BISHOP K MART TO CLOSE
By Hite

Transformco holdings, the parent company to Kmart and Sears, issued a press release on November 7 that read “Since purchasing substantially all the assets of Sears Holdings Corporation in February 2019, Transformco has faced a difficult retail environment and other challenges,” and then stated, “we have made the difficult but necessary decision to streamline our operations and close 96 Sears and Kmart stores.”

California, by itself, is losing nine K-Marts and 19 Sears.

And one of those Kmart’s is Bishop’s.

The closure represents a tangible loss to Bishop and the Eastern Sierra as a whole. This leaves Bishop with no big box department stores to supply the community “with the basics,” said Tawni Thomson, Executive Director of the Bishop Chamber of Commerce.

Residents of Bishop may feel like this is an indictment against their town, or rather a sign of the town not being able to support a big box store, but Thomson disagrees.

“The important thing to keep in mind is this store closed down for reasons that have nothing to do with Bishop. There is nothing wrong with our town.”

The history of Transformco, formerly Sears Holding, would tend to support this view.

Kmart was officially incorporated in 1899 but the first store named ‘Kmart’ didn’t open until 1962. In 2002, Kmart declared bankruptcy and closed 326 stores the following year. It was kept afloat by ESL investments, a hedge fund, which purchased Kmart’s debt. In 2005, Kmart merged with Sears to form Sears Holdings Corporation.

Sears Holdings combined company profits peaked in 2006 at $1.5 billion. Due to retail pressure from tech giants like Amazon, Sears began to bleed money. From 2011 to 2016 the company lost $10.4 billion. And from 2010 to 2017, Sears holdings stores declined from 3,500 stores to 695.

After closing a couple hundred more stores, Sears Holdings was about to file for Chapter 7 liquidation before a judge ordered the company to strike a new deal to keep the stores open. Transformco holdings purchased 425 stores (223 Sears and 202 Kmart’s) from Sears Holding for $5.2 billion in February, 2019. Stores not purchased were immediately liquidated.

On August 6, 2019, Transformco announced it would close 26 stores (5 Kmart’s and 21 Sears), in October of this year.

See BLUE LIGHT, page 6

MLT SETTLES ... BEFORE WINTER

Well, if Steve Harvey lived here, he’d be out of a job.

Because the “Feud” between Mammoth Lakes Tourism and erstwhile event venue developer Dirk Winter has apparently runs its course.

MLT and Winter reached agreement this week to settle their differences.

The differences were obstructing Winter’s ability to close escrow on a deal to flip the Woodsite property he acquired just two-and-a-half years ago - using MLT’s money as the down payment.

Winter bought the property from Sam Walker and Dennis Hartman for $3.95 million. The sales price is said to be $5.9 million.

Understandably, MLT wanted its $300,000 back, money it had given Winter to encourage him to close initially back in April, 2017. MLT believed the money would go towards infrastructure improvements to develop the site as an events venue.

The terms of the deal, as outlined by Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board Chair John Seufert, page 2

NET GAINES

State Board of Equalization member Ted Gaines (center) passed through Inyo and Mono Counties this week to meet with various local officials. Which is fairly typical of Gaines. As a State Senator, he always made it a point to campaign locally. Pictured at Whiskey Creek in Bishop on Wednesday from left: Inyo County Assessor Dave Stottlemyre, Julie Faber, ‘Mr. Bishop’ Chuck Kilpatrick, Gaines, Interim Bishop City Manager Robin Picken, Bishop Mayor Jim Ellis and Gaines’s Chief of Staff Dave Titus. Trivia question: Who is the highest-ranking (elected) Republican in the state of California? Answer: Ted Gaines.

Bloomberg news

p. 19/

Plover lovers

p. 13/

Dialysis Blues

p. 8/

Budget Blues

p. 5/

Congestion is good!

p. 18/
FEUD
continued from page 1
Morris, call for Winter to make two $300,000 payments by January, 2021. The first $300,000 is due within thirty days. The second payment, due in approximately 14 months, carries a 7% interest rate.

In addition, The Festival of Beers and Bluesapalooza, Sierra Classic Theatre’s Shakespeare in the Woods and the Mono Arts Council’s Labor Day Arts Festival will have a home for 2020.

Rent charged to Mammoth Brewing Company for the 2020 Bluesapalooza is also capped at a CPI increase.

The agreement represents a separate addendum and supersedes the existing contract.

On the surface, it looks decent. $600,000 for $300,000 plus the estimated $85,000 MLT has spent in legal fees.

But this doesn’t take into account lost time - three years down the road. Lost opportunity. Staff time wasted - and in Executive director John Urdi’s case, that’s expensive staff time. Then there’s Events Coordinator Caroline Casey, who has been handcuffed by uncertainty and lack of a venue.

As Morris said, “It’s the best outcome we could hope for. We’ve tried to account for every contingency.”

But no one’s really happy. Or should be happy, anyway. Except perhaps those involved in the real estate transactions.

And the attorneys. Don’t forget the attorneys.

The Sheet asked Morris why MLT believes Winter will follow through on his promises now when he’s never followed through on a promise before.

Morris said that while the lien MLT had on the property during the legal battle has been removed, MLT can still go after Mr. Winter personally if he does not live up to the terms and make his payments.

MLT attorney Tim Sanford added that loser pays attorney fees, so that would represent a “poison pill” that Mr. Winter would likely wish to avoid.

“He [Winter] would have to go to personal bankruptcy to avoid it,” said Sanford.

Morris laughed. “After last year, we built timing issues into the marketing plan. I don’t anticipate we’ll be asking for emergency money,” he said.

From the “You Can’t Make This Shit Up” department ...

So if I have this straight, you’re gonna hire me - but only for two months, while we liquidate.

If there ever was a deal where I’d want my money up front ...

I’ll bet you Dirk Winter is gonna head over there, negotiate a big signing bonus, and then never show up for work.

You could learn a lot from that guy.

But it’s funny, I’m sitting here looking at the photo and realizing, “But ... what’s gonna happen to Little Caesars?”

Hite didn’t address that in his story. Rookie mistake.

He didn’t address the hiring question either, come to think of it.

But back to Little Caesars. I’ve never ordered it - probably because the idea of ordering pizza in a Kmart is like ... there are certain places which are antithetical to producing decent cuisine. Kmart, airport food courts, Elko, Nevada.

Never mind that when it comes to pizza in Bishop, I’m partial to the Pizza Factory. And my daughter’s partial as well (game room). I mean, it’s a factory devoted to pizza. Not a Kmart devoted to ... well, I don’t really know what Kmart’s devoted to, aside from fluorescent lights and a somnambulant atmosphere. Which is probably why there’s no more Kmart.

Alright, the printer’s calling for this last page. It’s not a matter of printing all the news that’s fit to print. It’s just a matter of printing what we found, or what found us.

And we’ll have something on Marty Burgenbauch next week. Marty deserves the Marvel treatment for sure. He was a great one. 

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FELICI & FRIENDS CONCERTS
2019-2020 SERIES
The Sonora Strings with guest artists Ruth Lenz, violin, and Dustin Budish, viola

SEIZING FATE
Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
String Quartet in F Major, opus 74 no. 2

Joseph Jongen (1873-1953)
Sérénade Tendre for String Quartet

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
String Quartet in C Major, opus 59 no. 3.
“Razumovsky”

SATURDAY
7:30 pm
Nov. 16, 2019
SPECIAL LOCATION
Mammoth Lutheran Church

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

SUNDAY
4:00 pm
Nov. 17, 2019
Cerro Coso College, Bishop

WITH SPONSORSHIP FROM:
Hilda Herrera Adler, John Cunningham, Valerie Mackay, Donald Sage, and Dr. Lynnea Box
Dear Editor:

No crowning Juul

As Pediatricians, we are writing this letter in strong support of the ordinance to ban flavored tobacco products.

Tobacco use and smoke exposure are some of the most significant health threats to children, adolescents, and adults. The developing brains of children and adolescents are especially susceptible to developing tobacco and nicotine dependence. In fact, studies show that most nicotine dependence begins before 18 years of age. Nicotine use in children and adolescents negatively impacts parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control. Of particular concern are flavored tobacco products including flavored vapor liquid, cigars, smokeless tobacco, and menthol. These products serve no other purpose than to target young, vulnerable children and adolescents. One study showed that at least two-thirds of youth tobacco users use two-thirds of youth tobacco users use flavored tobacco products ‘because they come in flavors I like.’ All of these products contain nicotine, which make these products addicting and hard to quit. We should all be concerned about the tobacco products ‘because they come in flavors I like.’ All of these products contain nicotine, which make these products addicting and hard to quit. We should all be concerned about the high concentration of nicotine in these flavored products. One JUUL pod is the equivalent to the nicotine in over 20 cigarettes. As you can imagine, this makes us complicit in their addictions and declining health.

