



2015 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



“Thank You WNIT for providing worthwhile television in a landscape where reality shows are anything but reality and spectacle is valued over substance.

Traig F.

Mission Statement: WNIT is a trusted, community owned public media source that is dedicated to inspire, inform, educate, entertain and unify the communities we serve.



WNIT is a valuable part of the Michiana community.

Our **Vision** is to foster enlightenment in our community, anytime, every time and everywhere.

Our **Promise** is to uphold and foster our most valued asset, the public trust. We will actively embrace this promise by adhering to these values and principles:

- We will provide communication content that inspires, educates and entertains.
- We will champion and provide free access to the multi-media world.
- We will manage a fiscally responsible organization without seeking profit.

WNIT's local services had deep impact in the Michiana area.

- Website had over 140,412 unique visitors and 644,683 page views.
- Partnerships with over 50 local organizations throughout Michiana
- Produced "Live From Notre Dame" at the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center and Harbor Lights.
- Produced work-for-hire pieces for the Economic Development Community of Elkhart Co., Hospice, Student Hunger Drive, Mossberg & Co., Food Bank of Northern Indiana, Bashor Children's Home, Elkhart County Community Foundation and Quilt Gardens .

In 2015, WNIT provided these key local services:

- Continued to air Experience Michiana in addition to 4 other local productions - Dinner & a Book, Economic Outlook, Outdoor Elements and Politically Speaking.
- Produced and broadcast "Michiana's Rising Star," a talent search throughout our entire broadcast area culminating in the crowning of Madison Kopec as Michiana's Rising Star on August 7.
- Our Town: South Bend & Our Town: North Webster
- Partnered with St. Joseph County Public Library for One Book, One Michiana
- Produced "Ebola and Beyond," a call-in show on Ebola and other infectious diseases, as well as, aired "Harbor Lights," a 30 -minute show focusing on the communities throughout Southwest Michigan.
- WNIT Kids Club continued to show strong membership growth sending the membership over 300. WNIT Kids Day in the Park grew as well to almost 500 participants..
- Maintained PBS initiative *NEXT AVENUE* in Michiana to reach age 50+ population
- Participated in "Success by Six" Early Childhood Education Summit



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WNIT continues to maintain an active and involved presence throughout the Michiana community. During the year, WNIT maintained the PBS initiative *NEXT AVENUE* in Michiana. *NEXT AVENUE* is a major PBS system website designed to reach America's booming 50+ populations as they plan for and literally define a new life stage. *NEXT AVENUE* provides articles, blogs, slideshows and videos that address a wide range of financial, caregiving, health and lifestyle topics for older adults.

In April, WNIT again partnered with the St. Joseph County Public Library as part of its ONE BOOK, ONE MICHIANA event. The title of this year's book was *Frankenstein by Mary Shelley* and it will be discussed on an upcoming episode of our popular **DINNER & A BOOK** with host, Gail Martin and her guest, Doug Farmwald.

We have several opportunities throughout the year for WNIT members to win tickets to events at local venues. These events included Brit Floyd, Jim Brickman, Celtic Woman, the Texas Tenors and various area symphonies to name a few. In all, WNIT maintains about 50 active partnerships with organizations throughout Michiana.

WNIT maintained an active presence in the community with exhibits at the Cornerstone Fall Trade Fair in Benton Harbor, the Elkhart Biz-Ness Expo in Elkhart and the St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce Business Expo in South Bend. We were media sponsors for the Krasl Art Fair on the Bluff in St. Joseph, River Bend Film Festival in South Bend, Fernwood Botanical Garden's Falloween in Buchanan, and the Lubeznik Center's Art Festival in Michigan City.

The WNIT Kids Club participated in the WNIT Kids Day in the Park at St. Patrick's Park, with nearly 500 parents and kids in attendance. WNIT staff members also attended the Elkhart County Early Childhood Education "Success by Six" Summit in Goshen to learn the latest in early childhood development training and share PBS Learning Media resources with those in attendance.

WNIT's Center for Public Media remained a hub of activity throughout the year. The Community Room played host to some 2500 community members in over 123 meetings and lunches. Our staff conducted tours of the facility for 200 persons.

