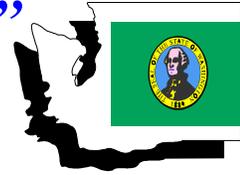




“...in the public interest...”

**WASHINGTON’S LOCAL BROADCASTERS
BRINGING VOTERS & CANDIDATES TOGETHER**



Our political institutions work remarkably well. They are designed to clang against each other. The noise is democracy at work - Michael Novak

*The most important political office is that of the private citizen
- Louis Brandeis*

It's not the hand that signs the laws that holds the destiny of America. It's the hand that casts the ballot - Harry S. Truman

*There is no excitement anywhere in the world, short of war, to match the excitement of the American presidential campaign
- Theodore White*

Democracy is the recurrent suspicion that more than half of the people are right more than half the time - E. B. White



Do not run a campaign that would embarrass your mother - Sen. Robert Byrd

*Texas has a lot of electrical votes
- Yogi Berra*

People often say that, in a democracy, decisions are made by a majority of the people. Of course, that is not true. Decisions are made by a majority of those who make themselves heard and who vote - a very different thing - Walter H. Judd

You campaign in poetry. You govern in prose - Mario Cuomo

Maybe a nation that consumes as much booze and dope as we do and has our kind of divorce statistics should pipe down about character issues. Either that or just go ahead and determine the presidency with three-legged races and pie-eating contests. It would make better TV - P. J. O'Rourke

An election is a moral horror, as bad as a battle except for the blood; a mud bath for every soul concerned in it - George Bernard Shaw

I'm tired of hearing it said that democracy doesn't work. Of course it doesn't work. We are supposed to work it - Alexander Woollcott



Washington State Association of Broadcasters



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local Media is Talking About Local Races. “If you turn on a television...you’re going to see political ads and the debates are getting covered.” [Stuart Rothenburg, publisher, The Rothenberg Political Report, as quoted by Jim Rutenberg in the October 24, 2002 *New York Times*]. Television and radio make it possible for all citizens to meet face to face with the key figures in national controversies and local community problems; to hear the arguments first-hand; and, to weigh the candidates and their views on the issues. Questions of foreign policy, the economy, law enforcement, the environment, war and peace are examined in formal debates, campaign speeches, news conferences, free time given to candidates in special station programming segments, all brought to the voters by local radio and television stations.

82 Years of Political Coverage. Washington radio and television stations have a long history of service in public affairs and political broadcasting. A Seattle station was one of the twenty-seven founders of the first national political broadcast network, which provided coverage of the Coolidge campaign of 1924! Local political broadcasts began even earlier.

Wire-to-Wire/Border-to-Border Coverage. The 2006 elections produced some of the most hotly contested, closest, most intriguing campaigns in memory. With one of the largest voter turnouts ever for a mid-term election, more than 64%, Washington voters were vigorously engaged from campaign kick-off to election night returns. Local radio and television stations serving Washington’s communities covered the election from the day the first candidates announced their campaigns through the Primary to the wee hours of General Election night.

Voters Say: “Job Well Done!” An overwhelming majority of American adults believe local broadcasters provided “the right amount” or “too much” time covering the 2006 elections, according to a nationwide poll of 1,007 Americans. The poll, commissioned by the National Association of Broadcasters and conducted by APCO Insight (margin of error plus or minus 3.1%) made several key findings:

- 50% of adults believe local broadcasters are providing “too much time” covering the elections, while 37% say local stations are providing “about the right amount of coverage;”
- Only 10% of Americans think broadcasters are providing “too little time” covering elections;
- Local broadcast coverage of elections, whether in the form of news reports or debates, was viewed by 30% of Americans as the “most helpful” factor in selecting a candidate;

“...in the public interest...”

- Only 6% of Americans listed paid radio and TV advertising as the “most helpful” factor;
- By an overwhelming margin – 70% to 23% - poll respondents oppose government mandated free airtime for political candidates; and, 67% of Americans believe that if political candidates were offered government mandated free airtime, they would use the time for more attack ads
- 69% of Americans think that political candidates would still raise as much money as they could and would spend as much money as they raised, even if they did not have to pay for political advertising. They believe that candidates would simply spend it on something else.

“Americans continue to strongly believe that local broadcasters are doing a good job covering elections. These findings are almost unchanged from a poll conducted two years ago and have remained remarkably consistent since we began asking these questions six years ago,” said Bill Dalbec, Senior Vice President, APCO Insight.

Wide Variety of Campaigns Covered. Washington broadcasters provided free time for dozens candidates running for elective offices ranging from United States Senator to Public Utility District Commissioner; from County Clerk to United States Representative; from County Prosecutor to State Senator; from State Representative to Superior Court Judge; from Court of Appeals Judge to State Supreme Court Justice; and, from statewide Initiatives and a Referendum to local bond levies. Candidates representing major parties, minor parties and heretofore-unknown parties appeared, as did partisans for and against statewide Initiatives and local ballot measures, alike.

In Their Own Words. Candidates took to the air talking directly to voters, in their own words, in debates, live interviews, newscast coverage, taped responses to citizen and reporter questions, and open line voter call-in programs. Many stations added links to their web site to further assist voters in gathering additional information about candidates and the election.

Free Time, Freely Given. All of the airtime for the appearances described in this report was provided to the candidates free of charge. Free time, freely given, a part of each station’s obligation to serve the public interest of its community. In every manner, way, shape and form, local broadcasters in Washington went above and beyond the call of duty during the 2006 election cycle, serving the interests of their communities, bringing voters and candidates together.

