



2020 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

“Thank you for providing this invaluable service. I am proud to be an evergreen friend and look forward to many more years of trustworthy news reporting.”

-- Deaton Love

Every day, the Maine Public connects the people of Maine to each other and to the world through the open exchange of information, ideas and cultural content. As Maine’s premier, independent media resource, we create exceptional opportunities for the communities we serve to engage with critical issues, compelling stories and quality entertainment.



Maine Public has made a distinct difference in our community by focusing on issues most important to our fellow Mainers and bordering neighbors.

We are known for our consistent quality of news and public affairs, cultural and entertainment shows.

We have an open exchange with our community including through on-line services and community and virtual events.

We continue to focus our news efforts on covering more of Maine and dig deeper into issues that matter to and affect the state’s residents including extensive and thorough coverage of the influence the pandemic has had on our state.

We are the sole provider of state wide broadcast coverage in a large, rural state and now provide Maine with two separate radio format options – news/information and classical – and four free over-the-air television signals including Maine Public Television, The CREATE Channel, The World Channel and a 24/7 PBS Kids programming channel.

In 2020, Maine Public served our community on the air, on-line and much more by providing key local services specific to the challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Maine Public undertook additional services and programming to serve Maine in new capacities. Daily airings of the CDC briefings on radio, television, and online have kept Maine as informed as possible. Focused news segments, including special coverage on the Maine Calling call-in news program, have sought to fully inform and educate Maine’s citizens about the pandemic and what is taking place across Maine.

Maine Public launched The Learning Space, an educational program designed to provide Maine students in grades 3 through 5 with little or no access to online learning opportunities with educational lessons aired each weekday on Maine Public Television. The equivalent of 90 classrooms watched each episode of The Learning Space.

Maine Public created several diverse online experiences – concerts, forums, cooking challenges, museum access -- to provide Mainers remaining at home with entertainment and educational experiences that are free and easily accessible.

Serving significant audiences, the impact of Maine Public’s local services is deeply felt though out the entire state of Maine, portions of New Hampshire and Massachusetts and parts of the Canadian Maritimes.

Maine Public celebrated Maine’s bicentennial throughout 2020 with daily history factoids shared on Maine Public Radio, Maine Public Classical and online, showcased video interviews with people from across Maine sharing why they love the state, created a specially curated bicentennial community film series, held special bicentennial-focused episodes of Maine Calling, and created an online resource for people to explore everything that was taking place across Maine during the year-long celebration.

Our local communities and arts organizations turn to MAINE PUBLIC for a wide range of support including raising awareness of their events and initiatives on all Maine Public’s platforms.

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Maine Public – What we value

MAINE PUBLIC is here to inform, inspire and delight our community.

Civic Engagement – We view our responsibility to promote awareness and participation in the democratic processes supremely important. We actively seek to make workings of government and the public conversation as accessible as possible by posting timely news and information on air and on our website and covering election coverage and developments in Augusta and Washington fully. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Maine Public has dedicated its services to keep our citizenry fully informed at all times.

Creativity – We recognize the critical role that creativity plays in our organization’s life, as well as the broader world. We support and nurture the kind of risk-taking and innovation that are hallmarks of a creative environment and supports arts organizations across the state.

Ethical Standards – We maintain an unwavering commitment to fairness, transparency, tolerance, diversity, and accountability in everything we do.

Life-Long Learning – We believe in the power of knowledge to transform lives and promote greater understanding. We endeavor to maximize the opportunities available to the public to participate in a culture of learning throughout their lives.

Public Service – We take our role as stewards of the public trust very seriously. We strive to build value in the communities we serve through initiatives and programming that have the public interest at heart and by engaging our listeners and viewers in. Our efforts – providing daily CDC briefings, for example – speaks to the role we play relative to public service in our state.

A snapshot of a few of our initiatives—

News and Public Affairs:

At MAINE PUBLIC we feel that a well informed citizenry makes for a strong state.

Maine Calling. Maine Public’s daily news call-in show, Maine Calling, introduces and discusses important, relevant and interesting events and issues five times a week and gives voice to the people of Maine and beyond through phone calls and social media dialogue. Maine Calling has dedicated multiple shows this year to COVID-19 pandemic coverage and topics.

