ALTELLA WALKS IT BACK
Ikon Base Pass will now (mostly) include Mammoth

By Giles and Rea

Bowing to pressure fromirate passholders, Alterra Mountain Company announced on March 1 that unlimited skiing (with holiday black out dates) at Mammoth Mountain will be included in the 2018-2019 Ikon Base Pass for $599. The change came one week after Alterra’s announcement that Mammoth Mountain would be excluded from the Ikon Base Pass. Research The Sheet conducted this week may shed light on why Alterra made its initial decision, and why that decision was reversed.

When Alterra first announced its multi-resort offerings on February 24, unlimited skiing at Mammoth Mountain was only available through the Ikon Pass, which is priced at $899 for the 2018-2019 season. At that time, the Ikon Base Pass afforded just 5 days at Mammoth Mountain.

Of the 12 ski resorts owned by Alterra, Mammoth Mountain was one of four for which unlimited skiing was not included in the company’s cheaper Base Pass (the other three being Colorado’s Steamboat Mountain, Vermont’s Stratton Mountain Resort, and Utah’s Deer Valley). But Mammoth was the

see Ikon, page 12

IF THE SHOE FITS...

IF THE SHOE FITS...

MCOE Superintendent Stacey Adler will pay back $24,500 in stipends

By Bodine

She’s going to give the money back. Mono County Superintendent of Schools Stacey Adler is going to voluntarily pay back the $24,500 in stipends she has awarded herself since 2012 for work she performed for a San Diego charter school. In a special meeting held on February 23 in Bridgeport, Mono County Board of Education Trustees voted 4-0, with Trustee Sue Bouska absent, to require Adler to pay back her stipend. According to the motion, Adler and the Trustees jointly agreed that the money be paid back to MCOE. The board determined there was “no bad intent” on Adler’s part in issuing the stipends. They concluded that she had not followed procedure; however, there is no current Mono County Office of Education policy or procedure that dictates how stipends should be awarded.

Adler, along with 10 other Mono County Office of Education employees, received stipends for their work for the Urban Corps of San Diego Charter School (see “Stipendintendent,” February 10, 2018) since 2012.

The Mono County Office of Education (MCOE) manages the finances, special education requirements and payroll for the charter

see PAYBACK, page 6

BACK TO WORK

CalTrans plows attempt to catch up with the first big Sierra storm of the season near The Village on Thursday, March 1. See story, p. 22.

Assessment distress
High and dry
Cry me a river
Location, location, location
Warm fuzzies
/p. 5/
/p. 7/
/p. 20/
/p. 10/
/p. 11/
BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY
By Lunch

In empathy for millennials (this phrase alone will cause a gasp among certain Sheet writers), I admit to having had a vast cluelessness about business during my “pay for hine” days.

Paychecks were like…magic. And I didn’t think too much about where they came from, or who paid ‘em, or about even the loosest connection between my toil and what monetary value it might be worth to my employer.

I assumed that my employers made money hand over fist.

I couldn’t understand their stresses or why they would occasionally snap at me.

In hindsight, I’m shocked that my businessman father didn’t teach me more about the world of business.

Maybe he tried. I probably wasn’t listening.

It was only when I started my own business that I gained an appreciation for the poor souls who had graciously offered me employment through the years.

Thank you, Benett.

So it was with some amusement and recognition that I sat down and read “Business for Bohemians” by Tom Hodgkinson this week.

Hodgkinson is a Brit. He is also a fellow publisher, and opened a business in London in 2011 called “The Idler Academy of Philosophy, Husbandry and Merriment,” a combination cafe, bookshop and events venue.

So this is a fun guy with a sense of humor, a guy who openly and actively celebrates trying to avoid working too hard.

But then, he started a business and got…worked…over.

At one point, his Fired employee told him: “I don’t enjoy this. I’m taking the Idler philosophy to heart, became so brazen in their lack of effort that Hodgkinson resorted to putting a sign up in the break room which ironically read, “No Idling.”

The inmates were clearly running the asylum. It got so bad at one point that Hodgkinson recalls “Fluffball (a female employee), barefoot, wearing a onesie, with stars on her cheeks and a whistle in her mouth, was standing on the counter, waving her arms in the air while Tarquin (a male employee) aimed pelvic thrusts in her direction.”

A friend of Hodgkinson’s, witnesses this and, horror-struck, turns to Hodgkinson and says “Your staff…your staff.” As Hodgkinson observes, it was like something out of Heart of Darkness.

So this book is his advice manual for aspiring entrepreneurs. And a perfect gift for that bohemian in your life who’s got a boatload of energy and ideas but just can’t seem to direct his/her energy or implement his/her ideas.

As Hodgkinson observes, “Bohemians affect disdain for Mammon. They live for art and life, so they say. But if you don’t address financial issues in a grown-up fashion, you’ll end up poor, which is no fun at all….Your chaos will do…nothing but profit your oppressor. So you need to get comfortable with the idea of making money. Respect may be nice, but, as punk poet John Cooper Clarke once wisely said, “Respect don’t pay the rent.”

Among the many helpful chapters: The Art of Accounting, How to Sell. The Art of Negotiation, How to Deal With Enemies. Get The Price Right and Get Paid. How To Be Stoic.

The chapters are littered with helpful, self-deprecating anecdotes that make it all seem a little less scary.

The #1 attribute necessary for success: Three words. “Just Keep Going.”

I liked the part in the Negotiation chapter where he suggests, “One way of negotiating is to delegate the process to someone else. You could create a fictional ‘money man’ who works at your company.”

Or, like The Sheet, you can invent a fictional money man who owns the company.

You invent these fictional characters so you have someone to blame if you tell people you can’t slash your prices any further. Because, as Hodgkinson warns, bohemians are chronic undervaluers of their own goods and services (while paradoxically often overvaluing their mad, creative skills!).

Another section that resonated with me was entitled: Accept that you are the ‘money man’ who works at your company.

And regarding the TBID…

Mammoth Mountain pays 2 percent of its lift ticket sales into the TBID (Tourism Business Improvement District), which funds Mammoth Lakes Tourism’s (MLT) marketing efforts and subsidizes air service to Mammoth-Yosemite Airport. According to the MLT’s Profit and Loss Statement for Fiscal Year 2016-17, Mammoth Mountain paid $10 million that year.

Joani Lynch, Senior Director of Brand Marketing for Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA), answered a few of Lunch’s questions regarding the future of the TBID this week.

Lunch: If season passes are sold out of Altera’s base of Denver, CO, will MMSA pay TBID on those passes?

Lynch: TBID will be remitted based on where the pass is used, not based on where the pass is sold. This is the same method we used to apply to TBID on Cal4nia passes between Mammoth and Big Bear…If a passholder uses their ikon 90 percent at Mammoth, then we will remit 90 percent of the 2 percent of the full ikon purchase price…

We will initially remit an estimate based on prior year remit, and then will true up after the season based on actual visitation…given that there will be thousands and thousands more ikon passes in the market than Cal4nia passes, it is highly likely that the total TBID remit for season passes to [Mammoth Lakes Tourism] will to continue to grow.

Lunch: Is Mammoth Mountain’s 2 percent of ticket sales voluntary and is it tied to air service?

Lynch: “Since TBID is an assessment, it requires a vote of the assessed business to approve. In this case, the vote will occur in the context of the renewal of the TBID in the next few months. Since Mammoth Mountain is the only entity selling lift tickets/season passes, if we vote ‘no,’ then the TBID on tickets/passes will not be renewed…So, while it is not technically ‘voluntary,’ it is effectively voluntary since only we can impose it on ourselves…

We believe that we won’t have reliable air service until we move the “base” to Bishop. We feel unfavorably towards continuing to use TBID generated on lift tickets/passes to subsidize unreliable air service.”

Correction: In the February 24 story “Ikonmore,” the quote “Mammoth is a bunch of thugs” was incorrectly attributed to Marjorie Greenfield. The Sheet retracts this quote and regrets the error. See Greenfield’s letter, p. 4.
The Felici Trio
The Three Amigos

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Piano Trio in B-Flat Major, K. 502
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Piano Trio in A Minor, opus 114
Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)
Piano Trio in E Minor, Opus 90 "Dumky"

SATURDAY
March 3, 2018
7:30 pm
Cerro Coso College, Mammoth Lakes

SUNDAY
March 4, 2018
4:00 pm
Cerro Coso College, Bishop

Tickets are available online at ChamberMusicUnbound.org
At the Booky Joint; the Inyo Council for the Arts, and at the door on concert nights.

WITH SPONSORSHIP FROM:
Hilda Herrera Adler, John Cunningham, Valerie Mackay, Paul & Kate Pape, Donald Sage, and Dr. Lynne Roe.

#4 FELICI & FRIENDS CONCERTS
2017-2018 Series

WHAT’S HAPPEN ‘N’ AT MAMMOTH ROCK ‘N’ BOWL

BOWLING N BEATS MONDAY
Let DJ Chronofriction set the beat
while you bowl $4 games, starting at 9pm.

MMSA EMPLOYEE NIGHT TUESDAY
$3 games and $2 shoes.
Show MMSA Employee Pass.

LATIN NIGHT THURSDAY
The fun starts at 9 pm with DJ Orbitz
$4 games and $2 shoes,
DANCING to great latin tunes.

OPEN DAILY
EVENTS & TIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

3029 Chateau • 760.934.4200 • MAMMOTHROCKNBOWL.COM

EASTERN SIERRA COMMUNITY AUCTION
Saturday, March 10, 2018
6:00-8:30 P.M.

United Methodist Center
205 N. Fowler
Bishop

Silent Auction
Live Auction
Appetizers & Desserts
Door Prizes

Proceeds from the auction will support operating costs of United Methodist sponsored community projects, including:

Soup Kitchen
Friendship Center
Shower Ministry
Recovery & Re-Entry
Child Care Available With Reservation
Sponsored by Bishop United Methodist Church
760-872-7701
Online at bishopumc.org

PETRA’S
FINE DINING
760.934.3500

Happy Hour from 5:00 - 6:00pm
$22
Salad, Bolognese, and a Glass of Wine
(Weekdays only, at the bar)

DAILY
Wine, Cocktail and Appetizer Specials

PUB FARE
760.934.2725

Happy Hour from 4:30 - 7:00pm
$5
Happy Menu
Whiskey of the week

$5
$1.00 OFF
Bottled Beers/Draft Specials

Located at
6080 Minaret Road
in the Alpenhof Lodge
across from The Village
Letters

Editor's note: The following letters were sent prior to Alterra Mountain Company's decision to include Mammoth Mountain (excluding holiday blackout dates) in its $599 Ikon Base Pass (see story, front page).