WNIT's *Planner* remains a staple of membership benefits, with over 6,000 copies per issue. The full-color, 32-page magazine is printed bi-monthly and contains complete listings for both channels 34.1 and 34.2, program highlights, and features about our Membership, Development, Production, Kids Club and Directors' Circle.

WNIT also maintains an active and energetic presence in social media. Our web site has continued to be an invaluable resource for our community, reaching 140,412 unique visitors and 644,683 page-views during the fiscal year. Facebook has blossomed to over 2700 followers, Twitter has 1,000+ followers and the newly launched WNIT Instagram page has gained just over 100 followers. In addition, each month we send out approximately 4,900 electronic newsletters to bring our viewers up-to-the-minute announcements, scheduling and updates. To compliment the electronic newsletters, WNIT also sends out various electronic ticket offers for area plays, sporting events, screening, etc. These offers are usually sold out in minutes and gives those signed up to receive our newsletters and offers a chance to attend some of the area events they wouldn't normally have a chance to obtain tickets for.



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In March **EXPERIENCE MICHIANA** a daily, magazine style program hosted by Gordy Young began its fourth season on the air at WNIT. Rather than a daily show as it has been since its inception, **EXPERIENCE MICHIANA** now airs weekly on Fridays with repeats on Saturdays. It features all the good things to see and do in the region and has something for viewers of all ages. There are segments reviewing the latest DVD releases, nature and outdoor exploration, and places to go to have a great EXPERIENCE. We visit museums, art galleries, and community theaters to find out what's happening behind the scenes. Over 3,000 guests have appeared on **EXPERIENCE MICHIANA**, including the state champion Adams High School Mock Trial team, CEO of the Girl Scouts of Northern Indiana, Sharon Pohly, South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Marvin Curtis, Dean of the Raclin School of Arts at IU South Bend, John Shoup, Elkhart Civic Theater, Dawn Yarbrough, Harbor Lights TV in Benton Harbor, Al Gutierrez, CEO of St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center, Maestro Tsung Yeh, Director of the South Bend Symphony and John Hayes, Executive Director of the Dunes Learning Center. It was a hit from the beginning and forms a wonderful complement to our four other locally-produced weekly programs--**ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, DINNER & A BOOK, OUTDOOR ELEMENTS** and **POLITICALLY SPEAKING**.

An increasingly important segment of WNIT's funding is generated by Work for Hire—products such as training tapes or web videos—that are created and produced by our Production staff. During the current year, we produced work for the Economic Development Community of Elkhart Co., Hospice, Student Hunger Drive, Mossberg & Co., Food Bank of Northern Indiana, Bashor Children's Home, Elkhart County Community Foundation and Quilt Gardens .

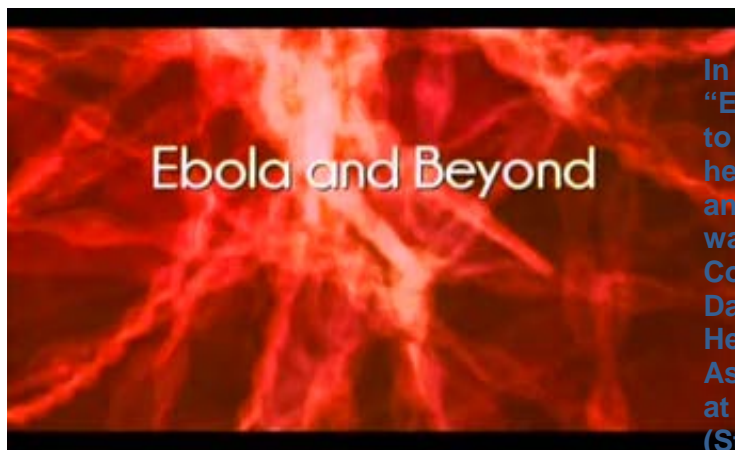
We also continued and developed new partnerships to produce the following more extensive projects:

- The University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center and WNIT Public Television presented LIVE FROM NOTRE DAME.....performances in dance, theater and music from the campus of the University of Notre Dame. These special presentations gave viewers at home a chance to witness the breathtaking beauty, creativity and skill that is brought to the stages of the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center.
- HARBOR LIGHTS TV returned in September on WNIT with its fourth season. HARBOR LIGHTS TV is a 30-minute show focusing on interesting projects, people, places and events in the communities through Southwest Michigan.



