

2021 4th Quarter Issues Report for Wyoming Public Media

Issue: COVID 19

Topic: Concerns about sending kids back to school have revolved around the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. But as the wildfire season has become longer, smoke finding its way into the classroom is also a problem. The Mountain West News Bureau's Maggie Mullen reports on the battle to keep children safe.

Time: 4:30

Date: Oct 1 2021 at 3pm and Oct 3rd at noon

Topic: Wyoming has roughly a 39 percent vaccination rate against COVID-19 and is seeing its hospitals fill up. State health officials say that approximately 96 percent of those in the hospital have not been vaccinated. Another fact is that by the time many reach the hospital they have serious cases of COVID-19 because they didn't seek treatment when symptoms first arrived. Dr. Donald Lloyd Jones is the President of the American Heart Association and the Director of Preventive Medicine at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago. He tells Wyoming Public Radio's Bob Beck why Wyoming's numbers concern him.

Time: 8 min

Date: Oct 1 2021 at 3pm and Oct 3rd at noon

Topic: Over in the northwest part of the state is Sublette County. It's the only county in the state without a hospital and it's in the top five for lowest vaccination rates in the state.

Wyoming Public Radio's Caitlin Tan brings us this story.

Time: 5 min

Date: Oct 15 2021 at 3pm and Oct 17 at noon.

Topic: Elective surgeries are being canceled or delayed throughout Wyoming. The causes are many, but the primary culprit is the Delta variant, which continues to wreak havoc on hospitals throughout one of the county's least vaccinated states. Jeff Victor has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: Oct 29 2021 at 3pm and Oct 31 at noon.

Topic: The effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines seems to wane over time. And Pfizer and Moderna booster shots are currently being recommended for fully vaccinated Americans who are 18 and older. Wyoming Public Radio's Jeff Victor wondered if it's still a good idea to get one.

Time: 5:30 min

Date: Nov 19 2021 at 3pm and Nov 21 at noon.

Topic: Kinli is a Laramie Middle School student with asthma and congenital lung conditions. She lost a family member to COVID and almost lost a second. Wyoming Public Radio's Jeff Victor spoke to Kinli about finally getting vaccinated. She says everyone who is able to get a vaccine

should get one — especially to protect the immunocompromised people who can't get one themselves.

Time: 2:30 min

Date: Nov 19 2021 at 3pm and Nov 21 at noon.

Topic: After a long wait, children aged five to 11 are now eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. While many parents and children breathed a sigh of relief, others might be questioning the necessity of a vaccine for one of the most resilient age groups. Wyoming Public Radio's Jeff Victor spoke with Wyoming Public Health Officer Alexia Harrist, who said children and their communities benefit from vaccination.

Time: 8 min

Date: Nov 26 2021 at 3pm and Nov 28 at noon.

Issue: Politics

Topic: It's that time of year when the legislature starts heading into the home stretch as it prepares for the upcoming budget session in February. In the meantime, a number of legislators and the governor are discussing a special legislative session to pass bills to protect Wyoming businesses and health care facilities from federal COVID-19 mandates. All Democrats are voting no on the proposal. House Minority Leader Cathy Connolly joined Bob Beck to talk about that and issues from education to juvenile justice.

Time: 15 min

Date: Oct 15 2021 at 3pm and Oct 17 at noon.

Topic: A special legislative session against federal COVID-19 vaccine mandates led to a lot of debate but no substantive legislation this week. The result was a bit of a surprise, but many think lawmakers bit off more than they could chew. Bob Beck reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: Nov 5 2021 at 3pm and Nov 7th at noon.

Topic: Senate President Dan Dockstader of Afton has had an interesting couple of years. Managing through COVID-19 and numerous budget challenges were interesting enough, but he's also been working to either stop the shut down of coal-fired power plants in the state or at least slow the process down. He speaks with Bob Beck.

Time: 8 min

Date: Nov 19 2021 at 3pm and Nov 21st at noon.

