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HEROES

Healing Heroes is a partnership with Guardian Angels Medical Service Dogs, Inc. to provide qualifying disabled Veterans in our communities with highly trained service dogs. Armstrong is committed to helping our local Veterans. Service dogs help to mitigate the challenges of several conditions, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI); seizures; glucose imbalance, mobility issues and more.

We are actively seeking Veterans who would benefit from the assistance of a Guardian Angels Medical Service Dog.

Application forms are available at <http://www.medicalservicedogs.org/service-dog-application/>
Once the online form is completed, a full application packet will be sent to the applicants to fulfill the process for consideration.

Thanks to your generous donations, we have raised enough money to train 10 dogs!



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Verizon Communications Inc. has agreed to sell its blogging website Tumblr to the owner of popular online-publishing tool WordPress.com, unloading for a nominal amount a site that once fetched a purchase price of more than \$1 billion. Automattic Inc. will buy Tumblr for an undisclosed sum and take on about 200 staffers, the companies said. Tumblr is a free service that hosts millions of blogs where users can upload photos, music and art, but it has been dwarfed by Facebook, Reddit and other services.

Verizon became Tumblr's owner through the carrier's 2017 acquisition of Yahoo as part of a bid to build a digital media and advertising business. The wireless carrier began seeking a buyer for Tumblr earlier this year, [The Wall Street Journal reported](#). It discussed a potential transaction with a handful of parties, people familiar with the matter said. The sale price isn't material to Verizon, one of the people said.

Verizon is in the process of [revamping its media group](#), which struggled to meet revenue targets in recent years. The business, home to legacy Yahoo and AOL web properties such as HuffPost, TechCrunch, feminist media brand Makers and celebrity-interview site Build, is increasingly focused on subscription and original content. The Tumblr acquisition is the largest ever in terms of price and head count for Automattic, the company's Chief Executive Matt Mullenweg said in an interview. The San Francisco company has [a stable of brands](#) focused

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on online publishing, including longform site Longreads, comment-filtering service Akismet, and avatar-managing service Gravatar.

Yahoo had **paid about \$1.1 billion** for Tumblr in 2013 when it was one of several fast-growing internet startups. Tumblr failed to generate meaningful revenue for Yahoo, prompting the company to **write down the site's value** by \$230 million in 2016. A decision last year by Verizon to ban adult content on Tumblr alienated some users. Mr. Mullenweg said his company intends to maintain the existing policy that bans adult content. He said he has long been a Tumblr user and sees the site as complementary to WordPress.com. "It's just fun," he said of Tumblr. "We're not going to change any of that."

Tumblr has a strong mobile interface and dashboard where users follow other blogs, he said. Executives will look for ways WordPress.com and Tumblr can share services and functionality. Revenue within Verizon Media Group, formerly called Oath, was \$1.8 billion **in the second quarter**, down 2.9% from a year earlier. The company said during its quarterly call with analysts that it remains focused on news, finance, sports, entertainment and mail products within the media business, including new HuffPost and Yahoo finance subscription services. Verizon last year booked a \$4.5 billion accounting charge related to the unit and it has struggled with declining desktop advertising revenue and a digital advertising market dominated by behemoths like Alphabet Inc.'s Google. — **Wall Street Journal**

As **Concord (New Hampshire)** TV nears the end of its second decade of providing the city with the most local of local content, it faces a possible financial crunch caused by the least local of sources: federal telecommunications regulations and national changes in people's media habits. "It's not like we're panicking. We're going to keep providing the best content we can," said Josh Hardy, a seven-year veteran of the community access station who this summer was named its new executive director as Doris Ballard steps aside following a decade at the helm.

Not panicking but not unaware. In fact, the entire landscape of community TV is aware of what might happen. "We're definitely worried. There's definitely a reason to be worried," said Keith Thibault, director of Fall River, Mass., Community Media and a board member of Alliance for Community Media, a national organization of community-access stations. The bulk of money to run non-profit community-access channels like Concord TV comes from fees paid by the cable TV company as part of its contract with the local government. The fees were created under laws passed in 1984 by Congress that largely shaped the cable TV industry in this country.

In Concord, Hardy said, the city council gives one-third of this franchise fee to the station for operations, while the rest goes into the general fund. The actual dollar amount each year depends on how many city residents subscribe to Comcast cable TV. The station also gets \$525,000 over the course of the 10-year contract for capital improvements, such as new servers or cameras, Hardy said.

In fiscal year 2018, two-thirds of the station's revenue came from franchise fees: That's \$296,000 out of a total of \$462,000. That ratio has been roughly stable in recent years. The financial peril for Concord

TV and others of its kind is twofold. The first peril is "cord-cutting," the term for an increasing pattern in which people stop subscribing to cable television and instead look at videos or stream programs over the internet.

Concord's franchise fee is dependent upon subscribers to Comcast's TV service. Concord TV gets no money from cord-cutting even if the cord-cutting customer still gets internet through Comcast, as is often the case. "We are seeing, across the country, that the number of cable subscribers has dwindled as more and more people are cutting the cord," said Thibault. A proposed bill in Massachusetts would change the situation in that state, charging a 5% fee to digital streaming providers to make up for lost cable TV fees, but nothing of the sort is in the works for New Hampshire.

The second peril is a recent FCC ruling that would allow Comcast to reduce monetary payments to the local franchise fee by placing a value on "in-kind services" that it provides, such as cable connections to local government buildings and subtracting that from the fee payment. The Alliance for Community Media thinks this is illegal so there may be legislative pushback, and either way it's unclear how much reduction in fees this would create in Concord. But it's definitely a concern.

Concord TV has operated out of Concord High School offices since it got the community-access franchise in 1998, broadcasting everything from streaming video of city council meetings to video of school plays to recordings of Science Cafe to the popular "Dogs of Concord" program. With four full-time and several part-time staff, as well as a host of volunteers, it also trained scores of students and adults in video techniques and technology over the years, a role that should increase now that the Concord Regional Technical Center is adding film to its theater program. Concord TV's location helps explain why Concord High School has "the most sophisticated three-camera morning announcements you've ever seen," said Hardy.

In recent years Concord TV has embraced the online world, not just broadcasting over three Comcast channels but live-streaming events online, creating YouTube and Facebook channels, and discarding equipment like DVD and video players that were once cutting-edge. "Depreciation happens very quickly in this industry," is how Mike O'Meara, a former board member and volunteer who has been the station's IT director since 2017, puts it.

One of the frustrating parts of community access TV is lack of data about viewership through cable boxes, which means nobody can say exactly how many people have seen all this work. "There's no Nielsen ratings for hyper-local content," notes Hardy. But Concord TV's programs definitely get watched. One measure is what happens when there's a hiccup in the technology. "When streaming goes out, we hear about it. We get calls, emails. The city clerk's office gets calls and emails," said O'Meara.

With newspapers and TV stations struggling to maintain local reporting, the role of community access channels is only getting more important. "If it's eight people, or 30, or 50 - it's still that local aspect that's important," said Hardy. "It serves a role in the community." Hardy said the station's staff and board of directors are always looking for

new sources of revenue. Last year, the station got \$68,000 in grants and \$16,000 from events. Their legal status means they don't accept advertising like commercial channels, but Hardy said they're looking into corporate underwriting of programs, similar to what is done by public radio and public TV. "We're going to keep making these programs, these services. I think it's important; we all do," said Hardy.

— **Concord (NH) Monitor**

