



2022 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



"Thank you for your variety of programs! A great service and need is being fulfilled by your work!"

-- Cynthia C.
Donor from Lynchburg, Virginia

The mission of Blue Ridge PBS is to enrich people's lives by providing educational, informational, and cultural programming that fills a unique role as a positive and lifelong resource for the communities we serve.



Blue Ridge PBS, based in Roanoke, is a valuable part of southwestern Virginia's advancement, providing a variety of quality programming across multiple channels and platforms.

Blue Ridge PBS is comprised of five broadcast channels: WBRA-TV (15.1), Southwest Virginia PTV (15.2), Blue Ridge PBS Kids (15.3), Blue Ridge Create (15.4), and ECHO (15.5).

In addition, we have three online streaming channels: Blue Ridge Streaming, ECHO and Project Southwest.

In 2022, Blue Ridge PBS provided these vital local services:

- Connections in the community through special events and projects
- Educational programming for learners of all ages with emphasis on locally produced content
- Locally produced content about a wide variety of topics along with a stellar selection of national content
- ECHO, a locally generated streaming to broadcast channel, dedicated to Education, Community, Health and Opportunity

Blue Ridge PBS' local services added more local content for and about the region on-air with Southwest Virginia PTV and ECHO as well as online with ECHO, Blue Ridge Streaming and Project Southwest. The Blue Ridge PBS Kid's channel continued to fill the need for children's programming around the clock. Local and PBS programming on our main channel, 15.1, was continued throughout the region with support made possible by a partnership from local cable and dish providers.

Blue Ridge PBS Out and About!



The year found Blue Ridge PBS staff and volunteers out and about at a wide variety of community events including:

- Roanoke's **Festival in the Park**
- **Touch A Truck** in Christiansburg
- **Olde Salem Days**
- **Zoo Boo** high atop Mill Mountain

We also visited area elementary schools to provide activities, fun swag and educational resources.



"Our daughter LOVED the chalk obstacle course! 🥰 What an AWESOME table by PBS! Games, giveaways, music, prize wheel, AND the Big Bird Car! 🥰 Wow, Oak Grove Elementary School students were so, so lucky to have you visit today! Thank you!"

--Lynda A.

A highlight of the year was **ECHO and Blue Ridge PBS Kids Night at the Salem Red Sox**. The event featured a visit from Daniel Tiger, Jet, and Pippy Pinewood along with a lot of exciting activities!



To wrap the year, the parking lot at Blue Ridge PBS became a free, drive-through holiday light extravaganza with special guest appearances by Santa and Mrs. Claus and the Roanoke Grinch. Thousands of people enjoyed the magic of the holidays as they visited **Santa's Winter Wonderland 2022**.

The event would not have been possible without the help of our wonderful volunteers and helper elves. We're also grateful for the event sponsors: Berglund Center, EZ Rampz Mobility Solutions, Leonard Buildings, Lionberger Construction, First Citizens Bank, Christmas Décor, Pete's RV Center, Build Smart Institute, and the Chui Casas Family.



"It was magical."

--Brent R.
Donor

"I love our yearly trip here! Our kids love it! Thanks for all you do!"

--Andrea H.

Community Partnerships and Saying Thank You

Blue Ridge PBS Gives Back

In 2022, Blue Ridge PBS launched an initiative to highlight fellow non-profits and spotlight their good works. During the year, we featured three organizations:

Feeding Southwest Virginia and their daily efforts taken to eliminate hunger in our region.

Angels of Assisi and their work to help people and animals forge better lives together.

Rescue Mission of Roanoke and their efforts to help men, women, and children in crisis.

The specials we produced included a mix of live broadcast and pre-recorded stories that helped to give each organization an amplified voice in the region.



National Night Out

In partnership with the Williamson Road Area Business Association, Blue Ridge PBS participated in National Night Out celebrating Roanoke's City and County first responders.

The evening of free family fun had a festival atmosphere featuring music, food, games, and more all while promoting community-building and neighborhood safety.



Neighborhood Pop In

In the spirit of Daniel Tiger, to say thank you to the hard-working organizations and people of our community, Blue Ridge PBS partnered with Krispy Kreme to spread some sweet joy.

Each week, we rolled out the Big Bird and delivered dozens of doughnuts along with our thanks for being a "Tiger-rific Neighbor!!!"



In 2022, Blue Ridge PBS continued popular programs and added more locally produced content to the lineup.

Programs produced by Blue Ridge PBS

CONVERSATIONS WITH BOB DENTON

Host, Bob Denton, is known as a political analyst for various news organizations throughout western Virginia.

On this new weekly show, Bob seeks to engage guests in conversation and dialogue about various issues and social concerns affecting Virginians. The goal of the show is to share and understand rather than oppose and debate.



THE LIFE OF A MUSICIAN

Danville, Virginia, serves as the backdrop for the series with each episode filmed in very unique locations, including historical homes, hotels, and even an old gas station.

