



# **Allegheny Mountain Radio WVMR Station Profile**

**Dunmore, WV  
November 2020**



# Station Participants

- **Scott Smith**, General Manager, first joined AMR as a part-time news reporter in 2014
- Became News Director in 2015
- Moved to a full-time position in 2015, becoming Station Coordinator at WVLS
- Was named interim GM in October 2019 and GM in December 2019



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# Station Participants

- **Heather Niday**, Program-News Director
- Began volunteering as a DJ in 1998 with her husband who is now the Chief Engineer
- Joined the staff in 2007 as News Director, became Program Director in 2013, also Traffic Manager and recently News Director again
- Previous experience in computer operations, retail, banking, and at the local Snowshoe Mountain Resort



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# About WVMR aka AMR

Our cooperative of radio stations provides news, entertainment, education, weather, emergency alerts, closings and cancellations, and community information for a listening area which encompasses three counties in two states (Virginia and West Virginia). We serve an audience which is primarily rural, economically challenged and lacks a broad range of diversity/racial diversity.



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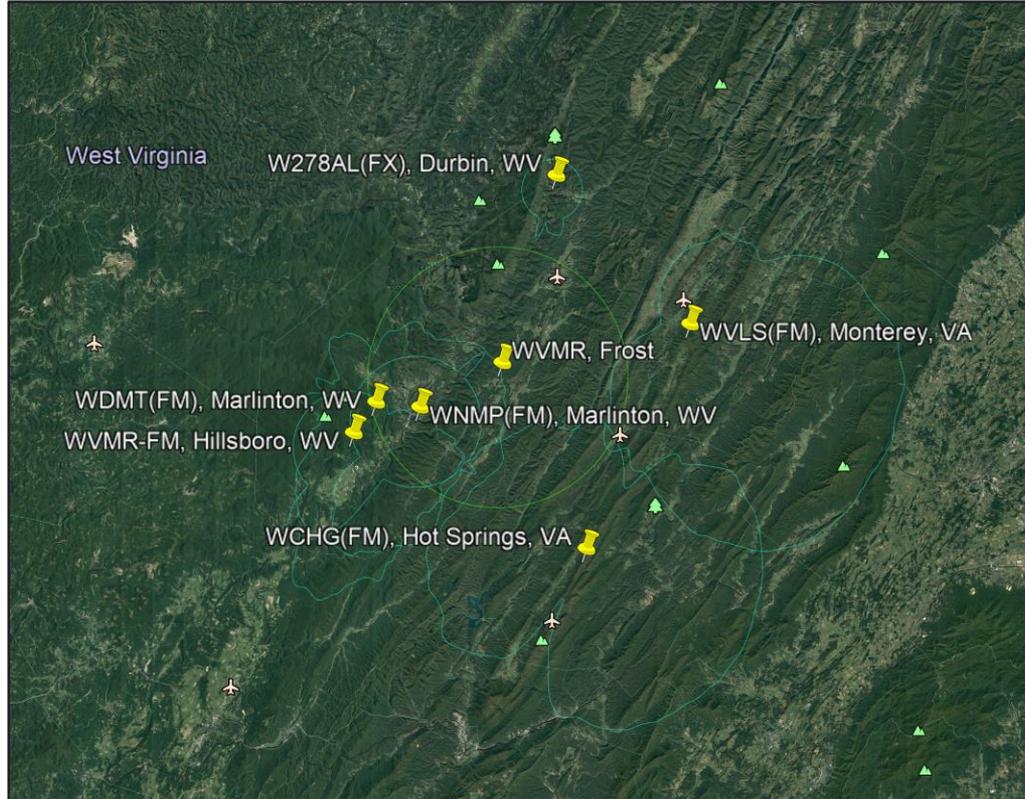


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# AMR, a radio station cooperative



Allegheny Mountain Radio operates 6 transmitters in 3 Counties (Bath, Highland and Pocahontas) in 2 States

- 1370 AM WVMR, Frost WV
- 88.5 FM WNMP, Marlinton, WV
- 89.7 FM Monterey, VA
- 91.9 FM WVMRFM, Hillsboro, WV
- 106.3 WDMT FM, Marlinton VW
- 107.1 FM WCHG, Hot Springs, VA

And 1 translator

- 103.5 FM W278AL FM, Durbin, WV



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# Hopes for CCI

- Expand our network of peers, and find different and better ways to educate and inform our listeners, and strengthen ties to our community
- We are in conservative area with a narrow point of view – we hope to broaden that outlook - not sure what is possible, but change can never come without the conversation starting it.
- Momentum for strategic planning



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# Audience and Demographics

- Population coverage ~15,000-16,000
- Listenership of ~2,500-3,000 per hour, potentially more 6 to 10am, Noon to 1pm and 3 to 6pm
- Target audience resembles demographics of region – primarily white, middle-aged and older
- Minimal users of social media
- Have recently added some younger DJ's to draw a younger audience for programming after 6pm



# Economic Environment

- Economic development has been steady to declining for many years
- Area is largely dependent on the tourism industry
- Remote, rural area with geographic hurdles (travel and distribution) for new and re-locating businesses
- Difficult to finding new underwriters
- Pandemic has been very challenging



