

YEAR IN REVIEW

2009



NEWS



NEWS

With its expansive coverage, in-depth analysis, colorful features and thoughtful commentary, NPR continued to set the standard for journalism. Drawing on reporters and correspondents based in the United States and around the world—from Washington and New York to Shanghai and Baghdad—NPR covered important and breaking news with stories that transported the audiences to the scene of the developments to hear from those directly affected.

NPR's breaking news reports and special live coverage included the presidential election and milestones such as the *funeral and burial of Senator Ted Kennedy**. NPR Legal Affairs correspondent Nina Totenberg broke the news that *Justice Souter was to retire from the Supreme Court* and that the Justice Department planned to *drop all charges against former Senator Ted Stevens*.

In addition to offering comprehensive coverage of the 2009 Presidential Inauguration, NPR was the only radio broadcaster of the live "*We Are One: The Obama Inaugural Celebration at the Lincoln Memorial*."

*[hyperlinks to original](#)

THE ECONOMY

In a year marked with global financial crises, NPR explained the complexities of Wall Street and described the real-life challenges on Main Street.

Planet Money, a multimedia reporting project led by NPR economics correspondent Adam Davidson and *This American Life* producer Alex Blumberg, anchored NPR's economic coverage this year. *The Planet Money* team offered clear eyed, insightful coverage making sense of the complicated environment with explainers such as "*The Giant Pool of Money*".

Noting the influential role the California economy has on the rest of the country, NPR News launched a multi-media series on *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered* and on *NPR.org* to identify and examine the key factors contributing to California's budget woes. The "*California In Crisis*" series featured reporting from NPR national correspondents Ina Jaffe and Carrie Kahn, both based at NPR West, and crime and punishment correspondent Laura Sullivan, with contributions from Rob Schmitz and John Myers of NPR Member station KQED in San Francisco and Capital Public Radio's Kelley Weiss.

All Things Considered relocated to NPR West in Culver City, CA, from NPR's DC headquarters for a month in 2009. This was the first time the long-running newsmagazine has been hosted for an extended period outside of Washington, D.C. The change of scenery during a pivotal time of California's budget crisis added new perspectives to the show's reporting.

Rounding out coverage of the economy with "*Dollar Politics*," a multi-part, multimedia series, NPR examined the extraordinary intersection between money and politics, and what it could mean for public policy.

INVESTIGATIVE NEWS

NPR News continued to delve deeply into the important stories of the year and stayed with them long after they faded from the daily news cycle. NPR News Investigations explored the details behind the headlines and filled the gaps where other news organizations often left off.

NPR correspondent Daniel Zwerdling's investigations into accused Fort Hood shooter *Nidal Hasan's history at Walter Reed hospital* included reports from Hasan's colleagues at the hospital, the memo that harshly *criticized Hasan's work performance* and *discussions between a Walter Reed and USUHS official* about Hasan's state of mind.

NPR News' counterterrorism correspondent Dina Temple-Raston *broke the news that the government was charging eight more people with terrorism offenses* related to the disappearance of young Somali-Americans in Minneapolis.

In a two-part report airing on *Morning Edition*, Daniel Zwerdling *investigated an inspector general report that airlines in the United States are cutting costs by outsourcing maintenance* to developing countries, often with less monitoring by the FAA.

FOREIGN COVERAGE

With 17 foreign bureaus and correspondents and stringers all around the world, NPR continued its commitment in 2009 to covering the important stories happening outside the United States. Several ground breaking features brought together a greater alignment between on-air and online reporting.

From the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to the *rebuilding in China a year after the 2008 earthquake* and nuclear weapons in Iran, NPR was on the front lines reporting and telling the stories as these battles were being fought on the ground and in the hearts of the people. Here are some of the highlights:

“Life Along Israel’s Barrier” was a four-part multimedia series that explored the effects of the barrier on the lives of those who live there today: the workers, businessmen, settlers and soldiers.

NPR correspondent Lourdes Garcia-Navarro and staff photographer John Poole traveled through Peru seeking first-hand accounts on effect of the building of a transcontinental highway under construction in Peru and Brazil. The series, *“Traveling Down The Amazon Road”* brought to life the possibilities of the highway from the prospects of economic opportunity to environmental ruin of some of the most remote places on the planet.

