



General Manager's Report

idahoptv.org

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QUOTE

"Maybe it's my age, but I find very little on other television that I can watch. I think that we need to support them."

Sen. Patti Anne Lodge, R-Huston, at IdahoPTV's Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (JFAC) budget setting hearing on Monday, February 28. A positive budget recommendation was enacted on a 17-3 vote.

FESTIVAL 2005 OPENS SATURDAY, MARCH 5, ON IDAHOPTV

— Annual On-Air Fund-Raiser Is March 5-20

New specials on Idaho's Basque heritage and Idahoans who bring the past alive headline FESTIVAL 2005 on Idaho Public Television. The 16-day on-air fund-raiser also offers cooking and household hints, self-improvement, travel, comedy and music of many kinds, filling television screens statewide.

"During FESTIVAL we feature a number of specials and strong episodes from our regular series, such as NOVA 'Dogs and More Dogs' on March 8 and GLOBE TREKKER's 'Ultimate Italy' on March 15. These, along with IdahoPTV's own productions, provide a sampling of the kinds of programming we air throughout the year," says Kim Philipps, IdahoPTV Director of Marketing.

FESTIVAL 2005 features two new IdahoPTV specials — WEST OF THE BASQUE, Monday, March 7 at 7:00 p.m. MT/PT and BACK TO THE PAST: AN OUTDOOR IDAHO SPECIAL, Thursday, March 10 at 8:30 p.m. MT/PT and repeating Sunday, March 13 at 6:30 p.m. MT/PT

WEST OF THE BASQUE follows former Idaho Secretary of State Pete Cenarrusa to his parents' homeland; traces the history of Basques in Idaho and joins Idahoans of Basque heritage, who keep alive the dances, language and music of their forefathers.

BACK TO THE PAST joins re-enactors who celebrate several historical eras and follows Idahoans who research family history, preserve historic buildings, dig into historical sites and grow heirloom plants.

Philipps says the celebration's musical soundtrack this year includes concert performances by John Denver, Paul McCartney, Andre Rieu, Eric Clapton, Tina Turner, Norah Jones and Rod Stewart. Also on the schedule are specials that present stars from the 1950s and 1960s and Broadway showstoppers, 1967-1986. Armchair travel opportunities include Europe, New York City, Alaska and Idaho.

She points out that the annual March fund-raiser and the weekend December event are a major part of IdahoPTV's operating budget.

"Currently 63 percent of Idaho Public Television's operating budget is dependent upon private contributions and FESTIVAL is the single largest fund-raising event of the year. So the success of this campaign is critical," Philipps says. "Money raised during FESTIVAL helps pay for program acquisition and Idaho productions that are seen throughout the year."

IdahoPTV is Idaho's only statewide medium and offers national and Idaho-produced programming. Local programming includes OUTDOOR IDAHO, DIALOGUE and IDAHO REPORTS, plus a variety of specials relating to interests and issues important to the state's citizens. The system also provides: 60 hours each week of programs for toddlers, pre-school children and primary-grade students, plus an overnight schedule with educational programming for students, teachers and adult-learning opportunities. IdahoPTV's five digital transmitters in Coeur d'Alene, Moscow, Boise, Twin Falls and Idaho Falls provide high definition television programming nightly, with standard digital programs scheduled during the day for people with high definition digital television receivers.

"FESTIVAL 2005 is a time for people to become partners with us in this investment in television worth watching," Philipps says. "Remember, Idaho Public Television belongs to you."



For more Buzz, checkout idahoptv.org

-On Monday, February 28, the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (JFAC) voted 17-3 to approve IdahoPTV's state budget. Please refer to the attached news reports and editorials I've included at the bottom of this GM Report.

-Just a quick update to let you know that Idaho Public Television was mentioned twice in two different front page stories in the Idaho Statesman on Thursday, February 24. The first was Rocky Barker's coverage of the House water hearings, who mentioned our webcasting of the proceedings. And the other article made note of our two programs later in the week profiling famed raptor expert Morley Nelson.

