SEE YOU NEXT YEAR

27 pages in the books. This one left to write. And I’m already regretting all the stuff I missed/overlooked/left out.

There’s the battle in Lee Vining over the Mill/Wilson Creek issue. Ignored that.

There is no “Arts” section.

There is no “Sports” section, but the big story was Bishop football, and we ran front page coverage last week.

But over time, I’ve morphed in my approach to year-end issues. Less about jamming in every single factoid like test answers to be recited, and more thematic.

And maybe, I’m happy to have one more chance to recycle some jokes.

And if you really want to know, to do the front page collage correctly requires at least eight hours of labor.

And you’d be correct if you guessed that I started at the top left and worked my way down and across. You can tell by the faces. They’re sized a little bigger at the start, and get smaller and smaller as I try to jam in as much as I can.

I was saddened to hear of the passing of Tony Colasardo (Footloose Sports) this week. Tony just had a real easy way about him, that gravelly voice which he never raised, and that trademark low chuckle (heh heh heh).

Tony was a member of the Town’s Parks and Recreation Commission when I started The Sheet. Was always community-minded. Mentored all of us to some degree. I admired his demeanor and wondered why I couldn’t be more like him. You know, measured, reasonable.

Another guy I wanted to mention before 2019 gets swallowed whole is Bob Todd, who’s retired from Sierra Wave radio.

Bob is living proof that there are second acts.

Another story that was kind of profound. I only realized he submitted the Mono County “Civility Proclamation” twice for publication - once last winter and once for the December 14 issue.

Speaking of Gardner, it was only in doing the Year in Review issue that I realized he submitted the Mono County “Civility Proclamation” twice for publication - once last winter and once for the December 14 issue.

The purpose, he said, was to encourage “more civil discourse.” And that “we can be tough on the issues, but we should never be tough on each other.”

Hmm. Two things come to mind. 1.) I certainly saw evidence of Mr. Gardner being tough on Sierra Center Mall owners Hild (and former owner Rudder) during lease negotiations. Not just tough on the issue - but personally critical.

And 2.) I imagine the media will be painted as a convenient scapegoat and labeled “uncivil” if the Civic Center issue blows up as expected.

For a subscription to The Sheet contact Lunch at his above e-mail address, or call the office. Issues are mailed out by 6-7 weekly. Cost is $65/ year.

As for 2020, I’ve got at least one prediction.

Which is that the County is going to encounter some difficulty finishing its Civic Center building on time, and that the Mono Supervisors better be making some contingency plans.

Sierra Center Mall owner Drew Hild has already established that he’s moved on and wants to renovate the mall into a hotel, and he got planning approvals to do so last month.

So he’s established that he’s moving forward and he will be “damaged” (just as Terry Ballas, infamous Mammoth Airport developer, was “damaged”) if his project is delayed.

The County probably figures it can “squat” at the Sierra Center if its new building isn’t quite done on time (and there’s no chance they’re moving in at the end of March. None) - and that extra rent paid to Mr. Hild for a few more months occupancy would constitute ample compensation for the privilege.

But if Hild misses a building season as a result ... There was a lot of “Gardstanding” (Definition: Grandstanding by Supervisor Bob Gardner) during the whole divorce between the Mono Supes and their landlord, Mr. Hild. So we’ll see how much of the other cheek Mr. Hild is really willing to turn.

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“Nulla quippe in American secundum vitas.”
-Scott Fitzgerald

JACK LUNCH

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra

NORTH EAST COUNTDOWN & PARTY
MOUNTAIN SIDE BAR & GRILL • 6:30PM

MAMMOTHMOUNTAIN.COM/ NYE

NEW YEAR’S EVE PARTY
CANYON LODGE • 21+ • 9PM
WITH DJ WLDCT & YOUTH FABLES

FAMILY FUN & FIREWORKS
THE VILLAGE • 7:30PM

NEW YEAR’S EVE DINNERS
MAMMOTH’S BEST EATERY

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN.COM/ NYE

Whether you watch the ball drop at 9PM, or you’re partying it up till the early morning, there’s a New Year’s Eve celebration for you this December 31.
In 2019, local politics sort of mirrored the national scene, with economic optimism ultimately trumping housing woes and paralyzed, factionalized governance.

But ... where’s Tom Bodett when you need him?

YEAR IN REVIEW: HEADLINES

In 2019, local politics sort of mirrored the national scene, with economic optimism ultimately trumping housing woes and paralyzed, factionalized governance.

But ... where’s Tom Bodett when you need him?

YEAR IN REVIEW

By Gorman

BROWNLIE’S MOON SHOT: 1.8 MILLION

MMSA CEO aims for 1.8 million annual skier visits by 2024

By German

Mark Brownlie, Mammoth Mountain’s Chief Executive Officer, gave a presentation to the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday. It was a marketing presentation, one a business might give to its investors. Brownlie offered the vision for Mammoth Mountain’s future and a potential path for getting there.

The goal, Brownlie said, is 1.8 million annual skier visits by 2024. Brownlie also gave Alterra’s goal, which is to become “a global mountain community” with a portfolio of unique mountain brands.

Brownlie said that the Ikon Pass, now in its second year of existence, is gaining more traction. Mammoth budgeted for a certain number of pass sales in May and has now had to re-budget because sales have been “through the roof.” Ikon Pass sales in Southern California alone nearly equal the number of Ikon pass sales in the entire state of Colorado.

“I think next year will be the biggest in Mammoth’s history,” Brownlie said. Some good metrics from this year: an increase in visitation from skiers aged 25-44, and more Asian and Hispanic visitors.

The younger trend is a good sign because Baby Boomers have been the backbone of the ski industry for years and there was a fear that younger generations would not show as much interest in the sport. That’s starting to change. The future of skiing revenue, according to Brownlie, is the Asian market. He said Mammoth’s position on the west coast of the U.S. sets the mountain up well for attracting Asian ski tourists as the sport grows in popularity in Pacific nations.

POWER PLAY

By Page

At 8 p.m. on Monday night in Mammoth Lakes, the outside world had taken on an apocalyptic vibe. Immense black clouds over Mammoth Mountain were visible against the last hint of the sun and the darkness that blanketed the area was borderline impermeable. In Vons, shoppers scanned aisles with flashlights and whispered grocery lists to each other as store employees checked the plastic coverings on the refrigerator cases. Check out was cash-only, conducted in relative darkness while outside, the wind threatened to scatter any groceries not properly secured and traffic crawled along, unaided by stoplights.

Only a few lights were visible from the Twin Lakes overlook, creating the impression that the night sky had extended all the way down to Earth and blanketed the entire area, while the gusts screaming down off the mountains turned even walking and standing into harrowing endeavors. All in all, straight out of Billy Joel’s “Miami, 2017.”

At about this time, Jeff Carlson of Old Mammoth took a drive up to the Lakes Basin to check if anyone staying in the campgrounds was enjoying a campfire during the shortage.

“We know that any type of fire that’s going to wipe out Old Mammoth is going to come from the Lakes Basin. When he got to the Coldwater Campground, Carlson found not one but six campfires burning in the chilly night.

“The first campground on the left, I saw these embers flying all over the place,” said Carlson. The individual responsible claimed that they hadn’t been told about the fire hazard by the host or anyone else.

Monday was the first glimpse at the future of a fire-threatened rural area such as ours, and the reality that it painted was one of uncertainty and frustration. At approximately 1 p.m. on Monday afternoon, Southern California Edison initiated a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) that affected 14,524 customers in Mono and Inyo Counties. The shut-off lasted more than twelve hours, even stretching late into the day on Tuesday for June Lake and Bridgeport. The cause of this shut-off? An increased fire risk due to high wind velocity throughout the region.
They Said It:

“Matt [Lehman] says let’s kill the golden goose and save money on goose food.”
- Paul Rudder responding to the suggestion the town cut its marketing budget

“When a government agency is required to provide a public service, it should be held to the standards of a public service. But when it is given a mission, it should be held to the standards of a business.”
- Lunch

U

nittingly, Lunch predicted what was going to happen in regard to development of work-force housing in one of the very first editorials he wrote in 2019. From the January 12 issue:

For a few years at the outset, The Sheet would hold anniversary parties at the Clocktower Cellar where Mac and I would bartend and donate the tips to charity (Mac and I were not the charity). At the 2nd anniversary party, a guy sitting at the bar said something like this to me, “You know, I like your paper, but it looks like crap.”

