JUST OUT OF REACH

Mammoth escapes potential catastrophe after arsonist sets fire to two homes

The scene at 9:15 a.m. Monday at 357 Grindelwald, the location of one of two arson-related fires Monday, consisted of numerous Mammoth Police and Fire vehicles on an otherwise deserted street. The vehicles were parked in front of a home with visible burn marks on its front, a man sat in the bed of a pickup truck, answering questions posed to him by Sergeant Joseph Vetter. A hastily erected line of cones marked off the edges of the crime scene and soon another truck deployed another line of cones about fifteen yards in front of the initial line, accompanied by a “Road Closed” sign.

That same afternoon, less than a mile away at the Val D’Isere condominium complex, a similar array of vehicles were parked in front of the building housing unit four. Police officers could be seen conferring on the pathway outside the unit. Mammoth Lakes Police believe that the fires, which were ignited early Monday morning at these two locations, share a common perpetrator, and at 3 p.m. Monday, MLPD published a short statement omitting its Facebook page which announced that 30-year old suspect, Patrick Zepeda, was in custody.

The charges read as follows: two counts of arson, one count of attempted murder, and one count of burglary.

The post featured an image depicting the home at 357 Grindelwald, where the suspect lived with his girlfriend, still emitting smoke and surrounded by fiery debris sporadically drops from the roof and windows visible from the street. When fire fighters arrived on scene, the house was “fully engulfed in flames”, according to the DA’s press release. “Half the unit was on fire with the wrong drug.”

Another update from the police department came an hour later, updating the charges against Zepeda to three counts of attempted murder, based upon three people being inside the Val d’Isere unit at the time the fires were set. This update was accompanied by a video, which showed smoke pouring out of windows and large flames emerging from others. Fiery debris sporadically drops from the building onto a porch, where it continues to burn fiercely.

The Mono County District Attorney’s office released an official statement on Wednesday afternoon that established the timeline of events. At 4:43 am, the fire department responded to the fire at Val D’Isere and about forty-five minutes later, another 911 call came through that was related to the fire on Grindelwald.

A closer examination of the Val D’Isere scene revealed little, if any, exterior damage but damage to a wall in entryway was visible through a full length window. The three small fires set inside the condominium were extinguished before the fire department arrived. The condo at Val D’Isere is owned by Garrett and Cary James with a mailing address in Laguna Niguel.

District Attorney Tim Kendall’s official statement indicated that the condo residents were friends of the suspect.

The extent of the damage at 357 Grindelwald was greater, with blackened portions of the roof and windows visible from the street. When fire fighters arrived on scene, the house was “fully engulfed in flames”, according to the DA’s press release. “Half the unit was on fire with the wrong drug.”

RISK VERSUS REWARD

Insurance rates statewide have skyrocketed in fire-prone areas, policy cancellations are on the increase, and Eastern Sierra residents are being impacted.

Although the Eastern Sierra is not considered an at-risk area for wildfires, insurance companies can take into consideration the statewide concern for fire when writing a policy. Insurance companies often take into account something called Special Hazard Interface Areas (SHIA) when determining risk. This includes environmental factors such as wind shear and fuel load, which signifies how much potentially flammable material exists in an area.

Eric Olson, an insurance broker at Mammoth Insurance, believes that insurers in the area may be seeing higher SHIA in the area and determining an insurance price without looking at the historic lack of fires.

“IT’s not a high fire area”, says Olson, “but the industry won’t back away from it. They take [the trend] and put it into our scenario and who knows?” Olson also cited the Round Fire in Swall Meadows in 2015 as an instance that insurers could seize upon to jack up rates.

That fire, aided by 50-75 mile per hour winds, raged across 7,000 acres of land and ultimately destroyed forty structures in Swall Meadows and Paradise. Not: The Paradise of Mono County is not the same Paradise that was the focus of the 2018 Camp Fire.

In some cases, insurers see INSURANCE, page 6

Oster column
Get your hand out of the air
Q rating
Skate Comp wrap
He’s Tall
p. 12/
p. 2/
p. 18/
p. 16-17/
p. 27/
RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU’RE SURE

The headline above was the old slogan for Sure deodorant. A few folks could’ve used some Sure at that opening Parcel workshop. Because there was some stink present.

Last week, Hite reported in his housing story that when prompted by Mammoth Councilmember Cleland Hoff to identify themselves if they weren’t getting paid to be there, about five people raised their hands at the opening Parcel workshop.

Problem is, Hite hasn’t been here long enough to know who’s who. So he didn’t know enough to call bullshit when Mammoth Mountain Vice-President of Development Tom Hodges disingenuously raised his hand. As if Hodges wasn’t paid to be there, ordered to be there by his bosses. And of course Hodges is trying to figure out a way for the company to capitalize as much as it possibly can - satisfying its private need on the public dime.

I don’t blame the guy for being there. He’s supposed to be there. And I don’t blame Mammoth Mountain for trying - I mean, they’ve had great success telling the town what to do over the years. But for godsakes, don’t raise your hand like you’re some earnest citizen altogether devoid of self-interest. Yeah, not getting paid my ass.

I made Hite watch the closing presentation on the Parcel workshop which took place last Friday night. So this is the preliminary plan. The consultant estimated building cost of $364,000 a unit, and with development fees that number jumps to $475,000 a unit. It’s calculated as a $50 million project.

Wait, what??? I just called Hite to confirm this crazy number. The consultant estimated building cost of $364,000 a unit, and with development fees that number jumps to $475,000 a unit. $475,000 times 106 = $50,350,000.

The town would be expected to come up with 10%, or $5 million, with grants covering the rest.

It sounds like we’d be a lot better off purchasing a fleet of Sprinter Vans and paving a parking lot instead. And as Hite tells me, you can really deck out these vans for about $120,000. The following pitch is from a company called Lake Region RVs based in Minnesota.

“Looking for a go-anywhere RV camper van that lets you get away from it all - and take an abundance of luxury along for the ride? Our Passage 144 custom RV camper van checks all the boxes. Meticulous leather-clad upholstery and polished wood veneers throughout the interior confirm its Midwest Automotive Designs pedigree. A cabin full of artfully installed appliances and intuitive electronics offer the utmost in convenience, most reliable and environmentally friendly sources of AC/DC power. The same state-of-the-art lithium-ion battery power system that’s available on the longer-wheelbase Passage model lets you replace the noise and nuisance of a fuel-gulping generator with one of the safest, most reliable and environmentally friendly sources of AC/DC power. Air conditioning? Check. Suburban tankless water heater? Check. Solid-surface countertops with an induction cook top? Satellite TV, WiFi and premium sound? It’s all there. All wrapped within legendary Mercedes-Benz safety and performance engineering - and a 19-foot platform that allows you to navigate the urban jungle as confidently as you explore the roads less traveled.”

Imagine. You solve people’s transportation and housing needs! And to encourage the use of public transportation, maybe there’s a mileage charge after a certain base use - say 3,000 miles a year.

The vans sleep two. You charge $1,000/month. It costs you $12.7 million up front for 100 vans plus the cost of paving a 100-stall housing-only parking lot. You charge $1,000/month for the vans (remember, housing plus transport!) and collect $1.3 million per year in rent.

And look, if you don’t want to do it all at once, let’s just use the magic word - we’ll phase the purchases.

I attended Monday’s Bishop City Council meeting just because I was curious about what the vibe would be in the wake of former City Manager David Kelly’s abrupt exit.

For a subscription to The Sheet contact Lunch at his above e-mail address, or call the office. Issues are mailed out bi-weekly. Cost is $75/ year.

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1969 2019

FREE ADMISSION!
ARSON
continued from page 1

flames coming out and impinging on the
the unit next door”, said Natalie Mor-
flames coming out and impinging on the
conveyed his gratitude [at having a place
Mr. Zepeda lived in one of his duplex
Molnar, who confirmed the
guy to tell you how wronged he was,
righteous indignation, or for a wronged
Burning Man.

Pat was a good guy and good ten-
twist of irony, is working this week out at
He needs help, not prison.

He needs help, not prison.

But if you’re looking for a fistful of
But if you’re looking for a fistful of
The timeline of events made it possible
The Sheet reached property owner
Property owner

Zepeda was arrested without incident
Zepeda’s mental com-
A status conference is
tends seven travel shows per year.

A 12-charger station is planned for

Penney building.

A 12-charger station is planned for

a 2%

Finally, it looks like Bishop will

Bishop’s BTID is funded by a 2%
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decline to continue coverage altogether and people are left scrambling to find an insurance at an affordable price, which can often be all but impossible to find.

Dave Easterby, insurance agent at State Farm, noted that since the Ridgecrest earthquakes in July, he’s also seen an uptick in inquiries about earthquake insurance.

“The good news is that the pressure is relieved often through smaller earthquakes,” says Easterby. He also mentioned that because premiums are low, it [earthquake insurance] is not necessarily a bad idea to have, as “we do sit on a caldera.”

According to Easterby, similar houses in Mammoth Lakes and an area like Pasadena can have drastically different earthquake insurance rates, to the tune of over a $1,000 difference. He also recommended that prospective home buyers make sure that whichever home they want to purchase is insurable. In other words, if you buy and then find out that the structure isn’t insurable, you may be out of luck on a good policy.

