

Long live journalism, long live the Bulletin



Thoughts from the 'grave

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Well, folks, this is a newspaper, so I'm not going to bury the lede: I'm leaving.

I'm facing a lot of changes in this move. Not only am I leaving the Bulletin – a newspaper and colleagues I love – and Buffalo, a town I've fallen in love with and a place that holds so many memories and relationships, but I'm also leaving journalism, a profession and a field I truly love and believe in.

Journalism has profoundly shaped my life both directly and indirectly. The highlight of my four years in college was my time spent in the newsroom with some of my best friends. I took a leap of faith and moved from Philadelphia to Torrington, Wyoming, just to pursue this career in 2020. Yet another chance taken brought me to Buffalo to continue my journalism career when really what I wanted at

the time was to move back east.

The mentorship and camaraderie I quickly found at the Bulletin convinced me my choice was the right one. Meeting so many wonderful sources, friends and even the love of my life solidified that choice even further and kept me here for five years. I did leave for eight months to pursue a career opportunity and spend time with family and friends back east. Thankfully, the Bulletin, and you all, welcomed me back. If I'm honest, when I left, I had a feeling that my work wasn't done here, and I guess I was right.

Today, though I am truly so sad to be leaving this career and this place, I don't feel like I've left anything unfinished. Sure, maybe a few pie-in-the-sky story ideas, but that's about it.

That may be because I'm only moving down the road to Cheyenne, and I know that I have a lot of visits here in my future, including the Wyoming Women's Antelope Hunt in October. My new professional role will be in public relations at Wyoming State

Forestry, so I know that I'll still be involved in Johnson County through my professional pursuits as well as in my personal life.

Five years ago when I started at the Bulletin, I could not have imagined that this new job would be my next step. My editor, Jen, told me on my first day here in March 2021 that I'd be covering natural resources, and I was not thrilled. What did I know of the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service or Wyoming Game and Fish?

I can't pinpoint when my attitude changed, but I think it was a lot of things. Living here, among the wild-life I was covering, the public lands I was hiking, made me appreciate the importance of these subjects. I also have to give credit to the professionals working for local, state and federal agencies and longtime landowners whom I've talked with week after week. They always speak

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'Thanks for everything'

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with expertise and passion for natural resources, and they are gracious enough to dumb down the science for me when I need it.

My favorite question of the 5 Ws and the H that we are taught as student journalists to answer in our stories has always been "Why?" Why does this project, funding, person, place, animal or event matter? I think that question is what is missed most in society's shift from in-depth, long-form storytelling to short-form content.

I'm going to miss journalism a lot, I think, but, frankly, I need the chance to miss it. I have met so many wonderful people, heard and relayed so many beautiful stories and learned so much about the community, state and country I live in through this career. It's a pretty incredible job, one that I would definitely recommend to curious people. But I'm ready for a change.

In my new role, I'm excited not only to nerd out about forestry but also to continue working alongside journalists. Again, journalism is a vital profession and this newspaper, in particular, is a crucial resource in this community. It's as much part of the infrastructure as the county's roads and buildings, in my opinion. Its existence certainly predates most of those.

I've no doubt asked hundreds, maybe thousands, of questions of many of you over the past several years. I'm here now to ask you for a few favors, if you would.

Please continue to foster the wonderful communities in both Buffalo and Kaycee. Keep taking care of one another in hard times (I know that's an easy ask of you folks) and stay engaged on what is happening within your local governments.

You can do that by continuing to support and read this newspaper. While Facebook fodder is enticing, the users ranting about an issue most likely have not attended a government meeting on the subject nor have they talked to the parties involved or read the lengthy, boring associated documents.

The journalists at this newspaper are doing that. And they're writing researched, factual, thoughtful stories. They are capturing the humanity of this town both visually and through the written word.

It's special that Johnson County still has such a robust weekly newspaper. And all of the pages published each week filled with photos and stories crafted by members of this community cost just \$3 a week. That's substantially less than one oat milk latte costs nowadays.

Because I believe in this staff and care about this town, I'll subscribe to this newspaper (as soon as I find housing!) and relish the day it arrives in my mailbox each week. I bet I'll read your stories and look at your beautiful faces over coffee on Sunday mornings, because, gosh, I'm going to miss you.

Thanks for everything, Buffalo. Against all odds, you're the best decision I've ever made.