Mammoth Lakes Fire Department Engineer Gilbert Lucero and District Chief Natalie Morrow hang Christmas lights on Fire Station 1 on Tuesday, November 21.

INYO SUPES OFFER TERSE COMMENT ON PERDITO
Does edit job = big deal?
By Lunch
If a picture says 1,000 words, what does the elimination of 300 words mean? Some might say it amounted to the evisceration of a comment letter sent by Inyo County to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on the proposed Conglomerate Mine Exploration Project. The initial draft of the comment letter signed by Board Chairman Mark Tillmans stated, “we are in support of this exploration project.”

“TIS THE SEASON
By Giles
During a meeting on November 23, 2016, Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) Public Works Director Grady Dutton and Parks and Recreation Director Stuart Brown told HMC Architects to rewrite “the project contingency” budget item from the cost estimate the firm compiled for the Multi-Use Facility (MUF) at Mammoth Creek Park West.

According to meeting notes obtained by The Sheet in a public records request, HMC’s principles Chris Taylor and Kyle Peterson replied that, “in our professional experience, a 10 percent contingency is prudent at this point in a project estimate.” At that time, HMC Architects estimated the MUF was, at minimum, an $11.9 million project.

On May 17, 2017, Mammoth Town Council voted to authorize funding for the project. Council made that decision based on information provided by Town staff at the time. Staff indicated that “value engineering” had reduced the cost of the project to approximately $9.5 million, which still left an anticipated $1.5 million funding gap.

On September 4, 2017, Dutton announced at a Recreation Commission meeting that the Multi-Use Facility at Mammoth Creek Park West would cost, at minimum, $1 million more than the $9.5 million originally forecast by HMC Architects.

On September 4, Dutton also reported that HMC Architects had told Town staff the facility’s roof was slated to be $1 million more than originally forecast, and fluctuations in California’s construction market were expected to raise costs further. Overall, Dutton said the project could cost as much as $12 million.

On October 4, Town Council authorized the issuance of $5.5 million in bond debt for the MUF.

Bait-and-switch?
At a September 4 meeting, Recreation Commissioner Sean Turner said, “I feel bait and switched.” to which Dutton responded, “They’re see MUF, page 20

MAMMOTH HOSPITAL PLANS TO BUY COLLEGE’S SOUTH GATEWAY APARTMENTS
By Rea
Mammoth Lakes Foundation Executive Director Rich Boccia and Mammoth Hospital CEO Gary Myers both told The Sheet this week that the Foundation and Mammoth Hospital have been discussing the possible sale of the South Gateway Student Apartments at Cerro Coso college to the Hospital for approximately a year.

Myers said on Tuesday, November 21 that the Hospital has offered approximately $3.5 million for the apartment building and the 11-acre parcel it sits on.

“Entering into the agreement we’ll be acquiring a 50 percent interest in both the building and the land,” said Myers. “Having a partner like us that can manage building and facility” would be beneficial for the MLE who Myers said were the ones to approach the Hospital with the proposition.

Myers said the Hospital currently manages over 100,000 square feet of property.

On September 20, Mammoth’s Town Council voted to approve an amendment to the Institutional Public Land Use Designation affecting a 57 acre parcel owned by the MLF and the Kern Community College District (See “Old School 2,” September 22). Mammoth’s Planning and Economic Development Commission approved the amendment on August 9. When asked whether the possible sale of the apartments to Mammoth Hospital was ever mentioned at any of the Town meetings prior to the amendment’s passing, Boccia said he did not believe it was. Myers told The Sheet that, see HOSPITAL, page 20

FREE
Vol. 15, No. 47
Saturday, November 25, 2017

What’d the fox say?
/p. 22/

Hiked to heaven
/p. 4/

Get your Kincos here
/p. 14/

#Himtoo
/p. 6/

Life of illusion
/p. 2, 11/

The Sheet
News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra

Mammoth High school student and Olympic hopeful Dusty Henricksen and his mother, Jenny, at Stellar Brew. For more about Henricksen’s accomplishments as a competitive snowboarder and his wallet-making endeavors, see page 21.
MINING
continued from page 1

work simply amounts to a gateway to a larger, more destructive outcome. Tons of rock in massive open pits. A method of mineral extraction. The Carlin Gold, according to the 91 Metallurgist.com website, can be profitably mined at 0.2 grams of gold per ton of material which is mined using the cyanide heap leach method of mineral extraction. Essentially sift out tiny particles of gold via a cyanide solution from tons of rock in massive open pits.

Inyo County residents who spoke at the November 14 meeting were hardly sanguine about the prospect, and believed that any “exploratory” work simply amounts to a gateway to a larger, more destructive outcome. Bishop resident John Louth called it “unacceptable, no matter the perceived benefit.”

Harry Williams of the Bishop Paiute Tribe: “Our natural environment is our greatest asset … The economic engine in this valley is tourism.” He equated BLM’s potential approval of an exploratory project to giving “the keys to a bunch of wild, crazy Canadians.”

Supervisor Matt Kingsley admonished Williams for picking on Canadians. “When we’re not happy in the U.S., we go to Canada,” he pointed out. Dr. Tom Boo: Cyanide heap leach mining has no place in Inyo County. Steve McLaughlin to Supes: Your guiding principle should be to do the least harm.

Drew Wickman: Multiple-use of public land is a noble concept, so long as any one user isn’t destroying the land. The major economic benefits of such a mine would be for stockholders, not Inyo County. Ralph Lachenmaier: Why destroy the world to put it in a vault? … It would be different if we were digging for something we could use. Danelle Bacocho-Gutierrez: Haven’t we learned anything from Owens

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Sunday, November 26, 2017
Sheet, I

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The author of arguably the most popular book among hikers and climbers in the Sierra Nevada, “High Sierra—Peaks, Passes and Trails,” Robert John “R.J.” Secor has died. Born September 1, 1956 he passed away in Pasadena on October 26. He was 61.

The 1992 book, now in its third printing, was meticulously detailed by Secor, having visited and climbed most of the peaks and trails himself. The comprehensive guide covers the entire Sierra Nevada. He is credited with 700 ascents on more than 300 peaks, climbing as many as 60 peaks in a year in the Sierra Nevada. He took extended annual trips to the Sierra every year for decades.

The current glut of Sierra guidebooks specialize in climbing particular peaks and routes or the tick-list of the famous. Secor’s book is all purpose; it’s a wish book, an autograph book, cutting board and lid for a cooking pot.

The first edition was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

His stamina and will to explore and summit were transcribed, generously, in the guidebooks that are now his legacy. People often refer to his Sierra guidebook as, “Secor’s” more than “Peaks, Passes and Trails.” The book was a monumental undertaking.

Detractors often criticized some of the route descriptions in the book, such as, “Go left to the summit,” which might involve scrambling up an airy wall and negotiating a maze of ridge gargoyles, but it kept some of the wild and adventure of a route.

Mountaineer and friend Alois Smrz posted in SuperTopo.com, “He knew exactly what he wanted to accomplish regarding the Sierra guide series and would not be derailed from including hikes and cross country routes as well as climbs. He could be pretty stubborn.”

Secor dedicated his life to the mountains and to sharing those adventures and the knowledge he learned from those trips with others through his books and stories.

Secor also summited Aconcagua in Argentina, the highest point in the Americas, and Denali. He went on to scribe guidebooks of those peaks, along with the volcanoes of Mexico. He became the second person to climb all 247 peaks on the Angeles Chapter’s Sierra Peaks Section’s peaks list—twice. From 1989-90, Secor was the president of the California Mountaineering Club and was chair of Angeles Chapter’s Sierra Peaks Section in 1998.

In April 2005, Secor lost control of a self-initiated glissade down the face of Mt. Baldy in Southern California, sliding 1,200 feet, bouncing off rocks and icy snow. He sustained skull fractures and other injuries and had to be airlifted to medical treatment.

A year later, he was walking again and began to hike, but, according to family, he suffered another head injury last year that eventually led to his death.

A memorial may be planned in Altadena, California, at a later date. Contributions may be made in his honor to the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter. Those who want to share memories and stories about R.J. Secor with his family should email southern.sierran@sierraclub.org.

- Bodine
WALK, BIKE, RIDE... PARALLEL PARK

Town of Mammoth Lakes contemplates removing head-in parking on Main Street

By Lunch

The Town is contemplating the elimination of the head-in parking along the Frontage Roads on Main Street. That should be enough to keep you reading.

Mammoth Lakes Planning and Economic Development Commission (PEDC) held its first-ever meeting of its Mobility Committee on Friday morning.

PEDC member Michael Vanderhurst, in talking about the “Walk, Bike, Ride” planning initiative, noted that the title itself might be a bit of a misnomer.

“People don’t realize we’re talking about transportation, sidewalks …” said Vanderhurst.

“People don’t realize we’re talking about transportation, sidewalks …” said Vanderhurst.

Or about a redesign of Main Street.

