

CPB LOCAL CONTENT & SERVICE REPORT FY24



CASCADE  PBS

A message of thanks from Rob Dunlop, President and CEO of Cascade PBS

Thank you for your support during what has been a remarkable period of transition for Cascade PBS.

Despite many changes, one thing remains the same – our belief that an informed and engaged community is vital to our well-being, as individuals, as a community and as a nation.

Cascade PBS is committed to providing the enriching programs and essential news reporting our community relies on to make informed decisions every day. We're dedicated to ensuring our reliable, trusted programming is available anywhere, anytime – over the air, online, streaming and through our many in-person events. As you explore this year's Annual Report, please know that this work is made possible by your generous support.

This year, we unveiled a fresh, new name that unifies all our work. We brought together KCTS 9 and its nearly 70 years of beloved local TV; Crosscut's award-winning, in-depth investigative journalism; and our creative services agency Piranha Partners under the shared identity of Cascade PBS. Our new name better represents who we are, who we serve and supports our mission to inform and inspire our community to make the world a better place.

This year also marked the successful conclusion of our capital campaign and our relocation to a newly modernized, community-centered home on Seattle's First Hill—a milestone made possible by the support of our community.

Our team delivered impactful journalism, earning awards for excellence and transparency. Highlights include investigative stories prompting action from the Attorney General and exposing safety issues at the Seattle Animal Shelter. In arts and culture, *Mossback's Northwest*, *Nick on the Rocks* and *Black Arts Legacies* offered compelling explorations of history, science and the creative spirit of our region.

We also brought the community together through events like the Cascade PBS Ideas Festival, live podcast recordings and local gatherings that highlighted our programs. These events showcased the rich tapestry of stories, places and people of the Pacific Northwest.

In closing, Cascade PBS is committed to serving the Puget Sound region – every day – delivering local news, programming and inspiring events that build and strengthen our community. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our talented team and your support.

It's a true partnership and we thank you for contribution to our continued success.

Robert I. Dunlop
PRESIDENT AND CEO
CASCADE PBS



HIGHLIGHTS

Your generous support of Cascade PBS made a real difference in our community this year.

CASCADE  PBS

New Unified Brand

After nearly 70 years as KCTS 9, we look to the future with a new brand: Cascade PBS. This new name reflects our enduring commitment to serving the Cascade region with quality independent journalism, local series and community events paired with the best PBS programming. While the name is new, the quality programs and trusted reporting remain the same. Cascade PBS continues our commitment to providing unrivaled science, history, arts, drama and kids programming.

Seattle International Film Festival

Cascade PBS worked with the Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF) during their annual May festival. We interviewed two filmmakers with documentaries airing on PBS, *POV: King Coal* and *Nature: Grizzly 399 – Queen of the Tetons*. We also interviewed local filmmaker Stimson Snead about his movie *Tim Travers and the Time Traveler's Paradox*. We shared all of these interviews on social media and used the relevant interviews on broadcast to promote the films with PBS premieres.



CASCADE PBS PODCASTS

In FY24, we produced several Cascade PBS podcasts: Our news podcast *Crosscut Reports* became *Northwest Reports*, *Cascade PBS Ideas Festival* (also under a new brand name), *Mossback's Northwest* and *Your Last Meal with Rachel Belle*.



Your Last Meal with Rachel Belle

In fall 2023, we welcomed the *Your Last Meal with Rachel Belle* podcast. *Your Last Meal* was a James Beard Award finalist for Best Podcast and is hosted by Seattle-based, National Edward R. Murrow award-winning reporter Rachel Belle. In each episode, Belle asks a celebrity (Jewel, Isaac Mizrahi, John Waters, Jenny Slate, Jack Johnson, etc.) what they would choose to eat for their last meal. Then the podcast digs into the history, culture or science behind a dish with experts from around the world.

ACQUISITIONS

Cascade PBS has continued to build our digital footprint and support for our apps through a curated collection of international and local acquisitions. With a Cascade PBS Passport membership, viewers can access an extended library of streaming programs specially selected by Cascade PBS.



Three Body

In October 2023, Cascade PBS premiered international sensation *Three Body*. The Chinese sci-fi series, based on Cixin Liu's book of the same name, was making waves ahead of the premiere of its English-language adaptation. We were able to provide Cascade PBS Passport members and broadcast viewers the opportunity to watch the series ahead of this hotly anticipated Netflix premiere. All 30-episodes ran on broadcast with a marathon streaming opportunity for Passport members.