STORIES OF IMPACT

WNIT continued its highly successful OUR TOWN series with OUR TOWN: SOUTH BEND, which premiered on Monday, June 8th, and OUR TOWN: NORTH WEBSTER, which premiered on September 21st. As with OUR TOWN: GOSHEN, OUR TOWN: WARSAW – WINONA LAKE, OUR TOWN – ELKHART OUR TOWN: DOWAGIAC, and OUR TOWN: MISHAWAKA, the town’s residents became volunteer videographers. Armed with their own home camcorders, they created a video scrapbook of the stories that make both SOUTH BEND and NORTH WEBSTER special. WNIT’s professional staff utilized these video recordings, along with interviews held by the producers with the volunteer videographers, to edit the stories and produce an hour documentary that reflects the emotional ties of the people who live, love and are passionate about OUR TOWN.



In November WNIT produced a live call-in show, “Ebola and Beyond”, giving viewers the opportunity to participate in a panel discussion with top, local health officials on the issues surrounding Ebola and other infectious diseases. Host, Gary Sieber was joined by Dr. Jerome M. Adams (The Commissioner of the State Dept. of Health), Dr. Daniel Nafziger (Health Officer of the Elkhart Co. Health Dept.), Dr. Robert Stahelin (Adjunct Associate Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry at University of Notre Dame) and Terry Howard (Staff Counselor at UNICEF in Nigeria).

In May, WNIT presented “Art Decio: A Wonderful Life.” WNIT’s cameras took viewers back into time to experience the Elkhart that Art Decio knew and loved while growing up. Through archival and personal photos, as well as on location tapings, viewers saw the home Art grew up in and visited the site of his old neighborhood, schools and places he and his friends played and “hung out.” Most importantly, viewers will journey into the past to explore “Art,” as he is called by people who know him, philanthropist, humanitarian, businessman, leader, visionary and real life living legend.





MICHIANA'S RISING STAR

Michiana's Rising Star returned for its second year in hopes of finding the brightest and best talent in the entire Michiana region. The competition opened in February 2015, and attracted over 75 applicants. The top twenty-five performers from the auditions competed in hopes of making it to the Live Week at the WNIT studio each evening from Sunday, August 2 through Friday, August 7. Judging was conducted by area arts professionals, media personnel, professional performers and local celebrities.

In addition, the public was invited to text in to vote for their favorites and a Grand Finale Dinner/Viewing Party was held August 7 at the Century Center in downtown South Bend. During the party attendees had dinner, viewed the finale show and enjoyed live entertainment and dancing that included special guest performances by Rising Star finalists.

Madison Kopec was crowned as *Michiana's Rising Star 2015!* Madison received a \$1,000 cash prize plus the opportunity to appear on WNIT programs.

Our enthusiastic and talented contestants, their families, friends and viewers made *Michiana's Rising Star* a resounding success!





2015 Local Content & Service Report Summary

WNIT is “Michiana’s PBS Station!” Serving 22 counties in Northern Indiana and Southwest Lower Michigan, WNIT is a trusted, community-owned public media source dedicated to inspire, inform, educate, entertain, and unify the communities we serve. Our vision is to foster enlightenment in our community anytime, every time and everywhere. Our commitment is to not only bring our viewers iconic PBS programs such as Downton Abbey, Sesame Street and Antiques Roadshow on channels 34.1 and 34.2, but also bring our viewers strong local productions like Dinner & A Book, Outdoor Elements, Experience Michiana, Economic Outlook and Politically Speaking that engage, inspire and most importantly, inform.

At WNIT we keep our viewers in mind because this is their PBS Station and at WNIT....There’s Something for Everyone!



WNIT Broadcast Map

“You increase my knowledge, understanding, appreciation, and interpretation of the world around me from nature, history, culture, drama and news. Thank you for giving me television programming that brings quality to my life as a senior citizen. For the first time in my life television has become important to me.” Susan S.

“I love the educational programs for my kids it sticks to educational programming versus these shows other networks have come up with that promote things I don’t care for.” Joanna P.

“We watch so very little TV but we do want to make this wonderful station available to others.” Virgil and Louise C.