

WCTE Central TN PBS

2022 Local Content and Service Report to the Community



Explore Your World. Experience WCTE Central Tennessee PBS.

For more than 44 years, the Emmy award-winning WCTE PBS has enriched the lives of its viewers in central Tennessee, stimulating educational, civic and personal development through informational and innovative programming and services that address local and regional needs.



WCTE Central Tennessee PBS is an essential resource for the people we serve.

On air, online, in print and in the community, WCTE PBS is middle Tennessee's premiere storyteller. WCTE PBS is the **ONLY** full-power television station, public or commercial, in a 75-mile radius of Cookeville, TN, making it a strategic partner with education, health services, government, arts and music.

In 2022, WCTE Central Tennessee PBS, provided these vital local services:

Seventy-six hours of original, locally produced content covering a variety of topics such as sustainable agriculture and environmental living, health, history, public affairs, education, music, art, and sports.

Featured live coverage of the Tennessee Senate and House of Representatives as part of a continued collaborative initiative with all Tennessee PBS stations.

WCTE Central Tennessee PBS, local services had deep impact.

WCTE PBS's signal reaches 1.3 million people throughout middle Tennessee and southern Kentucky with over the air broadcast, cable, streaming and satellite services.

WCTE partners with leaders in local education, business, agriculture, economic development, public safety, music, art, theatre, athletics and tourism to provide much needed resources to the citizens we serve.

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The mission of WCTE PBS is to give voice to the people and places of the region we serve. We strive to engage our citizens through distinctive programs and services that inform, educate, entertain and inspire. Since 1978, WCTE PBS has been a leader in celebrating the stories and people of this region. We continue this tradition today through multiple platforms of engagement that extend beyond the broadcast. Below are brief highlights of some WCTE initiatives and series from 2022.

1. Local Cultural History Programming and Initiatives

Capturing the essence of local culture and the history of a region in a way that entertains, educates and inspires is part of the fabric of WCTE PBS's storytelling and community engagement as evidenced in many of the activities of the past year.

***51st Annual Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree** celebrates traditional mountain music, dance and crafts. For more than 32 years, WCTE has been there to capture the event. WCTE PBS produced two days of live coverage that was shared across the state and then put together a one-hour show for national distribution..

***Where Stories Live** is a new WCTE PBS original series that took a unique deep dive look into the rich historical homes from the area, and the daily lives of the people who worked and lived there. The stories included historical references, and articulated the rich culture of the time. The stories were told by the show host, Avery Hutchins, through interviews with local historians, family members and the presentation of artifacts that best represented and supported the story line.

***Cookeville/Putnam County Christmas Parade** featured the annual coverage of this long-standing parade. The 2022 parade theme was, "A Cookeville Country Christmas." WCTE PBS broadcast the parade live and featured a one-hour edited special that aired Christmas week, featuring parade float winners.



***55th Anniversary of the Tennessee Tech Tuba Ensemble** featuring the award-winning TN Tech Tuba Ensemble.

Shot and edited by WCTE PBS, the show is a 90-minute documentary featuring Winston Morris, a professor of Music and Instructor of Tuba and Euphonium who has taught the tuba for over five decades.

Morris is an internationally recognized leader in the advancement of the tuba.

The show was funded by WCTE PBS donors.

2. Local Engagement

Indie Lens Pop-Up (ILPU) Screenings is a neighborhood series that brings people together monthly for public film screenings and community-driven conversations. The Independent Lens film series is the winner of several awards including 27 Emmy Awards, 23 Peabody Awards, eight DuPont-Columbia University Awards, and 10 Academy Award nominations. The subject matters of these films are deeply personal yet speak to universal challenges that we face in the Upper Cumberland region. Our screenings this year included *Storm Lake*, *Missing in Brooks County*, *Apart*, *Writing with Fire*, *Try Harder*, and *Move Me*. Also resulting from our screenings are collaborative opportunities with community stakeholders: Tennessee Tech University, Harper’s Soundstage, Big Tony’s Pizzeria, Stage One Dance Studio, Regional Overdose Prevention Specialists, Tennessee Tech Addiction Prevention & Support Coalition, and Genesis House.

WCTE PBS partnered with Cookeville’s *Cityscape for Stations of Imagination (Stations)*. *Stations* is an event that fills the important role of providing engaging and free activities for children who visit the annual Fall Fun Festival. Kids aged 2–12 years old find a wide range of fun and educational opportunities with an emphasis on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) activities that align with PBS’s Ready to Learn educational Initiatives. WCTE PBS partnered with 27 businesses and community organizations to provide the community with 25 booths of crafts, games, and educational activities.



Community Engagement and Education

The Governor’s Early Literacy Foundation (GELF) has a Book Bus program to help strengthen early literacy and reduce learning loss in the summer. WCTE PBS partnered with Putnam County Schools (PCSS) and GELF by creating and airing promotional videos.