In a five-part series, *“Emerging Cultural Voices In Africa,”* NPR explored new artists from Africa. From the Bob Marley of Ethiopia to a poet, actor and writer who is a voice for South Africa’s post-apartheid “born-frees,” these stories reflected the continent’s vibrant artistic activity.

Morning Edition host Renée Montagne traveled to *Afghanistan* to report on the *voters* and *candidates* key to the Afghan *presidential elections*.

NPR explored Iran’s pursuit of nuclear weapons including an *interview with Ambassador Susan Rice*, her first one-on-one broadcast interview as U.S. Ambassador to United Nations.

The nine-part, in-depth exploration across all NPR newsmagazines, *“The Challenges of a Nuclear Iran,”* examined the state of Iran’s weapons program and the potential ramifications of a nuclear-armed Tehran.

In 2009, NPR sat down to talk with *Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad*. *Morning Edition* host Steve Inskeep conducted NPR’s first interview with the leader.

On the Media, NPR’s program devoted to media criticism and analysis, *interviewed soldier-turned-reporter Matt Mabe from his base in Afghanistan after he was called back into active duty*. Mabe detailed the military practice of commissioning private companies to research, profile and assess reporters’ previous military coverage. The interview sparked a wider investigation by the *Stars & Stripes* newspaper and eventually a termination of the contract to conduct such assessments.

HEALTH CARE

Delving deep into the national debate, NPR peeled back the layers of the complex issues to reveal the reasons for the high costs of health care in the United States and revelations about the drug industry, and interviewed President Obama on financing of the health care bill.

All Things Considered host Robert Siegel and health policy correspondent Julie Rovner sat down for an *interview with President Obama* focusing on the financing of the health care bill.

NPR's Alix Spiegel reported on the surprising financial impact of healthcare decisions made by doctors and patients in a three-part series, "**How Health Care Became So Expensive.**"

For the "*The Biography of a Medication*" piece, NPR investigated the line between disease and the drug industry by looking at how diseases have evolved to fit prescriptions.

SCIENCE

NPR has long been known for its innovative and in-depth coverage of developments in the natural world with coverage of science on a broad range of the latest studies and trends.

This year Robert Krulwich continued his innovative series, "*On Science*" by examining *all things scientific*. In each report through sound, storytelling and often animated video, Krulwich examined and explained perplexities such as *ants who count*, how *crows can tell humans apart* and the secret *advantage to being short*.

As an extension to the insightful and informative science and health coverage heard on air, *NPR.org* continued to report and provided expanded coverage through dedicated *science* and *health* pages, as well as through the health blog, "*Shots*".

PEOPLE

Behind every great piece, story or series are journalists editors, and producers dedicated to fulfilling the mission of NPR. Throughout this year, we celebrated and welcomed individuals whose contributions make NPR a success.

After 30 years of diligently waking up at 1:05 a.m., Carl Kasell *signed off for the last time as a newscaster* during *Morning Edition* on December 30. Listeners were thrilled to hear he will continue in his role as official judge and scorekeeper on the NPR news quiz program, *Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me!* and will hit the road as NPR's roving ambassador to visit listeners at Member stations across the country.

Guy Raz—a former NPR intern, Berlin bureau chief, London bureau chief and most recently defense correspondent—took the reins as the *weekend host of All Things Considered* midway through this year. Raz's experience reporting from more than 40 countries and throughout NPR allows for a fresh perspective and deeper connection with the news and audiences.

Network radio news veteran *Robert Garcia was named as the executive producer of NPR Newscasts* in 2009. Garcia brings 13 years of executive level news experience at ABC News Radio, CNN Radio and CBS Radio's Washington Bureau to his new role.

Susanne Reber, a prominent investigative radio editor and producer, was hired to *lead NPR's new investigative journalism unit* as Deputy Managing Editor of Investigations. Reber led the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's news investigative unit for seven years prior to her appointment at NPR.

