

Preface

On October 26, 2003, Robert Gwyn, after many long years of service to The Peoples Channel, resigned from the position as President and Chair of the Board of Directors. Mr. Gwyn's years of dedication have placed The Peoples Channel on a secure footing for continued development. Although he continues to offer valuable assistance as a Board Member, Brenda Risch has replaced Mr. Gwyn as President. Brenda, a recent graduate of the University of North Carolina with PhD in Comparative Literature, brings a new direction and vision to the Board of Directors.

I. Introduction

In 2003 The Peoples Channel experienced a substantial increase in the number of visitors to the station as well as continued expansion of programming and services. These are indicators of progress toward fulfilling the town's objectives and our own long-term vision for public access in the greater community.

Our goals for 2003 fell into five categories:

1. Board Development -- developing leadership within the Board and in the community; and creating an Advisory Board to provide support and advice on fundraising, community involvement, and long-range planning.

2. Identity Development and Community Involvement -- Public Service Announcements, Promotional Programs; increasing outreach to community organizations and individuals.

3. Financial Development -- expanding funding options.

4. Plans for Expansion -- pursuing performance agreements with other local franchise authorities; exploring options to provide access services for government and/or educational channels; and investigating a permanent location for the public access facility.

5. Fulfilling Performance Agreement -- upgrading editing and playback equipment; and completing other obligations.

As the following report will show, we have accomplished many of these goals and are making progress toward fulfilling the others.

II. Facilities and Services

A. Operations

1. Governance. The Peoples Channel is governed by a Board of Directors, operating under a mission statement of providing the means and promoting opportunities for area citizens to create local cable television programming by, for, and about our local community based on the principles of free speech, diversity of expression, and democratic participation. Board members are residents of Orange County or a neighboring county, who serve without compensation. Terms of office are three years and are staggered to assure continuity. Officers include President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer; the President serves as Chair of the Board and the Vice President as Vice Chair. As of December 31, 2003, there were 12 members of the Board; two positions were vacant. A list of current Board members and their terms and offices as of December 31, 2003, appears in Appendix A.

In 2003 The Peoples Channel made aggressive efforts towards board development. TPC has recruited two new board members, Robert Blech and Miguel Najera. Miguel Najera, our newest board member, is a PhD candidate at UNC in Mass Communications. As a Spanish-speaking native of Mexico City, he will assist the station in its continued outreach to the Latina/o community.

The Peoples Channel Board of Directors operates according to bylaws, which are available for inspection at The Peoples Channel. The Board of Directors meets the third Thursday of the month at The Peoples Channel. These meetings are announced and open to the public, and minutes are made public.

Policies governing training, use of facilities and equipment, technical requirements, content guidelines, scheduling, and discipline are posted at The Peoples Channel and copies are available to producers and visitors. The Peoples Channel also has a grievance process in place and a staff manual outlining personnel policies.

2. Operating Days and Hours. The Peoples Channel facilities are open Tuesday through Friday, 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. On Sundays the station is open from 12p.m. to 4p.m. for Animation classes. The facility also is open for appointments Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The facilities are closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Programming is cablecast 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays.

3. Staffing. Julius Hewitt remains as Station Manager, Robert Nipe, as Associate Programming Director, and Chad Dravk, as Associate Director of Animation and Graphic Design. The Peoples Channel also employs part-time staff to assist in teaching classes in studio production, digital editing, and sound design. TPC's part-time staff also includes six crew members responsible for the Board of Orange County Commissioners shoots. In 2003, formal job descriptions and evaluation processes were written and implemented for the main four staff positions (Manager, Assoc. Programming Director, Assoc. Director of Animation and Graphic Design, and BOCC Shoot Director).

