

# 2020

## LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Nebraska's  PBS & NPR Stations

# WE ARE ESSENTIAL

Our mission is to enrich lives and engage minds by connecting communities and celebrating Nebraska with services that educate and enlighten.

“It is refreshing to have programming so well executed and so well developed. The subjects are interesting, and the news is presented unbiased.

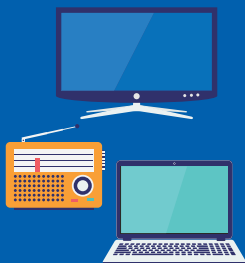
**Linda Will**  
Chadron



**NET, Nebraska's PBS & NPR Stations**, is the statewide public media service dedicated to creating opportunities for Nebraskans to engage with critical issues, compelling stories and quality entertainment.

We serve Nebraska's **93 counties** with **52,560 hours** of programming each year on **4 television** and **2 radio channels**, plus a rich collection of digital content.

Our commitment is organized around three key pillars – **public safety, civic engagement** and **universal access to education** for everyone in the state. In addition to our educational programming, we provide programming in the arts, award-winning news and public affairs information and emergency alert services.



More than  
**1 million** people  
watch, listen and click  
each month

We are  
**30,000 members**  
strong



More than  
**1.3 million** click on  
**netNebraska.org**  
– a **68% increase**  
in users





We provide **240** hours of trusted educational children's television programming each week

We offered **3** STEM learning nights at Grand Island elementary schools that provided **5** hands-on activities for parents and children to do together



Each month, more than **20** Nebraska libraries hosted events featuring **PBS KIDS RESOURCES**

# EDUCATING NEBRASKA'S CHILDREN

A grant from **Sesame Street in Communities** funded a series of workshops for teachers in Lincoln and Columbus, and our free family learning event at the elementary school in O'Neill. At a dozen activity stations, more than **900 parents and young children** gathered resources that encouraged everyday teaching moments.

◆ When the coronavirus emerged in Nebraska, we adapted. High-quality educational resources on our new **Learn at Home** webpage were made available to teachers and parents who became teachers. We enhanced our **nebraskavirtualcapitol.org** website with online art lessons, and broadcast **At-Home Learning Service for 6-12 graders** on our **NET World** television channel.



LOOKING  
FOR WAYS TO  
LEARN  
AT HOME?



“

PBS shaped my childhood, and it brings me great joy to see it shaping the minds of my nine young children!

**Megan Porter**  
Minden



# TRUSTED NEWS & LOCAL CONTENT

We're working to tell stories from every corner of Nebraska – whether it's the corner cafe or a busy downtown street corner. Along with four other Midwest public media stations, we are leading a new regional news hub and increasing local, in-depth reporting that will benefit all communities.

◆ Ten live, statewide episodes of ***Speaking of Nebraska: COVID-19 Town Hall with Governor Ricketts*** aired on television, radio and on Facebook, bringing together experts in health care, education and business who answered questions from people in communities of all sizes. As the pandemic unfolded, we broadcast the governor's daily news conferences on radio, produced daily television news updates and offered Spanish language translations of critical information.



COVID-19 testing in McCook.  
Photo: Nebraska National Guard

# OUR TOP STORIES



## MOST READ

Former Husker Dishman  
Discusses Wife's Tragic Death  
May, 2020  
Read 31,682 times



## MOST SHARED

Boyd County Still Without Water,  
Feeling the Effects  
July, 2019  
Shared on Facebook 926 times

More than **50,000**  
people watched  
episodes of  
***Speaking of Nebraska:***  
***COVID-19 Town Hall***  
***with Governor Ricketts***  
on Facebook

◆ Now more than ever, high-quality public media journalism matters. Our essential services connect Nebraskans to important news – on **radio, television, online** and **social media**. In uncertain times, we adapt and our fact-based reporting continues to empower our citizens with information to make decisions. We offer trusted and continuing coverage of **COVID-19** and a changing America, plus in-depth news about Nebraska's **economy, agriculture, education, politics, health care** and our recovery from **devastating floods**.