A new plan would see the Town’s Engineering Manager Haislip Hayes explained, the Town is embarking on an $8.5 million project to complete sidewalks along Main Street by 2020.

The sidewalk would stretch from the first traffic light as you enter town all the way to the post office, crosswalk near the post office, limit, installation of a stoplight at the first traffic light as you enter Main Street Frontage Road.

Cars park head-in on Mammoth’s existing Main Street Frontage Road.

“The free money doesn’t matter if you do a bad project.”

While Cage questioned the efficacy of parallel parking on Main Street, Hayes said the Town realizes it will not work unless it is done in conjunction with traffic-calming measures (perhaps a lower speed limit, installation of a stoplight at the crosswalk near the post office).

As Hayes said, the reconfigured Main Street would still have two traffic lanes on the Frontage roads, but next to those lanes, instead of parking, would be a 14- to 16-foot promenade. Next to that, along Main Street by 2020.

Hayes said affected business owners had been invited to two workshops but had not attended.

The philosophical question posed by Hayes to the committee was as follows: Are we providing public parking for businesses and employees or is the public parking for the public?

He added that grant money is at risk if the Town does not act in a timely manner.

Kittredge Sports owner Tom Cage said timing constraints should not affect decision-making. “You can’t take free money and destroy businesses and screw people,” he said.

You can’t take free money and destroy businesses and screw people.

- Tom Cage

Hayes maintained there would be no net loss of parking.

He added that the proposal had been shared with Main Street business owners. Several owners The Sheet spoke with disagreed, saying they had no idea there was a proposal to eliminate the public parking outside their businesses.

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Several owners The Sheet spoke with disagreed, saying they had no idea there was a proposal to eliminate the public parking outside their businesses.
#HIM, TOO? Assemblyman Mathis faces allegations of sexual misconduct

By Bodine

California Assemblyman Devon Mathis is being investigated for sexual harassment and assault stemming from an incident in April 2016. Mathis represents California’s 26th Assembly District, which includes all of Kern County and part of Mono County, including Visalia. He was first voted into office in 2014.

Even if the allegations are untrue, the incident may be the last straw for California Republicans with regard to Mathis’ performance as an assemblyman.

In Inyo County Republican Central Committee unanimously passed a resolution on November 14 which asked Mathis to resign immediately. According to the resolution, Mathis had “become an embarrassment to his constituents ... Mr. Mathis lied to members of the Central Committee and Republican elected officials regarding votes in the legislature and matters of public policy. Mr. Mathis used a vulgar slang term when bragging about ignoring his constituents on the floor of the California Assembly.

Committee chairwoman Mariann Hedstrom told the Visalia Times-Delta on November 14 that Mathis does not vote in line with his constituents.

Sacramento Police announced on November 16 that the investigation into the April 2016 incident was closed and said there is no evidence that a crime was committed. Hedstrom told the Fresno news outlet “Your Central Valley” on November 17 that the committee is still moving forward with the resolution to have Mathis resign.

In an Op-Ed piece by Inyo County Supervisor Matt Kingsley printed in The Sheet on October 14 (as well as in numerous other outlets statewide), Kingsley described Mathis’ inconsistent voting record. For example, Mathis promised to vote against a controversial cap-and-trade bill, then Mathis voted against it. Kingsley also said that Mathis lied to the Fresno Bee on November 17 that the committee is still moving forward with the resolution to have Mathis resign.

On October 19, Turner wrote on his blog that several individuals steered him toward Mathis as a womanizer and a man with a drinking problem. Turner retold the accusations made by staffers regarding the night in question, in April 2016. A night of drinking devolved into Mathis allegedly sexually assaulting an unconscious staffer. He also allegedly could not keep his paws off of two Democratic staffers, according to Turner.

Rule Committee chairwoman Mariann Hedstrom told The Sheet’s May 2013 story, “A Facelift for Mammoth” that the committee is still investigating Mathis for sexual misconduct allegations against him.

According to Turner, Mathis has also been accused of child abuse and endangerment. Mathis denies these allegations as well.

CBS Sacramento reported on November 16 that the state’s Assembly Rule Committee is still investigating sexual misconduct allegations against Mathis.

When the Party Bosses are going to do something right?

- Assemblyman Devon Mathis

MUSD SEEKS BOND Mammoth’s School Board approves contract for bond counsel

By Giles

On Thursday, November 16, the Mammoth Unified School District Board voted unanimously to approve a Bond Counsel contract with the firm Orrick, Herrington and Sutcliffe, LLP (Orrick), an international law firm based in San Francisco. Orrick was selected as the most competitive respondent to MUSD’s Request for Proposals. MUSD’s Chief Business and Financial Officer Brooke Bien said that Orrick “felt like the right fit.” She said Orrick’s principals stood out for their attention to detail and readiness in initial consultations to explain nuances of the bonding process that MUSD staff had not yet considered.

MUSD will be seeking voter approval of a series of bonds to renovate Mammoth’s elementary, middle, and high schools. As reported in The Sheet’s May 2013 story, “A Facelift for MUSD” MUSD’s operating budget for 2016-2017 was approximately $13.3 million. On August 24, MUSD approved a new Facilities Master Plan, which recommended between $63.1 million to $69.1 million in repairs and upgrades to Mammoth’s schools.

The Facilities Master Plan was prepared by HMC Architects, the same firm which was contracted by the Town of Mammoth Lakes to prepare the conceptual design and cost estimates for the Multi-Use Facility.

The contract approved on Thursday between MUSD and Orrick dictates that Orrick will craft a bond series ballot measure, most likely for the November 2018 election. Additionally, Orrick will be responsible for defending ballot arguments if they are challenged. Orrick will also be responsible for drafting all of the legal documents required to issue the bonds (which, if the ballot measure is successful, will be issued by Mono County, which will act on behalf of MUSD). This includes the bond purchase agreement, and a notice of proposed and final sale, to be filed with the California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission.

Orrick will no longer provide counsel to MUSD once the bonds are issued.

If the ballot proposition is approved by the residents of the school district, MUSD will pay Orrick $73,000 for the first bond series issued, and $48,000 for each additional bond series issued. If the ballot proposition is not approved, MUSD will pay Orrick nothing.

If MUSD chooses to terminate its new contract with Orrick, it will owe the firm hourly payment for all work done up to the date on which the contract is terminated.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEVON MATHIS’ OFFICE

FUNDING NOW!

Mammoth Schools Now Foundation donates $35,000 to MUSD

By Giles

(L-R): Mammoth Unified School District Board members Shana Stapp, John Stavlo, Mammoth Schools NOW Education Foundation Board President Cindy Podosin, MUSD Board member Jack Farrell, Superintendent Lois Klein, MUSD Board members Deanna Campbell, Yvonne Guzman Rangel, and student board member Melanie Moyer at the Thursday, November 16 MUSD Board meeting.

On Thursday, November 16, Cindy Podisim, President of the Mammoth Schools NOW Education Foundation, presented Mammoth Unified School District with a check for $35,000. Podosin said the funds were raised through the organization’s credit card processing program, called School Spirit Pays (SSP). SSP donates 25 percent of their net revenue on each transaction from each participating business. In Mammoth Lakes to the NOW Foundation, SSP provides credit card processing support to local businesses who wish to participate at no additional cost to the business. Together, Mammoth Schools NOW and Mammoth Community Foundation have funded over $1 million in programs at MUSD since 2010.
UKULELES FOR ALL
Infinite Music supports beginning ukulele lessons at MUSD
Press Release

Infinite Music Foundation (IMF), a grassroots nonprofit dedicated to making music a priority for young people, has given $4,320 to help support beginning group ukulele lessons for Mammoth Elementary school students as well as needed instruments for the Mammoth school band and choir programs. The funds were raised from the nonprofit’s involvement with the Thursday night concert at this year’s Bluesapalooza event, presented by Mammoth Brewing Company.

“I am a believer that the arts are significantly important to a child’s education. As the District is struggling financially, this contribution from Infinite Music allows us to strengthen our music program... This gift will go a long ways toward funding our growing needs,” said Lois Klein, Superintendent of Mammoth Unified School District.

Infinite Music Board President Sarah Mason stated that the funds have been appropriated for Infinite Music’s Makin’ Music After School Club program for the 2017-18 academic year. Monies were additionally allocated for needed instruments for Director of Music Mike Hammer’s band and vocal music programs. This is the second year the grassroots nonprofit has funded local music programs for Mammoth’s schools, gifting over $8,000 to further music education for deserving local youth.

“Infinite Music’s contributions both this year and last have been huge in the success and rise of our music programs here in Mammoth, especially for our younger students at Mammoth Elementary School... These funds help provide a number of kids the opportunity to study music and play an instrument who otherwise may never have the opportunity.”

