

## WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

### General Manager's Newsletter | November 2021



Will Shortz picks a Wyomingite! NPR's puzzle master and New York Times's puzzle editor, Will Shortz, challenged Wyoming's own Marion Yoder on Sunday morning, November 7. It's not that often that Wyoming is represented in national shows. Marion did us proud. You can hear Marion's performance [here](#).

Welcome back, volunteers! After several volunteer-less fund drives, we welcomed a few members during times when phones ring a lot, as you can see below. They supplemented our staff, who also answered phones from their offices. Online giving is growing, thus minimizing the number of "live" on-air fundraisers and phone volunteers. The pandemic also streamlined operations.

Seeing friendly faces in the pledge room, though, is a plus! This fall's fund drive reached its goal but was a little shy of numbers reached in the old 10-day on-air drives. Still, the shorter on-air drives are much appreciated by listeners and staff, so we may find ourselves coming back at the end of the fiscal year in June to off the projections.

Listen for new voices on WPM from Hugh Cook, based in Gillette, and Caitlin Tan, based in Pinedale. A fourth-generation Northeast Wyoming native, Hugh is familiar to Wyomingites through his work with the late Senator Mike Enzi. Caitlin comes back to the WPM airwaves after a stint in Alaska, NPR, and the podcast "Inside Appalachia." NPR's *Morning Edition* will have a new executive producer. Erika Aguilar comes from KQED San Francisco. And there are new voices in our Mountain West Bureau including Alex Hager and Bert Johnson. Our own Savannah Maher, who reported through the Mountain West Bureau, is now reporting for Marketplace. It's a small and fast-paced workplace!

It was a coldish day when WPM's reporter Cooper McKim walked around Rock Springs asking passers-by a deep question – "How do you feel about the future of Wyoming?" He got an earful from people who are vested in Wyoming. In Jackson, folks were more concerned with an immediate conundrum – lack of housing. It was an opportunity to interact directly with the public, and part of the *Wyoming Now and Beyond* project funded by the George B. Storer Foundation. It gauges what Wyomingites think about Wyoming. Is our economy serving our needs? Where are we heading? You can hear Cooper's findings [here](#).

Recently we had some on-air signal interruptions caused by failures, upgrades, and maintenance. In Jackson, we replaced an antenna to improve coverage. In Cody, we have had the output of our transmitter fail. (We are awaiting replacement parts on that one. In Laramie/ Cheyenne we have replaced our entire antenna as part of combining this antenna with another non-commercial station. (This work has improved our Laramie/Cheyenne signal.) This project took longer than the planned three days due to parts and weather issues. We also had a key component fail in our statewide uplink a few weeks ago that caused us to go on our backup systems. We apologize for the inconvenience and appreciate your patience. Kudos to our engineering team, who work hard to keep over 43 signals on the air. Information and updates about locations currently experiencing problems can be found [here](#).

Our CPB-funded [Neighbor to Neighbor: COVID-19 in Wyoming](#) page is accumulating information about vaccination in Wyoming and its impacts on human loss, businesses, and the average person trying to secure medical attention at our overcrowded and understaffed hospitals. In our research, we discovered that locally and nationally people disagree on therapeutics, masks, mandates, and much else. But many agree on the vaccine and have publicly stated that they took it. Recognize any of these folks? Ben Shapiro, Trump, Bill Maher, Hannity, Gingrich, Biden, Martha Stewart, Willie Nelson, Mark and Jennie Gordon, Brian Wilson, Tucker Carlson, Dolly Parton, and Neil Cavuto, who in his recent broadcast credited the vaccine for saving his life. The list goes on and on. Who said we can't agree on something!

*Giving Tuesday* is right around the corner and we're excited! Unlike most organizations, WPM does not fundraise for itself during Giving Tuesday. We tried this in our first year and it just didn't feel right – it was too much about us. So, we turned it into an opportunity to honor other non-profits with on-air and online messages. Our public radio colleagues thought this was a bit mad and a missed opportunity, but we like the community feel and still get requests to showcase our WPM concept nationally. Our Membership Director, Andrew Mittelstadt, recently participated in a panel on this topic. This year Wyoming Public Media's *Giving Tuesday* is sponsored by the *Wyoming Community Foundation*. It falls on November 30th and ushers in a month of giving. Are there non-profits you think need attention? Submit them online at [www.wyomingpublicmedia.org](http://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org). The Giving Tuesday link will be activated the week of Thanksgiving. The Wyoming Community Foundation joins us as a sponsor.

