



2021 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



“Without WQLN working with the Erie County Health Department, people wouldn’t get a full picture of the pandemic’s impact.”

- Kathy Fatica, Erie County Council

For more than 50 years, WQLN PBS NPR has been the Lake Erie Region’s passport to a wider world—a world of discovery, exploration, lifelong learning, and an ongoing respectful exchange of ideas.



WQLN PBS NPR is a valuable part of the advancement of the Lake Erie Region.

In 2021, WQLN PBS NPR provided these vital local services:

- WQLN Home Room
- Sounds Around Town
- the Erie Blues and Jazz Festival
- Broadcast of the Erie Philharmonic’s 2020/2021 season
- Candidate Forums
- Q-Kids in the Classroom,
- Spotlight on the Arts
- Speaking Grief
- American Portrait
- The Black Church
- Erie Eats,
- WQLN Writers Contest
- Sesame Street Virtual Training
- Sounder and Friends
- Create Channel
- The World Channel, and
- 24/7 Kids Channel

WQLN PBS NPR’s local services had deep impact in: Northwest Pennsylvania, Northeast Ohio, Western New York, and Southern Ontario.



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*“We need to do something for these students.
They worked too hard not to have a high
school graduation ceremony.”*

That is how we opened fiscal year 2021 by broadcasting a high school graduation ceremony for every senior in Erie, Crawford, and Warren counties. The ten-hour broadcast aired over the Fourth of July holiday weekend, and featured fifty keynote speakers, including Tom Hanks, Tom Ridge, and Judy Woodruff.

Producing a ten-hour television broadcast saluting academic achievement is the mission of Public Broadcasting in Northwest Pennsylvania. It’s also a demonstration of WQLN PBS/NPR’s spirit for community service.

In August, we aired *Erie’s Blues and Jazz Festival* on television, on radio, and online. Erie’s Blues and Jazz Festival is an annual Erie summer tradition and losing it would only add to the Lake Erie Region’s pandemic fatigue. WQLN arranged for the artists to perform on WQLN’s campus, where we broadcast their performances live. The community response was unexpected. People put radios and TVs on their porches. They took radios and laptops to city parks and common community spaces and created a virtual Erie’s Blues and Jazz Festival – which they happily shared on social media.

WQLN Education recruited 100+ teachers to appear on the half-hour television series *WQLN Homeroom*. We provided the teachers with cameras, microphones, and light kits to record their daily classes. *WQLN Homeroom* aired on TV and streamed on WQLN’s website - *Your Learning Neighborhood*.

WQLN restructured our signature education program *WQLN Families* into an entirely virtual event. Allowing us to reach more families wanting to help their children succeed in school.

WQLN recorded and broadcast every Erie Philharmonic concert during their 2020/21 season. Erie Philharmonic artistic director Daniel Meyer appeared every Friday on WQLN NPR’s *Classics with Brian Hannah* to keep the Erie Phil subscribers engaged.

To support the PBS series *The Black Church*, WQLN created a series of spots about Erie’s Black Churches. WQLN also devoted an entire week to honor the life of Erieite Harry T. Burleigh by airing informational spots on television and playing his music and music inspired by Burleigh.

We recorded personal histories from people living in the small towns of McKean, Cochran, and Meadville and produced *Our Town McKean*, *Our Town Cochran*, and *Our Town Meadville*. WQLN was an *American Portrait* station, and we recorded hundreds of people living in the Lake Erie Region defining what it means to be an American.

WQLN produced and aired a weekly COVID 19 news conference with the County Executive and the Erie County Health Department. We shared the news conference with the local news media. WQLN also produced the 16th Congressional and the 49th District Pennsylvania State Senate Candidates Forum.

For our efforts during this historic year, WQLN won Preservation Erie’s 2021 *Greater Erie Award* for our television series *Our Town*. WQLN won two gold awards from the Public Relations Society of America for *The Erie Blues and Jazz Festival* and the weekly COVID 19 news conferences. And WQLN was named *Non-Profit of the Year* by Commitment Erie.

