Sandy Hogan stays in the Mammoth fray

By Gorman

Citizen Sandy Hogan speaks at Mammoth Town Council’s meeting on Wednesday. Sandy Hogan speaks at Mammoth Town Council’s meeting on Wednesday. She is practically a roaming board member for Mammoth Lakes’s non-governmental organizations and town council. She see HOGAN, page 8

WHO WANTS TO BE IT?

Answer: Everybody. Putting the Green in Greenberg

By Benham

Mono County completed a compensation study for the salaries of its entire staff. At her final Board of Supervisors meeting on Wednesday, April 18, County Administrative Officer (CAO) Leslie Chapman along with Human Resources (HR) Director Dave Butters presented the study’s findings and made recommendations to the board.

They recommended $226,984 in salary increases across the staff, which is a 4.6% increase in at-will contract expenditures. Total at-will expenditures are $4,934,434.78. (At-will employees are non-elected.)

The county included funds for a 5% increase in its 2019-2020 budget. The salary increases came in 0.4% under budget. Supervisors unanimously approved the recommendation with a 4-0 (Supervisor Jennifer Halferty was absent.)

Initially, the county hired a consultant to do the study. It ditched the consultant.

The study compared county salaries to those of fifteen counties: Amador, Calaveras, Colusa, Glenn, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Mariposa, Nevada, Plumas, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, and Tuolumne. These counties were considered similar because of population of county, budget size, county staff size, and five year average wages.

They began with base pay and added longevity, deferred compensation, insurance, social security, county contributions to PERS.

The county calculated that Mono County’s cost of living merited an 11.3% increase from the median salary of the comparable counties. The county see SALARY, page 14

NO BOWLONEY

Dylan Okrowski jumping the gap between two hips at the Holy Bowly on Mammoth Mountain on Thursday. For more see p. 18.

CITIZEN SANDY

Sandy Hogan stays in the Mammoth fray

By Gorman

“Citizen” is not an idle title. It represents enfranchisement, the endowment of certain rights, but it also represents an obligation. Citizens are called by virtue of their title to be engaged in the governance of the society to which they belong. A democracy is only as active as its citizens, and few understand this as well as Citizen Sandy Hogan.

Hogan was given the Spirit of Mammoth award by Mayor Shields Richardson in 2017. She is practically a roaming board member for Mammoth Lakes’s non-governmental organizations and town council. She see HOGAN, page 8

William White and Jessica Diaz of Big Pine’s new coffee shop, Brewed Awakenings. For more, see story page 15.
CARPOOL KARAOKE

If you like Mammoth’s current Town Council, you’re in luck, because they’ll be serving four months longer than anticipated.

Council voted at its regular meeting Wednesday to move Council elections, traditionally held in June, to November beginning in 2020. The reason for the change is pretty simple. Town Attorney Andrew Morris said the state’s move of its presidential primary to March (to gain more relevance in the nominating process) necessitated the change, as municipal elections have to coincide with state elections.

Leaving the new options as March or November. Councilmember Lynda Salcido led off the discussion by saying she couldn’t possibly make a decision until she had heard from every other conceivable board in the town and county. She felt it would be “confusing” to voters if all entities weren’t in alignment in choosing the same election day.

Not a Trumanesque stance. More of a Truman Show stance. The show must go on ... and on ... and on.

Mayo-Pro-Tem Bill Sauser then blissfully intervened. “We can be the trendsetters,” he said, suggesting Council should demonstrate some leadership on the issue. Both he and Councilman Wentworth thought March would be bad timing and would potentially politicize the budget planning process.

Council voted unanimously for November, which also gives each sitting Councilmember an extra four months in office.

In other Council action Wednesday, the Town accepted a bid for its Municipal Signage and Wayfinding project.

The project involves 81 signs, built from Corten steel i-beams and designed to not only withstand the area’s weather, but also adaptable in terms in being able to change out the messaging.

The bids came in higher than staff and consultant estimates.

The winning bid from Express Sign and Neon Co. was $497,870. The project involves 81 signs, built from Corten steel i-beams and designed to not only withstand the area’s weather, but also adaptable in terms in being able to change out the messaging.

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The town hopes to use $100,000 from the Joint Tourism Reserve it holds with Mammoth Lakes Tourism to help fund the project.

The Sheet raised the obvious question as to why ESTA is essentially providing valet service at approximately $1,500/month when their parents could be, oh I don’t know, arranging their own carpool?

While Moores wants to ditch the service entirely and use the money for recruitment and retention of drivers, or perhaps an improvement of the Snowcreek Athletic Club bus stop, Mayor Pro-Tem Bill Sauser would prefer to see regular service out to Old Mammoth, perhaps with a smaller bus and an extension of the Purple Line making the loop at Red Fir.

Citizen Sandy Hogan said you’ve got a million bucks in the transit reserve. If you have the dedicated money, she said, provide the service. That’s what the voters voted for back in 2002.

According to the Sheet’s research, the service costs ESTA $80/hour to run and services between 4 and 7 children daily.

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Council also heard from Eastern Sierra Transit Authority Director Phil Moores, who suggested that maybe it’s time for ESTA to kill the limited fixed route bus service on Old Mammoth Road now that the school year is almost over.

Currently, ESTA runs a small bus up to Red Fir, not specifically to get schoolchildren (because that’s apparently not allowed, for public transit to serve as school transit. It’s okay if it happens, but it can’t be planned. Wink wink, nudge nudge) but conveniently, the bus runs at the optimum time to get schoolchildren in the area every morning and return them conveniently home every afternoon.

The service runs midweek only.

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Councilman John Wentworth was clearly annoyed by the whole mess, and by the repetition of talking points made on this issue since the 21st century began.

He pointedly told Moores that his predecessor (John Helm) did an analysis of this route, service levels, people served. There’s data to be examined. So go examine it, and then come back to us when you have something specific and well-thought out.

Ouch.

April Fool’s Day has passed. And I assure you the following is not a joke.

This week I was advised to log onto the Visit Mammoth homepage to see Mammoth’s current Town Council, you’re in luck, because they’ll be serving four months longer than anticipated. Council voted at its regular meeting Wednesday to move Council elections, traditionally held in June, to November beginning in 2020. The reason for the change is pretty simple. Town Attorney Andrew Morris said the state’s move of its presidential primary to March (to gain more relevance in the nominating process) necessitated the change, as municipal elections have to coincide with state elections.

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This week I was advised to log onto the Visit Mammoth homepage to check out the new marketing campaign.

It reads: Summer and Winter = Swinter. Welcome to Mammoth Lakes’ Newest Season.

Here’s how they pitch it.
We thank [JLJF5] for their sponsorship.

See you at the Jubilee!

**SPECIAL EASTERN SIERRA LOCALS DISCOUNT PASSES (SAVE $50)**

Use your zipcode as the promo code when ordering on Eventbrite to unlock the discount. Expires May 4th.

**TICKETS:** junelakejamfest2019.eventbrite.com

**INFO:** monoarts.org/june-lake-jam-fest

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**Easter Weekend**

**April 20**

*Earth Day*

2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Celebrate Earth Day with informational booths, DJ mash up, Woolly, and more!

**April 21**

*Easter Sunday Parade*

2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Join us for our annual Easter Sunday Parade with Easter Bunny and Woolly, and lots and lots of candy...Happy Easter 2019!

ALL FREE IN THE PLAZA

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**FIFTH ANNUAL**

**JUNE LAKE JAM FEST**

**Friday**

**Saturday**

**Sunday**

Sept 6-7-8 2019

**Gull Lake Park**

**June Lake Loop**

**RESERVED BY**

Mono Arts Council

**A BENEFIT FOR MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS**

**REVIEWS:** junelakejamfest2017.eventbrite.com

**INFO:** monoarts.org/june-lake-jam-fest

We thank [JLJF5] for their JLJF5 sponsorship.

See you at the Jubilee!
Beyond “virtue signaling”

Dear Editor,

When have you seen the government correctly identify a problem, then formulate and implement a solution that reduces the problem in any significant way? It is very difficult for the government to make a situation better. It is very easy for it to make the situation worse.

California’s socialist oligarchy mandating by law the use of “green energy” has significantly increased economic inequality. Californians pay 60% more, on average, than the rest of the nation for electricity. This increased cost is the direct result of users subsidizing renewables such as solar and wind. If solar and wind are so worthwhile, they shouldn’t need government subsidies or mandates. California has the most stringent regulations for its gasoline in the nation which is why it costs about $4 per gallon while the rest of the nation pays ~$2.50 per gallon.

The new state law requiring solar panels on all new construction will have a significant impact on making housing less affordable throughout the state. A $200 billion industry – that is a lot of green. The focus is on profits for the large waste hauling monopolies who manage these facilities - not protecting the environment - while the local governments are inept at overseeing them.

The L. A. Times reported last February that Californians are losing nearly half a billion dollars a year in recycling deposits. China is in a tailspin as are most other state recycling deposits. China lost $1 billion dollars a year in recycling deposits.

Glass is essentially sand worth ~$6 per ton and state law mandates it be recycled. Transporting a ton of sand to make another ton and often onto China to be recycled. Global recycling is a $300 billion industry – that is a lot of green. The focus is on profits for the large waste hauling monopolies who manage these facilities - not protecting the environment - while the local governments are inept at overseeing them.

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The most iconic destinations. The most unforgettable experiences. The Ikon Pass returns with 38 unique destinations across the planet. Discover 3 unique pass options to choose from including a Fort membership + Ikon Pass, as well as discounted child passes, renewal savings and a new payment plan (only $199 down).

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Foresight 2020?
Construction on Mono County office building is underway

By Benham

Construction on Mono County’s Civic Center located between the police station and hospital in Mammoth Lakes started up again on April 8.

At the Mono Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, April 16, County Public Works Director Tony Dublino admitted they were a week behind schedule. They were supposed to start on April 1.

“The target date of completion is still February 2020,” Dublino said.

In the fall of last year, the county’s design-build contractor Roebbelen began grading the site. Workers cleared snow off the site and are now re-compacting and excavating the site to prepare it for more grading and the pouring of the foundation.

This is considered Phase I of the project. There are three phases total. Phase II is the construction of the building’s shell. Dublino called it the “exoskeleton.” The county anticipated submitting plans for Phase II yesterday. Review of those plans is due by May 13. If approved and a permit is issued, Roebbelen can start construction on the same day.

As of Tuesday, April 16, the project is estimated to be $856,000 or 4% over budget. The total budget is $20.5 million.

Dublino provided a “so-called value engineering spreadsheet,” which outlined costs already cut and potential cuts to the budget.

Public Works and Roebbelen have already cut $705,132.50 from the project. Those cuts include $134,093.75 for wood trim on the outside of the building.

Phase III consists of interior touches and smaller exterior stuff.

Earlier this year, Mono County Public Works Department along with Roebbelen finalized the floor plans for the building. There are two stories with a semi-open floor plan.

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SHOP FOR A CAUSE
AT THE CAST OFF!

Rhiannon’s Kids
SATURDAY, APRIL 20TH
11 AM - 3 PM

Rhiannon’s Kids is a financial assistance program at Mammoth Hospital designed to help families of pediatric patients with expenses for out-of-area care. The Mammoth Hospital Auxiliary has pledged to donate and match all proceeds from The Cast Off on Saturday, April 20th to Rhiannon’s Kids.

For more information visit
mammothhospital.org/giving-back/rhiannonskids/
CIVIC continued from page 6

building, $56,343.75 for wood trim inside the building, and $9,900 in soft costs. A soffit is the underside of an overhanging structure. Think a deck or the overhang of a roof.

