

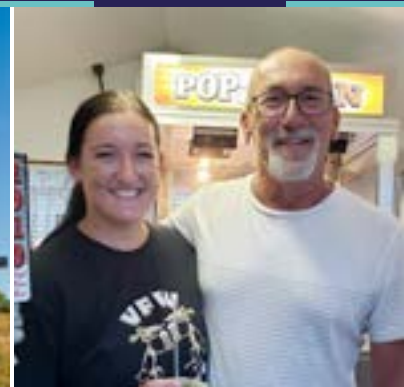
Pioneer  PBS

20
21 LOCAL CONTENT
AND SERVICE REPORT
TO THE COMMUNITY



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MISSION STATEMENT

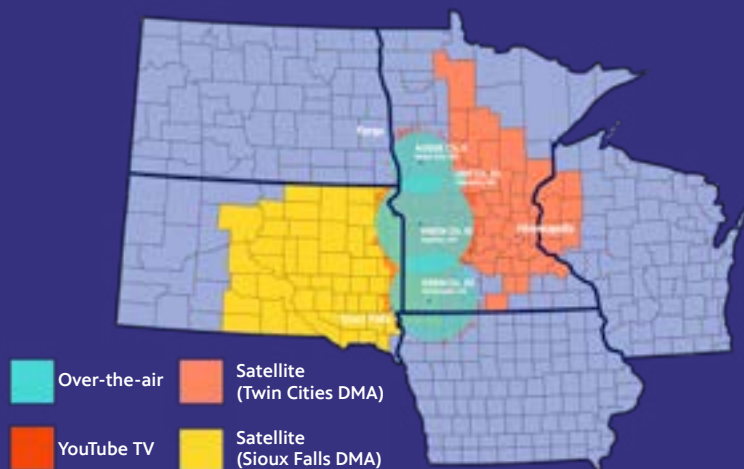
Pioneer PBS is committed to building vibrant and welcoming communities. Our mission is to foster civil discourse and civic well-being through thought-provoking media productions and events that connect people to rural stories and shared values.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to be a forward-thinking media and technology leader whose viewers are engaged and inspired to advance rural values of cooperation, resilience and innovation.

LOCAL VALUE

Since 1966, Pioneer PBS has been serving small towns and farming communities of a five state area by advancing our ability to share stories, discussing current events and our region's history and learning from each other.



21 OVERVIEW OF KEY SERVICES

In spite of a raging COVID-19 pandemic in fiscal year 2021 (July 2020 through June 2021), Pioneer PBS produced the following **local broadcast productions**: Prairie Sportsman, Meet the Candidates, Compass, LANDMARKS, Your Legislators, Prairie Yard & Garden and our award-winning arts, culture and regional history program, Postcards.



To help teachers and students with at-home learning needs, we collected resources on our website and put educational Postcards and Prairie Sportsman episodes into a **curated list** for summer school.

In FY 2021, Pioneer PBS was one of the **first PBS stations in the nation** to be able to roll out a new live streaming service to better serve our local viewers.



Additionally, we added a sixth channel to our lineup -- the **FNX channel** devoted to Native American and world Indigenous content.

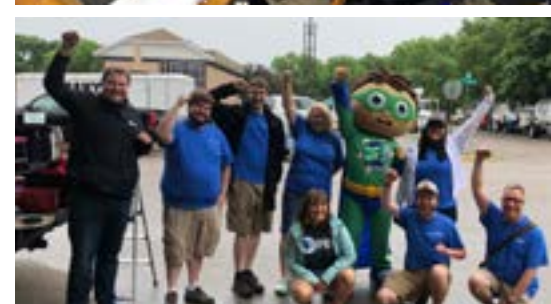
We participated in and documented outdoor cultural diversity-centered events for **Welcoming Week** in the communities of Granite Falls, Willmar and Worthington.

We organized a successful online screening and discussion event for **THE HORSE RELATIVE** with more than 85 people in attendance from four different states. The event created a template for future virtual screening events.

