

## In our own backyard

Mary Cruse/For the Times-Standard  
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I want to elaborate on our opportunities for creating documentaries and short-content video, further building our Humboldt Bay, Tasman Bay, New Zealand connection. But first I must elaborate on my momentary gratitude-attack content.

Something is happening to me that I truly did not anticipate. I am falling in love with living here. The more people I work with and make friends with, the deeper my understanding of local history, the more exciting projects and events we have going on ... the more committed I am to working toward being a part of the positive growth of our region.

As I have mentioned before, I left Southern Humboldt when I was 18, never planning on moving back. But my fondest memories, and nearly all of the people and things I cherish most in my life, are a result of my moving back in 1994, after my dad, Jim Demulling, passed away.

What does this have to do with media, you might ask? I am sitting here, as always when I write, with the television on in the background. Since I do not have cable when I am staying in Eureka, I always have a DVD playing in the background. Tonight, however, I am home mid-week in Benbow, where I do have cable!

Herein, lies the media connection. I am watching KEET, our 40-year old regional Public Broadcast Service station. It is quite remarkable that in a region this size we have our own PBS station. According to Wikipedia, there are 15 PBS affiliates in California, with KEET serving the smallest population. One of the goals for the Humboldt Film Commission is to work as a liaison for the production of more quality local programming -- the more quality local programs, the better.

On Wednesday, KEET launched North Coast Cuisine, a six-part series featuring chefs, restaurants and farmers. Another local favorite, North Coast Visionaries, takes a look at area entrepreneurs such as Blue Ox, Economic Fuel, Internews and other great stories. The professionals at KEET are currently in pre-production for another local documentary series. To me, this is very exciting.

Another way to view local content, could be your own, is to tune in to Access Humboldt, an incredible asset to our community. AH is a PEG station (P = Public Access, E + Education Access, G = Government Access). It is becoming more and more challenging to keep PBS stations and Public Access Televisions operating on a local level, maintaining the local flavor. Huge corporate media conglomerates like Time-Warner Cable are gobbling up PEG stations across the country. It is so important to keep Access Humboldt a local resource for the community.

Most of us have caught an episode of local government coverage, or check the program guide for program choices on either Channel 8, 10, 11, 12. Access Humboldt is doing much to further the development of digital media production infrastructure, working closely with myriad community partners.

In the age of online content consumption, it is essential to have a presence on the Web. Access Humboldt added video streaming to its Web site as of November 2008. There are more than 360 AH segments that you can now view online. Working with Internet Archive, a San Francisco-based online digital media content library, AH is putting Humboldt County stories on an internationally recognized Web site -- [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org).

My first exposure to [archive.org](http://archive.org) was at an Independent Digital Media conference I attended in San Francisco in 2002. It was a one-time two-day conference with digital media leaders from across the globe. To have Humboldt County content on [archive.org](http://archive.org) is extremely viable in the digital age. Hopefully, this will also raise the bar for creating local content.

The quality of the programming is improving due to the efforts of many local video producers. There are so many opportunities to showcase local stories and, beyond that, many opportunities to collaborate and create with our global friends, as well.

A priority project is to work with our friends in the Nelson, New Zealand region, a sister city of Eureka, and a regional partner with the Humboldt Bay region. I invite everyone to become a part of this exciting development process. The first step is to explore our Kiwi connection at a free presentation at the Wharfinger Building in Eureka on Thursday from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Following the free presentation, you will have the chance to share ideas, network and begin the creative process.

This will move forward with content produced to air on Access Humboldt, which now has a much larger audience with video streaming, a Tasman Humboldt YouTube channel, and real time screenings at the WildRivers 101 Film Festival in September.

Another component of building this partnership will be a monthly live radio spot with one of the radio stations in Nelson and one of our local radio stations.

One of the other factors that prompted my gratitude attack is the number of radio stations we have in our region that continue to offer support to local nonprofits and continue to be major partners in building positive community relationships. But that is another story.

I know that I will continue to call in my pledges to KEET television, public radio station KHSU and community-owned radio station KMUD, in addition to work with our local television stations and radio stations.

Fast forward ... five years from now: The Redwood Coast is known as a creative digital media hub, known for our creative spirit and get-it-done mentality. I'm looking forward to working together to make a brighter future.

*Mary Cruse is the FILMhumboldt film commissioner and founder/director of the WildRivers 101 Film Festival. You can contact her at [merrycruiser@gmail.com](mailto:merrycruiser@gmail.com) or at 707-223-8462. Become a member of Access Humboldt: [www.acesshumboldt.net](http://www.acesshumboldt.net).*