“...in the public interest...”

II. THE RESEARCH

When the 2006 election cycle began, WSAB asked selected stations to keep track of the free, on-air appearances by candidates for public office. In compiling this information, we asked the stations to exclude all paid advertising, either by the candidate’s campaign committee or independent expenditures that addressed a candidate or issues related to a candidate. Using this methodology, WSAB was able to focus on the appearances by the candidates in which they were able to direct information about their views on the issues directly to voters, or in which the voters were able to interact directly with the candidates, without the positioning and filtering of a paid advertising campaign.

III. BRINGING CANDIDATES AND VOTERS TOGETHER

What follows is a description of typical programs on radio and television stations throughout Washington that WSAB discovered in its sampling of stations’ efforts to serve the public interest in the critical area of civic education. Some samples are from large market TV and radio stations, other examples highlight the kinds of efforts that are found in small markets. Our compilation is by no means complete. Time and space limitations prevent an exhaustive accounting.

Debates & Community Forums

In a debate, not only can voters discover the positions of the candidates on issues that are important to them, but they get a glimpse of how each candidate reacts under pressure. Washington TV and radio stations broadcast debates between candidates for offices from United States Senator to County Commissioner.

KXLY-TV, Spokane. KXLY-TV in Spokane broadcast the debate originated in Spokane on October 12th between Senator Maria Cantwell and challenger Mike McGavick. In addition, the debate was streamed live on the KXLY-TV web site.

KING-TV, Seattle. On October 17th, KING-TV in Seattle hosted a debate in which incumbent United States Senator Maria Cantwell faced-off against challengers Mike McGavick and Bruce Guthrie to a statewide audience. The debate was broadcast on KING-TV’s sister station in Spokane, KREM-TV and on KNDO-TV, Yakima and KNDU-TV, Tri-Cities. Taking advantage of their new digital TV capability to broadcast more than one channel, KNDO-TV and KNDU-TV rebroadcast the debate a dozen times over their Digital Local News Channels in Yakima and Tri-Cities.

KOZI, Chelan. In upper North Central Washington, listeners rely on KOZI-AM/FM to connect them to their community. Whether it’s on-air emergency information during wildfires or bringing candidates into their listeners’ lives, it’s all part of serving the

“...in the public interest...”

public interest for KOZI. The station broadcast three debates live during the weeks preceding the General Election. The debate on October 17th featured candidates Nick Stemm and Randy Smith for Chelan County PUD, Position #2. A second debate followed featuring Gary Montague and Dennis Bolz, candidates for the Chelan County PUD, at large position. Then, on October 19th, KOZI broadcast a debate between Douglas County Commissioner candidates May Hunt and Rob Salter.

KNDO-TV, Yakima/KNDU-TV, Tri-Cities. In addition to broadcasting the U. S. Senatorial debate on October 17th, KNDO-TV and KNDU-TV broadcast debates between the candidates for the 4th Congressional District, incumbent Doc Hastings and challenger Richard Wright on October 30th. On October 3rd, KNDO-TV and KNDU-TV broadcast a debate between the candidates for the 5th Congressional District, incumbent Cathy McMorris and challenger Peter Goldmark. Both of these debates were also streamed live on the stations’ web sites.

KREM-TV, Spokane. KREM-TV in Spokane broadcast two hour-long debates, one between Peter Goldmark and incumbent Cathy McMorris in the 5th Congressional District and a second debate between U. S. Senate candidates Mike McGavick, Bruce Guthrie and incumbent Maria Cantwell. Sister station KSKN-TV broadcast debates between the candidates for Governor of Idaho and Idaho’s 1st Congressional District.

Mount Vernon Town Meetings Live on KAPS, Mount Vernon. KAPS and KBRC, Mount Vernon partnered with the League of Women Voters of Skagit County to host a two live, two and one-half hour broadcasts of their community’s series of candidate town forums. The events were broadcast live throughout the campaign season for on both KAPS and sister station KBRC. The stations’ News Departments provided the moderators for the forums, which featured candidates for Skagit County Auditor, Commissioner and District Court Judge in the first forum. The second forum featured candidates for Skagit County Prosecutor, Skagit County Sheriff and PUD Commissioner.

KAPP-TV, Yakima/KVEW-TV, Tri-Cities. KAPP-TV and KVEW-TV are sister stations of KXLY-TV in Spokane. KXLY provided a live feed of the October 12th debate between U. S. Senator Maria Cantwell and challenger Mike McGavick, so that the viewers in the Yakima Valley and the Columbia Basin could also see the debate.

KXLY-AM, Spokane. On October 18th, the candidates for Washington’s 5th Congressional District faced off in a debate that was broadcast live throughout Eastern Washington on KXLY-AM, Spokane.

KONP-AM, Port Angeles. KONP-AM owner Todd Ortloff is closely connected in his community and is a hands on, on-the-air, owner. He arranged for a series of four debates during the two weeks prior to the General Election. On October 18th he broadcast a

“...in the public interest...”

debate between the candidates for Clallam County Auditor; on October 23rd he broadcast a debate between the candidates for Clallam County Sheriff; on October 24th he broadcast a debate between the candidates for Clallam County PUD Commissioner; and on October 30th he hosted a debate between State Representative Jim Buck and his challenger Kevin Van De Wege.

