

History

NET today is the sum of more than 50 years of history – visions that have become reality through the hard work of hundreds of people.

This chronology shows the evolution of NET and the services that it provides. It also serves as testament to the vision of the people of Nebraska who made it possible.

Year By Year

1951

The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska petitioned the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to reserve UHF channel 18 for noncommercial educational use in Lincoln.

1953

The University created the position of director of television within the Department of Public Relations.

1954

Cornhusker Radio and Television Corporation, a subsidiary of Fetzer Broadcasting Company, acquired licenses to operate channels 10 and 12 in Lincoln. Company President John Fetzer offered the channel 12 license as a gift to the University, subject to FCC approval. Lincoln banker Byron J. Dunn was named trust officer to operate channel 12 on a noncommercial basis until the University could assume control of the station. The FCC approved the trust arrangement and changed the educational TV channel allocation for Lincoln from UHF channel 18 to VHF channel 12.

KUON-TV Channel 12 began operating November 1, using studios and equipment of KOLN-TV Channel 10, Lincoln. The station was on the air mornings only, Monday through Saturday.

1955

KUON-TV, in cooperation with the State Department of Education, the University of Nebraska and Lincoln area schools, began an extensive series of experimental instructional telecasts that spanned five years.

1956

The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska assumed control of the KUON-TV Channel 12 license.

The John E. Fetzer Foundation presented to the University a transmitter, transmission line, an antenna and studio equipment valued at \$135,000.

The Ford Foundation's Fund for Adult Education granted the station \$100,000 to buy equipment and assist with studio activation.

1957

KUON-TV Channel 12 began operating in the fall from renovated space in the University of Nebraska's Temple Building at 12th and R Streets in Lincoln. Nighttime broadcasts were added five times per week.

1959

University Television was recognized as a separate department of the University of Nebraska, reporting to the Office of the Chancellor.

1960

Six Nebraska school districts were incorporated as the Nebraska Council for Educational Television to develop instructional television curriculum resources for use in their classrooms.

The Nebraska Council for Educational Television, Inc., petitioned the FCC to reserve channel 4 in Kearney, channel 3 in Bassett, channel 8 in Albion, channel 9 in North Platte and channel 13 in Alliance for noncommercial educational purposes.

1961

The Nebraska Legislature adopted a resolution urging a study of the feasibility of a statewide educational television network. Governor Frank B. Morrison appointed the Nebraska State Committee on Educational Television to conduct the survey.

Five VHF channels – the largest number ever approved for use in one state – and three UHF channels were allocated by the FCC to the Nebraska Council for Educational Television, Inc.

1962

The Great Plains Regional Instructional Television Library was established at the University of Nebraska as an experimental videotape exchange project under the National Defense Educational Act Title VII grants from the U.S. Office of Education.

The Nebraska State Committee on Educational Television completed its statewide educational television survey in December. The report detailed network feasibility and recommended its prompt activation.

1963

The Unicameral enacted two bills implementing the recommendations of the statewide survey. One, the Nebraska Educational Television Act, created the Nebraska Educational Television Commission with responsibility to develop and administer a statewide network. The second bill appropriated \$600,000 to construct the first phase of the network. Funding was also provided through the federal Educational Television Facilities Act.

1964

The University of Nebraska was awarded a \$309,583 grant from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare under the Educational Television Facilities Act for full-power activation of a KUON-TV transmitter at Mead.

1965

The KUON-TV Channel 12 transmitter was moved from Lincoln to the University of Nebraska Field Laboratory at Mead. KUON-TV went on the air from its new location January 18.

Two additional stations were completed. KLNE-TV Channel 3, Lexington, began operation September 6. KYNE-TV Channel 26, Omaha, began broadcasting on October 19.

Federal grants totaling more than \$140,000 were received by the Commission to finance further network development.

The Nebraska Video Nursing Council (later redesignated the Nebraska Television Council for Nursing Education, Inc.) was organized to provide programs via the Nebraska Educational Television Network to nursing schools in Nebraska and western Iowa.

1966

The Commission appointed a panel of citizens from throughout the state to serve as a Program Advisory Committee.

KTNE-TV Channel 13, Alliance, began operation September 7. KPNE-TV Channel 9, North Platte, went on the air five days later.

The Nebraska Educational Television Council for Higher Education (NETCHE) was incorporated in May as the nation's first statewide all-inclusive collegiate educational television organization. An initial federal grant of \$145,000 was awarded to NETCHE, Inc., to acquire television equipment for member colleges. (Subsequent yearly federal grants were awarded through 1973 for the development of college-level instructional television lessons.)

The Great Plains Regional Instructional Television Library changed its name to the Great Plains National Instructional Television Library (GPN) and became a self-supporting operation.

1967

The Legislature approved two additional stations for the Network – one at Merriman and the other at Hastings. The 1967-69 biennial budget included \$250,000 to plan a telecommunications building to house all Lincoln-based educational television activities.

The Network grew to seven stations. KMNE-TV Channel 7, Bassett, began operation September 1. KXNE-TV Channel 19, Norfolk, went on the air in early November.

The Commission was awarded federal grants totaling nearly \$220,000 to help finance continued development of the statewide network.

1968

The eighth and ninth stations of the statewide television network were activated. KHNE-TV Channel 29, Hastings, began transmission on November 18. KRNE-TV Channel 12, Merriman, began operation December 9. The first of the Network's translators was put into service on November 1 to serve the Fairbury area.

1969

Network stations began offering broadcast service seven days a week beginning with the 1969-70 broadcast season.

The Nebraska Legislature passed measures authorizing construction of a telecommunications building.

Land at 1800 North 33rd Street in Lincoln was acquired as the site for the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center. The land was deeded from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) to the City of Lincoln. The Nebraska ETV Commission signed occupancy agreements with both the City and University.

A translator to serve the Beatrice area was activated October 14.

1970

Ground was broken for the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center and construction began.

Translators to serve the communities of Chadron, Benkelman and McCook were activated.

1971

Responsibility for elementary-secondary instructional television was vested by the Legislature in the State Department of Education, and the first appropriation for school television was provided.

