

Open For Business



WELV Returns to the Air!

For those who miss the call letters "WELV" and all it once represented – a local radio station run and staffed by local individuals who knew and cared about our community – the good news is that a new WELV is back on the air, broadcasting from the heart of Ellenville at 107.9 FM.

Thanks to a limited federal program begun in 2000 to grant restricted licenses to educational and community groups to build low-power (under 100 watts) FM transmitters for noncommercial educational broadcasting, the application to the FCC from the Ellenville Central School District was approved and funds were allocated by the school in time to build and operate the transmitter before the deadline date of April 30th. And so, WELV-LP is now official!

The application was initiated by former EHS teacher and media advisor/coordinator Dennis Warner. Former EHS student Eric Aiese (photo above, right), who was involved with the initial talks to go after the low-power license while still in high school and involved with EHS's audio/visual department, was instrumental in moving the process along while a student at Harvard, where he worked in radio during and after his schooling there, and is now a consultant to the Ellenville school for the radio station. Eric was also fortunate in his timing as he was able to reserve the historic WELV call letters just as they became available.

Critical to getting all things done in time was new teacher (TV/Radio) Tim Lukaszewski (photo, above, left), who began at EHS in October 2004. Although he had to get up to speed quickly in the cable TV studio, and handling other teaching chores, he saw the need to ensure the approval of the application before the end-of-April deadline. Eric and Tim were fortunate to locate David Groth of Radio Engineering Services in Rhinebeck, who was also passionate about helping low-power stations get off the ground, literally, by engineering and building the transmitters and antennas (see cover photo), and sourcing all the other broadcast equipment, which is now housed in the school's media room.

According to Tim, the school has authorized and spent roughly \$40,000 to date on all phases of the operation, from filing, engineering services, equipment, and payroll. Working at a furious pace, Tim and Eric got everything up and running in test mode before the April 30th cutoff date; by running several looped hours of music – selected by former DJ Eric – around the clock, they met the FCC requirements for proof of broadcast. Now, the plan is to bring in students and the community to generate more diverse programming, including capacity for emergency alert broadcasts, music, talk, events, etc., as a real locally-run and oriented radio station! For more information, call the EHS office at 647-0123. ☆



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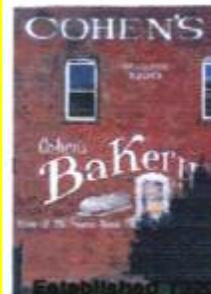
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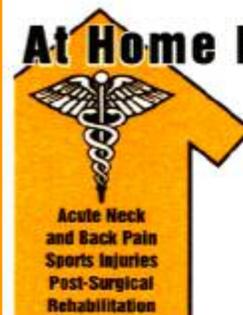
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