

The Defender: Coronavirus Edition

A mini  newsletter

Corona week 4
April 8, 2020

On the skeleton crew



Chief Ben Baur from his position on a skeleton crew

Dear Defenders,

It seems like we might be settling in for what could be a new (ab)normal, at least a few more weeks. Barring any other major shift, this is how we're going to be working for a while: some of us from home, others powering through on a skeleton crew. Our normal communication patterns have been upended. Our coffee at our desk routine isn't the same. The "Hello, how're the kids?" to the colleague at the next desk is on pause. Now it's Zoom meetings. It's sparse courtrooms. It's video and phone calls with clients. It's trying to keep up without drowning in emails. So ... so ... MANY emails.

Many of us are working from home, but there are those of us who are still coming in as "skeleton crew." It's weird and a little lonely. But we will adapt and figure out this new normal. And we will be back. In the meantime, enjoy the news and views of our comrades and coworkers, and keep the Defender spirit.

-Ben



Paralegal Cynthia Cairns preparing motions in the Alamogordo office.



Traci Henderson, senior secretary, left, and Hannia Carrasco, calendaring secretary, practice social distancing as the skeleton crew in the Carlsbad office.



Attorneys David Woodstock, left, and Michael Reyes noodle over upcoming cases in the Alamogordo office.

New employees



Kasey Taylor, senior secretary in Alamogordo and her 5 children rockin' in at home.



5th District Defender Deirdre Ewing has yet another home supervisor, Xander



FizzLee the bearded dragon hangs out as the new guy around the office with Communication Specialist Maggie Shepard and daughter, Nova.



I'm just yawning.

Abq atty James DeRossitt and his doggo Sadie, who looks fierce but is just yawning, figure out a virtual PV hearing.



Aztec Managing Attorney Sarah Field gives, or maybe gets, some work lessons from kiddos Ashlynn, back, and Kennedy - who turns 5 tomorrow.



David Benatar and Lindsay McDonell-Benatar welcomed daughter Stella Martha Benatar on March 21. Dad says that with 2 public defender parents, she's in line to take up the cause, too.



Gracie and Sarah Palin flank cats Charlie and Jack while working alongside Roswell paralegal Vicki Carlton.



MCDU atty Todd Farkas now directly reports to these two, one of whom stepped on the power switch on his laptop. Todd says, "fortunately, no documents lost."

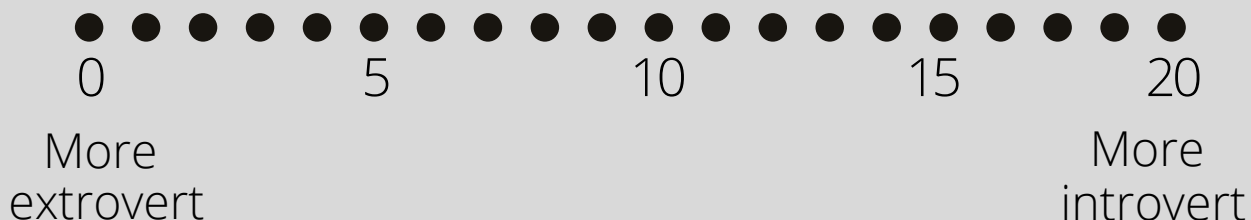
Are you more of an introvert or extrovert?

Knowing can help your transition to working from home or on a skeleton crew, LOPD's leadership consultant says

Answer each question on this informal quiz with a True or False, choosing the one that applies to you more often than not. Then calculate your score and read the advice on the next page.

1. _____ I prefer one-on-one conversations to group activities.
2. _____ I often prefer to express myself in writing.
3. _____ I enjoy solitude.
4. _____ I seem to care about wealth, fame, and status less than my peers.
5. _____ I dislike small talk, but I enjoy talking in depth about topics that matter to me.
6. _____ People tell me that I'm a good listener.
7. _____ I'm not a big risk-taker.
8. _____ I enjoy work that allows me to "dive in" with few interruptions.
9. _____ I like to celebrate birthdays on a small scale, with only one or two close friends or family members.
10. _____ People describe me as "soft-spoken" or "mellow."
11. _____ I prefer not to show or discuss my work with others until it's finished.
12. _____ I dislike conflict.
13. _____ I do my best work on my own.
14. _____ I tend to think before I speak.
15. _____ I feel drained after being out and about, even if I've enjoyed myself.
16. _____ I often let calls go through to voice mail.
17. _____ If you had to choose, I'd prefer a weekend with absolutely nothing to do to one with too many things scheduled.
18. _____ I don't enjoy multitasking.
19. _____ I can concentrate easily
20. _____ In classroom situations, I prefer lectures to seminars.

How many "true" answers? _____ Find that number on the line below.



LOPD Leadership Consultant Vince Brush's take on I/E spectrum

Those people that fall on the introverted side have an easier time adjusting to work at home, which also means they have a more difficult time with their work with 300 people in a building. They have been used to adjusting to that. But someone more on the extrovert side, without them even knowing it, they get to work and say hello, they high five people, they talk in the bathroom, they get a group together for drinks after work.

All that's changed now for both personalities. If you're an introvert, you're still going to need to have conversation and connect emotionally. The extrovert will find it easier to connect but they will be needing more of that connection. If they know they have an introvert on their team, they might want to draw them out.

