



FY2018

# Local Content & Service Report

To the community from WGCU

July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

WGCU Public Media  
2-12-19

*"We appreciate the in-depth reporting on all the issues and human interest stories. WGCU sustains democracy."*

*– Karen and Joseph, Ave Maria*

## Introduction

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## I. Local Value, Key Services, and Local Impact

The Mission of WGPU Public Media is to inspire, inform, educate, engage and entertain through the power of public media.



**WGPU Public Media is a valuable part of the Southwest Florida area.**

As a testimony to our local value, our membership grew to 16,384 in FY18 and we welcomed 4,865 brand new members.

With an enhanced focus on digital offerings, WGPU implemented a strategy in FY18 that best utilized our web and social media platforms. This resulted in wgpu.org serving 704,267 users (an increase of over 30% compared to FY17), 700,965 of which were new users.

FY18 - 540,577 users  
FY18 - 704,267 users



**In FY18, WGPU Public Media provided these key local services:**

WGPU serves all or some of Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, Sarasota, Desoto and Glades counties, which is an area comprising almost one-fifth of the state.

In FY18 WGPU-TV had the highest cumulative audience percentage in the nation, reaching over one million viewers in Southwest Florida. The station also consistently ranks among the most watched stations in the country in prime time. WGPU-FM serves more than 130,000 listeners weekly.



**WGPU Public Media local services had a deep impact in the Southwest Florida area.**

In FY18, WGPU worked with community partners on screenings, workshops, and special events including Artis Naples, Harry Chapin Food Bank, Barbara B Mann Performing Arts Center, Bleu Provence, The Club at Mediterra, Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Hilton Naples, IMAG History and Science Center, Lee County Library System, Millennium Brewing Co., The Naples Council on World Affairs, Naples Trust Company, Quarles & Brady, Sugden Theater, Sydney Berne Davis, Tarpon Bay Explorers, The Wine Store, Top Rocker Field at Six Bends, The Guadalupe Center, Collier County Library System, Lee County Library System, and St. Matthew's House.

## II. In The Community

### WGCU Public Media Local Productions & Engagement Efforts

During the last fiscal year, from July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, WGCU Public Media produced more than 359 hours of local content. The content aired on WGCU-TV and FM/HD radio. Local television programs were re-distributed to county schools and aired on local government television channels as well. All newscasts and programs are archived on [wgcu.org](http://wgcu.org) for access by teachers and students 24-hours a day. Highlights of our TV and radio productions, digital platforms and community outreach efforts are featured in this report.

### Producing Community-Focus Documentaries and Series

WGCU-TV produced 9.5 hours of local content that helped Southwest Floridians develop a meaningful understanding of our diverse region and a deeper sense of community. In FY18, WGCU was proud to add quality programming, including:

#### **FGCU at 20: The Beginning**

This program documents the challenges of creating a new university on the cusp of a new millennium in one of the fastest growing states in the country. Decades before Florida Gulf Coast University opened its campus in 1997, community leaders, legislators and higher education officials rallied to make the case for Florida's "tenth university" to be located in Southwest Florida. As the first university built in the Sunshine State since environmental permitting laws were enacted, **FGCU at 20** dives into FGCU's backstory and goes well beyond the signing of its authorizing legislation in 1991.

#### **Curious Kids Episode 117: Tolerance and Diversity**

In the latest installment of WGCU's award-winning children's program, the **Curious Kids** explore aspects of tolerance and diversity in Southwest Florida. Through their adventures, they learn about the history of early African American settlers in Punta Gorda, identify connections between inland and coastal communities, and discover how protecting habitats helps Florida Panthers, gopher tortoises, and numerous other species. The spirit of cooperation and inclusion that first inspired those early settlers lives on, reminding us how our shared history can serve as a foundation to building a bright and prosperous future.

#### **Joyful & Triumphant**

WGPU worked with FGCU's Bower School of Music Chamber Choir, University Choir and Symphony Orchestra to present the annual holiday concert **Joyful & Triumphant**. This yearly performance features traditional holiday favorites, familiar carols, and new works that capture the spirit of the season.

## Key Initiatives & Community Outreach Efforts

### **WGPU hosts signature event, Twisted Strings Music Festival, for the second year**

The second annual **Twisted Strings** outdoor festival brought together 762 people at Top Rocker Field at Six-Bends on Saturday, January 27, 2018. The crowd gathered to hear classically-trained musicians fuse years of musical training on stringed (and other) instruments with the sounds of jazz, blues, soul, rock, hip hop, and world music. Performers included *Laura's Auras*, *Simply Three*, and *The Family Crest*. This event was sponsored by community organizations including Sanibel Captiva Bank, Stock Development, and the Lee County Sheriff's Department. All photos and videos are documented on the [TwistedStrings.org](http://TwistedStrings.org) microsite.

### **Education and Outreach Highlights**



The Education and Outreach department conducted 17 educational workshops and presentations for parents, families and children. Our primary partners were Title I schools and area libraries. WGPU reached almost 200 adults and more than 705 children with these programs, as well as provided training to 246 teachers through 11 training sessions on PBS LearningMedia. Each led teachers through signing on to the system, examples of available resources, and a discussion of available teacher tools.

WGPU delivered a PBS Kids Wild Kratts Reading Nook to a public library in each of the five counties we serve. The nooks included fixtures, books and DVDs about animals and habitats.

