

Television

Student radio station steals some thunder

Stuck between two veteran heavies, student-run WMPG (FM 90.9) is in a tight spot. But with a power boost and excellent programming this fall, the station is suddenly attracting listeners from as far away as Topsham.

Matt Bosisio



Struggling against WMGX's powerful frequency (FM 93.1) on one side and the Maine Public Broadcasting Network (FM 90.1) on the other, the station has still managed to eke out a 50-mile broadcasting radius. And in doing so, has put commercial radio on notice that a non-commercial competitor is out to pirate listeners.

According to WMPG's fall program guide, the station will deal in real people, not "radio personalities." The music "is not selected by a radio consultant in New York

— each announcer has creative control over his/her show."

The goal of the station, the guide continues, is to "serve our listeners with thought-provoking programs and an in-depth examination of university and community issues." And to provide listeners "with a style of radio programming you may never have heard."

Joan Marie Muldoon, program director, said to date, all facets of the operation have been "looking up." She said the student senate at the University of Southern Maine, WMPG's funding source, has expressed an interest in providing additional funding "for some real good turntables and some better equipment," all based on its reaction to the station's performance.

She said among those who have approved of the station's direction are members of the professional academic community, who, she said, "are really pleased and making note of us."

The station was first established in 1973 by Howard Allen and Hal Bergson. They began with donated equipment from WCSH radio, now operating as WYNZ-AM, and initiated broadcasts from the student lounge of Anderson Hall on USM



Joan Marie Muldoon, WMPG's program director, says things are looking up at the student-run station.

days.

News director Jeff Hale said his 10-person news staff is just now feeling its way through the complexities of news gathering. But he believes the newsroom will eventually become a viable avenue for news and information.

"We obviously don't want to bite off more than we can chew," Hale said. "But we want to handle the key issues of the day and concentrate on more local and, especially, campus news."

Hale said with added staff, the news department will become involved in producing segments for interview and public affairs programming.

Program Notes

University radio station WMPG had a very successful first week on air. The overall programming sounded very smooth with some technical difficulties due to rusty on-air personalities. This problem will work itself out as everyone becomes more comfortable with meters and switches, knobs, turntables and phones ringing in the background.

We've had no problems with interference and the transmitter has been performing flawlessly. The executive board, under the direction of Ernie Freeberg, is managing to "go forward-move ahead." We have all worked very hard to make this station a viable alternative in the greater Portland listening area.

In two weeks there will be 1,000 program guides circulated which will carry a comprehensive list of all programs and on-air personalities. This will be your reference guide to some of the greatest sound in Portland. Keep your eyes peeled and your ears tuned to the area alternative—WMPG, 90.9 FM.

Changing Programs

WMPG moderator Laura Cianchette debuts this Monday at 1 p.m. with the first in a series called "Changing Programs." The series gets underway with a recapitulation of remarks made by convocation lecturer Dr. John Kemeny.

According to Cianchette, Kemeny's remarks covered a vast number of topics and issues.

"We have material here for in-depth discussions on some of the most critical areas in which computers affect us: matters of privacy, education, and security among them. Our plan is to explore these issues in a way that invites participation from all segments of the public, from computer experts like Dr. Kemeny to concerned citizens. Our hope is not to make all our listeners computer experts, but to acquaint them with the critical ways the computer revolution will affect all of us."

Participation from sources throughout the university and community is welcomed. For further information about "Changing Programs" contact Laura Cianchette at WMPG, Gorham, telephone 780-5415.

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Television

WMPG to broaden its reception range

Joan Muldoon is excited these days, almost giddy.

Next month begins a new experiment for her and others at radio station WMPG-FM. The student-run broadcast booths are about to join the rest of the radio world.

Making a quantum leap from 10 watts to 50 watts, the station returns to the air in a few weeks ready to challenge some of the best in local radio with a new sound.

Labeling it "alternative progressive," Ms. Muldoon, the program director, says the music will be fresh and different, touching on music not generally in the market. She says the emphasis will be primarily on reggae, classical, straight jazz and a combination of soul and disco, if you can imagine it.

Licensed to the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine, the Gorham station has long sought to broaden its reception area to include more of the Greater Portland area. The adjustment in power will now make that possible, shifting it on the dial to 90.9 FM. The station is expected to be on the air by the middle of October.

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They're really asleep over at WASY in Gorham. The station carries the Red Sox schedule but on any given weekend, it also carries dead air. That's when the sound suddenly goes out and nothing is heard from the radio for several seconds, sometimes minutes.

WMPG-FM will be fresh and different, touching on music not generally in the market. The emphasis will be primarily on reggae, classical, straight jazz and a combination of

Consider yourself lucky, however. If you can pick them up.

Meanwhile WMPG, the radio station of the University of Southern Maine, has changed their frequency to 90.9 FM and boosted their power to 30 watts — with more increases to come. Like a good college station should, WMPG maintains a commitment to alternative music of all types around the clock. They have definitely become more professional in the last few months.

South

SWEET POTATO

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