Other costs were not as ornamental. Public works and Roebbelen eliminated an American Disabilities Act (ADA) walkway from Sierra Park Road to the main entrance that was going to cost $94,192. Dublino told supervisors that the design for the pathway would encroach on Town of Mammoth Lakes land. After discussions that involved the Town’s Sandra Moberly and Engineering Manager Haislip Hayes, it was decided to eliminate the walkway.

“The town was not particularly interested in having that pathway on their property,” Dublino said.

“We all kind of agreed that it was just as reasonable to provide a legally adequate ADA access from the Thompson Road side and just completely abandon that access coming off Sierra Park.”

The building will have one ADA access from Thompson Way.

A covered walkway on the east side of the building that would lead into the District Attorney’s office was also eliminated. That would have cost $37,002. It wouldn’t have been a public access point.

“I think it is fair to say that what we are taking off of the building are non-critical improvements. What we would consider to be cosmetic improvements,” Dublino said.

He added, “We’ve tried to focus on items that our facilities staff are well positioned to come in after the fact and make the improvements in due time.”

The county decided not to spend $46,200 on bullet proof glass. Instead, they will remove bullet proof glass being used at county offices in the Sierra Center Mall and install it in the new building.

“Our intent remains to preserve the project budget,” Dublino told the Board of Supervisors.

Supervisor Bob Gardner said, “Clearly we’ve stated over and over again that our priorities are getting it done on time and staying within the $20.5 million target.”

Supervisor Gardner asked that Dublino create a list that would show how each cut is helping the project move along. Supervisor Stacy Corless added that she’d like that list to include rationale for those decisions.

She said, “People get very anxious about what their office space is going to look like.”

NOTE TO SELF
Self-checkout is back at Bishop Vons
By James

Readers may recall that Vons super-market in Bishop removed its self-checkout lanes during remodeling a couple of years ago. The rationale from the parent company of Albertsons, Vons and Pavilions said it was eliminating self-checkout lanes was “to give better one-on-one service to shoppers” and add more Express checkout lane.

Apparently, that did not work out well for the Vons in Bishop as they have reinstalled self-checkout lanes at their store. (The Vons in the Mammoth Lakes store does not use self-checkout lanes.)

Self-checkout lanes are popular with shoppers in a hurry. It was not unusual to be standing in line at the Express checkout counters in the Bishop Vons and hear shoppers say, “I wish they had not taken out the self-checkouts.”

But there were other reasons that self-checkout lanes had been removed:

-The machines are very expensive to install. A typical setup costs $125,000. They break down a lot.

-The machine doesn’t scan or recognize an item properly. Some barcodes simply don’t scan because they are scratched or damaged ... or more likely, it’s just your luck that you seem to always buy things that never seem to scan properly, or you scan the same item several times by mistake. Then you had to ask for help from the employee assigned to supervise the self-checkout area, who is usually busy helping someone else having problems.

-Shoplifting was a problem. The industry prefers to use the euphemism, “shrinkage” or “Unintended stock re-duction.” In either case, some customers (and occasionally, an employee) would steal.

-Every shopper paid for shoplifting through increased costs for “loss prevention” measures such as surveillance cameras and security guards or additional employees. It results in higher prices on food for everyone.

-Self-checkout lanes rely on the “Hon- or System,” counting on the idea that the average to pay in full for every item.

-Some people have gone so far as to say that the machines encourage some, otherwise honest people, to cheat and steal because it’s so easy and therefore, too tempting. Never mind what that says about someone’s personal values or character.

-That Vons Reward Club ‘Five-Finger’ discount for a “free” ham that was never scanned yet made into the cart and out the door, or the $4.95, USDA Prime steak that someone scanned on the machine at $4.95, bananas, can add up to some significant losses into the hundreds and even thousands of dollars over time.

-None of this is to say that many of these shoplifters don’t get caught and arrested. Often, they are caught on surveillance cameras located in the self-checkout area or by the store employees or security. Occasionally other shoppers alert the store management or employ- ees.

SIHD ON THE MEND
By James

Southern Inyo Healthcare District (SIHD) entered bankruptcy proceedings and saw a total turnover of the administrative staff and a completely new board of directors put in place.

The management firm Healthcare Conglomerate Associates (HCCA) was brought in to revive the facility, which it did. However, the SIH board severed ties with HCCA in December and hired Brian Cotter as the hospital chief executive officer.

Cotter presented the 2017 usage numbers at a board meeting earlier this year.

“The Emergency Room saw a significant jump in the number of patients in 2017. For the year, the Emergency Room had 1,536 visits. That is big increase over 2016, during which just 1,120 ER visits were recorded during the ten months the hospital was open. In 2015, the ER had 1,222 visits, and in 2014 there were 1,137 ER visits. Therefore trend also shows up in the average number of visits per month. In 2017, the average number of ER visits per month was 128, compared to just 94 a month in 2014.

The hospital’s SNF has also recovered from the 2016 closure, which resulted in all the patients being moved to other facilities. Starting in March of 2016, the SNF had 11 patients. That number slowly increased to 18 by December of 2016. In 2017, the monthly average remained above 20 every month, with a peak of 25 in July. In December of 2017 the SNF had 22 patients.

The doctors, nurses and staff at the SIH Rural Health Clinic have seen a consistent number of visits during the past four years. The clinic recorded 3,789 visits in 2017. That number represents a slight decrease from the 4,128 visits in 2016 and 3,908 in 2015. However, the 2017 figure is a substantial increase over the 2,725 visits recorded in 2014.

The X-ray Department saw a dramatic increase in use in 2017, with 1,713 visits. In 2016, the department recorded 972 visits during the 10 months the hospital was open. About 1,200 visits a year were recorded in 2014 and 2015.

The hospital laboratory volumes were fairly steady in the past four years, with about 3,400 laboratory functions per year.

The hospital’s physical therapy department reported about 2,000 uses in 2017, a slight drop from 2016 and about 1,000 fewer visits than were recorded in 2015 and 2014.
FROM 2-D TO 3-D
NIH upgrades with Da Vinci
By Maddux

On Thursday, April 11 in the main lobby of the Northern Inyo Hospital, Dr. Allison Robinson, Board Certified General Surgery, Colon and Rectal Surgery, introduced the public to the Da Vinci robot. Trained surgeons have performed 230 surgeries locally with the robot, and 6 million worldwide. “Faster, smaller scars, less pain, [and] less risk of infection,” Dr. Robinson said of the success of the Da Vinci. When an operation is performed, “we control all the instruments and have an assistant there, but we are never out of the room,” Robinson said.

During the presentation, she showed several videos of the progression from laparoscopic surgery to the Da Vinci robot. After the presentation, the public was allowed to examine the Da Vinci systems through the wristed instruments, which is 3-D with 10 times the magnification. The other examination that the public demonstrated on was through straight instruments of the 2-D laparoscopic machine.

The way in which the Da Vinci is controlled is through the surgeon’s console. The instruments, “now allow for better visualization, control, dexterity, and precision in the surgery,” she said.

One of the biggest benefits of the instruments, is that they are “EndoWristed, which means they bend and move just like your wrist.” This makes surgery more like open surgery than using laparoscopic instruments, which only open and rotate in a circle,” Robinson said. In the current Da Vinci Si model, the incisions are “8 mm and our camera is 12mm,” Robinson said.

In October 2016, Dr. Jeanine Arndal was the first to use the Da Vinci robot at the NIH, Dr. Robinson said. Three of the doctors that perform surgeries through the Da Vinci robot are Dr. Robinson, Dr. Robin Cromer-Tyler (Board Certified General Surgery), and Dr. Jeanine Arndal (Board Certified Gynecology & Obstetrics). Doctors can train on the Da Vinci through “an actual training course in Sunnyvale, California, online training courses, and a simulator possibly for more than 30 hours on different modules,” Dr. Robinson said.

Gina Steinhoff, Intuitive Surgical’s Clinical Specialist (the company that invented the Da Vinci) said the robot “does not perform surgery, it is the highly trained surgeon that performs the surgery,” she said.

When doctors at NIH have questions or troubleshooting issues with the robot, Gina Steinhoff is the contractor with Intuitive that is contracted. There is no room for mishaps, as the robot completes “1,200 system checks a second,” Steinhoff said. At NIH, the Da Vinci, performs, such as “locally general, GYN and Colorectal surgery,” Steinhoff said. At other hospitals, surgeons can perform transoral heart surgery and urology through the Da Vinci robot, Steinhoff said.

The NIH is currently leasing the machine, and every 5 years, they “are updating and going to another model,” Robinson said. “We are upgrading to the next version of the da Vinci the end of this month—the Xi model,” Robinson said.

At the same time, “we have trouble with workman’s comp. They think it is an addition to laparoscopic” Robinson said of those who refuse surgery with the Da Vinci. At other times, “we are doing open surgery, because sometimes that’s what is indicated based on the patient’s surgical problem or medical condition,” Robinson said.

If the doctors are not doing robotic surgery, “we can just do it laparoscopically, which is still through the small incisions—12 mm and 5 mm using laparoscopic instruments, which is using a 2D camera. The initial part of any robotic surgery is putting in trocar and laparoscopic instruments, which allow us to assess the abdomen and position things for the docking of the robot. We then dock the robot and proceed with the surgery robotically/using the Da Vinci system,” Robinson said.

Bishop High School student, Nick Jacobs, 16, told The Sheet, the Da Vinci is “innovative and very precise with the movement.” As he sat at the controls of the Da Vinci, Jacobs said he had shaky hands, but “it was almost exact with my movement,” he said. “I have several friends that had surgery with the Da Vinci. Most of them had a real quick recovery,” Jacob said.

Retired Bishop resident, Glenn Arndal heard about the Da Vinci robot from his daughter-in-law. For a small hospital in a rural setting, we’re very fortunate to have the high technology and the physician’s trained on this technology,” he said.

HOGAN continued from page 1

can be seen at most board meetings, asking questions or giving historical perspective during the public comment portion of proceedings.

“Sandy has a wonderful historical knowledge,” Richardson said. “Our town is better by having active, knowledgeable, and civil people like Sandy.”

Hogan sits on the Local Transportation Commission (LTC) of Mono County, the Yosemite Area Regional Transit System (YARTS) Advisory Committee, and the Lands Committee of the Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT).

She is a model civil servant, but it wasn’t always that way.

It was a Berkeley ’63 who thought I would overthrow the government,” Hogan said.

Her career in public service began when she joined the Forest Service. After being a ski bum in Tahoe for a few years, and working around the world, she went to school for Forestry and became a Forest Ranger in San Bernardino county.

Hogan inherited lawsuits from her predecessor at the Forest Service. The former ranger had, in Hogan’s words, “Not done some good stuff.”

“I probably would have run him out of town on a rail, myself!”

She had to go out into the public and get yelled at a lot for the issues her predecessor left behind, but it taught her the importance of an active public.

“My first public meeting I had three hundred people yelling at me, but those are the kind of things that help us learn, by asking questions together and solving the problems.” Hogan helped to create a land trust after the litigation was settled.

She was brought to Mono County in 1995 to become an Assistant Forest Supervisor. She was in charge of 1.1 million acres from south of Crowley, over Montgomery Pass, and north to Conway Summit. Hogan’s job involved a lot of public outreach. “My job at the time was focused on going to these different communities. I went to the Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) in Lee Vining, the June Lake Citizens’ Advisory (CAC), the RPAC in Crowley, and the Mammoth Town Council. I really got a feel for how they operated … I got to understand what went on in those 1.1 million acres.”

