

KPFZ 88.1 FM LAKEPORT



On-Air Guidelines

For Producers, Program Hosts, Board Operators, and Volunteers

By Andy Weiss

as of August 16, 2008

copies and updates available at www.kpfz.org

(2022 Update: The body of the text is mostly unchanged from 2008, and is still good and valid. A few updates are inserted for major changes in procedures or equipment).

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(2022: The page numbers are out of date)

Introduction

*And in the naked light I saw,
Ten thousand people, maybe more.
People talking without speaking.
People hearing without listening.
People writing songs,
that voices never share.
No one dare,
Disturb the sound of silence.*

- Paul Simon, "The Sounds of Silence"

Welcome to KPFZ. Below is some rah-rah, corny stuff about community radio - but heartfelt rah-rah, corny stuff. Please know that your involvement is what will make KPFZ work - ***You are*** this community radio station.

A Bit of Background

KPFZ was born one cold, November night in 1995, when a small group gathered around a wood stove to explore the possibilities of community radio in Lake County. Many years of obstacles, hard work, frustration, and a whole lot of community support followed. These efforts eventually lead to several incarnations of the station, including a micro power station (1996-1999), and a Low Power (LPFM) radio station (the first one in California, 2001-2005). KPFZ is currently a full-power, Class A, non-commercial radio station, fully authorized by the FCC.

Lake County Community Radio (LCCR - the non-profit organization, which owns and operates KPFZ) has dedicated itself to bringing local voices to the airwaves. In this age of media consolidation this radio station was begun to give ordinary (but inspired) people in all parts of Lake County a way to express themselves. This has been a very broad-based undertaking and represents many aspects of the social and political spectrum in our county - people coming together with the common goal of fostering a form of communications which counter-balances the monopoly of centralized media in America.

KPFZ dedicates this training manual to those who have made this community station possible. So, when you sit down at the microphone to do your show, please keep in mind - as both a source of strength, and also of humility - that there are many others standing behind you. If we do this right, KPFZ will become a precious community asset. Thanks, and welcome!

Listening

Most of us don't think about "sound" very much. The other senses often get precedence, or work in conjunction with our aural network, so that we don't separate or appreciate sound. And yet, we are surrounded by a sea of sound. Not a moment passes in which we don't hear something (and usually scores of sounds - even while sleeping). Close your eyes and listen (please, not while driving). Without sound, we would be still be going to silent movies. Sound has a powerful effect on us - it can annoy us, makes us calm, raise our blood pressure, cause stress, inspire us (as in good conversation or music), it can give us clues about our environment (notice how many cues to being a good driver come from sounds), and on and on.

So, what's the point?



Radio is pure sound, and nothing else. There are no pictures or tastes or smells to augment the listener's experience. Your job is to explain the world through sound to the listener. You cannot do this well unless you become an expert.

So, to make good radio, you have to learn to become a "listener". Listening can be a learning experience, a meditation, an art-form. If you haven't already (and most of you wouldn't be interested in radio if you hadn't given this some thought) begin the process of becoming a "true" listener. Listen to all the sounds around you, to peoples' voices, listen to your show, to your fellow programmers, and to as much radio as you can. A new world will open up to you. It is now your job as a program producer! And it will pay off in making your show the best it can be, and also in making KPFZ a great community station.

For some tips and helpers on this subject, see the Air Quality section in this guideline.

The Producer Concept



Lewis Hill, founder of Pacifica

And now, the practical stuff. There's a lot of it, so take your time.

Some non-commercial, community radio stations have paid staffs who watch over-the-air and take care of any problems - technical and otherwise. KPFZ is an all-volunteer station. What is the practical outcome of being involved in an all-volunteer station? It means that the producers must share in the responsibility that a paid staff would normally handle. This makes you, as a program producer, an integral and vital part of KPFZ. Without you, it won't work. There isn't anyone else to run it!

So, here is how it works...

Every minute of air time at KPFZ has a producer associated with it. And the buck stops with the producer. The producer is responsible for what is on-the-air, as well as the facilities of KPFZ during her show (more on this later).

In many cases, the on-air host and producer will be one in the same person. In other words, you host a music show and you are also the producer. Or, you do an interview show, and you also assume the duties of producer (we will get to what a producer does in a moment). Simple.

But the producer concept is also a way for KPFZ to organize and recruit new shows for the air, thus reaching out into the community. Here's how that works.

There may be cases when the producer and the program host are **not** the same person. Let's say you have an idea for a show that would involve young people in Lake County, but you don't especially want to be on-the-air. You assume the role of producer. You may organize the show, get it started, recruit the talent, but various young people would do the actual hosting, planning and programming for the show. As producer, the program is your ultimate responsibility. Looked at this way, producing thus becomes a vehicle for bringing in lots of new ideas, programs and people to the station.

Another way this might work is in the area of special programming - one-time shows or a series of one-time shows. Maybe John Trudell is coming to town. You want KPFZ to broadcast his talk. You get the idea approved, assume the role of producer, broadcast time is set aside, and you get Trudell's talk on-the-air - again, being ultimately responsible for that broadcast.

One more example of when the producer concept could expand KPFZ's programming, and the host and producer would **not** be the same. Let's say you would like to see Free Speech News on KPFZ's air (available over the internet). First, you get clearance from the Program Director (PD), then you assume the role of the producer. Even though you are not on-the-air as a host, or are not even choosing the content, it is still your show, and you are responsible.