+ CULTURE ENTERTAINMENT



CULTURE+ENTERTAINMENT

NPR's *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!* continued to bring news, challenges and hilarity to every corner of America with live road shows including a sold-out show at *Carnegie Hall* in New York; *Berkeley, CA*; *Washington, D.C.*; *Austin, TX*; *Dayton, OH*; the outdoor *Millennium Park* in Chicago; *Chapel Hill, NC*; *Santa Barbara, CA*; *Boston*; *Pasadena, CA*; and *Atlanta*.

Weekend *All Things Considered* launched the very successful "Three Minute Fiction" contest in the summer. Collaborating with listeners in a new way, the *contest challenged listeners to write an original piece of fiction* that can be read in three minutes and must incorporate the prompt. Thousands of listeners responded in each of the two rounds. The finalists' essays were posted on NPR.org and the *winner's piece was read on the air*.

It's all fun and games when there's a Fiat to laugh about, but Tom and Ray, the *Car Talk* guys, also have a serious side when it comes to staying safe while driving. The *Driver Distracted Center* launched this year on CarTalk.com featuring community discussions, key facts about the perils of driving while distracted and a driver distraction quiz. Produced in partnership with the University of Utah Applied Cognition Laboratory, researcher David Strayer, one of the leading national researchers on driver distraction, hosts the Center's blog.

Car Talk's Vehicle Donation Program continued to get environmentally unfriendly aging jalopies off the road. The successful program has already sent several million dollars to stations.

NPR MUSIC



NPR MUSIC

NPR Music presented *two concerts from an eclectic range of musicians* during the internationally renowned 2009 South by Southwest Music and Media Conference in Austin, TX. NPR Member stations KUT Austin, WFUV New York, WXPB Philadelphia, KEXP Seattle and The Current from Minnesota Public Radio partnered with NPR to offer extensive multimedia coverage of the influential music festival. In addition to its concerts and events, NPR offered artist interviews, reports and live performance sessions. NPR kept tabs on the Austin scene via the “*All Songs Considered*” blog and Twitter @allsongs.

The “*Tiny Desk Concert*” series continued in full force this year with invitations to musicians for an unlikely stage for a live concert – the desk of Bob Boilen, host and producer of NPR Music’s *All Songs Considered*. Highlights included six new songs by the *Swell Season* and a concert by the legendary *Tom Jones*.

In “*The Decade In Music: ‘00s*” series, NPR Music presented a music retrospective with a focus on the most important songs of the last 10 years and the changes in the music industry.

NPR Music, together with WBGONewark, NJ; WBGH Boston; WFUV New York; FolkAlley.com WKSU Kent, OH; and mvyradio on Martha’s Vineyard and in Newport, presented an exclusive live webcast and broadcast of dozens of the country’s most acclaimed artists performances from George Wein’s *Folk Festival 50 and CareFusion Jazz Festival 55*.

NPR MUSIC

A dynamic, if unexpected, mix of three diverse groups and sounds came together at an *NPR Music concert at Joe's Pub in New York City*. The concert, inspired by the eclectic curatorial vision of NPR Music, included performances by soul singer Lee Fields & The Expressions; New York-based indie collective The Phenomenal Handclap Band; and nine-piece jazz ensemble Fight the Big Bull, joined by Steven Bernstein.

NPR's exclusive First Listens series—albums available for streaming at NPRMusic.org before they are commercially released—ramped up this year with an amazing playlist including *Bruce Springsteen's Working on a Dream*, *Moby's Wait for Me*; *Regina Spektor's Far* and *Neko Case's Middle Cyclone*.

