

Quarterly Issues and Programs Report

KGAB AM, KIGN FM, KLEN FM

October 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

Section I. Issues

The stations have identified the following topics as significant issues facing our community in this quarter:

- A. **Taxes/Government/Education Funding:** The state for once has a budget surplus at the same time as a court fight is pending over education funding. How to spend that extra money, and how much should go to fund existing programs as opposed to how much should be set aside for savings for “a rainy day” is a major topic of discussion.
- B. **Wyoming State Government.** Cheyenne is the state capital where most state government decisions are made. Laramie is home to the University of Wyoming, an institution that is dependent on state funding to a large extent and is heavily affected by many state policy decisions.
- C. **Drug/Alcohol abuse:** Wyoming continues to suffer from one of the highest drunk driving rates in the country, as well as a continuing methamphetamine epidemic and a growing opioid problem. These issues have a ripple effect on everything from crime to local and state budget issues.
- D. **Economy:** An obvious concern both in terms of the economic well-being of state and local residents as well as paying for state and local government programs. Because of the critical importance of the energy industry to Wyoming’s economy, energy prices are one key component of this issue, although certainly not the only one
- E. **Housing:** Wyoming, and in particular, Laramie County, faces an ongoing shortage of affordable housing.
- F. **Suicide:** Wyoming has the highest suicide rate in the nation. It’s an ongoing problem and one that doesn’t seem to be moderating.
- G. **Healthcare:** This can include anything from the availability of healthcare to access to exercise and healthy foods.
- H. **Crime:** Includes everything from street crimes to the gun control debate. During this quarter we also focused on scams, especially those targeting senior citizens.
- I. **Homelessness:** A major problem across Wyoming, especially in southeast Wyoming.

Section II. Responsive Programs

Report to Wyoming is a locally produced program that airs every Sunday on KIGN and KLEN at 6am and on KGAB at 7am

Date(s) Aired	Program Name	Description of Issue Discussed	Duration
10-8	Report To Wyoming	Robin Bocenegro, Director of the Comea Homeless Shelter in Cheyenne on homelessness in Wyoming. Bocenegro outlined the statewide housing shortage, which is even more pronounced in southeast Wyoming as a major cause. She said until that is addressed the problem will persist, as many people are only a missed paycheck or two from being homeless. Other issues contributing to the problem include substance abuse, specifically the meth and fentanyl epidemics, and a lack of available mental health care, especially for the uninsured. Towns along the Union Pacific rail line tend to have higher rates of homelessness because many homeless people illegally ride train cars from town to town, despite efforts by the UP to prevent that. Homelessness, Housing, Healthcare.	24 minutes
10-15	Report to Wyoming	Dr. William Denk, chronic pain management specialist at Cheyenne on pain management. Denk said that the first step in addressing pain is determining the cause, and in many cases, if the cause is treatable the long-term use of pain medications and the associated risk of opioid addiction can be avoided. In general, many pain sources—though not all—can be addressed by such things as physical therapy, diet, and lifestyle changes. This could include things as simple as losing weight and/or getting more exercise. In some cases, shots of cortisone or anti-inflammatory medications are also helpful, and many headaches can be treated at least in part through stress-reduction techniques. One of Denk’s main points is that there is a wide array of methods available for treating pain. People often “just live with” pain that is treatable or can at least be mitigated. People who are in chronic pain should see a doctor. Denk said that while that may sound like common sense, a lot of people don’t do it, regarding pain as a side effect of aging that can’t be avoided. Healthcare, Health/Wellness.	22 minutes
10-22	Report to Wyoming	Carla Thurin, Director of Safehouse Services in Cheyenne, on Domestic Violence. Thurin said that while domestic violence is often a cycle of learned behavior—those who grow up in violent homes are more likely to engage in such behavior—factors such as substance abuse, the economy, and even the recent COVID-19 pandemic also tend to affect domestic violence. She also said that societal attitudes towards domestic violence remain a	22 minutes

		<p>problem, as some people think that what goes on in a private home is no one else's business an attitude that persists despite educational efforts to the contrary. As with many other Wyoming issues, the shortage of affordable housing is also a factor because victims are afraid of ending up homeless.</p> <p>Crime, Housing.</p>	
10-29	Report to Wyoming	<p>Caleb Smith of Enroll Wyoming on open enrollment for health insurance under the federal Affordable Care Act. Smith discussed how to get health insurance coverage under the ACA and discussed the types of coverage that are available. He said people are often intimidated by the process of getting coverage and the perceived high cost of health insurance, but he said that under the ACA people are often eligible for coverage that is much less expensive than widely believed. So far as being intimidated by the process, he said navigators such as himself are available to help.</p> <p>Healthcare, Public Programs.</p>	23 minutes
11-5	Report to Wyoming	<p>Wyoming AARP Associate Director Tom Lacock, update on common scams, focusing on those that are prevalent during the holidays. Those include text message scams purporting to be from UPS or the postal service. Such scams often claim that information is needed to deliver a package or verify an address. In some cases, they are also an attempt to find out when no one will be home to commit a burglary or steal holiday packages from a porch. With tax season approaching in early 2024, Lacock outlined the common phony IRS scams, focusing on the fact that the IRS contacts people via registered mail. They won't just call you up. He also emphasized that virtually any time a government agency or private business demands payment in gift cards, that is a guaranteed scam.</p> <p>Crime, Scams.</p>	28 minutes
11-12	Report to Wyoming	<p>Dr. David Martorono of Wyoming Behavioral Institute discusses depression and available treatment strategies. Topics covered include the difference between "the blues" and major clinical depression that may merit getting professional help. Martorono said clinical depression typically lasts for at least two weeks (and can last much longer) and may feature such things as severe guilt and suicidal thoughts, as well as difficulty focusing and sleep disturbances among other issues. He also said depression may or may not grow out of traumatic events such as the loss of a job or a divorce. But it can also grow out of chemical imbalances in the brain with no apparent trauma at all. Treatments can include such things as anti-depressant medications, cognitive therapy, and several others. Ironically, even positive achievements such as a promotion can spark depression in the sense that the person doesn't</p>	26 minutes

