



Story by
Joseph Stevenson
Drawings by
Barbara Grant
for
THE CURRENT

*Listener supported radio
Non-commercial*

KMUN

91.9 fm
Astoria, Oregon

CELEBRATES ITS FOURTH BIRTHDAY

On April 17, 1983, North Coast Community Radio was born when, after years of hard labor, KMUN first went on the air at 91.9 MHz on the FM band. In the four years since then, KMUN has carved out a special niche for itself and has made believers out of many (including myself) whose first reaction to the idea was: "Do we NEED this?" More thoughtful skeptics said things like: "Just how are you going to support a non-commercial station in a community this small without some kind of state or institutional funding?" How indeed... but you can tune into 91.9 right this minute and there we are, four years later and still MAKING WAVES, still expanding our facilities, our programming, and even the reach of our signal.

In fact, right now KMUN is at a crucial turning point in its brief history as we move into new quarters, with more room and easier access for the elderly and handicapped. This lovely old Victorian house (at 1445 Exchange Street in Astoria, donated by a generous listener, has, at various times in the past served as a restaurant, a doctor's office, a boarding house and a brothel. Soon it will be a radio station, complete with a new satellite earth station connecting KMUN with national and international radio networks. The KMUN staff and volunteers are busily researching what these new sources of programming have to offer, and how they can be incorporated into community radio.

Shall we look back a few years to the early days at KMUN? By the time the station celebrated its first birthday, many of our current programmers were already on the air, including Aunt Pauli, Pierce Christi, Leigh Dolin, Elaine Myers, Peg and Orlan Larson, Doug Sweet, Deanne Bruner, Belinda Kruger, Ed David, Vern Barth, Jim and Jane Hill, Barbara Freeman, Carlos Welsh, Pam Trenary, Ann Shaffer,

Tom Piaskoski, Elizabeth Howard, Bob Berg, Sister Pat, Liam Dunne, Rainmar Bartl, Dan Reiley, Sharon Montoya-Welsh, and Dr. Anonymous. Trudy Nudell was already running the office, and Barbara Grant was, as now, our wonderful cover artist. (See her cover for the First Birthday edition of "The Current," KMUN's monthly program guide, on this page.) Harriet Baskas, the station's first manager, had already gone back to KBOO in Portland (where she is station manager now), leaving things in the hands of Doug Sweet.

By the second birthday we had acquired a program director in the capable person of Katrin Bridget Snow. "The Current" had expanded from four to eight pages, and a new production studio meant that we could train new programmers without going off the air every afternoon. At the completion of three years on the air, the production studio was full of radio thespians, cranking out not only two original radio mystery dramas each month, but a weekly soap opera with a local setting as well. Work had begun on three auxiliary transmitters ("translators") that are now bringing KMUN's signal to outlying areas previously enjoying poor reception or none at all. With late-night programming three nights a week until 2 a.m., KMUN was now broadcasting, on average, more than eighteen hours a day.

Now comes birthday number FOUR, and as we pause at this milestone in KMUN's history, let's salute not only our current programmers and volunteers, but those who gave us so many hours of pleasure before moving on to other places and other things, including Moe Bowman, Dennis Crabb, Bill Berg, Tertru and George Hummasti, Kevin Violette, Alden Borders, Rita Rega, Roland White, Don Morden, Ron Wetteroth, Susan Ward, John Berggren, Sam Churchill, Barb

Kindler, Dale Osborn, Doreen Simonson, Canessa, Karen Boelling, and others listed numerous to mention. As for our current of volunteers, a list compiled as a Valentine for our February issue of "The Current" has more than one hundred and fifty names on it, and then we lost a few in the shuffle.

KMUN is truly a collective effort, and frequently a reflection of our KMUNity in its diversity. Never meant to be musical wall, KMUN continues to stimulate and exasperate to excite and to irritate, to give us a place to express ourselves and allow others to do the same. We have built strong programming areas of classical, jazz, folk rock, and bluegrass music; literature and radio drama, issues of particular interest to women; a wide variety of locally-produced special interest programs including cooking, gardening, health, Scandinavian culture; and public affairs; and we are proud of the fine programming we offer to our children as an alternative to the TV habit. This summer, as we move into our new home, we hope to use our new satellite capability to expand public affairs coverage to include national and international news, and connect with new information, music, and arts programs from both networks and independent producers around the globe.

