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Interviewee: Zachary Millar

Interviewer: Michael Larmann

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Note: The interviewer, Michael Larmann, was located in Bethany Beach, Delaware, as he was conducting this interview. Tropical Storm Isaias had just moved through the area and cut off wireless connectivity to the internet. The Interviewer relied on a mobile hotspot to conduct this interview which caused some lagging and connections issues during the interview. Issues with the connection are identified below.

Michael Larmann: Do you see a red light in the top left?

Zachary Millar: I don't.

ML: No? It says it's recording on my end...

ZM: Oh, I see it now. Yeah.

ML: Excellent. Okay, then we can begin. My name is Michael Larmann. I am a doctoral student in the History Department at the University of Montana. I am currently located in Bethany Beach, Delaware in the midst of Hurricane-Tropical Storm Isaias. It is currently past 11AM Eastern Time. Today I'm interviewing Zachary Millar. Mr. Millar, could you please just introduce yourself, who you are and what you do?

ZM: Sure, I'm Zachary Millar. I live in Missoula, Montana with my family. I own the Dram Shop here in Missoula. It's our family business and yeah, I'm originally from Pennsylvania. I moved to Missoula 25 years ago and lived here ever since. And yeah, I'm just excited to answer some questions today.

ML: Excellent. And as I said earlier, it is just past 11AM Eastern time, which means it's just past 9AM Mountain time. Excellent.

ML: Mr. Millar, could you briefly explain what the Dram Shop is?

ZM: Sure. So, the Dram Shop is a tap room and growler fill station. So, we have, depending on which location, between 35 and 45 taps, craft beer, wine, cider, kombucha, soda for the kids. And you can come in and sit down and relax and have a drink or you can fill a growler with anything that we have on draft and take it home with you or on your next adventure. We have

two locations, one right in the heart of downtown Missoula on Front Street and a new location at the south side of town near the mall.¹

ML: Excellent. How would you describe the drinking culture in Missoula or the larger western Montana region?

ZM: Well, I mean, I think I can speak for Missoula. I actually think of it as more of a European-style culture surrounding alcohol and drinking in Missoula. I think it's more ingrained than in a lot of places in the US. It's sort of more part of the fabric of the community, so to speak, than I think it is elsewhere. There certainly is some college drinking, sort of, things like that, but a lot of it takes place and brewery tap rooms and more laidback areas. People bring their kids. It's a very family-oriented way for people to socialize and visit and relax. So, I'm not sure if it's that way across western Montana's smaller towns, but I feel like that's how it is in Missoula.

ML: Excellent. Do you think the COVID-19 pandemic has affected public drinking or drinking culture in any way?

ZM: Oh, for sure. I mean, it draws distinctions between people's comfort levels, people's beliefs about what COVID-19 is and how it behaves and you just see a natural selection in terms of customers and what they are comfortable doing and what they're not comfortable doing based on their interpretation of the situation, so to speak.

You know, we are also still in Phase Two reopening so businesses like ours are not allowed to be 100 percent open and function normally. So that changes the environment significantly. People still come out and enjoy themselves, but it's different and, you know, in our establishment specifically we've never done table service before and I always thought that that way of functioning served as a way to open up the room in a way that will feel less tied to a specific spot at their table, you know, made it more pub style where people come and visit, they run into their friends, they run into their other friends and end up seeing and becoming part of the community that way. And with the regulations, the way they are now we have to do table service and people are not allowed to mingle. So, you have to stay with the group that you came in with. So, that definitely changes the feel I think in a significant way.

ML: Okay. Excellent. I lost track of where I was. Okay. Great start. Yes. Do you remember your first memory with COVID-19 like, do you remember the first time that you heard about it or you felt that it impacted you or your business in some way?

