

## Bloomington Rotary Club

### Roundabout

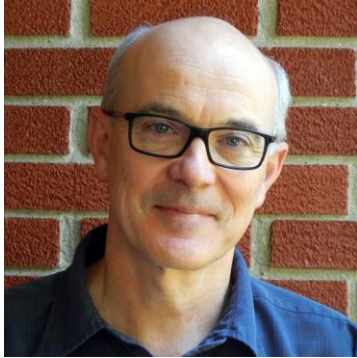
March 16, 2021

#### Next Week's Program

A club forum! You can expect lively, interactive conversation. Don't miss this chance for fellowship.

#### This Week's News

Past President **Earon Davis** announced our club's slate of officers for next year:



- **Alain Barker**, President-elect (to follow **Sally Gaskill** in 2022-23)
- **David Meyer**, continuing as Secretary
- **Kyla Cox Deckard**, continuing as Treasurer

Thanks to all three for your leadership. We look forward to the next year!

**Henk Heitjema** announced: "At long last we have proof of the existence of the French version of the book by **Elsa Marston Harik**, *I Just Kept Walking/Je Continuais a Marcher*. Distribution to schools will commence in the next few weeks, we are told. Some copies of the book were handed to Dr. Jerry Kindomba (Giving Back to Africa) by Mr. Jean Kitard (Rotary Club Gombe). These will go to Anne Marie Thompson. I hope to hold one in my hands in the near future."

President **Ashley Wesley** reported she volunteered last week through Helping Hands. Visit <https://helpinghands.civicchamps.com> or call (812) 727-0838 to sign up to make deliveries and assist with various other ways to help individuals in our community.

Returning member **John VanderZee** announced he has opened a new business, Up to Date Coaching LLC.

**This Week's Program. Available on YouTube:** <https://youtu.be/g-ixL7FhGgU>



**Jim Bright** introduced **Brad Kimmel**, new director of IU Radio and TV Services, WFIU and WTIU. Before coming to Bloomington, Kimmel was President and CEO of WNIN Public Media in Evansville and a member of Evansville Rotary. His show "My Classic Car" went on to national cable distribution.

Kimmel began his talk by saying he was thrilled to be here, even though he has yet to meet many of his staff in person because of the pandemic. WTIU, PBS affiliate, serves 607,000 households and has recently produced several outstanding programs, including “Amen, Music of the Black Church,” “Round Barns,” and others. WFIU, NPR affiliate, went on the air in 1950 and is currently celebrating 70 years of broadcasting. Recent successes include the radio drama “The Ernie Pyle Experiment,” “Earth Eats,” and “Soul Kitchen.” Kimmel acknowledged recently retired director Perry Metz, who significantly expanded news coverage, making the stations among of the best in the state and country. He pointed to two examples of worthy news coverage: recent executions at the U.S. Penitentiary in Terre Haute and local challenges of homelessness.

Kimmel noted that streaming has developed very rapidly, doubling in the last nine months. Social media also continues to grow.

The top three funding streams for the stations are 1) members and major donors, 2) corporate supporters, and 3) Indiana University. Grants and state and federal support are also important sources of revenue.

Kimmel outlined opportunities for the future. The stations are looking for areas where commercial enterprises are not involved or can't make a profit. One example is new uses for the legacy technology datacasting, which has traditionally been used for public safety and communications during emergencies: e.g., to send data to first responders. WTIU is currently working with Jennings County Schools to use datacasting technology to reach the 30% of their students who do not have adequate broadband access to participate in remote learning. Students can receive tests, homework assignments, and any content currently included in the PBS education library. The school is currently serving 200 families and will expand to 1,200 in the next few weeks.

Members asked penetrating questions:

Q: How has the increase in podcasting impacted the funding and viewership/listenership?

Radio listenership has plateaued but stabilized. The stations are not growing in the number of members, a long-term concern, but in the short term existing members are contributing more dollars.

Q: How widespread is broadband access in Monroe County?

About 75-80% of households have access to broadband.

Q: How do you know the size of the audience?

The stations subscribe to a rating service.

Q: When will season two of “All Creatures Great and Small” air?

Hopefully, winter 2021-22.

Q: Are TV and radio stations separate?

WTIU and WFIU are separate operations, each with separate budget, as required by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and donor restrictions. The station's research shows radio supporters give in support of the mission, while TV supporters are more transactional; their contributions depend on incentives.

Q: What is the age breakdown of radio listeners and TV viewers?

WTIU viewers are more likely to be female and in their early 60s, while WFIU listeners are evenly split between male and female and in their early 50s.

Q: How does the station relate to the larger university?

The stations receive funding from the university and have connections to various schools and faculty experts. In addition, the stations provide many services to IU, including running scoreboards for athletics. Kimmel sees opportunities for more collaboration in the future.

Q: “Harmonia” was originally a WFIU program. Are there plans for additional syndication of current WFIU programs?

Yes, Kimmel pointed to “Earth Eats” and “Soul Kitchen” as other possibilities.

Q: How do production costs for radio and TV compare?

Video production is much more expensive, although equipment prices are coming down. The stations are moving toward a “content first” approach, where the video and audio may appear on television, radio, in podcasts, and in longer and shorter formats.

Q: Who is innovating with equipment?

Kimmel noted that innovation is always a challenge, because it is risky and expensive. The stations have a five-year plan for replacement and upgrade of equipment. Innovation comes from adapting to viewer behavior and expectations. Right now, next-gen TV equipment is coming from South Korea.

Q: What new programs are in development at WTIU?

Kimmel replied he was meeting after the Rotary meeting with the production team to find out what is underway.

### **Our Weekly Gathering, March 16**

President **Ashley Wesley** welcomed members and guests to Bloomington Rotary Club’s weekly Celebration of Service. **Steve Moberly** reflected on this busy middle week of March: The Ides of March (15) was bad news for Julius Caesar and Archie Miller; we celebrated National Panda Day March 16, with a new baby panda born at the National Zoo; also that day National Artichoke Day and Freedom on Information Day. March 17 was St. Patrick’s Day. March 18 is Awkward Moments Day and Absolutely Incredible Kids Day. March 19 is the first day of spring!

Guests included Suzann Owen and **Phil Meyer**.

Ashley thanked producers **Natalie Blais, Michael Shermis, Sally Gaskill** and **Earon Davis**.

**Scott Shackelford** has a birthday March 16 and **Monica Kroener** on March 20.

**Sandy Keller** celebrated 4 years as a member, **Jeff Baldwin**, 7 years; **Shelli Yoder**, 8 years; and **Steve Moberly**, 14 years.

Reporter: **Sara Laughlin**