

Friends OF SDPB

2024 Annual Report

Always curious. Always public. Always free.



Dear Members of Friends of SDPB,

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for your unwavering support and dedication. Your contributions have enabled us to continue delivering high-quality, informative, and entertaining programming that enriches the lives of South Dakotans.

This year, we expanded our educational outreach, providing more resources and opportunities for lifelong learning. Our local productions have highlighted the unique stories and voices of our communities, fostering a deeper connection among viewers and listeners. We also made significant strides in our digital offerings, ensuring that SDPB content is accessible anytime, anywhere.

Your generosity has not only sustained our operations but also fueled our growth and innovation. Together, we have navigated challenges and celebrated many achievements. We remain committed to upholding the values of public broadcasting and serving as a trusted source of news, culture, and education.

Thank you for being an integral part of the SDPB family. We look forward to another year of learning, growing, and connecting with you.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Julie Overgaard
Executive Director, SDPB

Ryan Howlett
Chief Executive Officer, Friends of SDPB

SDPB by the Numbers

FY 2024: July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Television

In FY24, **over 530,000 MORE** people have watched SDPB-TV compared to the previous fiscal year. That is a 9.5% increase in viewers.

YouTube

28% increase in views from 2023.

49% increase in views in two years.

22% increase in Subscribers from 2023. 38% increase in two years.

Just over **2,000 hours** of content are watched daily.

SDPB content was watched on every continent but Antarctica.

Streamed Radio

SDPB saw a **12% yearly increase** in the streaming of our radio products.

On average **9,259 more total hours streamed** per month.

Smart speakers lead the way for devices streamed at **309,163** total hours in FY24, followed by the SDPB app at **260,688** and desktops at **151,556**.

Podcasts

428,530 Downloads in FY24, up 42% from FY23. The increase was led by the *Short Walk* podcast, which had just over 81,000 downloads and was listened to by 40,438 users.

SDPB's Daily News Podcast was downloaded **115,274 times** by 31,605 users, an increase of 30%!



SDPB's Short Walk

The 9-Part Feature Podcast

Former South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravensborg was removed from office in June 2022 after he struck and killed pedestrian Joe Boever in September 2020. Ravensborg is the first statewide elected official to be impeached, removed from office, and barred from holding future office in the state.

Events like these are not easily forgotten, but many details were lost due to the other big story happening at the time, the COVID-19 pandemic. Lee Strubinger, SDPB's Politics & Public Policy Reporter, filled in details of this incident with a podcast titled *Short Walk*. Strubinger's interest in the story stemmed from the fact that he covered Ravensborg prior to his election as Attorney General.

Along with learning about the story, Strubinger and the SDPB Journalism team discovered much about the legislative and legal processes.

"Impeachment of a constitutional officer is something we've never gone through as a state before. We set a precedent here. Another goal of this podcast was to let listeners know who Joe Boever was, and what his interests were. Details of the victims in stories like this are often overlooked," said Strubinger.

"Part of this podcast is telling the full story of how the attorney general, who critics point out had never tried a jury trial before, became the state's top law enforcement official," said Strubinger.

Short Walk



Short Walk is nine half-hour episodes and is available on podcast platforms everywhere. Listeners' support provided the opportunity for SDPB to explore this complex story in podcast form.

SDPB Assists Young Learners

SDPB's Education Department Reached Across the State

SDPB's Education team works diligently to provide programs, resources, and events. SDPB's Director of Education, Marcy Drew, shared highlights from just a few of their projects from the past year.

Jan Brett Book Tour

SDPB, Black Hills Reads, Rapid City Public Library, and Early Learner SD hosted renowned author and illustrator **Jan Brett** on her Winter Wonderland Book Tour. Over 400 parents, children, and teachers were excited to attend. The beloved author offered a drawing demonstration and shared stories appreciated by attendees of all ages.

Lakota Nations Education Conference

SDPB participated in the annual **Lakota Nations Education Conference** in Rapid City as an exhibitor and featured speaker. SDPB presented the methods of using media and technology with purpose, and how students and young children can use the resources available.

