

**“State of the Station”
FY 17 Annual Re-Cap
July 2016 – June 2017**



**Community Television for the Black River Valley
& the Okemo Mountain region**

Administrative / Organizational

- LPCTV was served by a Board of Directors with 10 members this year: Sharon Combes-Farr (President), Chris Saylor (V.P.), George Thomson (Secretary), Fra DeVine (Treasurer), Sharon Bixby, Julie Bowyer, Lou Krefski, Jennifer Hoar McBride, Noah Schmidt, & Jamie Ward.
- We maintained the same personnel team this past year at 2.8 FTE, with Patrick Cody as Executive Director, Fred Marin as Programming Coordinator, Adam Sayre as Production Coordinator, and Ed McEneaney as Production (and general support) Associate.
- Last Fall, we signed a new contract with VTel to be carried on its new cable TV system. Those channels were activated late February, and can be found on VTel system-wide on Channels 166 (the local community access channel) and Channel 167 (education & government channel). These channels are in standard definition but soon we expect to also be in HD on VTel's channels 1166 and 1667, respectively.
- We continue to operate on Comcast's channels 8 (local community access) & 10 (education & gov't) in Ludlow, Plymouth, & Cavendish. In Mt. Holly, our Comcast channels are found on Ch. 20 & 21, respectively.
- With the addition of VTel, we have expanded our service area to include the Towns of Andover & parts of Reading.

Building & Equipment Improvements

- We spent some time continuing to make improvements in the TV & performance studio. Doubling as a carpenter and set builder, Production Associate Ed McEneaney built set risers and some backdrop set panels. The risers provide for better lighting and camera angles, while allowing us to be neater with mic cables, power cords, etc. The backdrop panels give more options and variety for those wishing to use the studio. We intend to expand upon these options, by continuing to build different panels over time.
- We received approval from the Town of Ludlow to build a 12'x12' shed, for storing props, set materials, and tools. We hope to have that built this Summer.
- Last year, we began budgeting for depreciation as an annual capital expenditure, which is then put into an equipment fund. That fund, in addition to the capital funding we receive as part of our regulatory fees from the cable providers, is what provides for equipment upgrades and replacement. The result is that we are now on a regular schedule of replacing and upgrading equipment. This year's major upgrade is in the works right now: the studio cameras. Once they are installed (over the next few weeks) our facility will be 100% HD-compatible.
- We have also purchased 1 new iMac desktop computer as an additional work station and editing machine. This is in line with our new depreciation / replacement procedures.
- We have entered the fundraising period for the 3rd and final phase of the facility renovation, which began in 2011 when the initial fit-up of our portion of the building was completed. We moved into the new facility in April 2013, and then over the period of the next two years, finished the TV / performance studio, which is the centerpiece to the facility. After the studio was completed, the Buildings & Grounds committee worked with Patrick to map out a plan for a final scope of work, along with a cost estimate. The remainder of the build-out is estimated to cost \$175,000 and includes walls, flooring, & ceilings for the editing suites, the "Digital Learning" lab / classroom, the master control room, studio control room, lobby / welcoming area, and support areas. Since the financing plan involves grant funding, the timeline of the work will be contingent upon the success of our proposal (more on that under "Fundraising").

Programming & Productions

- LPCTV has televised over 1400 shows on our TV channels this year, which include a wide variety of community programming, government meetings, studio shows, local events, churches, documentaries, concerts, as well as programming from State government, regional and statewide agencies, and numerous others. This number also includes shorter pieces, such as promotional videos and PSAs, and short music recordings.
- More than half of these shows are original programming from within the local community; the remainder is received through a video sharing network with our regional and statewide colleagues in the Vermont Access Network (including our "neighbors", SAPA-TV in Springfield, Woodstock Community TV, GNAT, and PEG TV in Rutland).
- All "local" programming (programming that has been generated by or through the use of LPCTV) is also made available for viewing on our website LPCTV.org
- LPCTV provided "gavel-to-gavel" coverage of well over 100 local government meetings during the past year, including Selectboard, Planning Commission, special Town Meetings, Annual Town Meetings, and school board meetings in Ludlow, Cavendish, Plymouth, and Mount Holly.
- LPCTV has provided pro bono video production services to many different local organizations this past year, including non profits, schools, Town offices, State government, government agencies, community groups, and churches.
- "Irene: Ruin to Renewal", the documentary produced in collaboration with Plymouth Historical Society, premiered over the weekend of August 27th at President Coolidge State Historical Site. More than 100 people attended each of the 2 screenings. The film commemorates the 5-year anniversary of Tropical Storm Irene's impact on the community
- We have picked back up on a project called "Ludlow Memories" with Black River Academy Museum that was started several years ago. Back in the Summer & Fall of 2012, we helped record a series of discussions among long-time Ludlow residents at the museum. They never televised. This Spring, we started it back up, this time in LPCTV's studio, and there are plans for more. Within the past week, we have started to televise these episodes of "Ludlow Memories" and they can be found at LPCTV.org/
- Our most prolific producers this year included local fiddling sensation John Specker, Ludlow Baptist Church, St. James Methodist Church, and Ralph Pace, who each produced many shows throughout the year. It's producer like these who keep the local programming coming to LPCTV.
- Ralph Pace "retired" his show "That Was the Week That Was" (or "TW3" for short) after 10 years, nearly to the day. His 10th anniversary show was his last, and he was joined as a surprise by his long-time co-host Leo Graham, who drove 18 hours to Ludlow from Milwaukee (where he now lives) to join Ralph on the set one last time. Ralph may have ended the run of "TW3", but he has not strayed far. He started a new monthly show, "FOLA Presents", in promotion of upcoming films & events in Ludlow Town Hall Auditorium; he is also involved with the Ludlow Rotary Club's new show "Rotary This Month"
- Yes, the Ludlow Rotary Club started a new monthly show in the LPCTV studio, and we are glad to have them.
- Marji Graf has continued to produce and host Okemo Valley- Your Place in VT, the monthly update from the Chamber, with interviews from Chamber members
- We have begun new monthly promotional series with both the Cavendish and Mt. Holly libraries
- Local yoga instructor Liza Eaton started a new series, helping to transform our studio into a living room, where she offers yoga instruction. We used the new set pieces to help design her set. She produced 4 episodes this past winter and will pick it back up again in the Fall.
- There are many other one-time productions- too many to mention here, ranging from election programming to short interviews, sporting events, concerts, and more. Thanks to everyone who participates and keep it coming!
- Thank you to our volunteers who covered school events, community events, and meetings for us this past

