

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



## BUSIEST SUMMER EVER IN HEARTLAND MARKETS

From the shores of 'Gitche Gumee' to the 1,600 lakes in Vilas County...

The wheels haven't come off yet, but they may be close to leaving the axle...so to speak.

The award-winning eight Heartland stations serving approximately 340 thousand people in Wisconsin's Northwoods were a little more than just "crazy busy."

There were parades, live country music shows, back-to-school backpack giveaways and – literally – there was a live activity going on EVERY WEEKEND somewhere in the Heartland markets spanning from "way up there" in Michigan's Upper Peninsula to pretty close to Wausau — you name it. Heartland CEO Jim Coursolle said, "It was almost



*Trish Keeley and Deb Hunt with 93.7FM Coyote at Blackhawk concert in Eagle River.*



*Rick St. Nick on live remote with Z93FM WBSZ.*

perpetual motion." And that it was.

In Ashland serving Ironwood, MI, Bayfield, WI, Washburn, WI and a dozen other small Wisconsin,

Michigan and Minnesota towns, there were tons of events and parades in Ashland and Iron River with Steve Stone and Q-Ball riding and waving their wrists off.

See **Summer**, Page 5

### In This Issue

Page 2 . . .  
Pres. Release

Page 3 . . .  
Ashland News

Page 4 . . .  
Eagle River News

Jim Coursolle, CRMC  
President and CEO

Wendi Ell, newsletter  
designer and publisher

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



## TRISH KEELEY APPOINTED SALES MANAGER OF FOUR HEARTLAND EAGLE RIVER STATIONS

"I have loved this job since day one," Trish Keeley said in a recent job interview. According to Heartland President and CEO, "It is perfect that Trish should be appointed to General Sales Manager in Eagle River." Trish begins her new position following long-time broadcast legend and Heartland manager Jeff Wagner's retirement, and a short



**Trish Keeley**  
Eagle River  
General Sales  
Manager

stay by Stacey Lazarus.

Trish has been with Heartland as a sales representative for 18 years. Prior to that she managed a bar/restaurant owned by her mother. Before moving to Eagle River in 1996, Trish also acted for 14 years as a caregiver for her sister's husband who was brain injured and disabled from a motorcycle accident thus allowing Trish's sister to have a job to support her family.

Trish was hired by Jeff Wagner shortly after moving to Eagle River. Trish is quoted as saying, "I enjoy the great team of people we have at our stations. I like the diversity that selling brings — no two days

are ever the same."

Trish is married to husband Todd who is seen and helps at many Heartland station events. Trish and Todd have two children daughter Natasha and son Jesse. They also have two grandchildren Harper age 9 and Ivan age 5 who both bring them incredible joy.

"Trish is going to do very well as she knows the market and her sales team. They have worked together for years, and that experience will only result in the sales success for our Eagle River stations," said Jim Coursolle. "We're excited to have Trish at the helm of our sales department."

# Pres. Release

I am proud. Yes, proud of the entire Heartland staffs in both of our Northern Wisconsin Heartland markets.

Many months ago, all Heartland employees got together in a teleconference staff meeting to discuss the immediate and massive loss of business caused by the pandemic shut-down of 95% of all businesses in our markets. No Zoom for us, of course our staff meeting was audio, because we're RADIO and proud of it. As I look back, it was surreal... it is still hard to believe.



Jim Coursolle  
President, CEO

In that meeting, I told both market staffs that in my entire radio career now spanning 60 years, my wife Diane and I had NEVER laid off anyone – not one single employee – due to economic reasons. Of course, in my 60 years, about 45 of them in management and ownership, either I or my management team has had to terminate employees for various reasons. But not one of those rea-

sons were due to economic turndowns or setbacks. I told our staff that at 78 years old, I was not about to begin to change that methodology unless – the significant UNLESS – I was forced to because there was no money to pay them. I remember being quite clear with everyone that it would be up to THEM, our professional staff members, to do what it took to make sure that not one member of our Heartland staff would have to go home worrying about where their next paycheck and meal was going to come from. I repeated that – I counted the times – five times to make sure that I got my point across.