So, every minute of the air has a producer associated with it. Once you agree to produce a program for KPFZ, **you are responsible for the following:**

1. Making sure *someone* or a *pre-recorded* program is at the station **on time** for broadcast, and is in **broadcast quality** for that broadcast (see quality section). Recorded shows or backup hosts are fine as substitutes, but it is still **the responsibility of the producer to do the sound board for the recorded shows or for the back-up host, or find someone who will**. If you do not do the above, you have failed as a producer.
2. The producer is responsible for the air quality of his/her show. If the show does not sound good (this is the Program Director's decision), the producer has failed.
3. The producer is responsible for all audio equipment, cds, records, tapes, software, etc., as well as the KPFZ broadcast facilities during the time his/her show is on-the-air (This does not include responsibility for the transmission equipment). If anything is stolen, broken, misused, etc. it is the responsibility of the producer. This means you may have to replace that equipment, or those cd's, etc.
4. The producer is responsible for dealing with the public, press, etc. concerning the content of his/her program. Aside from offering a forum for expression, KPFZ has no official stand on issues. The content of each show is ultimately the producers' choice (with some restrictions).

One more item for the technically challenged: There may be situations where you might want to produce a program, even be the host of that program, but do not wish to be involved in the technical sound board operations of the station. KPFZ does not want to discourage possible producers just because they do not know or do not have the desire to learn the right buttons to push. If you want to produce a show, then you can either find someone on your own who will do the board for your show (**you** are still 100% responsible, however), or contact the station manager and ask for a staff board operator to be assigned to you.

Who are is this person who run our lives? Ladies and gentlemen, meet the...

The KPFZ Program Director (PD) is a volunteer who makes all decisions regarding what goes on and off the air. The PD is appointed by management. The PD is assisted by a Program Committee. Any complaints or questions should be directed towards her/him.

And now the nasty part....

Any violations of these producer guidelines could result in removal from the air by the PD.



"Suits" commercialize early radio

Doing Your Show - A Step by Step Guide

Once you have gone through the process of being accepted to do a program (see guidelines at end of this publication), though you may be a bit nervous and unsure of what follows, here is a step by step idea of what to expect and what to do.

Always be prepared to do your program. This means putting some advanced thought into each show. This will vary greatly depending on what kind of program you are doing.

Music Shows: If you are a music programmer begin to make contact with record labels and distribution companies. You are welcome to use the KPFZ name and post office box to do this, but all **music becomes the property of the station**. You can ask for an extra copy for yourself if you want.



Teens Hit Airwaves at KPFZ

You might want to subscribe to some specialized music periodicals or make some thorough examination of web sites which pertain to your area of music.

It is always good for a community station to give as much local perspective as possible - so become an expert of local musical activities.

You might want to make contact with local musicians and organizations so you can provide your listeners with events and musical happenings around the lake and beyond.

Think of new ways and approaches to present your music. Interviews, anecdotes, themes, will enliven your program and your listeners will appreciate your extra effort.

Public Affairs/talk: If your show is based on opinions, interviews, guests, recorded portions, telephone calls, news, etc. preparation is obviously just as essential.

The same guidelines apply as with music programmers - make contact with organizations, both locally and nationally who can feed you information, guests, tapes, etc. Make sure any recorded sources are checked out for quality and content (and permission - see phone section).

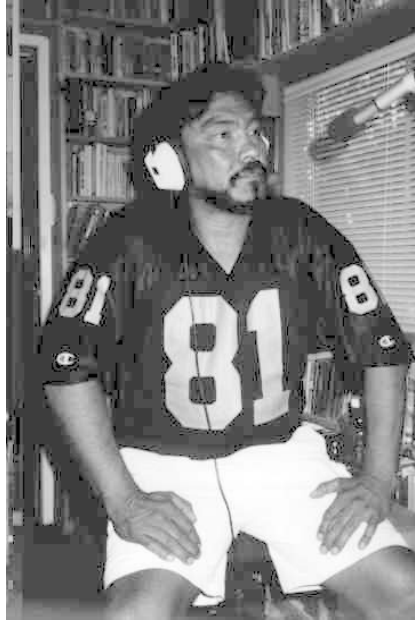
Get the local angle if possible. Pre-interview guests. Check with the station manager and make sure phone equipment is working before you do a call in show. If you have "live" guests, make sure the manager is contacted so that extra mics, chairs, headphones, etc. are available.

Time out the portions of your show ahead of time so you will not be caught with an extra "15 minutes" of nothing to say. Always bring back-up material (recorded material, cd's etc.) in case something goes wrong or you don't get any phone calls (which is a definite possibility at first).

Other Types of Shows: In some cases, programs will **not** have local origination. If you are the producer of any of these types of programs (i.e. - a national news show gotten off the internet, a tape received through the mail), you still have some preparation time involved. Listen to the program in its entirety to make sure it is 1) broadcast quality 2) it is a complete program, and is timed correctly 3) it fits the guidelines of community radio - that is, no obscenity, discrimination, commercials, etc.

KPFZ Promos: Promotional spots are one of the ways the station promotes itself, its programs, its events, its fundraising. Plan on running one or two during your show - it helps out the station and also can give your show a change in rhythm or a needed break for you and the listeners. There should be a list of promos at the board, with possible recommendations by the program committee on what to play. Listen to the air as much as possible so you are up to date on the current promos. Also, check your mailbox regularly for updates.

