

"One of America's Finest Small Market Radio Broadcasting Companies"

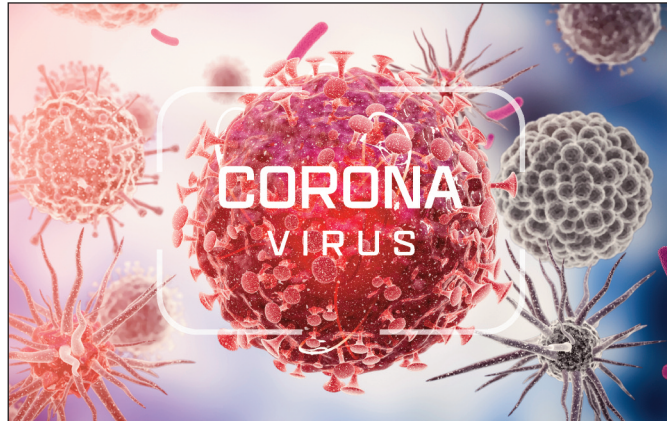
AN AMAZING COMEBACK

A Terrific Team Effort Is Apparent

The amazing comeback of Heartland revenue is a lot more than a story about money and advertising sales. It is a story about resolve and willpower.

It is a story about adrenaline and elbow grease.

It is a story about knowing that many people all over the country were losing their jobs, and their paychecks, i.e., money to go grocery shopping and pay the rent or mortgage. There are a lot of Heartland families with kids that needed to be fed and adult employees that needed



peace of mind and security about their future.
"Many and Countless

nights that I sat in my chair trying to relax with a little TV
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Jim Coursolle, CRMC
President and CEO

Wendi Ell, newsletter
designer and
publisher



www.heartlandcomm.com

CHRISTMAS IS ON THE AIR

Heartland Holiday Programming Brings Cheer

"In a time when Ashland and the surrounding area is suffering from the sadness connected with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Heartland on-air folks in Ashland have worked hard preparing to bring old-fashioned Christmas cheer to our airwaves on WBSZ, WJJH, WNXR and WATW FM & AM," said Heartland Ashland Program and Operations Manager, Steve Stone.

Mike Wolf, Heartland Corporate Program Director reported that the Heartland on-air team in the Minocqua, Eagle River and Rhinelander area, a.k.a. 'The Northwoods Vacation Triangle' were putting the finishing touches on many Christmas Holiday programs wishing to bring traditional Christmas Spirit to thousands of homes and holiday listeners throughout the Northwoods.

"I'm stopping short of putting on a red suit and white beard, but along with all of our announcers, I am ready to add some



'Ho Ho Ho' to our Christmas programming," said Wolf.

Listeners in the Ashland/Superior-Duluth and Ironwood, MI area can expect to hear their favorite Christmas songs beginning Monday, November 30th, on WNXR, WJJH and WBSZ. On December 24th, according to Stone, "We will broadcast Christmas music on Christmas Eve beginning at 6 pm on WNXR, WBSZ and

WATW FM & AM."

Stone also mentioned that the Heartland Ashland stations will be broadcasting their annual "Magic Stocking" fundraiser to help feed people in need.

The Heartland Eagle River stations of award-winning WRJO, WCYE, WNWX and WERL FM & AM "will be lighting up the holiday season with a bunch of listener fun and winning," according to Program Director, Mike Wolf. He said, "It is a fun time to be a jock on the air as listeners win prizes and play on-air games adding to the Christmas entertainment."

On Coyote 93.7, Coyote Program Director Jim Franklin is excited about a Christmas Dinner Give-away. "Listeners will be able to win a large dollar amount gift card from a local grocer. They can then decide whether they want to keep their dinner winnings or give the gift card to a family

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Pres. Release

When you're 77 years old, you usually don't look forward to the passing of a year; 2020 might be an exception to that feeling.

I guess if there is any mental impression that would leave its mark on 2020, it would have to be the infamous white or light blue surgical mask. In an almost surreal bad dream, it seems that people lined-up as robots under control, go about their business suspecting and wondering if that unfamiliar person pushing a shopping cart by them at the super market would infect and kill them without notice.

Fear for many became the determining factor for their day and life. We wondered if this was really America and if so, what happened to moving around freely...



Jim Coursolle
President, CEO

going to the movies or a ball game or even a family wedding? I couldn't even get a haircut. Are we losing our freedoms?