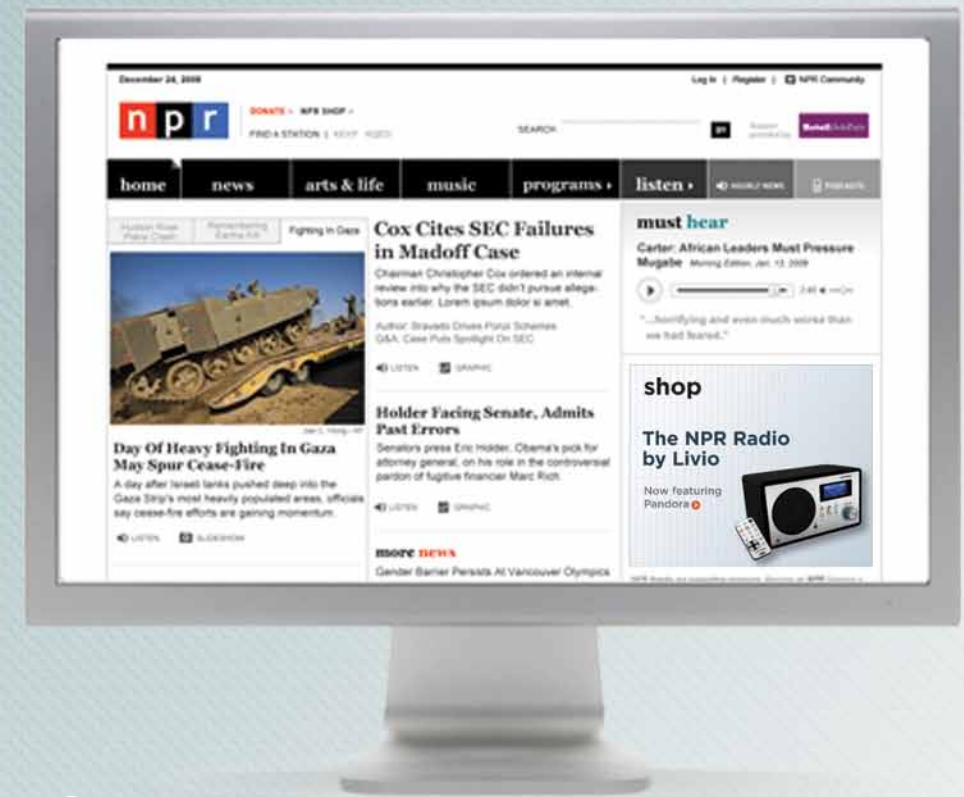
Pitting old school versus new school, *World Café from NPR and WXPB host David Dye moderated the generational debate*: which era of rock really reigns supreme? Making the case for contemporary music was Ryan Schreiber, editor of the taste-making Internet publication *Pitchfork*, and speaking for classic rock was Dave Thompson, critic and author of the classic rock manifesto, *I Hate New Music*. Delving into some of the core dividing issues, the rivals discussed how the Internet affects musical discovery and how musicians draw from prior eras.

NPR's *World Cafe* focused a Thanksgiving special on one of the most highly praised albums of the year, Rosanne Cash's *The List*. Host *David Dye interviewed Cash* and her husband, Grammy Award winning producer John Leventhal, about the making of the album's tracks, country essentials selected by her legendary father, Johnny Cash. Listeners were treated to never-before-aired live tracks performed by Cash at WXPB.

From the Top, the preeminent showcase for young classical musicians, *celebrated its 10th season on public radio* in 2009 with *live-audiences show tapings in Portland, ME; Dallas, TX; and Hilo, HI*. Representing the thousands of young musicians who have appeared on the show over the past decade, *From the Top* featured 10 alumni spotlights illustrating the many ways that this generation of young musicians is stretching the boundaries of classical music and contributing something special to the world.

The *From the Top* broadcast at the *El Paso Summer Music Festival* in June 2009 celebrated of the partnership between the show and the *Jack Kent Cooke Foundation*. At the time of this broadcast, this scholarship program had passed the \$1 million mark by awarding 100 young musicians with financial need over the last five years.

DIGITAL MEDIA



DIGITAL MEDIA

NPR advanced its position as a technological pioneer with the launch of the new NPR.org, apps and sites for mobile devices, making use of the open application programming interface. These new and re-designed platforms make it easier for listeners to access content when they want it, where they want it. Exploration is encouraged and Member stations become an even more vital player in the public radio spectrum in the process.

THE LAUNCH OF THE NEW NPR.ORG

The new NPR.org highlights news, arts and music, reflecting both NPR's reporting strengths and the interests of the audience. The redesigned home page makes it easy to follow the news throughout the day, with the top stories updated regularly and featured prominently, and up-to-the-minute discussions of the day's news. The site is structured to feature an enhanced visual storytelling, offering more photos, images and graphics, and better integration of text and audio content. Audio options are presented more prominently throughout the site and allow fans to organize the various ways to listen to NPR—through their favorite NPR station, live stream or via podcast. Visitors can localize their homepage to receive a mix of local and national news feeds, streams and podcasts.

