WTIP is celebrating 17 years of serving the community! Over the years, we have become more than a radio station, serving as an essential service that connects, reflects and builds community on the north shore of Lake Superior.

History

WTIP was launched by a small group of pioneering volunteers sitting around a kitchen table who believed that community radio in Cook County could play an important role in building a sense of shared community.

Since our inception in April 1998, the need and demand for WTIP’s services has grown tremendously. Through strong community support, involvement and feedback, WTIP has continually strengthened our programming, outreach and response to community needs. The communities we serve rely on us for information, use us as a creative outlet, and respond positively to our outreach efforts. Indeed, WTIP has become an essential and highly valued community resource.

WTIP works to produce on-air programming that reflects and responds to our unique listenership. Our program schedule is often described as having “something for everyone.” In addition to our on-air efforts, WTIP also reaches beyond the airwaves, embracing our role in the community and using our position as a trusted community asset to increase the well-being of the area.

Mission

WTIP’s mission is to connect, reflect and build community on the north shore of Lake Superior. We aim to fulfill our mission by:

• Providing timely and accurate reports of local and state events, including weather, news and community happenings;
• Providing a forum open to all residents of the area for the discussion of public issues;
• Offering music and entertainment for our audience;
• Offering a diversity of programs designed to educate and inform;
• Seeking to promote the general well-being of the area;
• Training local residents to use the medium of radio to express their thoughts, feelings and talents.
Executive Director’s Report

WTIP Community Radio began broadcasting on April 28, 1998, just over 17 years ago. From our humble beginnings in a 250 square foot windowless studio and 15 volunteers to a 2000 square foot building with space for a community garden, 11 staff and over 80 volunteers, WTIP has become an integral part of this community of the North Shore and beyond. We have over 1,100 active members and so appreciate the dedication, commitment and talent of all who make up the WTIP family.

This past year the staff and board have been diligently working on projects that will ensure a strong infrastructure for WTIP’s future.

• With the culmination of a successful capital campaign, which began in 2008, we were able pay off the mortgage on our studio and office space on Highway 61.

• Last summer we replaced our main broadcast antenna above Grand Marais. The new antenna is of a radomed type, which protects us from an interruption of strength during ice storms and reduces our electric usage. We raised nearly $60,000 for this project from many wonderful individual member donors, Cook County, Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board and the following foundations: Lloyd K. Johnson, North Shore Health Care, Paul and Carol C. Schaap Fund, and the Minneapolis Foundation.

• This summer we anticipate completing our $70,000 capital campaign to replace our 17 year old main broadcast transmitter, enabling us to maintain the strength of our signal for years to come.

There are two additional projects I want to highlight, as they are reflective of the culture of WTIP, engaging community members to bring their voices to our air waves.

The Community Voices Project was initiated this year by a grant from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation. This project, led by producer Patrick Knight, is providing an opportunity for community members to be trained in the art of audio production, taking them down the path of creating and producing on-air features for WTIP. These features will reflect living along the North Shore through interviews and features about the geography, history, arts, culture and individual lives of those who call the Arrowhead their home.

The Youth Radio Project is in its 5th year of engaging local youth to learn the critical thinking skills of radio production. We have an incredible group of 8th and 9th graders participating on a weekly basis, and we are very excited about this young group of producers.

I also want to acknowledge that Melanie Steele, our development director for the past eight years, is moving to Oregon with her family this month. Melanie has been the key person for the growth and development of WTIP and securing our place in our community. We will truly miss her daily presence as part of our team and know she will bring her skills, talent, and goodness to enhancing the health of another organization.

Thank you for your support of WTIP Community Radio. We so appreciate all the ways the community sustains us.

Deb Benedict
WTIP’s executive director
2014 brought wonderful opportunities to meet the unique needs and interests of our community of listeners:

Features

Our amazing network of commentators provided features on a variety of topics and issues, from nature to history to local happenings and perspectives.

