MOUNTAIN OF MONEY

MMSA appeals tax liability

By Gorman

Mammoth Mountain Ski Area has appealed Mono County’s assessment of its taxable value for the years 2012 through 2016. There is a $250 million difference between MMSA’s assessed value and the value in its appeal. If MMSA wins this all of its appeals, the county will owe the mountain as much as $2.5 million in taxes plus 3% interest, according to county assessor Barry Beck.

“There is the potential for significant impact,” Beck said.

The appeal is scheduled for seven business days. It started Tuesday, February 19 and runs through Thursday, February 28 with a day off on Thursday, February 21.

The assessment appeal board is hearing MMSA’s case. It is made up of three members: Paul Oster, Rick Liebersbach, and Mickey Brown. They will deliberate in closed session after the hearing ends and come to a decision in the next few weeks.

The dispute stems from a longstanding agreement between the mountain and the county.

According to California Proposition 13 only two events can trigger the reappraisal of a property: change of ownership, or new construction, which only triggers an appraisal of the new construction itself.

In 2005, Mammoth Mountain was purchased by In-trawest. The county appraised the mountain’s value at that time and the assessor and mountain came to an agreement to lock in that value for a few weeks.

It turns out that the SIHD board members’ concerns were justified. According to an article in last week’s New Yorker Magazine by reporters Adam Entous and Roman Farrow titled “Private Mossad for Hire,” Benzeevi spent $230,000 on a political consulting firm that has ties to Israeli spy agencies in order to—unsuccessfully—retain control of the Tulare Regional Medical Center.

The company that Benzeevi hired was a private Israeli consulting company that employs former spies for Mossad and other intelligence services. They attempted to manipulate a local healthcare district board recall effort in Tulare. It failed spectacularly.

Both the TRMC and SIHD were allowed to break out of their agreements with HCCA. Members of the Mammoth Lakes Housing board were in attendance at the hearing and expressed their support for the grant application.

Mammoth Mountain Ski Area VP of Development Tom Hodges backed Robertson up. He said that the town has done loans like this for non-profits, and that this loan structure might not be unreasonable for the developer.

“At as known, construction in our area is very expensive. We haven’t seen the pro-forma or the details of the analysis.”

Mammoth Mountain Ski Area of Viewership Tom Hodges backed Robertson up. He emphasized the town’s desperate need for housing.

see COUNCIL, page 6
FREEDOM OF THE McCoy

So this is what’s been on my mind ...

Two stories in the Wall Street Journal Tuesday.

One was titled, “Suits on Web Access for the Blind Surge.” The lead: “Businesses with websites that can’t be navigated by the blind are getting pummeled with lawsuits.” 2,250 such suits were filed in 2018. 814 were filed in 2017.

Most, according to the story by Sara Randazzo, are settled for $20,000 or less plus an agreement to improve websites within two years.

One suit cited involved a blind man who was unable to order customized pizzas from the Domino’s website.

The second story involved fallout from tennis star Martina Navratilova’s recent op-ed which stated that transgender girls should not be allowed to compete in girls sporting competitions.

From William McGurn’s story: “In June, two transgender high schoolers in Connecticut made national headlines when they dominated the girls’ state track competition for the second year in a row. Such victories underscore Ms. Navratilova’s argument that if biological men are allowed to compete in women’s sports, girls will not be the winners.”

In the first case, I don’t get it. The blind person is not prevented from ordering a customized pizza just because the website or app isn’t cooperative. They can call - although, maybe that is what is perceived as the injustice of it all, that a person would be forced to interact with another human being in order to complete a transaction.

In the second case … I agree with Navratilova. Sometimes life just isn’t fair. Sometimes gratification isn’t instantaneous. Sometimes you have to wait around long enough until there are enough transgender girls to create a TransOlympics.

Guest Apprentice

From last Saturday’s Journal: ‘A 2010 study conducted by consultants Bain and Company found that for each additional person over seven members in a decision-making group, decision effectiveness is reduced by approximately 10%.”

DEEP SNOW WARNING!

WHAT’S THE DANGER?
It’s extremely important to be aware of SIS (Snow Immersion Suffocation).

SIS accidents occur when a skier or snowboarder suffocates from being trapped in deep snow.

Falling headfirst into a tree well – a depression of deep, loose snow that forms around a tree base – is the most common way SIS incidents can happen.

PROTECT YOURSELF
Please ski or ride with a partner. Be aware of potential SIS locations and use extra caution where deep, loose snow exists, especially near trees. If you are going to fall, attempt to do so feet first.

FOR ON-MOUNTAIN EMERGENCIES, CALL 760.934.0611

McChesney to McCoy

MHS student Rachel McChesney won the Lions Club speech contest Wednesday for her defense of freedom of the press. An independent press, of course, would be eliminated?!? Maybe we need to bring Trump in for some guest Apprentice.

The larger article was titled “The Science of Better Meetings.” My unscientific observation: the younger the person, the more they really dig meetings. It’s like meetings are their way of easing themselves into the work harness. Myself, I feel like every minute spent in a meeting is a minute not spent working on an actual project. But I feel like I have to have these meetings so that I can be an optimum 21st century handholder and engaged communicator.

In short, I have learned to sing Kumbaya in the correct key. Pathetic. But maybe I’m bitching about meetings simply because I feel plagued by inefficiency these days. That technology hasn’t made me more productive, but less. That all the texts and emails … I feel like I have to answer them in a timely fashion, and if that involves interrupting my chain of thought, I let it happen.

Why do I let it happen?

One more story from the vault. A weekend interview in the Journal from Jan. 26 with Cal Newport (Georgetown University professor) entitled “It’s Not Too Late to Quit Social Media.”

As Newport says, “To have an excellent career, you need periods of uninterrupted concentration to produce work of unambiguous value.”

I don’t know a lot of folks who feel that way right now. For most folks, at least the ones working for a living, life itself is triage - we flail away at a whole slew of stuff every day, and don’t do very much of it well.

The article had a very interesting comment from the comedian Jerry Seinfeld about “Seinfeld.”

“In most TV series, 50% of the time is spent working on the show; 50% of the time is spent dealing with personality, political and hierarchical issues of making something. We [Seinfeld and Larry David] spent 99% of our time writing, Me and Larry. The door was closed. Somebody calls. We’re not taking the call. We were gonna make this thing funny. That’s why the show was good.”

McChesney to McCoy

MHS student Rachel McChesney won the Lions Club speech contest Wednesday for her defense of freedom of the press. An independent press is something I think that people appreciate when they’re reading the news, and appreciate less when they’re making it.

What has surprised me a little bit about this business over the past few years - the increasing number of solicitations I get from public relations people. There are at least five p.r. people per week who send me “free” articles to publish. The return for them, of course, would be clever product placement.

The general rule of thumb is that public relations professionals outnum-
I could save money on writers in the process! But there would hardly be any fun or joy in that - even if joy in a very general sense has seemingly taken a backseat these days to analytics and monetization.

I mean, our local Tourism organization has a whole department devoted in part to calculating how much "free" media it’s managed to generate (by plying writers with meals and plane tickets to write cloying stories about the wonders of Mammoth) and how much that media is worth.

It would certainly be interesting if writers, at the end of every story, had to divulge all monetary gifts received during the research and writing of that story. After all, journalists make a big deal about public officials receiving such gifts.

I do miss having Dave McCoy ask me (on the special occasions when I got to see him) if I was having fun - because he knew that if you had fun everything else, including the business, would follow. So I suppose what I really celebrate is the freedom of the McCoy. Heck, I think he'd just as well do it for free.

And if the business didn't follow, well I would hardly be any fun or joy in that - even if joy in a very general sense has seemingly taken a backseat these days to analytics and monetization.

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Bob Drake has always been a few steps ahead of the rest of us. That’s why he’s talking about 2020 in 2019. He dropped the following on the office the other day.

20 Questions for 2020

Dear Editor,

1) Is lobbying, where money is paid or donated to a government official, ‘bribery’ and hence illegal?
2) Should election laws be amended so that a simple majority wins? Eliminate the electoral college?
3) Should voting be mandatory as it is in Australia?
4) Should all health related service and commodity companies be non-profit?
5) Should universal health care be provided for all citizens, a la Medicare?
6) Should primary elections all be on the same day, since early primary states get an inordinate influence?
7) Should Supreme Court justices have limited terms instead of life appointments?
8) Should all drugs be legalized, controlled and taxed like alcohol?
9) Can we have a la carte TV without ads, whereby you pay a monthly fee for minutes watched?
10) Shouldn’t teachers be paid at a rate comparable to other professionals such as doctors and lawyers, since an educated society is fundamental to a healthy democracy?
11) Should economic inequality be reduced by more progressive taxation?
12) Can we have a system of referendums whereby hot-button issues such as abortion rights can be put to a direct vote of the public to determine law?
13) Can health insurance be eliminated and money spent on premiums used directly for health care?
14) Can nuclear power be reinstated as a major energy source now that 4th generation reactors offer low risk options?
15) Is there a solution to homelessness in the USA?
16) Should higher education be more substantially subsidized?
17) Should the second amendment concerning gun rights be repealed or amended?
18) Can cyber security be established to protect both privacy and freedom?
19) Will Trump be indicted and/or impeached?
20) Will the length of life be extended in our life time?

