“This is my Wisconsin Life.”
Hello Friends

“This is my Wisconsin Life.”

That's how each of the dozens of folks from around our state have introduced their stories on our new program, Wisconsin Life, before sharing their unique hobbies, passions and livelihoods.

As I watched each episode this year and got to know all of these fascinating people, I started to realize that this introduction was more than a clever tag line and even bigger than the TV program. “This is my Wisconsin Life” really describes everything Wisconsin Public Television does every day.

We tell the stories of every corner of our state – uncovering our history; exploring the present; and celebrating and fostering our future through moving documentaries, in-depth news and public affairs reports, inspiring arts programs, enlightening educational programs and engagement events across Wisconsin.

We couldn't do all of this without your generous support. We know that the programs you rely on each day – from PBS favorites and our beloved, and parent-trusted, kids programs to the local shows that reflect our state – are an essential part of your Wisconsin Life. In these pages, we'll look back at some of that work that you have supported in the past year and look forward to some of the new projects coming soon to WPT.

Your support allows us to make sure every person in the state both sees this work – and sees themselves – in this work. We all share this Wisconsin Life. And we all share Wisconsin Public Television.

Thank you for your support. As always, I hope you'll drop me a line at james.steinbach@wpt.org to tell me about your Wisconsin Life!

Sincerely,

James Steinbach
Director of Television
Wisconsin Public Television
Our history shapes our *Wisconsin Life* today. Wisconsin Public Television’s own history has been filled with sharing the stories of our state’s past and the people who called Wisconsin home.

This year we explored the culture of the state and celebrated our heritage through engaging documentaries. Corresponding education initiatives brought the lessons of our past from the television screen into our classrooms, where our state’s stories bring history alive in the minds of Wisconsin students.

Continuing our *Wisconsin Hometown Stories* project, Wisconsin Public Television turned for the first time to an entire county in *Wisconsin Hometown Stories: Juneau County*. Fulfilling a promise to uncover the stories of our state’s communities – large and small – the program brought viewers inside a resource-rich central Wisconsin county that has played a vital role in connecting our state across the decades. Hundreds of residents joined us in the spring to share their stories in a series of free screenings in the community. And, in Oshkosh, work has already begun on the next *Wisconsin Hometown Stories* documentary as residents this summer joined WPT producers to share their families’ photographs and memories for use in the 2015 film.
The first three installments in WPT’s **Tribal Histories** project premiered on television this year. Esteemed tribal elders from the Menominee, Oneida and Forest County Potawatomi nations shared the oral tradition of their communities, illustrating the rich histories of our state’s native people. By the conclusion of the multi-year series, each of Wisconsin’s 11 sovereign nations and the Brothertown Indian Nation, whose sovereign status is no longer recognized by the federal government, will be featured on WPT. Working together with our colleagues at the Educational Communication Board, WPT’s **Tribal Histories** programs will join the Wisconsin Media Lab’s **The Ways** project (which profiles the lives of native people across Wisconsin as they preserve their own cultures) in classrooms across the state to help ensure that the history of Wisconsin’s native populations is part of each student’s learning.

“For more than 30 years our family has supported WPT for one simple reason: WPT offers quality programming that we can’t find anywhere else. Even as we are flooded with more TV channels than ever, WPT is the only choice for consistently smart, original and entertaining programs that keep our family informed and connected to our community.”

– LOWELL & MARY PETERSON, APPLETON
Principal donors to Wisconsin Life
We know that our Wisconsin Life relies each day on a well-informed community across the state that is willing to listen to each other’s perspectives, concerns, goals and dreams. That is why Wisconsin Public Television remains devoted to encouraging lifelong learning in programs like University Place. And, it’s why we insist on covering the state’s issues in a civil, inclusive way that ensures a respectful dialogue between newsmakers, legislators, public officials and the constituents they serve.

That is never more important than in an election year. Using WisconsinVote.org as a hub, WPT’s news coverage focused on providing access to the candidates running for office across the state. Each week, Here and Now interviewed the people behind the headlines and followed the latest developments in races across Wisconsin. Debates produced by and broadcast on WPT, posed important questions to the candidates, while our ongoing Candidate Statements project offered unfettered perspectives from everyone running for state or federal office. When it came time for ballots to be cast, WisconsinVote.org was the best source for voting information, candidate profiles and all of the unbiased, breaking and in-depth news coverage from WPT and our partners at Wisconsin Public Radio.
We also understand that it isn’t our state’s political differences that make us who we are. As we flew over every corner of the state in the groundbreaking Wisconsin From the Air program, we saw a widely varied landscape that reflects the people of Wisconsin – a broad tapestry of diversity that we are all very proud to be a part of. It is the individual stories – and passions – in each of our lives that create the vibrant communities that come together to make us one.

