

Quarterly Program Topic Report
WTTW PBS Programming

2nd Quarter 2023
July, August, September

As the program schedule for WTTW-PBS is planned, special consideration is given to a variety of special interests in the Chicagoland area. During July, August, and September, the following issues were covered in a variety of programming.

American History / Biography

Arts / Culture

Business / Industry / Economy

Crime / Legal Issues / Law Enforcement

Environment / Nature / Natural Disasters

Health / Health Care

American Politics / Government

Science / Technology

War / Veterans / National Security

The programming listed below represents ongoing series that continually touch upon the previously mentioned topics.

Amanpour & Company (Weeknights)

American Masters

American Experience

BBC World News & BBC World News America (Weeknights)

Chicago Tonight (Weeknights)

Frontline

Independent Lens

Nature

NOVA

PBS NewsHour (Weeknights)

POV

Pritzker Military Presents

Washington Week (Weekly)

American History / Biography

JFK: The Making of a President (60) minutes

Aired Friday, July 7, 2023 at 8:00pm

The life of John F. Kennedy is so often defined by his death. His assassination in November 1963 came to be seen as a turning point for America, a shift from an age of innocence and hope to one of violence and change. JFK himself was transformed from man into legend. But that reading of history can disguise the fascinating and contradictory man behind the myth. JFK's public life details his travels through Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy and fighting the Japanese in WWII, including swimming for survival to a tropical island. His personal life, including many different illnesses, was often hidden from the public. His glamorous marriage to Jackie and his meteoric rise to become a Senator and eventually President captured the imagination of the public.

Al Capone: Icon (60) minutes

Aired Tuesday, August 8, 2023 at 8:00pm

Al Capone — the quintessential self-made American man, ruthless killer or both? Just his name sparks images of pin-stripe suits and bloody violence. To this day, Americans are fascinated by this celebrity gangster. The question is why?

American Masters “Rita Moreno: Just a Girl Who Decided to Go For It” (120) minutes

Aired on Friday, September 8, 2023 at 8:00pm

Discover how Moreno defied her humble upbringing and racism to become one of a select group of Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony Award winners. Explore her 70-year career with new interviews, clips of her iconic roles and scenes of the star on set today.

Arts / Culture

Iconic America: our Symbols & Stories with David Rubenstein (60) minutes

Aired on Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at 9:00pm

Reveal the evolving meaning of this symbol for a "nation of immigrants," and how it embodies our values and our conflicts, from abolition and women's suffrage to the treatment of refugees.

How Saba Kept Singing (60) minutes

Aired on Monday, August 21, 2023 at 9:00pm

Musician David "Saba" Wisnia believed that he survived the horrors of Auschwitz by entertaining the Nazi guards with his beautiful singing voice. Join David and his grandson Avi as the pair embark on a journey exploring the mystery of Saba's past.

Inventing Improv: A Chicago Stories Special (60)

Aired on Sunday, September 17, 2023 at 1:00pm

It may be Chicago's greatest cultural export: improvised theater that was carried out into the world by the likes of Bill Murray, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, and Stephen Colbert. But this art form wasn't created by a funny man - it was devised by a woman who wasn't out for laughs. Explore the life and legacy of Viola Spolin, the social-worker-turned-theater guru known as The Mother of Improv.

Business / Industry / Economy

PBS NewsHour "Episode 9" (9) minutes

Aired on Thursday, July 13, 2023 at 6:00pm (segment)

SAG-AFTRA, the union representing 160,000 television and film actors, will go on strike after four weeks of failed negotiations with the studios. Jeffrey Brown spoke with Anousha Sakoui of The Los Angeles Times for a look at what's behind the decision and how Hollywood will be affected. It's part of our arts and culture series, CANVAS.

PBS NewsHour (6) minutes

Aired on Friday, August 4, 2023 at 6:00pm (segment)

Major studios and producers are sitting down with the Writers Guild of America for the first time in three months. The writers strike began before the summer then actors joined in after contract negotiations broke down over similar issues. The talks will have to solve major divides over streaming revenues and the role of AI. Jeffrey Brown discussed the negotiations with Matthew Belloni.

Chicago Stories "Union Stockyards" (60) minutes

Aired Monday, September 4, 2023 at 9:00pm

At the end of the 19th century, Chicago completely transformed the way Americans eat, and the Union Stockyards on the South Side were the center of that revolution. Experience the sights, sounds, and awful smells of the Union Stockyards and the complex of meat factories next to it, known as Packingtown. As they modernized the process for getting affordable meat to the masses, the Stockyards

also became the stage for ugly battles over the well-being of workers, and the safety of nation's food supply.

Crime / Legal Issues / Law Enforcement

PBS News Weekend “Episode 3” (8) minutes

Aired on Saturday, July 8, 2023 at 5:30pm (segment)

Cities across the country have used automated speed cameras in traffic enforcement for decades. Today, nearly 200 communities have them in place. But critics say that in places like Chicago, the tickets and fines they generate fall disproportionately on Black and brown residents. Economics correspondent Paul Solman reports.

PBS NewsHour (8) minutes

Aired on Tuesday, August 22, 2023 at 6:00pm (segment)

Last year, a white gunman killed ten people in a racist shooting at a grocery store in a predominantly Black area of Buffalo, New York. The gunman, now serving a life sentence, drove 200 miles to target that community. Last week, 16 witnesses of the tragedy filed a lawsuit over the trauma they endured. Geoff Bennett discussed the case with Fragrance Harris Stanfield and attorney Eric Tirschwell.

Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland “So Many Broken Hearts” (60) minutes

Aired on Tuesday, August 28, 2023 at 8:00pm

Learn about the harrowing impact of the IRA hunger strike through three women's stories: an IRA prisoner's wife, a police officer's wife, and a hunger striker's daughter. Tit-for-tat killings, car bombs and assassinations are now routine.

Environment / Nature / Natural Disasters

Nature “Undercover in the Jungle” (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, July 19, 2023 at 7:00pm

Go undercover with a film crew on a perilous journey to the untouched wilderness of biodiversity in the Amazon rainforest. Meet some of the most incredible creatures, from pygmy marmosets to pumas, as the wild secrets of the jungle are revealed.

Human Footprint “The Urban Jungle” (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, August 2, 2023 at 8:00pm

In "The Urban Jungle," Shane explores the modern city: an ecosystem built by, for us. He encounters three species thriving in the city, reckons with our complex urban history, and envisions a new and wilder urban future.

America Outdoors “Suwannee: Wild River” (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 7:00pm

The Suwannee is one of the last wild rivers in America. From jet skiers to herpetologists, manatees to snapping turtles, Baratunde learns how this unique environment inspires a whole range of passions.

Health / Health Care

Unconditional: Healing Hidden Wounds (60) minutes

Aired on Sunday, July 9, 2023 at 4:00pm

UNCONDITIONAL: HEALING HIDDEN WOUNDS is a revealing documentary about the home healthcare crises of mental wellness. Mental health issues and questions of emotional wellness challenge some 50 million family caregivers each year, and often they do not know it. Filmed over seven years, the cinema verite film follows three very different families as they discover the impacts, stresses and rewards of caregiving for their loved ones living with disabilities.

Amanpour and Company “Episode 32” (60) minutes

Aired on Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 11:00pm

A new Covid variant is fueling a resurgence of the virus as it continues to evolve. But three years on, we still don't know how the pandemic started. Author and journalist David Quammen ponders the origin of the virus in his latest article for The New York Times Magazine. He joins Walter Isaacson to discuss the conflicting theories.

American Politics / Government

Firing Line with Margaret Hoover “David French” (30) minutes

Aired on Monday, July 3, 2023 at 5:30am

Guest: David French. Conservative New York Times columnist David French, an anti-Trump voice in the GOP, weighs in on the 2024 race, the latest cases and controversies involving the Supreme Court, Trump's legal troubles, and whether the Republican Party can be redeemed.

Washington Week with the Atlantic “Episode 6” (30) minutes

Aired on Friday, August 4, 2023 at 7:30pm

For the first time, a former American president is charged with conspiring to stay in office after losing an election. But what does the most serious criminal case yet against Trump mean for him, the nation and the 2024 elections? Join guest moderator John Yang, Francesca Chambers of USA Today, Carrie Johnson of NPR, Hugo Lowell of The Guardian and Jeff Mason of Reuters to discuss this and more.

Science / Technology

NOVA “The Planets: Jupiter” (60) Minutes

Aired on Wednesday, July 19, 2023 at 9:00pm

Jupiter's massive gravitational force made it a wrecking ball when it barreled through the early solar system. But it also shaped life on Earth, delivering comets laden with water - and perhaps even the fateful asteroid that wiped out the dinosaurs.

NOVA “Sunken Ship Rescue” (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, August 30, 2023 at 8:00pm (series)

NOVA follows the epic operation to secure, raise and salvage the Costa Concordia cruise ship, which ran aground and tragically capsized off the coast of Italy on January 13th 2012, killing 32 passengers. Moving the ship - which stretches the length of three football fields, weighs over 114,000 tons and lies half submerged on the site of a protected reef with a 50-meter long hole in its hull - from its precarious perch on the edge of a 60 meter high underwater cliff will be a huge technical and logistical challenge. Now, NOVA joins a team of more than 500 divers and engineers working around the clock as they attempt the biggest ship recovery project in history.

NOVA “Saving Venice” (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 8:00pm (series)

Rising seas and sinking land threaten to destroy Venice. Can the city's new hi-tech flood barrier save it? Discover the innovative projects and feats of engineering designed to stop this historic city from being lost to future generations.

War / Veterans / National Security

100 Days “D-Day - 1944” (60) minutes

Aired on Friday, July 7, 2023 at 9:00pm

On June 6th 1944, the largest amphibious invasion in military history began to target the France's Normandy coast. The 100 days that follow would see the end of Nazi dominance in Western Europe as the allies swept through the country liberating towns and cities as they went, including Paris on August 25th. Although the gains were striking, not all within Allied command agreed on the best strategy to win the war.

PBS NewsHour (10) minutes

Aired on Friday, August 25, 2023 at 6:00pm (segment)

Ukraine is working with many international fighters in its battle against Russia. A group of Russian dissidents made headlines in May with cross-border raids from Ukraine into Russia. But the group's white nationalist politics feeds into Putin's propaganda that Ukraine is dominated by the far right. With support from the Pulitzer Center, Jack Hewson and Ed Ram have a rare look inside this group.

Chicago Stories “Our Soldiers, Our Lady of Guadalupe” (60) minutes

Aired on Sunday, September 18, 2023 at 12:00pm (series)

This is the story of pride and heartbreak in a close-knit south side community. Our Lady of Guadalupe, Chicago's first and oldest Mexican-American parish, lost 12 young men in the Vietnam War during a brutal five-year period. These young men came from a proud military heritage, and some felt they owed a debt of gratitude to America. But, as the war dragged on and antiwar protests escalated, some in this patriotic community began to question why Mexican-Americans bore a disproportionate brunt of an unpopular war.