California has been reducing earthquake insurance rates on account of a general lack of major quakes but Olson noted that “they’re always surprised when a quake hits.”

“When the next big one happens, the rate’ll go up again,” says Olson, and summarized the state’s policy on earthquakes as “Save a dime today, charge 30 cents tomorrow.”

According to the California Department of Insurance, zip codes that were recently hit by fires saw a 9.81% increase in insurers opting to not renew policies while seeing a concurrent 1.7% rise in policies provided by the California Fair Access to Insurance Requirements (FAIR) plan.

FAIR is seen as the policy of last resort for California homeowners. As Bryan Thomson at State Farm says, “Try to go through a buyer you have history with. After that, try everybody you can contact. FAIR is the absolute last resort.”

The issue with FAIR is that it only covers damage from fire. “That’s it. Tree falls on your house? Snow collapses a roof? You’re not covered. With FAIR, it becomes necessary to buy additional insurance coverage for any possible thing other than fire.

Even the FAIR plan website acknowledges that “The FAIR plan provides insurance as a last resort, and should only be used after a diligent effort to obtain coverage in the voluntary market has been made.” The website even provides resources for insurance shopping. Inspirational.

In Mammoth Lakes, the fire department worked to reduce the fuel load in the Lakes Basin, according to Olson, but he noted June Lake is a different matter entirely. He related a story of an individual who was looking to buy a house in June Lake but balked at the $6,000 insurance policy. “It starts to drive how badly someone wants to buy a property,” Olson noted.

Thomson also revealed that companies like State Farm have a quota or percentage for how much of a town they’re willing to insure. “In the early ’90s, State Farm was still accepting new people but they’ve hit their threshold,” says Thomson.

While frustrating, it makes sense: if the whole town were to catch fire, a company covering any large portion of the town would be on the line for everything. When asked what exactly the magic number of policies was, Thomson said that he didn’t really know and that it’s really up to the corporate office.

Thomson referred to the situation in June Lake as an uphill battle, stating “There’s a little pocket … where we can do houses, but the rest of it is wildfire zone and that’s probably not going to happen.”

Brett Walters, broker at Brett Walters Insurance advises homeowners not to miss their renewal payment. “The alternative would be drastically higher,” says Walters. He also stressed the importance of managing the property by creating “defensible space,” which includes dead wood and vegetation.

In terms of the structure itself, it doesn’t matter, “what the house is built or made of. 200 feet is the minimum clearance that insurance companies want to see,” says Walters.

All of which leaves homeowners in a tough place. And often on the short end of FAIR fight.
NARCAN DO

Overdose drug available in Mono County
By Hite

Approximately six months ago, Public Health Officer Tom Boo asked Mono County EMS Training Officer Ray McGrale, “Do we have an opioid epidemic in this area?”

It was clear that the United States had an opioid problem. In the ten-year period from 2007-2017 opioid-related deaths increased from 18,515 to 47,600 (drugabuse.gov). In the same time span, drug-related deaths connected to opioids increased from 51.4% to 67.8%. This is a spike that has been increasing every year since the late ’90s, and recently the United States government declared it a “Public Health Emergency.”

McGrane wasn’t sure the issue had spread to the Eastern Sierra. “I felt like we had typical users, pill-poppers, but nothing out of the norm. When a bad batch of drugs comes through, we get some overdoses. We knew the opioid epidemic was happening other places, but I didn’t think it was of epidemic proportions.”

McGrane continues to maintain it isn’t an epidemic yet, but he did say “The problem is apparent, and it is here now.”

In the last month, there have been approximately eight overdoses and two deaths locally.

Narcan distribution project

In October, 2018, California started the ‘Naloxone Distribution Project.’ Funded by SAMSHA (Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration), and administered by DHCS (California’s department of health care services), the Project “aims to address the opioid crisis by reducing opioid overdose deaths through the provision of free naloxone, in its nasal spray formulation.” The nasal spray Naloxone, under it’s brand name Narcan, has useful links on Narcan, the Naloxone Distribution Project, related resources, and even a list explaining who can give the Narcan to the public.

Right now, Mono County Behavioral Health, Paramedics, and the Public Health department have Narcan and can answer the questions necessary about where to get the nasal spray. Recently, one fire station was trained to distribute Narcan, while local police officers are about to be trained as well, and more fire stations will have it eventually.

The public can get Narcan for free from the places and people listed on the Mono County website. Normal business hours are the best time, but in an emergency call 911.

Nationally, opioid manufacturers, like the tobacco manufacturers before them, are starting to get targeted for push-ins of their highly addictive wares on an unsuspecting public.

In a landmark case, an Oklahoma judge ordered Johnson and Johnson to pay $572 million because they “had intentionally played down the dangers and oversold the benefits of opioids.” This is not to say that the pharmaceutical companies are the only bad actors, but that addiction to opioids is common and hard to avoid if you are being prescribed these drugs by a doctor who was encouraged to do so.

Mono County’s video on how to use Narcan was launched August 9, the same day the late Jerry Garcia died of a heart attack in 1995. Garcia was known to have problems with opioids, and proof that opioids can prey upon anyone, no matter how successful.

For more information on Narcan, how to get it, or general opioid information visit: monocounty.ca.gov/public-health/naloxone

By James

Senator Bill 402 to extend the Eastern Sierra Adventure Trails Pilot Project in Inyo County and designate combined-use roads for Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) up to 10 miles until January 1, 2025, and further evaluate the safety and effectiveness of these routes was passed on August 19. The bill will now be sent to the Governor for his consideration.

Because of delays, the County felt that it had too little time and data to fully assess the program for its mandated report to the state originally set for January 2017. The County asked that the program be extended. The project originally had over 70 proposed routes, which were then reduced to 36 potential routes, before being further downsized to just seven.

The Adventure Trails Pilot Project hoped to copy the success of other similar programs in other states and communities which have reportedly proven very successful in improving the local economies by establishing similar routes accommodate ATV/OHV access to local businesses. According to State Senator Andreas Borgeas, “SB 402 allows the Adventure Trails system to safely remain in operation giving the community access to trails and natural resource protections. Improving access to these trails gives increased opportunities for all to enjoy the beauty of our publicly-owned lands, and I am very fortunate to have the support of my colleagues.”

Assemblyman Devon J. Mathis (R-Visalia) presented the bill on behalf of Senator Andreas Borgeas (R-Fresno) before the State Assembly.

“I applaud Senator Borgeas’ dedication to the people that reside and recreate in beautiful Inyo County,” said Assemblyman Mathis. “These trails are a wonderful part of the region which offers people unbeatable opportunities to explore and learn.”

In January 2015, after several public meetings, Inyo County Supervisors approved the designation of seven combined-use routes where certain non-street legal vehicles can drive on county roads to access goods and services and enjoy OHV recreation. Seven routes were opened for combined-use vehicles between July 2015 and September 2017 along with an evaluation process to access the use and impact of the OHV program.

Despite concerns of some residents expressed at the outset of the program that it might have potential negative impacts on their property values because of noise, air quality and safety issues, that does not appear to have proven to be the case. The Sheriff’s Department, the California Highway Patrol and the County have reported that they have received very few complaints about the program and the complaints that have been reported have been for trails and roads not covered by the project.

The bill is supported by several groups including the Inyo County Board of Supervisors, the Off-Road Legislative Association, and the Rural County Representatives of California.

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Fuels Reduction project

On September 3, 2019 work to complete fuels reduction on up to 630 acres in the Mammoth Lakes Basin will begin according to Betty Hylton of the Mammoth Community Water District.

Mechanical and hand thinning will create fuel breaks and defensible space along roadsides and around campgrounds, including safe exit routes. These activities will provide protection to infrastructure and maintain recreational access to forest and watershed resources. Access in the Lakes Basin will be affected, including road delays and trailhead, campground, and bike path closures. Planned closures will be updated Monday on the Town of Mammoth’s website under “Town Highlights.”

“We want to ensure that locals and visitors have information on where closures exist with a goal of minimizing impacts when visiting the Lakes Basin,” stated interim general manager, Mark Busby. “Outreach regarding the project’s impact to access is being coordinated between multiple agencies in our community including Mammoth Lakes Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access, Eastern Sierra Transit, Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, and the Mammoth Lakes Lodging Association. Their assistance is greatly appreciated.”

The project is partially funded by a $1,000,000 grant awarded to the Mammoth Lakes Fire Safe Council from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC). Funding for the remaining project cost is being pursued.

The application and project was supported by the Mammoth Community Water District, United States Forest Service, Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County Board of Supervisors and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

*SNC is an agency of the State of California, under the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68) grant cycle and in support of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Project.

Stabbing Suspect Caught

A double stabbing in Bishop on the afternoon of August 25 saw one of the victims, an elderly man, taken to the hospital for his wounds.

Inyo County Sheriff’s Department received a report of a possible stabbing victim in the vicinity of Red Hill Road. When deputies arrived, they contacted an adult female who stated that she was attacked with a sharp object. During the course of the interview, deputies learned that another victim, an elderly male, was located at a residence on Rocking K. The male was transported to Northern Inyo Hospital for treatment.

