



CONTACT: Brian Rossiter
Senior publicist
(215) 351-2066
brossiter@whyy.org

WHYY-FM'S *FRESH AIR* SETS RECORD WITH MORE THAN 5 MILLION LISTENERS

Program Becomes First Non-drivetime Public Radio Show to Reach Audience Milestone

PHILADELPHIA, March 26, 2009 — WHYY-FM's *Fresh Air* set a record in increasing its cumulative and average quarter-hour listenership 13 percent from fall 2007 to fall 2008, according to statistics released by National Public Radio and based on Arbitron data. The program, which is distributed by NPR, carried by 512 stations and also heard in Europe on the World Radio Network, is the first nondrivetime show in public radio's history to reach more than 5 million listeners (cumulative) weekly.

A Peabody Award-winning weekday magazine of contemporary arts and issues and among public radio's most popular programs, *Fresh Air* reached an average quarter-hour listenership of more than 1 million weekly. Terry Gross began hosting the program in 1975 when it was broadcast only in Philadelphia. *Fresh Air* became a daily national broadcast in 1987. Gross interviews authors, actors, musicians and experts on subjects ranging from the economy to religion on *Fresh Air*.

Following a year in news dominated by the presidential election and global economic crisis, NPR stations' listenership increased 6 percent to 32.7 million listeners weekly.

"It is an honor for WHYY to be the home of *Fresh Air*," said Bill Marrasso, president and CEO of WHYY. "I congratulate Terry — clearly one of the most important figures in the nation's news media today — and her excellent team. They have done nothing short of an extraordinary job over the years, bringing to light interviews of great sensitivity and extraordinary news value."

Gross said: "When I started hosting *Fresh Air* in 1975, when it was broadcast only in Philadelphia, the audience was so small there were times it was almost too small for the ARBs to measure. So this is thrilling news."

Fresh Air received its Peabody Award, which cited Gross for her "probing questions and unusual insights," in 1994. America Women in Radio and Television presented Gross a Gracie Award in 1999 in the category of National Network Radio Personality. She also received the Edward R. Murrow Award from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in 2003 for advancing the "growth, quality and positive image of radio."



Gross also received the Columbia Journalism Award from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism in 2008.

Gross has received honorary degrees from Princeton University, Haverford College and Drexel University. She received a bachelor's degree in English and master of education in communications from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Her alma mater presented her an honorary degree in 2007 and a 1993 Distinguished Alumni Award. Gross was born and raised in Brooklyn, N.Y.

###

