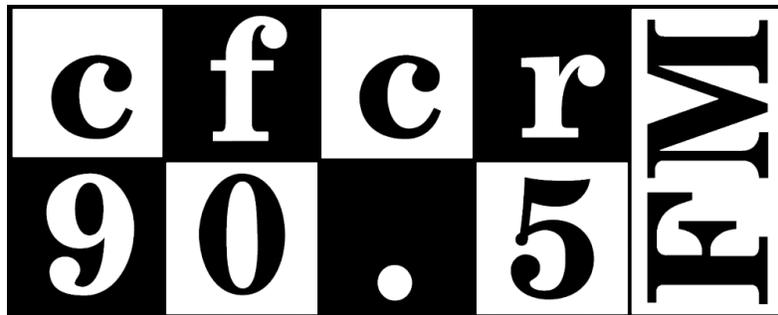


Community Radio Society of Saskatoon

CFCR 90.5 FM

Annual Report

AGM: May 25, 2021



# We Put Community On The Radio

CFCR 90.5 FM Community Radio is a non-profit corporation owned by the Community Radio Society of Saskatoon. We are a volunteer-powered, listener-supported organization serving the alternative radio needs of Saskatoon and surrounding areas.

Our mandate is to build and foster community, creativity, and connection by putting radio in the hands of the people of Saskatoon in a way that reflects the cultural and artistic diversity of our city. We provide a platform for alternative and local music to be shared, while also providing a voice on the airwaves for Saskatoon communities that is typically not available or supported by other radio outlets.

As CFCR is a non-profit organization and we have a small, hardworking staff. We work with the guidance of our Board of Directors.



# Message From the General Manager

To say the last year has been the most challenging one on record would be correct. To say it has been like no other would also be correct. And to say that we fared better than we could have hoped is also correct. The year began with COVID-19 and the uncertainty that it brought. No one knew where things were going in the beginning except that business and life as we knew it was going to change for the worse. And it did. Businesses closed their doors and people stayed home. It was just the beginning.

The first challenge for us at CFCR was how to keep the station live and on the air and with that I'd like to start out by thanking the staff for the incredible job they did over the initial 3 months and have continued to do the rest of the year. We shut down the station to Volunteers and the general public on March 16 and welcomed the Volunteers back on June 15. For a period of 3 months the staff kept the station on the air live from 8am until 9pm Monday to Friday, covering all the shows whatever format they might be. The dedication and hard work of the staff to keep the station live and alive over the 3 months was crucial. It was done with optimism, hope, goodwill and a belief in the value of Community Radio to bring some comfort and value to people's lives. Thanks to the staff for going above and beyond to keep Community Radio alive and well.

I'd also like to thank the volunteers who came back after the 3 months to continue their programs either live in studio or by recording them from home. We would not be able to exist without our volunteers. Of course the station had to come up with new protocols and safety procedures to keep everyone safe and healthy and with the guidance of Sask Health we were able to come up with new protocols and procedures that have kept us in good stead over the past year. We have only had 2 cases of COVID in the station over the last 12 months and both of them were singular in nature and did not affect anyone else in the station due to the protocols and cleaning we instituted.

The second challenge was paying the bills and for that I'd like to thank the Federal Government. The wage subsidy really saved us, especially in the early months of the pandemic. We've received over \$100,000.00 in federal support through the wage subsidy program. We've also accessed \$60,000.00 in loans from the Federal Government and only have to pay back \$40,000.00 of the loans when we repay them in the allotted time, which should not be a problem.

The third challenge was getting clients back on the air. We had a few clients that stuck with us and for that we are really grateful but a lot of clients simply couldn't afford to advertise when their businesses were closed. We lost a lot of clients including Affinity Credit Union which was

basically our only corporate client and our biggest advertiser. The good news is that early indications this spring are that business is returning to the airwaves. We've had to reduce our prices and come up with many different plans to suit every price range but clients are returning slowly but surely.

The next challenge will be in the year to come. The wage subsidy will be gone by September and will leave a large hole for us to fill. We'll need to generate over \$100,000.00 more in the coming year than we did in the past year and that will be a challenge. We've managed to keep costs down and everyone employed to this point and hoping to do the same in the upcoming year.

Last but not least I'd like to thank our listeners. We had the best FM-Phasis in the history of the station this past year which is a testament to our listening audience and the volunteers who went out in very trying circumstances and raised over \$75,000.00 for the station. We will need to do the same and more in the coming year to keep Community Radio alive and well and with the support of the community, volunteers and our staff I'm optimistic we'll continue to thrive and serve the city of Saskatoon.