Upon being interviewed, the two victims and another witness identified the suspect in the attacks as Robert “Roy” Horton, 28. A search in conjunction with other local agencies failed to locate Horton and a Code Red alert was issued to the Rocking K and Millpond communities, advising them to be on lookout for Horton.

Later that same evening, Inyo County Dispatch got word of “a male subject located sleeping in a bedroom inside a residence on Running Iron.” The homeowners had woken the man up and asked him to leave. Based on statements given by the homeowner, police were able to determine that the sleeping man had been Horton. Once again, a search of the area turned up nothing.

Police announced that Horton had been taken into custody without incident the next day at 586 Rocking K Drive and he was booked into Inyo County Jail at 12:53 p.m.

The charges include but are not limited to: one count of attempted murder, one count possession of a controlled substance, and one count assault with a deadly weapon. He is being held on $770,000 bail.

No word has been issued as to a trial date.

Local Briefs

On Sunday, August 25 at approximately 3:18 PM, Shirie Zulkowski, 45, of Ridgecrest, driving a 2008 Toyota Sequoia (SUV), was traveling westbound on SR-190 near Twenty Mule Team Road in Death Valley National Park. According to the California highway patrol report, as Zulkowski approached a right-hand curve in the highway, she either caused or allowed the SUV to veer off the left side of the roadway. The SUV traveled approximately 280 feet before colliding with a rock wall. The driver suffered major injuries from the collision and succumbed to her injuries at the scene.

On September 1, 2019, police announced that the stabbing suspect in Bishop has been arrested after a second stabbing in Inyo County as a result of the investigation into the August 25 stabbing.

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No word has been issued as to a trial date.
PRESENTS A BENEFIT FOR MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS

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Mode Green
The Coffis Brothers
Melizone Beat
Nemrtrina Orchestra
Dusty Green Bones Band
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INFO: monoe arts.org/JLJF/

Thursday Night Kick Off and After Parties Friday and Saturday
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We thank sheet for their 2017 Sponsorship
New Asian restaurant to open next to Minaret Cinemas

By Lex Brode

When Pat Kumlue said “We want to try to keep it as authentic and affordable as possible,” his wife and co-owner Taylor jumped right in to add “Well we’re not going to try, we will!” That type of confidence radiates from the couple when asked about their new Asian restaurant, Noodley. They hope to open by late September in the Minaret Plaza, next to the Booky Joint and a stone’s throw from the movie theater.

They also don’t seem discouraged at all by Mammoth’s changing seasons, and capricious qualities that seem to get the better of many businesses. “We want to hopefully be the last restaurant to take up this space.”

According to the Kumlues, it simply lined up as the right time and opportunity to start a business in the Eastern Sierra. Any new-business-nerves are assuaged by the many locals and passers-by looking into the restaurant, asking when it’ll be open and when they can get their first orders in.

And as longtime locals, they know they’ll need to cater to fellow locals to weather shoulder seasons and bad winters. They mentioned a soft-opening for locals and other business owners to come in and offer feedback before the official launch.

As for the cuisine, the menu will look unlike any other Mammoth restaurant. “We want to bring an authentic culture and a different experience that Mammoth hasn’t seen before,” says Pat.

Pat explains his cuisine the same way he explains his own background: Vietnamese/Thai/Chinese. Pat is originally from Thailand and although he humbly refrains from calling himself a chef, he’s spent many years learning original recipes from his family, and perfecting these dishes for friends and parties in the Eastern Sierra. The new restaurant is looking to have a small, but well-executed menu with vegan, vegetarian, and even gluten-free options.

Pat even told me about a unique featured dish that will make its debut with the restaurant called ‘Khao-Soi,’ a spicier regional dish from Northern Thailand, which is, according to the Kumlues, extremely hard to find, even in metropolitan cities with Asian food on every corner. The restaurant will incorporate aspects of both Pat and Taylor’s backgrounds; including southern sweet tea from Taylor’s Georgia roots, as well as Thai tea and coffee, and even a peaflower tea that is described, in Taylor’s words, as “fun and blue.”

The food won’t be the only one-of-a-kind element; even some of the furniture is hand-built by Pat himself. “He’s really done everything himself, even the countertops are preserved with a Japanese charred wood method,” Taylor answered when she explained the bright colors and comfy atmosphere of the restaurant. She’s also proud of the environmental conscientiousness they’ve incorporated, highlighting that all to-go supplies are either biodegradable or compostable. Every detail appears well thought-out, right down to the spoons being high-quality ceramic, and including a hook at the top to prevent from slipping into your soup. (Seriously though, you should have seen how excited this woman was about her spoons).

Pat and Taylor Kamlue, owners of Nooldey.
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Q: We are local residents and own our own home but we have been following the condo and nightly rental trend in Mammoth, and how it has increased values and activity. We also watch the Town’s marketing expenditures and production of bed tax revenue. We think they have all reached a peak, at least cyclically. What does your contrarian indicator show?

A: Mammoth is always full of surprises. Will it snow this winter? Or will it be a drought year? Or will there be too much snow? This applies to the local real estate market as well. You are correct that the Mammoth condominium market has seen strong price appreciation in the past two years. Much of this activity is being driven by the current state of the short term rental (STR) economy and associated trends.

In the past 24-36 months there has been an interesting disconnect between condo values and single-family home values in Mammoth Lakes. Condos have moved up in value and single-family has remained on the flatter side (of course, there are always exceptions in this market). Buyers of both are actually getting solid bargains, relatively speaking. But upward condo values are being supported by their ability to produce substantial revenue and provide personal usage for their owners.

The single-family market offers a variety of properties and price points (except inexpensive). Relative to the cost of vacant land/LOTS, government fees (and delays) and construction costs, the values are hardly inflated. Especially at today’s low interest rates. And I still meet people who think all of the natural and undeveloped land surrounding us is available for subdivision and homestites. They don’t realize Mammoth Lakes and other eastern Sierra communities are essentially private property islands.

And as I have been reiterating, both the local homes and condos are selling well below their peak values of the mid-2000s. The massive, record amount of Mammoth’s TOT (bed tax) is significantly due to the many property owners who have upgraded their condos and aggressively market and service their properties in this new STR age. It has become almost trendy, and cultish. They are generating strong revenues for both themselves and the Town. The services of VRBO, Airbnb and the like have certainly helped facilitate this. But there are a lot of working parts and a massive workforce behind it all. The local marketing wonks believe they are the genius behind the big numbers. But there are other factors to consider.

Some months ago (March 9, 2019 to be exact) The Sheet published a graph and data showing the marketing dollars spent and the TOT collected in the past 20 years (and my brain can go back at least 30 years on this subject—anybody remember Ralph McMullen?). Evidenced in the graph and data, there is little (if any) true return on investment on the extraordinary marketing expenditures of the last 10 years. My business professors warned against working beyond the law of diminishing returns. The Town fathers seem almost enamored with it.

But The Sheet left out a couple of critical data points in their analysis. One is inflation, and the other is the population growth of California. I bought a brand new 4 bedroom / 2.5 bath, 3-car garage home from John Hooper 20 years ago for $330,000. It would cost three times that today. A premium four wheel drive truck has more than doubled in that time. And California has grown by more that 10 million people in the past 20 years (an approx. 33% increase). Do any of them come to Mammoth? Of course they do, they get bombarded with Mammoth marketing everywhere they go. And half the people in SoCal have some sort of Mammoth sticker on the back of their car.

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$5 Whiskey of the Week
$1.50 OFF Bottled Beers / Draft Specials
OSTER
continued from page 12

So while the TOT numbers look great, in actuality they have simply kept pace with the societal trend lines including inflation and population growth. The maturation of the resort as a whole hasn’t hurt either. If you put Mammoth Mountain’s revenue numbers on the same graph you would see a similar trajectory. The Town marketers might argue they helped this, but MMBA was pulling down massive skier visits long before the Town incorporated and had a marketing budget.

But what has helped facilitate all of this the past ten years are all of the local condo owners who have upgraded their properties and made Mammoth’s guests feel comfortable; like staying at someone’s mountain home. The Ski Area’s consultants Hart Howerton reminded us a few years ago that we are ~1,000 transient beds short in this community. How many new “hot beds” have been developed the past 10-12 years? Almost none. Even the newest and possibly the nicest hospitality facility in Mammoth, the Westin Monache, is undergoing a major and costly “refresh.” The (soon to come?) Mega Zip, a roller coaster, and more. These are not snow activities on the Mountain; the Via Ferrata, the (soon to come?) Zip, it sure beats bankruptcy.

Marketing is one thing, providing quality accommodations is another. The newest generation of STR property owners have simply supplied the guest demand. Without these owners, the marketing would be counterproductive. And any new potential hotel-type facilities, more STR units are needed (which maybe more.

Mammoth Mountain recently stated that the IKON Pass sales in SoCal are “through the roof” for next year. They also stated that their goal is to average 1.8 million skier days by 2024. So where are all of these guests going to stay? It sounds like occupancy rates should rise. And yes, there are a couple dozen brand new townhomes in the Mammoth Inntory at Canyon Lodge and Creekhouse. But odds are that at least half of them won’t be on any sort of rental program. And any new potential hotel-type facility is still at least three years away, and maybe more.