Bloody well pissed

Dear Editor:

I am bloody well pissed and our community should be as well. This year the mountain has done a great job in keeping trails open and skiable beyond what Mother Nature has provided. As a result businesses in the town have not suffered because of the lack of snow, to date. We have new restaurants starting up and new interest in living the good life in Mammoth Lakes.

Ikon Pass pricing is now out in the open and it is not a good thing. Previous season pass holders are being asked to more than double up for their lift tickets. If that were the only negative impact, the business community might be able to survive. It is not the only negative impact. If visitation is reduced by 25 percent as a result of this pricing, will your business survive two winters? You ask, "Why would the pricing alone reduce visitation?" Great question. The pricing structure drives business away from Mammoth. If I pay for a lower priced lift ticket, I get a limited number of days at Mammoth and unlimited at June and unlimited at Squaw Valley. Compare five days at Mammoth and I am spending all my tourist dollars in Mammoth for those five days. Now I have unlimited skiing at Squaw for no additional dollars. Guess where I am going to spend my lodging dollar? Guess where I'm going to spend my restaurant dollar? My choices are Lake Tahoe or Reno. Both have more flights between their airports and Southern California and the bay area than Mammoth.

Now the season pass will be used in other communities instead of ours unless all those skiers and boarders are willing to spend a thousand dollars for their season pass. The reduced rates of years past brought business to our community. The pricing structure as declared by the Ikon Pass will have a negative impact on the business base of Mammoth. In the past, I thought pricing was a compliment to local businesses. Please explain how excited town visitors will be to make annual trips here when the ticket pricing structure leads them away from our mountain.

Point two: Kind of chicken for the leader of the band to head east and then drop this pricing on us. I feel betrayed. I only hope the powers that be have the courage to address this poorly thought-out pricing structure.

Les Harvey
Mammoth Lakes

Correction

Dear Editor:

Your well-titled article on the Ikon pass in Saturday's paper misquoted me. I did not say that "Mammoth is a bunch of thugs." The reporter also spoke to my husband. He believes he may have quoted someone else as saying that "Mammoth does not value locals and thinks they are a bunch of thugs." Neither of us called Mammoth a bunch of thugs. See correction, p.2. I did refer to the decision as short-sighted.

The multi-resort "privileges" of the Ikon passes do not benefit us or anyone else with a long term commitment to Mammoth. They are particularly disrespectful of loyal seniors like us who have been here year in and year out, lots of snow or scarcity. Mammoth's new passes ignore us completely.

Marjorie Greenfield
Philadelphia

Does Rusty have the guts?

Dear Editor:

With the introduction of the Ikon pass, it appears that Rusty Gregory has abandoned the Mammoth Mountain customers that he purportedly nurtured prior to last year's acquisition.

I wonder if he will have the guts to show his face at next season's Early Ups. Oh stupid me, why would I think we will even have Early Ups next season?

Dan Masnada
Valencia

Mono County Sheriff's Office
Search and Rescue

Where the roads end, we begin...

If you like the mountains and want to help people, Come Join Our Team!

Annual Recruiting Night
Learn more about us

Thursday March 15th 2018
7:00 p.m.
SAR Building
ML Water District
Hwy 203 & Meridian

www.monosar.org
info: 760.914.4214

Learn more about us

Wake up and smell the coffee

Breakfast Club
The Coolest Grub is at the Club
Come on in and Warm your buns. Try our delicious

SIN-AMON ROLL!

OPEN DAILY
6:30am - 1:30pm
Next to Shell on Hwy 203 & Old Mammoth Rd

Contact Us: 760-965-8800

www.breakfastclubmammoth.com
www.monosar.org
By Giles

O n Thursday, February 22, Mono County Assessor Barry Beck told the Mammoth Unified School District that the Assessor's office is frequently challenged by local entities over its property value assessments. These appeals, filed by some of the County's largest landowners, could require the County to remit as much as $8 million in property taxes. MUSD requires the County to remit as much of property tax revenue as Mono County. Schools in general receive 41 percent of property tax revenue in Mono County.

 Mono County is currently negotiating 398 unresolved Property Value Assessment Appeals. Of those active appeals, 224 were filed by Mammoth 8050, 102 were filed by Ormat Technologies, Inc., and 42 were filed by Mammoth Mountain Ski Area. Some have been unresolved since 2010.

 MMSA contends that its properties were over-assessed by more than $250 million over five years, from 2012 to 2016. Ormat contends that its properties were over-assessed by over $516 million. Mammoth 8050 contends that its properties were over assessed by over $28 million. The appeals will be decided by the Mono County Assessment Appeals Board, which is appointed by the Board of Supervisors. If the appealors challenge the Board's ruling, Beck says the cases could go to Superior Court.

 "We are confident with the valuation work that we do at the Assessor's Office," said Beck Thursday. "But these applicants have a lot of resources and it will be expensive and difficult for us to fight them." Beck said that if the County loses, it will be forced to use its reserves to pay for the tax remissions. After those funds are exhausted, it will have to collect from all of the special districts it funds with property tax revenue.

 Some of the applicants have long histories of filing appeals. Beck said that Ormat has said publicly that its policy is to appeal annually. "We are going to fight for what belongs to Mono County and its special districts, but unfortunately, some of these folks are really good at delay tactics," said Beck. "I won't name any of these folks, but one entity sent us eight banker boxes full of documents in response to a simple request for specific documents and information." Beck was referring to Alterra Mountain Company. The full purchase price for Mammoth Mountain Ski Area has not yet been determined, but Beck said it was rumored to be close to $800 million. He said it could take up to two years for the California Department of Tax Fee Administration to send copies of the formal report to each of the three counties in which Mammoth's properties are held: Madera, Mono, and San Bernardino.

 Beck said he expects all active appeals to be settled by May 16, 2018—except for one held by MMSA.

 According to Beck, Mono County earned $5.3 million in property tax revenue in 2017, approximately four times what it earned in 1989. Beck said that 2017 could be the third highest property tax roll in the County's history. The highest was in 2009, just before property values declined as a result of the Great Recession, said Beck.

 In the State of California, there are two laws that keep assessed property values low to protect homeowners. Prop 13 sets a limit on how much property tax revenue the County can earn, and Prop 8, passed in 1978, allows a property to be temporarily reassessed at fair market value if its market value drops below the assessed value of the property. Once a property's fair market value climbs above what its assessed value would be, assuming no more than a 2 percent increase annually from its last assessment, the Assessor's office uses the lowest value. "If everything were assessed at fair market value, our property tax roll would be huge," said Beck Thursday.

 According to Beck, 26 percent of parcels in Mono County are in Prop 8 status. This means they have relatively low fair market values relative to when they were purchased. As such, they are assessed at a lower rate. Beck said this indicates that the County has not fully rebounded from the recession. He said that the growth seen in 2017 is likely unsustainable.

 Beck estimated that MUSD has lost $12 million in property tax revenue since 2009. MUSD Chief Financial Officer Brooke Bien said $12 million is equivalent to one year's budget for the district of 1,200 students.
PAYBACK continued from page 1

school, and, in turn, charges the charter school for the work its employees do. This means extracurricular work for some MCOE employees, and they were compensated for that work with stipends. The stipends ranged from $200 to $5,000, and totaled $93,530 in payments since 2012.

MCOE has not yet produced a spreadsheet or time cards, as requested by The Sheet, documenting how much work has been performed by its employees at the charter school. The stipends awarded to MCOE employees other than the Superintendent are allowed under California Education Code 1302, and those employees will keep the money they have received so far. The practice of issuing stipends to employees may continue at the discretion of the Superintendent, pending new policies governing those types of payments. Those policies are currently being drafted by the Trustees with assistance from the California Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team.

In 2017, the Mono County District Attorney’s Office investigated MCOE and Adler for alleged misappropriation of funds related to the stipends. District Attorney Tim Kendall announced on February 7 that the investigation concluded that there was no criminal intent by Adler. Kendall also concluded that Adler gave herself a stipend and not a raise in salary, which according to Education Code 1209, would have required Board of Trustee approval.

The Trustees were given information about the stipend payments but took no action, according to the minutes from a December 2012 Trustee meeting. MCOE began managing three charter schools in 2012, but now manages only the Urban Corps Charter School. In "Climbing the Chart(ers)" (February 17, 2018), Adler said that the Trustees knew of and had approved the stipends.

Trustee Greg Jennisson said at the February 25, 2018 Board of Trustees meeting that he was unaware of the stipends. He said in a separate interview with The Sheet on February 28 that MCOE has no policy in place that addresses stipends or other bonuses to employees or the Superintendent. Adler didn’t have to tell the Trustees about her stipends because there was no procedure stating she had to and it was not an increase in salary, said Jennisson.

A matrix was included in the minutes from the December 2012 meeting that detailed which employees would receive stipends, and what the value of those stipends would be. Adler’s name was not on that list, but was included in a matrix from 2018 which showed she did receive a stipend in 2012. Legally, the inconsistent records provided to the trustees regarding whether she received stipends and when are a moot point, because she didn’t have to tell the Trustees if she got one.

Jennisson wanted to reiterate that Adler did nothing wrong and that he wholly believes she did not intend to mislead anyone. Adler and the employees received compensation for the extra work they did for the charter school, he explained. Jennisson added he knows Adler is a tireless worker and cares deeply about the kids and the employees of MCOE.

Even though Adler did nothing wrong, according to the DA and the Trustees, she’s giving the money back of her own volition. The motion made by the Trustees states that the payback, which is a goodwill gesture, should resolve any doubts about suspected improprieties.

CHARITERING A NEW LIFE

A look at the Urban Corps Charter School, managed by MCOE.

By Bodine

Senga Lukingama, a Bantu tribesman from Somalia, fled his country alone at the age of 14, during the Somali Civil War in the early 1990s. He eventually made his way to the Democratic Republic of Congo but never saw his family again. He landed in the United States in 2016, and then at the Urban Corps San Diego Charter School. This year, Lukingama made it to Washington D.C. The Urban Corps Charter School has its finances and payroll managed by the Mono County Office of Education (MCOE). It’s uncertain how old Lukingama is—keeping track of dates is not a priority when escaping from a war, said Dan Thomas, Dean of Education at Urban Corps. Most of the new student refugees from Africa have birthdates of January 1, because the students didn’t know what date they were born on, Thomas said.

Most of the 235 students enrolled in the unconventional school are aged 18 to 25. The “North Americans” or English speaking students, said Thomas, are often high school dropouts or kids who got kicked out of school. They may have no connections to gangs, Thomas said. In some cases, a teenage pregnancy prevented them from earning a high school diploma.

