

From the Mayor: Governor Ducey issued Executive Orders 2020-43 and 2020-44 on Tuesday regarding the state's response to the rapid increase in COVID-19 cases. The full text of 2020-43 is shown in the photo, or you can read both orders on the Town's website at [https://www.clarkdale.az.gov/your\\_government/covid-19\\_information\\_and\\_resources/index.php](https://www.clarkdale.az.gov/your_government/covid-19_information_and_resources/index.php).

Here are the highlights and interpretation from a Clarkdale-centric perspective:

The order halts the re-opening of bars with class 6 or 7 liquor licenses. These are establishments whose primary business is serving wine, beer and liquor on premises. It's important to Clarkdale that the order does not restrict class 3 (microbreweries) license holders like Smelter Town Brewery and class 13 (wineries) licensees like Bodega Pierce, Chateau Tumbleweed, and the Southwest Wine Center at Yavapai College. These must still follow the existing business guidelines, but they may remain open.

The order also halts any "water parks and tubing operations." This does not restrict private or commercial kayaking or private tubing on the Verde River.

Public organized events of more than 50 people are prohibited by the order, unless the Town approves them.

The Executive Order does not inhibit "engagement in constitutionally protected activities, such as speech and religion, or in any legal or court process so long as it is conducted in a way that provides appropriate physical distancing to the extent feasible." This means that churches must ensure at least 6 feet of physical separation between attendees except for attendees who live together. I hope anyone attending church services will also wear their masks while they're inside or when they are within 10 feet of another person outside.

Executive Order 2020-44 delays the opening of all in-class schools by two weeks, until August 17<sup>th</sup>. I talked to Danny Brown, Superintendent of Clarkdale-Jerome School. He and his staff and the School Board are working hard to adapt the school's procedures to the effects the pandemic imposes. They're working on class sizes, busing arrangements, how and where to provide meals, and a myriad of other things that need to change to keep our kids safe and well-educated. Some distance learning may need to be deployed, which will necessitate creating an online platform. Please keep C-J's staff and School Board in your thoughts as they work through this complex situation.

I spoke at length with Teresa Propeck from the Verde Canyon Railroad yesterday to better understand their reopening plan. The train will reopen today and will be following strict guidelines, including limitations on the number of people in the depot at one time, allowing only one person to enter to pick up tickets at a time, enforcing distancing guidelines while waiting to board the train, and perhaps most importantly, demanding that all passengers and train staff wear masks. There will be no unpackaged food on the train, so no trays of hot wings, etc. Of course, the VCRR must also follow all existing guidelines for businesses in Arizona. The train will have their open-air cars restricted to the occupants of the car to the right as you face the train when boarding, and each indoor car will be restricted to 50% of its normal capacity, to meet social distancing requirements.

Finally, like all of you, I'm extremely disappointed that we had to cancel this year's Old Fashioned Fourth of July celebration. I'll miss the Contreras family and the goats and the bicycles and the kids and the pancakes and sausages and the band and the tremendous sense of community the event brings every

year! I will miss riding that wonderful fire truck, ringing the bell and yelling “Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July!” until I’m hoarse. It is one of those things that defines small towns, defines community, and defines Clarkdale!

Please be safe, wear your mask, and stay home unless you absolutely must go out. The faster we cooperate, the faster we can get our local businesses back to work and return to some semblance of normalcy complete with all our signature town events!

Thanks for reading, and happy 4<sup>th</sup>,

Doug



**Doug Von Gausig**

Mayor

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