Hosted by singer/songwriter/musician Brandon Lee Adams, each episode features fascinating conversations and music from well-known international artists.



REAL LIFE WITH SUSAN HARF

This series is hosted by Rose Martin and features Life Coach Susan Harf. As a trained personal and professional life coach, Susan offers solutions for everyday problems we all face in our relationships at home and at work.

Topics include: How to Diffuse an Argument, Keeping the Love Alive in Long Term Marriage, Friends – Why We need Them, and more.



Taylor Thyme

Local teen baker, Taylor Pusha, engages viewers with sweet recipes. A competitor in the national Kids Baking Championship and the creator of Taylor Made Cakes & Creations, she shares tasty treats and recipes made in her kitchen.

In this season, Taylor also visits local bakeries, farms, and Hotel Roanoke. She learns about chickens, picks blueberries, and makes a holiday Yule Log with a pastry chef.



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WHAT IT TAKES...

In its 4th season, the award winning *What It Takes...* continues to feature experts and committed citizens to our studio to discuss timely issues affecting Southwest Virginians.

Hosted by BRPBS Director of Educational Innovation Tom Landon, WIT embodies the spirit of our ECHO Channel, featuring topics on Education, Community, Health and Opportunity.



WRITE AROUND THE CORNER

We wrapped up Season 5 of this popular series in spring with Season 6 going into production during the late summer.

The program features a wide variety of writers who have connections to Virginia from first time writers to international best sellers. Recorded on location, each half hour interview delves into the stories behind the stories. We also record bonus interviews with each guest which are made available online.



BU\$INESS MATTER\$

The program, hosted by award-winning radio and print journalist Gene Marrano, explored business from a variety of viewpoints and scenarios - the big players, the up-and-coming, the look ahead; featuring interviews with the people helping to grow jobs, the economy, and the Blue Ridge region.



INTERSTITIALS

Information and entertainment went beyond the standard television format with short stories and segments that ran in our station breaks. A sampling includes:

- **Creative Virginia** profiles the artistic and imaginative people of Central and Southwest Virginia.
- **Eye on the Past** highlights the history and heritage of the people, places, and events in the region.
- **On the Road Again** visits interesting attractions and destinations that are just a short drive away.





2022 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

ECHO: Looking to the Future, Reflecting the Past

2022 was a year of big anniversaries! ECHO celebrated its first birthday and Blue Ridge PBS celebrated its 55th anniversary of being on the air! Education and technology are key touchstones for both.

When Blue Ridge PBS (WBRA) was built in 1967, it was designed as the first all-color educational television station in the country.



In those early years, programs were presented live over-the-air by studio teachers covering everything from geography to advanced math. The technology and presentation style of education content has changed a great deal over the decades. ECHO reflects the original reason Blue Ridge PBS was founded – education. And just as the original station was on the cutting edge of technology, so is ECHO.

Combining streaming with traditional television, ECHO is designed to meet the needs of learners in all stages of life. It is the first station in the country to develop this advancement in local public media education. The goal is to provide accessible, educational programming that is both informative and entertaining by “being where others aren’t.”

Education, Community, Health, and Opportunity are the pillars that build the foundation for educational, community-oriented content. From early learners to those still learning from their life experiences, ECHO seeks to provide educational content that encourages everyone to learn something new every day.

Partnering with the Virginia Department of Education, the Library of Virginia, Virtual Virginia, Cardinal News, Center in the Square, Grandin Theatre Film Lab, Salem Museum, and more, ECHO curates, streams and airs content for learners of all ages. A wide range of content is also produced by the Blue Ridge PBS ECHO team.

By providing a space that values education, community, health, and opportunity, ECHO encourages viewers to learn with us. Together, we strengthen our communities and its members to create a world where we never stop learning.



“Being on ECHO has inspired a group of our students to explore different areas of media. We look forward to ECHO’s growth for the future ... ECHO is the channel the community has been needing. Thank you.”

*--Doug Pitzer
Guest on What It Takes*

A Sampling of Content Produced by Blue Ridge PBS ECHO

Cardinal News Updates— Cardinal News is a Southwest and Southside Virginia based non-profit news organization whose goal is to fill in the gaps left by retreating legacy media organizations. ECHO partners with them to provide a twice monthly news update.



Get Schooled: Field Trips – Produced in partnership with Center in the Square, these segments take students on a virtual field trip with explorer, Payton Moledor. Adventures included learning about paleontology at Virginia's Explore Park and finding out if air is a fluid with a visit to the Roanoke Blacksburg Regional Airport. (BTW, surprise! Air IS a fluid. A fluid is any substance that flows and has motion.)