Topic: This year legislative committees have dealt with key issues surrounding revenue, redistricting, and how to finally address juvenile justice concerns. Jackson Representative Mike Yin finds himself on all three of those committees. He spoke with Wyoming Public Radio's Bob Beck.

Time: 8 min

Date: Dec 17 2021 at 3pm and Dec 19th at noon.

Issue: Housing

Topic: The pandemic has not only led to crowded hospitals but it's also impacted housing. The exploding housing market in Jackson and other communities is leading Teton County advocates to once again push for a real estate transfer tax. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: Oct 29 2021 at 3pm and Oct 31 at noon.

Topic: In Laramie, the city council is exploring rental regulations. The idea has floated around for years in a town where at least half the population rents their home. Wyoming Public Radio's Jeff Victor reports the idea has more support than ever before.

Time: 5 min

Date: Dec 17 2021 at 3pm and Dec 19th at noon.

Topic: Real estate prices have reached new heights in many of our region's ski towns. In Jackson Hole, Wyoming, buyers spent a record \$2 billion in the first nine months of 2021. Meanwhile, the number of homes on the market is at an all-time low. That's pricing out many long-time residents. The Mountain West News Bureau's Maggie Mullen reports.

Time: 4 min

Date: Dec 17 2021 at 3pm and Dec 19th at noon.

Issue: Business

Topic: Back in 2016, Teton County was struggling with bears eating crab apples. The solution...make cider out of those apples. With that Wyoming's one cidery was born. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska has this story.

Time: 5 min

Date: Oct 1 2021 3pm and Oct 3rd noon

Topic: A select committee is looking to make it easier for cryptocurrency miners to set up shop in Wyoming. Crypto-mining is the process of gaining cryptocurrencies by solving equations with the use of high-powered computers. Energy and Natural Resources reporter Cooper McKim speaks with Chris Rothfuss, chairman of the Select Committee on Blockchain, Financial Technology and Digital Innovation Technology, on why the state is so interested in getting their business.

Time: 6 min

Date: Oct 8 2021 3pm and Oct 10 at noon

Topic: Wyoming's economy was built on energy. But with the structural decline of coal and fragile oil and gas markets, the constant question has become, what's next? How long can this dependence on energy revenue last? So, are citizens happy with the state's response?

Wyoming Public Radio's Cooper McKim visited Rock Springs to ask locals: what do you think?

Time: 7 min

Date: Oct 29 2021 3pm and Oct 31 at noon

Topic: Jackson Hole is in a unique position in Wyoming. While it's a cornerstone of the state's economy, it's often considered separate from the equality state. Energy and natural resources reporter Cooper McKim recently visited the western Wyoming town to gauge how locals felt about the state and the area's future. He spoke with news director Bob Beck about the visit.

Time: 7 min

Date: Nov 19 2021 3pm and Nov 21 at noon

Topic: Due to the regular boom and bust cycles in the state and Wyoming's continued struggle to attract and retain younger workers—the never-ending discussion on the need to diversify the state economy continues. During the recent Governor's Business Forum hosted by the Wyoming Business Alliance, some had hope about the future. Wyoming Public Radio's Bob Beck has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: Dec 3rd 2021 at 3pm and Dec 5th at noon

Topic: Nationwide there's a worker shortage — you've probably seen in your own town lots of 'Help Wanted' signs. Well, this rings true in southwest Wyoming, where the energy, manual labor, and tourism industries play a unique role. Wyoming Public Radio's Caitlin Tan brings us the story.

Time: 5 min

Date: Dec 3rd 2021 at 3pm and Dec 5th at noon

Topic: The pandemic slowed food supply lines across the country as workers at major meat processing plants got sick. That meant more ranchers were turning to local butchers for processing, and consumers were turning to them for meat. But more business at local meat shops means less room to process wild game for hunters.

Time: 4:30 min

Date: Dec 3rd 2021 at 3pm and Dec 5th at noon

Issue: Social Issues

Topic: Military leaders and state overseers allegedly fail victims of workplace hostility and evade accountability. The issue has led to a legal and legislative debate. Kamila Kudelska reports.