Special Coverage and Breaking News. Maine Public Radio and Maine Public Television frequently carry special event coverage from NPR and PBS to satisfy the needs and desires of our listeners. Our daily CDC briefings coverage has been ever-present throughout the Covid-19 pandemic crisis.

Special Series. Our news team has launched a series of long-form journalistic reports to really dive deep into issues facing the state. Our most recent Deep Dive project centered around the pandemic and the state’s response to it. Past Deep Dives have examined issues around poverty in Maine and the challenges of daycare for families.

THIS DAY IN MAINE podcast is designed to provide Mainers with a summary of all the day’s news each weekday evening when and where they want to hear it.

Weekend Edition Maine Public continues to build its weekend news presence on Maine Public Radio. Important news stories are featured as well as lighter topics appropriate for weekend listening.

The Maine Public News Updates daily email and THE TEN Newsletter are two new ways that we are connecting with our audiences and providing access to high-level reporting and stories.

Insights from the State House. Maine Public’s State House coverage includes reporting excellence from journalists Mal Leary and Steve Mistler. They, and other news staff, cover and report on news and information critical to Maine coming out of Augusta.

mainepublic.org. Maine Public continues to build a robust online presence, providing local, national, and international news.

Geographic Commitment. Maine Public news has news centers in Portland, Lewiston, Bangor, and Augusta providing Maine Public swift access to key areas of the state with seasoned coverage.

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The Voice of our Community--

At MAINE PUBLIC we feel it's important to ensure that there are multiple avenues for citizens across Maine to participate and engage with MAINE PUBLIC and our content offerings.

Statewide Emergency Alerts. MAINE PUBLIC makes its statewide system available to federal and state authorities in the event of an emergency that requires rapid notification of the state's population.

DAILY CDC BRIEFINGS. Maine Public has carried extensive coverage of all COVID-19 developments, including providing daily coverage of CDC briefings on television, radio, online, and over social media.

MAINE PUBLIC Community Films. Every week, this series presents a diverse offering of independently produced films that showcase stories and information that showcase regional people, places and topics. By embracing the local independent film community MAINE PUBLIC is able to offer much more to our audiences by providing other voices and coverage of important topics that may never have been seen otherwise by our audience.

Community Calendar. Is a statewide on-line service that allows organizations of all sizes and areas to list their public events – from lectures to workshops to concerts to classes. There are hundreds of listings consistently on this site and promoted extensively, helping to ensure its success in connecting those who are searching for community events and with those offering them. This year we pivoted to sharing more virtual events, recognizing the need for organizations to be able to be successful with their events, albeit remotely.

Arts Community Support. MAINE PUBLIC partners with arts organizations across the state to draw attention to their performances and to engage MAINE PUBLIC's listeners and viewers through calendar postings, social media posts, and additionally on MAINE PUBLIC Radio, MAINE PUBLIC Classical, MAINE PUBLIC Television, The Create Channel, and in print.

High School Basketball Tournament. Live coverage of the Girls and Boys High School Basketball Tournament – when held – is a cornerstone of our community involvement and celebration of youth in our state.

High School Quiz Show Maine. Maine Public delivers to the state High School Quiz Show Maine, a contest highlighting the importance of academia across Maine as schools compete in a state-wide "brain game." This was put on hold for 2021, but we anticipate it to return in 2022.

The Reach of New Media. MAINE PUBLIC embraces the power of the digital age and enjoys the engagement of our audience with our web-based platforms. From social networking through platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter to streaming live audio and video of cultural programming from our radio studio, we create a two-way exchange with our audience.

Our This Day in Maine podcast and our two newsletters – **The daily and The Ten** – are additional ways we can reach our audience and they can stay informed through MAINE PUBLIC.

Maine Calling. MAINE PUBLIC's noon call-in show covers a wide range of topics about and affecting Maine and receives significant participation each show from callers across Maine. It's focus since March of 2020 has been on the pandemic and providing valuable information for our listeners.

Local Programming. In addition to our news programming, MAINE PUBLIC also produces other original programming, including its own regular classical and jazz music programs and programming like Speaking in Maine that broadcasts talks by thought-leaders from Maine and around the world.

