

## **Morehead State Public Radio**

### **2020 CPB Station Activities Report**

Morehead State Public Radio (MSPR) is governed by the Board of Regents at Morehead State University (MSU) in Morehead, Kentucky. MSPR is operated at 50,000 watts (50,000 kW) by its flagship station, WMKY at 90.3FM. WMKY can also operate for unlimited operation at 5,000 watts (5kW) using an auxiliary transmitter and non-directional antenna. Since 1965, WMKY has served the communities in more than twenty counties throughout eastern Kentucky, southern Ohio and western West Virginia. MSPR also broadcasts live online through WMKY's website ([www.wmky.org](http://www.wmky.org)).

MSPR's mission is to provide regional programming that is educational, informative and entertaining. Through the work provided by a staff consisting of three full-time directors, several part-time personnel, Morehead State University student work-studies and community volunteers, MSPR offers regional news, public affairs and documentary programming, as well as a variety of music programs consisting of classical, jazz and Americana (bluegrass, blues, country, folk and old-time/traditional).

#### **News and Information Programming (locally-produced)**

1. "Open Mic" is a weekly public affairs program focusing on community issues, people and events important to the listeners in the MSPR region. The program explores current event topics including arts and culture, education, employment, environment, government, health and wellness, and tourism
2. "Midday News" is a weekday, half-hour news program on current news, issues and events from the MSPR region. This program also offers extended news, arts and culture features
3. "Mountain Edition" is a weekday, half-hour news program on current news, issues and events from the MSPR region. The program also offers sports, weather, commentaries and stock reports
4. "Health Matters" is a weekly public affairs program addressing medical topics and health education issues. The program is a co-production between MSPR and the Northeast Kentucky Area Health Education Center, an outreach service of St. Claire HealthCare in Morehead
5. Local newscasts are provided weekday mornings during National Public Radio's (NPR) "Morning Edition" and weekday afternoons during NPR's "All Things Considered"
6. Partnered with the University of Kentucky's Markey Cancer Center to broadcast "Cancer Crisis in Appalachia," a series of interviews and stories of cancer patients and survivors
7. Partnered with WUKY (Lexington) to broadcast the 2020 Kentucky Women Writers Conference Special
8. Partnered with WIVY/WKCA (Morehead) and Downtown Morehead Incorporated to broadcast the 2020 Morehead-Rowan County Candidate Forum
9. Partnered with Rowan County Middle and High School Leadership students to record and broadcast a series of tributes for Veteran's Day

MSPR regularly covers a variety of issues including economy, education, environment, government and politics, health and welfare, transportation, tourism and other issues important to the region. In 2020, MSPR provided more than 2,000 regional stories (scripts and audio) and more than 60 extended news features.

MSPR also provides election coverage from multiple surrounding counties in the broadcast region with live reports, interviews and election results during the primary, general and special elections. MSPR regularly invites regional newsmakers to discuss current events and issues.

Community event announcements are read live throughout the broadcast day by studio announcers and program hosts. A list of community events are also made available on MSPR's website. In 2020, more than 600 community announcements were provided as MSPR's public service to the region.

MSPR provided numerous pre-recorded public service announcements (English and Spanish) for Census 2020, COVID-19 (health, safety, and vaccinations), Feeding Kentucky, Kentucky Telehealth, Kentucky Youth Challenge, Morehead Railroad and History Museum, Morehead-Rowan County Chamber of Commerce, Morehead Theatre Guild, and Story Corps.

### **Music Programming (locally-produced)**

1. Classical music is presented Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Feature segments during the weekday program include Pulse of the Planet, 90 Second Naturalist, and The Reader's Notebook
2. MSPR offers weekly jazz and blues music programs including "Big Band Boulevard," "Live From The Jazz Lounge," "Sunday Night Jazz Showcase," "Nothin' But The Blues," and "Muddy Bottom Blues"
3. Americana and other music programs include "Bluegrass Railroad" and "Bluegrass Sunday" (bluegrass), "Grant Alden's Field Notes" (Americana) and "Odd Numbers" (variety)
4. Partnered with WUKY to broadcast a series of five concerts featuring the Lexington Chamber Orchestra

During MSPR's locally-hosted music programs, regional events are promoted. Musicians and songwriters are often invited to the studios to perform and discuss their music.