That is where Wisconsin Life – the TV program and its companion WPR series – comes in. Each episode of the new show introduces us to unique people across Wisconsin, including a man who is thriving in a life off the grid, an urban farmer who is changing the way we grow and eat food, a counselor empowering teens through the art of photography and more than 100 more fascinating folks who are our neighbors, family and friends. Along the way, we see ourselves in each segment and are inspired to share our own stories with each other as we celebrate all of our Wisconsin Lives.

“WPT has meant so much to me because of the high-quality culture, entertainment, and information it consistently offers. I’ve been a supporter for almost 30 years because I want others in my community to share in the benefits of this unique service.”

– CYNTHIA STIEHL, EPHRAIM
Principal donor to Birch Creek Concerts
Fostering the imagination, creativity and minds of our youngest viewers has long been a cornerstone of Wisconsin Public Television’s mission through innovative, trusted and revered PBS Kids programs. That work bounds off the television screen and into our communities as WPT inspires kids and their families to Get Up and Go as they pursue a healthy, active Wisconsin Life filled with learning, growing and fun. This year, thousands of families joined us at Get Up and Go events across the state that brought together community groups, University of Wisconsin athletes and favorite PBS characters.

Just as we work each day on air and in classrooms across the state with the Wisconsin Media Lab to encourage Wisconsin children to grow and learn, WPT continues to share the inspirational talents of our youngest residents as we celebrate the future of our Wisconsin Life with the Young Performers Initiative.
This year, WPT traveled the state to bring a wide array of musical talent into the homes of all of our viewers. The Tommy Awards honored Wisconsin’s best high school musical performers and went backstage to find out what drives their artistic pursuits. The Wausau West Pop Concert took us inside an energetic high school talent show that puts students in charge of the full production. Wisconsin’s Young Artists Compete: The Final Forte continued to uncover the best individual musicians in the state and The State Honors Concerts presented the heights of musical accomplishment that come from working together in an ensemble.

As WPT works in partnership with the Wisconsin School Music Association and other educators throughout Wisconsin to create classroom curriculum from these young artist-focused TV productions, we continue to support the future of our Wisconsin Life.

“I support Wisconsin Public Television because I want an unbiased daily news show not focused on the latest sensational events. I want my grandchildren to be able to watch entertaining but educational programs without being bombarded by commercials for sugary cereals and expensive toys. Finally, I enjoy scientific and cultural programs not generally available on commercial TV.”

– RON ANDERSON, CABLE Principal donor to Wisconsin Tribal Histories
 Audience Services had 25,000 conversations with viewers and members in 2014.

“Asking me to pick my favorite program on WPT is like asking which of my children are my favorite!” — from a viewer

WPT has more than 537,000 viewers each week.

WPT engaged more than 60,000 people around the state for community screenings in 2014.
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A Passion For History

Since the 1980s, Irene Daniell Kress, better known as Billie, has worked with WPT to create inspiring and educational programs for families across the state. The mother of four grown children herself, she has passed along her legacy of philanthropy and family values. “She’s the world’s best mother,” said her son John, who gathers with her and his brother and sisters for lunch every Monday, a tradition they have continued for almost thirty years.

Billie has generously contributed to Wisconsin Vietnam War Stories, the historic LZ Lambeau project, and Wisconsin Hometown Stories: Green Bay, as well as History Keepers which portrayed Green Bay’s passion for history. Most recently, she contributed a principal gift to Wisconsin Public Television’s Tribal Histories project. The project includes 12 half-hour, self-told histories of Wisconsin’s sovereign nations and includes a curriculum for K-12 classrooms and teacher training across the state.

While her giving is usually done quietly, the impact of her philanthropy rings loudly in Green Bay and throughout Wisconsin. WPT is deeply grateful to Billie and her family for their investment through Wisconsin Public Television in the educational, cultural and civic life of Wisconsin.

Pictured at right are UWGB Student Clinton Isham, UWGB Professor J.P. Leary, Billie Kress and WPT Producer Mik Derks.
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Directors Circle continued
Heritage Society

To ensure a robust public broadcasting service for future generations, these thoughtful friends have designated a legacy gift to WPT in their wills or estate plans. For information about the Heritage Society, please contact our Planned Giving office at 608-263-2131.

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Robert and Margaret Swanson, Rochester
Elliott and Marion Sweet, Verona
We Remember

The following have honored WPT with gifts in their estates. With deep regard, we remember these friends for their special commitment to sustaining WPT for future generations.