We've all heard the "We're all in this together" pandemic announcements on the air. Some companies believed that, some did not. In radio broadcasting, I have heard that much larger and more financially successful radio companies laid people off. I wondered what impression that made on their remaining employees. Way more than dozens of times, during this very stressful time, I laid awake at night thinking about payrolls, our good people and their kids, etc. I knew it was my job to challenge our people to perform at a level way beyond normal and even

way beyond what they ever thought they could do. I knew, I had to get the message across, but that I could NOT motivate anyone to work at mach-speed levels; all of us would have to discipline ourselves to crank it up two, three or four notches. If we were going to succeed and make sure everyone got paid, we were going to have to be almost flawless.

The implausible part of this demonstration of SELF MOTIVATION was heartwarming for me to watch. For these months – and it continues – the Heartland gang knew what had to be done and they did it. They raised revenue levels despite COVID and kept them increasing each month. With their efforts and with the assistance of the SBA, Heartland was able to keep every employee employed. No cuts in salaries were made. No hours were reduced. Sales commissions went down because advertisers either cancelled or cut back on advertising. And I might add, those advertisers who didn't cut back or cancel have now come out on the other end of this pandemic stronger and more viable. That was also rewarding to watch.

See **Motivation**, Page 5

## July Top Sellers



### Sales Reps

Diane Byington .....	\$24,980
Tammy Hollister.....	\$24,945
Trish Keeley .....	\$24,089
Scott Larson .....	\$15,210
Shannon Anderson .....	\$12,111



## BIRTHDAY "BROADCASTS"

### AUGUST

4<sup>th</sup> – Jim Franklin – *Eagle River*

27<sup>th</sup> – Jim Coursolle – *Corporate*

### SEPTEMBER

1<sup>st</sup> – Tyler Ostman – *Ashland*

14<sup>th</sup> – Wendi Ell – *Corporate*

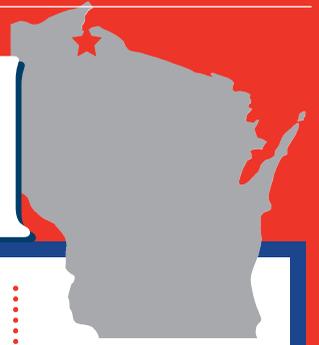
### OCTOBER

3<sup>rd</sup> – Marion Warren – *Ashland*

25<sup>th</sup> – Mike "Wolf" Ell – *Eagle River*



# Ashland



## Dishing Up Programming

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

A considerable amount of programming reaches the listener because of satellites. In order to enhance the air quality and stability of the Ashland Cluster, construction was undertaken to set new concrete pedestals and wiring for the two dishes that bring programming to all of the Ashland Stations. The



new, more stable pedestals are immune to the frost heave and new cable and hardware were also added to the project to ensure the highest possible signal quality.

With the help of a local contractor and advertiser the dishes are now in place and our satellite programming is stable for years to come.



John Warren  
Ashland  
General Manager

[www.wbszfm.com](http://www.wbszfm.com)  
[www.wnxfm.com](http://www.wnxfm.com)  
[www.wjhf.com](http://www.wjhf.com)  
[www.watwbaycountry.com](http://www.watwbaycountry.com)



has been a huge success for the summer. Our event at the Stage Coach Bar and Grill included television celebrity, Brian Van Flandern, from Bar Rescue and Mixologist.

**Summer Spin & Win**  
Covid-19 effectively stopped the Ashland group of radio stations from summer activity in 2020. For 2021, we ramped up the opportunity to meet listeners face-to-face and reward them for listening to Heartland Radio Stations with prizes during our "Summer Spin & Win" events. A combination of remote broadcasts, station and social media promotion and our prize wheel has brought listeners out to area businesses. Prizes have ranged from \$100 cash, to T-Shirts, hoodies and more. Getting people back into area businesses and getting Heartland Ashland Radio Stations back into the public eye



**NASCAR Comes to Ashland**  
Summer always means auto races at the Northwoods Premier race-track in Ashland. ABC Raceway was excited to bring Xfinity NASCAR Driver, Noah Grayson on July 24th.