ZM: Well, I remember I was following the news. I think it started to pop up in the news in mid-December with the stories coming to China. And of course, you know, in the States we never experienced SARS [Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome] or MERS [Middle East Respiratory Syndrome] really. And so, during that time it seems like sort of a Esoteric threat that we

¹ The Dram Shop is located at 229 E Front Street, Missoula MT – 59802. The second store is located at 2700 Paxson Street, Missoula, MT 59801.

probably wouldn't have to deal with, or more facing in a real way at that point and it was during spring break in March when our family went to Utah to ride bikes with a bunch of other families and it was the thirteenth or fourteenth and we were trying to decide if we should go or not, because things were closing down and we had a meeting with our manager and we were like 'we don't think we feel like we should go.' We really wanted to go because we needed a break and she was said, 'you know, you guys should just go' and it was a day's drive away. You know, it's like 13 hours. So, you could get home and a half day. So, we're like, okay, we'll go and we got there and I mean from the minute we were there we were just on the phone with everything back here, just trying to figure out what was going to happen and, you know, what we could do and what we should do. And so, I think we stayed for two nights and then turned around and just drove right back.

ML: Interesting. So, when everything started to become clear that it was an issue you actually weren't in Missoula and you were trying to solve it.

ZM: Yeah.

ML: Okay.

ZM: Yeah, via cell phone. Yeah. So, and then, you know, that was a long drive back of calling each of our employees individually and letting them know what was going on. Just talking to them about where they were and how they felt and what their take on everything was and just touching base with them individually just to see where they were, you know, emotionally, and what they thought about everything and all that kind of stuff.

ML: Okay. And if you can recall what were the first days of the pandemic like for the Dram Shop like what were the first reactions?

ZM: Well, the first thing we did was shut down. I mean, there were a few days before shut down where things were getting weird and I think everybody sort of experienced it in their own way and that's what made it weird, because, you know, you have all these different individuals coming in who had their own opinion about the situation and what the danger level was like or whatever and our employees trying to deal with that.

So, things were just strange I think for a few days leading up and then I forget the exact date. I want to say it was March 17 or something we shut down entirely and I think that was the day we were driving home or the day after I don't recall. And we shut down entirely. And then we only stayed shut down entirely for one day and the next day we were back open for reduced our hours. We were just doing 3 to 7 [PM] for four hours carryout only so people come to the door order and we could bring stuff to them and then the ensuing days was just a mad rush to figure out how we could continue to operate, what the regulations were and what the restrictions were and how we could operate within them in a safe way and keep some kind of revenue stream going and keep the doors open because my biggest fear was shutting down for

any period of time. It just felt like if we did that it would be really hard to get back up and going again and that just felt like that was a huge risk and following the regulations and being safe was always, you know, the top priority, but second to that was staying open, you know, and ,you know, continuing to offer our service for the community and also just continuing to let the business be alive, so to speak.

ML: I find it very interesting that you said your closed for one day and that day was March 17 which happened to be St. Patrick's Day, which I can only imagine would be a big day many tap houses throughout western Montana given the Irish American population there.

ZM: Yeah, it's, you know, for us it's not... Actually, it's funny. A lot of those quote unquote "drinking holidays," St. Patrick's Day and the like, they're not very crazy for us. We're more of a neighborhood place, I guess that's a little more laid back, but it was strange, you know, so.

ML: Okay. And you also mentioned that you began to make this rapid transfer within the first few days you guys like set up your website, you were doing like wine and beer deliveries and packages. How did you come up with this idea?

ZM: Well, delivery was actually something that I looked at during when I was writing my business plan, but it was illegal in the state of Montana to do alcohol delivery. So, what happened is... I think it was four days into the shutdown Governor Bullock changed the alcohol laws in the state of Montana to allow for curbside and delivery. So, part of the laws were that you had to make the transaction of the sale, or what we call off premise alcohol, meaning you're going to take it to go. So that's whether you buy a six pack at the grocery store or whether you buy a bottle of wine from us, they're both considered to be off premise sales. So, he changed the law so that you could do that off premise transaction outside of the building off of your premise or do a delivery. So, that was four days in. I built out a Web Store I think in a day or day and a half. So, then we were open for online ordering for, you know, carry out, contactless pickup or delivery and we're maintaining that site still and we're doing deliveries still three days a week and carry out of course. And people are still using the service. Not as much as they were when the shutdown was a lot harder, but they're still using it and I want to keep going with it as long as we still have some customers just because I feel like if we get shut down again, I just want to have it still operating and not have to start it up again.