The Learning Space. Maine Public launched The Learning Space, an educational program designed to provide Maine students in grades 3 through 5 with little or no access to online learning opportunities with educational lessons aired each weekday on Maine Public Television and available for online access.

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Community Engagement

MAINE PUBLIC is committed being a valued presence in our community.

Overall Commitment. MAINE PUBLIC recognizes the need to engage the Maine community in both our content and mission and to ensure that we are meeting the needs and preferences of all Mainers. MAINE PUBLIC connects with our viewers and listeners through a variety of mechanisms including Community Advisory Board (CAB) meetings that are open to the public, Board of Trustees meetings that include opportunities for public comment, community events that include state-wide free public screenings of MAINE PUBLIC programs, a presence at fairs and festivals (actual and virtual), and access to MAINE PUBLIC-produced events including debates and cultural performances, and an active social media presence with a continuously updated website (mainepublic.org) and a primary active Facebook property that includes over 54,000 members. MAINE PUBLIC partners with non-profits across the state to help promote their initiatives and events (actual and virtual) and help drive the success of their efforts.

Community Events. MAINE PUBLIC is out in the community -- when possible -- with screenings, forums and debates, a presence at fairs and festivals, and the like that are all free and open to the public.

MAINE PUBLIC's Board of Trustees. MAINE PUBLIC is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees which include the President of MAINE PUBLIC, a gubernatorial appointee, a University System appointee and up to 24 Community Members from across the State. The Board meets a minimum of four times a year and all meetings are open to the public.

The Community Advisory Board. MAINE PUBLIC has a Community Advisory Board which advises MAINE PUBLIC with respect to whether the programming and public service aspects of MAINE PUBLIC are meeting the specialized educational and cultural needs of the communities served.

Audience Services. Through phone calls and emails, MAINE PUBLIC places great importance in having our audiences be able to communicate with a real person and receive a quick and individualized reply to any question about programming, our on-line efforts or technical needs. It also assists MAINE PUBLIC in better understanding how to better serve our audiences.

Experience Magazine. MAINE PUBLIC's monthly magazine keeps our audience informed of program schedules, background information, initiatives in the community and MAINE PUBLIC events and personalities with a circulation exceeding 20,000 readers.

Virtual Events. MAINE PUBLIC created special experiences that our audience could attend/experience/participate virtually: music concerts, cooking challenges, lectures, and museum tours, among other experiences.

Communicating Free Access to Maine Public Television. We discovered that many Mainers are moving away from engaging cable services for their television viewing and created an online resource for Maine Public's television viewers to navigate how to access Maine Public Television over the air for free using an HDTV antenna. We also communicate how to access Maine Public Television for free via streaming from our website.

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STORIES OF IMPACT

Maine Public's This IS My Maine Series.

2020 was the year of the state of Maine's bicentennial and it was a year exposing great divisions across the country and here in Maine. What better way to celebrate Maine and the diversity of what Maine is today than to hear from its own citizens? This was the thinking behind our This is My Maine Series. We travelled across our state and asked people to share what makes Maine so special. We fielded some very personal responses and shared dozens of videos over our television signals, over social media, and online and the resulting audio over our two radio services.

What came shining through was an overall appreciation for Maine's beauty, the character of the people who live here, and an indomitable spirit of friendship and community no matter one's race, color, or creed. The response to our This Is My Maine Series has been significant and has, in some small way, reminded all Mainers of our commonalities, as opposed to our differences.