Dr. Ann Bardeen-Henschel, Oconomowoc
A. Henry Bova, Cooksville
Mary Elizabeth Cason, Rockford, Ill.
James N. Engeseth, Mount Horeb
Ellen Dicke Fluck, Madison
Dr. Leo J. Groth, Madison
Louis A. Haas, Kaukauna
Mary V. Kahrs, Elkader, Iowa
Lawrence LaSage, Janesville
Ellen Dickie Fluck, Madison
Edith Jean Meerdink, Madison
Raphael R. Montello, Madison
Evaleen and Joseph Neufeld, De Pere
Shirley Seireg, Madison
Sharon L. Sites, Encinitas, Calif.
Nevin O. Taylor, Fall Creek
Margaret Welke, Madison
Rose Zerwick, Madison
Wesley Zulty, Madison

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Nevin O. Taylor, Fall Creek
Margaret Welke, Madison
Rose Zerwick, Madison
Wesley Zulty, Madison

Planted The Seed

Ellen Fluck created an extraordinary life for her children, recounts her son, Jim. Ellen attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she met her husband, Paul, in the registration line. Ellen and Paul built a home. They planted trees, put down roots and raised their children—Jim and Peg.

Jim recalls Wisconsin Public Television being a part of all their lives for as long as he can remember, from watching The Friendly Giant as a child to seeing his mother’s enjoyment of programs like PBS NewsHour. Jim remembers his mother watched WPT almost exclusively, trusting and appreciating those programs.

Following her husband’s death in 1961, Ellen went on to enjoy many more years with family and friends. The trees that she and Paul planted have grown to create a lovely green space in their community today.

Like those seeds planted long ago, Ellen had the foresight to make an investment in the future by including WPT in her will. Jim shares, “I was really proud of Mom. I felt her decision to give to Wisconsin Public Television was in keeping with the way she lived her life.”
Wisconsin Business Support

Leaders within the business community and at foundations are strong backers of the work WPT undertakes as evidenced by annual support. For information about sponsorship, please contact Kathleen Callaghan, Manager of Corporate and Community Development at kathleen.callaghan@wpt.org or 608-265-3851.

Wisconsin Business Support

AHMC Properties
Al Johnson's Swedish Restaurant and Butik
All Metal Stamping
Alliant Energy Corporation, Inc.
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ANiU Salon and Spa
Ardyth's Sew-N-Vac Shoppe
Associated Banc-Corp
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CastlePierce
Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund - Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin
Civic Symphony of Green Bay
Clover Needlecraft, Inc.
Coats and Clark
Colonial Brands
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Keleyny Top Soil, Inc
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Kolosso Toyota-Scion
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Madison Gas and Electric
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Mayo Clinic Health System
Mead Witter Foundation
Meriter-UnityPoint Health
Ministry Door County Medical Center
Ministry Health Care
Morgan's Shoes
Nancy's Notions
National Railroad Museum
Oakwood Lutheran Senior Ministries
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Qual Line Fence Corp.
Quilters Club of America
Quilter's Thread
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Sentry Insurance Foundation, Inc.
Sew ’n Sew
SewBatik
Shen Yun
Summers Christmas Tree Farm

Charitable Trusts

WPT is honored by the intended gifts through established charitable trusts from these friends.

Anonymous (Washburn)
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Ann Cameron, Madison
Florence Kurtzweil, Marshfield
Marion R. Lemke Trust, Green Bay
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Alice Jean Smith, Neenah

TDS
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University of Wisconsin - Madison Division of Continuing Studies
UW Band
UW Health
UW Platteville, Center for the Arts
Wartmann Chandler Appraisal Associates
Whole Foods Market
Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters
Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra
Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation
Wisconsin Master Gardener Association
Wisconsin Mathematics Council
Wisconsin Nursery and Landscape Association, Inc. (WNLA)
Wollersheim Winery
Friends of WPT Board

Friends of Wisconsin Public Television provides citizen support through diversified fundraising, community relations, volunteer networking and administrative services.

Major events sponsored by Friends include on-air fundraising campaigns, special events, the televised Auction and annual Garden and Quilt Expos.

Friends of WPT Board Members
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Ron Anderson, Cable
Nancy Lee Carter, Appleton
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Judith LeRoy, Dykesville
John McHugh, Sparta
Mary Mohs, Madison
Jeanette Roberts, Madison
Tom Schober, Green Bay

2014 Awards

Chicago/Midwest Emmy Awards
A Farm Winter with Jerry Apps, Best Historical Documentary, Winner
In a New Light segment of Wisconsin Life, Outstanding Achievement for Human Interest Programming
Ryan Ward, Individual Award for Outstanding Crafts Achievement: Photographer for his work on Wisconsin Life

Wisconsin Broadcasters Association
A Farm Winter with Jerry Apps, Best Series or Documentary, First place
Live at Overture: The Naughtons, Best Specialty Programming TV, Second place

Northwest Broadcast News Association
Affordable Care Act, Series, First Place
Here and Now #1219, Talk/Public Affairs, First Place

Addy Awards
A Farm Winter Promo, Promotional Announcement, Winner

Volunteer of the Year

Wisconsin Public Television is pleased to recognize Sandy Rupnow with the V. Thomas Metcalfe Volunteer of the Year Award for her support of quality public television through her years of volunteer service with Friends of WPT.

Wisconsin Public Television is a service of the Educational Communications Board and University of Wisconsin-Extension.

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