ML: Okay. Yeah, excellent. I have two questions in response to that, if I didn't just forget. The first was about Governor Bullock's order. I was just wondering how that must have felt in that moment, like, was it a godsend? Did you feel relieved? Was it something that you had like hoping for?

ZM: Yes, it was. It was a major help for us and I was pleasantly surprised with how quickly he got it done. Alcohol laws in Montana are fought over tooth and nail. The interests are many and influential and so to have that kind of change that quickly A) was surprising and B) super helpful for businesses like ours to be able to continue to function. I mean, you know, beer sales in

grocery stores were off the hook. Right, but places like ours that sell on premise, we weren't allowed to have people in the doors all of a sudden, so you can't function, you know. So, I was pleasantly surprised that he was able to act so quickly on that one for sure.

ML: Excellent. Now the order I believe is a governor executive order. So, it is temporary.² But do you think that this experience with delivery might change the way that the state government or businesses look at delivery or liquor laws in the state?

ZM: It's possible. I, you know, part of me hopes so. I think it's something that could be helpful for people. I think in terms of regulations they probably need to be examined a little more closely. We've all been playing a little fast and loose so speak since the shut down just to make sure that things move forward. So, if it was something that was written into law I think all the stakeholders will be at the table again. So...

ML: Great. Okay. The other question I had was, I just wanted to ask you specifically about deliveries, or your wine and beer packages. As you said they were kind of in high demand, especially when the pandemic first really hit Missoula in mid-March. I was just wondering what it was like to have such a large demand.

ZM: Well, when we first, I mean, actually, like, probably three or four weeks into doing delivery we were having some really busy days, especially like on a Friday. I did a lot of driving around Missoula delivering things for people, growlers and wine. But, I felt lucky to have a vocation during that time, and as scary as it was to be, I mean, I worked in the shop, the whole time. So, there was, you know, basically a frontline job where you're interacting with the public was a little scary. I wasn't without concern about it, but I also felt lucky to be busy and get to drive around town and be out of the house. Even though it was exhausting. I mean, we pivoted our business on a dime and it took a ton of work. We were down to four employees working, including myself, and our manager. We were at both locations we kept open from 3 to 7 [PM] every day. So, four of us were working pretty hard during that time in order to keep everything going. We had, you know, quite a few employees who were not interested in coming in and working and we couldn't afford to continue to pay everybody. None of the aid had come in from the federal government or anything else and so it was touch go there for a while.

ML: Okay. Well, I'm glad to ship is still floating.

ZM: Yeah. Me too.

ML: Excellent. I'm curious, and please correct me if I'm wrong, just because from a little poking around on the internet, I found that you opened the Dram Shop with your partner Sarah Millar

² The interviewer is partially mistaken. Governor Bullock issued a Directive to enable "Alcoholic beverage service businesses" to deliver alcohol to customers. The directive will end when the Governor's Directive expires at the end of the declared state of emergency.

back in 2015. I'm also curious besides business if the pandemic has affected, you know, just your basic daily routine or your family life?

ZM: Oh, for sure. I mean, we have two daughters who both were in sixth and eighth grade, you know. They're home from school so we're doing online learning with them, which I don't know if you've talked to many parents who went through that this spring, but it was at least for our kids and where they were educationally, it was a lot of work to make sure that they were engaged and still learning throughout the spring so, you know, that was definitely a major responsibility during that time. And then in terms of our work at the shop, I was out every day, you know, either working behind the bar or doing deliveries or whatever needed to be done so it was a very busy time actually. I mean, everybody was making sourdough bread and reading books and I was like, I do not have extra time right now. I am busy as heck, you know, but that's just what it required at the time so...