It did look like crap. I was all ears. The guy’s name was Nils Davis and he was a graphic designer and I hired him off that barstool to redesign The Sheet. His redesign remains in place 13.5 years later and I have zero plans to touch it. He did a fantastic job. And I was smart enough not to interfere. (Actually, this is bullshit. My daughter had just been born. I didn’t have the time or inclination to micromanage).

“Matt [Lehman] says let’s kill the golden goose and save money on goose food.”
- Paul Rudder responding to the suggestion the town cut its marketing budget

“You keep thinkin’ Butch. That’s what you’re good at.”

That was the refrain in the 1968 classic film “Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.”

The refrain for the 2019 housing discussion in Mammoth?

“You keep talkin’ Councilmember XYZ ... ”

I tell you this story in preface to what I’m going to tell you about what I learned at the joint Mammoth Lakes Town Council/Planning and Economic Development Commission workshop. Mammoth’s Public Works Director Grady Dutton, who has recently been appointed to serve as Czar of The Parcel (aka Grady Acres), gave what amounted to a pre-planning update.

Now, a few housing experts (among them Jennifer Halferty and not among them Kirk Stapp) have suggested to me that a lot of what Dutton and Town Staff are now doing in pre-planning (which takes time and money) would have been done by the developer had the town chosen to issue a Request for Proposals to solicit a developer to do the project.

So I went to the podium and I asked Council why it had decided to appoint Dutton versus hire an expert in the field. And Dutton’s response was as follows.

“We have to have a base of knowledge to move forward,” he said. After the staff acquires this base of knowledge, it was suggested that that would be the time to engage a developer.

My comment Wednesday in reply was that this sounds like an incredibly expensive staff training exercise. And to relate it to my own experience, imagine if I had said to Nils Davis, “Well, that sounds like a wonderful idea. Let me take a graphic design course and get back to you.”

Well, that would have taken several months, and then, after I’d taken the course, one can imagine that my next step might’ve been, “Geez, now that I’ve taken a course and I know the nuts and bolts of InDesign ... why should I hire Nils Davis to do this project? I’ll just save myself some money and do it myself!”

The problem with this scenario is that it implies that acquiring some knowledge about the topic suddenly transformed me into a talented expert - which I’m not. More than likely, my design would have been half as good, taken me twice as long and taken me away from the things I’m actually good at (putatively writing and drumming up business). Never mind the redesign would have been delayed by a year.

So my message to Mammoth’s Town Council is pretty straightforward: Hire a pro. Get the hell out of the way. And reassign Mr. Dutton to the job you hired him to do in the first place. It will lead to a better outcome, and very likely save you money in the process.

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By the end of 2019, the Town had not still hired a pro (developer). What the Town had done is hire a consultant who presented a “final conceptual land use see HEADLINES, page 5
**They Said It:**

“The Truaxes are like the Ripkens of Mammoth. They never miss a game.”
- Lunch

“One thing I learned in my year being Mayor is to take credit for as much as possible.”
- Cleland Hoff

**HEADLINES continued from page 4**

plan” at a joint workshop of Mammoth’s Town Council and Planning and Economic Development Commission on December 11.

The consultant cost $400,000. Along the way in 2019 there was a four-day design workshop held in August.

There were surveys (see *Year in Lunch* on page eight).

There were discussions about how much parking should be included in the development, which amenities ...

Then we finally got around to figuring out how much it might cost. From the August 31 issue ...

So this is the preliminary plan. The first set of phasing, on the northeast corner of the lot, will be comprised of 1.1 acres, mainly three story buildings, and 106-111 housing units serving households with an average AMI (Area Median Income) of roughly 50%. 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 see HEADLINES, page 6.
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 and luxury. 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 in 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.

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.

Upon hearing the news that affordable housing units are about a half-million a throw, and that the Town committed to spend $330,000 on three new bus shelters, one smart-ass suggested that maybe the Town should just buy out the Yotelpad project, since the developer was offering units starting in the $300s.

In a nutshell, this is what Mammoth really accomplished this year regarding housing. It purchased two units in November at a cost of $663,000.

As for Mammoth Lakes Housing (the non-governmental organization that has been relegated to the sidelines for the Parcel project), it had two projects in the hopper as of January and announced plans to create 24 units of housing within 18 months.

Both projects fizzled.

The Ballad of MLT

Mammoth Lakes Tourism continued to be the most interesting (quasi) governmental organization in 2019, both for its performance and its aspirations.

From the Sept. 7 issue: "In all, Mammoth Lakes saw more than $20.7 million in TOT revenue from July 2018 to June 2019, with record numbers in nine months out of the year.

This TOT total exceeds the previous year’s total of $17.9 by more than $2 million, a 13.1% increase.

The biggest overall change came in April 2019, which saw a 41.3% increase in TOT revenue from April 2018. "Thank you Mother Nature with a side helping of Ikon Pass."

On the board level, more than half its members turned over. Hammer, Duggan, Goico, Salcido and Karell arrived. Rudder, Schaubmayer, Truax, Hoff and Turner departed.

It settled one lawsuit (Dirk Winter). Another (Jean Harris) looms.

From the August 17 issue: "Jean Harris filed his complaint against the Town of Mammoth Lakes, et. al. on August 5. In the June 29 issue (pages 10 & 26), The Sheet printed the three-page letter which Harris sent to Mammoth’s Town Council in May threatening litigation.

The 57-page complaint filed by the retired City Attorney, who formerly served as a consultant to the Mammoth TBID, elaborates upon that initial letter. Among his assertions: Mammoth’s TBID (Tourism Business Improvement District) was established to “reduce the MMSA balance sheet expenses and, in turn, increase the net income of the resort.”

He calls the TBID an “in lieu tax” formed to “cause taxpayers to pay for corporate expenses.” And cites the California Constitution, Article 16, Sect. 6 which states that such an arrangement amounts to a gift of public funds.

He does say his complaint is a threat to the very concept of TBID itself, in Mammoth and throughout the state, and believes the conflicts-of-interest inherent at the Mammoth TBID’s formation should render all subsequent actions void.

In terms of strategy, MLT started the year trying to tap reserves and convince Council to fund a Destination Marketing Plan.

By the end of year, sensing its huge budget is an inviting target, MLT ceded TOT [Transient Occupancy Tax] over- age revenue to the Town and recognized workforce housing as a critical community need.
Mammoth Lakes Town Council voted by a 3-2 margin to move forward with plans for a revised Multi-Use Facility project at Mammoth Creek Park. The new MUF will be made of a “Tensile Fabric Structure,” according to Town Engineering Manager Haislip Hayes. Translation: It’s a tent, just like Eagle Lodge.

Which may not appeal to the architectural snobs who were pushing for an iconic building which matches the grandeur of our natural surroundings, but ... the price is right. And unlike Eagle Lodge, Hayes said there are design and color options which will help mitigate the, well, blandness. As Hayes said, his mandate was to bring a project in for $13 million or less, and this one provides all the goodies (four locker rooms, bleachers, lobby, storage, concessions, et. al.) and keeps the Town on this side of that line in the sand.

Some contemplated extras (like building out a 6,000-square foot mezzanine for community space, 100 extra parking spaces) are not included in the $13 million plan but can be added as desired. A basic rink and roof alternative plan, open on two sides and with no extras, was priced at about $15 million. Steel’s expensive. Blame the tariff game.

The new structure, which boasts a 65-year life span, will require environmental review, because height and setbacks will change. The proposed Sprung Structure is 13’ taller than the previous design, and the setback from the nearest condominium development would be reduced from 90’ to 50’. From The Sheet June 8/

The year in Misery

In the September 14 issue, Owen Page reported the depressing stats from the Mono County Health Assessment. “The information related to behavioral health, especially the numbers from the schools, illustrate an alarming trend in mental health within both ESUSD and MUSD. Graphics revealed that by the time students in ESUSD reach eleventh grade, 57% report experiencing or having experienced chronic sadness or hopelessness in the past year; in MUSD, that number sits at 42%, both of which exceed the state average.

In addition, 42% ESUSD eleventh graders reported that they “seriously considered suicide,” a rate that clocks in at nearly triple the state average.” A December 14 story by Page about the employee satisfaction in Mono County found that two-thirds of County employees are reporting exhaustion, burnout.