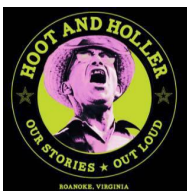
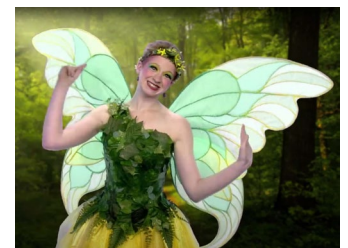
Hands on Physics – This is a series of demonstration videos designed in partnership with Virtual Virginia and the Physics Demonstration Lab at Virginia Tech. Aimed at Physics 1 students, they are designed to fill the gap that can sometimes exist in online courses when demonstrating key scientific principles due to lack of access to materials or facilities.

Hands on Health – This co-production with Virtual Virginia is a series of videos that demonstrate a variety of first aid skills from CPR to treating adult and infant choking and more.

Pip's Tips - Designed for primary or elementary school learning, this series follows Pippy Pinewood (aka Pip) as she shares tips for her young Dewdrops. The SOL correlated tips cover a wide variety of topics with a dash of fun added! Pip even learns a few things herself on the way.

"This is wonderful! Thank you to all who worked on producing these videos. We look forward to viewing them and integrating the content into the Virtual Virginia Physics I course. Our collaboration is certainly enriching the learning experience for Virginia students."

--Sarah Warnick
Virtual Virginia



Field Notes/Hoot & Holler – Field Notes is an occasional live performance series. Included is Hoot and Holler. Recorded at Roanoke's historic Grandin Theatre, Hoot and Holler is story telling at its best with each performance built around a theme.

Day of Remembrance – March 19, 2022, marked the second anniversary of the first case of confirmed COVID 19 in the Roanoke City and Alleghany Health District. A ceremony was held to mark the occasion and to thank first responders, volunteers, and others who have helped combat the spread of the virus. This event was closed to the public. Blue Ridge PBS ECHO was pleased to make it available for all to see.



Sights, Sounds and Stories of Southwest Virginia



Project Southwest continued to celebrate Virginia's heritage in 2022 with its 24/7 multi-platform "community first" streaming YouTube channel. It is available free to the public and designed to create and spread positive awareness about Southwest Virginia which is an often underserved, misunderstood, and misrepresented region of Virginia's Commonwealth.

For two years PSW producers have shared exciting and beautiful outdoor adventures, portraits of interesting people, and toe tapping music like the series, ***Musical Portraits*** which showcases phenomenal local musicians in stunning local locations.

PSW partners include the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, Mountain Heritage Museum & Gallery, and more.



But MORE is on the way for the western region of Virginia.



In 2022, Blue Ridge PBS began laying the groundwork for a new PBS affiliate to serve the area. We are creating a first-of-its-kind, all-digital television station. Rather than using the traditional broadcast antenna, distribution will be a linear stream that can be seen online, local cable channels, and through an app.

Dedicated to serving Southwest Virginia, PBS Appalachia (PBSA) will serve 13 counties in one of the only areas of the country not currently served by a PBS station. Along with local content, the station will deliver the full PBS schedule including PBS Kids, PBS NewsHour, Masterpiece, Nature, and NOVA.

The award-winning PBSA team will tell the stories of our communities, celebrate our heritage, highlight our people, and look forward to our region's growth; all through the lens of industry-leading equipment and the eye of award-winning producers. Our first two signature series are *French Magnolia Cooks* and *Hometowns*.

French Magnolia Cooks is an inspirational, savory and educational epicurean journey through Southwest Virginia. Chef Missy takes viewers from hunt & farm to chef & wine to the table. Field and Stream with John Gurley. Wine with Thomas Fraley. Recipes with warmth & humor by Chef Missy.



Hometowns – Originally a part of Project Southwest, this multi-award-winning series profiles the Appalachian communities our viewers call home.



With support from the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, PBS Appalachia Virginia is on track to launch in June 2023.



2022 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT SUMMARY

**Blue Ridge PBS is Public Media
serving Virginia's Blue Ridge and Appalachia on air and online!**



"Angels of Assisi is so honored to have been chosen to participate in Blue Ridge PBS Gives Back! We cannot thank you enough for the incredible opportunity that you provided for Angels of Assisi last night ... the positive impact on AOA from that show will continue for much longer than that and will allow us to continue to help more and more families, pets and farm animals in Roanoke and surrounding areas."

-- Carol Jessee
Angels of Assisi

"I so enjoy what you are doing and how you are doing it! Just beautiful with so much respect for this area and the people who live here."

--Thom M.
Project SW Viewer



"We so appreciate the great programming and innovative projects. Thank you!"

--Donor from Blacksburg

"Thank you for the quality and variety of programming you provide our area. It is much appreciated."

--Blue Ridge PBS Donor from Christiansburg

In 2022, Blue Ridge PBS continued to provide education and entertainment programming for viewers of all ages. From broadcast to streaming to video-on-demand, Blue Ridge PBS is the region's community resource for lifelong learning!