Assuming reasonable snow conditions, more STR units are needed (which doesn’t help the workforce housing shortage). The increased demand should also drive-up the rates because the dynamic pricing algorithms will certainly be paying attention (oh, how the busi-ness has changed!). And guess what? The Town’s TOT should increase right along with it. Hopefully, it doesn’t go to their heads.

The IKON Pass program has also leveled the surges in business by virtue of the black-out dates during the tradi-tional peak holiday periods. The Pass also brought more skiers and riders on non-weekend dates, especially Fridays, Monday and powder days. As a 30-year season pass holder, I certainly noticed a difference. For the 2020 winter I’m changing my Mammoth access game plan just because of it. So have we reached any sort of peak? Probably not as long as there is snow.

And as we have learned, the Alterra game plan is to push more summer ac-tivities on the Mountain; the Via Ferrata, the Seed to Sky, the IKON Pass does bring a whole new roll. Hopefully, all of the players are seeking out the appropriate professional.

To start, HotelNewsNow.com reported on August 3 that while occupancies have been solid in 2019, the prior week splaying July and August (and pre-sumably peak summer business) was slightly down year-over-year in three key metrics: occupancy, daily rate, and rev- enue per available room. It might be an anomaly, but it might also be an accurate metric of plateauing tourism nationwide.

What about potential plateauing in Mammoth? Or potential decline? The wildcard is always snow. But our new friend the IKON Pass does bring a whole new dimension. There is no doubt it played a role in Mammoth’s very suc-cesful 2019 winter and spring. Great snow and the IKON are profound for local tourism numbers. Many skiers and snowboarders came to Mammoth who had never been here before, and it was all because they had an IKON Pass. There is no doubt they appreciated what they experienced. It is likely they will be back. And they will bring their friends.

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And as we have learned, the Alterra game plan is to push more summer ac-tivities on the Mountain; the Via Ferrata, the (soon to come?) Zip, a roller coaster, and more. These are not snow dependent. All of that, mixed with an increasing number of popular summer events will only create more demand in the summer and fall. This too should drive occupancy and rates.

The Bishop airport status is another factor in moving beyond our peaking numbers. It might be part of the MMBA optimism to attain 1.8 million skier days in the next five years. Having truly dependable air service could finally push Mammoth in the direction of a real des-tination resort. The IKON Pass will play a roll. Hopefully, all of the players are figuring out how it is all going to work.

There are opportunities for everyone.

The recently filed TRID (Tourism Business Improvement District) litiga-tion shall be enlightening. It has taken six years for a challenge to finally arise. This specialty tax is also dumping many millions into the Town’s coffers. If the challenge is successful, I would imagine it would be compensated for in TOT and sales tax. Trimming marketing expenses and the air service subsidy would be taboo. But it should take years to sort out. I’m betting on the completion of the Village/Eagle gondola to come first. And maybe we’ll have the Airport settlement paid off by then.

So are these short term rental revenues and bed taxes peaking? Only the future will tell. But for now the numbers are impressive. Besides the weather and snowpack, the state and national and global economics will play their part. Lower interest rates will certainly drive some cash-out refinancing and that can certainly keep the party going. And people still clamor to ski and snowboard even in recessions. Mammoth remains on the affordable side of that equation for the value received. Dynamic pricing algorithms will be making sure the pricing is all competitive, for both owners and guests.

Meanwhile, the community needs to appreciate the current success and bounty. It sure beats bankruptcy.

Paul Oster is the Broker/Owner of RE/MAX of Mammoth. For other timely real estate information you can go to: MammothRealEstateBlog.com. For legal, accounting, or construction advice, please seek out the appropriate professional.
CONDOS SOAR, SFRs SLIDE

By Hite

Real estate prices and sales in Mammoth Lakes have remained steady despite a volatile stock market, an inverted yield curve, trade tensions and more.

For the first time in three years, however, the median price of a single family home has declined. According to Mammoth Real Estate broker Matthew Lehman, the year-to-date median sales price has tumbled 16%. This has been countered by an almost 13% rise in the median price of condominiums.

The reasons for these numbers are possibly intuitive. “People want flexibility. If you have a single family home, oftentimes you rent it out for 6-7 months, and you can’t visit during that time period. But with condos, you can rent them out nightly and plan your stay around those times,” explained local weatherman and real estate agent Howard Sheckter.

Sheckter also explained how claiming your house as an ‘investment property’ can come with certain tax advantages, as California tax law is particularly lenient with the types of deductions that can be applied to your taxable income.

As for the 16% slide in median home prices, part of the explanation could be that 55-65 new Gray Bear homes in the latest John Hooper development may have skewed prices higher when they came on the market in 2017 and 2018. Lehman calculates these homes factored into a roughly 3% increase in the median price of homes in the area. As a market indicator, Lehman likes using median prices and not average prices, “because the median price is a midpoint to the data, it tells what the price of a normal home being sold is, while the average can be skewed by [the sale of a few] expensive homes.”

When asked about the state of real estate, Dennis Cox of Mammoth Realty Group said, the market has been on a strong run since April 2017, particularly the condo market. “The trifecta of the Mammoth Mountain purchase by KSO, heavy snow years, and the Airbnb phenomenon make one bedroom condos desirable.”

Cox also cited smaller, less obvious trend. Some of his clients “bought 7-12 years ago, really like the area are upgrading to bigger houses. They sell what they have and buy something more expensive”

He also explained reasons why some are leaving Mammoth. “Some people seem tired of the snow and will swap their Mammoth home for one in Crowley or Bishop.”

Others get more bang (and acreage) for their buck in places like Idaho.

On macroeconomic principles that affect the market, Cox said “It all affects us, the interest rates certainly help. The stock market volatility can actually lead to people putting their money into real estate. And the unemployment rate, inflation, everything can change what happens to our market. For the most part, if the southern California economy is doing well, so are we.”

He did note that “The market is doing well but that is making it hard for locals to buy homes. When the prices rise and incomes don’t follow it can lead to a problem.”

But he also said that these were minor fluctuations in the market and long run, prices level out. He used an anecdote to explain “In 2005-2006, housing prices were high and the town tried to get more involved. They created multiple affordable housing developments but they lagged behind. The market crashed and all houses became affordable. It didn’t do what the town wanted, but the affordable housing is still there. In the long run having those homes is likely a positive.”

Another factor to the healthy housing market is the Federal Reserve cutting interest rates, “When people are financing for a house, they are looking at the price of a home. But they are focused on their mortgage payment to understand what they will have to pay every month,” explained Lehman. People live day to day, month to month, so if lower interest rates lead to a lower monthly payment, more people will be able to make that monthly payment and more people will buy.

Lehman continued, “lower interest rates are certainly helping sustain the market, particularly for those looking at a long term investment.”

For now the market is alive and well. According to Lehman “October is one of the better months for real estate as people who waited out the summer decide to buy.”

For now the market is alive and well. According to Lehman “October is one of the better months for real estate as people who waited out the summer decide to buy.”
2019 WAVE RAVE SKATE COMP RESULTS

Micro Grom Street Boys 5 & Under
1. Bexton Nash
2. Wilder Molnar
3. Massimo Singer

Grom Street Boys 9-10
1. Ricky Pascale
2. Chase Helmrich
3. Brooks Montoya

Micro Grom Street Girls 5 & Under
1. Eveanna Kramer
2. Ava Miller
3. Daisy Molnar

Grom Street Girls 9-10
1. Emily Campbell
2. Keifer McTernan
3. Sara Tomaier

Mid Grom Street Boys 6-8
1. Koa Morehead
2. Liam Hodges
3. TJ Weygand

Grom Street Girls 9-10
1. Liam Knight
2. Riley Pascale
3. Jack Taggart

Mid Grom Street Girls 6-8
1. Kinsley Klassen

Super Grom Street Boys 11-12
1. Liam Knight
2. Riley Pascale
3. Jack Taggart

Super Grom Street Girls 11-12
1. Peyton Mendez

Shredder Street Boys 13-15
1. Ayden Fulmer
2. Levko Fedorowycz
3. Lys Fedorowycz

Womens Open Street
1. Kate Jones
2. Ellie Horsman
3. Zeia Rose

Mens Open Street
1. Bryant Dunkel
2. Ron Forth
3. Jarett Paperny

Tandem Bowl
1. Zeia Rose & Tyler Brooking-Kleinertz
2. Ava & Andrew Miller

Micro Grom Bowl Boys 5 & Under
1. Bexton Nash
2. Massimo Singer
3. Wilder Molnar

Super Grom Bowl Girls 5 & Under
1. Lou Neale
2. Ruby Hodges
3. Eveanna Kramer

Mid Grom Bowl Boys 6-8
1. Koa Morehead
2. TJ Weygand
3. Liam Hodges

Mid Grom Bowl Girls 6-8
1. Audrey Tomaier
2. Lola Montoya
3. Sadie Hansen

Grom Bowl Boys 9-10
1. Chase Helmrich
2. Brooks Montoya
3. Ansel Smith

Grom Bowl Girls 9-10
1. Keifer McTernan
2. Norah Hinson
3. Sara Tomaier

Super Grom Bowl Boys 11-12
1. Liam Knight
2. Jack Taggart
3. Riley Pascale

Shredder Bowl Boys 13-15
1. Lys Fedorowycz
2. Levko Fedorowycz

Womens Open Bowl
1. Zeia Rose
2. Tyler Brooking-Kleinertz
3. Kate Jones

Masters Bowl 30-39
1. Scotty Goodman
2. Jeff Kramer
3. Brandon Montoya

Grand Masters Bowl 40-49
1. Teddy Buhl
2. Mike Larry
3. Yoshi Komiyama

Legends Bowl 50-
1. Bev Bihler
2. Todd McDonagh
3. Mark Kleinertz

Mens Open Bowl Final
1. Alex Carlson
2. Archer Braun
3. Patrick Reddy
Cherry Tomatoes, Fuji Apple, Sliced Fennel tossed in House Vinaigrette
Baby Greens