But how is this possible? They get so much time off. There’s Gorman’s story (June 8) where John Urdi, Mammoth Lakes Tourism Executive Director, is quoted as saying Senior Department Heads at the Town of Mammoth Lakes receive 47 days off per year.

Urdi’s a marketing guy. I’m accustomed to a bit of hyperbole. But he actually undersold it. Not to pick on Mammoth’s Public Works Director Grady Dutton, but knowing how much it annoys Engineering Manager Haislip Hayes, I couldn’t help but look at Dutton’s contract.

He gets 10 days a year of administrative leave. He gets 12 federal holidays. As a five-year employee, he accrues 20.667 additional hours per month of “comprehensive leave,” which equates to 31 days a year.

Add it all up and he gets 53 days off, not including weekends. And yet, he doesn’t do nearly as well as this counterpart in Bishop. A City of Bishop Public Works Director gets 17 days of administrative leave per year, 24 days of sick leave, 12 days of family sick leave, 4 days bereavement leave, 15 days a year of vacation (with five years of service) and 12 recognized federal holidays.

Potentially, that’s a whopping 84 days off per year. Perhaps this explains the discrepancy in pay. Dutton made about $163,000 this year, which doesn’t include an anticipated $3,000 bonus based upon the Town’s receiving Transient Occupancy Tax revenue in excess of budget. “Ah, so NOW I know why the Town is so incentivized to budget TOT revenue so artificially low …” Bishop’s Public Works Director Dave Grah makes about $118,000 a year. Mind you, this is just what they’re paid - doesn’t factor in perks like insurance and retirement and such.

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53 Kitchen & Cocktails

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Blek Market & Kitchen Bubbles Tasting

Nye at Canyon Lodge

Nye at Gomez

Nye Party at Mammoth Brewing Company

Rafters Restaurant & Lounge Nye Party

Red Lantern Chinese Restaurant Nye Party

New Years Eve Dinners

53 Kitchen & Cocktails

Blek Market & Kitchen

Lakanuki Bar & Café

The Lakefront Restaurant

Mammoth Rock Brasserie

Whitewalk Restaurant, Bar & Lounge

Campo Mammoth Outdoor Fireworks Viewing Party

Mountainside Grill East Coast Nye Party

New Year’s Eve Family Fun and Fireworks in the Village at Mammoth

Nye at Canyon Lodge

Nye at Gomez

Nye Party at Mammoth Brewing Company

Rafters Restaurant & Lounge Nye Party

Red Lantern Chinese Restaurant Nye Party

Whitewalk Restaurant, Bar & Lounge

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Once again, the Town of Mammoth Lakes gave Lunch all the inspiration he needed to produce his very best B+ material ... 

**WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN**

The Town of Mammoth Lakes hired Lisa Wise Consulting (LWC) a few months back. The task: To complete a “Conceptual Land Use Plan” for The Parcel - the 24 acres in the center of town Mammoth purchased last year for the purpose of building an affordable housing development.

The price tag: $400,000.

*Former Town Planner Jen Daugherty is now a associate at LWC. Nepotism is alive and well. I hope bringing in the contract nets her a promotion.

As part of the scope of work, LWC set out to determine community priorities/values in regard to The Parcel and concocted a survey. Survey questions and my answers below.

**Question 1. What is your interest in The Parcel?**
- My interest lies in self-preservation, because watching Town Staff try to build affordable housing may be enough to cause me to drown myself in a shallow pond.

**Question 2: If you've been to The Parcel, how did you get there, what did you do, and what were your impressions?**
- After dropping my car off at Alpine Garage on Center Street and learning what it would cost to fix, I sauntered over to The Parcel to have a good cry and look at the garbage strewn all over the forest. My impression was that The Parcel is a good place for a cry, and I’ll bet Mike Fiebiger goes there often after 49er games.

**Question 2.1: Have you been to The Parcel?**
- Are you people stupid? You just asked that.

**Question 2.2: Where did you enter The Parcel?**
- Okay dummy. Now I’m getting upset.

**Question 2.3: What mode of transportation did you use and what did you do?**
- Jesus H. We’re paying $400,000 for this?!

**Question 2.4: What were your impressions of The Parcel?**
- As I said, it’s a place to make one cry … reminds me of this survey.

**Question 2.5: How do you think future residents will get to and from The Parcel?**
- Spaceship.

**Question 3: What does affordable housing mean to you?**
- About two bedrooms less than I really want, but way better than couch surfing.
- A better place to try to score after a date than a tent.
- Indoor plumbing.

**Question 4: What other uses should be provided on-site?**

**Question 5: What are the obstacles to developing The Parcel?**
- Town Council. Town Staff. Surveys like this. Consultants like you.

**Question 6: What is your long-term vision for The Parcel?**
- The same as my short-term vision. Housing. With a dose of boobs bursting out of tight orange tops and Lawn Bowling. Haven’t we been over this?

**Question 7: What are your three objectives for The Parcel?**
- To have the long-lasting construction and spiritual impact of Stonehenge and the Great Pyramids.
- To produce citizens who can Move Like Jagger, Walk Like Egyptians, Run on Empty, Fly Like Eagles and Stand in the Place Where They Live.
- To rename it. “The Parcel” is lame.

**Question 8: What are some ideas you have for engaging the community?**
- Engagement? Um. Speed dating?
- Beer always helps get people engaged. Well, beer goggles.
- How about hosting another one of those events where people get to put sticky dots on posters? People love those sticky dots!

**Question 8.1: What other questions do you think we should ask the community?**
- Hmm. Ask yourself, “What would Donald J. Trump do?”
- If Train A is traveling east at 25 mph, and Train B is traveling west at 46 mph, will either stop in Mammoth if the United States Forest Service and/or the Town of Mammoth Lakes is responsible for getting the train depot open? 
- Corollary: Will Mammoth Lakes Tourism take credit for Train B being faster than Train A?

**Question 8.2: How can we get more potential residents of The Parcel involved in the planning process?**
- Free raffle entries. People love raffles.
- Maybe create a path of Reese’s Pieces leading to the site. Worked with E.T.

**Question 9: Is there anything else you would like to add?**
- I really like the Lakers signing of Jared Dudley.
- Goats. Lots of goats. They could help with fire suppression and yoga classes. Lunch knows a dealer …

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MLT AGAIN SEeks To TAP RESERVE FUnD

By Lunch

Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) Executive Director John Urdi announced this week that MLT will petition Mammoth’s Town Council to tap the Joint Tourism Marketing Reserve for the second time in four months.

In November, MLT asked the Town to release $250,000 in emergency funds because of a “tourism emergency” due to a lack of November snowfall.

This time, MLT is asking the Town for the release of $400,000 because there is too much snow, jeopardizing the near-term accessibility of the Lakes Basin and potentially pushing Snowcreek and Sierra Star golf course opening days into June.

“We need to be able to give our guests what they want, when they want,” explained Urdi. “If they want to ski on May 5 and then suddenly decide to fish the Lakes Basin on May 6, we’ve got to adapt to consumer demand.”

“Make no mistake. We are in a marketing arms race,” continued Urdi. “If we don’t provide the services and amenities people want, they’ll go elsewhere.”

Urdi then explained his plan for the emergency $400,000 for Operation Spring Ahead. $200,000 will be spent on a combination paid/volunteer campaign to remove snow from “critical assets” by any means necessary.

Not only will this involve snowplows clearing the Lakes Basin, but it will also involve Citizen Brigades clearing campgrounds and providing access to shorelines, as well as drying out golf courses.

Charles Scatolini and Jeff Frome have volunteered to lead the Snowcreek Golf Course Mayday (aiming for May 1 open) team.

Scatolini explained the two-pronged process for accelerated course preparation, which he has said has been developed under the supervision of Greenskeeper Bob Gibson.

“The first step,” he said, “is to focus on the tee boxes and greens. We use the shovels to clear most of snow, being careful not to ground the shovels, and then clear the last layer and dry out the ground with the hair dryers.”

For those citizens who wish to help, Mammoth Lakes Tourism has offered to purchase a Turbo Power TwinTurbo 3200 model hair dryer for anyone who puts in ten or more hours of volunteer service.

The 1,900-watt dryer, which comes in five colors, is equipped with a K-Lamination motor and retails for $155 on Amazon.