Time: 6:30

Date: Oct 8 2021 3pm and Oct 10 at noon

Topic: Last month, Gabby Petito was found dead in the Bridger-Teton National Forest. Her case received immense media coverage. That sparked conversations throughout Indian Country regarding missing and murdered Indigenous women's cases and their comparative lack of coverage. Enrolled Eastern Shoshone Tribal member and Wyoming Public Radio reporter Signa McAdams sat down with Wind River Reservation's Tianna Wagon and Erica Lamebear to talk about how this discrepancy felt looking back on the loss of their own family members.

Time: 14:30

Date: Oct 8 2021 3pm and Oct 10 at noon

Topic: In what has been described as part of the nation's original sin, segregation laws also known as Jim Crow laws, have been a topic of debate for decades. In recent years, efforts have been made towards an honest accounting of history to bring about healing from past wounds, and the promotion of national unity. But there is growing evidence that more needs to be done. Intern Friday Otuya speaks with UW Professor Tracey Patton about her research on the topic.

Time: 5:30

Date: Oct 15 2021 3pm and Oct 17 at noon

Issue: Climate

Topic: Much of the region is gripped in a historic drought. And there are a lot of ideas for how to relieve it and ease its impacts—some more feasible than others. In the first of a two-part series, Wyoming Public Radio's Ivy Engel looked into some of these ideas and their merits.

Time: 5 min

Date: Oct 1 2021 3pm and Oct 3rd noon

Topic:

The West's historic drought is changing how people think about water. In part one of this two-part series, we heard about some of the more labor-intensive ideas to help solve or at least ease the drought. In part two, Wyoming Public Radio's Ivy Engel explores some potential water policy changes.

Time: 5 min

Date: Oct 8 2021 3pm and Oct 10 at noon

Topic: Big game species like deer, elk, and pronghorn are closely tied to their environments. As droughts and storms driven by climate change become more common, it's becoming even more important to learn how they're all linked. Wyoming Public Radio's Ivy Engel has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: Nov 5 2021 at 3pm and Nov 7th at noon.

Topic: Thanksgiving is just around the corner. Usually, that means the start of downhill ski season. But in many places, there isn't enough snow on the ground. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska looks at how climate change may be impacting ski areas.

Time: 5 min

Date: Nov 19 2021 at 3pm and Nov 21 at noon.

Topic: The pandemic threw many industries into a tumultuous and uncertain time. This wasn't any different for Wyoming's stock growers industry. But then Wyoming entered a pretty severe drought. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska sat down with the executive director of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, Jim Magagna, to understand how these outside factors have and will impact the industry.

Time: 10 min

Date: Dec 17 2021 at 3pm and Dec 19th at noon.

Topic: For years, Central Wyoming College in Riverton has been studying the effects of climate change on Wyoming's glaciers. Now they have an even more ambitious project up their sleeve. Wyoming Public Radio's Melodie Edwards talked with Alpine Science Institute Director Jacki Klanchar about Climate Capture, an international effort to collect climate data with the help of locals. Partway through the conversation, they were lucky enough to be joined by NOLS instructor James Kagambi, who will be part of the first all-black team to ascend Mount Everest later next year as part of the Full Circle Everest Expedition.

Time: 9:30 min

Date: Dec 17 2021 at 3pm and Dec 19th at noon.

Issue: Energy and Minerals

Topic: Bill Gates' company TerraPower and the utility Rocky Mountain Power have picked the Wyoming coal town of Kemmerer as the location for a \$4 billion, electricity-generating nuclear reactor. Optimism is high but the technology's unproven. Judy Fahys reports.

Time: 4:30 min

Date: Nov 19 2021 at 3pm and Nov 21st at noon.

Topic: A historic gold mine near Cheyenne is potentially going to be reopened. This would be the first metal mine in Wyoming in nearly 40 years. Wyoming Public Radio's Ivy Engel has more.