We produced and aired a series of 12 **Meet the Candidates** debates in advance of the 2020 election where our local viewers could directly ask questions to politicians running for the Minnesota State Legislature.

We organized a screening and discussion event to celebrate the **34th Season** of Prairie Yard & Garden.

We sponsored a float featuring **SUPER WHY!** for the June 2021 Granite Falls Western Fest parade.



21 AWARD-WINNING LOCAL IMPACT

Fiscal year 2021 was an impactful year for Pioneer PBS because we produced and aired **21 programs** that were nominated for Upper Midwest Emmy® awards! In FY 2022, two of these programs received the coveted Emmy trophy.

The New Melting Pot of America won an award in the “Lifestyle” category. The story features Mateo Mackbee and Erin Lucas’ restaurant, Krewe, in St. Joseph and how they use their restaurant, bakery and farm to promote diversity and teach about food.



The Making of Tuscaloosa in Minnesota won an award in the “Arts and Entertainment -- Long Form Content” category. The story features behind-the-scenes interviews with the film’s director Phillip Harder who made the film in Minnesota and who based his film on a novel by Glasgow Phillips.

Since 2013, stories created by this Postcards production team of Dana Conroy, Ben Dempcy and Kristofor Gieske have received **18 Upper Midwest Emmys**.





LANDMARKS, a special series of programs hosted by Minnesota photographer and storyteller Doug Ohman, continued production in FY 2021 with two new programs featuring **the communities and people of rural Minnesota**.

In LANDMARKS: Classic Car Road Trip, which aired in FY 2021, Minnesota photographer and storyteller Doug Ohmann and Pioneer PBS Production Director Timothy Hale Bakken traveled through more than **15 communities** in two days with a classic 1968 Ford Mustang convertible.

LANDMARKS: Classic Fall Colors Road Trip, which also aired in FY 2021, took viewers into the heart of north central Minnesota to see iconic Minnesota landmarks that can be enjoyed from the road. Ohman and Bakken traveled through more than **30 communities** in four days.

Our programs have a local impact by **lifting up all that is good** about small town living to the region and the world.

21 LIFTING UP UNHEARD VOICES

IN THE COMMUNITY

Through our local programs and website, Pioneer PBS connects a vast underserved region by providing a multidimensional media platform for local people to share their stories with the rest of the world. Many of our viewers are low-income families who cannot afford cable or satellite television. We also serve tens-of-thousands of elderly people living on fixed incomes who regularly tell us that we are their constant companion and best friend.

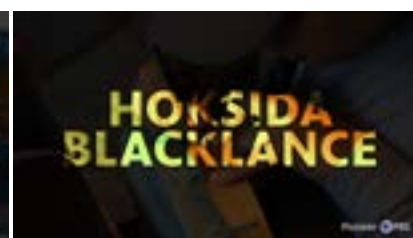
Pioneer PBS serves a higher percentage of underserved and low income viewers than most other television broadcasters in the region. Pioneer PBS's primary community of license (Appleton, Minnesota) has an average per capita income that is only 52% of the national average. Because of the audience composition and the distance to urban centers, Pioneer PBS is the only television station providing service to many of our counties.

At Pioneer PBS we take very seriously **our obligation to lift up and tell stories from these underserved populations.**

In FY 2021, Pioneer PBS made great strides in reaching out to the Dakota population in our viewing area. Pioneer PBS hired Tanner Peterson, a member of the Upper Sioux Community, to produce several short videos intended for **digital first** distribution on our social media platforms.



These videos included stories about the Dakota tradition of making and giving star quilts and a four-part video project highlighting the importance of song and drum to four different Native artists. [Undowanpi \(We Sing\)](#) and [Pezihutazizi and Cansa'yapi Star Quilts](#) are some of the most viewed and widely watched programs on our Facebook, YouTube and video.pioneer.org platforms.





FY 2021 saw the growth and maturity of our local public affairs program, Compass. The mission of Compass is to **create opportunities to share rural narratives** and stories for and by groups historically underrepresented or misrepresented in the news. Pioneer PBS aims to strengthen rural news gathering and build a more diverse media and news platform that gives rise to emerging rural voices in the Upper Midwest.

