



# WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

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## General Manager's Newsletter | September 2023

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Fluid is the operative word these days, as NPR reports two upcoming losses. Senior VP for Programming and Audience Development, Anya Grundmann, is leaving after almost three decades of service to public radio. Under her leadership, NPR became one of the nation's top podcast producers. Anya was also instrumental in creating the *Tiny Desk Concerts*, introducing millions of young, diverse fans to radio. Anya was named one of Billboard's Women in Music three years in a row. NPR Senior Manager Si Sykes is leaving after 19 years of service as liaison with General Managers and Program Directors. Si oversaw critical problems that all seem to happen at the same

time and at the last minute. WPM staff and all public radio owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

WPM reports two additions to our staff, and one promotion. Rexanna Kelly, a UW graduate, joins us as Corporate Development Manager, focusing on managing our underwriting program and connecting to the business community. Courtney Blackmer, a recent graduate of Denver University, will join us as *Morning Edition* Host later in the month. These positions have been unfilled for some time. Tina McGee, who has been straddling both Corporate and Membership areas, moves to the Membership Manager position. Congratulations to all!

Election season is upon us, though it seems like it never left us! Elections generate fierce political party debates that paint things in solid red and blue. On the state level, media's tendency to label states as Republican or Democrat can be misleading and nuanced. It's not all that cut and dry, and the American public has a way of bucking labels and frustrating media. NPR Public Editor provides some insight and just in time for 2024 elections in their [newsletter](#). At WPM, we still respect old-fashioned balance!

Saturday, September 2 at 11 a.m. marks a special broadcast from the Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra (UFO), led by their Music Director, Canadian-Ukrainian conductor Keri-Lynn Wilson. The concert took place in Warsaw, Poland, in advance of Ukrainian Independence Day, August 24, and includes an unusual performance of Beethoven's 9th Symphony. The final movement includes Ukrainian wording instead of the original German. This change evokes Leonard Bernstein, who famously changed the word "Freude/Joy" to "Freiheit/Freedom" when he conducted the symphony in Berlin in 1989, after the Wall came down. Maestro Wilson has changed "Freude" to "Slava" – "Glory" – the rallying cry for Ukrainian freedom. WPM will carry this commemorative concert on its Classical channel heard in the following Wyoming locations: Green River (88.5), Jackson (95.9), Lander (91.9), Laramie (88.5), Riverton (91.9), Rock Springs (88.5), and Saratoga (88.9). It will also be streamed live on the [Classical Wyoming homepage](#) (Find information on [how to listen here](#).)

New technology continues to baffle and delight. We lived through Twitter's mislabeling of public broadcasting, followed by Twitter's transformation to X. Then there was Threads, which flamed wildly and now flickers. Messieurs Zuckerman and Musk teased us with a cage match. And there's Instagram, YouTube, AI, etc. In this cacophony, we missed the fact that the Edward R. Murrow Awards made history. This year's Excellence in Innovation Award went to Planet Money's Jack Corbett for his entry-- not for radio-- but for TikTok. This was a "first" for the prestigious Murrow. What would Edward think?

Tom Wilhelm, beloved host of the *Ranch Breakfast Show*, is retiring after 40 years of broadcasting. It's hard to describe the depth of this legacy. So many listeners have made the *Ranch Breakfast Show* a part of their Saturday routine. From his eclectic music selections to his quiet voice, listeners were taken on a musical journey that touched on so many human experiences. Sadly, the art of being a host or DJ with just a stack of music and thoughtful commentary is slowly disappearing. Fortunately, Tom leaves his legacy to his protégé -- Kelli Trujillo. Kelli has hosted the *Ranch Breakfast Show* many times, and she will not disappoint. Tom will be with us through fund drive in early October, with a special farewell edition.

A huge thanks to Wyoming Humanities and the Native American Education Conference, which partnered with WPM to honor *The Modern's West's* 6th Season – *Mending the Hoop*. Fans and donors attended in Riverton and Jackson, and a good time was had by all.

Thanks to our loyal sustaining members and to new members who responded to our call for new members. It's a bit harder to encourage membership in today's fiscal environment, but we're hopeful. The year has 4 months left and spurts in giving have been known to happen. Soft messaging has already started, and we will culminate with the on-air live fund drive October 7 through 13. If you are in the giving spirit, you can find a welcoming invitation [here](#).

