

MADE POSSIBLE BY YOU

ANNUAL REPORT
2026



DEAR FRIEND,

Last year brought an enormous challenge for public media when Congress zeroed out and rescinded all federal funding — creating unprecedented funding cuts for Prairie Public and stations across the country.

When the funding gap opened up, you stepped forward. You gave more, showed up to events, and renewed your membership. At our **State of the Station** event this fall, PBS President & CEO Paula Kerger joined us in Fargo as the Knight Foundation offered a \$30,000 challenge match, and you met it within a single day.

You helped us welcome **NPR Morning Edition** host Steve Inskeep to Bismarck for a sold-out evening. Your support made it possible for our **Learning Express** trailers to travel across North Dakota and Minnesota, bringing hands-on learning to children and families. And more than 1,300 of you joined us for **Be My Neighbor Day**, making it our biggest community celebration of the year.

This year I also asked more from the people at Prairie Public. We said goodbye to valued colleagues because of the funding cuts, and those who remained stepped up in extraordinary ways — from communications, programming and master control to finance, engineering, gaming, volunteers, and every team member in between.



Thank you for being with us this year. **Prairie Public is made possible by you,** and we look forward to serving you for years to come.

With gratitude,
John Harris
President & CEO





YOU INVESTED IN PRAIRIE PUBLIC

You showed your commitment to public media by renewing your membership, making a gift, and helping Prairie Public continue its work across the region.

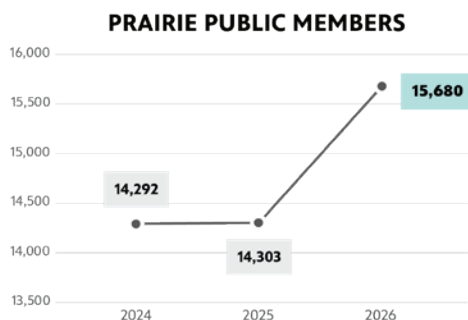
YOU FUNDED THE FUTURE

We're grateful to the individuals who chose to include Prairie Public in their estate plans. This year, generous gifts from 29 individuals **added \$485,822 to our endowment** — including \$228,138 in bequests and \$257,683 through the North Dakota Tax Credit program.

These gifts provide lasting support for Prairie Public and help strengthen our future for the next generation.

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

Your membership dollars stepped in where federal funding once stood, proving that this region is willing to invest in the media it trusts.



GIVING HEARTS DAY

On **Giving Hearts Day**, 1,426 donors came together to help raise \$457,060 for Prairie Public.

SAVE THE DATE: Giving Hearts Day is on February 11, 2027! Giving Hearts Day is one of the most significant single days of community generosity all year, and every gift helps power the projects captured in this report.



Thanks to your generosity on **Giving Hearts Day**, this year's event raised 258% more than last year, earning Prairie Public two awards: **2nd Place in New Donor Growth** and **2nd Place in Fundraising Growth**.

GENERATIONS OF SUPPORT



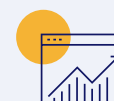
More than 50% of today's members have been part of Prairie Public for at least 10 years.



4,678 have supported Prairie Public for 25 years or more.



2,266 have been with us for 40 years or more.



2,145 joined the Prairie Public community this past year.

Additionally, dozens of companies, non-profit organizations, businesses, foundations, and family funds supported the programs you count on. We wouldn't be here without everyone's support.



YOU HELPED US HONOR AMERICA250

This year, you helped Prairie Public bring America's 250th anniversary celebration to life — on the air, at community events, and in classrooms across the region.

CELEBRATING KEN BURNS' *THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION*

You joined us to celebrate Ken Burns' landmark documentary series **The American Revolution**. In November, we previewed the documentary and tested our knowledge at a Hamilton-themed trivia night. In July, we stepped back into 1773 for a LiberTEA Party — a celebration of tea, history, and revolution featuring colonial tea tasting, and a program moderated by a local historian.

WHAT DOES AMERICA MEAN TO YOU?

Prairie Public brought America250 to classrooms across our region with our **PBS KIDS Writers Contest**, where students in grades K-5 submitted their original stories and illustrations inspired by the theme, "What does America mean to you?" Then, in a **radio workshop** facilitated by education associate Emily Mihalik and radio producer Tay Calloway, students of Standing Rock High School shared their perspectives on history, representation, and identity through peer-to-peer interview practice and story development.

ON THE GROUND IN MEDORA

Our News Director, Dave Thompson, traveled to Medora to cover the grand opening of the **Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library** on July 4, bringing North Dakota's most significant America250 milestone directly to your radio.



