

# Raven Radio On-Air Annual Meeting

## December 17th, 2020

- 6:30 PM - Welcome & Order of Things + Community Announcements:** *Becky Meiers, General Manager (15 minutes)*
- 6:45 PM - Introduce the Board/Board President Statement:** *Gretchen Clarke, Board President (10 minutes)*
- 6:55 PM - CoastAlaska:** *Mollie Kabler, Executive Director, CoastAlaska (10 minutes)*
- 7:05 PM - Budget Report:** *Becky Meiers, General Manager (10 minutes)*
- 7:15 PM - Audience Report:** *Becky Meiers, General Manager (5 minutes) music track outro*
- 7:20 PM - Development:** *Lily Wasserman, Development Director (10 minutes, PRERECORDED)*
- 7:30 PM - News:** *Robert Woolsey - News Director, Katherine Rose - Reporter, Erin Mckinstry - RFA & AED Reporter (10 minutes)*
- 7:40 PM - Programming/Operations:** *Bryan Lovett, Operations Director (intro by Becky Meiers about restructuring)(10 minutes)*
- 7:50 PM - Q&A calls:** *Becky Meiers (until 8 PM)*

### **Welcome & Order of Things (BECKY)**

Thank you for joining me this evening. My name is Becky Meiers, and I'm the General Manager of Raven Radio, as well as your host this evening. I'm working with Bryan, our Operations Director, to keep a safe social distance for everyone presenting tonight. We're proud to partner with Dan Etulain at Northstar Television, channel 11, and will be providing him a recording of this meeting for future broadcast. It is an honor and a privilege to be a part of this radio community.

With 182 KCAW members providing their proxy, we have a quorum of our membership. (That's 28% of you!) And so, our annual meeting is called to order.

I want to start with an expression of gratitude. To all our members, our volunteers, our staff, our listeners, our communities, our allies, our underwriters, our institutional funders, and our advocates at every level of government - your support throughout all the dark days of 2020 has meant so much to me, personally. You were my light in the dark, each one of you. You lit the way for us. I'm proud to say that, because of you, we were able to take the courageous path forward. It wasn't the easiest path, it wasn't the most popular path - but it was the way that allowed us to continue to serve you in a way you've come to expect.

I'm not sure if y'all remember it, but the very first day of 2020 - New Years Day - roared in like a lion with snow that wouldn't stop for days. I remember, because we were responsible for sharing info on closures with the community. A week later, Sitka called it's very first snow days in more than a decade. And KCAW was there for you then - not knowing this was to be a kind of practice run for what was ahead.

I also remember sitting in a Rural Resiliency Workshop - as a member of Sitka's Local Emergency Planning Commission - hosted by the Sitka Fire Department, with people from all over Southeast Alaska when the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. The next thing I remember was spending a whole night, wide awake, filling a spreadsheet with all the businesses, schools, and organizations that announced closures for us to read over the air. I remember the mayhem of those first months of the pandemic - and the weight of the responsibility we held and continue to hold. We needed to keep broadcasting, report more, work with less, keep everyone safe, learn new tech... the work didn't let up. But we took that work right up, because we knew it was important to you.

I don't mention that fact simply to point it out - I mention it because it's the backdrop to everything we're working to strengthen, build, and survive. Because, even through a global pandemic, Raven Radio continued to collaborate, innovate, and create. And we're not just talking about a pandemic here - we covered a winter without ferries, a high-key divisive election, and a flashpoint racial justice moment.

And yet, in the middle of everything, we replaced vital operational systems, repaired translators, restructured our programming department, reconfigured nearly every single fundraiser, built community resources, and returned a portion of our hosts back to the air.

That's just a small part of what we've been doing above and beyond our normal service. My philosophy has remained the same: in times of doubt and worry, in times of need, Raven Radio will double-down on our service to the public. We didn't flinch from the work, because our mission is to serve you.

We created centralized information sites to keep you informed about what was happening with COVID and our local elections. We reimagined everything that you love about Raven Radio, rather than cancel them — creating community-centered virtual

events and inviting many voices to join us, on air, via Zoom. Even while things changed, we still brought to you the same great programming and services.

That's not to say that there aren't things we can improve on. One example comes right to mind: from an urgent capacity standpoint, we rolled back live hosted programs while we, globally, learned how COVID-19 was spread. Trust me when I say that I miss our regular shows and voices — I know that you did too. We are still hard at work to responsibly return all our programming to pre-pandemic levels of volunteer participation. We're aiming for that work to be complete in January, and we'll tell you more about it when we talk about our Operations Department.