In our own practice we are seeing first-hand the impact of these products in our community. We have adolescent patients admitting to using 2-3 JUUL pods per day. For the first time in our careers as pediatricians, we are having to educate ourselves on nicotine replacement therapy in order to help these teens quit. The proposed policy to ban flavored tobacco products serves to protect our future generations from addiction and life-long health problems. Research has shown such polices to be effective in improving health outcomes. It is unacceptable and unethical to consciously put our community’s children at risk when it can be easily prevented. We implore you to support this ordinance, which is an investment in our community’s health and future.

Drs Kristin Collins, Louisa Salisbury, Mary Bissell, and Sarah Ruberman
Mammoth Lakes

Dear Mono County Supervisors,

The problems and fate of Wilson Creek remain in limbo. I think the concerned citizens and the County had great hopes when Southern California Edison offered to give a briefing on the water flow plans for Wilson Creek and the return ditch. Months have passed and there has been no briefing and little, if any communication, apparently the Mono Lake Committee sent several documents detailing what had happened with water flows over the last year or two and an interesting pdf version of a slide show to the County. There were a lot of data in these documents, but in terms of the future of Wilson Creek there was little, if any actual information. My wife and I met with the Mono Lake Committee, at their invitation, to discuss the Wilson Creek issue. Lisa Cutting suggested that we needed a creative solution. After some discussion, I suggested that perhaps each of the water users on Mill and Wilson Creeks could donate some amount of water each year to keep lower Wilson Creek flowing and healthy. The Mono Lake Committee rejected this suggestion. At this point there seemed little reason to continue the discussion. I have written previously of the many reasons the future of Wilson Creek and its delta need to be publicly and openly discussed and will not repeat those now.

In view of the lack of response on the part of the organizations controlling the fate of Wilson Creek I would like the County to insist on either a detailed response or open public meetings on the future of Wilson Creek.

The water in the Mill/Wilson system is a public resource, water rights holders have a claim on much of that water but only for legitimate uses. The water flows largely over public land. The public has a right to know. Wilson Creek may die as the result of decisions made in secret and kept secret. Don’t let this happen.

-Cole Hawkins

Wilson Creek may die as the result of decisions made in secret and kept secret. Don’t let this happen.

-Cole Hawkins, PhD
Lee Vining

“Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.” -- Benjamin Franklin
FROM AGING MALL TO BOUTIQUE HOTEL
Highmark proposes makeover of Sierra Center Mall into 164-room hotel
By Hite

Mammoth’s Planning and Economic Development commission hosted a meeting in Suite Z on Wednesday to discuss the beginning stages of a design review for the “renovation and remodel of the Sierra Center Mall site to create a new 4-story, 164-room boutique luxury hotel with accessory restaurant.”

The applicant did request a variance for a 10% height adjustment to allow for a total building height of 49 feet and 6 inches rather than the maximum 45 feet per Old Mammoth Road zoning district standards.

The existing mall was constructed in the early 1980’s prior to the incorporation of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the proposal is designed to comply with updated requirements.

According to Drew Hild, President of Highmark Advisors, the project is estimated to bring in $2.5 million a year in economic development for Mammoth Mountain, endorsed the project, “I am blown away. The fact that somebody is bringing a highmark proposes makeover of Sierra Center Mall into 164-room hotel pure hotel in Mammoth by saying, “This is the right project and the right place for it.” Harvey did bring up the parking issue but cited the town’s goal of being a pedestrian community. “People should come to Mammoth and park one time. Then they can take the bus.”

Translation: You need fewer spaces if people moving their cars all the time. Patricia Vanders, owner at Meridian Commons (the apartments above AT & T) and owner of Red Lily Design (whose shop is in Minaret Mall), said, “As much as I’d love to have it all be a pedestrian situation, I like to park at my home and my business has a delivery service so parking is a major concern on both levels.”

And for the shade issue: “We struggle so much with the ice never melting and you can see a clearly defined line where the shadow hits. The ice maintains there pretty much all winter long. The shading would extend to the whole parking lot which is very much a safety issue,” said Vanders.

Taylor Ludwick, owner of Bishop Veterinary Hospital (located within Minaret Mall), also expressed concern about parking. “I want to emphasize that we look closely at ways to manage parking. We need closed parking and not just parking everywhere so that is a concern of ours.”

Andrew Brady, legal counsel for the developer, addressed the public concern by deflecting to the commission, “We’d simply ask that if the commission has any issues with concerns raised we are more than happy to address them. We think the concerns have been addressed by the staff report, particularly with respect to parking. To be clear we are meeting the code requirements and if there are any concerns with how, operationally, that is going to work we are happy to answer any questions.”

The commission asked Brady about the logistics of the valet parking as an offset to the parking issue. Brady claimed the valet would mitigate the parking issues but couldn’t speak to the specifics (how much the valet would cost) and couldn’t guarantee people would use the valet but believed it would be a sufficient solution.

Finally, Ralph Lockhart, a partner of Hild’s, told the commission “[The parking study] is a very robust study and it looks like the proposed use will actually be less parking than is currently being used now which would mitigate the parking issue.”

The Commission praised the architects and the hypothetical upgrade of the Sierra Center Mall revitalizing Old Mammoth Road. They wanted some type of confirmation that the valet would be cheap suggesting it be free with validation (for hotel or restaurant guests), but ultimately deferred to the parking study.

The commission approved the design review application with changes recommended by staff 5-0.
BRING BACK THE RANCH!

By Page

C
ome next year, weather permitting, the stretch of US 395 south of Con- 

way Summit and north of Mono Lake known as Conway Ranch may have 

another 50 cents for the pension fund 

than liability is 30 cents on the 

dollars for other employees. As it pre-

a typical factor within the overall budget.

12) be willing to test new methods to 

4) be willing to help create and support 

Some nuggets from the RFOP. The ideal 

1) have a high acceptance of and appre-

2) support wildlife restoration projects 

$2,426,243.

of which precipitated the recession in 

paramedics and funding marketing 

Dutcher noted towards the end of 

The 2019-2020 budget included 

transient occupancy tax, set at 12%, 

County tax paying businesses. 

If the board were to increase that 

“if it’s a gradual, controlled slope. “ This 

and South 

in 1998 and 2000, and allowed sheep 

years. Mono County purchased the lands 

into $2.5 million over the course 

$2,426,243. 

of General Fund revenues dropped by 2.5%, nearly one million 

$2,426,243. 

around the possibility of instituting a 

proportion to a lampshade.

So why all this focus on raising even 

amount of time, but when that de-

the General Fund before the 

county’s Board of Supervisors 

Two days ago, county Supervisor Fred Stump asked 

Dutcher informed supervisors that a 

At a meeting on Tuesday, Mono County Financial 

Dutcher also reported that while the 

Mono County taxing 12%, and South 

5.6 mil-

in the General Fund, with 

resultant deficit clocking in 

it’s a real good party. 

Generally speaking, overspending 

those concerns when it comes to 

Dutcher noted it would take approximately three 

6.5% increase over the last year. “

You can never get rid of overtime 

The county also paid out over $1 mil-

in overtime, with Dutcher noting 

The 2019-2020 budget included 

and benefit.

Dutcher explained that other juris-

“for the ranch” back to Conway by permit-

Dutcher noted that she found the overtime expend-

ns were near 6% growth 


$226,000 in salary increases for upper 

a story in April which highlighted 

and benefit.

Cost controls and efficiency. “We 

Dutcher noted, as a policy decision, about participat-

Dutcher did include what could be 

the auditor-controller’s association is 

To the General Fun?” County Counsel 

Dutcher noted, as a policy decision, about participat-

Dutcher informed supervisors that a 

Dutcher noted that she found the overtime expend-

Altogether, the county paid out close 

But we need an example and never mistaken 

the county. And if you had to choose between the 

no good idea - unless it’s a 

The county paid out another 50 cents for the pension fund 

“for the ranch” back to Conway by permit-

Dutcher noted, as a policy decision, about participat-

Conway Ranch, an area that also 

Mono County’s Board of Supervisors 

Some nuggets from the RFOP. The ideal 

1) have a high acceptance of and appre-

2) support wildlife restoration projects 

5) be willing to operate with wildlife 

6) be willing to test new methods to 

7) have a history of supporting envi-

8) have the experience and knowledge 

9) be willing to provide financial infor-

10) be willing to contribute and oversee 

Dutcher, County Financial Di-

A letter from Pope Francis himself may also be helpful, but is not required. 