KHQ-TV, Spokane. The Internet has changed everything. KHQ-TV, Spokane, served the viewers in the Inland Empire with streaming political programming on its web site. The station provided live web channel coverage of the Spokane County Clerk candidate Forum, a debate between candidates for the 5th Congressional District and a debate between the candidates for Spokane County Sheriff and Spokane County Prosecutor.

Special Candidate Access Programs

Many stations put together a package of opportunities for candidates to appear in their own words, unfiltered by advertising techniques, newscast time constraints, debate rules, or other limiting factors. Just the candidate, pure and simple. And free.

KGY, Olympia “Get to Know Your Candidates.” Every morning, every day of the week, KGY-AM morning host, Dick Pust, invites a guest to be the focus of a 15-minute interview in prime morning drive time. During campaign season, Dick interviews candidates for local, state and federal offices. In 2006, KGY-AM produced a lengthy series of programs called “Get to Know Your Candidates.” Each program featured one candidate, for offices ranging from Thurston County Auditor to State Senate, U. S. Representative and U. S. Senate. Each interview lasted approximately 10 minutes and many were rebroadcast more than once. In all, a total of 28 candidate interviews were broadcast during the election campaign.

KIRO-TV, Seattle “Campaign 2006: Candidates for Congress.” KIRO-TV, Seattle offered each congressional candidate in the state of Washington the opportunity to speak to voters in a taped, unedited, 5-minute segment. In this 90-minute special program, viewers had the opportunity to meet the candidates running in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th Congressional Districts. The individual candidate segments were also streamed on KIRO-TV’s Campaign 2006 web site special page.

KING-TV/KONG-TV/Northwest Cable News, Seattle “It’s Your Time.” Since 1996, Belo Corporation, owner of KING-TV, KONG-TV and Northwest Cable News in Seattle, has offered federal candidates free airtime through their program “It’s Your Time.” Each candidate was given one-minute to answer a question from the KING-TV journalists. Those one-minute segments were broadcast within the station’s newscasts daily beginning approximately three weeks prior to the election. In addition, each candidate was given four minutes in which he or she had the opportunity to respond to the question:

“...in the public interest...”

“Why should the voters cast their vote for you?” None of the responses is edited; each is broadcast just the way the candidate recorded it. The 4-minute segments were compiled into a full-length program that is broadcast twice on each station in the two weeks prior to the election. In addition, all of the segments were compiled into a full-length program that was broadcast on October 25th. Candidates for U. S. Senate, and the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th Congressional Districts participated.

“It’s Your Time, Spokane.” In Spokane, Belo Corporation’s KREM-TV also broadcast candidates’ statements as part of Belo’s *“It’s Your Time”* project. Candidates for the 5th Congressional District, United States Senate participated. In addition, because KREM 2’s coverage area includes all of Northern Idaho, *“It’s Your Time”* included the candidates in the Idaho Governor’s race and Idaho’s 1st Congressional District. In addition to broadcasting the individual segments, they were combined into a 40-minute program that was broadcast just prior to the general election.

“Straight Talk, Yakima.” Fisher Communications’ *“Straight Talk”* provided candidates with a 60-second segment, during which the candidate could address voters during local newscasts in the six weeks leading up to the election, and explain why citizens should vote for him or her. News watchers are voters. Fisher’s Yakima TV station, KIMA-TV provided free time to Central Washington candidates for Congress from the 4th District, as well as both major party candidates for U. S. Senate. KIMA-TV didn’t forget about the State Legislature and broadcast *“Straight Talk”* segments featuring candidates in the 13th, 14th and 15th Legislative District House and Senate races. *Straight Talk* segments were not limited to only congressional and legislative candidates. KIMA-TV’s series featured candidates for Kittitas County Treasurer, Sheriff and County Commissioner, as well as Yakima County Auditor and County Commissioner. These messages were broadcast during the station’s newscasts; provided free of charge and were produced at the station if the candidate needed that kind of assistance.

“Straight Talk, Tri-Cities.” Fisher Communications’ KEPR-TV in the Tri-Cities also provided candidates with time for *“Straight Talk.”* Candidates for the offices of Benton County Coroner; Franklin County Commissioner; State House of Representatives from the 16th District; plus, candidates for the State Supreme Court, United States Senate and the U. S. House of Representatives all participated in KEPR-TV’s *Straight Talk.*

KIRO 7 Insight: The Senate Race. KIRO-TV’s Senior Political Reporter hosted this 30-minute special to help viewers make an informed decision in the 2006 U. S. Senate election. Viewers were able to meet the leading candidates, explore crucial issues surrounding the statewide election and hear from the region’s top political journalists before casting their ballots.

“...in the public interest...”

KXLY-AM, Spokane. In the two weeks leading up to the election, KXLY-AM, Spokane, broadcast no fewer than ten Candidate Spotlight Interviews in the station’s Morning News, the most listened to time of the day for radio, especially a news radio station. Candidates that participated included both major party candidates for Washington’s 5th Congressional District, Spokane County Sheriff, 6th Legislative District State Senator and Spokane County Auditor. In addition, the station presented a Spotlight Interview regarding Initiative 933.

Holding the Candidates Accountable: “Ad Watch”

Some stations did in-depth analysis of candidates’ claims and promises. Many did this in the context of their news coverage of specific campaign appearances.

