

## WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

### General Manager's Newsletter | January 2026



*Welcome 2026!*

Right under the wire! We're thrilled to share that we successfully wrapped up our year-end fundraising initiative, and we express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed and helped us tackle the financial challenges of the past year. Our year-end 2025 campaign kicked off on *Giving Tuesday*, where we also inspired our supporters to uplift nonprofits across Wyoming and beyond that make a real difference in our communities. These organizations, too, are facing the tough effects of funding cuts. Your generous support not only uplifts us but also inspires us all to strive even harder in the coming year. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our mission—together, we can achieve amazing things!

And the winner is... This year's "Best Song" of the year goes to.... *A Band Named Sue "Move On."* *Wyoming Sounds* listeners and social media followers participated in selecting the winner, as well as the runners-up. Heard on our *Wyoming Sounds* channel, these groups represent the best of Wyoming's bands and performers. Thanks to all who participated, and congratulations to all talented musicians in Wyoming! The complete list of winners can be found [HERE](#).

With so much happening in the world, providing live coverage can be challenging. Recent activities around Venezuela bear this out. That's where our online service comes in. We will continue to broadcast major presidential speeches and events live on air. When *NPR*-anchored coverage isn't available, we'll provide a link on our website at [wyomingpublicmedia.org](#).

We confess to an omission. In our haste to post last month's newsletter, we forgot a highlight – the new *Metropolitan Opera Season*, heard on *Classical Wyoming* on the radio and streaming. The full schedule is [HERE](#).

Getting the words just right can be dicey. In early December, a listener brought this to our attention in an *NPR* story about the Epstein files, and how the *NPR* host referred to the women in this story. She wasn't the only one—nationally, listeners asked *NPR* to review the story, which it did – and made some changes. (*NPR's Pointer Public Editor*).

Get ready for the State Legislature Session. You'll hear coverage from *State Government Collaboration* journalists Chris Clements and Jordan Uplinger, along with reporting from the WPM newsroom. This collaboration with *Jackson Hole Community Radio* is supported by a *Corporation for Public Broadcasting* grant through June 2026, and we're actively seeking continued funding to keep this important work going. Wyoming's state government is simply too important not to cover. If this project resonates with you—or with someone you know—we'd love to connect and share ways to help sustain it. Contact Ry Woody at 307-766-2181 or [rywoody@uwy.edu](mailto:rywoody@uwy.edu).

Many of you get your news online, and that audience continues to grow. Consider adding WPM's daily and weekly newsletters to your inbox and help us grow our subscribers. Our daily edition offers a one-stop,

well-rounded look at Wyoming, regional, and national *NPR* stories, while the weekly edition brings everything together in one easy read. It's a quick, convenient way to stay informed.

If you're someone who doesn't check your inbox often, there's still an easy way to catch up on local, regional, national, and global news all at once. Just visit our homepage at [wyomingpublicmedia.org](http://wyomingpublicmedia.org) and scroll through the full page. You might be surprised by what you discover.

Our annual *I Love WPR* campaign is coming up in February, and this year we're also celebrating our 60th anniversary. It's a wonderful opportunity for you to record a testimonial for WPR or any one of our four services you enjoy. You'll find more details in the February newsletter, but it's never too early to start thinking about what you might want to share. In the meantime, you can explore the testimonials we've gathered so far on our [\*I Love Wyoming Public Radio\* page](#).

We're excited to welcome [\*Catz N Coffee Connections\*](#) to our *Community Minute* program—a series that highlights the mission, reach, and impact of nonprofit and service organizations across Wyoming. Each *Community Minute* gives listeners a brief but meaningful look at the people and programs helping our communities thrive. You can explore all of our *Community Minute* features at [wyomingpublicmedia.org/community-minute](http://wyomingpublicmedia.org/community-minute). Nonprofits are essential to Wyoming's economy, cultural life, and overall quality of place, and WPM is proud to recognize and uplift the work they do every day.

What's on Wyomingites' minds these days? We keep a close eye on the metrics from our top stories and our *Topic of the Week* to get a sense of what's resonating across the state. Here's what was rising to the top through the holidays. Take a look and see if it matches your top stories.

Top 3 Stories:

- [Why one Wyoming town is rebranding a block in the Hispanic District](#)
- [Wyoming clocks 100-plus mph winds, causing vehicle blowovers](#)
- [2025 projected to be Wyoming's second worst coal production year](#)

Top Topic of the Week:

- [What are your thoughts regarding the Wyoming Supreme Court halting school funding changes?](#)

Media relations with the Trump administration continue to evolve, as does the status of our funding. We are now closely monitoring our institutional support, which comes through a block grant from the state legislature to the University of Wyoming. At the same time, we're working diligently to grow our new member base—welcoming more than 850 new members in the last year. You can find ongoing updates about national and state issues affecting public broadcasting on [\*The GM Update\*](#).

