



The Proletariat are growing restless

We are in a State of Emergency, but it is not the one the Governor has described.



PHOTOS BY CAROL FORHAN



IN MY OPINION
Bill Forhan
Publisher

In California there is a recall petition against California governor Gavin Newsom. Some people in the Tri-cities are attempting to launch a recall of Governor Inslee. Our local school board elections are mostly contested races for the first time in recent history.

The point here is people are becoming frustrated by elected officials who are growing increasingly out of touch with the people who elected them. This week I received a letter from a Leavenworth resident that expresses that frustration. I am offering it here as a Front Page editorial because nothing is more important to the continuation of our great American experiment in self government than the views expressed in this young man's letter.

Bill Forhan can be reached at 509-548-5286 or publisher@leavenworthecho.com.



Across the country the American People are waking up to the challenges to their freedom. In Loudon County Virginia the School Board had to shut down their meeting when a crowd of concerned citizens showed up to challenge their policies. In Wenatchee this week a crowd of 30 "unmasked" citizens caused the school board to shut the meeting down and move it to an online meeting. When the meeting was moved online only 4 people spoke according to the Wenatchee World article.

CSD Athletic Fees Are Now Waived



Marlene Farrell
Correspondent

"It has really been a goal for us to figure out how we can eliminate sports fees for students/families, but never seemed like something we could pull off. After last year of not charging anything for sports with the shortened season and now with HB 1660, we felt like it was the best time to make it happen."

In prior years, CSD has waived sports fees for any student who qualifies via the free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL) eligibility. This next step of a waiver for all students is necessary, because, as stated on the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction website, "The process for charging and collecting Associated Student Body (ASB) card fees, school-based athletic program fees, optional noncredit school club fees, and other fees from students in grades 9-12 must be the same for all students, regardless of their FRPL eligibility. The fee waivers must be automatically applied, where applicable."

Beyond athletics, other noncredit school club fees will also be waived. Connected to this new plan is also a waiving of spectator fees. "Charging

for games has always been a league level decision. We charge in our league for football, volleyball, basketball and wrestling only," said Coffin. Now, to account for requirements by HB 1660, spectator attendance fees will be waived for all. "We did not want to single out low-income families," said Coffin. He also said that at a recent league meeting, all schools have opted for a similar system of removing these fees.

This year, spectators can donate to attend a game, and those funds will be restricted to go toward expenses associated with that sport.

There are budgetary impacts of this new policy. "The district will be absorbing athletics for basic needs (balls, safety equipment, etc.)," said Coffin. "Before I came, the district also took on official costs and transportation, which was something our fees at gates helped pay for. Our athletics was always in the red though as these are big costs, so that is when the district took on those fees. Our coaches also have fundraising accounts where we are able to raise money for the extra needs of our programs."

This decision will hopefully

inspire greater sports participation. It is documented that extracurricular opportunities improve academic, social, and emotional outcomes and could prove particularly beneficial after a year and a half of hardship caused by the pandemic.

"I believe this is a huge step for our district," said Coffin. "We have always pushed that we do not want money to ever be a reason why a student-athlete cannot participate."



FILE PHOTO.

Dominique Coffin

Some Washington State Representatives have called for a special session to review and amend Emergency Powers, but unless legislators from the majority party agree, the discussion will not be had. Paradoxically, Inslee is the only one who can end his emergency powers by ending the state of emergency, which he has no immediate intention of doing. This is too much unchecked power for any branch of the government in a free state. It sets an extremely dangerous precedent, and the outrage ought to be equal no matter your party or political affiliation.

If the Governor and his office insist that we are still facing an emergency, is it not reasonable then to argue that the litany of uncontested, unprecedented government imposed solutions have not been effective? The social distancing, the lockdowns, the closures, the masking, the required masking, the vaccinations, the mandatory vaccinations, and all the micro-managing proclamations have not quelled the "emergency". If anything, they appear to be prolonging it. At what point do we admit that these measures are not effectively solving our problems? At what point do we resume debate, discourse, and local management of local problems? At what point do we resume the checks

CONTINUED TO PAGE A2

With the COVID-19 restrictions relaxed, take time to visit our local businesses for Shopping, Dining and Events

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Local and Regional News

City tax receipts show strong growth over 2020



BILL FORHAN
Publisher

Still short of 2019 levels

City of Leavenworth tax receipts continue to be strong through June of 2021. Retail Sales tax receipts for the first six months of 2021 are up 41% following two years of decline.

Lodging tax receipts are also strong through June up 58% for the first six months of the year, however, this follows an exceptionally bad first six month of 2020 with June showing a near total collapse of lodging revenues. Previous to 2020, Lodging tax receipts showed double digit gains year after year.

Following questions from the Leavenworth Echo about the performance of individual categories of taxes the city has provided an analysis of major sectors. There are few surprises here as Food service and drinking establishments

took a big drop in 2020, while construction showed some gain over 2019. The one big surprise is the gain in retail trade that shows a healthy gain through the Pandemic years.

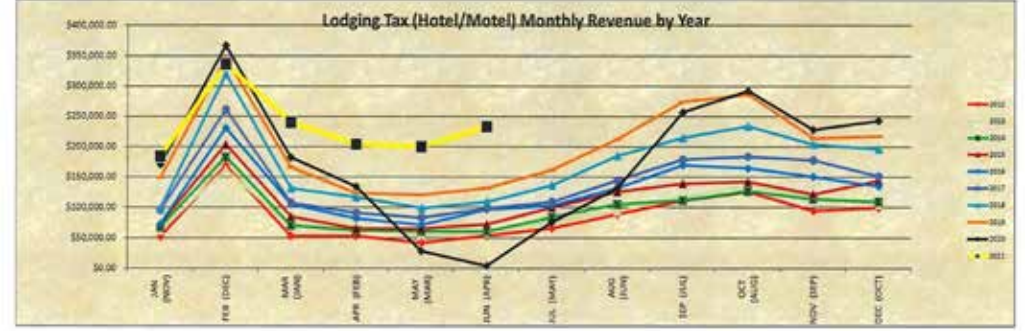
It remains to be seen if the rest of 2021 will follow the trends or if economic activity as reflected in our city's tax receipts will start to return to more normal levels. The fall quarters have traditionally brought in significant revenue. Without Oktoberfest and a scaled down Christmas Lighting Festival there is reason to be concerned.



CITY OF LEAVENWORTH THROUGH JUNE 30, 2021 RETAIL SALES TAX REVENUE SUMMARY. Table with columns for Budget (2012-2021) and Actual (2011-2021) for various months (JAN to DEC).



THROUGH JUNE 30, 2021 HOTEL/MOTEL TAX SUMMARY. Table with columns for Budget (2012-2021) and Actual (2011-2021) for various months (JAN to DEC).



Ivermectin Should Not Be Used To Prevent Or Treat Covid-19

SUBMITTED BY VERONICA FARIAS
Chelan-Douglas Health District

East Wenatchee – Chelan-Douglas Health District (CDHD) advises people against the use of Ivermectin to prevent or treat COVID-19. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved Ivermectin for use in treating or preventing COVID-19 in humans.

Ivermectin is approved at very specific doses for some parasitic worms, and topical (on the skin) formulations for head lice and skin conditions like rosacea. Ivermectin is not an anti-viral (a drug for treating viruses).

CDHD asks that you never use medications intended for animals on yourself. Ivermectin for animals is very different from those approved for humans. Taking large doses of Ivermectin is dangerous and can cause serious harm. If you have a prescription for Ivermectin for an FDA-approved use, get it from a legitimate source and take it as prescribed. Here is what we know:

• There is inadequate evidence to recommend for or against the use of Ivermectin for the

prevention or treatment of COVID-19. The FDA has not reviewed data to support use of

Ivermectin in COVID-19 patients to treat or to prevent COVID-19; however, some initial research is underway.