We produced  
**770** stories about  
**COVID-19**



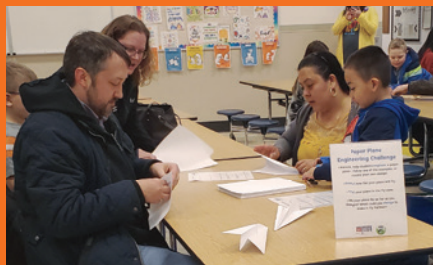
Our news team  
reported on  
stories from  
**83** Nebraska  
communities



Our news team  
won **36** awards



# SUPPORTING PARENTS, TEACHERS & CAREGIVERS



Our **Nebraska Studies** website puts history at the fingertips of teachers, students and history buffs. More than 370,000 page views – an **18.5% increase** over last year – revealed archival photos, letters, maps and videos.

**[nebraskastudies.org](http://nebraskastudies.org)**



Our **Nebraska Virtual Capitol** website had more than 250,000 page views – a **16.6% increase** over last year – from people looking to learn more about the building or who may not be able to visit in person. Virtual visitors learn more about its sculptures, murals, architecture and history. The site also is a rich archive of classroom resources for teachers and Nebraska fourth-graders who are studying the state's history.

**[nebraskavirtualcapitol.org](http://nebraskavirtualcapitol.org)**

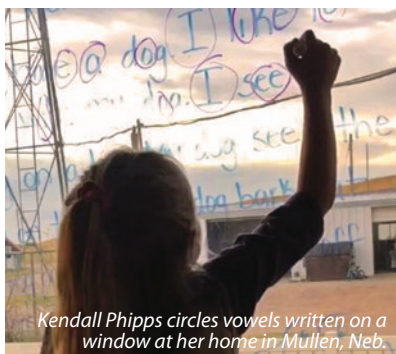
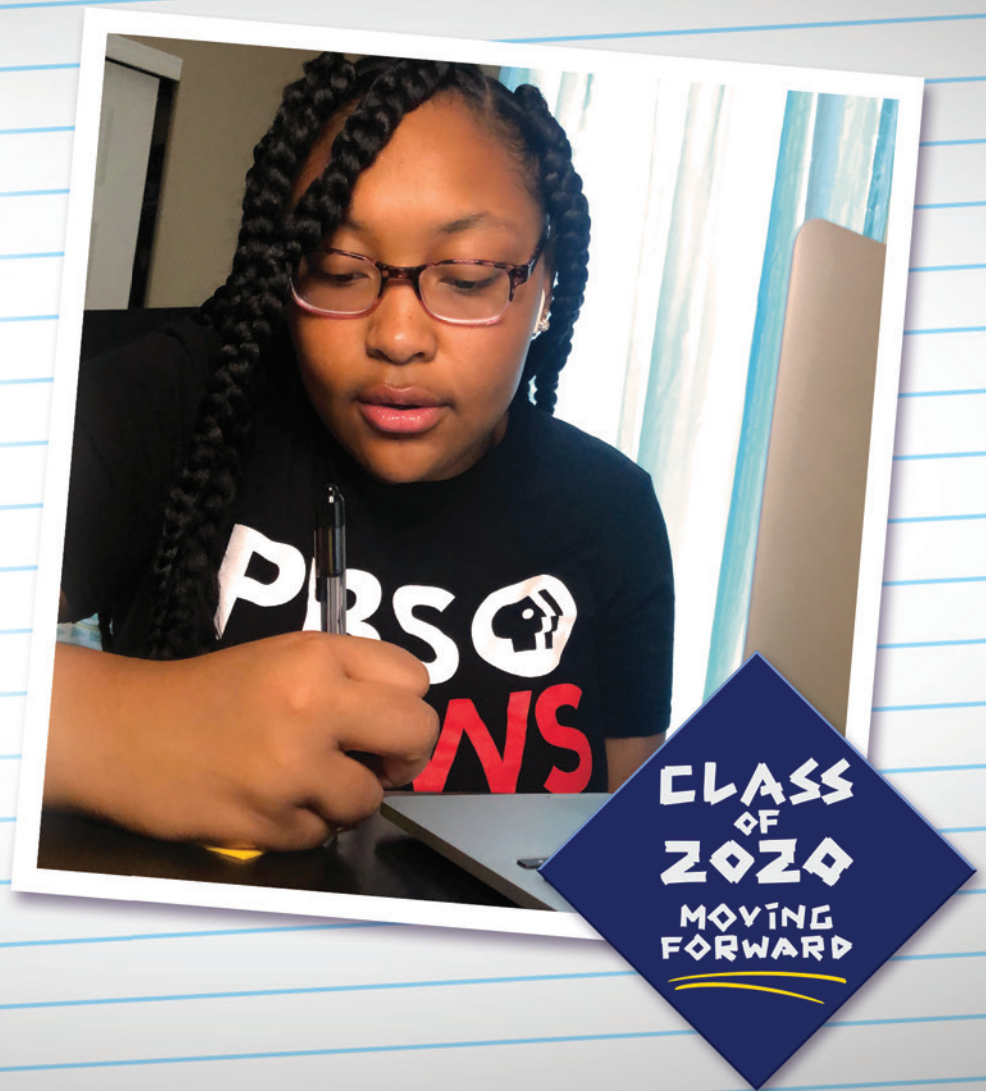
Each week, our electronic **Smart Scoop** education newsletter delivers educational activities, videos and resources right to educators' and parents' inboxes. With more than 5,000 subscribers – which grew by 1,000 over the last year – it's filled with ideas and inspiration to help kids learn and grow.