KING-TV, Seattle. News reporter Robert Mak produced and hosted that station’s “Ad Watch” designed to provide viewers with facts that could help them sort through the claims made in selected political ads aired prior to the election. For example, in September, KING-TV focused its Ad Watch on negative ads aimed at race for Supreme Court and attacking incumbent Justice Gerry Alexander. Later, prior to the General Election, KING-TV’s Ad Watch examined a spot in which incumbent U. S. Senator Maria Cantwell criticized the record of challenger Mike McGavick; and, KING-TV’s “Ad Watch” examined a controversial television ad targeting 8th District Congressman Dave Reichert.

KXLY-TV, Spokane. On October 27th KXLY-TV broke down the main messages of each candidate’s advertising campaign on a special program called “Political Ads.”

KCPQ-TV, Seattle. The race for Supreme Court Justice between incumbent Gerry Alexander and challenger John Groen drew heavy scrutiny from the media because of the intense nature of the advertising. KCPQ-TV reviewed those advertisements in a special segment of its newscast just prior to the Primary Election.

Small Market Radio Brings Campaigns Home

Radio stations in smaller communities were highly active in bringing candidates and issues into their listeners’ lives. More than any other business, small market radio stations are a basic part of the fabric of the community.

KLOG-AM/KUKN-FM, Longview/Kelso. Where the Columbia River turns west, KLOG-AM and sister station KIKN-FM made generous time available to a host of candidates to speak directly to the voters. Among the candidates who took advantage of KLOG/KIKN airtime were 3rd District Congressman Brian Baird and his opponent

“...in the public interest...”

Michael Messmore; and, state legislative candidates Dean Takko, Ed Orcutt, and Richard Curtis during the two months prior to the election.

KOZI-AM/FM, Chelan. One of the most hotly contested elections in Chelan County did not involve any candidates. It was the Lake Chelan Community Hospital Bond Levy. KOZI broadcast four different interviews, ranging from 10 to 15 minutes each that provided the spokespersons for the proponents and opponents of the measure ample time to plead their respective cases to the voters. KOZI provided airtime to spokespersons for the Chelan County Fire District #7's Levy Lid Lift proposition and the Okanogan County Fire Districts #6 and #16 for their Levy Lid Lift and Bond Levy.

Double Service: KAPM-AM, Vancouver. Pamplin Broadcasting's KPAM-AM, Vancouver literally straddles the divide between Oregon and Washington. Residents of Vancouver and Portland rely on their stations to provide coverage of both Southwest Washington issues and Oregon issues, as well. KPAM was able to arrange to provide the audio of the debate between the candidates for Governor of Oregon in that hotly contested race. The Victoria Taft Show, from 5 to 8 pm weekdays, became the area's link to the election by giving dozens of opportunities for candidates and ballot measure proponents and opponents time to talk about their issues. The program regularly held open phone lines for candidates and ballot measure advocates to air their views, giving more than three hours of airtime to this feature alone. The Victoria Taft Show also provided political parties with the opportunity to reach out to voters. Incumbent Washington 3rd District Congressman Brian Baird appeared on the program as well as his opponent, Michael Messmore and U. S. Senate Candidate Mike McGavick.

KXRO-AM, Aberdeen. Throughout the campaign, KXRO, Aberdeen kept its listeners informed and found ways to get candidates speaking to the voters directly over-the-air. The station broadcast interviews with candidates Jim Buck, Kevin Van De Wege, Al Carter and Rhys Davis, among others. The station also dedicated time during newscasts to provide in-depth interviews with U. S. Senate candidates Maria Cantwell and Mike McGavick, as well as the state legislative candidates.

“Town Forums” KELA, Centralia-Chehalis. Without local radio's dedication to bringing candidates and voters together, the only alternative for candidates to get their messages out in many communities is the Letters to the Editor column in the local newspaper. KELA broadcast two candidate forums sponsored by the local Chamber of Commerce and held on the Centralia Community College campus. KELA news reporter Bruce Hunting served as the master of ceremonies and moderator for both Forums. Each Forum lasted 90 minutes and included all of the candidates for Lewis County Commissioner and the two County Assessor candidates.

“...in the public interest...”

“The Todd Ortloff Show Interviews.” KONP-AM, Port Angeles, broadcast two special programs on October 5th and November 2nd that featured spokespersons for the various views on a \$13.8 Million aquatic center bond issue, as a part of the Todd Ortloff Show.

KGMI-AM, Bellingham. KGMI-AM’s local talk programming connects Whatcom County residents to their elected officials and office-seekers. The station provided many hours of political discourse during the 2006 campaign during its heavily listened to talk programming. Beginning in August, in preparation for the September Primary Election, KGMI began broadcasting interviews with judicial candidates, whose elections are normally decided at the Primary Election. As the General Election approached, KGMI broadcast a full 1-hour interview with the candidates for the 2nd Congressional District, incumbent Rep. Rick Larsen and challenger Doug Roulstone. One of the most talked-about races occurred in the 42nd Legislative District and KGMI ensured that its listeners had the opportunity to hear candidates Doug Ericksen and Jasper McSlarrow (House); Kelli Linville and Craig Mayberry (House); and, Dale Brandland and Jesse Salomon (Senate) during a series of 1-hour interviews for each race.

“On Line with Butch Bare,” KBSN, Moses Lake. From September until the November general election, KBSN’s twice weekly public affairs program *“On Line with Butch Bare”* was geared up almost entirely for political candidates and issues. The hour-long program featured host Butch Bare interviewing the candidates and also provided an opportunity for listeners to call-in and ask their own questions. Over the course of the campaign period, the program featured interviews with candidates for several County Commissioner positions, County Auditor, several PUD Commissioner positions, and County Clerk. The program also provided listeners with in-depth information about statewide ballot measures.