year, most notably Sherri Geimer, Aiyana Fortin, and Sharon Bixby

- History Day: once again, we have partnered with Black River High School & Middle School history classes to offer support for Vermont History Day and National History Day competitions. For their projects, students can choose to create short (10 min.) documentary videos. BRHSMS has a long tradition of participating in History Day. Moreover, there is a long tradition of excelling at History Day, particularly in the area of video entries. LPCTV has offered the equipment and training to students. This year we worked with several groups of students, who entered their productions into the state Vermont History Day competition. 2 students, sisters Aiyana & Natasha Fortin placed 1st & 2nd, respectively, which meant they both went to D.C. to compete in National History Day! This year's (and past years') History Day videos can be found on our website- LPCTV.org/Videos. Search for "History Day" (anecdote: LPCTV was founded in 2001 in large part because history teacher Sue Pollender was looking for a local place for students to create videos for History Day...and here we are, nearly 16 years later!)

Fundraising

- The 6th Annual Kentucky Derby Gala was held in May at Willie Dunn's Grille at the Okemo Valley Gold Course. 69 guests attended and more than \$5000 was raised for LPCTV. This continues to be our organization's largest and primary annual fundraising event. We are fortunate to have the support for this event, including the community members who attend and participate, and to Willie Dunn's for hosting. A big "thank you" goes out to our event sponsors: Okemo Mountain Resort, Ludlow Insurance Agency, The Book Nook, William Raevis Real Estate/ Vermont Properties, Jim Alic, Four Seasons Sotheby's International Realty, Wine & Cheese Depot / Stemwinder, and Ludlow Sidehill Cronchers Snowmobile Club.
- We have generated over \$2700 in revenue through underwriting, which is a means for local businesses to support our efforts with distributing the thousands of hours local programming each year. This has developed into a primary form of annual fundraising for our organization. Thanks to this year's underwriters: Heritage Family Credit Union, Okemo Mountain Resort, DJ's Restaurant, Four Seasons Sotheby's International Realty, William Raevis Real Estate / Vermont Properties, The Book Nook, Sam's Steakhouse, People's United Bank, & Bruce Farr Creative.
- Thank you to the Town of Ludlow, Plymouth, Cavendish, and Mount Holly for their continued support through their respective municipal budgets. In total, \$3450 in revenue was generated through this support in FY17.
- We have begun the process of raising funds for the completion of the third and final phase of the facility build-out. The plan is to finance as much of the approximately \$175,000 project as possible through grants. We are pleased to report that we recently received our first grant for this project- a \$10,000 grant from Okemo Community Challenge. The funds will be used towards the studio control room. This will create an accommodating and enclosed space that we can teach groups of people, including students, to direct, switch, run graphics and lighting for shows recorded in the studio. We cannot thank Okemo Community Challenge enough for its strong support of our efforts over the years. We would not be where we are without that level of support. That much is certain.

Community Outreach

- We celebrated LPCTV's 15th anniversary with an open house event in the studio in September 2016. Approximately 50 people attended to help celebrate, and to the restaurants who donated food: Mojo Café, Homestyle Hostel, Table 19, The Killarney, Sam's Steakhouse, & Stemwinder.
- We created a new annual "Community Service Award" for the first time this year. It was presented to Ralph Pace at the Kentucky Derby Gala on May 6. Ralph was awarded for his dedication & his work on "That Was the Week That Was" over the past 10 years, helping to provide an outlet for local residents and organizations to connect with the community
- We launched a new Facebook page this year. LPCTV previously had a "profile" but it is now a page. There are over 650 "likes". It is an important outlet for promoting activities, programming etc.
- We completed the work on migrating old video-on-demand (from the old version of our website) to the new video platform on the new version of the site. The new site was launched at last year's Annual Meeting, and

includes a new & improved video player for all of the local programs, as well as many new design features, which made it into a more mobile-friendly site. This year, the focus was on importing all of the data associated with the 2500+ videos that were on our old website (so that fields such as "Producer", "Series", and production dates for the older programs were accurately displayed, clickable, and searchable). That work is now complete, so it is now possible to search for (and find) local shows dating back to 2007, all on LPCTV.org

- One of the organization's primary goals is to "strengthen our brand", as outlined in the Strategic Plan. This year, the Outreach & Marketing Committee addressed this by evaluating the strength of the name "LPCTV". A survey was distributed to community members, the results were reviewed, and a formal recommendation was made to the Board of Directors to change the name of the organization. That recommendation was supported and is now moving forward. The new name will be announced at the Annual Meeting on June 22nd. During the first quarter of FY18, a major focus will be on rolling out the new name and identification. This will include new logos, graphics, marketing materials, along with community outreach.

- Patrick Cody, Executive Director