-Idaho Public Television has begun offering an alternative way for learners to access educational content and materials. Although transparent to the user, when visitors from the Pacific Northwest visit www.learner.org to access the educational video streams and workshops from Corporation for Public Broadcasting(CPB)/Annenberg Foundation, their connection time will be greatly reduced because it is now streamed from IdahoPTV's video stream servers which are acting as a mirrored site for all of CPB/ANNENBERG educational videos and workshops. Online video programs and related teaching materials have broad topic range and total up to 1000 hours.

-Idaho Spokesman Review's Betsy Russell on IdahoPTV's Webcam Service (February 14, 2005):

"It's the Legislature Webcam. Idaho Public TV has been offering live audio-streaming of House and Senate sessions and JFAC hearings, but starting today – just in time for Valentine's Day – there's now video, too. On the floors of the House and Senate chambers, IPTV has installed fixed cameras, and you can see the live video any time by clicking here and choosing "House Live" or "Senate Live." JFAC will continue to be audio-only.

The new Webcam will let you see just what's going on in the House or Senate at the moment, whether it's senators milling around, House members debating, or whatever. It may also help with the complaints that IPTV was getting from people who complained that the audio-streaming wasn't working because there was silence when they clicked – because the House or Senate actually wasn't in session at the time. Now, you'll be able to tell that just by looking at the picture. If they're in session, you'll hear the sound, too."

IDAHOPTV SIGNALS UPDATE

-Idaho Public Television and CableOne are pleased to announce that the IdahoPTV high definition service is now available to subscribers of CableOne in the Pocatello and Idaho Falls areas. IdahoPTV provides more than 16 hours per day of high definition television programming.

-Lots of experiments with DTV have been going on in the SE Idaho viewing area. Independent Cable Co. has found that utilizing our DTV signal on Channel 17 from the East Butte transmitter produces studio quality pictures for all their subscribers in the Grace, Bancroft, McCammon and Soda Springs areas. Additionally, the Caribou County TV Association has been conducting over the air tests on channel 49 in the Soda Springs area with an experimental DTV translator with encouraging results. Things are definitely looking up for rural public television viewers!

IDAHOPTV REACHES OUT

-On March 3, Peter Morrill spoke to the Pocatello Rotary Club.

-On Tuesday, February March 1, KTVB's Larry Gebert broadcast live segments from 5am to 9am from our studios promoting Festival 2005, IdahoPTV's major annual funding campaign.

-On Thursday, February 17, Idaho State Broadcasters Association held its Legislative Dinner featuring a 50 inch plasma high definition television set displaying programming from IdahoPTV's HD service.

-On Tuesday, February 15, Marcia Franklin presented and discussed her program "From Idaho to Iran" at a function sponsored by the Salt Lake City Film Center and the City Library in Salt Lake City.

-On Thursday, February 10, IdahoPTV presented at the Gold Room of the Idaho State Capitol an hour and half of segments from some of our best local projects. Entitled "IdahoPTV's Best Local Programs and Services Overview," attracted seven legislators and several members of the press. The segments were introduced by IdahoPTV producers including Bruce Reichert, Joan Cartan-Hansen, Jim Peck, Marcia Franklin and John Crancer, hosted by Peter Morrill.

-On Wednesday, February 9, from 9am to 4pm, Peter Morrill and Ron Pisaneschi participated in the Idaho Digital Government Day at the Idaho State Capitol. Located on the fourth floor, Idaho Digital Government Day features booths set up by a cross section of state agencies highlighting technical services provided to our state. IdahoPTV's display included our plasma monitor displaying local programs such as OUTDOOR IDAHO as well as demonstrations of idahoptv.org and video/audio streaming services. More than twenty legislators stopped by!

-Idaho Legislature Just a Mouse Click Away As Sight Is Added To Sound at idahoptv.org

View the Idaho Legislature in action from home, school or office at the click of a mouse, which began Monday (February 14) on the Idaho Public Television Web site.

IdahoPTV and Legislative Services are conducting a multi-week pilot test of Web-cameras in the Idaho House and Senate chambers. The sound and picture from each chamber can be accessed on the IdahoPTV Web site (idahoptv.org/idreports/legislatureLive.cfm) when either chamber is in session. The live video streaming with audio can also be reached by clicking on the "Streaming" link at the bottom of the IdahoPTV homepage (idahoptv.org).