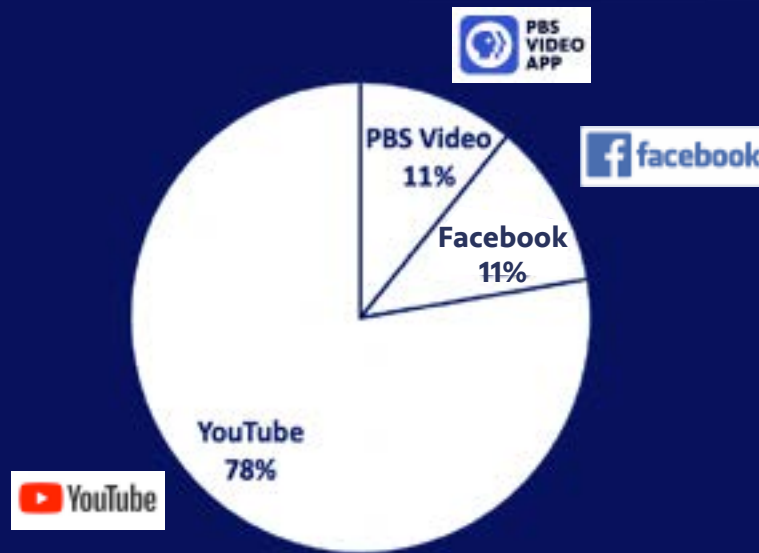
In FY 2021, Compass stories about the Asatru Folk Assembly — a whites-only religious organization which opened their third location in Murdock, Minnesota — **brought statewide and international attention to this story**. Compass stories were picked up and used by reporters from the Star Tribune and The Guardian.

21 REACH IN THE COMMUNITY

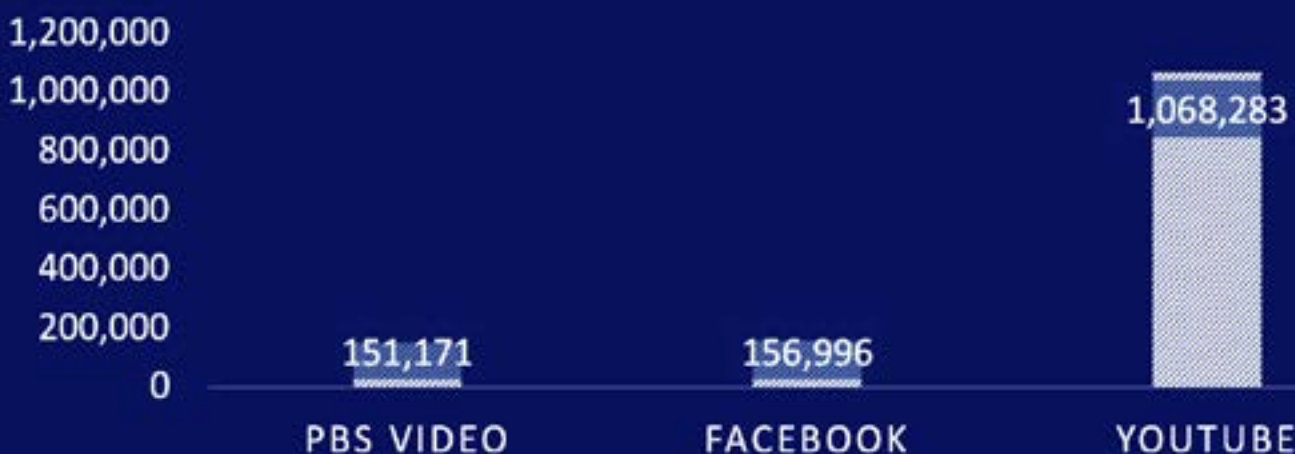
Pioneer PBS serves the small towns and farming communities located in western and southwestern Minnesota, the eastern Dakotas and northwestern Iowa. We are the only broadcast television station located in this area. Research has revealed that on average at least **40% of households** in the Sioux Falls DMA tune into the Pioneer PBS broadcast channel at least once a month. When combined with viewing statistics from the Twin Cities DMA, it is estimated that Pioneer PBS programs reach an estimated **1.1 million** households with our broadcast signal.

