual pursuit, because the way we're set up, set up where individuals to get air to have their time apply on an individual basis. On election night, we did do, we picked up a live stream from Brad Friedman

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runs a operation called rad blog,

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which is out of the bay area, but he's really interested in election. machinery, you know, he's in he's into the, you know, the, that idea of voting machines and, and the whole all that issue around election integrity. And so they did an absolutely great fee for almost like five straight hours, with breaks for local program, we were one of maybe eight stations and picked it up was primarily internet stream. But we then came in using the web to fill in the local results. And then so that's the way we did it was relatively new. We're, what from eight to three. With that, so.

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So you were essentially using him as your network and then cutting into local stuff.

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Yeah. And it wasn't, you know, I mean, he's anti corporate. So it wasn't really I mean, it fit what we're trying to do it fit our mission, it fit our sound, you know, and, and then it allowed us to have that sort of platform to insert the local content that we need to do. And I of course, also had the plan. I was also on the ballot for school committee, I've been honored to announce my own defeat.

28:27

But the but no, I work in, we would like I think, you know, we would like to go that direction. So it would have to be a collaborative, sharing the same sort of thing where, you know, we kind of support each

other and make it a collaborative effort. You know, we are all volunteer, everybody has, you know, their interests and, and tend to pursue their interests.

28:54

Amy, could you talk a little bit about the audio work that you're starting to do on the MCL a website.

29:02

I've been podcasting since the beginning of the fall. I'm a they're 20 to 30 minute segments. They come out once a week. And right now I'm trying to have them the student life, academic life, community life. So each episode has something at each level. So I've interviewed shopkeepers and talk to people who run to nonprofits. And last week we got our first student put his PSA. And it's a lot of fun to put together. I don't have a huge listening audience yet. But it's growing. I think it's just a matter of people don't know about it.

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Jen is you do have a sense. Do you guys have a sense that the people on campus are aware of that or not really? Yeah.

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We, I mean, I was in one of your podcasts a week so I mean, I knew about it for that, but they've been advertised I get a lot publicising, rather, this idea, but I think that it's not really captivating students yet. I mean, I think that we're mostly selfish, only concerned about it when it's about us. So that generally found the ones that are more about student life, academic life are more engaging than the ones above. Just.

30:21

Yeah. So now what? What possibilities? Would you see any, if any to say feed a television broadcast with a podcast or feed? The Great Barrington radio station, the podcast, yes,

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doing a lot more work with the grid bag radio station than I can with television. And that is, our bandwidth is an issue. And I think the bandwidth is an issue for the region, there's just not a lot of it. And depending on how it's packaged, we may be able to put up video podcasts, basically video casts, which would be easy, you know, to host that and send that out if it's much more impressive, or to go the other way and deliver it to TV. But it's not as easy right now, I don't think that we have the setup to go from TV to to computer.

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Yeah, that's just a quick question. Can somebody just tell me a podcast just identify exactly what it is? I mean, yes.

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But let me try. It really is a cool euphemism for an audio file that is that you download and it plays as an audio as a sound on your computer. And it's called podcast, because typically podcasts are encoded in

a particular kind of format, which is called mp3. So you'll see that phrase mp3, usually associated with podcasts, and it'll show up on your computer as a, just as you have a file. That's my story dot doc, because it's a Microsoft Word document file, you might see a file on a website that it admitted a dot mp3. And what that means is that's an audio file. And if you click on it, and if you've got either a real player, or QuickTime or Windows Media Player on your computer, it will just automatically play that as a sound file on your computer.

32:24

Okay? Or if you have an iPhone, then I can, yeah, yes.

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Something like iTunes, is that you can subscribe to them. Automatically. Yeah. So you don't have to remember to go back and check to see if a site is updated. Right? It comes to you in your mail, or

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the open sky in me says that there's also aggregators that you can download for free that will do the same thing.

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You can get the NCLA podcasts on audio, and on iTunes. So that is, you know,

33:02

let me ask the radio guys in the room. What, what do you see as the possibility of assembling a network that's not really a network in the sense of it being a permanent connection, but maybe a resource site that has audio files on it that each of you may have produced and contributed, but that by mutual agreement, anybody can play?

33:32

The question of who updates the website? We've been trying to do that trying to encourage our students to turn their shows into podcasts. I mean, it's, we're on a volunteer basis, too. So it's a question of who opened in the time to do it. And but yeah, it'd be great to centralize that and to have access to local news, things that we could download.