The Commission received a \$209,973 matching fund grant from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare for the Network's Bassett station, KMNE-TV Channel 7. A second grant of \$223,622 was awarded for KXNE-TV Channel 19, Norfolk.

Nebraskans for Public Television, Inc. (NPTV), a nonprofit citizen support organization, was formally incorporated and a charter membership campaign began.

The "Program Previews" newsletter that had been sent to viewers was expanded to a magazine format program guide and renamed "Choice."

1972

The Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center was dedicated June 4. Representatives of all national public television organizations attended.

On August 15, the Network assumed responsibility for feeding several hours of programming each week to more than 20 Central Educational Network stations in 12 Midwestern states.

1973

The FCC approved the Nebraska ETV Commission's application to remotely control KXNE-TV Channel 19, Norfolk; KYNE-TV Channel 26, Omaha; and KHNE-TV Channel 29, Hastings.

1974

The Nebraska Legislature approved a bill assuring a permanent Nebraska Heritage Television Library to preserve programs considered of unusual significance to Nebraskans.

A federal grant of \$165,000 was awarded to the Nebraska Educational Television Council for Higher Education, Inc. (NETCHE), to expand its activities and start a cooperative program of instructional improvement and development.

On October 1, KYNE-TV Channel 26, Omaha, began broadcasting selected programs from the University of Nebraska at Omaha campus. KYNE-TV temporarily broke away from the Nebraska ETV Network schedule while it "simulcast" these programs of interest specifically to the metropolitan Omaha audience.

The Commission approved a contract with Northwestern Bell Telephone Company to provide audio and video connections between the Mead transmitter and the KYNE-TV Channel 26 transmitter in Omaha. That link also provided two-way communication between the University of Nebraska College of Nursing at the Medical Center in Omaha and Lincoln campus classrooms.

GPN provided programming for a Satellite Technology Demonstration Project in the Rocky Mountain states – the first widespread use of a satellite-based telecommunications system for educational purposes.

1975

The first statewide legislative hearing broadcast live on Nebraska television was held February 25 in the Network studios. The hearing featured the Nebraska Legislature's Judiciary Committee deliberations on correctional reforms.

The Commission received a \$25,000 grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) to study the feasibility of a statewide public radio service in Nebraska.

1976

The Network's first major program series to be produced for national distribution by the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) – a 20-program poetry series entitled “Anyone for Tennyson?” – premiered on 110 PBS stations. The series, coproduced with the New York-based Great Amwell Company, continued over three public television seasons for a total of 50 programs.

The National Broadcasting Company (NBC) announced a new corporate symbol on New Year's Day that was identical to the Nebraska ETV Network logo. Amidst extensive national press coverage, the Commission filed suit against NBC in February for trademark infringement. An out-of-court settlement accepted by the Commission gave the Network a color mobile unit and new equipment valued in excess of \$800,000 in exchange for discontinuing the use of the look-alike “N” logo. An additional cash settlement of \$55,000 reimbursed the Network for costs of designing a new logo, eliminating the old logo from all program content and other materials, legal fees and other related costs. A new Nebraska ETV Network logo was unveiled May 25.

A \$25,000 grant was announced in April from John E. Fetzer, chairman of the board of the Cornhusker Television Corporation, to enable Network participation in the proposed satellite interconnection system for the national distribution of public television programming. Later in the year, PBS selected Lincoln as a transmit and receive site for this satellite communications/program distribution system.

On August 18, the Commission recommended the phased development of a statewide public radio network.

Television translators were activated to serve the communities of Neligh, Trenton, Culbertson, Verdigre, Stratton and Decatur.

GPN passed the \$2 million mark in royalties paid to educational television production centers in the United States whose materials were distributed by GPN.

1977

The Nebraska ETV Network began broadcasting Legislative committee hearings in addition to regular session coverage.

Network translators were activated to improve reception for the communities of Blair, Wauneta and Niobrara.

The Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium (NAPBC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to the expression of the Native American heritage, established headquarters at the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center.

1978

The 14th Network translator was activated at Falls City. Land for a 15th translator was purchased at Pawnee City.

The 1,499-foot KTNE-TV Channel 13 tower near Alliance collapsed on February 6 during an ice storm. The Nebraska Legislature appropriated \$917,644 to build a new tower. Installation was completed by mid-October and full service restored to the Panhandle area on October 20.

In March, KUON-TV Channel 12, Lincoln, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln received a CPB grant to investigate the potential of videodisc technology for instruction for the hearing-impaired. A second CPB grant in August funded an investigation and demonstration of videodisc technology for American instructional and public television.

The Nebraska ETV Network was linked to public television's new satellite program distribution system on April 27 when the newly constructed receive/transmit Earth station was activated.

The John E. Fetzer Nebraska Satellite Center was dedicated on June 16.

The U.S. Office of Education awarded a series of grants in November for a new transmitter and antenna for KYNE-TV Channel 26, increasing the coverage area in metropolitan Omaha.

The Nebraska Legislature renamed the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center the Terry M. Carpenter Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center in honor of the late state senator from Scottsbluff.

1979

The 15th Network translator was installed to improve reception in the Pawnee City area.

NETCHE, Inc., became the official name of the consortium originally known as the Nebraska Educational Television Council for Higher Education.

The Videodisc Design/Production Group, formed at KUON-TV Channel 12, Lincoln, under a CPB grant project, presented four pilot instructional videodiscs – each geared toward a different educational level – at the National Association of Educational Broadcasters meeting in Chicago.

1980

A 1,000-watt translator replaced the ten-watt translator that had served the Beatrice/Fairbury viewing area since 1969.

EduCable, a cable program service which included gavel-to-gavel coverage of state Legislature activities, was begun for Lincoln CableVision subscribers.

The Network initiated a satellite teleconferencing service in April 1980 with a national teleconference originated for the American Council on Education.

The first-of-its-kind national symposium on videodisc production was conducted October 8-10 at the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center. Leading designers and producers from across the country made presentations to 160 participants.