I also want to take this opportunity to talk about another area of improvement. We will be working with the National Federation of Community Broadcasters to create a broader range of strategic focus for the station, through the Community Counts Initiative, or CCI. CCI is a cohort-based learning program for community radio stations serving rural and underrepresented communities. The model they're using for this program (called The Circle of Engagement) suggests that engagement, content, and revenue are interconnected and that solid organizational capacity is the glue that sustains these efforts over time. This will be a 13 month customized support group of 12 radio stations in total. We're excited to take an intentional step forward into Raven Radio's future with the support of stations all over the US — especially as we strive to create a public media for all.

There is so much more to be said about Raven Radio, and how we all thrive because of your involvement. Stay tuned for more, as we report on our operations for the past year. We invite your input and questions, and will take calls near the end of the program.

## **Community Announcements (BECKY)**

- We want to start by welcoming our newest Raven. Hello to Rose Beyer Giammona!
- Welcome also to our newest staff members!
  - Erin McKinstry, Report For America Reporter
  - Bryan Lovett, Operations Director
  - Lily Wasserman, Development Director
  - Anna Laffrey, Part-Time Retail Coordinator

- Cara Crain, AmeriCorps Volunteer Coordinator, who will start in person on January 4th
- We are grateful for the time and talent lent to us by Ari Snider in the newsroom earlier this year; he helped give our regional beat form. He's currently working at Marfa Public Radio, on a team led by Elise Peebles, in Texas!
- You may have heard Makenzie Rose on the air recently; she was joining us from her home in Anchorage, where she moved with her family this summer. She is still in KCAW's orbit, as she is working with CoastAlaska currently!
- Our former Program Director, Dave Emmert, has moved to Anchorage and seems to be thriving. We miss his presence and thank him for his dedication to the station, as he works remotely on project-based work!
- We are so grateful to Suzi McClear for helping with volunteer programming coordination as we restructured this department and got everyone hired. Her expertise and help has proven invaluable, and we're grateful for her dedication and service.
- Goodbye dear friends of Raven Radio: Gil Truitt, Byron Mallot, Jane Eidler, Bob Allen, Lorenzo Milam, and the Island Institute - an organization we partnered deeply with in years past.
- Deep gratitude to Kenley Jackson for her years of service to KCAW and CoastAlaska - we're thankful for how you shaped public radio in SE AK.
- We also want to share our love and appreciation to the outgoing board members this year.
  - Cameo Padilla has been a member of Raven Radio since 2014 - and started lending her energy and passion to our board of directors since 2018. We are grateful for her service!
  - We are grateful for Blake Anthony, a Mt. Edgecumbe High School student who stepped into a board role last year. The pandemic interrupted life as we all knew it, and Blake stepped down earlier this year. Thank you, Blake!

**Please know that we will be taking your questions at the end of the program. If you've got something to ask, please call 747-5877. We will start our Q&A around 7:50 PM this evening.**

## **Introduce Board Members & Staff (Gretchen)**

### **Joining the board:**

Roby Littlefield - returning

Franklin Eccher - new to the board  
Grace Greenwald - new to the board  
Mary-Alice Henry - new to the board

Full board and current officers (officer elections to be held in January)

Gretchen Clarke - President  
Lauren Bell - Vice President  
Roby Littlefield - Secretary  
Grace Brooks - CoastAlaska Representative  
Perry Edwards  
Franklin Eccher  
Dan Etulain  
Grace Greenwald  
Mary-Alice Henry  
Stephen Rhoads

David Sam is our Sitka CoastAlaska Representative At Large.

For the past 8 years, it has been my honor to be able to serve on the Raven Radio board of directors, and, for the past four years, as board chair. We in Sitka and our listening communities are so fortunate to have Raven Radio. It has been a very busy and interesting (to say the least!) year. During these many months of social distancing, Raven Radio has kept us engaged, informed, and connected. Raven Radio has kept us up to date with accurate and timely news and information throughout – all in a time when the news seemed to shift by the minute. When in-person activities were halted and we sheltered in place, we were never alone, because Raven Radio kept us connected to one another. In the many years I have been on the board, we have experienced much change including new staff, new opportunities (Community Counts Initiative, Report for America!), loss of funding (SOA), new funding sources (thank you grant writers extraordinaire, Becky and Mollie!), new programming and services (podcasts! Community calendar!), and lots and lots of awards (way to go, Newsroom!). Through all of that time, Raven Radio has continued to do better and be better at

serving you, our listening and, now streaming and viewing, community.

