WYOMING PUBLIC MEDIA

General Manager's Newsletter | June 2020



Updates from the General Manager, Christina Kuzmych

When it rains, it pours! For weeks, Covid-19 took up all the oxygen. Now we have the additional national tragedy precipitated by George Floyd's death. This is an issue that has affected us deeply, as we continue to cover Wyoming's response. (View WPM site here.) Hats off to NPR for its ability to cover these complex and heart wrenching stories at a time of difficult financial conditions. Kudos to our WPM reporters for covering both stories from the Wyoming perspective. I will never tire of saying "thank you" to you – donors who go the extra mile to enable Wyoming to have a superb group of reporters and producers who rise to the occasion.

It's like a walk down the red carpet for radio! Wyoming Public Media won a station record of six Regional Edward R. Murrow awards in the small market category, in the areas of Investigative Reporting, Hard News, Continuing Coverage, Best Use of Sound, Sports Reporting and Documentary categories. This year's honorees include Melodie Edwards, Catherine Wheeler, Cooper McKim, Tennessee Watson, and Bob Beck. It's a proud moment for WPM professionally, and prouder still to see that three of these reporting positions were created through foundation and donor support. Well done, indeed! (See news release.)

WPM's Tennessee Watson was selected as Education Writers Association National Award Finalist for her audio documentary that examines how the highly mobile lives of homeless kids and migrant farmworker kids are limited in their access to education. (See news release.) You may remember that recently Tennessee was selected in 2019 as a Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard Fellow. The Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard, home to internationally recognized journalism fellowships, programs and publications, selected 27 Nieman Fellows for the class of 20.

We carefully follow audience reaction to changes. The results of Jacob's Media second "flash poll" of core radio listeners' behavior during the coronavirus show sizable audience gains, with public radio the winner in a number of large markets. A few years back, former NPR CEO Jarl Mohn predicted that in our fast-paced political environment, public radio's national *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered* programs will take the lead. Coupled with strong local news coverage, this combination will lead media in their markets in news and in entertainment formats. His predictions may be materializing, creating an audience bump nationally, and locally. This brings us right back to the importance of strong reporting and production teams at local stations—something that donors have effectively built in Wyoming.

Music gains traction on radio, as it reflects communities and provides a shared cultural experience. Public radio stations are the cultural hub in their communities and support local musicians. A new

report from noncomMUSIC Alliance states that over 700 public radio stations feature music as a primary or significant part of their formats, reaching over 20 million listeners weekly. In Wyoming, we're lucky to have 3 music services, Classical Wyoming, Jazz Wyoming, and Wyoming Sounds, and we're thrilled to feature Wyoming artists to help build awareness for their craft.

The Metropolitan Opera Summer Encore presentations continue into June starting at 11 a.m. MT. For opera lovers, this is a wonderful opportunity to revisit some of the best performances from the Met archives. The 2020/21 season will be delayed until December 31, 2020. The Metropolitan Opera airs on Classical Wyoming on Saturdays, and can be heard on radio in Green River, Jackson, Lander, Laramie, Riverton, and Rock Springs and via online streaming from anywhere in the world.

Amidst all the local and national activity, we have the 4th of July coming up – an event that connects all Americans. WPM has plans in the works for a broadcast that acknowledges distancing regulations. We will promote this project both on air and online.

I leave you with a few WPM stories that I find particularly interesting or poignant. This time, though, I'm offering stories that our Program Director Grady Kirkpatrick found interesting, and shared with our staff.

> "Bob produced an especially interesting interview with Congresswoman Liz Cheney on Covid 19 and while a lot of focus on the pandemic has been on the number of cases and social distancing, WPR news added a much needed human touch remembering some of those in Wyoming who have lost their lives."

If you missed them, all are available online.

Congresswoman Liz Cheney Says COVID-19 Remains A Threat, But She's Optimistic About The Future

Mountain West In Memoriam: Bill Sweney

"The Creator Let Them Go Together:" A Family Remembers Three Loved Ones Lost To COVID-19

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

As always, stay well, and thank you!

Christina Kuzmych,

WPM General Manager

(P.S. – Don't miss the mini catch up fund drive June 23 - 25, complete with Pet Wednesday!)

BEHIND THE SCENES

***The Modern West* Podcast Launches A New Season** *The Modern West*: Exploring the evolving identity of the American West, taking listeners on a sound-rich journey into some of America's most iconic landscapes to discover the people and places shaping the American West's present and future. Listen to a preview of *The Modern West* summer mini-season: three episodes that take you deep into the real West to meet people thinking hard about the future of this place. Predators, prairie, and pots of glitter.

