



A Positive Outlook

The Good News We Don't Hear About

I was told once that no one ever writes about the plane that lands safely. That's the nature of our world and certainly the news cycle. But for every negative story that makes headlines, there are abundant lesser-publicized positives on the other side of the coin.

Take the monthly reporting on jobs. Nevada's labor market has undoubtedly felt the acute effects of travel restrictions, business closures and customer concerns brought on by the pandemic. In fact, Nevada lost more than 250,000 jobs in the early months of the COVID-19 crisis and remains down more than 115,000 jobs compared to February. Not good news by any measure, but what tends to be overlooked is that the state has regained 164,000 lost jobs since the April low point. Moreover, an additional 430,000 workers have stayed on the job due in no small part to the federal Paycheck Protection Program, which has provided \$4.2 billion to help maintain payrolls in the state.

Every day we hear or see the latest news on COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations and deaths. Of course, these are critical factors in evaluating how Nevada is managing the outbreak, measuring the collective response and planning next steps. That said, we rarely hear about the 78,000 people who have recovered from COVID-19 infections or the nearly 660,000 Nevadans who have tested negative.

We have heard plenty about the major retail chains that have closed or filed for bankruptcy in recent months, less so about businesses that are continuing to weather the storm. Reduced cash flows, operating restrictions and uncertainty have created a challenging business environment, and according to the online business review site Yelp, a modest 1.1 percent of Southern Nevada businesses have permanently closed. That means the vast majority of businesses have remained open despite these challenging times.

We hear about the pervasive issue of homelessness and the rising numbers during times of deep economic crisis. In Nevada, homelessness climbed during the Great Recession and is likely on the rise today. But we hear little about the fact that more Nevadans are realizing the American Dream of homeownership. In fact, the homeownership rate across the state is an estimated 59 percent, up notably from under 54 percent just five years ago.

We read reports over the summer about the state budget deficit and the cuts needed to balance the budget. The legislative special session ultimately did include budget cuts completely overshadowing all the programs state lawmakers were able to preserve under remarkably difficult circumstances. To be fair, legislators were able to add back more than \$138 million to restore funding to many

programs, including \$50 million in federal aid for local schools, \$49 million to Medicaid services and \$10 million for mental and behavior health services.

We hear about bad behavior by a handful of tourists, but rarely do we hear about the charitable activities of major conventions and tradeshows. Take the annual CES trade show, the largest in Southern Nevada with 170,000 attendees. The show's producer, Consumer Electronics Association, and contracting coordinator, Freeman, partner each year to donate truckloads of furniture, exhibit walls, flooring and carpeting to local charities such as Habitat for Humanity, Opportunity Village and Goodwill. CES also donates tens of thousands of dollars to local charities.



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We read about crimes in our community every day although we don't often hear about declining crime rates, crimes that were prevented or lives that were saved because emergency medical response vehicles were quickly on scene. In Southern Nevada, Las Vegas police reported an 8 percent decline in overall crime in 2019, which was driven by a 16 percent decline in violent crimes. All major violent crime categories dropped by double-digits, with homicides plummeting 33 percent and robberies falling 25 percent.

This year has had more than its share of troubling news, and the media is right to report it. But while we navigate these stressful and uncertain times with our families, co-workers and neighbors, it is worth taking a moment to recognize and consider the good news that may not make headlines but still shapes our world, our state and this community in positive ways.

For the record, 89,000 planes have landed safely at McCarran International Airport so far this year.

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