33:57

You put the projector on, I could show you a site.

34:00

You know, I was trying I'll let me fiddle with it. While we talk. I was trying to get it going before we got started. And I was having trouble getting it to work

34:07

either your the site already called Radio four, oh,

34:09

yeah, use radio for all. Our hosts post on archive dot o RG, which is the sort of like the internet, the master mother, library archives of the internet, and there was a guy who invented one of the key parts of the Google software and that's how we used to sports and this is set up a terabytes worth of servers and you can basically as long as it's open source, you can post content as long as long as you're willing to say that, you know, not commercial, you don't have to give up your commercial rights. But, you know, for non commercial uses wide open. So I post up there and that and that's you know, I mean I have literally gigs of content up there. And then you can use that and pointed Something like radio for all that data for a blog, you can point back to that site. Of course, that's all moot. If you have your own server, and you have space on your own server, then you can just throw away that part. But radio for all that matters is a shared sight. In a lot of radio, radio programs, independent radio programs, a lot of Canadian stations, independent stations are up there and Pacifica stations, cable and Portland with a lot of stuff. There's not one big thing about video. There's a lot of it is complete. And that's what I would like to see is more unedited unedited actualities. Right, we produce programs with that station IDs and program IDs, I want to see somebody go in, what I do is I go and record the lecture. And I take that link to the right to an interview. And I might take some of the sloppy parts out and put it but I would rather see that up there. And then other people could come and get that and work with it the way they need to work within the fitted into their context, as opposed to listening to me say it was who produced exclusively. And you don't want to hear that. So I mean, that you know, and so that I think it's absolutely that would be one of my, you know, coming to this meeting. But really one of my goals is is to seize a framework for that kind of collaboration, whether it be a blog, I mean, it could be as simple as, as a blog.

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Yeah, my notion would have been that it would be that it would be a place that not only the collaborating radio stations could draw information from but that the public could go to, and listen to as well. And I liked the idea of it not being heavily produced, because that's going to make it too complicated for volunteers. I was playing with a service that I signed up for recently called, well, I forget the name of his service, where if you dial a particular phone number, and put in your password, because you paid to have a relationship and it's cheap, it's you know, five bucks a month or something, you can then talk into your phone just like you're talking to an answering machine. And when you hang up a couple of minutes later that shows up as an audio podcast upon a on a on a blog website. And actually, jokingly did a little Interview with Fred. And I just had my cell phone and hung up the phone. And about three minutes later it was on the Greylock news.com website. In fact, it's there. Now if you go and look at it later,

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what service are you using?

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I can't throw that

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one away. One of them was discontinued. There was a there was a free service that was doing that that that they just continued Oh, do I think still? But yeah, that's that's fantastic. I couldn't get I tried

giving that number out to a number of our volunteers. And it was like, it was just too much for them to get beyond putting in an entry, password.

38:19

Od e Oh, yes. For the for the radio. It's called

38:23

hip cast calm. And

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my thought was that, that if you

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have people who you trust to do not put obscenities or or personal screens or bad stuff on it, you could essentially make that a community resource where you could have people phoning in information about a meeting coming up tonight about media or media issues or or report on a Selectmen meeting they went to where they just talk about it. And then at the radio stations, you can preview that stuff and choose whether you want to use it. Anyway so much for that.

39:01

I have a question about the Yeah, if you want to take a lecture, record a lecture and put it up do you have to get releases signed as you do for cable access?

39:10

I usually talk to the people who live training, capturing a lot of times I do it at a university and it's a professor from University or something like that. I do not have a release form, like a standard.

39:24

I'm just wondering if it's going up onto a site where anybody can pull it off. If there's no TV there's always concerns about

39:33

Yeah, I mean, I I consider anything that I put anything I put online, I put under what's called a Creative Commons license, which is basically some rights reserved, no commercial use, but all non commercial uses allowed. No delivery, no derivations, so people can't cut it out. But Creative Commons is a way for content creators to designate the rights, you know, downstream, rather than that huge monster of copyright comes down on top of the content, and locks up all permissions so that you have to go and ask for permission every time for every use. There are some uses that are just automatically permissible once you put it under a Creative Commons license. And that's typically the way I work with my content. And you know, if any, anybody in the people record you know, I just haven't pursued it too much. I haven't had occasion excited

40:39

leads and listen to WPC are online, right. So I don't have to be within five follow Stockbridge in order to hear my green card doesn't allow me to go. No. Surely?

