WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

General Manager's Newsletter | September 2024



Happy September!

For folks in Pinedale and the greater Sublette County area – please note that the Wyoming Public Media signal has moved to 88.9 FM.

Congratulations to WPM's engineering/tech team! Team member Alec Lafferty Schaffer received national recognition when he was named one of 30 "rising stars" in the industry. This is an annual distinction given to top performers in the public broadcasting industry who are 35 years of age or under. As part of the engineering team, Alec makes sure your signal is delivered and that WPM is on top of industry best practices. In the last 2 years, the team updated practices to comply with industry standards, implemented a daily inspection of statewide sites, updated public notification about signal issues, installed 17 remote boxes to track signal activity from our Laramie hub, and is addressing security issues at sites. This year's awardees also included Caroline Ballard, currently News Director at KUOW in Salt Lake City. You may remember Caroline from her days as WPM *Morning Edition* host. WPM is happy to contribute talent to the national pool!

Retro Cocktail Hour fans came out for two nights of reminiscing and dancing in Jackson and Cody. It's amazing how people of all generations bond with this experience that hearkens back to the music of a bygone era! Celebrity host Darrell Brogdon charmed the audience and entertained new fans and groupies alike. Jackson's *Elks Lodge* and Cody's *Buffalo Bill Center of the West* hosted the events. A special thanks goes to Naoma Tate for her support and a stay at the famed *Big Hat Ranch* just outside of Cody.

Our Fall fund drive is in the works, and this year again we hope to be as unintrusive as possible. Expect to meet some interesting WPM personalities in the next several weeks. These are folks who work behind the scenes to make radio happen. You don't hear them, you don't see them, but without them, radio doesn't rock. In the meantime, if you haven't made a pledge to WPM, take this opportunity to get the ball rolling. In today's hyper media world, public radio is all the more relevant. Donate.

Check out the *Wildfires* page on our homepage. This is a new, timely and critical addition. You'll find news of the latest fires and smoke conditions throughout Wyoming, as well as links to major state and national sites with up-to-the-moment accounts of fires and conditions, all in one place. Further down the page, you'll find a compilation of fire-related stories from our WPM reporters, as well as national information. Wildfires have become a part of our lives, and this timely addition makes it easier to follow the news. WPM salutes all who are involved in critical firefighting measures that keep us informed and safe.

July and August were tumultuous times nationally. The attempted assassination of President Trump, followed by President Biden's announcement of ending his candidacy riveted our attention. Both events required immediate mobilization of news teams. NPR stepped up to the plate with continuous coverage and analysis which WPM rebroadcast preempting regular programming. For those without television, smartphones, or on the road, this was an invaluable service. Following these two events, WPM carried live *NPR* coverage of both the

Republican and Democratic national conventions. It's times like these that underscore the value of public radio and the immediacy it brings to major events. Your support makes it possible to broadcast at this level. Thank you!

Wyoming's Primary took place August 20, amid heated political activity. Now we're heading into the national election in November. Our State government reporting continues, and we will expand air time for state races. WPM's local government programming is supported by a grant from the *Corporation for Public Broadcasting*, and is broadcast in collaboration with partner station *Jackson Hole Community Radio*. You can find work generated by this project online.

The *ABC News* Presidential Debate, between the Republican candidate, former President Donald Trump, and the Democratic candidate, Vice President Kamala Harris, is scheduled to take place in Philadelphia on Tuesday, September 10 at 7 p.m. MT. As of this writing, *NPR* has confirmed the simulcast. WPM plans to carry the debate.