To support our local schools, WCTE PBS consistently attends family engagement events and provides information on free PBS Kids resources to families at schools including Burks, Cane Creek, Sycamore, and Jere Whitson elementary schools. We also support student career development by conducting media production demonstrations at career events. Cornerstone Elementary and Baxter Primary were two such places where we participated in career day events.

WCTE PBS has also been actively involved with many community events. Our Education Team attended and provided craft activities and PBS Kids learning resources to the Putnam County Clean Commission’s Earth Day event, the Academy Sports family engagement night, Cummins Eyes of Diversity Event, and the Putnam County YMCA’s Winter Break Camp.



In July, WCTE PBS’s Gilley Pool Back to School Bash and Book Exchange event in McMinnville welcomed approximately 215 adults and kids and exchanged about 125 books. Additional activities that have celebrated the diverse cultures in our region include attending and providing resources and activities to kids at events like Tennessee Tech’s Window on the World (WOW) and the Upper Cumberland Hispanic Heritage Festival. Both events are festive celebrations of cultural diversity and harmony with food, clothing, music, and activities for our community.

Grants

WCTE PBS received the Dollar General Literacy Foundation Grant which provided indoor TV antennas to 127 families. Having access to the over-the-air signal ensured that those families were receiving the necessary early learning programming needed to ensure school readiness. WCTE PBS also made use of the funds to provide educational books and flashcards to low-income schools, including Woodland Park Elementary in Sparta, Bobby Ray Elementary in McMinnville, and Jere Whitson Elementary in Cookeville.

WCTE PBS received the Finding Your Roots Community Engagement Grant which made two community events possible. One was a genealogy meetup, in partnership with the Putnam County Library, during which we showed clips from PBS’s Finding Your Roots and discussed genealogy research strategies and resources. The other was a breakfast for the Pre-K classes at Jere Whitson Elementary School in celebration of the cultural heritage of the students and their families.

WCTE PBS received the Indie Lens Pop-Ups Grant. The film screening series allowed WCTE PBS to receive funding to enhance the publicity efforts and produce interstitials for all the screening events which featured the panelists and community partners.

WCTE PBS received the MPT Harriet Tubman/Frederick Douglass Community Engagement Grant which was used to provide funding for activities to teach the community about African American history. These activities include a booth at Stations of Imagination, a screening of historic documentaries, and a student art show across several counties in the Upper Cumberland region. WCTE PBS partnered with the NAACP, the Black History Museum of Warren County Tennessee, and several school systems.

At-Home Learning and Partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education

The At-Home Learning initiative is in its third year. WCTE PBS, along with the other five Tennessee PBS stations, collaborated with Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) to provide access to instructional learning with daily lessons being delivered via over-the-air broadcast. Additionally, WCTE worked with several organizations and schools across the 14 counties in Tennessee to introduce Datacasting. The Datacasting pilot attempted to provide access to classroom content through the use of the television signal to students and families without broadband connectivity.

Community Training

WCTE provided several training sessions for organizations in our region. Through our Social Emotional and Academic specialist (in partnership with PCSS), we offered poverty training workshops for 150 new student teachers in the College of Education at Tennessee Technological University. We also trained the social workers in relation to the UCHRA Empower UC Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program aimed at alleviating poverty in the Upper Cumberland region.

4. Local Programming

WCTE PBS has always been recognized as a leader in the creation of local content. As the region's premier storyteller, WCTE PBS continues to capture important community content on a daily basis. The following are just representative of that emphasis.

***Live Green Tennessee: Holiday Cooking Edition** featured Live Green Tennessee's host, Melinda Keifer, and co-host Grada Casey. During the half-hour show the host explored the diversity in cooking, the origin and the meaning behind food and family traditions during the holiday season.

***Spirit of Holiday Traditions**, hosted for the second year by Caroline Moore, explored a medley of holiday stories and local traditions from around Central Tennessee. Moore cooked with a Mennonite family from Muddy Pond; visited historic White Plains, a historic home in Algood decorated for Victorian and Pioneer Christmas; and she explored Christmas traditions with the actors, singers and others at the Cumberland County Playhouse.

***Wish You Were Here, Season One**, is a show aimed at both visitors and locals, featuring the 14 counties of Tennessee's Upper Cumberland. A number of partners are involved with the program, including the Upper Cumberland Development District and the Upper Cumberland Tourism Association. The show explores places, events, activities, and adventures, divided into a number of short, often lighthearted and informative segments hosted by an on-the-spot correspondent.

5. Local Business Programming and Engagement

WCTE PBS recognizes the need to feature local business and industry to be supportive of economic development within our region. The following series and outreach opportunities strengthen those partnerships and regional growth.