41:02

Yeah. What? Did somebody want me to show something on there?

41:06

For you for all that? If you want to take a quick look? That was for about a half an hour.

41:13

It's the number four

41:14

that numeral four.

41:24

Wish I put something up today? I mean. So

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free run by volunteers, they take donations. And you

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can put you can load an mp3 up here. And then anybody can play it essentially. Right?

41:40

Well, it's probably more courteous to point to an mp3 Because if you look over on the side, they're asking for donations they, they have. They're a pretty, I mean, they're actually in the Hudson Valley. But they're pretty tight. Tight to the bone sort of operation. Typically what I do is I hosted an archive dot orgy, or another server and then I point what I uploaded here, I just simply put in the metadata, and then point back to the mp3 and then that that works, and then takes the strain off of their, their servers. Yeah, because if you upload to their server one, it's really slow. It's it's really, it's a slow upload, and to add some strain into there.

42:25

The other thing you might take a quick look at is audio for.org, which is a similar service.

42:37

Let's say up in the left hand corner there.

42:41

Oh, on the last page, the last one, you were just

42:43

put said say

42:45

that's a inflows radio project a imposed it's sort of part of its associated with India, in the

42:53

end. So this is also a place where you can upload files

42:56

if you have to be affiliated with specific network. All right. Okay.

43:03

You guys. We are here with the with the network web team. are you affiliated or are you just taking it directly from anyways, relatively minor thing to get affiliated they want to

43:13

wait, that's a really it's an issue with a major controversy. It's a major issue.

43:17

And you mean just a manipulation about what No, affiliated,

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we don't mind the program. It's the affiliation. Let's let's let's quieted down a

43:32

little bit. Let's switch gears from audio to print. Now. I'd like to introduce Fred Daly and Jenny stern introduced themselves earlier, but they have together on Hill Country observer, which comes out monthly except for January. But there's an old saying that that newspaper editors eat snow in January. And so they've wisely decided that they won't even try to publish a paper in January. So they get a little time off. But Fred has a background as city editor of the of Glens Falls paper and Jenny used to work for a weekly in northern Maine. And I have been helping them you know, public disclosure, I've been helping them out a little bit. To support started make contacts and connections in the Berkshires. And the reason I got involved is because I feel that this paper is the only paper albeit only coming out once a month. It really does do serious journalism on a regular basis, as you heard what she has to say. And and David has been a contributor to that and I, I thought that it would be great to give them a couple of minutes of floor time to talk a little bit about what they're doing and also encourage any of you who have a bet for freelance writing, to consider helping them out working with them because they're a great outlet and he's a fine editor.

44:53

Anybody needed is there is very low tech, it's black and white.

45:04

It doesn't even have a website at the moment. We do 15,000 copies a month, we distributed 400 and some locations. And we're trying to fill

45:14

the gap that Steve mentioned, where as far as a lot of news organizations are concerned a little kind of pulled off a cliff at the

45:22

New York getting the border. When you both sides of the border, we do purchase bedding from southern counties of New England side and,

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and four counties on the New York side Columbia experiments were

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Washington, Saratoga and also one salt area. So we've been doing it for two years. And we're one of the few free papers that the Fed is still dedicated to public service journalism. generalizable Simon's rock graduates, so

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let's purchase connections for Berkshire County residents in that period. And

46:08

and we've been lucky to have some, some pretty experienced journalists from the Berkshires, like David

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was a carbon and wrote he had 15 years of writing for.

46:21

And one of the things I've observed in the research I've done for the media draft project is a real synergy between things that happen on the web and things that happen in print. It's a synergy that the mainstream media is just starting to figure out. But there are places like village soup in Camden, Maine, which is a website that was started in about 1996, by a couple of people to serve the area around Camden. And while the county and Knox County, and originally it was only a website, but the thing became so successful, and essentially became the the principal source of news for people all over that area that they realized that they had, they had started weekly newspaper, to continue to move the brand on to two places to people who didn't have access to the web. And one of the things i i hope, a Collaborate collaborative might have as a relationship with some print product in the area, because you can use print to promote what is going on on the web. And you can use web promote what's going on in print. And so one thought one reason one, one notion and inviting Jenny and Fred here tonight was to see whether there was some way that they might be able to collaborate on whatever we might get going here. Do you guys have a sense from the two years now that you've been publishing a regional publication about what the hurdles or opportunities would be if we were to try and put something together with this broader distribution of interest? That was, that was multimedia. It wasn't just print?