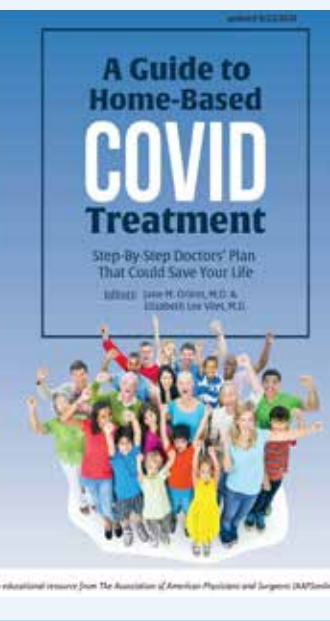
• Ivermectin for approved uses can interact with other medications, like blood thinners.

Adverse side effects from taking Ivermectin, which occur 1-10% of the time with standard doses, include rapid heart rate, swelling of face, swelling of feet, low blood pressure, dizziness,

diarrhea, nausea, decreased white blood cell counts, and hepatitis.

• You can overdose on Ivermectin, which can cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, hypotension (low blood pressure), allergic reactions (itching and hives), dizziness, ataxia (problems with balance), seizures, coma, and even death.

Effective ways to limit the spread of COVID-19 continue to be the use of masks, staying at least 6 feet apart from others who do not live with you, avoiding large crowds and frequent hand washing. For public health updates, visit www.cdhd.wa.gov



Editor's note: A reader has provided me with a document from The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons that has issued a "A Guide to Home-Based Covid Treatment." It is the most complete guide I have seen regarding the risks and treatment for this pandemic. You can find it at <https://aapsonline.org/covidpatientguide/> or I will post it to my websites.

State of Emergency

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

and balances of the established governing branches? These uncontested overreaches ought to frighten all of us. If you were to tell me three years ago, it's likely a State government will soon have a list of private businesses deemed un-essential and declared un-safe to be open for an entire calendar year, I would laugh it off and go back to my latte. If last year you had told me when a vaccine is ready, it is likely that the Governor will make it mandatory to receive it or be faced with losing your job, I would have said "never in the USA". If you tell me now that soon you won't be able to cross the state line, be in a public place, or enter into a grocery store without proving you've taken a state sanctioned medical treatment, I'm listening, and I'm deeply troubled.

I am in fear because I don't see the same outrage and passion in my peers.

I am in fear because of the gross complacency and compliance from men and woman who speak their outrage behind closed doors but play along in public month after month. I am in fear because the local news reports these "Proclamations" without question. Without even so much as acknowledging how unprecedented this type of government power is in the USA. Without so much as a curious question.

I am in fear of what the next "Proclamation" will contain; who's shop will be closed, how many masks I'm "required" to wear. What needs to be injected into my body against my will. Where I can travel without disclosing medical records, and what the Science

of the day is.

I am in fear because of how few people seem to understand how a representative government is designed to work.

I am in fear because the slow boil of our representation in this state is nearly steam.

I am in fear because writing to my representatives, to the governor's office, and to the local paper seems futile and hopeless.

I am in fear for the future of a free state.

I am not in fear of getting sick.

It is my hope that somehow, some way we can act en masse to compel the State Legislature to review the Emergency Powers Act, to at the very least include Legislative review of

executive orders.

I know many of you are as frustrated as I am, probably many of you much more. Please do something about it! Write to your representative, write to the governor's office, call these people. Start, sign and share a petition! Resist, question and speak out about these proclamations and mandates. It may seem insignificant as an individual, but with many of us, it is more powerful than anything. The time for action has passed! This letter is late to the game. These overreaches are outside our front doors. Take action today! Unless we the citizenry do something, it is not just going to magically stop. This government overreach is the real emergency!

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This announcement sponsored by The Leavenworth Echo

The Contract
Unveiling the healing power of forgiveness
A novel by local writer William E. Forhan.

Nobel Prize winning author Gabriel Garcia Márquez was quoted as saying, "All human beings have three lives, public, private and secret."
In our modern world of the Internet search engines and DNA testing, keeping our private and secret lives separate is increasingly difficult. Sometimes they can come crashing in on our public lives when we least expect it.
Father Robert McCarthy is a middle-aged priest who is suddenly and unexpectedly confronted with his secret past. How he deals with the revelation of that past with his family, his congregation and the impacts of that secret life is inspirational. How McCarthy discloses the news of his college indiscretion requires him to take everyone involved on a journey of confession. That journey forces him to deal with issues of homosexuality, judgementalism, divorce and pride.
His pastoring skills and the depth of support from his wife help him bring forgiveness and restoration to many broken relationships.
The bonds of three families are ultimately restored through celebrations of life experiences including fishing, holiday gatherings, the discovery of unknown family connections and a wedding.
Bill's Book is now available online through Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com and Apple iBook The paperback is \$16.99 and the ebook is \$8.99. Or you can order the book directly from Bill at The Leavenworth Echo (509-548-5286), the Lake Chelan Mirror (509-682-2213), or by emailing your contact information to Bill.Forhan@gmail.com. Orders placed directly with the author have the added advantage of being signed including a short message if you like. Sales tax applies and if you request mail delivery add \$3.00 for postage. There is no charge if your order is picked up at the Echo or Mirror office.

Dealing with Constipation

Q: I finally had my hip replaced last week. My surgeon recommended taking a stool softener for a couple of weeks to prevent constipation. Is that the same as a laxative?

Many surgeons advise their patients to take a stool softener, expecting it to help you avoid the discomfort of constipation. However, this practice has been called into question because there is very little evidence proving that it works.

Laxatives encourage the movement of stool through your intestines, preventing or relieving the pain and pressure of constipation. The word laxative means “to loosen,” similar to the word “relax” and “lax,” meaning to act loose or relaxed. A laxative

works to “loosen” your bowels, relieving constipation.

Stool softeners lubricate your stool, making it softer, but don’t prevent or relieve constipation.

After swallowing a bite of food, it moves through a series of tubes, called the digestive tract. In your stomach, highly acidic gastric juices secreted by cells in its lining start breaking down your food into a form that can be absorbed by your body. The most liquid mass of food then moves from your stomach into your small intestine to begin the process of absorbing its vital nutrients.

Your intestines are lined with special cells designed to absorb any nutrients, medicines, and water. Other muscles run the entire length

of your intestines, squeezing as they keep the mass of food moving through. Whatever is leftover becomes stool or feces.

The longer it takes food to move from your small intestine to your rectum, the more water will be pulled out of your stool. This makes stool smaller, harder, and more painful to eliminate. A stool softener draws moisture into the food mass and lubricates it, helping ease the discomfort of constipation. The most common stool softeners are docusate and mineral oil.

Docusate is a surfactant, very much like a detergent or soap, and helps water move into your stool. Docusate doesn’t directly stimulate the muscles of your intestine to eliminate feces. Instead, it can replace some water absorbed into your body as it moves through your intestine. Docusate is usually easy to tolerate but may occasionally cause diarrhea or stomach cramps. Unlike mineral oil, it doesn’t interfere with the absorption of nutrients or vitamins.

Mineral oil is a liquid refined from crude oil. It lubricates the stool but doesn’t increase its water content like docusate. Mineral oil is colorless and odorless, and “baby oil” is a scented version of it. Mineral oil can interfere with your body’s absorption of fat-soluble vitamins like vitamin A, D, E, and K. This can eventually cause vitamin deficiency. Stool can also leak out from your rectum.

