

# **FBI Agents, Media Give Lincoln An Early Start To Visitor Season**

Tom Sowa

April 4, 1996

Most springs, locals in Lincoln, Mont., talk about the price of hay or how soon the tourists will show up.

Wednesday, the town's 800 residents were wondering why the Unabomber may have chosen the self-described snowmobile capital of the world for his hideout.

On Tuesday, more than 25 federal agents descended on this remote town halfway between Missoula and Great Falls.

The news media followed the next day after learning the FBI had taken Theodore Kaczynski into custody and were searching his cabin for evidence of his involvement in a series of mail-bombings that have baffled federal authorities since 1978.

Lincoln residents who've heard about the media frenzy associated with the FBI standoff with the freemen in Jordan, Mont., can now see three network satellite trucks parked on Highway 200 in their own town.

Isolated, 6,000-foot-high Lincoln traditionally attracts anglers, hikers and RV-driving vacationers.

In recent years, it's also drawn increasing numbers of retirees looking for small town life and Big Sky serenity.

"That's why I moved out here," said Wayne Cashman, owner of the Seven-Up Ranch Supper Club, one of the town's main motels on its main drag, Highway 200.

"It's the Old West," said Cashman, who moved here from Spokane after retiring from Scott paper company.

Kaczynski apparently discovered Lincoln because his parents from Chicago purchased land in the area years ago.

Tourists usually start showing up after Easter. The busy period is summer, when the highway between Glacier and Yellowstone national parks hums with travelers.

Some people spend their summers here in second homes.

"Nine months of the year, this is a great place to live," said Cashman, whose son, Wayne Jr., and daughter-in-law, Tammy, run the motel-restaurant.

"The rest of the time, it's pretty cold," said Cashman.

To battle the winter blahs, residents have added events like the Race to the Sky sled dog competition. Lincoln is now one of the race's annual checkpoints.

Cashman said he has no problem with the influx of federal agents and media: His rooms are booked solid for the next few days.

Others have different reactions to Lincoln's moment in the spotlight.

"The whole town is in shock," said Gene Youderian, a volunteer fireman and worker at High Country Jerky outside of town.

*Staff writers Jim Camden and Gina Boysun contributed to this report.*

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