Proposals are due Dec.17 at 3 p.m.

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Eric P. Wasserman 
Senior Financial Advisor

Wells Fargo Advisors Financial Network

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OPEN NOVEMBER 9th WINTER HOURS 12PM - 8PM OHANAS395 OPEN NOV. 16 12PM - 5PM
No price hikes following remodels at local cinemas

Minaret Cinemas and the Bishop Twin Theatre will not increase the price of admission after their recent remodels. Currently, the prices for Minaret Cinemas are $12 for adults, and $8.95 for seniors, kids and matinees. General Manager of Minaret Cinemas, Emily Lopez, said if the price of admission increases it would be due to the increase in minimum wage. Holly Mullanix, owner of Bishop Twin Theatre said the price of admission at her theatre will remain the same. The price of admission for adults is $8, and $5 for children, adults, and early bird matinees.

Both theatres plan to have an official grand opening over the next few months, with Minaret Cinemas planning a ribbon cutting in January, and Bishop Twin Theatre hosting a grand opening before the end of the year.

One big change at the Minaret: their reclining seats, which Lopez said are big, but are like recliners with tables and cup holders. Meanwhile, the Twin Theatre is currently working with a local pizza place to add soft pretzels, beer and wine by early 2020, she said.

The contractor's proposed cost of the project resulted in an $181,275 deficit. The following agencies recently made significant financial contributions to support the project's completion:

- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power ($90,425) Mono County ($30,425) Town of Mammoth Lakes ($60,425) Edelmann International – a parent company of Southern California Edison ($30,000)

“I am grateful these agencies and SNC recognized the importance of this project” stated Dave Easterby, MLFSC president. “The success of this project will be recognized by their financial contribution, along with the tireless efforts from volunteer individuals, including our primary grant writer, Matthew Diener, MLFSC Director at Large. We’re fortunate to be working with dedicated like-minded individuals within a community of supportive agencies.”

“This project’s success demonstrates the power in multi-agency collaboration and what volunteer groups can accomplish,” Juliana Olinka-Jones, Secretary of MLFSC, continued “I am grateful so many entities, who care about the safety of our community, came together to provide financial contributions to this regional support effort.”

The Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project will be completed in Fall 2020. 568 acres were completed this season, providing valuable protection to the Mammoth Lakes Community. Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Community Water District and Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District supported the ‘project’ development and grant administration. The MLFSC is thankful for the overwhelming support received by the community and recent financial contributions from other local agencies.

- Press Release

Truckee ditches rink project

Truckee recently shuttered its attempts to construct an ice rink complex. Jesse Boeri, speaking for the Truckee Community Pavilion and Ice Rink, informed The Sheet that the town’s prioritization of housing, combined with TBID negotiations with the Town of Truckee, ultimately derailed the project.

The following press release was issued a few weeks ago by the Truckee Community Pavilion.

It’s with deep disappointment that the Truckee Donner Recreation and Parks District (TDPRD) along with the Truckee Community Pavilion (TCP) team announce that the Truckee Community Pavilion and Ice Arena project has been immediately suspended and likely terminated.

The overriding factor driving the decision was construction cost. The first construction estimate, when including overhead and profit forecasts came in approximately $13 million over the budgeted goal of $7.2 million.

A second factor impacting the decision was tight timing regarding ongoing tax negotiations between the Town of Truckee and Truckee Tourism Business Improvement District (TTBID), those debates played heavily into facility capitalization and the decision to stop.

“Value engineering and the ability to shave $13 million off design costs to satisfy our budget within 45-60 days, in my mind, would be close to impossible,” said Kevin Murphy, acting Chair of the TCP team. “We achieved so very much in the last year, and the positive impacts to the community will now be lost along with a lot of fun and opportunities for our families, businesses and tourism. The project represented an estimated $254 million infusion to our community over the next thirty years and it’s sad we’ll lose a covered facility that will really make a difference.

The project has been in the works off-and-on for 20 years and cost to construct has always been the leading impediment. From a timing standpoint, this is the furthest the project has ever progressed, and it wouldn’t have happened this time around without the substantial support of the Truckee lodging community and the TTBID Board of Directors.

When asked about the impacts to the Truckee Donner Recreation and Parks District, General Manager Steve Randall said, “We’ll push on to support ice and an event gathering concept for our community. TDPRD will continue with the programs we have until other ideas and capital come into play … In the last ten years we’ve brought to truckee the Community Center and Aquatic Center, and those are smashing successes. We simply have to control our budget for the next 20 years as we continue to grow.”

Local agencies kick in for Fuels Reduction project

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Edison International, Mono County, Mammoth Lakes Water District and Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District supported the Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project to pay for cost overruns.

Mammoth Lakes, California – November 13, 2019 – In March of 2019, the Mammoth Lakes Fire Safe Council was awarded a $1,000,000 grant from the State’s Nevada Conservation District (SNCD) to complete the Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project (‘project’). The project provides valuable fuel reduction treatments on 900 acres in the Mammoth Lakes Basin to reduce wildfire risk, improve forest health and protect the watershed.

The contractor’s proposed cost of the project resulted in an $181,275 deficit. The following agencies recently made significant financial contributions to support the project’s completion:

- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power ($90,425) Mono County ($30,425) Town of Mammoth Lakes ($60,425) Edelmann International – a parent company of Southern California Edison ($30,000)

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- Press Release

BLUE LIGHT

continued from page 1

year.

On August 31, 2019, they announced the closures of 92 more stores (77 Kmart and 15 Sears) to be closed by the end of 2019.

And finally on November 7, 2019, Transform announced it would close 96 of its Sears stores (45 Kmart stores and 51 Sears), with one of the stores being the Bishop Kmart.

The math is tricky, but according to the Press release dated November 7, “Transformco will operate 182 stores.”

Ashlee Alex, the assistant finance director for the city of Bishop, told the Sheet that revenue from sales tax generated by the Kmarts in Bishop is “less than 10 percent.”

“The Sheet has submitted a public records request to the city of Bishop to get the exact percentage and amount.”

Some of the lost business should diffuse into the community but an unknown amount will be lost to non-local sources such as the Walmart in Gardnerville, Nevada or even Amazon. The big loss, however, is the number of department stores in Bishop is an important issue but it ignores the loss of jobs. According to Thomson and the Chamber of Commerce, “At one point likely the peak of Kmart’s business,” the Bishop Kmart had up to 70 employees working for them.

An overt negative that Thomson brought up along with the other economic news is just about everyone employer (associated with the chamber of commerce), is looking for employees. In Bishop we have a very low unemployment rate.”

She cited the Big 5 opening in Bishop as a part of the solution, “We know the new Big 5’s hiring about 17 people in the Bishop area which should help the recently unemployed workers.”

As for the property that Kmart sits on, Elaine Kabala, the Bishop city planner, said “I am not sure what the property; they simply lease it. The company that owns it is a third party and Bishop has been talking with the owner to ask about what might be next. “We certainly don’t want the space to stay empty,” said Kabala.

Thomson brought up her worst case scenario as well, “The worst thing that could happen is Vons holds the space hostage like they did to the old Kmart spot.” She said.

Kabala confirmed that Vons is holding the space hostage by leasing the old Kmart. They don’t own the property where the old Kmart sits but have a long-term lease on the space.

Kabala believes it’s possible someone will purchase the vacant building and Thomson agrees. “I am optimistic that another retailer will want to come through because there is opportunity here in Bishop as we have about 35,000 people that live in our market area.”

www.thesheetnews.com

THE SHEET | Saturday, November 16, 2019

LOCAL NEWS
**SHEET SURVEY**

Given the recent announcement of the Bishop Kmart’s impending closure ...

The Sheet asked people on the street: What is your reaction to Kmart’s imminent closure and its impact on the community?

“Hopefully we get something to replace it - something like a Target.”
- Jessica Borin and Angela (and Kayden) Kneip

“It sucks for the community because it is the only source to buy convenient items at a good price.”
- Jim Hess

“A little disappointed to see an empty building. I didn’t go in often but I needed something quick it was helpful. In the future I’ll use Amazon ...”
- Heather Carr

“I almost never go to Kmart. I was kind of surprised, but everywhere I’ve been kmarts are closed.”
- Sara Froiland

“People want other stores. It opens up the door for other options. Nobody likes Kmart because it’s not a pleasant environment.”
- Kristin Ostly

“I’m not fond of Kmart anyway, but it does come in handy when I need something last-minute and can’t order it online. I’d like to see something go in that benefits our city.”
- Dawn Briggs

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Purchase your 19/20 Tamarack/Crest/County Ski Season Pass for $319 (adult) and enjoy unlimited access to 19+ miles (30+ km) of secluded, groomed cross-country ski trails in the beautiful Mammoth Lakes Basin.