This trial service enhances the live audio streaming, which has been available when the chambers are in session since 1999. The service, provided by IdahoPTV and Legislative Services, is part of the IDAHO REPORTS portion of the Web site. The site also includes information about stories covered on the weekly television show, video streaming archives of the programs and links to additional resources about the Legislature and the issues under consideration.

IDAHOPTV STAFF UPDATES AND TRANSITIONS

-I am pleased to announce the arrival of a new employee in the Membership office. Please join me in welcoming Jerry Breckon to IdahoPTV. Jerry has a great customer service and community service background.

-Phyllis Smith has joined our Development team as a part-time office assistant.

PAST AND UPCOMING MEETINGS OF IDAHO PUBLIC TELEVISION'S FRIENDS BOARDS

-Friends of Idaho Public Television: KAID/KIPT, Wednesday, February 16, Noon.

-Friends of Idaho Public Television: KISU, Wednesday, February 23, 5:30pm.

-Friends of Idaho Public Television: KUID/KCDT, Tuesday, March 29, noon.

IDAHOPTV RECOGNIZED

-On Tuesday, January 18, the Idaho Cable Television Association (ICTA) awarded the Community Project Award to CableOne of Idaho and IdahoPTV for the CableOne.net membership challenge at their Legislative Dinner.

-On February 8, 2005, the Telly Awards (national television programmers association) announced that IdahoPTV had been recognized in six categories:

Lewis and Clark Crossing the Centuries	Finalist	Documentary
Moments in Time	Finalist	Miscellaneous
Outdoor Idaho: Pushing the Boundaries	Winner	Information
Vintage Idaho	Winner	Documentary
Outdoor Idaho: Jewel of the North	Winner	Travel
Designing Idaho	Finalist	Cultural

WEST OF THE BASQUE PREMIERES ON IDAHOPTV; TRACES BASQUE HISTORY IN IDAHO; FINDS STRONG CONNECTION TO BASQUE HOMELAND IN THE PRESENT

— Aired Monday, March 7 at 7:00 p.m. MT/PT

A new Idaho Public Television documentary looks at the Basque history and heritage in Idaho and finds the state and the Basque homeland are linked in past and present.

IdahoPTV producer Jim Peck and videographer/editor Alan Austin trace the Basque presence in Idaho from the late 1800s into the present and reveal ways the Basque communities here and in Spain remain connected and are planning a joint future.

“They came and they stayed in Idaho, through generations and continue to contribute culturally, historically and politically. Their influence is still felt; there is a texture and richness they have provided,” Peck says. “And Idaho Basques are connected to those in the Basque Country. There is a transatlantic conversation between individuals by e-mail and other means.”

Young people of the Basque country came to Idaho in the early years of statehood, seeking a fresh start from a homeland where war was always either a reality or a lingering echo, Peck notes. They arrived to find sheep-herding jobs available — not a skill they knew but one they learned. Idaho's Basque community and the state itself grew up together and today there is a Sister City — Gernika — and a Basque block in Boise; there are Basque studies centers and language institutes. Basques and their descendants have become professionals, entrepreneurs and politicians. They also seek to retain their unique culture through dance, music, food and language.

“When my mother and father came over here,” says rancher and former Idaho Secretary of State Pete Cenarrusa, “they spoke Basque; they didn't know the English language — my father in 1907 and my mother in 1914. They lived about eight miles apart in the Basque country and never met. They met for the first time in Shoshone, Idaho, in a boarding house.”

The show follows Cenarrusa and his wife, Freda, to the family homes of his mother and father in the Basque country. There, they are honored guests at feasts and celebrations with relatives. He is also there to meet with Basque government officials about a program for the Cenarrusa Center for Basque studies in connection with Boise State University.

John Bieter, historian, BSU professor and grandson of a Basque immigrant, is in Spain also. He comments on the continuing connection to the Basque homeland for Idahoans of Basque descent and the reciprocal connection to Idaho from Basques in Europe.

“I think one of the things that our culture doesn't feel as much is a history, a tie, something that is unique in a world that is homogenizing so quickly,” says Bieter. “And the Basque country provides that. For the Basque who have had nothing but history, they feel the necessity of a future, the need to modernize.