Bob Drake
Mammoth Lakes
Mono-Mammoth Mind Meld
Mammoth Lakes and Mono County meet to talk housing, snow, and development

By Benham

Mammoth Lakes Town Council and Mono County Supervisors held a “Special Joint Meeting” on Tuesday, February 19. Instead of joining hands and singing “Kumbaya,” those gathered recited the Pledge of Allegiance and sat down. They discussed the county’s radio system, housing, disaster response and the construction of the county’s civic center.

Mammoth Lakes Trails Coordinator Joel Rathje introduced the first director of the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Coordinator, Matthew Paruolo. Paruolo is an employee of Mammoth Lakes Recreation (MLR), but he will work with both the town and county on recreation projects. His point person for the town will be Rathje and, for the county, Mono County Public Works Director Tony Dublino.

Mono County Information Technology Director Nate Greenberg talked about overhauling the county’s radio system. This isn’t new news but he was updating the board and council since he’d presented to them last year. The town is directly affected by the radio system because Mammoth Lakes Police and Fire departments use the system to talk with dispatch. The sheriff’s office, CalTrans, and CHP all use the radio system to communicate as well.

Greenberg wants to create a joint powers authority (JPA) to oversee the radio system. The JPA would consist of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, eleven fire protection districts, Mono County Office of Education, and Eastern Sierra Unified School District.

Mono County is paying Federal Engineering, a consultancy, $48,000 to create a strategic plan for the system. Greenberg said that the strategic plans will include a technical analysis, public outreach, and options for overhauling the system.

Greenberg gave what he called “a back of the envelope” estimate for the cost of the overhaul, $5 million.

Director of Mono County Community Development Wendy Sugimura talked about the county’s housing situation. The county has $200,000 set aside for housing projects. The county does not have inclusionary housing requirements, development impact fees or a land-use designation for affordable housing. There is a Housing Mitigation Ordinance that expired in November 2017 and has been updated but not adopted. The Board of Supervisors will reconsider the ordinance at its June 30 meeting when it updates the county’s housing element.

The ordinance was created by Economic and Planning Systems (EPS) Inc., a consultancy from Oakland, California. For single-family developments, the ordinance requires developers to build one unit of affordable housing for every ten units of market rate units. 10% of units must be below market rate. Of that 10%, half must be priced for moderate income households (80-120% of Area Median Income) and half must be for low income households (below 80% of Area Median Income). For multi-family developments, it is one unit of affordable housing for every 15 market rate units, that’s 6.7% of units that must be affordable. All of those units must be for low income households.

EPS created in-lieu fees for developers who do not want to build affordable units in their developments. The fee for single-family developments is $9,387 per market rate unit. For multi-family developments, the fee is $9,362 per market rate unit.

The ordinance also addresses the affordability gap. EPS’s commercial linkage fee study said, “The cost to construct new housing units is higher than can be supported by the rents or home prices that many workers will be able to pay.”

The study created maximum allowable fees for different development types. For storage and warehouse facilities, the fee is $26.40 per square foot. For commercial, it’s $71.30 per square foot. For industrial/service commercial, it’s $8.60 per square foot and for visitor accommodations it’s $94.74 per square foot.

These fees exist but have remained suspended since June 19, 2018. When the board reconsidered them on June 30, 2019, over a year will have lapsed without a housing mitigation policy. The time to develop in the county is now.

According to County Administrative Officer Leslie Chapman and Mammoth Town Manager Daniel Holler, the town and county need more staff.

“We have bodies. That’s what we need. We need capacity. So we need either shift what our priorities are and start focusing on this, which I think is a clear directive from my board. But we just haven’t figured out how to get capacity,” CAO Chapman said.

The town is hiring for three new positions: a senior planner/housing coordinator, a new associate engineer and an assistant planner. The new assistant engineer and new assistant planner have been hired and will start on March 11. Recruiting for the senior planner/housing coordinator ends February 25. The town is struggling to replace Ruth Traxler, a senior planner who moved away.

“Staffing is our Achilles heel,” Councilman Kirk Stapp said.

“The meeting then turned to disaster response,” Dan Holler said. “We don’t have enough capacity to move as much snow as we’d like to.”

In the three weeks from January 7 to 27 the town spent $65,503.50 on parts and freight for snow removal, according to the town payment approval reports. “First responders are great, but then it’s us. We don’t have enough capacity to move as much snow as we’d like to.”

LOOK WHO’S 60

From left: Teller, Cage and Joerger.

Tom Cage turns 60 on Sunday. From Joe Joerger: Best friend, family man, coach, civic leader, business partner. Many thanks for all the things you have done.

And from Lunch: Thank you for the many wagers we have made since 2004. My children and Eric Wasseman at Wells Fargo, who manages the 529 accounts, are very appreciative.
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www.thesheetnews.com

LOCAL NEWS | 5

SNOW-PIERCERS

On Thursday morning, February 21, employees of Ron Kuppens Roofing attempted to dislodge a massive icicle from the roof of the Shilo Inn. Three tied themselves to it while another chopped at it with an axe.

JOINT continued from page 4

gets thinned,” Holler said.

Mono County Public Works Director Tony Dublino updated both bodies on the county's Civic Center.

The county hired Interwest Construction Inc. for building official and inspector services. The county will pay Interwest “an amount not to exceed” $90,000 per year until the project is completed.

At Mono County’s Board of Supervisors’ meeting earlier on Tuesday, a report from Community Development Director Wendy Sugimura showed a break down of the payment to Interwest. The report said, “The plan check fee is estimated at approximately $30,000 and inspection services could potentially break down of the payment to Interwest. The report said, “The plan check fee is estimated at approximately $30,000 and inspection services could potentially be about $40,000 during each summer construction season.”

“Interwest is the same plan-review contractor that is used by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, so this group is keenly aware of town building codes,” Dublino’s staff report said.

The Interwest contract is part of the county’s decision to permit the project internally, with the assistance of outside consultants that would be under County direction,” the report said.

Town building codes still apply although the county is exempt from permitting fees.

So far, the county has completed its “First Phase plan submittal,” which includes plans for utilities, the foundation and slab. This means that they’ve submitted that part of the plans to the County Building Division for review. They’ll be finalized “in early March.”

Dublino admitted that they are a week behind on the project. The delay was caused when Dublino could not deliver plans to Mammoth Lakes Fire Department and Mammoth Community Water District during a recent storm.

SPIES continued from page 1

thanks to a federal judge’s finding in their favor. There have been accusations of co-mingling of funds, unaccounted funds, and unlawful transfers of equipment between the two hospitals, coupled with incredibly poor record-keeping and failure to respond to requests from the healthcare districts’ board members. The Tulare County District Attorney’s Office has done the heavy lifting in pursuing the troubling accusations and the potential criminal investigation into HCCA, so much so that the Inyo County District Attorney has had very little to do with the case.

SHID is open to the public and should soon come out of its Chapter 9 bankruptcy that has been ongoing for three years. TRMC has also re-opened its doors after having been closed for months because of its dispute with HCCA. The agreement between TRMC and HCCA was signed in May 2014. HCCA was being paid $225,000 a month to operate the hospital until October 2017.

The New Yorker article alleges that Healthcare Conglomerate Associates apparently spent the $230,000 on a political consulting firm, Psy-Group, based in Tel Aviv. The former Israeli spies attempted to hang on to control of Tulare Regional Medical Center by running a smear campaign against Senovia Gutiérrez, who won a 2018 recall election against then-TRMC board member Dr. Parmod Kumar, a strong supporter of HCCA. After HCCAs agreement with SHID, Dr. Kumar would be given hospital privileges at Southern Inyo Hospital and appointed as its Medical Director.

So, just how spectacularly did Psy-Group fail on behalf of HCCA?

First, they misspelled Gutiérrez’s name during a failed attempt to frame her for bribery.

-James

They misspelled Gutiérrez’s name during a failed attempt to frame her for bribery.

-Happy Hour

4-6 Mon-Fri

4-5:30 Sat & Sun

Happy Hour

JUNE LAKE BREW IN

JLB OPEN LaserCat SAYS
HOURS WINTER NOON - 8PM
OHANAS395 OPEN NOON - 5PM

SIHD is open to the public and should soon come out of its Chapter 9 bankruptcy that has been ongoing for three years. TRMC has also re-opened its doors after having been closed for months because of its dispute with HCCA. The agreement between TRMC and HCCA was signed in May 2014. HCCA was being paid $225,000 a month to operate the hospital until October 2017.