Ikon Pass holders, call 800.MAMMOTH to purchase your XC pass with special pricing.
Some patients, former employees and others are very unhappy with some of the changes that have happened at the Toiyabe Indian Health Project’s highly regarded, award-winning Dialysis Unit in Bishop, the only clinic within several hundred miles serving a reported 35 dialysis patients.

The drama surrounding the clinic really matters because dialysis keeps people alive ... literally.

The principal complaint against TIHP from several of its dialysis patients is that its Chief Executive Officer, Kori Novak, is putting “profits before patients,” a charge she denies. She says the complaints are coming from “former disgruntled staff.”

Employees have been threatened (advised) that they could lose their jobs if they speak out on their concerns for patients or continue to voice strong support for the former unit’s medical director and nephrologist, Dr. Raffi Minasian and his staff from the KDMG Kidney Disease Medical Group located in Glendale, Calif., which had operated the clinic under contract with TIHP for 9 years.

There are also allegations that Toiyabe was attempting to essentially take over the prerenal patients’ list made by Minasian’s patient records, saying that “I would never tell someone to violate HIPAA regulations.”

Accusations of inappropriate relationships by administration were made, as well as charges that the clinic’s replacement locum doctor had upset patients and several Toiyabe employees by inappropriate touching and other inappropriate behavior. (The doctor has since been removed.)

In a sign of just how “nasty” the situation has become, there have been reports of shoving matches in the clinic’s lobby between a patient and staff. And then there was also a wholly inappropriate posting on Toiyabe Facebook page on social media designed to humiliate a new clinic employee brought in after the Minasian group left.

Further, there is a charge of racist comments being made by a clinic employee questioning Hispanic patients’ “legal status.” One of those interviewed for this story noted that the new doctor that replaced the Minasian group did not speak Spanish.

By comparison, all of Dr. Minasian’s staff did.

All-in-all, it’s quite the laundry list of alleged wrongdoings and misdealing. Even if a mere fraction of it is true, this is one hot mess that clearly needs attention of the Toiyabe administration.

Some background: Six weeks of almost daily phone interviews, emails, texts, pages of material, promises of confidentiality, and in-person meetings with over a dozen patients, former employees and concerned health care providers have passed since The Sheet was initially contacted by Caregiver Tammy Emley and Robin Weatherly of Lone Pine, both wives of patients receiving dialysis treatment.

Hope Holmes, a dialysis patient, wrote that “any medical establishment … that would rob patients of their doctors (that) they have known and trusted, and built relationships with many years over the years WITHOUT ONE WORD OF NOTICE (???) is the most egregious act I’ve ever (seen) in my 60 years of experience as a kidney patient, who has been in and out of hospitals from San Francisco to San Diego, and here in the Eastern Sierra.”

The complaint of a lack of communication, transparency and respect is the most common criticism made by those with whom The Sheet interviewed.

Holmes and Weatherly brought their concerns about the dialysis clinic before an attentive Toiyabe Indian Health Project Board of Directors meeting held on Friday, Nov. 1.

They were advised that there was a process to follow on filing complaints at Toiyabe before they can be brought before the board.

Patients and caregivers speaking to The Sheet are concerned about the clinic’s staff with whom they share a close symbiotic relationship. Dialysis patients are delicate in that even the smallest mistake in treatment can have severe consequences requiring hospitalization.

Mediodialysis treatment is one of the most regulated, monitored and documented health services provided to a patient simply because it is so critical. And the government pays for most of it through Medicare and other programs because, frankly, it is very expensive! Unfortunately, for most people who rely on Mediodialysis for their health care, particularly those in rural areas, reimbursement is relatively small.

Former Dialysis Nurse, Manager Valerie Curtis, explained that it is not the clinic or doctors that make money for TIHP, it is the treatments. Doctors can only bill for 4 visits with patients a month (35 patients X 4 = 140 visits at $100/visit. The clinic, meanwhile, bills $350 for each treatment.

She points out that the clinic is the one that bills for treatments, not the doctors and not the preneral clinic run by Minasian. It is Toiyabe gets the lion’s share of the money and the

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**Public Input Sought**

**Mental Health Services Act Annual Update**

Mono County Behavioral Health invites community members to:

1. Access the plan at: www.monocounty.ca.gov/MHSA
2. Send comments via email to: agreenberg@mono.ca.gov
3. Share input at a public hearing: December 9th at 3:00 p.m., Social Services Conference Room, Sierra Center Mall, Third Floor, 452 Old Mammoth Rd in Mammoth

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The Mammoth Orthopedic Institute at Mammoth Hospital

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Timothy Crall, MD co-founded the Mammoth Orthopedic Institute and has been in practice at Mammoth Hospital since 2011. He is board certified in Orthopedic Surgery with a subspecialty Certificate of Advanced Qualification in Sports Medicine from the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery. He specializes in arthroscopic and open reconstruction of shoulder, knee and hip pathology. He has a special clinical interest in shoulder replacement, hip impingement, shoulder instability, and rotator cuff tears.

He serves as a Clinical Assistant Professor of Orthopedic Surgery for the University Of Nevada School Of Medicine. Dr. Crall sits on the Editorial Board for Arthroscopy: The Journal of Arthroscopic and Related Surgery. In that role he frequently reviews papers submitted for publication, and also writes editorial commentaries for the Journal. Dr. Crall serves as a team physician for the US Ski Team and is the Head Team Physician for the Mammoth Mountain Ski and Snowboard Teams. Currently accepting patients in both Mammoth and Bishop locations as part of our team of comprehensive orthopedic specialists.

BLUES
continued from page 1

only way to increase revenue is more patients.

Curtis held Dr. Minasian and the staff that came up from KDMG Kidney Disease Medical Group, which included a Dr. Michel Zakari and PA-C Arturo Dominguez, in very high regard. The doctors rotated each month to cover the clinic. Curtis eventually resigned over the changes made by the Toiyabe CEO and says that she has left the medical field because of the disappointment over how the patients were treated.

I went into the medical field to help people; that was my life’s goal. After what happened at the Dialysis Unit, the patients and the treatment of Minasian’s group, I have turned off of nursing as my ability to take care of patients was taken away,” said Curtis with sadness.

She added, “I miss my patients.” A sentiment also shared by many of the patients on her departure.

Interviews with both Dr. Minasian and THHP CEO Kori Novak offered contrasting views of what happened.

On the one hand, Novak insists that she wanted a local nephrologist for the clinic rather than traveling doctors from out of the area.

She also said that the contract was offered to Minasian three times, and he refused.

Minasian disputes this; he says that every time an appointment was made to discuss and sign the contract, the meeting would be cancelled, and that Novak refused to meet with him or even take his calls.

The contract that Minasian’s group had with Toiyabe allowed him to establish a pre-renal clinic, reportedly with up to 200 patients referred locally. They were considered his private patients and he rented a room in the clinic for $200 a month rather than in town to stay close to the dialysis patients.

Novak says Minasian had not paid his rent in two years. Minasian said he was never billed by Toiyabe and that the money made from the pre-renal clinic supplemented the expenses of travel, lodging and meals each month for him and his staff, and made the job as the Dialysis Medical Director and the rest of the staff’s travel to the area economically feasible, while at the same time, keeping people off of dialysis.

Novak seemed to feel that the pre-renal clinic was skimming off patients that would otherwise be using Toiyabe medical services. She also said that she wanted an in-house nephrologist, internal rather than contracted.

Novak said that Minasian also wanted a raise.

On why she did not meet with Minasian, Novak insisted that there was a chain-of-command and that he, like everyone else, “must go through the proper channels.” She noted that “We have his resignation letter,” although she says she told the staff that “we’re firing him.” She went on to say that he did not give his patients a 30-60 day notice, upsetting many of them.

Minasian insists that he was “played” until the contract ran out, which he contends was Novak’s plan all along. She accused him of cursing staff over the phone.

Minasian admitted he got “hot under the collar” because of her evasions, adding “What kind of a CEO refuses to meet with a Medical Director?”

Novak insists that she has done nothing wrong and that procedures and policies must be followed by all employees.