The excitement of a new year is here, and we're looking forward to continuing our work—serving audiences with intelligent, thoughtful, and uplifting programming. Thanks to your overwhelming support, we're able to fulfill our mission of serving Wyoming and strengthening the connections that make this state such a remarkable place to call home. And if you haven't already, just take a look below at the stories our newsroom selected as their favorites for 2025. They're real winners!

Happy New Year! Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments at [ckuzmych@uwyo.edu](mailto:ckuzmych@uwyo.edu).

Christina Kuzmych,  
WPM General Manager



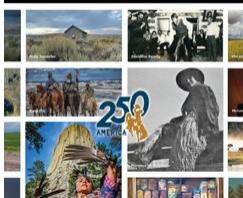
## BEHIND THE SCENES



[Download a free Calendar! Wyoming's History Through Listeners' Eyes](#)

**Happy New Year!** Wyoming Public Media invited Wyomingites to get out and take photos of Wyoming's beautiful scenery, people, and history. The top choices are featured in this 2026 calendar and will be displayed in a traveling exhibit. *Funded in part by a Wyoming State Parks & Cultural Resources Semiquincentennial grant.*

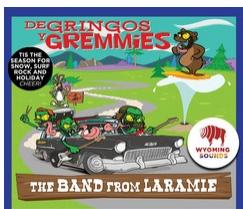
Winners and calendar posted on the [Virtual Gallery](#).



### Listen to *Big Hollow Blues* and *Highway 287 Ramble* each Weekend

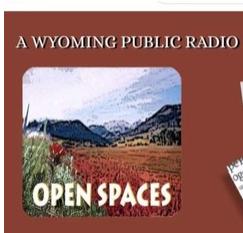
On the *Wyoming Sounds* channel, Dr. Robert brings *Big Hollow Blues* and the *Highway 287 Ramble*. Beginning this month, *Wyoming Sounds* will air the best in the blues from archived *Big Hollow Blues* shows, featuring the foundational music of America. Dr. Robert's *Highway 287 Ramble* takes you on a musical tour of the US.

[Listen at WyomingSounds.org](#) [Wyoming Sounds Schedule](#).



### De Gringos Y Gremmies' Virtual Holiday Concert Aired on *Wyoming Sounds*

The Band from Laramie kicked off the holiday session with a Facebook live event on December 5th. The virtual concert featured Shane Wallace on guitar and vocals, Dusty Richards on bass and baritone guitars, and Dan Walker on drums and other percussive tools. [Watch Studio Session video at WyomingSounds.org](#). December 5, 2025.



### WPM Reporters' Recall their Favorite Stories in 2025

Celebrating the new year on *Open Spaces*, Wyoming Public Radio reporters shared their favorite stories from 2025 and why. With each one, hear from the reporters themselves on what made them pick the stories they did. [Listen on YouTube](#).



### Wyoming Looks to Rebrand Coal

A story by Caitlin Tan aired on *Marketplace* about alternative uses for coal and shifting coal's negative reputation. [Listen to the Story](#). December 18, 2025.

### Diné author Brendan Basham on the enduring inspiration of home

Hannah Habermann's interview with Diné author Brendan Basham aired on KNAU in Arizona. [Listen to the interview](#). December 23, 2025.

### How bison meat and chokecherry jam are helping with Indigenous food insecurity

Hannah Habermann's story about bison meat and chokecherry jam getting distributed on the Wind River Reservation aired on *Our Living Lands* out of Boise, Idaho. [Listen to the story](#). December 29, 2025.



**MUST LISTEN** 



**Listen to HumaNature's Season 16 - New Episode "The Man With a Pigeon on his Head"**

Brian Buckbee's life was changed forever when he rescued a pigeon named Two-Step. Hear their story tomorrow on a brand new episode of HumaNature. [Listen to the podcast.](#)



## PHOTO OF THE MONTH

### ***Davidson Family - Strawberry Hill Dance ~ 1918***

*One of the Winners from the [2025 WPM Photo Contest](#)*

*"Strawberry Hill Dance – 1918" captures a milestone in the Davidson family's Wyoming story, rooted in the journey of Even and Astri Lee, who immigrated from Norway in 1877 and 1887, respectively. The dance shown here celebrated the completion of eldest son Ole Lee's cabin in 1918 — a classic moment of community cheer.*



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