		get the happiness out of reaching a goal that had been expected. Suicide, Mental Health, Healthcare.	
11-19	Report To Wyoming	Larry Bartolbort and Roz Schilisky, editors and authors of an upcoming book on Wyoming Military History. In a region of Wyoming with a large military base [F.E. Warren AFB] and a huge veteran population, this is a topic of great interest. Volume One due out in 2024 will cover the military history of the state from circa 1870—before Wyoming became a state—to the end of World War II. Volume Two, covering 1945 to the present day, is expected to be published in 2025. Topics included such things as the extensive cultural and economic impact that the military has had on the state since its inception as well as the history of the Wyoming Air and Army National Guards. Also the history of how F.E Warren came to be, growing out of Fort D.A. Russell, a 19 th century army fort designed to protect settlers from hostile Native American tribes in the area. Wyoming State Government, Economy.	29 minutes
12-3	Report to Wyoming	Marilyn Burden, Laramie County Chair of a statewide petition drive that seeks to get a ballot initiative on the 2024 election ballot that would slash property taxes for homeowners by 50 percent. The tax cut would only apply to property where a home is located, and if it becomes law, eligibility would be restricted to only one property and the property owner would need to have lived in Wyoming for at least 6 months. The proposal will have to overcome the hurdles for getting any ballot initiative approved in Wyoming, which is among the most difficult states to do so based on several factors related to state electoral law. Economy, Taxes/Government Funding, State Government.	25 minutes
12-10	Report To Wyoming	Dr. Liam Clark neurologist at Cheyenne Regional Medical Center on headaches and their treatment. While for many people headaches are a minor inconvenience, those suffering from such things as migraines and cluster headaches often face debilitating pain that can last for hours or even days. The stress of the holiday season often brings an increase in these severe conditions. Dr. Clark said that one of the challenges of treating severe headaches is that they usually have multiple causes, including such things as genetics, diet, stress, and in some cases even bright lights under certain circumstances. The effects of migraines go beyond simply severe pain and can make concentration on tasks difficult to impossible. The good news for victims is that a lot of progress in treatment of headaches has been made in the last five years, or to quote Dr Clark “There is a ton of options.” Healthcare, Health/Wellness	23 minutes

12-17	Report To Wyoming	<p>Cheyenne realtor Joe Shogrin discussing the local housing shortage and options for people facing housing challenges. Unfortunately, Shogrin says the housing shortfall is likely to continue in southeast Wyoming for the foreseeable future, as the inventory continues to lag behind demand, due mostly to people moving into the area. But he does say the issue is somewhat less severe in Laramie than in Cheyenne, and in fact, some who work in Cheyenne are choosing to live in Laramie or Fort Collins and commute to work in Cheyenne. But Wyoming's severe winters can post travel challenges for those people. Shogrin also says credit is not the barrier to home ownership that many people assume, adding there are programs to help people with low credit scores find housing and that many realtors are willing to work with people with credit scores under 600 under the right circumstances. In terms of rentals, Shogrin said that new apartment complexes are being built, but once again demand continues to outstrip supply, a situation that is likely to continue for some time.</p> <p>Housing Shortage, Economy</p>	22 minutes
12-24	Report to Wyoming	<p>Dale Steenbergen, member of the Cheyenne Passenger Rail Commission on efforts to bring passenger rail service to southeast Wyoming. A current proposal would eventually link southeast Wyoming with a passenger rail network under development in Colorado's Front Range. Steenbergen, who is also President and CEO of the Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, says such a network would provide a major boost to the local economy and might even be useful in attracting new businesses. It also would offer southeast Wyoming residents another option for visiting the Denver area for medical appointments, recreation and shopping. At this point the proposal is still in the preliminary stages and will likely take several years to implement. It's also not clear whether the project might involve asking voters to sign off on new taxes to help fund the project.</p> <p>Economy, Taxes.</p>	22 minutes
12-31	Report To Wyoming	<p>Debra Bianchi, Alzheimer's Association Of Wyoming, and advances in treatment of dementia and also on programs to help Wyoming families of Alzheimer's victims. Bianchi noted that a new for treatment of Alzheimer's was approved by the FDA in 2023 and said research may soon provide other treatment options as well. While all of the available drugs, including the newest one, lecanemab, only delay the onset of Alzheimer's, Bianchi said that research is making progress, adding "We think the first survivor of Alzheimer's disease is alive somewhere. Having said that researchers are still not certain of the exact causes of Alzheimer's, which is one reason finding</p>	23 minutes

		<p>a cure is so elusive. Risk factors for Alzheimer's include a family history of the disease, poor diet, and even social isolation. While people can't control genetics, maintaining a healthy diet, getting plenty of exercise and eating the right foods can reduce the risk. Bianchi said that some research indicates the "Mediterranean diet" seems to reduce the risk of the disease, and that in general following a "heart-healthy" lifestyle in general seems to help. Health/Wellness, Alzheimer's, Healthcare, Nutrition</p>	
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