After five years, the Forest Service was shifting its management model, and Hogan moved laterally into a planning role. She worked on land exchanges like the McFlex Parcel that
Inyo National Forest workers acknowledged for Rose Parade float

"SAY ‘HELLO’ TO SWINTER IN MAMMOTH LAKES
FROM SNOW TO SUN, SWINTER HAS THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS"

In Mammoth Lakes, winter just doesn’t know when to quit. That’s why this year Mammoth Lakes is announcing a new season: SWINTER! That’s right. Winter has joined forces with summer, creating a magical new season called SWINTER—the awe-inspiring, superbly snowy, summer hot-spot found only in Mammoth Lakes."

Off the top of my head ...

Does this mean I can look forward to Sprummer?

If it doesn’t snow by Thanksgiving, will we need more marketing dollars for Fwinter?

When referring to the Wood Site, do we call it getting Swintlered?

I need a Swinter Van.

I think we should celebrate spring cleaning as well and have Swinter underwritten by Swiffer.

Is there a Trumpian promise that we’re all going to get tired of swinning?

Swindustry swinsiders are hailing this marketing idea as a Swistant Classic. Swintacular.

Mering Carson is submitting “Swinter” in a hastily created new category so we can pay for them to win some more awards. Big question: Is Mering Carson up for a swimmy or a swemmy?

Mammoth is like an American Swin-tzerland.

It’s getting warm. Maybe Swoolly needs a buzz cut.

This slogan makes my swincter pucker.

Finally, an interesting little article from the March 23 issue of The Economist.

Titled “Strong Pot is Hot,” the article references a study which talks about the regular use of pot with a potency of greater than 10% THC.

According to Marti Di Forti, a clinical scientist at Kings College in London, “Regular use of cannabis with a potency greater than 10% increases the risk of developing psychosis five-fold.

In London, 30% of new cases of psychosis in the study were estimated to be tied to strong cannabis.”

But it’s the last paragraph of the story which delivers the punch:

"With the relaxation of cannabis laws in the U.S. and Canada, many will wonder what this means for countries still developing their own policies. Given the impracticality of removing high-potency strains from the illegal market, the finds may support calls for legal, regulated sales of less harmful strains. It is difficult to know how this would affect public health. However, as one scientist remarked recently, while laboratory animals are an expensive way of understanding the risks of cannabis use, ‘North Americans come free.’"

HOGAN continued from page 8

now houses the Mono County Court.

What does she think is the biggest issue facing Mammoth Lakes?

“Housing, and housing always has been.”

She sees The Parcel as an opportunity for solving the problem, if it is done right.

Currently, Hogan says that the Town of Mammoth Lakes has not been funding Mammoth Lakes Housing (MLH) enough.

“I saw, before this council, an attempt to try to not fund MLH, to keep it at a starvation level,” she said. “The council before this one got it down to just two staff people, and then Jennifer [Halferty] ran for supervisor so it was just Patricia [Robertson]. I literally worry about her health. She’s trying to do a job that needs at least three people.”

Hogan’s motivation for engagement is simple.

“Just to be sure that the questions are asked,” she said. “I learned that it’s easy to make comments, but it’s harder to ask good questions.”

"If you don’t ask the hard questions and make yourself known you can make some big mistakes.”

She has worked on a slew of committees since retiring from the Forest Service: the Mammoth Recreation Commission, Mammoth Lakes Trails Coordinating Committee, Airport Commission, Mobility Commission, among others.

She has scaled back her full-time seats to just the three: LTC, YARTS, and ESLL. She doesn’t want to overbook herself because, she said, “I like to ski in the winter.” It also frees up her time to go to a meeting and follow legislation from a citizen angle.

Wyatt welcomes you to visit the Main Street Promenade!*

G.H. Bass & Co. Outlet
Graphic Gownclusions
Black Velvet Coffee
Mountain Sol Yoga
Ananya Integrative Bodywork
The Sierra Light Gallery
Liberty Sports Bar & Grill*

...and, introducing...

The Public House: Mammoth Lakes’ newest bar! 50 rotating taps!

Ascent Dispensary: The art of cannabis!

*(formerly the Mammoth Luxury Outlets located at 3343-3399 Main St.)
The Sheet

IKONic REAL ESTATE?
By Paul Oster

Q: As previous season ski pass holders at Mammoth, we are very pleased with the new IKON Pass. We can’t imagine why anybody would be displeased with what it has to offer. But we hear there is dissension in other resorts and maybe even here in Mammoth. What is your take on how it has affected Mammoth and has it made, or do you expect it to make, any impact on the local real estate market?

A: As the first year of the IKON Pass winds down there have been many fascinating aspects to this new phenomenon. I expect it to be even more successful next year. But success may be in the eye of the beholder. And yes, inexpensive season passes will continue to affect Mammoth real estate.

There are plenty of different takes on the IKON Pass. It certainly appears to be making some significant changes on many micro and macro levels. On an individual level it depends on your own factors; if you ski/snowboard or not, whether you dislike crowds in town or on your favorite runs or at the chairlift, whether it is convenient for you to take advantage of the access to other resorts.

Whether you own a local business and like visitors with more disposable dollars in their pockets, whether you end up at YONAS at the wrong time of day, etc., etc., Mammoth Mountain, under the Alterra Mountain Company’s IKON Pass offering, may be slightly different from the other resorts under the conglomerate. Mammoth has a 20 year history of a large passholder base and an even longer history of massive crowds at certain periods. The large passholder base is why Mammoth has been considered a valued prize in the ski industry for years. Now it finally has ownership (once again) that can and will put it to good use.

This Mammoth passholder base is a large demographic mainly from southern California that loves to ski and snowboard, has sufficient affluence to afford it, and thinks very little of spending five or six hours to drive for the experience. Quite frankly, it is somewhat unique in the industry. Mammoth Mountain Ski Area has the size and facilities to accommodate a major influx of skiers and snowboarders. And the terrain and features to keep a wide variety of athletic interests coming back for more. The relatively temperate climate also has mass appeal.

Mammoth is a ski area that is familiar with crowds. Experienced skiers do everything to avoid the crowds, including making Wednesdays their favorite day to ski. Others know to go early or to ski in certain areas at certain hours of the day. Or to even take the day off. At Mammoth, it is just part of the game. But at some of the new IKON Pass resorts this hasn’t been the norm. The increased crowds this season have ruffled some feathers.

Various reports from other IKON resorts are of longer lift lines that have never existed in the past. Or of local bumper stickers with negative comments (like “IKON not wait for you to leave”). Or resort officials reminding local residents the value of customers spending dollars in the community. A significant influx of ski and snowboard crowds with IKON passes has clearly alarmed some regulars and altered the quiet enjoyment of their favorite resort.

Here in Mammoth there has been no major outcry but we’ve experienced almost 20 years of Gold and MVP pass holders whose ranks are purported to be in the 30-40,000 range every season. Most of these skiers and snowboarders are here on the weekends and/or tackling a Friday or Monday onto their stay. But again, Mammoth is quite familiar with crowds.

The blackout dates here in Mammoth (IKON Base Pass) have clearly flattened the peak periods at the Ski Area. Local business people have commented about it. For some it appears it has increased business, and for some it appears to have decreased business in these formerly peak periods. In the past, Weekends and Weekdays are two different varieties of resorts (having both IKON and Epic Pass (Vail Resorts) holders will switch to the IKON Pass so they can experience a different variety of resorts (having both passes would be ideal for diehards).

What does all this mean for Mammoth real estate? Most significantly, it should impact the condos that are designed to produce short term rental (STR) revenue. This has been a strong part of the Mammoth market the past 24 months. Some observers believe the values for these properties have plateaued. But we may need another IKON season to know for sure.

The STR trend is primarily in the lower-end of the condominium market and it has pushed values up in the past 24 months. That is where the best return on investment has been. And record TOT (room tax revenue) this winter is proof that it is working. Interest in the new YotelPad condo hotel property is also indicative. The Ski Area’s planning consultants say that Mammoth Lakes is about 1,000 beds short of visitor demand.

Twenty years ago, the first inexpensive pre-sold ski passes created strong demand for what I dubbed “crash pads.” That was an interesting phenomenon back then. Local real estate values were still quite suppressed. Paying a few hundred dollars for a ski pass (the previous year was over $1,000) was considered such a great deal that many skiers became buyers of cheap condos. They simply wanted a modest condo so they could enjoy their week on the slopes. The phrase “I have a ski pass, now I need a condo” made complete sense for many.

That was all pre-Airbnb/VRBO. Now owners can easily have a crash pad and rental income. The more widely accepted “last minute” booking style gives owners more flexibility; wind and weather permitting. And I suspect many of the original crash pads have morphed into STR units. Ultimately, the crash pad effect and the Airbnb/VRBO effect have significantly impacted the values at the low-end of the Mammoth condominium market. How much higher those values can be pushed up remains to be seen. The IKON Pass has created new pools of potential buyers and guests.

At the other end of the real estate spectrum may be the luxury real estate market including $1M+ single family homes and condos. That part of the market has also been surprisingly strong the past 24 months. This might be more of a reflection of the stock market. But the

see OSTER, page 19
SHOULD WORK
Bold, Webb help green and business overlap

By Lunch

W
e all have those “shoulds” in our lives. Should exercise more. Should be more socially conscious. Should give up on the Dodgers because they’ll break your heart. Etc.

But then there’s making time for the shoulds. And then there’s hassle. And then the shoulds get tabled because no one has the bandwidth for them.

But Pam Bold and Lia Webb are not ready to let you off the hook so easily.

Because signing up for the Eastern Sierra Green Business Program is so, so easy, promises cost savings, won’t take too much of your time, and places business in the driver’s seat to make their mark on energy efficiency and sustainability in the Eastern Sierra.

Lia Webb says there are currently 29 businesses enrolled in the program and 35-40 more which have expressed interest.

A soil scientist by trade, Webb came to the Eastern Sierra on a climbing trip a few years back and decided to stay. She’d been working for an engineering firm for 15 years and was ready for a change, and a relationship was ending so there were no entangling alliances getting in the way.

Her experience running a green business in Humboldt convinced High Sierra Energy’s Pam Bold that Webb was a good fit to run the Eastern Sierra Green Business Program.

One of Webb’s recruits to the program has been Black Tie Ski Rentals in Mammoth, a place where she used to work part-time.

As Black Tie partner Colin Fernie explained, for the first 5-8 years Black Tie was in existence, he and partner Jeremy Goico were engrossed in operations and growing the business.

But then, as they were able to step back a little bit, “It made us really think about our core values.”

Fernie said they came up with four initiatives.

1. Foster entrepreneurship
2. Teamwork
3. Community building
4. Sustainability. Not only in terms of being greener, but in terms of being green and business overlap.

Jeff and Susan Russell of Ridge Merino, participants in the Eastern Sierra Green Business Program.

AVALANCHE CHANGE
How climate change affects snow behavior

By Benham

G
oal climate change is affecting the snowpack. Sue Burak, a snow scientist and avalanche forecaster, studies the effects of the changing climate on snowpack.

About the forecasting profession she said, “You can’t have an ego.”

Lives are on the line and Burak makes the call. People depend on her forecasts to determine if roads are safe to travel, like Tioga Pass and the Highway 168 from Bishop to Aspendell and Twin Lakes Road from Bridgeport to Twin Lakes.

She asks herself, “Will a slide reach the road or building?”

She considers the avalanche’s character, its location, the likelihood of it being triggered, its size. To determine an avalanche’s potential character, she considers stratigraphy in the snowpack, snowpack depth, precipitation type, precipitation intensity and duration, temperature, dew point, humidity. She considers the terrain: slope aspect, angle and shape, elevation drop, ground texture. Then there’s historical data to read, past avalanches to consider.

As a scientist, climate changes can entice. As a forecaster, they can keep her up at night.

