Documentary about 1876 Ashtabula train crash to premiere in June

On Dec. 29, 1876, the luxury train The Pacific Express departed the train station in Erie, Pa., for Chicago to celebrate the new year. The train never reached its destination due to a catastrophic disaster that happened in Ashtabula, Ohio, during a raging blizzard.

In this town off the shores of Lake Erie, an all-iron railroad bridge collapsed, sending one of the most luxurious trains to ever ride the rails plummeting 70 ft. into a frozen river. Of the 170 people who were on board, only 75 survived, most with serious injuries. Of the 95 who perished, 47 were identified; 48 were unidentifiable.

ENGINEERING TRAGEDY: THE ASHTABULA TRAIN DISASTER tells the story of this deadliest disaster of the 19th century, using reenactments and period sets to bring the story to life. The documentary will premiere on PBS Western Reserve on Tuesday, June 20, at 9 PM. It is the work of co-producers Len and Patti Brown of Beacon Productions.
Station hosts virtual story time

On April 5, PBS Western Reserve sponsored a storytelling event with PINKALICIOUS & PETERFIFIC co-executive producer Victoria Kann, who also is author and illustrator of the “Pinkalicious” children’s book series.

Via Zoom, Kann read a story and answered the 12 participants’ questions. Attendees later received a Pinkalicious-themed goodie bag in the mail.

Daniel Tiger is coming to Akron Civic Theatre!

On May 20, PBS Western Reserve will bring Daniel Tiger to Akron Civic Theatre for Be My Neighbor Day. This event, held in collaboration with PNC Grow Up Great, Fred Rogers Production and Summit County Public Health, encourages youngsters to be a caring neighbor.

Attendees will have the opportunity to take photos with Daniel Tiger, complete a make-and-take craft, receive a Nature Discover Kit and Daniel Tiger book, and visit local support agencies.

Multimedia project emphasizes writing skills

Each year the Production and Educational Services departments collaborate to produce educational videos for the state of Ohio’s Multimedia Grant Project. This year’s project, “Everyday Writing with Coach Write,” is for Grades K-3 and focuses on different aspects of writing.

Eleven videos will be available to educators in June at PBSWesternReserve.org.

CITY CENTRIC production nears completion

The Production Department was in the field in April to produce the final elements for the PBS Western Reserve special series CITY CENTRIC, which features six cities from within our viewing area.

The team is revisiting each city to record opening segments, segues between guests and closes.

With the completion of this final stage of field production, CITY CENTRIC enters the post-production phase ahead of its broadcast premiere later in 2023.

Glamorgan Castle in Alliance proved to be a spectacular location for one of the CITY CENTRIC photo shoots.

New grants support marketing efforts

PBS Western Reserve recently received two grants that will help with the station’s marketing endeavors:

- From Google Ads, $10,000 per month to support Google Search ads
- From 4imprint, a $500 grant to be used for PBS Western Reserve-branded merchandise

Stephanie Virgallito, digital marketing and community engagement specialist, handled the successful grant applications.

Production

Youngstown-area events feature PBS Kids characters

PBS Western Reserve was out in the community at the following outreach events.

Youngstown Phantoms event inspires students

On March 8, PBS Western Reserve participated in “Get Schooled” School Day game, sponsored by the Youngstown Phantoms and the Covelli Center in Youngstown. The event focused on STEAM activities, career exploration in sports and drug prevention. It attracted thousands of elementary, middle and high school students from surrounding communities.

At the March 14 Tuesday is for Toddlers event at Eastwood Mall in Niles, children learned about planting flowers, did fun activities and enjoyed a special guest visit from the curious bunny rabbit Elinor of the PBS Kids show ELINOR WONDERS WHY.

On March 25, PBS Western Reserve participated in Warren-Trumbull Library’s Family Book Day. Children had the opportunity to meet and interact with beloved PBS Kids character Daniel Tiger, take part in a coloring station and explore their favorite PBS Kids digital games at the interactive device station.

On April 5, PBS Western Reserve sponsored a storytelling event with PINKALICIOUS & PETERFIFIC co-executive producer Victoria Kann, who also is author and illustrator of the “Pinkalicious” children’s book series.

