

Country documentary is a labor of love

BY AUTUMN LABBÉ-RENAULT

Special to The Enterprise

Film screening benefits KDRT: Davis residents Glenda and Jesse Drew recently completed a documentary film on the history and politics of country music, an effort that's been a labor of love for the couple for many years.

It is a gift, they say, to "community organizations, down-home music venues, alternative film spaces, union halls, and grassroots projects, as a means to spread the word and to help generate some funds and resources to continue doing the good work you do."

Premiered recently in the Drews' old Mission District neighborhood in San Francisco, "Open Country" makes its Davis debut on Sunday, March 10, at the Davis Odd Fellows Hall. The Odd Fellows are generously co-presenting the event with Davis

DAVIS MEDIA ACCESS

Media Access (DMA) as a benefit for KDRT 95.7 FM, the low-power FM community radio station DMA launched 20 years ago. Tickets and more information available at <https://davis-media.org>.

Continuing to navigate the information ecosystem: last month I began to share a bit here about my work to articulate a vision for a "civic information hub" in Davis and Yolo County. Civic media/information hubs are a re-imagining of local news, with a goal to be more equitable and fair, to serve communities in more authentic ways, and to involve those whom the news affects.

This week I attended the inaugural meeting of the Future for Local News (FLN) network's Community Media Center Working Group, with whom I'll be meeting every two weeks.

This working group was borne out of a realization that non-profit community media centers — with their technological infrastructure and expertise, and their deep community engagement — could play a vital role in re-imagining the public commons of news and information.

Out of about 3,000 nonprofit channels and community media centers nationwide, we're nine practitioners who are working to actively advance similar ideas in our communities. Within the FLN framework, we'll work to make sure that community media centers are front of mind for policymakers, funders, and other potential allies. I'm deeply honored to have been invited to this table.

(For more about FLN, consider reading its 2023 report, "The Roadmap for Local News," <https://localnewsroadmap.org/>).

This process is much like laying bricks on a path as I'm

walking it — every one thing leads to the next step. I've been meeting with local journalists, elected officials, librarians, teachers, and community leaders. This first level of assessment has been geared at getting early assessment and buy in as DMA works towards a planning grant to do a deep and broad community assessment. In turn, that will provide critical feedback and data as we work towards securing some of the national funding being geared at such efforts. This is similar to a process we used quite successfully before launching KDRT in 2004.

On the March 2, 2024 episode of Davisville (KDRT 95.7FM and <https://kdrf.org>), Host Bill Buchanan walks through some of the formative work of this project with me. Buchanan makes clear this discussion is its early days, and that DMA's concepts and approach may well change over

the course of exploration.

For now, I'd like to say we're concerned about the local information ecosystem, and using the framework and experience of DMA/community media, its technical expertise and its connections to the community, we've initiated a process of trying to determine what the community needs. Generally, this would be a new source of community and civic information about Davis/Yolo, drawing on the strengths of people in the community, and available to all. We don't see this as a commercial venture; we do see it as a supplement to existing local sources of information.

— Autumn Labbé-Renault has served as DMA's executive director since 2007, where she writes about media, nonprofits, arts and culture and their intersection. Learn more at <http://davis-media.org>, email info@davismedia.org, or call 530-757-2419.