A SOLD-OUT NIGHT WITH NPR'S STEVE INSKEEP

As part of NPR's America in Pursuit initiative, Morning Edition host **Steve Inskeep** joined Prairie Public at North Dakota's Gateway to Science in Bismarck for a sold-out conversation with Robbie Lauf, Executive Director of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library. Inskeep's visit to North Dakota was featured in a story on Prairie Public's Main Street and NPR's Morning Edition.



"Prairie Public adds vitality to and supports my life. **I look out, not in, and that's important.**"

— Ann from Bismarck



YOU BROUGHT OUR COMMUNITY TOGETHER

LEARNING EXPRESS ON THE ROAD

You made it possible for our **Learning Express**, a free mobile trailer of hands-on learning kits, to visit schools, libraries, and childcare centers in our region this year.

Built around skills like empathy, resilience, and cooperation, each visit gives kids and educators tools that help classrooms thrive, all at no cost to the communities we serve.



This year, our Learning Express trailers traveled **2,426 miles** across our region!

BE MY NEIGHBOR DAY

More than 1,300 community members joined us on August 8 for **Be My Neighbor Day**. Together, we celebrated childhood education, safety, kindness, and what it means to be a caring neighbor. Attendees created more than 150 cards for local veterans, met Daniel Tiger and Katerina Kittycat, enjoyed free lunch, and learned from community partners how to be a helper.

SAVE THE DATE: Join us again next summer for Be My Neighbor Day 2027!



“We really like PBS KIDS shows because, not only are my kids entertained by them, they’re also **learning life lessons**.”

– Danielle from Moorhead



CELEBRATING OUR TRADITIONS

Your support connected Prairie Mosaic’s cooking stories to real families learning our region’s food traditions firsthand. We hosted three free **cooking workshops**, each led by a different chef from our region, where kids and grown-ups cooked side by side with locally-grown ingredients to make regionally significant dishes.

You helped us make free, family-friendly programs available at libraries across the region. Through 58 **Cook & Create Kits** at eight libraries and the launch of **North Star Nature Packs** in northwestern Minnesota, families explored new recipes, discovered local ingredients, and connected with the natural world. Each program paired hands-on activities with books and learning resources, from cooking alongside Prairie Mosaic stories to exploring Minnesota’s plants, animals, and habitats.



AN EVENING WITH RICK STEVES

Rick Steves, public television's most trusted voice on European travel, led us through a virtual wine tasting adventure. Guests sipped their way through six European wine varietals, paired with appetizers, for an evening that combined Rick's love of travel with a hands-on taste of Europe.

THE LIBRARIANS

We celebrated National Library Week together – April 19-25, 2026 – where you joined us for free screenings of Independent Lens' **The Librarians** in Grand Forks, Bismarck, and Moorhead. The documentary follows librarians across the country, exploring how book restriction policies are impacting library collections. After each screening, a panel of local public and school librarians hosted engaging discussions, highlighting their unique roles in supporting the freedom to read.

WINNIPEG DINNER

In September, you joined us for **An Evening of Gratitude** in Winnipeg, allowing us to hear from you in-person and celebrate the connection that public media creates across the border. Guests enjoyed dinner, heard updates from Prairie Public CEO John Harris, and met with fellow supporters of public media.



STATE OF THE STATION

PBS President Paula Kerger joined us in Fargo for a sold-out **State of the Station** event, where 250 community members gathered to talk about the future of public media in light of unprecedented funding cuts. The night sparked real generosity: a \$30,000 match provided by the Knight Foundation match, which raised an additional \$43,193 the next day.

The evening was awarded in the **Special Events category** at NETA's 58th Public Media Awards.



A CONVERSATION WITH JACQUES PÉPIN

Jacques Pépin, legendary chef and television personality, joined Prairie Public audiences virtually for a special conversation about his culinary career. Guests enjoyed a luncheon featuring recipes from Pépin's new cookbook, while watching the live virtual conversation and Q&A with Jacques.



THANK YOU to our sponsors that helped make our events possible: Augustino Hiram Zuccaro Foundation, Booth Delivery, Creative Kitchen, Eide Bailly, Fred Rogers Productions, GA Group, Indie Lens Pop-Up, John and Kathleen Risch Charitable Fund, Mathwig Family Charitable Fund, Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, NPR, Old National Bank, Performance Foodservice, Starion Bank, WETA, and our many underwriters.

YOU PUT OUR REGION IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Prairie Public productions shared this region's stories — made possible entirely by you.

PRAIRIE MOSAIC

Prairie Mosaic explored the culture, history, and traditions of our region — from bison ranching and foraging to cooking how-tos and local artist features.

Highlights of this season included:

Candace Stock brought foraging traditions into the kitchen by preparing an Indigenous Corn Pudding using native-grown corn, locally grown oats, and foraged ingredients rooted in cultural tradition.