“Life on the Mississippi,” coproduced by the Nebraska ETV Network and the Great Amwell Company, premiered nationally on PBS in November.

1981

“Hidden Places: Where History Lives,” a three-part series produced by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Department of Television's Cultural Affairs Unit, premiered nationally on PBS.

The 14-year-old KXNE-TV Channel 19 transmitter serving Norfolk and northeast Nebraska was replaced. The project was funded in part by a \$250,000 grant from the federal Public Telecommunications Facilities Program.

1982

Sunday morning broadcasts began for the first time on the Nebraska ETV Network with programs for children and for adults enrolled in college credit telecourses.

A \$450,000 grant from The Annenberg School of Communications and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting project initiated development of interactive videodisc lessons to provide an alternative to conventional college and university laboratory science instruction.

HI-VIS, a new statewide Hearing Impaired Video Information Service employing the line 21 communications technology, was officially dedicated September 21 by Governor Charles Thone as a cooperative project of the Nebraska Commission for the Hearing Impaired, the Nebraska ETV Commission and UNL Television.

1983

The National Association of Public Television Stations presented a special award to the Nebraska Legislature for the 15th consecutive year of public television coverage of Unicameral sessions and hearings via the Nebraska ETV Network.

A second application of the line 21 communications technology, AGRI-VIS – the Agricultural Video Information Service – was officially dedicated on June 15 by Governor Robert Kerrey as a service for Nebraska farmers, ranchers and agribusiness representatives.

“Reading Rainbow,” a children’s reading series coproduced by GPN and public television station WNED-TV, Buffalo, New York, premiered nationally in July on PBS stations.

1984

The Network began a new marketing service, offering for purchase videocassettes of programs produced by UNL Television.

The Network’s 16th translator was activated February 7 in Crawford to improve reception in that area.

A three-year, \$2 million Challenge Grant Campaign to ensure funding for Nebraska ETV Network television production equipment and programming was launched by the University of Nebraska Foundation, Nebraskans for Public Television and the Commission. The first \$500,000 was provided in a challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

In revised legislation introduced by State Senator Bill Harris, Lincoln, the 88th session of the Legislature changed the name of the Nebraska Educational Television Commission to the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET) Commission and expanded its responsibilities to include telecommunication technologies.

1985

In February, the Network tested stereo sound, considered the most important technological advance in television broadcasting since color.

The Network received a Public Telecommunications Facilities Program grant of \$291,400 toward replacement of the KMNE-TV Channel 7 transmitter at Bassett.

1986

The Network joined forces with the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service to conduct AgReach ‘86, a month-long outreach project examining issues confronting farm and ranch families and rural communities.

Two colleges of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln joined the Division of Continuing Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Television and the NET Commission to inaugurate Nebraska CorpNet, a corporate training network for on-site delivery of college graduate and undergraduate courses and seminars to company worksites. Eight Omaha and Lincoln corporations were charter clients.

The Nebraska Legislature directed the NET Commission to establish and operate a statewide public and educational radio service, but provided no funding.

The Nebraskans for Public Television (NPTV) board of directors announced formation of an NPTV Trustees Council comprised of distinguished Nebraskans who have provided major support during the course of development of the statewide Nebraska ETV Network.

The Nebraska ETV Network joined with four other public television licensees to form the Public Television Outreach Alliance (PTOA) to produce national programming and outreach campaigns addressing important social issues.

The Public Radio Nebraska Foundation (PRNF), Inc., an outgrowth of a former Nebraskans for Public Radio group, was formally chartered to assist with planning and fundraising toward the phased development of a statewide public radio network.

The 1,524-foot tower for KMNE-TV Channel 7, Bassett, collapsed during a severe ice storm on December 2, leaving much of north-central Nebraska without a public television signal.

1987

Governor Kay Orr approved emergency deficit funding legislation that appropriated nearly \$1.5 million to replace the Bassett tower. Temporary service to residents within a 32-mile radius of the Bassett transmitter was provided immediately. Full service was restored in October 1987 when the new tower was activated.

The successful conclusion of the three-year, \$2 million Nebraska ETV Network Challenge Grant Campaign was publicly announced January 14.

GPN completed its 25th year of operation and announced gross annual revenues topping \$1 million for each of the past 15 years. Royalty payments to producers of GPN-distributed materials totaled more than \$4 million.

1988

The 25th anniversary of the passage of the Educational Television Act, which created the NET Commission and Nebraska Educational Television Network, was observed.

Funding totaling \$88,261 was appropriated by the Nebraska Legislature to plan a statewide public radio service.

A new Schools TeleLearning Service was developed jointly by the Nebraska Department of Education and the NET Commission.

A U.S. Department of Education Star Schools grant (\$546,609) was received by Nebraska. Nebraska's participation was a result of the new Schools TeleLearning Service agreement. Nebraska's initial satellite production was an interactive introductory Japanese language course. Four schools were selected to participate in the pilot project: Crawford, Medicine Valley-Curtis, Beaver City Schools and the Grand Island High School. In April, Nebraska had 24 schools with satellite capabilities in addition to three educational service units. A SERC (Satellite Education Resource Consortium) grant resulted in the construction of a Ku-band satellite uplink to be located at NETC.

Nebraska CorpNet, which provided closed circuit instructional courses to business work sites, grew to nine corporations participating in Omaha and five in Lincoln.

The Nebraska Public Radio Network Study Report, an overall plan for public radio development, was completed by Carr Communications and approved in October by the NET Commission.

Public radio station KUCV/90.9 FM MHz was relocated from Union College in Lincoln to the NET Center in July. The station transmitter and antenna were moved from Union College to a Hallam, Nebraska site. KUCV's studios were dedicated on October 10th. A Community Advisory Board was established for Station KUCV, Lincoln.

A premiere of "The Trial of Standing Bear," produced by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Television for broadcast by the Nebraska ETV Network, was held June 30. The first PBS nationwide distribution of the program was on July 4.

1989

In April, Nebraska established satellite communication links with 24 schools and three Educational Service Units.