Ice Mermaid: Cold Resolve

We also offered Cascade PBS passport members a program from our own backyard, *Ice Mermaid: Cold Resolve*. This documentary set in Washington state follows Melissa Kegler's journey to achieve the first U.S. ice 2.2K swim. Beyond the physical challenge, it explored body image, self-acceptance and community in extreme sports. The film showcased Washington's natural beauty, celebrating the connection between swimmers and their environment.

PBS PROGRAMMING

PBS continued to provide an abundance of entertaining storytelling as well as essential news and programming across a diverse range of topics.



Dramas

In January 2024, our favorite *Masterpiece* programs *All Creatures Great and Small* and *Miss Scarlet and the Duke* continued to delight viewers. We also offered exciting new *Masterpiece* series like *Funny Woman*, about a fictional Lucille Ball-type, and *Nolly*, starring Helena Bonham Carter. Viewers also embraced the gripping drama *Little Bird* in fall 2023, which shed light on the lasting impact of the Sixties Scoop in Canada — when Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families and placed in non-Indigenous homes.



Ken Burns

Directed and executive produced by Ken Burns, *The American Buffalo* was a quintessentially American story that served as a biography of the continent’s most magnificent species, an improbable, shaggy beast that nonetheless found itself at the center of many of our nation’s most thrilling, mythic and sometimes heartbreaking tales. But it was also a morality tale encompassing two important and historically significant lessons that resonate today. The series explored the startling swiftness of the species’ near extinction in the late 19th century and the lesser-known story of the people who set out to save the species from extermination.



Gospel

This multi-part documentary series from Henry Louis Gates, Jr. delved into the rich history and cultural impact of gospel music in America. The series traced gospel’s origins in Black spirituality through its evolution and influence on other musical genres like blues, rock and hip hop and explored how this uniquely African American art form has been a constant source of strength in Black communities for over a century.

LOCAL VIDEO SERIES

Over Fiscal Year 2024, our team expanded our original series lineup in exciting ways, producing eight unique series and programs that cover history, the outdoors, science, art and so much more.



Out & Back with Alison Mariella Désir

In Season 2, host Alison Mariella Désir explored various outdoor activities and efforts to make them more inclusive for BIPOC communities. The series took viewers on diverse adventures across the Pacific Northwest, from downhill skiing at Stevens Pass to surfing on the Quinault Reservation. Désir learned birdwatching in Seattle’s Seward Park, experienced her first camping trip at Lake Timothy in Mount Hood and discovered horseback riding while exploring the legacy of Buffalo Soldiers. She also addressed water-related fears common in BIPOC communities through swimming lessons focused on healing. Each episode featured conversations with BIPOC outdoor enthusiasts and community leaders, highlighting how these activities foster connection, healing and new opportunities for engagement in nature.



Human Elements

Human Elements returned for a fourth season, exploring stories about climate change in the Pacific Northwest. This season featured Indigenous communities creating resilient coastlines, scientists tracking how Canada lynx move through landscapes scorched by megafires and plant lovers searching for a home for one of Washington’s endangered wildflowers.



Mossback’s Northwest

Knute Berger continued to uncover hidden stories behind the region’s most interesting treasures and myths. This year, Mossback discovered the story of the first flight around the world that took off and landed in Seattle, learned what happened to the grizzly bears that once roamed the Cascades and found out about the catastrophic Cascade eruption that created an indelible mark across the Northwest.

LOCAL VIDEO SERIES *continued*



The Nosh with Rachel Belle

This new series explored the eclectic and delicious culinary scene of the Pacific Northwest through lively and curious storytelling. It examined art, culture, trends and the outdoors, all through the lens of food and drink. Host Rachel Belle, known for fan-favorite podcast *Your Last Meal* and her work as a National Edward R. Murrow award-winning reporter, brought her expertise to this fresh look at the region’s food culture.



Black Arts Legacies

For decades, Black artists have made key contributions to Seattle’s cultural landscape. *Black Arts Legacies*, a Cascade PBS project, celebrates these lasting accomplishments with written, video and photographic portraits of the painters, poets, dancers, musicians and other Black creatives who have made Seattle sing. This expanding digital archive has showcased 40 artists (and counting) across eras and genres — from 1940s gallery curator Zoë Dusanne to 1970s television producer Nate Long to contemporary ballerina Amanda Morgan. *Black Arts Legacies* Season 3 added 10 more profiles to the mix, further illustrating the region’s vital Black arts ecosystem.



Nick on the Rocks

In its highly-anticipated fifth season, *Nick on the Rocks** returned to explore the region’s most interesting landscapes. This season took a trip just outside Othello, Washington, where a labyrinth of canyons conjured images of the desert Southwest. It traveled high above Wenatchee, Washington, where a group of spires told the story of extreme volcanic activity and ancient vents of magma older than the Cascade volcanoes. It also discovered how the glaciers of Mount Baker carved away rock to reveal a surprising history of ancient volcanoes.