I leave you with a quibble involving the word "tape." An *NPR Editor* article exposed a justified frustration. Listener Glenn Hargett wrote:

*"The use of the word 'tape' is so frustrating to me. Particularly when NPR journalists use it, when they know that they don't have that recording on any form of tape. It has become journalistically incorrect and inaccurate to refer to modern recording, storage, and playback technologies as 'tape' whether for audio or video. The demise of audio and video tapes has been well-documented, with their decline starting in the late 1990s. However, despite their obsolescence, the term 'tape' continues to be used as a catch-all phrase for various recording media. The replacement should simply be 'recording.' Digital files, digital recordings, or such would be more descriptive."*

No disagreement here, just a disclosure. Many media old timers can't bear to part with reel-to-reel tapes, cassettes, 8-Tracks, DAT's, Carts, and a variety of obsolete technologies lovingly stashed in closets and basements. To us, they're all "tape" and a thrave of history. Alas, one day the MP3 will join them in its own digital repository. Just wait!

Thank you for listening, be it on a 40-year-old radio or on your I-phone or computer. We're reminded of how time passes and trends come and go, yet listeners remain ever loyal. Thank you!

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



### **Wyoming Public Radio Aired Live Broadcast with Rob Ickes and Trey Hensley**

Nashville based duo Rob Ickes (dobro) and Trey Hensley (guitar/vocals) played live on the Ranch Breakfast Show with host Kelli Trujillo. The studio session came in between shows at Gem City Nights and The SOK Gallery in Laramie. [Listen here](#). August 7, 2023

### **Reporter Ivy Engel Reflects on Science Story Editing Workshop**

Ivy recently participated in a science story editing workshop from *The Open Notebook*,



which taught strategies to be an effective and compassionate editor. When Ivy joined WPR, she was an intern in the science journalism/Wyoming EPSCoR program. Ivy then moved into a part-time position at WPR. Now, as a full-time reporter, Ivy mentors interns, including students from the same program where she got her start. *August 9, 2023.*



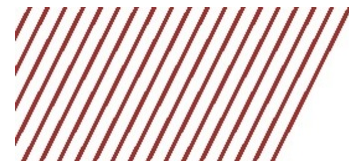
#### **"Up First" Featured HumaNature Podcast from Wyoming Public Media**

NPR's *Up First* offers the three biggest stories of the day in 10 minutes. August highlights included: "Explore where humans and our habitat meet through real stories about human experiences in nature. □ Hear Bob Salem's strange story on this episode. He holds the record for the fastest time for pushing a peanut up Pikes Peak Mountain ... with his nose." [Listen here.](#) *August 20, 2023.*



#### **WhatFest Music Festival Was Broadcast Live on Wyoming Sounds**

The *WhatFest* lineup was a perfect mix of music, incorporating comedy for a nice touch. The Buraus, who own the venue, made a speech about being happy to offer space to *WhatFest* and thanked the crowd for being good stewards of the land. Pictured: WPM broadcast engineers, Ben Slater and Cody Hume, seated, and Grady Kirkpatrick, hosting for *Wyoming Sounds*, in the center. *July 28-29.*



## **BEYOND WYOMING**



#### **Wind River-made Film, *Who She Is*, Won Best Animated Film at Oregon Documentary Film Festival**

Wyoming Public Radio reporter Hannah Habermann's story about a documentary that brings "faces and voices to Indigenous women caught in the MMIP epidemic" aired on *National Native News*. [Listen here.](#) *July 24, 2023.*

#### **How a man started rock climbing after losing his sight — and what it taught him**

Wyoming Public Radio reporter Hannah Habermann's story about a blind rock climber aired on NPR *All Things Considered*. [Listen here.](#) *August 2, 2023.*

#### **Rural voters shaping the GOP presidential primary turn against U.S. aid to Ukraine**

Wyoming Public Radio's Energy Reporter Caitlin Tan helped with field reporting and photography for a story Brian Mann did for NPR on rural America's thoughts on U.S. aid to Ukraine. [Listen here.](#) *August 18, 2023.*

#### **Modern day healing from Sand Creek, and how tribes could restore access to land**

Wyoming Public Media Podcast Producer and Reporter Melodie Edwards was interviewed about *Mending the Hoop*, a podcast series that "explores what happened nearly 160 years ago and how it resonates today" on Colorado Public Radio. [Listen to the interview.](#) *August 18, 2023.*

#### **Can long-haul trucking go electric?**

Wyoming Public Radio/Mountain West News Bureau Reporter Will Walkey's story about electric trucking aired on *Marketplace*. Long-haul trucking is a huge part of the economy and has a big carbon footprint. But the vehicles can be costly and the infrastructure sparse. [Listen to the story.](#) *August 28, 2023.*



## **MUST LISTEN**



#### **The head of the EPA just visited Wyoming. Here's what he learned from the trip.**

The Head of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently visited Wyoming. Gov. Mark Gordon took Administrator Michael Regan fishing on the Bighorn River then gave him a tour of energy research facilities in Gillette and Laramie. Regan said he wanted to learn more about carbon capture and storage technology and

hear about how the EPA's recently proposed regulations on power plant emissions could impact the state. Wyoming Public Radio's Will Walkey spoke with Regan in-studio about his reflections from the trip. [Listen to the interview.](#) August 11, 2023.



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