Wyoming Pubic Radio Timeline 44 years ago Wyoming Public Radio celebrated the bicentennial year with Music Director, John Baxter, News Director, Stan Stefanik, and Operator-Announcer, Dale Barkley, on the air



shortly before KUWR's move from UW's student union to Knight Hall, adoption of NPR programming, and increase in wattage. Check out other fun facts on Wyoming Public Radio's Timeline.

NATIONAL STORIES

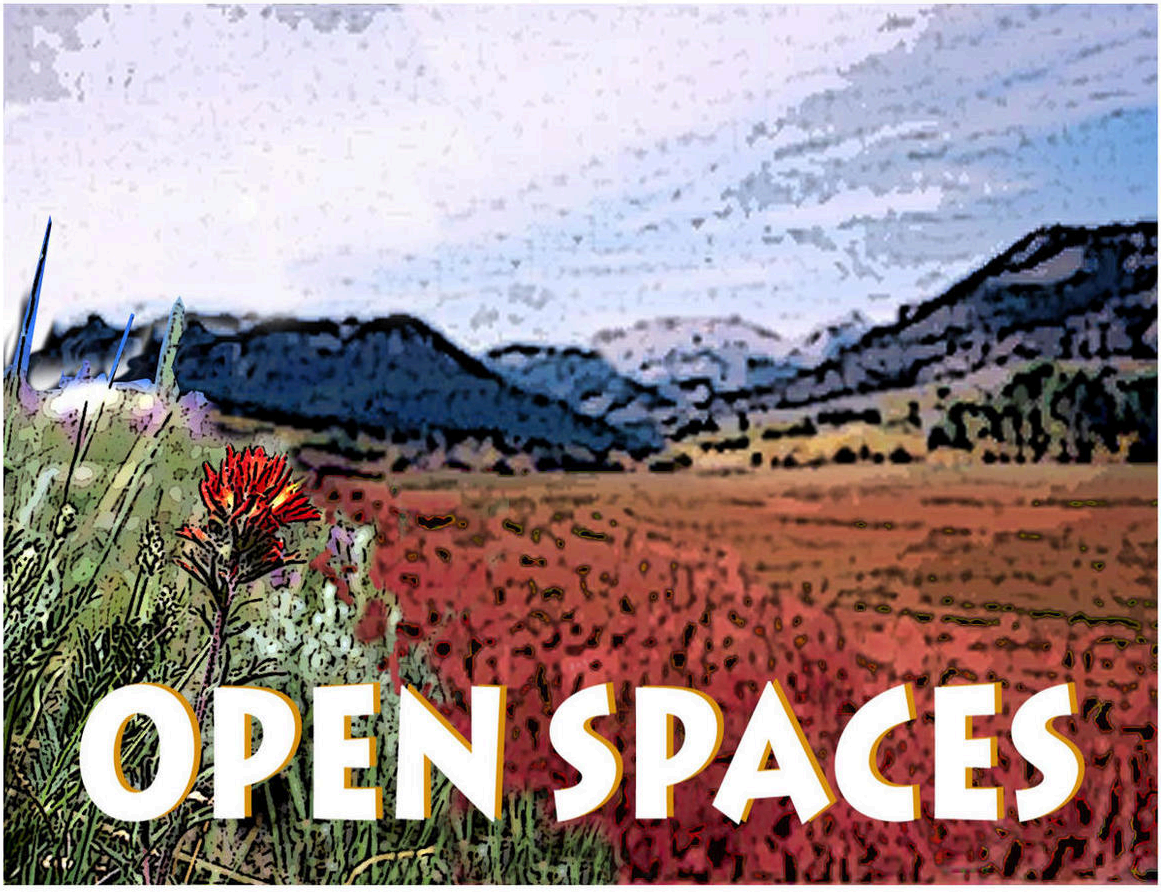
Wyoming County Faces Challenges Amid The Crash of The Crude Oil Industry Cooper McKim's story aired on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* on May 12.

Wyoming's Largest Taxpayer, Ultra Petroleum, Filing For Bankruptcy National Public Radio's *Newscast* aired a spot by Cooper McKim on May 15

Northern Arapaho Tribe Reports Fifth COVID-19 related death Savannah Maher's story aired on National Native News on May 18.

MUST LISTEN

***Open Spaces*, Wyoming Public Radio's news series & podcast, featured COVID 19 on May 22, 2020.**
(Click image below to listen)



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