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So, just how spectacularly did Psy-Group fail on behalf of HCCA?

First, they misspelled Gutiérrez’s name during a failed attempt to frame her for bribery. Second, they created fake anti-recall websites that pretended to be community-based, using fake names of supporters to make comments against Gutiérrez. That was uncovered by supporters of the recall who noticed the similarity of the names used in posting comments and the similarity of the comments being made. Almost to be expected, accusations were made on the fake websites questioning Gutiérrez U.S. citizenship. When the election was finally held, 81 percent of Tulare voters decided to recall Kumar and elected Gutiérrez to replace him.

HCCA was soon to be replaced by the new TRMC Board of Directors.

They misspelled Gutiérrez’s name during a failed attempt to frame her for bribery.

-James

They misspelled Gutiérrez’s name during a failed attempt to frame her for bribery.

-SNOCMYS

GRILL & BAR

Happy Hour
4-6 Mon-Fri
4-5:30 Sat & Sun

Dining at 5:00
no reservations “just come on in”

*steaks *ribs *seafood *
*pasta *burgers *
appetizers & snacks *
*classic cocktails *
craft beers on tap *wines priced to drink*
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COUNCIL
continued from page 1

He also said that, by his calculation, the profit margin for the owners would be very thin. “They should be allowed to make a profit,” Hodges said. “Based on my analysis, I don’t disagree with what they are saying… Even at a 2.5% interest rate it didn’t work.”

Hodges asked council to apply for the loan and work out the finer details later. MLH board member Lindsay Barksdale said that it is exciting that a private developer wants to make affordable housing.

“We have between when the applications are due and May when awards are made to really delve in and do a much stronger negotiation,” Barksdale said.

If the town is awarded the grant, it cannot be used for any other project than that which it was applied for. It can, however, be returned to the federal government if an agreement is not reached between the town and the developer. Patricia Robertson said that this return would not be a black mark on the town for future grant applications.

The Town Council did not feel as warmly about the loan terms as the MLH board did. Councilman Kirk Cleland Hoff expressed concern that the terms are much harsher than what it was applied for. It gives them the value to sell it at the profit he is looking for,” he said. Sausser is likely right about this. Greenlaw listed the property for $6 million in February, 2018, and it is still on the market. Sausser recommended that the loan terms say that the loan must be paid back in full upon sale of the property, as it is with home loans, but he thought that Greenlaw wouldn’t go for this.

“Once he gets the mall rented that he can’t currently rent in this economy, it gives him the value to sell it at the profit he is looking for,” he said. Sausser is likely right about this. Greenlaw listed the property for $6 million in February, 2018, and it is still on the market. Sausser recommended that the loan terms say that the loan must be paid back in full upon sale of the property, as it is with home loans, but he thought that Greenlaw wouldn’t go for this.

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Councilman John Wentworth made a motion that the town apply for the grant under the conditions that town staff undertake a credible negotiation with the developer, and perform an analysis of the burden that the current loan could put on the town.

The application for the CDBG is due next week, and the town plans to submit it on Friday, February 22.

I am not anxious to put cash in the hands of a developer who paid too much for a mall that he now can’t rent.

-Bill Sausser

MUF Movement

Wednesday’s Town Council Meeting also saw steps made toward construction of a new Multi-Use Facility (MUF). Council passed a motion four votes to one stating the three next steps regarding the MUF:

1. The council prefers Mammoth Creek Park over the School Site as a location.
2. Town Staff should figure out what can be built with the current amount of money allocated, $9.2 million.
3. Town should explore alternative funding sources to fill the $3.8 million gap between current funds, $9.2, and the proposed cost, $13 million.

Not much has changed since council directed staff in December to explore the School Site (aka the current site of the ice rink) as an option. Recreation Manager Stan Brown and Public Works Director Grady Dutton put together a report recommending that the town council choose to build the $13 million park at Mammoth Creek Park over the School Site.

The staff supports Mammoth Creek Park because, according to the report, the town owns that property, and would have to lease School Site, so the former removes the burden of lease payments and also means that the town is investing capital into land it owns rather than leases.

The condition of the current ice rink means that much of it must replaced in the near future, and it will be more expensive to keep up than a new facility. Location constraints around the lot size at the School Site limit potential expansion of amenities and programming. Also, the park offers the opportunity for expansion into a community center.

The greatest hangup on this issue was the lack of funds.

Here is a list of sources for the current $9.2 million allocated: General Fund $120,000; Measure R $2,600,000; Measure U $500,000; Parks Development Impact Fees $200,000; Mello-Roos $214,400; Bond Issuance $5,500,000.

The town cannot ask for bids at $13 million until it actually has the $13 million, and so must find the $3.8 million somewhere.

This prospect worried Mammoth Lakes resident Sandy Hogan.

“This [the MUF] may have been a priority a few years ago, but now I believe that housing is number one,” she said.

“…that housing is number one…” she said.

“I don’t want to see $3.8 million taken away from housing.”

Mayor Hoff was concerned that Dutton was underestimating the price of the new facility. She cited the construction of the current rink, which took place in 2007. A roof had been included in the plans but was never installed due to a “lack of funds.”

“What is so different about us now?” Hoff asked.

Sausser elaborated, as he was on the recreation funding board at the time, that the roof price had been quoted at $1.3 million but was actually much more than that. It was merely an estimate that was incorrect. He pointed out that this $13 million price is the same as that 2007 price: an estimate.

Lynda Salcido felt that she has re-searched the issue thoroughly and was confident that the Mammoth Creek Park site is superior. She said that she believes that there are creative funding options that town staff has not explored, like soliciting funds from Mammoth Mountain.

The motion that the council passed does not guarantee the construction of the $13 million site at Mammoth Creek Park, but that is the path they are pursuing.

Once staff gets back to council with the details on the site that they could build for the $9.1 million the town currently has, and a way to get the $3.8 million, then the council will compare options and possibly make a decision.

Event funding sparks controversy

“When I see this list of funded events, we are a drunk, music listening community, and all we care about getting people to The Village to spend money there,” Mayor Hoff said about the list of special events that Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) recommended the town fund in 2019-20.

“I hope that in the future we reflect more of our core values,” she said.

MLT Director of Special Events Caroline Casey led the five member board of special event funding, which included Town Manager Dan Holler,
Markarian Sentenced

On January 18th, Amelia Markarian was sentenced to six years in prison for the killing of Chris Harper. Markarian drifted into Harper’s lane on highway 395 while she was driving drunk and struck his vehicle, killing him and leaving his wife Rhonda widowed and his daughter Mackenzie fatherless (See The Sheet January 19 issue for more).

The six year sentence for manslaughter and driving while intoxicated that Judge Stan Eller handed down was in the middle of the four, six, or eleven year sentences that Markarian’s crimes could have warranted. Markarian had fourteen months commuted from her sentence for time already served.

A disconsolate Rhonda Harper had little to say about the sentencing. “Time being served does not matter because it will not bring him back,” she said.

Now Harper is suing Dickren Markarian, Amelia’s husband, for damages caused by his alleged negligence. The car that Amelia was driving was registered in Dickren’s name. Amelia had a prior DUI conviction and Harper is claiming that it was negligent for Dickren to give his car to a woman who was known to be dangerous behind the wheel.

Dickren’s initial settlement offer was for $100,000, which was covered by his insurance. Rhonda Harper called this “insulting.”

So Harper and Markarian met in court on Wednesday to discuss the settlement. Harper’s lawyer, Doris Cheng, and Judge Eller attempted during the course of the hearing to elicit more financial information from Markarian in order to inform the settlement. Markarian did not disclose the information that they requested, and no new settlement offer was demanded. Judge Eller will continue to try to get information from Markarian, and there will be an update on the case on March 14.

Senator passes land bill

Death Valley National Park could grow by 38,889 acres if the United States House of Representatives passes an omnibus land bill that includes the Natural Resources Management Act. Of that 38,889 acres, 32,520 would be wilderness and 6,369 acres would be non-wilderness. The bill would designate 26,788 acres already within Death Valley National Park as wilderness. If approved by the House, the bill goes to the president’s desk and he has ten days to make a decision.

The Desert Bill, known officially as the California Desert Protection and Recreation Act, is a rider on the Natural Resources Management Act. Besides adding acres to Death Valley National Park, the Desert Bill would add 4,506 acres to Joshua Tree National Park. It would designate 18,000 acres in Inyo County as the Alabama Hills National Scenic area. Currently, it is a National Recreation Area under the Bureau of Land Management’s purview. According to Senator Paul Cook’s website, the reclassification of the Alabama Hills would prohibit mining and gas extraction, but continue to allow activities such as filming, hunting, fishing, climbing, biking, motoring.

200,580 acres of land would be designated as OHV Recreation Areas in Johnson Valley, Sprangler Hills, El Mirage, Rasor, Dumont Dunes, and Stoddard Valley. In total it would designate 375,500 acres as wilderness in exchange for releasing 124,000 acres of existing wilderness in the Soda and Cady Mountains.

