A CHRISTMAS LOVE STORY

Will KSL-Aspen compete with Vail?

By Giles

Mammoth Resorts, which includes Mammoth Mountain, Bear Mountain, Snow Summit, and June Mountain ski areas, along with the privately-held company Intrawest, were acquired by a joint venture formed by KSL Capital Partners and Henry Crown and Company (the owners of Aspen Skiing Company) on July 31. The private equity firm Starwood Capital Group previously owned the majority interest in Mammoth Resorts.

The new entity has not named itself, but has commonly been referred to as KSL-Aspen. The Denver Post noted that industry people in Colorado have been calling it the “UnVail,” in its October 13, 2017 story “What’s in a Name?”

In April 2017, Jeff Hanle, Vice President of Communications for Aspen Skiing Company, told The Aspen Times that the new company will be privately owned. This week, Hanle confirmed that this was still the case, adding see VAIL, page 6

HAIL TO THE BUS DRIVER

Marty Burgenbauch has spent almost 20 years driving Mammoth’s kids to school, not to mention laying down some sweet rhythms. See story, page 16.

Talk of the Town /p. 5/

Uber successful? /p. 7/

Christmas cookies /p. 12/

The Last Jedi /p. 13/

Condo-maximum? /p. 14/
HO HO HO
By Lunch

I took in the Ultimate Christmas Show at the Edison Theatre last Sunday. Barbara Richter laughed so hard throughout the whole show that I thought she might bruise a rib. At the very least, I thought she’d need oxygen.

The show features three talented visiting actors (Sean Faye, Dana DeRuyck and Kate O’Toole) and is directed by Drina Durazo, who’s like de facto visiting faculty for Mammoth Lakes Repertory Theater.

This is the fourth production she’s done for MLRT. Previous efforts include Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery and All The Great Books (Abridged). Here’s the set up. Saint Everybody’s Non-Denominational Universalist Church is set to present its Annual Multicultural Interfaith Holiday Variety Show & Christmas Pageant.

Visiting acts scheduled to perform include The Confederate Christmas Carolers, Cleveland Castrato Choir, North Piddle and Happy Bottom Panto Players, Swingle Sisters Jingle Singers, Cirque du Sleigh, Billy Barry Ballet Company, The Muslim-American Ramadancers … you get the idea.

But bad weather prevents the acts from making it to Mammoth, so the three hosts have to step in and improve the evening. That or refund ticket sales, and who wants to do that??

What you get is like a Yes and No book. Suitable for ages 9-99, with a balance of over-the-top farce and sly asides and audience involvement to keep things rolling along.

This show will either keep you in the Christmas spirit or help you recapture it.

A glass of wine beforehand never hurts either.

The show plays over the next two weekends, Dec. 22-23 and Dec. 28-30 at 7 p.m. each night.

A half-percent per week

The end-of-year (almost) real estate stats are in, and in terms of price growth, 2017 was a strong year for Mammoth Lakes real estate according to local appraiser/broker Matthew Lehman.

According to the numbers as of December 19, local condo sales stood at 395 in 2017, up from 249 the previous year, a 59 percent jump.

The median condo price, at $349,000 is up 27 percent for the year, or as Lehman said, “a half-percent per week.”

Average days on the market for condos plummeted from 150 to 117.

The median condo price, at $349,000 is up 27 percent for the year, or as Lehman said, “a half-percent per week.”

Number of sales, year-to-date, declined slightly from 97 to 86.

Who’ll hold the bag?

Mammoth Lakes Tourism’s (MLT) events subcommittee met Monday, December 18 to discuss the long-talked about need for an events coordinator in Mammoth.

The events coordinator would not only help with existing events, but also be tasked with creating new ones that could draw Bluesapalooza-type numbers.

The plan that’s been bandied about previously would have MLT fund dedicated events personnel ($250,000) while the Town would continue to provide seed money ($125,000) for existing and proposed events.

MLT Board member Brent Truax urged fellow members to apply pressure on Council to follow through on its promise, at least one Councilman thinks it’s time for everyone to “cool their jets.”

Councilman Shields Richardson acknowledged a “commitment was made” but he also added, “things come up.”

By things coming up, he’s referring to the Town’s recent decision to purchase the Shady Rest Tract in the center of town in order to build community housing.

On the Town’s list of priorities, housing, suggested Richardson, trumps events funding … or perhaps, it doesn’t trump it so much as dictate that the funding may need to come from another source. He said the Town may wish to have a discussion as to whether the $125,000 in events funding (events to support tourism) should be supplied by well-heeled MLT.

From Lunch’s perspective, it appears as if the Town’s appetite for taking on long-term debt in the form of police stations, ice rinks, airport terminals, office buildings and community housing is encouraging it to cast its eye further afield on ways to access money—or to get other people to pay its bills.


Twitter: @JackLunch.
Celebrate 2018

Welcome the new year in style and head slopeside for a sweet 21+ dance party.

Mammoth Lakes Repertory Theatre
Dec. 14-30
Thurs. - Sat. @ 7pm; Sun. @ 4pm
(no shows Dec. 16, 24)
Tickets: MammothLakesRepertoryTheatre.org

Directed by Drina Durazo
sponsored by:
Paul & Kathleen Rudder

CELEBRATE MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN.COM/NYE

SUNDAY, DEC 31
• 9PM
EAGLE LODGE
Welcome the new year in style and head slopeside for a sweet 21+ dance party.

Adv Purchase $69 / $59 for California Passholders • Day-Of $79

Morrison’s
Join us for the Holidays!
Christmas Eve
3pm-9pm
3 course pre-set menu $42
$18 kids under 12
Entrée Choices
Scottish Salmon
Prime Rib
Stroganoff
Reservations Required
760-934-7427
Morrisonrestaurantandbar.com

Morrison’s
New Years Eve
3pm-10pm
4 course pre-set menu $56
$20 kids under 12
Entrée Choices
Scottish Salmon
Prime Rib
Stroganoff
Reservations Required
760-934-7427
Morrisonrestaurantandbar.com

Mammoth Ice Rink
NOW OPEN!

Holiday Schedule
12-10pm Daily; Dec 23-Jan 7
3 Session Times:
12-3pm / 3:30-6:30pm / 7-10pm
Dec 25: Open at 3:30pm
Subject to change. Weather permitting.

Admission
Local Kids 8" / Child 53" Youth 53" / Adults 53"
Includes Skate Rental
Medi Wisconsin ID

OYH, ASL, SIA Lessons
Fridays During Public Skating
20 min lessons. 4-6:30pm

(760) 965-3695
Visit Our Website for Schedules & Session Times

Mammoth Ice Rink
Mammoth lakes, CA
Pete Korngiebel, owner of Community Printing and Publishing, dedicated community volunteer and friend, died on December 1. He was 76.

Born in Pasadena, Pete earned a degree in Economics from UC Riverside in 1959. He met his wife, Darlene, in college and the two married in 1965. He was a Navy Reservist, spending 22 months on the destroyer USS Henderson.

Pete and Darlene left Southern California for the Eastside in 1969. Along with friends Alan and Margaret Wallace, the Korngiebels bought Kittle Printing, located in the Rite Aid shopping center just outside the Bishop City limits. Pete had taken a letter print class in eighth grade, and that was all the experience the Korngiebels had in printing. Luckily, the Wallaces knew their way around a press. They closed Kittle Printing in 1980.

Stan Smith of Pleasant Valley Associates co-owns the building where his own business and the Korngiebels second venture, Community Printing, are housed. He bought the building with Pete in 1999 because it was within in the city limits, after locals cried they wouldn’t do business with Pete if he stayed in the Rite Aid center. They wanted their tax money to stay in Bishop, not Inyo County. As a member of the Bishop Lions Club, Pete was instrumental in starting the Lions’ Top 10 scholarship program, which awards money to 10 local high school students each year. He also served as President of the Bishop Area Chamber of Commerce.

Pete was an elder with the First Presbyterian Church in Bishop, and served as treasurer, choir director, and bell director. More than 20 years ago, Pete helped replace the roof on the church.

Travel was his passion. “If he wasn’t on a trip, he was planning another one,” said Smith.

Not much of an outdoorsman, Pete spent most of his time working or volunteering for the community. He did try hunting when he first came to town, says Darlene, but just once. He came back from the trip vowing to never to do it again, explaining it was too dangerous with so many hunters in the field.

Tawni Thomson, Executive Director for the Bishop Visitor’s Bureau and Chamber of Commerce, said Pete was dedicated to the community in his role as President of the Chamber. She said that the Chamber performs many different functions, but that its primary role is to boost tourism and the local economy. Pete’s heart was with the community, she said.

A good example is the Polar Express holiday celebration at Laws Railroad Museum. At the event, there are games and activities for kids, including a coloring booth where children can color and decorate pictures. Pete thought one picture per kid wasn’t good enough and created, printed, and donated 500 coloring books so every child could have a book to take home, not just one picture. He threw in the crayons, too.

Pete Korngiebel was a tireless worker and volunteer, dedicated community volunteer and friend, died on December 1. He was 76.

Pete Korngiebel.

Pete is survived by his wife, Darlene; children Jennifer and Doug; daughter-in-law Corinna; grandchildren, Bradly, Mac, Danielle, Jarod, Dawn and Sierra; great-granddaughter Mary; sister and brother-in-law Dorothy and Bob; nephew Jeremy and nieces Danielle and Bobbi Jean. His Celebration of Life service was held on December 9, the day of the 2017 Polar Express. Donations in Pete’s name may be made to Bishop Lions Club or the Bishop Community Concert Association.

- Bodine
By Rea
Town, County fund joint position

The Town of Mammoth Lakes and Mono County will be funding a new recreation staff position to be shared between both the Town and County. The employee will work for the Town for three days out of a five-day work week, for which the Town has allocated $50,000 to the funding of that position. The employee would also liaise with the U.S. Forest Service, said Town Manager Dan Holler. A job description, salary range, and proposed term for the employee will be presented to Town Council at its February 7 meeting.

McFlexing

At a joint meeting between the Town of Mammoth Lakes and Mono County, participants heard a staff report from Assistant County Administrator Tony Dublino on a proposed agreement between the County and Town regarding the McFlex property in Mammoth Lakes. Dublino asked for approval of the agreement, or else for direction to be given, saying the County was hoping to release a Request For Proposals (RFP) “sometime in the middle of January” for plans to build the proposed new County offices at the parcel. Town Council and County staff agreed that a revised agreement would be presented to the Mono County Board of Supervisors on January 16 and to Mammoth’s Town Council on January 17.

License to... sell?