Soup of the Day
Made fresh Daily

First Course
Grilled Marinated Flank Steak with Chive Mashed Potatoes, Charred Onion, Carne Asada

Entree's
Broccolini and Cilantro Chimichuri
Fettuccini, Red Bell Pepper, Squash, Slow Roasted Tomatoes in a Pistachio Pesto Cream Sauce
Pistachio Pesto with Chicken
Asian Sea Bass in Garlic Oragano Aioli, with Basmati Rice, Seasonal Vegetables & Charred Lemon
Crispy Skin Barramundi Filet

Dessert
Choice of any of our Homemade Desserts!

Above: Teddy Rauh with a nose grab high on the brick wall
Below: Patrick Reddy making it look easy on his way to a third place finish in the Mens Open Bowl.

Above: Levko Fedorowycz and Spongebob Kickflippin’
Left: Bexton Nash cruises to a Micro Grom Sweep. He finished first place in the Street and Bowl competitions for his age.

Mens Open Bowl L-R: Alex Carlson, Archer Braun, Patrick Reddy
Grom Girls Street L-R: Emily Campbell, Keifer McTernan, Sara Tormer
Womens Open Bowl L-R: Zeia Rose, Tyler Brooking-Kleinertz, Kate Jones

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Soup of the Day
Main Fresh Daily
Entree’s
Carne Asada
Grilled Marinated Flank Steak with Chive Mashed Potatoes, Charred Onion, Broccoli and Cherry Chimichurri
Crissy Skin Barramundi Filet
Asian Sea Bass in Garlic Oragano Aioli, with Basmati Rice, Seasonal Vegetables & Charred Lemon
Pistachio Pasta with Chicken
Fettuccini, Red Bell Pepper, Squash, Slow Roasted Tomatoes in a Pistachio Pesto Cream Sauce
Dessert
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While watching a preview of Avenue Q on Wednesday night at the Edison in Mammoth, I felt a strange sensation begin to creep over me that I just couldn’t shake. It wasn’t discomfort, or displeasure. The show was as funny as advertised and the cast showed no signs of low energy in spite of the two people in the seats. So just what was it? As I watched the actors maneuver the puppets and themselves around the stage, I realized the root of my unease: I was watching my life unfold onstage before me. For a 22-year old fresh out of college, and attempting to find “purpose” in life, the show hits remarkably close to home. The show’s second musical number, “What Do You Do With a B.A. in English?” is ripped straight out of my life. The answer as far as I can tell: move to Mammoth Lakes, work for The Sheet, and battle existential despair at every turn.

Ed. note: Hey, do you really have to bring The Sheet into this?

But what kept me from experiencing a soul-hurricane in the rear seats of the Edison Theater was the life that the actors breathe into the show and its relentless drive forward. Avenue Q charges from scene to scene with optimism and intensity, never dwelling too long on its more despairing aspects and instead bringing the cheer and educational value of Sesame Street to the reality of adulthood. The show addresses the pitfalls and truths of life, confronting aspects of being an adult that may seem taboo. It’s is cynical but not pessimistic; if anything, it presents a way to discuss and confront uncomfortable things, like race and gender relations, that removes their complexities.

Take “Everyone’s a Little Bit Racist,” a early number that tackles the potentially sticky subject of race. As the number progresses, we find out that the whole cast of characters is more than happy to admit that they carry some sort of bias with them. It’s a hilarious song with a message about being honest with yourself and acknowledging your shortcomings. And we laugh because the characters on stage, even if they’re puppets, are accurate representations of how people are.

The cast, coming off of an eight week run in Los Angeles, handled the challenges of puppeteering and a new stage with ease. It’s a small group of actors, often doubling or tripling up on roles to accommodate the number of characters, but they manage to effectively define each character they portray and the world they construct makes sense, in spite of characters like Trekkie Monster and the Bad Idea Bears. The puppets come alive in the actors’ arms, conveying the emotion of the script with swings of their arms and raising of their eyebrows.

The few roles not played by puppets are seamlessly integrated into the world of Avenue Q and the actors in these roles succeed in matching the puppet’s zaniness with their own.

Speaking of the Bad Idea Bears: they appear to Princeton, one of the puppets, as he mulls how to spend a check that his parents gave him and successfully convince him to spend the money on beer instead of rent or food. When he decides that he’ll buy a six-pack, the bears urge him to “be economic” and buy a case of beer instead, which he happily agrees to. It’s the type of math I can appreciate. Note: Although this show prominently features puppets, it is not intended for children, and includes “graphic puppet nudity,” whatever that entails.

Showtimes: Friday at 7; Saturday at 3 & 7; Sunday at 3.
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**calendar of events**

**BARS & MUSIC**

**Happy Hour**
- **Austria Hof**, Happy Hour 5-7:30 p.m. Daily. Taco Tuesdays and Poki Taco Thursday. More info: See ad p. 6.
- **Outlaw Saloon Happy Hour** Mon.-Fri., Happy Hour from 4-6 p.m.
- **Morrison’s Happy Hour** 5-7 p.m. all summer Sunday through Thursday in the bar.
- **The Mogul Happy Hour Sun. -Thurs. from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the bar with food and drink specials.**
- **Mammoth Rock ‘N Bowl** Mon. 9-9:00 p.m. Thurs. DJ 10 p.m. Info: See ad p. 5.
- **Clocktower Cellar** Happy Hour: 4-7 p.m. daily, $6 dollar menu items, drink specials. Info: See ad p. 13.
- **Pete’s Bistro**. Happy hour 5-7 p.m. Signature cocktails. Wine by the glass. Info: See ad p. 13.
- **Roberto’s Happy Hour**: 4-6 p.m. daily.
- **The Public House Local Mondays** (all local beers are $5 a pint). Karaoke Tuesdays @ 8:00. ½ Priced Wine on Wednesdays, Open Mic night Thursdays. More info: See ad p. 18.
- **Famous Slocums Happy Hour** Happy Hour: Mon-Fri 4-6 pm; Sat 4-5:30 pm. Dining at 5:30 pm. Closed Sundays. “No Reservations, just come on in.” More info: See ad p. 5.
- **Giovanonni’s Happy Hour** daily 4-6 p.m. Large pizza and a pitcher of beer gets you free wings. See ad on this page.
- **Shelter Distilling Open 11am -11pm Daily Happy Hour**: 3-5pm Sunday through Thursday/ Half Off All Drinks Taco Tuesday; $6 Blue Agave Cocktails and $2 Street Tacos All Day Thursday $8 Growler Fills All Day. Info: See ad. p. 27.
- **Blau Dely Happy Hour** 5-6 p.m. $5 Beer, Wine and Small Plates.
- **Devils Creek Distillery** tasting room hours 10am-6pm. Fridays and Saturdays.
- **Dennis Quaid and the Sharks** 8 p.m.
- **Karaoke @ Public House.**

**TOWN STUFF**

**Friday, August 30**/ **MHS Football** opens its season **at home vs. Tonopah. Time:**

**September 3**

**Eastern Sierra Tri-County Fair** continues at the Fairgrounds in Bishop. More info: See sidebar column next page.

**Avenue Q: The Musical** @ Mammoth Lakes Repertory Theatre. This refreshing musical (adult puppetry at its most insane!) addresses and satirizes the anxieties associated with entering adulthood. Aug. 30: 7 p.m. Aug. 31: 3 and 7 p.m. Sept. 1: 3 p.m.

**August 30-31**/ **Campfire Programs presented by the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Assn. Aug. 30: Crowley Lake. Time: 7-8:30 p.m. Aug. 31: New Shady Rest. Time: 7-8:30 p.m. Topic: Mountain Lions

**Saturday, August 31**/ **Annual Labor Day weekend BBQ and Horseshoe tourney** @ Silver Lake Resort in June. Info: 760.648.7525

**Benton Hot Springs History dinner & presentation**, 5-9 p.m. Dine in rarely opened historic buildings and enjoy a fun and fascinating presentation on prehistory or history in Mono County’s oldest living town. $50 for catered dinner and presentation with all proceeds going to Historic Benton Hot Springs non-profit. Tonight’s lecture: Secrets on the Hill: How Archaeology can tell us about Benton’s Past People. More info: See sidebar column next page.