- Moments in Time
- Artist Open House
- Behind the Work
- History Speaks
- North Woods Naturalist
- Grand Portage Biologist Seth Moore
- Northern Sky
- First and Third Thursday Community Conversations
- Local Music Project
- The Lake Superior Project
- Wildersmith on the Gunflint
- West End News
- Magnetic North
- Gunflint Notebook
- NorthShore Art Scene
- Gus’s Wild Side
- Sunny’s Backyard
- Anishinaabe Way
- And much more…

Environmental Features

WTIP’s ongoing coverage of environmental stewardship includes audio features, programs and supplemental information that raise awareness of stewardship in our area. Features and programs are archived on our website at www.wtip.org.
Awards

Station staff and volunteers regularly produce features that bring forward a variety of voices and perspectives on topics that explore the rich culture of the region.

Edward R. Murrow Award

Edward R. Murrow Awards recognize the best electronic journalism produced by radio, television and online news organizations around the world. This year, 673 regional Edward R. Murrow Awards in 14 journalism areas were awarded. In the small market radio category WTIP won for best News Series, “Trafficking and Lake Superior,” by Kelly Schoenfelder.

Minnesota AP Broadcasters Awards

Several WTIP features have been selected as 2014 Minnesota AP Broadcasters Award winners:

In the Series and Specials category, first place went to “The Lake Superior Project: Trafficking & Lake Superior,” by Kelly Schoenfelder. First place in the Writing category went to “Gus’ Wild Side: Cache Lake Country” by Dennis Kaleta and Martha Marnocha.

In the Feature category, the station won honorable mention for: “Local Music Project: Radio Waves,” by Will Moore. Also receiving honorable mention in the Documentary category was “History Speaks: Ernest Oberholtzer – Advocate for the Quetico-Superior,” by Martha Marnocha.

The overall Best in Show award was granted to “The Lake Superior Project: Trafficking & Lake Superior,” by Kelly Schoenfelder, and WTIP’s website received The Best Website award.

The Associated Press is the world's oldest and largest news gathering organization. The cooperative of newspapers, radio stations and television stations provides text, audio, graphics, video, photos and technology to more than 15,000 news outlets worldwide.

Congratulations

from long-time WTIP volunteer Bill Burkhardt

“During the formative years of WTIP, we had great faith in the people of the north shore. In 1997, when we made our membership application presentation to AMPERS, I stated that the WTIP Board had confidence in the creativity and dedication of north shore residents to found a high quality community radio service. Now, WTIP has demonstrated the truth of that utterance.

The Associated Press awards are an inspiration to members and volunteers. WTIP’s achievement reaches across the community and creates a climate of excellence that ensures continued growth and renewal as an organization.

Thank you for making us all so proud.”
School News

School News is a WTIP feature that airs during North Shore Morning and North Shore Digest weekdays during the school year. Every week students from all the schools in Cook County gather news about the happenings and activities in their school, create a news report and then record the report, which is broadcast on WTIP.

Sports Broadcasts

WTIP broadcasts Cook County Vikings football and basketball games on a regular basis. Through our efforts, folks who aren’t able to make it to the games can still listen via webstream.

Live Remote Broadcasts

WTIP works hard to inform and connect the community through interviews, information, and sometimes through live broadcasts from area events. We also provide public service announcements and in-studio interviews on countless events throughout the area.

Community Garden

What was once a gravel parking lot now houses a flourishing community garden, used by at least eight community members each year to grow fruit, veggies, herbs, and flowers. New in 2014 was the addition of a sitting area “rest stop” garden on the other side of the parking lot, in front of the building. Watch for the addition of a Little Free Library to this garden, coming in the summer of 2015.

Fingerstyle Masters Weekend

The annual Fingerstyle Masters Weekend provides North Shore residents and visitors access to quality workshops and first rate performances to learn or improve their fingerstyle guitar technique. “The fingerstyle guitar has a rich history and is a form that all ages can enjoy,” says Gordon Thorne, the North Shore musician producing the event.

“Experienced guitarists can get a lot from it, and for non-guitarists, learning about these techniques offers interesting insights into an American art form.”