48:18

Well, I think certainly, you know, as long as we have

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a print publication that you can use that to direct people to a website or to radio or you know, anywhere else. So I think there's potential.

48:36

Also with us tonight, by the way is Jeff Potter, who is owner of the Shelburne falls independent, and also an early typesetter for the advocate years and years ago, and yeah, the old comp, too. And, Jeff, I want to show you I want to show you Jeff's website, because he's another example of a print guy who has dived into the web. Is that right? Doesn't sound right, do it. Anyway, what's, what is it? It's SF independent.

49:14

What's unique about Jeff site is he he covers breaking news on his website, because his paper only comes out every other week. But you also require subscribers. To get past the first couple of paragraphs you have to hit a subscriber. So it's sort of a perk for a current subscriber. But most important, you're really you are really with this website becoming the go to place for news and Shelburne falls.

49:48

I think, I think that's still was we're still working toward that. But it certainly gives us unprecedented opportunity to transcend publishing frequency right now where every other The Week which we were discussing at dinner is the lousiest frequency anybody's ever worked with. But, but if something happens in between issues or or there's, or, for instance, with election results, like can go on and within within 30 seconds haven't haven't posted live, I can also control whether people have full access to it or not. So there are certain debates or what have you. We put some video up in the past election season, that we've certainly made available to everybody, not just subscribers.

50:35

So if you You haven't done anything with audio, yet,

50:39

not by itself.

50:41

As you've listened to this group tonight, so far, what do you see is the opportunities or challenges of trying to pull together any kind of a collaborative?

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I think time and organizational structure? You know, it's really, I think you're really sick, somebody else said that. Y'all have other real jobs, tech, I designed a school design books for a living. So it's, it's not

for the faint of heart. And volunteers are, you'd have to, you'd have to look very hard at sustained enthusiasm. Because that may die very quickly, and you're left with a newspaper, or a website or

51:34

air on radio. And aside, by the way, about the village soup site, I just showed you a minute ago was on one of the handouts that most of you got a copy of the backside of it are some tips by the founder of village soup about what the what what is needed to mount a successful local online news operation. And I don't I won't go over it now. But it's just probably useful reading at another at some point. I wonder if we could go to the Southern Vermont College folks now and ask you to maybe talk a little bit more about this idea of this community community media center? And what you see what are the what's the potential for that being broader than just Bennington? I mean, is it something that might that could potentially incorporate, say, a collaboration with MC LA or with with a radio station in Great Barrington? Or what do you think?

52:35

I think it definitely is looking at a broader collaborative model, but with the idea of enhancing our local service. And it also because we are an education institution, and training people to work in community media across the region across the country, and to think of as citizens, what role they're going to play in their communities through how they filter media, how they interact with the media, how they seek media, I think that they'll be looking at a much broader geographic range of partners, and also across all media as well, it is a little bit more to them.

53:15

The idea is just an initial stages have been formulated, we were hoping to get together in a in the spring, a early spring, a panel session of brainstorming about how what the what this configuration of these various components and how it interacts with the community, and how we have, by the way, an additional an additional responsibility which traditional college radio stations doesn't have. And that is it's a commercial radio station. And like Jennifer there has to make some money. And we have advertisers. And while its mission is to to be a, you know, independent source of information and resource for the community still, there is that component to it. That is not

54:15

my, my big red bow. I know Bob and we've been in many meetings, we've talked to

54:22

Thurston about this at length about how to make how to be independent and yet the economically sustainable which I think it's a big challenge, actually for an independent media. And I'm hoping we can maybe help help to solve that.

54:40

Well, we know the radio station almost breaks even for the college. So we have to, we'd have to funders, we have advertisers and Fatima college. And, you know, the, we would try to we would, you know, one of the things that we're trying to do is to really breakeven with advertising. And because the reality is, you know, you have to have money to do any of these projects, really, you can have a lot of

enthusiasm, volunteers, but, you know, they usually last about two programs like that. And then they lose their

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advantage to having a compact, where we can

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share it, we have locally produced,

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and I mean, really good programming, and I love your guys programming referring to but, you know, this is locally produced can be quite excellent.