4. Volunteers. While our staff is the heart of the station, TPC relies heavily on volunteers from the community. Our volunteers range in age from 12 to 83 and are racially diverse. Whether it be through operating a camera, audio mixing, directing or producing a Peoples Channel volunteer can receive continuous television production training at beginning and advanced levels. Just to mention a few, Emily Gordon, Cameron Parker, and Taylor Garbut have contributed significantly in 2003. During 2003, TPC volunteers helped staff the day-long taping of Apple Chill. Approximately twenty-five volunteers were asked to arrive as early as 5:30 a.m. in preparation for Apple Chill. These volunteers worked for more than twelve hours during this production. Other volunteers provide assist with office support and committee work. They also produce programming, cover events in the community, and work on the crews of local access productions. Their contributions are crucial to the success of the station.

The Peoples Channel has an ongoing need for volunteers, as we seek to expand services, explore performance agreements with neighboring communities, and strive to be more responsive to the communities we serve. We are especially proud of young volunteers who have reached a technical and competence level that exceed some of our adult volunteers. The

volunteers listed below have contributed countless hours to the quality and upkeep of programming at TPC.

Jesse Baskir	Dakota Marcoplos	Eva Metzger
Edie Allen	Bradford Johnson	Terry Bennett
Samuel Baskir	Juanell Bartlett	Anthony Dowling
Chris Allen	David Brown	Susan Walker
Charlie Karnes	Rob Blech	David Kaspar
Jerry Passmore	Brit Strickler	Bettye Jenkins
Cullen Jones	Christian Britt	Eduardo Tinoco
Mark Baer	Gloria Sanchez	Robert Blech
Matt Byrd	Quinton Woodson	Anita Hackney
Heather Barnes	Mark Cares	John Chapman
Beth Parente	Paul Joffrion	Mariangela Crowley
Lisa Rubarth	Brenda Risch	Ed Yonaitis
Liane Salgado	Maria Darlington	Peter Orr
Emily Gordon	Robert Gwyn	Kenny Smith
Taylor Garbut	Andrew Chin	Jeanette Kamil
Cameron Parker	Teddy Jacobs	Roger Brower
Cathy Owens	Vimala Rajendran	Roland Giduz
Barbara Brown	Ann Hampton	

B. Facilities and Training

1. Studio and Facilities. The Peoples Channel operates out of a 1600-square-foot facility located at 300A S. Elliott Road, which includes studio, control room, editing suites, office, meeting area, and rest rooms.

In previous years The Peoples Channel leased out its 600-square foot office space located in the front of the building. In 2003 we converted that space into a meeting space/classroom. The Peoples Channel is making ongoing effort to modernize. We have added a chroma key wall to our studio. This special backdrop allows producers to shoot sequences and add computer-generated or location-shot backgrounds or scenery to them, either live or in post-production. We have painted the entire facility and installed new carpeting, which was generously donated by the Hampton Inn Suites in Durham.

2. Equipment. The Peoples Channel facility is currently equipped with two linear editing systems, two non-linear editing systems one of which is checked-out for home usage, and a two-camera studio with full set-up including: cameras, monitors, tripods, switcher, audio equipment, lights, and control room access. Check-out equipment includes three High 8 cameras, four digital cameras, five tripods, two monopods, and support accessories (lights, microphones, cables). Playback equipment includes PowerPoint software which supports the Peoples Bulletin Board; an FM receiver on loan from WCPE to broadcast their signal while the Peoples Bulletin Board is airing; switching equipment with eight SVHS decks; a computer controlling the switching equipment; a fiber-optic encoder; and a transmitter. In 2003 The Peoples Channel

purchased a new character generator expanding the titling and live graphic capabilities of our studio. To facilitate communications between directors and camera operators, we purchased a headset intercom system. We also received a generous donation of three professional-grade SVHS decks from Fox 50 in Durham.

3. Policies. Equipment may be checked out by local residents who are certified as having received training or demonstrated proficiency in the use of that equipment. Checkout period is generally 24 hours or over the weekend; longer checkout periods may be negotiated with staff and are dependent on demand and availability. Certified users may reserve time in the editing suite, usually in 1 to 4 hour blocks. Studio space may be reserved for meetings, classes, or production shoots. Studio use for production is generally reserved in 3 to 6 hour blocks.