Newscasts

It would be hard to find a station that did not cover the candidates, their positions and campaigns in their newscasts. Even music intensive stations delivering country and western, oldies, rock, or the myriad other music forms available today, include campaign coverage in their regular newscasts. Here’s how some Washington broadcasters used their prime news vehicle, the regularly scheduled newscast, to inform voters.

Hours and Hours of News Coverage. KREM-TV, Spokane broadcast a minimum of one hour per week of political stories. The breadth of those stories included local, state and national races and issues. Some of the stories included in-studio guests during weekend newscasts and on the daily Noon newscast.

KNDO-TV/KNDU-TV, Yakima/Tri-Cities. In Yakima and Tri-Cities, KNDO-TV and KNDU-TV carried more than 120 stories featuring the principals in the U. S. Senate race

“...in the public interest...”

during the 90 days prior to the election. In addition, the stations broadcast in-depth interviews with candidates for Washington’s 4th and 5th Congressional Districts, as well as the Senatorial candidates. The stations did the same for the partisans on both sides of Initiatives 920, 933 and 937.

KCPQ-TV, Seattle, Newscast Interviews. KCPQ-TV in Seattle devoted segments in its newscasts to interviews of candidates and representatives of various viewpoints on ballot measures. In the days before the Primary Election, KCPQ-TV’s newscasts carried interviews with all of the candidates for State Supreme Court and the host of candidates for the 43rd Legislative District. As the General Election approached, the station broadcast interviews with proponents and opponents of Tacoma’s Initiative 1, Seattle’s Referendum 1, King County Proposition 2, Seattle’s Proposition 1, and statewide Initiatives 933 and 937. In the week prior to the General Election, the newscasts also included interviews with the two Supreme Court candidates who were on the ballot, the candidates for United States Senate (twice) and the 8th Congressional District.

“6 Questions.” KHQ-TV, Spokane features a regular segment in its newscasts in which it poses “6 Questions” to government, civic or business leaders in the community. During the election campaign, KHQ-TV produced five special “6 Questions” segments featuring the candidates for Washington’s 5th Congressional District, U. S. Senate, Spokane County Sheriff, Spokane County Prosecutor and Idaho Governor. Each segment of this special “6 Questions” feature ran about 4-minutes long and was broadcast during KHQ-TV’s 5 o’clock and 11 o’clock newscasts. In addition, all of the “6 Questions” segments were posted on KHQ-TV’s web site and on Comcast cable on demand.

KVEW-TV Candidate Interviews. During the election campaign in the Tri-Cities, KVEW-TV devoted many newscast segments to candidate interviews in the station’s 5 o’clock and 6:30 pm newscasts. Incumbent Congressman Doc Hastings appeared, as did his opponent Richard Wright. Both incumbent U. S. Senator Maria Cantwell and her challenger Mike McGavick also appeared.

Who’s Coming to Town? Often, stories in newscasts about upcoming local campaign visits by candidates might seem to be little more than promotional announcements for a candidate’s appearance. But those news stories, heralding the local appearance of a candidate, serve to notify listeners and viewers of yet another way in which they can inform themselves and make better election decisions.

Get Out the Vote

Washington radio and TV stations in virtually every community shoulder the responsibility of getting out the vote. Broadcasters have combined forces with local organizations, such as the League of Women Voters, to mount organized campaigns to

“...in the public interest...”

increase voter registration and turnout. Most stations frequently remind voters to be sure to vote in the days leading up to the election. These reminders are nearly constant during Election Day.

Saga Communications' Cascade Radio Group stations KGMI-AM/, KPUG-AM and KBAI-M in Bellingham worked with the Whatcom County Auditor to record and broadcast information about the new “mail-only” balloting system. The announcements were broadcast early in the election cycle when voters would be most in need of information about their mail ballots.

KIMA-TV, Yakima & KEPR-TV, Tri-Cities used their station identification announcements to encourage viewers to remember to vote. These announcements, required by the Federal Communications Commission, are broadcast every hour. The stations also participated in a project aimed at encouraging young voters to cast their ballot by broadcasting youth voting public service announcements.

Every time a station reports on projected voter turnout, listeners and viewers are reminded of the time remaining for the polls to be open and are urged to cast their ballot. KGY, Olympia's reminders were nearly constant on election day, announced more than 30 times during the 13 hours that the polls were open.

KXRO-AM, Aberdeen, took the opportunity to let the candidates urge their listeners to be sure to vote. During each of KXRO's many candidate interviews, the candidates were the ones promoting “Get Out the Vote.”

Legal Notice of State Ballot Measures

Nearly every commercial radio station in Washington participated in the 2006 Secretary of State Legal Notice Advertising of State Ballot Measures Program. In the clatter and din of candidate campaigns, some lesser-known, but vitally important issues might be overlooked, except for Washington broadcasters' commitment to serve the public interest through their participation in the Legal Notice Advertising of State Ballot Measures Program. Although the Secretary of State can afford to buy only a small amount of commercial ad time to publicize proposed statewide ballot measures (as required by the State Constitution and state statute), Washington radio stations are committed to running additional spots, at no charge, to increase awareness of these critical measures. These announcements, which are broadcast during the two weeks immediately preceding the November election, also remind citizens to review their Voters Pamphlet, to study it carefully and thoroughly before voting. Spanish-speaking voters are not forgotten; the spots are broadcast in both Spanish and English.