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# Media Landscape

- AMR is often the “only game in town” when it comes to local radio, 2 of 3 stations (WVMR and WVLS) are considered “sole source” for information
- WCHG’s area is more accessible to both public and commercial stations
- Bath and Highland Counties share a newspaper and Pocahontas County has it’s own
- There is some TV reception in Roanoke and Harrisonburg, most residents utilize Satellite TV

# Organizational Capacity

- 6 full-time employees, 5 part-time
- Benefits are minimal – paid vacation and sick leave, holidays, and payments toward private insurance coverage
- 41 current volunteers for all 3 stations, 12 months ago we had 53
- No strategic plan, annual goals are budget driven with personnel (compensation) and infrastructure improvements being the highest priorities

# Emergency Preparedness

- Plans and procedures are in place to cover staff responsibilities and broadcasting priorities
- We participate in emergency scenarios with emergency services personnel and actively participate in planning committees in 2 of 3 counties we serve (Pocahontas and Highland).
- Biggest concern is coordination between the 3 stations should phone and internet outages occur



# Org Capacity – Top Challenges

- No capacity for new initiatives
- Lack of strategic plan
- Staffing

Recent changes to our management structure - Scott becoming GM, Heather becoming ND in addition to PD, a new Business Manager and new Board members



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# Engagement: Impact of COVID

- Outreach has been severely curtailed in the past 12 months, due to cancellation of events where AMR usually has a presence
- In late March we closed the studios to the public and temporarily suspended all of our volunteer programs (about half of weekly programming) in order to reduce the risk of possible exposure to our older volunteers



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# Engaging a Younger Audience

- Senior citizens are our largest base of support, many have been with us since the beginning, almost 40 years, but they are aging out
- It's increasingly important to attract younger generations of listeners and supporters
- Making a concerted effort to attract new, younger DJ's, exploring podcasts and other social media outreach efforts to reach younger audiences



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# Strategic Partnerships

- AMR has strong ties to religious and civic organizations (Ruritans, etc), school systems in the three counties, and various non-profits promoting economic development, health and safety and agriculture/animal health
- Staff members serve on boards/committees: Emergency Services, Pocahontas Chamber of Commerce, Pocahontas Bicentennial Committee, Highland County Farm Bureau, and more



# Website

- ~4,000 visitors per month for the last 12 months, news and individual stories are the most viewed
- Engagement spiked notably during February and March with the onset of COVID and has remained higher



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# Web Streaming

- 15-25 visitors at any given time
- Peaks at 90-100 during PCHS football games when the visiting team has no broadcast
- There has been a notable increase due to COVID
- Monthly web stream visitors more than tripled in March 2020 to 23,219 from 7,034 in March 2019
- 21,038 in April 2020 vs. 9,303 in April 2019
- Besides our website, can also stream on TuneIn and RadioGarden apps

# Social Media and Video

- Facebook ~ 3,615, increasing due to a new Social Media Director position being created and filled
- Gaining budget approval in FY20, tapped a current employee with good experience and knowledge
- Increased Facebook posting activity including videos
- Followers and engagement trending positive



# Engagement

## Strengths

- One-on-one contact with individuals and organizations
  - Being in a small rural area, our staff is well known, and responds to anyone reaching out

## Challenges

- Engaging new listeners
- Engaging a younger demographic
- Geographic distance



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# Content

- Music dominant with some news & information
- Locally-produced, dominant with some syndicated
- 91% locally produced (105/118 hours), decreased for a short time in the Spring due to COVID-19
- Our content is very eclectic, ranging from Gospel and bluegrass to rock and grunge to jazz and Americana, it is both a benefit and a challenge in finding and keeping a loyal audience.



# Local News

- Local news stories are produced in-house
- We subscribe to statewide news organizations in Virginia and West Virginia, and NPR for National /International news
- No major changes resulting from COVID



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# Partners and Shared Production

- Pre-COVID, we partnered with schools on school-centric news stories and features, recording of PSA's, announcements, and on-air broadcasting
- Collaborate with the Highland Historical Society on a retrospective history feature
- Produce feature length stories that have aired on WV Public Radio (Folklife Project) and Virginia Public Radio



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# Content

## Strengths

- Eclectic music mix is both a benefit and a challenge

## Challenges

- Music mix to appeal to broad audience
- Producing content for younger demographic
- Recruiting new programmers, music and public affairs



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# Revenue

- In a normal year, AMR conducts 2 fundraisers in April and October
- Due to COVID concerns, 2020 fundraisers were staff only, where normally there would be volunteers, live music, studio guests, etc.
- In addition, Fall 2020 Fundraiser was “silent” – solicitation by letter only
- Donation functionality on website, process credit cards via Square

# Fundraising Metrics

- 2 CSG Grants per year, WVMR-AM and WVLS-FM
- 33 underwriters with a \$1,053 avg package
- 507 individuals, average donation of \$91, revenue increased 52% over prior 12 months
- 15 organizations, \$160 average, 5% decrease
- 4 sustaining members, increased from 2
- 44 major donors => \$200 gifts, revenue increased 80% over prior 12 months



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# Income Sources in FY2020

- Federal Support (CSG) - 53%
- Underwriting – 23%
- Membership – 20%
  - General Giving ~ 66%
  - Sustaining Giving ~ 2%
  - Major Gifts => \$200 ~ 32%
- Earned Income – 4%



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# Revenue – Top Challenges

- Planning beyond what we have always done
- Underwriting
- Membership database



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