

WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

General Manager's Newsletter | December 2021



We live in a high turnover era! *Morning Edition* host Noel King leaves NPR on December 10, to be succeeded by Erika Aquilar. For over four years Noel has covered complex issues from the refugee crises on the border, to interviews with Janet Yellen, to stories on racial injustice. In parting she praised her colleagues, *"Journalists are wanderers by nature, (or at least this one is,) so I don't believe in long goodbyes. I'm certain I'll see most of you again soon. As a restless person I never thought I'd spend six years anywhere. My longevity here is attributable to all of the creative, funny, talented people who make this organization, and very specifically to Kenya Young and Alex Goldmark. Thank you to them, and all."*

Recent research from an Alter Agents Engaged Impressions study shows the importance of local content and local perspective to listeners. Participants cited local content and host trust as core reasons for listening to media. "They just know my city, they know my problems, they live in the same city and they get me," a sentiment that is also echoed by WPM listeners and shows a strong vote for local content. Expensive as it sometimes is to produce, local content speaks directly to the communities we serve.

And then there was the Thanksgiving surprise. An update by the Federal Communications Commission's computer system delivered a turkey to radio station websites. The public file link used by broadcasters to link from their website to the station's online public file on the FCC portal was changed. It meant users got the "404 – Not Found" message instead of network information, which they should be able to access by regulations. Not good. It was an easy fix for most stations and networks, but not when staff are scarce!

WPM's CPB-funded [Neighbor to Neighbor: COVID-19 in Wyoming](#) page is wrapping up and our dedicated staff is taking a look back. We were happy to see the vaccination rate in Wyoming rise from 34 percent at the onset of the project to a little over 43 percent as per the Wyoming Department of Health numbers. Admittedly, we would have liked to round the 50 percent vaccinated bend, but we hope this can be achieved in the next few months. Perhaps the most gratifying element of this project was learning about and working with the dedicated agencies and programs devoted to helping Wyoming ride this pandemic. Health care and medical personnel immediately come to mind as these fiercely dedicated professionals work relentlessly at the epicenter of the pandemic. Looking over the entire project, we are fast-forwarding to the future and asking, "What have Wyomingites learned from this pandemic that can be applied in the next one?" Unfortunately, pandemics are part of the world we live in, but we would certainly like to be more prepared when the next one visits us! You can view our continuing work on the [Neighbor to Neighbor: COVID-19 in Wyoming](#) page.

Thanks to all who shared their favorite non-profit organizations with our listeners on Giving Tuesday. Together we helped raise public awareness for non-profits and their activities in Wyoming's communities. A list of [non-profits mentioned during our Giving Tuesday broadcast can be found here](#). A special thanks to the Wyoming Community Foundation which partnered with WPM to highlight Wyoming's non-profits.

Program Director Grady Kirkpatrick reminds us that Holiday cheer is in order. Our schedule runs from December 18th to 25th and into the New Year, and can be found on [wyomingpublicmedia.org](#). Everything from the Tabernacle Choir to the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra will be featured, as well as the festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. In addition, Holiday programming will be woven into just about all broadcasts originating from our program distributors. Enjoy!

Want to cast your vote for something close to your heart? You can vote for your favorite songs from 2021, as well as your favorite albums from Wyoming artists. (Visit [wyomingpublicmedia.org](#).)

And, if you have some Holiday leisure time and want to catch up on reflective listening, here are some suggestions for programs or features you may have missed. You can binge on the story of how pandemics affected Indigenous people on the podcast [Shall Furnish Medicine](#). For animal lovers, check out an upcoming edition of the public affairs program *Open Spaces*, in which two donkey stories will be featured. ([Episode 72: Everyone Needs A Purpose - HumaNature](#) and [Episode 11: Hoofprints On The Heart - HumaNature](#)). It's a far cry from politics and public affairs you may think, but then, maybe not! And of course, you can immerse yourself in something different from news radio, and check out our [Classical Wyoming](#), [Jazz Wyoming](#), and [Wyoming Sounds](#) channels. Here you can get far, far away from the daily news cycles!

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

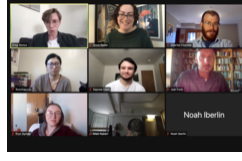
Thank you for being a part of the WPM family.

Wishing you a happy, peaceful, and warm Holiday Season.

Christina Kuzmych,
WPM General Manager



BEHIND THE SCENES



Wyoming Public Media's Digital Manager Anna Rader Visits UW's COJO Class

Anna Rader shares Podcast production stories with Dr. Runchao Liu's COJO class via Zoom. Former *HumaNature* volunteers Greg and Charles, were also asked to speak, offering a glimpse into *HumaNature's* creative process (pitching stories, editing, pre-interviews, and marketing). November 5, 2021.