[Slight lag issues]

ML: Excellent. There we go.

ZM: I think you might have frozen up their little Michael.

ML: That's okay. I heard everything you said. And that's what's most important. Can you still hear me? Okay. Test, test. Can you still hear me, Mr. Millar? Oh, no. How about now?

ZM: You're back.

ML: Excellent. Well, the good news is I heard everything you just said.

ZM: Okay, good.

ML: So that's what's most important. The image is secondary the words are what are most important.

ZM: Right, good.

ML: Great. Okay. All right, great. We can keep going. I'm so excited. It's funny that you say that because most people I've spoken to are either one, you know, they were out of a job or had a lot of free time on their hands so they were reading books, baking bread, and then there's individuals such as yourself who were like, time to work.

ZM: Not enough hours in the day, you know, kind of style is how it works for me. Yeah, I know there was kind of a wide range of experiences that way through the whole thing I think for different people in different situations.

ML: Excellent.

ZM: Yeah, you had a lot of people who were in financial crisis, you know, certain peoples whose businesses were booming, you know, you had just people in socially different spots and the human element of this whole thing has been the most fascinating I think.

ML: Excellent. Well, we can talk more about that, if you wish, because that's...

ZM: Well, I could probably go down that rabbit hole all day.

ML: Yeah, maybe we'll come back to that towards the end.

ZM: That sounds like a good plan.

ML: That's Great. Yeah, I want to shift a bit towards the safety protocols that the Dram Shop put in place during phase one and phase two.

During Phase One, from what I found, The Dram Shop reduced its capacity to 50 percent for customers, arranged seating in a socially distant manner, eliminated bar service, sanitized seats and tables between uses. And then in Phase Two reopening which Missoula still is in, it restricted group sizes to I believe 10 people and now has designated seats at the bar. So still many protocols in place. I have two questions. The first is how did the Dram Shop create these safety protocols and what were the challenges of implementing them?

ZM: Sure, yeah. So, Phase one, I think, was six people max per group Phase two is 10. As I mentioned before, if you come in with a group, you have to stay with that group. And so, for us moving into phase one was a pretty big step because we had to staff back up because we're doing table service so we have to have more staff on hand. We expanded our hours a little bit. And most importantly though, we followed Missoula City County Health Department guidelines to a T. So that was, you know, our philosophy throughout has just been that we will be following their recommendations. That's like the long and the short of it and because there were certain like, you know, places where you could follow their recommendations if you wanted to, but you don't have to kind of thing, we said we're going to follow them the whole time. So, the amount of labor required for us to provide service under Phase one and Phase two is significantly higher than it was pre-COVID. Offering table service, the amount of cleaning that goes on, we're doing a lot more for less basically during this time.

And when we did open back up for Phase one it was interesting. Some folks, well, I should start by saying pretty much everybody who was willing to come out and have a beer or glass of wine or whatever when phase one reopened wanted to be there. So, you had this like select group of people already. And then, you know, within that selection of people there are people who took things very seriously and people who took things less seriously and this was my biggest concern with reopening because we as a business can set up our, you know, pre-shift health checks for

employees, we set up our cleaning protocol, we set up our cleaning and sanitizing protocol for growlers, we have everything set up in a way that we feel safe with, and we feel like is responsible, but you can't control the human element. So, you can't control the way somebody feels you know, where they are in life, where they are with how they feel about the pandemic. So, you have to be ready to sort of be flexible in terms of how you treat people in terms of how you know, the way in which you interact with them and yeah, that was my biggest concern.

To date, we've had a handful of interactions that have been difficult, but for the most part, it's been not as bad as feared, so to speak, and, you know in general as a alcohol establishment, our customer base is very adult and responsible and respectful and we love that. And we return the favor with our customers and so I think there's quite a bit of mutual respect and that's super helpful. But, when we were reopening there was just a lot of unknowns in terms of how things would go and so far things have gone pretty well.