At **Rolling R Bison Ranch**, Dale Rengstorf showed us how the ranch restores a piece of the prairie's original story by raising bison on land they've roamed for thousands of years.

Knife Maker **Uncle Jed's Iron** turned curiosity into a calling — hand-forging each knife to create high-quality, artisanal blades for hunting and cooking.

PRAIRIE PULSE & MAIN STREET

Prairie Pulse kept you connected to the people and issues shaping our region, including a preview of the Legislative special session with North Dakota Governor Kelly Armstrong.

Main Street brought North Dakota's news, culture, and events to your radio every day, covering the issues and stories shaping our communities. This year, you also helped expand that coverage on **A Closer Look with the Monitor**, a new podcast and radio partnership with the North Dakota Monitor. Each week, Craig Blumenshine sits down with one of the publication's journalists to dive deeper into the region's biggest stories.

PRAIRIE MUSICIANS

On **Prairie Musicians**, seven singer-songwriters and bands took the stage in our downtown Fargo studio to deliver intimate performances — including **Winter Sloths** of Fergus Falls, **MoonCats** of Pick City, **Darren Quam & Friends** of Battle Lake, and **Alma Cook** of Williston.

COVERING NEWS THAT MATTERS

You helped our **Prairie Public News Team** cover stories that matter most to our region — from Danielle Webster following the rising water levels in Devils Lake to Erik Deatherage's look into the Fargo Convention Center decision, to Dave Thompson's frequent reporting trips to the Capitol and Todd McDonald's coverage of city elections.

KEEPING THE MUSIC ON-AIR

Your support kept Prairie Public's music programming on the air this year. Mike Olson continued sharing his deep knowledge of roots, rock, and jazz on **Into the Music**, while Scott Prebys brought listeners **Prebys on Classics** during the week and **Prebys on Jazz** on Saturday nights. This fall, Prebys on Jazz expanded by an hour, giving listeners even more time to enjoy the music.



"Here we are, and are we glad."

— Dave Thompson at 5:30 a.m. on September 1, 1981. He was the first voice on Prairie Public's radio service, which celebrated its 45th anniversary this year.



AWARDS

UPPER MIDWEST EMMY AWARD

- “It’s Never Left Me”

TELLY AWARDS

- **Gold Winner** – Shearing Day
- **Silver Winner** – Lawrence Welk: A North Dakota Farm Boy
- **Silver Winner** – It’s Never Left Me
- **Silver Winner** – Cyrus M. Running: Manternach Memorial Mural
- **Bronze Winner** – John Olesen, Glassblowing
- **Bronze Winner** – Struggle and Success: Women in the Military

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“Prairie Public **broadens my mind.**”

– Lorelee and Ryan from Fargo

WE ASKED, YOU ANSWERED

Your voice matters to us, and shapes how we plan for what’s next. This year, we surveyed our members to gain feedback on our programming and services. Here’s what we learned from more than 300 responses:

Programs you can’t get anywhere else.

From Ken Burns and MASTERPIECE to NATURE, NOVA and local productions, viewers told us they value Prairie Public for programming that **informs, entertains, and expands their world.**

Our region’s stories matter.

When we asked what viewers want from local programming, **history** and **North Dakota stories** rose to the top — alongside music, arts and culture, regional traditions, and Native and Indigenous stories.

News you can trust.

Again and again, respondents told us they turn to Prairie Public for **news they trust and programming they can rely on.**

2026 BY THE NUMBERS



4.8 million

local streams of PBS KIDS programs. **Wild Kratts** and **Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood** account for 1/3 of that!



34,504

local streams of **All Creatures Great & Small** on Passport — our region’s most-watched PBS program.



708,064

views of Prairie Public productions on YouTube.



243,266

downloads of Prairie Public radio and podcast episodes.



2,647

new Facebook followers. That’s a 10% increase compared to 2025!



Prairie Public provides quality radio, television, and public media services that **EDUCATE, INVOLVE,** and **INSPIRE** the people of the prairie region.

2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Megan Langley – *Chair*
- Nick Archuleta – *Vice Chair*
- Judy Anderson – *Secretary*
- Shannon Stafslie – *Treasurer*
- Alissa Adams
- Carolyn Becraft
- Lawrence Prout
- Matuor Alier
- Melissa Johnson
- Nicole Poolman
- Scott Meyer
- Scott Nelson
- Victoria Rae Teske
- Zachery King

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

- Sandra Holmberg – *Past Chair*
- Ken Zealand
- John E. Harris III – *President & CEO*



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Prairie Public is recognized with a 2026 Gold Seal of Transparency from Candid, which allows our supporters to access our complete financial details and leadership information.

Our audited annual financial report for the year ending 9/30/2026 will be available in early spring 2027 at prairiepublic.org.



FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

@prairiepublic