Raven Radio truly is community radio—it can't happen without you, without us. Thank you to all of you, our members, whose contributions enable us to keep going. Thank you to the amazing staff. They have done a tremendous job keeping the signal strong and everyone informed and engaged during these unprecedented times. They deserve a huge round of thanks. Thank you, Becky, Rob, Katherine, Erin, Dave, Bryan, Makenzie, Lily, and our morning edition hosts!

Thank you to our out-going board member and Coast board rep, Kenley Jackson, and to former members Cameo Padilla and Blake Anthony. A big welcome and thank you to our newest additions to the board, Frank Eccher, Grace Greenwald, and Mary-Alice Henry. The board represents a diverse cross section of our community's talents, and I am honored and humbled to be able to work together with them in stewardship for the station. Thank you!

## **CoastAlaska (Mollie)**

Raven Radio is a member of CoastAlaska - an independent non-profit consortium improving service to listeners by sharing services and increasing capacity through inter-station cooperation. Member stations in Juneau, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Wrangell and Unalaska as well as Raven Radio in Sitka are all financially sound despite the pandemic...

Collaborative services that CoastAlaska provides include accounting, payroll, membership, underwriting sales, regional news, engineering and IT and representation to state and federal funding agencies. CoastAlaska also serves several other stations around the state through a contractual arrangement to help offset our operating costs. Most of the CoastAlaska staff is working from home during the pandemic; however, the CoastAlaska business office is in Juneau. I am the Executive Director and work here either in the Cable House or from home during this pandemic time.

We love having previous Raven Radio development director Makenzie Rose as a

CoastAlaska regional development director working from home in Anchorage. Other CoastAlaska employees, like News Director Jacob Resneck and engineering staff usually travel frequently to different locations around coastal Alaska but are now working from home.

Most CoastAlaska travel and board meetings are conducted via Zoom. Last February's face to face meeting, hosted by KCAW in Sitka, went well and was our last in person meeting.

CoastAlaska stations like Raven Radio have focused local service on providing the news and information you have needed to understand how to navigate this pandemic. Despite building restrictions and the sad loss of a full complement of local volunteer hosts, the stations remain solvent and ready to continue to provide the essential services you rely upon. The CoastAlaska audit concluded recently with a year-end in the black thanks to the community members that continue to support community radio, the effective grant writing by managers, and several agencies and municipalities that have granted CARES Act funding.

The racial reckoning faced in the follow up to the murder of George Floyd and others means that public media must improve in the face of institutional racism. To that end CoastAlaska recently joined the coalition called Public Media for All. This group of public media workers, led by people of color are raising awareness of the negative effects of a lack of diversity, equity and inclusion in public media, and sharing solutions for individuals and organizations.

### **Federal budget update and State funding update**

The Governor's FY22 budget is silent on public broadcasting funding. Both FY19 and FY20 legislative funding was vetoed by the Governor. The Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission still exists but has no funding to effectively conduct business nor any revenue to send on to stations around the state.

CoastAlaska continues to collaborate with Alaska Public Broadcasting, Inc. APBI is a small statewide service bureau providing services to Alaska stations. Our plans to merge our services are still in the works. Examples of services that benefit Raven Radio include the group buy for NPR and the group health insurance.

Public broadcasting stations received federal Cares funding directly from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting last spring. This much-needed support was essential to stations as fundraising events were canceled and expenses around the pandemic increased. Although there has been significant discussion in congress about more pandemic relief funds at this time, there is no clarity that a forthcoming appropriation that includes stations is likely to be approved.

The House Appropriations bill includes \$515 million for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) in FY 2023, \$20 million for Interconnection, \$30 million for the Ready To Learn initiative.

The Senate draft subcommittee appropriations bill included level funding of CPB at \$465 million in FY 2023, \$20 million for Interconnection and \$29 million for Ready To Learn.

Congress has strong bi-partisan support for funding the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and President-elect Biden is likely to approve funding for CPB.

## **Budget Report (BECKY)**

Before we talk about what's happening now, let's take a look at how we closed out the last fiscal year. Raven Radio's fiscal year starts on July 1st.

We ended the 2020 fiscal year \$27,309 ahead, after expenses. Specifically, we raised \$665,316 in revenues, and spent \$638,007 in all our expense categories - before capitalization on our assets.

The end of the most recently completed fiscal year looks very out of the ordinary - the last quarter of our year was when the global pandemic hit Sitka. We cut a lot of expenses that were no longer necessary - travel, premiums, retail stock. As a result, the division appears to weigh heavily on personnel and salaries. COVID-19 also required us to reinforce a remote work infrastructure. Thanks to the work and wisdom of my predecessors (and our amazingly talented CoastAlaska technical staff,) we only needed to make improvements to the remote audio production side of things - which was not insubstantial, mind you. I'll talk about how we were able to make that work in a few minutes.