At the same joint meeting, an update was given on Mono County and Mammoth’s cannabis regulation program. Participants agreed that it would behoove the County and Town to work on tax codes together for ease of implementation, though Mono County has a much more complicated process due to its large size and potential for outdoor grows. Staff recommended a tax measure be placed on the June 2018 ballot. Both Don Wright (Green Mammoth) and Robert Calvert (Mammoth Lakes Wellness) spoke at Mammoth’s Town Council meeting on Wednesday, December 20 to express their desire to sell recreational marijuana commercially beginning on January 1, even offering to put a self-imposed tax on their businesses in order to do so. Currently, both businesses can only sell medicinal marijuana. Assistant Planner Nolan Bobroff said at the joint meeting that “right now our code doesn’t approve adult use, so [the businesses] can’t apply under any adult use [or recreational] license.”

No more parking on Main?

Mammoth Lakes approved the Downtown Revitalization plan, with a public discussion about parking on the frontage road on Mammoth’s Main Street (Highway 203). Town staff will come back to Council at its next meeting on January 17 with “professionally drawn exhibits” of alternative parking arrangements, said Public Works Director Grady Dutton. Business owner Camille Miller suggested a “phased” approach to removing parking on Main Street and installing a proposed 16-foot promenade and 12-foot multi-use path (MUP) or sidewalk.

Shady Rest

Mammoth’s Town Council voted 4-0 on Wednesday, December 20 to authorize Mayor John Wentworth or Town Manager Dan Holler (in consultation with Council member Shields Richardson) to sign off on a purchase agreement for the Shady Rest Parcel, if R. Mark Carney, attorney for All California Funding (the current owner of the property), would work with his client to amend several issues. Those issues included the fact that the agreement was for a 107-day escrow (not 120, as requested by the Town) and a 77-day contingency removal (not 90 days as requested). The property owners also claimed they had no history or records of the parcel, which Town Attorney Andy Morris said was unusual.

Eminent Domain

On Wednesday, December 20, Mammoth’s Town Council discussed whether the Town will acquire a piece of property by eminent domain in order to complete the Mammoth Creek Gap Closure Project. A lawyer for the Mammoth Creek Condominiums Homeowners Association, Tim Sanford, asked the Town to “slow down” the legal process. The Town has applied for a grant from the California Transportation Commission (CTC) that possibly requires “safety lighting,” which the HOA opposes. Public Works Director Grady Dutton did not know as of press time whether the grant could be issued for the project if the lighting component was removed. Council members agreed that they would be amenable to removing the lighting component of the project (though Mayor Wentworth requested that infrastructure be installed for possible future lighting) if it would avoid litigation between the Town and the HOA.

The Sheet will have further updates on some of these discussions in its next issue on December 30.
Aspen Mountain, Snowmass, Aspen Highlands, and Buttermilk, will continue to be owned by the Lester Crown family of Chicago.

As part of its $1.5 billion purchase of Intrawest, KSL-Aspen acquired seven resorts, in addition to the four ski areas that comprise Mammoth Resorts. KSL also owns the Tahoe resorts Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley, and purchased Utah’s Deer Valley in August of this year. According to the National Ski Areas Association’s listings, KSL-Aspen currently owns 13 ski resorts, excluding the four owned by Aspen Skiing Company. According to its website, Vail Resorts, Inc. owns 14 ski resorts.

Despite Hanley’s assertion that the new company will not go public, KSL-Aspen has emerged as a clear rival to Vail Resorts’ dominant presence in the ski industry. Kristin Rust, Director of Public Relations for KSL-Aspen, said this week that she did not have any information to release regarding a pass to rival Vail’s Epic Pass, but that she would have more information in 2018.

According to its website, Vail Resorts, Inc., which is a publicly traded company, expects to sell 650,000 Epic Passes, but that she would have more information in 2018.

Intrawest, between 2013 and 2017, operated a ski shop, American Skiing at 13 resorts. Local retailer Paul Oster said that the change in ownership could be an economic boon—if KSL-Aspen chooses to go public. Mammoth Mountain has never been managed by a publicly owned company. Since being sold by Dave McCoy in 2005, the Mountain has been managed by private equity firms. “A publicly held company handles money differently than a private equity firm,” said Oster this week. “They [private equity firms] load their private enterprise with debt, get paid to repay that debt, and grind out the bottom line to attract other firms’ returns, rather than a publicly owned company with ample capital saved for Mammoth Lakes. ‘Most people, I think, are a little nervous about The Empire [Vail or KSL-Aspen] purchasing their ski area, but I promise you that this will be an upgrade for Mammoth,’” He said the Mammoth economy of Vail Valley improved: “They are very good at lateral development,” said Higgins. Higgins said that if KSL-Aspen wishes to compete with Vail Resorts, it will be a boon for Mammoth Lakes. “Most people, I think, are a little nervous about The Empire [Vail or KSL-Aspen] purchasing their ski area, but I promise you that this will be an upgrade for Mammoth.”

“Mammoth.” He said the year-round economy of Vail Valley improved: “They know how to play this game, because they know how Vail Associates and Vail Resorts work.”

-Vail Associates and Vail Resorts work.

-Tom Higgins

In contrast, The Denver Post reported in Jason Blevins’ May 9, 2017 story, “An Inside Look at the $1.7 billion deal that weds Aspen, Steamboat, Winter Park, and Canadian Mountain Heliskiing Operation,” that “Intrawest, between 2013 and 2017, continued from page 1
CAN I GET A LYFT?

Ride sharing apps Uber, Lyft come to Mammoth Lakes

By Rea

The high-tech world of ride-sharing apps has finally made its way to Mammoth Lakes—well, in theory. Both Uber and Lyft, two of the most popular among what’s now known as “peer-to-peer ridesharing” arrangements, are both currently active in Mammoth Lakes. However, says one local taxi driver, it doesn’t yet seem that there’s enough participants in the pool to make the system—which has revolutionized car travel in cities and taken a large chunk out of traditional cab companies’ clientele—reliable.

“It’s a Catch-22,” said Dylan Tarrant, who drives for both Uber and Lyft (most drivers make themselves available through both companies in order to maximize the opportunity to work) “because I’m not incentivized to be online right now since it’s just a slow trickle of requests.”

Drivers for the company mark themselves “online” when they’re available to work, but unlike in a large city, where requests for cars stream in and a passenger can choose from a variety of drivers near them, Mammoth hasn’t reached a point where the demand and supply make the service worthwhile.

Tarrant said he’s gone on his app to see how many other drivers are online, and so far the most he’s found is two (meaning that’s three drivers working in Mammoth at once). Companies pay drivers between 75 and 80 percent of fares, according to their websites, so, Tarrant says, for a $5-6 fare (which is what it costs to go most places within the Town of Mammoth Lakes) he typically makes $4-5. But it’s rare that there’s a new fare waiting near where he drops a passenger off, which is what maximizes drivers’ profit. For instance, he said, if he takes a passenger to the airport, it’s unlikely he’ll find a new passenger through one of the apps unless a flight has just arrived.

“Too really make it worth my while, I need more of a constant stream” of customers, he said. “But, if there’s not a driver available, then people are not going to use [Lyft or Uber], they’re going to Mammoth Taxi or another local service.”

Scotty Marzone, owner of Mammoth Taxi, told The Sheet that he doesn’t think the service will work with any reliability in Mammoth due to the overheading of cell phone towers during the busy season.

“Once more than 12 to 15,000 people are in Town, the apps don’t work,” said Marzone, who said that Mammoth Taxi launched its own app last year, but isn’t using it due to trouble with data.

“There’s people up here that I know that have worked for Uber down south, and they say the same thing—once it’s busy enough to make money, they can,” said Marzone.

Ridesharing companies like Lyft and Uber are known as “transportation network companies” (TNC). The term comes from a ruling by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in 2013, which legalized the new revenue model.

Danny Earls, Revenue Accountant for the Town of Mammoth Lakes, told The Sheet in an email that there were never any regulations keeping the companies out of Mammoth.

“Lyft/Uber drivers don’t have any hoops to jump through in regards to CPUC regulation,” due to the CPUC’s decision, said Earls. “The Town can’t issue permits for the vehicles/services/drivers, can’t inspect vehicles, and can’t regulate where they operate.”

Neither rideshare companies nor cab companies pay Tourism Business Assessment District, or TBID, taxes in Mammoth, said Earls.

Companies with this business model have been so successful because their drivers are, in essence, independent contractors. Unlike cab companies, which have to purchase their own vehicles and insurance, ridesharing companies put the onus on the drivers. The companies do have excess insurance policies for drivers, but only while they are actively transporting customers or “online” waiting for a call. Many consumers like the model because no money exchanges hands; tips can be left via the app.

A report by the business travel expense firm Certify showed that both Lyft and Uber dominated taxis in the last quarter of 2017, with Lyft receipts covering 11 percent of business travel expenses, ahead of taxis, which were logged at 7 percent (Uber, the archetypal ridesharing company, took 54 percent of the category).

The biggest reason for the popularity of ridesharing apps is their price. Mammoth Taxi’s website states that transportation to Mammoth Airport be an Uber driver in L.A. than here.” There still aren’t enough drivers to make it a reliable service here,” said Tarrant. “Reliability and instant access is the whole point, and if you pull up the app and there’s nothing available,” customers will stick with what they know, like traditional taxis.

Marzone says he’s unfazed by Lyft and Uber. “Without our reservation systems...it really wouldn’t work.” He said that, especially with airport pickups, it’s a “unique dynamic” in Mammoth. “Our cars are all 4-wheel-drive SUVs with snow tires,” said Marzone. “Then you get Lyft and Uber drivers coming from down south... it’s going to turn into a mess.”

Tarrant said he doubted people from Southern California were coming up to Mammoth to drive for ridesharing companies. “It would be way more lucrative to be an Uber driver in L.A. than here.”

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Scotsman taxi fares, which are online waiting for a call. Many consumers like the model because no money exchanges hands; tips can be left via the app.
continued from page 1

She would’ve earned a bachelor’s degree but couldn’t pass the swim test—a whole other story. When she first started selling door-to-door, she met a man named Martin Wolf. His wife had recently died of cancer. She sold Mr. Wolf a photo sitting, and then, as she typically did, she canvassed the neighborhood.

“I’ve got Mr. Wolf at 3 p.m. How about you take 3:30?” Etc. It was like filling out a dance card. But at the mention of Mr. Wolf, every woman in the neighborhood would chime in about what a wonderful man and father Mr. Wolf was.

So afterward, she circled back and asked Martin if he and his five children would like to come over and join Gayla and her four children for a barbecue. He said yes. They began dating. He asked her to marry him. She said no.

He was a college professor, she explained. “I felt like I wasn’t … in his league. And maybe I also didn’t want to go back to being a housewife and a mother of … nine.”

She needed to live her life, continue to grow, prove herself to herself.

Fast-forward to 1979. Energy crisis. She couldn’t really afford to drive door-to-door, so Gayla took a job setting up a friend’s photography booth in Encino for a B’nai Brith holiday craft show. A person walked by and admired the photos. She wondered whether Gayla ever came to Bishop.

