

WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

General Manager's Newsletter | September 2021



We're 55! Wyoming Public Radio celebrates its 55th anniversary on September 14, 2021. In 1966, students and staff in the Student Union gathered together in the Student Union to air the first broadcast of KUWR, Wyoming's "Educational FM Station". The rest is history: [Wyoming Public Radio 55th Anniversary page](#).

We bid farewell to NPR legend Neal Conan, who passed away in early August. He was an announcer, producer, anchor, director, and host of the daily *Talk of the Nation* program. Neal was special to WPM. He settled in Wyoming and Montana with his wife writer Gretel Ehrlich and both were WPM members. After he left NPR, WPM tried to entice him with a spot, a daily talk show, anything he wanted. Alas, he settled for our colleagues in Hawaii Public Radio. Running a macadamia nut farm in Hawaii may have had something to do with it. We bid farewell to Neal, one of the main framers of public radio in America as we know it. Retired NPR legend [Robert Siegel aired this obituary](#).

Kudos to the entire public broadcasting system. The Radio Television Digital News Association announced the 2021 National Edward R. Murrow Award recipients and public radio won in nearly every section in the Radio Network: Small Market and Large Market categories, as well as two Student Winners. In addition, NPR earned four awards in the Radio Network: Feature Reporting, Excellence in Video, Radio Network: Digital and Radio Network: Hard News categories. "These awards are a testament to the remarkable depth of reporting across our network and displays the importance of our collective journalism," said NPR CEO John Lansing. WPM had a number of contenders in this award cycle.

WPM was one of 14 recipients of a CPB grant to inform communities hit hard by the pandemic. Each recipient will address its communities with information that best resonates with listeners. Apart from providing general information, WPM is focusing on the pandemic's disruptive impacts on both the business and health communities. We have just begun this project, and already aired a number of stories focusing on the dwindling capacity in hospital beds and services. In Wyoming, where revenue sources are few and people even fewer, the cost of a pandemic—COVID or otherwise-- can be deadly. Check out some of the most [recent stories we posted, including one that describes how UW's sports program is fighting to keep its COVID numbers down](#) and "stay in the game."

Looking at the media big picture we always ask – "Who will be listening to us in 10 or 20 years and what will they be listening on?" A recent survey reminds us that many younger listeners do not know radio, but they do know podcasts. The recent Edison Research's "Share of Ear" study reveals that while radio dominates the audio landscape with mass reach and time spent listening, new content and distribution platforms are growing significantly. The median age for the podcast listener is 34, while for radio its 48. WPM is taking this data seriously and recognizing the emergence of new generations of listeners. Most of our locally produced content is available over multiple platforms. Yes, it's expensive, but so is losing the next generation of Americans!

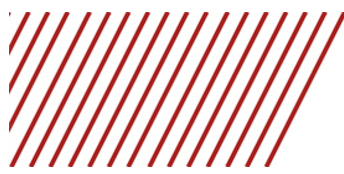
A friendly reminder – fund drive is just around the corner, and gentle messages are beginning to air reminding listeners of the value of public radio. If you're not a current WPM member, please think of it as a generous and responsible thing to do to keep yourself, your neighbors, and the American public informed and uplifted with national and local news, music, and cultural programming. Information and culture are the heartbeat of our daily lives, and these days we can benefit from all the stimulus we can get! You can [make your donation here](#).

Your support and loyalty is awesome and continues to inspire our daily work. We particularly appreciate this strong support in these times of national and global upheavals. Thank you for your generosity to WPM and for listening!

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

Christina Kuzmych

WPM General Manager



BEHIND THE SCENES



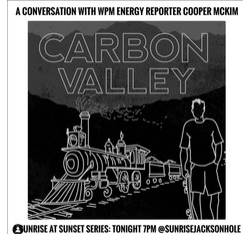
[View the 2021 Wyoming Public Media Photo Contest Winners!](#)

We were lucky to receive over seventy beautiful entries from all over Wyoming, and it was difficult to choose the best. The winners were chosen by listeners who voted for their favorite in each category, Wyoming's Nature, Wyoming's People, and Wyoming's History. We have posted Grand Prize Winner, based on listener votes, and the top 4 in each category.



[Kudos to the Modern West Podcast](#)

"Just wanted to let you know I'm excited to recently find your podcast on the Modern West and hear some welcome commentary on North Park, CO. My Dad was raised in Walden (born 1932) and we visited Grandma Chedsey and relatives every summer growing-up during summer break from his (and my mother's) teaching at the University of Montana. We just returned from a trip a few days ago and my interest in the future of Jackson County has led me to your excellent reporting." Matthew Hampton 09/02/2021



[Carbon Valley Podcast Covering Carbon Captures Acclaim](#)

"I just wanted to reach out and let you know I am thoroughly enjoying the Carbon Valley podcast. I was on the hunt for a new podcast and CV was one of the first to pop up on Spotify. I don't know if it's because I too went to UW, I'm a geologist, I work with coal plants in the south or because deep down I'm just a sucker for the climate. But I clicked on your podcast and was instantly hooked. You do a great job hosting, presenting the facts in an interesting and understandable way." Jess Baker 08/17/21



[HumanNature Podcast Receives Fan Mail](#)

"I was so sad to hear that your podcast will be going on hiatus. I have been listening to you since the beginning of your podcast, and have so loved hearing all the episodes over the years. Erin Jones you were great in bringing such nice and heartwarming stories. There are so many great episodes that I can remember so well. I truly hope the Humanature podcast will resume again in the future. In the meantime you will be sorely missed. Thanks again for such a great podcast." David Gross 7/31/21



[Lovers Leap treated Wyoming Public Media to a set on #WyomingSounds!](#)

The talented ensemble consists of two married couples, Joel Timmons and Shelby Means of Sally & George, plus Billy Cardine and Mary Lucey formerly of the Biscuit Burners. They shared the story behind their serendipitous naming and some great background on the Dobro steel guitar. [Listen to the interview](#).



NATIONAL STORIES



[Water Fights Coming Home to Roost in Wyoming | No-Till Farmer](#)

Wyoming — in the middle of yet another drought — is emerging as another state with a possibly looming water crisis for farmers. Wyoming Public Media recently shared the story of rancher Alan Kirkbride, who raises cattle in southeastern Wyoming and relies on the aquifer, Horse Creek and other local watering holes for his his animals. The article was published on August 12, 2021.

[Current Podcast Review- 5 Takeaways from the Expansion of Public Radio's Climate Change Coverage](#)

"Podcasts have also been popular outlets for climate projects launched by radio stations within the past three years. Examples include WJCT's Adapt series, in which Rivers interviewed six Northeast Florida climate experts, and Wyoming Public Media's Carbon Valley, which followed the story of a state-sponsored contest to develop carbon-capture technology." The feature was published on August 19, 2021.

[Carbon Valley Wraps Up A Series on Carbon Capture X-Prize](#)

Cooper McKim participates in a live two-way for national based on the last episode of Carbon Valley, while weaving in the infrastructure bill. Cooper interview with NPR's *Morning Edition*. Infrastructure plans, carbon capture and Carbon Valley. The interview recorded in August aired on September 7, 2021.



MUST LISTEN



[The Modern West Upcoming Season Three - Shall Furnish Medicine - Release Date September 29, 2021](#)

Reservations have been some of the hardest-hit communities in the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, this all feels sort of familiar...the arrival of a terrible illness that kills elders while the federal government does little to stop it.

In a three-part series we're calling *Shall Furnish Medicine*, The Modern West podcast will explore that devastating history from the beginnings.



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