If you accidentally inhale mineral oil while trying to swallow, it can cause life-threatening lung irritation. Although mineral oil usually stays in your intestine, if

you take both docusate and mineral oil together, the mineral oil may actually absorb into your body, away from where it can help relieve any painful elimination.

Emollients like docusate and mineral oil can turn your stool “mushy” but don’t directly stimulate the muscles lining your intestine. While most people get results within 2 days, it can take up to five days for full effect.

Here are 6 Tips on Using a Stool Softener for Constipation:

- 1. Stay hydrated.** Drink enough fluids will help docusate do its job of moving water into your stool.
- 2. Avoid docusate sodium if you are on a sodium-restricted diet.** Docusate has two forms, sodium, and calcium. If you are restricting your sodium intake, choose docusate calcium

instead of docusate sodium. It can be hard to find. If you don’t see it on the shelf, ask the pharmacist.

3. If you have trouble swallowing pills, avoid 250mg docusate capsules.

Although the 250mg capsule seems a better value than the 100mg because they often cost the same, the 250mg capsule is HUGE and should never be cut.

4. Never cut or bite docusate capsules.

Docusate tastes HORRIBLE, just like soap, because that’s what it is. Avoid biting or cutting docusate capsules unless you like a strong, soapy flavor. The syrup tastes nearly as bad; it ranks consistently at the bottom of my liquid taste tests, and its aftertaste can linger for hours.

5. For more reliable results, choose a laxative.

There isn’t much evidence



that docusate prevents constipation. OTC laxatives like Senakot® and Dulcolax® are just as safe as docusate, and much more effective. Docusate is also available combined with a laxative like senna or bisacodyl in the OTC products Senakot-S® and Peri-Colace®.

Dr. Louise Achey, Doctor of Pharmacy, is a 42-year veteran of pharmacology and author of Why Dogs Can't Eat Chocolate: How Medicines Work and How YOU Can Take Them Safely. Get clear answers to your medication questions at her website and blog TheMedicationInsider.com. 2021 Louise Achey

P.E.O. JF Announces Scholarship Winners

SUBMITTED BY: MIMI KELLER

P.E.O. Chapter JF-WA is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2021-22 Local Scholarship

This year’s recipients are Wendi Mingo from Cashmere is currently working at Confluence Health as a

certified nurses’ assistant and has been accepted in the nursing program at Wenatchee Valley College.

Stacey Menley from Cashmere is currently attending Wenatchee Valley College in the field of Business Computer Technology and plans to become an accountant

or administrative assistant in the field after completion.

Laura Valencia from Wenatchee is currently a para-educator in the Wenatchee School District. She is a junior at Central Washington University studying to become a Bilingual Elementary Teacher.



Stacey Menley



Wendi Mingo



Laura Valencia

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Obituary & Memorial Policies

NCW Media, Inc.: Leavenworth Echo, Cashmere Valley Record, Lake Chelan Mirror, Quad City Herald

An Obituary is a way for family member(s) to commemorate a loved one’s life and to notify the community of the passing of the loved one. Obituaries are also used for historical and ancestral data.

Memorials are another way to let the community know about the life and memories of the person who has passed. A Memorial is different from an Obituary. An Obituary is usually current, while a Memorial can be written later.

Obituaries and Memorials need to be typed and emailed as a Word Document. They can be placed in one or more papers - all publish weekly on Wednesday.

Obituaries are priced by the number of words and include one color photo and go online at no extra charge. Memorials are priced per column inch. Please call for cost. *Payment is due at the time of placement. *Exception: Chapels, funeral homes who have an account, can be billed. There is no charge for a Death Notice - information is limited.

Deadline is 4 p.m. on Friday - some exceptions may apply.

Please call 509-548-5286 for more information
Or email classifieds@leavenworthecho.com

UPPER VALLEY CHURCH GUIDE

New to our area? On vacation? These churches welcome you!

TO PLACE INFORMATION IN THE CHURCH GUIDE CALL 548-5286

CASHMERE

CASHMERE BAPTIST CHURCH
103 Aplets Way • 782-2869
Worship 9 a.m.
Bible Study, Wed., 6:30 p.m.
Pastor Bob Bauer
Find us on Facebook at Cashmere Baptist Church

CASHMERE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
303 Maple Street • 782-2431
Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
Call for activities: Pastor Charles Clarke
www.cashmerepres.org

CASHMERE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
213 S. Division • 782-3811
Virtual Zoom Service, Sunday, 11 a.m. until further notice.
Pastor Lilia Felicitas-Malana

CHRIST CENTER
Cashmere Assembly of God: 509-782-2825
Worship Service Sundays 10:00 a.m., in-person, Conservatory @ Apple Annie’s and on-line, christcentercashmere.com
Underground High School Sundays 6:00 p.m., In-person, Conservatory
Middle School Youth Thursdays 7-8:30 p.m., In-person, Conservatory
Lead Pastor, *Steve Haney*
Children’s Pastor, *Andy Robinson*
Congregational Care Pastor, *Joyce Williams*
High School Director, *Kelsie Folden*
Community Outreach, *Steffanie Haney*

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509-860-0736 for more information.

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH
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5837 Evergreen Drive • 782-1662
Sunday School - 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship - 11 a.m.
Evening Service - 6 p.m.
Pastor John Smith
www.christforcashmere.org

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
10600 Ski Hill Drive • 548-4345
Saturday Services • Bible Study 9:30 a.m.
Worship 11 a.m. • Fred Smith • 860-3997

SPIRIT LIFE CENTER
210 Benton Street • 548-7138
Sunday Worship 10 a.m., Prayer 6 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study 6:30 p.m.
Pastor Russell Esparza

MONITOR

MONITOR UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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Pastor Lilia Felicitas-Malana

PESHASTIN

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8455 Main Street • 548-7517
Sunday Worship 10 a.m. • Pastor John Romine
www.lightinthevalley.org

NEW LIFE FOURSQUARE CHURCH
7591 Hwy. 97 • 548-4222
Sunday Worship, 10 a.m.
Pastors, Darryl and Mindy Wall
Email: newlifeleavenworth@gmail.com
FB page: [newlifeleavenworth](https://www.facebook.com/newlifeleavenworth)
www.newlifeleavenworth.com

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• Worship 10:45 a.m.
Pastor Steve Bergland

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Pastor Mike Moore
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Church: 548-7667
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Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.
Website: www.leavenworthbaptist.com
Email: info@leavenworthbaptist.com

LEAVENWORTH CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
111 Ski Hill Drive • 548-5292
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Lead Pastor: Greg Appleby
www.LCN.org



PHOTO BY RACHEL HANSEN, SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIST, CHELAN COUNTY PUD

Wenatchi elder Randy Lewis gave a blessing during the re-opening ceremony for the new Discovery Center at Rocky Reach on Wednesday, Aug. 25.



PHOTO BY RACHEL HANSEN, SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIST, CHELAN COUNTY PUD

The PUD project team, leadership and community leaders untie the ribbon at the new Discovery Center at Rocky Reach on Wednesday, Aug. 25. The team tied the ribbon when the Discovery Center closed in 2019 for a two-year transformation process. From left: John Laycock, Casey Hall, Kirk Hudson, Steve Wright, Steve McKenna, Dan Garrison, Debbie Gallaher, Kirby Billingsley's daughter Rielle Crocker, and Bob Bauer.