The other students come from San Diego’s large refugee population. He said the student refugees come from the “flavor of the day” of the world’s war-torn regions. Most recently, that group has included Syrian refugees. During the Iraq War, Iraqi refugees came in droves, Thomas explained. At any given time, up to 15 different languages can be heard in the halls.

The students get along, Thomas said. Violence is grounds for dismissal.

“You would think with former gang members and people from different cultures, there would be problems,” Thomas said. “But by the time they get to us, they know what it takes to stay here.”

Academics is just part of the focus of the school, he said. Job training and life skills are the other part, and for some students, it is their main focus. Paid, on-the-job training is offered at Urban Corps, including contracts with the City of San Diego to clean and collect recyclable materials from Petco Park. At the San Diego Padres Thomas added that the school has recently started an electronic waste program.

Some students go on to community college. Most of those students are the first members of their families to ever go to college. Thomas said he is very proud of those student accomplishments. He said 90 percent of Urban Corps Charter School graduates find a job or go to community college.

Students learn basic life skills, like getting a driver’s license, financial planning, how to balance a checkbook, and how to find safe, reliable childcare, Thomas explained. This tax season, volunteers are helping students file their taxes.

The next steps for the school are to offer housing and childcare for students, Thomas said. “We’re preparing
HOLDING MHS SPORTS HOSTAGE?
Mammoth High School wants to leave CIF Desert Mountain League, may be stymied by Mojave High School

By Rea

The worst case scenario for us is if we have to stay in the Desert Mountain League,” said Heidi Thompson, Athletic Director at Bishop Union High School (BUHS), which is one of the teams in the Desert Mountain League (DML). “We’re really good at [soccer],” said Thompson. “It’s super popular, and an important sport in our community. All kids in Mammoth have played at least a few years of soccer. It would be a huge unfairness to our kids if we’re not able to keep this opportunity. We’re really feeling like we do have girls basketball, but it’s not a league that we compete in girls basketball.”

Mammoth High School (MHS) faces the possibility of being held hostage by Mojave High School, which is currently part of the Desert Mountain League (DML), a local educational authority that controls the rest of the High Desert League, which consists of BUHS, Kern Valley, and Mono County High Schools. The DML is trying to re-leaguing the teams this coming school year.

The DML had seven teams prior to the past cycle, and has been dissolved. In the High Desert League, which over-sees schools in the central Sierra, and some of the remote regions of San Bernardino, Inyo and Mono Counties, Big Pine and Lee Vining High Schools are both part of the Hi-Low League; Bishop Union High School is part of the High Desert League, both of which are in the Central Section.

The High Desert League moved from the Southern to the Central Section three years ago, said Powell, and the Hi-Low League will be part of the Central Section beginning this coming school year.

Since those two leagues were allowed to move, Mammoth is really Central Section territory, now, said Powell.

Thompson believes that MHS belongs in the High Desert League, which consists of BUHS, Kern Valley High School, California City High School, Rosamond High School and Frazier Mountain High School. Unfortunately, because Mojave was rejected from its application to join the Heritage League, they may be able to vote to keep the Desert Mountain League (DML) intact, stated Powell, and essentially hold Mammoth hostage.

The problem with that scenario is that Mojave is a much smaller school than Mammoth, and they don’t compete in some of Mammoth’s strongest sports.

Thompson and Powell both said that Mojave doesn’t compete in soccer, though girls soccer coach Tom Cage said that Mojave does have soccer, but they don’t compete in girls basketball.

Mojave Athletic Director George Pulos did not respond to requests for comment from The Sheet via email and phone.

“We’re really good at [soccer],” said Thompson. “It’s super popular, and an important sport in our community. All kids in Mammoth have played at least a few years of soccer. It would be a huge unfairness to our kids if we’re not able to keep this opportunity. We’re really feeling like we do have girls basketball, but it’s not a league that we compete in girls basketball.”

Thompson said both MHS boys and girls soccer teams won league this year, as did girls cross country. If Mammoth had to stay in the DML, Mammoth would have to “fearlize” the sports that Mojave doesn’t play, which decreases their chances of ending up in league playoffs.

“Which is what CIF [California Interscholastic Federation] is telling us is if we have to stay in [the Desert Mountain League],” said Powder. “We’re really good at [soccer],” said Thompson. “It’s super popular, and an important sport in our community. All kids in Mammoth have played at least a few years of soccer. It would be a huge unfairness to our kids if we’re not able to keep this opportunity. We’re really feeling like we do have girls basketball, but it’s not a league that we compete in girls basketball.”

Mojave Athletic Director George Pulos did not respond to requests for comment from The Sheet via email and phone.

“We’re really good at [soccer],” said Thompson. “It’s super popular, and an important sport in our community. All kids in Mammoth have played at least a few years of soccer. It would be a huge unfairness to our kids if we’re not able to keep this opportunity. We’re really feeling like we do have girls basketball, but it’s not a league that we compete in girls basketball.”

Mojave Athletic Director George Pulos did not respond to requests for comment from The Sheet via email and phone.

“I wouldn’t be able to coach,” said Cage. “Every game would be an away game” and Cage, who volunteers his time and owns multiple local businesses, simply can’t take every weekend of the season away from town.

“This affects all sports,” Cage said. “The Educational Code dictates that sports are part of a curriculum, but because we’re a little bit north of everyone else, we have been left blowing in the wind in regards to our league...”

Powell said it was a shock to MHS and the other DML teams that Mojave wasn’t allowed into the Heritage League. “It was a shock to Mojave,” as well, he said.

Cage said that in fairness, Mojave waited too long to ask to move. He said that Mojave also waited too long.

CIF rules require that all teams in a league must vote to dissolve that league. Mojave, understandably, will not to end up without a league, even if that means keeping Mammoth hostage. “I wouldn’t be able to coach,” said Cage. “Every game would be an away game” and Cage, who volunteers his time and owns multiple local businesses, simply can’t take every weekend of the season away from town.

“The Southern Section has already told us that unless they change their mind, they’re not going to support us trying to go to the Central Section [High Desert League].”

“We're going to see if we have any options open to us by talking to the State,” she said. “We're really feeling like we could use a higher level of support from CIF.”

“Somebody somewhere has the authority to say, ‘make this happen,’” said Cage. “We shouldn’t deprive the kids this part of their educational component because somebody missed something.”

Once upon a time... INTO THE WOODS

Stephen Sondheim’s Grammy Award winning musical performed by Playhouse 395

MARCH

2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11 & 16, 17

Playhouse395.com • BrownPaperTickets.com • 760-920-9100

Presented through a special arrangement with Music Theatre International, MTI www.mtishows.com
By Bodine

**FATAL VIRGINIA CREEK CRASH**

Carson City man dies after vehicle lands in frigid water

According to the California Highway Patrol, a single-vehicle fatal accident occurred at approximately 7 a.m. on Friday, February 23, south of Green Creek Road and Bridgeport. A 2006 GMC pickup driven by Juan Alvarado-Zavala of Carson City, was traveling southbound on US 395 at about 40 mph on the snow-covered highway.

As the GMC passed Green Creek Road, it came upon a slower vehicle, causing Alvarado-Zavala to apply the brakes. The vehicle rotated in a clockwise fashion as it slid from the southbound lane of US 395 onto the west shoulder, where it overturned and came to rest upside down within Virginia Creek.

Both passengers were able to self-extricate as the passenger compartment began to fill with water. The names of the passengers were not released by the CHP. Alvarado-Zavala was mechanically extricated by the Bridgeport Volunteer Fire Department and transported to Mammoth Lakes Hospital by Mono County Paramedics. He succumbed to his injuries while at the hospital and was pronounced deceased at approximately 9 a.m.

All occupants appear to have been properly restrained. Drug and alcohol impairment was not a contributing factor in this collision and there is no evidence that the driver was using a cell phone or was otherwise distracted at the time of the accident. The cause of the collision is still under investigation.

Juan Alvarado-Zavala of Carson City, driver of the pickup shown here, suffered fatal injuries when his vehicle slid on the icy roadway and into Virginia Creek on Friday, February 23.

**PEDC NIXES BIGGER BUSINESS BUFFERS**

Planning Commission says cannabis businesses don’t need 500 feet

Mammoth’s Planning and Economic Development Commission balked at a component of the zoning code amendment to the Town’s cannabis regulations at its regular meeting on Wednesday, February 28.

The three commissioners present (Amy Callanan, Michael Vanderhurst and Greg Eckert) voted 3-to-0 to recommend that, instead of having a 500-foot buffer between cannabis businesses located within the Town of Mammoth Lakes, the Town only require a 250-foot buffer.

“This is clearly a product and a service the community wants,” said Commissioner Michael Vanderhurst. “But [the 500 foot buffer] feels like we are effectively giving this business to two operators and closing the door on anyone else, just due to the lack of viable other locations.”

The two current cannabis businesses in Mammoth are Green Mammoth (94 Laurel Mountain Road) and Mammoth Wellness (3399 Main Street). The zoning codes also require that businesses be at least 600 feet away from day cares, youth centers and schools (a state requirement) and public parks (a requirement that Mammoth’s Town Council supports).

Assistant Planner Nolan Bobroff said that the distance between business could always be relaxed or reduced in the future.

“I understand somebody doesn’t want a [new cannabis] shop opening upstairs’ from an existing shop, said Commissioner Greg Eckert, “but 500 feet is quite a ways away.”

“The operators are supportive of the 500 foot buffers,” said Bobroff. “Of course they are!” replied Commission Chair Amy Callanan.

The Commission voted 3-to-0 to recommend to Mammoth’s Town Council that the Town’s ordinance should state that buffers between cannabis businesses should be reduced from 500 feet to 250 feet.

The recommendation will come before Council at its regular meeting on Wednesday, March 7.

**SENIORS GET TECH SAVVY**

Free computer classes for seniors are returning to the Bishop Senior Center on Wednesdays from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The first session will focus on computers using Windows 10. Future classes and workshops will cover Apple iPads, Android tablets and Chromebooks. Jack Perkins, a local Bishop resident, has attended the classes over several years. He says, “I learn something new in almost every class.” Beginner-level classes in Windows 10 Basics are offered from 3-4:30 p.m. with Advanced Beginner and Intermediate-level classes from 5-6:30 p.m. The classes are “hands-on,” friendly and interactive, using the latest version of Windows 10 laptops. Participants are encouraged to bring their tablets or laptops to the class. The training does not require previous knowledge or experience. Class size is limited. For more information, call Charles James at 760.614.0546 or send an email to freelance.charles.james@gmail.com.

