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Non-Comm Radio Milwaukee Turns 10, Celebrating With Year of New Features, Events Highlighting Milwaukee Music and Community

For 10 Years, Community-Supported Station Has Broadcast Unique Mix of Indie, Urban and Milwaukee Music and “Stories”; Focused on Improving City

Milwaukee (Feb. 27, 2017) – At its 10th birthday celebration Sunday, award-winning non-commercial 88Nine Radio Milwaukee (WYMS-FM) unveiled plans for a series of special events and new programming throughout 2017 to mark its first decade and highlight Milwaukee music and community.

The self-supporting, non-profit station launched exactly 10 years earlier, on Feb. 26, 2007. It has become recognized for its unique mix of new and Milwaukee music; its “community stories” features; and for fostering community engagement and positive change.

At an on-air celebration held with Radio Milwaukee members at its studios, the station announced several activities this year to commemorate its 10th birthday that will include:

- Holding an all-day free street concert outside its studios on June 24, with a mix of national and local acts to be announced.
- Unveiling on April 14 (“414 Day”) a new feature to connect Milwaukee music to listeners everywhere.
- Launching a new narrative audio and video series, “In The Wings: Bringing Our Community to Center Stage,” that each month this year will highlight the positive work of Milwaukee individuals in a variety of categories, starting March 1 with the city’s food culture.
- Beginning a weeknight show, “88Nine After Nine,” hosted by DJ Tarik Moody. It will feature a pioneering new format, combining contemporary urban and Triple A sounds, from 9 p.m. to midnight Mondays through Thursday starting Monday.
- Airing the new weekly “Listener Approved” show at 9 p.m. Fridays beginning March 5 with Music Director Justin Barney unveiling a top-ten countdown of the station’s best songs as selected by listeners.
- Throwing a benefit gala dinner June 22 honoring station donors and founders, including co-founder, philanthropist and musician Peter Buffett.

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Radio Milwaukee Turns 10 Add One

“Radio Milwaukee has come so far in just 10 years, from its beginnings in a basement at Milwaukee Public Schools to our \$2.8 million state-of-the-art studio and performance complex in the Walker’s Point neighborhood,” Radio Milwaukee Executive Director Glenn Kleiman said. “We’re proud that we’ve been able to bring great music and stories to Milwaukee for 10 years and have an even greater impact on the Milwaukee community.”

At the birthday celebration, Mayor Tom Barrett unveiled an official proclamation declaring Sunday as “88Nine Radio Milwaukee Day.” It said that the City of Milwaukee commends the station for “10 years of dedicated service and leadership, recognizes its outstanding contributions to the community and wishes it many more years of success.”

Since it began broadcasting 10 years ago, Radio Milwaukee:

- Has introduced Milwaukee to an array of national and international artists through the diverse recorded music it plays and the more than 120 “Studio Milwaukee” live, on-air sessions with these musicians in front of audiences. The station is credited with helping break several artists nationally, including Alabama Shakes, Valerie June, Michael Kiwanuka, James Vincent McMorrow and PHOX.
- Has championed Milwaukee musicians through its annual Milwaukee Music Awards; weekly “414 Music Live” sessions featuring Milwaukee bands broadcast with a studio audience; playing at least one song on air by a Milwaukee artist every hour; and by promoting Milwaukee’s live music scene on air, its website and its social media outlets.
- Broadcasts more than 200 original short-form Community Stories per year throughout its weekday schedule and online, including video. The stories feature non-profit organizations and individuals who are making a difference in Milwaukee.
- Renovated and outfitted a vacant former foundry in the Walker’s Point neighborhood into its \$2.8 million state-of-the-art studios and offices. The complex includes a 99-seat performance space for live broadcasts and sustainable green roof. The station moved to its new home in September 2013. More than 1,700 donors contributed to the project.
- Has been widely recognized for its on-air music, community affairs features, digital media and new studio complex, winning awards from the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, Milwaukee Press Club, Wisconsin Area Music Industry, Shepherd Express newspaper, American Institute of Architects Wisconsin, Milwaukee Business Journal, Milwaukee Magazine and the International Competition for Marketing and Communication Professionals.
- Created its “Cultural Commons” initiative, which involves more than 20 organizations in an effort designed to break down barriers and bring people together. The station’s mission, its young and diverse staff and new home are enabling it to spearhead an effort by local organizations to create events welcoming all Milwaukeeans.
- Airs an average of 400 free public service announcements a year for up to 45 organizations; helps collect donations of needed supplies and goods for the community through campaigns with groups such as Milwaukee Public Schools, Hunger Task Force and Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee; and invites the non-profit community to use its new home for events.

Radio Milwaukee Turns 10 Add Two

- Receives the great majority of its financial support from its 4,900 contributing members, more than 200 underwriters and 25 foundations.

The station traces its history to the founding in 2003 of the non-profit Radio Milwaukee organization, which according to its incorporation filing, was formed to reach “a new generation of radio listeners on air, on line and in the community with a compelling selection of music and public affairs programming.” The group’s filing said it “celebrates Milwaukee music, arts, heritage, and culture by supporting and contributing to a community that encourages multi-ethnic collaboration and conversation and by promoting a positive global identity for the city of Milwaukee.”

The non-profit Radio Milwaukee organization operates WYMS through an operating agreement with the Milwaukee Public Schools, which owns the frequency.

Information on the station’s history and birthday-year plans is posted at www.radiomilwaukee.org/10 and will be updated periodically.

A photo of Mayor Barrett and Program Director Jordan Lee at the birthday party is available at: <https://app.box.com/s/0zgyyncwbv5m3vg147kvv29igovc9qrz>

Other photos from Radio Milwaukee over the years will be available on the station’s birthday microsite and are posted at www.flickr.com/photos/88nine.

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ABOUT 88NINE RADIO MILWAUKEE:

A non-profit, community-funded radio station, 88Nine Radio Milwaukee (WYMS-FM 88.9) has been a part of Milwaukee since 2007. Learn more about 88Nine and stream the station at <http://www.radiomilwaukee.org> or via the 88Nine mobile app.