Taking dialysis is time-consuming. The usual hemodialysis schedule has three sessions a week, with each session lasting from 4 to 6 hours sitting in a dialysis chair. It takes a considerable commitment from the patient, his or her caregivers, and the dedicated services of the medical staff. The result is that they become very close, which is what makes what has happened at the clinic all the more difficult - and emotional.

Hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities are places of high drama for the very reason that they exist: People’s very lives and health often depend on them. Add two immovable objects such as a CEO and a contracted Medical Director, and that drama is greatly increased.

On a positive note, despite everything going on, CEO Novak informed The Sheet yesterday the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) performed an inspection of the Dialysis Unit last week. It passed.

What kind of a CEO refuses to meet with a Medical Director?

-Dr. Raffi Minasian

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BISHOP FOOTBALL ADVANCES

Bishop Union High School Football shut out Boron 13-0 last Friday night in its first round playoff matchup. Luke McClean ran for the first touchdown in the final minute of the 1st half and connected with Joe Weaver for a 56-yard touchdown in the 3rd quarter.

Kennedy Batchelder led the defense with 10 solo tackles notching the shutout. Tristan Valle and the defensive line were outstanding. Valle had 6 solo tackles including 3 tackles for loss. Trevin Moose, Anthony Diaz, Sam Calderon, and Edward Ray did a great job on the defensive line. Next up is a round two home game with Foothill High School. Kickoff is set for 6 p.m. on Friday, November 15th.

Editor’s note: The great thing about Coach Palu is that it’s not hard to figure out how he feels about something. The terse write-up above speaks volumes about how he feels about a 13-0 win two weeks after beating the same team 56-6.

Look out, Foothill.

MHS VOLLEYBALL IS BIG DOG V. ST. BERNARD

By Hite

Mammoth High School Girls Volleyball lost in the Division Five Central Section playoffs to Kerman last weekend, but rebounded to beat St. Bernard in its first State playoff game at home on Thursday.

The victory was in straight sets.

The loss to Kerman came in a heart-breaking five-setter. In one game, the team blew a 12-point lead.

Despite the loss, the Huskies record earned them one of the two #1 seeds in the 31-team CIF State Girls Volleyball championship in Division Five.

The Huskies received a bye in the first round and faced the St. Bernard Vikings of Playa Del Rey. St. Bernard beat Cornerstone Christian 3 sets to 1 in the 8-9 seed matchup of the first round.

The Huskies justified their seeding by trouncing the Vikings 25-19, 25-12, 25-22.

Somewhere up above, Leif Erikson is weeping.

The Huskies had a number of Ella Thompson (named player of the week by Maxpreps for the state of California) spikes that seemed to come at the most crucial moments. But the team was kept afloat by contributions from nearly every member of the team. Sam Jones and Erica Lynch were everywhere on the floor providing important digs and setting their teammates up for multiple kills. Makenna Kumlue had another great service game.

Sara Mueller, Drew Presson, and Kendall Lach were blocking shots while also spiking the ball when needed. This is not an exhaustive list as the Huskies had contributions from all over the floor.

One of the most fun players to watch was Adison Witherill as she had two early chances to attack the Vikings defense but placed both shots out of bounds by 5-10 feet. As the match progressed Witherill calmed down and had multiple soft taps that found the holes in the opposing team’s defense. She also had a couple well-placed spikes that the Vikings had no chance of digging out.

The team effort places the Huskies in the regional quarterfinals in a matchup against the Elizabeth High School Bulldogs who boast a 30-3 record (10-0 in league). The Bulldogs beat Trinity Classical Academy 3 sets to 1. The match is set to take place Saturday, November 16, at 6 p.m. at the MHS gym.

If Mammoth manages to get past Elizabeth, it could face a rematch of the Central Section finals against Kerman High School, who face off against University on the other side of the bracket. The semifinal match against the winner of Kerman and University would be on Tuesday, November 19, at 6 p.m., also at home.
DJ Williams and Shots Fired to play Liberty this weekend

By Page

Williams’ Shots Fired is the sort of band that seems tailor-made for live music from the first licks Williams’ rips out of his guitar. His style of playing and composing blends genres like funk, hip-hop, electronic, and jazz, all rooted in extremely raw funk. Add to that a rotating cast of bandmates pulled from the ranks of acts like Dave Matthews Band, Lenny Kravitz, Slightly Stoopid and Greyboy Allstars and it’s a fine stew.

The band has a two night engagement this weekend at the Liberty Bar in Mammoth, and a price tag of free for a show you’d have to pay to see anywhere else; Williams and Co. are headed out on a junket as openers for G. Love and Special Sauce early next year.

Williams began playing music at a young age, eventually moving home to Richmond, Virginia and starting his own band, DJ Williams Projekt, whose goal was “bringing jazz back to the dance floor” by incorporating personal favorites like rock and funk into that jazz base. The big break came in 2004, when DJ Williams Projekt opened for Karl Denson, a saxophonist and flutist who’d been a member of Lenny Kravitz’s band.

According to DJ, Karl wouldn’t usually watch the opening bands, but “one of the band members went to the bus and brought him to the stage to see our set ... at the end of the night, we kind of hit it off and decided to keep in touch,” beginning a ritual of playing with each other’s bands whenever they happened to cross paths.

In 2011, Denson’s guitar player decided to leave and Williams got the call to come aboard as the new guitarist, a role he’s held with Karl Denson’s Tiny Universe ever since.

Shots Fired, Williams’ current project, came about in 2015, when he first moved to Los Angeles. “I got lucky,” Williams said in a phone interview this week, “because I got Rashawn Ross, who’s the trumpeter player for Dave Matthews Band. He was off tour that year, and he decided that he was completely down to be in the band.” From there, Williams picked up the horn section from Slightly Stoopid, a keyboard player who’d worked with Eric Clapton and Lenny Kravitz, and Lyrics’ Born’s drummer. Williams describes the group as “a family collective of fortunate musicians ... it’s all of my music, but a rotating cast of musicians that I trust.”

One of the most striking things about Williams’ music and guitar work is the range. One second he’s creating a Daft Punk-esque Nirvana cut and following it up with tracks that could come off a Phish or Primus album.

On Live From Over Where, Shots Fired’s debut live album, Williams chose to include covers, like the aforementioned Nirvana song, because “they were huge influences on me as musician. I was a huge Nirvana fan, I was a huge Stevie Wonder fan, I was a huge Jimi Hendrix fan ... but any time I do a cover, I like to put my own spin on it ... just take what I love about that song and put my own voice to it.”

In spite of that genre-bending and those covers, “there’s definitely an integral sound that the band has,” says Williams, “and regardless of genre, I don’t think the integrity of the sound of the band is lost. I come from this rock world, mixed with funk and hip-hop ... it took me a long time to be comfortable with the sound I had in my head. I’m just now feeling that I’m finding my own voice, and this is what that voice is.”

Joining Williams this weekend at Liberty will be keyboardist Todd Stoops, of RAQ and Electric Beethoven, drummer Max McVeyt of Lyrics Born, and newcomer Jiho Han, who’s been working with Williams on his upcoming record, an ode to spy and western movie soundtracks.

The guy he’d most like to get up on stage? “I would love to work Dangermouse,” said Williams, who also brought up Emily King, producer MadLib and Cee-Lo Green.

DJ Williams’ Shots Fired plays the Liberty Bar this weekend, November 15 and 16, 10 p.m. - 1 a.m. No cover. Excellent bartenders.
C5 Studios, a nascent community art center in Bishop, is currently leasing the former back commercial space of JC Penney (which formerly housed the shoe department, the kids department, and appliances).

When JC Penney folded, Family Dollar took the Main Street-facing portion of the building, while C5 has a Warren Street entrance.

The studio debuted last month for the Downtown Chocolate Art Walk and a week later, hosted a pumpkin-carving contest.

While there is no set “grand opening” for C5 as the space is literally a work-in-progress from a construction standpoint, it’s hard not to enter the place and get a little excited.

It has that TriBeCa loft vibe.

The main basis for the center is to create a community hub for the arts, says Erin Boehme, one of the co-founders of C5 (along with Naomi Hart Johnson). It’s a good fit for artists who prefer to work in a communal art space (and it’s certainly large enough to accommodate a beehive of activity - if one had to guess the exact square footage, call it more than 3,000 feet on two floors). Vibrant, active, and a lot going on —in fact, that’s how Boehme explained the vision in a nutshell.