Now remember, these were not Gayla’s photos, and Gayla was too honest to say they were, but she was also pragmatic. She didn’t deny that they were her photos, either. Gayla replied, “Sure I’ll come to Bishop … Where’s Bishop?”

The gal from Bishop who inquired was Ardis Hitchborn. She told Gayla she’d line up five families for her if she’d come.

Gayla had never shot a picture in her life. Sold ’em, but hadn’t taken ’em. Her mother loaned her some money so Gayla could go out and buy an expensive German camera. Then Gayla went to a camera repairman she knew and asked for his advice on how to take a photo. He said the following: Set it at 5/6 and leave it there. That makes the people in focus and the background fuzzy. And if the shutter speed is under 60, tell ’em they can’t move, he added.

So she came up to the Sorenson house at Ranch and Mountain View in Bishop. The lilacs were in bloom, and the lighting was perfect, and the average order was for $1,400.

“One of those photos from that sitting is still up in the hospital—in the waiting room. It’s Corey Veager Buffington with her black dog Beau,” says Gayla.

She came home after the shoot and told her mother, “I can do this.” She spent the next 17 years as a full-time photographer, doing art shows, sittings. One of her clients was legendary Dodger broadcaster Vin Scully. She did Christmas cards and family portraits for him for many years. “Nicest man I ever met in my life,” she says. “And you know what he told me? He said, ‘we’re all little people, Gayla.’”

All this time, Gayla lives in the same house she’s always lived in in Woodland Hills. Has the same phone number.

One day, 25 years after they first met, Martin Wolf calls. “Is this Gayla?” he says.

Gayla Wolf and her husband Martin Wolf on a motorcycle trip while he was fighting cancer in 2009.

PHOTO COURTESY GAYLA WOLF

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Gayla had never shot a picture in her life. Sold ’em, but hadn’t taken ’em. Her mother loaned her some money so Gayla could go out and buy an ex-
“Yes.”
“You still got good legs?”
“Well,” she stammers, “I don’t know. But I’m strong.”
“I’ll be right over.”

About twenty minutes later, on August 7, 1996, Martin pulled up to the house on his Harley. And they spent the next 14 years together. Inseparable. “Martin the Magnificent,” Gayla still calls her Prince Charming.

As Gayla later learned, Martin had cruised by the house many times over the years, and had always remembered the phone number. He had thought that it was likely someone else lived there because of all the improvements that had been made. He was unaware of Gayla’s professional success.

In the intervening years, he had married a second time. And had a second wife die of cancer.

Before they were even married he bought her the house on Running Iron and told her he wanted her to live there for the rest of her days.

When asked if they ever had an argument, Gayla said yes—one time. Martin had had a recent heart attack, but despite that, wanted to follow through on plans to jackhammer up the concrete in the driveway. Gayla had decided it would be too tough on him so she went out and hired someone to do the job instead. When he got home from the hospital, he was incensed. “You job-flsked me,” he railed at her.

But that was the only disagreement. The pair traveled extensively. There’s a great shot from Sturgis, South Dakota (the site of the big annual motorcycle rally) on her wall. Another shot of her and Martin on the Harley. They often took trips together on a complete whim.

One year, she recalls with a laugh, they returned from Sturgis through Oregon via a northern route so they could visit the falls at Klamath Falls. There are no falls at Klamath Falls.

In the final years, as Martin got sicker, they would attend the Catholic Church together, and Martin urged Gayla to continue to go to church after his death, if only to have a reason to get out of the house.

Gayla acknowledges that for two years after his death, she only left the house to go to attend mass. That was it.

But in 2012, she started taking pictures again. As she said, “I needed purpose. We’re in this life to give.”

She acknowledges that the advent of the phone camera has put a dent in her portrait business (“I do about half of the phone camera has put a dent in”), but she says, “I am a better photographer now than I’ve ever been.”

And she’s right. And she’s worth it.

Gayla Wolf can be contacted at 760.872.4015 or wolfgas@usa.net.

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The Groundwater Sustainability Act, passed by the State of California, requires that groundwater basins at risk of overdraft create plans that demonstrate their capacity to manage water resources. The Owens Valley Groundwater Authority (OVGA) is a group of agencies that govern the Owens Valley basin. The estimated price of creating such a plan, according to the OVGA, is $747,585, or $67,962.27 per member over three years (a total of $22,654 a year). For each $67,962.27 contribution, a member agency receives four votes of the 44 available. If a member contributes nothing, it still receives two votes.

If awarded, the grant would cover a significant portion of the cost of developing the plan. Mono County Supervisor and Chairman of the authority Fred Stump said the grant would lower the cost of each individual contribution from $22,654 annually to approximately $3,500.

Stump explained that the grant money could level the playing field for the Authority’s 11 members. Some members, like the Keeler Community Service District (which serves 50 people), would never be able to afford $67,926. Those members have indicated that a $3,500 annual fee would be manageable.

Members of the Authority include the Big Pine Community Service District, the City of Bishop, the Eastern Sierra Community Service District, Inyo County, Mono County, Sierra Highlands Community Service District, the Tri Valley Groundwater Management District, Indian Creek Westridge Community Service District, Keeler Community Service District, Wheeler Crest Community Service District, and Starlight Community Service District.

Bishop Public Works Director Dave Grah recommended to the Bishop City Council on Monday, December 11 that the City put up half of the entire cost of creating the plan, or $373,792.50. Such a move would earn The City 22 votes, and a lot of power to influence governance of local groundwater.

Grah added that the city represents the largest constituency on the Authority. “…and it should strive for influence commensurate with that constituency. Votes are the most direct way for the city to have this influence.”

Waiting for the grant money to lower the cost of the contribution could mean equal votes among the members, but would not necessarily serve Bishop’s interests. The City of Bishop voted against the delay, but was outvoted by the other agencies, who pushed a delay in formation of the GSA will be deferred until early February, 2018 while waiting on the grant.

A meeting on December 14, the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority decided to delay full implementation of the Owens Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency pending reward of the Sustainable Groundwater Planning Grant.

The Groundwater Sustainability Act, passed by the State of California, requires that groundwater basins at risk of overdraft create plans that demonstrate their capacity to manage water resources. The Owens Valley Groundwater Authority (OVGA) is a group of agencies that govern the Owens Valley basin. The estimated price of creating such a plan, according to the OVGA, is $747,585, or $67,962.27 per member over three years (a total of $22,654 a year). For each $67,962.27 contribution, a member agency receives four votes of the 44 available. If a member contributes nothing, it still receives two votes.

If awarded, the grant would cover a significant portion of the cost of developing the plan. Mono County Supervisor and Chairman of the authority Fred Stump said the grant would lower the cost of each individual contribution from $22,654 annually to approximately $3,500.

Stump explained that the grant money could level the playing field for the Authority’s 11 members. Some members, like the Keeler Community Service District (which serves 50 people), would never be able to afford $67,926. Those members have indicated that a $3,500 annual fee would be manageable.

Members of the Authority include the Big Pine Community Service District, the City of Bishop, the Eastern Sierra Community Service District, Inyo County, Mono County, Sierra Highlands Community Service District, the Tri Valley Groundwater Management District, Indian Creek Westridge Community Service District, Keeler Community Service District, Wheeler Crest Community Service District, and Starlight Community Service District.

Bishop Public Works Director Dave Grah recommended to the Bishop City Council on Monday, December 11 that the City put up half of the entire cost of creating the plan, or $373,792.50. Such a move would earn The City 22 votes, and a lot of power to influence governance of local groundwater.

Grah added that the city represents the largest constituency on the Authority. “…and it should strive for influence commensurate with that constituency. Votes are the most direct way for the city to have this influence.”

Waiting for the grant money to lower the cost of the contribution could mean equal votes among the members, but would not necessarily serve Bishop’s interests. The City of Bishop voted against the delay, but was outvoted by the other agencies, who pushed a delay in formation of the GSA will be deferred until early February, 2018 while waiting on the grant.
By Bodine

Success stories from Mammoth Lakes Housing’s First Time Homebuyer Program

S

ince 2006, the Town of Mammoth Lakes and Mono County First-Time Homebuyer Program has helped 13 families move into homes they now own and can afford. The program helps with down payments, closing costs, paperwork, and can keep mortgage costs as low as 25 to 35 percent of a person's income.

Jennifer Halferty, Executive Director of Mammoth Lakes Housing (MLH) said the first time buyer’s program consists of two programs that can be used separately or together; the Down Payment Assistance Program and the Deed Restricted Program.

The Down Payment Assistance Program can help pay for the “gap” between what families can afford to pay for a down payment and what is available. If the mortgage is too much, the “gap” funding could facilitate a down payment larger than the standard of 20 percent, which helps to make the mortgage more affordable.

The Deed Restricted Program facilitates the sale of MLH housing stock at below market value to qualifying applicants. A homeowner can sell their deed-restricted home for a profit. A homeowner can sell their deed-restricted unit for 5 percent in 5 years, the owner can sell their deed-restricted unit for 5 percent more than the original price. MLH has first right of refusal. Additionally, the home can not be an investment property for flipping or for rental.

Halferty said there’s a common misconception that housing in Mammoth is out of reach for people making an average wage. Many people are unaware that they qualify for assistance with buying homes.

The Sheet talked to three families that have successfully purchased homes through Mono County’s First Time Homebuyer Program, and one who sold his home for a profit. Adam Floyd recently closed escrow on a house in Wilkerson, a bedroom community located about six miles south of Bishop.

“I didn’t really ever plan on selling, I love Mammoth, and when the housing costs peaked, buying from MLH was the only way I’d be able to purchase something,” said Floyd. The only reason I moved was because [a job] opportunity in Bishop opened up, and I was tired of driving back and forth when it is cheaper to live down here.”

He explained that when he bought his unit through MLH’s First Time Homebuyers Program, he was in the lowest income bracket possible. When he eventually sold, Floyd was able to earn returns of about 15 percent on his property.

Floyd explained that, because MLH decided to purchase the unit from him, “I didn’t need to pay closing costs to a real estate agent, just the escrow fees,” said Floyd. He added that MLH worked with him on the closing date so he could close escrow on his new place and move in the next day. “I really didn’t have to do anything except sign some papers.”

Nathan Taylor moved into a new home in Mono City after selling his condo in Mammoth. He told The Sheet he heard about the program through the Real Estate Agent, except they add another player to the typical mix of buyer, seller and mortgage holder.

Donnalisa Knowles was still unpacking boxes when The Sheet asked her about her new home in Mammoth. A real estate agent herself, Knowles said she heard about the program through MLH outreach.

She said the program was easy to navigate and that MLH was very patient and helpful. She said she’s proud that the program works. “Overall I’m very happy, and really like working with Jennifer,” Taylor said. “I think they genuinely want to help the community.”

Taylor took advantage of both the Deed Restricted and Down Payment Assistance programs.