Infinite Music is dedicated to fostering music education, and is focused on giving underserved youth the tools and confidence to excel in academics and in life. Infinite Music Foundation is a volunteer organization funded through grants, fundraising events, and tax-deductible donations. To learn how you can support Infinite Music’s mission, visit www.InfiniteMusic.org.

PYRO-MANIA!
Reyes Soria’s art on display at Mammoth Rock ‘n Bowl

By Rea

Monday’s “Bowling and Beats” event at Mammoth Rock ‘n Bowl will feature local artist Pamela Gisel Reyes Soria, who specializes in “pyrography,” or art made with a wood burning tool. It’s more of a hobby than a profession, says Reyes Soria, who said she learned a few years ago how to make art by using a hot pen on wood canvases.

Reyes Soria’s day job is working for Mammoth Mountain’s childcare department (she also moonlights at the Yodler), but she recently had enough time during shoulder season to complete a 48”x14” image of Mammoth Mountain with a looming Woolly Mammoth in the foreground.

“I’ve always been into art, and I was introduced to the wood burning tool by a friend and I just fell in love with it,” said Reyes Soria, who is originally from Peru, but has lived in the U.S. since she was 13.

She earned her associates degree in art, and “tried a little bit of business... but I never left the art. It’s just something in the back of my mind. It’s your passion that you want to keep with you.”

Reyes Soria’s Mammoth piece will be on display on Monday, November 27 at Mammoth Rock ‘n Bowl, featured alongside several other pieces of her artwork. Cosmic bowling and electronic dance music (by Kally Quezada) will commence at 9 p.m.
A SLIPPERY SLOPE

Hikers observe massive Mule Deer casualties at Bishop, Shepherd’s Passes

By Rea

Several large scale deer mortality incidents were discovered by hikers on Bishop and Shepherd’s passes in the Inyo National Forest in the last two weeks, said Mike Morrison, Wildlife Biologist for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Prior to the most recent storm to hit the Sierra, said Morrison, “the deer were following their normal trail and because of the heavy snow we got last year, there were big fields of it left unmelted. When it got cold it turned to ice and the deer just slipped to their death,” said Morrison this week. He said that 78 deer had been counted dead on Bishop Pass, and 44 at Shepherd’s pass as of Monday, November 20. “However, he said, “it’s very possible that there’s a lot more mortality than what we know about,” because CDFW relied on hikers who reported finding the deer carcasses.

Lindsey Jackson told The Sheet that she happened upon a boulder field of dead deer below Bishop Pass on November 11. “When I first walked up on it, I was horrified,” she said. At first, she said, she didn’t understand what had caused such a mass die off of apparently healthy deer.

She said when she eventually ascended Bishop Pass she saw the reason for the carnage—a huge ice field above a chute. “I had to use my microspikes if I wanted to keep going,” Jackson said. Jackson said that scavengers had already been at work, with crows circling overhead. “There were enough (dead deer) to mask the rocks,” she said.

Morrison said that the phenomenon is not common, but it has been documented before. A paper titled “Accidental mass mortality of migrating mule deer” published in 2001 by West North American Naturalist and written by Vernon C. Bleich and Becky M. Pierce, cites events in that year, and in 1995 and 1954. “Snow, which is transformed to ice and then thaws and freezes, occasionally lasts through autumn at high elevations, and such would be expected following winters of heavy snowfall,” stated the paper.

The paper also reported that public concern at the time led the authors to propose using hand tools to enhance the trail and cover it with sand, but permission at that time was denied by the Inyo National Forest ‘because it would conflict with ‘natural processes’ in wilderness.’

Morrison said that migrating mule deer ‘are like lemmings. They could go around it, but their mama brought them that way and that’s the way they’re going. They step on the ice not recognizing it’s going to be slippery. When they get to the point where gravity takes over, it’s too late.’

Morrison also said that it was too early to tell whether the mass mortality event would affect the amount of hunting tags issued next deer season. “We’ll have to sit down and talk about that when the time comes,” he said.

“We don’t want to issue a whole bunch of tags knowing there’s going to be a low success rate for those fortunate enough to draw a tag,” he said. “That it’s the does (female deer) that drive populations, and that the mass mortality events this fall resulted in the deaths of fawns, bucks, does, everything.”

This unattributed photo made the rounds on social media as hikers reported mass casualties of mule deer on several high passes, including Bishop and Shepherd’s pass.
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THE LITTLE APPLE DUMPLING GANG

The Little family make a living pioneer-style at the Virginia Creek Settlement

By Bodine

There’s a blue building near the turnoff to Bodie State Park, it looks like the door opens right onto Highway 395. It’s hard to tell though because most people fly by the Virginia Creek Settlement on their way to Bridgeport or Mammoth. It’s just another blur along the side of the road.

People have been flying by the place for 90 years, whether it was a store, restaurant, bar or brothel—but many have stopped. Those smart folks can enjoy homemade apple dumplings or fish Virginia Creek for trout raised on site.

In 1927, Virginia Creek Settlement was a boardinghouse and stagecoach stop on the way to or from Bodie, says Jimmy Little, who, along with her husband Brinn, has owned and operated the settlement for 15 years. Highway 395 was still under construction in ’27 and the pavement stopped near Bodie because the narrow corridor between the mining town and the outskirts of the Nevada border. It took some time for the rest of Mono County to be surveyed and when it was determined that Virginia Creek Settlement was in California, the brothel closed.

Today, the settlement is a restaurant and motel with cabins, tent cabins or the option to sleep in a covered wagon.

The settlement doesn’t close… an anymore. Brinn Little said the previous owners, Don and Jenny Newsome, were open from the beginning of fishing season to Halloween. He said he kept the place open a little more each year until he decided he’d just remain open year round for the past 4 years. The move was necessary to keep employees on, Brinn explained. It became harder to find reliable seasonal help, or employees that wouldn’t leave in August to go back to school.

Year-round employees keep the food and service consistent. Fall colors, photography and fishing keeps the place hopping from May through October, with the time between Thanksgiving and Christmas break the slowest. “This time of year,” Brinn said grinding his jaw, “is painful.”

“We’re trying to find the winter survivable,” he added. A new business, High Sierra Snowcat and Yurts, shuttles skiers up to Virginia Lakes and has been a boost for business. Travertine Hot Springs is a year-round attraction and brings in guests. Room rates are nearly half what is being asked for in Bridgeport and Lee Vining, he added.

With its close proximity to Bodie, the recipe for this homemade apple dumpling is at least 75 years old, say the Littles.

Mono Lake and Walker River photographers visit the settlement year-round.

The Sheet: “How do you guys make it in the winter?”

Jimmy Little: “There’s still people on the road.”

The Littles make sure there’s fish in the creek in their backyard by making their own. The couple got licensed for aquaculture two years ago and are raising trout. They have about 350 in the pond right now. The two vacationed on the East-side as kids, and finally made the move to live up here. To make ends meet while waiting for escrow to close, Brinn drove from their place in Mojave to Bakersfield every day, and then the family would make the drive to the settlement to learn the business. They had no restaurant experience, but wanted to get away from the smog and dirty water and boost their quality of life. Jimmy said things were going perfectly, “The only hiccup was the twins.”

Jimmy’s parents bought the property south of the restaurant when the Littles decided to move up, Jimmy said. The day escrow closed on her folks’ place, September 25, 2005, Jimmy got the ultrasound from her doctor showing twin boys, Avry and Archer. The two join brother Aiden, 16, and sister Amber, 18.


When escrow closed on the restaurant, the Littles hired a photographer to take staged, sepia pictures where people dress in Ol’ West garb.

Angie Tapley

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Next to Shell More Hwy 203 & Old Mammoth Rd

see DUMPLINGS, page 17


The Ski Area acquisitions in 1996 and 2005 were both quite different. In 1996, the real estate market and the community as a whole were just getting some legs after a deep recession. Despite the marketing mastery of Intrawest there was almost no immediate impact to the real estate market (despite being told we were on the verge of a baby boom generation into their "big spending years") to truly move the market. Ultimately, the depressed economy of the early 1990s along with intermingled drought years were a bigger factor than the immediate ownership change.

The 2005 acquisition was at the peak of the economic and development cycle. Money was flowing freely. Many real estate prices were significantly higher than today. The local market had stalled in the summer of 2005 but launched after the October sale announcement. We were led to believe Mammoth was destined to be one big heavenly bed. Values rose another 10-20 percent over the already record highs.

But the macro economy soon went south and the hotel plans for the "W" and the Ritz-Carlton got shelved. Looking back it was quite delusional. Then a few drought winters stymied everything. Development has been relatively stagnant ever since. So once again, the macro economy was a greater influence than new ownership. Will that happen again?

The current market conditions are slightly encouraging for anyone with an eye towards development. Most Mammoth properties have been selling in the 60-70% range of peak (2006) values the last few years. But many segments are now rising. There are still plenty of properties selling below replacement value. That doesn't create an attractive environment for development. Values in condo hotel properties need to rise further before developers will find it worth the risk. And there is so much quality opportunity out in the "real world" that Mammoth could be shunned altogether. And hurricanes and wildfires are driving up the cost of construction.