Your Promos: You may also want to make promos for your show or an event which is tied in with your show. For instance, you may want to promo a special show you have put a great deal of work into (e.g. an interview w/ Noam Chomsky or a preview of a new musical release). Please let the station manager know and a time will be set up either for you or someone else to record it. **Promos make the station lively and current, while also creating an impression of cohesiveness to the listening audience. Make use of them!**



Clayton Duncan launches "The Voice of White Plume"

On the Day of your show.

Always arrive early. As already mentioned, be prepared for your show. If you have a guest or guests, explain the general procedure so as to relax them somewhat. Either that or give them a valium. You may want to pre-interview guest/s before your program.

Please bring your own headphones! You will feel more comfortable, they will be cleaner because you will take care of them. KPFZ will provide headphones for guests.

WARNING: Never put on the headphones without turning down the headphone monitor volume first - otherwise you can do permanent damage to your guests or to your own hearing. Once your headphones are on, slowly bring up the monitor level to an acceptable listening volume.

Begin and End on Time. It's a tradition in community radio for shows to go long, and for the next one to start late. It is a bad tradition. Except in cases when special event programming, emergencies, local crisis, etc. make it necessary to break the rules, it is important for several reasons to stay on time. Number one, listeners have a right to and will expect consistency, and will count on it, and judge us by it. In addition, we have to accommodate our digital recording and archiving system so we can re-broadcast our programs, and have copies available to both programmers and the public, so you must strictly follow the guidelines.

CHECK The board clock -- it can be several seconds off. If you start your show too soon parts will not be recorded for replays. You can look at the "Total Recorder" computer to see if recording has started.

Update 2022 : Official Format for a Show

The format for EVERY HOUR of a show is as follows (2-hour shows should be treated as two 1-hour shows – sometimes only one hour might be repeated) :

HH:57 For a live show you can exchange places with the previous host.

Check that the board is NORMALIZED. In particular, all mics must be off, and any phone call disconnected.

HH:59:20 If you are following a pre-recorded show it may end early (eg at 11:59:20 for an 11 o'clock show). You must fill in the time, totally informally. Maybe announce what shows are coming up. Promote a KPFZ event.

HH:59:55 If music is playing, fade it out. Do not talk over the hour-change.

HH:00:03 Station ID : We are **KPFZ, 88.1 FM Lakeport** ... (Clearlake and round the Lake). Streaming via kpfz.org, (The 3-second delay in starting allows the recorder to kick in, and for minor errors in the board clock)

Underwriters : presently TWO underwriter CD's. Do NOT comment on or endorse these underwriters. You can say something general like "And now a message from our underwriters".

Intro Music .. about 1 minute is good.

Your show introduction. Introduce the show, yourself and any guests.

HH:20 and HH:40 OR at HH:30 .. informal station ID and a review of what show is on, guests and so on

During the show: play PUSH CD's, including promotion of KPFZ events.
Public Service announcements.

As a courtesy to the incoming host you can load their Underwriter CD's

At MM:56 Your formal goodbye

MM:57:00 Outro Music

NORMALIZE THE BOARD and LEAVE THE STUDIO if a live show follows you.

Any talking after 59:50 will NOT BE RECORDED for a replay.

For a live show the incoming host may fade your music out at 59:20 to do short promos, what's next etc. You can collect your CD while the underwriters/intro music are playing.

For a pre-recorded show you can record outro music up to 59:55 with a fade-out at the end.

Your program must begin and end with music. This is due to our recording and playback system which will fade in and fade out your show when it is re-broadcast, so it is better to have music fade in and out than it is talking. You should not be talking past 57 minutes into the hour. This not only gives our system the breathing room it needs, but gives the next programmer time to settle in before her show, and for other station business to be taken care of.

Pay strict attention to beginning and ending your show on time. Check the digital clock in the studio and begin your intro music at the precise time your show should air. Again, this is necessary due to our digital recording system.

Actual Length of Shows: If you do a half hour show, you need to account for about 28 minutes of actual new programming each week. The other two minutes will be your intro/outro music and promos, so don't overbook yourself. This goes for all length programs - 57 minutes of programming for an hour show, etc. For a two hour show, you may want to allow for 4 or 5 minutes of intro/outro, promos. Don't cut it too close - the automated system is set to start and stop recording your show at the scheduled times - and if you deviate from that, part of your program will be missing. As a general rule then, run your intro music at least 30 seconds at the top of your show, and run it at least 30 seconds of outro music at the end. That way, on re-broadcast, change-overs between programs will sound smooth and less jolting.

No Time Referrals. Some shows will be repeated, so time references are not applicable during those shows. If your show is repeated, please do not make "live" time references during your show. Since your program may be re-broadcast at another time period it will confuse the listener. However, it is a good idea to mention the other time slots in which your program will be rebroadcast - Something like, "I'm 'live' on Saturdays at noon, and rebroadcast on Wednesdays at eight" is recommended. If your show is not repeated, feel free to give the time.

Call-in shows. If your show is repeated, and since phone calls can only be done then - please, let your listeners know that. "If it's Saturday," you can say, "give me a call here at the station. Otherwise, we are on tape, and please do not call." Please see permission rules for call-ins.

Local References. If possible, make lots of local references to Lake County. KPFZ is a community radio station, and we want people to know we serve this area. Even if your program is geared nationally or is about music which isn't local there are always ways to pull in local people, ideas, frames of reference, descriptions of the landscape, almost anything. We want to separate ourselves from centralized, satellite and other non-local media as much as possible - so let people know you live, work, play, and dream in Lake County! It is our main mission. And the listeners will love and appreciate it, and come back for more.