**As all of you listening are aware, 2019 was yet another year of zero State funding**, despite the herculean efforts of our state legislature — and despite the incredible health & safety service we provide Alaskans every single day. If you feel some kind of way about that, please get in touch with me. To fill the hole left by the absence of State support, listeners and members must partner even more deeply with the station - and that means we will come to you for help more often. Here’s how the numbers shook out for FY20.

### Revenue

Listener Membership - 37.9%

Winter Fellow Program Contributions - 4%

Underwriting - 18.1%

Rent from other tenants of the Cable House - 4.4%

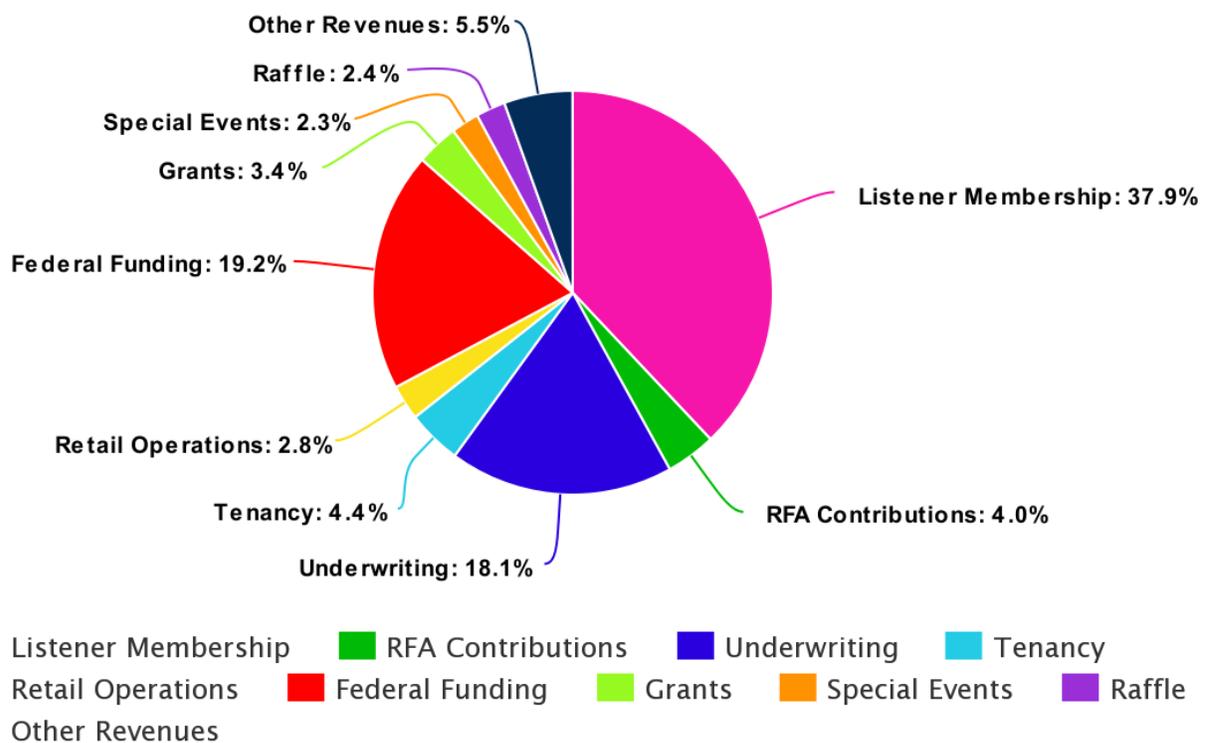
Retail operations - 2.8%

Special Events - 2.3%

Raffle, dividend income, gains on sales of fixed assets, royalties, production fees & in-kind contributions - 5.5%

Grants (Capital and Operating) - 3.4%

Federal Funding - 19.2%



## Expenses

Personnel – 55.1% (salary, benefits, and federal taxes for 6 full time, and several part time employees)

CoastAlaska - 16.7% (Regional accounting, membership, development, news, engineering, and representation)

