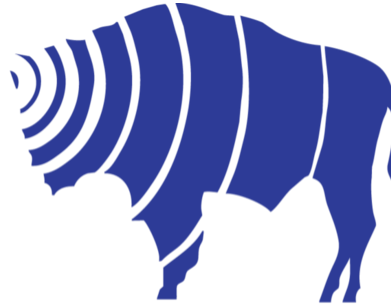


October 2025



WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

General Manager's Newsletter | October 2025



Dear Leadership Circle Members—
Happy October!

We're still here, broadcasting, and serving communities throughout Wyoming! Our daily routines have changed, and sometimes we feel we're fundraisers more than broadcasters. But the important thing is that listeners in Wyoming continue to receive their public radio service – something many depend on and cherish. Let's keep it going!

For decades, we operated with a funding model akin to a four-legged stool, relying on federal, institutional, individual, and corporate sources. With the loss of federal funding, we're now a three-legged stool. However, even a three-legged stool can be strong and functional if well-positioned.

Your support through the Leadership Circle has been exceptional and continues to grow. Corporate revenue remains stable, with a small increase. We are grateful to the University of Wyoming for its support, providing over \$800K in direct funds that help sustain our positions; without this funding, we would not be able to operate.

"How are you folks doing?" we're asked in the midst of the defunding furor. We want to reassure you that we're hanging in there, and we're filling in the defunding gap thanks to supporters who joined the "protect public radio in Wyoming" bandwagon. If we can keep this spirit up, along with our corporate underwriting and university support, we will be able to continue serving Wyoming. Here's an e-letter we sent to members documenting our progress. ([Link](#))

WPM is excited to share that we received a *Wyoming Semiquincentennial Grant*! To celebrate this special milestone, we're extending the deadline for our Photo Contest, "*Wyoming's History Through Listeners' Eyes*,"

so everyone has a chance to participate. Wyoming's rich history is everywhere—just look around! It could even be in your backyard. We encourage you to get creative and share your photos of Wyoming's stunning scenery, its wonderful people, and its fascinating history. Be sure to submit your entries by Friday, October 31st. We can't wait to see your amazing photos! [More information here.](#)

Congratulations to Lynne Simpson, University of Wyoming's 2025 Distinguished Alumna. Lynne will be honored on October 3 from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. at the *American Heritage Center* on the UW campus. She discusses her accomplishments with Dean Peter Parolin, as an actress, theater director, producer, advocate for community theater and arts programs, and organizer of community institutions. Lynne has strong connections to WPM. Our *Women in Media* program, funded by the *Edelweiss Fund* at the *Community Foundation of Jackson Hole* and individual gifts given during *International Women's Day*, is named after her in recognition of her contributions to Wyoming.

Journalism isn't easy! In today's world of misinformation, how do you teach journalists how to fact-check? It's more than just listening and taking notes. ([This professor decided to teach his college students Fact-Checking 101 — here's what happened, Nieman Lab 9/2025](#))

Commercials on public radio? Now that the *Corporation for Public Broadcasting's* role in maintaining the tone and timbre of the public radio sound is receding, could there be changes? Not so fast! FCC binds us to the non-commercial sound, as noted in this exchange. ([Public Editor](#))

Legendary journalist Bill Moyers passed away in June. He foresaw the challenges journalism would face, and it eerily resembles the current environment. ([Bill Moyers sparks Stripped for Parts: American Journalism on the Brink - Current](#))

In September, journalists found themselves defending their freedoms. The ABC suspension of comedian Jimmy Kimmel ignited a discussion about freedom of the press as enshrined in the First Amendment. Many thoughtful leaders on all sides of the political spectrum weighed in. Perhaps the most poignant and memorable was Texas Senator Ted Cruz, whose words went viral: "*I think it is unbelievably dangerous for government to put itself in the position of saying, 'We're going to decide what speech we like and what we don't.' If the government gets in the business of saying, 'We don't like what you, the media, have said; we're going to ban you from the airwaves if you don't say what we like.'*" (from *Verdict with Ted Cruz*, podcast)

Ira Glass had some inspiring words to share about the future of public radio and seizing the moment to build new directions. [Ira Glass to pubmedia: 'The time of invention does not need to be over' - Current](#)

The fall fund drive is here, and we are excited about the exuberant support from our listeners. Many of you are stepping up, especially after Congress decided to cut funding for public broadcasting. A big thank you to those who are donating for the first time—your help is greatly appreciated! We need more people to join our member ranks to make up for the \$400K loss in funding. During this fund drive, we will often ask new donors to help us. Our loyal supporters have kept us going over the years, but we need to grow our community of donors. Thank you for considering supporting WPM! [Make your donation now!](#)

If you happen to be outside Knight Hall on the Laramie campus on Saturday, October 4th, you just might find a complimentary Bison cookie waiting for you! WPM is kicking off Homecoming as well as our fund drive. Our doors will be open from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Please use the Iverson Street entrance. We hope to see you there!

