

Welcome to WSLR-LP 96.5

Sarasota's Community Grassroots Radio Station



Thanks for volunteering at WSLR.

Volunteers have been the heart and soul of WSLR since we began in 2005. Volunteers do almost everything that needs to be done here and we couldn't operate without people like you.

There are four steps to becoming an active volunteer at WSLR:

- Attend a Volunteer Orientation
- Fill out a Volunteer Application Form
- Meet with the station staff
- Complete your first volunteer shift

WSLR is a home to people of various races, ages, political philosophies, sexual orientations, lifestyles and abilities. In an atmosphere of such diversity (coupled with radio's tendency to attract strong personalities) constant tolerance, respect, and good humor are essential. Attitudes of racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, or condescension will not be tolerated at WSLR. Violation of this policy can result in immediate dismissal.

What is Community Radio?

In 1949 a new kind of radio station went on the air. It was KPFA in Berkley, California, the first of five Pacifica Foundation flagship stations. The concept of listener-supported radio was pioneered by Pacifica's founder, Lew Hill. Friends told him he was crazy, but Hill was banking on the idea that noncommercial, listener-supported, community radio was worth paying for.

Pacifica's philosophy broke new ground, striving to "encourage and provide outlets for the creative skills and energies of the community... to conduct classes and workshops... to serve the cultural welfare of the community... to contribute to a lasting understanding between nations and between the individuals of all nations, creeds and colors... to gather and disseminate information on the causes of conflict between any and all of such groups... to promote the study of political and economic problems, and of the causes of religious, philosophical, and racial antagonisms... to obtain access to sources of news not commonly brought together in the same medium..."

Pacifica offered news, public and cultural affairs, and music never before dared on radio: the avant-garde, the unpopular, the controversial, and the in-depth, hard hitting investigations. All this occurred in the face of legal and political attacks which threatened its very existence.

What is Low Power Radio?

In 2000, the FCC created a new category of radio station license: low power FM. These licenses would be granted to non-profit groups for the purpose of operating 100 watt stations that would bring localism and diversity back to radio.

The History of WSLR-LP 96.5

During the four day window allowed by the FCC for license applications five organizations applied for low power frequency 96.5 in Sarasota. Bo Bentele, Sarah Kell and David Beaton negotiated a settlement between two of these parties, The Sanctuary and the New College Student Alliance (NCSA), whereby The Sanctuary withdrew their application and combined forces with the NCSA, allowing the NCSA application to move forward. In February 2004 the NCSA was awarded a construction permit for a low power station.

A new 501c3 organization, WSLR, Inc, was formed to govern the station with a board consisting of community representatives and New College representatives. The board worked for a year and a half establishing the bylaws and procedures by which the station would be governed, and raising the funds for construction and purchasing necessary equipment.

On the last weekend of July 2005 volunteers gathered, and with the help of technical staff from Prometheus Radio (Andy and Sarah) and local engineer Sara Allen, the studio was constructed at 3706 Royal Palm Avenue and the tower was raised at Camp Rick.

In August 2005 WSLR made its first live broadcast and received its FCC license. In February 2011 the station license was officially transferred to WSLR Inc.

Our Mission Statement

WSLR is an innovative, listener supported, non-profit, non-commercial FM radio station dedicated to serving the Sarasota community.

WSLR features locally produced programming and events that present cultural, artistic, and political perspectives currently underrepresented in the media.

Our goal is to inform and empower listeners to play an active role in WSLR and the community. WSLR's programming promotes equality, peace, sustainability, democracy, and social and economic justice.

WSLR's Structure

WSLR is governed by the Board of Directors and their associated committees, and by Staff/Programming committees that implement policy. Board members are elected by the voting membership and serve two year terms. Board meetings are open to the public and are currently held monthly on the third Monday at 7.00 pm.



WSLR Board of Directors

Volunteers are encouraged to serve on one of WSLR's advisory committees. In committees, volunteers, staff, and board members work together to generate new ideas, plan events, and solve problems.

Programming Committee:

This committee evaluates incoming program applications and current programming. 4 members appointed by Board, 3 elected by programmers.

Marketing Committee:

Develops and implements strategies to build audience, membership, public image, and community relations. The Public Relations Team, Photography and Video Team, Writing and Newsletter Team, and the Social Networking Team work under the umbrella of the Marketing Committee.

Event Planning Team:

This committee approves special events within parameters set by staff, evaluates events, and helps with marketing and coordination.

Studio Team:

This team keeps the studio and office clean and presentable, and keeps information boards current.

Operations Committee:

The Emergency Preparedness Team and Technical Team work under the umbrella of this committee. These teams work to maintain the studio and transmission equipment, and to ensure station is ready to stay on the air during emergency situations.

WSLR Staff

WSLR has only one full-time position: that of Station Manager. The Station Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of WSLR, dealing with legal and licensing issues, personnel management, and is the liaison between the staff and the Board. Arlene Sweeting currently serves as our station manager. She can be reached at 941-894-6469 or at info@wslr.org

The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for recruiting, orienting and scheduling volunteers, and is the liaison between volunteers and WSLR as a whole. Joe Hendricks is our volunteer coordinator. Please contact him with questions, concerns and ideas about volunteering at 941-894-6469 or volunteer@wslr.org



Standards for the WSLR Community

WSLR's mission statement espouses the values of peace, justice, democracy, sustainability, and equality. It is the intention of WSLR to live up to these ideals both on-air and in our off-air interactions as a community of volunteers, staff, and board. In this way, WSLR intends to create a workplace free of all forms of discrimination, harassment, abuse, and intimidation.