Just this February, there were six Atmospheric Rivers (ARs) in the western United States. Four of them were rated as moderate. One was “Strong” and one ‘Extreme.’ Burak said there was an increase in smaller avalanches around this time.

An increase in rain-on-snow events could lead to flooding during winter in areas where it usually doesn’t occur until warmer times of the year.

The rain-on-snow along with warming temperatures and other factors have increased the amount of wet slab avalanches in mid-winter, specifically January.

A wet slab avalanche occurs because water from rain or melted snow weakens the snowpack.

When rain hits snow it freezes. It can also move through the snow and when it does, it finds the path of least resistance, creating channels called macropores. The macropores, when dyed, look like fingers. The fingers are interrupted by “ponds.” The “ponds” are water pools on ice layers that develop from rain-on-snow events. (The rain freezes, creating an ice layer.)

Snow is complicated. Burak knows this. In a presentation she gave at the White Mountain Research Center on April 2, she showed a chart of snow energy exchanges. It provides an visual overview of how snowpack changes.

Solar energy hits snow. Some of it is reflected. Some absorbed. The incoming energy is represented by a capital K for Kelvin, a measurement of thermodynamics, next to the Hindu Om symbol. To Burak, the Om connotes the universal, a bit of the unknown.

The reflected solar energy is represented by a capital-S for Siemens, a measurement of electric conductance, next to a yin-yang, for balance. Burak added the symbols in for levity, added the symbols in for levity, a reminder that mystery exists.

How climate change affects snow behavior

see BIZ, page 11

See SNOW, page 7

Promoting the culture of energy efficiency and sustainability in the Eastern Sierra.

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 print
TOU, NEXT
Modify energy use to save energy and money

By Pam Bold

When you use energy is becoming as important as how much you use. Utilities are introducing Time of Use (TOU) rates to encourage consumers to use less energy during peak demand times. Utility companies and community choice aggregators procure energy generation and utilities transmit it to end users. Consumers, industry and agriculture use energy, and most of us have little knowledge of how the energy is being generated.

In late 2018, California passed SB100, an ambitious goal of relying entirely on zero-emission energy sources for its electricity by the year 2045. The bill requires that 50 percent of California’s electricity be powered by renewable resources by 2025 and 60 percent by 2030. California’s Energy Commission estimates that 34 percent of California’s retail electricity sales in 2018 will be provided by Renewable Portfolio Standard eligible sources, e.g., solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, and small hydroelectric -- positive progress toward SB100’s goals.

On a sunny day in the middle of summer, that electricity share can reach 50%. However, the dynamic nature of solar and wind generation challenges the grid as renewable sources aren’t always producing power when Californians need it most, primarily, in the evening. That’s when the state’s other, more expensive power plants, like natural gas and nuclear, have to kick in to meet the demand.

The California Public Utilities Commission approved the change for investor-owned utility (IOU) residential customers to transition to TOU rate plans. San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) customers are beginning to transition now and Southern California Edison (SCE) customers will transition in late 2020. Unlike a tiered-rate structure where customers move into higher rates as they use more electricity, under a TOU plan, customers pay different prices per kilowatt-hour depending on when they use electricity. The highest rates are from 4-9 p.m. midweek during the summer.

Currently, SCE customers have the option to use either tiered or TOU rate plans. SCE has a rate comparison tool on their website (sce.com/rateplan-tool) which can help identify the best plan for you based on historical data. Familiarizing yourself with the differences in usage times and rates will save you money. As an example, using an electric clothes dryer five times per week during peak rates would cost $19 a month. The same usage during off-peak times would cost almost half, $10 per month. Finding ways to reduce your energy usage during peak times will save you money and will take advantage of the cleanest energy generation. Here are some ways to save.

Specific time of use changes:
• Load dishwasher and laundry at night, but don’t run until after 9 p.m., or in the morning.
• Charge devices and electric vehicles before 4 p.m., or after 9 p.m.
• Prepare dinner using a slow cooker during the day.
• Thaw frozen items in the refrigerator.
• Take advantage of a utility rebate and install a smart thermostat.
• Program pool/spa pumps and heaters to run during off-peak times.

Reduce consumption through general energy efficiency:
• Change to LED lightbulbs.
• Weatherproof for air leaks.
• Install programmable thermostats.
• Replace old appliances with high-efficiency Energy Star models and models that allow for delayed start.
• If your oven has a convection setting, use it instead of conventional mode, saving 20% energy.
• Regularly clean and/or replace furnace and air-conditioning filters.
• Clean the lint trap every time you use the dryer.

Use the climate credit you received on your electric bill this month to fund some of the energy efficiency plans you have been putting off.

In an effort to fight climate change, California requires power plants and other large greenhouse gas emitters to purchase carbon pollution permits. These credits are issued to all investor-owned utility residential and small business customers, every April and October. This year’s SCE credit is $66. According to the bulbs.com energy calculator, if you used that money to replace 16 60-Watt incandescent bulbs with 17.5 Watt LEDs, you would save $1,775 over the bulbs’ lifetime – that’s a 3,586% return on investment.

Investing in energy efficiency is a gift that keeps on giving.

Pam Bold is Executive Director of the Range of Light Group.
LEND A HELPING HAND TO YOUR EASTERN SIERRA PUBLIC LANDS!

Friends of the Inyo takes care of the streams, meadows, valleys, and peaks that make the Eastern Sierra an unforgettable public treasure.

Visit friendsoftheinyo.org today to lend a hand at our next Stewardship Project and donate to ensure our public lands get the care and protection they deserve.

Photos by Dylan Welcome
Recently, California has been ravaged by an uptick of intense wildfires. 15 out of the 20 largest wildfires in the state have occurred since 2000. Last year more than 8,400 wildfires scorched nearly two million acres across California, the most in recorded history. In the aftermath of another devastating wildfire year for the Golden State, you may be asking yourself, “is this the new normal?”

Trees and other plants in our forests have evolved in response to the natural fire regime and frequent low to moderate intensity fires are necessary for reproduction and growth. However, after a century of fire suppression aimed to protect people, property, and valued timber resources, Sierra Nevada forests have become densely packed and overloaded with dead wood that is primed to burn intensely and spread quickly under hot, dry, and windy conditions. Climate change intensifies the risk. Warming temperatures and decreasing snowpack are extending fire seasons throughout the range. Increasing climatic variability is adding “fuel to the fire” as rapidly growing vegetation during wet years dies back during droughts.

The 2012-2016 California drought was the most severe in 1,200 years and approximately 110 million trees died throughout the Sierra Nevada largely because trees could not produce enough resin to “pitch out” invading bark beetles.

Locally, a recent outbreak of mountain pine beetle killed 80 to 90% of all whitebark pine in the June Mountain Ski Area and surrounding forest. For obvious reasons, this makes local residents even more concerned about fire danger. In the fall of 2014, a fire precipitated by a work crew at June Mountain spread quickly and came perilously close to impacting nearby structures and June Lake Village itself. In addition to June Lake residents concerned about fire threats, the massive die-off is a concern to conservationists. Whitebark pine is considered a candidate species for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The pine can live for 1,000 years or more near mountaintops and is considered a keystone species because of its ecological importance. Just like all stones depend on the keystone to maintain a masonry arch, many species depend on whitebark pine to maintain ecosystem integrity. Its large and nutritious seeds attract and feed chipmunks, squirrels, bears, and over a dozen different birds, including a mutually beneficial relationship with the Clark’s nutcracker; by caching seeds in the ground, the nutcracker plants whitebark pines and promotes forest regeneration and expansion. If left untreated, the whitebark pine die-off areas increase the risk of catastrophic fire which threatens biodiversity, residents, and the local tourism-dependent economy, including a highly popular trout fishery. The likelihood for landslides and mudflows increases, following severe burns due to the combustion and decomposition of anchoring and reinforcing root systems. Massive soil erosion and transport can smother fish and bury their insect prey in addition to damming industrial water infrastructure by filling reservoirs, clogging turbines, and causing hazardous flooding. When fires kill streamside trees, water temperatures may warm to stressful or lethal levels for cold water-dependent fish like trout. In some cases, fish populations with narrow habitat ranges may be eliminated entirely by the direct and indirect effects of fire.

California Trout, June Mountain Ski Area, and Inyo National Forest are working together to remove beetle-killed whitebark pines and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the Rush Creek watershed. Selective removal of approximately 11,175 dead whitebark pine from 75 acres of forest occurred in 2018 with funds provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Fuels Program, Wells Fargo’s Resilient Communities Program, and the Alterra Mountain Company.

In 2019, another 38-70 acres will be treated with additional funds from Pacific Gas and Electric, including the use of a helicopter to hoist and remove logs from the steepest slopes where ground-based equipment is too unsafe to operate. By mimicking the effects of the natural fire regime, mechanical thinning is clearing out patches of dead forest and understory and producing less dense and multi-aged pine stands. The healthier forest benefits the June Lake community, California’s iconic biodiversity, recreation opportunities, and downstream water users.

Given the anticipated impacts of climate change and increasing water demands by a growing human population, projects like California Trout’s unique nonprofit-corporate-government partnership is critical for the continued coexistence of wildlife, fish, and people during an era that I can best describe as the “new normal.”

Eric Huber, Ph.D. is Regional Director of California Trout’s Sierra Headwaters Region.

For more information:
760-934-4650, greenbusinessca.org
greenbiz@highsierraenergy.org
One thing we’ve been working on at Friends of the Inyo is achieving protection from industrial mining development for Conglomerate Mesa, an Inyo County desert gem located just a few miles from Death Valley National Park.

For centuries, the area was utilized by local tribes for hunting and pinyon nut gathering, it was used by early miners to make charcoal, and near endangered Joshua Trees and Inyo Rock Daisies call the mesa home. Visitors enjoy hiking, striking valley views, camping, backpacking, hunting, photography, and star gazing.

The latest fight to protect the area from a cyanide heap leach mining project began in Fall, 2017. A formal corporate plan, approved by BLM, intended to make this the first roadless area in California targeted for an open pit gold mine under newly relaxed federal management priorities.

Friends of the Inyo led a coalition of stakeholders to educate the public about the proposed project and the dangers it poses to the land and people of the Eastern Sierra.

In addition to public education, the coalition filed a Request for State Director Review, asking BLM to reconsider its approval of exploratory drilling.

Immediately following the filing of this request, Canada-based Silver Standard Resources withdrew its application. While this was certainly good news, the mesa remains threatened—public documents reveal that days later, the mining claim owner began scouting for another company to take over the drilling project.

As things stand now, Friends of the Inyo and the other coalition members continue to wait for a formal decision from BLM regarding the issues raised in their request for review. Additionally, efforts continue to raise awareness about this special area and its need for permanent protection.

Our efforts have resulted in coverage in Backpacker magazine and Patagonia’s social media feeds. Friends of the Inyo will lead a handful of outings to the area this year, check our website friendsoftheinyo.org if you’d like to participate, one is coming up on April 26, 2019.

Trail Ambassadors

In addition to fighting for protection for our deserts, Friends of the Inyo’s Trail Ambassador program continues to grow to care for our national forest lands.

After two successful seasons on the Inyo National Forest, we are excited to increase the number of Trail Ambassadors, and to extend our reach into the Bridgeport Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. This season will see the program grow to six ambassadors who will provide coverage on all the Forest Service lands in the Eastern Sierra, from Lone Pine to Bridgeport, Mt. Whitney to Matterhorn Peak.

Trail Ambassadors do a variety of things to benefit our Eastern Sierra public lands. They lead interpretive walks and provide Leave No Trace education to the throngs of folks visiting our beautiful Eastern Sierra. These activities in particular have been recognized as critical to the long-term health of our public lands, as federal and local resources to perform these functions become more inadequate every year. By teaching people just how special our lands are, and what they can do to help care for them, we believe we can create a constituency for our public lands that will allow them to stay vibrant forever.

