

WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

General Manager's Newsletter | February 2026



Happy February!

WPM's *Public Advisory Council (PAC)* rides to the rescue! After the *Joint Appropriations Committee* voted to cut the University of Wyoming's block grant — funding that supports WPM along with other university entities — we turned to our *PAC* for help. A reduction of \$1.69 million over two years is a serious blow. You should have received a letter from the *PAC* outlining the situation. As a non-profit, WPM has limited lobbying ability, so the *PAC* steps in to carry our message. Their letter also directs you to the [GM Update page](#), where you'll find contact information for legislators and other key Wyoming stakeholders. Check out the [FAQS](#) for answers to questions we received.

We're 60 years old! In 2026, WPM celebrates six decades of serving Wyoming as licensed broadcasters. Some would even say it's been 95 years, if you trace our lineage back to our earliest roots — as this [history chart](#) shows. Help us celebrate during this year's *I Love WPR* month. You're invited to record a testimonial sharing your listening experience or a memory from your history with WPM — or with KUWR, as we were known back then. These testimonials air throughout the year, and we'd truly love to hear from you. ([More information here](#))

The new year is still young enough for a few resolutions. *The NPR Editor* recently offered ideas for how *NPR News* can strengthen its work in the months ahead, and we wholeheartedly agree with their thinking. See what you think. ([The Public Editor's 2026 New Year's resolutions for NPR](#))

What's in a name? *Department of War* or *Defense*? News organizations think long and hard about how to officially refer to entities whose name arbitrarily changes for reasons that are political, symbolic, or strategic. Journalists know that names carry meaning, and they're careful about when to adopt a new one, how to explain it, and whether it obscures more than it clarifies. ([Secretary of War? Gulf of America? In reshaping the names and titles of things, Trump is challenging journalists to find the right words](#), *The Public Editor*)

Wyoming's Legislature started the year with a bang, and we're ready to help you follow every development. Check out our WPM/WyoFile weekly [Cheyenne Roundup](#). Our *Wyoming State Government Journalism Collaboration* team is already reporting, funded by the *Corporation for Public Broadcasting's* remaining funds ([See state government page](#)). WPM and *Jackson Hole Community Radio* partner to provide in-depth coverage about legislative impact on Wyomingites.

Governor Mark Gordon's *State of the State* address will air on *Wyoming Public Radio* on February 9th. President Trump's *State of the Union* address is scheduled for February 24th. Both will also be available online at [wyomingpublicmedia.org](#).

February is *Black History Month*, and national program producers are already sending us a rich slate of special offerings to honor Black history and tradition in America. Review is in progress, and we'll share the finalists with you soon on our website [wyomingpublicmedia.org](#).

The Grand Teton Music Festival Orchestra returns with concerts recorded live from Walk Festival Hall in Teton Village. You can hear them on both *Wyoming Public Radio* and the *Classical Wyoming* channels. Led by Maestro Donald Runnicles, the *GTMF* is a Wyoming tradition that has earned global recognition as one of the nation's premier summer festivals. Tune in Wednesday nights at 8:00 beginning February 11th. ([Link to GTMF](#)). From the opposite corner of the state, the *Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra*'s season is already underway.

First it was cars, and now it's sports! *WPM* is excited to announce a new weekend program hosted by a familiar voice — David Greene, former host of *All Things Considered*. *Sports in America* will debut on Saturday, February 7th at 9 a.m., taking over the longtime spot held by the iconic *Car Talk*. *Sports in America* dives into the stories that shape athletes and fans alike. Each week, David Greene leads in-depth conversations with people from across the world of sports — from the star who hits the game-winner to the millions whose lives are touched by the games.

Why do we engage in public service? It's baked into our DNA as a *Non-Profit Educational (NCE)* license. *WPM* "educates" communities about themselves, connects people to services and growth opportunities. We use our airwaves and digital media to help Wyoming thrive, lift spirits, and provide vital information. No politics involved! This month we're excited to welcome *WyoPoets* to our *Community Minute* program and the growing roster of non-profits.

Speaking of public service, don't forget the *Community Calendar*. It's a space where you can self-enter details about events your organization is planning — quickly, easily, and on your own schedule. People really do use it! In the past month alone, we've had over 30 event entries from organizations across the state. ([Post and read of events here](#))

To be honest, we're scared. For the first time in 60 years, we face the real possibility of losing our university funding — and with it, eight key positions that maintain our statewide broadcast sites, produce three music channels, deliver state and local journalism, monitor our *FCC* compliance obligations, support the Emergency Alert System, and connect Wyoming's communities with public service. This cut crushes the backbone of our operation. The combined weekly broadcast time of our 4 channels is ~672 hours, of which 86 hours originate from *NPR*. That's just 13% of the schedule. The rest is cultural programming, local news and information, and classical and jazz music from national syndicators. Yet, that 13% is the irritant that drives legislative ire and throws a statewide network at risk. ([TRANSCRIPT LINK](#)) Legislators need to hear from their constituents.