The market conditions downright suck for local residents who don't already own. The bottom inventory of the condo and single-family markets have been cleaned out in the past 18 months. The cheap condos that have always been the mainstay "first rung" on the property ladder are gone. The VRBO/Airbnb driven ownership crowd has made sure of that. How far up the price curve they go is yet to be seen. Rising prices in the low-end of the condo market are now eroding the return on investment potential in this segment.

The "pure" second homeowners remain a significant portion of the current market. They don't rent and many are sporadic users. There are literally thousands of properties that sit unoccupied a great percentage of the year. Many would make excellent local resident housing and many could be producing substantial revenue including bed tax. And potential tax law changes are unlikely to make any difference.

With the recent Ski Area ownership change, the operative question many are beginning to ask: Are the new owners really compelled to do anything?? Mammoth is an enigma. The enterprise hauls down big financial numbers as it is. Especially when it snows. What capital expenditures and improvements are going to respect one another's delusions. "Respecting one another's delusions might be one of the greatest challenges of our time. Mammoth is certainly no different. It is all yet-to-be seen. I may or may not make any significant difference. It is all yet-to-be seen. I may or may not make any significant difference."

from The Lessons of History by Will and Ariel Durant.

A

The current market conditions are slightly encouraging for anyone with an eye towards development. Most Mammoth properties have been selling in the 60-70% range of peak (2006) values the last few years. But many segments are now rising. There are still plenty of properties selling below replacement value. That doesn't create an attractive environment for development. Values in condo hotel properties need to rise further before developers will find it worth the risk. And there is so much quality opportunity out in the "real world" that Mammoth could be shunned altogether. And hurricanes and wildfires are driving up the cost of construction.

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With the recent Ski Area ownership change, the operative question many are beginning to ask: Are the new owners really compelled to do anything?? Mammoth is an enigma. The enterprise hauls down big financial numbers as it is. Especially when it snows. What capital expenditures and improvements are going
to make the enterprise more valuable? We’ve heard some promises, but we’ve heard those before (some for decades). I’ve advocated for the completion of the gondola system for years (if you don’t understand it, look closely at the Hart Howerton plan). I believe it would greatly enhance Mammoth real estate values, especially for properties that gain improved entry to the Ski Area. This includes not only the properties near the lift bases but also those with quick shuttle access to the lift bases. Completing the gondola system would improve everybody’s lives in Mammoth.

But is the gondola system going to make the owners more money? Squaw and Alpine must think so. The nightly renters at Eagle and the Village would certainly see the value in Mammoth. Ironically they might be willing to pay more when they themselves are the least likely to do so (as history has proven). They somehow seem to think the local property owners need to make the first step. Makes me think they just want to buy the newly improved properties out of foreclosure. Even the new Grocery Outlet outlet rejected the concept. I’m sure they realized it was cost prohibitive. What makes it work for them is they purchased the land cheap and are building a modest and efficient building. And while they are a “family business” they have private equity backing (and smarts) too. Hopefully they can make it work. Mammoth needs an alternative. But they were savvy enough not to be delusional. Substantial redevelopment costs serious money. Pie-in-the-sky planners are great at painting rosy pictures. But do they want to take the risk? No way. That is why they are planners. Long-time Mammoth property owners and business people will surely be reluctant. Maybe the new owners of Mammoth Mountain need to show us how the infusion of large amounts of capital will provide a handsome return. Sometimes that is called leading by example. But now I’m delusional. Real estate development is not a simple game. Many critics of our most hated real estate developer like to point out that he started with a good pile of money. It certainly helps, but it doesn’t guarantee success. History is littered with failed development and developers. Mammoth’s history is filled with many of what used to be delusional. Maybe the new owners of Mammoth Mountain need to show us how the infusion of large amounts of capital will provide a handsome return. Sometimes that is called leading by example. But now I’m delusional. Real estate development is not a simple game. Many critics of our most hated real estate developer like to point out that he started with a good pile of money. It certainly helps, but it doesn’t guarantee success. History is littered with failed development and developers. Mammoth’s history is filled with many of what used to be called “Mammoth millionaires”; just come with $5 million and leave with one. The Mammoth Clearwater/Old Mammoth Place project reminds me of another delusion. The property was purchased at the top of the market and in the wrong location (not in the “resort corridor”), etc. They basically should have built the Bellagio Hotel surrounded by early 1970’s condos. But we’re forging ahead! And everyone should follow…. Successful redevelopment requires all of the stars to come together. The Village, despite many hiccups, has proven to be successful redevelopment. But a great percentage of the risk was born by the initial condo hotel owners. And many of them ended up in foreclosure or short selling.

Wherever this next saga is taking us is anybody’s guess. The larger economy and California economy will certainly play their role. There are plenty of development and redevelopment opportunities but the construction and “soft” costs in Mammoth remain very high. And the local economy is seasonal. It may be a case of “The more things change….”

In the meantime we’ll try to respect everyone’s delusions. They make for great entertainment.

Happy Thanksgiving! Paul Oster is the Broker/Owner of REMAX of Mammoth. For other timely real estate information you can go to www.mammothrealtestateblog.com. For legal, accounting, or construction advice, please seek out the appropriate professional.

OSTER
continued from page 11

PUBLIC REAL ESTATE MARKET

SOLD

HIDEAWAY DOWNS CANYON #41
3 BR / 2.5 BA
Great Location and Views!
$440,000

MAMMOTH POINT #33
3 BR / 2.5 BA
Spacious Condo with Views
$499,000

Westin 306
1 BR / 1 BA
Full Amenity Resort
$329,000

Westin 519
1 BR / 1 BA
Easy Ski Access
$355,000

Westin 406
1 BR / 1 BA
$400,000

Snowflower #35
2 BR / 1 BA
Great Rental Potential
$475,000

Gillan’s Mtn. Properties
760.709.0066
Gillian Parrish
gillian@mammothmountainproperties.com

Vanessa Oelke
vanessa@mammothrealtygroup.com
715.351.7247

Teresa Frazier
teresamammothmountainproperties.com
760.408.9611

Gillian Parrish
gillian@mammothmountainproperties.com
760.709.0066

Vanessa Oelke
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760.920.0878

760.408.9611

715.351.7247

760.920.0878

715.351.7247

760.408.9611

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Heartfelt thanks...

A MAMMOTH thank you and BIG LOVE to all who have made my year the best ever!

– Tammy

Welcome to Our Cabin

Upgraded mid-century Mammoth cabin
Classic, well-maintained cabin built in 1963 and recently refurbished with modern mountain upgrades throughout. Open floor plan with large windows and abundant sunshine. Gas fireplace, forced air, hardwood floors, built-in cabinets, cork floors in bedrooms, cement kitchen counter tops, newer stainless steel appliances, washer/dryer, spacious deck with barbecue.

420 PINECREST AVENUE
3 BR / 2.5 BA / STORAGE BASEMENT / 1,570 SQ. FT.
OFFERED AT $625,000

My exclusive ROCK STAR ADVANTAGE for buyers and sellers:
– First-time second home buyer loan approval program with RPM Mortgage and the Logemann Group
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A NEW COAT OF WAX AT FASTSKI SPORTS

Longtime Footloose Sports employee Matt Finnigan takes over the iconic Mammoth business

By Rea

There aren’t too many ski shops that have survived 35 years in a town chock full of gear shops, but Command Performance Fastski Sports is one of them, and it’s about to change hands. Albeit gradually.

Matt Finnigan, who worked at Footloose Sports for 32 years, is taking over from current owners Robin and Emily Falkingham, and is going to be slowly easing the Falkingham’s into semi-retirement.

“We’re not going to drop kick him into the holiday tourist crowd that quickly,” said Emily. “We’ll be here until Easter at least, on the holidays and weekends.”

Instead of “retirement,” Finnigan says of the Falkingham’s eventual departure, “let’s call it an exit strategy.”

Emily and Robin really have no idea what they’ll do once they’re not running the ski shop. They’ve owned the shop since they moved to Mammoth in the infamous winter of 1982, when their oldest son was an infant. That same year, Dave McCoy stopped in to wish them luck in their new endeavor.

“Many things will be staying the same. The shop will continue to offer free waxes, as they always have, and they send donations for waxes to For Paws, a non-profit that helps cover the cost of care for pets whose owners need financial assistance.”

From left: Robin and Emily Falkingham and Matt Finnigan.

The ownership change hasn’t been all storm of the season—an affordable, quality product that makes up for in performance what it lacks in looks, the glove is a favorite of ski patrollers and diehards. Finnigan knows what those folks want, and he stocks it.

Local people are very special,” says Emily. “When they make that commitment, it’s a life long commitment.”

