

PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR'S REPORT
KBBF RADIO
OCTOBER 2017

FIRE COVERAGE

In the early hours of the fires on October 9, I was woken up a little before 4 AM. A few minutes later I got a call from Alicia. We talked about what KBBF was going to do. We decided to put KSRO's stream on the air temporarily while I got to the station to figure out what to do. Francisco Pardo also called Alicia and said he was willing to go to the station to get on the air. Some time between 5 and 6 AM I arrived at the station. Ventura Longoria (AKA Mr. Chuch) had sent me a message asking if we needed volunteers. I said yes. At this time my family insisted that I go with them out of town because they were worried. I gathered as much information as I could from KSRO and the Internet and created a packet of info for Francisco and Chuch.

Francisco and Chuch read the information on the air and did what they could to translate KSRO information for a couple hours, until Hugo Mata showed up to the station an hour early for his regular program. Due to his work with the County, he had a lot of resources and his strong translating ability allowed him to give very important information for a few more hours while Francisco backed him up and took phone calls.

Different volunteers came in throughout the day including Judy and Francisco Lozano. I was controlling the studio via remote login software and coordinating volunteers throughout the day. Starting at 6am on Tuesday, KBBF programmers were on the air nonstop from 6am to 11pm giving information in Spanish. Volunteers in the office gathered information and made and received phone calls. On some of the days we went until 1AM. My role was to coordinate the programmers in the studio, contact public officials for interviews, provide technical support for all studio operations, relay information from the volunteers in the office to the on-air voices, and run the office if there weren't other volunteers to help.

We interviewed CALFIRE officials, county supervisors, city council members, the Mexican Consulate, FEMA, PG&E, the Red Cross, many other organizations, agencies, and public officials, and hundreds of community members asking questions, giving information, relating their experiences, and thanking KBBF for our work. Everywhere I go in the community people tell me that we were the ONLY source of information about the fires in Spanish.

The Press Democrat did a short piece on the role of radio stations during the fire. We had a small mention. One night while I was getting ready to close up the office at 11:30 PM, I received a call from the BBC in London, who wanted to interview me for their morning news show. We conducted the interview via Skype and it aired in London. We were also interviewed by Splinter media, who posted a short social media video about our work during the fires. This video was re-posted by Jorge Ramos and up to date has

almost 150,000 views. We were also interviewed by other public radio stations, and tomorrow we will talk to KQED.

In the midst of all of this, our on-air fundraising campaign was set to launch on October 13th. Several programmers asked me if it was a good idea to move forward with it. I decided to move forward and programmers for the most part were very supportive and very passionate about raising money. Many people opted to come in to the station to give their donation as well as personally appreciate us for our work.

Our work has been recognized around the world, and we are continuing to provide interviews with public officials and agencies. The Mexican consul general was in our studios this afternoon, and I made sure there were representatives of the community in the studio to ask him questions. We have also received 2 large Underwriting contracts which we are in the process of finalizing.

This whole experience has given me a lot of insight and perspective into how to run our programming department. We have 4 new shows being developed and training is under way for them. I am continuing to develop and evolve my ideas for how to re-structure the department, but my priority is to get these exciting new voices on the air.

Alicia Sanchez can report more on our work during the fires. What I've provided is only what pertains to programming.

Edgar Avila