Neil Bergen, General Manager



# Message From the Board Chair

Welcome members to the virtual AGM of your community radio station. I had mentioned in my remarks last year that I had hoped the Zoom AGM would be a one-time occurrence; the virus had other plans so once again we meet by Zoom.

This past year was another challenge economically; however thanks to the efforts of staff and Neil in particular we kept expenses under control. Thankfully the Federal government stepped in with significant support, had this not been the case our situation would surely have been worse.

Fund raising was once again a problem, but we did manage to break a record for FM-Phasis donations. Through the hard work of staff, hosts and the generosity of our listeners we raised over \$70k this year. We are really hoping that starting in fall the live music world will be on its way to normal and we can have some shows once again. I believe that Joel Plaskett is still on board for later in the year. In addition please have a look at our musical instrument auction coming up next month.

I am ending my board responsibilities and I would like to thank the staff, volunteers, listeners and my fellow board members for their support and hard work though my tenure as board chair. It has been an honor to be part of this community gem that we call CFCR.

Guy Edlund, Board Chair



# Message From the Program Director

The COVID-19 pandemic brought many programming challenges very suddenly in March, 2020, and while we have managed those challenges well, they continue well into 2021, and may in some respects be a “new normal” for the station. Primarily, the volume of prerecorded content that we air regularly has increased greatly. While I am very thankful for all the Hosts who sprung into action to create new content for us when we closed the station down to the public and volunteers in March 2020, I do hope we can revert back to more live programming, especially during the day, as I feel that we have lost a certain level of timeliness with the recorded programming. You can't tell the listeners what the weather is like outside if you're recording your show days in advance!

## 1. PROGRAMMING & HOST CHANGES:

### PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE CHANGES:

OVERALL – Overall, there weren't any major, sweeping changes to the way our Program Schedule is organized this year. Weekday Daytime programming remains in its “Block Format,” followed by the Spoken Word block (Mon 6-7pm, Tues-Fri 6-7:30pm), and Evening Open & Specialty shows afterwards. Multicultural Programming remains on the weekends during the day.

DAYTIME – When COVID hit, several Hosts opted to stay away from the station when we reopened the studio in June 2020. Some of those Hosts started recording from home, but some just decided to hit ‘pause’ on their hosting, until it was safe to return. A few of those Hosts still have not come back to the studio. But otherwise, it seems like there has actually been less Host turnover in our daytime programming than in the past. There are a few more cases of Hosts doing multiple programs, which previously was usually avoided, but we haven't had too many people leaving.

EVENING – Since COVID hit, we have seen a couple of longtime programs leave the airwaves: Expansions (Host: Jason Armitage (aka Dr. J)) and Fake Headlines (Host: Paul Pybus). There were no ill feelings between the Hosts & the station, I think it was just the right time for these Hosts to hang up the headphones, so to speak.

SPOKEN WORD – I have been working to fill a couple of vacant slots in our Spoken Word segment of programs, as well as one program that will mostly feature talk content, but that will be broadcast outside the Spoken Word block. It's a somewhat involved process, from Program application, to approval, to scheduling, to fine tuning the format, to training, and finally airing. I have a couple of new programs that have recently begun or are about to begin:

- Switching Gears (Thurs, 6:30-7pm) – A program featuring a wide variety of cycling topics. Hosted by Tyler Rittinger.
- F.I.R.E. (Feminist Intersectional Radio Education) – A program that picks up where our previous feminist/gender program The Laundry List left off, focusing on intersectionality and feminism. Hosted by a rotating group of amazing Hosts!
- AudioCalma (Tues, 7-7:30pm) – A program to help you unwind, featuring new age music & thoughtful meditation exercises. Hosted by Miguel Canal (aka Angel)
- Homelands (Wed, 7-7:30pm) – A program featuring a wide range of Indigenous people and their stories. Hosted by Andréa Ledding.

I am hoping to develop a sort of “podcast” area on our website, whereby we could be developing programming, even if it doesn’t go on the airwaves right away (ie: Hosted at CFCR.ca for people to listen to on-demand). This may grow in conjunction with a greater project to make all our content available on-demand for listeners!

MULTICULTURAL – Our weekend cultural programs have remained more or less constant in the last year. One show that isn’t technically a cultural program, but does focus on issues for Newcomers to Canada/Saskatoon (Voice Of Saskatoon) just left the airwaves since the Host had to return home to Pakistan, but I’m working with the Open Door Society and Intercultural Association to start a new program with similar topics. Our long-running German program, Trefpunkt Deutschland saw a change in Hosts, and as a result, a change in music (the new Hosts are younger and more interested in playing modern German music). It became evident that it made sense to change the name of the program, and it is now called Deutsch Klanfabrik (translates roughly to “German Music Factory”). I am (and have always been) very open to having folks do a program with more traditional German music, but I haven’t had anyone come forward to take it on.