See **Ashland**, Page 5

**Sales are Rocking in the Ashland Market**  
After all is said and done, 1st and 2nd quarter of 2021 the Ashland Sales team consisting of Tammy Hollister, Tyler Ostman, Shannon Anderson and yours truly John Warren have obtained 106% of the 1st and 2nd quarter sales goals. The third quarter ended at 104.4% of goal. The month of August is off to a great start as we went into it at 99.8% of goal. As of today, the Ashland sales team is at 107.7% of it's sales goal. A huge thank you to Marion Warren for keeping all the orders and copy changes straight and on-air, Rick St. Nick, Q Ball and Steve Stone for producing all those commercials and providing great programming to help keep the wheels turning.

**Sports on WATW and WNXR Continue to Sell**  
Green Bay Packer avails were sold out this year in record breaking time. On June 23rd the Ashland sales team had officially sold all the avails right thru Super Bowl LVI

See **Sports**, Page 5



Steve Stone  
Operations  
Manager and  
Program Director

# Eagle River



## PD NOTES...

By Mike Wolf,  
Corporate Program Director

### June In the Northwoods

It was a “normal” summer in the Northwoods. That meant WRJO was on the road and burning through liquid dinosaurs in a Ford Explorer like water through a garden hose. Between the Summer of Winning live broadcasts, standard remotes, and the chambers of commerce in several different towns doubling-up on events, it had to be a record number of hours shaking hands, kissing babies, and providing our Classic Hits soundtrack.

Don't think that because Labor Day the traditional end-of-summer is upon us that the festivities die down. We are looking at one of the busiest fall seasons out windshield of said Explorer. On tap we have scheduled Beef-A-Rama, Cranberry Fest, Winter Park Drive-in Movie Night, not to mention the start of the World Famous WRJO Pizza Tour.

So we roll on... Welcome back to normal, plus!

### Backpacks A Plenty

WRJO, Coyote 93.7 and Mix 96 once again teamed up with dozens of Northwoods businesses to give away backpacks to kids headed back to school. For two weeks we had three simultaneous contests going on, on three different stations, which meant a total of 130 smiling faces left the Heartland Eagle River studios with brightly colored schoolbook containment units.

All the backpacks were adorned with the logo of their favorite Northwoods radio station. We partner with a local business who uses heat transfer to add our logos to each backpack.

This is such a fun and reward-



*Three stations at Heartland Communications gives away 130 backpacks and school supplies for a fifth year.*

ing contest we look forward to every year.



### Coyote High/Low

A successful launch of the latest Coyote contest took place in June. Coyote 93.7FM has rolled out High/Low Cash giving listeners a chance to win cash.

Listeners are flocking to the phones to play Monday thru Friday with Jim Franklin. Franklin said, “The phones light up like a Christmas tree every morning with the hopes of winning large jackpots of cash.”

With the rollout of any new contest, you wonder what the response will be, and High/Low Cash has not disappointed. Listeners must continuously listen to keep up with the jackpot amount guessed by prior listeners, sending time spent listening or TSL sky high.

We have had a few winners so far, and the excitement is off the



*Bruce Marcus, news director, delivering a live morning newscast.*

charts, and is causing quite a stir on Coyote 93.7.

### Summer of 2021 Live on Location

WRJO, Coyote 93.7 and Mix 96 are set for what looks like a remarkably busy summer of live broadcasts and appearances.

After meeting with several of our local area chambers of commerce and businesses in the Northwoods, it looks like our stations dance cards are filling up quickly.

See **Eagle River**, 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)



Mike Wolf  
Corporate  
Program Director



Jim Franklin  
Program Director



**Ashland**, from Page 3

Tammy Hollister was there broadcasting live as the track offered free admission for an annual fundraising event.