**Sunday, September 1**/ **Mammoth Lakes Summer Interpretive Walks**: 8:00 a.m. Lundy Canyon Bird Walk, 10:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Sonora Trail Walk, 10:00 a.m. Panum Crater Walk. Join naturalists to learn about the unique features of Mono Lake. Info: 760.647.6595

**Botany in Rock Creek with Robin Hirsch**. Learn which plants taste good and which are better left untasted. Come prepared. Location: Rock Creek Lakes Resort, 1 Upper Rock Creek Road, Bishop. Times: 9-12 & 1-4.

**Sierra Meadows hike at North Lake with Kimball, Meet at North Lake day hiker parking lot near pack station. All ages & free. Time: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

**SEMBA Mammoth Point to Point 50k Bike Race**. Headquarters at The Village at Mammoth. Free event, open to the public and to all ages and abilities. Time 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Info: sembabike.org.
### Calendar of Events

#### 50th Anniversary Labor Day Festival of The Arts

Set high among the pines, this world-class festival provides fairgoers a beautiful viewing and buying experience.

The over course of 3 days, visitors and residents of Mammoth Lakes will enjoy more than 110 exhibiting visual artists, sample international food, local craft beers and wine, listen to live musical performances and entertain families with kid’s art workshops.

The quality of the participating juried artists contributes to the Festival’s continued recognition as the premier visual art show in the Eastern Sierra.

**Hours:**

August 31: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
September 1: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
September 2: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

#### Mary Austin birthday celebration

The Eastern California Museum will be hosting a birthday celebration for Mary Hunter Austin, famed author of “The Land of Little Rain” and Independence resident, who was born 151 years ago this September. The birthday party will be on Saturday, Sept. 7, from 12 to 3 p.m. at the Museum.

Thanks to a talented local performer, Mary Austin herself will be on hand to speak about her life and work. A special treat will be guided tours of Mary Austin’s Independence home. Please call 760-878-0258 to reserve a spot on the tour or for more information about this free event, and yes, there will be birthday cake!

#### Rock ‘N Rye

A Whiskey festival from August 29 - September 1. With 2 days of live music and three days of fun. Sponsored by High West and hosted by the Mammoth Track Club, this festival features over 30 distilled and 10 live musical performances. Please join the INYOMO at the Mammoth Track Club, this free event is a beautiful viewing and buying experience.

For more, please visit: [https://mammothrocknrye.com](https://mammothrocknrye.com)

### AT THE MOVIES

**Movies Play this Week 8/30 to 9/5**

**Paradise Lost**  
Friday, September 6  
6:30 p.m.

**Ready or Not**  
Saturday, September 7  
6:30 p.m.

**Have a Nice Day**  
Sunday, September 8  
6:30 p.m.

### Tri-County Fair

This weekend’s big event is the Eastern Sierra Tri-County Fair! Thursday night is Native Night presented by Akamaya Culture group with live performances, music, food and vendors. On Friday you won’t want to miss the concert with Dennis Quaid and the Sharks. Saturday’s main arena event is the rodeo and Sunday’s Demolition Derby is always a sell out! Entertainment line-up will be exciting with something for everyone. New this year is the Decayed Brigade Roller Hockey Shootout Contest in the Charles Brown. There will also be Silent Walkers, K-9 Kings Stunt Dog Show, Circus Puppet and Players Little Theatre, Buck Trout, Kiddeo Karoo Barnyard Bash, just to name a few. Live Music will include a CCR Tribute Band, Eagles Tribute Band, 70s/80s Boogie Rock, Violin on Fire and the Valley Sons Demolition Derby After Party.

Come see the hundreds of homegrown and homemade items made by locals at the Fair Exhibits Competition in art, photography, quilts, bees and BBQ competitions, and many more.  

Info: [www.tricountyfair.com](http://www.tricountyfair.com) / 760.873.3588.

### Be Bopp

On Monday, September 2, Musician/Historian Tom Bopp presents historic photos & songs at the Lee Vining Community Center; and business meeting begins at 6 PM prepared. Meet 8:45 at the Union Bank parking lot in Mammoth Lakes, or 9:30 at the Ranger Station on the Tioga Road. Info: annieletti@gmail.com / 760-934-9721.

### Monday, September 2

**Mammoth Historian Tom Bopp presents historic photos & songs at the Mono Basin Historical Society meeting in Lee Vining. Info: See sidebar column this page.**

**Tuesday, September 3**

- **Mammoth United School District Board of Education Budget Study Session.** 3:30-5:30 p.m. @ Trail L. Boost Fitness hosts a free training & conditioning class today and Thursday @ 5:30 p.m. Limit of 4 adults per class. RSVP: info@teddskki.com.
- **Mammoth Recreation Commission** meets. 9 a.m. Suite Z. Minaret Mall. Mammoth Lakes Recreation Commission meets 5 p.m. Suite Z. Minaret Mall.
- **Mono County Supervisors** meet. 9 a.m. Bridgeport Courthouse. Video conference available 3rd floor, Sierra Center Mall in Tourism office.
- **Wednesday, September 4**
  - **Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board** meets. 1 p.m. Suite Z. Minaret Mall. Mammoth Lakes Tourism Town Council meets 6 p.m. Suite Z. Minaret Mall.
  - **Regional water management workshops.** 3-5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. Location: Paiute Shoshone Cultural Center at 2300 West Line. More info: See sidebar column this page.
  - **September 4-6**
    - **Mammoth Gran Fondo Pre Ride.** @ Footloose Sports. Join EastSide Velo for a 40 mile warm-up ride for the 2019 Mammoth Gran Fondo. Sept 4-6, 11 a.m. Sept 5-6 2 p.m.

### Regional water management

Help design a roadmap for meeting future water needs and ensuring environmental and economic resilience in the Owens Valley.

The state is looking for exciting, innovative, bold, and broad ideas on water management and policy. This is our chance to give our region’s water voice and influence the approach to addressing water issues in our area. Please join the Inyo-Mono integrated regional water management program for two public listening sessions on Wednesday, September 4, either from 3-5 p.m. or 6-8 p.m.

Location: Owens Valley Paiute Shoshone Cultural Center, 2300 West Line Street in Bishop.

More info. Contact: allison@inyomonowater.org.
Help Wanted

Sierra Employment Services, Inc. is hiring PT & FT for:
- Front Desk/Reservations M $14 - $19, reporting to Clerk II M$14
- Housekeepers M $15 - $17
- General Laborer M $15 - $20, reporting to Cabinet Installer M $20 - $25
- Cashier M $15 - $20, reporting to Clerk M $15

Call us Today 760-924-0523 or 760-873-8599 www.SierraEmployment.com

Help Wanted

Rock 'N Dirt Inc. is looking for those spe- cially qualified for the following position. Please call stop by for an application, or drop off a re- sume. Located at 62 Berner St. in Mammoth, Rockndirtinc@yahoo.com 760-934. 3091

Mammoth Spa Creations has FT positions for office/sales associate and in spa mainte- nance, offering vacation accrual, benefits and paid holidays. Experience preferred. Some positions will require evening, night and Sun-Tues afternoons - evenings. Email resume: teri@seasun.com and we’ll set up an interview. 760-934-2030

Help Wanted

Best Western High Sierra Hotel Now Hir- ing Front Desk Supervisor position, pay is $14 - $18 DOE plus paid vacation. Please stop by at 3238 Main Street in Mammoth Lakes, CA. Front Desk position is accepting applications for experienced/driver with great customer service skills. Customer service and driving orientation is also looking for office staff for the right person with great organizational skills and good communication background. Please inquire with Scottie at 760-914-7433. www.bestwestern.com

Bleu Handedcrafed Foods seeks food- passionate individuals to join our BAKING and what AMS Raking Team shifts start at 7am and Culinary Team shifts start at 10:30am. Based on your experience and interests, we will train and place you in the right role at Bleu. Great wages, benefits and co-workers PT/FT. Send resume to valbroca@yahoo.com or call 760.709.6689

Help Wanted

Vacasa is looking to hire full and part time housekeepers in Mammoth Lakes and June Lake. Pay will start at $18 per hour. Apply online at Vacasa.com - Operations - Frontline - Join Our Team - Frontline Jobs -Vacasa.com Help Wanted for seasonal and/or part-time retail positions. Exceptional customer service, strong work ethic and enjoyment of a fun, fast paced environment required. Duties include basic food/beverage prep, POS operation, and cleaning/stocking the Cafe. Both early and afternoon shifts are available, may work weekends and holidays. Competitive pay and great benefits. Phone for more information and to apply, visit www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov, or call 760-965-3060

Help Wanted

Vacasa is looking to hire full and part time housekeepers in Mammoth Lakes and June Lake. Pay will start at $18 per hour. Apply online at Vacasa.com - Operations - Frontline - Join Our Team - Frontline Jobs - Vacasa.com

Seeking a qualified person with electri- cal experience. Successful candidate must be able to work nights and week- ends. Please call 210-760-8003

Lake Mary Marina is now hiring for vari- ous positions in the store and on the marina, at 10 am. We are closed on Sundays. We are located on the south side of Lake Mary. No phone calls please

IMACA JOB OPENING

IMACA is a 501(c)3 non-profit Com- munity Action Agency serving low-income persons in Inyo and Mono counties. IMACA’s Administration office in Bishop, CA has an opening for: Executive Director - The ED is responsible for the over-all op- erations of IMACA. The ED reports to the IMACA Board of Directors. Position is a full time Exempt position with full benefit package. Salary: $79,705.60 - $102,044.00 ($38.32- $49.61/hour)

For more information and to apply, visit gbuapcd.org/employment or gbuapcd.bambooclip.com/jobs. Application, resume, and cover letter must be received by 3 pm Monday, October 4, 2019. Applicants selected for an interview will be notified.