**WHAT DOES THE ROAD SOUND LIKE?**

Death Valley acoustic scientists attempt to find out

Death Valley National Park is one of the quietest places on Earth. It spans 5,200 square miles—with only 280 permanent residents. The loudest things out there are the wind, the occasional flyover by an F-16 from the nearby Naval Air Weapons Station at China Lake, and vehicle traffic.

This spring, scientists will tackle the noise from Badwater Road, the longest road in Death Valley. The biggest concern is noise pollution from other parks, says Frank Turina, Program Manager for Policy, Planning and Compliance for the National Park Service.

This is the first test of its kind ever performed in a national park. Pipkin has established a baseline for noise from Badwater Road, the site of the experiments. During planned maintenance of that road, three 250-foot strips of different types of surfacing will be placed on the road. Using microphones embedded in the wheels of NPS vehicles, the noise levels of the strips will be compared to the baseline (existing asphalt) to see which surface generates the least amount of sound.

The four types of surfacing include the standard 3/8-inch chip seal, which will cover the entire road minus the three strips, 1/4-inch chip seal, type II micro-surfacing, and type III micro-surfacing. Type II surfacing contains smaller aggregate particles than Type III.

The Department of Transportation will also be studying the durability of the different surfaces. Additionally, the experiments will test to see how far the noise travels both horizontally and vertically, taking into account the diverse topography of the Badwater area.

Death Valley and Badwater Road offers the ideal conditions for testing noise, Pipkin explained. Badwater Road is isolated from other roads and there is little noise to interfere with measurements.

“You can hear road noise from surprising distances in Death Valley because it is so quiet,” Pipkin said. “Think about how you could hear a whisper in a library, but not in a crowded restaurant.”

Abby Wines, Public Information Officer for the park, said this is the first time such a test has been done in Death Valley. The biggest complaints about noise from the public stem from the rumble created by military aircraft. The park is a favorite with flyboys from China Lake. Wines, an avid hiker and canyoneer, said she never seems to be amazed at how far noise travels in Death Valley. She said she’s been 5 miles from the road and can still hear every vehicle that passes by. Visitors can expect delays of up to 30 minutes on Badwater Road, the Beatty Cutoff Road/Daylight Pass and Mud Canyon from now until May 26. Many parking lots will be half-closed for one day at a time for testing.
Mammoth Mountain Community Foundation’s signature event is all about coming together on the snow for a great cause, plus an enjoyable evening of giving at the gala dinner and auction.

“All That Glitters is Gold” Gala Dinner & Auction

April 7 • Main Lodge

Dinner Tickets – $250 each
$2000 – 10-person table

MAMMOTH INVITATIONAL
APRIL 6-8, 2018 #FORTHEKIDS

REGISTER TODAY! MammothMountain.com/Invitational

Silent Auction Opens Online March 28

Hike! Climb! Run! Camp!

We stock a large selection of supplies for all your climbing, hiking, and outdoor adventures. Rentals are available including tents, packs, sleeping bags, bouldering pads and climbing shoes. Open 7 days a week including holidays.

224 North Main St., Bishop, CA 93514
Eastsidesports.com, info@eastsidesports.com
760-873-7520

NOW OPEN
Self-Serve Frozen Yogurt in Mammoth

bongofroyo.com - face/bongofroyo - insta/bongofroyo

FRIENDLY MOUNTAIN ATMOSPHERE

HOURS
OPEN DAILY
11:30AM-11PM
FRI & SAT
OPEN LATE 'TIL MIDNIGHT

OUTLAW SALOON
SPORTS BAR & GRILL

HAPPY HOUR
MON
ALL NIGHT
TUES–FRI
4-6PM

MID WEEK SPECIALS
JOIN US MONDAY–FRIDAY

MANIC MONDAYS
ALL NIGHT Happy Hour
4PM–CLOSE

BURGER THURSDAYS
Burger & Beer Special
6-9PM

TACO TUESDAYS
$2 1/2 Taco Bar
4-9PM

HAPPY HOUR FRIDAYS
Happy Hour Specials
4-9PM

WILD WING WEDNESDAYS
50% OFF All Wings
4-9PM

FOR DINE IN AT THE SALOON, PRICING DOES NOT INCLUDE SALES TAX OR TANDEM TURNTABLE

3499 MAIN ST., MAMMOTH • FULL MENU AT JOHNSPIZZAWORKS.COM

/HE Eastern Sierra’s Friendly and Knowledgeable Climbing Shop
Mountain Sports Specialists Since 1977

126 Old Mammoth Rd.
Free Parking - Transit Stop #10 or #11
bongofroyo.com - face/bongofroyo - insta/bongofroyo

HOT COCOA, Too!
Mono County Supervisors re-evaluate Housing Mitigation Ordinance in wake of Housing Needs Assessment

By Giles

On Tuesday, February 20, Mono County Supervisors discussed revisions to the County’s Housing Mitigation Ordinance. The ordinance sets standards used to evaluate what impact a new development will have on available workforce housing within the County. If a project’s construction is determined to create a need for additional workforce housing, the document requires the developer to either pay additional fees or construct additional units of workforce housing within the County.

The ordinance was suspended through a vote by the Board in November 2017 until August, 2018. According to a staff report from Tuesday’s meeting, the ordinance was suspended so that General Plan housing policies could be reviewed to ensure that new development within the County provides a “fair share” of the cost of implementing workforce housing, following an update to the County’s Housing Needs Assessment which was completed in November, 2017.

The old Housing Mitigation Ordinance, passed in 2010, included a formula that dictated how much developers of various types of projects should be required to pay or provide additional units of workforce housing within the County. The ordinance sets standards used to evaluate what impact a new development will have on available workforce housing within the County.

Wendy Sugimura, Interim Director of Community Development for Mono County, said “represents the cost of housing and need for affordable housing within a specific geographic area within Mono County.” Developers who built in certain parts of Mono County were required to provide or pay for a larger share of workforce housing than if they developed elsewhere in the County.

Sugimura told Supervisors she could not provide the Location Factors for individual districts at that meeting, and District Two Supervisor Fred Stump said he would like to see a uniform fee structure across the entire County. The Location Factors were not listed in the copy of the Ordinance provided at the Supervisors’ meeting, and Sugimura was unavailable for comment as of press time.

Another factor used to determine the fees owed by developers was the cost of construction. Additionally, under the existing ordinance, Single Family homes over 2,399 square feet were subject to scrutiny under the ordinance. Stump said that people in his district had objected to this requirement in the past. “I had people with blended families, with four to five kids, who needed 4,000 foot homes, for whom the fees came to eight grand. That, plus the location factor, pushed them past the point of being able to house themselves (in District 2),” said Stump. Single Family residences larger than 2,399 square feet were subject to the old, currently suspended, Housing Mitigation Ordinance.

“When you get to a large enough sized home, it creates employment for certain job sectors that don’t have very high wages associated with them,” Sugimura said. She offered landscapers and housekeepers as examples of the types of jobs generated by the construction of larger homes. District Three Supervisor Bob Gardner expressed his discomfort with the idea that larger homes were subject to the ordinance. “We are taxing people with the funds to build a large home to pay for housing for other people. People may question the philosophy of that. That’s basically a tax on people with high incomes,” said Gardner.

Gardner said that since the Housing Needs Assessment has been updated, the County should revisit its goals for workforce housing and develop a funding source to ensure it can meet those goals. “There are not a lot of sources within our current resource mix for additional funding. I think we have to look outside at peer resort communities for guidance. “In Aspen, they’ve been consistent for 25 years. They don’t stop when the market crashes.”

No action was taken, but Supervisors asked staff to revisit the language regarding housing mitigation in the General Plan and provide additional information about the Location Factor component of the Ordinance. Any changes will likely be voted on as part of a General Plan Amendment in April.
O n February 14, a gunman opened fire on students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. At the February 22 meeting of Mammoth Unified School District’s (MUSD) Board, parents, teachers, and Superintendent Lois Klein spoke about gun safety in Mammoth’s schools. “Our hearts go out to shooting victims,” said Klein, adding that “I can’t consider a solution to gun violence that includes arming teachers.”

Parent Eric Kaufman spoke during public comment, asking administrators to consider offering drills to teach students how to respond to gun violence in their schools. “We teach them how to respond in an earthquake, but we don’t teach them about firearms,” said Kaufman. “And yet they have, statistically speaking, a much higher likelihood of being affected by that than by an earthquake.”

Fifth grade teacher Lisa Anderson implored administrators to take school safety and security seriously. She said the current systems are inadequate, and that active shooter drills should be more frequent.

Mammoth High School (MHS) Principal Chris Powell said that he is working with teachers and other district principals to organize drills and trainings for staff, but “Only addressing socioemotional needs of kids can make society safer.” He said it’s his goal for every student to have an adult on campus that they can confide in. “That’s important to school safety,” said Powell. Student Representative to the Board Melanie Moyer said that MHS’ counseling program could be improved to provide more emotional resources. “Most of the counselor’s duty is to schedule classes,” said Moyer. She said she thought additional staffing would help the department.

Mammoth Middle School (MMS) Principal Annie Rinaldi said that any drills pertaining to an emergency, such as an active shooter, would have to be age-appropriate. Mammoth Elementary School Principal Rosanne Lampaniello clarified that “we would never have an active shooter drill at the elementary school.”

“As a parent and as an educator, I’m”

I can’t consider a solution to gun violence that includes arming teachers.

-Lois Klein

O n February 18, Inyo County Sheriff’s Office ordered the evacuation of Pleasant Valley Campground due to the Pleasant Fire. While implementing the order, Sergeant Chris Connolly noticed a family of three with their golden retriever in the middle of the campground. As the family was rushing to gather its belongings, the fire engulfed the campground’s access road, leaving it impassable.

“I ordered them to the far east of the campground,” wrote Sergeant Connolly in a post on the Inyo County Sheriff’s Office Facebook page. “There was no access to any roads, and in effect, we were stuck.”

Sergeant Connolly determined that the safest way out was to cross the Owens River fork by foot.

“Just at that point, the fire jumped the road and caught the tall brush on fire directly west of us,” wrote Connolly. “We crossed the creek, which was waist deep. The young girl was carried across by her mother as I attempted to find sturdy ground for the family to safely exit the river.” wrote Connolly.

The family dog, Lexie, would not cross the water. “After numerous attempts to call her, she became scared,” said Connolly.

