



WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

General Manager's Newsletter | April 2026



Happy April!

We have much to appreciate right now. Spring has arrived, longer days are settling in across Wyoming, and the Wyoming legislative budget session has wrapped up—leaving us with plenty of insight and perspective. It's a season of renewal, reflection, and fresh momentum.

The First Amendment prevailed! Judge Randolph D. Moss of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia found that the Trump White House executive order to defund *NPR* and *PBS* violated the First Amendment and is therefore "unlawful and unenforceable." As you may recall, that White House executive order was the first step in the Congressional elimination of funding for public broadcasting. We will not be able to reverse the Congressional action, but any future federal funding will be seen in a more positive light. WPM is encouraged by the Judge Moss finding, but we're not taking the ruling for granted. If past practice is an indicator, the White House may appeal the finding. We need to stay vigilant and keep up the momentum. ([Federal judge finds Trump violated free speech by ordering NPR defunded | NPR](#))

Federal cuts adversely affected the public broadcasting system, and many stations and networks were forced to reduce staff. In some cases, the impact was devastating. WPM managed to avoid this fate. We streamlined our operations through natural attrition, thanks to a dedicated team willing to take on additional responsibilities. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to our listeners and donors, whose support helped us bridge the gap during this challenging time. ([What our survey of laid-off pubmedia workers reveals about cuts and their fallout | Current](#))

It is with both sadness and pride that we say goodbye to two incredible WPM professionals. Our state government journalist, Chris Clements, has departed. He was the first reporter to join our state government reporting initiative, funded by the *Corporation for Public Broadcasting*, and he set the standard for what this work could be. His reporting shaped the tone and expectations for the program, and this year's legislative session demonstrated just how demanding and essential government journalism can be. WPM is bidding farewell to Caitlin Tan, our talented energy and natural resources reporter, as she departs to join the national program *Marketplace*. While we are saddened to see her go, we are immensely proud that a top national broadcaster recognizes the caliber of journalism produced by WPM reporters. University of Wyoming Human Resources protocols precluded WPM from generating an offer to retain her. Even so, we celebrate this opportunity for Caitlin and the visibility it brings to the strength of our newsroom.

The 2026 legislative session demonstrated just how important state government activities are to the citizens of Wyoming, and how deeply they affect our daily lives. WPM is committed to making state reporting a primary mission of our news department, and we are continuing to work on sustaining this effort after *Corporation for Public Broadcasting* funding expires. We will actively seek new funding opportunities to support this initiative.

International Women's Day was a great success. Thank you to everyone who pledged during this short fundraiser in support of a truly worthy cause—the WPM women working in journalism and management. We

hear their voices and engage with them throughout the year, and they enrich our radio, online, and podcast services. This was a winning day for their work, and we are all encouraged by your enthusiasm and support.

The popular *NPR* program *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!* has announced a major transition: longtime judge and scorekeeper Bill Kurtis is retiring from the show after a remarkable 12-year run. Kurtis, whose rich, unmistakable voice has been a defining part of the program, joined *Wait Wait* in 2014, stepping into the role previously held by another public media legend, Carl Kasell. Both Carl and Bill were iconic voices in *NPR* news for decades, shaping the sound of public radio for generations of listeners. Kurtis, now 85, shared that while he still loves the show, it's time to "start living like it," noting that he plans to scale back and enjoy a slower pace while still contributing occasionally. His final regular appearance will air the weekend of May 23, 2026. ([Bill Kurtis retires as 'Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!' judge and scorekeeper | NPR](#))

The spring fund drive is quietly rolling in, carried by heartfelt messages and testimonials from Wyomingites—and even a few voices from beyond our borders. Listener Liz Rader Haigler from Cheyenne tells us that, "*Wyoming Public Radio is more than just an incredible news organization- it's a thread that weaves our community together. As a 5th generation Wyomingite, I love how WPR shares the stories and voices of our region and highlights the issues that matter most to us.*" Comments like Liz's remind us why this work matters and why public radio continues to thrive through community support. And yes—*Pet Wednesday* will absolutely be part of the fun. For those pledging early, WPM will be delighted to add your pet's name to the roster for our on-air shoutouts on *Pet Wednesday*, April 15th. This drive is an important moment for us. We're hoping to reconnect with our loyal supporters and to hear from the many enthusiastic new members who joined our public radio family over the past year as we worked hard to offset federal funding losses. Your generosity keeps Wyoming's stories on the air and ensures that independent journalism remains strong across the state.