As I wrote this, we are about a week or so after the presidential election with no clear winner... only TV networks "calling" or predicting a winner, but no official announcement. News reports of rampant voter fraud filled the airwaves as did reports of dozens of lawsuits being filed in many courts throughout the land; ballots mailed out at random, even to thousands of dead people, were being broadcast as much of the problem. What a year 2020 has been.

With all of that and from my perspective, the loss of about \$1.1 million in advertising revenue due to government mandated business lockdowns, I am

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October Top Sellers



Sales Reps

Tammy Hollister.....	\$20,774
Trish Keeley	\$20,289
Diane Byington	\$19,354
Tyler Ostman.....	\$11,280
Scott Larson.....	\$9,164



BIRTHDAY "BROADCASTS"

NOVEMBER

- 6th – Shannon Anderson – *Ashland*
- 8th – Diane Byington – *Eagle River*
- 20th – John Warren – *Ashland*

DECEMBER

- 14th – Sydney Cristiano – *Ashland*

JANUARY

- 9th – Wendy Baxter – *Eagle River*
- 10th – Grayce Schulta – *Eagle River*
- 11th – Trish Keeley – *Eagle River*
- 17th – David Olson – *Ashland*
- 22nd – Jenny Schilling – *Eagle River*
- 25th – Kathy Wawiora – *Corporate*



Ashland



Merry Christmas from Heartland-North

By John Warren,
General Manager
WBSZ/WNXR/WJJH/WATW

I'm happy to say that 4th quarter sales are pacing very well as October 2020 outperformed October 2019 and reached 128.4% of its adjusted October sales goal. It's looking like we will outperform November 2019 sales as well as we're currently pacing at 134.9% of November 2020 adjusted sales goal. We haven't seen this type of sales success since the start of the pandemic in March. Way to go Tammy, Tyler and Shannon. A huge thank you to Marion for getting all those orders in, keeping it all straight and getting the billing out.

After a late start to the football season, Northwestern Tigers



High School Football play-by-play action got underway with Mike Granlund, Brady Lind and Terry Johnson. With a shortened 7-game season the final regular season game is Friday, November 6th. We expect the Tigers to go deep into the playoffs starting November 13th. Congrats to the Northwestern Tigers on a great season. The Northwestern games



can be heard on 107.3 FM and on line at WNXRFM.com by clicking the Listen Live tab. At this time, Northwestern Tigers basketball is scheduled to start on December 3rd, 2020.

Ashland Oredockers Football with Nick Gima and Chris Beeksmas got off to a late start this year with a shortened 7-game
See **Ashland**, Page 5



John Warren
Ashland
General Manager

www.wbszfm.com
www.wnxfm.com
www.wjjhfm.com
www.watwbaycountry.com



Steve Stone
Operations
Manager and
Program Director

The 2020 Heartland Communications Deer Hunter's Round Up airs November 20th through November 28th on both WNXR 107.3 FM and WATW AM 1400/101.3 FM starting at 4:30pm. The show brings back some familiar names, Steve Williams, Rudy Allen, Marty Davidson and various other guests. There's a number of contests, camp call-ins, venison recipes, hunting stories and of course all your favorite hunting tunes.

Photos will be posted to the Deer Hunters Round Up Facebook page. The show will air on WNXR 107.3 FM, WATW AM 1400 and 101.3 FM and online at wnxfm.com and watwbaycountry.com by clicking the Listen Live tab.



PD NOTES...

By Steve Stone,
Operations Manager and
Program Director

WATW Grows Sports Programming

WATW has recently added some major sports to the lineup. The Wisconsin Badgers Football and Basketball seasons will be airing on both 101.3 FM and 1400 AM, the games will also be available on the live streaming service. With the addition of the Badgers, WATW also received permission from the Green Bay Packers organization to simulcast the Packers games with sister
See **Programming**, Page 5

Eagle River

Coyote 93.7 has announced a new week night program from 7pm to midnight that focuses on the local information for the Coyote listener but with fun elements mixed in. November saw the start of Weeknights with Renee DuBay.

Renee said, "I found my calling when I was 16 and our 4-H club did a fundraiser at a local radio station in my home-state of Minnesota. Since then, I've done radio in Colorado, Ohio, Hawaii, Nebraska, Chicago and Minneapolis. I still love radio as much as I did when I was 16. I'm mar-



Renee DuBay
On-Air
Personality



ried, no kids, but do have a chihuahua and a tabby-cat. I love to cook, bake, play Texas Hold 'em, travel, binge watch shows on TV, go to the movies and fish. So happy to still be in radio doing my thang!"

