

from our readers

Public TV  
alive and well

To the editor:  
Let's not write public TV's epitaph just yet.

I read with interest your April 23 "Crackerbarrel Debate," "Public TV's ultimate test yet to come," and wanted to clear up a few things.

First, to get the facts straight, the \$723,000 that we raised in the annual auction was not short of last year's total. As reported in your own paper, it was a new record — \$679,000 having been last year's proceeds. Support has never been as high as right now. Nor has viewership and the public support that brings.

As you say, \$723,000 does not a tele-

vision station make. But let's not overlook the more than \$2 million in individual donations being sent in this year alone from the appreciative viewers of Channel 56. Those are the voluntary \$100 or \$50 or \$20 or \$5 or \$1,000 or \$1 that folks send in just to keep it all going. And that's 52 percent of the budget.

Auction adds another 17 percent. Corporate donations account for 10 percent. The federal government kicks in about 16 percent of the Channel 56 budget. Put it all together and multiply it by the 292 PBS stations (some smaller, some larger) in the U.S., and there is considerable public support — and considerable buying power.

So are we going to roll over and die just because there are new technologies available? No, we'll use those technologies to our advantage. We are,

in fact, developing our own pay-cable arts programming service for some first-run fine arts events which would then sell those programs to "free" public TV at lower cost for subsequent wider broadcasts. Also, we are encouraging cable systems to check out what we have to offer in the way of post-secondary educational credit courses. And soon we will be presenting a new service that will make us even more attractive to all-night TV watchers.

The challenges are there, but we're pretty scrappy. We survived 25 years with no guaranteed means of funding by being competitive. And we'll continue to. Is it a grim picture for Channel 56 and public TV? No way.

Thanks for your interest and support of us.

Daniel Alpert  
Vice President  
Public Information

Red Cross  
deserves  
praise for work

To the editor:  
I read with great interest your account of the fire at Kensington Manor which occurred about a month ago.

I am one of the residents who lost their home that day.

It is very traumatic to watch your home and possessions go up in smoke. I was lucky my losses were not as great as most of the other residents.

Your account was accurate, only one thing was missing and that is the part that the Red Cross Volunteers played

that day and I feel, as do all the others, that it should be told.

By 3 o'clock that day we all knew we would not be going back to our apartments again. Needless to say, there were many problems and some panic.

At 5:30 p.m. the Red Cross Volunteers were there with food and coffee. There was an R.N. taking care of those who needed special attention, blood pressures, getting vital medications out of their apartments (the firemen did the going in to get them).

Words cannot express the comfort these people brought to us. They contacted friends and relatives — made certain everyone had a place to sleep that night. They made arrangements at the Holiday Inn in Farmington Hills for those who didn't have immediate plans.

Ever walk into a Holiday Inn with a paper bag containing a robe and tooth brush? It's a funny feeling.

The Red Cross stayed for two days — the residents who were moving and anyone who came to help were welcome to go to the club house at anytime to eat or rest or whatever else they needed.

Most of us feel we really didn't have a chance to thank them enough for what they did.

It has been written that the good that man does lives after him, but I think only if someone mentions it.

We wish to thank each and everyone of the Red Cross Volunteers who helped us get through those two days.

We may have forgotten your names but never will we forget your many kindnesses.

This is living and giving in its purest form.

Clara Stevenson  
Farmington

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