“...in the public interest...”

Expanding the Reach of Broadcasters' Efforts

Web Sites. The Internet has become the research engine for political issues in America. Broadcasters have embraced this new tool as another way to serve the public interest of their communities. Use of a station's web site expands the station's coverage of campaigns with a level of detail that reporters cannot include, and viewers do not want, in a regular newscast report. However, viewers can regularly log onto stations' web sites and follow links when they have more time to investigate these issues on their own, or when they want a specific piece of information about a candidate or a candidate's position on an issue.

Streaming. Stations all across Washington are streaming their signals on the Internet. Just click and listen. During the campaign season, coverage is now available in both audio and video files streaming live, and in some cases, archived for later review from many radio and TV stations in Washington. For example, KHQ-TV, Spokane, not only posted the station's "6 Questions" segments on its web site, but it streamed debates between candidates for Spokane County Clerk, Spokane County Sheriff, Spokane County Prosecutor and the 5th District congressional candidate debate.

Links. The Internet has also allowed stations to provide listeners and viewers with direct links to candidates' web sites, voter information, government sites regarding elections, voter registration and election returns. During their newscasts or other campaign related programming, radio and television stations in small communities and large markets throughout Washington encourage citizens avail themselves of this outstanding opportunity.

Voter Information.

KNDO-TV and KNDU-TV, Yakima/Tri-Cities, created an entire micro-web site on elections. Called "Decision 2006" it featured voter information, more than 50 individual news stories, video clips and information on every candidate in the stations' viewing area, which includes portions of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. KNDO-TV and KNDU-TV even offered all candidates the ability to attach their own issue papers or video at no cost. Unfortunately, no candidate accepted that offer.

KXRO-AM, Aberdeen, used its web site to inform listeners of exact interview times and included summaries of the interviews and news stories featuring local candidates.

KCPQ-TV, Seattle, provided links to the State Voters Guides for federal races, judicial races, legislative races and statewide ballot measures, in addition to links to King and Pierce County and Seattle local voters guides. The station also linked its web site to local voters guides in Snohomish, Kitsap, Thurston, Skagit and Whatcom Counties, all of which the station serves.

KIMA-TV, Yakima & KEPR-TV, Tri-Cities archived to their web site all of their "Straight Talk" segments in which candidates are provided free time to address the voters and promoted the site to their viewers. To ensure that everyone would have access

“...in the public interest...”

to the candidate’s statements, the station posted the “*Straight Talk*” segments in both video format and text version.

Coverage for Two States: Spokane Stations Do Double Duty. Spokane broadcasters provide the primary radio and television service, not only to their Spokane listeners and viewers, but to all of Northern Idaho, as well. Spokane stations routinely offer free airtime to candidates for local, state and federal offices, and ballot measure campaigns in both Washington and Idaho. This year, in addition to their coverage of Washington campaigns, Spokane broadcasters provided free airtime for candidates in the Idaho gubernatorial race and the race for Idaho’s 1st Congressional District seat.

The Networks. Local broadcasters bring the experience, insight and resources of the national broadcast network news organizations into our living rooms. No local station can match the on-going resources for coverage that the networks have. But by bringing network reporting to local audiences, hometown broadcasters are also delivering in yet another way on their commitment to serve the public interest.

Regional Cable News Channels. Belo Broadcasting’s Northwest Cable News Channel, carried throughout Washington, Idaho and Oregon, extends the reach of Belo’s Seattle and Spokane stations, and allows its news organization to present more in-depth coverage of campaign issues and events. Viewers throughout the region benefit from the resource sharing between Northwest Cable News and Belo’s free, over-the-air stations, KING-TV and KONG-TV, Seattle and KREM-TV and KSKN-TV, Spokane. In addition, the combination of these stations and Northwest Cable News can carry debates broadcast by the Belo TV stations, either live or on a tape delay basis, offering Northwest viewers additional opportunities to hear candidates’ views on issues. Cross-promotion of these repeat showings ensures that viewers do not miss out on an important campaign replay.

Lose A Little On Each Sale; Make It Up In Volume

Candidates, their committees and their supporters spent record amounts on paid advertising during the 2006 election cycle. There were more contested races, even for the Washington State Supreme Court. There were more candidates, as the Libertarians and the Green Party fielded candidates in nearly every Washington congressional race, and the U. S. Senate race. Several minor party candidates qualified for the November ballot in many races.

Despite the eye-popping number of dollars spent on political campaigns, if anybody got rich from political advertising, it certainly was not radio and television stations. Every candidate spot runs at a huge discount from the price that a normal commercial advertiser would pay for that same spot, called Lowest Unit Charge (LUC). Many stations are normally "sold out," i.e., they are able to sell all of the spot airtime they have available to

“...in the public interest...”

regular commercial advertisers at rates higher than the candidate rate. Every LUC candidate spot replaces a full rate spot, and costs the broadcaster the difference.

Sometimes It's Tough To Get Candidates On-the-Air

Any requirement that radio and television stations broadcast a minimum amount of “candidate-centered discourse” will carry with it an obligation for candidates, as well as broadcasters. Broadcasters can only provide as much exposure on their stations as candidates are willing to accept. If stations had to meet such a requirement, the refusal of a candidate to appear on a station’s newscast for an interview or participate in special free time programming such as “*It’s Your Time*,” or “*Straight Talk*” could place the station in jeopardy of violating the minimum requirement of “candidate-centered discourse.” Unfortunately, during the 2006 campaign, many candidates were unable to accept station invitations to participate in their “candidate-centered discourse” programming.