Renee along with informing listeners about local Northwoods information and events will have 3 benchmarked elements.

The first is The Outdoor Minute with Marv Holowinski. Marv will keep listeners up-to-date with Wisconsin's Northwoods hunting, fishing and outdoor scene. It will also be a nice way for listeners to get the major and minor fishing and hunting times for the following day.

Renee will also offer "Drive By Funny." Everyone needs a little humor every

day and Drive By Funny brings those moments. It's a wide variety of comics, all in 60-90 seconds. Laugh along at work at home, in your car, where ever. It's a good daily uplift.

And, because it is a country station so Renee also offers the Nashville Update. WCYE's Nashville Update is information for today's modern country radio audiences. The Nashville Update is also a backstage pass to Nashville's latest buzz, news, and stories with original artist-focused content, concert info, and exclusive interviews with the biggest names in country music.

We are happy to have Renee on Coyote 93.7 weeknights and hope she will be that fun and information that keeps you going late into the evening.

Email Renee with song requests and information at reneeadubay@gmail.com.

PD NOTES...

By Mike Wolf,
Corporate Program
Director

The fourth Quarter in Eagle River gets busy.

There are always several contests and fun events that WRJO offers to our listeners as the holiday season gets closer. This year has been such a drain on everyone, and if WRJO can help usher out a crazy time with fun and even delicious prizes, that's what we are going to do.

The first contest in line is our Turkey Shoot. This is where we ask listeners to call in to win their Thanksgiving turkey. Let us just say that there is a cannon involved and a turkey with a helmet, but

please be assured that no turkeys are harmed while playing the turkey shoot. This contest has become a listener favorite. Calls will start coming in when the calendar strikes November wondering when we will be shooting turkeys.

Next, we have a special contest that spans the end of the year and the beginning of the next. It's Shop Local 365. This is a contest that not only benefits WRJO but our local businesses as well. We start in November, just before Thanksgiving so listeners benefit from all the holiday shopping, and at the end of March pull a winner of our grand prize valued at or more than \$1,000. Last year's grand prize was well over \$1,000, with a bicycle included valued itself at \$1,000. We want to not only promote shopping local but have people really do it.

So, if we must beg listeners to get out there and reward them with prizes, you're darned tootin' we will.

We will wrap up 2020 with one of our favorites, The Elf Toss. Santa and his boy are having a little fun at the North Pole and WRJO listeners benefit with a chance to win their Christmas ham. Whether you like your ham Bayonne, Black Forest, Boiled or Cooked, Capicola, Country, Culatello, Gammon, Honey or Maple, Irish, Jamon Iberico, Picnic, Prosciutto (Italian Ham), Scotch, Serrano, Smithfield, Speck, Westphalian or York, we will set the stage you just have to prepare it to your liking.

We love the holiday season at WRJO and one big reason why is simply because our listeners benefit from us having fun.



Jeff Wagner
Eagle River
General
Sales Manager

www.wrjo.com
www.mix96northwoods.com
www.coyote937.com



Mike Wolf
Corporate
Program Director



Jim Franklin
Program Director

Ashland, from Page 3

season. Ashland Oredockers have three wins and three losses with the final regular-season game to be played on November 6th. At this time it's uncertain on playoff implications. Ashland Oredocker football can be heard on WATW AM 1400 and 101.3 FM and online at watwbaycountry.com by clicking the Listen Live tab. Ashland Oredockers and Indianhead Conference Basketball play-by-play will air on WATW AM 1400 and 101.3 FM. The season kicks off in early December.

Programming, from Page 3

station WNXR, bringing Packers Football back to Ashland. Adding to the sports lineup, Wisconsin Radio Network sports update with Bill Scott is now a daily feature as well.



Bill Scott



We Have Wisconsin News

Award-winning news coverage for all four of Ashland's radio stations is now being provided by The Wisconsin Radio Network. In October, the Ashland market became an affiliate, adding the coverage of Wisconsin State News to the morning shows on WBSZ, WJJH and WNXR and hourly updates on WATW. The Northwoods area truly needed a resource for Wisconsin news, since most of the television coverage is focused on Minnesota, leaving listeners with no media coverage for their state. WRN and the Ashland stations will also provide special programming and cover important events.