The Erie Philharmonic's COVID Season

When the Erie Philharmonic was unable to perform live, due to the pandemic. WQLN PBS recorded and broadcast all of the Erie Phil's 2020/2021 season.

New audiences were introduced to Erie's world class Philharmonic, as were people living in distant communities.



Helping Kids to Become Better Readers

Along with our partners at Unleashed Innovations, WQLN PBS created the animated adventure series Sounder and Friends.

Sounder and Friends is unique, because it focuses on phonemic awareness, which is critical to reading development.



Erie Blues and Jazz Festival

The pandemic canceled all in person events and concerts in the summer of 2020.

Long time iconic summer concert, The Erie Jazz and Blues Festival was performed live in front of WQLN's cameras and broadcast on television, radio and online.

Viewers created mini festivals on porches, in driveways and backyards.



WQLN Homeroom

COVID-19 exposed many societal inequities in Northwest Pennsylvania. One was that not all families have high speed Internet and the technology needed for remote learning. While many students' education continued during the pandemic, other students' learning came to an abrupt halt. To bridge this gap, WQLN PBS provided a means for students to connect with their teachers and continue their education - by way of broadcast TV.

Teachers recorded lessons in their homes and WQLN aired them as part of a new television series called *WQLN Homeroom*. This permitted students without Internet equal access to grade-level lessons each weekday.

Reach in the Community:

We called *WQLN Homeroom* the community's schoolhouse. And as schoolhouses go *WQLN Homeroom* was big - as big as the WQLN broadcast area.

But was small enough to provide a one-on-one teacher to student ratio.

Partnerships:

- Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Unites
- School Districts in Erie, Crawford, and Warren Counties

Impact and Community Feedback:

"I recently had a student that had to stay home in quarantine. It was so helpful to be able to assign her WQLN Homeroom episodes for virtual assignments so she was still able to learn at home when she couldn't be at school!"

—Valerie Button, Homeroom Teacher in Erie, PA



As part of the Connectivity to Learning initiative, for the last 15 months WQLN PBS has provided 5 hours of daily (Monday through Friday), standards-aligned, educational broadcast programming for grades Pre-K-12. This included weekly activity sheets for Pre-K and elementary age learners in English and Spanish.



“WQLN Families is a great program that helps parents learn how to improve their child’s reading. It is wonderful to watch parents and their children working together to achieve this goal.”

—Debbie Neugebauer, Diel Elementary School

WQLN Families Turn on to Literacy is an innovative literacy workshop series that emphasizes the involvement of the entire family in a child’s education. This three-week program brings parents and their K-2 children together for an interactive learning experience that includes reading, hands-on activities, and educational television programming.



Adopting the PBS Ready to Learn Learning Triangle concept, parents increase the educational success of their child.

“Thank you for WQLN Homeroom. We don’t know what we would have done without it.”

- Stacy Weber, mother

Public Broadcasting of Northwest Pennsylvania, Inc.

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AND ACTIVITIES

Years Ended June 30, 2021 and 2020

	June 30, 2021	June 30, 2020
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		
Current Assets	\$ 1,033,863	\$ 1,164,081
Property and Equipment, net of depreciation	2,589,547	2,643,411
Long-Term Assets		
Investments	<u>2,096,165</u>	<u>879,024</u>
	<u>\$ 5,719,575</u>	<u>\$ 4,686,516</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$ 105,124	\$ 54,456
Current Liabilities	550,572	768,313
Long-Term Liabilities	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	655,696	822,769
NET ASSETS	<u>5,063,879</u>	<u>3,863,747</u>
	<u>\$ 5,719,575</u>	<u>\$ 4,686,516</u>

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

OPERATING ACTIVITIES

Revenue	\$ 4,607,340	\$ 3,636,480
Expense	<u>3,186,406</u>	<u>3,103,074</u>
Net Operating Income	\$ 1,420,934	\$ 533,406

NON-OPERATING ACTIVITIES

Revenue	\$ 4,750	\$ 256,030
Expense	<u>225,552</u>	<u>290,977</u>
	<u>(220,802)</u>	<u>(34,947)</u>
Change in Net Assets	<u>\$ 1,200,132</u>	<u>\$ 498,459</u>