The second part of Urdi’s marketing strategy involves the production of a Spring Ahead promotional video starring Olivia Jade.

Jade is a “social influencer” who was recently caught up in the college admissions bribery scandal.

Urdi says the scandal has reduced the price for Jade’s services, and seeing as she is no longer taking classes at the University of Southern California, she’s available.

“We think the ‘meltdown’ theme as it relates to snow and Olivia’s career will dovetail really well,” said MLT’s Communications Director Lara Kaylor.

“Plus, she’s really hot,” said Mammoth Lakes Mayor and MLT Board member Cleland Hoff. “The other board members asked me to point that out because they thought it would be too creepy coming from them.”

Urdi asked MLT’s Advertising Agency, Mering Carson, to commission a cost-benefit analysis of opening amenities ahead of schedule.

Mering Carson principal Dave Mering said the comprehensive $157,000 analysis found that for every extra day the Lakes Basin is open to the public during the summer season, the Town of Mammoth Lakes reaps an estimated $689,000 of increased economic activity, translating into almost $70,000 per day in tax revenue.

So if Urdi’s $200,000 investment opens the Lakes Basin a month ahead of schedule, the Town will enjoy more than $20 million in correlated economic activity.

And for Chuck Scatolini, a 31-handicap, you can’t put a price tag on what every extra day of golf is worth.

“I know it’s supposed to snow two feet on Wednesday, but I’ll be out on that first tee box all night. I will never cede gained ground to the enemy - Mother Nature - and I don’t care what it takes. I’ll clear snow with my ball retriever if I have to!”

For those interested in joining the Operation Spring Ahead Citizens Brigade, there is a volunteer orientation scheduled for Monday (APRIL FOOL’S DAY) at the MLT offices beginning at 9 a.m.

/from The Sheet March 30/
HORATIO GREGORY

This editorial, which ran March 9, probably garnered more feedback than anything we published this year - wait, I take that back. Anything published that was even slightly critical of Donald Trump elicited an immediate and swift reply from Mr. Trump's supporters.

"Gregory first clicked into a pair of skis a couple of weeks after finishing a final season as a University of Washington linebacker. He put off graduating to help skiers onto lifts at Mammoth. "I was probably the most gregarious lifter on the mountain," he says. Gregory befriended Mammoth owner Dave McCoy and was soon welding lift towers. Eventually he ran human resources and negotiated with investment bankers to sell the resort twice, most recently to Starwood Capital Group, a private equity firm. Now, with a 15 percent ownership stake, he lives at the Four Seasons Hotel Denver with his camper van parked out front. (It won’t fit in the hotel’s garage.)"

The above paragraph was written in a March 1 story titled "One Pass to Ski Them All" by Ryan Stock which appeared in Bloomberg News. But that was only the story’s introduction to former Mammoth Mountain CEO Rusty Gregory. Stock lays the myth-making on even thicker in his closing paragraph:

"In mid-December, Gregory flew into Deer Valley to see how things were going. After a conference call, he hopped up to the lift to meet [Bob] Wheaton, who’d delayed his retirement and signed on as a sort of roaming consultant for Alterra. They’re two uniquely ski bumps turned even less likely ski executives. Wheaton, a native of Detroit, is short with a rancher’s belly. Gregory, who paid for his few finance courses by welding bridges, hulks with a lineman’s head. On the lift ride up, they were sanguine about the future of their industry. Who wouldn’t love this? they wondered, as the sun saturated the Wasatch Range.

"I can tell you one thing," Wheaton said, "we’re not done shopping, and Vail’s not either." Disembarking, the men tucked their chins to the wind, leaned into the descent, and carved sinuous turns with near-perfect form. In the parlance of the sport they love, they ripped, zipping past crowds of new guests at speeds that seemed almost reckless."

"Pardon me for just a moment while I retch into the nearest trash receptacle."

The only conclusion that can possibly be drawn, therefore, is that the Director of Mammoth Lakes Tourism and the nine-member board have pressed all the right buttons and made all the right moves, and that the vast sums of money devoted to MLT’s marketing program should remain in place in perpetuity. Because if you’ve got a good thing going, you’ve got to keep all the numbers covered. Just don’t roll seven.

But what happens when we trace financial history further back than five years? What happens when we trace it back twenty years?

The answer may prove startling. What we find is that the compound growth rate from 1998-1999 through 2017-2018 is virtually identical to the compound growth rate from 2010-2011 (when Mr. Urdi took over as Executive Director of MLT) through 2017-2018.

Then, consider this. Below represents the Town’s total marketing budget as a percentage of room tax revenue.

1998-1999. $478,000 for revenue of $4.4M (20%) 2010-2011. $2.5M for revenue of $11.1M (22%) 2017-2018. $7.7M for revenue of $17.5M (44%)

By historical standards, the Town’s marketing budget should be about $4 million. Maybe $4.5 million if you really want to be aggressive.

Many Sheet readers are likely unfamiliar with the circumstances surrounding the formation of the TBID (the population around here turns over quickly), so let’s walk through a short history.

In the early 2000s, Mammoth Mountain CEO Rusty Gregory toured a plan to expand Mammoth Yosemite Airport and fly destination visitors in from Chicago and Dallas on 757s.

The environmental documents projected as many as 333,000 commercial air passengers flying into Mammoth.
HORATIO continued from page 10

The average growth rate for TOT from 1999-2018 was 8.36% per year. This is represented in the black line, which is curved because compounding growth is exponential. The red line represents growth after 2010 (the year Mr. Urdi became Marketing Director), the blue line represents growth prior to 2010. The red trend line is steeper than the blue trend line because compounding growth is exponential, but that does not mean that TOT is growing faster as a percentage of the principal in recent years. -Gorman

HORATIO continued from page 10

each year.

There was just a small hitch. The Town of Mammoth Lakes had already signed a development agreement for the airport with a man by the name of Terry Ballas. When the town (at the urging of Gregory) tried to dump Ballas in order to land millions in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airport improvement dollars (because the FAA found the competing plans incompatible), Ballas cried foul. He challenged the Town for backing out of the deal.

The Town subsequently got whipped in court. The damages—airport litigation cost the town $29 million (or $50 million over 23 years, factoring interest).

Gregory then told the town that the only way out is through. That the Town had to grow itself out of the mess. The answer was to float a TBID.

And the only way to get a cynical town to raise fees to fund the TBID was by creating an independent, non-governmental organization (MLT) to market the town.

Initially, the TBID was supposed to raise $4.7 million annually. Below is what was advertised in a fact sheet distributed in 2013.

The Proposed Assessments:
- Lodging (1%) $800,000
- Retail (1.5%) $1.35M
- Restaurants (1.5%) $750,000
- MMSA (2% for lift tickets and ski school) $1.8M

The Proposed Budget Distribution:
- Marketing, sales, PR, promotional: $2.525M
- Air subsidy $2M
- Administration $175,000

During the debate over TBID, proponents trumpeted the fact that TBID assessments would be a “pass through” for the businesses. So you’re going to be assessed 1.5%? Well, raise your rates...
HORATIO
continued from page 11

1.5% then, they said. The consumer will pay for it.
The TBID went into effect in August, 2013. And literally overnight, Mammoth’s marketing budget tripled (TBID plus dedicated General Fund support for marketing).

TBID was renewed for another five years in 2018. It is still supposed to raise $4.5 million annually. The projected revised assessments look like this:

| Lodging | $1.1M |
| Retail | $1.1M |
| Restaurants | $1M |
| MMSA | $1.3M |

MMSA’s total has decreased as season passes are no longer part of the formula. Season passes are now sold out of Denali so passes are no longer part of the formula. Season passes are now sold out of Denali so season passes are no longer part of the formula.

HORATIO
continued from page 11

MLT Employee Labor Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>$1.12 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>$1.23 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>$1.37 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

That’s a 22% increase in labor expense over a two-year span.

Okay, so how’s the average Mammoth Lakes resident doing. He/she has been paying TBID for the past six years - essentially bailing out the town for its airportasio. What is there to show for it?

Is there any new affordable housing stock? No. Rents have been skyrocketing. And rent is not a “pass-through” item. It’s not like you can make the mice pay it.

Is there a new amenity like an ice rink with a roof on it), or a Performing Arts Center, or a National Wounded Warrior Center? Nope. We either can’t make those projects pencil, or are disinclined to help others bridge their funding gaps.