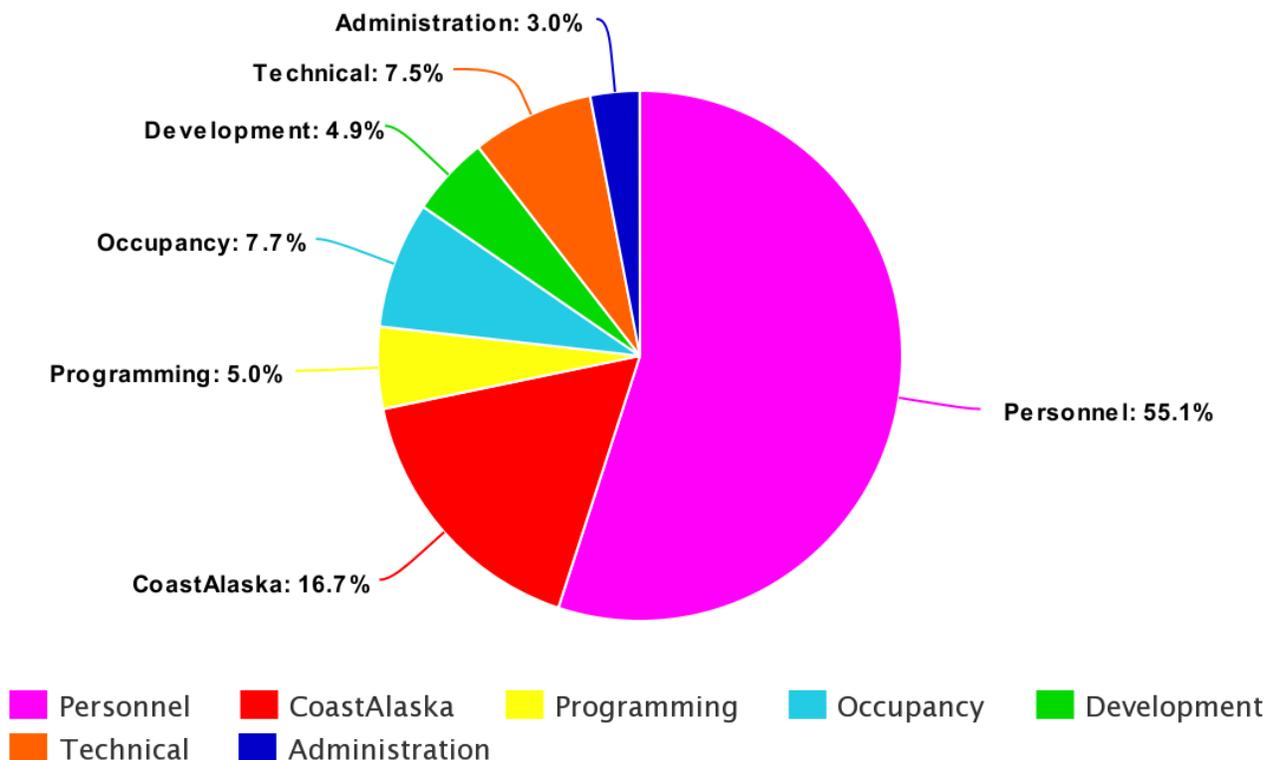
Programming – 5% (APRN, NPR, BBC, etc.)

Occupancy – 7.7% (Utilities, insurance)

Development – 4.9% (Mugs & apparel, special event expenses)

Technical – 7.5% (Equipment repair and maintenance, including translators)

Administration – 3% (Office supplies, postage, dues, board etc.)



meta-chart.com

I want to speak to our financial health for the current fiscal year - as many of you probably have it on your minds after our Winter Drive! I'm happy to report that we're up to over \$70,000 for the Drive, so a huge thanks goes out to every single KCAW member out there. When we were building our budget in April, we had no idea whether we could do any fundraising at all. We were at the cusp of a pandemic-induced recession, and everything related to social functions was taken off the table, including pledge drives. So your participation in our fundraising means everything to us.

With a lot of staff and board input, I developed a 3-stage trend analysis for the year to come - drawing out 3 scenarios, each with a related contingency plan. We ultimately

decided to go forward with a very conservative revenue plan that accommodated the loss of revenue for the first 6 months of fiscal year 2021. At the same time, we committed to rethinking our fundraising - and if we were successful, we could move forward with a budget that looked more like what we've done in the past.

I'm relieved to say that we are in a sound and stable financial position at the moment. We got to that point through: creatively approaching our fundraising barriers, making mindful budget cuts, planning for the worst and working hard to meet reasonable goals, and grant writing.

