The threads of history can connect our past with one of our continuing productions at Rocky Mountain PBS. **Super School News** (SSN) is currently celebrating its 37th year as the longest continuous local broadcast produced by Rocky Mountain PBS since 1979-80. That’s impressive!

Did you know that our local production, **SUPER SCHOOL NEWS** that thrives on our air today was originally titled “Super Six School News?” This innovative program conducted its very first student orientation at the Channel Six studios at 1261 Glenarm on December 13, 1979.

On that December date, sixty-five young and excited Channel SIX elementary school newscasters selected from thirty Denver Public Schools reported for their first day of “work” at KRMA. Escorted by faculty advisors from their respective schools, the children got an inside look at the world of television during an orientation session designed to initiate them as “Super Six School Newscasters.”

Trudy Fowler, KRMA’s Director of Development in 1979, initially presented the concept of SSN to KRMA Executives and members of the Denver Public School Board in 1979. When attending the program’s 30th anniversary celebration at the Rocky Mountain PBS Studios in 2010, Trudy said, “I think, without a doubt, that Super (Six) School News was and continues to be, one of the best station outreach programs ever.”

Back in 1979, coordinated with Denver Public Schools by KRMA’s staff and volunteers, the young students were provided with rookie press cards, handbooks and Super Six t-Shirts. Along with the orientation, one hundred and fifty lunches were served to the students, teachers and volunteers. During the afternoon, promotional spots were shot to tell viewers about the exciting new production by KRMA-TV. The first season of SSSN, 1979-
1980, was underwritten by the Johns-Manville Corporation. The current season is supported by a generous donation from the Colorado Education Association (CEA).

The original project benefitted Channel SIX in those early years throughout the Denver Public Schools because the selected newscasters promoted KRMA’s regular programming through creating and posting special school bulletin boards at their schools touting upcoming programs on KRMA-TV.

Along with the December 13 morning orientation presentation by the volunteers, the students toured the KRMA-TV facilities and received a first-hand look at station operations before moving on to the studio to tape two promotional announcements heralding the premiere of Super Six School News.

Super Six School News started as a series of 90-second “mini programs” that included news and feature reports on the activities and interests of Denver Public School elementary students. Reports were aired on Wednesday evenings at 6:29 pm and again on Sunday mornings at 9:59 a.m. as well as within the weekday instructional schedule. Today’s SSN productions are two minutes in length. Each participating school’s two-minute segment runs three or four times at 10:55am or 2:55pm in its assigned week, so be sure to catch it when it airs!

Many of the orientation and production procedures for Super School News remain the same in 2016. Students write their own scripts, provide their own graphics and serve as anchorpersons or reporters representing their schools.

Of course, new developments in production technology allow greater creativity for today’s SSN kids, but the impact of SSN to the students, their schools, Colorado communities and viewers remains consistent. Appearing on SSN becomes an everlasting memory for all students that participate. To learn more about SSN and to read some heartwarming testimonials submitted by numerous students who have appeared on SSN since 1979, visit the SSN pages on the RMPBS website: TESTIMONIALS.

All research for this article was made possible by STATION’S ARCHIVED MEMORIES (SAM). Station's Archived Memories serves the past, present, and future of Rocky Mountain PBS by assuring that the history of the station and its importance to the Colorado community will survive for generations to come. SAM is a volunteer-driven project preserving the history of Rocky Mountain PBS. To learn more about the station’s history and how to research, volunteer or donate items to the archives, please visit www.RMPBS.org/SAM, contact the SAM office at Rocky Mountain PBS 303-620-5734 or email SAM@rmpbs.org.