Bieter says this is leading to a new kind of modern exchange between the groups that guarantees strong ties into the foreseeable future.

Also appearing in the documentary are: Boise Mayor Dave Bieter, John's brother; William A. Douglass, coordinator emeritus of Basque Studies, University of Nevada, Reno; Sean Aucutt of the Oinkari Basque Dancers; Geneva Ayarra, Basque language teacher; and the Oinkari Dancers. The film also features the late Jimmy Jau-soro, legendary Basque musician.

BACK TO THE PAST: AN OUTDOOR IDAHO SPECIAL

— Aired Thursday, March 10 at 8:30 p.m. MT/PT
— Repeats Sunday, March 13 at 6:30 p.m. MT/PT

Many people see a bright future in the past. Their special interests run the gamut from stone age tools to growing heritage seeds, but all reach for the past to enliven the present.

At the annual Rabbitstick gathering near Rexburg, a pre-industrial village emerges where villagers learn how to make and use stone age tools. “There is something within us that has been patterned for 99.9 percent of our human history, which is founded in the Stone Age,” says Dave Wescott, an organizer of the gathering”

The clank of swords, bright colors and a solemn knighting ceremony mark the Society for Creative Anachronism spring festival near Idaho Falls. Members talk of a love of history, the enjoyment of friends who become like family and the romance of being part of a chivalrous society. Baron Dietrich Schneewolf (Chuck Wemple) says: “It is not a form of escape. It is a desire to bring back something that was lost.”

Whatever words are used, people are immersing themselves in historical pursuits in increasing numbers nationwide and Idahoans are not being left behind. Idaho's re-enactors celebrate mountain men and the fur trapping rendezvous; demonstrate American Civil War equipment, including cannons; move wagons and horses across the Snake River without a bridge; and run sheep through Ketchum.

“Our show originated as a way to explore the ‘living history’ movement that seems to be sweeping the country,” says Idaho PTV producer Bruce Reichert. “But it also deals with the concept of progress, and an underlying question that emerges: Are the present and future naturally better than the past?”

Idahoans use many means to keep the past alive as a beacon for the future. They are restoring a theater in Rupert, investigating a drowned town under a reservoir, using archaeological science to reveal a building’s secrets, keeping antique plant varieties alive and growing, or learning more about family members who preceded them.

OUTDOOR IDAHO PRESENTED NATIVE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES ON LEWIS & CLARK TREK

— Aired Thursday, February 17 at 8:00/7:00 p.m. MT/PT

— Repeated Sunday, February 20 at 7:00 p.m. MT/PT

Native Americans populated the lands that the expedition led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark set out to investigate in 1803. The more Lewis and Clark got away from the civilized eastern seaboard, the more civilizations they encountered — 50 separate nations in all.

Residents of those lands spoke out in a new OUTDOOR IDAHO production, “Lewis & Clark Among the Tribes,” about what the arrival of the historic expedition means to their people.

“I think we’ve been silent long enough and so it’s our time to say: ‘Wait a minute, we’re Sacajawea’s people; we still exist, and don’t take that away from us,’” says Leo Ariwite, a Lemhi-Shoshone.

He and other Native Americans from the Dakotas to the Oregon Coast provide their perspective on the changes that came to their lands in the wake of the explorers.

Talking on camera are individuals from seven Native American peoples of North Dakota west to Washington and Oregon — Mandan Hidatsa, Blackfoot, Lemhi Shoshoni, Salish, Nez Perce, Umatilla and Chinook. Several historians also draw together various strands reaching through 200 years into modern times from the initial collision of cultures. And running through the 30-minute program are excerpts from the Lewis and Clark journals, which mention experiences with Native Americans.

“In our work on the Lewis and Clark histories, we had obtained many more wonderful conversations with Native Americans than we could use in our previous shows,” says IdahoPTV producer Bruce Reichert. “Now it is time for them to tell more of their story.”

Lewis and Clark met the ancestors of the Native Americans appearing in the episode. The explorers stayed in or near Native American villages, sought directions and traded for food, horses and other goods. But the expedition preceded major migration from the eastern states into the western lands, displacing people already here. Now, two centuries later, much has changed for the original residents. They say they are observing the anniversary with caution and introspection and a sense of looking ahead.