***WCTE's Great TV Virtual Auction** is a station fundraiser in its 39th year, which also showcases more than 300 businesses throughout the 12-day virtual event and five-night live broadcast.

***It's Your Business with Michael Aikens**, produced by WCTE PBS in partnership with the Tennessee Tech Center for Rural Innovation with funding provided by the Rural Reimagined Grand Challenge, supported in part by the state of Tennessee and the Economic Development Administration University Challenge. Michael Aikens, Director of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Tennessee Tech, visited with regional business leaders and entrepreneurs to hear their stories and to discuss resources and strategies.

***INTERACT** is a public affairs show produced to spark civil discourse and relevant discussion of current affairs and the issues important to Central Tennesseans. Each episode provided panelists and the host, Michelle Price, a wide variety of experience and knowledge showcased in open and honest discussions. The show attempted to provide viewers with new insights that encouraged ongoing conversations among themselves and around their communities.

6. Collaborative Initiatives with all Tennessee PBS stations

WCTE PBS continues to collaborate with the other five PBS stations in the state of Tennessee through the use of the Iris fiber system. This connection has been used to broadcast statewide the Smithville Fiddlers Jamboree, various TTU Live Basketball coverage, the Governor's State of the State, Live Legislative Coverage and Tennessee Capital Report.

***The Tennessee Channel** collectively airs on Saturdays and Sundays and continues to grow in popularity with WCTE PBS shows like Wish You Were Here, Where Stories Live and shows of interest to all Tennesseans, produced locally by Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Memphis and Martin PBS stations.

***Live Legislative Coverage of the Tennessee Senate and House** is a service and a wonderful opportunity to inform our citizens.

***Live statewide Coverage of Governor Bill Lee's State of the State Address.**

7. Local Programming currently in distribution nationally

It's hard to believe that a station as rural and as small as WCTE (only 17 full-time employees) could produce relevant, quality programming that gets distributed to a national audience. Much of this is possible through a collaboration with independent producers.

***51st Anniversary Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree** was a one-hour edited show that premiered nationally with 194 airings on 82 channels in 44 markets in a total of 18 states.

***Cavern's Sessions**, formerly Bluegrass Underground, is a music series that features performances by well-established musicians and emerging artists as they performed at The Caverns in Pelham, TN.

***Ray Stevens Cabaray**, presented by WCTE PBS, is a music-based series from songwriter and artist Ray Stevens, and features a variety of multi-talented guests and personalities in a half hour show based in Nashville.

***Discover the Upper Cumberland** began airing nationally on the Create Channel in 2022. This series from WCTE's archives explores the unique, culturally rich region of Tennessee and was funded by the USDA.

8. Collaborative Partnerships & Events

WCTE's Great TV Auction, May 31 - June 12, 2022 - Since 2020 the Great TV Auction has been operating under a hybrid model by doing an online auction with a live broadcast component. The live broadcast was held June 8 – 12, 2022. The GTVA has been one of WCTE's most successful fundraisers. The Great TV Auction involves many community sponsors, partners, donors, and volunteers. WCTE PBS grossed \$60,500 in revenue from this event.

Day of Giving, August 21, 2021 - WCTE PBS's Day of Giving celebrated the day WCTE PBS went on the air 43 years ago. The all-day broadcast campaign with virtual and digital components reached a record high this year grossing \$45,880. The money raised on this one day goes to support the Education Endowment fund that was established in 2018 during WCTE's 40th Anniversary.

Blues and Brews Craft Beer Festival, October 15, 2022 - In 2014, WCTE PBS premiered an outdoor craft beer festival and live blues music in a local park as a fundraiser for the PBS station. The popular event featured over 100 craft beers from local breweries and home brewers along with blues music and more. The event hosted more than 400 ticket holders and has become one of our fastest growing fundraisers to-date. With an ever changing format the event continues to be a fan favorite and is featured in a number of state and local publications as "The Event" to be at in the fall. The event raised over \$21,000 dollars in 2022, which is down from its peak in 2019, but trends show that the event should make a comeback as more people are attending in-person events.

Haunted Half Marathon, October 15, 2022 - After a virtual race in 2020, WCTE PBS offered both in-person and a virtual options for this year's race participants. The WCTE PBS early morning race, held the third weekend in October, welcomes costume-wearing runners to run 13.1 miles in support of public television. WCTE PBS raised \$26,479 from race registrations and sponsorships.

Third Annual Film Festival, August, 2022 - WCTE PBS welcomed seven independent films and filmmakers to the stage in late August. The event hosted more than 60 participants and partnered with RiverRun International Film Festival. Featured at the film festival was an encore of a film shown earlier that year at the RiverRun International Film Festival. WCTE PBS received a grant from the First Horizon Foundation and partnered with the local performing arts center for showing the films

The At-Home Learning initiative entered its third year with the collaboration between WCTE PBS and other Tennessee PBS stations, along with the Tennessee Department of Education (TN DOE). The objective was to continue offering in-classroom instruction to students in Tennessee, particularly in remote areas facing limited learning and accessibility.

