

# The Janesville Gazette

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## OPINION

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### OUR VIEWS

## WisconsinEye's time has come

WisconsinEye is a great resource for a great state

Unfortunately, most of the people in the state don't know it.

WisconsinEye is the statewide public affairs network that had been in the works for years before finally launching in May 2007. Through television and the Internet, it provides

#### FOR MORE

WisconsinEye is on Channel 200 in the Charter cable television lineup and on Channel 163 on Time Warner. To visit its Web site, go to [www.wiseye.org](http://www.wiseye.org).

unfettered and unfiltered coverage of state government, public policy discussions and issues that are important to the people of Wisconsin.

Though the network has been operating for 15 months, word has been slow to spread. The folks at WisconsinEye hope to change that in the months ahead, and we'll all be well-served if more people take advantage of this one-of-a-kind programming.

The time is particularly right for WisconsinEye to step to the fore because newspapers and other media are cutting back on their coverage of state government and statewide issues. Times are tough in the news business, and newsrooms everywhere are cutting resources.

That creates a void that WisconsinEye can at least partly fill with its comprehensive coverage of state government, the Supreme Court and other important public policy matters.

The network has 70 camera positions in the Capital to provide gavel-to-gavel, unedited coverage of state proceedings. From its fully digital studio just blocks away, it features viewer call-in programs and other shows, and its team of videographers covers community affairs and public policy discussions across the state.

In addition, WisconsinEye's Web site offers live and archived video streaming of its Capitol coverage as well as other resources for civic education and engagement.

The network is the only one of its kind in the country to receive no state funding. That means WisconsinEye has full editorial control. It also means that fund raising is a continual challenge, and that's largely why the network took years to get off the ground.

But WisconsinEye is real now, and its television programming is available to more than 50 percent of Wisconsin's residents through Charter and Time Warner cable networks. WisconsinEye is working with companies in other parts of the state to expand that access. And the Web site is available to anyone with a computer and an Internet hookup.

WisconsinEye officials are particularly excited about the network's "Campaign '08" project, which is shining a bright light on races, issues and candidates for the September primary and the November general election. State residents should take advantage of the wealth of information as they decide whom to support.

They shouldn't stop there. WisconsinEye could become an important part of the political and civic landscape in this state in the years ahead, but it needs a wider audience. Take a look if you haven't. Go back if you have. You'll help the network, and you could help Wisconsin to a better future.

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