He sold his condominium at Aspen Village for a small profit that was minimal after accounting for inflation. He said he didn’t necessarily plan on selling his condo, but he was tired of dealing with second homeowners and a homeowners association.

Taylor said that working with MLH was not much different from working with a real estate agent, except they add another player to the typical mix of buyer, seller and mortgage holder.

For more information on any of the programs, or to see if you qualify, contact MLH at 760.934.4740 or mammothlakeshousing.org.

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THE COWBOY CODE
A Story from the Sage featuring Chris Langley

By Giles

In his time serving as the Executive Director of the Lone Pine Western Film History Museum and as Inyo County’s Film Commissioner of eight years, Chris Langley has learned a thing or two about cowboys; both real and fictional.

“We have this mythological picture of the cowboy hero that is replicated over and over again in the films made in Inyo and in Mono Counties,” said Langley. “I think they shape real people’s expectations for their lives.”

Langley is working on a trilogy of books about the film history of Death Valley, Lone Pine, and the Eastern Sierra. For that project, he has watched hundreds of films.

What Langley observed was that cowboy heroes changed depending upon the landscape in which their stories were told. One trope he saw over and over again was the lone figure who stands up for the interests of his community when no one else will. He said the movies and the heroes translate into what he calls a shared “Cowboy Code of Ethics,” an informal set of standards to which people in small Eastern Sierra communities hold themselves.

“I think we really value the hero who will stand up for the community, especially when no one else will stand with them. It could be a lone figure, someone like a cowboy, or just someone who is standing against the adversity or the enemies of the community,” said Langley, who cited local politicians, teachers, and ranchers as real-life cowboy heroes.

Langley’s trilogy is now complete. He is seeking a publisher for his books, and continues to write and research the legacy of cowboys in film in the Eastern Sierra. For more stories about Cowboy heroes, real or fictional in the Eastern Sierra, check out The Sheet’s latest podcast episode, Stories from the Sage at www.thesheetnews.com.

BISHOP’S PIANO WOMAN
Janet Guglielmino and Diane Doonan bring music to Main Street

By Bodine

“For me, playing takes away the stress,” said Janet Guglielmino on Thursday, December 7 outside Range and River Books in Bishop, sitting at the public piano she recently donated to the business. The piano is under the awning, next to noisy Main Street. “Even shy people can play without worrying about being heard,” Guglielmino said with a chuckle. The fallboard can be locked and people are asked to respect the instrument, but other than that, anyone can play.

“Harmonicas would be easier to carry around, but …” Guglielmino said with a big grin.

Guglielmino has been playing piano for most of her life and has been learning how to repair and refurbish pianos for the last seven years.

She has seen public pianos in other cities, in hospitals and coffee shops, but they’re scarce in Bishop. Range and River Bookstore owner and operator Diane Doonan graciously loaned Guglielmino space for the piano.

A psychotherapist by day and wood carver and piano technician the rest of the time, Guglielmino said she is a firm believer in the healing power of music. She said she’s seen hardened war veterans brought to tears by simple chords and notes.

“It’s all about playing for Guglielmino, and not just the right notes, but the sounds and the act of making music. She said music can carry a listener or a player to a safe place, offering solace at a person’s fingertips.

GIRL SCOUTS GIVE BACK

The Big Pine Girl Scouts have raised money to provide meals for two “adopted” families for Christmas Eve this year. There will be 20 seats available for each family. Bradley and co-leader Ashlee Dondero are heading up the Christmas adoption. Bradley said the troop lacks uniforms, but has space to meet, as Bradley has opened a new preschool in Big Pine called Little Pines. To donate to the troop, call Bradley at 760.920.2583. From left; Jo Bradley, Emery Bradley, Zoe Bayer, Danielle White, KayAnn Dondero, Arayah Miller and co-leader Kami Bayer.

By Bodine

PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG PINE GIRL SCOUTS

Janet Guglielmino sits at the piano she donated for public use at Range and River Books in Bishop.

By Giles

The Big Pine Girl Scouts have raised money to provide meals for two “adopted” families for Christmas Eve this year. There will be 20 seats available for each family. Bradley and co-leader Ashlee Dondero are heading up the Christmas adoption. Bradley said the troop lacks uniforms, but has space to meet, as Bradley has opened a new preschool in Big Pine called Little Pines. To donate to the troop, call Bradley at 760.920.2583. From left; Jo Bradley, Emery Bradley, Zoe Bayer, Danielle White, KayAnn Dondero, Arayah Miller and co-leader Kami Bayer.
A TRULY EASTSIDE HOLIDAY TREAT
The Sheet adapts a holiday cookie recipe to highlight a local ingredient—the Pinyon Pine nut

By Rea

I n the spirit of the holiday and, most especially, pine trees, The Sheet’s Recipe Corner this week features a uniquely local ingredient—the Pinyon Pine nut. The single-leaf Pinyon Pine, *pinus monophylla*, has been a staple food for people of the Great Basin for thousands of years. The Paiute supposedly judged when it was harvest time for the pine nuts from the bloom of the rabbitbrush (perhaps a bright side to the allergy sufferers out there). The Paiute people of the Mono Basin and Owens Valley still gather the nuts every year, often in their traditional familial areas, said Jen Schlaich, director of the Bishop Paiute Food Sovereignty program. Deb Schweizer, Public Information Officer for the Inyo National Forest, says that the forest “allows reasonable personal use collection. In the case of pinyon pine cones, that is the amount that would fit into a 5 gallon bucket.”

The thing about pine nuts is that they are so expensive). (it quickly becomes apparent why in order to enjoy the delicacies inside soft casing around the actual nut itself then have to crack open the relatively cone is only the first shell—you you haven't gotten any stored up, it’s almost always unshelled, so save the shells for a make sure you’ve got the commitment to crack them. Save the shells for a vodka infusion, which will culminate as the dough will spread. Then pinch a few (10 to 15) pine nuts, and drop as many as you need to cover the dough)

Method:

Heat oven to 300 degrees F. You want to bake this cookie on low heat, so they remain soft and chewy. Combine almonds and granulated sugar in a food processor, and grind until very fine (about 4 minutes). This process is quicker if you use slivered almonds. Add confections’ sugar and pour in the egg whites, which will bring the dough together.

Meringues are finicky, but you’re not making a true meringue here, so don’t worry—this dough almost couldn’t be easier. Line your baking sheets with parchment paper. You’ll regret it if you don’t, as the flourless dough has a tendency to stick. Transfer dough into a piping bag, but if you don’t have one (like 99 percent of us mere mortals), just use a gallon Ziploc bag and cut a small hole into one corner. Pipe the dough into small mounds about 2 inches apart, as the dough will spread. Then pinch a few (10 to 15) pine nuts, and drop them on top of the mounds. They will adhere relatively easily, and the ones that fall to the sides will generally be encompassed by the spreading dough. Bake at 300 degrees, rotating the sheets halfway through at the least, but four times is better (set an alarm for 5 minutes and rotate 1/4 turn when it sounds). It’s best to slightly undercook them, again, so they remain chewy. Look for just a hint of brown on the edges, which indicates the cookies are done. Bring these to your Christmas party and you’ll certainly get invited back next year.

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Pignoli (Italian Pine Nut Cookies)

It’s often prudent to double recipes, but when working on a new one, especially with expensive ingredients, it’s smart to make a single batch to ensure it doesn’t end catastrophically. However, this one (adapted from *Saveur*) is almost foolproof, so feel free to double it.

Almond slivers work just fine instead of blanched almonds, and are usually easier to find. You’ll basically be making almond flour, which also makes these cookies happily gluten-free. A great baking trick is to save vanilla bean husks from other projects and store them in a jar of sugar (a trick from Skadi’s Ian Algeroen). Gild the lily by using vanilla sugar here.

- 2 cups slivered blanched almonds (or whole blanched almonds)
- 1/2 cup granulated vanilla sugar
- 1 cup confections’ sugar
- 3 egg whites, lightly beaten (one egg white=1 ounce)

1/2 cup Pinyon Pine nuts (or as many as you need to cover the dough)

Add confectioners’ sugar and pour in the egg whites, which will bring the dough together. Mix almonds and granulated sugar in a food processor, and grind until very fine. Combine almonds and granulated sugar in a food processor, and grind until very fine (about 4 minutes). This process is quicker if you use slivered almonds. Add confections’ sugar and pour in the egg whites, which will bring the dough together.

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FRESHLY BAKED PIGNOLI

Highlighting the nuts’ flavor is recommended, especially when they’ve been painstakingly gathered by hand. This season’s harvest time is over, so if you haven’t gotten any stored up, it’s best to head to the grocery store— you can buy a bag of commercial pine nuts, which most often come from the Chinese *pinus armandii*. You can often find bags of Eastside pine nuts at the Manor Market in Bishop or at the general store-gas station in Benton.

The Manor Market in Bishop or at the general store-gas station in Benton. They’re almost always unshelled, so save the shells for a vodka infusion, which will culminate as the dough will spread. Then pinch a few (10 to 15) pine nuts, and drop them on top of the mounds. They will adhere relatively easily, and the ones that fall to the sides will generally be encompassed by the spreading dough. Bake at 300 degrees, rotating the sheets halfway through at the least, but four times is better (set an alarm for 5 minutes and rotate 1/4 turn when it sounds).

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**Happy Holidays**!
The latest installation in the Star Wars franchise, “The Last Jedi,” (Episode VIII) was released last week. The Sheet asked: Who is the “Last Jedi” in your life?

- Laura Carvalho, Brazil
  “My country’s last president, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.”

- Elijah Grice, Mammoth Lakes
  “My younger sister, Alyra. She’s curious, strong, and outgoing, and has lots of potential. She turns 17 this week.”

- Ingo Ditberns, Santa Clarita
  “My dad, Warren Strelow. He was the first paid goalie coach in the NHL, and the goalie coach for the Olympic team during the 1980 games.”

- Terry Tran, Mammoth Lakes
  “My husband. He’s on a motorcycle trip from San Diego to Argentina right now, fulfilling a dream on his bucket list. He’s an adventurous person, and he’s had a big impact on my life.”

- Hunter Irons, Los Angeles
  “My little brother, Chance. He’s young and he’s got a pure heart.”

- Griffin Dyne, Los Angeles
  “My old lacrosse coach, Andrew. He was a real mentor to me and someone to look up to.”
CONDO PRICES SOARING

By Paul Oster

Q: We can’t believe how much the lower priced condos have gone up in value in the past 12 months. And now it appears that the other condos are doing the same. Do you expect that to continue? And for how long?

A: Mammoth Lakes condominium values have assuredly risen in dramatic fashion in the past 12 months. The increases range from 10 to 30 percent or more, depending on price range and other variables. The most profound increases have been in the low end of the inventory. But that appears to be changing as the increases are now moving more rapidly into the other segments of the condo market. And as we close out 2017, the available inventory remains historically low.