**Kids Day at WGPU** was a free family event held at WGPU studios. Eighteen exhibitors came out to meet the 500 parents and children in attendance. There were activities, games, crafts and photo opportunities with four costumed PBS Kids characters.

The **On the Road with WGPU** travel series took its first journey to the Andrea Bocelli concert in Tampa in February. The second bus of fans attended the Tampa James Taylor concert in the spring.

WGCU also worked closely with the community to present four unique screenings: **Rare: Creatures of the Photo Ark** from PBS held at the Conservancy, WGCU original productions **FGCU @ 20** and **In Irma's Wake** held in studio, and a **Civil Discourse in a Polarized Society** live event hosted by WGCU News in March 2018.

### III. Gulf Coast Live

[Gulf Coast Live](#), WGCU's locally produced, call-in radio show, gives Southwest Florida listeners a chance to share their thoughts and connect to their community live on the air.

#### Notable Gulf Coast Live Segments

##### [Water Contamination in Lee County Reporters Roundup](#)

DEC 12, 2017

Over the past year three different local reporters have investigated three different complaints of water contamination in Lee County. WGCU's Jessica Meszaros uncovered arsenic in groundwater on Pine Island; News Press reporter Janine Zeitlin reported on contaminated well water in Charleston Park in Alva, and News Press reporter Patricia Borns reported on toxic sludge dumping in the Dunbar neighborhood in Fort Myers.



##### [Active Shooter Preparedness Training](#)

DEC 19, 2017

The term "active shooter" has unfortunately become all too familiar in recent years, as news reports from around the country bring stories of mass shooting incidents right into our homes. We're joined by staff officer Scott Griffith from the Lee County Sheriff's Office. He's presented dozens of active shooter preparedness training classes over the years to various groups around the county, including one he'll be giving later this week for representatives from faith based institutions to help them develop a plan for before, during, and after such an incident.



[Exploring the Breakdown in Civil Discourse in the U.S.](#)  
MAR 7, 2018

It's become increasingly apparent in recent years that talking to people with whom we disagree, either politically or socially, has become practically impossible. We've partnered up with Gulfshore Life Magazine to try to tackle the issue. We're joined by Jennifer Reed, she wrote this month's cover story called "Talk to me ... Please?" to find out what she learned from the many Southwest Floridians who she met while writing the article.



[Helping Kids After the Loss of a Parent or Sibling to Opioids](#)

JUN 26, 2018

Grieving the loss of a loved one is difficult for anyone, but when children lose a parent or sibling, the loss can be particularly profound. We're joined today by the Founder and CEO of a local non-profit called Valerie's House that works to help families and children struggling with loss. She says they've seen a spike in the number of kids who need help following the overdose death of a parent or sibling, and that right now about a quarter of children who need grief support is struggling with this situation.



## IV. Stories of Impact

### Breaking News Coverage

[Hurricane Irma Coverage in Southwest Florida](#)



Hurricane Irma coverage in September 2017. Power outages throughout the Southwest Florida region interrupted most television and radio broadcasts leaving WGCU as one of the only stations that stayed on the air. In conjunction with the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network, WGCU was able to provide live reports statewide often picked up by NPR. The Washington Post journalists embedded at the station produced a

short video about the team and posted nationally stating, "Ft. Myers radio station provides life-saving public service during Irma impact." The Florida Associated Press named WGCU **Radio Station of the Year** and the news team won a **National Edward R. Murrow Award** for live breaking coverage "Hurricane Irma Hits Southwest Florida."

## Documentaries

### [In Irma's Wake](#)

Hurricane Irma's violent path of destruction through Florida in September 2017 was historic in its magnitude. Nothing was spared its wrath including many of Southwest Florida's treasured landmarks, attractions and nature preserves. This program chronicles the efforts of the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, Naples Botanical Garden, The Naples Zoo, Everglades Wonder Gardens, The Calusa Nature Center, and the Six Mile Cypress Slough to rebuild and recover post-Irma.



### [Stories of Service: Gulf War Vets](#)

The Persian Gulf War (codenamed: Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm) officially ended on February 28, 1991. The conflict between Iraq and a United States-led coalition of 34 countries was mandated by the United Nations when Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990. Twenty-seven years after the war Southwest Florida veterans Terry "Chip" Carroll, Robert Carswell, Garry A. Gosfod, Robert Kamp, Michael Swartz and George Tice share their memories of service: braving daunting conditions, desert heat, and the threat of chemical weapon attack.



## V. WVCU Podcasts

WVCU was happy to introduce two brand new podcasts to our local content lineup in FY18. Launched in Spring 2018, **Three Songs Stories** and **Grape Minds** produced more than 19 hours of original content in 2018.

### Three Song Stories

Three Song Stories is an exploration of the power music has to connect us to times, places, people, and emotions from our lives. The show brings out the guests' personalities, and personal histories, by mining the connections music has made during their lifetimes. It's also a chance to sit back and listen to the eclectic mix of songs the guests have chosen for their ultimate musical memory short list.



### Grape Minds

A podcast that looks beyond the glass to the stories of winemaking, culture, and the history of the world's most intriguing beverage. Hosts Julie Glenn and Gina Birch will interview winemakers, talk with importers, and dig into the issues and nuances of wine in the modern world while always keeping it down to earth.