For us going from Phase one to Phase two didn't really change much. We were allowed to go from 50 percent capacity to 75 percent capacity, but we weren't really able to add any capacity beyond a couple spots at the bar where people can sit just because of the spacing, you have, you know, you have to maintain the social distancing and just based on the footprint of our buildings we couldn't add tables and because there wasn't space. If you had a larger building, then sure, you could go up 25 percent but we weren't able to do that. We were able to add outdoor seating in our new location. We've been working on building a permanent patio there since February. But we were able to add temporary seating outside, which was helpful and recently we've finished the permanent patio out there so we have permanent outdoor seating there as well now, so the outdoor seating is super helpful and I think makes people feel comfortable being outdoors and I do worry about the fall when it gets too cold to sit outside.

ML: Okay. I actually. I had the pleasure of going to the Dram Shop. I think in late June or sometime in July.

ZM: Oh right, yeah.

ML: And that was during the outdoor seating and it was very pleasant. I was very hesitant at first. A friend invited me to go out. I think that was like my first, like downtown venture since the pandemic arrived, and I was very hesitant, but just like sitting outside seeing everything wiped down. It was very reassuring.

ZM: Good and... I'm getting some lag with you, Michael. See if it catches up.

[Brief Lag Issues]

ML: Test, test.

ZM: Okay, I hear you, your video is still a little slow.

ML: Okay, we'll just give it a minute then. I can see and hear you perfectly fine.

ZM: Yeah, your audio is lagging I think.

ML: Okay

ZM: That looks good. It looks like it's coming back. Yeah, that's great to hear that you were feeling comfortable when you went to the shop. We've gotten a lot of feedback from folks saying that the protocols that we have in place make them feel comfortable and that, you know, we're one of the few places that they feel comfortable coming to. And so, that makes me feel, you know, happy and confident about where we are and how we're handling it. You know, I think I've heard the saying that it's like we don't get to decide what's going on, the virus gets to decide what's going on, so it makes me feel at least that we are doing things to the best of our ability. Considering the situation and that's all we can do really.

ML: It was that and just sitting outside gave it this really nice European feel so I thought it was funny you said that at the very beginning.

ZM: Right.

ML: Excellent. And while it's great to hear that your customers have given you some good feedback about them feeling comfortable, I'm also curious has there been any negative customer experiences [lagging] during the pandemic or mostly positive?

[Brief Lagging Issues]

ZM: We're having a little lag. Again, but that's okay. I can go ahead if you can still hear me. Mostly positive for sure. I'm trying to think. We have, you know, we do have the statewide mask requirement now, which is a godsend. I wish the Governor would have done that sooner only because it just normalizes it and makes it so that it's not a question. You know, basically the Health Department and the Governor's office up until that point had put it on businesses to decide what they want to require and as a business owner, that feels a little unfair because, you know, I'm not a health authority. I'm just a business owner. Like, to put that authority on me... I don't feel qualified to do that and I don't feel like it's my place to be an enforcer. That sort of thing. I feel like that is a city or state or federal responsibility, you know, not a business owner's responsibility. So, I'm really glad that we have a statewide mask requirement now. We definitely had a few situations where people had different attitudes regarding mask wearing. And that's one of those things where you're like, 'you're not wearing the mask for yourself, you're wearing it for us or for somebody else.' Although studies are now showing we are working for ourselves as well. But, you know, beyond that, I think, like I said before, folks who

were coming out were coming out because they wanted to be there and so that's really helpful.³

We definitely this summer, you know, because we have such a low case count in Montana and Missoula, we've had a lot of tourism, a lot of people driving into town, coming to the parks, and so we've had a lot of out of state folks at our downtown location and I sort of feel as though many folks are coming here because they feel like we have a lower case code and it's a safe place to go visit and because of that, like they're coming here because there are fewer cases and then they feel like they don't have to take it seriously while they're here. So, just generally attitude wise, I think there's a little less seriousness regarding that with some tourists and it makes you kind of sad, you know, that people would be like... because it feels like a slight against our community, a little bit. And so, you're like, come on guys. Like, we're glad that you're here, you know, as tourists to support our businesses and our community, but by the same token, like treat us nicely, you know. Anyway, so overall, I would say we have not had a lot of conflict in a general sense

