

# WKAR

## 2018 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY: RADIO



WKAR makes good on its mission to provide programming and community events that educate and inspire.

*Geri Alunit Zeldes, Professor, MSU*

## Connecting people to powerful ideas that inspire personal growth, exploration of our world and positive change.

### LOCAL VALUE

**WKAR Radio is a valuable part of Michigan's capital region advancement.**

The station provides public broadcasting service with WKAR-AM, WKAR-FM, online, and the Radio Reading Service.

Serving a 60-mile radius from East Lansing, WKAR is involved with more than 70,000 weekly listeners. WKAR's range of programming includes WKAR News, classical music, live broadcasts, participation in community events and with station representatives serving on a variety of boards and community committees; and community support through student learning internships.

### 2018 KEY SERVICES

**In 2018, WKAR provided these vital local services:**

- Three Radio Stations
  - WKAR-AM 870kHz
  - WKAR-FM 90.5
  - WKAR-FM 105.1
- One Television Station with four channels
  - WKAR-HD
  - WKAR-Create
  - WKAR-World
  - WKAR-PBSKIDS
- Online Streaming
- National and local news, public affairs, arts and culture, health, science, and education programming.
- Current capital region news.
- Live classical music and music education throughout the capital region.

### LOCAL IMPACT

**WKAR's local services had deep impact in Michigan's capital region.**

WKAR reached more than 70,000 listeners through the station's partnership with local educators, businesses, governments, arts organizations, schools, and social services agencies.

Through our timely local and national news reporting and coverage, WKAR helps local non-profits and government agencies reach and engage new audiences.

***This past year at WKAR (July 2017-June 2018) was marked by more news, and more classical music, and a greater digital presence.***

## **More News**

The WKAR News team aims every day to make a major impact on multiple platforms for listeners on the radio and to those who choose to connect with us digitally. In an effort to better serve our listeners, we continue to increase our online news presence, news on the WKAR app, and, in March 2018 launched a news/talk only channel, 105.1 WKAR News/Talk, providing 24/7 radio news from WKAR to the Capital Region.

WKAR-FM partnered with an MSU science writer and food expert to launch in April 2018 a podcast examining food and its impact on Earth. **Serving Up Science**, the weekly segment, is also infused with historical and scientific research as well as history, culture and humor.

2018 was also a year teeming with spot news. We covered an emergency declaration ahead of some of the worst flooding to affect the city of Lansing in decades.

Early in January, the largest challenge for our small staff: revelations of unprecedented abuse committed by former MSU doctor Larry Nassar. We were in court every day as hundreds of women and minors confronted Nassar with victim impact statements. The same week of his sentencing, the MSU President stepped down and there was a large Friday night protest. Our team pulled an all-nighter together to produce an hour long special of the events of that week for a weekend special.

In the months that followed, our team covered resignations and arraignments of other administrators, congressional testimonies and constant protests of the Board of Trustees. We did it independently and vigorously to bring our audience the entire story of the investigation.

Lastly, the local news/arts radio magazine **Current State** remained a fixture on the Saturday and Sunday schedules, presenting a lineup of issues around Michigan Government and Politics, Education, Science, Technology, Environment, Music, Arts and more.

We used Facebook Live to report from the **East Lansing Arts Festival** in May 2018. Reports featured local artists, community leaders, attendees, and musicians throughout the two-day event.

**AM NewsTalk 870** is the Michigan capital region's source for a global perspective, featuring news talk from **BBC World Service**, plus **Current Sports** and **The Takeaway**.

**Current Sports with Al Martin** offers a high-energy daily hour of interviews and conversation with sports fans, athletes and coaches. The show is also a training ground for tomorrow's sports journalists, as students from the School of Journalism at MSU work alongside WKAR professionals in daily show production and filing feature stories.

**Ondas en Español**, mid-Michigan's only Spanish-language program, celebrated 44 years on the air in 2018. Host El Chayo Cervantes has been with the series since the beginning, and continues to bring music, news and information to the Spanish-speaking community on weekend mornings and evenings.

## More Classical

As always, WKAR's classical music programming was a mainstay for 90.5FM. WKAR's classical music team presented 2,132 hours of locally-produced classical programming in 2018. Broadcast partnerships with major Michigan ensembles expanded in the past year, with first-time live broadcast concerts by the Lansing Symphony Orchestra. WKAR also showcased the Flint Symphony Orchestra with 52 one-hour concert recordings, live broadcasts by the Ann Arbor Symphony from Hill Auditorium, and live broadcasts from the Detroit Symphony on select Friday mornings throughout the 2017/18 season.

Other unique local classical music programming included WKAR's International Women's Day (March 8, 2018) of music entirely by female composers, and a week-long Leonard Bernstein centennial presentation, incorporating voices of local music educators, performers and listeners sharing personal recollections of the legendary American composer/conductor/pianist.

WKAR continued its statewide partnership with Detroit's WRCJ-FM and Traverse City's Interlochen Public Radio, producing the programs **MSU In Concert**, **Michigan Matinee** and **The Fugue** for broadcast on those stations. 2018 brought a new regular music feature to 90.5 FM. On the first Friday of each month, 90.5 Classical's **New Release of The Month** showcased a single recording by a particular ensemble or artists. Peter Whorf's feature kicked off during Morning Edition, then classical hosts Jody Knol and Jamie Paisley broadcast selections of the highlighted recording throughout the following weeks.

