

Patti McGettigan, News Director WOOD 8

I'm sure you're all happy to see me. I would like to first of all thank Jeff for creating this forum and I do think it is of value and I did take copious notes tonight. But I don't feel like you want me to defend my position, I don't think that's what this is for. I think it's for us to learn, to know how to do the work that we provide you better everyday and I think you can play a critical role in that. I heard some refrains that were repeated frequently, local elections; pardon me if I'm nervous, this is not the friendliest audience I've ever spoken in front of. We Cover fourteen counties so for us to cover every local election the way that you would like us to cover it, we wouldn't have time to cover the war in Iraq, we really wouldn't. I mean we can't.... (crowd interruption)... I mean we can't cover the library commission in every little township and community that we cover. We are broadcasters; we are not your local newspaper. That doesn't mean I didn't listen to you or I don't want to learn from you, I'm just trying to say that some of it is a struggle that we struggle with on a regular basis. We struggle ourselves, and I think the internet has been a fabulous tool for us. We hear a lot from our viewers though the internet and it opens a lot of conversations and I encourage all of you to exercise that. Pick up the phone and call us but internet seems to be an easier way you can fire off an e-mail to some one and it's easier to accomplish than telephone. And that's helpful to us. I really do find that helpful and I find your comments helpful, but again like I said, I don't want to go through and defend every point because I'll just start what almost got started here, and that is that you'll disagree with my stance on it. What I'm trying to tell you is that I am open to this, I am open to this conversation, I encourage my staff to be open, I encourage them to talk to the viewers that call, that e-mail, that write. I've had conversations with Jeff in the past about studies that have been done on the local news and he's been open to my input, which I really appreciate. Somebody made a comment about the five thirty, to put those stories on at six and eleven. We have more viewers at five thirty than all the other stations combined, so it's not reaching a small audience in my opinion. And we can't fit everything as six and eleven; we have a limited amount of time. Another great resource that I want to mention briefly for local elections is woodtv.com. We don't have the same resources to devote to it that we do to our on-air product and we use it just like that. We did a very extensive voter guide allowing all of the candidates to submit their information, their profiles, fill out surveys and information. That is a great place for people to go and we would talk about that frequently on air. We have more space, more availability to do those kinds of things there than we do on air. So we only have a limited amount of time on our air, that's been an incredible extension for us over the last ten years that has grown and will continue to grow. So, I do appreciate your time, I appreciate all of your comments. Like I said, I really took a lot of notes and I'm going to take these back and have a lot more conversations and I thank you for coming.