ML: Excellent. Yeah. Okay, great. I think we can move on. We already discussed discuss that [Lag]. You mentioned that the beginning I'm assuming that you are a cyclist? Excellent, because one article I ran into online talked about the cycling community in Missoula and their efforts to try and support small businesses and tap houses in the region. I think the cycling community created the Missoula Rides Solo for Small Business Challenge and part of the proceeds I believe actually went to the Dram Shop. I was just wondering if you had any thoughts about the cycling community and their connection to small businesses in Missoula during these past few months.

ZM: Sure, yeah. So, a friend of ours, Cory Kaufman, he runs a business called Competitive Timing. So, his business does timing for bike races and foot races and all that kind of stuff so he's really involved in the racing community. And when we shut down, you know, obviously, there was no racing or anything like that. All of the cycling events were on hold. So, he came up with this idea for the solo challenge and as a way to support small businesses, which is super, it was really fun. So, he would do... It's eight stages or something. So each stage would be a certain ride that you would have to do and you would have three days to do it And each stage would support an individual small business and in order to sign up for it, you would, you know, it costs money to sign up for but all of that money was dispersed to all the businesses that were chosen so there were eight different businesses. And so, then you would go out and you would ride that stage, and then you would log it on the digital interface. And it was a great way to, you know, we were in Montana.

We were never not allowed to go outside, which was huge. We were in fact encouraged. I mean, the governor encouraged people to go outdoors from day one, you know, obviously, in a safe way, but that we have a big state and not a lot of people and lots of natural amenities and they should, you know, be used because we can't do anything else basically. So, we were able

³ Prior to the Mask Mandates in Missoula and the state of Montana, the Dram Shop strongly encouraged patrons to wear masks, but did not make it mandatory.

to ride bikes the whole time and my daughter and I did every stage together and we did a couple of them as a family and it was just a great way to have something to focus on. They got you outside and kept you healthy that also helps support small businesses in the community. So, it was a really neat thing that fit well with where we were, so to speak, and I'm appreciative of it.

ML: Awesome. Okay. Let's see. Where to next? I think you mentioned earlier that because of the pandemic, there's a few services that the Dram Shop is offering such as growler exchanges, pickups, drop off delivery and you mentioned that you hope to continue some of these new policies. Do you think the Dram Shop will continue this moving forward, hopefully?

ZM: Yeah, I hope so. So, we started to do growler changes pretty quickly after we started doing deliveries. If you have any growler we would just switch it out and then we'll take those growlers and clean and sanitized them and reuse them again for the exchange program. You know, because the one challenge that we had with deliveries from the get-go was that you'd have to purchase a new growler each time and that's an added expense for folks and they don't really need to have, you know, a pile of growlers sitting around in their garage. So, we just basically said, if you have an old growler just leave it out for us and we'll exchange it kind of like a milkman, you know, and we just take the old one and get them cleaned and sanitized and then bring them back the next time or whatever, it just goes into this pool of sanitized growlers that can be used for other growler exchange purchases and it's worked really well and I think people are appreciative of it and I think as long as we continue to operate the web store for carry out and deliveries we'll continue to do it. I mean, we always kept, you know, loaner growlers around if somebody came and wanted their growler filled up but forgot their growler. We always had something available that we could send them home with. But this brings it to the next level and hopefully I mean if we continue to operate our web store we'll continue to do it because it makes sense.

ML: Okay. All right, we are quickly approaching the end I think [lag]. I only have a few more questions left. Do we need to go take a break or can we keep going?

ZM: No. I'm good. I'll push on through.

ML: Okay, let's do this. Well, this oral history interview is going to be part of a collection, as I told you, in the University of Montana library archives. And it's also partially supported through the Downtown Missoula Partnership and one question they have for you is what materials, services, or information does your business require to keep operating through the pandemic and is there anything that the Downtown Missoula Partnership could possibly provide you?