The Fingerstyle Masters Weekend takes place every April at Bluefin Bay in Tofte. All profits from the event are donated to WTIP to support the station’s efforts.
Community Voices Project

WTIP received a grant from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation to launch the Community Voices Project, designed to bring more community voices to the air.

The project provides training and opportunities for community members interested in creating and sharing audio features on a variety of topics and subjects.

The “Deeper Reach” project will increase WTIP’s engagement efforts by bringing in more community voices to capture and reflect the variety of community perspectives. This will increase the overall well-being of the area by making the community more engaged, informed and connected.

Youth Radio Project

The Youth Radio Project Show is hosted, engineered and produced by students living in the Cook County area. Tune in to hear interviews, features, and music selections from a youth perspective. Check out the Youth Radio page on our website at www.wtip.org to meet current participants and learn more about the project.
Radio Waves

The 7th annual Radio Waves Music Festival featured three days of music by local and regional musicians, fantastic on-site food, children’s activities, dancing and on-site camping. It took place September 5-7 at Sweetheart’s Bluff in the Grand Marais Recreation Area, on the shores of Lake Superior, which is the perfect setting for sharing the weekend with friends and family while enjoying a music line-up that offers something for every music lover, including rock, classic country, classic rock, folk, jazz, Americana, alternative country and more. The next Radio Waves Music Festival is planned for September 11-13, 2015. Hope to see you there!
2014 marked important milestones for WTIP:

**Completion of the “Home of Our Own” Capital Campaign**

In the summer of 2014, WTIP received a generous donation that enabled us to pay off the remaining balance owed on our mortgage, ending our $550,000 “Home of Our Own” capital campaign.

We purchased a building on the west end of Grand Marais in 2007 and converted it into studio and office space. The new building enabled us to strengthen our programming through increased independence and extra broadcast, office and preparation space; provided more local news and information reports through increased space for volunteers and an extra recording studio; increased community outreach through better visibility and space for volunteers; and housed back-up equipment to ensure that our signal remains strong in times of power outages.

A generous donation launched WTIP’s capital campaign and was soon joined by donations from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation, the A Paul and Carol C Schaap Foundation, and numerous other foundations and individuals. Recently, the same donor made an additional gift to WTIP that covered the remaining balance of our capital campaign.

WTIP wishes to thank everyone who supported the “Home of Our Own” capital campaign, enabling us to grow and expand to better serve our community of listeners.

**Antenna, Transmitter Replacement**

2014 presented a golden opportunity for WTIP to upgrade our original main broadcast antenna. With Cook County assuming ownership of the former WDIO tower and a partnership with Verizon Wireless to replace that tower, WTIP was able to work with the county to customize the tower design to accommodate a new higher gain antenna (to reduce our electric consumption) that has protective radomes (covers) to increase our ability to stay at high power during icing events. Plans have also been made to install the original antenna and feedline on another nearby county-owned tower to be used as a backup in the event of a catastrophic failure of the new tower, feedline, or antenna.

WTIP has also been planning to replace our aging, original tube-type transmitter with a more efficient solid-state design, further reducing our electrical consumption with a modern, state-of-the-art design. The current transmitter will then also be used with the backup antenna and feedline.

These two upgrades will give WTIP the ability to stay on-the-air, in a more efficient manner, well into the future.
Funding and Support

WTIP’s efforts are made possible by the strong support we receive from several sources:

Grants & State and Federal Funding

Much of WTIP’s programming and services are made possible through funding from foundations, including the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation, the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, the Grand Marais Area Tourism Association, Minnesota’s Lake Superior Coastal Program, the Global Awareness Fund of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, Moving Matters and the Cook County Chamber of Commerce, the A Paul and Carol C Schaap Foundation, the Minneapolis Foundation, and Cook County. WTIP also receives state funding, including support from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, and financial support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.
Membership

Over 1000 listeners are active members (they have made a financial donation to WTIP within the past 12 months). By choosing to support WTIP with a financial donation, these members provide essential funding that helps make WTIP’s services possible. Membership supports the day-to-day operations at WTIP, enabling us to provide timely, essential services.

We love the variety of music, news, and other programming reflecting the great Grand Marais community.