WBSZ Adds Top Country Nights

Today's Country WBSZ Z-93 will be adding one of the top syndicated country music programs to its nightly line-up. "Nights With Elaina" will fill the 7pm to midnight time-slot seven days a week starting Monday, November 30th. Califor-

nia native, Elaina Smith has become one of the strongest female presences on country radio. She was recently named one of RadioInk's 30-And-Under Superstars. Elaina is also a two-time Gracie award-winning, CMA and ACM nominated broadcaster. The nightly program will feature country music, news and interviews with chart toppers in country music.

Unfortunately The 10th Annual Garland City Women's Expo that was planned for Saturday November 7th was canceled this year due to Ashland County's Health Departments mandate on large gatherings. We look forward to putting it together for the 1st Saturday of November in 2021.

Heartland Communications - North Sales Staff is currently accepting reservations for booth space for the Heartland Communications 2021 Home and Sport Show in Ashland. The Show in Ashland will be

held at the Bay Area Civic Center on March 26th, 27th and 28th, 2021. We look forward to a show full of vendors and potential new customers. To reserve booth space contact Tammy, Shannon or Tyler at 715-682-2727.

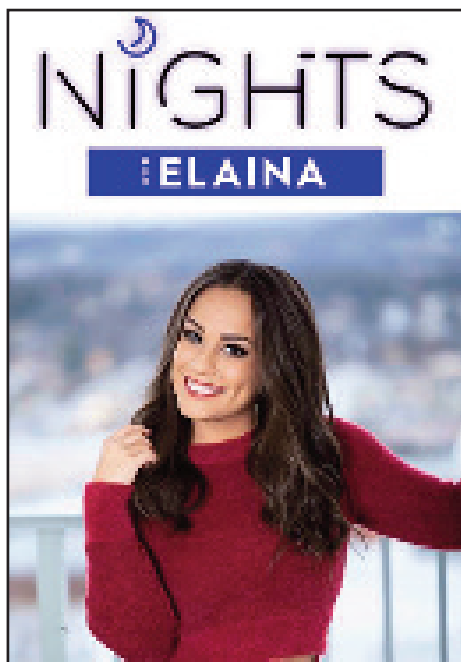


Brian Wick along with Ashland's lady of the airwaves Bri went out for a drive and judged the submissions. Winners received "Chamber Bucks" to spend at local businesses.

All four Ashland stations are having fun with the "Caffeinated Caller" promotion. Tchebo Coffee provided packages of coffee for the contest. Listeners have to identify a song that has been sped up several times its normal speed. If they guess the song and artist they receive the coffee and station drink coozies.

A few months ago, J-96 WJJH added "Flashback Trivia" as a feature of the morning show. The program has really caught on with listeners. Each morning Steve Stone opens up the phone line to find one person that can answer the daily trivia question. The daily feature is currently sponsored and because of its popularity, has a list for future sponsorships.

The contests have been extremely valuable in keeping listeners engaged with the radio stations and keeping them tuned in.



Scarecrows, Coffee and Trivia

COVID-19 has brought more than a few challenges to the broadcast industry, chief among them has been "listener engagement." The programming team in Ashland has been hard at work getting the listener engaged with some awesome promotions. In October, WBSZ, WATW and the Ashland Chamber of Commerce sponsored a "Scarecrow Contest." Rick St. Nick and



Christmas, from Page 1

in need.” Franklin said, “Heartland knows how hard 2020 has been on all Northwoods families.”

Christmas listeners can also expect to hear ‘The Elf Toss,’ ‘Shop Local 365’ and other Christmas contesting. But, according to Wolf, “The Star of the Show will be our Christmas Music which starts the day after Thanksgiving through Christmas Eve.”

“The joy that the Christmas holidays bring will be incredibly important this year,” said Wolf. Ashland’s Steve Stone added, “I haven’t talked to one person who isn’t looking forward to a little Christmas cheer this year... we’ve all been through a lot and we are waiting for the Christmas celebration!”

Thanksgiving, from Page 2

grateful.

I am grateful that through amazing teamwork, the Heartland stations have survived and mostly recouped our lost \$1.1 million in revenue.

This is the Thanksgiving season and I feel thankful that at this writing, everyone at Heartland has a job with which to support themselves and their families. This was no easy feat and could only be accomplished by excellent teamwork. We need to continue to work hard to guarantee our jobs.