Where this all goes is anybody’s guess. And as I have previously written, it is probably more dependent on the macro economies of the country and the state than anything on the macro economies of the low end of the inventory. But that appears to be changing too.

The past two wet winters have rekindled Mammoth’s reputation as a snow magnet. There is no doubt that quality snow conditions help Mammoth real estate values. The perception of a better economy and increased stock market wealth also helps. Especially in this second home/vacation market. But other factors have played their part.

One of the reasons Mammoth condos have been undervalued in the recent past is because they have never reached their true potential to generate revenues.

Still another convergence of factors has changed the rental industry. The VRBO/Airbnb phenomenon has allowed many condo owners to become “active” participants in generating significant rents out of their properties, while also enjoying some personal usage. This trend has allowed many to become true sole proprietors and income property owners. For some it has become a component of their lifestyle and retirement plans.

But there are other factors here in Mammoth that have propelled this trend even further. Mammoth condos have been selling well below replacement value for some time. Because of that there have been very few (almost none) new condominiums built in the past 10 years, and no new condo hotel properties to help fill the increased rental demand. Did I say increased rental demand? The most recent group of planning consultants to look at housing demands in Mammoth Lakes reported that we are now close to 1,000 beds short during the peak tourism periods.

Another factor affecting condo prices: the community has allocated a substantial sum to marketing in the past few years. The TOT (bed tax) numbers show that it has paid off. The marketing has created greater demand for rentals in the summer and off-season periods. It has also allowed for an increase in the winter rent rates, especially during the high demand periods. So rental revenues are up. And the new models of vacation rental and management are allowing condo owners to keep more of their income. In short, the vacation rental industry is going through real transformation.

So demand is up, rates are up, and there is diminishing competition. For now a large chunk of the local condominium inventory is owned by what I refer to as “pure second homeowners.” They don’t rent and they don’t really occupy their properties that much. This is especially true in projects and areas of town that have not seen large percentages of local resident ownership or long-term rental. In projects like Snowcreek, there really isn’t much nightly/vacation rental going on.

Some of that could change with the new tax laws. Some pure second homeowners may convert their properties to rental properties for tax purposes. But it may not be a significant volume of them because many pure second homeowners aren’t owning for tax purposes, and many have no or very little debt on these properties. Just as many new condo owners are planning on being pure second homeowners as are planning to run a rental business out of their second home.

The low end of the condo market has come under the greatest amount of pressure because of these new rental models. These small units function like hotel/motel rooms in the Airbnb realm. But the demand is creeping up to larger and more luxurious properties. Owners are finding interesting niches in many segments of the market. Less expensive units have provided better returns on investment (ROI) in the past few years. But that appears to be changing too. Modern rental programs are also utilizing dynamic pricing, and local property owners are no exception to that trend. Owners are pursuing higher rents during the strong demand periods. Many are...
incentivizing extended weekend rentals through the winter, and requiring week-long minimum stays during the summer. And they are also capturing low-impact rentals that generate modest rents in the shoulder (slower) periods. An increasingly successful strategy during slack demand periods is renting larger units as smaller units by locking off bedrooms and baths. Renters like the larger living areas and kitchens of larger units but don’t need the extra sleeping space. These evolving and increasingly effective vacation rental models have certainly pushed condo values up here in Mammoth. The underlying zoning and land use designations in Mammoth are now creating added value for most condo units. It is a twofold impact. The zoning (and other governing restrictions) for the majority of condo projects allows for nightly rentals in the single-family neighborhoods curbs the competition from these properties. And while that activity has occurred in the past, the Town is stepping up on while that activity has occurred in the vicinity from these properties. And many local residents are downsizing including selling large homes and moving towards condos. Winters like 2011 and 2017 can certainly be motivators. The longer you live in Mammoth, the more trying the big winters become.

For many, part of the popularity and downsizing trend is the realization that the local HOA fees are not some ominous burden that many think they are. Owning, managing and maintaining improved real estate in this environment is expensive. Snow and ice removal (and the damage they can cause), the altitude, the sun, the dryness, etc., all take their toll. There are economic efficiencies in a condo projects that don’t exist in single-family homes and neighborhoods. I’ve owned both. The expenses of owning a home add up fast. And inevitably second home owners end up paying for some level of management that condo owners already have. The true cost of ownership, depending on variables, can be a push.

And all of these factors have also created a condo remodeling boom in Mammoth. Many of the older condo projects have excellent locations including the Meadow or slope side or downtown. Many have good utility (especially for nightly rental) or pleasant views or are in low density projects. Most are certainly worth remodeling. Potential buyers and owners contemplating a rental business are looking to remodel with renting in mind; attracting renters who are willing to pay more for a condo that feels modern and works efficiently. And they are remodeling with some built-in durability to withstand almost constant usage.

The rise in values in the low end is now affecting the higher end; potential buyers are looking at condos that have now risen into the $400 to 500,000 range that need $100,000+ in upgrades. So they might as well move into the $600 to 800,000 range and buy a property that is relatively new and already in great condition. If these trends continue there will eventually be new units developed in the market. But their pricing will have to be high. Nothing to do with development and construction is cheap in Mammoth. And California’s wildfires aren’t going to make it any less expensive.

So for now the Mammoth condo market pricing is on the upswing. This has primarily occurred in the past 12 months. But the condos are still undervalued. They are still selling for significantly less than the peak of the mid-2000’s. And many believe the rental rates remain undervalued too. Increased rents will support increased values.

How long will this last? Ultimately the larger national and State economies should determine where real estate values go from here in Mammoth. But if the Ski Area’s new ownership does something really profound, then all bets are off. So only time will tell.

Happy New Year!

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

driving the beat

Marty Burgenbauch talks drums, bears and buses

By Ben

ike many Eastern Sierra residents, Marty Burgenbauch has a secret life—by day, he’s a mild-mannered bus driver, but at night, he holds down the beat playing drums with local band The Jadied Haters. “You always have to have a second gig in Mammoth,” said Burgenbauch, chuckling at the repeated mantra to make it in a ski town. His second shift, luckily for him, has always been playing music. He started playing the drums at the age of 13 in Costa Mesa (his parents had a garage, so they supported his hoisy new hobby). He’s played in so many bands he can’t even remember them all, and sometimes trails off when trying to remember when he played with who (“What band was that when I played with Pat Hogan? County Line, I think.”...)

Burgenbauch “bend his way to a life in Mammoth the same way so many do. ‘I thought I’d be here for five years, but 30 years later...”

He met his wife Judy when she was bartending in Santa Barbara, where Burgenbauch was attending school (he has a Bachelor’s in English and a minor in Art from UCSB). “She applied for [teaching jobs] at Round Valley and in Bridgeport,” he said, because the couple liked to ski and they decided they’d spend some time near Mammoth Mountain. “Well, she drove up to Bridgeport, got there, and turned right around and drove back.”

She took the job at Round Valley, and the couple lived in Crowley Lake for 10 years before they both landed jobs in Mammoth and bought a house “right before [house prices] went totally crazy,” said Burgenbauch. Judy now works as a first grade teacher at Mammoth Elementary School. They’ve managed to raise three kids here; all of whom seem to have the musical gene too. His daughter Cassie sings and writes songs for the Haters, and she also plays with local favorites Bodie 601. Burgenbauch said that sometimes, he’s even been the second job “kept him up too late and away too long, and ‘I missed out on some kid time,’” but “now I get to play music with all my kids.” He said that “in a town like this, you have to find some niche that works for you.”

He started his career at the Mammoth Unified School District as a security guard in 1998, a job that was far cry from his education and his former job at the sports shop at Canyon Lodge.

“When I first heard of the job, I thought, ‘A security guard? Me?’” said Burgenbauch, laughing. He spent two years there, and then a position for a school bus driver opened up. “I’d never driven a bus before, but I drove a Volkswagen van for years,” he said. “Those things make you use your muscles.”

He’s now seen over 15 years of Eastern Sierra students grace the seatbeltless vinyl benches of MUSD’s buses. “I’ve picked up kids now whose parents rode my bus,” said Burgenbauch after he extended an exaggerated ‘hello, Adriana!’ to Mammoth High School’s Attendance Clerk Adriana Madrigal, whom he used to drive when she was a senior in High School. “She used to make me call her ‘The Queen,’” he said, explaining his deferential greeting.

Burgenbauch went about his daily routine on the morning of Monday, December 16, loading bins of interdepartmental mail into the back of his rig to deliver to the various schools. He joked that he takes a nap every day in between morning and afternoon runs, but didn’t have time for that. School bus drivers at MUSD keep busy while the kids are in classes—they help out the custodians, snow, and keep busy around the campuses to get them their full 8 hours of work.

“We used to have a lot more runs,” said Burgenbauch of when he first started working, “but 30 years later...” (two elementary school teachers, Jeanne Oakeshott and Stacey Posey, left the elementary school last year and were not replaced, which The Sheet covered in “A Rock and A Hard Place,” November 23, 2016).

Burgenbauch himself hopes to retire this year after almost two decades of service. His plans? He and wife Judy just bought a Toyota Tacoma with a camper on the back, and they’re hoping to “do some gallivanting” around the country, though Judy is not yet slated to leave her position at MES.

As time has passed, has he noticed any changes in students? Not a whole lot, although, he says, more students busy themselves with games on their cell phones during the drive to school than they used to. “If kids read a book, that’s great, but not very many of them. You used to hear how many parents who believe their children are infallible, which puts him in a tough position when he has to issue a dreaded behavioral violation. He doesn’t like to give those out, but if he has to issue one, it’s usually because a school bus is different than teaching in a classroom—he’s got to keep his eyes on the road, which means that if kids misbehave, it’s dangerous. He’s had to pull the bus over on the side of Highway 395 (MUSD’s Red Bus picks up students in Crowley Lake and Sunny Slopes) more than once.

What’s the most awful thing that’s happened on his bus? “Vomit’s always fun. One day a kid stood up and peed right on the floor.”

Ever have a run-in with a deer on Highway 395? “No, but one driver hit a horse once in Lone Pine coming back from a football game.” Burgenbauch also said he’s had a close call with a bear on Old Mammoth Road. “The thing came skidding down a slope and ended up running along right next to the bus, I could see him in my side mirror. He finally bumped the bus, which sent running back away from the road.”

How about the stress of driving in inclement weather? “If it’s sunny and 90 degrees in Orange County, I don’t think I could do it,” he said. “I wish I could take just one picture of the drive to Crowley Lake every morning...It’s just stunning.”

VAIL

cover story/local news

continued from page 6

Manager Lauren Burke said she did not have figures for how much Starwood Capital had invested in on-mountain improvements between 2005 and 2017. Upgrades to Chairs 5 and 9, a revamp of Woolly’s Tube Park and cosmetic changes to several lodges “are the only memorable infrastructural improvements made by the company, according to a canvassing of old-time locals. However, Mammoth Resorts purchased Bear Mountain and Snow Summit ski areas for $38 million in 2014, and added access to those mountains to its California Pass.