PHOTO BY RACHEL HANSEN, SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIST, CHELAN COUNTY PUD

A 14-foot steel spiral with more than 100 salmon spans two floors of the new Discovery Center. It hangs from a walkable skylight on the outdoor exhibition deck. Every floor of the new Discovery Center has new, interactive exhibits and three mini-theaters that connect visitors to the Columbia River, including its cultural history, ecology, how hydropower works, and large, fish-viewing windows that allow people of all ages to look a salmon in the eye.

CRUTs: A Practical Path to a Lasting Legacy



Russ Speidel
Attorney,
Speidel
Bentsen Law
Firm

Today we'd like to introduce you to the Charitable Remainder Unitrust, also known as the CRUT. CRUTs can be a donor's best friend, providing them an income stream for life and allowing them to establish a legacy once they pass. In 1995, an investment advisor called me for help. He had an elderly retiree-client, a single man who owned about \$1 million of appreciated Alcoa stock. The advisor was looking for a way to sell the stock, to avoid paying capital gains tax, AND increase his client's monthly income. This was a tall order, but when I inquired and learned that the retiree might have a charitable intent, there was an easy

solution: form a Charitable Remainder Unitrust with the Community Foundation. It worked marvelously. The retiree transferred his Alcoa stock to the Community Foundation, which could sell it tax free. Then, during the remainder of the retiree's lifetime, the CRUT paid to the retiree all of its net income, a sum much greater than the Alcoa dividends. The retiree, Roy Hill, established a lasting legacy through a Scholarship Fund and a Designated Fund. To this day, those funds support students and provide income to his favorite charity every year. In the 20 years since he passed in 1998, approximately \$1.3 million has been awarded in grants and scholarships and the funds have grown in value with a balance today of over \$1.9 million – allowing his legacy to continue on, forever. Roy Hill loved music. He cared deeply about ensuring the future of aspiring musicians and also supporting the Wenatchee Valley Symphony, one of his favorite nonprofits.

By establishing a CRUT, Mr. Hill secured a larger income for himself during the remainder of his life, and he left an astonishing gift to the community by creating the Roy W Hill Music Scholarship and a designated fund to benefit the symphony. CRUTs work particularly well when people have an appreciated asset and want to avoid capital gains tax. People who own rental properties – and are tired of being landlords – can gift their rental properties to CFNCW to establish a CRUT. Often the interest income from the CRUT provides as much if not more income than they would have received from tenants, without all the hassle of maintaining the property. CRUTs provide tax advantages and provide a charitable deduction for the donor. And the best part: They will have established a charitable legacy in the process.

To learn more, visit www.cfncw.org or contact the Community Foundation at (509) 663-7716.

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The Washington Outdoors Report



PHOTO BY JOHN KRUSE.

The author with a pink salmon caught from shore on Whidbey Island

It's Humpy Time!

By JOHN KRUSE

With some three million pink salmon flooding Puget Sound and entering tributary rivers right now, it is prime time to go fishing! Pink salmon return to Puget Sound every odd year and this is the best return we've seen in nearly ten years. The pinks are also known as humpies for the hump that forms on their back after they enter freshwater on their journey upstream to spawn. They generally run from three to six pounds in size though they can get bigger than that. As a matter of fact, the state record pink salmon in Washington weighs a whopping 15.4 pounds and was caught by Adam Stewart in the Stillaguamish River in October of 2007.

Right now, you have the luxury of fishing for salmon in the saltwater of Puget Sound or from several river banks where they head upstream to spawn. Guide Brianna Bruce with Livin' Life Adventures has been fishing the Sound near Mukilteo, trolling 8-to-11-inch flashers and a 2 1/2 or 3 inch white or Silver Horde Pink Fisher spoon. She avoids using herring or other bait because dogfish sharks are abundant and will be hitting the bait more often than the salmon do.

If you are fishing from shore in the saltwater, you can fish humpies from a variety of public piers in Puget Sound or from beaches, especially on Whidbey Island at Lagoon and Bush Point as well as at Fort Casey and Deception Pass State Parks. High tide is a good time to fish but early morning and just before sunset are also very good times to be casting for pinks. Many anglers use a pink buzz bomb, which is cast a long distance and then jigged back to shore. If you can't find a buzz bomb, consider using a

of course) and fish it the same way. The salmon generally hit after you reel up and let the lure flutter and fall a second or two before reeling again.

Spoons are also effective in the saltwater, and in rivers too. I've had good success fishing pink spoons close to the bottom on a gravel bar on the Skagit River near the railroad trestle in Mount Vernon. One of my favorite spoons? A DarDevle Devle Dog. Youngs Bar on the Skagit at Mount Vernon is another very well-known place to cast for pinks. A good number of humpies will also fin their way up the Puyallup, Green, Nooksack, Stillaguamish, Snohomish and Skykomish Rivers too in the days ahead, with the bulk of the run finished towards the end of September.

Casting spoons is actually an old school method of catching humpies (though it works just fine). Nowadays, many people fish pink jigs or jig heads with pink squid hoochie skirts attached in rivers. In slower moving waters these jigs can be deadly effective.

As for table fare, pink salmon get a bum rap from many anglers who complain about the soft texture of their

flesh (made all the softer as they get closer to spawning). I've enjoyed some great meals of pink salmon though. Want to do the same? Here's a few suggestions:

1. Immediately bleed and clean the fish and keep it in a cool place or in the water.
2. Grill it up fresh! Grilled pink salmon on the BBQ is absolutely delicious when cooked within a couple of days of catching it and the firmness and texture of the meat is just fine, as is the taste.
3. If you freeze your salmon resolve to cook it within six weeks. Pink salmon fillets simply don't hold up as well in the freezer as thicker coho or chinook salmon fillets do.
4. Smoked pink salmon are absolutely delicious, and this is what I recommend doing for pink salmon you freeze and can't eat within a few weeks.
5. Canned salmon is an option too. There is a reason pink salmon is on sale at the supermarket in cans, people like it on salad or prepared as part of other dishes.

John Kruse – www.northwesternoutdoors.com and www.americaoutdoorsradio.com



PHOTO BY JOHN KRUSE.

Lures that work for salmon from the beach and in the lower rivers

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Afghanistan Evacuation Flights Resume After Deadly Bombings

ZACHARY STIEBER

Evacuation flights from Afghanistan resumed with new urgency on Aug. 27, a day after two suicide bombings killed 13 U.S. troops and at least 95 Afghans.

As the call to prayer echoed through Kabul along with the roar of departing planes, the anxious crowd outside the airport was as large as ever. Dozens of Taliban members carrying heavy weapons patrolled one area about 500 meters (1,600 feet) from the airport to prevent anyone from venturing beyond.

We will complete our mission. And we will continue, after our troops have withdrawn, to find means by which we find any American who wishes to get out of Afghanistan.

President Joe Biden

The ISIS terror group said it carried out the Aug. 26 bombings, which took place at or near an eastern entrance to the U.S.-held Hamid Karzai International Airport. The group said it was targeting American forces and “their spies.”

U.S. President Joe Biden vowed to

retaliate and promised the evacuations would not end because of the attack.

“We will complete our mission. And we will continue, after our troops have withdrawn, to find means by which we find any American who wishes to get out of Afghanistan. We will find them and we will get them out,” Biden said from the White House.

The United States has facilitated the evacuation of approximately 100,000 people since Aug. 14, when the Taliban completed its takeover of the country. That includes 5,000 Americans.

In the 24 hours starting Aug. 26 at 3 a.m. E.T., 7,500 people were flown out of Afghanistan on 14 military flights and 39 coalition flights, a White House official said.

Some 5,000 people were on the ramp at the airport awaiting airlift, a U.S. general told reporters on Aug. 26.