The bill would permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LCWF). Oil and gas companies pay $900 million in royalties from offshore drilling leases into the LCWF. The LCWF grants that money to conservation projects. Use profit from extractive industries to conserve land. Funding for the fund ran out on September 30, 2018.

The bill would allow hunters to pass through national parks with a bow and arrow and open all federal lands to hunting and fishing unless specifically prohibited.

On a national scale, the bill would add more than 1.3 million acres of wilderness, protect 367 miles of rivers and shorelines, prohibit mining and gas extraction, and 200,580 acres of land would be designated as OHV Recreation Areas.

The bill would permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LCWF). Oil and gas companies pay $900 million in royalties from offshore drilling leases into the LCWF. The LCWF grants that money to conservation projects. Use profit from extractive industries to conserve land. Funding for the fund ran out on September 30, 2018.

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On a national scale, the bill would add more than 1.3 million acres of wilderness, protect 367 miles of rivers and shorelines, prohibit mining and gas extraction, create four national monuments. The Eastern Sierra Land Trust could not be reached for comment by the time The Sheet went to press.

-Penham
Christopher Platt is Mono County’s new head librarian

Christopher Platt was hired last year as the new Mono County Head Librarian. He comes from a prestigious background in New York City.

Platt was working with the New York Public Library system since 1995, and for the last two years he was the Chief Branch Library Officer. In that role, he oversaw all 88 libraries in the largest public library system in the United States. Now he oversees the seven libraries of the Mono County system.

Why leave such a high powered role? Why Mono County?

The first reason is that Platt was raised here. He grew up in Bishop. His father was a UPS driver.

He left for college in the late ’80s, and now he says that he is reacquainting himself with the Eastern Sierra.

“Mammoth is certainly a lot bigger than it was when I was a kid,” Platt said. He says that he appreciates the growth. “It makes it a really vibrant place to live and work.”

He has also noticed a culture shift in Bishop.

“Growing up in Bishop climbing was not a big thing, nowadays it is a major tourist industry,” Platt is encouraged by seeing Bishop develop this year-round outdoor attraction that stimulates the local economy.

He also likes the new Mountain Ramble beer pub.

“You can usually find me there having lunch at least once a week,” Platt said. The second reason for the move is that he craved the adventure.

Platt said that he and his partner had a house in the Catskills that they would visit to get out of NYC. They prefer the country, and fantasized about getting out of the city for good.

The second reason he came back is that there was a job for him here. When Platt started seriously looking for jobs with rural libraries the Mono County job opened up.

“It was like a sign from God,” Platt said.

Platt got the job and he and his partner packed up and moved to Bishop in October.

He said that he has already been impressed with the amount of community engagement he has seen in the Mono County library system.

“There’s a diverse community here. They are well educated. They really appreciate libraries, the outdoors, the environment, all the stuff that syncs up with me.”

The Friends of Mono County Library group has especially impressed him with their zeal.

They are really really dedicated to what a public library can be for their community.”

Platt said that the approach to running a rural library is completely different from an urban one, and it is a muscle that he wants to flex. For instance, many of the branches of the Mono County system can only afford to employ one part-time librarian. When the Benton librarian couldn’t come to town for a few days in December, Platt filled in for her.

“It has been years since I’d actually worked in a library,” Platt said. “Thank God it wasn’t too busy.”

This experience gave Platt an new appreciation for how intimately familiar this librarian is with her community and her collection.

As access to information through technology has spread, the role of the public library has come under question. Platt said that libraries have constantly been adapting to continue to be a resource for their communities.

Platt used the “Maker Space” in the Mammoth Lakes Branch as an example of adaptation. The “Maker Space” is essentially an arts and crafts room, but Platt says that it serves a high purpose for the development of young minds.

“We have a project going on right now where we are making mini quilts to give to the county animal shelters,” Platt explained. “But from my perspective those are kids learning how to create a pattern, and how to use a machine to put that pattern together, and all the steps it takes to get from point A to point Z to end up with a finished product.”

Platt said that tax-peak, story-times, early literacy outreach, and events are just a few of the programs that the library offers.

This evolution does not imply that the books and buying books has gone up in recent years. In the 1990s around 100,000 books were published per year, now it sits at around 1,000,000 books, and bookstores are thriving, according to Platt.

E-Books have failed to kill the printed book as some anticipated, though the library lends E-Books as well as hard copies.

Platt said that the future of libraries looks bright. The Millennial generation uses libraries more than any other adult generation, 53% of Millennials have used a library in the last year compared to 45% of Gen-X and 43% of Baby Boomers. This is because Millennials are the most well-educated generation in American history, and educated people like libraries. It is also because millennials were raised using libraries and are more likely to bring their kids to library events.

Platt said that his first objective in this new role is to build out youth programming. Early literacy, according to Platt, is key. Studies have shown that if a student is not reading at a third grade level by the time she exits third grade then her chances of success through high school are vastly diminished. Platt is happy with the amount of outreach that library performs with children under five, but he wants to see greater influence on children over five.

“Coming from New York, three o’clock in the afternoon you do not want to be near the doors of any of those libraries because kids are just slamming into the building... There are not as many kids coming in the afternoon as I think could be,” Platt said.

The library has the potential to make society better, according to Platt, but “If books aren’t getting used, then what’s the point?”

THE WARMING HUT
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Saturday: Mike McGuire Guitar and Vocals
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ROSES FOR NATIONAL FOREST

Inyo National Forest workers acknowledged for Rose Parade float

By Maddux

What did Smokey Bear get for his 75th birthday? A float in the Rose Parade.

On February 5th, the Inyo National Forest Service informed the Inyo Board of Supervisors that three of their employees and one volunteer had participated in the Rose Parade on January 1st. Inyo National Forest (INF) employees Levi Ray, Angel Avila, Lee Roeser, and his wife Jen built the float and rode it at the parade. Lee Roeser is a forest packer. Jen Roeser said that, “everything had to be a natural fiber.” The Smokey Bear浮标, “was covered in natural flax seed, grass seed, and rock salt,” Levi Ray said. As for the Forest Service sign, Ray said he is unaware of what natural fiber it was made of.

During the Rose Parade, Lee Roeser said he was “one of the packers, leading the string of mules, as well as in the Equest Fest Event,” he said.

Levi Ray said that he was involved in the rebuilding of the wagon that was used for the float.

“We put new wood on it, built skirt- ing to go around the outside to hang the decorations for the float,” Ray said. “I was one of the firefigh ters’ that were walking in the parade with the entry.”

Ray said that he did a demonstration on packing the mules, and “how we pack on fires, [and] when we’re supporting firefighters with the pack strings.”

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SERRANO FIRES UP ART SCENE
Serrano Fine Art gallery opens art show featuring local artists

By Maddux

On Saturday February 16, the first art show at Serrano Fine Art, “Western Miniatures,” opened in Bishop. The gallery is owned by artist and Lone Pine resident Frank Serrano.

The art show featured several local artists, as well as some from outside the Owens Valley. Local artists who had work displayed included Bruce Licher, Randy Smith, Janice Kabala, and Serrano.

Serrano said the purpose of the art show and the gallery is, “to bring the community together and bring more art to Bishop.”

Prior to the art show, Serrano said he hosted a sale of art pieces on his Instagram page, “serrofineart.” The pricing of the pieces at Saturday evening’s art show ranged from $800-$2,400. Serrano teaches En Plein Air painting workshops, where he takes people outdoors and they paint on location.

Randall Smith and his wife Kathy attended the art show because of Randall’s photographs and pastel paintings. In total, Randall had ten art pieces at the show. Randall and Kathy are both retired.

Bishop resident and artist, Janice Kabala had two of her oil paintings featured at the show. One contains Mt. Morrison. The other, Starlite Overview, Kabala said, “I live in Starlite, and this is what I see every day … The mountains are purple and this is overlooking the valley towards the Whites. It’s always gorgeous,” she said.

Both paintings, are “really common views for this area…really precious,” she said.

“I have always worked as an artist in one form or another,” she said. She received an art degree from San Francisco State with a concentration in painting and print making. She is grateful that Serrano has opened his gallery to local artists “It is a great asset to our community,” Kabala said.

Local artist, photographer, and painter from Lone Pine, Vince Leal said his art was not featured at the show, but he possibly has 20 or more art pieces in Lone Pine. Leal said that the majority of his work is “public art, mural art at [the] Chamber of Commerce in the Courtyard, painted lettering at the Film Museum, the coffee shop, the library book drop, and a light post footer (at the Hostel),” he said.

Leal is working on a project called the “Inyo 150 mural,” which is on the Napa Auto Parts store in Lone Pine.

The size of the mural is 75 x 16 feet and will take another two years to complete. He has been working on it for two years. Aside from art, Leal works as a lineman for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

“When I retire, I do plan to transition into an artist,” he said. He wants to create a street art gallery in Lone Pine.

