The mission of Minnesota Public Radio regionally and American Public Media nationally is to enrich the mind and nourish the spirit, thereby enhancing the lives and expanding the perspectives of our audiences, and assisting them in strengthening their communities.
This year was a turning point in many ways for Minnesota Public Radio, both expected and unexpected.

We made significant progress toward achieving the goals of The Next Standard capital campaign, including expanding our headquarters, which will bring staff from three different buildings together for the first time. More people than ever engaged with us online and through our Public Insight Journalism initiative. We also launched a new music service, The Current, to invite younger, underserved audiences into public radio.

We brought world-class thinkers and performers to Minnesota, including journalist Thomas Friedman and the King’s College Choir from England. Just as our events extended our reach at home, American Public Media, our national production and distribution arm, connected us with new audiences beyond the region.

It was an eventful year—and the coming years promise to be just as exciting with changes in the way listeners access media and the way new technologies reach audiences across the state, nation and even the world. The increased need for civic dialogue and the demands of fueling a vibrant cultural community keep Minnesota Public Radio vital and growing.

This past year’s numbers speak to some of that growth: We continue to move toward a milestone listenership of 800,000 in the region and we hit a high of 14.7 million listeners nationwide; we’ve gained 9,000 new members through The Current, for an unprecedented total of more than 88,000; and we’ve welcomed nearly 20 new underwriters and foundations, underscoring the important role public radio plays in the community.

The future beckons on all fronts and we’re changing to meet the challenges and capture the exciting opportunities. Thank you for your support and for joining us in this undertaking to set The Next Standard in public radio—and public service.

William H. Kling, President
Creativity requires room to grow and take shape—a place to delve deeply into ideas and initiatives. In the context of radio, it also requires “many talented people and a tremendous amount of equipment, software and digital technology,” says Jon McTaggart, Minnesota Public Radio’s senior vice president and chief operating officer.

It’s with creativity in mind that Minnesota Public Radio made plans for a new state-of-the-art facility with more studios, more meeting rooms and more collaborative spaces. But the building itself is one part of a larger whole that encompasses Public Insight Journalism, a groundbreaking and highly collaborative approach to newsgathering; more arts and cultural programming and partnerships; and a digital archive to preserve our aural legacy and shared history.

The Next Standard builds on the trust of our audience and stretches our creativity for programming that is deeper and more relevant. All of these accomplishments serve to advance our mission of public service by enabling more collaboration between staff and with our audience.

**MEETING—AND SURPASSING—CAMPAIGN GOALS**

This year marked a turning point toward realizing the goals of The Next Standard. More than 6,200 contributors—individuals, organizations and
foundations, including challenge grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Kresge Foundation—helped us reach our 2005 goal of $46 million.

Participants in the Public Insight Journalism network doubled to 12,000, cultural partnerships expanded and the digital preservation of our vast audio archive took off with campaign seed money.

Thanks to momentum generated by contributors, the Minnesota Public Radio board of trustees voted to complete the building in 2006 and to revise the campaign goal to $51.5 million. The additional funds will be used to complete spaces not included in the initial budget, including the fifth floor offices and The Forum—a 120-seat, multi-purpose broadcast-ready space that’s integral to our role as a convening organization.

PREPARING FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND OUR REACH

Hundreds of thousands of audio files are accessed via the Minnesota Public Radio and American Public Media Web sites each month. Nearly 40,000 listeners use the live 24/7 Web streams. And digital radio, with its potential for multiple channels on a single frequency, presents the possibility to expand our public radio programming throughout the region. Minnesota Public Radio President Bill Kling says it succinctly when he talks about The Next Standard: “To maintain its effectiveness, Minnesota Public Radio has to change as much in the next five years as it has since its inception in 1967.” And we are.
“Radio is a great medium for expressing the impact of events—not just quoting people but hearing it in their voice,” notes News Director Bill Wareham. It’s a visceral connection that runs through Minnesota Public Radio’s comprehensive, in-depth coverage of key issues, from the 2004 presidential election to the achievement gap in the region’s public schools to the Northwest Airlines mechanics’ strike. The reach of the newsroom—and involvement of listeners in the newsgathering process—has never been greater.