Fictitious Business Name Statement

The Following Entity is Doing Business As:

Mammoth Chevron, Inc.

Mammoth Chevron, Inc. 3236 Main Street, P.O. Box 27 Mammoth Lakes, Ca. 93546

This business is conducted by a Corpora- tion. For details of the name or names listed above on June 12, 2019, this statement was filed with the Clerk of Mono County on August 1, 2019 File Number 19-149 2019-0156 (8/10, 8/17, 8/24, 8/31)

Fictitious Business Name Statement

The Following Entity is Doing Business As:

Mammoth Chevon

Mammoth Chevon, Inc. 3236 Main Street, P.O. Box 27 Mammoth Lakes, Ca. 93546

This Business is conducted by an Corpora- tion. For details of the name or names listed above on June 12, 2019, this statement was filed with the Clerk of Mono County on August 1, 2019 File Number 19-149 2019-0156 (8/10, 8/17, 8/24, 8/31)

PERSONALS

I saw your team’s QB ... abruptly retired at the end of the game. I’m aware that if you didn’t have Bad Luck you’d have no Luck at all.

I think you guys are the perfect example of the American Dream...
Notice of Public Hearing
Zoning Code Amendment (ZCA) 19-001

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Wednesday, September 11, 2019, beginning at 2:00 p.m. and continuing until finished, at the Town Council Chambers, Suite Z, within the Minaret Village Shopping Center, 437 Old Mammoth Road, the Mammoth Lakes Planning & Economic Development Commission will hear a request for the following:

Application Request: Zoning Code Amendment 19-001 — Amend various sections of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Zoning Code to: (1) Amended Tables 17.20.020 and 17.24.020 to clarify a Use Permit for Fractional or Timeshare Developments in the RMF -2 Zoning District and Town of Mammoth Lakes Zoning Code to: (1) Amend Tables 17.20.020 and 17.24.020 to clarify a Use Permit for Fractional or Timeshare Developments in the RMF -2 Zoning District and Town of Mammoth Lakes Zoning Code to: (1) Amend Tables 17.20.020 and 17.24.020 to clarify a Use Permit for Fractional or Timeshare Developments in the RMF -2 Zoning District and Town of Mammoth Lakes Zoning Code to: (1) Amend Tables 17.20.020 and 17.24.020 to clarify a Use Permit for Fractional or Timeshare Developments in the RMF -2 Zoning District.

CEQA Determination: Exempt pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21081.3 and State CEQA Guidelines section 15163

TS #2019-0101

Notice of Adoption/Public Input

Notice of Summons

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: The Partnership of McKay Brothers Cattle Company, aka McKay Brothers Cattle Company, in the State of California, has been served with this Summons and Notice of Summons.

You are hereby SUMMONED by Plaintiff TRACY LEE BREG, RONALD LEE BREG, and DANIEL S. BREG, individually.

You may appear before the Court, if you desire, by an attorney authorized to practice law in the State of California, or you may appear by written power of attorney, filed in the office of the Clerk of the Courts, of your choice. If you do not appear, judgment may be entered against you without your being heard unless you re-

pect the further proceeding before this Court.

You have 20 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response and have it served on the plaintiff's attorney. Failure to respond, within the proper legal form of your issue, will cause the court to hear your case. There may be a court order that you are required to obey in your processing. You will receive either the entire court forms and all other information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/self-help), or by contacting your local county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. For the court clerk’s address for a fee a few forms, if you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your, money, and property, may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you must meet with an attorney and obtain legal services from a nonprofit legal service program. You can contact legal aid services through the California Legal Services Web Site (www.dial2justice.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/self-help), or by contacting your local county law library, or the courthouse nearest you.

NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for wages and fees on any settle-

ment or judgment entered against you. The court has a lien for fees awarded to a few attorneys, if you do not appear.

The name and address of the court is: SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF MINO, 100 Inyo County Government Center, PO Box 1507, Mammoth Lakes, Calif.

The number is: CS190088

The name, and telephone number of Plaintiff's attorney: -

People, Law Office of Peter E. Tracy 100 South Main Street #200 Bishop, CA 93514

DATE: May 30, 2019

EXHIBITS

SEAL

THE PARTNERSHIP of McKay Brothers CATTLE COMPANY, aka McKay Brothers CATTLE COMPANY, a general partnership, VICKIE LEE BREG, RONALD E. BREG, EDITH McKAY, aka MARGOBER ALDREDGE and JAMES McKAY and GIOVACCHINI, individually and as Successor Trustees of THE ROBERT W. McKAY FAMILY TRUST; THE ROBERT W. McKAY FAMILY TRUST, a trust, SHEILA Mc KAY and JAMES McKAY, individually.

BECAUSE, and all persons unknown claiming any legal or equitable right, title, estate, lien or interest in the property described in the Complaint attached hereto, or any part thereof, are hereby charged with notice, I, or any of my agents, does 1-10 inclusive.

The following parcel(s) of real property is the subject of the above captioned action: the east side of U.S. Highway 395 near (s) at the north of South Snowflake Trail, the west side of North Snowflake Trail, and the south side of North Snowflake Trail.

AS GRANTED TO ANTELOPE VALLEY MUTUAL WATER COMPANY by deed recorded January 19, 1966 in Book 101 of Official Records. APX. 2000

TS #2019-0102

Notice of Inviting Bids

The Town of Mammoth Lakes will receive sealed bids for the work shown on the plans entitled:

MAMMOTH LAKES WINTER STREET ANIMATION 2019 to the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Lakes, CA. Bids will be received at the Office of the Town Clerk of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite 206, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546.

Important: Proposals/Contract Documents for this work are available at the Office of the Town Clerk, Suite 206, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546. All matters related to this solicitation will be held in confidence. Bids must be submitted on or before 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25, 2019.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: Project includes purchase, installation, maintenance, and removal of lightweight integrated LED lights that will be strung along roads in town and will be in place for the duration of the winter season.

Bids must be submitted on or before 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25, 2019.

Any member of the public may obtain a copy of this invitation to bid by visiting the online self-help center at www.mammothlakes.ca.gov or by calling Allison Dodds, Dial 2 Justice, at (760) 965-3650. Plans and specifications are also available at the Town of Mammoth Lakes Office of the Town Clerk.

Bids must be submitted on or before 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25, 2019.

Bids must be submitted on or before 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25, 2019.

Any person having an interest in the proposed application request may appear before the Planning & Economic Development Commission either in person or represented by counsel and state their position.

NOTICE OF UPDATE OF INYO-MONO INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN, PHASE II

In the Town of Mammoth Lakes will receive sealed bids for the work shown on the plans entitled:

Bids must be submitted on or before 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25, 2019.

The Director of Industrial Relations has determined the prevailing rate to be $25.00 per hour.

The Town reserves the right to waive any disparity in bids that may be submitted.

Picked up at the Town Offices   $25.00

Description Plans & Specifications (incl. bid forms)  $740.00

Proposals/Contract Documents for this work are available at the Office of the Town Clerk, Suite 206, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA. 93546.
LLOYD’S TO CLOSE

Rod Ayers, owner of Lloyd’s of Lone Pine, is planning to close his retail store by the end of September. Lloyd’s has been in business since 1937.

Ayers said his reason for closing is due to his older age, his family wanting to sell and the grandkids not wanting to take over the business.

Rod currently owns the building, and is not sure what will go in after he closes. He’s also unsure whether he’ll retire in Lone Pine or out-of-state.

Ayers said everything in the store from this week until closing is 50% off. The iconic white horse “Frosty” will be sold to a local business in the Owens Valley.

“Frosty” was named “after my old horse that I had when I was a young kid,” said Ayers.

The old horse was used as a double in movies, such as Hopalong Cassidy, The Lone Ranger, and The White Stallion. “Frosty” has adorned the front of the store since about 1970.

At one point, a local kid graduating from Lone Pine High School climbed on the roof and over the side and painted the horse’s balls blue, said Ayers. That was the legend.

Ayers later found out that one of his best friends, who owned a service station in town, had painted the horse’s balls. When the movies used the horse, the horse’s blue balls were then painted back to their original color.

Ayers said Lloyd’s customers liked the people and kids for shoes and boot repairs.

Lloyd’s was first opened by Rod Ayers parents, Lloyd and Elsie Ayers—it was first called Lloyd’s Shoe Store until the family incorporated. The first Lloyd’s was located next door, as the current location housed a Bank of America branch until the early ’70s - the property was owned by the City of Los Angeles - ultimately, Ayers acquired it.