Via Zoom, Kann read a story and answered the 12 participants’ questions. Attendees later received a Pinkalicious-themed goodie bag in the mail.

Daniel Tiger is coming to Akron Civic Theatre!

On May 20, PBS Western Reserve will bring Daniel Tiger to Akron Civic Theatre for Be My Neighbor Day. This event, held in collaboration with PNC Grow Up Great, Fred Rogers Production and Summit County Public Health, encourages youngsters to be a caring neighbor.

Attendees will have the opportunity to take photos with Daniel Tiger, complete a make-and-take craft, receive a Nature Discover Kit and Daniel Tiger book, and visit local support agencies.

Community Outreach
Two educational grants received

The station recently received two grants to further educational endeavors for children.

Cyberchase: Mobile Adventures in STEM is a national initiative that includes a texting program featuring videos and activities from the PBS Kids program CYBERCHASE. It is designed to encourage families to engage at home in playful STEM activities highlighting math and the environment.

PBS Western Reserve will recruit families from our local communities to participate in the free texting program and will encourage ongoing engagement. The project ends in November.

PNC Grow Up Great + PBS KIDS | Content Development Support is an early-learning content development project that will utilize an iterative design process to create new, high-quality early learning resources.

PBS Western Reserve will co-develop the content for two collections: Healthy Me and Weather. PBS Western Reserve was one of two stations to receive this grant, which was authored by employee Holly Cartwright and consultant Pam Oviatt.

Station participates in state education conferences

PBS Western Reserve participated in the Ohio Educational Technology Conference in Columbus. The PBS Western Reserve booth featured information about station services.

In April, Educational Services employees staffed a booth at the Ohio Early Learning Childhood conference in Sandusky, providing information about Ohio Learns 360, Ohio Ready to Learn trainings and Cyberchase: Mobile Adventures in STEM to the more than 2,000 attendees.

Ohio Ready to Learn training sessions held

PBS Western Reserve conducted five Ohio Ready to Learn trainings in February through April, with five additional trainings scheduled through May.

Ohio Ready to Learn is a series of early childhood workshops that are funded through the Department of Job and Family Services. Workshops are provided for home day-care providers and private child-care providers through an Early Learning Expansion grant from the United Way of Youngstown and Mahoning Valley.
**Staff News**

**New employees welcomed**

Pamela Andrews, who has been filling the role of accounting clerk as a temporary employee since August 2022, has joined the organization as a permanent, part-time employee. She is responsible for the organization’s general accounting functions and serves as a liaison between PBS Western Reserve and NETA Business Consulting.

Chandra Bertolini joined PBS Western Reserve in February as corporate support manager. She is responsible for securing sponsorship funding for the organization and fostering relationships with existing and prospective clients.

**Fred Barrett gives high school presentation**

Fred Barrett, emerging media learning and development manager, gave a presentation to Grade 11-12 students at the Mahoning County Career and Technical Center (MCCTC). He offered information about PBS Student Reporting Lab, StoryMaker.org, the importance of digital content training and understanding the economics of the social media influencer.

The MCCTC instructor plans to integrate the digital content training information into course curriculum.

**Stephanie Virgallito is debate tournament judge**

Stephanie Virgallito was a judge at the Ohio Speech and Debate Association state tournament held in March at Austintown Fitch High School.

**Research indicated that Chandra Bertolini’s grandfather was a POW during the Battle of the Bulge at M. Stammlager IVB Main Camp.**

**MAPS Museum makes Chandra Bertolini’s day**

Chandra Bertolini, corporate support manager, got an unexpected surprise from MAPS Museum, one of our underwriters.

While there, Bertolini had mentioned that her maternal grandfather, Nick Antonacci, had served in World War II and had been a prisoner of war, but she had very little information about his service.

Doug Perry, our contact at MAPS Museum, proceeded to do some research and sent a photo of the POW camp where her grandfather had stayed, along with a photo of his registration into the army.

Our station’s relationships come in many forms and this is a poignant example of just how valuable they can be.