

## Questions and Answers

### About KUNR's Updated Program Lineup

From KUNR General Manager David Stipech

#### Everything seems to be changing these days. Why is KUNR changing its program schedule?

Change of any kind is hard for people, especially after so many years of the same thing. Our programming is being updated to better meet the overall needs and expectations of our communities, to more appropriately serve a higher proportion of our audience with our limited air time.

#### How do you determine what listeners want?

Radio stations receive detailed survey data on local audiences ... when they're listening, when they're not, and what else they're listening to. Our audience research matches up exactly with what you – in increasing numbers and with increasing frequency – are telling us. We've listened, and we are moving in a positive direction to strengthen our broadcast schedule.

#### How do you keep everyone happy?

We can't. No single station can please everyone. KUNR's goal is to meet our listeners' needs to the highest degree possible. That's why we're working to attain the best blend of programming – balanced with the limited airtime available – to serve our listeners in the proper proportions.

#### Help me understand what's happening with classical music.

Throughout the country, listening to classical music on radio is continuing its years-long decline. That saddens and baffles some of those who enjoy it. As the trends have continued, many stations nationally have dropped classical music from its airwaves altogether for lack of a sustaining audience. Public radio stations have an obligation to serve their audiences in proportion to their needs and expectations.

#### Why move classical to the evening?

Evenings and nights are perfect for classical music, when it can be enjoyed while listeners are unwinding at home, perhaps over dinner or with a glass of wine or even a good book. Naturally, a high percentage of daytime radio listening occurs while people are driving in their cars. Even classical music aficionados aren't able to hear the delicate notes over engine and road noise. The evening hours are when every note can be savored.

#### Why doesn't KUNR just drop it altogether like so many other stations?

Actually, some would say we should drop classical music entirely, in favor of 24-hour news and information. That's not KUNR's desire and we hope it doesn't come to that, since no other station in the region airs classical music at all. It will depend on the degree that this programming is supported going forward. KUNR is committed to doing all it can to preserve classical music in keeping with its traditions, history, mission of broadcasting local arts-and-culture programming.

#### Describe KUNR's new evening classical music offering.

We believe classical music fans will be thrilled. KUNR's new evening classical music programming will truly be a thing of beauty. But you'll have to tune in to hear for yourself. Listeners will get their NPR headline news at the top of each hour, followed by truly the best classical music broadcasts you will hear anywhere. All in all, KUNR provides a relaxing and rewarding after-hours experience in full stereo with minimal interruption.

#### Jazz is also changing on KUNR's schedule. For the same reason?

Yes, as much as many of us enjoy jazz, it is facing the same drop in radio listening everywhere, and many stations are moving away from that, too. And with other northern Nevada stations offering various forms of jazz, and we can't justify devoting so many hours to jazz at this time. To meet the needs of those who enjoy jazz – and for those in outlying areas without other stations offering jazz – we offer a great new jazz program on Saturday night and overnight.

#### So why is radio listening for classical, jazz and other music declining?

As much as many of us may hate to face it, people's interests and lifestyles are changing – as is technology. With satellite radio, cable TV, Internet radio, vast CD collections, and now iPods and digital music downloading, listeners can hear exactly what they want, when they want it. Simply put, jazz, classical and all audiences are now much more fragmented with all the options today.

#### Opera is moving from Saturday mornings to Sunday nights. Why?

Many opera fans tell us that Saturday is an inconvenient time to sit in front of the radio for three and half hours, that many are out and about, busy running errands and so forth. That may explain why opera listening on Saturday mornings has been steadily declining in recent years. Working with the Nevada Opera Association, we've determined to offer the entire *World of Opera* broadcast Sundays at 8 p.m. To our disappointment, The Metropolitan Opera will not permit us to air *The Met* at this more convenient time due to its longstanding "live-only" policy. The Met can be experienced in theaters and heard via other radio stations on the Internet this coming season. NPR's *World of Opera* will air year-round (with some occasional local or alternative operas).

#### Why is there so much interest in news and talk programming?

Society's needs, interests and habits have changed. The vast majority of today's audience wants and expects a steady stream of conversation, news and information. Some blame it on CNN and the explosion of cable TV news some years ago, followed by the Internet's 24/7 reshaping of when and how we get our news. Regardless of how or why, the reality is that KUNR must migrate to a news-and-information daytime lineup to serve a higher percentage of its audience's needs and interests during peak times. And that means airing a strong lineup of news and information each weekday.

#### What other programs that are either shortened or not aired altogether?

For too long, KUNR has simply tried to do too much for any one station. As great as our variety of programs has been for smaller numbers of people, we've had to end some programs altogether and reduce the hours devoted to others based on listenership. I am sorry to those who will miss the shows.

#### Isn't radio these days all about corporations, ratings and money?

##### I thought public radio was different.

Public radio is different in that we're nonprofit stations that rely on our members for direct financial support. KUNR is licensed to the University and Nevada System of Higher Education, so there certainly is no broadcast mega-corporation involved. Yet it is true that every radio station – especially a public radio station – must have a sizeable audience to remain on the air. Because public radio stations rely so much on listener contributions, when people tune out or tune in elsewhere, it draws away the station's life blood. Before that is allowed to occur, it is wise management to ensure the station best serves its audience, works to increase the attractiveness of its programming, and ensures the station is financially viable in the long run.

#### How do I pass along my views to KUNR on the new programming?

We would welcome your positive comments of support or your respectful, constructive suggestions anytime. The best way to do so is via an e-mail to [feedback@kunr.org](mailto:feedback@kunr.org). Or write to: KUNR, Mail Stop 0294, University of Nevada Reno, Reno NV 89557. Thanks for your patience and support as we build a better, stronger station in the interests of the communities we serve.

## KUNR Welcomes The Diane Rehm Show

Monday - Thursday, 9-11 a.m.

Fridays at 10 a.m. following *Nevada Newsline*

For 25 years, *The Diane Rehm Show* has offered listeners compelling conversations with the world's most interesting and important people. During each hour, she invites listeners to join the conversation by opening the phones to their questions and comments on the topic at hand.

New listeners will quickly notice Rehm's manner of speaking. In 1998, she was diagnosed with spasmodic dysphonia, a neurological condition that causes strained, difficult speech. After finding treatment, she wrote several articles and produced a program about the little-known disorder. In her 1999 book, *Finding My Voice*, she talks about her childhood, marriage, broadcast career, and vocal difficulties.

Since 1995, NPR has distributed the award-winning program to stations across the nation; it is aired in Europe and Japan since via direct broadcast satellite, and heard on U.S. military installations around the world via Armed Forces Radio.