Rod Ayers has two children Rod Ayers, Jr. and Stacey Vanrenselaer, and two granddaughters. His wife, Linda died 6 years ago from breast cancer. They were married for 40 years. Ayers currently lives on his ranch named the “Rafter Bit” above Independence, on leased land owned by the DWP.

The Sheet spoke with two Lone Pine residents at a local beauty shop. Mary Alice Miller, 77, works part-time at Karen’s Beauty Shop and has bought her Wranglers at Lloyd’s since she was 12— they made sure they had her size, she said. Miller said she could have gone to other places to purchase her Wranglers, but she wanted to give Rod the business. Miller also reflects to a time when Lloyd’s had a shoe x-ray machine (to see the foot bones), which was something they didn’t keep, she said.

After Lloyd’s closes, Miller said she will have to find a new place to shop, either in Bishop or Reno.

Owner of Karen’s, Karen Brackney, 64, said of matriarch Elsie Ayers, “She was a cool lady, and very good about fitting shoes.”
Got Fresh Air?

Secondhand smoke doesn’t just hurt people, it can hurt your pets too.

Learn more at TobaccoFreeCA.com

Make your house or apartment smoke free

For help quitting call 1-800-NO-BUTTS or go to www.nobutts.org

This message paid for by Mono County Tobacco Education Program and Inyo County Health and Human Services Public Health and Prevention Division.
**HORRORSCOPES**

By Clouds McCloud

**Virgo:** This promises to be great year for you. So don’t let yourself settle for less than what you want and deserve. Sure, you’re going to have to meet in the middle on some things, but hopefully that will lead to meeting someone else’s middle. That’s why your new motto is not “Let’s Netflix and Chill.” Instead it’s, “Let’s travel, make memories and then Hulu and woofoo.”

**Libra:** A married couple in their 80s was recently arrested for having sex at a park in Connecticut. Much like their drawers, the charges were dropped. Please let this remind us of three valuable lessons. First, Connecticut sucks. Second, we should all have the goal of putting the “O in Octogenarian.” Third, your new motto is not “Let’s Netflix and Chill.” Instead it’s, “Let’s travel, make memories and then Hulu and woofoo.”

**Scorpio:** People often forget that you are loved. Most lessons of life. That’s why this Churchill line might come in handy. “You never can tell whether bad luck may not, after all, turn out to be good luck.”

**Sagittarius:** Your words of wisdom are valuable. “The most valuable player is the one who makes the most plays behind the scenes.”

**Capricorn:** Since this is a period of positive change, perhaps your new anthem should come from James Bay, “No, you don’t have to wear your best fake smile. Don’t have to stand there burning inside, if you don’t like it!” Although, if you feel like this attitude might burn a bridge you still need to cross with someone, just remember that feelings are really just visitors. They come and go. So let them.

**Aquarius:** Here’s your new mission—try to shut down any conversations that involve hating on other people. In fact, maybe your new habit should be to talk kindly behind other people’s backs. Of course, you can always just tell yourself and other people that Clouds is an idiot. It all depends on the results your shooting for, either bitter and lonely or happy and well-loved.

**Pisces:** People often forget that you can’t defeat your demons if you still enjoy hanging out with them. It turns out that emotions are just like children. They heal pretty easily when they feel listened to and validated. They also like to cuddle, play outdoors and pee the bed.

**Aries:** Since the last month of summer can be a very amorous time, and since Aries tend to be happiest when you’re sharing your love with people, places and things, try one of these lines. From Niall Horan, “I’ve been thinking ‘bout it all day and I hope you feel the same way... Yeah, I already know there ain’t no stopping your plans and those slow hands.” From Dr. Seuss, “Studies have shown that more good things happen when you smile, especially when you’re in the buff.”

**Taurus:** Since you like lists, here’s your new To Do List: 1) Smile often. 2) Stay positive. 3) Don’t let the dickheads get you down. 4) Be thankful. 5) Be naked as often as applicable. 6) Call your mom. 7) Remember to floss.

**Gemini:** With another football season getting underway it will help to remember: 1st Down) Tom Brady is the GOAT. 2nd Down) Vince Lombardi once said, “The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary.” 3rd Down) Football is most people’s second favorite “F” word. Touchdown) Dr. Seuss was right: “You have to be odd to be number one.”

**Cancer:** Clouds would like to remind you of some things. A) Your anxiety is lying to you. B) Pisces and Cancers have special connections. See) Effort is attractive. D) Stay close to people who feel like sunshine.

**Leo:** Studies have shown that people with low self-esteem are much more likely to criticize others. But that doesn’t seem to work for anyone besides President/Comrade Trump. Leos, however, are at their best when they are raising others up. Studies have also shown that confident people enjoy life more, which is why Leos like to hang out with them since like seeks like.
ROCK, RYE AND THE REVEREND

Mammouth Rock ‘N Rye takes place this weekend in the Village at Mammouth. A familiar face, Reverend Tall Tree, is set to take the stage Saturday night at 6 p.m.

Reverend Tall Tree, or Chris Pierce, is making another trip to Mammouth Lakes after playing multiple shows at Bluesapalooza earlier this month. He has also been a part of past Rock ‘N Rye, and says the two festivals represent Mammouth well.

“There are a lot of similarities between Bluesapalooza and Rock ‘N Rye. You know the energy of just being up there in Mammouth and the overall vibe is very similar. Good people, good times, people that enjoy celebrating a hard day’s work.”

He agreed the beer hit harder at altitude, and noted that he has been connected to the Mammouth scene for awhile now, citing residents who have “welcomed him with open arms.”

Pierce has had a long career in the music industry that started when he was a child, “My mom was a public school teacher and actually both my parents saw that from a young age, music hit me in a special way. They made sure I had vocal opportunities, chances to sing choir, had music records, just to ensure that I had the opportunity to do music.”

By 15, Pierce was playing shows at local clubs in Los Angeles. At 19, he toured with Sonia Dada. Once he got back from that I had the opportunity to do music.”

By 15, Pierce was playing shows at local clubs in Los Angeles. At 19, he toured with Sonia Dada. Once he got back from that tour, he decided to get his undergraduate degree in Jazz Studies at USC.

In 2005, Pierce met Seal at a house party. Sensing a unique opportunity he simulated the energy of just being up there in Mammouth and the overall vibe is very similar. Good people, good times, people that enjoy celebrating a hard day’s work.”

Pierce gave him his card. He then received a phone call from Seal’s representatives, and within a couple of weeks, he was on tour halfway around the world, playing acoustic guitar while opening for Seal.

For the purposes of Rock ‘N Rye, Pierce will be playing under the pseudonym Reverend Tall Tree. The name is not entirely fake, as Pierce is an actual reverend.

“About 20 years ago, I studied all kind of religions and ethics while becoming a non-denominational reverend. When my father passed, I went to a Native American sweat lodge. The elder there started calling me Tall Tree, and the name stuck. Fast Forward to six years ago, and I was looking to start a blues band. Combining the two names, I thought it would be fun to use ‘Reverend Tall Tree.’

On how he differentiates his two acts, Pierce explained, “I roll with it really. Some months I have more Chris Pierce shows, some months I have more Reverend Tall Tree stuff. At the end of the day it’s all music, and that’s what is important to me. I think about it as one big part of my existence and however I can get up to that part, I do”

Talking to Pierce, you understand his passion for the connection between the artist, the art, and then finally the listener. When discussing some of the biggest moments of his career, he mentioned that he co-wrote a song called ‘We Can Always Come Back To This’ and the hit show “This is Us.” Three different versions of the song were featured on the show, and the song even made the Rock and Pop top 20, and was #1 on the Billboard chart for four weeks. Then it got nominated for best song written for TV and Film. For him, the feeling was more visceral, “It just reminded me that, it’s all about the music, it’s all about the song. If that song touches people, then the rest will follow.”

His music has reached people all over the world. Pierce has performed with or opened for B.B. King, Coldwar Kids, Colbie Caillat, Al Green, Jon Butcher, Beth Hart, Rodrigo y Gabriela, and obviously Sonia Dada and Seal. This is not an exhaustive list, but in addition to those bands, he has either provided vocals or wrote music for shows such as True Blood, Brothers and Sisters, Rosewood, Crash, and This is Us, to name a few.

For the purposes of Rock ‘N Rye, “we have Sam Meek on guitar, Frederik Bokkenheuser on the drums, and Jon Flaugher on the Bass” said Pierce. The 1930s aesthetic doesn’t stop at Reverend Tall Tree as they have unique names for the entire band. There is Colonel Sam, Major Fred, and Commander Flaugher. The band plays a groovy version of blues that pairs perfectly with Rye Whiskey.

Again, Reverend Tall Tree plays at 6 p.m. on Saturday. The music is free, and there will be food and drinks available to purchase. Mammouth Rock ‘N Rye is an all weekend affair from Friday, August 30 - Sunday, September 1. Rye Tasting tickets can be purchased at mammothrock-rye.com.
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NEW BUILDING RELEASE SHOWCASING HOMES AVAILABLE FOR SUMMER 2019 MOVE-IN
Luxury Mountain Retreats with Alpine Golf Course and Athletic Club at Mammoth Mountain.

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