Introductions/Repeating. Introduce yourself, your program, your themes, the station call letters, your guests, your music, etc. over and over and over again. People usually don't tune in at the "top" of a show or stay tuned or pay attention the entire time (unless you are doing some real dynamite programming), so you have to repeat yourself often. It is a fundamental rule of radio.

Logging. Make sure you log your program. KPFZ keeps logs of the following: time and date, name of show, description of show (tape, live, cd's, talk), source of show. The log sheets will be available in Master Control. This helps in keeping track of what was on-the-air in case of FCC or local complaints or problems. note: we have not instituted the logging system at this time.

Help each other. Listen to KPFZ as much as possible. When you hear something great done by another programmer, let them know it. In addition, if another programmer should ask, "how did you like my show the other day?" you can be ready to offer some suggestions on how to make it better.



KPFZ Volunteers produce a program

Studio Etiquette

For sake of clarity, we will define the part of the studio which contains all the equipment and host-chair as **Master Control**. The other half, we will call **The Interview Area**.

Do not go into Master Control or the interview area when someone else is on-the-air (unless invited - and even then, be careful not to disrupt a broadcast). Be quiet when someone else is on-the-air. Don't talk outside Master control. If you need to talk, please find an appropriate place which will not disturb the radio broadcasts.

When you are finished with your show, **leave Master Control and the interview area immediately** unless invited to stay by the next programmer. These change-overs between shows are sometimes tricky, with people bumping into each other, grabbing cd's and tapes, and generally panicking. When you have finished your show you may have some "relief" energy or a little "buzz" going, but the next programmer may have some "anxiety" energy going. So, it is polite (and makes for better radio) to leave him/her alone - unless invited to stay. Thanks!

Please leave the radio counter clean and clear. The next programmer will expect to have the use of that space, so any notes, or magazines or books or other stuff should be gone when the next programmer arrives. This goes for the interview area also. Please keep in mind that the show before and after your show is just as important as your program!

When you are finished with your show, take only what belongs to you. Leftover cds, notes, tapes, etc. can be put in programmer's boxes or in the Lost & Found box. People count on getting these items back, so please be considerate and ask if you borrow something.

It is probably not wise to bring an entourage to watch you do your show (for one thing, we don't have a great deal of room). KPFZ doesn't want to have to make a rule against bringing friends along when you do your program, but think twice about it - does it really make for better radio? In some cases, it might. But in most cases, it probably won't.

Update 2020: Due to Covid19 access to the green room and studio is limited.

No food or drink or smoking in Master Control. Sorry, but if any of that spills or gets into the equipment, it is a disaster. Guests who are sitting in the interview area may have drinks, but be careful not to let those drinks get into the master control area. If you want to drink liquid, either go outside or do it carefully in the interview area. If you are the producer during an accident any damage is your responsibility. That means **you pay** for the equipment which gets ruined! And not only will there be a financial burden to deal with, but KPFZ may be off the air until that equipment gets replaced.

Treat everything gently - microphones, all the audio equipment, and especially people. Thanks again.

What You Can or MUST Say on-the-air at a community station

There are some things **you will have to say** on KPFZ.

- 1. The official station ID.** By FCC regulation, this must be done once an hour, usually at the top of the hour or as close as you can get. The minimum official id is as follows: "**KPFZ Lakeport**". However, the (2022) preferred Station ID is "**We are KPFZ, 88.1 FM, Lakeport, (Clearlake, and all of Lake County)**". You should also add that we stream via kpfz.org. The parenthetical phrases are not part of the official ID, but we will use them anyway (to make the entire county feel welcome) (Updated 2022)

The rest of the time, you should mention the call letters and frequency as often as possible, but do not have to do an official id. In other words, you could say, "KPFZ - community radio for Lake County," or "88.1," etc. Most of you will be on at the top of the hour, so practice the official id, as well as variations for the rest of the time.

2. Underwriting Announcements/Station Promos/PSA/Fundraising

Underwriting: Though non-commercial stations cannot do advertising, community stations can do something called underwriting. You will be required to read a short, value-neutral statement concerning a local business at the top, middle (if it is two hours), and end of your program. More details will be available as KPFZ develops a policy.

2022: These will usually be CD's – currently two per hour at the top of the hour, In addition, we often have "Push" CD's promoting both KPFZ Events and activities by local Non Profit (and sometimes Government) Organizations.

Station Promos: You will be required to read/play KPFZ promos which announce station events and publicize regular shows, as well as upcoming special radio events.

PSA: You will be asked to read Public Service Announcements (from other non-profits).

Fundraising: We will, from time to time, raise money over-the-air. All producers are expected to participate. This means not only "pitching" for funds over-the-air (and getting new members), but also helping in organizing those fundraisers - as in helping to answer the phone, taking pledges, providing "thank you gifts" (cd's, books, tapes, gift certificates, etc) to new members. On-the-air fundraising, as horrible as it may sound, is often a chance to reaffirm the commitment to community radio - both to ourselves as radio people and to the community in general. Occasionally, wonderful, inspired, passionate, spontaneous words will flow from our mouths during these periods about the meaning of this special radio station. It will also hopefully give us a sense and spirit of togetherness.

