

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

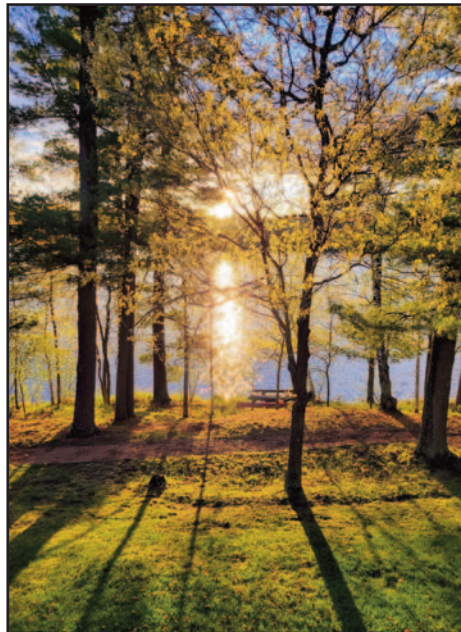
## Springtime in the Northwoods and Lakeshore

The buds are popping out with their beautiful spring-green color throughout the Northwoods and Lakeshore. Spring doesn't last long up here; it seems we go from winter to summer almost instantly; some tell me that Spring is a two-day or maybe three-day occurrence.

I have noticed that the cabin owners have returned and, on the weekends, tourism is evident. Everything takes a bit longer due to the increased tourism traffic. I am not complaining. With the almost non-existent winter throughout Northern and Northwestern Wisconsin, it is exciting, refreshing, and reassuring that people from all over the Midwest, and really, the nation, have returned to the Northwoods and Lakeshore areas to find R & R.

The tourism traffic does increase greatly after Memorial Day and when the schools in Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Des Moines and elsewhere are done for the summer.

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Jim Coursolle, CRMC  
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[www.heartlandcomm.com](http://www.heartlandcomm.com)



## WE'RE DOING WELL!

Please let me, Jim Coursolle, Heartland's CEO, write the last couple of paragraphs of this article first.

We're doing well at Heartland.

Usually, I would say that would or should be expected, and with our great operations and marketing teams in both the Ashland Lakeshore and the "Northwoods Vacation Triangle" (Eagle River, Rhinelander and Minocqua) it is expected because of their greater abilities. It is certainly evident that these last three or four years have been anything but normal, routine or usual. I have been in the radio broadcasting business for 63 years (graduated Benilde High School in the Spring of 1961 and in the Fall of 1961, as a freshman, I joined the staff of St. Mary's College campus radio station KSMC). There has never been a tranquil or "usual" moment during the

last three or four years of my radio broadcasting career. In my opinion, the Heartland crew has met the challenges and dealt with them. Sometimes, they even surpassed them.

It all began with the COVID pandemic. In Wisconsin, Governor Evers shut down the entire state's business operations, except for what he called "essential" businesses. Checking synonyms for the word "essential," the Thesaurus came up with the words, "vital," "important," "crucial" and so on... But as "vital" as these "non-essential" businesses were to any Wisconsin community, the business owners, employees, customers, and you'd think the State of Wisconsin, they were shut down. Even the Churches were shut down. But the larger national chain businesses, the liquor stores, and, in the government's infinite wisdom, other so-called larger

"essential" businesses were directed to stay open. States that did not shut down fared well; their economies were vibrant and, in many cases, their recorded COVID illnesses were less than the shut-down states. FEAR precipitated by the government and its partner the main stream media was rampant, and for some, that fear continues today.

Then came the inflationary PPP government loan programs which "may have" compensated "non-essential" businesses to perhaps the tune of 40 to 50 percent of the lost shut-down revenues; the small, family-owned businesses struggled to re-open. The supply-chain was so challenged and ineffective that, these "non-essential" businesses found re-stocking shelves to be difficult to say the least. Employees were also an issue.

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# Pres. Release

There wasn't much of a winter in the Northwoods or the Lakeshore in 2023-24. So as far as "complaining" about winter is concerned, most people aren't. That is, except for the Northwoods' and Lakeshore merchants that were financially hurt due to little, if any, winter sports tourism traffic to these areas.

But last weekend (May 4th & 5th), I noticed a bit of wonderful "congestion" on our highways. It was Wisconsin's Fishing "Opener" and that always brings hopeful anglers into our area. The worms were being drowned by the hundreds!

I was talking this morning to Ashland's Heartland cluster GM, John Warren, recently and we were discussing the positive increase area traffic. John brought up some discussions he had with Ashland area merchants; the people he talked with felt that because of the high gas prices (almost doubled since 2020) that tourists might stay



Jim Coursolle  
President, CEO

longer, but come less often. John mentioned that the conjecture was because money would be going into gas tanks, that tourists might spend less with local merchants when they are in the area.

