

2020 3rd Quarter Issues Report for Wyoming Public Media

Issue: Health

Topic: The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the nation to figure out something it's tried to do for years: increase access to telehealth. But as emergency orders end, will that access remain? The Mountain West News Bureau's Madelyn Beck reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 7/10/20 at 3pm and 7/12/20 at noon.

As COVID-19 puts stress on the country's healthcare system, Wyoming medical workers are heading to overwhelmed places with high amounts of cases to help out. Sheridan VA Health System nurses are being sent on two-week stints to veteran and community facilities. LPNs Mike Gatewood and Erin McDaniel, who work at VA satellite clinics in the state, speak about the toll COVID-19 took at a nursing home for veterans in Maryland.

Time: 7 min

Date: 7/31/20 at 3pm and 8/2/20 at noon.

Topic: Despite the pandemic...the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally is underway. For 80 years, motorcyclists from around the world have flocked to Sturgis South Dakota for the event. Many of those bikers travel through Wyoming and spend quite a bit of time in the northeast part of the state. But this year, with concerns about the spread of the coronavirus, those communities are preparing for how the influx of visitors could affect their towns. Wyoming Public Radio's Catherine Wheeler has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/7/20 at 3pm and 8/9/20 at noon

Topic: At the beginning of the pandemic, lots of things were put on hold, including elective surgeries at hospitals. Services have resumed most places, but the delay highlighted long standing barriers to healthcare in our region. Wyoming Public Radio's Maggie Mullen reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/7/20 at 3pm and 8/9/20 at noon

Topic: From grocery store workers to nurses to EMTs... There are a lot of tough but necessary jobs to do during this pandemic. That includes public health officers, who are often in charge of coronavirus response at a local level. But since April, a wave of public health officers across the country have called it quits. With support from America Amplified, Our Mountain West News Bureau's Nate Hegyi explains.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/7/20 at 3pm and 8/9/20 at noon

Topic: In 2015 two Northern Arapaho men were shot at the Center of Hope detox center in Riverton Wyoming. They were shot by a white city parks employee with a 40 cal. handgun while they slept. The confessed shooter said he was targeting homeless people who he perceived as a nuisance to the city's public spaces. The thing is neither man was homeless. This was a racially motivated shooting. It led to calls for change. Wyoming Public Radio's Taylor Stagner reports change has been slow.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/12/20 at 3pm and 8/14/20 at noon

Issue: Politics

Topic: Congress is now in recess for two weeks, but before the House gavelled out Democrats passed a 1.5 trillion-dollar infrastructure bill. That bill is dead on arrival if Wyoming Republicans get their way, as correspondent Matt Laslo reports from Washington.

Time: 5 min

Date: 7/10/20 at 3pm and 7/12/20 at noon.

Topic: In a rarity these days, the entire Wyoming congressional delegation disagrees with President Donald Trump on his response to coronavirus...even if they don't dare phrase it that explicitly. Correspondent Matt Laslo has the story from Washington on how our delegation's science-based responses are especially causing headaches for Congresswoman Liz Cheney.

Time: 5 min

Date: 7/31/20 at 3pm and 8/2/20 at noon.

Topic: This week, Gov. Mark Gordon started addressing Wyoming's \$1.5 billion shortfalls with \$250 million in budget cuts. The cuts are due to the economic fallout from COVID-19 and a sudden drop in energy prices. Gordon has said he would like to see cuts, reserves, and some new revenue sources used together to address the shortfall, but that remains difficult. Bob Beck reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/28/20 at 3pm and 8/30/20 at noon

Topic: After several months of anticipation, Wyoming has [withdrawn](#) its bid for roughly four million acres of mineral rights and a million acres of land owned by the oil and gas company Occidental Petroleum. Gov. Mark Gordon had hoped to use those assets to improve the state's rate of return on investments.

Throughout the process, there were questions about what was going on behind-the-scenes. Gordon put out a statement following the state's bid withdrawal looking to answer some of those questions. Wyoming Public Radio's Cooper McKim spoke with the governor to talk through that statement.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/28/20 at 3pm and 8/30/20 at noon

Issue: Social Concerns

Topic: Thousands have taken to the streets across the country -- and right here in Wyoming -- calling for an end to unchecked police misconduct. An investigation by Wyoming Public Radio and the Casper Star-Tribune found that in Wyoming law enforcement accountability can be a long, uncharted and demanding process. Naina Rao spoke with reporters Tennessee Watson and Shane Sanderson about what they found.