What You Cannot Say and Do

The list of what **you cannot say/do** on a licensed, full power station, such as KPFZ, is much longer (of course). There are quite a few FCC and station regulations which you must be fully aware of. Most of those rules can be summed up in one word: **RESPECT**. Respect for the FCC regulations, respect for the listeners, respect for your fellow programmers, respect for volunteers, respect for private and public figures, respect for the studio and equipment of KPFZ, and especially respect for KPFZ's positive status in the community.

1. No "obscene" language or "profanity" or "indecent" programming. The Supreme Court occasionally decides the definition of what "obscene" means, and the FCC has its own vague guidelines - so sometimes it is hard to tell. To be on the safe side, if there is any doubt, don't say it and don't play it. If you do so-called "indecent" programming, it should be noted with a disclaimer, and only done in "hours when children would not be listening" - after 10 at night, until 6 in the morning. Certain music comes under these rules also, as vague as they may be. **Trouble always comes via listener complaints.** So, always use good taste, and if you want to make a point by using controversial material, run it by the PD or manager first. Remember, people will judge the station by your show. And you will risk fines and our license if you over step these boundaries. Details are available in the NFCB Legal Handbook in the office.

Update 2022: The maximum "forfeiture" (fine, penalty) for using the F-word or S-word is \$300,000. All other cuss-words are a mere \$10,000; there is no official "7 forbidden words" list. We do not tolerate "street talk" from guests or callers. Give them one warning, then cut them off.

2. No personal attacks, vindictiveness, slanderous comments, etc. directed towards non-public people, racial groups, religions, creeds, **and our own programmers.** Public personalities present a different situation - they have lost privacy rights by being public figures, and it is harder for them to sue for libel, but always use good taste. In general, it is better to criticize policies, arguments, yes, but it is best not to get personal - it shows bad judgement, bad taste, and we could get sued (especially from non-public people) and the station could lose its license. In addition, personal attacks can easily turn community radio into "hate" radio. There is enough of that on-the-airwaves already.



No hate radio at KPFZ

3. No "Payola" or "Plugola" The FCC and station policy prohibit the on-air promotion of goods or services in which a person with program responsibility has a financial interest. Community radio is not there for you to push your own products, business interests, etc. However, calendar events that relate to your program are acceptable, as long as no editorial comments are included. In other words, it is okay to say, "The John Mills band will be playing at the Roxy on Saturday night in Lakeport," but not, "If I were you, I'd go see them."

4. Equal Time. We are obliged to give "equal time" in the area of politics and public affairs. During elections, Federal candidates from all sides and parties have a right to request air time. We must make a "reasonable effort" to accommodate them. This goes for state and local candidates also.

In the area of public affairs, it is best if your program tries to give a balanced perspective on any given subject. The listeners will take you more seriously if you attempt to do that. If you do a show on a certain subject, you may have opposing points of view requesting air time. Again, KPFZ must make a "reasonable effort" to air all sides **if requested to do so** (KPFZ does not have to solicit both sides). But as a credible producer, you should make an effort to accommodate these other views. Often, phone calls from listeners will give you the balance you need for credibility. This does not apply to music programming (in other words, if you play a local artist and another local artist demands equal time, you do not have to acknowledge that request).

5. No Advertising. KPFZ is a non-commercial station, so it is against FCC regulations to do any kind of advertising on-the-air (underwriting is the exception to this rule - and those rules are very specific, and you will be notified more about that).

Update 2022: also, no personal endorsements of any business. Do not comment on Underwriters – just play the CD.

6. No Drugs. The use of illegal drugs in the studios, offices, building, and back porch/patio, will put KPFZ's license at risk, is strictly prohibited, and will be cause for immediate dismissal.

Questions on any of the above? - check with the Program Director, Station Manager, or the NFCB Legal Handbook. Also see the FCC "The Public and Broadcasting" document, accessible via our Public File *link at the bottom left of the web page.)

It is highly recommended (if you haven't already done so) to join our egroup so you can receive messages from the general public on programs. This will be one way listeners can respond to your program. **It is your job, as a producer, to respond to the public about what you put on-the-air. KPFZ only offers access to the airwaves for the community and is not responsible for the content of your program.** There is a disclaimer in Master Control which expresses this, and you may want to use it, though it is optional at this point.

Other Programmer/On-Air Responsibilities

As a programmer - You are required to be a member of KPFZ. Rates are available from the membership chair. Your help in this area helps to sustain the station financially.

Copyrighted material: You must have written permission from the source to broadcast any published or copyrighted material. This includes tapes or "live" broadcasts of other radio and tv stations; any other recorded material; and internet copy, newspapers and magazines - though it is acceptable to read short blurbs from those sources without permission. But be careful about longer pieces. If you interfere with the copyright holder's ability to sell the material, you have infringed on his/her rights, and need to get permission. As far as tapes from socially-oriented organizations go (Michael Parenti, Noam Chomsky, etc.) it is a good idea to get permission also. As far as music goes, KPFZ will be paying music licensing fees so that any music published by BMI, ASCAP, etc. will be allowed on the airwaves. If you do run copyrighted material of any kind you may mention the source and contact information on-the-air. This may help you get permission from that source. Privately recorded material (a musician's "live" concert, local speeches, etc.) also need written permission to be aired. If you have any other questions talk to the PD or station manager.