The inspiration for C5 Studios began when co-founders, Erin Boehme and Naomi Hart Johnson sat down for tea at the Looney Bean, as they had an idea for setting up an art center in Bishop. Boehme said her inspiration for C5 Studios, is “when you tend a space for art and creativity to have a home, you cultivate more art and creativity in a community … it gives us a place to relate [to] one another, and be seen as individuals,” she said.

The name C5 is derived from not only the five c’s of “create, connect, converse, construct, contribute” but also from the other meaning of C5: “the central fifth direction, which is the center...[and] bringing all the other directions together,” said Boehme.

During the Art Walk, the front of the house served as a display area, but as one delved further into the studio, there were areas yet to be completed.

The vision for the unfinished sections: gallery/gift shop, teaching studio, library area, multipurpose area, and working artist studios (with eight smaller studios that will be rented out).

The teaching studio/art area would have art materials, sinks and cubbyholes where artists can paint, charcoal, pencil, watercolor, sculpture, clay, and scrapbook.

The multipurpose area is the performing/visual arts area with a large wall, that will be used for screening film and slideshows, and visual presentations. This area will also be used for performing arts, such as poetry, storytelling and any movement classes.

The cozy library space will have couches and bookcases where students can come after school to study, and Wi-Fi will be available. Boehme said C5 is partnering with school libraries, and one of the programs that will be a Reading with Dogs Program featuring, yep, trained therapy dogs for children to read to.

The last area of the studio will feature the working artist studios, eight smaller studios with wall partitions coming up, like stalls that will be rented out to artists. This area will also feature a communal workspace with a big 3-sided studio table.

Thus far, several teachers have signed up to teach at the studio, ranging from classes in juggling, dance and Tai Chi. The studio can also be used for board meetings, retirement and birthday parties, bachelorette parties and baby showers, and of course, art shows.

“The Sheet met with one interested teacher and one of the featured artists in the studio.

Joe Profita

Joe Profita, a 20-year Bishop resident and old-school photographer, said his work was featured at The Project Room during the summer. Joe shoots with a regular film camera, and said that sometime in the future the studio will have a photography dark room—Joe currently has a dark room at his house and will donate materials for a dark room at the studio, as he has accumulated equipment that was donated to him—he will also be teaching classes, he said.

Since Profita retired (he taught high school chemistry), he has done a few shows at the Project Room with some of his work also featured at the Arts Council, of which he is a current member.

Joe Profita’s work can be found on his website: www.joeprofita.com.

Nesia Stenzel

Home-schooled student and a featured artist at C5 Studios during the Chocolate Art Walk, Nesia Stenzel, 4, had her colorful artwork featured on the wall. Nesia’s mother, Rachel Stenzel said she is “looking forward to bringing her [Nesia] here to see other artists,” she said. On the wall, Nesia’s statement about her art is that “God shows me how to make beautiful things,” she said. The different pieces that Nesia uses for her art are “sticks, rocks, leaves, seeds, paper, strings, fabric, seashells, seeds, nuts, and garbage,” said Nesia.

The Sheet spoke with co-founders, Erin Boehme and Naomi Hart Johnson about their work in the studio.

Co-founder and artist, Erin Boehme was born in Bishop and lived in Santa Barbara for 20 years. She is currently the Director for Wild Roots Forest School. Boehme’s work displayed during the Art Walk was reclaimed wire sculpture.

Co-founder and artist, Naomi Hart Johnson previously taught visual art and photography for 15-years in the U.K. and the United States and is an art educator.

Naomi had two pieces of work on display for Art Wal; based upon found materials, such as hair and dust.

Johnson said she has “a strange obsession with dust and dust bunnies,” and has worked with dust bunnies a lot—she explained a dust bunny has dust, hair and shaved skin.

“Dust bunny is a little art archive, where you trace who has been in that particular space,” she said. A dust bunny can also be explained through “experiencing loss from the person I didn’t have around anymore [and] preserving some trace of their existence,” she said.

Naomi and husband Brandon have two boys, ages 2 and 4.

Boehme said the next phase of fundraising will involve fundraising workshops once the studio is ready to go, where teachers will donate their time and participants will donate their money to take classes, she said.

In order to raise more funds to open their studio, “we need community support,” said Johnson. Thus far, Erin and Naomi have started a gofundme.com page, titled “Open a community arts center in Bishop, CA,” and at the same time are confident to keep the place running by charging for classes, renting studios, and through various grants, said Johnson.

For community members that are excited about this center opening, contact C5 Studios to volunteer or donate at contact@c5studios.com.
Sarah Bryson, a PhD in Marine Ecology, is officially an ecologist who moved to the Eastern Sierra about six years ago. She claimed she had “little birding experience” prior to moving here.

Owens Lake covers about 100 square miles and is a terminal saline lake, meaning there is water coming in but no output of water.

In 1913, the Owens River was diverted into the LA aqueduct and the lake dried up. According to Bryson, “there was a brine pool in the middle and some areas with water,” but for the most part the lake was completely drained. This led to a dust problem when high speed winds in the Eastern Sierra stirred up the remnants of the lake.

In 2001, LADWP began a dust mitigation program which would put 0-40 cm of water in certain areas to control the dust. These dust controlled areas (DCAs) covered 34 square miles and is a terminal saline lake, meaning there is water coming in but no output of water.

By Hite

**THE OWENS IS FOR PLOVERS**

Sarah Bryson, a Watershed Resources Specialist for LADWP (Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power), gave a lecture to the Eastern Sierra Audubon society at the White Mountain Research Station in Bishop on Tuesday Night, November 12. The topic: “Snowy Plovers on Owens Lake.”

The program was designed to control dust but it inadvertently created habitats for certain species. Dyson told the audience these areas were great for research prior to moving here.

Owens Lake is completely drained. This led to a dust problem when high speed winds in the Eastern Sierra stirred up the remnants of the lake.

In 2001, LADWP began a dust mitigation program which would put 0-40 cm (but generally 0-10 cm) of water in certain areas to control the dust. These dust controlled areas (DCAs) covered 34 square miles. The average DCA is about 320 acres which means 67 DCAs are managed by the program.

The program was designed to control dust but it inadvertently created habitats for certain species. Dyson told the audience these areas were great for research because of the natural controls that every DCA has (amount of water, salinity, acreage, etc.). One of the habitats created were nesting grounds for the Snowy Plover, a bird on the California species of special concern list. The dried-up part of Owens Lake created a crusty shell, known as playa, that these birds used as nesting grounds and to feed on.

Dyson’s first research question was to analyze the population trends over time. She found that the plovers population generally went up after utilization of DCAs in 2001. There was a relatively consistent number of species after that until the drought in 2012.

The Plover population slightly decreased during the drought. Dyson wasn’t sure if the cause was the drought so she matched her population graph (that her and her research team did) with a trustworthy database of snowy plover populations that wintered in the beaches in southern California. She found that her team’s data resembled the data of the birds in southern California.

Her conclusion: A) snowy plover populations increased with the implementation of the dust control program and B) there was evidence of long-term drought affecting snowy plover populations in Owens Lake.

Then Dyson and her team wanted to see if they could build a model to predict the populations of these birds. No need to get too deep into the mathematics, but the model is a simple weighted model that spits out a number between 0-1 with a cutoff of 0.5 meaning snowy plovers could not live there and 1 meaning the researchers expected snowy plovers in the area. It used parameters of salinity, water depth, water availability, % dry area, microtopographic relics, and the extent of vegetation in the DCA.

DCA has (amount of water, salinity, acreage, etc.), etc.) One of the habitats created were nesting grounds for the Snowy Plover, a bird on the California species of special concern list. The dried-up part of Owens Lake created a crusty shell, known as playa, that these birds used as nesting grounds and to feed on.

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Research found the model was accurate for the most part. There were certain areas where they expected plovers and none existed which Dyson said could be for a variety of reasons before humbly stating “no model is perfect.” The team still came to the conclusion that the habitat sustainability model predicted snowy plover use in an area.

The final research question was whether vegetation encroachment affected the populations of these birds. The researchers rarely found plovers in highly vegetated areas and wondered what the cutoff was. They found that an area with higher than 5% vegetation likely meant no plovers and came to the conclusion that vegetation negatively affected population.

With targeted vegetation management they could support the plover populations in key areas. One question from the audience (~25 people attended) dove into the specifics of the model. “Does the model use spatial connection to predict population?” A spatially connected model would weigh a DCA surrounded by areas with vegetation lower than a model that was surrounded by open space, or any other plover population catalyst. The model wasn’t perfect, but there were shortcomings of the model that Bryson was aware of.