Sergeant Connolly led the family to a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) law enforcement vehicle parked off of Chalk Bluff Road. Connolly reported that, “The father attempted to go back into the fire to get Lexie, but I
only resort that would have seen a price increase for that unlimited access (early purchase 2017-18 season pass prices for Steamboat, Stratton and Deer Valley were $1,499, $999, and $2,295, respectively).

A California Pass, which earned the purchaser unlimited access to Mammoth Mountain, Bear Mountain, June Mountain and Snow Summit for the 2017-2018 season, cost $899 if purchased in the spring of 2017.

During the past week, passholders expressed their displeasure over Alterra’s decision to exclude Mammoth from the Base Pass, as well as the company’s decision to eliminate its senior passes (previously $599 for those ages 65 to 80, and free plus the cost of processing for those 80 and up).

“I was going to die years ago, but I only lived this long so that I could ski free,” said soon-to-be octogenarian Colby Johnson, half-facetiously. “So next year I’m just going to go into the ticket window and die right in front of them. I’ll say, ‘See? With no incentive, what have I got to look forward to?’”

Mammoth’s Public Relations Manager Lauren Burke told The Sheet in an email on Wednesday, February 28 that the consensus in Mammoth was “working on a plan for skiers 80 and older,” and that more information would become available in the future.

Other Alterra-owned resorts The Sheet reached out to, like Stratton Mountain and Ontario’s Blue Mountain, said that they were waiting until March 6, when the Ikon Pass goes on sale, to announce their full pass offerings for the upcoming season.

Shawn Cassel, Public Relations Manager at Snowshoe (located in West Virginia and owned by Alterra), said that their “Ridiculous Pass” would still be available to skiers for a price of $229. Following Alterra’s initial announcement last week, Pork Chop, owner of Alpine Sports Outfitters in Mammoth Lakes, expressed his concern that the pass price increase would keep locals from skiing. He said that a $200 increase is a lot of money for a person living and working in a ski town. “Long time locals feel abandoned,” he said of the decision “If they can’t afford to ski, they don’t have a reason to stay.”

He said that if the pass remained at $899, the portion of the workforce comprised of 18-to-20-something skiers would be incentivized to work for Mammoth Mountain instead of independent employers, or to move to Tahoe, where they can ski comparable terrain at Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows for $999 a season. “It’s tough on the locals struggling to make it work in Mammoth, and it just got harder. Employee housing? Employee pass? That’s going to be their focus.” Pork Chop added, “Rusty [Gregory, CEO of Alterra Mountain Company] said ‘Mammoth is in our hearts and minds.’ Well, he moved to Denver and said, ‘here you go, Mammoth. Have fun.’”

In contrast, business owners in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, which was also excluded from the Ikon Base pass, were optimistic about the Ikon Pass price.

Lisa Papovich, Executive Director of the nonprofit Main Street Steamboat Springs, which supports economic development in that community, said Steamboat is hoping to skim traffic from Colorado’s Front Range with the help of the Ikon Pass. “We are nowhere near capacity when it comes to filling our condo and hotel rooms,” said Papovich. “There’s room for growth.”

Like Mammoth Lakes, Steamboat Springs is remote. It’s about three hours from both Denver and Fort Collins. The bulk of its skiers don’t come for day trips. Unlike Mammoth, it has a nearby airport, Yampa Valley Regional, that offers multiple direct flights per week to 14 destinations during the winter season, including Chicago, New York, and Houston. The airport also offers daily flights to Los Angeles.

Pam Pole, owner of Fringe Boutique in Steamboat Springs, said on February 28 that the consensus in the business community is that the


differentiation between the two areas is that Mammoth is a small airport that is wind and weather affected. We’ve got to find a reliable way to get people here.”

In contrast, Pork Chop called the $599 Base Pass “doable” for locals.

Other resorts optimistic

In contrast, business owners in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, which was also excluded from the Ikon Pass price, were optimistic about the Ikon Pass price.

Lisa Papovich, Executive Director of the nonprofit Main Street Steamboat Springs, which supports economic development in that community, said Steamboat is hoping to skim traffic from Colorado’s Front Range with the help of the Ikon Pass. “We are nowhere near capacity when it comes to filling our condo and hotel rooms,” said Papovich. “There’s room for growth.”

Like Mammoth Lakes, Steamboat Springs is remote. It’s about three hours from both Denver and Fort Collins. The bulk of its skiers don’t come for day trips. Unlike Mammoth, it has a nearby airport, Yampa Valley Regional, that offers multiple direct flights per week to 14 destinations during the winter season, including Chicago, New York, and Houston. The airport also offers daily flights to Los Angeles.

Pam Pole, owner of Fringe Boutique in Steamboat Springs, said on February 28 that the consensus in the business community is that the
Ikon Pass will be good for the economy. “This is going to be great for us. We are thrilled… But I’m not so sure about you guys.”

Stratton Mountain, located in southern Vermont, was also excluded from the Ikon Base Pass, but the full Ikon Pass cut that mountain’s previous season’s pass price by $100. Lisa Gosselin Lynn, Editor at VT Ski and Ride Magazine, has compiled charts that track pass pricing at Vermont resorts since 2015-2016. Vail Resorts purchased Stowe Mountain Resort in 2017, making that mountain the first and only Epic Pass-eligible resort in the state (the Epic pass being Vail’s multi-resort option).

According to Gosselin Lynn’s data, a season’s pass to Stowe for the 2015-2016 season cost $1,788 if purchased prior to November 1. The resort was included in the 2017-2018 Epic Pass, which dropped the price of a season pass to $859.

According to Gosselin Lynn, this dynamic has placed pressure on other resorts across the state to lower pass prices, and it made it much more difficult for independently-owned resorts to charge more. According to the National Ski Areas Association, Stratton Mountain is one of 26 ski areas in Vermont (and the only one owned by Alterra). It is about five hours from New York City, which has a population of about 8.5 million, according to a U.S. Census Bureau report from 2016.

Steamboat Springs is one of 31 ski areas in Colorado, and a three hour drive from Denver. According to a 2015 report by the Colorado Division of Local Affairs, the Denver/Boulder areas had a combined population of over 3 million in 2015.

Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, San Diego, and Orange Counties were estimated to have a combined population of nearly 21 million people, the Census Bureau reported in July 2016. According to a 2016 Visitor Profile Report provided by Mammoth Lakes Tourism, 64 percent of visitors to Mammoth Lakes are from San Diego and Los Angeles.

Unlike in Vermont or Colorado, Southern California’s massive population appears to be a captive audience. Outside of the Eastern Sierra and Tahoe, the next closest major ski area to Los Angeles is in Park City, Utah—nearly 700 miles away.

Also unlike Stratton and Steamboat Springs, the Eastern Sierra is only accessible by air from coastal cities in California.

“The bulk of our visitors will more than likely always come from L.A. since so many people in Southern California consider Mammoth to be their home mountain,” said Lara Kaylor, Director of Communications for Mammoth Lakes Tourism in an email on March 1, prior to Alterra’s announcement that almost unlimited skiing at Mammoth would be included in the Ikon Base Pass.

With regard to pass pricing and regional air service, Kaylor said that MLT is not concerned about Mammoth’s L.A. clientele purchasing the Ikon Base Pass and opting to fly to the Rockies instead of driving to Mammoth Lakes to ski. Perhaps people will plan one trip to a different resort during the season, but it’s not going to replace the multiple weekend trips that L.A. visitors make to Mammoth each winter because of the ease of getting here.” She said many visitors like the ability to drop everything and drive up when large storm cycles hit Mammoth.

“Where else are they going to go? An east coast person has a choice. If you’re from the Bay Area, you have 20 options to choose from... Our customer base has no other choice, unless you’re past a certain income level and can fly.”

Tom Cage owns several local businesses in Mammoth Lakes, among them Kittredge Sports. He said on February 28 that he thought the $899 Ikon Pass was a good value for all the extra skiing it includes. He said that in order to compete with Vail’s Epic Pass, Alterra, “You’re going to have to offer the Base Pass to Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows in Tahoe.”

Cage also said Mammoth has a captive audience, adding that this new pass offering makes the need for reliable regional air service all the more pressing.

“The importance of a ski pass that attracts people from places like Chicago and Denver is that it provides the opportunity to grow our midweek and multi-day visitor base,” said Kaylor on March 1. “Someone coming from further away is less likely to be the weekend warrior that our L.A. visitors often are.”

Cage said that he doubts a couple hundred dollars more or less on a pass price will determine whether people from Southern California will continue to ski at Mammoth Mountain. “This is not a cheap sport, and this is an expensive town. If you’re going to play, you’re going to pay.”

The revised Ikon Base Pass announced on March 1 will offer unlimited skiing at Mammoth Mountain except for blackout dates of December 26-31, 2018; January 19-20, 2019; and February 16-17, 2019. Passes go on sale March 6.
INYO SUPES WEIGH IN ON DRECP CHANGES
Supervisors discuss GOP Administration’s proposed changes to the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan
By James

On Tuesday, February 27, the Inyo County Board of Supervisors discussed proposed changes to the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), which was developed during the Obama Administration. The plan is the product of eight years of collaborative public workshops, outreach to multiple federal, state, and local agencies, as well as environmental and business interests.

The DRECP is a collaborative effort of the Renewable Energy Action Team, which is comprised of representatives from the California Energy Commission, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The group also includes private stakeholders with an interest in the renewable energy generation business, as well as those concerned with environmental protection.

On February 7, the BLM suddenly withdrew a notice of proposal it had posted on December 28, 2016 in the Federal Register, which proposed withdrawal of 1.3 million acres of national conservation lands from location and entry under the mining laws in the California Desert Conservation Areas governed by the DRECP. The change was prompted by an executive order issued by President Donald Trump on July 6, 2017, titled “Promoting Energy Independence and Economic Growth.”

The executive order directed federal agencies to review regulations that could unnecessarily impede domestic energy development.

The order resulted in the BLM re-opening the DRECP to further review and change.

Most people involved with the DRECP, including the Inyo County Supervisors, are perplexed, having thought that the plan, after eight years of development, was a “done deal.”

Inyo County Planning Director Cathreen Richards told the Board that the DRECP process, which began in 2008, was intended to streamline renewable energy development while ensuring that fragile desert ecosystems would be protected.

The plan covered an area of about 22 million acres—of which approximately 2.9 million acres are in Inyo County—and excluded large portions of BLM land from economic development.

Karen Douglas, Commissioner of the California Energy Commission, shared her concerns about the BLM’s withdrawal with the Supervisors.

She offered the State’s perspective on the DRECP, which is that “No further review or changes are needed,” and that “Reopening (the plan) at this time is not appropriate.”