BRINGING PUBLIC RADIO TO MOBILE DEVICES

As smart phones got smarter and mobile devices brought the Internet into more and more hands, NPR launched device-specific apps and sites to bring NPR and public radio to the users. The NPR News App was the first news-oriented app that offers iPhone and iPod Touch users the option to read, browse or listen to a robust selection of NPR news stories and programs. Also this year, the NPR Mobile website was redesigned to offer easy access to hundreds of live and on-demand NPR and NPR station programs, and greatly improve the user experience for all mobile devices. In 2009, NPR became the first U.S. radio broadcaster to launch an app for Android-enabled devices. Powered by NPR's API, the NPR News Android app uses open source code which allows developers and NPR stations to iterate and improve the app in the future.

EXPERIMENT IN LOCAL JOURNALISM: PROJECT ARGO

NPR broke new ground with an experiment to *develop and expand local journalism at the local station level*. The two year project—dubbed Project Argo internally—is designed to help pilot stations establish themselves as the go-to source of news on specific topics most relevant to their community. Project Argo will allow the stations to have the resources to expand original reporting and to curate, distribute and share online content.

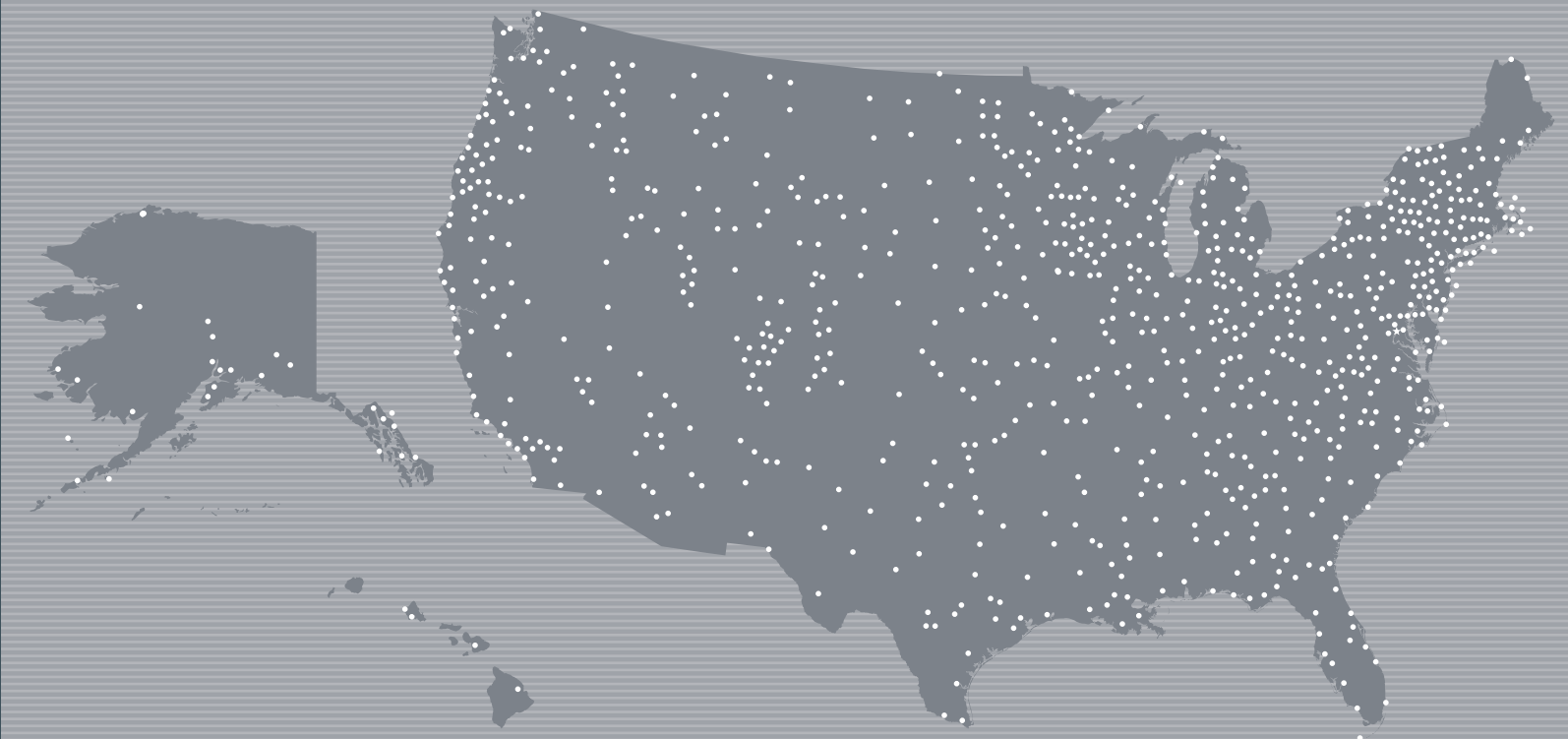
DIGITAL THINK-IN

NPR invited thought leaders across a variety of disciplines to a *Digital Think-In to help public media envision the next stage of a digital media strategy*. This one-day interactive workshop explored alternative business models and news gathering opportunities and distribution outlets.

PUBLIC MEDIA “UN-CONFERENCE”

NPR and PBS hosted more than 300 community organizers, bloggers, technology developers and public media staffers at the first national PublicMediaCamp (PubCamp), an initiative to strengthen the relationship between public broadcasters and their communities through the development of collaborative projects, both online and offline. Beginning with a national kickoff event in Washington, D.C., PubCamp set the stage for local events