The entire series can be viewed here:

<https://www.bicentennial.mainepublic.org/this-is-my-maine>



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STORIES OF IMPACT

Maine Public's The Learning Space Project

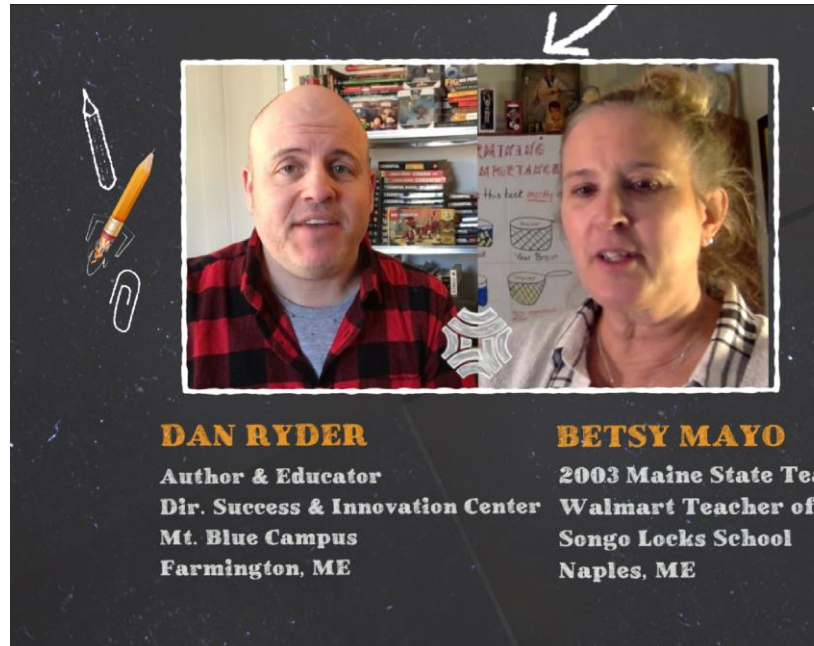
In March of 2020, it was clear that Maine students faced significant challenges relative to the necessary move to remote learning. With low broadband penetration, thousands of students did not have access to online learning materials. What most homes in Maine did have, however, was a television.

Cue the launch of The Learning Space. Maine Public, in partnership with the Maine Department of Education and Educate Maine, produced from concept to broadcast an entire educational series in a little over three weeks. Partnering with state educators, Maine Public helped create a curriculum and guided teachers through developing valuable content for students. Thirty-seven lessons were created and aired on Maine Public's primary television channel each weekday for two months and shared online on Maine Public's website.

On average, 1,800 individual viewers from 1,200 Maine households tuned in to each episode of The Learning Space on Maine Public Television. The equivalent of 90 full classrooms watched each episode. The online impact (an unintended bonus based on the television-focus of the project) continues with over 6,000 The Learning Space episodes having been viewed to date.

The Maine Department of Education has credited Maine Public with providing an invaluable service at a time of exceptional need for our communities across the state.

A summary of the entire project can be viewed here:
<https://vimeo.com/user12804004/review/483654514/a87ce8706>



Evaluating Outcomes, Measuring Impact

Maine Public has a significant reach across Maine over the air and online. 2020 witnessed Maine Public's audience grow in every category as we offered more services and channels and developed new ways to access our content. Maine Public has the support of over 54,000 households and that number is growing.

Maine Public Television and our ancillary channels reached an average of 410,000 viewers each week in over 150,000 households. The Maine Public Television Bangor Market ratings show that our service is often rated in the top 10 nationally among public television stations in terms of community usage.

Maine Public Radio reaches an average of 225,000 listeners each week and is frequently the most listened to station among many demographics in our major market Portland. In fact, our signal is the top listened to station in all of Southern Maine. In addition, Maine Public Radio ranks in the top ten nationally among public radio stations in terms of percentage of a community that tunes in each week. Our **Maine Public Classical Channel** attracts over 30,000 listeners each week.

In 2020, the number of consumers who visited our **consolidated website and accessed our digital offerings** far exceeded previous years indicating to us that we are providing the state with resources and content in the right way. Data in 2020 includes:

mainepublic.org

2020 on-line data shows Maine Public's website reached over 3.4 million unique visitors – an increase of 118% over 2019, with over 12 million unique page views – an increase of 115% over 2019.

Social Media

Maine Public's social media presence grew to over 54,000 followers on Maine Public's primary Facebook page. Other show-specific Facebook pages have also shown a solid growth in followers/numbers. We are also actively engaging Mainers each week over Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Twitter.

Live Streams

Maine Public's live stream audience continued to grow in 2020, with over 7 million Stream Starts (up from 6 million in 2019) and over 6.4 million total listening hours (TLH – up from 5 million in 2019).