A dozen residents and representatives of local environmental groups including the Friends of Inyo and the Sierra Club seconded Douglas’ opinion during public comment at Tuesday’s Board of Supervisors meeting.

The Supervisors cautioned that whatever action the County takes should not undermine the existing DRECP.

Fifth District Supervisor Matt Kingsley said that amendments could be made to improve the plan, especially regarding “Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, mitigation, disturbance caps and BLM rental/lease fees, which have tripled the cost of development and are a deterrent to establishing renewable energy projects on public land.”

In closing, the Board gave direction to Inyo County Planning staff on what they would like to have included in a letter to the BLM. The Board will revisit the final draft of the letter at their regular meeting in two weeks (Tuesday, March 13).

The BLM must comply with President Trump’s executive order by re-opening the DRECP for review.

One thing that the supervisors and many of those present agreed upon was that it would be foolish for Inyo County not to participate and comment during the review process.

As John Louth of Bishop succinctly put it to the Supervisors during public comment, “If you’re not at the table, you’re probably on the menu.”
BISHOP’S MAIN STREET GOES TO THE DOGS

Nicole and Raul Nava cater to man’s best friend at The Dog Store

By James

The Dog Store located on Main Street in Bishop is pretty “dope,” as in a cool, awesome place to meet all your dog’s needs. While the store carries all kinds of doggy-related stuff, the most eye-catching are the paracord dog collars and leashes that come in a dazzling array of colors, are highly reflective, and are available with personalized name tags.

Along with collars and leashes, customers can find doggie sweatshirts, safety vests, jackets, toys and a host of natural doggie treats, one of which is, interestingly, made from cannabis (without the active psychoactive effects). That is also “dope” in a manner of speaking, just not with the “high” normally associated with cannabis.

The owners, Nicole and Raul Nava, opened their store on December 16. The couple hails from the Riverside area. When they married on April 23, 2014, they owned six dogs between the two of them. They’re now down to only three dogs, but their love and devotion towards dogs prompted Nicole, a waitress for 17 years, and her husband Raul, a big-rig truck driver for 25 years, to consider opening a pet store business.

They researched, developed and perfected their own paracord products over three years. After working trade shows and thoroughly studying the business, they decided to take the plunge.

They moved out of the crowded, congested communities of the Inland Empire to the rural environs of the Eastern Sierra.

Their attention to quality and variety shows. According to the Navas, their colorful collars and leashes are made from Type III parachute cord, most commonly referred to as “paracord” or “550 cord,” because it is rated with a minimum breaking strength of 550 pounds. Survivalists with dogs, rejoice! Imagine Lassie wearing a paracord collar.

The Dog Store’s line of collar and leash products are made with seven inner strands and are highly visible in the dark. The collars can also come with personalized name tags. There is also an assortment of LED-lit accessories available that can make your dog (and you!) much more visible when walking around in the dark.

The Dog Store is located at 151 N. Main Street in Bishop. Their phone number is 903.820.9216.

While the best thing you could do for your dog is come into the store, you can also view many of their products online at www.etsy.com/shop/ranndspecialties.

PHOTO: JAMES

Raul and Nicole Nava display some of their wares at The Dog Store in Bishop.

PHOTO: ESTY

A custom paracord collar made by Raul and Nicole Nava, available online and at The Dog Store in Bishop.
The future of the former Mammoth McDonalds? A mammoth Starbucks.

According to Encino-based shopping center developer Steve Selcer, who bought the property last September from McDonald’s Corp., the 4,435-square foot building is approximately double the size of a typical Starbucks location. Unlike the two existing Starbucks in town (at the Village at Mammoth and inside the Vons Pharmacy), this Starbucks will be a corporate store versus a licensed store.

The project is scheduled to go before Mammoth’s Planning and Economic Development Commission (PEDC) on March 14.

Nolan Bobroff, Assistant Planner at the Town of Mammoth Lakes, told the PEDC this past Wednesday that the March 14 hearing would simply encompass a design review. Bobroff said the proponent’s (Selcer, on behalf of his tenant) plan suggests no changes to the footprint of the building, and the drive-thru will be maintained. There will be proposed facade changes (colors) and a proposed outdoor patio. The proposed use is consistent with the design guidelines in the municipal code and general plan.

Selcer said Starbucks may spend up to seven figures on the renovation. He anticipates the store will open by the end of the year.

While Selcer lauds Starbucks as a “community-based” business, existing businesses potentially affected by the arrival of a well-heeled competitor may not feel so sanguine.

Andrea Walker, owner of Stellar Brew, was her typical cheery and diplomatic self. “I think it’s going to affect my business,” she said, “but I think some people will be really happy about it.”

Brandon Brocia, who owns Bleu Handcrafted Foods on Old Mammoth Road with his wife Theresa, acknowledged that a new Starbucks, along with Grocery Outlet, “will affect everyone” and that Starbucks certainly has a closer tie-in to the visiting Southern California demographic than McDonald’s ever did. “Corporate knows how to do the math,” he said matter-of-factly.

That said, he asked rhetorically, “Does anything really make it in this town that’s corporate? … Most corporate places don’t make it without a local following,” he added.

Paul Rudder, who owns the Luxury Outlet Mall which houses the gourmet Black Velvet coffee shop and wine bar, warns that Starbucks may have a harder time than it imagines at the former McDonald’s location.

“If you’re arriving here, you don’t want to stop because you just want to get to your condo. And when you’re leaving, you don’t stop, because you just want to get home.”

As a frame of reference for the size of the planned Starbucks, Black Velvet has about 2,000 square feet downstairs on the ground floor, added Rudder.

Selcer, who says he is investigating additional commercial real estate opportunities in Mammoth, said he’s here every other weekend, loves the town and is passionate about making good things happen here.

A critical key to growth, he said, will be for Mammoth to address its housing issues.

“Retail follows infrastructure,” said Selcer. “You need to solve the housing [issue] and then retail will follow.”
Notice of Ordinance

ORDINANCE NO. 018-17
AN ORDINAMENT OF THE MONO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AMENDING TITLE 5 - MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE COUNTY OF MONO, CALIFORNIA, TO ADD ADEQUATE SUBDIVISION OF MAMMOTH LAKES WITHIN THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF THE COUNTY. getAll text here.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF MONO FINDS AND ORDAINS THAT:

SECTION ONE: There is a current and immediate concern within the unincorporated areas of Mono County, the unincorporated areas of the County, at which time oral and present testimony or may, prior to said hearing, file with the Executive Secretary written correspondence pertaining thereto. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65009 (b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised in this notice or written correspondence by the party initiating the challenge.

CEQA Determination: The project is consistent with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is exempt from CEQA Guidelines Section 15065 - New Construction of Small Structures.

Location: 763 Majestic Pines Drive (APN: 032-130-010-000)

Notice of Ordinance

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES
Notice is hereby given that on Monday, March 14, 2016, the Mono County Board of Supervisors, ap- proved and adopted Ordinance 2016-0009, entitled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES, CALIFORNIA, ADDING CHAPTER 5.42 (CANNABIS BUSI- NESSES) TO THE MAMMOTH LAKES MUNICIPAL CODE.

A copy of the complete text of the Ordinance is posted and published in the Mono County News on March 1, 2016. A copy may be obtained from the Office of the Town Clerk, 521 Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, and on a copy may be obtained by accessing the website of the Town of Mammoth Lakes at http://www.mammothlakes.ca.gov. The Ordinance becomes effective on March 15, 2016.

Notice of Public Hearing

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Tuesday, March 13, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. and continuing until finished, at the Town Council Chambers, Suite Z within the Minaret Village Shopping Center, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, California, the Board of Supervisors will take public comment on a proposed ordinance in the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

Notice of Public Hearing

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, beginning at 2:00 p.m. and continuing until finished, at the Mono County Board Chambers, 2nd Floor, Mono County Complex, 278 Main Street, Bridgeport, CA 93517, and by teleconference from the Mammoth Lakes Planning & Economic Development Commission Chambers, Suite Z within the Minaret Village Shopping Center, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, Ca 93546, at 1:00 p.m., the Mono County Board of Supervisors will consider the following: an ordinance to amend Ordinance 17-001, Ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, California, to continue the moratorium on the establishment of Type II Short-Term Vacation Rentals with an effective date extending from February 26, 2018, to February 26, 2021.

Notice of Public Hearing

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on March 14, 2018, beginning at 2:00 p.m. and continuing until finished, at the Mono County Board Chambers, 2nd Floor, Mono County Complex, 278 Main Street, Bridgeport, CA 93517, and by teleconference from the Mammoth Lakes Planning & Economic Development Commission Chambers, Suite Z within the Minaret Village Shopping Center, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, Ca 93546, at 1:00 p.m., the Mono County Board of Supervisors will consider the following: an ordinance to amend Ordinance 17-001, Ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, California, to continue the moratorium on the establishment of Type II Short-Term Vacation Rentals with an effective date extending from February 26, 2018, to February 26, 2021.
**BARS & MUSIC**

**Happy Hour/** The Liberty Sports Bar and Grill. Pursuit of Happiness Sport, 3-6 p.m. $1 off all beers, $2 off wine, $4 well drinks, $2 off specialty drinks. $5 Flatbread. Open mic plus returns, hosted by VTA & Acoustic as Folk w/ house sound & lights on Monday @ 9. See ad, p. 11.

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

**Roberto's** 4-6 p.m. every day. Austria Hof 5-8 p.m. daily. See ad, p. 15.

**Whitebark Restaurant Bar & Lounge** Unwind with daily drink and food specials 4-6 p.m. Clocktower Cellar Happy Hour 4:30-7 p.m. daily and all day Sunday. $5 dollar menu items, drink specials. See ad, p. 11.

**Petras's Bistro** Happy Hour, 5-6 p.m. every day. See ad, p. 3.

**Mammoth's Famous Sloccums Happy Hour** Mon. thru Fri 4-6; Saturdays 4-5. Closed Sun. See ad, p. 5.

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

**Smokeyard weekend Happy Hour** 4-6 p.m. in the bar only. Side Door Happy Hour daily 3-6 p.m. Giovannis Happy Hour, daily 4-6 p.m. Large pizza and a pitcher of beer gets you free wings. Lakanuki Happy Hour daily 3-6 p.m., $4.50 margaritas, Mai Tais. Happy Hour drink specials 10 p.m.-close.