We are, without a doubt, indebted to our institutional funders for seeing us through the loss of funding and the increase in expenses. Because of their support, we might be able to turn our short-term survival into long-term advantages for our station and community. Those funders are:

- Alaska Broadcasters Association
- AK Can Do Grant Program, a partnership between the Rasmuson Foundation, the Alaska Community Foundation, and donors statewide
- Alaska Census Working Group
- Alaska Center for Excellence in Journalism
- Alaska Community Foundation & Department of Health and Social Services
- The Alaska Energy Desk
- American Press Institute Trusted Elections Network grant program
- Brown Institute of Journalism Rapid Response Grant
- City and Borough of Sitka
- Corporation for Public Broadcasting
- Google Journalism Emergency Relief Fund
- The Groundtruth Project
- Lenfest Institute Rapid Response Grant program
- National Federation of Community Broadcasters
- Sitka Legacy Fund
- Rasmuson Foundation

## **Audience (BECKY)**

I want to start by thanking Katherine Rose for her work in collating these numbers. This year, our online streaming signal has between 10,000 and 40,000 connections each

month - averaging 17,030 listeners. Our website saw about 32,000 monthly users. Our website [kcaw.org](http://kcaw.org) regularly has **12,000-15,000** unique visitors per week. Some weeks that number is greater. And the vast majority of our readers (about 60 percent) are accessing our website through their phones, rather than a desktop computer (30 percent of readers).

Generationally, our online audience is pretty evenly distributed, but we gained a bigger following of readers under 35 this year.

19 % of users fall between ages 25-34 (this is where we saw the most growth)

17 % between 35-44,

17 % between ages 45-54

21 % between 55-64

17% 65+

8% between 18-24

Getting audience analytics on our FM signal throughout all our communities of coverage is a little trickier, and we hope to pursue ways to collect this data meaningfully in the future.

As of December 16th our Facebook page had 11,779 followers. If you haven't liked the Raven Radio KCAW Facebook page, take a moment to click that 'like' button! Facebook posts regularly reach tens of thousands of people.

Raven Radio is also on Instagram! We started it in June of 2017, and have 1,562 followers. You can find us too — just look up "KCAWradio."

**We have scheduled the next meeting of the Community Advisory Board, or the CAB.** The CAB focuses on programming review and gathering input on the community's needs to advise KCAW's governing board, and members of the public are invited to join us. Get your calendars out! **The meeting will be on Monday, January 25th, starting time TBD. This meeting will likely be held on Zoom.** If you are interested in contributing to this committee, please join us! We will include more information on our Community Calendar, including how to join the online meeting. Again - mark your calendars for January 25th to join our Community Advisory Board.

## **Development (LILY)**

[RECORDED]

If you have questions about anything Development-related feel free to give Lily a call at the station or send her an email at [development@kcaw.org](mailto:development@kcaw.org). She will be back in the office in the new year!

## **News (ROB)**

### **— Introduce the News Team:**

- Robert Woolsey, news director
- Katherine Rose, reporter
- Ari Snider, post-graduate fellow in community journalism, worked in Sitka through May. Then we were joined by...
- Erin McKinstry, our Report for America corps member

Morning hosts Erin Fulton, Peter Apathy, Brooke Shafer, and Meredith Redick.

**News Volunteers** - Big thanks to Megan Pasternak and Carole Knuth. Both put in too many hours to count on our Community Calendar!

**What is Report for America?** - Since the economic crisis of 2008 (remember the housing bubble?), a staggering number of regional news organizations have closed, the total is in the hundreds -- and represent **a loss of 270,000 reporting jobs**. Report for America is a non-partisan service organization -- like Americorps or the Peace Corps -- which places emerging journalists in newsrooms all across the country to restore the capacity of the media, and serve communities where there simply isn't much reporting. In our case, it's our seven remote listening communities -- Kake, Angoon, Tenakee, Port Alexander, Pelican, Elfin Cove, and Yakutat -- who deserve to have their voices heard and their struggles brought to light as much as anyone else in the country. Report for America pays half of a reporter's salary for a year. What we did was mash our internship and our fellowship into the Report for America position. Rather than getting someone for a few weeks or months, we get them for up to two years, and Alaska gets a top-shelf journalist who understands this state from the ground up. We were thrilled to be selected to host an RFA reporter -- there's another one at the Anchorage Daily News, and next year there will be a third at KUCB in Dutch Harbor. Across the country, there are 226 RFA reporters working; by 2024, there should be 1,000.

**Alaska Press Club Awards received in April 2020**

It's always a little embarrassing to talk about our awards. Seriously, I would be happy for the KCAW newsroom to be recognized a couple of times, but this year we won nine Alaska Press Club awards.

We took first and third places in headline writing for all Alaska media, which continues to amaze me, since we're relative newcomers in the world of digital publishing. But our website [kcaw.org](http://kcaw.org) gets an unbelievable amount of traffic.

In the Radio Division, we took first and third places for profile stories by Katherine Rose and Ari Snider. Ari won first place in Business Reporting and second place in Health Reporting. Katherine Rose took a couple of second places in Arts Reporting and Education Reporting. I took a second and third in Government and Politics, and Public Safety Reporting.