◆ Omaha North High Magnet School student Corie McCowin participates in the **PBS NewsHour** Student Reporting Lab that uses video journalism to inspire youth to find their voices and engage with their communities.

She's been interviewed about the stereotypes young African American women face and shared her youthful perspective with our news team.

McCowin was one of 15 Nebraska teens featured in **Class of 2020: Moving Forward**. Produced in a remote, socially-distant manner, the program focused on mental health and how students were coping with disruptions to their lives and futures due to COVID-19.



A special radio documentary **Remote Learning in Remote Nebraska** told the story of learning in a rural community during unprecedented times.

“

I love the programming and have for years. The best shows, news and specials. Thanks! I am a school counselor who grew up with *Mister Rogers* and *Sesame Street* and I use both in lessons regularly. Keep up the good work!

**David Sutton**  
Hickman



# REACHING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

**On the Road with NET** spotlights local talent with live radio programs and brings local television productions to communities' backyards. Free family learning events were also an essential part of our engagement as we featured PBS KIDS materials and hands-on learning from our education team.

We hosted **11 events** in **5 towns**, and also heard from leaders about their successes and challenges through community **Town Talk** sessions.

When the pandemic forced us to cancel events across the state, we pivoted to virtual events. Zoom versions of **On the Road Town Talk** listening sessions in two communities brought us together even though we were apart.





◆ Thousands watched on Facebook as hot air balloons drifted through crisp blue Panhandle skies in a virtual event featuring **Nebraska Stories: Racing the Wind.**



◆ Another Facebook Live Event previewed the PBS series **Prehistoric Road Trip** which explored 2.5 billion years of Earth's history, including fossils found at Agate Fossil Beds National Monument in Nebraska. Experts answered questions from more than **2,000** curious participants, while the archived event garnered an additional **4,000** participants. *One participant said in a follow up survey that her 8-year-old grandson wanted to be a paleontologist and the Q&A session really got him interested in the program.*





# EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

With more ways to watch and listen, public television and radio give viewers a companion wherever they go!

Our **NET Nebraska App** connects viewers to live and on-demand TV, radio and digital content, plus they can stream their favorites on the **PBS Video App**.

**NET Passport** offers on-demand access to a rich library of local and PBS programs.

When Nebraskans began sheltering at home, we launched our free **Watch Now** library with more than **600** programs about **science, sports, history, food** and **arts**.

Our podcasts give listeners a steady stream of stories – from the arts to news, sports and gardening; while more than 50 NPR podcasts cover money, politics, parenting, multicultural issues and more.



◆ Using **virtual reality technology**, Nebraskans can tour a University of Nebraska-Lincoln building that was razed more than 70 years ago.

Inside a virtual version of University Hall based on photos and descriptions, users can move around with a special headset and controller, experiencing history in a hands-on, engaging way.