In June, KLNE-TV Channel 3, Lexington, KYNE-TV Channel 26, Omaha, KHNE-TV Channel 29, Hastings, and KUON-TV Channel 10, Lincoln, began transmitting in stereo.

Nebraska ETV broadcast special coverage of President George Bush's June visit to Lincoln.

A Public Television Facilities Program grant of \$660,738 was received from the U.S. Department of Commerce for four new radio transmitters.

1990

"Profit the Earth," an hour-long documentary about creative solutions to environmental problems, was produced by UNL Television/Nebraska ETV Network as the cornerstone production for the Public Television Outreach Alliance 1990 year-long outreach campaign, "Operation Earth."

Following incorporation in Nebraska, a new Agricultural Satellite Corporation (AG*SAT) began with 27 land grant university charter affiliates following an organizational meeting in November. Nebraska served as the satellite operations center and headquarters for AG*SAT operations. AG*SAT institutions shared resident instruction and cooperative extension and research programs.

On June 22, a formal dedication of NEB*SAT, was held at Air Park West in Lincoln, with Governor Kay Orr, NET Commission members and NET administration attending.

The mobile television unit received by the Nebraska ETV Network as part of a 1976 legal settlement with the NBC was replaced. A new 45-foot mobile trailer housing remote production equipment was delivered in the spring, and \$832,393 worth of existing mobile unit production and control equipment was moved to the new trailer.

Public radio station KTNE/91.1 FM, Alliance, was dedicated May 3. KLNE/88.7 FM, Lexington, was dedicated May 4. KXNE/89.3 FM, Norfolk, was dedicated May 29. KHNE/89.1 FM, Hastings, was dedicated June 15.

1991

Nebraska Public Radio Network station KPNE/91.7 FM, North Platte, was dedicated July 2, and KMNE/90.3 FM, Bassett, was dedicated July 3. KRNE/91.4 FM, Merriman, and KCNE/91.9 FM, Chadron, were both dedicated August 29.

Dedication of the entire Nebraska Public Radio Network (NPRN) was held October 8 at the Lied Center for Performing Arts on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus, as part of a program featuring a special concert by the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra. The concert was broadcast by NPRN and simulcast on Nebraska ETV.

A live, two-hour national radio broadcast of Garrison Keillor's "American Radio Company" program originated from Red Cloud, Nebraska, on December 7 commemorating Nebraska author Willa Cather's 116th birthday.

The Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Facilities Corporation was established to facilitate lease/purchase of the GTE SpaceNet 3 transponder.

The Legislature approved addition of a technical community college representative to the NET Commission effective July 1, 1991. Harold F. McClure of Kearney was appointed by Governor Ben Nelson.

"Reading Rainbow" was found to be the most used and viewed children's television program in the United States during the 1990-91 school year, according to a Corporation for Public Broadcasting study, "Study of School Use of Television and Video."

1992

The Descriptive Video Service (DVS) began as a free service on some public television programs broadcast by the Nebraska ETV Network.

In July, television translator K08LN, UHF Channel 8, Harrison, was activated to serve the Harrison area.

GPN celebrated 30 years of operation in March.

National dedication ceremonies were held June 12 for AG*SAT on the grounds east of the NET Center.

1993

NAPBC's American Indian Radio on Satellite System received a three-year, \$460,000 grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to produce programming and coordinate efforts with the Native Canadian Broadcasters.

The 40th anniversary broadcast of public television's longest running continuing local series, "Backyard Farmer," aired in August.

NET's Closed Captioning Center completed its first real-time captioning contract, a three-part series for the University of Kentucky. "Big Red Play-by-Play" became the first live local television production to be live captioned for broadcast on Nebraska ETV.

Nebraskans for Public Television reported members from all 50 states, Puerto Rico and Canada, as a result of the NEB*SAT satellite distribution system.

"Statewide," the Network's weekly magazine series, was launched.

1994

"Mysteries in the Dust," a production of University of Nebraska-Lincoln Television originally broadcast on the Nebraska ETV Network, was rebroadcast nationally as an episode of "NOVA," PBS' premier science series. "NOVA" re-titled the program, which is about the state's Ashfall Fossil Bed, "Buried in Ash."

NET General Manager Jack McBride was elected chairman of the Board of Trustees for the American Program Service (APS). APS is a national coalition of public television stations that acquires and distributes programs.

Governor Ben Nelson named McBride to the Nebraska Commission on Information Technology.

Control for transmitters for KUON-TV Channel 12 in Mead, KTNE-TV Channel 13 near Alliance and KLNE-TV Channel 9 near Lexington was transferred from the sites to Network headquarters in Lincoln.

1995

“Fate of the Plains,” an hour-long documentary about the economic and environmental limits of the Great Plains, premiered on Nebraska ETV. The program was later picked up and broadcast nationally by PBS.

Nebraska ETV began the transition to the digital era of television when it received a grant of three digital video production systems from Abekas Video Systems of Redwood City, California. The equipment was valued at \$250,000. NET also purchased two digital videocassette recorders (VCRs) to record images digitally.

The Public Television Facilities Program (PTFP) awarded \$70,810 to NET to replace translators at Pawnee City and Beatrice. The NET Commission matched the funds. Nebraska Public Radio Network received a \$15,750 grant from PTFP to replace its 15-year-old master control console and router switching system. The Public Radio Nebraska Foundation matched that grant.

NEB*SAT reached a milestone August 23 when it aired the first voice-activated interactive class connecting classrooms in Lincoln, Kearney, Grand Island and Norfolk.

Nebraska Public Radio Network translators went into service at Harrison (89.5 MHz), Max (93.3 MHz) and Culbertson (92.7 MHz).

1996

“In Search of the Real Jesse James,” a documentary produced by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Television, premiered on the Discovery Channel. The broadcast marked the first time that a UNL-produced program premiered on commercial television before airing on Nebraska ETV or PBS. “In Search of the Oregon Trail,” a two-hour documentary co-produced by the Nebraska ETV Network and Oregon Public Broadcasting, premiered on PBS. The program was one of the 10 most-watched programs on PBS that year.

Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium, housed at NET headquarters, was re-named Native American Public Telecommunications (NAPT).