### WBA Awards

Earlier this year the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association held its annual awards ceremony. Heartland Ashland Stations had not participated in the past, but decided to throw it's hat in the ring for the 2020 awards. Two of our creative commercials were recognized by the judges. It was an honor to have been selected and we fully expect to bring home some first-place awards in the coming year.

### Fall Sports Are Near

Bay County WATW AM 1400 and FM 101.3 will be the dominant sports choice for listeners in the Northwoods this Fall. Wisconsin Badger Football, Green Bay Packers and Ashland Oredockers High School Football will be added to the end of the 2021 Milwaukee Brewers baseball season. The combination of classic country music and featuring popular sports programming is proving to be a winning combination for WATW. On WNXR, our Iron River Radio Station, Mike Granlund returns as the voice of the Northwestern for his 25th year.

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### Sports

, from Page 3

on February 13th, 2022.

Northwestern High School Sports heard on WNXR and the Chequamegon Area Sports Package heard on WATW are filling up and we hope to have these programs sold out for the 2021-22 season by the middle of August.

### Collections Continue to be Solid

For collections on the prior months billing, January came in at 98%, February 107%, March 103%, April at 100% and June at 92%. With all that said in 1st and 2nd Quarters of 2021 the Ashland market averaged 100%. This is unheard of in the radio industry. Thank you to all that help make that happen.

### Motivation

, from Page 2

Our stations continued throughout the COVID pandemic to contribute to the community with news, information and almost as important, humor and entertainment at a time when it was greatly needed. Our stations reduced some ad rates for customers who supported Heartland. We wanted those sponsors to succeed and behind the scenes, we did all that we could to assist those advertisers knowing that those business were our bread and butter and needed to sur-

vive.

Yes, I am proud; proud to be a part of a team of employees that have dedicated themselves to supporting each other and our listeners and advertisers. It doesn't appear that the "virus war" is over yet; some say it is political, my feeling is it doesn't matter...the results of whatever it is, have been very challenging. At Heartland, we faced the challenge and are overcoming it day-by-day.

I work with a darn good group of people who make me very proud! Thank YOU gang!

### Summer

, from Page 1

In the Eagle River market the annual WRJO Street Dances, where the city blocks off an entire street, went on every week with hundreds, and during the entire summer, thousands, dancing their hearts away.

Today's Hit Country Z93 (WBSZ), Ashland, was successful this summer in forming a relationship with Northland College and will be broadcasting 30 sporting events over the next several months.

Jim Franklin, Coyote 93.7 morning personality said, "the phones light up like a Christmas tree" every morning in hopes of winning large jackpots of cash on Coyote's High/Low Cash contest. "I couldn't believe my eyes the first time we did the contest; and now, every time the contest is on the air," said Franklin.

On the shores of Lake Superior, also known as Gitche Gumee, the "Winning Wheel" was in action with

the summer "Spin and Win" contest which had listeners winning many sponsor-provided prizes.

In the Minocqua, Rhinelander and the Eagle River markets, Heartland's newest station Mix 96 WNWV gave away backpacks to the kids heading back to school. The backpack giveaway was featured on both Mix 96 and Country Coyote 93.7.

In every Heartland market, our eight stations were broadcasting live dozens of times throughout the summer, giving our personalities a chance to meet and 'josh' with our listeners — everyone having good old-fashioned FUN!

It will be a summer to remember since Heartland was 'ubiquitous.' Now were not saying our on-air personalities can bilocate, but listeners told us that they were sure they saw Ashland's 'Q-Ball' in three or four different places at the same time. And, that my dear friends, was a certain possibility!

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### Eagle River

, from Page 4

All is full steam ahead in the Northwoods for events like concerts, chamber events, contesting, street dances and various events that all want Heartland's 3-headed-monster to be in attendance.

Some days have us appearing and broadcasting at multiple events, but after a year off we are fully charged up and ready to go.

Look for us at your favorite summer event. Please stop by and say hello, you never know what we will be giving away.



*Jim Franklin introduces Blackhawk at Shotskis in Eagle River.*