## 2. TRAINING & RECRUITING

Training is another thing that halted suddenly in March 2020. We are carefully reintroducing training back into the station, while limiting the number of people in the studio at any one time. There is a steady stream of new Trainees coming through the station, so hopefully some of those Hosts doing multiple shows will get a break soon!

## 3. INTERVIEWS & THE BUZZ

Interviews overall essentially ceased in March 2020, and are now just starting to start back up, but since we are still closed to the public, most of the interviews are being done remotely (by phone, Zoom). This has made the process of booking, recording, and airing the interview a much more time-consuming process, and I am very excited for the day that we can have live guests in

the studio again! Big thanks go out to the Hosts who have been spending extra time recording interviews to run on their programs!

#### 4. TECHNICAL/OTHER

ON-DEMAND – One of my main goals to pursue over the next few years is to make it possible for listeners to stream our programming on-demand, and I am working hard to make this a reality. With our finances where there currently are, it may not be possible for us to afford to do it all right away, but I'm trying to get as many pieces as I can in-place without spending any money, and we are exploring sponsorship/grant options that may help to pay for the project. I really believe this should be seen as a priority for the station to retain our supporters who may not be able to listen to their favourite shows when we broadcast them live.

AUTOMATION – COVID has brought a much greater need for automation at the station, because of the influx of recorded programming. The software we had been using for many years (DirEttore) has shown major signs that it cannot keep up with our needs (or the needs of the latest Windows operating system), so I have been on the hunt for a replacement. After long last, and hours of testing (with much more to come), I have decided to try a free program called RadioDJ. It is being used by a few of our fellow Community/Campus stations in Canada, and seems to be a reliable and full-featured option (and the price is right!).

PAPERWORK – I am working to update a couple of key pieces of paperwork at the station: our Program Log (ie: music log) and our Volunteer Broadcaster Agreement. These will be rolled out very soon.

I think that's it for this year!

Your friendly neighborhood Program Director, Jay Allen (pd@cfcf.ca / 306-291-6578)



# We're a Community of Volunteers

Volunteers are what power our station. When we closed our doors to volunteers in 2020, the staff felt the weight of the work our volunteers do fall on our shoulders. But we always felt their presence and support, and in hindsight it is amazing how quickly everyone was able to adapt. Many hosts immediately recorded shows from home or sent in playlists for our staff to program. Even more called to give support, make donations to the station, and gave us likes and shares on social media. With increased cleaning procedures and precautions in place, many volunteers are back into the studio and many still choose to record from home.

FM-Phasis was another time our volunteers came through for us above and beyond the normal hard work they do. In 2020 we raised over \$75,000 during FM-Phasis! We have to give thanks all who generously donated in a time of great uncertainty, and to our amazing sponsors and partners.



## 2020-2021 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

In the normalcy of early 2020, we were able to have business as usual for our two events, Fe-BREWARY and Chinese New Year. For the first few months of the pandemic our focus was on keeping on air programming running smoothly, and by June we were able to work on some digital events.

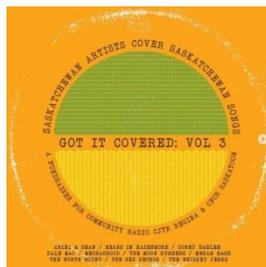
**Fe-BREWARY-** The third year of hosting the FeBREWary Friday social at Paved Arts was a success once again, with pizza and beer and DJs!

**Chinese New Year** – our Chinese New Year Celebration saw a delicious meal, great cultural entertainment, and a chance to thank our amazing sponsors.

**Cultural Showcase-** We were successful in receiving a grant through the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan that was meant to be for a live concert, which we ended up filming (socially distanced with no audience) and putting on YouTube! We have the grant funding to do a second part in 2021. You can see the performance on [youtube.com/cfcrsaskatoon](https://youtube.com/cfcrsaskatoon)

**Community Radio Summer Camp** – We held our first annual summer camp in 2020! This was meant to be in person but we adapted the format and offered it online for free to 6 youth. Thanks to our Camp Coordinator Dana Durell, and the Community Initiatives Fund for funding the project. Radio Camp Part two has applications available right now!

**Got It Covered Volume 3:** We didn't do any in person event for this release, but we put out a rockin' compilation album of ten great Saskatchewan artists covering equally great Saskatchewan Songs.



From all of the Staff and Board at CFCR 90.5 FM, thank you for supporting  
Community Radio now and into the future!