“I don’t use reconciliation. It means the books are balanced. The books will never be balanced as far as the tribes are concerned, never be balanced. Will we get back all of our land? I don’t think so,” says Otis Half Moon, a Nez Perce. “But yet again, we must heal, what has happened has happened. Let’s move forward with this.”

GOVERNOR DIRK KEMPTHORNE APPEARED ON DIALOGUE

— Aired Thursday, March 3 at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT

On DIALOGUE, Governor Dirk Kempthorne joined host Marcia Franklin to discuss his legislative agenda, which includes bonding for improved highways, tax incentives for corporations and a reduction in the sales tax.

Franklin and Kempthorne also took calls from viewers.

Kempthorne, in the middle of his second term as governor, announced in January that he would not run for a third term.

IDAHOPTV HONORS LIFE OF IDAHO RAPTOR EXPERT IN REMEMBERING MORLEY NELSON

— Tribute program aired Sunday, February 27 at 7:30 p.m. MT/PT

— Repeated Thursday, March 3 at 8:00/7:00 p.m. MT/PT

Idaho Public Television broadcast a 30-minute tribute to the life of raptor expert, filmmaker, scientist, conservationist and explorer Morlan Nelson.

REMEMBERING MORLEY NELSON, with host Marcia Franklin, included scenes from Nelson's life and work with eagles, falcons and hawks as well as studio guests who knew him.

Guests for the show, included: Steve Stuebner, author of *A Cold North Wind: Morley Nelson's Life with Birds of Prey*; Tom Cade, founder of The Peregrine Fund, headquartered at the World Center for Birds of Prey, west of Boise; and Norm Nelson, Morlan's son.

Nelson, who has appeared in several IdahoPTV productions, was an international authority on birds of prey and instrumental in establishing the Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area in the Snake River Canyon. The canyon walls within the natural area are home to the densest concentration of raptors in North America — the topic of the IdahoPTV production *THE VERTICAL ENVIRONMENT*. Nelson also helped establish the World Center for Birds of Prey. Nelson's own films and educational efforts helped people worldwide better understand birds of prey. His pioneering work on power pole modifications has saved hundreds of birds and cemented his reputation as one of America's foremost falconers and conservationists.

IDAHOPTV, COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS PROVIDED LIVE VIDEO/AUDIO STREAMING ON IDAHOPTV WEB SITE FOR HOUSE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE WATER HEARINGS

Idaho Public Television and its collaborators provided live video/audio streaming on the IdahoPTV Web site (idahoptv.org) during the Idaho House Resources and Conservation Committee hearings on the Snake River Water Rights Agreement in late February.

The hearings were scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday, February 22 and Wednesday, February 23 beginning at 1:30/12:30 p.m. MT/PT each day in Boise State University's Student Union Building.

The Web streaming component is a collaborative effort among Boise State University, University Television Productions (UTP), TTVV (the public access channel in Boise), Cable One and IdahoPTV.

HISPANIC LEADERS DEBATE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ON DIALOGUE

- Aired Thursday, February 24 at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT
- Repeated Sunday, February 27 at 5:30/4:30 p.m. MT/PT

This DIALOGUE program centered around a conversation between two Hispanic leaders about the costs and benefits of illegal immigrants. Humberto Fuentes, a board member of the Farmworker Justice Fund and former director of the Idaho Migrant Council, debated Canyon County Commissioner Robert Vasquez, who recently declared his county a “disaster area” due to the costs of providing health care and incarceration for some illegal immigrants.

The Idaho Senate Health and Welfare Committee recently killed a bill that would have capped the amount of money counties have to spend on health care for indigent illegal immigrants. But supporters vow to come back with another proposal, saying the issue is costing counties millions of dollars. Opponents of the legislation say illegal immigrants pay taxes and take jobs that others would not do, so they should receive some benefits.