And more continued to arrive on Aug. 27, despite warnings that more attacks could happen. The Aug. 26 attacks led Jamshad to head to the airport in the morning with his wife and three small children, clutching an invitation to a Western country he didn’t want to name. This was his first attempt to leave.

“After the explosion, I decided I would try because I am afraid now there will be more attacks, and I think now I have to leave,” said Jamshad, who like many Afghans uses only one name.

Others acknowledged that going to the airport was risky, but said they had few choices.



People gather to check on missing relatives a day after a twin suicide-bomb attack that killed scores of people, including 13 US troops, outside Kabul airport, at a hospital run by Italian NGO Emergency in Kabul on Aug. 27, 2021.

“Believe me, I think that an explosion will happen any second or minute, God is my witness, but we have lots of challenges in our lives, that is why we take the risk to come here and we overcome fear,” said Ahmadullah Herawi, also seeking to flee.

The United States is granting Special Immigrant Visas or other papers to Afghans attempting to flee, focus-

ing on those who helped U.S. troops since 2001 or are in fear of persecution if they remain in the country past the U.S. withdrawal deadline.

Officials emphasized on Aug. 26 that the Aug. 31 deadline is still in place, even as members of Congress continue calling on the Biden administration to push it back so that every American can be evacuated.

“The president must reconsider his self-imposed deadline and use whatever force and actions necessary to protect our soldiers, to bring home all American citizens, and to evacuate our Afghan allies,” Rep. Michael Guest (R-Miss.) said in a statement.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Previous COVID-19 Infection Protects Against Delta Variant Better Than Pfizer Vaccine: Study

MIMI NGUYEN LY

People who have previously recovered from COVID-19 have been observed to have better protection against the Delta variant of the CCP virus compared to those who received the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, according to a study from Israel.

“This analysis demonstrated that natural immunity affords longer-lasting and stronger protection against infection, symptomatic disease, and hospitalization due to the Delta variant,” researchers from Maccabi Healthcare and Tel Aviv University said.

“This is the largest real-world observational study comparing natural immunity, gained through previous SARS-CoV-2 infection, to vaccine-induced immunity, afforded by the BNT162b2 mRNA vaccine.”

Natural immunity refers to the immunity a person retains after having recovered from a virus, in this case, the CCP virus, also known as the novel coronavirus.

A preprint of the study, which is yet to be peer-reviewed, was published on medRxiv on Aug. 25.

Researchers used data from Maccabi Healthcare Services, Israel’s second-largest health fund, between March 1, 2020, and Aug. 14, 2021. They conducted statistical analysis on those eligible for three study groups: people who received two doses of the Pfizer vaccine; those unvaccinated who were previously infected with COVID-19; and those who were previously infected and later received one dose of the vaccine.

The outcomes were observed for the period between June 1 and Aug. 14, 2021, which corresponds to the time the contagious Delta variant became the dominant CCP virus strain in Israel.

Researchers found that people fully vaccinated with the Pfizer vaccine were 13.06 times more likely to contract the Delta variant of the CCP virus and 27.02 times more at risk of symptomatic disease compared to those who had recovered from a previous infection of COVID-19. The figures apply when comparing cases where the first vaccination or infection occurred between January and



A patient receives the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine from a nurse in Chula Vista, Calif., on Dec. 21, 2020.

February 2021.

When researchers compared cases of prior infection that occurred between March 2020 and February 2021 with vaccinations between January and February 2021, they found that the vaccinated cohort was 5.96 times more likely to contract the Delta variant and 7.13 times more at risk for symptomatic disease compared to those previously infected.

The results suggest that natural immunity gained from having survived a previous infection of COVID-19 may wane over time against the Delta variant, the authors wrote.

Those vaccinated were at a greater risk of COVID-19-related hospitalizations compared to those who were previously infected, the authors noted. They said that being 60 years of age or older increased the risk of infection and hospitalization.

In another analysis, the authors compared previously infected people with those who were previously infected and also had one dose of the vaccine. They found that the group with one vaccine dose was marginally, or 0.53 times, less likely to be reinfected with the Delta variant.

The authors said the results suggest that previously infected people “seem to gain additional protection from a subsequent single-dose vaccine regimen,” but they “could not demonstrate significance” in the cohort.

They acknowledged a number of limitations, including that the study

only observed the protection of the vaccine or natural immunity against the Delta variant. The study furthermore only observed the protection of the Pfizer vaccine and didn’t look at other vaccines or the effects of a third dose, or booster, of the Pfizer vaccine.

They also noted that because COVID-19 testing such as PCR was not required to be performed by protocol in Israel, the true number of asymptomatic infections may have been under-represented in the study, because such individuals often don’t go to get tested.

The study authors also acknowledged that certain health behaviors such as social distancing and the wearing of masks may play a confounding role in the study.

Since the Delta variant began to spread starting around June, the Israeli health ministry twice reported a drop in the vaccine’s efficacy against infection—in early and late July—as well as a slight decrease in its protection against severe disease.

Scientists and agencies continue to probe whether a third dose is necessary. The country on Aug. 24 has expanded the age of eligibility for a third dose of the Pfizer vaccine to those over 30 years old.

Amid the ongoing spread of the Delta variant, Israel has reimposed indoor mask-wearing, limitations on gatherings, and ramped-up rapid testing, as well as reinstated its “Green Pass” COVID-19 vaccine passport program in late July.

Supreme Court Blocks CDC Eviction Moratorium

MIMI NGUYEN LY

The U.S. Supreme Court on Aug. 26 blocked the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s eviction moratorium, thereby opening the door for property owners to evict residents behind on rent amid the pandemic.

The CDC has imposed a nationwide moratorium on evictions in reliance on a decades-old statute that authorizes it to implement measures like fumigation and pest extermination.

Supreme Court

The ruling comes after the CDC on Aug. 3 issued a federal moratorium for 60 days, expiring on Oct. 3.

According to Census Bureau data from early August, about 3.5 million people in the country said they faced eviction in the next two months.

The CDC’s policy was challenged by a coalition of landlords and real estate groups in Alabama and Georgia. They argued that the CDC didn’t have the authority to implement the moratorium.

In an unsigned opinion on Aug. 26, the court’s majority said the CDC lacked the authority to issue the moratorium without authorization from Congress.

The court rejected arguments from the Biden administration supporting the CDC’s authority. The administration also justified holding back evictions in areas where transmission of COVID-19, the disease caused by the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, was high.

“It would be one thing if Congress had specifically authorized the action that the CDC has taken. But that has not happened,” the court wrote. “Instead, the CDC has imposed a nationwide moratorium on evictions in reliance on a decades-old statute that authorizes it to implement measures like fumigation and pest extermination. It strains credulity to believe

that this statute grants the CDC the sweeping authority that it asserts.

“If a federally imposed eviction moratorium is to continue, Congress must specifically authorize it.”

The three liberal-leaning justices—Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan—dissented, with Breyer, writing for the three, saying the court shouldn’t reject the eviction ban “without full briefing or argument.”

“Applicants raise contested legal questions about an important federal statute on which the lower courts are split and on which this court has never actually spoken,” Breyer wrote. “These questions call for considered decision making, informed by full briefing and argument. Their answers impact the health of millions.”

Breyer also argued that the court should have upheld the moratorium, writing, “The public interest strongly favors respecting the CDC’s judgment at this moment, when over 90% of counties are experiencing high transmission rates.”

The CDC had ordered a nationwide eviction moratorium in September 2020 in an effort to prevent the spread of the CCP virus—the idea being that evicted people would be likely to move in with relatives or friends or crowded homeless shelters and potentially undermine social distancing restrictions.