Time: 7 min

Date: 7/10/20 at 3pm and 7/12/20 at noon.

The City of Riverton is proud of its tradition of peacefully protesting against acts of racism. But a new generation of activists is taking the lead, and they have a different idea of what those protests should look like. Wyoming Public Radio's Savannah Maher reports.

Time: 6 min

Date: 7/31/20 at 3pm and 8/2/20 at noon.

This week, a small team of federal agents based in Billings, Montana started investigating unresolved cases of missing and murdered Indigenous people in our region. It's one of seven cold case offices opening around the country as part of the Trump administration's effort to address the crisis. U.S. Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Tara Sweeney is a part of that effort, and a member of the Trump administration's "Operation Lady Justice" task force. She joined Wyoming Public Radio's Savannah Maher to discuss the new cold case offices.

Time: 8 min

Date: 8/7/20 at 3pm and 8/9/20 at noon.

Topic: In his teens, Tate McKinney started coming to terms with his sexual orientation and gender identity. Like many LGBTQ kids in small towns, that led to hard conversations with his family, but then he found out he was related to Aaron McKinney, one of Matthew Shepard's murderers.

Wyoming Public Radio's Melodie Edwards sat down with Tate to hear his uniquely Wyoming story. Tate came forward to share his story after hearing the episode "[Small Town Drag Queen](#)" on *The Modern West* about the hardship of growing up LGBTQ in the rural West.

Time: 8 min

Date: 8/28/20 at 3pm and 8/30/20 at noon.

Topic: This weekend would have marked the 80th annual One Shot Antelope Hunt. Organizers say they called it off because of the pandemic. But the cancellation also comes after a summer of intense criticism for the event, and those who've participated. Wyoming Public Radio's Savannah Maher reports.

Time: 6 min

Date: 9/11/20 at 3pm and 9/13/20 at noon.

Topic: The death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg certainly has some political repercussions, but for many women who followed her career, her impact will be long lasting. That's the case for many women who practice law in Wyoming. Bob Beck reports.

Time: 4 min

Date: 9/25/20 at 3pm and 9/27/20 at noon.

Topic: Nestled in between Cody and Powell in northwest Wyoming, the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center tells the story of over 10,000 Japanese-Americans who were held in the internment camp against their will during World War II. It turns out, the museum wouldn't exist if it weren't for the formerly incarcerated and their children's' dedication.

Chair of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation Shirley Ann Higuchi [just released her new book *Setsuko's Secret*](#), which tells these stories. To start, Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska asked Higuchi how she learned about her parents' time at Heart Mountain.

Time: 7 min

Date: 9/25/20 at 3pm and 9/27/20 at noon.

Issue: Outdoors and Recreation

Topic: The state's businesses are struggling right now. But in Laramie, there's one glimmer of hope. With its vast spaces and nearly 98,000 square miles of public land, outdoor recreation is a big deal in Wyoming. One group in Laramie plans to make that even larger and their efforts are starting to come to fruition. Wyoming Public Radio's Ivy Engel has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: 7/10/20 at 3pm and 7/12/20 at noon.

Topic: U.S. air travel [is down](#), and [hotel occupancy](#) remains low. However, one part of the tourism economy is attracting new customers even amidst a pandemic. As Wyoming Public Radio's Maggie Mullen reports, more Americans are looking to RVs and trailers to get away from home.

Time: 5 min

Date: 7/10/20 at 3pm and 7/12/20 at noon.

Topic: The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is considering changes to laws and regulations surrounding trapping. This comes after some encounters that members of the public and pets have had with traps near public areas. Some want trapping near trails banned, and others say pets should always be leashed. A working group has looked into solutions. Lander Region Wildlife Supervisor Jason Hunter spoke with Bob Beck to discuss what they are proposing.

Time: 6 min

Date: 8/28/20 at 3pm and 8/30/20 at noon.

Topic: Cody is the first community in Wyoming to have a local chapter of the national mountain bike program Little Bellas. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska explains how the program hopes to teach girls not only mountain bike skills but also friendship and self growth.

Time: 6 min

Date: 8/28/20 at 3pm and 8/30/20 at noon.

Topic: During the COVID-19 pandemic, many have turned to the great outdoors in an effort to get out of their house but still stay away from people. And with more people out of work, it also helps to be able to fill the freezer. Wyoming Public Radio's Ivy Engel has more about the state of hunting during a pandemic.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/11/20 at 3pm and 9/13/20 at noon.