Permission Needed to air telephone calls from the public, "live" phone interviews, and taped phone interviews: If you want to use the phone for your show - either "live" or on tape, you must get permission from that source. The easiest way to do this "live" over-the-air is to say, "Hello, you are on-the-air". For interviews over-the-air, be sure to make sure the interviewee knows she will be on-the-air beforehand. The same goes for taped interviews - let the person know the interview will be broadcast.

Preemption: KPFZ's Program Director retains the right to preempt your show for special programming. You will be notified by email, in your mailbox or by other means should this happen. No one likes to have a show preempted, but sometimes it will be necessary to serve the community in case of crisis or one-time special events, so KPFZ appreciates your cooperation. [**EAS/Xmitter:** KPPZ is required to be part of the Emergency Alert System, so occasionally you will be required to run an EAS test during your program. Schedules will rotate, so please check your mail box regularly to find out when you may have to do this. Some programmers will also have to check and record transmitter information in the operations log. N/A 2022]

Programming Log: Stations are not required to keep programming logs, but KPFZ may do this for its own records. You will be notified if we begin this practice.

(2022) For TALK shows covering local issues you are required to make reports for the KPFZ "Public Information File". You will also be required to make Spintron Reports of any music played -- quarterly (for streaming).

Promoting Your Show: KPFZ does not have the resources to promote any individual programs, except with over-the-air promos, so it is up to you to get the word out about your show. Use every opportunity to promote your program - among friends, colleagues, family, clubs, organizations, in the press, on other electronic media, and of course, KPFZ promos. The more work you put into this, the quicker and larger your listening audience will be.

In addition, you are encouraged to use the **kpfz.org** web site to help in your radio activities. You are welcome to have your own web page in our programming section and use that to give playlists, contact information on guests, pictures, sound clips, archived programs, maps, literature about a subject. The list goes on. Used in this way - community radio and a web site can be a very creative new form of communication.

Mail Boxes: All programmers have an assigned mail box for exchanging cds, tapes, preemption schedules, notes, etc. The boxes are located at the entrance of the Lakeport studio. Your mail box may also contain notes about underwriting announcements, on-the-air promos, station announcements, Public Service Announcements (PSA), EAS assignments, all of which you will be required to air. Please check before every show.



KPFA Fund drive in the 1960's

And now, the nasty part again...

Any violations of these guidelines could result in removal from the air.

Update 2022 : The current Master Control Studio layout

The following sections have historical pictures of the studio. These “snapshots” (pending better photos) are the studio in early 2022. And more changes are coming soon.



Studio Sound Board and board operator mic, with the interview area and 3 mics behind it. The input channels from left to right are 4 mics, 2 phone lines, CD 1 and 2, 2 Cassettes, 2 LP's, MP3 Input, CD 3 and finally the Replay/Record slider. At the top of the board are the clock, VU Meters for checking signal levels, and the buttons and knobs for controlling the monitor and headphones.



Equipment Rack, to the right of the Sound board. Top to bottom: On-air monitor, CD 3, 2-line Call-in Phone Interface, CD's 1 and 2, two (rarely used) Cassette players. Also visible: computer

monitors.



Two Turntables (to the right of the equipment rack).



Under the hood : Optimod Signal Processor (makes you sound better than you are!), STL Studio-Transmitter Link (sometimes has to be rebooted), Master Distribution Amp.

Not shown : Numerous computers, including "Total Recorder" (records and replays shows), Streaming Computer and the RF Computer that controls the transmitter itself. Coming soon: Board Operator Computer.



Master Control - early radio station

Air Quality

People will judge our organization, the radio, and especially the content of the programs by the air quality they hear. Again. People will judge our organization, the radio, and especially the content of the programs by the air quality they hear.

What is quality? As **Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance** pointed out, there is no way to define it, but you know it when you hear it. Here are some tips to help you in your search for quality.

The Principle of Signal to Noise: When doing either "live" on-the-air broadcasting or recording (either analog or digital) you want to fill the tape or air with sound **not** noise. The only way to do this is have your sound source (your voice, your cd, your interviewee) fill the air or tape and thus reduce noise (getting close to the microphone is one big solution). In other words, if your sound source is too low, the rest of what goes on the tape or out over-the-air will be noise that gets picked up along the way. We all know this when we hear it - fuzziness, dullness, echo, crackling, hum, etc. So, keep your meters at the optimum levels. On the other hand, when you put too much signal over-the-air or onto tape it is called...

Clipping: This means putting too much audio signal into the sound board (or a recording device). Clipping will distort the signal, making it almost impossible to listen to. Keep your eye on the VU meters above the board and keep them within range to avoid clipping. Also, keep an ear on the monitor speakers and headphones - your ears are the best guide if you are over modulating (distorting) your signal and clipping.

Level Matching: Nothing is more distracting to the listener than a radio show which changes "volume" levels during the program. Community radio stations are notorious for this. So, watch your meters, but most of all listen to the air, and make sure the transitions between "live" microphones, tapes, cds, computer, promos, are all even and not jolting. This can sometimes be difficult to achieve, but "cueing" up all sources and pre-setting levels thoroughly before broadcast is one way to prevent problems.



KPFA Reporter Interviews Guest at Rally

Microphone Use: Here are a few fundamental rules for using a microphone:

Keep about 4-6 inches from the microphone. If you move closer, lower your voice, if you move further away, raise it a bit. Practice and listening to airchecks will fine tune your technique.