To enhance understanding, the *JAC* vote transcript and the statements issued to the press by legislators would benefit from additional clarification and context. Briefly:

- *WPM can sell more advertising to make money.* Wrong. *WPM* is a *Non-Commercial Educational* license. No advertising allowed. No political ads.

- *WPM can fundraise annually for the \$800K JAC cut.* Highly unlikely with a population of 580,000. The scale simply may not be there.

- *Wyoming should emulate President Trump's action to defund NPR and PBS.* This goal wasn't achieved. *NPR* lost only 1% of revenue generated by federal funding and is thriving and growing. Local stations and networks like *WPM* bore the brunt of this defunding and many contracted or closed. Local populations, particularly in rural states, were the losers.

- *WPM broadcasts propaganda in the style of PRAVDA and should not be funded by the state.* Two things here: 1) *WPM* does not produce *NPR* programs and has no control over their editorial process, 2) this thinking falls under individual opinion making and should be respected as such. However, denying funding based on a subjective opinion borders on infringement of First Amendment rights.

More detail explanation can be found in the [FAQS link](#) on the [GM Update tab](#).

Sixty years ago, a few dedicated students, faculty, and administrators realized their dreams and *KUWR* was born. Dr. Terry Roark, UW's President 1987-1997, picked up that vision and expanded it to a statewide broadcast system, taking the university's outreach mission into the heart of Wyoming. Many of you were a part of that vision. Thank you for your part in growing this incredible network that can be heard from one end of Wyoming to the other. Let's preserve what we have built!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments at ckuzmych@uwyo.edu.

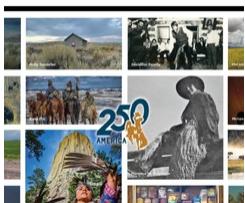
*Christina Kuzmych,
WPM General Manager*



BEHIND THE SCENES



2026 Calendar



Celebrate the Launch of the Wyoming Listeners' Eyes Traveling Exhibit March 11!

Join Wyoming Public Media staff for activities and music along with a presentation by a different historian each month. The first event will be at the Ivinson Mansion in Laramie on March 11th. *Free calendars to first 25 people or download from the [Virtual Gallery](#).*

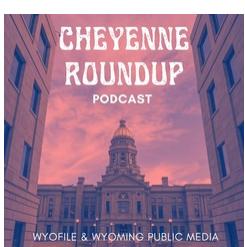


WPM's Ry Woody volunteered at Jackson Hole Nordic Alliance's Annual Event

The Ski, Fat Bike, and Snowshoe Day was held at the Turpin Meadow Ranch Sunday, January 11th. The community event included trail passes, nordic ski demos and lessons, ski and snowshoe tours, and more. Photo by Ry Woody.



SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



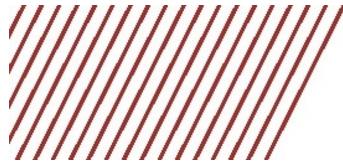
Listen to the *Cheyenne Roundup* for Coverage of the Wyoming Legislature

The problem solving, the power struggles, and the priorities of the 2026 Wyoming Legislative session. Starting February 2nd — join *Wyoming Public Media* and *WyoFile* reporters every Friday for the *Cheyenne Roundup*.



The *Tiny Desk* Contest, our annual search for the next great undiscovered artist,

...is now officially open for entries! From now until Feb. 9 at 11:59 p.m. ET, unsigned artists can submit on the *Tiny Desk* Contest website. [Enter here.](#)



BEYOND WYOMING



Abortion remains legal in Wyoming after state's Supreme Court throws out bans

A story by Hanna Merzbach's story about Wyoming's Supreme Court ruling on abortion aired on *NPR's Morning Edition*. [Listen to the story.](#) January 7, 2026.

Wyoming is among the states that could cut property taxes used for local services

Chris Clements' story about cuts in property taxes aired on *NPR's All Things Considered*: .

[Listen to the story](#). January 13, 2026.

Conservatives in Wyoming want to eliminate all property taxes on homes

A story by Chris Clements about Wyoming cutting property taxes aired on *WBUR's Here and Now*.

[Listen to the story](#). January 14, 2026.

Wyoming lawmakers backtracked on what many believed was a proposed cut to tribal Medicaid funds

Hannah Habermann's story about a proposed cut to tribal Medicaid funding aired on *National Native News*.

[Listen to the story](#). January 30, 2026.



MUST LISTEN



Listen to *HumaNature's* New Episode: Kidnapped in Kyrgyzstan

Beth Rodden is a world-renowned rock climber who made a name for herself at a very young age. So, at twenty years of age, she and three others headed to Kyrgyzstan, a well-known climbing destination, for the trip of a lifetime. And it was everything they dreamed it would be...until it wasn't. [Listen to the podcast](#).



PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Holly Sandefer - Desert Exhale

One of the Winners from the 2025 WPM Photo Contest

Holly's photograph, "Desert Exhale," was taken in Pinedale, WY, on a peaceful fall evening.



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