Trail Ambassadors also organize volunteer events to perform trail work, like moving fallen trees and rocks off the trail and picking up trash. And finally, they also lead youth, including at-risk youth, on wilderness adventures.

At Friends of the Inyo we are excited to help give our public lands the care and attention they deserve through our policy, stewardship and education programs. If these programs excite you too, please consider supporting the work we do at friendsoftheinyo.org.

Wendy Schneider is Executive Director of Friends of the Inyo.
Mammoth and June Mountain (MMSA/JMSA) work to create a sustainable culture with our employees, guest and community. Below are the programs that have been implemented to try and reduce our environmental footprint in the last five years.

We’re encouraging guests to donate their old skis and snowboards and we’ll be creating furniture out of them for our new food and beverage location “The Lunch Box” at Chair 4. We’ll be raffling off two models of the furniture pieces and all proceeds of the raffle will go towards a native brush re-vegetation project with the USFS.

Snowmaking

MMSA purchased low energy snowmaking guns.

MMSA completed phase one of upgrades to our snowmaking pumping system. This included retrofitting three of our main booster pumps with new bowls and impellers. This upgrade will bring our average overall plant efficiency per pump from 33.5% up to 72%. This can save an average of 116,389 KWh per pump in an average snowmaking year. These KWH savings translate to a 59.67-ton average decrease in carbon dioxide emissions per pump. MMSA also replaced a diesel emergency standby generator with a more efficient cleaner burning propane powered unit.

Recycling

MMSA donated all its e-waste to Human-I-T where we’ve helped connect over 6,000 underserved families to technology and internet. Over two million pounds of devices were given a second life rather than ground up and recycled

MMSA collaborated with students from Mammoth Middle School on a project to help reduce the environmental impact of plastic water bottles. To help reduce the amount of single use water bottles, a plan was developed and initiated to install water bottle filling stations throughout the resort.

MMSA and JMSA encourage guests to recycle and participate in utility conservatism within our Hospitality venues.

Habitat Conservation

JMSA collaborated with the USFS to remove dead trees and brush around the mountain in order to maintain a healthy forest, reduce the fire danger, and maintain the water shed.

MMSA provided in-kind support through summer housing for interns through the Student Conservation Association, an organization that works to create a sustainable culture with our employees, guest and community.

One of MMSA’s hospitality venues provided in-kind support through the program, consisting of the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory and the Valentine Camp. The Reserve provides protected wild lands, on-site experimental facilities, as well as facilities for conducting studies of natural systems.

Through a joint effort between MMSA and JMSA, MMSA makes wind and weather data from the ski area and UCSB’s weather plots available to anyone who wishes to use it for research.

MMSA is a supporter of the Mono Lake Committee’s fundraisers and the annual Andrea Lawrence Award dinner.

We fund trail and habitat restoration projects, wildlife-protection programs, scientific research and more to preserve and protect Yosemite’s natural wonders and enrich the visitor experience.

We support the Sierra Business Council, an organization that works on innovative approaches and solutions to increase community vitality, economic prosperity, environmental quality, and social fairness in the Sierra Nevada.

We are a member in several organizations including POW (Protect our Winters), Friends of the Inyo, Yosemite Conservancy, Youth in Yosemite.

Energy/Resource Conservation

MMSA has replaced six old, high polluting, snowcats with a new, more efficient, Tier 4 engine snowcats. The Tier 4 standards set by the EPA require that emissions of PM and NOx be reduced by 90%.

A SNOWsat was added to four of our snowcats to help with our fleet management. The information obtained allows us to optimize our vehicle routes to help reduce fuel consumption and gives detailed information to our snowmaking team to better optimize the use of our snowmaking guns and produce snow only where needed.

Tesla charging stations have been added to two of our Hospitality locations. One of MMSA’s hospitality venues received a recognition award from the Water District for their efforts in water conservation. By changing out all the spray sprinkler heads and replacing them with a drip system, they’ve reduced their water usage by 77%.

MMSA’s golf course, Sierra Star, is watered with 100% reclaimed water.

Lauren Burke is Mammoth Mountain Ski Area’s Public Relations Manager.
Along with the solar energy exchanges there are arrows representing wind, a squiggly red one for emitted longwave radiation, water vapor exchange. Conduction between the thermally active soil layer, basically the ground that touches the snow, and the base layer of the snowpack must be accounted for. Consider and refreezing within the snowpack and try to understand how a tree affects all of that.

Look at this. The equation for solar energy exchange is $\Delta K - (L - L) + Qe + Qh + Qp = Q$.

“We are in uncharted territory,” Burak said.

We are. Is that cuneiform?

But she meant that about forecasting weather and avalanches because of climate change.

For example, ARs don’t usually hit Arizona and New Mexico. The 2010 study shows that between 1979 and 2010 no ARs hit those states. In mid-January an AR made it to New Mexico. On January 17, two skiers died in an avalanche on Taos ski resort.

Generally, during winters with a lot of snowfall there are as many large avalanches.

Burak is looking for a climate change signal in the eastern Sierra. She’s studying the low night time temperatures from Mammoth Mountain and Bishop Airport to see if they are increasing. The data goes back until 1980.

Before ’80, there’s a dearth of data in the eastern Sierra. Even today it’s difficult to collect data because of a lack of sensors and instrumentation. Mammoth Mountain is a good resource for atmospheric data. Otherwise she tunes into monitoring stations at Pine Flat and New Exchequer dams for data. The National Weather Service in Reno struggles to forecast eastern Sierra weather because its radar does not have the range to make it down here with a strong signal.

This is changing. There is a new monitoring station going in on top of McGee Mountain.

For a snow scientist, McGee Mt. and the McGee drainage is a hot spot. Burak called it, “a great lab,” because large avalanches happen frequently there.

Her hypothesis is that the slope’s aspects, the cardinal direction the slope faces, are ideal for wind loading. They sit, she thinks, at the end of a wind funnel. Wind blows out of the south and southwest, loading snow onto the north facing slopes of McGee. Once, instrumentation is on top of McGee she’ll be able to test that hypothesis.

Burak was a coauthor on a 2010 paper titled “Avalanche Fatalities during Atmospheric River Events in the Western United States.” (Other authors are Benjamin Hatchett, Jonathan Rutz, Nina Oakley, Edward Bait, and Michael Kaplan. It was published in The Journal of Hydrometeorology.

That paper concluded that warming temperatures have a larger impact near the freezing point where a small temperature change can result in a change in precipitation type. One degree can be the difference between rain and snow.

Although forecasting is complex the desired outcome is simple: keep people safe, don’t let them die.

“We don’t have to be right. But we can’t be wrong,” Burak said.

Besides the snow and the weather there are people to consider. People and group dynamics between backcountry travelers are something Burak thinks a lot about.

People ski in avalanche prone terrain. Terrain that has been forecast as being avalanche prone.

To fully unpack the reasoning would require an understanding of the human condition.
In the eastern Sierra, fishing line clean-up efforts are tangled and scattered. Fly Fishers International Program installed 40 recycling tubes around Mono and Inyo County, but no one to maintain them.

There are clean-ups led by various non-governmental organizations: Friends of the Inyo, the Sierra Club, Mammoth Lakes Trails & Public Access, etc.

At the clean-ups, Janet Barth, a member of Sierra Club Range of Light Group’s Executive Committee, tells volunteers to look out for fishing line and that it can be recycled.

“People are always amazed at how much line they find,” Barth said. The clean-ups help, but something more comprehensive is needed. Barth set out to clean up fishing line clean-up. She created a report about a program to clean-up and recycle fishing line at the waterways in the eastern Sierra. The program is called Tangle Free Waters.

Tangle Free Waters calls for the installation of 30 new fishing line recycling tubes in the eastern Sierra from Twin Lakes outside Bridgeport to Diaz Lake in Lone Pine.

The tubes are made out of PVC pipe. They look like periscopes. They are easy to install and cheap. According to Barth’s calculations, the materials for one tube cost $15.33.

The recycling would be done through Berkley, a fishing company based in Spirit Lake, Iowa. Berkley sends free mailers to people who want to recycle fishing line with its program.

The mailers are 18 inch by 18 inch boxes. Participants fill the packages with fishing line, then send them to Berkley. At its recycling center, Berkley turns the line into plastic pellets, which it uses to build fishing gear or other things like park benches.

Recently, Barth sent a mailer filled with 15 pounds of line. “It doesn’t sound like a lot but imagine fifteen pounds of feathers,” she said.

She rated how impacted the waterways were by fishing line on a scale from 0-5. Zero was considered good and relatively clean. Five indicated a heavy impact. The south side of Convict Lake received a five. The south end of Saddlebag Lake and east and north sides of Bridgeport Reservoir received zeros. The ratings are based on the eye-test.

Barth found that Convict Lake, Lake Mary and Lake George in the Lakes Basin are so highly impacted that, Barth thinks, they should be cleaned at least once a year.

The big trash isn’t as common as it once was, Barth said. Micro-plastics remain prevalent. Fishing line is both micro and macro. It’s thin, micro, but long, macro. The program will cost about $25,000 and take a full-time staff member to run.

Barth has reached out to Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Coordinator Matthew Paruolo to get Mammoth Lakes Recreation (Paruolo’s employer) to take on the project.

At the Mono County Board of Supervisor’s meeting on Tuesday April 17, Paruolo talked about matching collection tubes with volunteers, like the Adopt A Highway program does. A person or organization would be responsible for collecting the line from the tube and maintaining the tube.

To educate anglers, Barth would like every fishing license to come with a brochure about Tangle Free Waters. Every licensed angler would know the location of recycling tubes and would not be able to litter out of ignorance. She would also like to see a picture accompanied with flters at campground kiosks.

Her report proposes a Green Fish Certification for organizations and sporting goods stores that would incentivize stores to join the Tangle Free Waters program. Stores could pass out bags for customers to put line into and then return to the store. The store would then mail the line to Berkley.

The Sheet spoke with Cindy Kamler, founder and director of Wildcare Eastern Sierra (Wildcare) a non-profit based in Mammoth Lakes. The Sheeting recycling tubes, Barth decided to develop a program.

We Choose to Recycle. Do you?

At Mammoth Disposal we look for ways to recycle and want to be a resource for the community. Our Transfer Station and Buyback Center is here for you, but we need your help to keep Mammoth Lakes the beautiful place it is.

TRANSFER STATION IS OPEN 7 DAYS/WEEK FROM 6:30am - 7pm

There are convenient containers for you to place your sorted materials.

We suggest you arrive with your recyclables sorted so it is a quick and easy process for you. Look at all the materials you can recycle:

- Cardboard, paper, magazines, cereal boxes and junk mail
- Tin and aluminum cans
- Glass bottles, jars, plastic bottles and jugs

BUYBACK CENTER IS OPEN MON - SAT 9am - 3pm (open for lunch)

You can join us in lowering your waste and protecting the environment. Join our neighbors and local businesses by signing up for service. Call Mammoth Disposal with all your recycling and trash questions.

Thank you for pitching in!
TANGLE
continued from page 8

Bishop that rehabilitates injured wild animals, about fishing line’s impact on wildlife.

Wildcare treats about 500 animals a year. Most of the animals injured by fishing line that Wildcare Eastern Sierra treats are birds

About a year ago, they treated a fledgling male raven rescued from Crowley Lake. He was found hanging upside-down from a barbed wire fence. His foot wrapped with fishing line and the line was wound around the fence. The bird died shortly after the rescue.