Time: 4:30 min

Date: Dec 3rd 2021 at 3pm and Dec 5th at noon.

Issue: Native American issues

Topic: Sinks Canyon State Park officials are looking at installing a climbing aid to the walls of the canyon to entice more summer climbers. Wyoming Public Radio's Tylar Stagner reports that the Tribes on the Wind River Reservation were not contacted appropriately.

Time: 5 min

Date: Oct 8 2021 3pm and Oct 10 at noon

Topic: Wind River Reservation residents say they've received good medicine with the delivery of 50 wild bison last month. Wyoming Public Radio's Signa McAdams, an enrolled Eastern Shoshone member, attended the historic event.

Time: 5 min

Date: Nov 5 2021 at 3pm and Nov 7th at noon.

Topic: A few years back, the Northern Arapaho Tribe's historic preservation officer Yufna Soldier Wolf sent a letter to the U.S. Army, asking to exhume the graves of three boys buried at a former Indian boarding school. The army wrote back, refusing. But Soldier Wolf wrote again and again until the army relented. Now a new documentary traces this story of how the tribe brought back their children to rebury on the Wind River Reservation. Wyoming Public Radio's Melodie Edwards sat down with Soldier Wolf after the film's premiere on the University of Wyoming campus and asked her why it felt important to share this story with the world.

Time: 8 min

Date: Nov 19 2021 at 3pm and Nov 21 at noon.

Topic: The Indian Education for All Act was passed in 2017 and the state gave school districts three years to implement changes to the curriculum. Taylar Stagner with Wyoming Public Radio reports on how different school districts are learning about treaty rights.

Time: 5 min

Date: Dec 17th 2021 at 3pm and Dec 19th at noon.

ISSUE: Recreation

Topic: Yellowstone National Park has already surpassed its previous record of visitors with about 4.8 million so far this year. The park dealt with this increase of visitors while still feeling the impact of the pandemic, specifically a smaller employee pool. But Superintendent Cam Sholly said while it was a stressful season, it was successful. Sholly told Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska the impacts that visitation has on the park presently and in the future.

Time: 10:30 min

Date: Dec 3rd 2021 at 3pm and Dec 5th at noon

ISSUE: Forest Fires

Topic: Wildland firefighters deal with months of intense and high-adrenaline work. Then, as winter approaches, the fire season ends practically overnight. For some firefighters, that sudden silence can amplify mental health struggles. Maggie Mullen reports.

Time: 4:30

Date: Nov 19 2021 at 3pm and Nov 21st at noon.

Issue: Arts and Culture

Topic: Last year was a tough one for musicians of all sorts and that includes the University of Wyoming Symphony Orchestra. Not getting audience feedback is difficult. This year it'll be different. The in-person symphony season kicks off on October 7 at 7:30 p.m. Longtime Symphony Director and Conductor Michael Griffith joined Bob Beck to preview the season and discuss how they plan on having a safe performance.

Time: 7 min

Date: Oct 1 2021 3pm and Oct 3rd noon

Topic: The myth of the cowboy is as deeply interwoven into the American identity as bald eagles and the stars and stripes. But that cowboy hat, that lasso, those pointy boots? They actually trace back to the Spanish vaquero. As Wyoming Public Radio's Melodie Edwards found out, it's a way of life that's still alive and well in the American West.

Time: 6 min

Date: Oct 29 2021 3pm and Oct 31 at noon

Topic: Wyoming cowboy artist Ernie Marsh was awarded a Folk Art Mentoring grant through the Wyoming Arts Council to pass on his knowledge to an apprentice. Olivia Weitz visited his shop outside of Lovell, Wyoming to see how a handmade set of spurs gets made.

Time: 3:30 min

Date: Oct 29 2021 3pm and Oct 31 at noon

Topic: The Ucross Foundation is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. Over the years, Ucross has welcomed a few thousand artists, playwrights, musicians, as well as others in the art world to southeast Sheridan County. Wyoming Public Radio's Hugh Cook has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: Dec 3rd 2021 3pm and Dec 5th at noon