Jack McBride retired after 43 years at the helm of Nebraska Educational Telecommunications. McBride was replaced by Rod Bates.

“Fate of the Plains,” a documentary about the Great Plains originally produced by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Television for broadcast on Nebraska ETV, was rebroadcast nationally by PBS.

In one of the most far-reaching technological changes in its history, NET changed the way it transmitted signals to and received signals from its orbiting satellite transponder. The conversion allowed NET to “compress” the signals used to transmit Nebraska ETV, NPRN, EduCable and other educational telecommunications services via satellite and make room for additional transmission channels.

EduCable, the cable television service of Nebraska ETV, expanded its broadcast schedule to 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

1997

The Mountain Time Zone delay center for the Nebraska ETV Network was eliminated.

Nebraska Public Radio began a weekly live remote series, "Live From The Mill."

"Around the World in 72 Days," a Nebraska ETV-produced biography of pioneer journalist Nellie Bly, premiered nationwide as an episode of "The American Experience."

1998

"Reading Rainbow" won Daytime Emmy Awards in the categories of Outstanding Children's Series and Outstanding Live and Direct to Tape Sound Mixing.

1999

On February 10 and 24, NET Online experimented with webcasting two Nebraska Women's basketball games live across the Internet.

The Nebraska Legislature pledged \$43.9 million in funding over ten years to cover the cost of replacing satellite transmission capacity, purchasing digital television transmission equipment and covering debt service.

In late December, NET received grants totaling \$786,656 from the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) to begin the transition to digital broadcasting by replacing or upgrading equipment used to produce and broadcast programs on Nebraska ETV and the NPRN.

2000

Nebraska Public Radio began real-time audio streaming on NET Online and the NPRN celebrated its 10-year anniversary.

The Nebraska Legislature authorized an increase of ten compressed video channels on NEB*SAT 3, bringing the total to 30 channels available for video and audio signals between origination and reception sites.

In October, EduCable, NET's cable television service, officially changed its name to NETV2.

2001

NET partnered with UNL's Teacher College to jointly manage the newly established National Center for Information Technology in Education (NCITE).

The Media Division of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) awarded NET a \$500,000 grant to fund a documentary on the life and career of early 20th century radical Emma Goldman. The NEH also awarded NET \$30,000 for research and initial development of a film biography of Nebraska writer Willa Cather.

The Nebraska Public Radio Network (NPRN) expanded its schedule to 24-hour broadcasting, launched its new website and changed the KUCV frequency from 90.9 FM to 91.1 FM.

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) awarded NET a \$1.5 million grant to continue Nebraska ETV's technical transition to digital television. PTFP also gave NPRN a \$15,300 grant to upgrade equipment at its Chadron transmitter.

NET received a \$10,000 grant from the National Center for Outreach to support the scheduling of weekly Spanish language programming blocks on NETV2.

2002

Nebraska ETV's productions "Monkey Trial" and "Polka Passion" were broadcast nationally as part of the PBS series "American Experience."

"Next Exit," a video journal about the unexpected in Nebraska, premiered as a regular series on Nebraska ETV.

NET received \$15 million from the Legislature to fund necessary renovations of the Terry M. Carpenter Center at 1800 North 33rd Street in Lincoln.

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) announced a \$500,000 award to support NETV's production of a national TV biography of Nebraska writer Willa Cather.

The NET Commission received a \$1.6 million federal grant to assist the Nebraska ETV Network in its conversion to a digital signal.

2003

NET launched a series of monthly programs and associated outreach activities addressing issues of importance to Nebraskans entitled "Nebraska Connects" and also aired a one-hour special, Frank Morrison and Bob Kerrey: A Conversation."

The Nebraska ETV production "Monkey Trial" won a 2003 George Foster Peabody Award.

"Backyard Farmer," the nation's longest-running, locally produced series, celebrated its 50th anniversary.

On April 23, 2003, NET officially launched its digital broadcast service with four digital program services available over-the-air. Datacasting was also made possible via digital. The total project cost for NET's DTV conversion was estimated at \$44.3 million, which included \$30.7 million appropriated or reallocated by the State of Nebraska and \$4.5 million in grants from the federal government.

The final year of the Schools Telelearning Service (STS) concluded in May.

2004

NET celebrated its 50-year anniversary (KUON-TV Channel 12 was launched November 1, 1954).

The broadcast day was reduced by one hour on the Nebraska ETV Network – to 6:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. – as a result of budget constraints.

The Nebraska ETV Network produced local documentaries "Solomon Butcher: Frontier Photographer;" "Hear That Train A Comin'" and the "Lewis and Clark Concerto."

The NETV documentaries "Emma Goldman: An Exceedingly Dangerous Woman" and "NOVA: Ancient Refuge in the Holy Land" premiere nationally on PBS.

The Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission received two grants totaling \$272,440 to replace one transmitter and five translators in the statewide Nebraska ETV Network system.

2005

The Nebraska Public Radio Network (NPRN) and the Nebraska ETV Network (NETV) were renamed NET Radio and NET Television. Nebraskans for Public Television (NPTV) and the Public Radio Nebraska Foundation (PRNF) were renamed the NET Foundation for Television and the NET Foundation for Radio.

NET Television produced local documentaries “Frontier University Dreams,” “Omaha’s First Families,” “Ted Kooser’s Poetic World” and “Charles Thone: A Conversation.”

NET completed its \$15 million building renovation.

“The Verge,” a new “crossover classical” music program, premiered on NET Radio.

NET Television’s “Willa Cather – The Road is All” premiered nationally on PBS as part of the “American Masters” series.

The 1,065-foot tower that provided television and radio service to south central Nebraska (NET Television KLNE Channel 3 and NET Radio Channel 88.7 FM) was destroyed when a single-engine airplane crashed into the tower.

2006

NET Television’s programs “The Canteen Spirit” and “Buffett & Gates Go Back to School” premiered nationally on PBS.

NET Television produced local documentaries “Don’t Touch That Dial” and “The Creightons: Building the Dream.”

