

WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

General Manager's Newsletter | June 2023



What do listeners want from their local media? A recent American Journalism study found that people want the full story of their communities to be told, they want information they can act on, and they want to know how decisions are made. Playing a role in connecting and convening communities also rated high among expectations. Nearly 5,000 residents in eight local markets across the country were queried. Judging from what we hear from our listeners, WPM's commitment to local news and information continues to be appreciated.

On Tuesday, June 6, the *Alliance of Rural Public Media* held an event at the U.S. Capitol showcasing how rural public media stations support access to local news, public safety services, arts and culture, and education. As always, the purpose was to remind our legislators of the importance of public radio in rural communities. Wyoming is a prime example, where many residents depend on WPM as their sole media source. You can help by contacting our Wyoming Senators and Representative to remind them of the value of WPM in Wyoming, particularly in local reporting and emergency services.

AM radio in cars was the topic on the Hill as well. Lawmakers held a hearing, titled "[Listen Here: Why Americans Value AM Radio](#)," to examine the role of AM radio in vehicles at a time when some electric automakers are removing AM from the dash. The hearing followed the introduction in May of the [AM for Every Vehicle Act](#) (S. 1669 / H.R. 3413), bipartisan, bicameral legislation directing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to mandate AM radio access in new vehicles. Ford said that it would reverse plans to remove AM radio from electric vehicles (EV) in 2024 and would provide a software fix to enable AM listening in its cars that currently lack the capability. The legislation, Ford's reversal, and a bipartisan letter from House members to EV makers seeking more information were at the center of questions at the hearing before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Communications and Technology. To be included in the hearing record, NPR submitted a letter discussing local news and public safety information provided by AM public radio stations as examples of why "it is essential that AM (and FM) radio continue to be included in new vehicles." In Wyoming, we value all possible sources of emergency information, as we witnessed this last winter.

WPM's journalists were selected for the *Solutions Journalism Network, Rural Cohort* initiative. This is an opportunity to closely study reporting in rural communities like in Wyoming and focus on solutions to issues and problems. WPM is honored to be chosen and delighted that all our journalists can participate in this project. It attests to their strong reporting.

A new voice will join *Weekend All Things Considered* beginning June 24th. Scott Detrow, White House correspondent for NPR since 2020 and co-host of NPR Politics Podcast, is ready to take over this prime hosting position. In the past year, he guest-hosted ATC from Kyiv and Lviv, Ukraine.

Summer brings changes to our programming schedule planned for early July. *E-town*, currently in re-runs, will be replaced by *Highway 287 Ramble* with *Wyoming Sound's* Dr. Bob with more Wyoming artists. *Undercurrents*, long a staple of public radio programming, ceases production after many decades and will be replaced by *Jazz Wyoming*. *Retro Cocktail Hour* fans will merge right into the mellow sounds of Jazz, for a Saturday evening of nostalgic music that so many of our radio listeners enjoy. Give these changes a listen, and let us know what you think.

We're hitting the road this summer. Be sure to catch us in July at the *What Fest* in Saratoga and this August at the Intertribal Center on the Central Wyoming Campus in Riverton, and at the Jackson Library for a celebration of the *Modern West podcast - Mending the Hoop* season finale. Stay tuned, there's more to come.

We'll be back in late June with a short fund drive to help bridge the almost \$100K shortfall in our annual membership donations. Most public radio stations and networks experienced dips in revenue this past year, and some, including NPR, cut staff and service. At WPM we're trimming our operating budgets and preserving the most valuable resource — our incredibly talented staff of producers, journalists, engineers, and programmers. Please step up to help if you haven't already and encourage others to become sustainers or new members. Though many listen, roughly 10% of Wyoming's listening population supports public media financially. There's plenty of room for growth!

We monitor WPM digital stats weekly and note that they are increasing incrementally as more people use streaming options on their computer, the app, and other smartphone options. Recently, when web usage increased by 200% in one week, we asked why? Something obviously spiked interest. Was it a salient political development, or a hotly contested social issue? No, it was an Air Force plane landing on remote U.S. highways 287 and 789 near Rawlins, as reported by our own Will Walkey. You can [read it here](#). Go figure!