The moratorium was extended for another 30 days in June, and officials at the time said it would be the final extension.

In late June, the Supreme Court ruled that any extension to the moratorium would have to be approved by Congress. A federal court later ruled in July that the CDC had overstepped its authority in halting evictions.

But three days after that moratorium expired, the CDC issued another more targeted eviction moratorium, which has now been struck down by the high court.

At the time, it was unclear how the Supreme Court would rule on the matter given that it was narrower in scope—aimed at “specific areas of the country” where COVID-19 cases are rapidly increasing and “likely would be exacerbated by mass evictions.” That would have covered more than 90 percent of U.S. counties, which are deemed to have “substantial” and “high” levels of transmission.

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Chinese Fluoride in Tap Water Worries Michigan Community

Downtown Lexington, Mich., a resort town that draws its drinking water from Lake Huron, on Aug. 23, 2021.

ALL PHOTOS BY STEVEN KOVAC/EPOCH TIMES

“We are dependent on China for too many things” says Village President Ray Mach of Port Sanilac



STEVEN KOVAC

LEXINGTON, Mich.—The discovery that a Michigan town’s drinking water treatment plant has been adding Chinese-made fluoride to its water supply for years has some of its residents upset.

“It’s absurd,” said Steve Stencil, a long-time restaurant owner in Lexington, Michigan. “It’s not good at all, buying our drinking water treatment chemicals from a communist nation that is our enemy. I am surprised that any municipality would buy fluoride for its drinking water from China. Our country needs to know this is happening.”

People across Michigan and across America need to be aware of our increasing dependence upon China in some of our most basic and vital functions like our drinking water systems.

Walt Badgerow, supervisor, Worth Township

Lexington Village Utilities Director Chris Heiden said the water plant has used Chinese fluoride for years without any problems.

Fluoride is a chemical added to drinking water to help reduce tooth decay.

The Lexington water plant supplies drinking water to village residents and several neighboring communities. It has just under 3,000 customers.

A downtown apparel shop owner in Lexington said he had no idea Chinese-made fluoride was being added to the water supply.

When he learned of it, he said it gave him cause for concern.

“It’s scary. I can’t help but think of the ‘What if?’” he told The Epoch Times.

One former water plant employee told The Epoch Times, “While I was working there, I saw the Chinese fluoride in 50-pound plastic bags stacked on the floor. I was surprised and appalled.”

Doug Varty, a residential real estate developer whose new subdivision is serviced by Lexington water, said: “It’s wrong. I’m not comfortable with Chinese-made fluoride. Surely we have American products they can use. Buying American is the way to solve the problem. If they have an alternative, they should buy it.”

Village President Ray Mach of Port Sanilac, Michigan, whose community plans to buy its drinking water from Lexington, told The Epoch Times that the use of Chinese-made fluoride makes him uneasy.

“Look at COVID-19. Remember a few years ago, one baby formula was supplemented with melamine in China itself,” Mach said. “We are dependent on China for too many things. We can’t even buy a surgical mask made here anymore.”

In 2008, Chinese-made baby formula products were found to have been purposefully tainted with melamine. The additive boosted

the nitrogen content of diluted milk, making it appear to have a higher protein content. Out of 294,000 victims, 59,000 were hospitalized and six babies died of kidney stones and kidney damage.

Walt Badgerow, the supervisor of nearby Worth Township, which buys its drinking water from Lexington, recently passed a resolution banning the township government from purchasing Chinese products if an alternative is available.

“From the moment I learned of the use of Chinese-made fluoride by the Lexington water plant I was appalled,” he said. “In light of the CCP’s [Chinese Communist Party] track record of foisting tainted pet food on our country and selling us toys colored with lead-based paint, I am very wary of their quality control. I won’t drink water with Chinese chemicals in it.”

Badgerow was referring to the 2007 Chinese pet food scandal, during which melamine-tainted pet food sickened and killed cats and dogs in the United States. Lead-tainted Chinese-made toys made their way into the United States as recently as 2018, despite protective measures put in place by Congress.

Stencil said that in a previous career, he had direct experience with Chinese quality control. He once demonstrated a strength-testing machine to a Detroit-area truck equipment supplier.

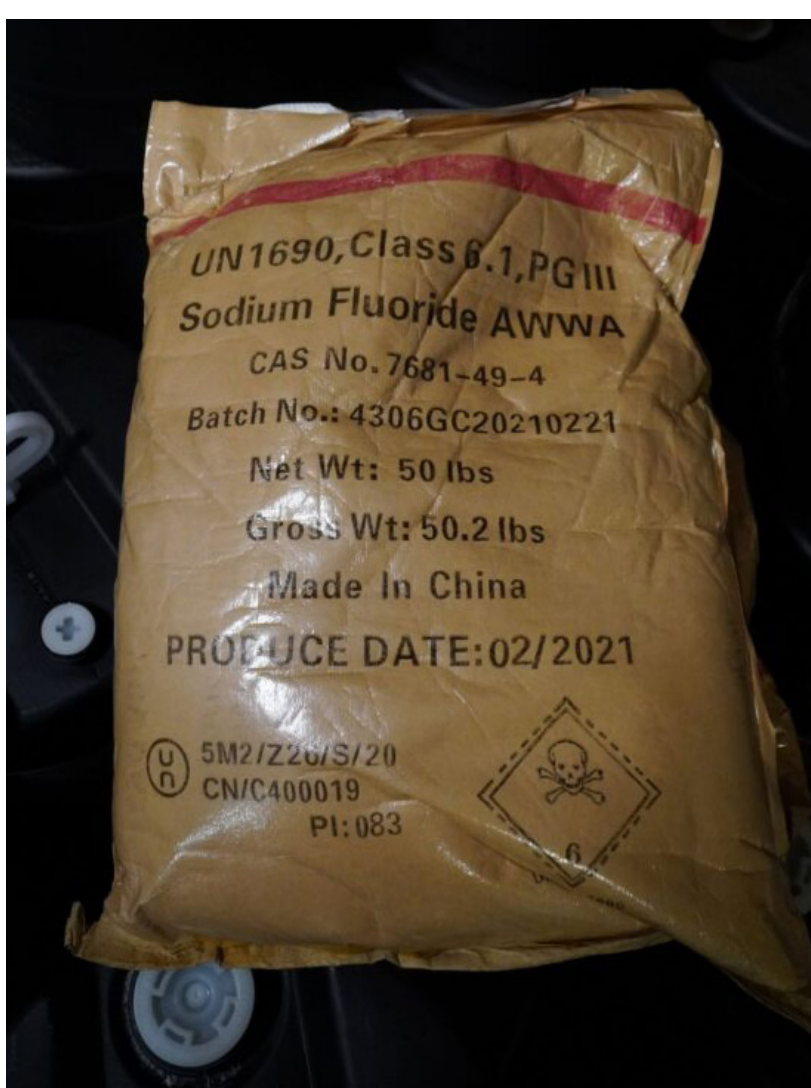
“The supposedly inspected and certified Chinese-made grappling hooks we tested failed before they reached half of the stress load they were certified for. That could kill someone. I can’t trust what’s coming from China,” he said.

Utilities Director Heiden said he relies on a couple of independent international inspection organizations that subject chemicals such as the sodium fluoride Lexington uses to stringent testing as part of the exporting process.

“It may be possible for us to buy American-made granular fluoride. I don’t know,” Heiden said. “Whenever we buy it, it must be NSF approved.”

The two largest independent testing organizations are the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF), and Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL).