### **Additional Programming and Services (locally-produced)**

1. "A Time for Tales" is as a weekly hour of storytelling through words and music, featuring regional and national storytellers
2. "The Golden Age of Radio" is a weekly hour of classic, old-time radio programs from the 1930's through the 1950's including westerns, comedy, adventure and suspense
3. "That Was Radio" is presented quarterly as an overview of radio programs of the 1930's through the 1950's, exploring the personalities and events that inspired those programs, as well as their importance and impact on culture and society

4. “The Reader’s Notebook” is a weekday, four minute feature offering literary or historical detail on a particular subject including science, technology, philosophy, history, and the arts
5. MSPR offers additional services on the station’s website including live web-streaming, news features and stories, programming and station information. Archived audio files and podcasts of locally-produced regional programs are also available on MSPR’s website including “Open Mic,” “Mountain Edition,” “That Was Radio,” and “The Golden Age of Radio”
6. Partnered with the Rowan County Senior High School Thespians to broadcast a radio play production of “It’s A Wonderful Life”
7. “Friends & Folk: A Retrospective” program featured highlights of this WMKY production (1991-1998)
8. “A Time For Tales” featured African-American storytellers during Labor Day weekend
9. “Golden Age of Radio” featured the original “War of the Worlds” radio program for Halloween

The support from listener contributions, local underwriting and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) enables MSPR to purchase programming from National Public Radio (NPR) such as “All Things Considered,” “Best of Car Talk,” “Latino USA,” “Morning Edition” and “Mountain Stage.” Programs acquired from Public Radio International (PRI) and Public Radio Exchange (PRX) include “Classical 24,” “Jazz Happening Now” and “The World.” Programs purchased from the African-American Public Radio Consortium include “Café Jazz” and “Return to The Source.”

MSPR also broadcasts public affairs programs produced by Kentucky Educational Television (KET) including “Comment on Kentucky,” “Connections with Renee Shaw” and “Kentucky Tonight.”

MSPR often presents special programming throughout the year to celebrate holidays or cultural events such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Black History Month, Women’s History Month, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Hispanic Heritage Month, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and others.

MSPR partners with the Associated Press, Kentucky News Network and Public News Service for use of their print and audio services. A partnership with the Ledger Independent newspaper (Maysville) and The Trail Blazer (Morehead State University) provides web-based news stories for MSPR’s website.

MSPR also provides web-based news stories and press releases on the station’s website from Morehead State University, West Virginia Public Broadcasting, WUKY and various Kentucky governmental state agencies involving stories relating to arts and culture, education, health and wellness, legislation, public affairs and transportation.

Providing support for MSPR’s programming and community service to the region are several volunteers, part-time employees and student work-studies. They provide vital operational support to MSPR’s full-time staff in various roles including news reporters, program hosts, production assistants and more.

In 2020, there were more than 30 part-time employees, student work-studies and volunteers involved at MSPR. The student work-study program is an important aspect of MSPR’s mission, providing many educational opportunities in a structured, supported and professional environment.

MSPR's Spring Fundraiser and Membership Drive (on-air) was conducted from February 28 – March 6. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fall Fundraiser and Membership Drive was cancelled, in part, to the economic hardship in the region. Instead, MSPR staff members encouraged listeners to support regional non-profit organizations such as clothing and food banks, homeless shelters and other community support groups.

### **Awards/Professional Development/Recognitions**

1. MSPR staff won 15 awards from the 2020 Kentucky Associated Press Awards (six first place, three second place and six third place)
2. Charles Jenkins named the recipient of MSPR's Outstanding Student Award and the MSPR Community Advisory Board Student Achievement Award
3. MSPR received a Certificate of Recognition from D&S Community Services (Morehead) for "embracing inclusion and creating an environment which allows growth and success"
4. WMKY employees completed Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) Workplace Harassment Training (required)
5. MSPR staff completed MSU's Diversity Training (required)
6. MSPR full-time staff participated in various webinars hosted by Commonwealth Council on Development Disabilities, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, National Public Radio and Public Radio Satellite Service
7. "A Time For Tales" aired episode #400
8. "Health Matters" aired episode #900
9. "The Reader's Notebook" aired episode #1200
10. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) renewed WMKY's broadcast license through August 1, 2028

### **Community Service**

Operating as the flagship station for Morehead State Public Radio (MSPR), WMKY at 90.3FM offers hands-on training for Morehead State University students interested in convergent media careers. The support MSPR receives from listeners, local underwriting, Morehead State University (MSU) and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) enables MSPR to train students for careers in convergent media, purchase new equipment and develop local programs of educational, informational and entertaining significance.