What's on Wyomingites' minds? We track the metrics on our top stories as well as *Topic of the Week*. Here they are. See if you agree.

Top 3 Stories:

- 1) [Mountain West has one of the worst nursing shortages in U.S.](#)
- 2) [Charlie Kirk talks race, education and Trump in Wyoming](#)
- 3) [Wildlife crossing project breaks ground in southwest Wyoming](#)

Top Topic of the Week

[Jimmy Kimmel - Free Speech](#)

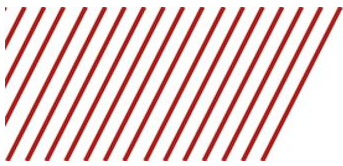
We're welcoming *Phorge Makerspace* to our *Community Minute* program, where we highlight the mission, scope, and impact of local nonprofit and service organizations. You can catch *Community Minutes* online at: wyomingpublicmedia.org/community-minute. Nonprofits are at the heart of Wyoming's strong economy and vibrant cultural life, and WPM is proud to feature them. Looking ahead, it's not too early to mention our *Giving Tuesday* broadcasts, happening December 2nd. It's an exciting day dedicated to honoring Wyoming's nonprofits live, on-air. More details to come.

On September 30th, *CPB* ceased operations after 60 years. President and CEO Pat Harrison stated, "Approximately 70% of *CPB* staff have left. This is a sad and challenging moment for all of us. These colleagues have strengthened the legacy and impact of public media and, together with all of you, have profoundly changed the lives of the American people. We are deeply grateful for their extraordinary service and dedication. A smaller team will remain in place during the wind-down process to sustain operations at a reduced scale until all remaining obligations are fulfilled. We are working quickly and responsibly to ensure that the remaining funds are distributed to the public media system during this time of need." The staff of WPM worked daily with our *CPB* colleagues. We wish them all the best in their new journeys and hope that we will meet again in a different public broadcasting environment.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments at ckuzmych@uwyo.edu. As noted, late-breaking developments related to public broadcasting and defundings will be posted on [Wyoming Public Media General Manager Blog](#). Questions listeners have posed are posted on wyomingpublicmedia.org/federal-funding-responses-to-questions.

Thank you for hanging in there with us through this wild ride in our national political history! It's good to know that we're not alone.

Christina Kuzmych,
WPM General Manager



BEHIND THE SCENES



Reporters Hanna Merzbach and Chris Clements Host Booth at Old Bill's Fun Run

Community members really came out of the woodwork to support Wyoming Public Media. People were excited to see us out there, especially with the loss of federal funding. *September 7, 2025.*



WPR heard from residents in Devils Tower, Sundance and more during tour

Property tax cuts, reductions to Medicaid and the repeal of most gun-free zones affect each community in Wyoming differently. With those issues in mind and the next legislative session on the horizon, state government reporter Chris Clements hit the road. He listened to Wyomingites' concerns in the northeast corner of the Equality State. *[Listen to his stories.](#) September 2025.*



SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Snow Train Music Festival's Musicians, Ellie & Austin, Tour WPM Radio Station

Musicians Ellie & Austin "...had a blast playing at *Snow Train Music Festival* last weekend!" They shared their tour of the station and live performance on their social media platforms: *[View photos.](#) [View reel.](#) September 20, 2025.*



Wyoming Public Media Photo Contest Featured in Cheyenne Television Broadcast

A Wyoming station, KGWN-TV, broadcast a feature on its evening news about WPM's "*Wyoming Through Listeners' Eyes*" Photo Contest traveling exhibit on display at the *Cheyenne Botanic Gardens* in September. *[Watch video.](#) September 24, 2025.*



BEYOND WYOMING

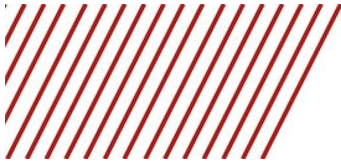


GOP policy bill could cost Wyoming \$50 million annually, and lawmakers are worried

A feature by Caitlin Tan about legislation that could cost Wyoming \$50 billion annually aired on *Marketplace*: [Listen to the story](#). September 16, 2025.

Congress gave a break to coal producers. Wyoming worries it'll carry the loss

A spot by Caitlin Tan aired on *NPR's Newscast* on legislation to boost the coal industry. Rocky Mountain Power said this won't change their plans to switch their Kemmerer coal plant to natural gas. [Listen to the story](#). September 30, 2025.



MUST LISTEN



Wyoming Public Media is excited to announce Season #15 of its award-winning podcast *HumaNature*.

Listen to this season's first episode, "Hike Your Own Hike," featuring another riveting adventure. This episode is about Julia Sheehan, who was about to turn 30. Julia thought she had done everything right; she owned her own home and had a stable job in a good field. But she was miserable. So she left her old life behind to thru-hike the Appalachian Trail, not knowing what she would find or who she would be by the end (if she made it). Listen to the newest [*HumaNature*](#) podcast season [here](#).



PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Philip Hilson - Brotherly Love
2024 WPM Photo Contest Entry



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