Are there more cops on the street? Nope. We’re about 25% below the police staffing levels of a decade ago. Are the roads in better shape? Is the snow removal service better than it used to be? Have taxes been reduced? Are events better funded? How about the town’s recreation programs?

Tangibly, it seems like the only improvements we can really point to are the Main Street sidewalk,-resurfaced tennis courts and half a fence at Sam’s Wood Site.

Not much of a return.

So again, I circle back a thousandth time to the Town of Mammoth Lakes allocation of resources.

There’s way too many resources going towards a burgeoning marketing bureaucracy at the expense of infrastructure and capital improvement.

And I’m tired of being a pariah for saying it. Questioning a single marketing dollar has been akin to questioning the flag itself. And it’s not personal, no matter how much Mr. Urdi wants to say it’s personal to otherwise distract people from an honest assessment of spending priorities.

We have to move past the tribalism. Because I think we’re literally throwing millions of dollars down the toilet every year which could otherwise be invested in … ourselves.

Allocating dollars differently wouldn’t infringe upon Mammoth’s competitiveness. It would enhance it. Because we’d be spending more dollars on longer-range investment versus a short-term buzz.

Myself, I’ve decided that I’m literally for everything. I’m for the ice rink, no matter where Bill Sauser wants to build it. I’m for funding local people to create organic local events. It’s a damn sight better than sending every marketing dollar to the bottomless maw of Google and Facebook. I’m for more cops and better roads and for a performing arts center which could actually host world-class talent without embarrassment. I’m for us getting better. I’m for running out of excuses as to why we can’t get anything done. I’m for stopping the habit of doing something just because we did it before so we’re too scared not to do it and too afraid to fail at something new.

I’m for not waking up 25 years later wondering where the hell it all went and why there’s nothing to show for it.

“We know that bias prevents us from being a meritocracy, but research shows that when you say you’re a meritocracy, when you design an organization and you say that it is meritocratic, it leads to spikes in bias. It leads you to be more biased. Because basically, it frees people up from thinking that they have to try hard to be fair in their decision making.”

- Joelle Emerson, Founder and CEO, Paradigm

“Life in a tribe is easy, in all the wrong ways. You don’t have to think. Whatever the tribe thinks is right, whatever the other side thinks is wrong. There’s no real responsibility; just follow what the tribe and whoever speaks for it says to do.”

-Mitch Daniels President, Purdue University

Rare Property For Sale
143 Gregory Lane
McGee Creek

Deanna Clark
Realtor®
DRE # 020677/2
760-914-0060
MammouthPropertyFinder.com

Coldwell Banker
Mammoth Real Estate
2921 Main Street
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Escape the crowds and enjoy the peaceful Eastern Sierra landscape. This cozy mountain home sits on over an acre, borders public land and has 360 degree views of Crowley Lake and the majestic surrounding mountains. Miles of open space for you to hike, fish, snowmobile, horseback ride and ski right out your back door. Enjoy the best of both worlds as Mammoth is just a 12 minute scenic drive away.

• 3 Bedrooms/2.5 Baths - Approximately 2200 SF
• 3 Car garage - Paved driveway - RV Parking

Many renovations throughout this well maintained home. Adjacent 1 1/2 acre to be sold with this property to protect the unobstructed views. Both properties zoned equestrian.

Asking Price - Home: $979,000 Land: $170,000

Give your home the protection it deserves.

Dave R Easterby, Agent
Insurance Lic#: CH65719
457 Old Mammoth Road Suite J
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
Bus: 760-934-7575

Coldwell Banker
Mammoth Real Estate
2921 Main Street
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

State Farm Fire and Casualty Company, State Farm General Insurance Company, Bloomington, IL
State Farm Florida Insurance Company, Winter Haven, FL
State Farm Lloyd's, Richardson, TX

State Farm®

*Newsflash! State Farm is now offering homeowners insurance without restriction in Mammoth Lakes and June Lake. Call today for a quote.

We are moving! Effective Dec 30th 2019. See our new location at 625 Old Mammoth Rd.
No wonder all those birds were going after Tippi Hedren in Hitchcock’s classic thriller, “The Birds.”
They were onto something.

Their numbers were under assault. Damn humans.

According to an exhaustive study published recently in the journal Science, bird populations in North America are down 29 percent since 1970.

With climate change, deforestation, and general habitat loss a known reality to scientists, they knew that certain populations were declining. As one of the head researchers on the project Ken Rosenberg explained, “We also knew that other bird populations were increasing, and what we didn’t know is whether there was a net change.”

The difference was a loss of about three billion birds over the nearly 50 year period since 1970. 90% of the loss can be attributed to just a dozen bird populations including sparrows, warblers, blackbirds and finches. Up to 53% of grassland birds have disappeared as well as about a third of shorebirds.

Certain populations are surprisingly up in numbers such as raptors, bald eagles, and waterfowl. Duck and geese populations are up as a direct result of hunters maintaining these populations for sport.

Nationally renowned birders Tom and Jo Heindel of Big Pine have been researching bird decline in the Eastern Sierra over a similar time period as the original study. Mr. Heindel reiterated some of the findings from the study, “We have seen a significant decline in just about all native populations here (in the Eastern Sierra).”

The Heindels are set to release a book sometime next year that details their findings, “We have been researching birds in Inyo County since the 1970s and we have a significant amount of data,” said Tom.

The first page of the Heindels book describes how the data is collected, “A number of the most highly respected birders quickly sent us copies of their data and these, plus our field notes from 1972 through 2019, were added to the database. These data now number almost 485,000 entries (2019) and continues to grow each season.”

A magnitude 6.4 earthquake struck southern California on July 4, 2019 at 10:34 a.m. local time.

The closest large population center is Ridgecrest, population 28,000. Strong to very strong shaking and damage has been reported there.

Shaking from the earthquake was felt by millions of people across the region, including the greater Los Angeles and Las Vegas areas.

Estimated dollar loss for damage is ten to one hundred million dollars.

This event has triggered many aftershocks, but these will decrease in frequency over time. It is likely that there will be smaller earthquakes during the next week, with 50 to 700 magnitude 3 or higher aftershocks. Magnitude 3 and above are large enough to be felt near the epicenter.

On average, a magnitude 6.4 earthquake will produce an aftershock as large as magnitude 5.4, and about 10 aftershocks with magnitude 4.4 or larger. Earthquakes of this size can cause damage, particularly close to the rupture. USGS estimates a 9 percent chance of one or more aftershocks of magnitude 6.4 or larger in the next week.

Record snow, earthquakes, power shutoffs due to wind events, declining bird populations ... Armageddon as usual in the Eastern Sierra in 2019.

FOR THE BIRDS? HARDLY

RIDGECREST EARTHQUAKE
Press Release
From the U.S. Geological Survey Website.

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RIDGECREST EARTHQUAKE
/from The Sheet July 6/

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FROM THE SHEET OCTOBER 12/
Brian Jones: One day in May, 2011, 47-year old Flyin’ Brian Jones came home from a hard day of skiing on Mammoth Mountain. His feet had been bothering him for weeks, and doctors couldn’t figure out why. His feet were especially bad this day, and in his frustration over the pain, he grabbed his backpack and drove up to the Lakes Basin. He soloed up the Sherwin Range and skied down the Rock Chute. It was a powder day. 8 inches had fallen on the chute, and no one had touched the new snow. It was a perfect run.

This run was a turning point in the extraordinary life of Brian Jones. Before it, Brian had pioneered extreme skiing, drove mules through the Sierra, made thirty foot steel sculptures, jumped out of hot air balloons, survived forest fires, flash floods, car wrecks, and addiction. After it, he would build his own tombstone, be sent home by doctors to die in his bed, say goodbye to his stoic son and his crying father, die, live again, lose the ability to walk, drag himself around his home, walk again, die three more times, and live again. Mostly, he would teach those he met the indomitability of the human spirit. He would learn, and subsequently share with others, a law that only those who have seen God can come to fully understand:

That the only unforgivable sin is feeling sorry for yourself.

Brian Jones was raised in the San Bernardino Mountains, near Big Bear. He began skiing at the age of five and racing at seven. He took school year-round, with an eight week break in the winter for skiing, and a six week break in the summer. With night skiing, Jones said he was skiing from 8 o’clock in the morning until 9 at night almost every day since he was five years old.