Sometimes I worry about the future with proposed government anti-

business climate, but then I refocus, realizing that our Heartland people are the best and through teamwork Heartland would once again be setting records and winning awards.

This Thanksgiving season, despite the stresses of COVID 19 and the 2020 election, please join with me in a short prayer of gratitude for all that we have overcome and accomplished. It’s really comforting to be a part of this wonderful Heartland team.

Thanks to you and the Big Guy in the sky for bringing us all together to serve our listeners, advertisers and communities.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Comeback, from Page 1

and yet, I found myself thinking about payrolls and bills,” said Heartland CEO Jim Coursolle. “I also knew I was having some health issues, but I knew I had to keep that to myself a bit because there was lots of work to be done. I quietly got myself to doctors and finally three surgeries for heart stents. My blood pressure had increased considerably due to concerns about Heartland’s survival and success during the COVID pandemic and probably living a little wild in my younger years and just being an American broadcast entrepreneur.”

Coursolle said that other members of his team had tested positive for COVID and a few of them became ill with COVID. “It was not pleasant at all for these folks, they were really sick. But they survived COVID and recovered. They were returning to normal and back at work in just a few weeks. This, itself, proves what responsible people we have at Heartland.”

Coursolle shared that he knew he had some great Heartland leaders in John Warren, Jeff Wagner, Mike Wolf, Steve Stone, Jim Franklin and Bruce Marcus and that those folks had his back. But he said, “it is almost impossible to not think about things...I tried to pray away my worries and that helped a lot. Turning stuff like that over to God really worked.”

It was the middle of March 2020 that the government mandated lockdown of almost all businesses took place. At first, most people thought the government forced lockdowns would last a few weeks or months, but we are nearing the end of 2020 and we are hearing reports from one presidential candidate that face masks and lockdowns

may be federally mandated until God knows when; the effectiveness of such action has become questionable by many doctors. President Trump has often said that the “cure has been worse than the illness.” I think I understand that Trump quote.

We all went to work.

“The behind-the-scenes efforts by John and Jeff and their sales teams, and the forefront product or programming support by Mike, Steve, Jim and their teams was pretty amazing,” said Coursolle. “We initiated doable “pandemic” revenue goals. We held several staff meetings being extremely candid about the challenges we faced. I thought it much better to just let everyone know what we had to do to ensure payroll and the hope that there would be no layoffs or salary reductions. I told them it was up to them...we had to produce like never before or I wouldn’t be able to ensure that there wouldn’t be cutbacks or salary reductions. It seems everyone understood, probably because we all had friends at other companies that were suffering the loss of their jobs; I couldn’t stand the thought of that for our people,” said Coursolle. “This is not a big company and our people are not just numbers... they are part of my family.”

Since initially losing about \$1.1 million in contracted advertising revenue, we have pulled ourselves up and have recovered almost 90+ percent of that lost revenue.

Coursolle went on to say, “With the outcome of the election certainly to be determined by many courts and state legislatures and I am almost positive, The Supreme Court of the United States, the possibility exists of dealing with a new “Green” anti-business administration that

may impose stringent regulations and guaranteed tax increases on businesses and the general public. I have mentioned to our management team that we must look forward and focus on ‘belt-tightening’ and production. Those belt-tightening effects have already taken place; an announcer in the Ashland market gave notice and will not be replaced. Other business friends tell me they are doing the same thing which, in the long run, will result in the loss of millions of jobs throughout the United States.

There will not be any room for anyone who does not do their jobs, thus disallowing themselves and our stations goal accomplishment. We just will not be able to afford mediocre work knowing what may lie ahead. We all lived through eight very marginal years with the US GDP averaging 1.6% during the Obama/Biden administration compared to the 2.5+% during the Trump/Pence Administration prior to the pandemic. Even in small towns, the U.S. economy has far reaching effects.”

“The good news,” according to Coursolle, “is that Heartland has good, solid people, and with much more than average effort, we will be able to survive and succeed even with another future government mandated lockdown and possible future inept government economic policies.”

“I am very proud that no one at Heartland has been terminated or laid-off and no one has had their salary reduced to date because of COVID,” Coursolle said, “We are better prepared today than we were when the pandemic hit and we hopefully, as a team, understand what has to be done to survive and succeed. There is little room for a lackadaisical attitude and, my guess is, our Heartland team fully realizes that.”