

WAMU 88.5 American University Radio
Quarterly Issues-Programs Report
October 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022

Overview

WAMU 88.5 American University Radio is Washington D.C.'s NPR station serving the District of Columbia, Northern Virginia, and Suburban Maryland. The listening area comprises a population of six million people. The station has consistently ranked among the country's top public radio stations in audience share and size. Nielsen ratings put WAMU at the top of radio stations that serve the Washington D.C. region. The station supports diverse, equitable, and relevant award-winning programming and puts us among the most respected and trusted voices in the world of traditional and emerging media.

Issues of importance addressed by locally produced programs

The 1A Program

1A is a show for a changing America. Every weekday, host Jenn White convenes a conversation about the most prominent issues of our time. The show takes a deep and unflinching look at America, bringing context and insight to stories unfolding across the country and the world. Issues of local importance are inherent in the discussions because the nation's capital is the heart of our listening area.

With a name inspired by the First Amendment, 1A explores prominent issues such as policy, politics, technology, and what connects us across the fissures that divide the country. The program also delves into pop culture, sports, and humor. The goal of 1A is to function as a national mirror, taking time to help America look at itself and to ask what it wants to be.

The 1A Program features “News Roundup - Domestic and International” every Friday spanning two hours. Guests include subject matter experts in news gathering, politics, economics, and international relations.

The 1A program is produced by WAMU and distributed by NPR to over 445 public radio stations throughout the United States.

During this reporting period, there were 149 editions of the program totaling over 6,100 hours of content. There were three issues of importance that accounted for a substantial amount of programming time. They are detailed below with examples of the programs that addressed those issues.

Midterm elections: Runup and Aftermath

October 10; 10:06 a.m. 45 minutes. “Women over 50 are the most undecided bloc of voters in the election”. A new poll from AARP surveyed 800 women across the U.S. and found that more than half of respondents are still unclear on which Congressional candidates they will vote for in five weeks.

Women over the age of 50 cast over a third of the ballots in the 2018 and 2020 elections and are among one of the most reliable voting blocs in midterm elections.

Christine Matthews is the president of Bellwether Research and Consulting, they worked with AARP to conduct the nationwide survey.

“We see this group of voters as incredibly diverse,” she told 1A Producer Chris Remington. “The one thing they all have in common is they will show up to vote. There are some things that bring everyone together regardless of your ethnicity or geography — concerns about the state of democracy, inflation, and social security.”

The economy is one of the greatest concerns raised by respondents. More than one-third of voters who identify as women say they are less financially secure than they expected they’d be at this stage of their lives.

Mariel Padilla, General Assignment Reporter at the 19th; Christina Wolbrecht, Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame; Christine Matthews, President of Bellwether Research and Consulting; Nancy LeaMond, AARP Executive Vice President and Chief Advocacy and Engagement Officer.

November 8; 11:06 a.m. 46 minutes. “How voters with disabilities are being blocked from the ballot”. It’s election day. You may be going or have already gone to your local polling station. You might have voted by mail. Or maybe you even placed your ballot in a drop box. But for one in four Americans who live with a disability, the act of voting may not be all that simple.

A report from the Government Accountability Office found that 60 percent of U.S. polling stations featured an inaccessible area. And 65 percent also used a voting system that could impede disabled Americans from casting a ballot.

In 2020, an increase in the usage of alternative voting systems caused a surge in voter turnout. Nearly 18 million people with disabilities voted during the presidential election.

Since then, some states have restricted those alternative methods. How has that affected voters with disabilities this year? Michelle Bishop, voter access and engagement manager, National Disability Rights Network; Olivia Babis, senior public policy analyst, Disability Rights Florida; Stancil Tootle, disability activist; host of 'Tuesdays with Tootle,' part of the Rev Up Georgia network.

November 30; 10:06 a.m. 11 minutes. "One Arizona County refuses to certify the election results. Now What?" It's been three weeks since Election Day. And in Arizona, things are still chaotic.

People jeered and security stood guard as Arizona's most populous county certified its election results on Monday.

Critics slammed Maricopa County for everything from printer problems to long lines – all of which conspiracy theorists saw as evidence of a rigged election.