Buddy's Early Learning Expedition

SDPB transformed the corner in a small business into a cozy reading, relaxation, and learning space. The installation of community early learning spaces began at Belle Laundry, the only laundromat in Belle Fourche. The goal is to provide opportunities for young people to engage in play and learning to reduce screen time.

Playtime with the Wombats

SDPB was selected as one of ten public media stations to participate in a research project called **Playtime with the Wombats** held in Beresford. Based on the PBS Kids show *Work It Out Wombats*, the event provided families a chance to "play the show" while measuring children's computational thinking skills. The show features three marsupial siblings who tackle problem-solving by putting their heads together as they engage in play.

Dissection 101

Education Specialist Steven Rokusek expanded SDPB's online learning resource library with a new show in the **Dissection 101** series. "I am excited that we were able to record the dissection of a sheep brain. The video included identifying structures and functions of the brain." The series of dissection videos has proven to be extremely popular with educators around the state and across the country. It allows educators to access biology lessons they might not otherwise have.

Children's Day at the Capitol

SDPB joined thirteen organizations at **Children's Day** at the Capitol in Pierre, an opportunity to draw attention to issues affecting children and youth in South Dakota. Many attendees, including legislators and staff, talked about their favorite PBS Kids shows.



50 Years of Friends

Friends of SDPB Celebrated 50 Years of Triumphs and Support

For the past 50 years, **Friends of SDPB** has been working diligently to provide funds for the programming and events our supporters and viewers have come to love. Without the support and innovation of the Friends team, SDPB wouldn't be able to stand proudly where it is today. Through Friends, SDPB receives funding from 13,500 families and 147 corporate sponsors.

Before Friends existed, SDPB was funded and licensed through USD and SDSU. With network expansion statewide, SDPB came under the direction of the state of South Dakota, which continues to fund personnel and infrastructure. Paying for programming became the mission of Friends of SDPB, a 501(c)3 nonprofit. Friends was first organized in 1973, and the first television fund drive in April 1974 raised nearly \$23,000 from 1,800 people – an average of \$17 a gift. Today, 26 of those original members continue to donate and have done so, without fail, for 50 years.

Julie Overgaard, Executive Director of SDPB, started as a work-study student for SDPB in 1986. She talks about

how Friends of SDPB began as primarily a membership organization and has grown to be so much more for the state and those that abide here.

"Friends' purpose is to raise private dollars to support the mission and programs produced by SDPB. It's a hand-in-hand partnership and relationship. Friends successfully raises money because of the programming on SDPB, which appeals to our viewers and listeners. People support things in which they find value and purpose. Friends of SDPB builds relationships between our viewers, our listeners, and SDPB. They share all of the great things we are doing with our members, and the members provide feedback, ideas, and community engagement," said Overgaard.

Friends of SDPB looks forward to seeing what can be accomplished in the future. Thank you for the role you have played in getting Friends here. Friends and SDPB look forward with optimism and confidence to another half-century of **partnering with you**.



Pledge



More of the Regular Programming **You Love**

When we think about what makes public media and SDPB different from other news and entertainment sources, the answer is always YOU! Our members, listeners, and viewers helped shape SDPB into what it is today. As a way of showing our appreciation for your dedication throughout the years, we have revamped how we have done on-air fundraising over the last year. We wanted to focus more on the programs you already love and connecting to SDPB's mission, and with that has come more attention during our fundraising drives on things South Dakotans care about – local documentaries and news, high school sports and activities, and in-person and virtual events.



Radio

In FY24, we changed the cadence of our radio drives. Instead of two 5-day drives and one 3 day drive, we now conduct five 2-3 day drives, to include a Saturday or two. This means you get to hear more local, national, and international news throughout the year. We continue to leverage match funds from donors to increase the enthusiasm for supporting SDPB.