Topic: Grand Teton National Park experienced higher numbers of visitors this summer. Hiking trails saw increased daily traffic and campgrounds were filling up earlier in the day than previous years. But Wyoming Public Radio's Tennessee Watson brings us the story of one park visitor who still managed to find a secluded spot away from the crowds.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/11/20 at 3pm and 9/13/20 at noon.

Issue: Energy

Topic: Wyoming has approved its first coal mine permit in decades. The Kentucky-based coal company Ramaco now has the go-ahead to start mining near Sheridan in northeastern Wyoming. The process to get to this point was anything but simple. Wyoming Public Radio's Cooper McKim reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 7/10/20 at 3pm and 7/12/20 at noon.

Topic: The watchdog office within the Department of Labor has released a report recommending changes to the agency in charge of keeping mines safe. The U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration or MSHA has been under pressure from unions and some federal lawmakers to create temporary emergency standards in response to COVID-19. Wyoming Public Radio's Cooper McKim speaks with coal reporter Taylor Kuykendall with the S & P Global Market Intelligence... they begin by discussing what actions M-SHA *has* taken so far.

Time: 5 min

Date: 7/31/20 at 3pm and 8/3/20 at noon.

Topic: A new analysis by the Great Plains Institute and the University of Wyoming describes possible steps that industries in the U.S. can take to lower their CO2 emissions. They propose using carbon capture technology and transportation infrastructure that moves the CO2 to storage locations underground. Wyoming Public Radio's Ashley Piccone spoke with the Director of Energy Economics at UW's Enhanced Oil Recovery Institute Jeff Brown.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/7/20 at 3pm and 8/9/20 at noon

Topic: Wyoming leadership is doubling down on carbon capture as a tool to help preserve coal. That effort is building urgency as the pandemic devastates the struggling industry. Wyoming Public Radio's Cooper McKim reports that some think it's too late.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/4/20 at 3pm and 9/6/20 at noon.

Issue: Economy

Topic: Anyway you look at it, bar and restaurant workers are on the front lines of the pandemic. Since Governor Mark Gordon eased restrictions these businesses can now offer

indoor service as long as staff wearing face coverings. But some business owners aren't so sure they're comfortable with making decisions about how to keep the public safe. Wyoming Public Radio's Naina Rao reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 7/10/20 at 3pm and 7/12/20 at noon.

Topic: As we just heard, the effects of the pandemic are so widespread and unpredictable. For instance, Fourth of July week is usually when professional cowboys make a lot of their income... also known as "cowboy christmas". But most major rodeos in Wyoming, except the Cody Stampede, were canceled thanks to the pandemic this year. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska explains what cowboys have been doing to make ends meet.

Time: 5 min

Date: 7/10/20 at 3pm and 7/12/20 at noon.

When COVID-19 hit, stories of meat processing facilities shutting down due to the spread of the disease went national. The story that wasn't told was how the closures of these facilities affected the producers themselves. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska explains.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/7/20 at 3pm and 8/9/20 at noon.

Topic: As we've reported, Wyoming withdrew its bid for roughly four million acres of mineral rights and a million acres of land owned by the oil and gas company Occidental Petroleum. The winning bidder of the assets is Orion Mine Finance. Jon Lamb is a portfolio manager with the larger company Orion Resource Partners. Lamb joins Cooper McKim to provide some insight into their thinking behind the purchase... which is still underway.

Time: 6 min

Date: 9/4/20 at 3pm and 9/6/20 at noon

Topic: As many of you know it was a rough spring for Wyoming's workforce. Unemployment skyrocketed with the closure of many businesses due to COVID-19. The federal government provided assistance, but it took awhile to get the roughly \$336 million it paid out into people's hands. Robin Cooley is the Director of Wyoming Department of Workforce Services. She tells Bob Beck when the pandemic hit Wyoming things changed overnight.

Time: 6 min

Date: 9/4/20 at 3pm and 9/6/20 at noon

Issue: Education

Topic: When University of Wyoming President Ed Seidel was hired this spring he had lots of ideas. Then COVID-19 hit and his priorities shifted. But despite budget cuts, he still is excited about the future of UW and how it will impact the state. He speaks with Bob Beck.

Time: 8 min

Date: 7/31/20 at 3pm and 8/2/20 at noon

Topic: Wyoming's community college's are also working out plans to reopen this fall. Wyoming Public Radio's Jeff Victor reports they face a lack of federal guidance and other issues that could undermine those plans.