Retired teacher Linda Arnold and retired Bishop Police Lieutenant Ray Miklaucic were also at the show. Ray Miklaucic’s favorite piece was “Wyoming Cowboy” by Grant Redden, which was already sold when Ray admired it.

About his own art Ray said, “I play with it… I’m not really good at it.”

Linda Arnold’s favorite piece at the show was “Dancin Aspens” by Carole Cooke.

“I can hear the water moving and feel the warmth of the sun coming through the trees,” she said.

see SERRANO, page 11
SPEAKING OF ...

Teacher Rebecca Thomas, and speakers Katarina Beglau, Rachel McChesney, and Zane Morrison at the Lions Club Public Speaking Competition on Wednesday, February 20 at the Edison Theatre in Mammoth Lakes. McChesney won the competition for her passionate defense of the freedom of the press.

SERRANO

continued from page 10

Husband and wife, Augustus and Diana Guay are residents of Southern Nevada and told The Sheet they heard about the art show from local artists at a print shop in Bishop. Both Augustus and Diana are artists in their own respect. Augustus is a photographer, and Diana is an artist who does acrylic on canvas. As she glanced around the gallery, Augustus and Diana decided that their favorite piece was “Poplars” by Frank Serrano.

“I like the bold contrast of the green and blue, and the bold highlights, plus dark tones. My art is very uniform, so I like how free and natural it is,” Diana said. Augustus chose, “A Short Walk” by John Budicin, because of “the shadow contrast on the mountain itself. [The] very textured nature of the wilderness, and the very muddy features of the river that is flowing—the colors are very blended,” he said.

This is Augustus and Diana’s first time in the Eastern Sierra. The gallery left an impression on the couple, because “it reminds me a lot of the Rocklin galleries in Maine... It is a very artistic town,” Augustus Guay said.

Other artists also featured in the show are from various parts of the United States: Charles Muench (Gardnerville, NV), Jean LeGassick (Cedarville, CA), John Budicin (San Bernandino, CA), Grant Redden (Wyoming), Jim Wodank (Orange County), Matt Smith (Cave Creek, AZ), Gregory Hull (Mesa, AZ), Simon Lok (Arcadia, CA), Carole Cooke (Aquila, AZ), and Curt Mattson (Cave Creek, AZ).

Serrano plans to hold shows every few months.

Linda Arnold and Ray Miclauce

Vince Leal of Lone Pine

Mammoth Hospital and Mono County Health Department are asking for your help to identify health care needs in our community!

We have developed a short survey that you can access by scanning the barcode below, or by visiting our websites.

If you would rather complete the survey on paper, please let us know and we will make sure you receive one. For questions, please contact Sarah Rea by phone at 760.924.4114 or email sarah.rea@mammothhospital.com.
BETTENCOURT BATTLES
Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra inspires veteran to resume passion for sports

By Lunch

You’d understand if Sarah Bettencourt told you she was a little tired.

Just having two boys ages three years and three months respectively would test anyone’s endurance. But Sarah Bettencourt’s challenge only begins there, a challenge befitting a Marine.

Bettencourt was medically retired from the U.S. Marine Corps in 2012 due to a rare neurological disorder which remains officially undiagnosed to this day. The disorder affects different parts of her body. Essentially, something can stop working at anytime, anywhere, though her primary symptoms are that she can’t feel from the ankle down in either leg, and the feeling in her hands comes and goes, though she usually has enough strength to grip. She also suffers from some visual impairment.

Bettencourt, who lives with her husband Matt and two boys in the San Diego area, says her disorder is service-connected, stemming from when she was training to fly helicopters.

When she first retired from the service, Bettencourt acknowledges she was pretty down. “I went from serving my nation as a Marine officer to doing nothing,” she says.

She looked into applying to graduate school programs but soon realized that based upon her physical limitations, she’d need to hire a personal assistant just to get through it. How do you take notes if you can’t convince your hand to work?

She also despaired about not playing sports. “I thought I’d never be able to do that again,” she said.

Meanwhile, she was hiding the extent of her disability from her husband, who was in the Navy and deployed at the time. She didn’t want her condition to impact his career.

She literally talks about crawling to the bath tub with her arms (because her legs had stopped working), because filling the tub was the only way she could access drinking water. It was only when she blacked out during an evening out with her former commanding officer that a wider circle learned of the secrets Sarah was keeping about the extent of her condition.

Her husband was contacted and told to come home. He’s been her caregiver ever since. “And there were days where he would literally carry me to the bathroom,” she says.

Now here comes the Mammoth part of the story.

Bettencourt learned about Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra in 2014. “They told me they’d take me skiing,” she recalls. “I kept protesting, saying I didn’t have the capacity to do it. They ignored me and told me to come up.”

They put her in a bucket on a mono ski. And she loved it. As Bettencourt explains, “DSES … is about the people. There’s that intangible feeling when you’re there [with DSES] of ‘Hey, let’s figure out how to solve this problem, because you can absolutely do this.’”

“They taught me really well how to trust my skis,” she continued. “I’ve found that if I try to stay upright, I fall, because I’m overthinking it. Whereas if I try to fall, lean forward, trust the skis … it works.”

And for Bettencourt, the experience translated to: I can get my life back. I can get my limbs back. I can get my chores back.

“They [DSES] provide the attitude and tools to help you be successful.”

The success and fun Sarah had with adaptive skiing led her to return to San Diego and form a women’s sled hockey team. She is currently a member of the U.S. Development Sled Hockey team.

Bettencourt attends 2-3 DSES events per year, both winter and summer. Summer activities include kayaking, rock climbing, hand cycling, fishing, paddle-boarding, camping …

And over time, she says she has seen her condition stabilize. A lot of that involves taking better care of herself. While she instinctively has a push, push, push to exhaustion mentality, she says she’s gotten better at saying no, resting, taking better care of herself. Eat, sleep, workout, hydration …

DSES Instructor Rick Dodson has noticed the change as well. “She was always a darn good athlete,” he said. But at the outset, there were a couple of tells which indicated when she’d had too much. “I knew it was time to take a break when her speech started slurring or if she’d start giggling a lot,” he said.

Interestingly, Dodson says he noticed Sarah’s gotten a lot stronger and has a lot more stamina since her son Tyler was born in 2015.

At home, the Bettencourts have no housekeeper. Their home has been modified with 30” counters to facilitate cooking, laundry, dishes.

“My height is kid height,” she observes wryly.

Three-and-a-half year old son Tyler has been taught to be independent at a young age. As an example, Sarah says, “When we’re at Legoland, there are certain rides he wants to do that I can’t do. So I encourage him to ask strangers to ride rides with him. And afterwards he gets off and comes running up to me and tells me all about it.”

Husband Matt, in addition to caregiving at home, also works as a military contractor (heli instructor).

As to her state of mind, Bettencourt says frankly, “I feel sorry for myself about once a day. I constantly battle with that depressive impulse … My response is to go and do something I love. But I know I can do it, that everything’s gonna be fine.”

While Bettencourt is an incredible success story (in large part due to the support of her spouse), she is an advocate for the National Wounded Warrior Center proposed to be built in Mammoth Lakes (on the Cerro Coso campus).

“I would have used it [Wounded Warrior Center] had it been available at the time I needed it,” she says.

The Center, as proposed, would allow Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra to provide support services to more than 300 veterans and their families each year. The 36-room facility would provide transitional housing designed for veterans, and include areas for recreation, learning and dining.

Veterans would also have access to educational and vocational programs, wellness and PTSD management training and therapeutic recreational opportunities.

DSES is in the midst of an $18 million capital campaign. See the facing page for details.
$7 million raised toward our $18 million goal for National Wounded Warrior Center to be built in Mammoth Lakes!

- 4,000,000 veterans with disabilities across the US
- 11,000 homeless in CA; 22 veteran suicides/day
- We need your help to save and change veterans’ lives
- Donations will be matched 2-for-1 up to $1.5 million

DONATE NOW: National Wounded Warrior Center
WoundedWarriorsMammoth.org | 760.934.0609
P.O. Box 7275, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

An initiative of Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra. Not affiliated with any other organizations.

Graphic design generously donated by Carol Schotz
BARS & MUSIC

Happy Hour / Austria Hof. 4-7 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 4-6 p.m. Friday and Saturday. See ad, p. 7.

The Liberty Sports Bar and Grill Slider Mondays, Monday's at 9 p.m. Taco Tuesday, 3 homemade tacos for $8. Wine Wednesday is 1/2 off the entire list all day, happy hour wine from 3 p.m.-close. See ad, p. 7.

Outlaw Saloon Happy Hour Mon.-Fri., Happy Hour from 4-6 p.m.

Morrison's Happy Hour Mon.-Thurs., 5-6 p.m.