Oster maintains that Mammoth Mountain’s ownership by a private equity firm is not good for the mountain or for Mammoth Lakes. “Publicly held companies build things up. They are typically in for the long haul because of the way they see returns,” said Oster. “What we really got in town was short-sided on the deal [when Mammoth Resorts sold to Starwood Capital in 2005], because that’s what private equity does.” He said private equity firms seek high returns in the short-term, and don’t have time to wait years for infrastructure improvements to yield profits.

On the other hand, Oster said that KSL-Aspen may not be compelled to invest in infrastructure at Mammoth Mountain Ski Area because it is “an enigma in that it makes money.” Lunch reported in his April 15 story, “Aspen West” that Mammoth Resorts CEO Rusty Gregory said the company saw two million skier visits and between $85 and $90 million in operating earnings in 2016-2017.

Suzanne Silverton, Director of Communications for the Town of Vail and a long-time resident, said that Vail Resorts’ infrastructure improvements have helped other private property owners “get on the bandwagon of investment,” triggering a “community revitalization,” Vail Resorts’ stock prices have largely mirrored that growth, having increased in value more than tenfold since the company went public 20 years ago.

Oster said those investments are characteristic of publicly traded companies, not private equity firms. He said that if Mammoth wants to grow, it needs revitalization.

“Private equity is like a one-night stand... and that’s where we got screwed over.”

—Paul Oster
**Help Wanted**

**SERRA NEVADA RESORT & SPA**

Housekeepers ($11) **Cook**

**Dishwashers** **Maintenance Worker**

Please complete an application at 164 Old Mammoth Rd. or e-mail gbuapcd.bamboohr.com/jobs. Application deadline: January 8, 2018.

**TONK—NOW HIRING**

Full and part time positions available. Join our awesome team, work in a fun environment. Pick up an application at Tonk, 501 Stoddard Rd. Please call 760-934-2764 or stop by 92 Canyon Blvd. for an application.

**The Austria Hof Lodge has a position available for a Front Desk associate.** Experience is preferred but not required. We are looking for someone who is motivated and enjoys customer service. Please call 760.914.0768 for more information. Application deadline: November 21, 2017.

**SIEGMA SEBOYER SERVICES**

Sierra Employment Services, Inc. is hiring for the following positions:

- **Carpenters M $29-$35**
- **Machine Operator B $11.50**
- **Machine Operator M $11.50**
- **Front Desk M B $12-$14**
- **Incentive Aide Walker $15**
- **Room Inspector M $15**

Applications can be received Monday-Saturday, 9:30-5:30. Housekeepers M $15-$18 General Laborers M $14-$18.

Call 760.924.0523 or 760.873.8599 for an interview. See our full job listing online at www.SierraEmployment.com

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**Help Wanted**

**Temporary Snow Removal Operators** The Mammoth Lakes Police Department is accepting applications for Temp Snow Removal Operators for the 2017/18 winter season. $22.92 - $26.53/ hr. Commercial license required. Full-time hours, opportunity to work day or night shifts and potential overtime. Secure a job for the winter and join a dedicated, hard-working road crew! Call 760.965.3604 for more information.

**Executive Assistant to Chief of Police** $72,852 - $94,038 per year. Full benefits package. The Town of Mammoth Lakes is looking for an Executive Assistant to the Chief of Police to join the Mammoth Lakes Police Department. This position is available immediately. Full-time position will require a passion for law enforcement, excellent administrative skills, the ability to multi-task and must be a dedicated, hard-working road crew! Interested applicants should submit their resume to apply. Application deadline: January 8, 2018.

"Work With The Best, Footloose Sports, nationally recognized as a top 60 retailer, is hiring for the upcoming season. We are seeking a staff who work as hard as they play. We're looking for responsible individuals with a passion about winter sports, and motivated to provide the best in customer service. We have full and part-time positions open in our sales, rental, boot, and ski repair departments. We are offering great wage DOE, discounts and flexible hours, in progressive work environment. Call us at 760.934.2480. Go to our website at footloosesports.com or e-mail your resume to footloose@footloosesports.com to schedule an interview."

**Wanted Administrative Assistant for Our Resort We need someone to join our team and assist our manager with guest services, operations and some marketing. This full time permanent position is available immediately. Duties would be assisting the manager with the day to day operations including but not limited to; reservations, customer service, front desk, housekeeping supervisory duties (pre-post checks and assisting with needed), assisting with guests arrivals/ departures and regular relief of manager on manager’s days off. Also assisting with marketing and social media. Experience Required: Customer service a plus, but not required. Wages DOE. Please call 760.873.4499.**

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**For Hire**

**Bookkeeping Services Available.** Let me keep your books up-to-date and in order while you focus on your business or travel the world! Experienced in Quickbooks, Microsoft Office, Dropbox, Google Docs. Great references available. 805.540.0802. Z.Z. **IN-HOUSE Quality work, speedy service. Sportswear, parkas, pants, packs & duffels. Handmade! Call 760.873.4969.**

**For Rent**

**Mammoth Slopes Home** 2 Bedroom, 1 bath home on the Mammoth Slopes Home for monthly rentals. Ideal location for Mammoth Skiing & Shuttle Utilities Included W/D Internet. Must be Dog Friendly, Non Smoker. $1,100 per month, Available 11.15.17. 760.965.6715.

**2017/18 Apartment for Rent** Unfurnished washer/dryer hook-up, no garage. $1500.00, Studio Loft $950.00 Both require 1 year lease and local references. Greg 760.937.7569.

**One bedroom/bathroom custom home with beautiful granite countertops, efficient propane wall heater, and finishes in keeping with other innovative3.**

**Two Bedroom/bathroom custom home with beautiful granite countertops, efficient propane wall heater, and finishes in keeping with other innovative3.**

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**Mammoth Slope & Bowl Mammoth Rock & Bowl!**

Mammoth Rock & Bowl has the following positions available. Bowing Desk Employees, Service, Boat, Ski, Reservation Hostess. Contact Kevin O’Connell 760.934.4200 ext. 225, or Ann Ward ext. 221.

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**Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District**

**Air Monitoring Technician**

Is hiring for the following positions:

- **POLICE**
  - $54,343 - $72,852 + competitive benefits.
  - Education and Experience:
    - Completion of a Bachelor’s degree in law enforcement, excellent administrative skills, and a desire to serve our community, local police application, call 760.914.0768. This business is conducted by an Individual (2017/18 winter season. $22.92 - $26.53/ hr. Commercial license required. Full-time hours, opportunity to work day or night shifts and potential overtime. Secure a job for the winter and join a dedicated, hard-working road crew! Call 760.965.3604 for more information.

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**Fictitious Business Name Statement**

**The Following Person is Doing Business As:**

**Salon 437**

Amy Rene Wild 437 Old Mammoth Road # 82, P.O. Box 7014 Mammoth Lakes, Ca. 93546

This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on November 21, 2017. File Number 17-229. 2017-0234 (12/2, 12/9, 12/16, 12/23)

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**Fictitious Business Name Statement**

**The Following Person is Doing Business As:**

**Sierra Troutdoorsman Guide Service**

Samuel Vasily 2710 Old Mammoth Road, P.O. Box 9007 Mammoth Lakes, Ca. 93546

This business is conducted by an Individual. The registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on November 21, 2017. File Number 17-229. 2017-0236 (12/9, 12/16, 12/23, 12/30)

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**Fictitious Business Name Statement**

**The Following Person is Doing Business As:**

**GORDOS LLC**

Luis Javier Curiel P.O. Box 242 June Lake, Ca. 93529

This business is conducted by a limited liability company. The requesting or envin is conducting business under the fictitious business name listed above. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on November 21, 2017. File Number 17-229. 2017-0236 (12/9, 12/16, 12/23, 12/30)

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**Fictitious Business Name Statement**

**The Following Person is Doing Business As:**

**Lozano Labor Plus**

Billie Edmunds-Zanino 1400 US HWY 6 Bishop, Ca. 93514

This business is conducted by an Individual. The registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on November 21, 2017. File Number 17-229. 2017-0237 (12/9, 12/16, 12/23, 12/30)
calendar of events

BARS & MUSIC

Happy Hour/
The Liberty Sports Bar and Grill.

Pursuit of Happiness 3-6 p.m.
Free draft beers, $2 off wine, $4 well drinks, $2 off specialty drinks. $5 Flatbread. See ad. p. 9.

Outlaw Saloon—Happy Hour
Monday thru Friday 4-6pm;
Happy Hour during all regular season NFL games:
Sunday ticket NFL. Outlaw opens early at 10am with breakfast burritos, breakfast specials, mimosas. Roberto’s 4-6 p.m. every day.

Austria Hof 5-8 p.m. daily. See ad. p. 4. Whitepark Restaurant Bar & Lounge Unwind with daily drink and food specials 4-6 p.m. Half price sushi Mondays.

Clockworks Cellar Happy Hour 4:30-7 p.m. daily and all day Sunday. $5 dollar menu items, drink specials. See ad. p. 11.

Petra’s Bistro Happy Hour, 5-6 p.m. every day. See ad. p. 11.

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. Closed Mondays.

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

Side Bar 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 daily 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 4-6 p.m.

Friday, December 22/
Jazzy Night at Mountain Rambler Brewery. Performance of old-time swing tunes by Sophie Bijjani & Greg Strauss. Get in the jazzy spirit with DJ Rodney O. 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. Free. 21 & up only.

Saturday, December 23/
Abstract Rude plays Rafter’s with KTF and DJ Rodney O. 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. Free. 21 & up only.

Sunday, December 24/
Christmas Eve Pre-Set Dinner at Mountain Rambler.

Monday, December 25/
Bowling 'n Beats @ Mammoth Rock ‘n Bowl. Beats by DJ Channa De Silva, Joshua Strauss, Chronfucius.

Tuesday, December 26/
Tuesday Night Special @ Morrison’s Glass of wine or draft Coors Light with dinner for $10.

Karaoke @ Rafter’s with DJ CDS, 10 p.m. Free. 21 & up.

Thursday, December 28/
Open Mic night @ Side Door in Mammoth Lakes. $5 beer & wine specials, $7 mules. 6 p.m.

Ladies’ Night @ Mammoth Rock ‘n Bowl. Ladies bowl 2 games free, includes shoe rental.

TOWN STUFF

December 22-30/
“The Ultimate Christmas Show,” with MLRT. From Friday, December 15-Saturday, December 30, the play will start at 7 p.m. There will be a show on Sunday, December 17 that starts at 4 p.m. No shows December 16 or 24. See sidebar, next page and ad. p. 4, story p.2.

December 22-31/
Wabi Sabi Exhibit at Manzanar Bookstore, feat. art work by local artists. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. each day.

Textile Art Show @ Mammoth Lakes Library with the Calico Quilters Guild. 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. in the Ellie Randol Reading Room.