Professional skier Suzy “Chapstick” Chaffee trained at Snow Valley, Jones’ home mountain. She took him and some other young skiers under her wing. By 8 years old Chaffee had taught Jones how to do back flips, tip rolls and helicopters.

When Jones was 14 he moved to Mammoth Lakes. The big jumps and cornices of Mammoth Mountain brought the tricks Brian learned from Chaffee to a bigger dimension.

“I’d start from the top of the stairs of the Gondola on 223 cm. downhill[s], tuck down the ridge and do one turn off of Hangman’s and do a helicopter all the way down the throat.”

Sometimes ski patrol would spot Brian for these blind jumps. After landing, Brian would be going more than 80 mph, turning once on Climax, and once more into San Anton. The patrollers would stay below to make sure that he didn’t kill anyone on the runout.

“You’re not pulling the jump unless you go off the jump, fly through the air, land, do the full runout, stop, and then you’ve done the jump,” Jones said. “To me, that’s the jump.”
Bill Walters:  
Bill Walters founder and owner of Minaret Cinemas has sold the theater to D'Place Entertainment. D'Place official- 
ty took over on Friday, March 1.  
On Thursday, Bill Walters worked his last day at Minaret Cinemas.  
He is retiring after working as an  
exhibitor, the official term for someone who shoes movies, for thirty years.  
I met him on Wednesday morning at Minaret Cinemas to hear his swan song.  
He is steady and self-assured. I was  
about one minute late and he was five.  
He walked into the cinemas without  
jumping. He watches you with eyes  
wide open. They rarely blink. They don’t miss much. He talks without hurrying in  
a low New York accent. He was born in  
Manhattan and raised in Queens by im- 
migrant parents. His mother was Irish.  
His father, British.  
"They didn’t have the best timing because they moved here in 1929 in the  
crash," he said.  
He prefers to joke and laughs from  
his gut often before he’s made it to the  
punch line.  
We sat in the projection room over- 
looking Minaret Cinemas two audiotori- 
ums.  
In 1989, he bought the now defunct Plaza Theater from his next door neigh- 
bor, Dick Ellewart, not because he loved movies. It was a business opportunity.  
Bill planned to run The Plaza Theater  
for five or six years and then sell it. Like  
most life plans, it morphed. In 1994,  
his brother, Dick Ellewart, not because he loved  
1996.  
23 years later, coming off a hip re- 
placement in the fall of 2018, he placed  
1994, he bought the space where Minaret  
Cinemas is now. It had been a sporting  
goods store. The remodel and con- 
struction involved removing support  
columns, columns aren’t great in movie  
thaters, he reminded me. The columns  
were replaced with steal beams and the  
two theaters were built.  
He kept The Plaza running until 2006.  
He turned 80 last November and now  
skis for free.  
"I was sitting on the chair last season  
thinking, 'Wow, next season is free.'  
Then, I’m thinking about all the lift  
tickets I bought, all the season passes I  
bought. Hell, this isn’t free. I just pre- 
pared." He laughed.  
Bruce Willey:  
"There’s something about being the  
very best in the world at something,  
even if that something may be so arcane  
that you’re not even sure if anyone else  
in the world is doing it.  
But here’s the thing about Bishop-  
based photographer Bruce Willey. You  
hang out with him for a little bit, and his  
energy is so infectious that you start get- 
ting sucked into what he’s doing.  
To the point where I was telling him to  
stop the car because I had a good vibe  
about our surroundings.  
Yes, Bruce Willey, by traditional  
pigeonholing, is a wedding and family  
photographer. A very much in-demand  
wedding and family photographer. But he  
is also the world’s premier falling leaf  
photographer.  
How Bruce got into falling leaf photo- 
tography: He was in Georgia, unem- 
ployed and unemployable. He’d been  
freelance writing for magazines like  
Climbing, Nat Geo Adventure and Ad- 
venture Sports Journal but the pay had  
dropped from $1 a word to $0.35 a word.  
It wasn’t paying the bills.  
He thought maybe he’d get into wed- 
ding photography. In part because the  
couple’s itinerant lifestyle was such  
(hopping between Atlanta and Berlin at  
the time) that he needed a job that was  
ultimately transportable.  
But then he thought, “I can’t just  
jump into wedding photography.” He  
wanted to do something to sharpen his  
observational skills. So he thought he  
might try shooting falling leaves as a  
way to hone his eye ...  
Cassidy Seitz:  
At around 10:30 a.m. on Monday,  
December 31, fourteen-year-old Cassidy  
Seitz of Hancock Park suffered a heart  
attack while approaching an unload  
ramp on Mammoth Mountain’s Chair 4.  
According to her mother, the group was  
about 3-5 minutes from the end of the  
lift when Cassidy turned to 14-year-old  
Julianna Savagian, her best friend since  
the age of two, telling her that she felt  
"dizzy." She then became unconscious  
and unresponsive. At first her friends  

They Said It:  
"When you’re mayor, you have to recognize your position and  
know that people are uncomfortable calling you out."  
-Police Chief Al Davis scolding  
Mayor Bill Sauser for his micromanagement  
"My wife, my mom, my doc ... they say no. I say go."  
-DJ RodneyO

See PEOPLE, page 16
Todd Vogel: Cassidy was unresponsive and showed signs of an emergency as they came to the landing. They signaled the lift operator that there was a problem and then down to Los Angeles. It would be later flown to Reno and then down to Los Angeles. It would be a full-day before they fully regained consciousness, in part because she was kept under sedation as doctors attempted to diagnose her medical condition.

Mammoth Resorts President and Chief Operating Officer, Mark Brownlie, issued a statement saying that “the Mountain Ski Patrol performed to the highest ability in what can best be described as a life or death situation for Cassidy.”

BROTHEL OF THE CONCERT PANTS
19th Chamber Music Unbound Summer Festival opens this weekend
By Lunch

If there’s one thing the “experts” tell you about building a business, it’s about the importance of building relationships. And if that involves sharing pants, so be it.

That’s how the Felici Trio’s Brian Schuldt ended up recruiting one of the world class musicians who will perform at this year’s Chamber Music Unbound Summer Festival, which takes place Thursday-Sunday over the next two weekends at Mammoth’s Cerro Coso College campus.

Schuldt was in Reno playing the Nevada Chamber Music Festival when he realized he’d packed his wife’s pants for the performance. Try as he might, he wasn’t getting into those. As he looked around the in the same ple on the same team because finishing one of these races is an accomplishment regardless of time.

Mitch Cahoon:
After a quarter-century in town and nearly 15 years managing Petra’s Bistro inside the Alpenhof, Mitch Cahoon is moving to the Westchester/Playa Del Rey area to take a job with Treasury Wine Estates.

The fateful moment which changed Mitch’s life occurred during this period. He happened to stumble into a “trade tasting” at MMSA where reps for different wineries were pitching their wares. He was intrigued. It was a regular job. Paid pretty well. There were maybe 3-4 local reps at the time.

He left MMasa to work for the Henry Wine Group from 1996-2008. In 2003, the Schaubmayer brothers (Kirk and Robert) decided to open Petra’s Bistro to honor their late mother. Cahoon went in to sell them wine. The selling turned out to be mutual. The brothers talked Mitch into working for them. He put together the wine list for Petra’s, bartended there, and within a few years was managing the place, in addition to continuing his work for Henry.

Mitch: By Lunch

Todd Vogel: Todd Vogel, 55, of Bishop, has spent nearly his whole life outdoors. He grew up skiing and rock climbing and once he graduated high school in Michigan, decided to head west and hike the Pacific Crest Trail. He then went to college in Santa Cruz and has been a Sierra fixture ever since.

Rock climbing is his passion as he has been a mountainmeering guide since the 1990s after moving to Bishop in 1988. He has been a co-owner of Eastside Sports, inc. in Bishop since 2012.

Vogel recently ran the Tahoe 200 (as in miles) and finished in eighth place with a time of 63 hours and six minutes. Two days and 15 hours.