I suppose it's never really a mystery why we do so well at the Press Club awards: A LOT of interesting things happen in Sitka that make fascinating news!

**Katherine** has some more insight into our virtual and digital news, and news consumption on our site...

We have a tight knit news team of three people, and if you haven't been to the cable house, we all three share an office, a very close space. Until this year, we didn't take work home with us too often because all of the tech we needed was at the office. News really pivoted hard in March when we had to learn, almost overnight, how to produce our news offsite. We learned how to use new tools like Zoom for broadcast, and through grant funding Raven Radio was able to purchase key equipment for us to make radio production possible from home.

(Quick shout-out to those funders-We're thankful for funding from the AK Can Do Grant, Alaska Center for Excellence in Journalism, the Alaska Community Foundation/DHSS, and Sitka Legacy Fund for the equipment. Because of those generous grants, we set up mini-recording studios under blankets in our closets and kept producing news on our normal schedule. We worked closely with city staff to ensure we could continue to cover and broadcast regular assembly meetings remotely. Our election forums are usually well-attended at Harrigan Centennial Hall, but we hosted all of those forums remotely this year to help keep the public and our staff a

little safer. And we had to be more dependent on phone and video conference technology, rather than intimate in-person interviews for morning news, but continued to get the word out about all of the local events that matter to you on our Morning Interview.

Fortunately, our digital footprint remained strong, and our online news reached more people than ever this year. In general, each story reaches somewhere from 2000 to 8000 readers, though some other stories travel even further- we see an average of 32,000 readers each month, who spend around three to four minutes on each news story.

There was a LOT of hard news this year, and you paid attention to it. Listeners gravitated toward our coronavirus coverage- particularly the coronavirus information hub, ***which was the top visited page on the website.*** Readers also gravitated toward our science and regional energy coverage more than last year, along with big breaking news stories.

We began podcasting our morning newscast two years ago- our listenership for the news podcast has doubled this year. Considering over 60 percent of readers are accessing our website through phones, this is another really easy way to get the news right at your fingertips. Search most podcasting apps for Raven News, and you'll find us.

### **Erin: Report for America / Alaska's Energy Desk**

Happy to be joining everyone this evening. Rob and others have talked quite a bit about Report for America already but I'm going to tell you a little more about it from my perspective as well as my work with Alaska's Energy Desk. So, I've been working as a reporter at KCAW since June, and although it's been an unusual time to be working in journalism to say the least, it's been a pleasure to get to know Sitka and the Raven Radio community and to work with Katherine and Rob from a distance. I'm not new to Alaska or the Alaska Public Radio Network, but I've never spent time in Southeast before, and it's also been a pleasure telling stories in this beautiful and culturally rich part of the state.

I'm here as a Report for America corps member. It's a fairly new organization that partners with news organizations around the country to help bolster local news

coverage by recruiting a reporter to cover an underserved beat and paying a portion of their salary. I've been covering our listening communities outside of Sitka through phone and video calls. Ideally, I would also be taking trips to the communities, but I haven't been because of the COVID-19 pandemic. I made a decision to renew my contract for another year starting in June 2021, so I'm hopeful that I'll be able to travel to some of our listening communities before my tenure is up. And to meet some of you in person!

Another part of my position with Report for America is to spend a small portion of my time working with youth on journalism projects. I've been coordinating with the Mt. Edgecumbe Radio Club to help some of the students produce stories for their program. The project is still getting off the ground, and in the meantime, if anyone has any opportunities to work with youth to produce journalism, I'd love to hear from you.

Finally, I also joined Alaska's Energy Desk as a reporter at the end of August. The statewide reporting collaborative focuses on stories about energy and the environment. I'm working with an editor based in Anchorage, Julia O'Malley, to produce stories from Southeast that air statewide. I've admired the project since it was founded, and I'm grateful for the opportunity.

Overall, my work is split in threes: a third of my time on the regional beat, a third of my time on stories from Sitka, and a third of my time on Energy Desk stories. It's been a full and rich experience thus far, and I'm excited to continue to deepen my relationships and tell more in-depth stories. Thanks for all of your support!

## **Programming/Operations (Bryan)**

Hello!

I'm Bryan Lovett, the new Operations Director at KCAW.