NET3 was re-launched as “Create,” a 24-hour-a-day how-to, travel and lifestyle channel.

The University of Nebraska Board of Regents approved the sale of the University’s share of “Reading Rainbow” to WNED in Buffalo, N.Y. The Board also approved the sale of GPN to Educate, Inc. Together the sales totaled \$3.5 million.

NET Radio’s weekly arts and humanities series “Live From The Mill Statewide” was renamed “Friday Live.”

NET Television and the University of Nebraska State Museum were awarded a \$1,168,014 grant from the National Science Foundation to produce “Antarctica’s Icy Secrets” as part of PBS’ “NOVA” series and for related community outreach activities.

2007

NET Television’s documentaries “At Close Range with National Geographic” and “Most Honorable Son” aired nationally on PBS.

NET Television premiered local documentaries “Hard Times Swing,” “Afghan Journey,” “On the Frontline,” “The Price of Water,” “Saving Nebraska’s Treasures,” “Murder House,” “Nebraska Veterans Honor Roll,” “Dream Like a Champion,” “State of the Arts: A Nebraska Connects Special,” “Fighting for the Arts” and “Crane Song” (“Crane Song” later aired nationally on PBS).

NET Television and NET Radio aired specials “Meth in Nebraska” and “Drowning in Noise: A Nebraska Connects Special.”

NET Radio produced and aired the following local series/specials: “Great Plains, Great Books;” feature stories about Nebraska World War II veterans to complement PBS’ Ken Burns’ “The War” and the “Live Jazz Special with the Darryl White Group,” performed and broadcast live across the state.

NET completed construction of the KLNE tower near Holdrege, replacing the transmission tower that was destroyed in a November 2005 aviation accident.

2008

NET Television began airing the PBS World channel on NET2, featuring documentaries, public affairs (including live coverage of the Nebraska Legislature) and news programs.

NET Television premiered the local documentaries “Beef State,” as well as “‘68: The Year Nebraska Mattered;” “Nebraska’s Senate Race: The Primary;” “Electing a President: Nebraska Voter Diaries” (as part of NET’s extensive web, Radio and Television “Campaign Connection” resources); “The Ethanol Maze;” “Your Kids Are Drinking” and “Your Verdict: Affirmative Action on Trial.”

NET received four grants totaling nearly \$100,000 to support outreach and community engagement.

Broadcast hours on NET Television were restored to operate daily from 6 a.m. to midnight CT.

NET1 and NET-HD unified program schedules, meaning more viewers were able to receive their favorite NET programs in high-definition.

The “Inspire Nebraska” theme line was incorporated in the NET logo in print and on-air media to precede the launch of the Foundations’ Inspire Nebraska Campaign.

NET Radio launched the series and website “Smart Investing,” offering information on investor protection.

The NET Television-produced segment “Clash of the Mammoths” aired nationally as part of “NOVA scienceNOW” in July.

In July NET’s founder, Jack McBride, died of complications related to surgery. McBride had served as NET General Manager from 1963 until his retirement in 1996.

NET launched NET Public Media, a new community partnership programming service.

2009

All nine statewide transmitters officially completed the FCC-mandated switch from analog to digital transmission as of February 17, 2009. Viewers now have three over-the-air digital channels available – NET1/HD, NET2/PBS World and NET3/Create – offering a mix of programming to viewers previously unavailable with a single analog signal.

NET’s “Nebraska Capitol Live” provided live streaming on the web from 11 different government venues, including the main legislative chamber, seven committee hearing rooms and the Nebraska Supreme Court. Coverage online and on NET2 included the Unicameral’s Judiciary Committee hearing on the death penalty in January.

In 2009 NET Television produced several local programs, including “Ragtime Cabaret;” “Carl Sandburg: Prayers for the People;” “Homemade Astronaut: The Clay Anderson Story,” which debuted at the NET 2009 Governor’s Premiere event at the Strategic Air and Space Museum; “Walk Ons: Huskers’ Edge” and “The Recipe Box.”

NET Radio and NET Television aired a series of specials about the recession and its effects in Nebraska, including: “Smart Investing, Safe Investing,” “Nebraska’s Economy Update, radio call-in shows and “Nebraska’s Economy 2010” (in March 2010).

NET Radio aired a live call-in show in early September on the effects of the H1N1 flu virus on the rise across Nebraska.

NET Television's monthly series "Nebraska Stories," chronicling personal tales of contemporary and historical Nebraskans and Nebraska life, debuted in September.

Grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the U.S. Commerce Department were used to replace and upgrade the aging transmitters at KHNE/Hastings, KXNE/Norfolk, KTNE/Alliance and the KLNE/ Lexington, Holdrege and Kearney.

Former Nebraska Senator Chuck Hagel was elected to a three-year term on the national PBS Board of Directors in November.

In November the NET Foundations launched the active phase of the Inspire Nebraska Campaign, which aimed to raise \$25 million in membership and planned gifts over five years.

2010

In January, NET Radio kicked off its 20th anniversary year with a live concert by Lincoln's Third Chair Chamber Players in Studio One (the concert was also broadcast live statewide).

In January, the National Endowment for the Humanities offered the NET Foundation for Television a half-million dollar grant to support humanities programming. NET was required to raise \$1.5 million in nonfederal contributions to receive the full award.

NET joined Harvest Public Media, a partnership funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and involving six Midwest public broadcasting stations to enhance radio, television and web coverage of food, fuel and fields (agriculture).

In May NET obtained the rights to broadcast and web stream the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) state championships, including volleyball, football, wrestling, boys and girls basketball and swimming and diving.

In July the NET Foundation for Television announced that it had received its largest gift ever, a \$1.5 million bequest.

In 2010 NET produced a number of local programs, including: "Jazz Cabaret," "loopdiver: The Journey of a Dance" and "Paths of the Displaced" (a co-production with Meadowlark Films and the UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications), as well as NET News documentaries "Mind over Murder," "CSI on Trial" and "Nebraskans Before Battle: Soldiers and Families Prepare for War." NET News also produced a number of specials, including "Campaign Connection 2010," Legislative coverage and several specials that addressed Nebraska's budget concerns.