I mentioned to John that there is another side to the high-priced gas story. History has taught us that when gas prices are perceived to be much higher – and in this case, the reality is that they are much higher – vacationers and tourist tend to stay closer to home. Wisconsinites, instead of traveling to Wyoming and Yellowstone National Park, will opt to travel to Wisconsin or Midwest vacation spots such as our beautiful Northwoods' and Lakeshore vacation destinations. In the past, that is exactly what we have seen. The beautiful Ashland, Bayfield areas, the Apostle Island National Lakeshore and Lake Superior areas are sought after destinations by hundreds of thousands of vacationers each year. The Eagle River, Minocqua, St. Germain, Manitowish Waters, Boulder Junction, Sayner and other Northwoods areas are visited by many thousands of people. Both areas are loved by those who seek relaxation, good fishing, boating, camping, and just plain getting away from the hustle of city life

every summer and fall.

My own opinion is that our beautiful vacation-destination areas, because they are closer to home, will be selected as affordable and desired vacation spots for a significant number of tourists. And what I have been able to determine weather-wise is we may have a very hot summer encouraging summer outdoors vacationers to point their cars, boats and campers in the direction of Wisconsin's amazing Lakeshore and Northwoods. Our beautiful areas compare to just about any vacation spot in the U.S.

So, on behalf of the Heartland Communications Group family of Wisconsin radio broadcasters, let me extend a warm and hearty welcome to everyone reading this to come and see us. Drop your line in the water, gas up your camper or boat and head to hundreds (actually thousands) of lakes, tall pines, outstanding Supper Clubs, breath-taking golf courses and soothing beaches, and head North where the presence of God's beauty hits all degrees of the compass. But instead of a proverbial red carpet, we're offering you beautiful moonlit lakes, Master's-like golf courses, five-star Supper Clubs and indelible memories galore. We're waiting for you!

## April Top Sellers



### Sales Reps

Tammy Hollister.....	\$38,124
Diane Byington .....	\$28,924
Tyler Ostman .....	\$12,886
Shannon Anderson.....	\$9,183
Tim Zier .....	\$7,423



## BIRTHDAY "BROADCASTS"

### MAY

24<sup>th</sup> – Bruce Marcus – *Eagle River*

### JUNE

12<sup>th</sup> — Ashley Krusick – *Eagle River*

18<sup>th</sup> — Larry Hodgson – *Eagle River*

### JULY

31<sup>st</sup> – Tammy Hollister – *Ashland*



# Ashland



## 2024 Heartland Communications Home And Sport Show In Ashland Was A Hit

The 2024 Heartland Communications Home and Sport Show was held on March 22nd, 23rd and 24th at the Bay Area Civic Center in Ashland. The cash drawings were a huge success.

The 2024 Heartland Communications Home and Sport Show featured the Hourly Cash Drawings along with the Friday Night Whitefish Dinner provided by the Red Cliff Fish Company. Saturday's feature was a Philly Steak

Sandwich. Food was served by the Bay Area Civic Center. All proceeds from the meals were donated to the Bay Area Civic Center.

The isles were full and the vendors were happy.



John Warren  
Ashland  
General Manager



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[www.wjhf.com](http://www.wjhf.com)  
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## The Bay Area Battle of the Band Will Be Held At The Bay Area Civic Center In Ashland

The Bay Area Battle of the Bands has been consistently one of the biggest events to hit the Ashland area. Chequamegon Bay gets rockin' during the Bay Days Festival with thousands of people attending the event! The Bay Area Battle of the Bands will be held on Friday July 19th at the Bay Area Civic Center in Ashland.



Steve Stone  
Operations  
Manager and  
Program Director

# Eagle River



## The Northwoods Is Alive With Music & Fests

### PD NOTES...

By Mike Wolf,  
Corporate Program Director

It's time for the WRJO Street Dance. Starting in July, WRJO will once again be presenting, every Thursday night, great live music in Downtown Eagle River at the intersection of Wall and Main streets. Local

bands entertain the audience from 7pm to 9pm.

Lots of interaction goes on with dance contests and prize giveaways. The night also includes food sold by the local Boy Scout troop and a beer and beverage garden run by the local Veterans Resource Center. The entertainment is always free to attendees who come from all over.

### 2024 Beer Fest

This year's Beer Fest hosted by the Eagle River Chamber of Commerce and presented by WRJO and Coyote 93.7 will be held June 10th and 11th.

See **Beer Fest**, Page 5



Trish Keeley  
Eagle River  
General Sales  
Manager

[www.wrjo.com](http://www.wrjo.com)  
[www.mix96northwoods.com](http://www.mix96northwoods.com)

[www.coyote937.com](http://www.coyote937.com)

## Minocqua Farmers Market

Mix 96 is set for a big summer of outdoor fun at the Let's Minocqua Farmers Market. Come shop the Minocqua Farmer's Market Fridays from 8am to 1pm at 408 E Chicago Street in Minocqua. The market runs until October 11th and Mix 96 will be on hand for live broadcasts throughout the summer.