Time: 6 min

Date: 7/31/20 at 3pm and 8/2/20 at noon

Topic: Despite what some might think, there's a lot to consider with schools reopening this fall. That's obviously true for teachers and staff members. Take Ken Hilton -- he's a middle school counselor in Laramie. He also has a daughter going into the seventh grade. He explained to Wyoming Public Radio's Maggie Mullen how he's not sure what the best approach is.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/7/20 at 3pm and 8/9/20 at noon.

Topic: As high schools across the state gear up to send students back to school with health precautions, their fall sports teams are doing the same. And it may look a little different than what fans and players are used to. Wyoming Public Radio's Catherine Wheeler visited some Gillette teams during their first week of practice.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/14/20 at 3pm and 8/16/20 at noon.

Topic: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act promises all students, regardless of ability, the same opportunity for a good education. Wyoming Public Radio's Jeff Victor reports that promise stands in full, even during a pandemic.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/14/20 at 3pm and 8/16/20 at noon.

Topic: You can hardly have a show these days without some discussion about COVID-19. And while the pandemic is straining the healthcare system, it is also getting in the way of those being trained to be medical providers. The University of Wyoming School of Nursing is trying to find a solution to this problem. Wyoming Public Radio's Ivy Engel has more.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/14/20 at 3pm and 8/16/20 at noon.

Topic: For many, this time of year means the start of college football. But not this year. Without game days and everything that goes along with tailgating, college towns across our region will look different--and they'll *sound* a lot different too. Wyoming Public Radio's Maggie Mullen reports.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/4/20 at 3pm and 9/6/20 at noon.

Topic: As K-12 schools have students back in class, the challenge is how to keep everyone safe from COVID-19. But a question exists, will the public know how they are doing? Wyoming Public Radio's Catherine Wheeler has more on this collaborative reporting with the Casper Star Tribune.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/11/20 at 3pm and 9/13/20 at noon.

Topic: Due to multiple outbreaks of coronavirus in the University of Wyoming student population, the campus shut down and classes were provided online. As the university determines whether students can be in the classroom, Wyoming Public Radio's Jeff Victor reports they're also considering whether to punish some students for disregarding health guidelines.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/11/20 at 3pm and 9/13/20 at noon.

Issue: Environment

Topic: Federal and state officials are once again considering several policies that affect the west and the energy landscape here - including proposed changes to the National Environmental Policy Act, the Bureau of Land Management Waste Prevention Rule, and the Great American Outdoors Act. Wyoming Public Radio's Cooper McKim speaks with Hana Vizcarra, staff attorney at Harvard Law School's Environmental & Energy Law Program. She explains why so much action is happening right now.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/7/20 at 3pm and 8/9/20 at noon.

Topic: Medicine Bow National Forest is a popular area for recreation in Southeastern Wyoming, covering about one million acres of mountains, lakes, and more.

The National Forest Service is launching a plan for restoration in Medicine Bow. The [Landscape Vegetation Analysis](#), or LaVA project, gives the Forest Service the ability to treat over two hundred thousand acres of the forest with prescribed burns and logging and build up to 600 miles of temporary roads. As Ashley Piccone reports, although the Forest Service said the goal of the project is to create a healthier forest, environmental groups are critical of the plan.

Time: 5 min

Date: 8/28/20 at 3pm and 8/30/20 at noon.

Topic: Last month, the first transfer of 40 Yellowstone National Park bison to 16 tribes across the nation occurred. Known as the quarantine program, it took a lot of negotiations between stakeholders for the program to move forward. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska explains why it's so hard to simply move bison outside of Yellowstone.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/4/20 at 3pm and 9/6/20 at noon.

Topic: Hundreds of American Bison, sometimes known as buffalo, are slaughtered outside of Yellowstone National Park every year. It's a population control measure. But as Wyoming Public Radio's Savannah Maher reports, some tribal nations are intervening.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/4/20 at 3pm and 9/6/20 at noon.

Topic: Wyoming Governor [Mark Gordon](#) was in the nation's capital this week testifying about his desire to overhaul the Endangered Species Act. Correspondent Matt Laslo has the story on his testimony calling to upend that act - a message he delivered before Wyoming Senator John Barrasso's Environment and Public Works Committee.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/25/20 at 3pm and 9/27/20 at noon

Topic: Grizzly bear-human encounters have increased in the past decade. After a fatal attack, one community decided to become better prepared to respond to animal attacks in the backcountry. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska has this story.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/25/20 at 3pm and 9/27/20 at noon

Issue: Arts and Culture

Topic: Limitations on in-person gatherings because of the pandemic has led to theatres closing-or rethinking how the show can go on.