**Black Velvet Coffee's Happy Hour**, from 4-6 p.m. every day.

**Mammoth's Happy Hour Daily** 4-6 p.m.

**Friday, March 2/**

**Open Mic at Black Sheep Coffee Roasters.** 6:30-8:30 p.m.

**March 2-3/**

**Stoked! plays Rafters.** 10 p.m. 21 & up, free.

**Sunday, March 4/**

**Some Assembly Required** plays Black Doubt Brewing. 7-9 p.m. Free.

**Monday, March 5/**

**Open Mic at Black Doubt Brewing Co.** 6-9 p.m.

**Bowling 'n Beasts @ Mammoth Rock 'n Bowl.** Feat. Will Nye and Chronfucius. Bowling 'n Beats @ 9 p.m. Free. 21+. Guns N Roses Tribute Band.

**Tuesday, March 6/**

**Trivia @ Mammoth Brewing Co.** 7 p.m.

**Karaoke at Rafters.** 10 p.m.

**Wednesday, March 7/**

**Wild Wing Wednesdays at Outlaw Saloon** 4-6 p.m. Free. See ad page 9.

**Thursday, March 8/**

**Throwback Thursdays @ Rafters.** 10 p.m. Free. 21+. Guns N Roses Tribute Band.

**Friday, March 9/**

**Lose Your Illusion @ Rafters.** 10 p.m. Free. 21+. Wired Lights and Sound Bar

**TOWN STUFF**

**Friday, March 2/**

**June Lake Winter Festival Orientation dinner.** 5 p.m. at the Sierra Inn, Main Street June Lake. Pizza party. Tix: $12/adult, $8/ kid. See sidebar next page.

**Learn to Play Hockey: Free Clinic.** 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Mammoth Lakes Ice Rink. Register in advance at 760.956.3695.

**Read Across America Day Celebration @ Mammoth Lakes Library.** 3-4 p.m. See ad, p. 6.

**March 2-4/**

**Into the Woods with Playhouse 395.** See sidebar and story, p. 21.

**March 3-4/**

**Free showing. “Saving Snow” at June Lake Community Center (7 p.m. Saturday) and Lee Vining Community Center (3 p.m. Sunday). See sidebar next page.**

**Felci and Friends present: The Three Amigos.** Saturday, March 3 @ Cerro Coso Mammoth, 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 4, Cerro Coso in Bishop, 4 p.m. Tix: Booky Joint, Inyo Council for the Arts and www.chambermusicunbound.org. See ad, p. 3.

**Saturday, March 3/**

**Artists reception, images of “Four Seasons of the Eastern Sierra” at the Mammoth Lakes Library. 2:30-5 p.m. Light refreshments served. Mule deer migration field trip with ESLT led by Timothy Taylor of the CDFW. See sidebar. June Lake Winter Festival and snowmobile poker rally. See sidebar, next page.**

**Saturday, March 3/**

**Early Opener Trout Derby in Lone Pine.** 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Diaz Lake. $5 entry fee for kids 12 & under, $10 entry fee for adults. Weigh-in at 3 p.m. Every kid who catches a tagged Alper's Trout gets a prize. Info: 760.876.4444

**Mule Deer Migration Field Trip** hosted by the Eastern Sierra Land Trust and Timothy Taylor of California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Free, guided hike. Info: Ryan at ryan@eslt.org or 760.873.4554. See sidebar, next page.

**Sunday, March 4/**

**Mono County Resource Family Gathering** 12-3 p.m. at Mammoth Rock 'N Bowl. Childcare, food, provided. RSVP Mono County Social Services 760.924.1770.

**Sierra Club Ski/hike/snowshoe outing.** 9 a.m. at the Union Bank, Mammoth Lakes. Contact Brigitte: 760.924.2140 for more info.

**Monday, March 5/**

**Owens Valley Radio Observatory Tour.** 1-2 p.m. at the OVRO, off of Highway 168. Info: 760.358.8410.

**Mono Basin Historical Society Meeting.** 6-8 p.m. at the Lee Vining Community Center. Potluck at 6:30 p.m. This month's speaker will be Joseph Lent, providing traditional Paiute oral history relating to climate change. Info: 760.647.6461. Open to the public.

**Mammoth Lakes Housing Board Meeting.** 6 p.m. in Suite Z, Minaret Mall, Mammoth Lakes.
Owens Lake Bird Festival registration now open

Early registration for the 4th annual Owens Lake Bird Festival is now open to the public. This year’s event will run from April 27-29 in Lone Pine, and is hosted by Friends of the Inyo.

The festival will feature birding outings on the Owens Lake and along Lone Pine Creek. Featured guided birding and Botany in the Alabama Hills, Photographing Birds, Natural History at Cottonwood Creek, Geology of the Alabama Hills, and History and Saline Valley Salt Tram in Keeler, as well as many more.

Pre-registration is required for outings, as group sizes are limited. Pre-registration opens at Statham Hall, Lone Pine. To register, visit www.friendsoftheinyo.org.

AARP Tax Aide programs

The AARP Foundation Tax Aide programs in Bishop and Mammoth are now preparing federal and state tax returns online without charge to low and moderate income residents.

Appointments are available at the Bishop Annex Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. To schedule an appointment, call 760.937.0174. Appointments are available at the Mammoth Library, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, 1-5 p.m. To schedule an appointment, call 760.934.5674.

June Lake Winter Festival

The Seventh Annual June Lake Winter Festival will run on March 2 and 3, 2018. This year’s celebrations will feature a snowmobile poker rally, snow sculptures, a Family Fun Zone, and is hosted by Friends of the Inyo.

Orientation starts on Friday evening at 5 p.m. at the Sierra Inn on Main Street.

The traditional winter triathlon will not take place this year, but will be replaced by the dog parade. Participants should dress their dogs in costumes. For more info visit www.junelake.com.

Mule Deer migration field trip

Join Eastern Sierra Land Trust staff and special guest Timothy Taylor of California Department of Fish and Wildlife for a guided hike and discussion of how local mule deer are being affected after severe drought and the 2015 Round Fire. Free, Family-friendly event. RSVP required. Be prepared for eight hiking. No dogs. Contact Ryan at ryan@eslt.org or 760.873.4554 to reserve your place. Event runs Saturday, March 3. Meet Round Valley Elementary School, 300 N. Round Valley Rd. Bishop.

calendar of events

TOWN STUFF

Tuesday, March 6/
Management Training: Leading for Excellent Customer Service. Training hosted by the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce. 12-2 p.m. at the Mammoth Lakes Fire Department’s Main St. Station. $20 for chamber members, $30 for non-members.

Mammoth Recreation Commission Meeting. 9 a.m. in Suite Z.

Mammoth Lakes Recreation Board of Directors Meeting. 5 p.m. in Suite Z. Minaret Mall.

Wednesday, March 7/
St. Patrick’s Day Bike Ride. 6 p.m. from Black Sheep Coffee Roasters to Mountain Rambler Brewery.

Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board of Directors Meeting. 1 p.m. in Suite Z.

Friday, March 9/
Free Concert: The Dream Warriors, Frank Waln, the Sampson Brothers, and Tanaya Winder. 7 p.m. at Round Valley High School Gym. Hosted by the Round Valley High School Native American Club.

Community Roads Kick-off Dinner. 4:30-8 p.m. at the Tri-County Fairgrounds. Reserve free tickets in advance at Inyo Council for the Arts. 137 S. Main St., Bishop, or 760.873.8014. Performance by Estrellas de Mexico.

Saturday, March 10/
Living Legend Doug Robinson: Across the Great Divide. ESA Discover Store at the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center. 6-9 p.m. See ad, p. 14.

Eastern Sierra Community Auction. Proceeds benefit operating costs of United Methodist Church. Silent and live auctions, appetizers and deserts. 6-8:30 p.m. @ 205 N. Fowler St. in Bishop. 760.872.7701. See ad, p. 3.

Project Bighorn @ Mammoth Middle School. Presented by Bronze Award Winner Laura Whiteside. Jesse Steele and Amy Hemler will play the central roles of the Baker and his wife. Volunteers are needed for ushering and selling refreshments during intermission. For info about volunteering, call Karen at 760.873.7644. See ad, page 5 and story, p. 25.

AT THE MOVIES

Minaret Cinemas

Black Panther (PG-13): A Marvel Studios box-office record breaker featuring a spiffy character from Captain America: Civil War. The Shape of Water (R): Guillermo del Toro film about a mute and isolated cleaning woman who discovers a mysterious, scaled creature from South America that lives in a water tank in a high-security government lab.

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

CFO/Controller
High Country Lumber is seeking a Bridge Street employees and we're looking for a CFO/Controller to join our team and undertake all aspects of our financial management including corporate accounting, financial reporting, budgeting and forecasting.

Go to: highcountrylumber.com for details of job responsibilities and duties. Ideally, the candidate should have at least 5 years of experience in a financial management role and possess CPA or MBA credentials.

Benefits include:
- Competitive salary (based on skill and experience)
- Friendly work environment
- Health Care Plan
- Vacation Accrual
- Sick Leave Pay

401K Savings Plan
Contact: Steven Joseph 760.873.3674 steve@highcountrylumber.com

INDIVIDUALS ADVOCATES FOR COMMUNITY ACTION, INC. IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Yippee ki yay at Conway
A few years ago I attended a meeting in Lee Vining where Mono County laid out several possibilities for the future management of Conway Ranch. Some of these options would have meant this property basically as parkland with public access and interpretive trails.

These would be in keeping with the stated management goals of protecting wildlife, open space, and deer migration corridors. After examining all the options, my bait and switch alarm went off, and the options that appeared most likely to me, aquaculture and grazing, have indeed been the only ones pursued by the County.

Aquaculture would have required drilling several wells within a mile of the well which serves as the sole source of water for Mono City. While Supes debated whether they would pursue the project, the Mono City water supply, it surely would not have done this community any good.

Eventually, things didn’t go the way that Inland Aquaculture wanted and they successfully sued Mono County for about $700,000.

Next up was sheep grazing. Numerous Mono County citizens objected to this plan, which would have endangered native Sierra Big-horn Sheep, and plunged the County into litigation against arguably the most experienced environmental attorneys in the country. The result is that the County is now told to pay a $370 season locker. Are we really feeling sorry for Mammoth second home owners? Hah! I think it's kind of a joke.

Sara Rose
Mammoth Lakes

Help Wanted

The Eastern Sierra Transit Authority is seeking an Account Clerk II / III. This position will work for the Mammoth Lakes Office and provide a variety of duties including: assisting in the coordination of the daily operations of ESTA's Mammoth Lakes area fixed routes and demand response public transportation services, provide the public with route information, facilitate communication between operations staff and with vendors, and perform data management and general office duties.

Skills for success include being detail oriented, strong keyboard skills, communication, attention to detail, and good with numbers.