hosted by participating stations. Intended to develop new models for local PBS and NPR stations to connect and collaborate with their communities, PubCamp used the “unconference” format where all the attendees organized the event activities themselves, created their own sessions and worked on projects organically without a previously set schedule.

AUDIENCE



AUDIENCE

Despite decline in ratings and usage of traditional news media, NPR's weekly audience has remained strong and surpasses the combined circulation of *USA Today*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post* and the next largest 52 newspapers combined. On average, listeners spend 6.5 hours a week listening to NPR stations.¹ Unlike the challenges facing the newspaper industry, TV network news and news radio generally, NPR's audience is expanding. NPR.org serves about 11 million visitors a month on its web and mobile platforms, and generates nearly 15 million podcast downloads each month.

AUDIENCE OVERVIEW

Total weekly listeners for all NPR stations	33.9 million ²
Total weekly listeners for NPR programming and newscasts	27.1 million ³
NPR.org, Average unique visitors per month	10.9 million ⁴
Average monthly downloads of NPR-produced podcasts	14.7 million ⁵
Average monthly page views for NPR Mobile	19.3 million ⁶

¹ Arbitron Tapscan, Spring 2009, Total US, Persons 12+, Monday-Sunday 6am-12midnight.

² ACT 1 based on Arbitron Nationwide, Fall 2009, Persons 12+, based on program broadcast times, Mon-Sun Midnight-Midnight.

³ ACT 1 based on Arbitron Nationwide, Fall 2009, Persons 12+, based on program broadcast times, Mon-Sun Midnight-Midnight.

⁴ Omniture, 3-month average, Sept-Nov 2009.

⁵ Omniture, 3-month average, Sept-Nov 2009.

⁶ Omniture/Crisp Wireless, 3-month average, Sept-Nov 2009

AWARDS



AWARDS

NPR's high quality journalism series and in-depth reporting did not go unnoticed in 2009, but was honored with the most distinguished awards in the industry: three duPont-Columbia Awards, three Peabody Awards, three RTNDA Edward R. Murrow Awards, seven Webby Awards, a Scripps Howard Foundation National Journalism Award and a Gracie Award.