The Minocqua Farmers Market is a vibrant market where area farmers, producers, crafters, artisans, and non-profit groups come together to offer a variety of agricultural and related products directly to the public. The market connects the community with area food growers and producers and provides education and inspiration for growing and eating healthy, for a healthier lifestyle.



## Northwoodstock '24

Northwoodstock 2024 presented by WRJO at Bent's Camp in Land o' Lakes is one of the Northwoods premier music events. The first Northwoodstock kicked off in August of 2006 with a surprise appearance from Dewey Bunnell of America. The event quickly became a summertime staple for those on the Cisco Chain, and soon the town of Land O' Lakes. In recent years, bigger shows like Mark Farner's American Band (Formerly Grand Funk Railroad) solidified Northwoodstock as one of the most unique and intimate music events in the state. This year, Northwoodstock is taking things to a new level with TWO big headliners! Friday night July 26th, Wisconsin's own Bodeans will take the stage and on Saturday July 27th Starship featuring Mickey Thomas will blow things up.

This event is also a fundraiser with donations going to the LOL VFW Post and other Veterans' Charities. We strive to make Northwoodstock a positive event for not only those that attend, but our community as well.



Mike Wolf  
Corporate  
Program Director

**Heartland**, from Page 5

Many employees had found other employment or were on government assistance and were unavailable for various reasons. Many of those same problems continue as I write this article. I am proud to be a part of Heartland, a company unlike most broadcast companies, that NEVER laid off one employee during this time. And a company that provided greatly-reduced advertising costs to “non-essential” businesses to help them re-open and get back on their feet once again. Sadly, to say,

some of the “non-essential” businesses failed to re-open.

Next came THE INFLATION. And it truly came. Many financial pundits, advisors, and authorities have reported that it now costs a family of four approximately an additional \$8,300 to be able to purchase what they were able to purchase prior to the pandemic, or three or four years ago. Respected financial advisors say that in many categories of goods and/or services, prices have increased by as much as 20 to 30 percent. Gas cost per gallon has doubled. Four bags of groceries have now been

reduced to two bags of groceries. Used cars cost as much as new cars did three or four years ago. Restaurants seem to print a new menu every month. The government money printing presses continue to run inflating the U.S. dollar daily. Most of the additional printed U.S. money is now going overseas to fight war after war with the benefactors very questionable.

Just about every state in the Union, is now faced with the immense additional costs of supporting illegal aliens making it even more difficult for families, being taxed due to the supporting of these millions of new illegal non-citizens. This invasion continues today as the U.S. government ignores The United States Constitution, Article IV, Section 4, to the detriment of this country and most of the 330 million U.S. citizens.

Yet, the Heartland operational and marketing staffs have continued to meet operational and revenue goals. That continues even during an election year which promises to be an election year like none other, and I might add, election years usually

present business issues due to the inherent political uncertainty.

All broadcast licenses issued by the Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C., mandate that broadcast stations operate in “the public need and necessity.” At Heartland, we are doing just that...and more.

Life is much different today. There is no “new normal,” actually there is no “normal.” Today, there is only much turbulence and change affecting lifestyle, and for many in the middle class, that change is negative.

I am blessed and proud to be a part of Heartland Communications Group LLC as our people continue to perform their duties above and beyond the call. For us at Heartland, and I suspect for many others, turbulence and change is the order of the day and our decision is to meet that turbulence and change head-on. The decision was/is a simple one, we must and continue to serve our listeners, customers, and employees “in the public need and necessity!”

**Beer Fest**, from Page 4

The two-day event includes Premier Beer Night on Friday and the namesake event on Saturday.

Premier Beer Night features special brews from 15 participating breweries that will only be available that night. This VIP, red-carpet event includes tasty hors d'oeuvres and great live music. The main event

is Saturday and includes more than 25 breweries from the Midwest and beyond. This day includes great food and live musical entertainment.

Many of the breweries will be recognizable, from Eagle River's very own Tribute Brewing Co. to Leinenkugel's. But there are opportunities to try drinks from lesser-known brewers like Barrel 41 Brewing Co. and Stillmank Brewing Co.

**Spring**, from Page 5

This year, perhaps because of the lack of snow and winter weather, there seems to be more people traveling North, to re-connect with the beauty of our area. Since Memorial Day has come and gone, I am quite sure that the tourism traffic and vacationers will noticeably increase. The 45-minute wait at our many wonderful Supper Clubs becomes the norm.

There's lots to do in our Heartland marketing area. Calling all fishermen, golfers, boaters, tubers and water-skiers, hikers and campers and photographers.

When you come up, you'll be in in the Northwoods and Lakeshore and what many consider to be a vacationland paradise! Enjoy it with us; we hope to see you soon!