On how much sleep he got during the race, Vogel said, “I got about 26 minutes, two ten minute naps and about half a dozen one minute naps.” He called them “naps and described these so-called “naps” as “almost like hallucinations, but they were completely lucid and I controlled everything about them. They were wild.” He explained that the race is not really a competition but rather a bunch of people

Full Moon Snowshoe Tours

Take in the moon-lit scenic beauty on this after-dark snowshoe excursion. Depart the Ski Center at 7PM for a 1.5-hour guided tour, then gather for dessert and hot drinks in front of the fireplace back at Tamarack Lodge. The tour is $65 and includes snowshoe rentals.

JANUARY 8 & 9, FEBRUARY 7 & 8, MARCH 7
Space is limited – reservations required.
BARTON FINK?
Inyo County sues contractor, alleging fraud

Inyo County has filed a complaint against Wilder Barton Inc., an independent contractor which managed the County’s water systems at Independence, Lone Pine and Laws from mid-2014 through 2018.

The complaint, filed June 26 in Inyo County Superior Court, alleges that Wilder Barton shirked contractual obligations.

Wilder Barton is owned and operated by Patricia Wilder-Barton (who also serves as Inyo County’s Public Guardian), Floyd “Justin” Barton and Kenneth Wilder.

From the complaint’s introductory summary:
“Wilder Barton’s obligations under its contract with the county were simple: Wilder Barton was to read the water meters of County water system customers in Lone Pine, Independence and Laws near the end of each billing cycle (ed. note. The contract called for bi-monthly meter readings), record those meter readings in log books, bill customers based on those meter readings, and remit the money collected from customers to the County.

Wilder Barton did not complete those tasks. For whatever reason, Wilder Barton neglected to go house-to-house to read water meters and instead substituted invented ‘guessedimates’ of customers’ water usage in place of actual meter readings. Consequently, customers received bills that bore no resemblance to actual usage.

In the vast majority of cases, Wilder Barton’s practice of guesstimating customer water usage resulted in the customer being under-billed each billing cycle. While the amount of under-billing for each bill was generally small, Wilder Barton shirked its obligations under the contract and substituted guesstimates in place of actual meter reads for hundreds of County residents over the span of at least three years. When aggregated, these thousands of small errors add up to well in excess of $100,000 in lost revenue for the County.”

During the four-and-a-half years of the contract (which included two extensions to the original three-year deal), Wilder Barton amassed $924,300 in billings.

Espitia sentenced
The Mono County District Attorney’s Office, in conjunction with the Mammoth Lakes Police Department, had been investigating Mr. Espitia for nearly two years before his arrest. There were rampant rumors that Mr. Espitia would invite children to his home, provide them methamphetamine, and ultimately sexually abuse them. However, there was no corroborating evidence available at the time.

Early this year, one brave victim came forward to the District Attorney’s Office and detailed the abuse he had suffered for years beginning at the age of 12 by Mr. Espitia. The investigation intensified and ultimately five victims were identified, two of whom were sexually abused, and all five minor victims were provided methamphetamine, most on multiple occasions.

Lamb chopped
The state’s independent Commission on Judicial Performance, established in 1960, is responsible for investigating complaints of judicial misconduct and judicial incapacity and for disciplining judges under the California Constitution. The commission just issued a public warning on Tuesday, June 2, to Inyo County Superior Court Judge Brian Lamb for—for a third time in the last 13 years—signing salary affidavits stating that he was up to date on his casework when he was not.

All eight commissioners who participated in the case (there are eleven on the board) voted to publicly admonish the judge. Lamb had previously been issued an advisory letter in 2006 and a private admonishment in 2015.

Lamb has accepted the commission’s findings, reportedly telling the commission that he had “lost track” of the matter.

Fighting a DUI
Why was half of Mammoth called for jury duty this week? Answer: a local was fighting a DUI. A three-day jury trial began Wednesday at Mono County Superior Court. This is the story The Sheet heard in the courtroom.

Mammoth resident William Hays, a prep cook at 53 Kitchen and Cocktails according to his Facebook page, was trying to get his car out of a parking spot at the Holiday Haus. It was around 2 a.m.
MAMMOTH ACQUISITION

Mammoth Brewing reaches deal to buy Great Basin

By Lunch

It might not qualify as David acquiring Goliath, but as Mammoth Brewing Company CEO Sean Turner says, he can think of no other example within the brewing industry of a smaller brewer buying a larger one.

On Monday, Mammoth Brewing Company announced its intent to acquire Great Basin Brewing Co. of Reno, Nevada.

The deal will be debt and equity financed. Terms were not disclosed.

Mammoth Brewing Company currently produces 5,000 barrels annually and employs 45. Great Basin produces 10,000 barrels annually and employs 110.

The key to the deal, however, may be in the barrels Great Basin is not producing.

As Turner explained, Great Basin has production capacity of 30,000 barrels at its Reno facility, while Mammoth Brewing on multiple fronts beyond increased capacity.

“We’ve literally had to stop Southern California distribution in past years to make sure we had enough beer to serve locally.”

As Turner explained, Great Basin has production capacity of 30,000 barrels at its Reno facility, while Mammoth Brewing has been struggling to keep up with out of town demand.

“We’ve literally had to stop Southern California distribution in past years to make sure we had enough beer to serve locally.” Overall, Turner says he can typically fill 50-75% of his Southern California orders.

Two brewpubs Great Basin owns are also included in the deal, though no real estate is involved in the transaction.

The deal makes sense for Mammoth Brewing on multiple fronts beyond increased capacity.

1. It’s 25% cheaper to brew beer in Nevada versus California.

2. Great Basin has a canning line.

3. Great Basin distributes in Utah, and that market, along with the Bay Area, are targets for the merged entity starting next year.

Turner strongly emphasized (approx. every four minutes during the interviews) that “beer brewed in Mammoth will stay in Mammoth.”

They Said It:

“I had no idea that I was supposed to know so much by my second rodeo.”

-Clouds McCloud

The Year in Trends

Bigger companies dive back in:

While there were the typical number of business openings and closings this year, it did seem as if larger companies were more eager to make inroads in the Eastern Sierra.

The Knott closure in November being the notable exception.

The Grocery Outlet opened stores in Mammoth and Bishop. Family Dollar opened in the former J.C. Penney space on Main Street in Bishop. Big 5 Sporting Goods and Auto Zone opened in the for-

LITTLE NELL, BIG DEAL

Colorado-based developer purchases seven acres next to the Westin

By Sheet Staff

The Little Nell Hotel Group, a division of Aspen Skiing Company, has purchased the seven-acre lot that sits between the Westin Monache and Lake Mary Road above Canyon Boulevard.

The rumored price: $8.25 million.

In the middle ages, sometime around 2006, a development group led by former Dallas Cowboys football star Roger Staubach announced plans for a Ritz Carlton hotel at the site. The Great Recession nixed that bid.

The property was sold to The Little Nell Hotel Group by Cerberus Capital Management.

Mammoth Land Co. was the local LLC it operated under.

The company hired Mammoth local Dave Harvey to shepherd the property through Mammoth’s Planning Commission and Town Council in 2015 and 2016 to extend and amend a development agreement and entitlements through 2021.

According to a press release, “The intent by The Little Nell Hotel Group (TLNHG) is to develop a Limelight-branded hotel and residences to complement its existing owned and managed portfolio.

Since being formally introduced in January 2019, this is the first land purchase made by TLNHG, which is actively seeking acquisition and development opportunities in and out of mountain markets.

With this purchase, we also look forward to being an engaged member of the Mammoth Lakes community, and are committed to developing a property which supports the community’s values and aspirations,” says Alnio Azevedo, Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer, The Little Nell Hotel Group.

Editor’s note: I’m glad Mr. Azevedo is familiar with the community’s values and aspirations. I’ve lost track of what they are.

“We really like Mammoth as a market and it has the right elements to make for a successful development, including a strong feeder market in Southern California and recent and forthcoming investments by Mammoth Mountain,” Azevedo told the Aspen Times in a story which appeared September 20.

“He must love the escalator at Canyon.”

All Secondhand Smoke is Harmful

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Marijuana
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Cigarettes

Ready to Quit Tobacco, Chew or Vape?
Call the FREE California Smoker’s Helpline
1-800-NO-BUTTS
www.no-butts.org
Paid for by Mono County Tobacco Education Program
Two Die in Climbing Accident

Jennifer Shedden, 34, of Mammoth Lakes and Michelle Xue, 22, of Los Angeles died in a climbing accident on Red Slate Mountain last weekend. According to the Mono County Sheriff’s office, the pair had set out from Convict Lake on Saturday, October 26 to climb a couloir on Red Slate Mountain with the intention of returning the following evening.