COVERING CRITICAL ISSUES IN A NEW WAY

The award-winning series “Whose Recovery Is It?” which aired in September 2004, is a case in point. “It was a story we could not get any other way,” says Michael Skoler, managing director, news. “Usually we’d start with experts. In this case we started with listeners.” The series marked a watershed moment in the use of Public Insight Journalism in the Minnesota Public Radio newsroom, and it represented a broader shift toward more interaction with listeners—on air, online and, increasingly, in person. During the budget session, the Budget Balancer interactive tool was accessed 4,400 times. Over the course of the year, the Public Insight Journalism network doubled from 6,000 to 12,000 sources. While numbers don’t tell the whole story, they hint at the new ways that listeners are obtaining, using and shaping news coverage.

Two other projects—The Education Achievement Gap and The Future of Small Towns—engaged listeners in a conversation on the air, online
and in person, all with the goal of generating ideas and dialogue. The executive director of economic development for a southern Minnesota community who attended the small-towns forum wrote, “The sharing of ideas is a terrific way for all of us to be better at what we do, and who knows? Maybe one idea will work for me or for another community.”

CREATING A NATIONAL NETWORK OF SOURCES
Public Insight Journalism is also being incorporated into the programs we create with our national production and distribution arm, American Public Media—programs such as Marketplace Money™ and Weekend America® and our documentary unit, American RadioWorks®. And it continues to evolve. “For the first time [this year] we began connecting our public sources to each other and fostering an exchange,” Skoler says. “That’s something we’ll use The Forum [in the expanded headquarters] for—to let their interaction inform us.”

“Analysts solicit, distill and fact-check information from public sources. Then they pass the best information and sources to news staff, who do what they’ve always done: interview, research and produce balanced stories that get at the truth and put it in context.”

—MICHAEL SKOLER, MANAGING DIRECTOR, NEWS

LISTENER INSIGHTS
The Public Insight Journalism network includes public sources from all over the region. One of those sources, Mary Warner of Duluth, has contributed to nearly a dozen stories.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE?
“Whether you live in a box or a mansion or any dwelling in between, you have insights about the world based on your unique experiences. Public Insight Journalism allows you to share your thoughts with a wider audience.”

WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO PARTICIPATE?
“[Minnesota Public Radio] makes it easy to participate, sending periodic e-mails that ask a few specific questions about whatever topic they are covering.”

HOW HAS THE EXPERIENCE CHANGED THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT NEWS?
“Journalism should be about finding stories not just from the usual newsmakers, but from anyone who has something to contribute. ... And to know that everyone’s response is put in a database and the best ones are used for news stories makes me feel like the information is good.”
Under generator-supplied power, The Current went on the air at 9 a.m. on January 24, 2005 in the Twin Cities and Rochester. There was no running water and no electricity, but it didn’t dampen the excitement of those gathered around the studio to witness the launch of a new station. When DJ Thorn inaugurated the station with Atmosphere’s “Shhh”—a hip-hop song that extols the virtues of living in the Midwest—it spoke to The Current’s determination to provide a home for local music.

**OVERWHELMING LISTENER AND MEMBER RESPONSE**

St. Olaf College decided to sell its radio station to Minnesota Public Radio in August 2004. By December, Sarah Lutman, senior vice president for content and media, hired Program Director Steve Nelson and Music Director Thorn to develop Minnesota Public Radio’s third service. First up: determine the public service mission of the station. Lutman, Nelson and Thorn determined that The Current would be committed to playing new music across genres, eras and artists while supporting the local music community. The result: a station that plays music handpicked by a knowledgeable staff passionate about The Current’s mission to support local music.

Once The Current went on the air, listeners contributed more than $100,000 through the station’s Web site before there had been any on-air requests for donations. By the end of the year, 9,000 new members supported the station, bringing total membership to more than 88,000—the largest in Minnesota Public Radio history.

In its first rating period, The Current drew more than 170,000 listeners each week, a number that remains solid. “I am really excited by how much people love the station,” says Lutman. “People don’t just like it—when they talk to us, they love it.”
Along with recorded music, The Current augments its programming with numerous in-studio performances. By the end of the fiscal year in June, more than 75 local, national and international musicians visited Minnesota Public Radio.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY ON AND OFF THE AIR
“A radio station like The Current can make the Twin Cities a better place to live,” says Nelson. “That’s a really lofty goal when you’re thinking about playing records on the radio, but a great radio station can make a difference in people’s lives.”