The education team at WCTE PBS worked diligently to provide supplementary resources for a daily two-hour PBS education programming block, aimed at assisting parents and teachers in reinforcing grades K-3 students learning.



In addition to the over-the-air broadcast, PBS Learning Media resources, and curriculum related to over-the-air programming, the education team also made available additional educational content through the At-Home Learning and Connection Zone pages.

This year marked the continuation of a datacasting pilot for the state of Tennessee, led by WCTE PBS. Our efforts included:

- hosted a webinar attended by over 30 districts.
- hosted datacasting demonstrations at the State Capitol.
- presented at the Tennessee Educational Technology Association (TETA) conference.

Through the first part of this fiscal year, WCTE created content relevant to our community and our region with an emphasis on the PBS Ready to Learn initiative, as well as PBS Learning Media.

WCTE provided two educational channels for viewers: WCTE Main HD and 24/7 PBS Kids. We also provided channels with content aimed at lifelong learning with WCTE World and WCTE Create.

Upper Cumberland Public Safety

Commitment to Safety

WCTE's relationship with the Upper Cumberland's public safety community has always been strong. It continues to grow as the station continues to find new ways to work with law enforcement personnel, firefighters, first responders and others to ensure the Upper Cumberland is a safe place to live and work.

Partnerships

Many of the station's partnerships are based on shared infrastructure. WCTE's broadcast tower property, for instance, is also home to a second tower, owned by WCTE but primarily operated by Putnam County Emergency Services for antennas from various public safety agencies. Power for the site is hardened by WCTE's backup generator, and WCTE's fiber connection can and has been used to back up the county's microwave internet. The county has also included the cost of servicing and maintaining WCTE's main generator in the county's budget. The county also handles road and grounds maintenance at the entire transmitter site.

Putnam County provides WCTE with space inside its Emergency Services headquarters for a small television studio that allows remote broadcast from that facility. In the aftermath of an F4 tornado that occurred on March 3, 2020, the city and county mayors, along with various other public safety and emergency management personnel, were able to reach viewers with special live emergency messaging within an hour or two of the devastating touch down. In 2021, the studio was expanded to provide more room for cameras and lights, to provide viewers with a more professional-looking and trustworthy presentation in times of crisis. In 2022, Putnam County paid for an encoder/decoder pair that gives the studio a 24/7 link to WCTE's Master Control

The use of SpectraRep datacasting, a service that allows public safety agencies across the region to use a portion of WCTE's broadcast bandwidth to reach responders in remote locations with video, audio or data transmissions, installed in 2020, has not been adopted as eagerly as anticipated by local public safety agencies. Invisible to TV viewers, agencies with the dashboard software and an internet connection can send encrypted information, such as helicopter video, school blueprints, maps and messaging to any place within WCTE's mostly rural coverage area.

Planning for the Future of Broadcast Television

In June of 2022, work was completed to satisfy the FCC Construction Permit for a new television station in Algood. That station, W35DZ, channel 35, will provide WCTE the ticket to broadcast in ATSC 3.0, or NextGen TV, the new over-the-air broadcast standard. Working alongside the new station's owner, Public Media Venture Group, WCTE hopes to be able to light up an ATSC 3.0 signal in 2023 or 2024. The low-power transmitter is located inside WCTE's transmitter building, with a temporary antenna up 100 feet on WCTE's tower, and it is currently broadcasting a duplicate of WCTE's main channel.

Without this partnership with PMVG and W35DZ, it's unlikely that WCTE would have been able to add NextGen TV for many more years. To keep from losing viewers, stations must continue to broadcast in ATSC 1.0 while making the change, and, as the only broadcast television station within a 75-mile radius, there was no way for WCTE to do that. This partnership will allow WCTE to begin serving viewers who purchase NextGen TV sets while continuing to serve those who choose not to upgrade for a while.

Broadening the Ready to Learn Initiative

WCTE PBS was awarded funding as part of a new state initiative called Empower Upper Cumberland. The new three-year initiative, led by the Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency (UCHRA), is tasked with serving the most vulnerable populations of the 14-county Upper Cumberland region with a core objective of lifting 1,600 children and their families out of generational poverty by 2025.

Throughout the three-year grant, WCTE PBS and Ready to Learn instructors will be working with families and their children 2-8 years of age. These families will participate in hands-on workshops which follow Ready to Learn curricula such as Molly of Denali, Ruff Ruffman, Cat in the Hat, and others from PBS Learning Media. These workshops are designed to support early learning skills, and encourage connecting as a family.