The shop has an old-school, quality feel to it. A delivery of Kinco gloves arrived just in time for the first good storm of the season—an affordable, quality product that makes up for in performance what it lacks in looks, the glove is a favorite of ski patrollers and diehards. Finnigan knows what those folks want, and he stocks it.

“We’ve survived in the ski industry,” said Finnigan, “through booms and busts, droughts and deluges, said Finnigan. “Command Performance survived, Footloose survived, so the survivors all know each other.”

Finnigan moved to Mammoth in the way most eventual lifers wind up here—just for a season. While studying sociology in his hometown of Portland, Oregon, Finnigan decided to spend a summer in Alaska at a fishing camp. He made friends with Craig Albright, summer in Alaska at a fishing camp. He made friends with Craig Albright, and Dad are still waiting.”

“I was just taking a term off school,” he said, laughing. Thirty-some years later, “I still have to go back and finish. Mom and Dad are still waiting.”

They’ll probably have to wait a little longer. It was clear from the hour that The Sheet spent inside the shop at the Minaret Mall that Finnigan bought into a business with a loyal customer base. Everyone walking into the shop was met with exclamations and hugs, asked about the snow conditions, or how their winter in New Zealand went. Mammoth Lakes Tourism’s Michael Vanderhurst stopped in to check out locker bags and catch up.

The shop will continue to offer free waxes, as they always have, and 4 Paws, a non-profit that helps cover the cost of care for pets whose owners need financial assistance.

The focus will still be on “the three R’s,” as Finnigan says. “Racing, rental and repair.” And Finnigan will still make sure he gets some turns in even though the pressure’s on his shoulders. “It’s called ‘slope evaluation,’” he said with a grin.

“Our customers know that it’s important that you go skiing,” said Emily, who admitted to closing for a couple hours midmorning and dashing up Chair 15 on more than one occasion. She says that’s what makes Finnigan such a great fit for the business. “Someone will come in and ask how he likes a pair of skis, and he might say, ‘I don’t know if you’d like them, I’ve never skied with you, but how about Tuesday?’”

Finnigan jokedingly. “The dogs are more popular than the Falkingham’s are!”

However, many things will be staying the same. The shop will continue to offer free waxes, as they always have, and they send donations for waxes to For Paws, a non-profit that helps cover the cost of care for pets whose owners need financial assistance.

The ownership change hasn’t been all storm of the season—an affordable, quality product that makes up for in performance what it lacks in looks, the glove is a favorite of ski patrollers and diehards. Finnigan knows what those folks want, and he stocks it.

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SEASON LONG FAMILY FUN
Get ready to hit California’s family mountain on Opening Day and save $80 before pass prices go up. As always, kids 12 and under ski/ride FREE. Buy your pass now for unlimited winter fun this season.

June Mountain Season Pass
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WEEKLY SPECIALS
FALL OPEN THURSDAY THROUGH MONDAY FOR BOWLING, FOOD AND DRINKS.
| BRASSERIE ALSO OPEN THURSDAY THROUGH MONDAY.

FOOTBALL SPECIALS Thursday, Sunday & Monday
Watch the game while enjoying Bowling, Food and Beverage Specials!

BOWLING N BEATS Monday
Let DJ Chronfuscous set the beat while you bowl $3 games, starting at 9pm.

LADIES NIGHT Thursday
Ladies bowl 2 games FREE. Includes shoe rentals.

KIDS BOWL FREE* Saturday & Sunday
2 game maximum with paying Adult, 4 pm to 7 pm.

COSMIC BOWLING Friday & Saturday
9pm to close.

$5 GAMES Friday, Saturday & Sunday
Play $5 games all night.

GOLF $15 Hourly Rates:
Upcoming Closest to Pin and Longest Drive Contests.

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MORRISON’S
Thanksgiving
*pre-set menu
Starters
(Choose one)
Butternut Squash Soup
Baby Greens Salad

Entrees
(Choose one)
Traditional Hand Carved Turkey
Scottish Salmon
Smoked Brisket

Desserts
(Choose one)
Pumpkin Pie
Chocolate Ganache
Cheesecake

Adults $36 • Children under 12 $18
*tax and gratuity not included

NOVEMBER 23
3pm – 9pm • Reservations Required
760-934-7427
For menu details please visit our website
morrisonrestaurantandbar.com

CHRISTMAS IN OUR BIG BACKYARD!

Saturday, 12/2
Main Street Christmas Parade - 4:30 pm
City Park Christmas Tree Lighting - 5:30 pm
Street of Lights Downtown Party - 6-8:30 pm
Visit Santa & Mrs. Claus Next to Perry’s Italian Cafe - 6-8pm
HUGE Raffle at City Park - 8:30pm

Saturday, 12/9
Railroad Express at Laws Museum - 10 am-4 pm
Tickets $15/$7 for under 12

Thursday, 12/14
Holiday Mixer at High Country Lumber - 5:30-7:30 pm

BISHOP CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 760-873-8405
WWW.BISHOPCHAMBEROFCOMMERCE.COM
Bishop local Jolie Varela and 11 other women will hike Paiute ancestral trade routes in summer 2018

By Giles

It’s summer of 2018, a group of 12 Indigenous Women will hike 218 miles from Cottonwood Pass to Yosemite Valley along the network of historic trade routes that is now called The John Muir Trail. The group is called Indigenous Women Hike, and was founded by Bishop local Jolie Varela.

Varela started hiking about four years ago. She grew up in Bishop, but said she had never spent much time “out on the land” until that time. “I started hiking every day,” said Varela. “It made me feel good and cleared my head.”

Varela is Paiute and Tule River Yokut. She was raised in Bishop, and when she took to the trails, sometimes for 14 mile hikes, she noticed that she was often the only Native person using them. “When I’m out on the trail, I don’t see Native people... and if I do, it’s because I am taking them with me,” said Varela.

“When I would take my girlfriends who are indigenous out hiking, and saw how happy it would make them, what a difference one hike would make. I started organizing.” Soon, people, especially women, were calling her, asking about beginner hikes in the area. In May 2017, Varela started hiking about four years ago. She grew up in Bishop, but said she had never spent much time “out on the land” until that time. “I started hiking every day,” said Varela. “It made me feel good and cleared my head.”

Varela decided to formalize the movement, and founded Indigenous Women Hike. She was raised in Bishop, and when she took to the trails, sometimes for 14 mile hikes, she noticed that she was often the only Native person using them. “When I’m out on the trail, I don’t see Native people... and if I do, it’s because I am taking them with me,” said Varela.

Soon, people, especially women, were calling her, asking about beginner hikes in the area. In May 2017, Varela started organizing. “There is unresolved collective and intergenerational historical trauma,” states the organization’s website. “Reconnecting to our land is one method of healing for the mental and physical health, and a way of reclaiming Native people’s access to their ancestral homes.

“Varela also sees hiking as a means of cultural revitalization. “Our community needs healing,” said Varela. “I want to have indigenous women get involved, reconnect with the earth and with our traditional ways, and get out on the land that we were not supposed to be on for a long time.”

Varela said that the summer of 2018 hike will be an act of Tribal Sovereignty under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, which requires the Federal Government demonstrate a compelling state interest to restrict a person’s free exercise of religion. “I’ve been advised by elders not to get permits,” said Varela, who has given the Federal Government advance warning of the trip. “This is a cultural revitalization hike. “This is a cultural revitalization movement. We are going to repair the earth and with our community, and I saw dispari-

“Varela has never done an overnight backpacking trip, and is learning along with the women she leads. Although the hike is limited to Native women, she plans to host a series of community dinners and hikes leading up to the trip, to which all are welcome. Additionally, she is seeking collaboration with locals, particularly women, who can offer skills or used gear to the participants, most of whom have never done an overnight backpacking trip before. She said a group of women from the local environmental advocacy group Inyo 350 have offered to dehydrate food for them. Another woman, Kate Rutherford, a Patagonia Ambassador, has offered to teach them to pack. Varela has already started organizing. Earlier this month, she collaborated with The American Alpine Club and Sierra Mountain Guides to facilitate a Native Youth Rock Climbing Workshop for local kids and their parents.

“It’s not just Native women hiking,” said Varela, who has recruited local nutritional health coach Antonio Caligiuri, to support the women who will be hiking before and during their through-hike. “This is a cultural revitalization movement. We are going to repair the health of indigenous people.”
Temporary Snow Removal Operators
The Shop of Mammoth Lakes is looking for Temp Snow Removal Operators for the 2017/18 winter season. $22.92 - $25.63/hr.
Bilingual preferred. Full-time hours, opportunity to work during shifts and potential overtime. Secure a job for the winter and be part of a dedicated, hard-working road crew.

Full Time Mainenance Manager
Needed for a responsible and reliable Maintenance / Property Manager for upscale Mammoth community. Previous maintenance experience required.
Bilingual preferred. Full-time, 40 hours per week. Pay DOE. Email resume to info@mammothortainmentmanagement.com, call 760.934.8572, or stop by 1914 Meridian Blvd.