ZM: Right, well, you know, they already provided a grant that was helpful financially for us. It was a small grant, but everything at this point, everything helps. So that was super. And yeah, I'm not sure specifically, you know, what would be helpful for the Downtown Partnership to provide. It's difficult I know right now for downtown events wise in terms of being able to do

the things that we normally do, but you know I think that outreach would probably be one of the most important things to be done to the community, just in terms of communicating that downtown Missoula is open for business and communicating the safety protocols that are in place and that we're operating in a safe way and we're here and we're open and our community continues to function, albeit in a new way, and we'd still love to see everybody downtown. I think community communicating that to the community is important just because I feel like any amount of reinforcement in terms of helping people feel more comfortable is important.

It's a tough time psychologically for everybody. And we've had to sort of change psychologically on a dime from oh it's normal life to I could die if I don't wash my hands. Right. And that's, like, psychologically, a huge leap. And then with phased reopening it's like we had to make a psychological leap back the other way to, Oh actually it's pretty safe if we follow these protocols. And so, I think it's a lot of fatigue for folks and that any amount of reassurance in terms of how hard everybody's working to do things the right way is super helpful.

ML: Okay, let me just make a final check with my list here because I think we've come to the end of my main questions. Yes, I think that just about does it. So, what I like to do to wrap things up is ask a very broad and open question. You can take this however you would like. Because as I mentioned, this is going in the University [University of Montana] library archives so that future scholars, or anyone interested in the pandemic or perhaps other topics we've discussed, can look through this. So, do you have any words of wisdom or anything else who would like to share with anyone interested in this specific time that we're living in the summer of 2020 Missoula, Montana?

ZM: Oh, that's is a big open-ended question. I don't know. It's a fascinating time, you know....

ML: You discussed the human aspect as well so you can take it that way or just...

ZM: Yeah. You know, I have been saying since this all started, you know, it's all, it's been terrifying and disruptive and so many things along the way. And I always was just saying, well, at least, you know, we'll be able to tell our grandkids that we lived through it and you know. As scary and terrible as it is, it's also just part of being a human. You know, it's not the first pandemic that's killed a lot of people. Not that it should be taken lightly in any stretch of the imagination, but it's something we're living through that we'll get through. It's just a matter of how much pain there will be along the way and so I like to try to keep that sort of 10,000-foot view of what's going on in the back of my mind as I'm dealing with the daily intricacies of making sure that everything goes on, you know, just in terms of daily life. There's so much, so many decisions to be made and so many things to be tended to because things are changing so fast. Like I feel like it's important to psychologically maintain that that view from high above is like, okay, you're just like one small little piece of this larger thing that we're all going through together and you're not alone in it. You know, things are things are going to come out the way that they come out and you're going to be able to make some decisions along the way to guide

that and a lot of it is out of your control. And you can only do what you can do so I think that's like sort of a helpful way or has been a helpful way for me to frame the pandemic and all of the impacts that it's had on our lives like in my family and our employees and everything like that. If you try to shoulder everything, it's just too much. You know, you can't do it. So yeah, I don't know, that's sort of my philosophic attitude, I guess, throughout this so for whatever that's worth.

ML: Excellent. I think that's a good note to end it on unless you have any final notes, you'd like to add.

ZM: No, I don't think so. I mean, I could just say for folks if they're listening to this down the road some time for, you know, historical perspective, at least in 2020 Missoula is a great place to live and we have an awesome community and community members have come out and supported all kinds of small businesses and including ours and seeing how people behave when there's a threat like this to each other is a good reminder that, you know, we all really do care about each other and you know we all really do want each other to succeed. That's a nice reminder, because you don't get to see that all the time without some, you know, some sort of threat or whatever. So that's been a silver lining for sure. So, Missoula was a cool place in 2020, I guess is what I'm trying to say.

ML: Okay, I think that's a good place to end it so I'm going to pause the recording.

ZM: Okay.

[End of Interview]