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D.J. Williams + Shots Fired

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BARS & MUSIC

Happy Hour/
The Liberty Sports Bar and Grill. Happy hour 3-6 p.m. 1/2 off wings on Monday and Tuesday. Info: see ad p. 9.
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. More info: See ad p. 13.
Mammoth Rock ‘N’ Bowl Mon. DJ 9:00 p.m. Thurs. DJ 10 p.m. Clocktower Cellar Happy Hour: 4-7 p.m. daily. $6 dollar menu items, drink specials. Info: See ad p. 3.
Petra’s happy hour. 5-7 p.m. Signature cocktails, special menu. See ad p. 3.
Roberto’s Happy Hour: 4-6 p.m. daily. The Public House Local Mondays (all local beers are $5 a pint). Karaoke Tuesday @ 8 p.m. Happy Hour on Wednesdays, Open Mic night Thursdays
Famous Slocums Happy Hour Closed for vacation Nov.3-Nov.20 Re-Opening Thursday Nov.21/More Info: See ad p. 5.
Giovanni’s Happy Hour daily 4-6 p.m. Large pizza and a pitcher of beer gets you free wings.
Shelter Distilling Open 11am -11pm Daily Happy Hour: 3-5 p.m. Sunday through Thursday/Half Off All Drinks Info: See ad. p. 18.
The Mogul happy hour 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the bar with food and drink specials.
Bleu Daily Happy Hour 5-6 p.m. 15 Beers, wine and small plates.
Devils Creek Distillery tasting room hours. 3-6 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Location: Industrial Park, 123 hours. 3-6 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Location: Industrial Park, 123

TOWN STUFF

Friday, November 15/
Poetry Out Loud @ Edison Theater. Mono County students compete in this high school poetry competition for the Mono County title! Admission is free.
Saturday, November 16/
Mammoth Wedding Expo @ Mammoth Mountain’s McCoy Station. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Event ticket: $25.
Film History in the Alabama Hills presented by ESIA. meet at Eastern Sierra Visitor Center in Lone Pine, walk from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Covers an area of Movie Flat that includes locations from memorable films such as Gunga Din, Temors, and Django Unchained. A relatively easy walk on existing roads and trails covering less than one mile. Wear layers clothing for a range of conditions, sturdy footwear and bring plenty of water.

Christmas Bazaar in Bishop. 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. Raffle every hour. Auxiliary Bake Sale. Donations Needed. Limited tables available. Tables $25.00. Contact Tricia Weatherford for info or to reserve a table 760.937.3651.
Free Mono Lake South Tufa tour. Time: 1-2 p.m. Meet at South Tufa parking lot. Reservations encouraged. Bring sun protection and water. All ages welcome.

November 16-17/
Felici and Friends 2019-2020 concert series. The Sonora Strings w/special guests play Mammoth Lakes Lutheran Church. on Saturday. 7:30 p.m. At Bishop’s Cerro Coso campus on Sunday at 4 p.m. Featuring music by Haydn and Beethoven. Tix: $25. Available at www.chambermusicunbound.org or at the door. Info: See sidebar page 15 or display ad page 2.

Sunday, November 17/
These Alabama Hills are Alive presented by ESIA. Meet at Eastern Sierra Visitor Center in Lone Pine. Walk from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Learn about the many secretive creatures and flora hidden within the rocks. This is a moderately strenuous hike with occasional steep sections of trail. Wear layers clothing for a range of conditions, study footwear and bring plenty of water.
Free Mono Lake South Tufa tour. Time: 1-2 p.m. Meet at South Tufa parking lot. Reservations encouraged. Bring sun protection and water. All ages welcome. Info: 760.647.6595
Monday, November 18/
Inyo Associates meet at the Museum of Western Film History in Lone Pine. Time: 6 p.m. Menu: Hearty appetizers, beverages by donation. Cost: $20 per person. Make checks payable to Museum of Western Film History. Join community leaders and engaged citizens for networking and discussion about important local and regional topics. This month’s special program will be Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) with generous financial contributions to several local non-profit organizations. RSVP to excdr@ bishopvisitor.com.
**TOWN STUFF**

**Tuesday, November 19**/
*Multiple Sclerosis Support Group* monthly meeting. Time: 4-5:30 p.m. Location: Lee Vining Library. ADA accessible. Info: contact Deanna at EasternSierraMSGroup@gmail.com

*Not Your Grandma’s Bingo Night* @ the Warming Hut in Mammoth. First game 6 p.m. Info: see sidebar this page

**Northern Mono County Hospice Volunteer Meeting @ Walker Community Center.** Time: 6-7:30 p.m. Mono County Board of Supervisors meets @ Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes. Time: 9 a.m.

**Inyo County Board of Supervisors meets @ County Administrative Office, Independence.** Time: 8:30 a.m.

**Tech Tuesday @ Mammoth Lakes Library.** Stop by between 4 and 6 p.m. or make an appointment online for assistance with your tech-related needs and questions.

**Mountain Culture Speaker Series** hosts David Court as he presents “How to talk about climate change and not spoil turkey dinner.” Time: 6 p.m. Suggested donation: $10. Location: Mammoth Brewing Company. Info: See sidebar page 1.

**Wednesday, November 20**/
*Eastern Sierra Unified School District Board Meeting @ Coleville High School* Time: 6-8 p.m.

**Mammoth Lakes Town Council meets @ Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes.** Time: 6 p.m.

**November 19-20/ Management Training Luncheon with Justin Patton @ The Westin, Mammoth Lakes.** Patton is an international speaker and Executive Coach who believes “everything meaningful happens through conversation.” This luncheon and support our talented local artists.

**As always, you can support MAC by becoming a member here. And don’t forget to shop our online gallery! We’re adding new items all the time.**

**Not Your Grandma’s Bingo Night**

Volunteer Eastern Sierra’s wild ‘n crazy Not Your Grandma's Bingo returns Thursday, November 21st at The Warming Hut Restaurant on Old Mammoth Road. VES will donate net proceeds from Not Your Grandma’s Bingo to Guide Dogs for the Blind. Details: Not Your Grandma’s Bingo @ Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes. Stop by for a casual networking meetup with people from industries across the spectrum of employment. Time: 4-6 p.m.

**Saturday, November 23**/
*Tamarack Cross Country Ski Center* scheduled opening. Get on track this season and explore the Mammoth Lakes Basin on snowshoes or Nordic skis.

**Mammoth Lakes Turkey Trot**

Start: 8 a.m. Suggested donation: $15. Location: Mammoth Lakes. Time: 9 a.m.

**Nov 29 (doors open 8 a.m.) for the best price and you’ll be sliding in style all season!**

**DESCRIPTION**

Date: November 22

**FRIDAY NIGHT SPECIALS**

- Signature Mammoth Lakes Turkey Trot

All Participants Receive:

- Thanksgiving dinner Time: 6 p.m. Suggested donation: $10, Location: Mammoth Lakes Food Bank - Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

- Door prizes, raffle tickets, and more

**Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot**

Join Mammoth Track Club, The Town of Mammoth Lakes, and Visit Mammoth for the 5th Annual Mammoth Lakes Turkey Trot! Start your Thanksgiving morning out right and come out for a two mile run on a brand new course on the streets of Mammoth Lakes. This is a fun, family friendly event! Costumes and fun are encouraged. Packet pick up at 7:30 a.m. race begins at 8 a.m.

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**MLBOR Holiday Food Drive**

Please drop off any non-perishable food item at any Mammoth Lakes real estate office between now and December 15. Info: 760.834.1200. or email info@mlbor.com

**Makers Market**

Momo Arts Council hosts the eMa- delnMammoth Makers Market in the Minaret Mall just after Thanksgiving! Be sure to put it on your calendars: November 29th, 30th, and December 1st...

**The Sonora Strings**

Chamber Music Unbound presents “Seizing Fate” with the Sonora Strings featuring special guests, violinist Ruth Lenz, and violinist Dustin Bud- iš. A string quartet by Joseph Haydn opens the concert followed by a tender serenade by the Belgian impression- ist Joseph Jongen and the concert concludes with Beethoven’s fabulous “Razumovsky Quartet,” opus 59 No. 3. Tickets: http://felicitria.com/concerti-calendario.html. More info: See ad p. 10.

David Court talks climate change

David Court gives a talk titled “How to talk about climate change and not spoil turkey dinner.” Come learn the nuts and bolts of the climate discussion and see what you can stand on your own two feet no matter your political leaning. Court is with the Earth Research Institute (ERI) at UC Santa Barbara, is an instructor at the Geography Department at Santa Barbara City College where he teaches Weather and Climate. Where: Mammoth Brewing Company Info: Doors open and food available at 5 p.m. Start at 6 p.m. $10 suggested donation but no one turned away for lack of funds. Pints available for pur- chase and $1 per pint or root beer goes to support a different non-profit. Raffle tickets available.