_Abraham and Sara, renewing members_  
_Minneapolis, MN_

We like everything about WTIP. We have a cabin up on the Gunflint, so we stream it all the time to feel connected to the community. Thank you!

_Anonymous, renewing members_  
_Minneapolis, MN_

Local radio helps build community connections.

_Lori and Patrick, new members_  
_Grand Marais, MN_

Keeping the county connected, informed and entertained!

_Shari and Jeff, renewing members_  
_Grand Marais, MN_

I solo hiked the entire Superior Hiking Trail from May 14-June 10 this year and found great pleasure listening to WTIP when the miles got long and the mosquitoes started coming out. Thank you for your eclectic programming and keeping me company this summer!

_Joy, new member_  
_Lebanon, IL_

WTIP, the big lake and a cup of coffee; the only way to start a Morning!!

_Karen and Ed, renewing members_  
_Tucson, AZ_

We’re new to the area and find WTIP to be a great source for what’s going on in the community. We also really enjoy Peter Igoe’s ‘Old Time Radio’ show. Thanks WTIP!

_Jack and Susan, new members_  
_Grand Marais, MN_
Even when we cannot get up north, we stream you and thoroughly enjoy the local stories and information. It makes us want to return even sooner! Thank you ALL :)

*Sue, new member
Stillwater, MN*

Love listening when we’re up at our cabin on the Gunflint and on line when at home. Helps keep us informed about weather and as to what is happening in beautiful Cook County.

*Jim and Judy, renewing members
White Bear Lake, MN*

I love the eclectic-ness of this station! It helps to connect me to Grand Marais when I am far away...

*Kat, new member
Minneapolis, MN*

Thank you for offering internet streaming - it allows us to keep in touch when we’re not at the cabin!

*Scott & Carol, renewing members
Washington, DC*

We love the variety and quality of the music on WTI\P. Thank you!

*David, renewing member
Plymouth, MN*
Business Sponsors

Over 100 businesses support WTIP’s efforts through underwriting:

