

October 8, 1984



by Mary K. Minard

WMPG will be back on the airwaves at 90.9 FM on Monday, October 8. The campus radio station, which has been off the air since August 15, will begin broadcasting from its new studios in the Gorham Student Center.

Building new facilities for WMPG "wasn't a snap decision," says station director Ernie Freeberg. The station's old studios in the rear of the Gorham Pub were too small for the growing radio station.

"The station has expanded rapidly," Freeberg says, "we've got over 50 students here, and we'd have 15 to 18 people crowded into one room, all working on different productions."

## WMPG is Back: Returns to the Air this Week

The new studios will not be completely finished when WMPG resumes transmitting on the 8th. According to Freeberg, there are "still two or three more weeks of work" to be done on production studios and equipment.

These expanded facilities will permit a wider range of productions, from news to radio theater to community programming. They will also make it possible to train more students. "We're looking to improve our production," says Freeberg, "not just to be a music station."

Programming on WMPG underwent considerable change during the 1983-84 school year, going from mostly rock and new wave to a diversified format including jazz, folk, and bluegrass, as well as non-musical productions.

This year, program director Laura Cianchette has developed an equally varied schedule. Weekday morning slots will be filled with a mixture of classical, folk, and jazz tunes. Bluegrass and reggae will be included in the afternoon schedule. Evenings and weekends will be primarily rock 'n' roll time, with an emphasis on new music.

WMPG's aim is to provide airplay for independent labels and seldom-heard rock bands instead of concentrating on mainstream performers. One such unconventional show will be "Richie's Rare Record Round-up," consisting of psychedelic '60's tunes and the like.

In non-music programming, special productions director Peter Twichell has lined up shows ranging from syndicated comedy to student-produced radio dramas. Segments on special interests such as astronomy and Maine literature will also be presented.

Local talent will be showcased on the "State Street Radio Rodeo," a weekly variety program, and community interests will be well-served with talk shows and forums. Diversity is once again the key word. "I'm willing to put anything on the air that isn't obscene," remarks Twichell.

Freeberg wants to make WMPG more a part of the local scene this year.

"We've got a long way to go to be an important force in Portland," he admits, though observing that the station does have "a wide listenership" in the city. "We need to connect ourselves more to what's happening at the university, to be a voice for the university," he adds.

He plans to accomplish this by involving USM students and staff in community and news programming. The nightly newscast will incorporate features with a local slant, and local issues will be covered on discussion shows such as "Lip Service."

WMPG should prove to be a welcome alternative to the impersonal Top 40 and album rock stations currently available to USM listeners. When they return to the air, programs to satisfy a wide variety of entertainment and information tastes will be heard from 8 a.m. to 1 a.m. Plan to tune them in beginning October 8.