55:43

I think what I thought about when you were talking with the, with the commercial station, you know, we have spots, and you are we have programs, you know, that in order to get people to listen, they don't just tune in, and whatever is on I mean, you know, the, the whole secret of getting people to listen, is to have times when they know what's going to be station, you know, what kind of programming what is it going to be just going to be any, any stuff for or not. So, like, you were talking about a whole bunch of stuff coming in, it would seem to me that, or our commercial station, you would have to have some topics, or some kind of, you know, regular, you know, people, you know, I'm sure you all know that that radio is very, very personal, you know, once you get hooked something, your book, and you don't want to change that dial, especially what we found was I certainly don't want to hit the the from FM 2am. thing. In fact, many people don't even know that their radio has a n. So, but anyway, it's you know, it's the way you get listeners is, is to put on programs that catches them, and then becomes a personal thing. That's a very emotional thing.

57:21

Well, one of the ideas I had, was to make two, as an example of the kind of idea that we'll be tossing around, is, I would like to take the morning news cash program, web cam, and broadcast it actually from a coffee, local coffee. And via remote, and people could actually walk into the coffee house and see the program being broadcast. And you could actually comment, say, you know, to be, and you could actually interview people, and it would become a gathering place. And so I see media as a, as a tool to create community and create a sense of community create a sense of individual, belonging to a community. And one of the ways is to bring the media out of its confines and professionalism, and its arrogance, and bring it right down town, so to speak,

58:18

a word that we talked about was farmer's market, going to the gay parents and farmers market and having having a table at farmer's market, and broadcasting a show for an hour. Each day at the farmers market, you can get you get farmer farm reports you can get, you know, there's all kinds of stuff that you could do that. But yeah, I agree completely.

58:38

I'm sure Paul is thinking about remotes right now and all the remote years at a truly local radio station in the old days.

58:47

I mean, it sounds like what you were formed on. I mean, we had to watch out for you. We had to listen to you because you think

59:02

you're successful with the election night coverage that I think the public are starved for.

59:07

Well, I was gonna follow your comment. So you also have to give people something they want to hear. And I mean, that's as obvious as that is, you know, we have to be careful as we talk about whatever comes of this, that people want to listen to something what is the most listened to show on National Public Radio, it's card. It's not morning addition, it's not all things considered. It's the guys who are yucking it up for an hour, but they're giving people information in a in a form that they enjoyed listening to. So you know, I would just say words of caution. You really have to pay attention to how people want to receive it, you know, they want to hear about

59:49

there are hundreds of ideas of what could be done. And you know, what we found is that Do you have to pick and choose your battles or what you can actually get done, especially on, you know, 24/7 situation where you have to fill with airways. And you have to be consistent about having programs on a certain time, right. And then you have to have people that are, we have a couple of volunteers that have been there for five years, free, free of charge, you know, having doing one show a week in our show, or sometimes they do, too. But that's a rare person that will make

1:00:37

that kind of commitment. And then comes back to what you said, people are starved for things. When I worked for the radio stations here, I did their morning radio program, call in show called opinion, had been on the air in that 8:30am time slot since 1968. It was taken off last year, sometime after Vox media, whatever their name is, bought the station. It's a travesty. In my mind, it was one of the few outlets for people to debate in this area. And it's gone. I can't believe that they took that off here. And it was a revenue producer for them. And I

1:01:19

wonder too, if the success of your election coverage report surfing, they see that and it's sort of the reality news equivalent of reality TV and people are looking for a non synthetic version of the news that local voices, people may know people, you know, their first grade teachers, they're talking about what's going on? Or what happened at this school board meetings you're

1:01:45

going to take Excuse me, what would it take to recreate the opinion show on collaborative of W CFM? And WJ JW? Didn't have to have a person paid to do it? I mean, because you couldn't stay in a daily basis for Yeah. Talking about? Well,

1:02:03

I was just gonna say that. I think it's sort of old media thinking that you have to be able to schedule around the clock. Because now you can schedule to your audience. So that you may not have farmers listening at seven o'clock at night, but the farmers could listen to it. On Demand. I mean, I never get to hear this American life anymore on the radio, but I get to hear it whenever I want. On my podcast,

1:02:32

I think that's the difference between broadcast and the internet, the internet is really narrow casting, but your ability to narrow cast from that standpoint is so you could be a synergy there.