The Mogul Happy Hour Sun.-Thurs. from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m in the bar with food and drink specials. Mammoth Rock ‘N Bowl Mon. DJ 9:00 p.m. Bowling & Bears. Thurs. DJ 10 p.m. Latin Night. Saturday DJ 9 p.m.

Petra's Bistro & Wine Bar Daily, 5-6 p.m. $5-10 menu items and drink specials. See ad, p. 3.

Clocktower Cellar Happy Hour: 4-7 p.m. daily. $5 dollar menu items, drink specials. Sunday: open at 10 a.m. for football. See ad, p. 3.

Roberto’s Happy Hour: 4-6 p.m. daily. Sunday: open at 10 a.m. for football. Famous Slocums Happy Hour Mon.-Fri. 4-6 p.m.; Sat.-Sun. 4-5:30 p.m. Dining at 5pm, daily, “No Reservations, just come on in” See ad, p. 5.


Giovanni’s Happy Hour daily 4-6 p.m. Large pizza and a pitcher of beer gets you free wings. See ad on this page.

Shelter Distilling Happy Hour 3-5 p.m. daily; half off all drinks. Free Spirit tasting flight 2-3 p.m. daily. See ad, p. 18.

Bleu Daily Happy Hour 5-6 p.m. $5 Beer, Wine and Small Plates.


Devils Creek Distillery tasting room hours, 2:30-5:30 p.m. every day. Location: Industrial Park (off of College Parkway, Mammoth. Tix: edisontheatre.org or at the door. Cost: $20/adult, $10/child, $18/senior or student.

TOWN STUFF

February 22-24/ Mammoth Lakes Recreation is accepting applications for Measure R & U funds. Applications at mammothlakes recreation.org/measure-r-u.

Beer lovers’ candy store Selection of more than 300 beers WHO’S YOUR PADRE?

PIONEER VILLAGE & MUSEUM

Saturday, February 23/ (cont.) Los Kung: Fu Monkeys + Abunach Punchees plays T-Bar Social Club @ 6 p.m. Genere: Mexican ska/punk band. $15 advance, $20 door, $27 ticket + R/T shuttle.

Sunday, February 24/ Inspirational Speaker Jen Gurecki presents at T-Bar Social Club on “A typical adventure cycling through Africa.” Tickets: $5. Time: 7 p.m.

Monday, February 25/ Open Mic at Black Doubt Brewing. Time: 6-10 p.m.

Bowling and Beats at Mammoth Rock and Bowl DJs Chronfucious, Dom Disko, Hocus Pocus and Kally. Time: 9 p.m.

Tuesday, February 26/ Team Trivia at Mammoth Brewing Co. Time: 7 p.m. Free. Prizes.

Wednesday, February 27/ Locals night at Rafters every Wednesday. $2 drafts. DJs.

Thursday, February 28/ Night Club with DJ Kally Quezada at Rafters. Time: 10 p.m.

Bob Lines plays Black Doubt Brewing. Genre: country. Time: 6 p.m.


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TOWN STUFF

February 22-24/ Mammoth Lakes Repertory Theatre’s “Suite Surrender” continues. Times: Thursday, Friday and Saturday @ 7 p.m., Sunday matinee @ 4 p.m. Location: Edison Theatre, 100 College Parkway, Mammoth. Tix: edisontheatre.org or at the door. Cost: $20/adult, $10/child, $18/senior or student.

JLA Banked Slalom at Mammoth Mountain. Banked slalom races open to the public, proceeds to charity. More info: see sidebar column next page.

February 22-28/ Mammoth Lakes Recreation is accepting applications for Measure R & U funds. Applications at mammothlakesrecreation.org/measure-r-u.


Saturday, February 23/ Unbound Series Halfpipe. Open to all ages and skill levels with USASA membership. Time: bib collection 7:30-8:30 a.m. @ MMST Headquarters (at base of Broadway/Chair 1). Entry fee: $45, and lift ticket/season pass required. DJ’s counted lift tickets available. Info: Ben, 760.934.2571 x3144.

A screening of “The Women in the Sand: A story of Death Valley’s Original People” at The Museum of Western Film History. Time: 1 & 3 p.m. More info: see sidebar column next page.
Mt. Whitney Lottery

The Mt. Whitney Lottery, the process which awards both day and overnight hiking permits to the tallest mountain in the contiguous United States, has been rescheduled to start on February 22, 2019.

Typically, the lottery begins February 1 through www.reserveamerica.com. This year it was delayed this year due to the shutdown of the federal government. The lottery will open February 22nd at 7 a.m. and close February 28th at 5 p.m. (All times are in Pacific Time Zone)

Lottery results will be posted on March 24th. If you are unsuccessful in winning your date the lottery can try again on May 1st when the unclaimed dates will be made available for web reservations. Info: recreation.gov.

Banked Slalom

The 7th Annual JLA Banked Slalom will take place on Lower Dry Creek at Mammoth Mountain and registration on Friday, February 22 from 6-8 p.m. and races on Saturday and Sunday.

The event is in honor of professional snowboarder Jeff Anderson who died in 2003. Anderson grew up riding Mammoth Mountain. All proceeds from the races will go to The JLA Project, a foundation in Anderson’s honor which was responsible for building and now maintaining the Volcom Brothers Skate Park in Mammoth Lakes.

Registration is $500 for Pro Men and Women, $50 for Pro Masters (age 40+), and $50 for Amateur Men and Women. Kids 16 and under and moms can enter for free, but donations are appreciated.

The Pro, Amateur, Master’s and Kids’ Elite races take place Saturday, Mom’s and Kids races are Sunday.

There is a mandatory rider meeting on Saturday at 8 a.m. at the Mountain-side Conference Center. Saturday races start at 10 a.m. Sunday races start at 11:30 a.m. with rider check in at 9:30 a.m. Registration for Saturday races is Friday 6-8 p.m. Registration for Sunday races ends on Saturday at 5 p.m. There is no day of registration. Snowboarders only. Info: mammothmountain.com

Toyota Grand Prix

The Toyota U.S. Grand Prix comes to Mammoth Mountain March 4-9.

The event includes ski and snowboard style and halfpipe competitions. Monday and Tuesday (March 4 & 5) are training days.

On Wednesday, ski halfpipe qualifying is 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. and snowboard halfpipe qualifying is 8 a.m.-3 p.m. On Thursday, snowboard halfpipe qualifying is 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. and ski halfpipe qualifying is 8 a.m.-4 p.m. On Friday, snowboard halfpipe style finals are 9:30-11 a.m. and ski halfpipe finals are 1-2:30 p.m. On Saturday, ski style takes place 9:30-11 a.m. and snowboard halfpipe style finals are 1-3 p.m.

Mammoth athletes who are competing include Chloe Kim, Judi Henkes, Root Smoot, Maddy Mastro, Josh Bowman and more. Location: Un-bound Main Park/Main Lodge. Info: mammothmountain.com

TOWN STUFF

Saturday, February 23/ (cont.)

Bodie Hills Winter Oyster Bowl hosted by Friends of the Inyo. Meet at High Sierra bakery in Bridgeport at 9:00 a.m. Time: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Bring water, lunch, snacks, camera, and skis or snowshoes. Snowshoes can also be borrowed. RSVP: wendy@friendsoftheinyo.org

Sunday, February 24/ Sierra Club snowshoe. Route: Blue Diamond Nordic Ski Route through the Knolls, 5 miles round trip, leisurely pace. Meet at Union Bank parking lot, Minaret Mall at 9 a.m. Info: Dick, 760.709.5050.

Monday, February 25/ Bishop City Council Meeting at the City Council chambers, 301 West Line Street. Time: 6 p.m.

Tuesday, February 26/ Business After Hours at the Sierra Nevada Resort and Spa. Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce’s monthly mixer. Enjoy a drink while networking. Price: $10. Time: 5:30-7 p.m. Info: info@mammothlakeschamber.org

Mono County Economic Development, Tourism, and Film Commission Meeting at the Lee Vining community center. Time: 10 a.m. Address: 296 Mattly Ave, Lee Vining.

Bishop Planning Commission meets at the City Council Chambers, 391 West Line Street. Time: 6 p.m.

Inyo County Board of Supervisors meets at the County Administrative Center, 224 N. Edwards, Independence. Time: 4-6 p.m.

Wednesday, February 27/ Long Valley Hydrologic Advisory Committee Special Meeting at the Town/County Conference Room in Mammoth Lakes, in Minaret Mall above Giovanni’s Pizza. Time: 10 a.m.

Bishop Parks and Recreation Commission meets at the City Council Chambers, 301 West Line Street. Time: 5:15 p.m.

UPCOMING

Thursday, February 28/ Community Coffee with Mammoth Lakes Tourism and Chamber of Commerce at Starbucks on Main Street. Receive a free drink and discuss tourism with staff. Time: 8-10 a.m.

Apres Ski with Valle Nevado at Shelter Distillery. Receive a free alcoholic beverage and learn about summer skiing on the Andean mountain of Valle Nevado on your IKON Pass. Time: 4-6 p.m.