Here are some very basic house rules that have been developed to facilitate our community's ability to work together. The house rules apply to all people at WSLR whether volunteers, staff, or guest; they are rooted in respect for self, each other, and the organization as a whole.

Communicate your needs directly:

Do you have questions about process, how to voice ideas in a meaningful way, training or decisions? Talk to the Volunteer Coordinator. If you are a board member, the Board President would be the best person to ask for clarification; if you are a staff member, ask the Station Manager.

Talk directly with someone who has offended you:

Sometimes people can communicate hurtful things without thinking about the emotional effect it can have on others- often what is perceived is not what is intended. We encourage direct communication to resolve misunderstandings at an early stage. If this doesn't work out, talk to the Station Manager.

Be a team player:

Clean up after yourself. Turn off lights. Recycle. Don't use WSLR phones or equipment for personal use. Consider chemically sensitive co-workers and avoid scented personal care products. Respect those with allergies and leave your pet at home. Be professional and welcoming at the station and when representing WSLR in public.

WSLR Community Standards continued

No verbal violence will be tolerated:

That is defined as yelling, shouting, hurtful words (racial or gender-based epithets) threatening language (alluding to retaliatory actions, intimidation, or threat of physical violence), and being personally disparaging to a group or individual while in the building.

No physical violence will be tolerated:

Weapons do not belong in the workplace and will not be allowed at WSLR. Use of any weapon or threat of such will result in immediate termination from WSLR. Physical aggression and intimidation are not appropriate or permissible.

Take care of the equipment:

Remember that you are responsible for all equipment that you use. Volunteers agree not to repair, adjust, or alter equipment without the express prior approval of station management. Report all equipment failures. If you willfully damage or lose equipment you must compensate the station. Failure to do so may result in suspension or termination.

Enforce the station access policy:

It is up to everyone at WSLR to observe the access policy. After 5.00pm and on weekends, no unauthorized visitors should be allowed into the station. Authorized visitors will be placed on an access list. Understand that you are responsible for any guest that you bring with you.

Smoking, alcohol and drugs:

Smoking, alcoholic beverages, and illegal drugs are strictly prohibited on the premises of WSLR, including the studio. Persons violating any part of this policy will be subject to dismissal.

Taking care of our community is EVERYONE'S business!

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

You have the right to:

- Be kept informed of what is going on at WSLR.
- Receive training and continuing education.
- Be treated as a co-worker, not just free labor.
- Get constructive feedback about your work.
- Participate in a variety of volunteer duties.
- Serve on committees and have a say in planning.
- Appropriate recognition for your efforts.
- Recommendations and job references from the staff.

You are expected to:

- Keep your contact info current.
- Follow the guidelines established by WSLR.
- Be dependable. We are relying on you to fulfill your commitments.
- Notify us in advance if you need a substitute.
- Represent WSLR in the community in a positive and welcoming way.
- Take care of the shared equipment.
- Share the work. No one is too important to take out the trash or clean the studio.
- Be tolerant and respectful.
- Provide constructive feedback to management.

If you can't be good, be nice.

So now what?

There are many ways to help at WSLR, and always more jobs than volunteers.

A few specific needs are outlined below:

Receptionist: Receptionists are the hub of the station, ensuring that messages are received and people are directed to where they need to go.

Event Coordinators: Help make sure our special events run smoothly.

Special Event Volunteers: Help with events- ticketing, stagehands, setup and take down, food and beverage, and clean up.

Downtown Farmer's Market Coordinator: Ensures that we make the most effective use of our monthly Farmer's Market appearance.

Newsletter Staff: Write and edit articles for our quarterly newsletter.

Music Librarian: Keep our music library organized.

Citizen Reporter: Report on local news and events.

Newsletter Mailout: Help with quarterly newsletter mailing.

WSLR Historian: Archive press clippings and photos.

Social Networking Coordinator: Make sure our Facebook and Twitter site are being used most effectively.

Technical Trainers: Teach audio editing, podcasting skills etc. to others.

Pledge Drive Phone Support: Answer phones during our on-air fund drive.

Outreach: Staff the WSLR table at community events.

Programming: Do you have a passion for music that you want to share with WSLR listeners? Is there news or information you think WSLR listeners would appreciate hearing about? If you have an idea for a show we want to know!

But when do I get a show?

There is no simple answer. Because our on-air volunteers are the voice of WSLR in the community, it is important for you to be a part of the station as a whole. The first step is familiarizing yourself with the entire station- become an active volunteer and sign up for training. Talk to other volunteers and programmers about what they do, and ask about mentoring and partnership opportunities. Eventually you can submit a detailed proposal to the Programming Committee. Remember that there are only 168 hours in a week and program slots don't open up often. If this is your only reason for volunteering at WSLR you will probably get frustrated and lose interest before an opening comes your way, but if you take the time to get acquainted with us and explore other volunteer opportunities you're sure to find it worthwhile.

Thanks for your interest in WSLR Community Radio. We sincerely hope you find your experience at WSLR enjoyable and enriching. Please let me know how you're doing, and if you have suggestions to help us improve.

Arlene Sweeting, Station Manager