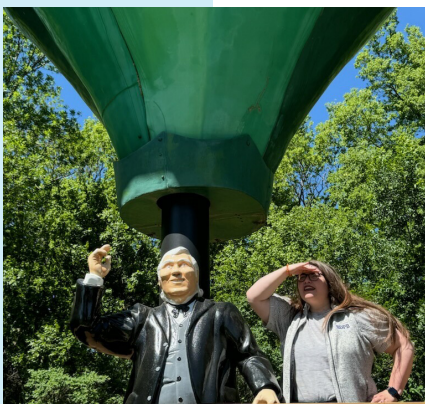
TV

While we have not shortened the number of days we are on-air fundraising on TV, you may have noticed a big difference in how those days look and sound. Instead of loading the TV schedule with national pledge programming, we are keeping our normal schedule as much as possible, meaning during the week you can still catch Nature, PBS News Hour, Antiques Roadshow and Dakota Life. We focus our fundraising breaks to be 90 seconds at the top of each hour, and coordinate those breaks with 2-minute screen updates that display our daily goal, donations so far, and special messaging thanking donors. It actually replicates how radio drives function.



Events

With the changes in on-air pledge drives, we have also focused our attention on creating and promoting virtual events to allow all our members, listeners, and viewers across the state to participate. You may have seen or heard promotion for a Bob Ross Paint Night that happened on Oct 29th. We are also expecting to be able to hold another Rick Steves Wine Tasting Night later this winter. We hope you can join us for one of these great virtual events.



Focus on *Focus*

30 Seasons of SD Focus

Since 1995, ***South Dakota Focus*** has held discussions with people about matters and events involving the state. Jackie Hendry from Roscoe, IL, is the host and producer since 2021. Hendry started her SDPB journey as an intern ten years ago. After graduate school, she returned and has been part of the SDPB family ever since.

While this show had traditionally been about public affairs, the approach has changed. Hendry shares what the process has been like since she joined.

"We're trying to be video-rich, hitting the road rather than being studio-based. We're getting that flavor of how these public policy issues play out across South Dakota and moving beyond talking points."

Hendry says she's dedicated to the mission because South Dakota has room to grow. "I truly believe the issues we are facing are solvable, and I know that people are working on them. I want to tell the story of people righting wrongs and working to help."

For the 2023-2024 season, the program focused on education in South Dakota, from pre-K through high school. They examined the challenges and the triumphs.

Season 30, airing in 2024-2025, is about one of South Dakota's largest industries, Tourism. In addition to the monthly program, *South Dakota Focus* is planning town hall-style events, to encourage community conversation. SDPB will utilize our Sioux Falls and Rapid City studios and meet in public places around the state to bring experts and communities together for discussions about how issues affect them.

Members of Friends of SDPB offer a wide range of ages, locations, and circumstances that provide us with a large pool of thoughts and opinions. SDPB finds that because members are engaged and committed to our mission, they are among the most likely to attend these events. We appreciate the spirit possessed by members of Friends, who are working towards a **better, more enlightened, and richer South Dakota**.

"The power of storytelling is seeing the problem solvers and thinking, 'Maybe I can join along in that effort.' Then maybe growth is possible," says Hendry.



Corporate Support

FY24 Corporate Support = \$1,189,809

Average Support: FY24 = \$8,079

Number of Corporate Supporters: FY24 = 147

-  New supporters = 35%
-  Repeat supporters = 65%

Corporate Support Increase over FY21 (3 years): 31%

Significant funding provided for these SDPB projects:

All Nations Football
South Dakota Focus
Black Hills in the Balance
Short Walk podcast
Dakota Life

Events for Members supported by Corporate Supporters

Aberdeen: Concert in the park
Black Hills: Badger Clark in Custer State Park
Sioux Falls: Prairie Songs at the Zoo

Beat reporting funded:

Healthcare
Business & Economics
Politics & Public Policy
Sports & Recreation
Education

SDPB Legacy Society

SDPB's Legacy Society is composed of generous and forward-thinking donors who support SDPB's long-term success through a planned gift or an endowment gift given during their lifetime.

Becoming a Legacy Society member ensures that we will remain South Dakota's most trusted news and entertainment outlet for generations to come. To create a legacy, contact one of our helpful Friends staff members listed on the right.