The Pioneer PBS video streaming service, video.pioneer.org, combined with our Pioneer PBS YouTube channel and Pioneer PBS Facebook page, attracted more than 1,376,450 views in 2021.

Percentage of views in 2021



Total views in 2021





In 2021, Pioneer PBS worked with dozens of local arts organizations, historical societies, businesses, nonprofits, educational institutions and civic organizations to find the stories and shine light on issues important to our viewers.

A Compass story documenting the success of a new and unique on-site carpentry training program offered by Minnesota West Community and Technical College in partnership with the **Cansayapi community** was used by Minnesota West to secure funding for continuation and expansion of the program. It has also been used in the Minnesota West Entrepreneur Summit as an example of how partnerships can better communities.

Other regional organizations that Pioneer PBS has ongoing relationships with include: University of Minnesota, Morris, Southwest Minnesota State University, Southwest Minnesota Arts Council, the Lake Region Arts Council and dozens of local chambers of commerce and historical societies.

To assist local civic groups and nonprofit organizations, station meeting room facilities are provided free for public use. In FY 2021, organizations such as the Granite Falls Chamber of Commerce and the Southwest Initiative Foundation used our facility.



Pioneer PBS knows it is having an impact because our viewers and partners tell us so. Twice a year, Pioneer PBS surveys our members to measure our impact. Here is a sample of just some of the hundreds of comments we receive:

“We’ve gotten a ton of traction on the web version of your feature (featuring 4-H kids adapting during COVID). Folks including the Extension dean and U of M president and board of regents have watched and loved it.”

- Erin Kelly, Collins Communications, Extension Center for Youth Development, University of Minnesota.

Pioneer PBS was a life saver during the pandemic. I’m learning about Pioneer PBS and appreciating you more and more.

- (Viewer from Alexandria)

“Pioneer PBS has made our family more aware of Minnesota.

- (Viewer from Hendricks)

I like the Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa specific programs.

- (Viewer from Baxter)

I watch more travel shows since I am elderly and not out traveling as much.

- (Viewer from Glenwood)

It is obvious that people love Pioneer PBS and that is reflected in the increased levels of membership and corporate support in FY 2021.

Pioneer PBS connects with its viewers on social media platforms, too!