I leave you with a warm story about a few creative women who decided to use WPM's Day of Dedication to promote Wyoming's suffrage history. We were thrilled to be a part of this mini-history lesson. Note that KUWR are the call letters for our Laramie/Cheyenne frequency. Roz Schliske explains:

*As a longtime listener and Leadership Circle member of KUWR, I had literally heard the Days of Dedication and then found myself really looking forward to the informational quality of the American Heritage Center's minutes when they first started. Suddenly, it occurred to me I might be able to combine the concepts of the two. So, I was walking in Lions Park in Cheyenne with fellow Cheyenne League of Women Voters' member and Leadership Circle member Mary Guthrie and told her about my idea. We also knew LWV Marguerite Herman was a Leadership Circle member. After all agreed I could use their Days, I had enough for one monthly Cheyenne League Day of Dedication for a year.*

*At first, I wrote the copy about the "usual suspects" in Wyoming suffrage history. Then in the summer during a visit with Bev Holmes, a Wyoming Historical Society member and the driving force in the creation of the Wyoming National Guard Historical Society, I discovered that for years she has been keeping a notebook of published stories about women "firsts" in Wyoming. Now I use this four-inch binder as the gold mine for my source material and am also less hung up on the Day of Dedication being the actual date.*

*As we began the project, we publicized our Days of Dedication within the Cheyenne LWV, and it was fun to read the email thread as members wrote in real time that they had heard the dedication at 8 a.m. or 10 a.m. or 1 p.m. So, when Cheyenne LWV member Joan Anderson increased her KWUR giving to the Leadership Circle level, she asked whether she could contribute to our cause. I dove back into the binder for more copy inspiration. Our only hiccup was the recent maintenance work on the tower powering 91.9. When members lamented they hadn't heard the Day of Dedication because of static or low power, I knew everyone was as hooked as I was on listening for our Day.*

*In the end, I love the synergy of two nonprofits—Cheyenne League of Women Voters and KUWR—working together.*

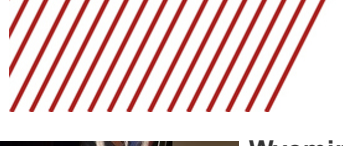
Our hats off to Roz and team! You too can get creative with your [Days of Dedication](#).

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

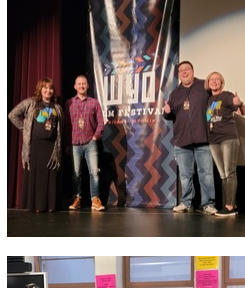
Thank you for what you do for WPM!

Wishing you a happy and peaceful Thanksgiving.

Christina Kuzmich,  
WPM General Manager



## BEHIND THE SCENES



### Wyoming Public Media Sponsorship Team Enjoyed WYO Film Festival

Corporate Development manager Dianne Burner and representative Tina McGee travelled to Sheridan in October to represent the station during the *WYO Film Festival*. The event included pieces from filmmakers based in Wyoming and from around the world. Wyoming Public Media was a partnering sponsor event. *September 30 - October 2, 2021.*



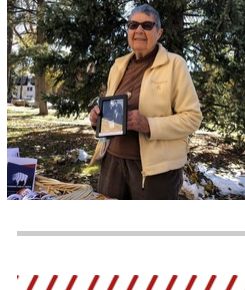
### Volunteers Returned to Wyoming Public Media's Fall Membership Drive

For the first time in over a year, Wyoming Public Media welcomed volunteers to stop by during October's fund drive. Katie and Bryon answered phones and jotted down names of listeners' favorite furry and feathered creatures during Pet Wednesday. *October 6, 2021.*



### Longtime NPR Music Producer B.J. Leiderman Visited Wyoming Public Media

During University of Wyoming Homecoming week, NPR's B.J. Leiderman visited the Wyoming Public Radio station where General Manager Christina Kuzmich offered him a tour. "B.J. Leiderman is the noted composer of the theme music heard on NPR's *Morning Edition*, *Weekend Edition*, and *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!*" ([npr.org](http://npr.org)) *October 21, 2021.*



### Wyoming Public Radio Listeners Share Their Stories During Homecoming

Wyoming Public Radio invited listeners to share their favorite stories heard on Wyoming Public Radio over the years. University of Wyoming Alumna, Musician, and Retired Professor Donna Marburger knew the station's first manager, John McMullen, pictured in the photo of KUWR's first broadcast day September 14, 1966. *October 22, 2021.*

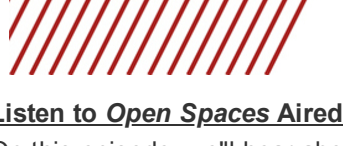


## NATIONAL STORIES



### Wind River residents reflect on MMIW as Gabby Petito's case continues to make headlines

Enrolled Eastern Shoshone Tribal member and Wyoming Public Radio reporter Signa McAdams sat down with Wind River Reservation's Tianna Wagon and Erica Lamebear to share a meal and talk about the loss of their own family members. Signa's story aired on *National Native News* October 19, 2021.



## MUST LISTEN



### Listen to Open Spaces Aired October 15, 2021

On this episode, we'll hear about one Wyoming county with no hospital and low COVID vaccination rates...many of the residents say they're skeptical of the vaccine. We will bring you another episode of the *Kids Ask WhY* podcast where kids talk about COVID-19 with a Wyoming doctor. Plus a conversation with Wyoming's House Minority Leader Cathy Connolly on a wide range of subjects including Juvenile Justice. Those stories and more.



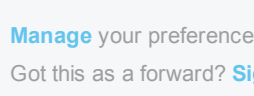
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