I grew up in Sitka and spent many years in and around the Cable House, between learning to host a show in high school to using the production studio to make beats or just surfing the record library. KCAW definitely spurred me into following my interests in music and audio engineering. I spent the last 9 years in the music scene of Oakland, CA, working as a live and recording engineer, production manager, and musician. I feel so lucky to have been able to work with incredible artists from all over the world, but in this pandemic year of closed venues and no touring, the financial realities of the

pandemic necessitated a career pivot for me. To be honest, it still feels surreal that I was able to land back here, at Raven Radio, to help keep the show rolling over the airwaves in Sitka and beyond. I am feeling very grateful for the opportunity.

My position of “operations director” is a new role here at the station, which is great because I am learning a lot! The pandemic made KCAW have to adjust a lot of its usual programming to keep both staff and volunteer hosts safe. So, I have inherited a schedule that involves more automation of syndicated programming in between our local hosts, so as to allow proper sanitization time and social distancing at the Cable House. This has been a perfect crash course for me to learn the intricacies of our automation system, and become familiar with the wealth of programming from both regional and national sources that we are delivering to you the listeners.

But we at the station know that there are still many hosts that are hoping to be back on the air!

With that in mind, one of my upcoming projects is to get Studio Xeno, our studio downstairs, ready to be a second functioning Air Room, so we can bring back more live hosts while also keeping maximum social distance within the Cable House as we continue to navigate the pandemic in the coming months.

We are also in the process of setting up a new remote studio with the Mt. Edgecumbe High School Radio Club, so the students there can have a direct pipeline to KCAW for their content. It's very cool to be able to promote radio production and journalism to the young people of MEHS, and hopefully they will be able to take the skills they cultivate working alongside Raven Radio back out into their communities around Alaska and elsewhere. We are expecting to have that studio up and running very early in 2021.

My position is different than the previous role of “program director” in that I am not coordinating volunteers for live programming, which allows me for more time to focus on technical and operational tasks, such as troubleshooting our backup generator for the transmitter on Japonski Island, much needed computer hardware updates in the air room, and preparing to do a full overhaul of both our new PRSS receivers and Distribution Amps in the coming months.

So thank you KCAW for the opportunity to learn and help the station adapt to the new

challenges of the pandemic and its effect on the station operations. And thank you to anyone who has reached out with words of support or with ideas for new changes at the station. Feel free to reach out at [bryan@kcaw.org](mailto:bryan@kcaw.org). I feel lucky and grateful to be of service to both a public radio station that I love and a beautiful community that loves it as well.

**BECKY:** Bryan - thank you for coming back to Raven Radio, and sharing your myriad of talents with listeners throughout Southeast Alaska!

As Bryan mentioned, we're in the middle of transforming our programming strategy. Since arriving at KCAW, I noticed that some jobs were consolidated into others - likely as a long-term strategy to survive yearly funding cuts. The Program Director position takes on many roles: volunteer coordination, production, engineering, traffic and automation, curation, tour guide, training, recruitment. The list goes on!

I also noticed that this role has had a lot of turnover in staff — even before I started in my General Manager role, so that indicated to me that the *structure* of that position was unsustainable.

Not only was the sound of the station at stake - so was our relationship with the community. KCAW volunteers are amazing, and ready to help when called. But what about those people who might also be amazing KCAW volunteers - how are we recruiting them? And how were we stewarding the breadth of human talent in KCAW, and in Sitka... but also in Angoon, Elfin Cove, Kake, Pelican, Port Alexander, Tenakee Springs, and Yakutat? What are potential opportunities we aren't thinking of? Who are the people that *aren't* in the room? What skills could we teach others, more broadly?

How can we better center our broadcast in our local communities and grow talented Alaskans into amazing broadcasters?

We divided the work ahead into several parts:

- divide out a position that focuses on operational matters,
- create a robust volunteer coordination system and role,
- develop a more comprehensive training program, that didn't rely only on in-person instruction,
- invite the community to advise KCAW on programming and program

development in an actionable way.

Right now, we are working to build capacity in each of those areas. Our priority was to keep the radio on, so we hired Bryan as the Operations Director. We are partnering with AmeriCorps this year to build the volunteer management system - and Cara Crain, our incoming Volunteer Coordinator, will arrive in January. We are designing the back-end of the volunteer management system now, and will have a prototype ready soon. As we complete this first phase of the restructuring, we'll have more info on the next steps. If you're interested in this process, or would like to give input on our system prototype and join our 'test group,' please get in touch with me!

That's more or less what we've got for you - we still have some time for questions. Please call 747-5877 if you'd like to ask a question on the air!

After this meeting, please continue to make comments by emailing Becky at [becky@kcaw.org](mailto:becky@kcaw.org)! We will also be sending our members an email with a document and the audio from this meeting.

That's it! Thanks for listening and for your membership with Raven Radio!