Beyond the music, The Current’s mission is to empower listeners to strengthen their communities and draw a younger audience to public radio—and public service. One way is through sponsorship of events and activities that build a commitment to public service. More than 150 dedicated volunteers staff events for the station throughout the community. By being so visible, The Current wants to be part of people’s lives, not simply a music station.

The Current’s Web audio stream has expanded listenership around the globe, too. One listener even e-mailed a request while listening to The Current online, aboard a transatlantic flight. Further proof of a growing audience for local music both in the region and beyond.

“"The Current is exactly what radio should be—great music, music that’s new, music that pushes boundaries and broadens horizons.”

—MEMBER JAMIE VIGNESS, COON RAPIDS, MINN.
“Classical Minnesota Public Radio creates for the radio audience what it’s like to be there,” says Dale Johnson, the artistic director of the Minnesota Opera, one of Minnesota Public Radio’s longstanding cultural partners. Exactly where “there” is depends. It could be Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis or Royal Albert Hall in London. Cantus, Lyra Baroque Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Music@Menlo, The BBC Proms, World Choral Symposium … audiences consistently hear the best from the region and around the world.

“People use the request program to mark milestones,” says Ousley. “I’ve seen everything from the birth of a child to the death of a grandparent. It’s a way to celebrate and remember.”

Ousley frequently receives requests from educators and music students, which is particularly satisfying because of the sense of ownership in the music expressed by many younger listeners.

Case in point: A student requesting *Marche Miniature Viennoise*, wrote: “I would like to hear this piece because I just discovered it and am determined to learn it ASAP! I am 10 years old, and I think I can do it!”

“Our job is to become part of the fabric of people’s everyday lives,” says Don Lee, managing editor of cultural programming. It’s a shared experience of music and the community of listeners who value it as a source of inspiration, information, conversation and more. And with a new features producer, Karl Gehrke, Classical Minnesota Public Radio continues to create more points of contact between listeners, the music and the broader community.
That relevance to listeners’ lives happens at all kinds of levels, says John Birge, senior program manager and on-air host. “It happens every time we open a mic and talk about the weather, the SPCO, the new Walker, Pawlenty’s opposition to a poet laureate, Jeune Lune winning a Tony, Bill Eddins leaving for Edmonton, Osmo Vänskä’s contract renewal, or about the origins of the music itself. … It’s a large part of how we add value to our music.”

BRINGING A WORLD OF CLASSICAL MUSIC TO THE REGION
The interaction extends beyond the airwaves, too. Listeners connect with hosts online with the Comparing Notes classical music blog featuring personal perspectives on the world of classical music.

The past year local audiences gathered at The Cathedral of Saint Paul for a sold-out Christmas concert by the acclaimed King’s College Choir from Cambridge, England. And listeners continue to gain perspective from the conversations with world-class musicians performing on Saint Paul Sunday® on the cusp of the program’s 25th anniversary.

“The influence of a robust cultural scene is an important part of what makes Minnesotans love living here,” says Sarah Lutman, senior vice president for content and media. “We consider it a birthright. But actually, it’s a delicate balance that needs to be nurtured and fostered every day.” And with a network of 17 classical music stations throughout the region and numerous active cultural partnerships, Classical Minnesota Public Radio is playing a vital role in connecting the community of listeners to the best classical music.

“My kids wake up to the classical station. … It’s a wonderful way to expose them to great music and ideas, and it’s great for me too!”

—MEMBER ELLEN BITTNER, MINNETONKA, MINN.
These days, listening is just one way audiences interact with Minnesota Public Radio. Depending on the time of day and what device is closer at hand—radio, computer, digital audio player—audiences look for content in different formats. And Minnesota Public Radio continues to respond to this ever-increasing demand.

**AUDIENCES LISTEN LONGER WITH STREAMING AUDIO**

Listening used to extend from the driveway to the parking lot for many listeners, with an occasional visit to the Web around noon. But with access to live online streams increasing, many listeners are extending their public radio experience past the morning commute and into the evening, competing with television’s “prime time” between 7 and 10 p.m.

Half of all radio listeners stream audio online at least once a month according to a recent survey. And with more than 700,000 visitors each month to the Minnesota Public Radio and American Public Media Web site, Minnesota Public Radio made aggressive plans to launch live continuous Web streams for all three regional radio services.