On a national level, Senators Larry Craig and Edward Kennedy recently introduced the Agricultural Job Opportunity, Benefits and Security Act of 2005, known as “AgJOBS,” to address some concerns surrounding illegal farmworkers.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE C.L. “BUTCH” OTTER TALKED WITH DIALOGUE ON IDAHOPTV

- Aired Thursday, February 17 at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT
- Repeated Sunday, February 20 at 5:30/4:30 p.m. MT/PT

DIALOGUE host Marcia Franklin interviewed Representative C.L. “Butch” Otter. Otter talked about several national issues, including Social Security reform, Medicare and Medicaid. He also spoke of the recent arrest of his campaign manager on a charge of felony DUI.

Otter was re-elected in November to a third term representing Idaho’s First Congressional District. He also recently announced that he would be running to succeed Dirk Kempthorne as Idaho’s next governor. He is a member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the subcommittees on Trade and Consumer Protection, Energy and Air Quality, and Environment and Hazardous Materials.

RADIO PERSONALITY AND DISABILITY RIGHTS ACTIVIST GREG SMITH TALKED WITH DIALOGUE

- Aired Thursday, February 10 at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT
- Repeated Sunday, February 13 at 5:30/4:30 p.m. MT/PT

DIALOGUE host Marcia Franklin interviewed Greg Smith, who hosts the nationally-syndicated radio program, The Strength Coach, and is an activist for disability rights.

Smith was the subject of the national INDEPENDENT LENS film, “On a Roll,” airing on Idaho Public Television Tuesday, February 15 at 10:00 p.m. MT/PT.

Born with muscular dystrophy, Smith has never let his severe disability stop him from leading the life of an able-bodied person. He uses his radio program to broadcast his upbeat, tough and humor-filled message. The father of three children, recipient of several achievement awards, role model and active spokesman, Smith proves that an individual can live freely, despite having a disability.

On DIALOGUE he also talked with Franklin about disability rights and his perspectives on maintaining strength and dignity under difficult circumstances.

DIALOGUE FOR KIDS LEARNS ABOUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

— Aired live March 15 at 2:00/1:00 p.m. MT/PT

DIALOGUE FOR KIDS learns about wildlife management in March with Conservation Educator Gregg Losinski and Wildlife Manager Jon Rachael, both with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

Maintaining the environment to help wildlife survive is an important aspect of ensuring an ecosystem's health in the future. Scientists track fish, monitor bear, elk and deer populations through the winter months and study how animals use their environment.

Host Joan Cartan-Hansen, Losinski and Rachael take calls from students statewide on a toll-free line: 1-800-973-9800. Questions also may be sent by e-mail (dialogue4kids@idahoptv.org or via the DIALOGUE FOR KIDS Web site) or in advance by FAX (208-373-7245).

Gregg Losinski is the regional conservation educator for the Upper Snake Region. His job is to not only talk to students, but also teach teachers and the general public about fish and wildlife. Losinski assists with projects such as deer trapping or catching poachers; he also takes pictures and video for newspaper and television.

Jon Rachael is the regional wildlife manager for the Fish and Game's southwest region. During the last 10 years Rachael has participated in coordinating statewide management programs for deer, elk, antelope, black bears, mountain lions and gray wolves.

Additional information and links regarding wildlife management can be found at the DIALOGUE FOR KIDS Web site (idahoptv.org/dialogue4kids/). The broadcast program, in addition to being audio- and video-streamed live on the Web, also will remain available in the DIALOGUE FOR KIDS archive on the Web site.

DIALOGUE FOR KIDS, produced by Idaho Public Television, airs the third Tuesday of the month throughout the school year and focuses on a variety of science-related topics.

DIALOGUE FOR KIDS LEARNS ABOUT ELEMENTS OF ELECTRICITY

— Aired February 15 at 2:00/1:00 p.m. MT/PT

DIALOGUE FOR KIDS learned about all the elements of electricity. Russ Weedon, of Idaho Power Company and expert John Gardner joined host Joan Cartan-Hansen to answer student questions on air.

Electricity powers everything from computers to the lights in homes. Businesses, schools and homes all use electricity daily. How is electricity created, where does it come from and how does it get into the plug? Cartan-Hansen and guests answered these and many other questions.

Students who submit questions are automatically entered into a contest to win a set of science books for their class.