INTROVERTS and introverted tendencies = tend to recharge by spending time alone. They lose energy from being around people for long periods of time, particularly large crowds.

EXTROVERTS and extroverted tendencies = gain energy from other people. Extroverts actually find their energy is sapped when they spend too much time alone. They recharge by being social.

Famous Introverts-
Albert Einstein
Bill Gates
Eleanor Roosevelt
Emma Watson
Meryl Streep

Famous Extroverts--
Bill Clinton
Steve Jobs
Muhammad Ali
George W. Bush

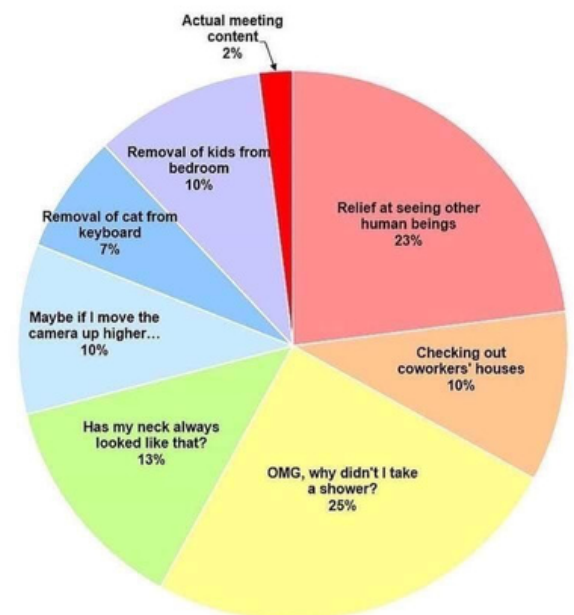
Turn on your videos

We all need the connection; brave the camera

Yes, it can certainly be uncomfortable to watch yourself on camera during a virtual meeting like Zoom or Google Meets or even FaceTime. But seeing each other -- and each other's pets -- during this coronavirus time is good for us. It promotes connection. It allows us at least a chance at reading the body language that is so important to communication. And it allows us some sense of the normalcy we got from our work in our offices. So, when you join your next Zoom or virtual meeting, brave the camera.



Diagram of Zoom Meeting Attention Span



More and more masks



Santa Fe attorney Sydney West sewed and sterilized in her oven, see left, 45 masks to distribute to sex workers through a harm reduction group in Albuquerque called StreetSafe New Mexico. West said she and a former prosecutor friend spent all weekend and made 80 total masks for the group, which can be found at www.streetsafenewmexico.org.

Virtual Recovery

Members of the LOPD family who rely upon in-person addiction recovery fellowships, such as AA, NA, CA, OA, or GA, may feel a bit disconnected or just plain out of sorts being so isolated. To that end, Deputy Chief Jennifer Birmingham, in her own capacity, worked with other LOPD members in recovery to help create NM DEFENDERS IN RECOVERY, a meeting that will be held every Friday night (for the next several weeks) at 6 p.m. via Zoom. For the Zoom link, more information or for other links to other virtual recovery resources, you can contact Craig Acorn at craig.acorn@gmail.com or 650-283-0694; Jennifer Birmingham at Jbirmingham2112@gmail.com or 575-288-7958; or JJ Hall at jjhall@me.com or 307-321-4752. Notice those are their private numbers and emails as this is not a department-sponsored effort. "Right now, more than ever, we need to be there for each other, no matter where in the state you are located," Birmingham said.

A reason to smile



From left, co-counsel Graham Dumas, LOPD client Antonio Sanchez-Echague, Jose Sanchez-Echague (represented by contract counsel Mark Ramsey) and Judi Caruso, counsel for Antonio Sanchez-Echague pose after a not guilty verdict March 6 in Albuquerque.

Abq attys Judi Caruso and Graham Dumas celebrated not guilty verdicts for client Antonio Sanchez-Echague on all counts (multiple counts Ag batt DW/GBH, conspiracy and tampering) in early March. Caruso said Sanchez-Echague and his brother, who had just gotten through a cancer treatment, defended themselves and each other against a racist attack initiated after a close call vehicle crash. She said "a brutal fight ensued, with the AVs sustaining significantly more severe injuries than the brothers. Blinkered, tunnel vision investigation and rush to judgment, resulted in our client's wrongful preventative detention for 7 months."

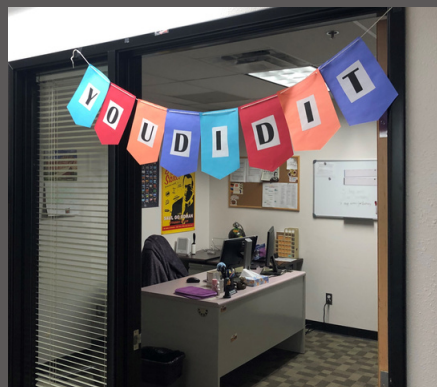
Jennifer Barela as DD is official

Albuquerque Acting District Defender Jennifer Barela is now the official District Defender.

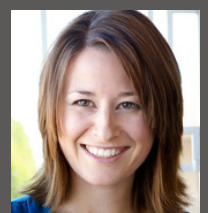


New attorneys must skip swearing in

Corona is forcing a virtual swearing in for our new attorneys. Still, congrats to Alicia Miller in Abq and Lucy River in Santa Fe. Abq Metro team decorated Miller's office even though she is working from home.



Alicia Miller



Lucy River



Thanks alot,
corona