The Future of a Mountain Town: A Community Dialogue hosted by Mountain Ventures Summit at Canyon Lodge. Panel of speakers and discussion on mountain towns. Free. Cash Bar. Doors Open 7 p.m. Speakers at 7:30 p.m. Info: mountainventuressummit.com

Friday, March 1/ Bodly went at the warming hut. Travelling adventure storytelling show and podcast recording. Time: 6-9 p.m. Bring your best adventure stories. Price: under age 12 free, $5 for 12-16, $10 for 16 and above, $20 for families.


Mule Deer Migration Corridor field trip with Eastern Sierra Land Trust and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. More info: see sidebar column this page.

June Lake Winter Festival. Check out the best snowman creations around town from 9 a.m. to noon.

Spring Craft and Vendor Fair. Sponsored by The Bishop Fun Bunch. First 15 guests get to make a free craft project.

Bishop City Council Meeting

AT THE MOVIES

Minaret Cinemas

Alita: Battle Angel (PG-13): In 2563, cyborg fights for her life and her identity.

Isn’t It Romantic (PG-13): Starring Rebel Wilson as a woman who hates rom-coms, then wakes up in one.

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

Breakfast Club Special

"Friday March 1, come on in for a creative array of breakfast and lunch specials prepared by Guest chefs that think they know what they are doing. One Day Only...You don’t want to miss this. Order whatever you want...Eat what you get!!!" Only... You don’t want to miss this. Order what you want...Eat what you get!!!

Mule Deer Field Trip

On Saturday, March 2, join Eastern Sierra Land Trust and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for a field trip to the Round Valley mule deer population’s migration corridor. Timothy Taylor a biologist with Cal Fish & Wildlife will lead the tour and focus on how drought and fire affect deer populations. The event is free. Please don’t bring dogs. For details on the meeting location and RSVP contact www.Marie@eslt.org or 760.873.4554.

America’s Hockey Week

Mammoth Ice Rink celebrates Hockey Week in America on Friday February 22nd and Saturday the 23rd. On Friday know what you are doing. On Saturday the Mammoth Stars youth hockey team plays Nevada Junior Wolfpack. Try hockey for free (free sticks and skates) from 4:30-5:30 p.m. This weekend goal shootout competition takes place 6-8 p.m. Location: Mammoth Ice Rink, behind the Library. Info: 760.965.3085.

The Women in the Sand

On Saturday, February 23, The Museum of Western Film History in coordination with the Eastern California Museum, will screen “The Women in the Sand: A Story of Death Valley’s Original People”. The screening starts at 1 and 3 p.m. Location: Museum of Western Film History, Lone Pine.

Synopsis: Timbisha Shoshone elders Pauline Esteves, 93, and Madeline Esteves, 84, tell the story of their tribe’s history in Death Valley.

Steve Jarvis, the film’s writer, producer, and director will host a Q&A session after the 1 p.m. screening. The screening is free. The 1 p.m. screening is completely reserved. RSVP required for the 3.p.m. screening. Info/RSVIP: 760.876.9909.

AARP Tax Help

Free tax help through April 15th from the AARP Foundation Tax Aide programs in Bishop and Mammoth. People with low and moderate incomes qualify for the help.

In Bishop at the NIH Birch Street Annex, appointments are available Wednesday afternoons, Friday afternoons and Saturdays. To schedule an appointment, call 760.937.1397. In Mammoth at the Mammoth Lakes Library, appointments are available Monday through Thursday and Saturday afternoons. For an appointment, call 760.934.5674. Spanish speaking assistance available and walk-ins welcome.
NO CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

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

- Bilingual HR Personnel M/B $8 DOE
- Installation Center M/B $15 to $20
- Housekeepers & Housemen M $15 to $17
- Wood Tech-Mechanics M/B $15 to $20
- Snow Shovelers M/S to $20
- MCW Manual M $18.41 to $22.35

Class A/B Driver (Rental Car) M $19 to $28

Master/Journey Carpenter M $32+ DOE

Call 760.924.0523 or 760.873.8599
See our full job list online
www.SieraEmployment.com

Mammoth Rock & Bowl/Mammoth Rock Brasserie has the following positions available:

- General Manager Part Time M $17 DOE
- Head Bakers M $17 DOE
- A/C Technician M $17 DOE
- Kitchen Staff M $12 DOE
- Bar Staff M $12 DOE
- Maintenance Technician M $12 DOE
- Bartenders M $15 DOE

Call 760.924.2642 (ext. 112)
www.enjoyelixir.com/jobs

www.cityofmammothlakes.ca.gov/jobs

Help Wanted

Alpenholz Lodge is accepting applications for winter employment. We are looking for full and part time team members for year round and seasonal positions. Applicants must be able to work weekends and holidays. We are looking for bright, friendly and night shift available. Please apply in person at 6080 Minaret Rd, Mammoth.

Mammoth/Bishop Domino’s Hiring!
Come work in a fun, fast paced environment! We are looking for Pizza Makers, Shift Managers, and Drivers! Hours are typically from 5pm-11pm closing daily on Sunday through Wednesday, and 11am-11pm on Thursday through Saturday. We are looking for candidates who are coachable, who can multitask, and who can handle pressure. When the RUSH comes, we need employees who are prepared to serve the customers in the best and most efficient way. All applicants must be able to pass a background check and, Drivers must have a Good Motor Vehicle Record with three or less tickets in the last 3 years. Apply in store at 1339 Rocking W Dr. In the Bishop Plaza, same building as Rite Aid, or Mammoth 1394 Meridian across from Vons. We are the newest restaurant in town and everybody is hungry! If you think you handle the excitement, WE WANT YOU!

Mammoth Spa Creations has FT positions in spa maintenance, vacation, accrual, benefits and paid holidays. Experience preferred. Some heavy lifting and a background and clean DMV is required. Call 760.924.3001 or stop by the store at 1401 Tavern Rd. in Mammoth.

Stellar Brew is hiring! Kitchen staff, baristas, and a baker are needed. Be an integral part of the community while working with an energetic crew of awesome individuals. Pay competitive, many benefits. Hiring for year round and seasonal positions. Please email stellarbrew@gmail.com for all the details!

Samurai Restaurant and Bar seeks Housekeeper, kitchen staff, servers, Bartender. Apply in person, bring resume, 3-5 p.m., ask for邉he manager.

Second Chance Thrift Shop seeks bright, energetic, sales associate must be able to lift at least 40 lbs, and have some work experience in a busy retail environment. Apply within. Resume. 501 Old Main St. mammothbakeshop@gmail.com

zPizza hiring delivery driver, pizza chef, casheur. Hiring PT/FT for all positions. Please apply either in-store in Do-It Center mall or email at mammothbakeshop@gmail.com

Mammoth Spa Creations offers Office/ Sales Associate position, which incl. vacation accrual, benefits and paid holidays. Experience preferred. Some heavy lifting, a clean background and clean DMV is required. Call 760.924.3001 or stop by the store at 1401 Tavern Rd. in Mammoth.

Full Time Hospitality Position Seeking responsible, reliable personnel for busy rental management company. Excellent phone/customer service skills, attention to detail required. Previous reservation or administrative experience preferred. Full-time 32-40 hours per week, year-round position paid, package. Please email resume to sarah@mammothsierraonline.com

Crowley Lake Fish Camp is looking to hire a chef for our summer outdoor restaurant. We are a part of our team and enjoy a relaxed and beautiful work atmosphere. Pay starts at $16 per hour and the hours are 10am to 3pm Friday through Sunday. Please send Able an email at crowleylakefishcamp@gmail.com to learn more or apply.

Temporary Farmworkers – 3/4 contract hrs and the hourly rate noted below guaranteed (unless the required wage rate is rescinded/enforced by court order or other government or a higher or lower wage is required by federal regulation). Piece rates and/or additional monetary benefits may also apply. Tools/supplies and, if applicable, worker housing provided. Pay guaranteed and will be bursed at 50% of contract and upon completion of contract (earlier if appropriate). 20 hr/week minimum and a workweek is required. To apply, contact the State Workforce Agency (SWA) below or any local SWA.

Job OPENINGS

Mammoth Lakes
Senior Planner $77,737 - $104,176
Senior Planner Housing Coordinator $77,737 - $104,176

www.thesheetnews.com
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FUNDING

continued from page 6

MLT Director John Urdi, Recreation Manager Steve Ford, and Market Manager of Community Director Ken Bringle

The board had $125,000 to allocate, and $320,900 in requests from event managers. 35 different events applied for funding this year, as compared to 16 in 2018.

The awards were made on February 7. Kristin Reese of the Mono Arts Council (MAC) was one applicant who did not receive funding for her events. Labor Day Festival of the Arts and Mammoth Celebrates the Arts 4th of July were told to apply for Measure U funding instead. Reese said that she was confused by the recommendation to take Measure U funding, which is for programming, not events, and MAC already receives $21,000 in Measure U funding annually, so reapplying for it would be ineffectual.