Additional information and links regarding electricity on the World Wide Web can be found at the DIALOGUE FOR KIDS Web site (idahoptv.org/dialogue4kids/index.html). The broadcast program, in addition to being audio- and video-streamed live on the Web, also will remain available in the DIALOGUE FOR KIDS archive on the Web site.

ONLY ONE MONTH REMAINS TO ENTER THE READING RAINBOW YOUNG WRITERS AND ILLUSTRATORS CONTEST

— Entry deadline is March 25

READING RAINBOW and Idaho Public Television are calling on kids to enter the 11th Annual Young Writers and Illustrators Contest. Children in kindergarten through third grade across the country are encouraged to submit stories to the contest.

Children interested in entering the contest should submit a story to his/her local Idaho Public Television station: KAID/KIPT in Boise, KISU in Pocatello or KUID/KCDT in Moscow. Entries are judged in Idaho and based on author's originality, creative expression, storytelling and integration of copy and illustrations.

The first place winners from each station will be sent to READING RAINBOW to compete with other station winners at the national level. Students compete for sets of READING RAINBOW DVDs and matching feature books.

Flyers promoting the contest have been distributed to schools and libraries.

To enter:

1. Get an entry form and rules at a public library, or at idahoptv.org/kids.
2. Submit a story with at least five illustrations. Stories should be between 50 and 200 words (kindergarten and first grade) and 100 and 350 words (second and third grade). Text can be dictated to an adult by a child who cannot write, and can be typed or handwritten.
3. Have a sponsoring teacher or parent sign the entry form granting permission to use the entry for promotional purposes. The signature is required to enter the contest.

See the IdahoPTV Web site (idahoptv.org/kids) for complete rules, entry form and to see the 2004 winners' entries.

READING RAINBOW, hosted by LeVar Burton, airs on Idaho Public Television weekdays at 2:30/1:30 p.m. MT/PT.

PUBLIC TV 'THANKFUL' FOR STATE FUNDING PANEL GIVES IPTV LESS THAN GOVERNOR ASKED

By Betsy Z. Russell, Spokesman-Review
March 1, 2005

BOISE – Though legislative budget writers cut nearly three-quarters of a million dollars from the governor's recommended budget for Idaho Public Television for next year, supporters of public TV said they were thankful for what they got.

"I'm very thankful to the state in times when the budget is very tight, that they've recognized the value of public television and the service that we provide to all parts of Idaho," said Peter Morrill, general manager.

The IPTV budget, pared back significantly but still aimed at partially funding pressing equipment-replacement needs, is typical of how the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee is approaching setting the state budget this year. The lawmakers have set a target of cutting back the budget from Gov. Dirk Kempthorne's proposed overall 6.7 percent increase to a 4.1 percent increase in general state tax funds.

"We're not going to put ourselves in a situation where we're forced to raise taxes next year," said Senate Finance Chairman Dean Cameron. "We're going to be very frugal. I think the committee is working very diligently, both sides of the aisle."

The IPTV budget plan Monday was proposed by a Democrat, Rep. Shirley Ringo of Moscow, and passed on a 17-3 vote. Most importantly, it fit within JFAC's target. Ringo's plan did that in part by tapping a reserve fund built up from a cigarette tax increase to pay for half of the cost to upgrade outdated broadcasting equipment at the network's main Boise studio – an expense the governor had planned to have the state cover next year with general tax funds.

IPTV will apply for a federal matching grant for the other half of the money. "The equipment has to be replaced – we'll be very aggressive at beating the bushes," Morrill said.

In fact, Morrill sat with two large, heavy Federal Express boxes in his lap as he watched the joint committee set his agency's budget Monday morning. The boxes contained piles of file folders that make up two major federal grant applications – both due in Washington, D.C., today.

The panel didn't include any matching funds for the second grant, which would pay for upgrading translator stations from analog to digital broadcasting. Morrill said he'll try to find private donations or other grants to pay for the \$10,000 local match on that grant.

Rep. Kathy Skippen, R-Emmett, said, "When you look at a lot of rural Idaho, we don't have access to cable. Public television provides an excellent service and a really quality product."