1:02:46

Right, right. But with everything that you can't fill your broadcast, it means that your audience may be split between people who are listening to it on the radio and people who are listening to it in the podcast. And if you're commercial, you can still have at the beginning of a podcast. This episode is brought to you by you know, the sheep farm down the street.

1:03:05

Also, a lot of the programs that are produced for web PCR are done at home. I know from my home, there's going to be one yeah, they're looking forward to Yeah. can look at Fembot politics.com is going on?

1:03:21

We've got a podcast as well. Yeah. Great.

1:03:24

So it's it's a, you know, to get people involved in producing content, you don't have to have them at the station anymore. They can do it at home. And actually just, you know, email it in

1:03:40

there. Well, we have we have we have a number of shows that.

1:03:44

Oh, that's Julian Yes.

1:03:47

Now we I mean, we can even go to the point where we have the the servers, you know, automated and automatically can download from a feed from a from an RSS feed, and it'll automatically loaded in and put it into the right folder and played at the right time. So that you know, once we set it, that's what you want. Because now rolls off the internet gets picked up and put gets put on the air. But another point that slides along with beside that one is that we have 60 some odd programmers in our community

have a count of how many people that are a Barrington with 8000, but 1000 in our listening area, and we have 60 some odd programmers plus, I mean, that's, I mean, you're already beginning to look at, you know, the word gets around. People

1:04:41

65 programs more like more like 70 to 80 programmers. And what's the program? Oh, half an hour long show an hour long show an hour and a half, two hour long show depends on what they want.

1:04:54

I think the thing that's different about this model is the Great Barrington station is a social context where people meet and greet, and that is part of the downtown. And I think if you're still doing what you're doing voice tracking, it's more of a commercial style. That was fun to do that kind of radio. And you don't have, it's just a different kind of radios. The third channel. And to me is I hear you talk and one of the big questions to answer is, are we talking about journalism as a product like any other product that's marketed to an audience? Or is it a process that we're talking about a community process of people getting together physically, and working together and learning and having fun. And as a byproduct, an important byproduct of that process? There's journalism, there's radio programming of print, as well. But it's not the whole thing. And what you see in commercial broadcasting and commercial journalism today is that the product is the whole thing. And like any product is being produced at the lowest possible cost to deliver the highest possible profit margin. Unless you focus on that difference. I think you you run the risk of going down that road that we're trying to escape from

1:06:00

you. And then a quick observation at a time check.

1:06:04

Yeah, I have a question with regard to blogs. Yeah, I saw there on the agenda here. I'm not an actual blogger. But I've been reading a heck of a lot in the last six months with a want to start a couple different ones. In your comment, sir, I'm sorry, I don't know your name. Steve. I'm David. That's one of the things when you're reading Cluetrain Manifesto, or blog marketing or blog rules. There's a lot of books out there. I don't want to leave everything I read, but they talk about authenticity. And one of the reasons the blogs have had this huge expansion is it's going against the old model of marketing. So you're really tuning in on a very consistent, persistent, whatever basis to what the people want. And, you know, I just would like to hear a little bit more about how blogs, any zany where you're going to talk a little bit about the blogs, is that on the agenda, I thought it's on here. But anyway, you're Yeah, yeah,

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well, we're starting to run short of time, because we're gonna have to all be out of the building eight o'clock. But as I noted in the agenda, people who want to keep talking, we can just walk across to the waves in and pull pull ups and tables to pull some chairs together and keep talking there. But before we go too much further, I want to, I would like to recognize our guests from images cinema. Because we've talked a little bit about an idea that may or may not involve Southern Vermont College. And that is the idea of applying for a grant from the Knight Foundation. The other side of the handout that I gave you that had information about village soup had a little bit of information about the knight brothers 21st