The increasing use of the Web to access Minnesota Public Radio comes through loud and clear in feedback from listeners. In the words of one longtime listener: “I’ve grown up listening to Minnesota Public Radio, and a month ago I moved to London for grad school. I’ve discovered Minnesota Public Radio online! Despite the six-hour time difference, I still get to hear nearly all my favorite programs.”
Even with increased use of new technologies, Minnesota Public Radio stayed true to our broadcast roots and mission to strengthen communities regionwide by providing listeners in Roseau and Blue Earth with new booster stations in June 2005.

INTERACTIVE FEATURES ENGAGE LISTENERS ONLINE
Perhaps the single greatest advantage of the Web is the possibility for interaction—to engage listeners in new ways. Online features of all three radio services harness this potential, from blogs to forums to interactive tools.

We introduced the Comparing Notes blog, offering personal perspectives on classical music. The Current’s audience stayed involved in the development of the station before its official launch, via Sarah Lutman’s daily blog which generated as many as 200 responses a day. And listeners continued to post comments to a variety of forums.

THE DEMAND FOR ON-DEMAND ACCESS TO PROGRAMMING
Podcasting is another way audiences are extending the listening experience. And with high-definition (HD) radio—which makes it possible to broadcast three channels on a single frequency—now in place at our Twin Cities stations and, soon, across the region, the potential for a greater variety of programming will grow exponentially. Cost is a significant issue due to the expensive nature of new technologies, but we are committed to finding revenue sources that allow us to respond to audience needs. As new ways of listening and accessing information evolve, Minnesota Public Radio is right there with them.

“Minnesota Public Radio is increasing its touch points with listeners and members by being where the audience is—in the car, at work on the computer and at home.”—MICHAEL BETTISON, DIRECTOR, INTERACTIVE MEDIA
American Public Media

A NEW NATIONAL PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION ARM DEBUTS

Minnesota Public Radio has been sharing its innovative programming such as Speaking of Faith®, Marketplace®, Saint Paul Sunday® and A Prairie Home Companion® with public radio listeners outside the region for years. In July 2004, we launched American Public Media, our new national production and distribution arm, to improve our ability to support that programming, reach more listeners and develop new programming more efficiently. Early in American Public Media’s first year, programming with deep roots in the region was reaching 14.5 million weekly listeners via 738 stations across the nation.

A YEAR OF FIRSTS FOR AMERICAN PUBLIC MEDIA

The year brought many “firsts,” starting with a new business model that allows American Public Media to build relationships directly with partner stations and contribute to their success. Those relationships are not only delivering quality programming to audiences across the nation, but also playing a role in developing new programs that expand the boundaries of public radio.

Weekend America®, which debuted as a new national program in October 2004, works with station content partners to engage listeners with shorter pieces on a range of topics—a format innovation that fits listeners’ weekend lifestyles. In less than a year, more than 129 stations picked up Weekend America, allowing hosts Barbara Bogaev and Bill Radke to bring the conversation to more than 580,000 people each week.
CREATING INTERNATIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE PARTNERSHIPS

Another first: a live broadcast from the Last Night of the Proms, part of the largest classical music festival in the world. The broadcast was made possible because of American Public Media’s new relationship with the European Broadcast Union. American Public Media, one of a small group of leading public service broadcasters in North America, joined the organization as an associate member, opening up programming possibilities for audiences regionally and nationally—and for audiences abroad to hear our programming.

Some American Public Media programs achieved firsts of their own. Speaking of Faith welcomed an Iraqi delegation to its studios in April for a conversation with host Krista Tippett about the political and social implications of religion and belief. The program also won its first Webby award—the “Oscar® of the Internet”—in May.

A NEW START FOR MARKETPLACE MONEY

The year ended with a farewell from Marketplace host David Brown whose spot was filled by Kai Ryssdal, the voice of Sound Money (which changed its name to Marketplace Money™ to align the programs more closely). The new voice and new era of collaboration between Marketplace programs means listeners can expect an irreverent, witty take on money that extends from your wallet to Wall Street.

The story of American Public Media starts in the region and circles back time and again. Its foundation comes from the strong support that has made Minnesota Public Radio the source of innovative and thoughtful programming for audiences in the region—and beyond.

“Thanks so much for helping us make the new schedule a reality! We couldn’t have done it without you … All the American Public Media program producers and hosts have been very helpful and professional.”