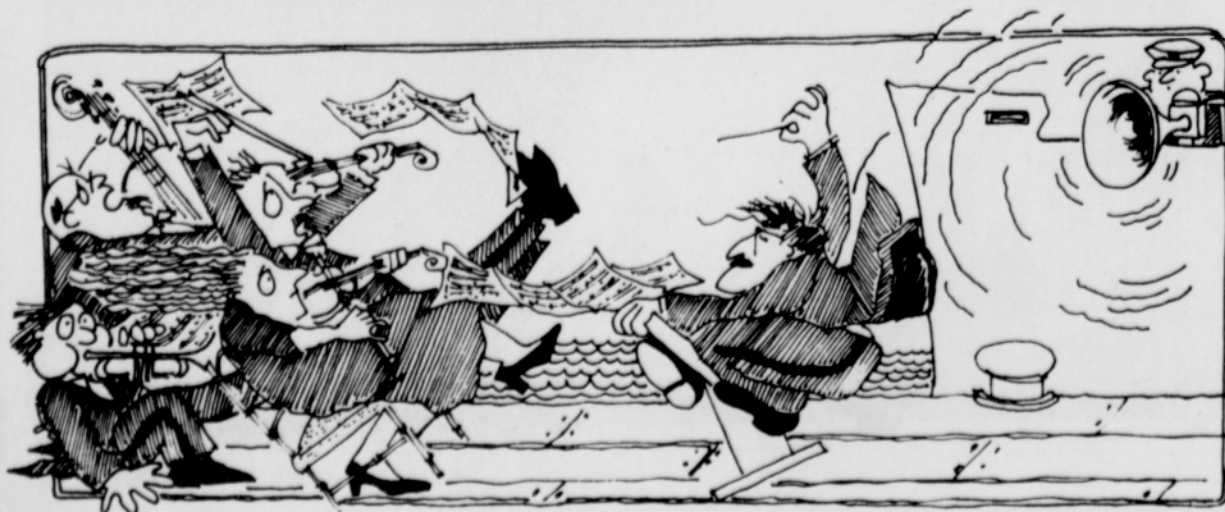
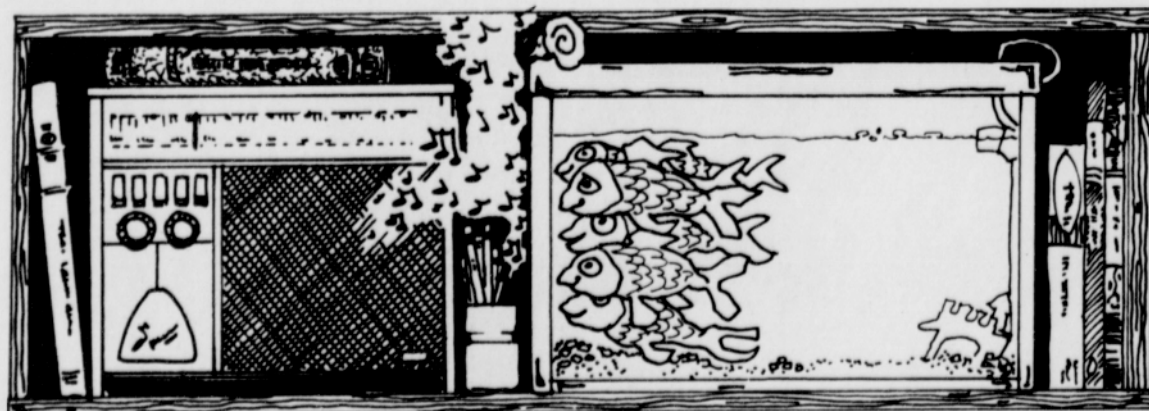
In other words, KMUN is out of its diapers for sure. KMUN is about to spread its wings and launch into new worlds of radio communication. How high we fly depends largely on whether we are able to broaden our base of support, to attract new listeners and members. KMUN's daily routine expenses have to be covered by our listeners, and with our expanded facilities and resources, these expenses are going to jump rather suddenly.

April is Birthday Month at KMUN, but also our annual membership drive. This time we are asking each KMUN supporter to pitch in and help us reach our goal of at least two hundred new members. Some of your friends and neighbors may not be aware of the community radio alternative. Copies of "The Current" with the complete program schedule are available free at any public library in the KMUN listening area, or in quantity at the station. You'd like to put some in your neighbors' mailboxes.

The next time you see an old FM radio for three dollars at a garage sale, think what that, and a fifteen dollar gift membership, mean to a lonely senior citizen or a hard-pressed family.

Community Radio is YOUR radio, so get involved! As a volunteer, as a member, as a listener, we hope you will find a way to contribute. And as for us, we invite you to join us for our birthday party, at the station (1129 Commercial Street, Astoria) Friday, April 17. Time? Whenever you can make it — we'll be partying ALL DAY!

Joseph Stevenson is KMUN's program director. Barbara Grant's acrylics will be on display at the Coaster Theater in Cannon Beach, beginning May 1.



FIRST BIRTHDAY COVER, APRIL 1984