When check-out equipment or studio facilities are not reserved for public access use, The Peoples Channel offers limited options for rental, according to the following rate structure:

Equipment:	High 8 Kit	\$85/day
	DV Camera	\$135/day
	Light Kit	\$35/day
Studio:	without equipment	\$25/hour; \$400/day
	with equipment	\$135/hour; \$1100/day

These rates may be varied where staff deem appropriate.

4. Training, Equipment Check-out, and Facility Use. In 2003, TPC added animation courses to our course offerings. We believe our animation classes are the first in all of North Carolina—if not the entire country—to be offered by a public access station. Other new course offerings include classes in After Effects, Photoshop and Flash Web Design, and Advanced Pre-production Planning (focusing on storyboarding, shot composition, and editing planning). Training classes on the use of the studio, field equipment, editing equipment, and other skills are available for individuals or groups. TPC continues to offer half-day field production classes and editing classes, as well as 3-hour studio production classes. Training in specific or advanced skills is scheduled as needed. During 2003, 62 classes were offered and 198 people received training.

181 studio shoots were scheduled during 2003, with 710 production crew members participating and 110 trainees involved. There were 49 live call-in studio programs. Editing suites were used for 540 sessions and field equipment was checked out 426 times.

The facilities were used for 117 meetings. These included 12 Board meetings, 30 committee meetings, 75 staff meetings, and 30 unspecified meetings. There were 2836 visitors to The Peoples Channel in 2003. There were 197 Public Service Announcements (PSA's) posted on The Peoples Channel Bulletin Board in 2003.

C. Programming and Scheduling

1. Procedures. The staff determines the broadcast schedule for The Peoples Channel. The schedule is submitted to the Chapel Hill News and the Herald Sun every Thursday for the following week. The program schedule is also posted on The Peoples Channel website, posted at the facility and new for 2003 posted on The Peoples Channel bulletin board. Samples schedules from the Chapel Hill News and the bulletin board appear in Appendix C.

Programs are scheduled in 6-hour blocks that run in the evening (6 p.m. to midnight) and are normally repeated the following morning (6 a.m. to noon) and afternoon (noon to 6 p.m.). The Saturday evening schedule runs through Tuesday afternoon, since the facility is closed on Sunday and Monday and staff is not available to program the playback equipment. Currently, the Peoples Bulletin Board runs between midnight and 6 a.m. and between programs where appropriate. Programs that are inappropriate for younger audiences are scheduled to run only after midnight.

Priority is given to locally produced programming from the franchise area. This includes programs produced using The Peoples Channel facilities as well as other locally produced or compiled programs. Second priority goes to non-local programs submitted by local residents. Whenever time slots are not otherwise filled, they carry reruns of programs from TPC's archive.

2. Programming Sources. During 2003, The Peoples Channel cablecast 364 hours of original locally produced programming for an average of 7 hours of new local programming each week. Chapel Hill Bandstand, a show produced by Chris Allen, airs Friday nights at 8. *Chapel Hill Bandstand* is Chris Allen's answer to American Bandstand, with a live DJ and dancers dancing to top 40 recordings. *Chapel Hill Bandstand* has begun an association with a local mentoring program. This association will give area children in need of mentoring an excellent opportunity to bond with other youth and adults as they learn how a TV show is produced. The programming produced locally for each month appears in Appendix D.

During (2002) 2003, The Peoples Channel cablecast (39) 45 locally produced series (consisting of two or more episodes) and (5) 26 locally produced one-time programs; a list of these programs appears in Appendix E. (18) 10 non-local series and (7) 12 non-local one-time programs were cablecast; a list of these programs appears in Appendix F. As these figures demonstrate, we have continued to increase amount of locally produced programming, as well as increasing the number of original shows aired on TPC. The Peoples Channel also cablecast eight movies with extra audio track depicting visuals for the visually impaired.