The only opponents of the budget plan were Reps. Dick Harwood, R-St. Maries; Mel Richardson, R-Idaho Falls; and Monty Pearce, R-New Plymouth. At least two of the three said they are against any state funding for public television because it competes with commercial TV.

Harwood said in an interview after the meeting, "I've never felt that any public dollars should go for competing against private enterprise. I think last year I voted for that, and I regretted it after."

But most of the JFAC members were supportive of Idaho Public TV. "Maybe it's my age, but I find very little on other television that I can watch," said Sen. Patti Anne Lodge, R-Huston. "I think that we need to support them." Cameron called Ringo's budget proposal, which Lodge seconded, "a creative approach that allowed us to help public television, and at the same time allowed us to keep within our target budget."

Also on Monday, JFAC set pared-down budgets for the Idaho State Library, the Idaho Transportation Department and the Public Utilities Commission. In the state library budget, the budget writers dipped into the public school technology budget for \$50,000 to keep operating the Libraries Linking Idaho database project, allowing the state library to keep about \$25,000 to buy books next year – otherwise, there would've been no money for books. "That's everything to a library," Cameron said.

The ITD budget had only minor reductions from the governor's proposal, as it uses no state general tax funds. ITD operates mainly with federal highway funds and direct funding from gas taxes.

So far, the most controversial budget decision has come in the state Commerce and Labor Department budget, where the joint committee eliminated the governor's plan to boost rural development funding. "I'm sure Commerce is disappointed," Cameron said, adding that the rural development program has "done a great job. ... But we aren't in a position where we can add additional resources to that budget at this point in time." Once the joint committee sets budgets, they're rarely amended or voted down in the full House or Senate. But the governor has been known to veto budgets he sees as inadequate.

The toughest decisions still lie ahead, on Medicaid and public education. The governor acknowledged that his Medicaid budget fell about \$20 million short for next year, in hopes that additional federal aid would materialize. So far, it hasn't.

On public schools, the governor's budget didn't anticipate an additional 90 classrooms worth of students enrolling this year, which is causing an \$11 million shortfall in the current year and an equal shortfall for next year. To meet JFAC's target, the public school budget for next year will have to be set at even less than the governor recommended.

Said Cameron, "It's going to be tough."

RINGO LOOKS AFTER PUBLIC TV AND STATE BUDGET BOTH

By Jim Fisher, Editorial Page, Lewiston Tribune, March 2, 2005

Last year's race for Shirley Ringo's seat in the Idaho House was [as] much a contest between committees as between candidates. Democrat Ringo ran on the promise she would inherit Lewiston Rep. Mike Mitchell's seat on the Legislature's budget committee, while Republican Earl Bennett campaigned on a leadership vow to put him on the House tax-writing committee. Ringo's victory made her a newcomer on the powerful spending committee, but Monday she showed that didn't turn her into a wallflower.

Ringo proposed an appropriation for the state's public television system that enabled it to replace half of its outdated equipment without exceeding the tight limits committee leaders have imposed to produce a state budget below Gov. Dirk Kempthorne's recommendation.

She did that by pulling money from a reserve fund containing money from a cigarette tax increase to finance the replacement. That prevented a likely futile attempt to spend the money from the state's general fund, and produced a bill that received support from 17 of 20 committee members.

The opposing minority comprised people like Rep. Dick Harwood of St. Maries who say tax dollars should not be spent to compete with commercial television.

That assumes public TV fare even tries to compete with the junk that fills commercial broadcasts. People who actually watch public television -- like Sen. Patti Anne Lodge, R-Huston -- know better.

"Maybe it's my age," Lodge said, "but I find very little on other television that I can watch."

Many of Ringo's constituents surely agree. Her Latah County district includes most University of Idaho employees and others who prefer "Dialogue" or "Nova" to "Desperate Housewives" or "Extreme Makeover."

It isn't just Moscow liberals who appreciate Ringo's innovative public TV budget, though. Committee Co-chairman Dean Cameron, R-Rupert, called it "a creative approach that allowed us to help public television, and at the same time allowed us to keep within our target budget." And Peter Morrill, general manager of the statewide broadcast system, said he was "very thankful" for the appropriation.

That tends to show that Ringo went beyond keeping a promise to serve on the budget committee. She has also become one of its promising members.