Maintenance Assistant Job
Must be able & willing to assist with maintaining & repairing chalets & other structures. Experience is needed in snowblowing, electrical, painting, plumbing & general maintenance. This candidate must be able to perform vehicle maintenance on a variety of vehicles/equipment.
Debbie & Mike Crowe, Mammoth Mountain Chalets 302.378.3681 Ext 0 (CA) 760.934.5518 Ext 0 Reservations@MMCalets.com

Front Desk, Maintenance Worker & Housekeeper: Holiday Haus Hotel and Hostel Now Hiring for year round positions: Front desk, Maintenance Worker and Housekeeper. Excellent pay DOE. Please contact Todd Robertson. 760.934.2480. Go to our website at www.footloosessports.com or email resume to footloose@footloosessports.com to schedule an interview.

Work With The Best. Footloose Sports, nationally recognized as a top 60 retailer, is hiring for the upcoming season. We are seeking staff who work as hard as they play. We’re looking for responsible individuals, passionate about winter sports, and motivated to provide the best service in customer service. We have full and part-time positions open in our sales, rental, boot, and ski repair departments. We are offering great pay, discounts and flexible hours in a progressive work environment. Call 760.934.2480. To apply, please visit www.footloosessports.com or email your resume to footloose@footloosessports.com.

NOW HIRING - front desk/customer service, part time/full time, competitive wage based on experience. Computer knowledge a must. Please send resume to info@mountainbackrentals.com.

Community Development Permit Tech
Mono County is seeking a permit technician for the Community Development Department, which includes Planning, Building, and Code Compliance divisions. Please see the job description on the Mono County website (www.mono.ca.gov) under “County Jobs.” Applications due Nov. 30.

Fictitious Business Name Statement
The Following Person Is Doing Business As:
Mammoth Mini Storage
K. Schlick LLC
105 Forest Trail, Mammoth Lakes, Ca. P.O. Box 788 Big Pine, 93513

This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Co.. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on August 15, 2017. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on October 2, 2017 File Number 17-109, 17-132, 2017-0217 (11/11, 11/18, 11/25, 12/2)

Fictitious Business Name Statement
The Following Person Is Doing Business As:
Mammoth Rock & Bowl
Mammoth Rock Brasierie has the following positions available: Bowling Desk Attendants, Server, Bartender, Brasierie Hostess. Contact Kevin O’Connell 760.934.4200 Ext 221

Full and Part time Hospitality Positions Available
Seek responsible, outgoing hospitality/ reservation agents for local management company. Excellent phone/customer service skills required. Previous reservation experience preferred. Flexible 16-40 hours per week starting immediately. $12.45/hr. DOE. Please email resume to stacey@mammothreservations.com.

Maintenance Office Receptionist:
Maintenance with office duties needed for a reservation company in town. Vehicle is a must. Please resume to info@mountainbackrentals.com.

Mammoth Rock & Bowl/Mammoth Rock Brasierie is hiring experienced and enthusiastic staff members to work in our bowling lanes, Rock Brasserie, and Bar. Positions open in our sales, rental, boot, and ski repair departments. Come work with us and be part of a team that is dedicated and focused on providing quality customer service to our guests and residents. Contact Devin at 760.934.2480 Ext 221.

Bookkeeping Services Available
Excellent pay DOE. Please contact Todd Robertson. 760.934.2480. Go to our website at www.footloosessports.com or email your resume to footloose@footloosessports.com.

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Mainly Socializing
Do you like Dogs? Do you enjoy working with dogs? We have openings for Handlers, Trail work and Kennel Positions. Please deliver resume in person or pick up application at Sierra Nevada Resort located at 3540 Main Street or send to info@sierena.com, call 760.934.2764 or soup by 92r Cabyon Blvd. for an interview.

Rock Brasserie
Apprentice Carpenters M $15-$20 per hour.
Carpenters M $20-$25 per hour.
High Sierra Sales
Footloose Sports, located on Hwy. 395, is hiring for Front Desk Clerks. We are looking for responsible individuals, passionate about winter sports, and motivated to provide the best service in customer service. We have full and part-time positions open in our sales, rental, boot, and ski repair departments. We are offering great pay, discounts and flexible hours in a progressive work environment. Call 760.934.2480. To apply, please visit www.footloosessports.com or email your resume to footloose@footloosessports.com.

Mammoth Lakes.
The Austria Hof Lodge has a position open in our Sales, Rental, Boot, and Ski Repair departments. Call 760.965.6715

The Restaurant is located on Highway 395, on the west side of the highway (left turn if traveling north) near State Route 270 toward Bodie State Historic Park. The settlement is open 7 days a week, breakfast 7-11 a.m., dinner 4-8 p.m. (4-9 on weekends). Schedule is received on Friday and Saturday. For more information visit www.virginiaerequisites.com or email info@virginiaerequisites.com, call 760.932.7780 or look for them on Facebook.

DUMPLINGS
continued from page 10

The wall near the front door is full of those photos. Most of the menu items come from recipes more than 45 years old — the pizza dough, the spaghetti sauce, lasagna, chicken Marsala, mostarid and eggplant lasagna are all made from scratch. The New- somes didn’t hand over the restaurant recipe book until escrow closed. They are all made from scratch. The New-somes didn’t hand over the restau- rant recipe book until escrow closed. They are all made from scratch. The New-somes didn’t hand over the restau- restaurant recipe book until escrow closed. They are all made from scratch. The New-somes didn’t hand over the restau-

DUMPLINGS
continued from page 10

continued from page 10
BARS & MUSIC

Happy Hour/
The Liberty Sports Bar and Grill. Pursuit of Happiness Hour, 3-6 p.m. off draft beers, $2 off wine, $4 well drinks, $2 off specialty drinks. $5 Flatbread. See ad, page 15.

Outlaw Saloon: Monday: All Night Happy Hour; 4-Midnight, Tues-Fri 4-6 p.m. Tuesday: $2 Jacos 4-10 p.m., 5-8 p.m. Wing Wednesday 50% off all wings. Thursday: Burger & Beer special 4-9 p.m. See ad, p. 21.

Roberto’s 4-6 p.m. every day. Austria Hof. 5-8 p.m. daily.

Whitebark Restaurant & Lounge Unwind with daily drink and food specials 4-6 p.m. Half price sushi Mondays.

Clocktower Cellar Happy Hour 4:30-7 p.m. daily and all day Sunday, $3 dollar menu items, drink specials. See ad, p. 17.
Petrà’s Bistro Happy Hour, 5-6 p.m. every day. See ad, p. 9

Mammoth’s famous Slocums Happy Hour Mon. thru Fri 4-6; Saturdays’ 4-5. Closed Sun.

Happy Hour @ The Bistro at Snowcreek, 4:30-6:30 p.m. daily.
Mammoth Tavern Happy Hour Tuesday-Sunday 3:30-5:30 p.m. Cloudeaux Mondays.

Smoky weekend Happy Hour 4-6 p.m. in the bar only.

Side Door Happy Hour daily 3-6 p.m. Giovanni’s Happy Hour, daily 4-6 p.m. Large pizza and a pitcher of beer gets you free wings.

Lakanuki Happy Hour 3-6 p.m., $4.50 margaritas, Mai Tais. Happy Hour drink specials 10 p.m. -close.
Black Velvet Coffee’s Happy Hour, from 4-6 p.m. every day.

Morrison’s Happy Hour Daily 4-6 p.m.

Food Cache Cafe Happy Hour 3:30-6:30 Sunday-Thursday. Street tacos $2.50, $3.50 beers, $7.50 beer/wine and house fries.

November 23-26/
Lava Moon plays at Tusks Bar at Main Lodge each day during Thanksgiving weekend, 2-5 p.m.

Friday, November 24/
Live music with The Sextones in The Village, 5-30 p.m.

Saturday, November 25/
Mammoth’s famous Slocums Happy Hour Mon. thru Fri 4-6; Saturdays’ 4-5. Closed Sun.

Happy Hour @ The Bistro at Snowcreek, 4:30-6:30 p.m. daily.
Mammoth Tavern Happy Hour Tuesday-Sunday 3:30-5:30 p.m. Cloudeaux Mondays.

Monday, November 29/ Monday Night Special @ Morrison’s Happy Hour Specials. Specials run during the game. First game @10 a.m. See ad, p. 5

Tuesday, November 28/ Tuesday Night Special @ Morrison’s Happy Hour Specials. Specials run during the game. First game @10 a.m. See ad, p. 5

Wednesday, November 22/
Storytime @ Mammoth Lakes Library, 10:30 a.m.
Deadline for IMACA Wish Tree Applications. See sidebar next page.

Thursday, November 23/ Thursday Trot. Registration: $25 advanced (www.active.com) or $30 on race day. Shirt included. 9 a.m.-12 p.m. at Mammoth Creek Park. Hot chocolate social @ 10 a.m. See ad, page 2.