Now, election deniers are keeping one last Arizona county from certifying the results at all.

On Monday, the Cochise County board of supervisors voted 2-to-1 to refuse to certify their election results — blowing past the state certification deadline of November 28th. It's a decision that throws the fate of tens of thousands of votes into jeopardy.

What happens now? We discuss this with a reporter in Arizona.

Jeremy Duda, Arizona politics reporter, Axios.

World Affairs

October 4; 10:06 a.m. 46 minutes. "A look at life inside Putin's Russia". Nearly 200,000 Russians have left their homes since September 21st. In the main, these young men headed for Kazakhstan, Georgia and Turkey.

It's an exodus. One prompted by President Putin's move to call up more than 350,000 Russian men to join the war in Ukraine. Recent estimates suggest that figure be closer to 1.2 million.

What toll is the conflict taking on everyday life for Russians?

It's economy could face a longer and deeper recession as the European and U.S. sanctions continue. And there have been widespread protests against the conscription effort.

Natalia Arno is President of the Free Russia Foundation. Her organization has spent the past 7 months helping persecuted individuals leave Russia.

She tells 1A, "There are 190 different ethnic minorities in Russia. These groups are the ones being targeted by the Russian military for conscription."

Our guests take us inside Russia, a country at war and at a crossroads.

Julia Ioffe, Founding Partner and Washington Correspondent Puck News; Natalia Arno, President of the Free Russia Foundation; Alexey Kovalev, Investigative Editor for Meduza; Charles Maynes, NPR Mosco.

November 7; 11:06 a.m. 12 minutes. "What to expect from the U.N. Climate Change Conference". Global leaders are gathering in the resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt to discuss the state of the world's climate.

The U.N. Climate Change Conference has convened every year since 1995, returning this year to Africa for the first time since 2016.

"The work ahead is immense. As immense as the climate impacts we are seeing around the world," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said during a recent pre-COP meeting.

He added, "A third of Pakistan flooded. Europe's hottest summer in 500 years. The Philippines hammered. The whole of Cuba in a black-out."

We take a look at what can be expected from the COP27 summit against the backdrop of Egypt's political landscape.

Zahra Hirji, climate reporter, Bloomberg News.

December 8; 11:06 a.m. 11 minutes. This morning, President Joe Biden confirmed that Russia has freed WNBA star Brittney Griner.

She was released earlier today after being held for 10 months. The president agreed to a prisoner swap for Viktor Bout, a convicted Russian arms dealer known as the "Merchant of Death."

Speaking alongside the president at the White House, Griner's wife, Cherelle, said she'd continue to work hard for the release of other Americans held abroad.

Robbie Gramer, diplomacy and national security reporter; Foreign Policy

Arts, Culture, and Entertainment

October 12; 11:06 a.m. 47 minutes. “The Legacy of Agatha Christie”. Who better at the whodunit than Agatha Christie?

The prolific mystery writer authored 80 books, making her the most published author of all time behind only Shakespeare and the Bible. She also wrote the world’s longest-running play, “The Mousetrap,” which has been playing in London since 1952.

Christie’s stories have also been adapted many times for both TV and film. Her detectives, such as Miss Marple and Hercule Poirot, are recognized even by those who have never opened one of her books.

Nearly 50 years after her death in 1976, Christie’s work continues to draw in new readers and viewers as well as inspire writers.

On what would have been Agatha Christie’s 132nd birthday, the 1A Writer’s Room turns its attention to her long-lasting legacy.

We talk to three writers recently inspired by her work – one who turned their pen to non-fiction, one to short stories, and one to the screen. And, as always, you.

Michael Green, screenwriter, "Murder on the Orient Express" & "Death on the Nile"; Jean Kwok, contributing writer, "Marple: Twelve New Mysteries"; author, "Searching for Sylvie Lee"; Lucy Worsley, historian and author, "Agatha Christie: An Elusive Woman"

November 17; 11:20 a.m. 34 minutes. “Hugh Bonneville on his Career”. You might know him from the television program “Downtown Abbey” Or the film adaptation of the beloved children’s story Paddington. Or maybe from the time he played Robert DeNiro’s leg.