This year, The Peoples Channel introduced a program that airs completely in Spanish, *Entrada Libre*. Producer Eduardo Tinoco works diligently to produce one of the highest quality airing on TPC. Another locally produced program, *Daily Living*, routinely airs live. Airing Saturday morning at 11:00 am, *Daily Living* fields live phone calls on current hot topics, giving advice on adding spirituality to daily life.

The Peoples Channel continues to tape and cablecast meetings of the Board of Orange County Commissioners (BOCC) (see Section V.A).

Last fall as a public service to the community, TPC cablecast candidate forums for the Town of Chapel Hill, the League of Women Voters, and The Northside Forum. The Peoples also runs water conservation PSA's for OWASA.

III. Community Outreach and Promotions

A. Information on Channel and Services

Information about The Peoples Channel and its services is publicized in a variety of ways:

Internet -- When Mindspring became Earthlink, they dropped our complimentary account which provided TPC with email services, Internet access, Basic Web, and Enhanced Web options at no cost. The monetary value of these services was \$1067.40 per year. A volunteer offered us free web space and email routing at no charge and The Peoples Channel pays Earthlink \$22.95 per month for internet access. The Peoples Channel web address is www.thepeopleschannel.org. Our webpage is designed and maintained by staff. It lists our mission statement, hours of operation, phone and fax numbers, email address for messages, membership of the Board of Directors, minutes of the most recent Board meeting, a schedule of classes and training opportunities, the current program schedule, and a list of locally produced programs currently airing with pointers to individual websites for those programs that have them. TPC also publicizes special projects on our website, such as our first public access video awards (2003 Burke Awards).

On cable -- Information and announcements about activities, training classes, and program schedules are posted on The Peoples Bulletin Board.

On site -- The current program schedule, list of Board of Directors, minutes from the most recent Board meeting, policies and procedures, and other information are posted at The Peoples Channel. Copies of past Board minutes, annual reports, Bylaws, and other information are available for public inspection.

Publicity -- The Peoples Channel issues press releases to local media about events and services, including our program and taping schedule. Articles discussing The Peoples Channel and its producers and programs have appeared this year in the *Chapel Hill News*, *The Daily Tarheel*, and *The Independent*. Several articles published in 2003 and an article that appeared in early January 2004 are reproduced in Appendix G.

Formed in 1999, CHIPS provides a forum for local public access producers to share information, help each other with program planning and production, and promote quality and diversity in public access programming. Although it is an independent organization, CHIPS also provides two-way communications between The Peoples Channel staff and Board and local producers for sharing information on equipment, procedures and production needs, and feedback, both positive and negative. Members of CHIPS frequently help coordinate crews for local access productions and provide technical assistance.

B. Outreach Activities and Community Responsiveness

The Peoples Channel has placed its course listings in the Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Department in an effort to raise community awareness to the station. The Peoples Channel is also currently seeking to partner with the PTA Thrift Shop in the hopes of producing programming related to its inventory. Julius Hewitt, our station manager, has built connections with local 4-H Clubs, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scout Troops, and area Homeschooling Associations to increase access for Chapel Hill and Orange County youth. Tabling during local events such as Apple Chill has also helped to publicize Channel 8.

The Peoples Channel has organized its first annual public access video awards titled "The Burke Awards," in an effort to reach videographers in the wider viewing audience. Named after the deceased station manager Matt Burke, The Burke Awards provide an opportunity to recognize the efforts of local producers and to celebrate the intensive long-term contributions of

outstanding citizens such as Eva Metzger, Robert Gwyn, and Roland Giduz. These three activists for community media will receive Lifetime Achievement Awards during the February 8th ceremony. The Peoples Channel garnered a total of 41 entries for the 2003 Burke Awards. This is considered above average for a first time video festival.