*The “Nick on the Rocks” name is a registered trademark of and is used with permission of Central Washington University.

LOCAL VIDEO SERIES *continued*



Made There

Made There Season 2 focused on Central Washington’s Yakima Valley. Each episode presented a unique guest, exploring their journey as an artisan or small business owner creating local art, crafts, snacks or beverages in celebration of the Pacific Northwest. From Yakima to Prosser, *Made There* highlighted the personal stories of each maker, offering an inside look at their success and providing a helpful tip for viewers.



The Newsfeed

With a new name, some of our programs and events underwent a few changes. Our on-air short news program *Crosscut Now* became *The Newsfeed*. The news series hosted by Paris Jackson continues to serve as a companion to our local, independent newsroom. *The Newsfeed* features news highlights, interviews and more from CascadePBS.org. More exciting changes to this show were rolled out in Q2 of FY25.

TOP 10 CASCADE PBS NEWS STORIES

Did you miss any of these great stories from Cascade PBS? These are the year's most popular stories.

- 1** *WA intercepts millions in child support for low-income families*
- 2** *Live updates: 2023 Washington general election results*
- 3** *Washington State University earns \$15M a year on stolen land*
- 4** *Washington governor's race will be a close one, poll finds*
- 5** *'To Kill a Mockingbird' in the hot seat at WA school district*
- 6** *Why Washington gas prices are the nation's highest*
- 7** *WA mom reclaims son's story after University of Idaho murders*
- 8** *The new year brings new WA laws for guns, minimum wage and more*
- 9** *For Christian nationalists, Eastern Washington is the promised land*
- 10** *Seattle Animal Shelter accused of safety issues, retaliation*



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Cascade PBS partnerships with community organizations in FY24

Black Arts Legacies Celebration

Cascade PBS hosted a celebratory event featuring several of the artists recognized as a part of the *Black Arts Legacies* project. The evening included films, a conversation with featured artists, a retrospective gallery of influential artists, DJs and a live dance performance.





Origins Screening: Lost at SEA

Cascade PBS hosted a first look at the new documentary series *Origins: Lost at SEA* at SIFF Uptown, which explored deeply personal experiences of growing up Black in Seattle. The evening celebrated the second year of the *Origins* docuseries initiative from Cascade Public Media and included a discussion with *Lost at SEA* filmmaker Lady Scribe.



Explore the Outdoors Family Fair

Allison Mariella Désir hosted this free community event featuring organizations advocating for BIPOC reclamation of outdoor spaces. Attendees learned more about engaging with nature in fun and healthy ways through games, treats, workshops and interactive opportunities. The event also included talks from the host and outdoor enthusiasts featured in the original series *Out & Back with Allison Mariella Désir*.



Cascade PBS Ideas Festival

The sold-out Cascade PBS Ideas Festival featured thought leaders Malcolm Gladwell, Lindy West and Heather Cox Richardson, among others. It included live podcasts and TV tapings from *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, Vox, Slate and NPR. Attendees engaged in thought-provoking discussions on current affairs and future trends and left inspired and more connected to the world.



Mossback's Northwest Screening

Knute Berger hosted an event at Fremont Abbey Arts Center in Seattle, offering a sneak peek at Season 9 of *Mossback's Northwest*. The event included a conversation about the upcoming season, a debut screening of a new episode, behind-the-scenes information and Mossback-themed prizes. Members were invited to a special cocktail pre-reception with the opportunity to chat one-on-one with Knute.



Your Last Meal with Rachel Belle Live Event

Rachel Belle hosted a live taping of her podcast *Your Last Meal* featuring guest Amanda Knox at the Great Hall at Green Lake. Rachel invited Amanda on stage where she shared her experience in her own words. Amanda talked about what prison food was like and why she chose Italian food for her last meal, despite her traumatic experience in the country. Members were invited to a private pre-reception hosted by Rachel Belle.



Three Body Screening

Cascade PBS hosted a special screening and celebration of the sci-fi series *Three Body* at the Pacific Science Center. The event featured a showing of the landmark first episode, exclusive bonus footage and a panel discussion with local sci-fi experts about the series. Members were invited to a pre-screening event with themed cocktails and bites. The event was presented in partnership with SIFF, Pacific Science Center and MoPOP.

FROM THE COMMUNITY

As members of KCTS 9, my spouse and I appreciate very much the efforts of PBS and you folks to provide balanced and informed coverage to your viewing public. Thanks so much.

– Arnold L.