Well, however you know Hugh Bonneville, chances are you’re a fan.

He’s had a long and successful career as an actor. And now, he’s sharing memories from life in a new book titled “Playing Under the Piano: From Downtown to Darkest Peru.”

December 13; 11:06 a.m. 46 minutes. “The Best Films of 2022”. Cinema fans are talking about “The Whale” for a lot of reasons. One is its director, Darren Aronofsky, who is best known for his intense films like “Black Swan” and “Requiem for a Dream.”

Another cause for conversation is the comeback of Brendan Fraser, who has been out of the spotlight for some years after saying he was blacklisted from Hollywood.

Fraser plays an obese, gay English teacher looking to reconnect with his younger daughter. We sit down with the screenwriter Samuel Hunter to discuss the movie's subject matter, which has drawn the ire of some critics.

But there's more to discuss than just one film. We talk about the best (and most disappointing) films of the year. Blockbusters like "Top Gun: Maverick" and "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" made billions at the box office.

Director Jordan Peele gave us something new with "Nope." And provocative hits like "Tár" and "Women Talking" could be Oscar contenders soon enough.

Samuel Hunter, screenwriter, "The Whale"; Candice Frederick, senior culture reporter, HuffPost; Aisha Harris, co-host, NPR's "Pop Culture Happy Hour"; John Horn, covering arts and entertainment, KPCC; host, "Retake" podcast

Other notable 1A Programs that address issues of importance include:

October 6; 10:06 a.m. 47 minutes. "Is It Time to Rethink Sex Ed?"

October 11; 11:06 a.m. 46 minutes. "Why Hazing Happens and How to Stop It"

November 1; 10:20 a.m. "How the NFL Disadvantages Black Coaches"

November 22; 10:06 a.m. 46 minutes. "The Future of Elon Musk's Twitter"

December 7; 10:06 a.m. 47 minutes. "Local Spotlight: Newtown, 10 years after the Sandy Hook Tragedy"

December 21; 10:06 a.m. 46 minutes. "How America is Grappling with Homelessness"

The Politics Hour with Kojo Nnamdi

This program focuses exclusively on issues of importance in our listening area and connects the dots between events happening in Washington, D.C., and the state houses in Annapolis, Maryland and Richmond, Virginia. With resident analyst Tom Sherwood, the program maintains a vital forum for the public to engage with elected officials and hold them accountable.

Every Friday in this reporting period, Kojo and resident analyst Tom Sherwood hosted governors, statewide office holders, city and county elected officials, regional appointed officials, and candidates for public office. There were nine locally produced editions of The Politics Hour totaling 430 minutes of programming involving over twenty-three guests.

In addition to probing the guests on their views, listeners are encouraged to call in and ask questions directly of the guests.

Examples of programming to address issues of local importance include:

Transportation Issues

October 7; 12:06 p.m. 49 minutes. DC Councilmember Mary Cheh discusses new traffic and speed control initiatives underway including additional bicycle lanes, speed cameras, and traffic calming measures.

November 18; 12:06 p.m. 49 minutes. WAMU reporters Martin Austermuhle and Jordan Pascale provide updates on the long-awaited Silver Line extension to Dulles airport.

December 2; 12:06 p.m. 37 minutes. DC Council Chair Phil Mendelson makes the case for his proposal to provide free rides on Metrobus.

Midterm Elections

November 4; 12:06 p.m. 49 minutes. This program provided a rundown of the races and issues in the upcoming primary and midterm elections in Washington DC, Maryland, and Virginia. Guests included Martin Austermuhle, Margaret Barthel, Danielle Gaines, and Christian Dorsey.

Maryland Politics

October 21; 11:06 p.m. 49 minutes. Maryland Comptroller candidates Barry Glassman and Brooke Lierman discuss their platforms, the Comptroller's role, their positions on Chesapeake Bay cleanup, and the proposed expansion of Interstate 270.

WAMU also produces **The Big Broadcast** with Murray Horwitz and **Hot Jazz Saturday Night** with Rob Bamberger.