In December NET Television's production "Secrets Beneath the Ice" broadcast nationally as part of PBS' "NOVA" series.

2011

NET News continued production of specials in 2011 with "Binge," "Home Fields: Digging into Local Food," "Nebraska's Budget: Moving Forward," "Nebraska's Talking Illegal Immigration," "Nebraska and the Big 10: Researching the Possibilities," "STRATCOM 9/11: A Different Doomsday," "Chronic Mental Illness and the Family" and "Gang Fight Nebraska." Also in 2011 NET co-produced (with George Washington University's Center for Innovative Media and Maryland Public Television) the national PBS special "Planet Forward: Energy Innovation."

In the spring of 2011 NET News launched its Signature Story initiative, producing a more in-depth story each weekday on a single issue important to Nebraskans. Signature Stories are presented on multiple media platforms, including NET Radio and NET's website.

In 2011 NET Television's major local documentary productions included: "Rosenblatt: The Final Inning," QUEST: Nebraska," "Standing Bear's Footsteps" and "My Dad's Illness."

NET Television launched the first episode in a brand-new series, "Nebraska Philanthropy: Investing in Our Future," spotlighting Nebraskans whose private contributions help promote and preserve "the good life" for future generations.

In addition to its regular gavel-to-gavel live Legislative coverage on NET Television's NET2 World (and highlights on NET Radio), NET News also launched "Capitol Conversations," a weekly web interview series. NET also began live streaming from 11 state government venues, including the main legislative chamber, seven committee hearing rooms, the Nebraska Supreme Court, the Nebraska Appellate Court and the Governor's Hearing Room.

In September NET honored Nebraska public broadcasting founding General Manager Jack G. McBride at a ceremony culminating in the renaming of NET's headquarters to the Terry M. Carpenter and Jack G. McBride Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center.

In September NET also partnered with Governor Dave Heineman, the University of Nebraska and the State Department of Education to create a virtual high school. NET will manage a digital library, which will include 16,000 resources accessible by teachers and students.

In November NET Radio's weekly program "Classics By Request" went on the road for the first time ever to produce a live show from Concordia University in Seward.

Also in November NET and the Omaha World Herald partnered to expand webcast coverage of the NSAA High School Sports Championships on NePrepZone, a statewide high school sports website.

In December Senator Chuck Hagel, his brother, Tom Hagel and NET General Manager Rod Bates donated archival film material from the NET production "Echoes of War" to the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

2012

In January NET Radio and KVNO Radio in Omaha announced a partnership to share select classical music programming. The partnership expanded the audience for KVNO Radio to cover the entire state of Nebraska and offered NET Radio a strong partner in the Omaha metropolitan area.

Also in January, NET Radio added the new program "Travel with Rick Steves." Steves also presented a free lecture to an audience of more than 900 at the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha in March.

In February NET moved from satellite to terrestrial distribution of its signal.

Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman addressed the national Public Media Summit of the Association of Public Television Stations in February 2012 in Arlington, Va. "I am very proud of what NET does for our state," Heineman said. "The respect, the admiration, how it brings us together."

Also in February NET Radio launched "Jazz Currents," airing Saturday evenings with host Tom Ineck.

In March PBS President Paula Kerger and PBS Foundations Board President Mary Bitterman visited NET. They met with staff in Lincoln, as well as with donors at a reception at the Stuhr Museum in Grand Island and viewed the Sandhill cranes at Rowe Sanctuary.

In April, State Senator Mike Flood introduced LR631, which recognized NET's history of legislative coverage. Speaker Flood praised NET for its "unwavering commitment to the coverage of legislative issues for 57 years" and recognized NET staff members from the floor of the Unicameral.

A new volunteer citizen advocacy group, Nebraskans for NET, was formed to help articulate the benefits Nebraskans enjoy from the statewide public broadcasting network and to inform state and federal decision makers about the positive impact NET provides Nebraskans.

In May, NPR's popular quiz show *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me* was recorded before a sold-out audience at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln.

In June, the NET Foundation for Radio and NET Foundation for Television announced that the five-year \$25 million Inspire Nebraska campaign had exceeded its goals. During the campaign, NET membership revenue increased by 50 percent, total membership grew to nearly 25,000 and endowment funds increased to more than \$10 million.

NET launched its Virtual Learning Library, powered by PBS LearningMedia, in August to provide teachers, parents and students free access to more than 20,000 digital learning objects. This new website is part of a larger statewide educational initiative announced by Gov. Dave Heineman.

A four-part Public Media series focused on elder care issues covered dementia, health issues, financial planning, caregiver burdens, end-of-life arrangements and navigating Medicare.

A new content management system "CMS" website was launched for net.Nebraska.org.

NET Television produced the following local documentaries in 2012: *Hearts of Zambia*, examining the effects of HIV/AIDS on the African nation and the role of UNL virologist Charles Wood; *Casting Call to Curtain Call*, a behind the scenes look at the Omaha Community Playhouse annual staging of *A Christmas Carol*; *Great Plains – America's Lingerin' Wild*, documenting what bits of wildness remains in the beautiful and fragile ecosystem of the Great Plains.

"Backyard Farmer," a co-production between NET Television and the University of Nebraska Extension, celebrated 60 years on the air in 2012. "Nebraska Stories" completed its 4th season.

NET News continued to produce specials in 2012, including: "Nebraska Child Welfare Reform," "Home School Nebraska," "Hispanic Hopes: The Heartland in Transition," and "Young and Overweight: Fighting Obesity in Nebraska." NET News also provided in-depth coverage of the XL Pipeline issue.

During the spring and fall of 2012, NET News kept Nebraskans informed on campaign news with "Campaign Connection 2012," a multi-platform initiative that included "Voter Voices," which encouraged Nebraskans to share their opinions on issues via video diaries at libraries statewide. NET aired the only free-access statewide live senate debate between Deb Fischer (R) and Bob Kerrey (D) from NET Studios Oct. 1. The debate was also carried live nationally on C-SPAN.