IV. ELECTIVE OFFICES/ISSUES PROVIDED FREE TIME

United States Senate (Washington)
Washington 1st Congressional District
Washington 2nd Congressional District
Washington 3rd Congressional District
Washington 4th Congressional District
Washington 5th Congressional District
Washington 6th Congressional District
Washington 7th Congressional District
Washington 8th Congressional District
Washington 9th Congressional District
Idaho 1st Congressional District
Washington State Supreme Court
Washington State Court of Appeals
Governor, Idaho
Governor, Oregon
Initiative 920
Initiative 933
Initiative 937
6th Legislative District State Senator
13th Legislative District State Representative
13th Legislative District State Senator
14th Legislative District State Representative
15th Legislative District State Representative
15th Legislative District State Senator
16th Legislative District State Representative

“...in the public interest...”

18th Legislative District State Representative
19th Legislative District State Representative
20th Legislative District State Senator
22nd Legislative District State Representative
24th Legislative District State Representative
35th Legislative District State Representative
42nd Legislative District State Representative
42nd Legislative District State Senator
43rd Legislative District State Representative
Benton County Coroner
Chelan County Auditor
Chelan County PUD Commissioner
Chelan County Fire District #7 Levy Lid Lift
Clallam County Auditor
Clallam County Sheriff
Clallam County PUD Commissioner
Douglas County Auditor
Douglas County Commissioner
Franklin County Commissioner
Grant County Commissioner
Grant County Auditor
Grant County Clerk
Grant County Public Utility District Commissioner
King County Proposition #1
Kittitas County Treasurer
Kittitas County Sheriff
Kittitas County Clerk
Kittitas County Commissioner
Lake Chelan Community Hospital District Bond Levy
Lewis County Assessor
Lewis County Commissioner
Okanogan County Fire District #6 Levy Lid Lift
Okanogan/Douglas County Fire District #15 Bond Levy
Port Angeles Aquatic Bond Issue
Skagit County Auditor
Skagit County Prosecutor
Skagit County Sheriff
Skagit County District Court Judge
Skagit County PUD Commissioner
Spokane County Auditor
Spokane County Prosecutor
Spokane County Sheriff

“...in the public interest...”

Tacoma Initiative #1
Tacoma Referendum #1
Thurston County Auditor
Thurston County Assessor
Thurston County Sheriff
Thurston County Coroner
Thurston County Treasurer
Thurston County Commissioner
Thurston County Superior Court Judge
Umatilla County Commissioner
Whatcom County Superior Court Judge
Yakima County Auditor
Yakima County Commissioner

V. CANDIDATES (Office Sought) PROVIDED FREE TIME

Robin Adair (United States Senator)
Gary Alexander (20th Legislative District State Representative)
Gerry Alexander (Supreme Court Justice)
Kimberly Allen (Grant County Clerk)
Edna Allphin (Kittitas County Treasurer)
Ted Anderson (Skagit County Commissioner)
Evelyn Arnold (Chelan County Auditor)
Brian Baird (3rd Congressional District Representative)
Ron Baker (Grant County Commissioner)
Mary Kay Becker (Washington Court of Appeals)
Bill Benedict (Clallam County Sheriff)
Brad Benson (6th Legislative District State Senator)
Steve Beren (7th Congressional District Representative)
Bob Bernd (Grant County PUD Commissioner)
Bill Bjork (Grant County Commissioner)
Brian Blake (19th Legislative District State Representative)
Dennis Bolz (Chelan County PUD Commissioner)
Ron Bonlender (14th Legislative District State Representative)
Lisa Bowen (13th Legislative District State Senator)
Jerry Brady (Governor, Idaho)
Dale Brandland (42nd Legislative District State Senator)
Terry Brewer (Grant County Commissioner)
Eric Briggs (Grant County Commissioner)
Jim Buck (24th Legislative District State Representative)
Darcy Burner (8th Congressional District Representative)
Jeanette Burrage (Supreme Court Justice)

“...in the public interest...”

Maria Cantwell (United States Senator)
Cindy Carter (Grant County Commissioner)
Bob Caruso (Spokane County Prosecutor)
Tom Chambers (Supreme Court Justice)
Bruce Chandler (15th Legislative District State Representative)
Glenn Clifford (Franklin County Commissioner)
Doug Cloud (6th Congressional District Representative)
Steven Cofchin (9th Congressional District Representative)
Dave Corrion (Skagit County Sheriff)
Pat Costello (Thurston County Assessor)
Tom Crowson (Thurston County Assessor)
Richard Curtis (18th Legislative District State Representative)
Gene Dana (Kittitas County Sheriff)
Vicky Dalton (Spokane County Auditor)
Richard DeBolt (20th Legislative District State Representative)
Norm Dicks (6th Congressional District Representative)
Sharon Dillon (Skagit County Commissioner)
Aaron Dixon (United States Senator)
Lynn Dodson (43rd Legislative District State Representative)
Thad Duvall (Chelan County Auditor)
Rand Elliott (Yakima County Commissioner)
Doug Erickson (42nd Legislative District State Representative)
Jonathan Fant (18th Legislative District State Representative)
James Flavell (Spokane County Sheriff)
Warren Gilbert (Skagit County District Court Judge)
Larry Givens (Umatilla County Commissioner)
Peter Goldmark (5th Congressional District Representative)
Larry Grant (1st Congressional District Representative, Idaho)
Richard Grimstead (Skagit County Sheriff)
John Groen (Supreme Court Justice)
Bruce Guthrie (United States Senator)
Terry Harper (Thurston County Coroner)
Doc Hastings (4th Congressional District Representative)
Norma Hickok-Brummett (Skagit County Auditor)
Sean Hillemann (Kittitas County Sheriff)
Don Hinman (14th Legislative District State Representative)
Anne Hirsch (Thurston County Superior Court Judge)
Jane’a Holmquist (13th Legislative District State Senator)
Jim Honeyford (15th Legislative District State Senator)
Dale Hubbard (Kittitas County Commissioner)
Keith Huff (19th Legislative District State Representative)
Mary Hunt (Douglas County Commissioner)

“...in the public interest...”