Think of the microphone as another person's face or ear - and in a sense, it is - listeners out there are hearing something very intimate in their ear - your voice. **Never yell into a microphone.** You wouldn't yell in someone's ear. If you are used to yelling to get your point across, just remember you don't have to anymore - you're on the radio now! **Don't blow in the microphone.** Treat microphones with extreme care. They are expensive and easily damaged.

Always stay on axis. The axis is the center of the pick-up pattern. It is where you get the best sound. Every microphone picks up sound differently. Some mics pick up from one direction (unidirectional), others from all directions (omnidirectional), some from a heart shaped pattern (cardioid). Our main two microphones in Master Control (Electro-Voice RE-20) have the cardioid pattern. It is probably best to have the mic slightly above you and pointed down towards your mouth. Listen to your airchecks and other programmers to fine tune your microphone use.

When you get "off-axis" the sound can get hollow or room noise and other sounds will be picked up instead of your voice. Make sure guests or interviewees do the same. Do not bump into or handle the microphone roughly, and be gentle in re-adjusting the microphone arm - don't force it into position.

Airchecks Make airchecks and listen to them! Airchecks are recordings of your program. There are several ways you can do this, including taping your show on re-broadcast, using a timer when the show is "live", having someone else do it for you, bringing a boom box over and setting it up in the office. For several reasons, you will not be able to make airchecks in Master Control when you do your show. KPFZ will be archiving all programs and keeping them on our computers for several months, so in an emergency there will be a copy for you to dub. However, in the end, it is your responsibility to make airchecks and archive them for yourself. Don't forget to do this! Airchecks are an invaluable way to improve your air quality (by listening and learning), as well as building up a library of your programs for re-broadcast, historical perspective, and helping you deal with any problems with the public and the FCC.

If you cannot make your own air-checks, copies of your programs are available through the station for a small fee (which goes to support KPFZ). Not only are air-checks a great help to you in learning how to be a better programmer, they become a valuable archive of your show, useful for filling in when you cannot do your show "live", to share with friends and family, and to enjoy in your old age.



Original KPFZ -LP - Studio in Lucerne (Studio "A")

It is best to have a fairly "dead" (meaning not a great deal of reverberation) broadcast area. Practically speaking, this means that in a "lively" room, you need to be a touch closer to the mic than you do in a "dead" room. So, if your airchecks reveal some echo and reverberation, you might want to consider getting a touch closer to the microphone for your next show. Pay attention to those airchecks you make - they will reveal much! If you don't like the sound you are getting on-the-air, talk to one of our volunteer staff people about making some changes.

Homework People will judge our organization, the radio, and especially the content of the programs on the quality they hear. Most listeners won't know consciously if the quality is good or bad, but will associate bad quality with the subject matter. So, if you want to be listened to, and want the station to make an impact on the community, always keep air quality in mind.

It is a good idea to begin listening to the radio as much as possible - our station, other community stations, public radio, and even commercial radio, so as to become a critical listener and a better programmer, and begin to understand the wide variety of sound on the radio. Even though some of you may not agree politically with NPR, **All Things Considered** puts out both outstanding air quality and very innovative and creative radio ideas. So does the BBC, if you can find them. You may even find that commercials on am and fm radio may broaden your scope and give you some ideas on sound and radio innovations. Become a true listener!

If you do your listening homework, you will soon see what separates community, public, and commercial radio and begin to develop an effective aural approach. None of us, I am sure, want to put out a "commercial sound", but what do we want to sound like? Compare KQED, KPFA, KZYZ, KMUD - all public stations - they all sound different. Why is this? Try to find out why.

Rush Limbaugh, who some people might not agree with politically, is an excellent radio person. If you listen closely, he has a little trick that makes what he says a little more personal - he thumps on something very lightly to emphasize points or when changing subjects. Listen to baseball games - and the wonderful background sound behind the play-by-play. Listen to Prairie Home Companion and the outstanding mix of live audience and stage presentation. Listen to the Christian stations and the way they segue into recorded portions of their shows. Begin hearing the way fading in and fading out is done (especially on NRP). Listen to community promos on the public stations. Listen to sound levels on different stations - do they change? Why? Listen to the layers of sound in an am radio commercial. How do they do that? The list goes on and on. Almost every show on every station can teach you something. And you can take what you want, stretch it, bend it, modify it, and apply it to your own show. Sound can be a real adventure. Keep your mind (and ears) open!

Best Advice: In the end, don't worry about making mistakes. That's what makes community radio sound like community radio and helps to endear itself in the hearts of listeners. Just work on improving and move on. Most of all, have fun on-the-air! (If you can, after all these rules).



Blues Beau Spins the Sounds

Nuts and Bolts of Board Operations



KPFZ -LP Master Control in Lakeport (Studio "B")

Warning: this may all sound very confusing if you have never done this before - it is much easier to do in person than read about. But do your best with these notes - they are mainly for reference should you forget how to do something. **Please see the board picture above for visual help.**

(Update 2022) The CD rack, Call-in Phone system and On-Air monitor are now to the right of the board. We also have two LP turntables.

Master control is the central work area of the radio station. In some stations this may be separate from the on air studios. In our situation, master control and the on air studio are one in the same - our **Master Control** is about half of the broadcast studio. The other half we will call the **Interview Area**

Control board or board or console: This operates the radio station. All signals from equipment (mics, cd players, tape players, computer, etc) go into the board, get mixed together, and are sent to various places, including the transmitter, headphones, a tape recorder, minidisc, or computer for aircheck (recording "live" on-the-air programs).