Matt Andrews Joins Wyoming Public Media as New Wyoming Sounds Host

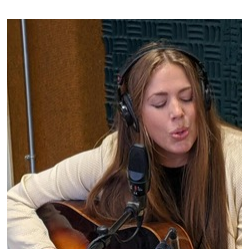
Welcome Matt to the Wyoming Public Media family. You will hear Matt on the *Wyoming Sounds* channel. Born in Albuquerque and raised in Western Colorado, Matt arrived in Laramie, Wyoming in 2011. His whole family loves Wyoming's outdoors and the uniqueness of Laramie culture. Matt is thrilled to be a part of *Wyoming Sounds* and its unique mission to bring great music to great listeners in Wyoming.



The Modern West "Shall Furnish Medicine" Acclaim from Abroad

"I just wanted to pass on my admiration for your podcast & all the work you, Savannah & Taylor put into it. So far I've listened to the *Shall Furnish Medicine* trilogy which is really excellent. There was so much in there about contact colonisation & disease. I felt I learned a lot & was inspired by the story of the Arapaho nation taking control of their testing & vaccination programmes." Maggie Ayre, Producer *BBC Sounds Radio 11-30-*

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Shannon LaBrie, Nashville-based Singer-songwriter, Performed Live on WS

Listen to Shannon LaBrie and a cornucopia of live music performances from the Wyoming Sounds studio on WPM's *Studio Sessions*. Do you have favorite songs and Wyoming albums from this year? Now's your chance to tell us! We'll playback the Top 21 of 2021 on Wyoming Sounds Friday, December 31 from 9 a.m. to noon. [Stream Wyoming Sounds online and post your favorites here](#).



NATIONAL STORIES



How the Spanish Vaguerio Gave Way to the American Cowboy

Melodie Edwards of Wyoming Public Radio's *"The Modern West"* podcast looks back at how the vaquero history merged with the American cowboy. Melodie's story aired on WBUR's *Here & Now* November 16, 2021.

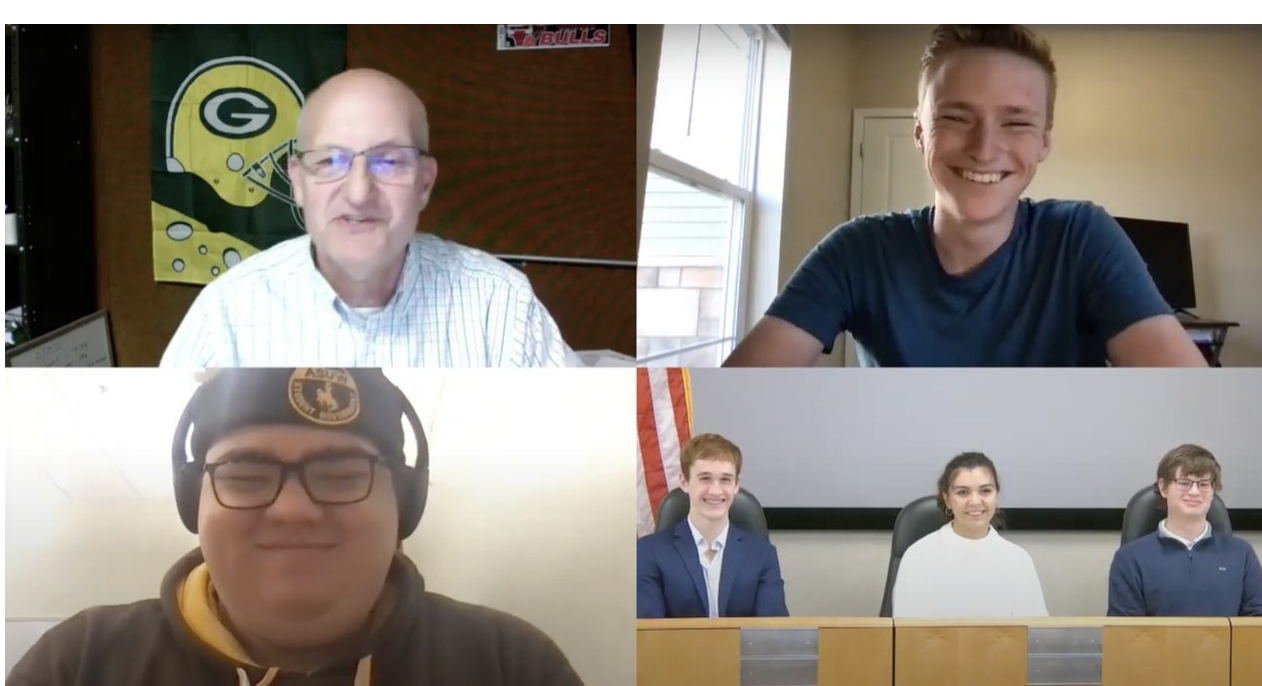


MUST LISTEN



COVID-19: Wyoming's Youth Speaks - Wyoming Public Media Virtual Discussion

Wyoming Public Media has been working with community members around the state to discuss the impacts of COVID-19. High school and college students share their experiences on the pandemic and education #COVID19WY. Watch their [conversation here](#).



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