NET Sports produced the popular series *Big Red Wrap-Up* with analysis of the preceding week's Husker football game. The weekly guests included retiring NU Athletics Director Tom Osborne, and incoming AD Shawn Eichorst. A live program Oct. 2 at the Champions Club attracted more than 200 guests.

In 2012 NET Radio launched a free app for the Android, iPhone and iPad technologies, allowing users to listen live to NET Radio's two streams – news/classical and news/jazz – as well as other features.

NET Radio was granted a new signal, 88.9 FM, in the Falls City/Humboldt area after a full-power station went on the air at 91.7 FM, the same frequency as our lower powered translator in Falls City.

NET Television viewers across the state who receive broadcasts over-the-air via antenna, were able to watch their favorite programs an hour longer. Beginning in July, NET1, NET2 World, NET3 Create and NET-HD -- signed off at midnight in MT and at 1 a.m. in the Central time zone.

Ron Hull, NET senior adviser, received his second honorary degree from Chadron State College in December, 2012. He also delivered the commencement address. Earlier in the year, the University of Nebraska Press published Hull's memoir, *Back Stage: Stories from My Life in Public Television*.

2013

NET Radio went on the road this year, originating a *Friday Live* in Kearney from the Merriman Arts Center in August, and hosting that evening a performance of the Nebraska Chamber Players with guest artist Nathan Pacheco. One highlight of the NET Radio year was the Oct. 19 production of *A Prairie Home Companion* with Garrison Keillor, live from the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln. A sold-out house enjoyed Keillor's take on Nebraska, on football and on the prairie skies.

NET Radio, and the entire NET organization, mourned the untimely deaths of two long-time NET Radio employees, Jerry Johnston, senior producer, and William Stibor, music director.

Original documentaries that debuted on NET Television included *Emery Blagdon and His Healing Machine*, about an unusual artist; *Nebraska's Capitol Masterpiece*, about the state capitol; a fifth season of *Nebraska Stories*, a video-magazine format program; *Remembered Voices*, which documents how contemporary students learn about the Holocaust using materials created by people incarcerated at the Terezin Concentration Camp during WWII; and *Ashfall Unearthed*, a music special about an original composition inspired by ancient fossils in northeastern Nebraska.

NET News documentaries included...*until he is dead*, which examined the history of the death penalty in Nebraska; *Devil Clouds: Tornadoes Strike Nebraska*, which told the story of the 1913 Easter tornadoes that killed 168 people statewide and caused millions of dollars of damage; *Changing Lands, Changing Hands*, which looked at the aging farm population and how the sale or inheritance of farms impacts the ag economy; and *Marijuana Crossroads*, which investigated the growing impact of Colorado's relaxed marijuana laws.

NET is leading the conversation titled "The State of Education in Nebraska," a two-year initiative with a goal of building awareness, stimulating conversation, affecting policy and engaging Nebraskans in supporting educational excellence for all Nebraska youth.

NET and partners Nebraska Shakespeare Company in Omaha and Flatwater Shakespeare in Lincoln teamed for several activities spun around the PBS series *Shakespeare Uncovered*.

NET Learning Services worked with schools in Auburn and Fremont on a *Ready to Learn* Initiative. Coordinated through the Nebraska Department of Education's Office of Early Childhood Education, Ready to Learn is directed toward at-risk pre-kindergarten children. It provides resources to improve reading and math literacy by using proven curricula built around PBS children's programming.

NET launched a new mobile app "Nebraska Capitol Live" in partnership with the Nebraska Office of the Chief Information Officer for instant access to the Nebraska Legislature and 10 other state government venues.

NET's Interactive Media team, part of NET Learning Services, has developed a curriculum for students attending Paul Mitchell Schools of cosmetology. "N-Lighten Your Journey" has five modules to help students develop positive social-emotional skills. Susan Swearer, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln professor of educational psychology and an expert in anti-bullying efforts, developed the modules for Paul Mitchell Schools. It is the first social-emotional skills curriculum designed for staff and students in a higher education setting.

The NET Foundations hosted members-only learning events to view the annual sandhills crane migration in the Platte Valley, numerous activities based on the PBS program *Downton Abbey*, and a luncheon at Spring Creek Prairie.

NET Public Media was renamed NET Connects. This unit works in partnership with non-profit, educational, governmental, community service and other mission-oriented organizations to deliver new informational and educational programs to the citizens of Nebraska. Content developed by NET Connects is broadcast on NET2 World, including: *Now What?*, a continuing series about dementia and other issues faced by an aging population and their families.

On August 1, Mark Leonard joined NET as its general manager and CEO. With more than 30 years of experience in public broadcasting, Leonard came to Nebraska from Illinois Public Media, the public television and radio services of the University of Illinois. He succeeded Rod Bates who retired June 30 after 18 years as NET's leader. Leonard is the third general manager in the organization's 59-year history.

2014 (through June 1)

Distrcted Drvng premiered in February on NET Television. The documentary is a sobering look at the dangers of distracted driving, most commonly caused by texting or other activity, and what law enforcement, lawmakers, businesses, families and others are doing to address the problem and improve safety.

Growing Up Gambling premiered in May. With the ease of online gaming, are today's tech-savvy youth on a slippery slope to gambling addictions? The film features cutting-edge science on youth gaming/gambling addictions and tells the real-world story of a teen's downward spiral into online sports betting.

Longtime NET Radio personality Don Gill and NET Television producer Jim Carmichael passed away. Gill had been associated with NET for almost 30 years, including 23 as host of *Big Band Spotlight*. Carmichael had been with the network since 1985 and directed many sports broadcasts and *Backyard Farmer*.

More than 140 people attended a special screening of *Emery Blagdon and His Healing Machine* in North Platte in April. The event was hosted by NET Foundations and NebraskaLand National Bank.

Walkaround Bert and Ernie visited Fontenelle Forest Nature Center in April as part of the Nebraska Science Festival, and helped to break attendance records there.

Internationally known artists performed live during NET Radio's "Friday Live" special from the Lied Center for Performing Arts in May which also celebrated the Lied's 25th anniversary season.