AmericInn of Silver Bay
Arrowhead Cooperative
Arrowhead Pharmacy
Art House Bed & Breakfast
The Attic Gift Shop
Backlund Realty
Bearskin Lodge
Best Western Superior Inn & Suites
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Beth’s Fudge & Gifts
Betsy Bowen Studio
The Blue Moose
Blue Water Café
Bluefin Bay
Boreal Access
Boundary Waters Journal
Buck’s Hardware Hank
Buck’s Radio Shack
Care Partners of Cook County
Carefree Living Silver Bay
Cascade Lodge & Restaurant
Cascade Vacation Rentals
Chik-Wauk Museum & Nature Center
Cleaning Solutions
Como Oil & Propane
Cook County Chamber of Commerce
Cook County Community YMCA
Cook County Dog Mushers
Cook County Higher Education
Cook County North Shore Hospital & Care Center
Cook County Visitors Bureau
Cook County Whole Foods Co-op
Crooked Spoon Café
Dockside Fish Market
Drury Lane Books
East Bay Suites
Edwin E. Thoreson, Inc.
Fika Coffee
First Congregational Church
Gary Zinter, Blue Cross Blue Shield
Gene’s Foods
George Humphrey Contracting
Grand Marais Art Colony
Grand Marais Hotel Company
Grand Marais Lions Club
Grand Marais Miniature Golf
Grand Marais Municipal Liquor Store
Grand Marais Rec Park
Grand Marais State Bank
Grand Marais Wellness Center
Grand Portage-Isle Royale Transportation Line Inc.
Grand Portage Lodge & Casino
Great Gifts
Gunflint Lodge
Gun Flint Tavern
H & R Block, Silver Bay
Hedstrom Lumber Company
Hillhaven Assisted Housing for Seniors
Hovland Art Festival
Human Development Center
Hungry Jack Outfitters
Independent Insurance Broker,
David Rohl
Isak Hansen and Sons
Java Moose
John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon
Johnson’s Foods
Joynes Dept. & Ben Franklin Store
Kah-Nec-Tah Gallery
LaBoda Grading
Lake County Fair
Lake Superior Angler Magazine
Lake Superior Community Theatre
Lake Superior Trading Post
Last Chance Studio and Gallery
Leigh Mathison, Attorney at Law
Licari, Larsen & Co.
Lighthouse Coaching & Retreats
Live from the Rock Folk Fest
Lola’s Sweet Life Bakery
Lonnie Dupre, Polar Explorer
Lutsen Mountains
Lutsen Resort
McMillan Landscaping & Tree Service
Minnesota Power
Moguls Grille & Taproom
My Sister’s Place
Naniboujou Lodge
NightTrain Racing Sled Dogs
North House Folk School
North Shore Commercial Fishing Museum
North Shore Federal Credit Union
North Shore Health Care Foundation
North Shore Journal / Bayside Printing
North Shore Oil & Propane
North Shore Outdoors
North Shore Winery
Northern Lake County Arts Board
Northern Wilds
The Pie Place Café
Porcupine Mountains Music Festival
The Print Shop of Grand Marais
Raven’s Beak Design
Reader Weekly
A Room of One’s Own
Satellite Country Inn
Sawbill Canoe Outfitters
Sawtooth Ridges Apartments
Science Museum of Minnesota
Seaton Guitars
Security State Bank
Shirt Outfitters
Sivertson Gallery
Snook One Charters
Stephan Hoglund Photography
Stone Harbor Wilderness Supply
Studio Forma
Subway Sandwiches
Superior Handyman
Superior Lumber and Sports
Superior North Outdoor Center
Superior Outdoors Magazine
Sven & Ole’s
Swanson & Heeren, P.C.
Sweetgrass Cove Guesthouse &
Bodywork Studio
Tall Tale Yarn Shop
Terra Bella Floral & Gifts
Thomsonite Beach Inn & Suites
Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce
Thunder Bay Community Auditorium
Tim Bauer Construction
Tofte Construction
Trail’s End Café
UCare
UMD Medical School, Duluth Center of
American Indian & Minority Health
Violence Prevention Center
W Labor
WatersEdge Trading Co.
WindCradle Retreat
World’s Best Donuts
1010 Interiors

WTIP Sports
Underwriters

Almost Home Appliance / Arrowhead Outdoor
Arrowhead Pharmacy
Backlund Realty
Buck’s Hardware Hank
Caribou Cabin Service /
Caribou Cabin Construction
Cook County News Herald
Crawford Excavating /
S & C Masonry and Concrete
Edwin E. Thoreson, Inc.
George F. Maruska, CPA
Grand Marais State Bank
Grand Portage Lodge & Casino
Johnson’s Foods
Mike’s Holiday
Minnesota Power
North Shore Federal Credit Union
State Farm Insurance
Superior Lumber
Sven & Ole’s

WTIP Business
Members

Angry Trout Café
Boundary Country Trekking/
Poplar Creek Guesthouse
Cook County Abstract & Title
Don Noyce Construction
Farley’s Plumbing and Heating, LLC
Grand Marais Lioness Club
Oddz & Endz
Temperance Valley Tile & Stone
Tofte Construction
Volunteers

Since WTIP’s humble beginning, the total number of regular volunteers has grown from eight to more than 80. Volunteers are the key to WTIP’s continued growth and success, and as a community-powered, community-driven station, WTIP continues to welcome new volunteers both on the air and behind the scenes.