Reese and the selection committee sat down in closed session to discuss why MAC was snubbed. Reese was told that because MAC events are long-standing and profitable, and because that profit goes directly to MAC’s programming, the event funding would essentially be going directly to fund programming, which she thought was unfair.

Caroline Casey’s committee recommended that five events seek Measure U funding instead of special events funding, and Casey said that it was because they were asking for programming funding for things like meetings instead of events. Mark Deeds said during the public hearing that the town does not commit enough to events funding.

“The special events funding has been stagnant for three or maybe four years,” Deeds said. “If the number is not growing it is going backwards.

Deeds asked that the council allocate more money to special events because they spur the economy of the town.

Councillman Sauer said that he would love to have a half a million dollar budget in special events funding, but the revenue surpluses the town has seen recently most likely to go backfilling maintenance, paying for police, and staffing the planning department among other things. He also said that he does not envy the committee that must make the decisions.

“This is one of the hardest things that we are asked to do all the time,” he said.
Notice of Ordinance

ORDER NO. 1-19
AN ORDINANCE OF THE MONO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Amending Ordinance No. 1-19, adopting Title Two, Parts A and B, Multi-Family Residential (MFR) Land Use Designation and B) Short-Term Rentals in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and consistent with the Mono County General Plan.
WHEREAS, the addressing the housing crisis through policy is identified as one of Mono County's 2018 strategic priorities; and
WHEREAS, in a priority setting exercise on housing programs, the Board of Supervisors expressed strong support for regulatory changes that improve housing production potential; and
WHEREAS, minimum lot sizes in the current MFR development regulations create potential barriers for certain types of multi-family projects that can meet density standards; and
WHEREAS, outreach was conducted to the Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPACs) with MFR designations in their jurisdictions including Mono County, Lassen County and Long Valley/Crosby Lake, and
WHEREAS, not owner-occupied short-term rentals that run with the land have been under moratorium since March 2017 while policies and regulations have been under development; and
WHEREAS, a General Plan Amendment was adopted in April 2018 removing the June Lake area plan unit and short-term rental regulations; and
WHEREAS, outreach was intimidatingly conducted to the Antelope Valley RPAC, Bishop Chamber RPAC, Mono Basin RPAC with a special meeting in Mono County, and Long Valley/Paradise/Small Meadows RPAC, and community meeting since April 2018 to refine short-term rental policies and regulations for those communities; and
WHEREAS, the RPACs deliberated and, when possible, made recommendations or provided direction for policy and regulation refinements which were incorporated into the proposed amendment; and
WHEREAS, daily noticed public hearings where held before the Planning Commission on January 17, 2019, and the Board of Supervisors on February 12, 2019; and
WHEREAS an Addendum to the 2015 RTP/General Plan Update (GPRU) Environmental Impact Report (EIR), as modified by the Board of Supervisors now makes the required findings and adopts GVN 19-16 A) a new section in the General Plan Land Use Element.
NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF MONO ORDERS FOLLOWS:
SECTION ONE: The Board of Supervisors certifies the Addendum for GPA 19-01 A) Multi-Family Residential Land Use Designation and B) Short-Term Rentals.
SECTION TWO: The Board of Supervisors finds that General Plan Amendment 19-01, including all text changes to the Land Element of the Mono County General Plan pertaining to A) Multi-Family Residential Land Use Designation and B) Short-Term Rentals, which are attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference, is consistent with the General Plan as well as all applicable area plans.
SECTION THREE: The Board of Supervisors further finds that the proposed area plan text amendments of GVN 19-01 are consistent with the countywide General Plan.
SECTION FOUR: This ordinance shall become effective 30 days from the date of its adoption and final passage, which are consistent with the countywide General Plan pertaining to A) Multi-Family Residential Land Use Designation and B) Short-Term Rentals, which are attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference, is consistent with the General Plan as well as all applicable area plans
SECTION FIVE: This Ordinance shall become effective 30 days from the date of its adoption and final passage, which are consistent with the countywide General Plan pertaining to A) Multi-Family Residential Land Use Designation and B) Short-Term Rentals, which are attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference, is consistent with the General Plan as well as all applicable area plans.
SECTION FIVE: This ordinance shall become effective 30 days from the date of its adoption and final passage, which are consistent with the countywide General Plan.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this 19th day of February, 2019, by the following vote, to wit:
AYES: Supervisors Corless, Gardner, Halferty, and Stump.
NOES: None
ABSENT: Supervisors Peters.
ABSTAIN: None.

Stacy Corless, Vice Chair
Mono County Board of Supervisors

ATTEN:
Schwartzen Dedman
Deputy Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
Marty Montour
County Counsel

"A COMPLETE COPY OF EACH EXHIBIT LISTED IS ON FILE WITH THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND IS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION AND COPYING IN TANGE OFFICE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC RECORDS ACT, CHAPTER 5 OF DIVISION 7 OF TITLE 1."
LIFE ISN’T FAIR ...

and leave your Prius at home

By Hartley

I am sick of the mentality in America to make everything FAIR. Consider the complaining in this year’s NFL playoffs regarding the overtime rules. The Chiefs and Patriots were tied 31-31 after regulation in the AFC Championship. The Patriots won the overtime coin toss and drove down the field on their first possession to win the game. Chiefs fans argue their team should have had a chance to match the score. Why? A championship team should be able to make a stop when it needs to. I had to watch the Chiefs pretend to play defense all year. Their defense was one of the nine worst in NFL HISTORY this year in terms of yardage surrendered. That is why they lost.

Then Saints fans sued over a bad call and ultimate loss against the Rams. Sure, the call was atrocious. Yes, they should have fired the officials involved. But the Saints had the Rams at the end of regulation. Poor play calling stopped the clock and gave the Rams too much time to even the score at the end of regulation. Then the Saints won the overtime toss. Did they drive down the field for the score? No. Brees threw an awful interception. The Saints had their chances.

Pet peeve: Pop-Up ads. Get it. They make money on the ads, and they gotta sell stuff. But come on, man. Back in the day, these ads had a big X so you could easily close them. Now they get all clever and try to wash out the X or hide it somewhere you won’t look. They try to confuse you by swapping words so you think you want to click YES instead of NO.

So if you hide the X, you’re just assuming I will say ... AH SCREW IT I GUESS I WILL READ THE DAMN AD AND BUY SOME-THING. Does this strategy actually work on sentient human beings?? Then I realize … it must. Someone is falling for it. How lazy and stupid are we as a society when this crap works? It’s like people accepting checks they know they don’t deserve … clicking on links to reset all their financial information with fraudsters … sending money to get their grandkids out of Croatian prisons because they didn’t think to call the parents and do a little fact-checking. So that’s the basic premise: that there are completely lazy and stupid people out there. And these fraudsters and sketchy companies are making a lot of money, because the premise is correct. And Visa and Mastercard make a lot of money too, ‘cause they charge a premium to merchants, in part to cover the fraud risk, and then charge the bad sacks with spending addictions another premium in interest. It is sad as hell. And every day as a banker, I get another example of it.

Snowmageddon 2019. We had a major storm in the Seattle area. I have 23 inches of snow in my yard. In an area prepared for about 4 inches once every decade. But everyone knew it was coming. Everyone. But I have to pass car after car after abandoned car on my way to work because people in their PRIUS’s just found out they aren’t good in snow and ice. Like driving your environmentally-friendly PRIUS or SMART CAR means Mother Nature gives you a pass on bad weather.

And then the people ... ohh the people who walk into the bank. I AM SURPRISED YOU GUYS ARE OPEN TODAY. But if we weren’t open, you would be pulling on the door and bitching we are closed. So why say it? Just don’t say it. It’s irritating. And the people, ohh the people … hey, are you guys gonna open early or stay open late for people having trouble getting to the office during regular hours? Why would I do that? Why? Snow means you have to have all day access to the $5.66 in your account. No, we’re not staying open early or opening late for people having trouble getting to the office during regular hours? Why would I do that? Why? Snow means you have to have all day access to the $5.66 in your account? No, no and no. And you are like the thousandth person to tell me that today.
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SHEET SURVEY

Because it has been snowing a lot ...

The Sheet asked people on the street: What do you do when you’re snowed in?

“Ski backcountry all day.”
- Sven and Nadine Syfrig, Switzerland

“Try to get my dog out at least.”
- Kyler Andresen, Mammoth Lakes

“Go split board, safely. Sleep. Go to the hot springs. I try not to let the snow stop me. When it’s cold I eat a lot because I burn more calories. I like inclement weather - love the snow. There are so many sports. Ice climb, go on the mountain and watch the lifts not work.”
- Mark Sicola, Mammoth Lakes

“Taxes.”
- Sarah Asa, Mammoth Lakes

“I would spend time watching rugby or reading a book.”
- Dave Leonard, Mammoth Lakes

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