Basic Input and Output: When you set up your home stereo or computer you did input and output. Master Control works the same way - except it is a bit more involved. But, if you plug an input into an input or an output into an output in Master Control something horrible might happen. So, just be sure you know what you are doing before plugging anything into anything. Ask first if you are not sure. Permanent damage - to equipment and people can result.

Don't touch anything or turn any knobs you don't understand. ASK first. Or read the board manual and find out. Many of the knobs, faders, and switches keep us on-the-air or are doing airchecking or performing other very useful functions.

Faders: The faders (sometimes called "pots") are the main controls you will work with. There are 18 of them, right in front of you. They slide up and down and control the signal level. These faders control the input of various input devices such as microphones, the cd players, the tape machines, and the turntable. Sliding them up - fades in the sound. Sliding them down - fades it out. It is always good to fade sound in, rather than abruptly turning on the fading modules.

The black bank of switches on the upper right of the board control all monitoring of the air and board activity, including cueing (which allows you to prepare something for air beforehand).

You must always monitor your program directly off the air - either through the headphones or by using the speakers. When you are using the speakers/headphones you may also wish to switch back and forth from listening to the board's output or actually listening to the station over-the-air. You may hear a big difference between the air and the board, depending on lots of things (like stereo, noise, and interference on-the-air). But actual monitoring of the station's signal is essential to verify if the station is truly on-the-air and how it is sounding - in fact, it is the biggest part of your job on the board. However, all air-checks are done off the board and not off the air so we can have a cleaner, crisper sound on re-broadcast (so air-check is really an inaccurate term, but it's one we will use).

Update 2022: the headphones are always set to play the live program. Check the Signal Level Monitor at the top of the equipment stack to the right of the board. If the levels are not moving something is wrong. Normally you will have to reboot the STL (Studio-Transmitter-Link) : the signal will usually come back in about 10 seconds.

As well as through listening you can monitor the signal by watching the **Program VU meters in front of you**. It is best to have the "heart" of your show to be in the 40-60 range (it may go over and under once in a while). **Do not ever go into the red or "pin" the needles**. This will damage the meters and distort the signal and the recordings. If the Main Output faders and VU meters are too low, you are adding noise to the broadcast. **If there is nothing on the Program VU meters we are off the air - so watch carefully**. The other set of VU Meters, called **Audition** is recording your "live" program, so if they are not registering something is wrong. Contact appropriate station personnel. However, the Program VU meters do not actually confirm that the station is really on-the-air, for that, you must listen. (2022: keep an eye on the on-air monitor)

Clipping Anytime you exceed acceptable signal levels it is called "clipping". Clipping does all sorts of horrible things to the signal. Clipping originates from having your input levels set too high on one of your 18 faders, or you could be clipping with one of the mics. Once again, **your main job you have as a board operator is to make sure that everything sounds as good as it can and stays within the correct level settings**. This is why we always monitor.

Cueing : There will be situations for all programmers when you will be playing some pre-recorded material (a cd, record, tape, mp3, etc.) over-the-air, and at the same time you will need to listen to the next tape, record or cd and get it ready for air. This is the moment where you can get in really big trouble. And this is where you need a sense of calmness. The main danger here, is putting what you are cueing onto the air with or without knowing it, and at the same time - taking what you want off-the-air. To go into "cue" mode, gently push the fader you want to cue down until it "clicks". A yellow light will appear in the upper right section of the board letting you know you are in cue mode. You can then listen through the cue speaker (at the front of the board) or through the headphones or monitor speakers using the black monitory bank of switches in the upper right corner.

Update 2022: If the monitor goes dead (and a mic isn't potted up) then CUE has probably been set accidentally. Check the yellow light and check all sliders.

Headphones : Buy your own and bring them to your show. **WARNING: Never put on the phones without turning down the headphone monitor volume first - otherwise you can do permanent damage to your guests or to your own hearing. Once your headphones are on, slowly bring up the monitor level to an acceptable listening volume. The headphone output at the board also controls the headphones in the interview area, so it is important to bring volume up slowly so you do not damage guests hearing as well as your own.**

How To Get A Show

The KPFZ airwaves are open to members of the Lake County Community. KPFZ is looking for programs which 1) serve the community in some way, and which 2) are unique to our county and are not heard in the mainstream media. The KPFZ Program Director makes all decisions regarding new and current programmers. The following is a quick guide to getting your own show. **Programmers are required to be active members of KPFZ, which includes financial and work-load support beyond individual program time, and to accept all regulations set by management or the board.**

- Contact the Program Director and discuss options, before making a formal application.
- Study the KPFZ guidelines
- Fill out the Program Application and send it to the Program Director, who will take it to the Program Committee.
- Go through KPFZ orientation
- Possible on-air audition, work with "mentor" programmer
- Receive Final go ahead from the Program Director who will assign you a slot.

These materials are on the [kpfz.org](https://kpfz.org/Volunteers/Volunteers) “Volunteers” page, <https://kpfz.org/Volunteers/Volunteers>

(Updated 2022)

Mission Statement

**To Provide a Voice for Freedom of Expression
and Cultural Diversity in the Community**

final words...

**"And the words of the prophets
Are written on the subway walls..."**

Paul Simon, "The Sounds of Silence"

contact information

phone 707-263-3640/ Studio: 149 N. Main St., Suite 240/ Mailing address: BOX 446 Lakeport, CA 95453/ email
kpfz@kpfz.org / web site www.kpfz.org (See the Contact page in particular)

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