Important to serving the communities in the Appalachian region is involving MSPR's Community Advisory Board (CAB) in programming, operations, engagement and outreach. The CAB consists of nine individuals representing MSPR's twenty county service region. The CAB reviews MSPR's mission, goals and programming, assists in developing and building the listening audience and expanding the operational base of

support. CAB members serve a three year term and meet with MSPR staff on a quarterly basis. CAB meetings are publicized in advance through on-air and social media, including the station's website. CAB meetings are held quarterly, open to the public and guests are welcome to attend. CAB meeting minutes are posted on MSPR's website.

MSPR is regularly involved in the community by sponsoring local and regional events and festivals. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, events were significantly decreased in 2020. Some of the events and organizations promoted by MSPR during 2020 were the Gateway Regional Arts Center, Morehead Railroad and History Museum, Morehead-Rowan County Chamber of Commerce, Morehead Theatre Guild, Morehead Writing Project, Rowan County Arts Center, Rowan County Christmas, Rowan County Public Library, Rowan County Senior High School Thespians, Sawstone Brewing Company (Brews & News), Storybook Christmas and Writer's Day Out.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, events on the campus of Morehead State University during 2020 were limited. Some of the events supported and promoted by MSPR included music, theatre and dance productions, music clinics, lectures, art exhibitions, writing workshops, book readings and film screenings. MSPR also spotlighted more than twenty MSU faculty, staff and programs through the "Points of Pride" recognition messages and news features. "Eagle" promos spotlighted MSU student-athletes, coaches, school programs and alumni.

Providing news, information and education to the community is an important part of MSPR's goals and mission. In addition to daily newscasts and special programs throughout the year, MSPR also provided Kentucky Educational Television's (KET) live coverage of Kentucky's State of the Commonwealth Address; NPR's live coverage of the State of the Union Address, Senate Impeachment Hearings, Vice-Presidential and Presidential Debates, Election night, Gospel Roots of Rock and Soul, and Summer of Racial Reckoning series; Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear's weekday briefings on COVID-19; as well as coverage of regional primary, special and general elections.

MSPR participated in career fairs, workshops and open houses at MSU and throughout the region. Limited by the COVID-19 pandemic, MSPR staff members were featured speakers at public events and MSU classrooms. MSPR also welcomed new MSU students by participating in MSU's Open Houses and Student Orientation, Advising and Registration (SOAR) sessions. Also limited to the COVID-19 pandemic, tours of MSPR's studios were provided to classroom students, community youth and other organizations.

The involvement of MSPR in community and regional activities helps to increase the awareness, learning and understanding of social, cultural and diversity issues. As MSPR's ongoing outreach and engagement efforts continue, MSPR's participation will enhance the facilitation of connecting people to needed resources and strengthening partnerships between organizations in the region.

Another important role in MSPR's operations is serving as a flagship station in the Emergency Alert System (EAS). MSPR's continued efforts to best serve listeners, especially the rural communities of MSPR's broadcast region, is to be proactive in regularly providing public safety information regarding emergencies and natural disasters. Weekly EAS tests are administered by WMKY and the station participates in monthly Kentucky statewide tests. An off-site back-up auxiliary transmitter is available during equipment and technical adjustments at the main transmitter, tower inspections, power failures or severe weather.

MSPR also continued a partnership with Radio Eye, Inc. to provide a radio reading service to the blind, visually challenged and impaired. MSPR provided use of WMKY's sub-carrier to provide regional radio programming including the reading of newspapers, magazines, community events, obituaries and more. As an ongoing

project, specially-designed radios are distributed free-of-charge to qualified applicants in the region.

WMKY received a relief grant in the amount of \$112,136.00 from CPB through the 2020 CARES (Coronavirus Relief and Economic Security) Act. A portion of these funds were used to purchase and install a new, 5,000 watt auxiliary transmitter. An upgrade in power and technology, the new auxiliary transmitter will help ensure the uninterrupted transmission of WMKY in the region.