I am writing to tell you what a big fan I am of **Out and Back**, particularly the episode on surfing. I am a 55-year-old woman who learned to surf in her 40s and appreciate this episode so much, especially not being the traditionally aged surfer and not looking like other surfers. Please tell the host how much I enjoyed this episode! It could not have been better. You do such great work. Cascade PBS is my favorite channel and I am proud to be a supporter.

– Gwen

I want to thank you for the **Pet Shop Boys concert** from Copenhagen. I have always wanted to go to a Pet Shop Boys concert but it is not possible. Now I can feel as if I was at a concert. Thank you for all the amazing shows you bring to the Pacific Northwest.

– Christopher W.

Thank you to the entire KCTS 9 team for their continuing commitment to outstanding television programs and services.

– Lorna B.

I have enjoyed and been inspired by many shows over decades with what used to be called KCTS 9. I have wanted for some time to thank you for the excellent programs that couldn't be seen except on Cascade PBS. I hope that the show **Royal Flying Doctor Service** will be popular enough to remain on the air and that locally, the show is popular.

– Lynne H.

Fantastic local reporting! Inspirational and beautiful. Thank you Cascade PBS.

– Brenda W.

Have to say I absolutely LOVED **American Experience: The Boys of '36**. I read the book a few years ago. Saw the George Clooney produced film of the same title; not nearly as good as *American Experience*! Thanks so much.

– Diana E.

You guys are AMAZING!! It is a rarity to receive a thank you note from anyone, let alone an organization. You are that rarity and I am so appreciative. I also know that makes me want to continue supporting Cascade PBS!

– Kathy J.



2024 Awards

AWARDS

NORTHWEST REGIONAL EMMY® AWARDS

Cascade PBS won two Northwest Regional Emmy® Awards on June 1, 2024 from the Northwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Cascade PBS is devoted to providing quality journalism and compelling stories to the public. We are honored to have our work in cultural and environmental reporting recognized.

Historical/Cultural – Short Form Content

Mossback’s Northwest: The Day Germany Bombed Seattle
Michael McClinton, Senior Producer; Knute Berger, Writer; Resti Bagcal, Photographer; Madeleine Pisaneschi, Graphic Designer; Sarah Menzies, Producer; Alegra Figeroid, Artist/Illustrator; David Quantic, Editor; Matthew Jorgensen, Composer

Environment/Science – Short Form Content

The Range Rider
Sarah Hoffman, Producer; Bryce Yukio Adolphson, Photographer; David Quantic, Editor; Sarah Menzies, Producer

NORTHWEST EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS

The Cascade PBS newsroom won several awards, including multiple first and second place honors at the Society of Professional Journalists NW Excellence in Journalism Awards. The Society of Professional Journalists contest includes entries from across Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Alaska.

Audio Investigative Reporting

1ST PLACE: Sara Bernard, Farah Eltohamy, Mai Hoang
After a takeover, mobile home tenants are fighting back

Audio Technology & Science Reporting

2ND PLACE: Sara Bernard, Brandon Block
The gray areas of surveillance tech in WA police forces

Photo & Design General News Photography

2ND PLACE: Amanda Snyder
New mothers can stay with their babies at this Washington prison

Writing Arts & Culture Reporting

1ST PLACE: Margo Vansyngel
A Seattle artist and the auction frenzy that sparked an FBI tip

Investigative Reporting

1ST PLACE: Farah Eltohamy, Mai Hoang, Genna Martin
WA mobile home communities organize against ‘economic eviction’

General Excellence

Cascade PBS Staff

Series

2ND PLACE: Joseph O’Sullivan
Coverage of ‘Legislative Privilege’

WASHINGTON COALITION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT

Bunting Award
Joseph O’Sullivan & Shauna Sowersby
Coverage of ‘Legislative Privilege’

The Bunting Award recognizes journalists and media outlets for work that uses or advances Washington state’s open government laws or educates citizens about them.



WHO WE ARE

Cascade PBS is a publicly supported media organization with a ***mission to inform and inspire our community to make the world a better place.*** We serve millions of people throughout the Pacific Northwest each year – on air, online and in person – with the best of PBS programming, local investigative journalism, unique regional productions and community events.

Our vision is to be the most essential and relevant media organization in the region for important conversations, civic engagement and enriching entertainment. We are committed to creating the highest quality content, product and experiences that engage and grow a diverse audience, reflect the values of our community and make an impact on people's lives.

We employ more than 115 talented and dynamic team members who work tirelessly each day in pursuit of our mission and strategy.

We are committed to building a team that represents a diversity of thought, experience and personal background. Along with race, gender and physical ability, we believe that one's ethnicity, national origin, religion, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identification and age are other dimensions that strengthen us. Such diversity enhances the relevance and substance of our work.



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