A Memorial Day testimonial we aired sparked a nostalgic note from Peg Ostlund, who fondly remembered her mother. "Imagine me, unexpectedly hearing my own voice coming from the radio," noted Peg Ostlund. ([Listen here](#).)

Again, thank you for your interest in WPM and for your support. Knowing that you interact with WPM be it by radio, online, or app, gives us a reason to continue producing content that has meaning to Wyomingites and beyond.

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

Christina Kuzmych,
WPM General Manager



BEHIND THE SCENES



Leadership Laramie Class of 2023 Visited Wyoming Public Media

Wyoming Public Media General Manager, Christina Kuzmych, offered this year's Leadership Laramie class a tour of the station and a bit of history.

Leadership Laramie is a program of the Laramie Chamber Business Alliance. The goal of Leadership Laramie is to encourage and help prepare citizens of Albany County to take positions of leadership within the community. April 25, 2023.

Congratulations to All Graduates!

Our own news department worked with two excellent interns last spring, Nicole Dillon and Sage Montana, who just graduated, as did student volunteer, Friday Otuya. We will miss seeing them working at the radio station and wish them well in their future endeavors. Learn more about [WPM's Internship Program](#). May 14, 2023.

Memorial Day Interview with Peg Ostlund Honored Mother Mary Ryan

"In July 2022, I was interviewed by wonderful Morgan, from *StoryCorps*, at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens. I talked about my Mother's military service as a Navy Nurse, and meeting my father, an Annapolis grad, in a Navy hospital. That was the start of an extraordinary life. After singing Happy Birthday, out loud to her yesterday, over solitary coffee, I turned on NPR/WPM... Left the radio room, came back, just in time, to hear the last of the *StoryCorps* piece. Imagine me, unexpectedly hearing my own voice coming from the radio." Peg Ostlund Email. ([Listen to a clip here](#).) May 30, 2023.



BEYOND WYOMING



The remains of five Native American children who died at an Indian boarding school more than a century ago will finally be returned to their living relatives

Will Walkey's story about native remains being returned from a notorious Indigenous boarding school aired on *National Native News*. [Listen here](#). June 1, 2023.

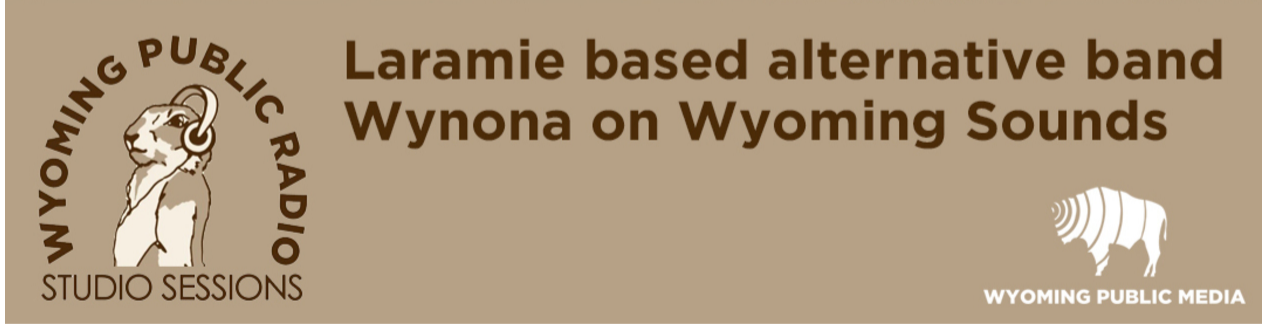


MUST LISTEN



Laramie-based alternative band Wynona on Wyoming Sounds

Four-piece rock band Wynona joined Dr. Robert and played a studio session including songs from their new album *Great Big Room*. [Watch the Video here](#).



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