Three 2009 Edward R. Murrow Awards

China Earthquake Coverage
2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing
"Dirty Money"

Three 2008 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Awards

China Earthquake Coverage
"Sexual Abuse of Native American Women"
"Giant Pool of Money"

Three 2009 Peabody Awards

China Earthquake Coverage
"36 Years in Solitary: Murder, Death and Justice on Angola"
"Giant Pool of Money"

AWARDS

Seven Webby Awards

Best Radio Site (membership)
Best Music Site (membership)
Best Mobile News (membership)
Best Music Online Video (membership)
Best Radio Site (public competition)
Best Music Site (public competition)
Best Podcasts (public competition)

National Association of Black Journalists

Journalist of the Year—Michele Norris, *All Things Considered* host

2008 Scripps Howard Foundation National Journalism Award

“*Dirty Money*”

2009 Gracie Award, American Women in Radio & Television

Some Muslims in U.S. Quietly Engage in Polygamy

2009 White House News Photographers Association’s *The Eyes of History* award

Best Use of Photography and Audio with Narration

1st Place - Crafting China’s Future Champions
3rd Place - From The Iraq War, A Troubled Romance In America
Award of Excellence - A Walk Through Beijing’s Vanishing Hutongs

Still Photography - Best Picture Story/Politics

1st Place - Birmingham, James Armstrong

Still Photography – Pictorial

Award of Excellence – Gaza

Video News Special Reports/Features

3rd Place - Afghan Dispatches

Video Documentary

2nd Place - Project Song: Nellie McKay

Political Video

2nd Place - New Hampshire Campaign

Video Feature

Award of Excellence - Dreaming Green in Ukraine

Video Lighting

3rd Place - Lighting Composite

Audio

3rd Place - Voices from the Front

Sports Video Editing

3rd Place - Afghan Olympian

Video Editing, Long Form

1st Place - Project Song: Nellie McKay

Video Editing, Sports

1st Place - A Good Throw

Audio

1st Place - A Good Throw

Sports Video

3rd Place - A Good Throw

Video Editing, Short Form

Award of Excellence - Burned in the War

Audio Editing, Short Form

Award of Excellence - Project Song: Nellie McKay

Vision Free Products’ Wonder Vision Award, presented by Stevie Wonder at the 2009 Consumer Electronics Show.

NPR, for its work in accessible digital radio and broadcast services for the sensory impaired

2009 Communications Award from The National Academies

Climate Connections series

Category: Online/Internet

Online News Association’s 2009 Online Journalism Award

Planet Money

Category: Online Topical Reporting/Blogging, Large Site

PHILANTHROPY + PUBLIC RADIO



PHILANTHROPY+PUBLIC RADIO

NPR and our Member stations focused on encouraging listeners and supporters to play an even greater role in the public radio community this year. As those who care most deeply about public radio and its future joined together to create a new vision, this community gave new life and possibilities for the public media industry.

NPR's philanthropic efforts sought out untapped potential throughout the public radio system as well as supported and worked with the Member stations.

As one example of our philanthropy, NPR brought its Saturday stars together for the first time ever at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C., for the "NPR Without the Dignity" event in November. *Weekend Edition* host Scott Simon led a conversation with the *Car Talk* brothers Tom and Ray Magliozzi and *Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me!* host Peter Sagal and official judge and scorekeeper Carl Kasell.

Across the media industry, NPR's increasingly pivotal role in journalism was recognized:

Fast Company, March 18, 2009, *Will NPR Save the News?*

Columbia Journalism Review, March/April 2010, *NPR Amps Up*

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LEADERSHIP

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Marisla Fund
MetLife Foundation
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
The Pew Charitable Trusts
U.S. Department of Commerce
Wallace Genetic Foundation

\$25,000–49,999

Jacob & Valeria Langeloth Foundation
Overbrook Foundation
Ploughshares Fund
Public Welfare Foundation
Retirement Research Foundation
Surdna Foundation
The Norman & Rosita Winston Foundation

\$10,000–\$24,999

The Bydale Foundation
Joseph Drown Foundation
Ducommun and Gross Foundation
Mary W. Harriman Foundation
The Holborn Foundation
The Giles W. and Elise G. Mead Foundation
The Ambrose Monell Foundation

\$1,000–\$9,999

Ad Hoc Foundation
GPK Foundation
Leon Lowenstein Foundation
Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation
The Middle Passage Foundation