century news challenge. The Knight Foundation is one of the largest foundations in America, its money leftover from the Knight Ridder operation. And about six months ago, they came out with a with a challenge to media, new media, people all over the country, both commercial and non commercial profit nonprofit, and said, Send us your ideas on a very, very simple application form. And they're going to be handing out money to ideas that they think will represent new ways of using journalism to connect and bolster physical communities around the United States. And we think there may be enough interesting stuff going on here to sustain an application which we think maybe would be written by written by Southern Vermont colleges fiscal sponsor. But one of the ideas that I had talked to the the journalism program officer at night foundation about was the idea of trying to get a collaborative people producing video that could be turned into a weekly tailor to run on a movie screen once a week. And so I talked a little bit, we've talked a little bit about this, about the idea and images is ready to step forward and sort of participate in this experiment as to as from what we and the idea would be to try and break through to an audience of people who don't necessarily read the news in the newspaper, who would see it on a on a movie screen, it would have to be produced in a way that was compelling enough that people wouldn't just see it as distraction and annoyance before the feature film. So back to the future as it is it's kind of a Back to the Future approach back to the old newsreels. But the difference is that now, if you've got the volunteer support, the technology of producing video has gone to practically zero in terms of the cost. And so we think we think it is least technically feasible on a local level to do this kind of thing. And they and the program officer I talked to was very intrigued by this idea, and, and so my hope is that that's a hook that might get us the opportunity To fund on a seed basis, a broader collaboration that involves not just this idea, but also trying to involve students on an outreach basis in our high schools. Producing media involves maybe some kind of an audio podcast network that might involve the low power and non commercial radio stations in the area. So I don't know if you want to talk a little bit about this, and also that it might involve willingness as well, which is the Public Access facility here, Williamstown, and of course, there are other public access Phillips facilities and other communities.

1:10:37

I don't know that I have much more to add to what you said. But we've spoken about it when we're going out about training people and putting the putting it in their hands. And there is a concern about the audience and being very short. It doesn't have to be overly produced. But the content has to be relevant, and to grab people's interest. And also to expose them to something they might not even think that they can be part

1:11:04

of. How does that get on the screen? We talked about movies with

1:11:10

digital projection, we have digital projection to a new DVD

1:11:14

or run it through a DV cam how much digital projection projection do you have

1:11:20

for us right now? We might do

1:11:23

is appreciate DVD that would appreciate that we have is on DVD, but our nightly films. And most it seems that most independent films that come in are digital to be of independent filmmakers coming in.

1:11:38

how long those segments? We haven't even talked about that. I mean, a minute or two at the most, I think I couldn't imagine anything longer than three minutes, it would have to be an awful good story, or a package of stores are producing that kind of content, right? Well, no, nobody. I mean that the notion would be I think if we go for a Knight Foundation grant that most of the money would go into paying people to produce content. And then the question becomes when you get to the end of the feed trough at night, what sustains it? And I don't know that we've got the answer to that right now. Nor does night, nor do many other people around the country right now who are trying to figure out how to make this stuff work. There's the there's the the PTO model, which is sort of a self sustaining volunteer organization, which is what you guys are working on in South County right now. And I think those may be those things may be viable. If they're done very carefully. We should probably start to wrap up. And I just wondering if anybody has any suggestions for next steps and what I put on the sheet there? Which was? Well, one key question is do we want to actually take a step of forming any kind of an organization? Or is this very informal? Periodic get together sufficient? That's one question I have. The other question is, is anybody interested in pursuing any of the other question marks that I was listed there? One is a web based calendar of events for the region, which is something that could then be fed, for example, to Fred Jenny's publications and printed and check with the community coalition. Oh, great. The

1:13:21

Berkshire medical the North Northern Virginia Medical. Oh, that's wonderful.

1:13:26

Seeing that there was a need.

1:13:28

Yeah, yeah. And you feed them the information and they put the information on the site. It's not like you can

1:13:33

get on with a site is it up and you know what the address is?

1:13:38

Okay, hi. Bircher says, yeah.

1:13:42

Yeah, so it may be that that resource is starting to

1:13:45

go down one as you look at a calendar a, you know, 31 days and says this is going on this day. Ah, that's pretty cool. I think

1:13:53

about I virtues for for us in Great Barrington is that it has some penetration into southern Berkshire, my concern would be I mean, if we were to become part of a collaborative, I really feel that it needs any change. Any tools that gets developed need to have penetration?

1:14:16

Is anybody interested in helping the Southern Vermont people with cranking out this Knight Foundation grant if they decide to go forward with it? If so, email me, and I'll connect you up with them.