Kamler listed cases of birds injured or killed by fishing line. As she recalled a nesting pair of killdeer that were tied together by fishing line, the memory of two white pelicans that were tangled flew into her memory. The instances kept coming.

A kingfisher in Bishop Creek had a hook in its beak that was tied to line that was tangled in a bush. A volunteer found the stuck bird, after a brief stint with Wildcare, the bird returned to the wild.

A gull lost its leg after fishing line got wrapped around it, cut off circulation and killed the flesh.

A loon had a hook in its beak and line wrapped around, like a muzzle.

A hook caught in a mallard’s beak, lacerated it, split it in half.

Kamler reminded that these were only the reported instances.

Wildcare has also treated bald eagles and ospreys.

Kamler said that if the animal isn’t eaten or doesn’t starve, its stress can kill it.

It’s not just birds. Kamler has seen raccoons and fox, but roughly 90% of fishing line related cases involve birds.

It’s not just wild animals. Hooks catch dogs or dogs swallow hooks.

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It’s not just wild animals. Hooks catch dogs or dogs swallow hooks.

“Most people who are fishing don’t want to but they don’t think about it,” Kamler said.

She has noticed a slight increase in the amount of animals Wildcare treats for fishing line related injuries. She noted that there are animals injured or killed by fishing line that Wildcare never sees because they don’t get rescued or reported.

Tangle Free Waters
janetrbarth@gmail.com

Garden of Eat’n
California Cuisine & Catering

APRES SKI 4-5 PM
1/2 OFF APPS & CREPES
$1 OFF BEER & WINE

Organic

erot

Beef Veggie

Gluten Free Options

760.934.1999
588 Old Mammoth Rd.

Janet R. Barth, Broker-Associate
Specializing in June Lake Properties
760-648-7304

www.SierraCrestRealEstate.com

SUPPORT BODHI’S BATTLE
JOIN US AT THE LIBERTY SPORT’S BAR AND GRILL, APRIL 26TH, 2019 AT 6 PM

Bodhi was diagnosed with Burkitt’s Lymphoma in early February. He has begun treatment and still remains as cheerful and radiant as ever. Please join us to increase awareness as well as help Bodhi and his family while he undergoes his treatment.

Join us for a fun night of Raffles and Live Music provided by DJ Fresh Tracks
KNOW YOUR FIVE R’S

By Upham

Do you find your head spinning trying to figure out what is going on with recycling these days? What can you recycle? Where can you recycle it? And where does it go once you have put it in a blue can or dropped it off at a recycling center? You are definitely not alone.

Recently a group of about 10 members of the local Climate Action Group INYO350 decided to try to find out the what-where-and how of Recycling in Inyo County. It has taken several months of investigation, but now, for Earth Day, they are ready to share what they have uncovered and learned.

First and foremost you might ask – after all these years, actually decades of Recycling, why is it so hard to figure out the ins and outs of local recycling? The answer is simply that the world of Recycling, around the globe, is changing on a daily basis right now.

Before the 20th century, there was not need to recycle things because people avoided waste due to economic needs. They fixed things that were broken and they found ways to give items a second life once their original purpose was complete. In the 1960’s “Reduce-Reuse-Recycle” was introduced to address the challenge of consumer waste and to limit the amount of materials going to landfills and incinerators. China has gladly purchased our recyclables for more than 20 years to fuel its manufacturing growth, but in January of 2018 that changed. Due to massive amounts of contamination in the recycled material that countries were sending to China, they decided to refuse the incoming material. This has led us into an international crisis of waste management on a planet that is vastly addicted to consumables, many of which are single-use plastic items. To better understand this, we first need to define contamination in relation to the world of recycling. Contamination occurs when garbage, food waste or the wrong recyclables are put into recycling carts, bins or containers. When Contamination occurs, all that was intended to be recycled ends up in our landfills. Assuming that most of us want to participate and be a part of the waste management solution, and not to contribute to making the problem worse, we now have two imperatives in front of us. The first is to properly recycle. The second is to reduce consumption of items, reuse items, repair items, re-purpose items and as a last choice, recycle items.

Flavors Hook Kids

Flavors mask the harsh taste of tobacco, making it easier for kids to get hooked on nicotine. The tobacco companies know this. They also know that flavor means a whole lot more.

Learn more at FlavorsHooKkids.org

4 of 5 kids who have used tobacco started with a flavored product.*

BRAIN SCIENCE FOR REGULAR PEOPLE

To explain why the tobacco industry targets kids, we have to lay down a little science.

1. Nicotine changes the brain, which is why quitting is so hard.*
2. The tobacco industry profits off addiction.
3. The brain’s peak period to develop addiction is in adolescence.*
4. If you think it’s coincidence that kids are the likeliest addicts and that tobacco now tastes like candy, go back to number two.
recycling bins, hoping that someone will sort out what is appropriate or not. Don’t guess. It is best to know what you are doing so you don’t add to the contamination of recyclables and run the risk of rejection. INYO350 has posted on its website, www.inyo350action.org, lists of all of the locations in Inyo County where things can be recycled, including lists of what can be recycled where. There are lists that you can print out and post on your fridge. When in doubt, check it out with a recycling agent, such as Inyo County Solid Waste Management or Bishop Waste.

Here is a short list of items that are NOT currently recyclable and that should appropriately be put into the trash to go to the landfill. Plastic bags and film wrap packaging, “compostable” plastics (not recyclable here), plastic utensils, plastic straws, take-out coffee cups (they have plastic liners), chip bags, plastic plates, small plastic toys, aluminum foil, and solid Styrofoam.

Once you have determined that the plastic, cardboard or glass you are going to recycle is appropriate it is very important that all food residue is removed from the item to be recycled. Clean it and dry it before placing it in a recycling cart, bin or container, therefore avoiding contamination of the entire container.

Reduce – Reuse – Repair – Repurpose – Recycle

Today with markets for recyclables being so volatile and unpredictable it is important for each of us to examine our consuming habits and think about our purchases, including how items are packaged.

Think about how you personally can reduce what you are buying that results in waste. Buy in bulk with a minimum of packaging. Carry a re-fillable water bottle, coffee cup and drinking glass with a re-usable straw. Think about the single-use plastics that most of us use without even giving it a second thought, such as plastic straws, plastic utensils and take-out coffee cups. With a little planning you can figure out how to use reusable items rather than use single-use throw-aways. Look around you and notice just how much waste really could be avoided.

Then think about going back to the 1800’s and think about items you could repair or re-purpose rather than just disposing of them in favor of something brand new. It’s a new way of thinking for us, but it is part of the bigger picture solution that we need to find.

Recycling is a part of the solution, but it is not the whole answer. Think about how you can be a part of the solution and take a pledge this Earth Day to be a part of that solution. For much more information on recycling and how we need to change the way we consume and dispose of our waste, please visit www.inyo350action.org and https://www.ca.recycle.

ensuring the long-term sustainability of the business. One of Fernie’s best qualities is his ability to self-evaluate, and he’s pretty realistic about who he is and what he does. Flat out, he’ll acknowledge that the ski industry by its very nature isn’t very green.

That said, Black Tie employs a lot of people, and if it’s not detrimental to the overall sustainability of the business, Black Tie will do what it can.

Some initiatives the company has undertaken.

1. Hiring Sierra Conservation Project to handle its recycling
2. Transitioning to “green” waxes which don’t have CFC’s (so employees aren’t inhaling them) and won’t have run-off to streams (from skier use).
3. LED lights in their location at 501 Old Mammoth Road.
4. The Incentivization of employees to not drive to work - either using public transport, carpools, walking, etc. Employees garner Black Tie “green points” which can be redeemed at the end of the season for prizes.

Black Tie has also encouraged its cleaning service, Perfect Clean, to use eco-friendly products.

Long-term, Fernie envisions transitioning Black Tie’s vehicle fleet to e-vehicles.

As Webb says, there’s definitely a link between tourism and sustainability. Being green translates to green (as in money).

BIZ
continued from page 1

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Becoming a Green Business is not as time-consuming as one might fear. The estimate is 15-40 hours depending upon the size and nature of one’s business. And you’ll learn a lot. As Webb says, there’s a lot of business owners who think they’re green, “but as they go through the checklist, many discover they’re less green than they thought.”

While Inyo County is not part of Webb’s dedicated service area for now, she will consider taking on Inyo-based businesses if contacted. For example, Webb was contacted by and met with the Tri-County Fairgrounds.

A statewide network of Green Business experts will be convening in Mammoth during the first week of May for training. There will be a mixer open to the public at The Fort in Mammoth from 5-6 p.m. on Thursday, May 2. A huge opportunity for anyone interested to learn about green business practices from leaders in the field.

Pam Bold recruited the conference to Mammoth while she was at a similar event in San Luis Obispo last summer. And when I chided her about the “green” practice of bringing all these people to such a remote locale, Bold assured me those coming practice what they preach.

One attendee is specifically hopping on the Metrolink and then taking the bus to Mammoth from Lancaster. Walking the walk one ride at a time.
The Future is Bright, Clean and Environmentally Responsible.

Introducing the Casa Diablo IV Project.
This state-of-the-art project will provide additional electricity for 22,000 homes while offsetting 4 million tons of CO2, providing the highest level of efficiency and safety in the geothermal industry. It’s a project that we have planned slowly, methodically and with an abundance of caution. The result has been full approval from every regulatory and oversight body.

Good, Clean Business for Mammoth
Casa Diablo IV will bring over $13,000,000 to the region • Casa Diablo IV will create over 180 construction jobs • Mammoth Pacific Geothermal currently employs 25 full-time people, a number that will grow as a result of the Casa Diablo IV project

mammothpacific.com

A past and future you can depend on.
Holiday Haus Motel and Hostel: Hiring for year round permanent position for a Front Desk. Excellent pay DOE. Please complete online application at www.sevendays.com or visit our website at www.gullphotosandjobs.com. Email photos and job references to pm93529@msn.com or visit our website at www.gullphotosandjobs.com. We operate our motel. Hours of operation: 9am to 9pm. We are looking for hard working, energetic people to join our team! We are hiring for Front Desk, Housekeepers, and Housemen. For more information, call or text 760-709-0131. www.sanmiguel.org

Bleu Handcrafted Foods: is seeking Office/HR, or personnel management experience. Baking Team Shifts start at 7am and Culinary Team shifts at 9 am. Part Time or Full Time. Experience and interests, we will train and place you in the right role at Bleu. Great atmosphere, positive work environment, competitive benefits and pay. To inquire with Scottie at 760-914-7433. www.mammoth-taxi.com. Mammoth Rock & Bowl/Mammoth Rock Grasserie has the following positions available: Baristas, Back Servers, and Line Cooks. Email stellarbrew@gmail.com for all the details!

Fictitious Business Name Statement: Outside Clothesline Services: is Doing Business As: PennBay Adventures. This business is conducted by Co-Partners. This business name listed above on December 17, 2018. The Proposed Name: Bruce Penn & Kama Newbury

Fictitious Business Name Statement: Town & Country Market is Doing Business As: Clean Queens. (Supplemental Information: Date of Organization: 1/1/2019)

For Hire
Z-Z-ZIPPIES! Quality work, speedy service. Sportswear, paints, pens, and other disposable merchandise. 760-873-4899. We are looking for 30 energetic crew of awesome individuals. Part-time and full-time is available for the right person. Eager to be a part of the community while working with great people, develop new friendships, work in a positive environment, and for a fair wage. Email: stellarbrew@gmail.com or call 760-709-0131.

