



## **BITV's Community Role in 2009**

By Scott Schmidt, Executive Director

### **1. Background**

I was fortunate to work for a leading publisher during our last major recession. The company, Rodale Press, had banner years when the nation was experiencing recessionary symptoms. Rodale publishes numerous magazines and books about sustainability, self-help information, and healthy living. We found that when individuals and communities face difficult financial times, they look for ways to improve their lives and they rely on all media sources for information.

BITV is poised to provide invaluable information services for non-profit agencies, businesses, the city, and the larger community. We have positioned ourselves to reach the largest audience, and efficiently acquire and deliver vital information. As we approach solutions to these very difficult financial times, BITV is enthusiastically offering the following direct benefits to the community:

### **2. Non-Profit Agency Support. BITV will help agencies in the following ways:**

- a. BITV will offer FREE membership for all island non-profit agencies.
- b. BITV will continue to offer FREE promotional time on both channels to all non-profits and encourage them to promote their fundraising events, capital needs, and services.
- c. Every week, BITV will promote agencies as a special story segment on Bnews.
- d. Every week on Bnews, BITV will include island agencies in the "What's Happening" segment keeping it local.
- e. BITV will aid agencies' marketing needs by teaching non-profits how to document their services as a program to air on BITV.
- f. BITV will offer free use of cameras to record an event or service the agencies want to promote on BITV.

### **3. Business Support**

- a. BITV and Bnews will showcase businesses that reach out to help others.
- b. BITV will encourage and showcase business/non-profit agency partnerships on both channels and on Bnews.



- c. BITV will recognize island businesses in Bnews. (in a non-commercial format)
4. Public Support (in addition to our contract deliverables)
- a. BITV will provide television programs on how to get through these tough times.
  - b. Bnews will always create island-focused positive reports as encouragement.
  - c. BITV will offer citizen journalism classes so residents can participate in telling news stories.
5. Education Support
- a. BITV will inform the public about the significant financial challenges schools face, the funding systems, and what the public can do to help.
  - b. BITV will inform the public about BISD's process to develop their budget and bond.
6. City Support
- a. BITV will offer FREE BITV studio time to city officials who want to provide educational information to the public in an uncensored program.
  - b. BITV will offer city officials a hosted conversation program in the BITV studio to discuss issues they are facing.
  - c. BITV will regularly invite city officials to appear on Bnews.
  - d. Bnews will provide unbiased reports on the work the city is doing, e.g., water quality testing, roads, Winslow project. The 3/06/09 newscast includes a Special Report about water quality and testing.

This role will put extra stress on our small organization, but these are indeed not ordinary times. As a community we need to utilize all available resources. BITV will enthusiastically do its part.