1:14:33

I'm hoping we can really form a compact, because I think in a necklace of independent radio stations, but you know, that would be only one, one component of a of our community media center. But this collaboration would be would be wonderful. And this

1:14:53

question of or the concern of organizing and sustaining. I think that hope that As the idea of a set of community media, we just more maturity, that in part, it can be one of those provide some of that architecture for that kind of thinking and organizing and, and resource sharing, whether it be in developing some other form of media sharing tools and shared vocabulary among organizations that we can move this stuff really fluidly between our outlets. But

1:15:33

I'd be happy, I would volunteer to work specifically on a piece like that, because it dovetails so nicely with what I'm already doing pieces that I'm already been involved in and doing like, particularly in the programming collaborative content. Yeah, the content sharing, you know, developing a structure a framework for sharing content amongst, you know, and that could even go to, you know, routing, you know, kind of like journalism years or so far back. tasking, what

1:16:08

are you guys calling, assigning,

1:16:10

assigning, again, you know, story assignments, you know, where, you know, I see this events up here, I can't make it. You know, I can't make it northern Berkshire, this, you know, tonight. Do you guys have somebody that will go capture that? Are you going to, or are you going to Yeah, coordinating, coordinating coverage. And there's Mike wise, if something's happening in Simon's rock, you know, likelihood is I'm going to be capturing. There's something significant going on Simon's rock. I'm gonna catch it. And have it available.

1:16:43

I could I could I say what? Yeah. Any of you people that live in Williamstown or North Adams, if you just see, I'd be interested to know if you can get our signal. Wb TM. Yeah. Am am

1:16:55

3770 on our radio. Yes. In the house. No, that's my experience. car radios just newer and more sensitive.

1:17:04

Anybody wants to get our scream? We're at Berkshire Radio dot o YG.

1:17:11

Listen, please listen, please. So I guess

1:17:18

one of the nice things that your station did during the brochure Film Festival was Paul rappin, a couple of people had little recorders. We were just talking to people that will record Oh. It was great. And then I went I went down the next day I was hearing, there's a talk show. And they were feeding in clips from the reception wherever we were at. And it was it was quick. It was easy. People saw it was happening. So they saw that it was easy. I think that's part of people becoming involved need to know that it's not brain surgery that they don't have to be trained for 10 days. Push a few buttons.

1:17:57

It was a lot of fun. Yeah, we captured you know, all the all the all the comments all but you know, through the film festival on a CF card, come back flashcard on this machine, I walked into the studio, plug this straight into the computer and was playing straight off the recorder. I didn't know no problem with introduction, actuality, Introduction In actuality,

1:18:19

I think one of the wonderful things about what you're doing down there, and maybe what other LP low power FM stations are doing or art is the is that people, ordinary people who want to have had something to say and want to produce a program can actually do it. And it's it's wonderful. I mean, he's really get a big your audience is also your programmers. No, it's it's it's remarkable.

1:18:44

Is there any LP station on the dial today? And W. BMG or North Adams? I think it might have been no. It wasn't

1:18:57

some Christian.

1:19:00

Christian. Yeah.

1:19:02

The other the other LP station in Berkshire County is that there's one also a dormant one well, sort of dormant at Taconic high school, they haven't low power,

1:19:11

it's actually it's been lighting up again.

1:19:15

But there's another license you know, low power FM stations are easy to without easy are available in the north not anymore. They stopped again. It was there was only the one application 2.3

1:19:33

weeks. They talked about penetrating more into urban areas the next round possible next round.

1:19:47

Let me explain how we can keep in touch. There's a a wiki shoot at three o'clock news org as opposed to calm which is coming up which, on which I posted this meeting and if you want to know kind of what's going on with what we talked about tonight just remember that URL Greylock news.org. And what you see when you type that in may change. But at whatever sort of the latest potential meeting or potential project going on, I'll try to keep up there. I'll try to change that fear on but I'm hoping that maybe the radio folks will start to connect on this idea of collaboration. And that there'll be action on this idea of applying for an ICT grant. I'll take is the is the notepad I circulated around somewhere. Did everybody put your name, phone number email address? I will. I'll post a link at Greylock news.org to this list which I'll put up sometime in the next couple of days I can't do it for 24 hours because I got a I got a busy day tomorrow but it'll be up within a couple of days as well as hopefully a link to the mp3 file of this conversation tonight. And I'm I'm happy to spend a little more time across the waves in but before you walk out please have a little juice and chocolate chip cookies if you want

1:21:27

thanks for coming okay

1:21:53

I've never done like Oh, it's so weird. You can't if you can't get it.

1:22:04

He said I know you can. Just

1:22:07

like