“

NET provides the best programming via TV, radio and streaming for all ages especially during these times of social distancing due to COVID-19. We are so lucky to have this great resource in our state.

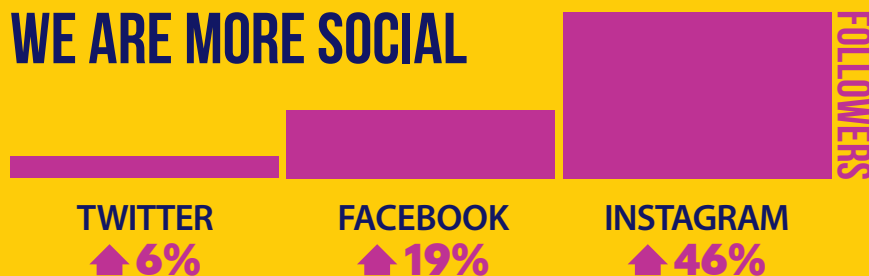
**Deb Sharrick**  
Hastings



The number of people who use our NET Nebraska App increased **45%** in the last year



## WE ARE MORE SOCIAL



**300,000+** LIKES  
**50,000+** SHARES  
**35,000+** COMMENTS

FACEBOOK, TWITTER  
& INSTAGRAM  
COMBINED

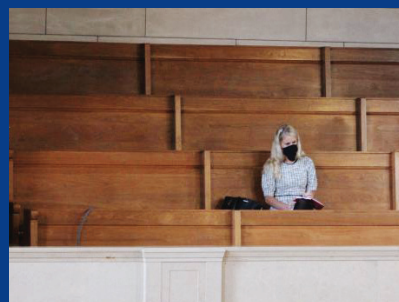


# INFORMING OUR CITIZENS

Since 1980, we've broadcast gavel-to-gavel television coverage from Nebraska's Unicameral, and more recently from 12 state government venues including the Nebraska Supreme Court and the Governor's Hearing Room.

Our viewers can livestream these offerings at [netNebraska.org](https://netNebraska.org) or on the NET Nebraska App and some are available on demand. Plus, our award-winning news team provides analysis and perspective each day of the session on radio.

When the 2020 Nebraska Legislature session resumed after being interrupted because of the pandemic, our coverage continued as state senators returned to the Capitol.



Online users streamed **38%** more content from the legislature and other government venues





◆ Members of the Legislature’s Judiciary Committee heard people describing their experiences with police and wider problems in the justice system at listening sessions held at NET in Lincoln and in Omaha. Both were broadcast live on our NET World television channel.



“ I am so grateful for the NE. legislature live streams, COVID-19 coverage, press briefings, judicial listening session live streams and the excellent daily news coverage and reporting. NET programming is the best anywhere. I would be lost without my NET App and access to music, news, current events and daily programs. Thank you for all you do to keep me informed!

**Kitty Hoden**  
Fremont



# KEEPING NEBRASKANS SAFE

Safety is important for all Nebraskans. We are committed to fulfilling public media's role in protecting Nebraskans in times of emergency. We are the first radio station notified by the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency during times of routine testing or an actual alert.

We relay emergency and weather information to other Nebraska stations, and during an Amber Alert, the National Weather Service notifies us so we can communicate critical details about missing children.

◆ Suicide is a leading cause of death for 10-24 year olds in Nebraska.\* ***Speaking of Nebraska*** explored options to improve behavioral health care, ***Nebraska Stories*** featured a young artist expressing the stigma of ADHD and we explored how 2019 flooding impacted the mental health of Nebraskans in our series ***Good, Healthy Life***.

\*Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2014



Public television is the backbone of the Emergency Alert System that enables the President of the United States to alert citizens about national emergencies.

As part of a national plan, we offer expanded emergency alert capabilities to mobile devices and digital platforms so that alerts can be heard and seen on phones, HD radios, car devices, Radio Data Systems (RDS) displays and online. We also deliver technical support and infrastructure resources for the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network – the first high speed network dedicated to public safety.

We partner with the Department of Homeland Security to offer first responders a portion of the broadcast spectrum for use during times of crisis.