Liquid fluoride is readily available from U.S. manufacturers, but Lexington and nearby Port Huron use two different dry versions of the chemical, which are more likely to be imported. Lexington uses a granular form and Port Huron uses a powder



A bag of Chinese-made granular sodium fluoride, which is added to the community water supply in Lexington, Mich., on Aug. 2, 2021.

form of fluoride.

A worker from the Port Huron water plant told The Epoch Times that they had been using Chinese-made powdered fluoride until the supply chain became so undependable that they switched to a Belgian manufacturer.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as of 2010, powdered and granulated sodium fluoride such as the one used in Lexington made up 15 percent of the water fluoridation products used in the United States. Sodium fluorosilicate, another powdered fluoridation product, made up 10 percent of the products. Fluorosilicic acid, a liquid water fluoridation product, was used in 75 percent of the country’s water systems.

The largest producers of fluorosilicic acid are located in the Asia-Pacific region, according to ResearchAndMarkets.com. Some of those producers are Solvay America, Inc., Honeywell International Inc., Napco Chemical Company, American Elements, and IXOM.

According to Michele McRae, a

commodity specialist at the National Minerals Information Center, a handful of plants in the United States produce fluorosilicic acid: J.R. Simplot Co. in Wyoming, Nutrien in North Carolina, and Mosaic Co. in Florida and Louisiana.

With the exception of bottled water used as a consumer beverage, the United States Food and Drug Administration does not regulate additives, such as fluoride, used in community drinking (tap) water. Such regulation is left to state agencies.

“People across Michigan and across America need to be aware of our increasing dependence upon China in some of our most basic and vital functions like our drinking water systems. We can’t trust the CCP. We need to know what our own water plants are using,” Badgerow said.

PVS Nolwood, the Detroit-based chemical company that supplies the Lexington water plant with Chinese-made fluoride, didn’t respond to repeated requests for comment.

PVS Nolwood was recently stripped of its National Sanitation Foundation certification for deliver-

ing four drums of sulfuric acid mistakenly labeled as liquid fluoride to the New Baltimore, Michigan, water plant earlier this year. The error was discovered by a workman before the substance was added to the city’s water supply, but a fluoride storage tank and a pump were damaged by the acid. No one was injured.

Mike Bolf of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy told The Epoch Times that PVS Nolwood is currently operating under its certification from Underwriters Laboratories, which Bolf said was “still current and valid,” thus enabling the firm to continue doing business.

“Underwriters has assured us that they have increased their surveillance over the company and are monitoring its corrective action plan,” Bolf said.

New Baltimore ceased doing business with PVS Nolwood right after the incident.

According to Heiden, Lexington suspended doing business with the firm and is using an interim supplier.

“We need to find out what corrective measures they (PVS Nolwood) are taking to get back in compliance with NSF,” he said.

According to the CDC, 6.6 million Michigan residents are receiving fluoride through their municipal drinking water. The vast majority of the fluoride is in liquid form and likely produced in the United States.

More than 207 million Americans had access to fluoridated water as of 2018, according to the CDC.

Adding China-manufactured fluoride to U.S. drinking water is “of course” a potential “attack vector” for the communist regime, according to Jeff Nyquist, author and expert on Chinese Communist Party subversion tactics and unrestricted warfare.

“If the Chinese government says, ‘Oh, you make fluoride there for the water for the Americans? Hey, we’ve got an extra little secret sauce for your American fluoride.’ I mean, that is certainly possible,” he told The Epoch Times.

One of the things stopping the regime from doing so is the risk of getting caught, Nyquist said.

“It would be an act of war.”

Is your community’s water system using Chinese-made water fluoridation products? The Epoch Times would like to know about it. Contact us at steven.kovac@epochtimes.us.

Cara Ding, Ivan Pentchoukov, and Petr Svab contributed to this report.

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Help Wanted

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Icicle River Middle School Para Educators

Fast Track application process and information can be found on our website at: www.cascadesed.org EOE

Bus Driver/ Operator – Full-time

Organization: Okanogan County Transit Authority (TranGO)

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Fast Track application process and information can be found on our website at: www.cascadesed.org EOE

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The Cascade School District is seeking qualified applicants for the following position:

Food Service Cook

Fast Track application process and information can be found on our website at: www.cascadesed.org EOE

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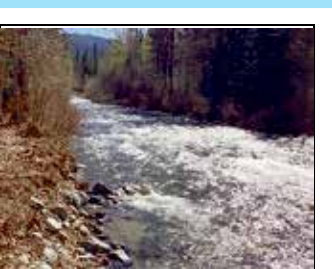
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A closer look at state mandates, emergency powers, and special sessions



COMMUNITY VOICES
Brad Hawkins

As Washington state and the rest of the world continues to process through the COVID pandemic, governors throughout our nation – Republicans and Democrats – have utilized their offices and authorities in a variety of ways. In Washington state, the Emergency Powers Act (RCW 43.06.220) authorizes the governor to declare emergencies and issue orders in response to those declared emergencies. The original version of this law was enacted in 1969, at a time when likely no one would have anticipated any emergency lasting multiple years. On February 29, 2020, utilizing the Emergency Powers Act, Governor Jay Inslee issued Proclamation 20-05 declaring a state of emergency for COVID-19. This proclamation will likely be in effect until it is terminated by the governor.

Following the emergency proclamation last February, the governor has issued a number of subsequent statewide orders. His appointed cabinet members, such as the secretary of the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), have released additional regulations. These DOH directives include the statewide mask regulations, which are referenced within

the governor's emergency orders. DOH's Order 20-03 for statewide masking, issued August 19, 2021, is the most recent requirement. For the COVID vaccine, Governor Inslee has issued two different mandates: Proclamation 21-14 for state employees and Proclamation 21-14.1 for health-care workers and K-12 school employees. Both mandates allow for exemptions for medical and religious reasons but not for personal reasons. In accordance with the governor's authority during emergencies, these directives have the same effect as state law, although temporary in nature.

Many people have contacted me to ask if these mandates are legal or constitutional. The short answer is that we are all entitled to our opinions, but final rulings from the judicial branch – in our “checks and balances” governance model – ultimately determine legality and constitutionality. These rulings include decisions by state and federal courts based on legal challenges, some of which have originated right here in North Central Washington. The federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals opinion in *Slidewaters v. L&I* affirmed the governor's authority to declare the COVID-19 emergency and state Labor and Industries' power to adopt a rule to enforce the governor's proclamations. Last summer, a Chelan County court denied a bid from challengers to terminate Governor Inslee's State of Emergency. While state laws may differ throughout the nation, courts in other states have largely upheld the COVID mandates

issued by their governors.

Washington state has the ability to modernize its Emergency Powers Act, but enacting a change in law would require approval by the Legislature and Governor Inslee. Last legislative session, I co-sponsored Senate Bill 5039 to expand legislative oversight of the governor's emergency proclamations by setting a 30-day time limit on all orders unless extended by the Legislature. Senate Republicans attempted procedural efforts to bring this bill to a vote last session, but those efforts were blocked by other senators. Senate Concurrent Resolution 8402 was also adopted during the 2021 regular session. It indefinitely extended many of the governor's emergency proclamations. Now, most of the governor's mandates are no longer actually reviewable by the Legislature, just extended in date indefinitely. I voted against this resolution, but it was approved by the Senate (28-19) and the House of Representatives (54-44). Beyond the Legislative process, only a citizens' initiative – if upheld by the state Supreme Court – could limit executive powers.