Public Affairs programming – The continued interest in the events after 9/11 has sparked interest in programming related to 9/11. In response, The Peoples Channel has worked closely with the North Carolina chapter of Indymedia. Chapel Hill is a unique community with many talents and resources. More than any other city in North Carolina, Chapel Hill citizens discuss and act on their concerns. The concerns are wide ranging, from local issues, state and national affairs and world problems. The Peoples Channel is in a unique position to broadcast a wide range of information from local, well-informed, articulate individuals and opinions from area citizens. TPC began running programming on the war in Afghanistan. The Peoples Channel in conjunction North Carolina Indymedia ran live programs for two weeks on issues related to the war.

The Peoples Channel also engages in informal activities and outreach efforts, including information booths at the Chapel Hill street fairs.

IV. Funding and Development

A. Funding and Other Contributions.

Total income for The Peoples Channel in 2003 equaled \$140,229.00. This can be broken down into \$108,992.00 in passthrough fees, \$ 15,300.00 in fees from the Orange County Commissioners, and \$15,937.00 in donations and miscellaneous income. The Peoples Channel also received in-kind donations of goods and services. Our total expenses for 2003 were \$156,466.00.

For more details regarding our income and expenses please see our audit for 2003.

B. Development Activities

The Peoples Channel is making progress establishing community relationships with local governments, public interest groups, and non-profits. In 2003, the Board founded a Development Committee and research began to find appropriate grant opportunities both on a local and national level. Thus far, The Peoples Channel has submitted a grant application to the Chapel Hill Service League (CHSL) and expects a decision in early 2004. Several more grant applications are planned and in progress for 2004.

V. Contracts/Performance Agreements with Other Communities

A. Orange County Commissioners.

The Peoples Channel began negotiations with the Orange County Commissioners in 1999 to tape and cablecast Commissioners' meetings. Last summer The Peoples Channel signed our second one-year (7/1/01-6/30/02) contract for taping and cablecasting of Commissioners meeting. The Commissioners also have expressed interest in having other meetings covered as well.

B. Presentations to Other Franchise Authorities.

Throughout 2003 The Peoples Channel maintained ongoing contacts with surrounding communities that are involved in franchise negotiations as we pursue additional partners in public access.

The Peoples Channel has representatives consistently attending the Orange County Cable Advisory Committee meetings. Several TPC staff hold sub-committee appointments for the OCCAC.

VI. Future Directions

A. Equipment

The Peoples Channel has developed a schedule for long-term replacement of equipment. To date, despite heavy use, TPC has only needed to replace one camera. However, all equipment reaches the end of its useful life and must be replaced. This has been anticipated and replacement is scheduled. TPC does not anticipate immediate difficulties with the conversion to digital.

TPC is investigating new Systems for recording video and audio on the computer. This will make it easier to record and cablecast shorter programming features, such as information for non-profits, program promotion, public service announcements, etc.

B. Community Outreach

The Burke Awards are a great outreach tool that allows unknown videographers to expose their work to a wider audience. As stated earlier, The Peoples Channel brought together approximately 25 volunteers to assist in its production of Apple Chill. These volunteers, along with TPC staff, donated their time and effort to assist the station and the town.

C. Proposed Performance Agreements with Other Franchising Authorities

The Peoples Channel, Inc., a non-profit corporation, is pursuing Performance Agreements with Orange County, Carrboro, Hillsborough and Chatham County. These governments are currently in negotiation with Time-Warner for new cable franchises. The Peoples Channel, Inc is proposing to operate public access for these areas either through channel 8 or other channels to be allocated by Time-Warner. We feel there is great value in the economy of scale. Also there is much value in sharing information throughout the two counties. The franchising system tends to “ghettoize” the area. With area wide public access Television, barriers can be crossed. In addition with the increase in the number of channels it would be possible to direct unique programming to specific areas. The Peoples Channel will request Performance Agreements that would include the same type of pass through payment. With increased revenue it would be possible for the Peoples Channel to substantially increase service to the communities.

The Peoples Channel Board of Directors – 2003

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