December 22-24/
Holiday Marketplace with the Mono Arts Council. 11 a.m.-6 p.m. daily at Main Village. Info: 760-914-2731 or kristin@monoarts.org.

December 23-30/
NASTAR races return to Mammoth. Info: 760.934.0642 or raceadmin@ mammothresorts.com.

December 23-January 7/
Public Skate at the Mammoth Ice Rink. 12-3 p.m., 3:30-6 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. Skate Assist lessons available 4-6:30 p.m. on Fridays, Ice Rink will be open at 3:30 p.m. on December 25. See ad, page 3, sidebar next page.

Friday, December 22/
June Mountain Opening Day, 11 opens to the public @ 8 a.m. Toast & sunnies giveaway @ 11 a.m. Bishop Union High School A&S Drive-In Movie Night. "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" and "Frosty the Snowman" will play from 5-7 p.m. @ the high school parking lot. "The Grinch" will play from 7-9 p.m. $5 per vehicle for 1 show, $9 for both. Proceeds support upcoming leadership camp.

City of Bishop Kids Night Out. Free dinner, arts & crafts, games, and a holiday movie at the City Auditorium, 377 W. Line St. Info: 760.873.5863. Pre-register at City Hall.

Photos with Santa and Woolly at Mammoth Sports in the Village. 3:30-5:30. Don’t forget your smile. Saturday also (4-6 p.m.).

Saturday, December 23/
Woolly’s Saturday Parade in The Village. Begins 3:45 p.m. with music and face painting, ends with dancing around 4:20 p.m.

Interpretive Hike: Film History in the Alabama Hills. 1-mile guided hike through Movie Flats. 2 hours. Meet 10 a.m. @ the Eastern Sierra Intergency Visitor Center, Lone Pine. Info: 760.876.6222.

Ugly Sweater Run at Mammoth Creek Park. 5k fun run starting at Mammoth Creek Park at 12 p.m. Route TBD, but “We’ll end somewhere that has beer.” Wear your favorite holiday sweater or dress up like Santa. Holiday Craft Fair at Inyo Council for the Arts. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Handmade holiday gifts for sale @ ICA, Main Street, Bishop.

The Fort Open House @ Main Lodge. Check out the new high-tech wellness space at Mammoth Mountain’s Main Lodge, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Complimentary beer and wine served for guests interested in learning about the space.
Ice Skating at the Mammoth Rink

Limited transit service will provide three morning trips from the Old Mammoth Road area into Town, and three return trips in the afternoon.

Departures from the Old Mammoth Area will commence at 7:13 a.m., 7:45 a.m., and 8:18 a.m. Return trips will start from the area of the schools and hospital at 2:45 p.m., 4:23 p.m., and 5:05 p.m. The service will operate seven days a week. Further information is available on ESTA’s website at www.edisontheatre.org, or by calling 760.965.3695.

Transit to Old Mammoth Road

Limited transit service will provide three morning trips from the Old Mammoth Road area into Town, and three return trips in the afternoon.

Departures from the Old Mammoth Area will commence at 7:13 a.m., 7:45 a.m., and 8:18 a.m. Return trips will start from the area of the schools and hospital at 2:45 p.m., 4:23 p.m., and 5:05 p.m. The service will operate seven days a week. Further information is available on ESTA’s website at www.edisontheatre.org, or by calling 760.965.3184.

Stormwater Meeting in Mammoth

The Town is developing a Stormwater Resource Plan (SWRP) and is inviting the public to participate in the process on January 8, 2018 from 4:00 p.m. in Suite Z. The SWRP is required by the California State Water Resources Control Board to establish eligibility for bond funding for stormwater quality improvement projects. The public will be introduced to the concept of funding for stormwater quality to establish eligibility for bond

TOWN STUFF

Sunday, December 24/ Christmas Eve worship with Mammoth Christian Fellowship, 6:30 p.m. at Mammoth Middle School gym, 1600 Meridian Blvd. Info: 760.914.3930 or mammothchristian.org. See ad, p. 8.

Monday, December 25/ Bishop Community Christmas dinner @ United Methodist Church. Enjoy a full course free dinner. Dessert is potluck. 1-3 p.m. @ 205 N. Fowler Ln. Info: 760.872.4034 or 760.873.3058.

Expiration date for all National Forest Christmas tree permits: Info: 760.873.2400 (Inyo National Forest offices, Bishop).

Wednesday, December 27/ Storytime at the Mammoth Lakes Library, 10:30 a.m. All ages welcome. Art show by Pamela Gisel at The Yodler, Mammoth Lakes. Learn about pyrography. 12-6 p.m.

Thursday, December 28/ A Very Merry Christmas with Stacey Cook. Two sessions: morning and evening. Ladies only. Info: 1.800. MAMMOTH.

Saturday, December 30/ Woolly’s Saturday Parade in The Village. Begins 4:15 p.m. with music and face painting, ends with dancing around 4:20 p.m.

December 30-31/ Full moon snowshoe tour of Tamarack Naturalist-guided tour lasts 1.5 hours and begins at 7 p.m. at Tamarack XC Ski Center. $59 includes equipment. Reservations required. 1.800. MAMMOTH for info.

Sunday, December 31/ New Year’s Eve at Eagle Lodge with

UPCOMING

DJ Psycho Therapist and DJ WLDC. 1-800.MAMMOTH for info.

New Year’s Eve family fun & fireworks @ The Village. 7:30-9:30 p.m. Woody, hot cocoa, live music, party favors. 1.800.MAMMOTH for info.

New Year’s Eve Pre-Set Dinner and Party at Morrison’s. 4-10 p.m. 4-course pre-set menu $50/adult. $20/kid under 12. Reservations required: 760.934.7427. See ad, p. 3.

Monday, January 1/ Mono Basin Historical Society Meeting. Potluck at 6 p.m. @ the Lee Vining Community Center. Meeting at 6:30 p.m. Info: 760.647.6461.

Inyo-Mono Broadband Consortium Advisory Council Meeting. 9 a.m. In town Council Chambers, Suite Z, Minaret Mall, Mammoth Lakes.

Tuesday, January 2/ Mono County Board of Supervisors meeting. 9 a.m. Broadcast live from the CAO Conference Room, Sierra Center Mall, Mammoth Lakes. Meeting in Bridgeport @ the Courthouse.

Wednesday, January 3/ Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board meeting. 1 p.m. in Suite Z, Minaret Mall, Mammoth Lakes.

Monday, January 8/ Bishop City Council meeting, 6 p.m. @ 377 W. Line St.

Tuesday, January 9/ Mammoth Recreation Commission meeting, 9 a.m. in Suite Z.

Wednesday, January 10/ Mammoth Planning and Economic Development Commission meeting, 2 p.m. in Suite Z.

AT THE MOVIES

Minaret Cinemas

Star Wars: The Last Jedi (PG): Luke Skywalker’s peaceful existence gets upended when he encounters Rey, a young woman with strong signs of the Force.

Jumanji: Welcome to The Jungle (PG-13): Four teenagers discover an old video game console and are literally drawn into the video game Jumanji.

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

an SWRP, presented highlights of the draft SWRP with an opportunity for public participation. Please RSVP to jrobertson@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov by January 3, 2018. We look forward to your participation in this project. See Town Bulletin, page 5.

Winter Parking Restrictions

The Mammoth Lakes Police Department is reminding citizens that there is no street parking from November 1 through April 30. Vehicles found parked in violation of these ordinances are subject to receiving a parking citation and/or in some cases, vehicles may be impounded at the owner’s expense.

Community Project Grants available

The Inyo County Community Project Sponsorship Program is accepting grant applications for events/projects in Inyo County. The grants are open to local non-profit groups, and up to $20,984 is available in the 2018 Competitive Grant Cycle. The deadline for submitting grant applications is Friday, January 9, 2018. CSP grants were used to sponsor the Lone Pine Film Festival, Death Valley 49ers Encampment, and the Eastern Sierra Music Festival, among other events.

To be considered, the completed Grant Application (sufficiently signed on paper or digitally), with an original signature, must be received by the Office of the County Administrator by 5 p.m. on Friday, January 19, 2018. No postmarks or facsimiles will be accepted. Grant applications being mailed should be sent to: Office of the County Administrator, Attn: Community Project Sponsorship Program, P.O. Drawer N, Independence, CA 93526.

If you are interested, please contact the Office of the County Administrator, 244 N. Edwards Street, Independence, CA, 760.878.0292. Digital grant applications, which still need original signatures, may be sent to jksusmire@incounty.us.
The accompanying summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statements of net position as of June 30, 2017 and 2016, the summary statements of revenues, expenses, and changes in net position, and the summary statements of cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes, are derived from the audited financial statements of Southern Mono Healthcare District filed with Mammoth Hospital (the District) as of and for the years ended June 30, 2017 and 2016. We expressed an unqualified opinion on those audited financial statements in our report dated November 28, 2017. The audited financial statements, and the summary financial statements derived therein, do not reflect the effects of events, if any, that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on the audited financial statements.

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Reading the summary financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of the District.

Management’s Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements
Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements on the basis described above.

Auditor’s Responsibility
Our responsibility is to express an opinion about whether the summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The procedures consisted principally of comparing the summary financial statements with the related information in the audited financial statements from which the summary financial statements have been derived, and evaluating whether the summary financial statements are prepared in accordance with the basis described above. We did not perform any audit procedures regarding the audited financial statements after the date of our report on those financial statements.

Opinion
In our opinion, the summary financial statements of the District as of and for the years ended June 30, 2017 and 2016, as described above, are consistent with, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements from which they have been derived, on the basis described above.