### **Future Projects**

MSPR will provide high-quality news, information and entertainment programming which best serves the region. In-depth feature and investigative reporting will focus on local, regional and state issues.

As the COVID-19 pandemic subsides and the community begins to open-up for public events, MSPR will support regional community events such as concerts, festivals, workshops, book readings, exhibits and lectures. These outreach activities will enable MSPR to foster and enhance partnerships with regional organizations and the communities they serve. Connecting with these communities is a vital part of MSPR's mission to provide programming which is educational, informative and entertaining.

MSPR will collaborate with Radio Eye to offer a radio reading service to the blind, visually challenged and impaired. MSPR will also promote the reading service and distribution of radios to qualified applicants through on-air broadcast announcements and placement on the station's website.

MSPR will work with community partners to provide employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to promote independence, personal growth and empowerment.

MSPR will partner with local, state and regional news agencies such as the Associated Press, Kentucky News Network and Public News Service for use of their print and audio services.

MSPR will partner with the Carter County News (Grayson), Ledger Independent (Maysville), Morehead State University, Trail Blazer (MSU), West Virginia Public Broadcasting, WUKY (Lexington) and various agencies of local, regional and Kentucky state government to provide on-air (90.3FM) and web-based news stories on MSPR's website ([www.wmky.org](http://www.wmky.org)).

MSPR will improve its website by providing an interactive outlet for listeners through podcasting, web-streaming and audio downloads, as well as other interactive media including smart speakers and connected car audio.

Improvements to WMKY's studios will continue to be enhanced through equipment upgrades and utilization of new technology. The purchase and installation of a new audio board for WMKY's master control and production rooms, computers for newsroom editing stations, and other technological and equipment enhancements are examples of several improvements planned as funding is available. MSPR will utilize available CARES Act and COVID-19 relief funds to purchase new equipment and updated technology to improve WMKY's broadcast service to the region.

MSPR will provide an educational and supportive workplace for student work-studies as audio engineers, news reporters and production assistants. The student work-study program is an important aspect of MSPR's mission, providing educational opportunities in a structured, supported and professional environment.

Also important to MSPR's success in programming and outreach activities, is developing a knowledgeable and trained professional staff. Opportunities for MSPR's staff to attend workshops, seminars and conferences will be available to enhance professional training, career education and peer-networking opportunities. As a result, MSPR's staff can be better informed and skilled to share their knowledge with other staff members.

The funds we receive from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting are vital for WMKY to provide unmatched regional news coverage, informational public affairs and cultural, music and entertainment programming. CPB funding covers the majority of WMKY's operational expenses, part-time salaries, purchase of national programming and network memberships, transmitter (main and auxiliary) electrical and tower rental fees.

WMKY's Community Service Grant accounts for approximately one-half of WMKY's total operational budget. CPB funding is extremely critical to WMKY's existence, serving as an important supplement to locally-generated revenue through fundraising and underwriting. WMKY could not operate at its current level without the support of the CPB.

CPB funding makes it possible for MSPR to focus our energy on addressing our goals and mission, serving our community, informing our listeners and creating programming that reflects the community's diversity on multiple levels, including (but not limited to) age, culture, economics, education and ethnicity.

MSPR's goals and mission depend on CPB grants to develop diverse and independent voices in promoting civic and cultural participation in the community. Without CPB funding, MSPR would not be able to achieve our mission and goals and likewise, MSPR's non-profit partners would be left without a media voice. Ultimately, their missions and goals would also be significantly and negatively affected if CPB funding were to be cut or eliminated completely.

MSPR views collaboration as a key element in significantly increasing our impact in the region, despite limited resources. CPB's support keeps us focused on our mission, our goals, our audience and our community. Without the support of the CPB, the diversity of programming, community engagement and outreach would be in jeopardy.

Morehead State Public Radio (WMKY) greatly appreciates the generous support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. MSPR understands this is an equal partnership and is dedicated to serving the listeners in eastern Kentucky by offering educational, informational and entertainment programming as a valuable resource to the communities served by MSPR in sustaining a unique sense of community, heritage and culture.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul W. Hitchcock, General Manager  
Morehead State Public Radio (WMKY)

February 10, 2021