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**MLBOR Holiday Food Drive**

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Call Us Today 760-924-8599
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Mammoth Rock N Bowl has immediate openings for 2 Assistant Pinsetter Mechanic, who will perform maintenance and repairs of Qubica/AMF Bowling Equipment. Please apply in person today. Additional duties include Facility Maintenance Projects. This is a part time, hourly position with flexible hours and a starting salary range between $16.00-18.00/hour.

Mammoth Spa Creations is in search of responsible, reliable personnel for busy weekends. We are looking for friendly, service-oriented people to join our team. Please apply in person or email your resume to pmcorto@timothysanfordlaw.com.

Currently hiring PT for:

Mammoth Taxi is accepting resumes for experienced drivers with great customer service and clean driving records. We are also looking for office staff for the right person to join our great organization and customer service background. Please inquire with the store at 760-914-7433. www.mammoth-taxi.com.

Mammoth Lakes Foundation is seeking a Head Swim Coach - that has experience with the immediate position of dual coaching responsibilities for both the Youth and Adult swim teams. For more information please visit www.mammothlakesfoundation.org and click on APPLY.

Full time retail job in Mammoth and in Bishop. Apply at Mammoth Mountaineering Supply, Alpine Approach, Mammoth Gear Exchange, or to dave@mammothgearexchange.com. Pay depending on experience.

Vacasa is hiring full and part time housekeepers in June Lake with pay starting at $18.00/hour. Apply online at vacasa.com/careers.

Full & Part Time Preschool Teacher: Mammoth Lakes Lutheran Preschool is seeking a qualified Teacher. Must have or be enrolled in Early Childhood unit or experience working in a licensed preschool setting and have a background check. Candidates must have a positive attitude, enthusiasm and experience working with very young children. Competitive pay. DOE. Email alexaeveveen@gmail.com or call 760-934-2414.

Hotel Haus Motel and Hostel. Hiring for your permanent position for Front Desk. Excellent pay DOE. Contact Todd @ 760.934.2414 or stop by and see us at 1401 Tavern Road in June Lake. No experience needed.

Seasons 4 Condominiums Rentals - front desk position. FT reservations/ground service position open. Must be computer literate, enjoy working with guests, & general office work. Fri, Sat, daytime hours, Sun-Tues afternoon even. Email resume: teri@seasons4.com and we’ll set up an interview, 760-934-2030. Thanks is being FT/PT help. Fun place to work, especially if you’re into clothes and fashion! Stop by the store on Old Mammoth Road for an application. 760.924.7727

FULL TIME

In search of ... a place to land for Thanksgiving, In search of ... some Thanksgiving action, and we’ll set up an interview. 760-934-2030.

Guest Service Representative Seeking responsible, reliable personnel for busy rental management companies. Must have cell phone/customer service skills, attention to detail required. Previous reservation or administrative experience preferred. Monday-Friday, Full-time 32-40 hours per week, year-round starting wage immediately, may include some weekend work. Competitive pay and package. Please email resume to sarah@mammoth-sieratone.com

For Sale

2016 Ford Focus SE hatchback, 83K miles all highway $9,500. Please contact 760-914-0081 for more information

For Rent

Seasonal rental season in West Bishop, 2 BDR, 2 BA house in the midst of great haven. Fresh goose milk/yogurt optional. Great Views, Cozy. Unique. Call Lunch @ 760-599-7915 for more information.

Winter rental until June 2020 two bedroom bath furnished – sorry no pets. Contact 760-914-0081 for more information

Notice of Public Hearing

Alpenhof Lodge is accepting applications for winter employment. We are looking for full and part time people for the upcoming winter season! We are looking for friendly, service-oriented people to join our team. Please apply in person or email your resume to customer svc@alpenhof.com or call 760-924-9127

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Agricultural Research Institution" exemption to grow cannabis plants constituting cannabis; and
WHEREAS, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, in currently in the process of rewriting its regulations to ensure conformance with the interim CEQA Determination: Pursuant to California Environmental

Mike McKenna

Mike McKenna, the first writer ever hired by Lunch, now lives in Hailey, Idaho and serves as the Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce for Hailey and the Wood River Valley, proving that The Sheet isn’t a total professional graveyard. This column was recently published by the Hailey-based Weekly Sun.

O

e of the keynote speakers for the annual Idaho Conference on Recreation and Tourism (ICORT), which took place October 21-23, was a fella named Roger Brooks. Roger is a well-respected expert on tourism, with a special emphasis on the creation of thriving downtowns.

During his talk at the Sun Valley Inn, Roger mentioned that he and his wife passed through Hailey on their way to the conference and thought it was a cute town. But it wasn’t cute or appealing enough to inspire them to pull over or even to return to later. When his presentation ended, I asked if he had any suggestions for Hailey.

“Narrow the highway, widen the sidewalks and put parking areas at both ends of Main Street,” he said.

Roger wondered aloud why towns like Hailey have taken two-lane highways and turned them into four lanes through town. It’s like we’re asking people to rush on through, he said. "The highway in Hailey is the Great Wall of China," Roger said, "Congestion is tourism’s best friend."

The rest of Roger’s talk filled in the other keys to creating communities that are attractive to visitors, are good places to live and are good investments. The most important step is to cater to locals, especially when planning for downtown.

“If you don’t hang out in your town, neither will visitors,” Roger said.

While Roger and his team at Destination Development Association have learned a lot from their work helping communities from Caldwell, Idaho to Hilton Head, South Carolina, they also tap into studies to find out what people really want. And people want culture, good food and fun things to do after 6 p.m. In fact, 70% of spending done in resort communities happens after 7 p.m., which is also now the hour most American’s enjoy dinner.

To help make staying open later more profitable, Roger recommends that the downtown core offers plenty of programming, with activities of some sort happening as many 250 days a year and most weekends.

Since the highway is such a challenge, Roger recommends creating more action on side streets and said more retailers should offer nice places for people to sit or rest.

One of the most interesting things Rog- er said involved parking. People, he said, expect to have walk to shop or eat. For example, the average Walmart shopper parks 200 feet from the storefront, and then walks through the cavernous store. There’s a misconception that people won’t walk distances in small towns like Hailey. Roger said we can make the walking paths safe and appealing, people will be happy to walk, shop or eat.

While all this seems like a lot of work, Roger said towns like Hailey can truly thrive. He said the path to success is to: “create a vision, not an executive summary or strategic plan,” to find a group of “doers and not directors,” and to never give in to the “Cavers, or “Citizens Against Virtually Every Thing.”
The possibility now exists that former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg could enter the contest for the Democratic nomination for president soon --- well after those already in the race (17 of them), and after 9 others who entered and later withdrew.

It was a record-large field to begin with, and three official nationally-televised debates have already been held. So what has changed the mind of the pragmatic Bloomberg about running for president?

He was well-known for his outstanding record as mayor of the nation’s largest city. Years before that, he was a successful businessman culminating in his becoming a billionaire.

At the same time, he is not a long-time Democrat, is 77 years old, and is known as an outspoken moderate in a party that in recent years has been moving to the left.

It was the latter, in fact, that motivated Mr. Bloomberg earlier to organize for a 2020 presidential run. But when former Vice-President Joe Biden entered the race, Bloomberg closed down his campaign. Although Biden and Bloomberg are very different political personalities, they appeal to many of the same Democratic voters.

Now that Biden’s early frontrunner status is being seriously challenged from the left, and some observers say he is fading, Bloomberg sees himself as the only political figure that can prevent the nomination of a redistributionist leftist such as Senator Elizabeth Warren or another “neo-socialist,” Donald Trump will be reelected.

Persons purportedly speaking for him say, if he runs, he will skip Iowa and New Hampshire --- and concentrate on Super Tuesday and subsequent primaries. Because of his huge financial resources, he can seriously compete in most states and begin to accumulate delegates --- and thus block Warren or Sanders from locking up the nomination before the July convention. In Milwaukee, he therefore could play a decisive role in the outcome.

So far, it’s a lot of maybes, but the extraordinary 2020 political atmosphere and environment suggests that this cycle, as in the last one, could see some unprecedented unlikelihoods become political realities.

Barry Casselman is a syndicated columnist who has been covering national politics since 1972. You can find more of his work at www.barrycasselman.com.
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