The popular show **Michigan Matinee** continued in 2018 and **Folk with Matt Watroba** joined the WKAR-FM Sunday line-up. This unique, Michigan-based program features folk legend Matt Watroba as he hosts an evening of acoustic folk, blues, bluegrass, and more, performed by artists from the Great Lakes and from all over the world.

## In Your Community with WKAR

Our community partners helped us during spring pledge with greater good for the community by donating meals to thousands of families in need.

WKAR is not just active inside the studio. **WKAR News and Classical** teams have been highly visible throughout the capital region, broadcasting live, stage hosting, and participating in events such as the East Lansing Art Festival, Great Lakes Folk Festival, MSU football tailgate events, MSU Homecoming Parade, and area concerts.

We hosted **Pop-Up Stories** storytelling events, where a dozen amateur community storytellers shared their perspectives in front of a public audience in three locations in our market. The events are held for free and produced for later broadcasts.

**PreView Conversations with Jody Knol** featuring the veteran WKAR classical host at Lansing Symphony Orchestra MasterWorks concerts continued for another season, and WKAR personalities hosted the growing **Jazz on the Grand** summer series of outdoor concerts.

### WKAR Promotes Community Dialogue

In collaboration with WKAR TV, WKAR Radio supports community dialogue by hosting a series of screenings and discussions that encourage community engagement.

In December 2017, WKAR Digital News Director Reginald Hardwick moderated a panel of community leaders and experts around the Independent Lens Film “I Am Not Your Negro.”



### WKAR Engages with our Community

- **PreView Conversations with Jody Knol** at Lansing Symphony Orchestra MasterWorks concerts continued.
- WKAR hosted **Jazz on the Grand** summer concert series.
- Scott Pohl hosted various community events such as the **Lansing Jaycees** annual banquet.
- **WKAR News** and the **90.5 Classical** teams have broadcast live, hosted stages, and participated in events such as the Blues on the Grant (pictured left), East Lansing Art Festival, Great Lakes Folk Festival, MSU Homecoming Parade and area concerts.

### WKAR News

In early summer 2017, WKAR expanded news programming efforts to include more local news on various platforms.

The WKAR News team aims every day to make a major impact on multiple platforms for listeners on the radio and to those who choose to connect with us digitally.

Now, audience members can get up to the minute weather and news reporting at [wkar.org](http://wkar.org) and on various social media platforms. Pictured right (r-l) is WKAR Digital News Director Reginald Hardwick producing a news story featuring one of our student interns as host.





### WKAR Hosts Pop-Up Stories, Inspires through Storytelling

#### Concept

Through Pop-Up Stories, WKAR provides a unique engagement opportunity where community members can share their personal inspiring stories, stories of impact, and create open dialogue.

Partnerships include Lansing State Journal, MSU's Residential College in the Arts and Humanities and community agencies. Stories are heard on 90.5 FM and AM 870, and are available online at [wkar.org](http://wkar.org).

#### Reach in the Community

Promotion for each event begins two weeks prior and includes radio promotion, social media, emails, and online, leveraging partnerships to expand our reach. Each event took place at a partner location and featured a diverse list of discussion topics:

August 11, 2017 | Great Lakes Folk Festival  
"On the Road Again"

October 26, 2017 | Capital Area District Library, Lansing  
"Transformations"

November 10, 2017 | WKAR TV Studios  
"Stories from the Frontlines"

March 22, 2018 | Capital Region International Airport  
"Around the World"

April 26, 2018 | Impression 5 Science Center  
"Childhood Memories"

June 28, 2018 | Meridian Farmers' Market  
"Growing Pains"



#### Impact and Community Feedback

Pop-Up Stories received about 400 attendees over the season. Social media followers, listeners, storytellers, and partners provided positive feedback and extended support. The stories were added to [wkar.org](http://wkar.org) and some were also aired on the station during local programming. This extended the impact, beyond the events.



WKAR engaged with our community through live broadcasts and stage hosting, and by leading discussions at live music performances.

We expanded our programs and specials to showcase Michigan Capital Region talents and professions.

We increased awareness around local issues, providing timely and quality news content and discussions.

As a result, membership and listenership are up and our audiences are more diverse.

*“WKAR provides meaningful platforms that generate healthy community interactions. There is nothing more important to our work than developing strong relationships with community partners. We recognize the significant influence that WKAR has on our community, and we treasure the opportunity to partner with this station.”*

**April Clobes**, President,  
Michigan State University Federal Credit Union  
(MSUFCU)

*“Thanks bushels for playing the Alice Mary Smith symphony this morning. That's the kind of revelation that keeps me tuning in. If there's an up-side to the centuries of women and people of color being ignored, suppressed and forgotten in classical music, it's the abundance of long-"lost" treasures that are now becoming available.”*

**Jeff Mortimer**

*“This morning, I listened to WKAR as I do each day. You and the music are so inspirational. I wanted to let you know how you do build purpose in our lives.”*

**Jayann**

WKAR continues to play an essential role in Michigan's Capital Region as a key source for quality news, music and cultural programming, giving a voice to a broad and deep variety of conversation, community, concerts, and more. WKAR commits to expanding its community relationships to better share the talents, interests, concerns and cultural backgrounds of the people in mid-Michigan.