Gifts of \$5,000 or more designated to build our endowment or planned gifts of \$5,000+ (for any purpose) are eligible to be a part of our Legacy Society. Legacy Society members are invited to an annual recognition event and are eligible for a personal Generations sculpture in recognition of your commitment to SDPB.

At SDPB we bring you stories that inspire, and we'd love to hear yours! If you choose to include Friends of SDPB in your estate plans, or have not yet notified us that you have done so, please contact us so we may thank you and acknowledge your role in our **SDPB Legacy Society**.

James Aase
Delores Anderson
Donald W. Baker
Richard & Linda Bakken
Reuben Bareis
John Barlow
Donald Barnett
Alyce & Everett Bates
Donna Bauer
Tom & Kay Becker
Ron & Jane Becker
Timothy & Bonnie Bjork
Phyllis E. Blumer
Laura Boyd
David & Cathy Brechtelsbauer
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Janice Homandberg-Knutsen
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Richard Miller
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Jan & Mike Mullin
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Russell E. Nash
Bruce & Kim Nearhood
Gordon Nesheim
Suzan Nolan
Nordby Family Foundation
Jo Nugent

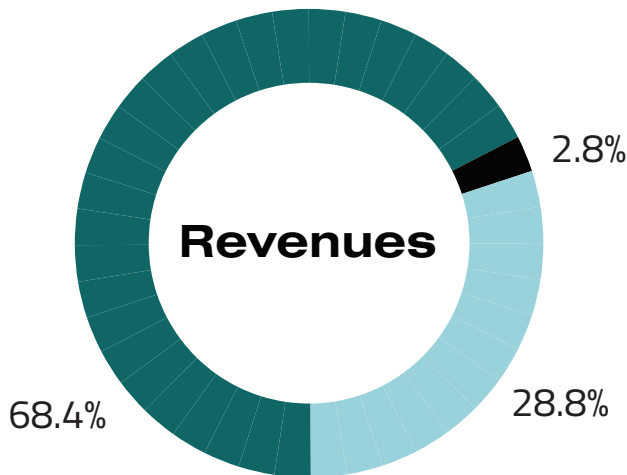
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Linda Peterson
Willard & Evelyn J. Peterson
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Beverly J. Poole
Penny & John Porter
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James Wassom
Sue W. White
Terry C. Whiting
James & Marlene Winker*
Diane & Thomas Zak

*New Member

Friends of SDPB Financial Report

FY 2024: July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Fiscal Year Highlights



Total Amount Raised: \$4,136,201

Membership & Leadership Gifts:	\$2,829,788
Corporate Support:	\$1,189,809
Endowment:	\$116,604



Friends is proud to have earned the trust and support of **13,558 member families**.



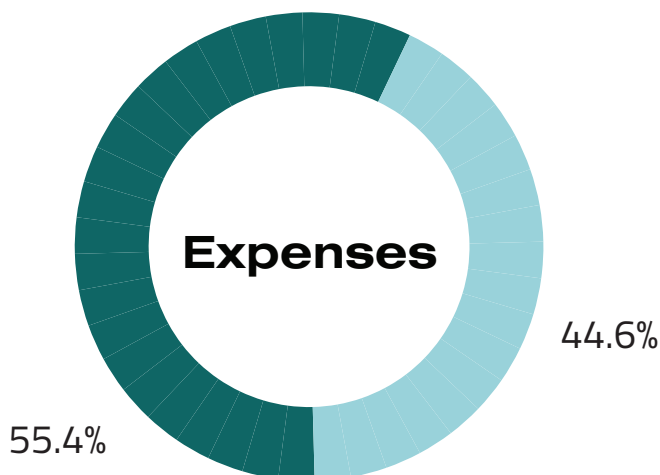
37.4% of the 13,558 SDPB members are sustaining members, giving through convenient, automatic, recurring payments.



SDPB Corporate Support surpassed the **\$1 million in underwriting sales** for the second time in Friends history.



In FY24, **8 generous individuals became SDPB's Legacy Society new members**.



Total Expenditures: \$4,825,582

Support to SDPB:	\$2,674,460
Friends of SDPB Operating Costs:	\$2,151,122