Many people have also asked about seeking a special session of the Legislature. According to the Washington State Constitution, the Legislature only meets for part of the year in a “regular session,” which begins each January. Article II, Section 12 of the constitution authorizes the Legislature to call itself into special session with a two-thirds vote. The governor can

also call the Legislature into a special session, but he has not done so. The specific process for gaining a two-thirds vote of the Legislature is set forth in the Legislature's Joint Rule 29. Senate Republicans, including myself, have called for a special session multiple times during the COVID pandemic. Most recently, we have called for a special session to address issues related to police reforms and emergency powers revisions, but we have not attained the two-thirds threshold among members. The political dynamics in Olympia have shifted greatly in recent years. Of the 49 state senators, there are 29 Democrats and 20 Republicans. There is no way to organize a special session without bipartisan support.

I hope this helps explain more about the complicated topics of state mandates, emergency powers, and special sessions. Judging by the thousands of emails that my office has received in recent days, there is definitely interest and questions about them. Clearly, the controversy from Governor Inslee's recent mandates will likely keep many issues at the forefront of legislative and legal discussions. There is no doubt that the governor's emergency powers and statewide vaccine policies will continue to be major topics of debate in the months and years ahead.

Brad Hawkins is our 12th District state senator representing North Central Washington in Olympia. Contact info: 360-786-7622 or brad.hawkins@leg.wa.gov.

Rep. Goehner Expresses Concern over mandates for critical public service employees



COMMUNITY VOICES
Keith Goehner

Earlier this month, the governor announced vaccination requirements for most state employees, private health care and long-term care workers. Last week, he announced further vaccination requirements for employees working in K-12, most childcare and early learning, and higher education, as well as an expansion of the statewide mask mandate to all individuals, regardless of vaccination status.

Under his vaccination mandates, most employees in Washington must now be fully

vaccinated by Oct. 18 or lose their jobs.

Rep. Mike Steele and I issued a statement to the media over the weekend regarding the governor's announcements.

I have heard from thousands of you, as have my colleagues from across the state, opposed to the governor's actions.

I am frustrated the governor has chosen this course of action. Mandating vaccines to our educators and health care workers at the expense of their jobs and income is unnecessary and heavy-handed. This is an individual's personal health care choice.

Last year, the governor was praising our health care workers battling this virus on the front lines, and our educators, tasked with teaching online and then doing what was necessary to allow our students to get back in the classroom for in-person learning.

Now, he has threatened these

workers will be terminated from their place of employment unless they are vaccinated. This is not the way to treat our most essential employees during this pandemic. Forcing vaccinations upon these workers could drive them out of some of the most important, essential professions needed during the pandemic. We cannot afford to lose health care workers or educators during this critical time.

Rather than enforce more mandates and requirements, we need to allow school administrators to work with their school boards, consider parental and local input, and put our trust in our local school districts. I recently signed onto a letter to the governor requesting he reconsider the mask mandate in schools and, at the very least, let school districts make that decision with the input of the parents in their communities.

The mandates go back to one-person control during the pandemic and legislators being left out of the decision-making process. I have mentioned emergency powers reform many times. It isn't for a lack of effort. We introduced many bills to reform the state's emergency powers law, including House Bill 1557. There was even a Senate bill introduced at the beginning of session, Jan. 12, to protect an individual's right to refuse the vaccine without consequences.

While legislators continue to lean on the governor's vaccine and mask mandates, police reforms, the long-term care tax, the need for a special session and much more, it is critical he hear from you, the citizens of Washington state. He needs to be aware how many of you are worried, concerned or frustrated with his decisions and how they impact you and your family.

Legislative update from Rep. Mike Steele



COMMUNITY VOICES
Mike Steele

Law enforcement reform

House and Senate Republicans recently called for a special session to fix some bad police reform bills approved during the 2021 session. Unfortunately, these bills have overshadowed other good, bipartisan policing measures that were also approved.

Two bills in particular are especially problematic: House Bill 1310, regarding the permissible use of force by law enforcement and correctional officers, and House Bill 1054, establishing requirements for tactics and equipment used by peace officers. I voted “no” on both these bills. Here's why: Each bill contains conflicting, vague language – creating gray areas that put law enforcement and the public at risk.

Unfortunately, we are now seeing the sad results of these policy choices. Two months after the governor signed these bills – embarking on a massive experiment in police reform – discrepancies in how officers

may or may not intervene in active crime scenes and mental health crisis incidents continue to cause uncertainty and danger. Take a look:

- Police around Washington scrambling, and struggling, to adapt a massive reform package (The Seattle Times)
- What happens when police don't show up to 911 calls (The Olympian)

- New laws add restrictions to policing, authorities look to adapt (The Wenatchee World)

- Bonney Lake officers say new reform laws kept them from tracking armed suspect (KING TV)

- Man jumps onto cop car, allegedly hits officer who was following police reform rules (KOMO TV)

- They had probable cause after he made threats, but law prevented Bellingham police pursuit (The Bellingham Herald)

- Lower Columbia SWAT team arrests man after three-hour standoff with nonlethal weapons barred by new state law (The Daily News)

- OPINION: Legislative Democrats' attempts at police reform puts communities at risk (The Seattle Times)

Sheriffs, police chiefs, troopers, patrol officers, and other law enforcement officials have joined with Washingtonians from across the state to express concern about the unintended

consequences of these bills. A special legislative session is needed – and soon – to fix these bills and put real, commonsense solutions in place that keep our communities safe and hold law enforcement accountable.

A new payroll tax | The Long-Term Care Act

A new, and for many, unwelcome payroll deduction begins in 2022. Starting on Jan. 1, wage-earners will pay 58 cents for every \$100 of their earnings to fund the Long-Term Services and Supports Trust Program. The WA Cares Fund, intended to assist with long-term care-related expenses, was authorized by House Bill 1087 in 2019 – approved on a party-line vote with all House Republicans voting in opposition.

Here's why I voted no: Acquiring this type of insurance coverage should be a personal choice, not one mandated by the state. Many hard-working Washingtonians simply can't afford to pay more in taxes. Struggling with yet another additional expense – whether it be through the new payroll tax or the cost of private long-term care insurance – will be tough. Further, the costs versus the benefits breakdown for the state-managed plan are abysmal for most working individuals and families.

Here are a few other reasons

the program is objectionable:

- If a worker retires or moves out of state, their benefits will be forfeited.

- Workers retiring within three years have no chance to benefit, but are not exempt from the payroll tax.

- Those who live in another state, but work in Washington, will be forced to pay the tax, but will not be eligible to receive benefits from the program.

- The plan costs versus benefits margin is narrow for most working Washingtonians. Some estimates put the state-managed plan projection costs at nearly three times that of private insurance.

- It's likely, in years to come, very real, large tax increases will be needed to keep this program afloat.

Unless they choose a private insurance plan, most Washington workers will be automatically enrolled in the state program, including the payroll tax. For those who do not wish to take part in the program and its payroll deduction, there is a brief window of opportunity to opt out. Once an eligible private plan is purchased, individuals must apply for an exemption from the program between Oct. 1, 2021, and Dec. 31, 2022.

Standing against forced vaccine mandates

The governor recently issued a mandate that requires most

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state workers, as well on-site contractors and volunteers, public and private health care and long-term care workers, to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Oct 18, or lose their jobs.

This underscores, yet again, the necessity of collaboration between the Legislature and the executive office in times of crisis. State government can and should make recommendations about actions like wearing masks or getting the vaccine – not force personal, individual health care choices. I'm absolutely against this heavy-handed approach. If the governor wants to get more people vaccinated, he should focus

his efforts on continuing to educate and/or incentivizing the public to do so.

Stay in touch!

Your input is vital in helping me represent your values in Olympia. Feel free to call or email my office with your comments, concerns, or ideas about state government. My contact information is listed below.

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