This is a 50% benefited position approx. 20-25 hrs per week. Pay rate: $13.75 – 17.75 per hr.

Pre-employment and random drug screening required. Open until filled, with first interview conducted on Thursday, March 16 and Friday, March 17. Please complete the general application that can be found at https://www.estransit.com/administration/jobs/Application or 703 Airport Rd., Mammoth Lakes.

EEO employer

Gary Nelson
Mono City Supervisor
Playhouse 395 presents the acclaimed Steven Sondheim musical

By Bodine

Into the Woods, a modern fairy tale and the most ambitious production to date for Playhouse 395, opens this weekend in Bishop. Since raising the curtains in 2006, Playhouse 395 has been out-doing itself each year, with musicals like Guys and Dolls and Joseph and Technicolor Dreamcoat. Into the Woods is a musical mash up of Brothers Grimm and Charles Perrault tales, incorporating characters from Little Red Riding Hood and Rapunzel into one entangled story. Like most fairy tales, love is found, mortgages and deal with the consequences of their legendary feats. Playhouse 395 relies solely on ticket sales to fund productions and projects.

Director Martha Reynolds was celebrating her birthday at a dress rehearsal on Monday, February 26. "This is a show we had to wait for," Reynolds said. Playhouse 395 has now gained enough experience to tackle the complicated production. There are actors all over the stage. "It looks like chaos because it is," Reynolds said. She’s been in 30 or 40 Playhouse 395 productions, both behind the scenes and on stage. The calm in the storm is a white cow, played by Kenji Kawaguchi. He’s the cow that trades for magic beans.

Kawaguchi used to perform guerrilla theater, or spontaneous acting performances in public. He described how fake arguments with other actors in a public park would grow to a dramatic pitch, stunning picnickers and passersby. Kawaguchi’s performances have gotten him escorted out of all the major amusement parks in Southern California, he said.

He said that there is so much competition for actors and writers in Hollywood that sometimes the guerilla acts were the best he could get.

Retired Bishop Police Chief Chris Carter plays the Big Bad Wolf. Carter plays guitar and sings with the Peavine Pickers, but admitted he didn’t know he could hit some of the notes in a Big Bad Wolf song.

His story is a common one among fathers whose daughters end up in the theater—dad takes his kid to a rehearsal, the kid asks dad to audition too, just for fun, dad then gets offered a major role but is unsure he wants to commit until the daughter bats those puppy dog eyes at him.

His daughter Rhianna said the two of them walk around the house singing songs. She said she loves it.

Brandon Fitt is taking to the stage for the first time to perform in his mother’s favorite musical. He and his kids Ashley, Rachel and Dylan Fitt are all in the play with him.

Curt Mulder plays the Mysterious Man. “I’m delirious, mysterious and deleterious,” he sings.

Owens Valley School Second and Third grade Teacher Allison Peeler plays Cinderella’s wicked stepmother. She’s previously performed in Rent and the Rocky Horror Picture Show with the South Lake Tahoe Community College Theatre. Into the Woods will be her third production with Playhouse 395. She said acting brings her joy and happiness and makes for a nice escape.

The production, which will be presented at the Bishop High School Theater, runs Fridays and Saturdays (March 2, 3, 9, 10 and 16) at 7 p.m. and Sundays (March 4 and 11) at 2 p.m. The finale is Saturday, March 17 at 2 p.m. Tickets are available at brownpapertickets.com or at 1.800.838.3006. Tickets can also be purchased at the Bishop Chamber of Commerce and at the Inyo Council for the Arts.

Playhouse 395 relies solely on ticket sales to fund productions and projects.
T he first truly massive storm of the 2017-18 season hit the Sierra beginning on Thursday, March 1. At one point in time, the storm was predicted to hammer the Sierras for a solid 24 hours or more, with Chris Smallcomb of the National Weather Service in Reno predicting "high freakoutness" on his "freakout chart" for Thursday and Friday, March 1-2. "...Don’t even think about traveling over the Sierra until Friday mid-day at earliest, safer to wait until Saturday p.m.,” Smallcomb wrote.

“This is a once-a-winter kind of event,” Zach Tolby, a meteorologist with the Reno NWS, told the San Francisco Chronicle.

On a positive note, Smallcomb predicted that the storm would be little enough to lower the already-abysmal Sierra snowpack a good 10-15 percent if the weather materialized as hoped. Before the onset of this storm, the Weather Network reported that the statewide snowpack was at 185 percent of normal. For context, on March 12-18 inches. As of 2 p.m. on Thursday, Mammoth Mountain has already began accumulating 12-18 inches. Of 2 p.m. on Thursday, Mammoth has reported a season total of 115 inches at McCoy station and 200 inches total at the summit. As for a “Miracle March,” (or a #MammothMarch, the hashtag Mammoth Mountain has already begun utilizing on this, the first day of the month) the NWS "freakout chart" is based by Smallcomb predicts a gradual warming trend, but posits that temperatures will remain at or below seasonal norms through March 7.

Beyond the weeklong forecast, things get a little harder to predict. Smallcomb predicts "one or two weak to moderate storms in March," with things "trending warmer" moving into the middle of the month.

Smallcomb reported that it would take four to six more storms of this size to get the Sierra snowpack back to normal levels. Or, as Curbed San Francisco's Megan Barber put it, "To get to the average snowpack on March 1—which is about 22 inches of snow water equivalent—this week's storm would need to drop over 16 feet of snow."

"To get to the average snowpack on March 1 that avalanche danger was “high” for the areas around Mammoth Lakes. As of Thursday, Mammoth Mountain Ski Area reported 9-14 inches of new snow with more falling, and predicted a daytime accumulation of 12-18 inches. As of 2 p.m. on Thursday, Mammoth has reported a season total of 115 inches at McCoy station and 200 inches total at the summit. As for a “Miracle March,” (or a #MammothMarch, the hashtag Mammoth Mountain has already began utilizing on this, the first day of the month) the NWS "freakout chart" is based by Smallcomb predicts a gradual warming trend, but posits that temperatures will remain at or below seasonal norms through March 7.

Beyond the weeklong forecast, things get a little harder to predict. Smallcomb predicts "one or two weak to moderate storms in mid-March," with things "trending warmer" moving into the middle of the month.

Smallcomb reported that it would take four to six more storms of this size to get the Sierra snowpack back to normal levels. Or, as Curbed San Francisco's Megan Barber put it, "To get to the average snowpack on March 1—which is about 22 inches of snow water equivalent—this week's storm would need to drop over 16 feet of snow."

Kindergarten & Transitional Kindergarten Round Up

Parents and incoming Kindergartners, please attend Round Up at your local elementary school to find out about Kindergarten and TK enrollment, meet the teacher and see the school. Get a free Kindergarten Backpack and learn about the free Summer Bridge Program!

If your child will turn 5 on or before September 1, 2018, then he or she can attend Kindergarten in the fall of 2018. If your child will turn 5 between September 2, 2018 and December 2, 2018, then he or she can attend Transitional Kindergarten in the fall of 2018.

Mammoth Elementary: Wednesday, March 14, 1500 Meridian Blvd, 760-934-7545
5:00 pm—Kindergarten Round Up
6:00-7:00 pm—Schedule a Kindergarten Well Check with Sierra Park Pediatrics.
(Well Check required for school entry)
Mammoth Health & Safety Fair: May 26, 2018, 10 - 1 pm

Lee Vining Elementary: Monday, March 19, 132 Lee Vining Ave, 760-647-6460
10:00 am—Kindergarten Round Up
10:30 - 11:30 am—Birth to 5 Health and Safety Fair, LVE Gym

Bridgeport Elementary: Monday, March 19, 205 Kingsley St, 760-932-7441
12:30 pm—Kindergarten Round Up (recess at 12:15)
1:30 - 2:30 pm—Birth to 5 Health and Safety Fair, BES Gym

Edna Beamam Elementary: Tuesday, March 20, 25541 Hwy 6, Benton, 760-933-2397
As in Reno, the snowpack was at 185 percent of normal. For context, on March 12-18 inches. As of 2 p.m. on Thursday, Mammoth Mountain has already began accumulating 12-18 inches. Of 2 p.m. on Thursday, Mammoth has reported a season total of 115 inches at McCoy station and 200 inches total at the summit. As for a “Miracle March,” (or a #MammothMarch, the hashtag Mammoth Mountain has already began utilizing on this, the first day of the month) the NWS "freakout chart" is based by Smallcomb predicts a gradual warming trend, but posits that temperatures will remain at or below seasonal norms through March 7.

Beyond the weeklong forecast, things get a little harder to predict. Smallcomb predicts "one or two weak to moderate storms in mid-March," with things "trending warmer" moving into the middle of the month.

Smallcomb reported that it would take four to six more storms of this size to get the Sierra snowpack back to normal levels. Or, as Curbed San Francisco's Megan Barber put it, "To get to the average snowpack on March 1—which is about 22 inches of snow water equivalent—this week's storm would need to drop over 16 feet of snow."

BEGINNING ITALIAN CLASS

March 12th through May 30th
Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:30 to 7:00
Learn about Italy, the Italian Culture and food.
Develop skills to interact in common conversational situations.
Develop listening and speaking skills.
This course is for people who have little or no prior knowledge of Italian.
Join Anna Kinsey Ceruti, a Mammoth Lakes resident from Italy!
Pre-registration is recommended by calling Shana at (760) 914-4131, emailing ssstapp@monocoe.org or stopping by the AEC Monday-through Friday 10 to 5.
Sexual Health is Just Health

Know Your Status!

The Mono County Health Department offers FREE HIV/STD testing and condoms, and can assist people living with HIV and AIDS to access medication, medical care, and other services to optimize health. Call or drop in for an appointment.

Mono County Health Department

www.monohealth.com

Mammoth Lakes Office
437 Old Mammoth Road
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
Phone: 760–924–1830

Bridgeport Office
37 Emigrant Street
Bridgeport, CA 93517
Phone: 760–932–5580

“This project is/was supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.”
A NEW HOME FOR FAMILY FUN

CreekHouse
AT SNOWCREEK RESORT

NEW RELEASE OF LUXURY MOUNTAIN RETREATS NOW SELLING!

New Luxury Mountain Retreats with Alpine Golf Course and Athletic Club minutes from Mammoth Mountain.

3-4 BEDROOMS & UP TO 2,742 SQ. FT. • SALES 877-766-9275 • LiveCreekHouse.com

All information subject to change. The Snowcreek Property Company, CalBRE #01812140.

Another Luxury Development by The Chadmar Group

SNOWCREEK RESORT