

Lakeland PBS

2021 Board of Directors

Ryan Welle, Board Chair, Bemidji, MN

Ryan serves as Vice President of Deposit Services at First National Bank in Bemidji. Ryan has worked in banking all of his adult life. Ryan also serves on several other boards around the region. His financial expertise is an asset that will help in the governance of Lakeland PBS.

Joe Breiter, Board Vice-Chair, Brainerd, MN

Joe currently serves as the Director of Business Development for the architecture and engineering firm of Widseth, Smith, Nolting (WSN) in Baxter, MN. Prior to WSN, Joe owned and operated a business-to-business marketing firm in Mankato for 15 years. Joe has extensive experience in marketing, staff management, strategic planning, budgeting, and business operations. In addition, Joe has served on several other non-profit boards in various capacities.

Jim Hanko, Board Treasurer, Bemidji, MN

Until October 2009, Jim had been the President and Chief Executive Officer of North Country Health Services (NCHS) in Bemidji, MN for 11 years. His vast experience and dedication to the success of both Bemidji and Lakeland PBS are huge assets to our organization.

Ann Marie Ward, Board Secretary, Bemidji, MN

Ann Marie serves as the Executive Director of the Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom (MAITC) Foundation. Prior to her current role, she served as the 4H county extension agent for Beltrami County. She is also a former employee of Lakeland PBS where she served in several roles including on-air talent for many productions and also as our preschool education outreach coordinator. Ann Marie's passion for kids and public television, along with her experience and "get-it-done" attitude will serve Lakeland PBS well.

Steve Berry, Bemidji, MN

Steve serves as a vice-president of investment banking at Riverwood Bank in Bemidji. Steve just recently moved to Bemidji and had lived in the Walker / Leech Lake area for forty years. Steve also has teaching experience and worked as an Extension Educator for the University of Minnesota in the past. Steve tells us that he has been a long-time fan of public television and has fond memories of watching Victory Garden and Austin City Limits back in the 70s.

Ray Gildow, Staples, MN

Ray is an author, professional fishing guide and retired Vice-President of Central Lakes College. In addition to his role as past Lakeland PBS Board Chair, Ray was a past host of Lakeland PBS's twice monthly local current events and public issues discussion program, Lakeland Currents.

Laine Larson, Brainerd, MN

Laine serves as the Superintendent of Schools for the Brainerd School District. Laine's recent work was to advocate for and implement a \$205M school bonding referendum that has been transformative for the Brainerd school district. Prior to her role in Brainerd, Laine served as the Superintendent of Schools in Thief River Falls, MN. Laine's commitment to education along with her extensive educational experience will be a big asset to the Lakeland PBS board.

Paul Peterson, St. Paul, MN

Paul is a partner in the law firm Lind, Jensen, Sullivan & Peterson, P.A., a 27 lawyer firm based in Minneapolis. Paul has roots in the region and owns a lake cabin close to Hackensack. In addition, his wife grew up in Bemidji. Paul will be a great asset to Lakeland PBS and brings a wealth of legal experience to the organization.

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Theresa Schermerhorn, Park Rapids, MN

Theresa is currently serving as the Human Resources Supervisor for the Bemidji regional MNDOT office. Theresa has over 20 years of high-level experience in human resources and HR law. These skills will be put to good use over the coming years when the organization will be dealing with several senior staff level retirements and associated new hires.

Brett Severson, Brainerd, MN

Brett grew up in the Brainerd Lakes area and has built a career in the Enterprise Data Storage and Infrastructure Solutions Industry with Dell Technologies. Along with a strong conviction in the mission of Lakeland PBS, Brett brings over 15 years of experience in troubleshooting complex IT ecosystems, managing large-scale product-improvement projects, and providing resolution management for critical executive and customer escalations. Brett's experience will help Lakeland PBS stay current with the ever-changing technology of media production and delivery.

John Ward, Baxter, MN

John has a long history in education and public service. He taught school for many years in several Minnesota communities including ISD-81 in Brainerd. John also served eight years as a legislator in the State House of Representatives in districts 12A and 10A. John brings a deep commitment and very unique skill set to Lakeland PBS.

Kim Williams, Bemidji, MN

Kim recently retired from serving as a special education supervisor at the Bemidji Regional Inter-district Council (BRIC). Kim is also a very active volunteer and loves being involved with various community youth programs. Kim's passion to serve children is very important considering Lakeland PBS' focus on children and education.

Marilyn Yoder Ph.D., Bemidji, MN

Marilyn is currently serving as the Dean for the College of Business, Mathematics, and Sciences at Bemidji State University. She has an extensive career in science and biotechnology in several academic institutions across the country. While she is new to our region, she has a long commitment to public media and brings us a strong science background along with ties to Bemidji State University.

Debra Zipf, Hillman, MN

Debra worked many years as a program manager for a large IT consulting firm and has years of experience working with corporations and non-profit organizations to address business issues to find ways to set them up for success. Debra is now retired, but continues to be actively engaged throughout the region volunteering her time with various non-profits.