What's in a headline? And do you find yourself drawn to some headlines, while annoyed by others? There's an art to creating the perfect headline. A team of researchers took a closer look at headlines and how they influence our behavior. Seems that keeping it simple is the key! (*Readers prefer to click on a clear, simple headline — like this one*)

Former *NPR* President and CEO John Lansing passed away at his home in Wisconsin, just 6 months after retiring from the network. He was credited with leading *NPR* through the pandemic crises as well as the post-George Floyd period of unrest in America and in the media. During his four-and-a-half years, he expanded *NPR's* digital footprint and led the network through a financial crisis. He was a leader during tumultuous times, and reflected much of the upheaval all media was experiencing then and now. (*John Lansing, the steady CEO who led NPR through the pandemic's crises, dies at 67*)

The 7th annual *Wyoming Singer-Songwriter* competition took place over Labor Day weekend at Ten Sleep Brewery. Wyoming Public Media's Grady Kirkpatrick was among the judges. Singer-songwriters and music fans came from all across Wyoming. Among the winners were *Best Songwriters* Marlee Holdeman (Gillette), Jackson Holte (Pinedale), Adam Kirkpatrick (Lander) (no relation to Grady).

Homecoming takes place September 28th, and the festivities include a parade along with other UW-related merriment. WPM will add its own touch near the parade route with our *Ragtime Radio Reunion* (more information below).

And don't forget the 2024 *Photo Contest*, which is still open to submissions and to judging. Last year's winning photography was displayed in Wyoming throughout the year, in Laramie Powell, Cheyenne, and in Driggs for our "Wydaho" listeners. You can find information here.

As always – thank you!! Your loyalty to public radio and generosity to the cause is exemplary in every way. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments at ckuzmych@uwyo.edu. Enjoy what's left of the summer.

Christina Kuzmych,
WPM General Manager

BEHIND THE SCENES

Hanna Merzbach and Hannah Habermann Attended CWC Conderence

WPM Reporters enjoyed tabling at the *Native American Education Conference* at Central Wyoming College in Riverton. The theme for the two-day event was "Community Wisdom and Engagement: Teaching Resilience to Our Indigenous Youth." They spoke



with educators and community members about the issues that matter to them in the world of education and beyond. *Learn more. August 6-7, 2024.*



Olivia Weitz Interviewed Shuko Yoshikami during the Heart Mountain pilgrimage
Close to 200 former incarcerees and their families recently returned to a relocation camp in northwest Wyoming for the first time since World War II as part of an annual pilgrimage. WPM Reporter Olivia Weitz visited the *Heart Mountain Japanese American Confinement Site*, near Cody, WY to report on the event. *August 25, 2024. Listen to the story.*



***Ragtime Radio Reunion* – Homecoming Celebration at Wyoming Public Media**
Stop by UW's Knight Hall at 12th & Ivinson for a *Radio Reunion*. You're invited for cookies and refreshments, to share your radio stories, and to listen to live music. The *Big Hollow Bluegrass Band* will be performing on-air and in the studio from noon to 1:00 p.m, hosted by *BuffaloGrass* host Kelli Trujillo. Find out more on the Ragtime Radio Reunion site. *Saturday, September 28th, 10am-1pm.*



WPM's Director of Media Technology wins *Current's Rising Star Award*
"I always enjoyed listening to public radio. When I was in college, I started volunteering at Wyoming Public Media. I had many opportunities to become more involved, and eventually they led to a part-time job editing audio. After many years of applying myself to almost every opportunity, I was hired to a full-time engineering position."
Current issue *August 12, 2024.*

BEYOND WYOMING

Wyoming offers to sell land to national park - or could turn to developers
Chris Clements' feature about northwest Wyoming's Kelly Parcel's uncertain future aired on *NPR's Weekend Edition*. *Listen to the story. August 4, 2024.*

Ongoing debate: How do rock climbers balance safety with Leave No Trace principles?
NPR's Morning Edition aired a story by Hanna Merzbach that explored perspectives on rock climbing ethics. Listen to the story. *August 6, 2024.*

When daycares close in rural areas, sometimes an entire town is left without options
Marketplace aired a story by Melodie Edwards about how communites addressed Wyoming's childcare desert. *Listen to the story. August 23, 2024.*

MUST LISTEN



A WYOMING PUBLIC RADIO NEWS MAGAZINE

Stay Current with Wyoming Issues by Listening to the Award-Winning *Open Spaces* Podcast

A news and public affairs program about Wyoming and the Mountain West.

Stream or Download the *Open Spaces podcast.*

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Rose Vowles - Wyoming's Paintbrush Heaven

2023 WPM Photo Contest Entry



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