Wanted to Operate Motel: Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546. We are seeking Office/HR, or personnel management experience. Baking Team Shifts start at 7am and Culinary Team shifts at 9 am. Part Time or Full Time. Experience and interests, we will train and place you in the right role at Bleu. Great atmosphere, positive work environment, competitive benefits and pay. To inquire with Scottie at 760-914-7433. www.mammoth-taxi.com. Mammoth Rock & Bowl/Mammoth Rock Grasserie has the following positions available: Baristas, Back Servers, and Line Cooks. Email stellarbrew@gmail.com for all the details!

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**BARS & MUSIC**

**Happy Hour**
- Austria Hof. 4-7 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 4-6 p.m. Friday & Saturday. See ad p. 7.
- The Liberty Sports Bar and Grill Slider Mondays, Monday's @ 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. 4.
- 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. 

**BARS & MUSIC**

**Mike McGuire** plays The Warming Hut. Time: 4-7 p.m. Genre: Ween covers and more.

**Sunday, April 21**
- Brunch @ Ganna’s. Ease your mind at the mimosa and bloody bar. More info: See ad p. 2

**Tuesday, April 23**
- Team trivia at Mammoth Brewing Co. Time: 6 p.m. Free. Prizes for 1st & 2nd. Karaoke at Rafters starts at 10 p.m. Free.

**Friday, April 26**
- Support Bodhi’s Battle at Liberty Bar.
- Food and raffle to support Bodhi. Time: 6 p.m. More info, see ad p. 18.

**TOWN STUFF**

**April 19**
- Easter Egg Hunt at Mammoth Creek Park. Time: 3-4 p.m. Jelly bean guessing competition and egg hunt beginning at 3:15. Info: 760.965.3699
- Free Screening of Chasing Coral. A documentary on the effects of climate change on coral and sea life shown by INYO350. Location: Inyo County Office of Education Great Room, 166 Grandview Street, Bishop. Refreshments will be available. Info: John Louth 760.872.2585.
- April 20/21 - Holy Bowl at Mammoth Mountain. A snowboarding competition in a skatepark of snow. Public access to the bowl this weekend. Time: 10 a.m.- 3 p.m.
- More info: see sidebar column next page.

**Saturday, April 20**
- Earth Day Celebration at the Village at Mammoth. Informational and interactive booth fair, ski and snowboard donation, raffle and live music. Time: 2-5 p.m. More info: See ad p. 3
- Easter Egg Hunt at the Sierra Nevada Resort. Over 2,000 eggs will be hidden around the resort! Free hot cocoa. Arrive at 9:30 a.m. for a hunt at 10 a.m. Location: 164 Old Mammoth Road. Info: 760.934.2515.
- Earth Day Celebration at Bishop City Park. Time: 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Info: 760.709.2452.
- Millpond Disc Golf Tourney. $10 entry. Registration begins 11 a.m. More info: See sidebar column next page.
- Shop for a Cause @ the Cast Off. Registration begins 11 a.m. More info: See sidebar column next page.
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High Sierra Tri Season Opener

Friday, April 26 from 5-7:30 p.m. at the Crowley Lake Community Center. Join us for dinner, a power point show, and performance on our training program, and race schedule. Meet fellow athletes, buy uniforms and participate in a raffle. If you are not yet a club member, you can join our directory online at www.highsierratri.com.

Please bring your own table settings. RSVP to president@highsierratri.org or call 760.933.4088.

Hospital Auxiliary Scholarship

Each year Mammoth Hospital Auxiliary awards college scholarships to residents of Mono County who are pursuing a career in a medically related field. The Scholarship Fund was established in 1985 and has awarded $589,000 to deserving locals.

Applications for 2019 Scholarships will be available April 1 and can be picked up at The Cast Off Thrift Store, 3059 Chateau Rd., Mammoth, or Mammoth Hospital.

Eligibility requirements are:

1. Pursuing a course of study in a medically related field.
2. A current resident of Mono County and resided there full time for a minimum of two years, or currently working in Mono County full time for a minimum of two years.
3. Completed two years of prerequisites in a medically related college curriculum with a minimum 3.0 grade point average, or worked for two years in a medically related field in Mono County.
4. Applications must be postmarked no later than June 30 and awardees will be notified in a medically related field.

Holy Bowly

The Unbound Terrain Parks host Holy Bowly April 15-21. A snowboarding contest, Holy Bowly is an annual international gathering of riders committed to getting as creative as possible on hand-shaped bowls, hips, spines, berms and transitions.

Public: April 20-21, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Info: 800.626.6684. See related story p. 18

Millpond Disc Golf Tournament

On Saturday, April 20, Millpond County Park hosts a Disc Golf Tournament. $10 entry fee. Registration begins at 11 a.m., ribbon cutting ceremony at 11:45 a.m., tournament begins at noon. The Millpond Disc Golf course is the first 18 hole Disc Golf course with official baskets (chains as they’re referred to) and tee pads in Inyo or Mono County. The course features a variety of holes with manicured lawn, native brush, some sand, and several holes where the pond itself is in play. Designed to be challenging for the advanced player yet also forgiving for those new to the sport as well. Info: Billy at boyobilly@gmail.com.

Mamma Mia!

Playhouse 395 presents Catherine Johnson’s “Mamma Mia!” from April 26-30.

Shows start at 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Sunday shows begin at 2 p.m. All shows are performed at the Bishop Union High School Auditorium.


Andrea Lawrence Award Dinner

The Andrea Lawrence Award Dinner takes place Friday, May 3 at 5:30 p.m., Parallax Restaurant, Mammoth Mountain.

Join us to celebrate Andrea’s environmental legacy of passionate engagement in community and the land with award recipient Elsa Lopez, pioneering Los Angeles community leader who connected LA youth to their Eastern Sierra watersheds on water conservation. $75 per person; proceeds go to the Andrea Lawrence Fund. Reservations required, please visit monolake.org/andreaaward for details and to RSVP.

Owens Lake Bird Festival

The Owens Lake Bird Festival takes place Friday, April 26 through Sunday, April 28. The festival showcases the migration of birds through the Mojave desert along the Owens Lake.

There will be outings, focused on birds, photography, botany, geology, and history.

Friday evening reception from 6-8 p.m. at Statham Hall, 138 Jackson St., Lone Pine. Drinks and hors d’oeuvres.

Saturday: continental breakfast and check-in from 6-8 a.m. at Statham Hall. Morning outings from 6:30-11:30 a.m. Lunch at Statham Hall noon-1 p.m. Afternoon outings 1-4:30 p.m. Dinner at 5 p.m. at Statham Hall.

Keynote address by Rich Cimino titled “Owens Lake – The Tundra to the Tropics: A Destination for Birdwatchers.”

Sunday: check-in and breakfast 6-7:30 a.m. at Statham Hall. Morning outings to follow.

Pricing: $40/one trip pass, $75 unlimited trip pass, $40 for dinner, $40 to sponsor dinner for a trip leader.

Register at https://friendsoftheinyo.org/owens-lake-bird-festival/

Manzanar Pilgrimage

The 50th annual Manzanar Pilgrimage takes place Friday, April 26 and Saturday, April 27.

On Friday, the Eastern California Museum, at 155 Grant St., Independence, will host a reception from 4-6 p.m.

On Saturday, a Pilgrimage Ceremony at the Manzanar Cemetery takes place from noon to 2 p.m. It includes traditional Japanese drumming and dance. Guided walks to follow. Lone Pine High School will host a discussion and open microphone at our dinner on Saturday.

On Sunday, there will be a book signing of “American Sutra” by Duncan Williams at the Manzanar Visitor Center at 11 a.m.

Location: Manzanar Visitor’s Center, 5001 Highway 395, Independence.

Info: 760.874.2194 ext 3310

calender of events
Salaries continued from page 1
modified the equation used by Sperling Best Places’ Cost of Living calculator by replacing listed home values with actual home sale prices from the National Association of Realtors. The median home value in Mono County is $264,630 more than the second most expensive county, Trinity, of the comparables.

The county only uses this data for positions that it felt were good comparisons to other counties, meaning the counties with the same positions, like CAO or Finance Director. In addition to the data, the county based new salaries on internal equity, the ‘is it fair?’ test compared to what other counties are paid.

The report stated, “...it must be stressed that finding the median salary for benchmark positions and adding a cost of living factor did not, in most cases, provide us with a salary we could recommend to the Board.” The $226,984 was doled out across seven positions. Benefits are not included in any of these salaries. The CAO position got a $6,600 boost. The HR Director got a $11,000 increase. The Risk Manager got $6,320 more. The County Counsel’s salary increased $2,700. The Public Works Director salary increased $17,660. The EMS chief, $9,840. The Public Works Road Superintendent was the only salary that decreased. It went down $4,432. The Community Development Director salary increased $8,000. The Community Development Department building official salary increased $6,000. Production chief, $13,064. Behavioral Health and Social Services directors, $13,664. Public Health director, $13,556. Treasury/Tax collector increased $6,364. The largest increase by percentage was for the Information Technology (IT) Director position, currently occupied by Nate Greenberg. His salary increased from $114,180 to $150,000, a $35,820 or 24.8% increase. Consider it a fair increase for the median salary for IT directors in the state, which increased $6,000. The Public Works Director salary increased $17,660. The Risk Manager got $6,320 more. The County Counsel’s salary increased $2,700. The Public Works Director salary increased $17,660. The EMS chief, $9,840. The Public Works Road Superintendent was the only salary that decreased. It went down $4,432. The Community Development Director salary increased $8,000. The Community Development Department building official salary increased $6,000. Production chief, $13,064. Behavioral Health and Social Services directors, $13,664. Public Health director, $13,556. Treasury/Tax collector increased $6,364. The largest increase by percentage was for the Information Technology (IT) Director position, currently occupied by Nate Greenberg. His salary increased from $114,180 to $150,000, a $35,820 or 24.8% increase. Consider it a fair increase for the median salary for IT directors in the state, which increased $6,000.

We felt that we came up with a good product, that our recommendations were fair.

-Leslie Chapman

I saw you. I received a $36,000 raise. IT’s no longer just a book by Stephen King, but it sure is a horror show for the taxpayer.

In search of Cousin ITT, but honestly, I’d rather drop a T and drop a resume. In search of ... a new Swinter boyfriend. Must be properly sworn. In search of ... a new Swinter partner. Because it’s a transitional season, I’m particularly interested in some tranny action.

In search of ... one nighter for Earth Day. I’ll recycle you all night long before I separate my bottle from your cans. In search of ... an Earth Date? Don’t bother coming around here. You inspire no climate change.
GET READY FOR A BREWED AWAKENING

By Maddux

In between a small church and the soon-to-open Two Brothers Italian restaurant in Big Pine, is a small coffee shop named Brewed Awakening. William L. (Billy) White and Jessica Diaz are the owners. White said the shop “took off a lot faster than I thought it would. I figured it would be slow at first, [but] it was quite the opposite,” he said. “Word of mouth had already been spreading, so people were waiting for this place to open,” Diaz added.

In November, 2017, Billy bought the building. At first, he was only “looking to lease the place to have a commissary for Billy Bob’s Grill,” but decided to purchase the building outright instead.


The couple said the building once housed a pizza parlor called Uncle Bud’s. Then it was originally the Big Pine Post Office.

The name “Brewed Awakening” came about when Billy joked around with rude awakening and the sarcasm in coffee, and Jessica came up with brewed awakening for the shop.

The couple came into the coffee business from different careers. Billy served in the Air Force, then as a Deputy for the Inyo County Sheriff’s Office.

Jessica served in the Army, became a 911 dispatcher for the Kern County Sheriff’s Department, and then worked with the FAA as an air traffic controller.

Jessica said she learned about coffee and all the basics from a friend in Mammoth at Stellar Brew, where they “went over the equipment, how the machines work with, making drinks, flavors, and temperatures,” she said.