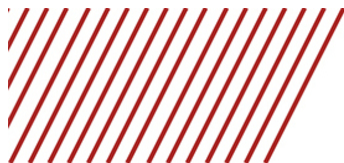
Two finalists have been identified for the University of Wyoming Presidency. The new president will take the helm in July. More than 100 applicants sought to replace the outgoing President Ed Seidel, who has served in the role since 2020. WPM is grateful for the support President Seidel gave to Wyoming Public Media, and we wish him all the best in his new position. ([UW names final candidates for president | WPM](#))

This month's *Community Minute* looks ahead to the growing season and the promise of spring. We're proud to welcome [Natrona County Master Gardeners](#)—working to assist, inform, and educate Wyoming residents in growing their own gardens. Through hands-on expertise and community outreach, they help cultivate both knowledge and connection across the state. *Community Minute* is a series that highlights the mission, reach, and impact of nonprofit and service organizations across Wyoming. Each episode gives listeners a brief, but meaningful, look at the people and programs helping our communities thrive. You can explore all our *Community Minute* features [here](#).

Next time I write will be after the spring fund drive. If you have pledged already or are a sustainer, thank you! If not, please consider it, or encourage a friend to become a supporter of WPM. In today's "upside-down world," public media brings value to our lives and a connection to our communities. It's important and needed, perhaps more than ever before.

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

Christina Kuzmych,
WPM General Manager



BEHIND THE SCENES



Wyoming Public Media's Melodie Edwards hosted a workshop, *Podcasting 101*

Melodie Edwards is the host and producer of the *Modern West* podcast and editor of *HumaNature*. She talked to UW honor students and faculty about the ins and outs of a podcasting career. *February 23, 2026.*



Wyoming Public Media presented at Laramie Rotary.

Doctor Robert, host of the *287 Ramble*, talked about American music along Highway 287, which travels through Wyoming. The show airs from 4-7 pm on Wyoming Sounds, and 1 pm on Wyoming Public Radio every Sunday. *February 23, 2026.*



Wyoming Sounds Broadcast Live from Casper's 307 WPR Listeners Showcase

Hosts Grady Kirkpatrick and Dr. Robert featured listener picks from the Best Wyoming releases of 2025, including *A Band Named Sue*, *The Tindwoods*, and *the Cory McDaniel Duo*. Chad Lore emceed the event at Citwerks in Casper. The showcase was part of Wyoming Public Media's *60th Anniversary Celebration*. Photo by Johnson Tan. *March 22, 2026.*

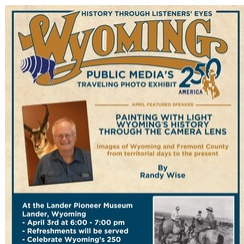


SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Cheyenne Roundup Wraps Up WPM's Coverage of Wyoming's Budget Session

"The Wyoming Legislature adjourned with a budget and over 90 new laws on the books. On this season's last episode of *The Cheyenne Roundup*, *WyoFile*'s Maggie Mullen and Wyoming Public Radio's Jordan Uplinger recap what passed, back-and-forth between the governor and lawmakers, and what happens next." See the Instagram Reel. *March 14, 2026.*



Wyoming's History Through Listeners' Eyes Exhibit & Presentation in Lander

WPM is hosting a reception for its photo exhibit celebrating winning entries from the 2025 *Photo Contest* at the Lander Pioneer Museum. Featured at the event is a presentation by Randall Wise, Museum Director: "Painting with Light – Wyoming's History Through the Camera Lens." Stop by for refreshments and free calendars. *Or watch online from WPM's Facebook page. April 3, 2026, 6-7 pm.*



MUST LISTEN





HumaNature - From our Very First Year - Season 1, Episodes 1 & 8 - Take you on Rafting Adventures

It's springtime, and that means whitewater river rafting! If you're a fan of rafting, take a listen to Season 1's two episodes about shenanigans on the Snake River in Jackson Hole!

Episode 1: Up A River, Without... A Pigeon? (2015)

Episode 8: Row Row Row Your Boat. Or Not. (2016) *From our archives. Happy 60th Anniversary WPM!*



PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Adam Bowen - Wild horses in the McCullough peaks range

One of the Winners of the 2025 WPM Photo Contest

About the Photo - This photo was taken at the *McCullough Peaks Wild Horse Management Area* just outside of Cody. He had spent countless hours trying to photograph these wild horses from the "Red Point Band", and on this particular evening, all the stars had aligned for a great shot!



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