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Central Vermont Community Radio

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**WGDR, Plainfield Celebrates 50 Years**

*WGDR is the 2nd oldest community radio station in the country and is Vermont’s biggest and oldest community radio station.*

A group of people posing for a photo

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Photo Credit: Central Vermont Community Radio - WGDR/WGDH's community programmers, March, 2024.

*Monday, April 29, 2024 – Plainfield, VT*:

WGDR, Plainfield has broadcast at 91.1 FM since the late spring of 1973 across the hills and hallows of Central Vermont. To celebrate reaching 50 years on the air, Central Vermont Community Radio will host a special birthday weekend of live and local programming, May 17-19 on 91.1 FM and 91.7 FM, WGDH, Hardwick, (the second station of CVCR). Folks from further afield can listen at WGDR.org or later via the archives. Programming will feature interviews with past programmers and station managers, live musical and DJ performances, and other surprises. The weekend will also include a “gift to WGDR” challenge to listeners to raise $2,500. Each dollar raised will be matched by a combination of the CVCR Board and sponsors of the weekend celebration.

**Saturday, May 18, CVCR invites the whole listening community to come to the station for a “Party at the Pratt,” from 3-5pm.** There will be live bluegrass music, tours of the station, food, and a chance to meet the nearly 75 programmers and other station volunteers who are part of WGDR/WGDH today. The WGDR studio is located on the Goddard Campus at the Pratt Library. Specific directions are available at WGDR.org.

“We are so excited to celebrate this incredible milestone for WGDR,” said station manager Llu Mulvaney-Stanak. “So many Vermonters have a connection to the station as a listener or as a past or current programmer or friend of someone who does a show. Now under community ownership, the station has flourished by centering the community in all we do on the air and how we run the station day to day. We are eager to have listeners come meet the WGDR of “today” at the birthday party.”

Over the last five decades, the station has been a critical way for Vermonters access to the airwaves to share their views, talents, and engage in civil discourse. Hundreds of local folks have hosted shows including highly curated music shows, call in shows about gardening, interviews with local leaders and organizers on the matters of the day, and the everyday needs of the community, from missing dog alerts to mutual aid information.

The station is also a key source of alternative news and national programming that can’t be heard anywhere else on the dial. This includes being the first to broadcast “Democracy Now” in the state and a continued commitment to airing public affairs analysis that digs into issues of climate change, food systems and security, organizing for social justice and just change, and more.

Erica Heilman, producer of Rumble Strip and member of the CVCR Programming Committee remarked: “Community radio is what the local community sounds like. The local stories, the good, the bad, and the oddities of our collective experience as a community, the obscure musical tastes. It all comes together as a truly unique listening experience that delights and surprises you every time you tune in. What is happening on WGDR and WGDH right now is some of the best radio you will hear anywhere.”

The station was built and operated by Goddard College for nearly 50 years, first as a college station, and then in the 2000s, as a community station focused on an educational mission. In late 2020, Goddard initiated the gift of the station to the local community via the new non-profit, CVCR. It was approved in May of 2021. A gift of a station is very rare nationally, and CVCR is forever grateful to Goddard for their generosity and foresight to ensure the future of the station.

“We’ve worked very hard over the last three years to not just keep the station on the air, but to try new things with programming and involve more of the community in all we do, especially as we grow our capacity as an organization,” said CVCR board chair, Mark Michaelis. “This is a new era for the station, you can feel the positive energy on the air and amongst the many volunteers who are working as a team to make WGDR and WGDH integral parts of the larger community.”

**More information about Central Vermont Community Radio**

Central Vermont Community Radio (CVCR) is the non-profit that manages and WGDR, Plainfield, and WGDH, Hardwick. The station is located and broadcasts across the unceded and traditional land of the Abenaki People’s past and present.

With over 50 locally made programs by Vermonters of all ages and backgrounds, the station provides a forum to cultivate social justice, stewardship of the natural world, and appreciation of the independent arts. We value representation of our diverse community on the air, access to the airwaves, civil discourse, and centering the community by being responsive to needs as they arise.

WGDR/WGDH is two of eight total community radio stations in Vermont. WGDR is the oldest community radio station in the state and has the largest broadcast reach to nearly 70,000 households in 60 towns and cities in Washington and Lamoille counties and various locations across the Northeast Kingdom, with thousands more listening online from across Vermont and beyond. In 2021, Goddard College gifted both WGDR and WGDH to CVCR to ensure the stations' future under community ownership. Goddard had operated the station as a community station, focused on educational content, since the 2000s, when they shifted to a low residency model for student life on campus.

**More information on how to give or underwrite, sponsor, listen to, and otherwise support the station is at** [**WGDR.org**](http://www.wgdr.org/)**.**

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