One of the novelties of the coffee shop is a newcomer doesn’t expect there’s a Billy Bob’s Grill, which now sits behind the shop and offers a varied menu.

“Now that we are in a physical building, the menu is able to be expanded,” Jessica Diaz said. The menu has BBQ, chicken wings, chicken sandwiches, salads, ribs, and homemade chili. The couple currently buys their bakery items from local Bishop business, Hing’s Donuts, but their coffee is from Black Rifle, a veteran-owned company that sells online.

A unique food item on the menu is “The Whole Pig,” which is a 4 lb., 24-inch breakfast burrito with all the meats from bacon, sausage, ham, chorizo, potatoes, cheese, and eggs, the couple said.

Jessica Diaz said the name of Whole Pig “was kind of a joke, and when it kept selling, they kept it on the menu,” she said. Diaz said, “the Whole Pig” is sold every day, and because of its size some customers split it in half.

“It helped that this food was already known. It’s really tasty [and] they know flavor. You’re gonna be full after you leave here—they are big portions,” Jessica Diaz said. At the same time, “we are looking forward to new places being added. Whenever this Two Brothers will open up, that’s just going to attract more people to Big Pine,” Jessica Diaz said.

Billy Bob’s Grill is owned by Billy and Jessica currently stays behind the coffee shop, but they are looking to buy another truck so they can continue their mobile business, he said.

“When Billy Bob’s Grill was mobile, it was usually stationed on the Bishop Reservation on Tu Su Lane and US 395, and at the South end of the Big Pine Paiute Reservation, he said. The couple said the mobile truck would also be at different places, such as the Bridgeport 4th of July, and “people reserved [it] for catering events and parties.”

One of the things the couple likes about Big Pine is the supportive community and “real good work relations with us, Rossi’s Place, [and] Copper Top,” White said. “Everyone is supporting each other. They will come in here and eat, and we’ll go over there and eat. We send people their way and we know they send people our way,” the couple said.

Jessica Diaz said she believes it is a small-town thing, and “I never known that before. I only noticed it here—people help each other out here, if you need something they are there [for you].”
CARVING WITH COOK

John Cook grew up on a 106 acre farm in Humboldt County. He could hunt, cut firewood, do all the things that make growing up on a farm fun. It turned him into a lover of the outdoors.

But when he lost a limb from a botched surgery and spiraled away from the outdoors like so many disabled men and women do. He lost his career, his identity, and his will to live. He was stuck on the couch. He attempted, many times, to become one of the 22 veterans who commits suicide every day.

Now, adaptive skiing has brought him back.

“I get depressed staying inside for too long,” Cook said.

“When I am at the top of the mountain and I just enjoy the view, just feel the breathe enter my lungs, the cold air, I am happy to be alive.”

Cook served eight years as an air-plane structural mechanic for the navy. He spent six of those years at Naval Air Station Lemoore in the California’s Central Valley.

It was there that he met his wife. They married in October of 2008. Around the same time, Cook broke his ankle while playing basketball on leave.

“I was amazed to see that giant peak,” Cook said of Mammoth.

He thought it was just a sprain and went a while without letting anyone know that it was hurt. Being in the Navy, he was worried that an injury incurred while on leave might get him into trouble.

His first surgery took place in November of 2008, a month after his wedding. Doctors ground down the part of the ankle that had chipped off. Over the next six months he had five more surgeries to fix the mistakes of the first one.

Then, the spasms came. While on leave he would have pain spasms so bad in his ankle that he had to be knocked unconscious when he got to the hospital. He searched for help but was turned away from a military emergency room because, they said, he was just searching for pills.

“When the doctor kicked me out, I didn’t really argue with him,” Cook said. “My tolerance was high. I was in a lot of pain, and I was abusing Oxycontin a little bit at that time, not nearly as bad as it would get.”

He went to a civilian doctor the next day. The civilian hospital told him that he had a MRSA Infection in his ankle, and if he waited another week he likely would have died.

Over the next year and a half he had two more surgeries attempting to rid his leg of the infections, and when his bone was found to be infected, a third to amputate.

The way Cook’s injury happened made it mentally even worse for him. He was not deployed when he got hurt. He was stuck on the couch. He at-tended the hospital. He searched for help but was turned away from a military emergency room because, they said, he was just searching for pills.

“Now, adaptive skiing has brought me back,” Cook said. “I was amazed to see that giant peak,” Cook said of Mammoth.

“Seeing the size of the mountain, riding down it and looking back at what you accomplished, it absolutely can be life-changing.”

Cook came to ski Mammoth twice this year. Now that he has the basics of skiing down, he hopes to learn to stand-up ski with a prosthetic in the near future.

He has also started working with a veterans group called Our Heroes Dreams, facilitating other vets to get on the mountain. Seeing other disabilities gives him perspective.

“There were times when I thought my life was over, and now I say, ‘I’m just a single-leg amputee. That’s nothing. That’s nothing compared to what some of these people go through.”

The depression that he went through before seems like a whole different life. “Through organizations like Disabled Sports, I look back and laugh and say how could you have felt like that? I look back like, ‘Really? There’s so much more to live for… Disability is nothing. It can be overcome.”

The National Wounded Warrior Center, proposed to be built on the Cerro Coso college campus in Mammoth Lakes, 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 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
This page sponsored by the DSES Advisory Council
Free-form terrain park open to public this weekend

**By Gorman**

The Holy Bowly has returned to Mammoth Mountain. The massive free-form terrain park (think skatepark made out of snow) will be open to the public for two days Saturday, April 20 – Sunday, April 21, in the Mammoth Mountain South Park, next to the Rollercoaster Chair.

Holy Bowly is the brainchild of Krush Kulesza of Snowboy Productions. He created the first snowscape bowls in Washington State in the early 2000’s. The concept grew, and the first Holy Bowly happened at Hakuba Happo-one in Japan in 2012. It was brought to Mammoth for the first time in 2015.

This years bowl, at 2,000 x 500 feet, is the largest that Kulesza has ever built.

The idea of the Holy Bowly is to open up the normally linear nature of a terrain park.

“The whole course is rideable,” Kulesza said. “It’s made of things that can be approached from any angles: bowls, snowboobs.”

A snowboob is a rounded snow-mound.

Kulesza builds one Holy Bowly a year, and it is different every time. He does not come to a mountain knowing what the terrain is going to look like.

He said that he has “Legos,” which are features that have been proven to look cool and been fun to ride. The Snowboy Productions crew tweaks and adds to its sketchbook as the build evolves.

This years Holy Bowly doesn’t share any feature in common with the one from three years ago, and, Kulesza said, “If we built it a week from now it would be totally different, too.”

Kulesza has had one feature in mind for the Mammoth build that he couldn’t put anywhere else. “There is a giant snow mound that is the top of a mammoth skull. Then there are two sweeping tusks that come out of the snow beneath.”

Building such a park is an unparalleled feat, according to head of Mammoth Terrain Parks, TJ Dawoud. Dawoud had the task of manifesting Kulesza’s vision.

“It is building at the highest level of creativity possible,” Dawoud said. It took eight days to build, and Dawoud said, “On day one you have no idea what it is going to look like on day eight.”

To do a park like this for a long period of time would be, “nearly impossible,” Dawoud said. It took three days working with an excavator and five snowcats to get the park to 90% completion. Then it took hand crews of 10-15 people shoveling and raking for five days to finish the park. The freedom of Holy Bowly is completely different than the specificity needed to build a competition park like the one Dawoud built for the Toyota Grand Prix.

“The riding style is different too. “This style of park is geared heavily toward creativity, flow, picking your own lines,” Dawoud said. “It creates an opportunity for riders to do what they want and think outside the box.”

From April 15-19, the bowl was only available to invited riders. Kulesza said that he, “Invited some of the most stylish riders in the world to explore that canvas for a week.”

There will be photography and a film shoots in the bowl, then it will be opened up for the public.

Kulesza said that it was great coming back to work at Mammoth. This is the first repeat location for a Holy Bowly. “Mammoth has a ton of resources, which is good when you are tackling something so big,” Kulesza said.

“All the snow in the west landed in Mammoth so we’ve had a lot to work with.”

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**Melissa Raitano with an indy grab off a hip on Friday.**
Mega Season Passes” like the Epic and a recent article in Outside) that these tations? There are those arguing (like quantity visitations or more quality visitations) are an age-old problem in mountain resorts. Should we strive for more resort communities. Affordable workforce housing crunch here in Mammoth and other resorts. Affordable housing is a real problem in Mammoth and no quick solution is on the horizon. Other IKON resorts are already reporting housing shortages as units are converted to Airbnb/STR units to cover the increased demand. Affordable workforce housing is an age-old problem in mountain resort communities. All of this leads to a key question in Mammoth; Should we strive for more quantity visitations or more quality visitations? There are those arguing (like a recent article in Outside) that these “Mega Season Passes” like the Epic and Ikon will be the death of skiing — “The U.S. ski industry is facing…increasing prices, paid by a declining number of customers”…The business model for large U.S. resorts (can be summarized as trying to get) more money from less customers.” But the business at Mammoth certainly hasn’t displayed that this season. Other IKON resorts had banner years. And it wasn’t all about great snow — too much snow can negatively impact business. There will be plenty of argument over the new conglomerates and mega ski passes. Much of it depends on your personal loss or gain. One thing for sure: they are here to stay. They will push greater demand for guest accommodations which will be supplied by new condo and/or condo hotel properties, or the conversion of more non-STR units into STR units. Here in Mammoth it is likely to be both. And more demand for luxury homes, most of which are still selling below replacement value. Hopefully we can maintain some balance between the supply and demand, but Mammoth always seems to live on the extremes. We’ll just have to wait for the next extreme. Paul Oster is the Broker/Owner of RE/MAX 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.

LETTERS continued from page 4

Our current population. Now, on average, a total of 260 people are killed annually by weather-related events — a quarter of the ratio from 75 years ago. Who can tell me how many of these 260 fatalities are the result of human-caused climate change and how many are related to natural processes? By comparison, in 2017 drug overdoses alone accounted for 70,237 deaths in the U.S. Life expectancy in the U.S. began dropping in 2015 and is continuing to decline. The suicide rate is the highest it has been in decades. If government wants to solve problems, then first take a look at where the bodies are coming from and it is not from changes in the climate! With Earth Day there will be many events reported widely by the media focusing mostly on one specific impact we humans are having on our planet and that is global warming or climate change. The solution offered by the Democrats and media elites is the Green New Deal which was recently introduced in both houses of congress. This proposal sets forth many lofty goals such as having all of our power demand in the U.S. produced through clean, renewable, and zero-emission energy sources within 10 years. The time allotted to complete this task is unrealistic. Many of its other goals relate to so-called social justice issues like economic inequality. It is apparent the left is using climate change and the environmental movement to deconstruct capitalism — using Marxism and socialism to create and solve perceived problems. The cure is worse than the disease. In 1989 Noel Brown a senior U.N. environmental official said entire nations could be wiped off the face of the Earth by rising sea levels if the global warming trend were not reversed by the year 2000. He said governments had a 10-year window of opportunity to solve the greenhouse effect before it grew beyond human control. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-NY recently said “Millennials and Gen Z and all these folks that come after us are looking up, and we’re like, ‘The world is going to end in 12 years if we don’t address climate change, and your biggest issue is how are we gonna pay for it?’” How many times can you cry wolf!

Gary Guenther Mammoth Lakes 760.934.6801

Biographical info: I have worked around large complex diesel power generation systems since 1970 and have extensive work experience as a technician maintaining and operating complex plant facilities such as on a Coast Guard ice breaker and more recently at a remote research facility in the arctic. Often, I’ve worked in support of the scientific community.

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