- Mark Abrahamson
- Doran Acero
- Tamera Andersen
- Chel Anderson
- Paulette Anholm
- Mary Ann Atwood
- Berta Bauer
- Andrew Beavers
- Buck Benson
- Tracy Benson
- Sally Berg
- Vicki Biggs-Anderson
- Julie Bishop
- Chloe Blackburn
- Lynden Blomberg
- Diane Booth
- Tom Bradovich
- Jane Burke
- Bill and Joan Burkhardt
- Lucy Callender
- Pat Campanaro
- Julie Carlson
- Bob Carter
- Tom Christiansen
- Gwen Danfelt-Martin
- Georgene Daubanton
- Joey Detrick
- Dick Dorr
- Staci Drouillard
- Randy Eastlund
- Pat Eliasen
- Joan Farnam
- Lil Fisher
- Steve Forsberg
- Cy Fortunato
- Gus
- Don Hammer
- Bill Hansen
- Pete Harris
- Barb Heidemann
- CJ Heithoff
- Linnea Henriksson
- Molly Hoffman
- Tyler Howell
- Trevor Huggins
- Marcia Hyatt
- Ada Igoe
- Mary Igoe
- Peter Igoe
- Jane Johnson
- Kris Johnson
- Kent Jones
- Pete Kavanaugh
- Anna Klobuchar
- Dale Klobuchar
- Tina Krauz
- Pat Kruse
- Cheryl Larsen
- Jan Lemke
- Ardie Lien
- Jerry Lilja
- Sherrie Lindskog
- Maxene Linehan
- Roger Linehan
- Jeremy Lopez
- Sean MacDonell
- Susan Maijala
- Mary Manning
- Martha Marnocha
- Bob Martin
- Michael McHugh
- Anne McKinsey
- Marnie McMillan
- Yvonne Mills
- Norman Moe
- John Morrin
- Deane Morrison
- Seth Moore
- John Moos
- Bj Muus
- Matt Nesheim
- Beth Olson
- Craig Peterson
- Joni Peterson
- Erin Petz
- Ann Possis
- Bob Pranis
- John Praxmarer
- Steve Ramberg
- Barb Rawitzer
Staff Members

Jay Andersen
Gary Atwood
Deb Benedict
Jana Berka
Matthew Brown
Sherrie Lindskog
Martha Marnocha
Will Moore
Jeff Nemitz
Patrick Knight
Ann Possis
Cathy Quinn
Melanie Steele
Veronica Weadock

Board of Directors

David Tersteeg – President
Rick Anderson – Vice President
Hyla Napadensky – Treasurer
Ann Possis – Secretary
Greg Toftte
Molly Hicken
Debbie Benedict
Paul Anderson

Community Advisory Board

Sue Hakes
Anna Hamilton
Bill Hansen
Thelma Hedstrom
Dennis LaBoda
Deb LaMusga
Mike LaVigne
Jennifer Schulz
President’s Report

WTIP – A modern Classic

What makes WTIP so great? We’ve probably all got some good answers for this one. How do we ensure our continued success? How do we remain relevant? These are a little harder…

Lately, the Board has been asking these questions and more, as a part of updating our strategic plan. Most would agree that planning for change is vital, and visioning has always been an integral part of our success. Thanks to a grant from the Blandin Foundation, specifically for alumni of the Community Leadership program (several board members are alums), we have been able to hire a facilitator who is engaging both the board and staff in planning for the future. Recent work sessions have been impressive brain storms of identifying our strengths/weaknesses, trends, funding, etc. The final product will be a living document that defines position statements for future success, as well as the necessary steps for achievement.

So we’ve been spending some time identifying our “assets and keys to success,” and guess which two words keep coming up again and again: Volunteers and Staff. We all know we are only as good as our people, but this is one area where the future is a little harder to predict. For better or worse, individuals come and go, but our core must remain strong. Hopefully our positive work environment, livable wages and quality leadership will continue to foster low turnover and satisfied staff. It’s our volunteers that are the real magic - dedicated DJs and behind the scene folks that give their time because it feels good. Clearly, we would not be on the air without volunteers. How’s this for a position statement? We will continue to recruit, train and give our volunteers the opportunity to thrive.

Finally, no discussion of the future is complete without lots of talk about technology. Upgrades to our antennae and transmitter are making sure we have a strong signal for those tuning in the old fashion way, but what about the (looming) “internet of everything”? Fear not, as we’ll soon have a mobile, responsive website. Great, so you can stream us on any device, what’s next? Keeping up with tech is an obvious, never ending task. The greater challenge may be preserving our old fashion analog radio roots for future audiences who still appreciate (and seek out) the charm of classic, modern community radio. Will we succeed in remaining a modern Classic? Stay tuned…

Dave
WTIP’s board president