Austria Hof Thanksgiving Dinner. 3-courses: $38 for adults, $15 for kids. Info: 760.934.2784. See ad, page 3.

Walnut Holiday Village in Sierra Room @ Mammoth Mountain Inn, includes letters to Santa, photos with Wooly, ornament making and more. 2:30-7:30 p.m.

Salvation Army Annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner. 12:30-2:30 p.m. @ 621 W. Line Street, Bishop. Donations accepted. Info: 760.672.2124.

November 24-27/ Mono Arts Council’s Holiday Marketplace @ Minaret Mall, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. all weekend.

Friday, November 24/
Holiday tree lighting in the Village @ Mammoth. Join Woolly and Santa for photos, kids’ activities and live music outdoors. 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Mammoth Lakes Foundation Pop-up Shop @ The Village in Mammoth. 11 a.m. to close.

Tamarack used equipment sale. Come by the Tamarack XC ski center early the day after Thanksgiving, begins 8 a.m.

November 25-26/ Cardinal Village Christmas Festival 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sit with Santa from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Alabama Hills film and natural history hikes with BLM and ESIA. Hikes begin at 10 a.m. both days and leave from Eastern Sierra Visitor Center. Info: Dave Kirk at dmkirk@blm.gov or 760.878.6222.

Saturday, November 25/
Holiday wishes with Santa @ Woolly @ Mammoth Sports in The Village. 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 26/
Walking Water-Talking Water Presentation. Participants will drive 30 miles from Mono Lake to Los Angeles over the last 3 years share photos, stories, activism and next steps. 4-6 p.m. @ Inyo Arts Council, Bishop.

Monday, November 27/ Bishop City Council Meeting, 6-8 p.m. @ City Hall. On the agenda: Public workshop on vacant and inactive storefronts.
**IMACA Wish Tree Applications**

IMACA has applications for the annual Wish Tree Program available. This program provides holiday gifts to children 13 years of age and younger who are in low-income households throughout Inyo County and Chalfant Valley.

Applications are available in Bishop, Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the IMACA Head Start Office, 180 Clarke Street. They are also available online at www.imaca.net. To request an application be sent by mail, call 760.873.3001. Completed applications must be returned by Wednesday, November 23.

**Shop with a Cop donations**

The annual Shop-With-a-Cop event will be held on Saturday, December 9. Children from disadvantaged and low-income families are picked up at their homes on Saturday morning by their law enforcement “partners” and taken to breakfast. After breakfast, each child will be given $20 to shop for gifts for their families.

Our goal is to provide Christmas to 80 children and their families. Donations can be dropped off at the Mono County Sheriff’s Office, Inyo County Sheriff’s Office, Bishop Police Department, and Mammoth Lakes Police Department. Please make checks payable to ESPOA (Eastern Sierra Peace Officers Association) with “Shop-with-a-Cop” written in the memo line. ESPOA is a 501(c)3 non-profit and your donation is tax deductible. Participant nominations can be submitted to easternsierrashopwithacop@gmail.com, or with Jessica Scida at 760.873.5866.

**Eastern Sierra Audubon Potluck**

The Eastern Sierra Audubon invites everyone to attend its annual Holiday Potluck, Candlelight Tour and Program on Wednesday, December 6 at the White Mountain Research Station. The potluck dinner will begin at 6 p.m. and will be followed by the program at 7 p.m. Drs. John Severson and Stephen Mathews from the U.S. Geological Survey will talk about the threats to the Bi-State population of greater sage-grouse, their habitat, and how strategies such as translocations can be used to help build populations. BVO place setting, drinks, and one of the following to share: main dish, salad, or dessert. Info: http://esaudubon.org/events/programs.php

**Bishop Christmas Celebrations**

On Saturday, December 2, Bishop’s Main Street Parade will start at 4:30 p.m. The City Park Tree Lighting will start at 5:30 p.m., and the Street of Lights party will run from 6-8:30 p.m. Visit Santa and Mrs. Claus next to Perry’s Italian Cafe from 6-8 p.m. There will also be a raffle at City Park at 8:30 p.m. See ad, page 3.

**AT THE MOVIES**

**Minaret Cinemas**

**Coco (PG):** Aspiring musician Miguel, confronted with his family’s ancestral ban on music, enters the land of the dead to find out why. Animated.

**Justice League (P 13):** Bruce Wayne enlists his newfound ally Diana Prince to face an even greater enemy than ever before.

For movie times, call 760.934.3131 or visit mammolthakesmovies.com.

**UPCOMING**

**December 1-3/ Home Studio Art Sale and Artist Reception @ Frances Cholewa and Tom Meyers’ home at 373 Mt. Tom Rd, Bishop. Reception: 6-9 p.m. on Friday. Art sale: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday. Info: 760.937.4655.**

**December 1/ Friday, December 1/ Backcountry Film Festival with Friends of the Inyo in Bishop. 7-9 p.m. @ ICA, 137 Main St. Tickets: friendsoftheinyo.org.**

**December 2/ Saturday, December 2/ Eastern Sierra Avalanche Association Fundraiser and Season Kickoff Celebration. 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. See sidebar and ad, p. 16.**

**Tri-County Fair Holiday Craft Bazaar. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Heritage Building at the Tri-County Fairground in Bishop. Bishop’s 50th Annual Christmas Parade, Tree Lighting and Street of Lights Celebration. Parade begins at 4:30 p.m. at High Country Lumber and heads north on Main Street, ending at Bishop City Park for the official tree lighting ceremony at 5:30 p.m. See sidebar and ad, p. 3.**

**Sunday, December 3/ Sunday, December 3/ Holly Berry Home Tour. Tours begin with a gathering from noon to 1 p.m. at Bishop First Methodist Church. Tours of homes begin at 2 p.m.**

**Tuesday, December 5/ Tuesday, December 5/ American Legion Auxiliary Unit 118 Meeting. 3 p.m. at the Alta One Conference room, 462 N. Main St., Bishop. All women with a military family member are welcome. Info: 760.872.1283.**

**Winter Transit Service Changes**

Transit services in the Town of Mammoth Lakes will be modified as of November 17.

• The Red Line will commence operations between Snowcreek Athletic Club and Main Lodge along Old Mammoth Road and Main Street with a bus every 20 minutes from 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.

• Service to Canyon Blvd., Lakeview Blvd., Kelly/Majestic Pines, and Juniper Springs Resort will be provided with the Blue-Yellow Line with service every 30 minutes from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

• The Town Trolley route will transition to night service operating from 5:40 p.m. until 2:00 a.m.

• In addition, the Purple Line route will travel northbound on Manzanita from Meridian to Main Street and southbound on Lupin from Main Street to Meridian. Also, the Purple Line will switch its alternating service to the Collar City Service with departures from Vons at the top of the hour, and to the RV Park and Visitors Center with departures from Walmart at the bottom of the hour. Please contact ESTA at 760.920.3359 for more information.

**ESAC Fundraiser and Clinics**

On Saturday, December 2, Eastern Sierra Avalanche Center will host a series of free workshops on avalanche and snow safety at Mammoth Mountain. The clinics will be followed by a kick-off party and presentation by professional skier Cody Townsend. That event starts at 6 p.m. A schedule of clinics and information about the event can be found at esavalanche.org. Pre-registration for all clinics is required and can be done on Eastern Sierra Avalanche Center’s website. Check in by 11 a.m. at the Mountainside Conference Center, on the 3rd floor of Main Lodge at Mammoth Mountain Ski Area on December 2.

**Bishop short term rentals need permits**

Bishop residents who intend to provide short-term rentals have to register with the city by January 1, 2018, according to an ordinance adopted by the City Council. To be in compliance with the city, hosts of short-term rentals, which include rentals of any portion of a dwelling or lodging for 30 days or less, must enroll by January 1 or else face penalties. The ordinance also requires that hosts pay Transient Occupancy Taxes, Bishop Tourism Improvement District Fees, a $150 annual application fee, and obtain a City of Bishop business license.

Applications to rent with the city can be obtained at City Hall or at the City of Bishop website at www.cityofbishop.com. For additional information, contact the Planning Department at 760.873.4858, or visit publicworks@cityofbishop.com, or at the City Hall offices at 377 W. Line St. in Bishop.
HOSPITAL
continued from page 1
while the Hospital's plans to purchase the building were not mentioned at either the PDCO or Town Council meetings where the zoning change was approved, they were mentioned "very specifically" on the agendas for the Southern Mono Healthcare District. The Sheet did find a closed session agenda item recorded for July 27, 2017 for "Real Estate Matter: South Gateway Student Apartments." The MFL submitted an application for the amendment on July 10, 2017.

Myers said real estate is an exemption from conducting business in public and can be held in closed session. There is no mention of the applicants in May's agenda, but a "Conference with Real Property Negotiators" regarding the apartments appears in every agenda from June 15 until November of this year.

The Sheet did not find the item listed on any agenda between January, 2016 and March, 2017.