CONDENSED STATEMENTS OF NET POSITION
June 30 2017 2016
Assets
Current assets $ 58,726,315 $ 50,640,473
Noncurrent cash 7,845,529 6,996,972
Long-term investments 6,271,270 7,909,206
Capital assets, net 326,083 375,605
Total assets $ 111,148,117 $ 103,332,121
Liabilities and net position
Current liabilities $ 8,049,147 $ 7,907,171
Long-term debt, less current maturities 24,316,907 24,517,823
Capital liabilities, net 324,083 375,605
Total liabilities 33,680,137 32,889,619
Total liabilities, deferred inflows of resources, and net position $ 111,148,117 $ 103,332,121
Net position
Operating revenues $ 68,044,473 $ 67,716,214
Operating expenses 63,839,535 60,933,228
Operating income 4,204,938 6,780,986
Nonoperating revenues, net 7,205,423 2,692,719
Revenues in excess of expenses before capital contributions and tax revenue from capital principal payments 6,908,363 9,473,705
Contributions for capital assets 149,352 200,102
Tax revenues for debt principal payments 825,000 740,000
Change in net position 7,902,715 10,413,807
Net position, beginning of year 70,516,662 70,516,662
Net position, end of year $ 78,419,377 $ 80,930,469
CONDENSED STATEMENTS OF REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND CHANGES IN NET POSITION
Years ended June 30 2017 2016
Operating revenues $ 68,044,473 $ 67,716,214
Operating expenses 63,839,535 60,933,228
Operating income 4,204,938 6,780,986
Nonoperating revenues, net 7,205,423 2,692,719
Revenues in excess of expenses before capital contributions and tax revenue from capital principal payments 6,908,363 9,473,705
Contributions for capital assets 149,352 200,102
Tax revenues for debt principal payments 825,000 740,000
Change in net position 7,902,715 10,413,807
Net position, beginning of year 70,516,662 70,516,662
Net position, end of year $ 78,419,377 $ 80,930,469
CONDENSED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
Years ended June 30 2017 2016
Net cash from operating activities $ 7,646,639 $ 6,524,088
Net cash from noncapital financing activities 3,641,601 3,967,663
Net cash used for capital and related financing activities (4,664,353) (2,235,593)
Net cash from investing activities 425,053 1,283,463
Net change in cash and cash equivalents 7,059,840 9,539,621
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year 45,945,820 36,406,199
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year $ 53,005,660 $ 45,945,820
Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents to the statement of revenues
Cash and cash equivalents in current assets $ 45,160,131 $ 38,948,848
Cash and cash equivalents in noncurrent cash 7,845,529 6,996,972
Total cash and cash equivalents $ 53,005,660 $ 45,945,820
Reconciliation of operating income to net cash from operating activities
Operating income $ 4,204,938 $ 6,780,986
Adjustments to reconcile operating income to net cash from operating activities 3,441,701 (265,898)
Net cash from operating activities $ 7,646,639 $ 6,524,088
new research by scientists at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA’s) Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena indicates that the Sierra Nevada mountain range rose nearly an inch between 2011 and 2015. "The study has the potential to revolutionize the way scientists understand the movement of water through mountains. According to a report from NASA, the Sierra Nevada is the result of loss of water in the fractures and cracks in its rocks. "This suggests that solid ground has the capacity to store mountain water," said Donald Argus, Jet Propulsion Laboratory research scientist. Previous efforts to understand the long-term impacts of California’s drought had focused on regions such as the Central Valley and Los Angeles, where the ground consists of clays and silts instead of solid granite.

Argus’ research team found that the amount of water lost from cracks and fissures in Sierra Nevada rock between 2011 and 2015 amounted to 10.8 cubic miles of water. According to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory’s website, that’s 45 times the amount of water Los Angeles uses in a year.

According to Argus, the Sierra Nevada rose during the drought because the weight of the water previously stored in cracks and the granite bedrock no longer weighted the earth’s surface. “We’ve known that the Sierra have this elastic characteristic over the course of a year," said Argus, who said this is the first time its compounds effect has been recorded over the course of many years. "It’s caused by the solid earth’s elastic response to the weight of the water. It’s like a rubber band, in that when you take it (the water) out, it rebounds the same amount.”

According to Argus, the Sierra Nevada have fallen about a half an inch since the drought ended in 2015. "We are inferring that the Sierra Nevada have recovered halfway from water loss during the drought," said Argus. Argus’ team was able to determine that tectonic uplift and rebound from extensive groundwater pumping in the Central Valley only accounted for a quarter of an inch at most of the uplift observed.

As discussed in The Sheet’s February 4, 2017 article “NASA and Snow,” recent research conducted by JPL’s scientists has revolutionized our ability to predict runoff from snowmelt in California. Those advances are due to improved data collection and modeling techniques. Argus’ findings could help make predictions about how water will move around the mountains during a given year even more accurate.

In a press release, JPL water scientist Jay Famiglietti, who collaborated on the research, said, “One of the major unknowns in mountain hydrology is what happens below the soil. How much snowmelt percolates through fractured rock straight down, versus into the core of the mountain?”

Famiglietti went on to say the study raises new questions, including, what does the water table look like within mountain ranges, where scientists had previously assumed all water was either stored as snow or disappeared as runoff? It suggests that mountains may store large volumes of groundwater instead of just shedding them.

Argus said mountainous groundwater aquifers differ from those in the lowland regions like California’s Central Valley. "Groundwater is any water that is in an aquifer. Aquifers are like underground containers made of porous layers of sand, silt, and gravel," said Argus. "In a place like the Central Valley, when you put water into the aquifer, it fills up the pores so that they expand. The first response of an aquifer in the mountains is the opposite," said Argus.

Argus said that, regardless of what substrate they are made of, 85 percent of the aquifers on earth share the elastic properties of the Sierra Nevada. He said the Central Valley is an exception to this rule.

"You can pretty much recover all of the porous stuff," said Argus this week. "But in the Central Valley, we’ve lost the permanent structure of the substance that makes the aquifer: clays." Argus said the extremely porous nature of clay aquifers makes them fragile. “When the water left [due to groundwater pumping for agriculture and drought], they collapsed. Those aquifers won’t recover,” said Argus. The data Argus and his team collected for this study was compiled using Geographic Positioning System (GPS) receivers installed across the mountains of California, Oregon, and Washington as part of the National Science Foundation’s Plate Boundary Observatory, which measures tectonic motion around faults and volcanoes. The system is extremely sensitive and can also measure elevation changes as slight as a few millimeters.

Argus and his team have plans to continue collecting data about the rise and fall of groundwater aquifers in the Midwest and on the East Coast. The research is part of a global project to better understand the resilience and behavior of groundwater systems.

A SPRING LOADED SIERRA

New research by NASA shows the Sierra Nevada range grows and shrinks by storing water
By Giles

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HORRORSCOPES
By Clouds McCloud

Sagittarius: “Jingle Bell” is one of the most famous and beloved holiday songs ever written, even though it was penned at a pub outside Boston. The iconic holiday ditty is about the loud sleighs that bounded past the Simpson Tavern in Medford in the 1850s. As a birthday gift to yourself, sing this song all year long as a reminder that you never know when (or how) you’re going to have reasons to jingle all the way.

Capricorn: With Mercury coming out of retrograde just as the Winter Solstice hits, good times are coming on like the Polar Express. To help you stay brave, hopeful and in the holiday spirit, remember what the train conductor said: “Seeing is believing, but sometimes the most real things in the world are the things we can’t see.”

Aquarius: You probably won’t find it hard to believe that you’re on both of Santa’s Lists. Yes, you can be nice and sweet as Grandma’s apple pie. But you also like to be a bit naughty, too. To help you fully embrace yourself this holiday season, try embracing this line from Winston Churchill, “You can always count on Americans to do the right thing—after they’ve tried everything else.”

Pisces: With the latest Star Wars movie hitting theaters it seems only fitting to tell Pisces (the spiritual movie hitting theaters it seems only sometimes the most real things in the world are the things we can’t see).

Leo: Since the holidays can be taxing and tired of things like responsibilities and wearing underwear, while the first may not go away, you’re certain to enjoy them more if you try going commando more often, or at least wore underwear with sayings like “It’s not going to spank itself!” Or “Caution: Contents Are Extremely Hot!”

Cancer: Hello, Hi, yes, you, that smoking hottie reading The SHEET. First of all, thanks for reading Clouds. You’re clearly exceptionally intelligent, gifted, downright sexy and destined for success and joy. Next, with the year coming to an end, it’s time you (and everyone else, for that matter) started working on some creative visualization. So set aside some time each day to dream about your dream life—even the parts that require wearing pants.

Taurus: People often get overly stressed or depressed during the holidays. So it’s okay to get a little overwhelmed for a moment, just don’t let that moment turn into a month. You’ve got 90 seconds to think about and release something bothersome. While this isn’t always easy, nothing worthwhile ever is. So don’t be a wanker.

Gemini: The Stars are reporting that you’re probably feeling a little sick and tired of things like responsibilities and wearing underwear. While the first may not go away, you’re certain to enjoy them more if you try going commando more often, or at least wore underwear with sayings like “It’s not going to spank itself!” Or “Caution: Contents Are Extremely Hot!”

Scorpio: Home and family life will be taking up much of your attention and time for the rest of the month. And that’s all good, just be sure to also take some time alone to think about what you want your life to look like next year. If you’re having trouble focusing your thoughts, remember that spending time in nature helps thoughts flow more easily and, as Wayne Gretzky says, “You miss 100 percent of the shots you don’t take.”

Libra: As we close in on another year and thoughts turns to 2018, please try to focus some thoughts on what you’d like your life to look like next year. If you’re having trouble focusing your thoughts, remember that spending time in nature helps thoughts flow more easily and, as Wayne Gretzky says, “You miss 100 percent of the shots you don’t take.”

Virgo: Here are your McNuggets of wisdom for the week: 1) If you ever need to resemble a fruit, be a pineapple. They stand tall and regal, are sweet and soft on the inside—just like Virgos. 2) “If serving is beneath you, leadership is beyond you.” —some guy named Murray. Three) Your new motto: “Great, another day ruined by responsibility.”

Aries: You probably won’t find it hard to believe that you’re on both of Santa’s Lists. Yes, you can be nice and sweet as Grandma’s apple pie. But you also like to be a bit naughty, too. To help you fully embrace yourself this holiday season, try embracing this line from Winston Churchill, “You can always count on Americans to do the right thing—after they’ve tried everything else.”

You can always count on Americans to do the right thing—after they’ve tried everything else.

-Winston Churchill

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A NIGHT OF DELIGHT
Mammoth’s Night of Lights gets patriotic, adds flame-throwing Snow Cats

Mammoth’s annual Night of Lights did not disappoint a huge crowd, which oohed and aahed beneath the classic fireworks display, with the addition of some sweet flame throwers on the Snow Cats that went off in tune to the music. Instead of handing out Mammoth beanies at tables this year, the ski area entrusted the duty to Santa’s elves, who tried their best to keep up with demand.

Mammoth employees Korbin Anchustigui and Ross Ladd direct traffic with a smile at Canyon Lodge as the crowd leaves the event.

Michael Peterson gets the crazy eye checking people in with Stephanie Pollard.

Landon Bear, 5, with Gina Aramanda.

Wendy Nishihawa, Laura Kranzler and Amy Buchanan show off their lightsabers. Owen McGuire rides atop dad Scott’s shoulders following the fireworks. Jean Holden and Marc Staker show some Mammoth pride.

Athena, Monique and Nicole Roebuck have a mother-daughters moment.

Above: Mono County Sheriff Ingrid Braun (left) and officers Ricci Reigle and John Pelichowski, keeping it safe.

A MERRY LITTLE CHIXMAS
Join Olympian and Mammoth Team Athlete, Stacey Cook, for some on-hill holiday fun. Get first tracks, then spend some time skiing with Stacey and fellow Chix, then cool down with a late morning yoga session. In the evening, hang up your skis and take a snowmobile tour to Minaret Vista, followed by a snowcat ride to dinner.

DECEMBER 28

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