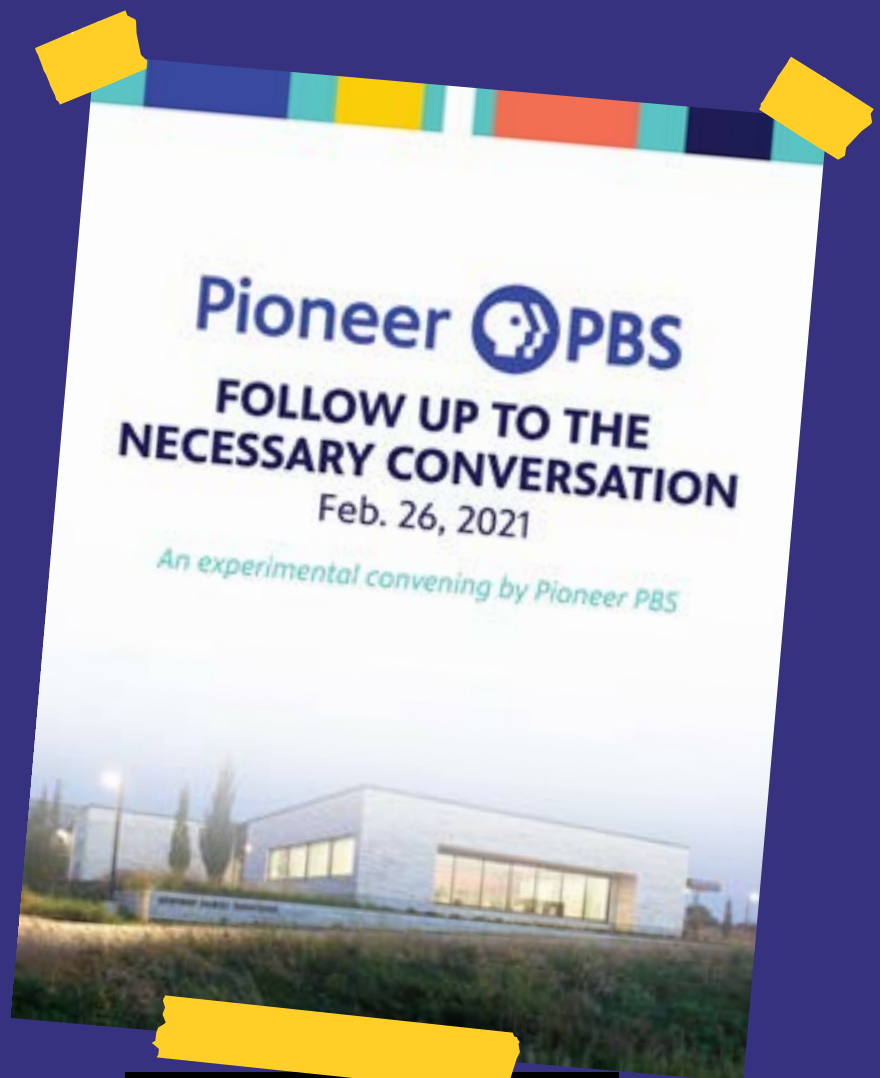
- The **Pioneer PBS video streaming** service, video.pioneer.org (151,171 streams | peak 16.4K in February), combined with our **Pioneer PBS YouTube channel** (1,068,283 views | peak 6.9K in November) and **Pioneer PBS Facebook page** (156,996 people reached | peak 8.9K in October), attracted **more than 1,376,450** views in 2021.
- In December of 2020, Pioneer PBS had 5.3K **Facebook** followers. One year later, we had 5.4K.
- In 2020, our **YouTube** page had 1,026,344 views with 2,576 new subscribers. In 2021, we had 1,068,283 views with 2,119 new subscribers. We currently have a total of **10,026** subscribers and have seen solid increases in subscribers for the past four years.
- In January of 2021, Pioneer PBS had 1,047 **Twitter** followers. In January of 2022, our followers grew to 1,085 followers.
- In January of 2021, we had 953 **Instagram** followers. By January 2022, our followers grew to 1,083.
- In January 2022, our followers on **LinkedIn** grew to 170 with 451 total page views.
- Our **Google Ads** campaigns cumulatively for the year saw an average 12.5% click-through rate as we drove more traffic from Google searches to our website. This, in turn, led more viewers to videos on our video.pioneer.org streaming platform and more visits to our membership and Passport pages. The goal we were trying to achieve was a 5% click-through rate -- we more than doubled that.
- **The number of Pioneer PBS Passport streams has more than tripled** over the past three years. In 2019, we had a total of 9,810 streaming events for the year. In 2020 we had 15,743 and in 2021 we had **34,164!** Let there be no doubt that viewer habits are changing. The key to our future survival will be to at least triple the number of members who currently are Passport members.

In February 2021, Pioneer PBS convened a Zoom conversation between 25 western Minnesotans identifying common values and aspirations for our region. The group discussed the challenges facing those aspirations and the tools we can use going forward.

The meeting was also designed to test the Zoom platform for using breakout rooms to host small group discussions between people of different western Minnesota communities and from different backgrounds, political views, generations and races.

As a result of this meeting, Pioneer PBS has been challenged to lift up and focus on stories that can help the region:

- **successfully welcome new community members of different backgrounds**
- **provide economic incentives to create the future we desire**
- **overcome political differences**
- **find initiatives to advance that appeal to all**



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Pioneer PBS

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