Boccia also noted that, at the August 9 PDCO meeting, "we talked about the partnership that we were processing with the Hospital," but that the information about the Hospital's potential purchase of the dorms "wasn't pertinent at that point in time. It was contingent on us getting that Institutional Public (zoning) expansion. If we didn't have that possible outcome we had no reason to continue negotiating with the Hospital." Boccia was not the Executive Director of the MFL at the time the amendment application was filed, but was the Executive Director of Mammoth Lakes Recreation. He started with the Foundation on July 1 of this year.

"Once this gets into the sale process it's future Board discussions regarding the sale. Myers, as well as being the CEO of Mammoth Hospital, is also the Chairman of the MFL Board of Directors. Boccia says the deal cost $650 per person for a shared 1-bedroom apartment, $900 for a studio, and $1,000 for a single person 1-bedroom. Rents include utilities. Cerro Coso Community College states that the dorms are occupied by only 11 community colleges in California to provide student housing."

The current terms of the sale negotiation, said Boccia, are that the hospital and Cerro Coso would split the rooms "50/50." Boccia said this would still fulfill the MFL's mission to support higher education.

When asked if young professionals would be asked to share rooms with one another, Boccia said that those details are still being worked out. "I don't see us mixing our folks and said, referring to the fact that the zoning allows for all institutional public employees (i.e. police officers, firemen) to utilize the housing. The Sheet also asked if rents would be different for hospital employees and students, and Boccia said that was another detail that was still up for discussion, as was whether pets would be allowed, and whether building's alcohol and drug policy might change. Currently, students over the age of 21 are allowed to have alcohol in their rooms, but not if they share a room with a student that is underage.

"Student housing has not been full," said Boccia. "There are a lot of those units lying fallow... We're hoping (the purchase) is going to be a win-win-win."
Mammoth’s Dusty Henricksen dreams of making the U.S. Olympic team, and he’s trying to get there, one wallet at a time. The 14-year-old Mammoth High School student has been snowboarding since he was two years old, and he’s won national championships every year since he was seven. He’s the defending champion in slopestyle in the USASA (United States of America Snowboard and Freeski Association) snowboard youth division. He’s participating in the Revelation Tour this year, which will qualify him for bigger contests that eventually lead to the Olympic Trials (he can’t compete in the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, South Korea, because he won’t be old enough, so he’s shooting for Beijing in 2022).

All that traveling isn’t cheap, and Henricksen said he started making duct tape wallets as a way to help his family with his competition expenses. “I just started making them for fun, and then a friend of mine said ‘Hey, you could make some money selling these!’ So he came up with a clever packaging idea, which touts his dreams as an Olympic hopeful, and charges $15 a pop for the wallets, which come in all sorts of colors and two different styles (his mom, Jenny, showed off her “mom wallet,” which has more pockets and looks a little more like a clutch—those cost $20).

“A lot of kids come from a wealthier background,” said Henricksen. “We don’t, so I make these.”

Jenny Henricksen said that she, her husband and their other son, 13-year-old Dillon, moved to Mammoth two years ago from their home in Big Bear in order to give their boys a better shot at reaching their goals. “We moved to Mammoth for better coaching and the schools,” said Jenny, who works as a server at Slo-cum’s when she’s not busy managing the schedules of two teenage extreme sport junkies. “It’s a busy life, but it’s a good one,” she says. “We’re grateful.”

Henricksen has been training on the Independent Learning Center Elite Snowboard Team at Mammoth High School, which means that he trains Wednesday through Sunday and then hits school on Mondays and Tuesdays “if I need to,” he says. Students in his program do weekly testing in each subject, and also have to meet with teachers on Wednesdays. Henricksen scheduled a meeting with The Sheet in the hour of spare time he had between training on the mountain and physical therapy (How many bones has he broken? Seventeen to be exact). His schedule is pretty packed. His first try at sitting down for an interview had to be postponed due to a commitment with the Mammoth Trampoline Club, one of his sponsors. Henricksen makes promotional videos and takes photos for the club, which touts trampoline practice as great preparation for pulling off big tricks on the snow, which is Henricksen’s specialty.

He’s also got eight gear sponsors, including DC and Electric goggles. Oh, and his grandmother, of course. “She got a hip replacement and was super bored, so she started to help me make the wallets,” said Henricksen. “If it wasn’t for grandma we couldn’t have been able to pump as many out.” He estimates he’s made at least a few thousand dollars from selling the wallets, all of which has gone to the cost of competitions and travel. He’s also the recipient of two scholarships from the Mammoth Mountain Community Foundation (his brother, Dillon, also received two scholarships this year).

He’s experimented with everything from bicycle tubes to a motorcycle seat that he snagged from his dad’s workshop, but most of his wallets are made with the classic duct or Gorilla Tape, which he buys from Mammoth’s DoIt Center. He says it helps that there’s been a boom in fun patterns of tape, anything from camouflage to unicorns and rainbows, so he’s got styles that appeal to everyone.

Dusty’s wallets are available in Mammoth at Stellar Brew, Blazing Shears, Salon 437, and Footloose Sports. Check out Dusty’s tricks on his Instagram @ dusty_henricksen.
WHAT DID THE FOX SAY? I’M ALIVE!

New data reveals presence of Sierra Nevada Red Foxes in Yosemite

By Giles

In 2010, a United States Forest Service crew of scientists discovered the unmistakable white tip of a Sierra Nevada Red Fox tail in a camera set up to observe wolverines off Sonora Pass. They subsequently identified fox DNA on bait meat that was also intended for wolverines in the same area.

The Sierra Nevada Red Fox were judged regionally extinct from the Sierra Nevada in 1990. They are some of the only mammals that live year-round and reproduce at meadows more than 12,000 feet above sea level. They are found on talus slopes, in meadows, and on high, windy ridges.

Over the winter of 2016-2017, a group of four scientists with the National Park Service surveyed Yosemite National Park for the foxes. With funding from the Yosemite Conservancy, the small crew spent the winter traveling Tuolumne by skis, installing and digging out baited game cameras installed on trees. They found approximately 30 distinct individuals north of Tioga Road. They also saw seven pups.

Prior to the surveys conducted last winter, the last fox documented in Yosemite National Park was killed in 1916 by a Chief Park Ranger. According to Mike McDonald, one of the scientists who surveyed the foxes in 2016-2017, NPS has found reports of a black Sierra Nevada Red Fox pelt sold for $1,000 in 1922. They were once plentiful, until trapping and sheep grazing became the region’s predominant economic drivers. At that time, Yosemite’s rangers were encouraged to trap foxes and other mammals to supplement their income. Trapping of the animals was outlawed in 1974.

The researchers also observed Great Basin Foxes, which are native to Nevada, migrating up into the Sierra and interbreeding with Sierra Nevada Red Foxes.

The cameras also provided footage of coyotes traveling as high as 12,000 feet above sea level during the winter months.

Cate Quinn is a geneticist and PhD candidate at UC Berkeley who has been studying the Sierra Nevada Red Fox since 2011. Quinn has found that individual SNRFs in Yosemite and in the Sonora Pass area are living longer than scientists thought they would, but that the animals are not reproducing as quickly or as effectively as expected. According to Quinn, “as genetic diversity gets reduced and the number of individuals gets smaller, you tend to see inbreeding.”

Quinn said population declines could be due to increases in the number of coyotes frequenting higher elevations during the winter as a result of mild climates. McDonald said that his crew observed many coyotes above 11,000 feet this past winter.

McDonald reported that the areas around Banner Peak and Mt. Ritter have also been identified as ideal fox habitat. He said there is no funding to support continued surveys of SNRFs in Yosemite for the winter of 2017-2018, nor is there funding to support new research elsewhere in the Sierra. Despite the fact that there are only about 30 individuals left, the SNRF is not listed as Threatened or Endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

On October 7, 2015, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages listings, announced that the Sierra Nevada Red Fox does not warrant listing under the Endangered Species Act. The decision read, “A small population of the fox located in the northern part of Yosemite National Park is warranted but not precluded from Endangered Species Act listing by higher priorities at this time.” According to John Buckley, Executive Director of the Central Sierra Nevada Conservancy, a group that has been monitoring the SNRFs’ status for over fifteen years said it is likely the agency did not have sufficient resources to protect the foxes in any meaningful way.

Quinn said that it is imperative that they continue to be studied if the species is to survive. “Small populations can shift really quickly, whether that’s due to a natural disaster, or a few foxes from the Great Basin interbreeding with Sierra Nevada Red Foxes,” said Quinn. “These animals rear their pups in places so harsh, it’s difficult for humans to stand the elements long enough to survey them. It would be a real shame we weren’t able to keep them around for future generations to enjoy them,” said Buckley. McDonald said that the National Park Service has not identified funding to continue to study the foxes this winter.

A Sierra Nevada Red Fox in Yosemite.
PHOTO COURTESY CATE QUINN
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