—ROBIN GEHL, VICE PRESIDENT FOR PROGRAMMING, WVXU, CINCINNATI

INTERGALACTIC PUBLIC MEDIA?

A Prairie Home Companion reaches for the stars

When astronauts are sent to work on the International Space Station, they are granted certain requests to make their lives easier during their missions. For astronaut John Phillips, his request prior to his spring 2005 liftoff was to be able to receive his favorite radio program, A Prairie Home Companion, in space.

“It’s just remarkable,” says Chris Kohtz, American Public Media’s director of distribution. “It shows how public radio programming creates a sense of place. John Phillips wants to hear this show while he’s in space…. That speaks to the power of Garrison’s storytelling and the power of the program.”
During our 2005 fiscal year, Minnesota Public Radio seized the opportunity to launch our newest music service, The Current, by acquiring two radio stations that serve the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area and Rochester, Minn.

As a result of one-time start-up costs related to the new radio stations, our operating net assets decreased $540,000—leaving an ending net asset balance of $50,000 in our Operating Fund. Minnesota Public Radio’s Operating Fund is used to record our day-to-day activities. See the graphs to the right for additional financial highlights of Minnesota Public Radio’s Operating Fund.

Temporarily restricted net assets decreased $8.9 million, due mostly to the utilization of contributions made to Minnesota Public Radio’s The Next Standard Capital Campaign.

Also reported is consolidated activity for Minnesota Public Radio’s 2004 fiscal year, when we placed the proceeds of $6.4 million from the sale of a commercial radio station, WMNN 1330-AM, into the APMG Endowment for Minnesota Public Radio, all of which was reported in the Property Fund.

The complete audited report for Minnesota Public Radio can be found online at www.mpr.org.
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| Total Consolidated     | 2005                   | 2004                   |
|                       | $ 11,452                | $ 10,580               |
| Royalties and licensing fees | 7,430                 | 5,909                  |
| Other earned revenue and investment return | 8,237                 | 4,764                  |
| Support from governmental agencies | 737                   | 712                    |
| Support from the public | 2,076                 | 793                    |
| Royalties and licensing fees | 5,385                 | 4,947                  |
| Other earned revenue and investment return | 1,289                 | 552                    |
| Support from governmental agencies | 392                   | 413                    |
| Royalties and licensing fees | 429                   | -                      |
| Other earned revenue and investment return | $ 1,404               | $ 37,427               |

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<td>Total Programming and Operating Expenses</td>
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Minnesota Public Radio has a rich tradition of financial support from individuals, families, corporations and foundations throughout the Upper Midwest and the nation. We at Minnesota Public Radio are grateful to each of the 88,290 individuals, families, corporations and foundations who generously ensured the achievement of our mission to engage listeners, expand perspectives and strengthen communities in fiscal year 2005 (July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005) through their annual financial support. On the following pages, we are pleased to recognize our leading supporters.
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The mission of Minnesota Public Radio cannot be realized without the tremendous support extended to us by these contributors. In fiscal year 2005 (July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005), 89 local, regional and national corporations, foundations and government agencies made philanthropic grants to support the annual programs and services that fulfill our mission. Within each category, contributors are listed in descending order of their financial support. Underwriting support from local, regional and national corporations is listed separately on this page. We sincerely appreciate the partnership and financial commitment of the following organizations.

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The goal of The Next Standard capital campaign is to raise $51.5 million for expansion of the Minnesota Public Radio production and editing facilities, and The Forum—a broadcast venue for discussion and debate—and to support three content initiatives: Public Insight Journalism, music, and arts and culture programming, and conversion of our audio archives to digital format. Minnesota Public Radio wishes to express our gratitude to the following individuals, families, corporations, foundations and organizations for their leadership support of The Next Standard through November 30, 2005.

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- National data contained in the annual report are Copyright Arbitron, Inc., Persons 12+, ACT1 Systems Nationwide Data, DMA, MSu 6a-12m, Fall 2004.
- Regional data are Copyright Arbitron, Inc., Persons 12+, PSA Data, MSu 6a-12m, Fall 2004.
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Radio listener habits survey provided by MediaSpan Group, www.mediaspangroup.com/pr051024.htm

Web data are Copyright Nielsen//NetRatings. The reported numbers are monthly averages of September 2004-June 2005.