◆ One year after devastating floods, ***Speaking of Nebraska*** interviewed residents of Winslow, Peru and Dannebrog about the ongoing recovery.

“

I rely on NET and NPR for fair and objective reporting--now more than ever. I am also listening to quite a few NPR podcasts these days, so I'm more than getting my money's worth. Thank you for the daily updates on the coronavirus and how it is affecting our Nebraska community. And thank you for being a great organization--you bring so much!

**Joeth Zucco**  
Lincoln



# CONNECTING NEBRASKANS TO LOCAL ARTS & CULTURE

NEARLY 50,000 USERS STREAMED OUR RADIO PROGRAMS THIS YEAR



“

I really appreciate the NPR coverage, classical music and some of the podcasts on the weekends.

**Jessie Case**  
Lincoln

◆ Our radio listeners don't have to travel to a big city to hear great music. We deliver a wealth of classical music and jazz, local talent, entertainment programs, news about upcoming arts events and more on our two radio channels.



◆ This past year, we trekked off the beaten path with **Nebraska Roots: Trees and Native Plants** and took a breathtaking trip to see history, natural resources and recreation in **Exploring Nebraska's State Parks**.

## MOST LIKED

Exploring Nebraska's State Parks  
June, 2020  
1,869 Likes on Facebook



◆ **Backyard Farmer's** online-only companion series **Digging Deeper** dug into fresh gardening topics like nutrition, kids and urban forestry.



◆ Littleton Alston's young life was sculpted by hardship and triumph. Fifty years later, the Omaha artist and Creighton University associate professor of sculpture is the first African American to create a work to be displayed in Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol.

**A Sculpted Life** captured Alston creating a clay model of Nebraska Author Willa Cather and the 7-foot bronze likeness that will represent our state to millions of visitors. Alston grew up in poverty in the nation's capital. As a boy, he escaped street violence by hiding out in his basement, learning to draw by copying pictures from magazines. As a young man, he came to Omaha on a residency and stayed to raise a family.



## PBS KIDS APP

**102,668**  
average monthly  
users



## PBS VIDEO APP

**6,983**  
average monthly  
users

“

Overall programming is excellent with a wide variety of shows. The news is presented in a calm, balanced and informative manner.

**Robert Servedio**  
Lincoln



# CONNECTING EVERY NEBRASKAN

We connect Nebraskans with each other, keeping our viewers and listeners engaged with the latest technology and services that educate and enlighten.

◆ We tell stories that inspire and fulfill Nebraskans' interest in science, history, news and music.

◆ We provide teachers, parents and caregivers free, high-quality PBS KIDS television programs, resources and community workshops and trainings that prepare children for success in school and beyond.

◆ We are committed to fulfilling three guiding pillars that measure the success of public media – public safety, civic engagement and education.

◆ We understand that safety for families and communities is important to Nebraskans, and we are committed to fulfilling public media's role in protecting them in times of emergency.

Our work reinforces our values and emphasizes what is important in the cities, towns and rural areas of our great state.

“

I appreciate all of the coverage and links to Nebraska State Legislature and Government. They are educational and help people to know what is happening in state government.

**John Deboer**  
Omaha

“

We watch NET every day. We love your programming. It is always informational, interesting and good, wholesome entertainment.

**Nolan & Lorene Berry**  
Gering

“

As a teacher, I always go to and use the Educational Resources.

**Ross Dinwiddie**  
Sutherland



◆ Each year we deliver more than **200 hours** of unmatched sports coverage to virtually every home in Nebraska. Whether it's Husker volleyball or NSAA High School Championships, we capture our state's competitive spirit and react with smart analysis. We are a leader among a handful of public television stations in the country that produce high school sports, speech and music, plus college sports broadcasts – more than **80 events** each year.

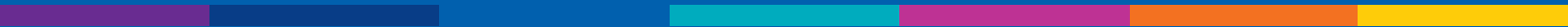
When the pandemic struck and attendance was restricted to family members at the **NSAA Boys State Basketball Championships**, we secured permission to continue our television broadcasts, giving thousands of Nebraskans in communities across the state access to six championship contests they were not able to attend in person.

f /netNebraska

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Nebraska's  PBS & NPR Stations