Some theatres have, for the time being, moved productions from the stage to the internet. That's the case for Laramie-based [Relative Theatrics](#), and the transition has led the company to hire a Director of Virtual Events. Noelia Berkes spoke with Wyoming Public Radio's Micah Schweizer about her new role and how theatre can benefit from a challenging time.

Time: 7 min

Date: 7/31/20 at 3pm and 8/2/20 at noon

Topic: Originally from California, author [Leslie Patten](#) fell in love with Wyoming almost fifteen years ago and eventually made it her permanent home. The naturalist moved to a rustic cabin near Cody and became fascinated with the wildlife she saw right outside her door. Leslie Patten discusses writing, dogs, mountain lions, and moving from the most populated state to

the least. Her latest book [*Koda and the Wolves: Tales of a Red Dog*](#) is out now. She speaks with Kamila Kudelska

Time: 7 min

Date: 8/7/20 at 3pm and 8/9/20 at noon

Topic: The Grand Teton Music Festival has picked its new executive director. The festival holds a world class orchestra during the summer months and offers other classical music events year round. Emma Kail has a background in music performance and as an administrative leader in classical music organizations across the US. Wyoming Public Radio's Kamila Kudelska spoke with her about her vision and hopes for the festival. First Kail describes how she got into this career.

Time: 7 min

Date: 8/14/20 at 3pm and 8/16/20 at noon

Topic: [The Jackson Hole Center for the Arts](#) has announced a new executive director. A native of Buffalo, Wyo., Marty Camino joined the Center in 2018 as events services director and has served as chief operations officer over the past year.

He spoke with Wyoming Public Radio's Micah Schweizer about stepping into the executive director role when much of the organization's programming has been rearranged by the pandemic.

Time: 7 min

Date: 8/28/20 at 3pm and 8/30/20 at noon

Topic: The Brinton Museum sits on the historic Circle A Ranch at the base of the Bighorn Mountains. Named after the ranch owner, Bradford Brinton, the museum prides itself on its extensive collection of Western and American Indian art. Recently, the magazine True West announced it as the top western art museum of 2020. Ken Schuster, the Brinton's director and chief curator, spoke with Catherine Wheeler about what honor means for the museum.

Time: 7 min

Date: 9/4/20 at 3pm and 9/6/20 at noon

Topic: The coronavirus pandemic has been particularly disruptive for musicians. Some solo performers and small ensembles have figured out creative ways to keep performing. But for symphony orchestras, which can have upwards of 80 players on stage, the problem of safe performances is especially complex. The University of Wyoming Symphony Orchestra has its first fall concert scheduled for October 1. As he explained to Wyoming Public Radio's Micah Schweizer, figuring out a way forward has been occupying conductor Michael Griffith's time.

Time: 7 min

Date: 9/25/20 at 3pm and 9/27/20 at noon

Topic: As statewide public health orders aimed at slowing the spread of the coronavirus are being lifted over time, more public events are resuming. Many film festivals around the world have had to cancel or change their formats to limit risks. But for the WYO Film Festival in Sheridan, the shows will go on in-person, with some modifications. Wyoming Public Radio's Catherine Wheeler spoke with the festival's director Justin Stroup.

Time: 5 min

Date: 9/25/20 at 3pm and 9/27/20 at noon

Issue: Law Enforcement

Topic: It's been a month of turmoil for the Jackson Police Department. Two officers resigned last week after a post on the department's Facebook page drew community outrage. And an investigation by the Jackson Hole News and Guide uncovered another incident that raises questions about the culture of the department. Wyoming Public Radio's Savannah Maher spoke with investigative and justice reporter Emily Mieure, about what she found.

Time: 7 min

Date: 8/28/20 at 3pm and 8/30/20 at noon

Topic: Journalists with APM Reports have been investigating a pattern of abuse and harm at juvenile treatment centers run by Sequel Youth and Family Services. The company has facilities across the country, including one in Wyoming. Reporter Tennessee Watson teamed up with APM Reports to look at Wyoming's response to concerns about Sequel's facility in Sheridan and brings us this story.

Time: 7 min

Date: 9/25/20 at 3pm and 9/27/20 at noon