Robin Hunt (Thurston County Treasurer)
Sam Hunt (22nd Legislative District State Representative)
Jay Inslee (1st Congressional District Representative)
Larry Ishmael (1st Congressional District Representative)
Stephen Johnson (Washington State Supreme Court Justice)
Joyce Julsrud (Kittitas county Clerk)
Cindy Kelly (Clallam County PUD Commissioner)
Dick Kelly (43rd Legislative District State Representative)
Colleen Kenimond (Skagit County District Court Judge)
Kimberly Kennedy (Benton County Coroner)
Dan Kimball (Thurston County Sheriff)
Ozzie Knezovich (Spokane County Sheriff)
Kedith Kunes (Grant County Clerk)
Rick Larsen (2nd Congressional District Representative)
Earl Lee (Yakima County Commissioner)
Kate Taylor Lucas (35th Legislative District State Senator)
Kelli Linville (42nd Legislative District State Representative)
Chris Marr (6th Legislative District State Senator)
Joe Martin (Clallam County Sheriff)
Corky Mattingly (Yakima County Auditor)
Craig Mayberry (42nd Legislative District State Representative)
Mark McClain (Kittitas County Commissioner)
Julie McCord (18th Legislative District State Representative)
Jim McDermott (7th Congressional District Representative)
Mike McGavick (United States Senator)
Cathy McKeown (Clallam County Auditor)
Cathy McMorris (5th Congressional District Representative)
Jasper McSlarro (42nd Legislative District State Representative)
Michael Messmore (3rd Congressional District Representative)
Rick Miller (Franklin County Commissioner)
Amy Mills (Kittitas County Treasurer)
Gary Montague (Chelan County PUD Commissioner)
Shawn Myers (Thurston County Treasurer)
Randy Neatherlin (20th Legislative District State Representative)
Dan Newhouse (15th Legislative District State Representative)
Michael Newman (Skagit County PUD Commissioner)
Linnea Noreen (7th Congressional District Representative)
Kevin O’Sullivan (Thurston County Commissioner)
Ed Orcutt (18th Legislative District State Representative)
Butch Otter (Governor, Idaho)
Susan Owens (Washington State Supreme Court Justice)
Jamie Pederson (43rd Legislative District State Representative)

“...in the public interest...”

Glen Pinkham (15th Legislative District State Representative)
Jim Powers (Thurston County Superior Court Judge)
Stephanie Pure (43rd Legislative District State Representative)
Michael Rechner (20th Legislative District State Representative)
Bob Reese (Umatilla County Commissioner)
Dave Reichert (8th Congressional District Representative)
Robbie Robertson (Skagit County PUD Commissioner)
Patty Rosand (Clallam County Auditor)
Doug Roulstone (2nd Congressional District Representative)
Bill Sali (1st Congressional District Representative, Idaho)
Jesse Salomon (42nd Legislative District State Senator)
Rob Salter (Chelan County Commissioner)
Ron Saxton (Governor, Oregon)
Alan Schrom (Grant County Commissioner)
Tom Seguine (Skagit County Prosecutor)
Mark Shattuck (35th Legislative District State Senator)
Tim Sheldon (35th Legislative District State Senator)
Bill Sherman (43rd Legislative District State Representative)
Ted Simpson (Clallam County PUD Commissioner)
Mary Skinner (14th Legislative District State Representative)
Joe Sloan (Thurston County Superior Court Judge)
Adam Smith (9th Congressional District Representative)
Randy Smith (Chelan County PUD Commissioner)
Marty Starrett (Governor, Oregon)
Nick Stemm (Chelan County PUD Commissioner)
Jim Street (43rd Legislative District State Representative)
Dan Stout (Grant County Auditor)
Tim Sutinen (19th Legislative District State Representative)
Jeff Teichert (Whatcom County Superior Court Judge)
Howard Thronson (Thurston County Sheriff)
Steve Tucker (Spokane County Prosecutor)
Kevin Van De Wege (24th Legislative District State Representative)
Bill Varney (Grant County Auditor)
Dan Venable (Thurston County Commissioner)
Tomas Villanueva (15th Legislative District State Senator)
Dale Walker (Grant County PUD Commissioner)
Larry Walker (Grant county Commissioner)
Maureen Walsh (16th Legislative District State Representative)
Gary Warnock (Thurston County Coroner)
Rich Weyrich (Skagit County Commissioner)
Charles Williams (Thurston County Superior Court Judge)
Richard Wright (4th Congressional District Representative)

“...in the public interest...”

Kim Wyman (Thurston County Auditor)

William Yallup (15th Legislative District State Representative)

Kevin Young (16th Legislative District State Representative)

Jeanne Youngquist (Skagit County Auditor)