

Goodbye Allen Theatres, for a while

Written by Staff Reports

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The *Las Cruces Sun-News* reported Oct. 26 that Allen Theatres will be closing across New Mexico.

The 13 locations in New Mexico and those in Arizona and Colorado will go into hibernation until further notice because of COVID-19, which has affected about 450 employees.

McKinley County Commissioner and Gallup-McKinley County Chamber of Commerce CEO Bill Lee told the *Gallup Sun* Oct. 28 that the company had done a remarkable job of pivoting to keep operating as an outdoor drive-in theater.

“With the PPP [Paycheck Protection Program] and CARES Act funds running out ... without the second bill out of Congress, I believe we’re going to see more and more of these kinds of closures,” he said.

“The Allen people have been invested in the Gallup community for a long time,” he added. “Right now they’re saying that it’s not a permanent closure.”

But Lee pointed out that since Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham doesn’t see the business restrictions lifting for another nine months or at least until a vaccine is on scene, these lockdowns will continue to have real consequences in New Mexico, especially to the hospitality and entertainment industries.

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Lee took the news of the closings as an opportunity to remind Gallupians that the holidays are on the way and they can help the community economy by “turning their attention away from the Amazons of the world and buying gift cards from local and small businesses.”

“The more that we can help them out, the more we can ensure their future will be strong enough to get through this,” he said.

He pointed out that local businesses support the quality of life in McKinley County, things like the Community Pantry.

“We wish the Allen family and all of their employees the best and hope that we’re going to be enjoying movies in their theatres again very soon,” Lee stated.