

Kathy Mattea hosts NPT series on Issues Affecting the Aging / Those that Care For Them

Contributed by Joe Pagetta
 Wednesday, 21 August 2013
 Last Updated Friday, 23 August 2013

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 Credit: David McClister

'NPT Reports: Aging Matters' to spend more than three years exploring significant factors surround an aging population NASHVILLE, Tennessee -- August 22, 2013 -- Kathy Mattea, the Grammy and CMA Award-winning singer-songwriter and advocate for a number of causes, including AIDS awareness and research, global warming and Appalachian mining practices, will host a new Nashville Public Television (NPT) series focused on the issues that surround an increasing older population. The series, 'NPT Reports: Aging Matters,' premieres on Thursday, September 12, 2013 at 8:00 p.m. on NPT with 'End of Life,' an episode exploring the difficult though important topic of end-of life-care. A national version will be distributed through American Public Television (APT) later this year.

Following in the footsteps of NPT's previous two multi-year, socially engaged and award-winning projects, 'Next Door Neighbors' and 'NPT Reports: Children's Health Crisis,' 'NPT Reports: Aging Matters' is a major multi-year initiative designed to open a community-based conversation about what Middle Tennessee's older citizens need to optimize their quality of life and what the community needs to do to prepare for a coming explosion in our aging population. Over a three to five year period NPT will focus on these issues -- caregiving, finances, end-of-life issues, dementia and Alzheimer's among them -- through at least six documentaries, televised town hall or panel discussions, 'Aging Matters' updates, community engagement conversations, a project website, interactive OVEE screenings and DVD distribution.

'Children's Health Crisis' shared a wealth of information with the community, and proved there was an interest in extensive in-depth coverage of issues affecting Middle Tennessee,' said Beth Curley, president and CEO of NPT. 'As a generation ages, they and those that care for them -- both personally and institutionally -- will have important decisions to make. Now is the time to be informed.' Mattea will introduce and close each episode, providing context from a trusted voice in the community, and from someone who herself has had experience with caring for the elderly. Her late mother Ruth and two of her aunts had Alzheimer's. It's that personal connection that led Mattea to lend her name, voice and image to the Alzheimer's Association and to Abe's Garden, a non-profit Alzheimer's and dementia care facility planned in Nashville. Her song 'Where've You Been,' co-written by her husband Jon Vezner, earned her a Grammy in 1990 for Best Female Country Vocal Performance. The song has become a source of strength for families of loved ones with Alzheimer's.

"I have had firsthand experience with loving someone while they walk through the stages of Alzheimer's," said Mattea. "I'm honored to be part of NPT's thoughtful and timely coverage of this and other issues surrounding our aging population."

Twice named Female Vocalist of the Year by the Country Music Association, West Virginia-native Mattea carved out a role for herself in the late 1980s and 1990s as a sensitive yet energetic artist at ease both with country tradition and free-ranging innovation. With close to thirty Top 40 country hits, including 15 Top 10s and 4 Number Ones, five gold albums and a platinum-selling greatest hits compilation, she is among the most successful women in the genre's history.

Her creative spirit continues to lead her to explore musical territory extending well beyond its confines. Her latest release, 'Calling Me Home,' an exploration of the music of her native Appalachia and a follow up to 2008's critically acclaimed 'Coal,' was released in the fall of 2012 on Sugar Hill Records.

'Mattea's work with the Alzheimer's Association and locally with Abe's Garden, in addition to her role advocating for numerous causes during her career, indicate her strong commitment to respect, dignity and the value of the human spirit,' added Curley. 'She is an inspiration to singers, songwriters and anyone aspiring to live an engaged life.'

'NPT Reports: Aging Matters: End of Life' is made possible in part through the generous support of Cigna-HealthSpring, West End Home Foundation, Jeanette Travis Foundation and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

About Nashville Public Television:

Nashville Public Television, Nashville's PBS station, is available free and over-the-air to nearly 2.4 million people throughout the Middle Tennessee and southern Kentucky viewing area, through its main NPT and secondary NPT2 channels, and to anyone in the world through its stable of NPT Digital services, including wnpt.org, YouTube and the

PBS video app. The mission of NPT is to provide, through the power of traditional television and interactive digital communications, high quality educational, cultural and civic experiences that address issues and concerns of the people of the Nashville region, and which thereby help improve the lives of those we serve.