Mono County Search and Rescue personnel determined that the women, though well prepared and equipped, were struck by a large rock fall event at an unknown time on their route.

They Said It:

- Photographer Bruce Willey

“You think of a tree as stationary. When a leaf falls ... it’s the only time that a tree can fly.”

-Bob Woodson

Skier Dies Near Hole-In-The-Wall

On March 19, 2019, at approximately 3:50 p.m., Mono County Sheriff’s Office received a 9-1-1 call reporting that a person was seen falling from the cliffs above Twin Lakes, across from Tamarack Lodge and north of “Hole in the Wall.” Our Dispatch immediately sent personnel from Mono County Paramedics, Mammoth Lakes Fire Department and Mammoth Lakes Police Department. Paramedic and firefighter personnel hiked up to the location of the fall and determined that the individual died as a result of the fall. Mono County Sheriff’s Office responded to handle the Coroner’s Investigation.

The deceased was identified as Justin Khoshnevis, 31 years old, of Los Alamitos, California. His next of kin was notified shortly after his body was recovered. It appears that Khoshnevis, who was alone, came across the ridgeline from “Dragon’s Tail,” which is out of bounds from Mammoth Mountain Ski Area. He was possibly attempting to ride “Hole in the Wall,” a popular backcountry chute, but it is not accessible from that approach. Khoshnevis’ snowboard was found along the path of his descent.

Anything outside the ski area boundary is considered backcountry.

Skier Dies Near Hole-In-The-Wall

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 deposited 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. 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 announced that 30-year old suspect, Patrick Zepeda, was in custody.

Ed Cesnalis, who rented the other unit in the duplex, commented on his Facebook page that Zepeda is “a good kid, took the wrong drug.”

By shopping at your local certified green businesses, you are voting with your dollars for a healthier, safer environment.

SHELTER DISTILLING
Small Batch Craft Distillery, Brewery & Kitchen

Embers
PEATED WHISKEY

MADE IN MAMMOTH LAKES, CA

Happy Hour 3pm - 5pm / Monday $2 Beers During Monday Night Football // Tuesday: $2 Tacos Wednesday: Locals Night Drink Specials // Open 11am - 11pm Every Day

100 Canyon Blvd In The Village At Mammoth // SHELTERDISTILLING.COM

Don’t forget to shop green this holiday season.

It felt like there were a lot of fatal accidents this year, on roadways, in the mountains and otherwise. Among those we didn’t have room for include Carne Lowgren getting struck and killed on his road bike in Chalfant, and Marvin McChristian’s truck jumping the curb at the Mono Cone, killing one and injuring several.

DONT FORGET TO SHOP GREEN THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.
BARS & MUSIC

Happy Hour / The Liberty Sports Bar and Grill. Happy hour 3-6 p.m. 1/2 off wings on Monday. More Info: See ad p. 17.

Outlaw Saloon Happy Hour Mon-Fri., Happy Hour from 4-6 p.m. Morrison’s Happy Hour 5-6 p.m. Sunday through Thursday in the bar. More Info: See ad p. 9.

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. 25.

Patre’s happy hour. 5-7 p.m. Signature cocktails, special menu. See ad. p. 25.

The Public House Local Mondays (all local beers $5 a pint). Karaoke Tuesdays @ 4. 1/2 Price Wine Wednesdays, Open Mic Thursdays.

Famous Slocums Happy Hour Weekdays: 4-6 p.m. Saturday 4-5:30 p.m. More Info: See ad p. 5.

T-Bar Social Club in June Lake. More info: www.tbarsocialclub.com. Giovanni’s Happy Hour daily 4-6 p.m. Lg. pizza & pitcher of beer = free wings. Shelter Distilling Open 11 am -11 pm Daily Happy Hour: 3-5 p.m. Sunday through Thursday/Half Off All Drinks Info: See ad. p. 15.

Side Door Café & Wine Bar Happy Hour: 3-6 p.m. daily Sunday Football - Happy Hour all day.

The Mogul happy hour 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the bar with food and drink specials. Bleu Handcrafted Foods. Bleu New Years Eve Dinner & Champagne Call 760-914-2538.

Devils Creek Distillery tasting room hours. 3-6 p.m. daily. Closed Sundays, Xmas and New Year’s Day. Location: Industrial Park, 123 Commerce Dr. Info: See ad p. 11.

53 Kitchen & Cocktails happy hour Friday-Sunday, Time: 2-4 p.m.

Black Velvet Coffee happy hour 4-6. Wine tastings on Wednesdays.

Rafter’s daily happy hour 4-6 p.m. All night happy hour on Thursday.

Jimmy’s Tavern 1/2 off select bottles on Wine Wednesday. 4-6 p.m. Happy hour every day 4-6 p.m. with special menu at the bar.

Lakani happy hour 3-6 p.m. daily. Mammoth Tavern Happy Hour 4-5:30 p.m. Half off draft beer, well drinks and wine. App specials

Friday, December 27 / Mo’Steph plays Rafter’s. Starts 10 p.m. Annual Ugly Sweater party at Rusty’s Saloon in Bishop with DJ Orbit. Time: 10 p.m.


Sunday, December 29 / Catch all the NFL action @ Liberty, Clocktower, Gomez in Mammoth and the Palate Palace in Bishop.

DJs spin @ Rafter’s. 10 p.m. ‘til close. Open Mic Night @ T-Bar. Time: 7 p.m. Karaoke @ Lakani with host Jesse Steele. Time: 9 p.m.

Monday, December 30 / Bowling ‘n Beats w/DJ Stephunk at Mammoth Rock ‘n Bowl. Starts 9:30 p.m.

Tuesday, December 31 / New Year’s Eve fun in a multitude of locales. See sidebar column next page for details.

BARS & MUSIC

Wednesday, January 1 / Hangover Party @ Rafter’s featuring live music from Safety Orange (SoCal beach rock & reggae). Time: 10 p.m.

Friday, January 3 / House Party @ Mammoth Rock ‘n Bowl featuring DJ Orbit and a beer pong tourney. Starts 10 p.m. Contact @ djorbit89 to get a spot in the bracket!

Monday, December 30 / Silent DJs in the Plaza @ The Village at Mammoth. Choose between three different live DJ stations and dance the night away. Time: 5 p.m.

Unbound Series #4: Skier Boardercross @ Mammoth Mountain Main Park. Spend the day as a spectator or sign-up to compete, with a chance to qualify for USASA championships. Head down to the Village afterwards for an appearance from Santa and Woolly. Time: 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Registration/ Info: https://www.mammothmountain.com/
### Upcoming Events

**Champagne and Classics**

The Felici Piano Trio’s annual fundraising party, Champagne & Classics, will take place this year on Saturday, December 28, 2019.

There will be a new format - a 6 p.m. concert at Mammoth Lakes Lutheran Church followed by a champagne reception with jazzy piano tunes, courtesy of Ari Schultid at the Schuldt residence. There will be plenty of fine finger foods, buckets of bubbly beverages, charming company, and, of course, marvelous music!

To make your reservation, please visit: https://felicitrio.com/concert-calendaredition.html

Cost is $125 for concert & reception, $50 for concert only.

All proceeds of Champagne & Classics support the Felici Piano Trio’s performance and education programs in Inyo and Mono Counties.

### New Year’s Eve Fireworks

The Village at Mammoth’s New Years Eve celebration kicks off at 5 p.m. with a performance by Stilt Cirq, a theatrical circus show, at 5:30 p.m., followed by a DJ at 4 p.m.

Shake Your Peace takes the stage at 8:15 p.m. Hailing from Utah, the band plays a "rock and roll hybridization" that folds in rhythms and musical styles from around the world.

The grand finale of the night, a fire-works display, takes place at 9 p.m. to celebrate the New Year with live music to continue afterwards!

**New Year’s Eve Options...**

- **Austria Hof:** Live entertainment. Tables available from $75. Regular menu plus NYE NYE specials.
- **Seating dinner from 4:15 p.m. Music Starts 9:30 p.m. Call for reservation at 760.934.2764.
- **Liberty Bar:** No Hassle/No Cover/No Commute/No Reservations/No Overpriced Anything New Year’s Eve FUN. All night happy hour and even a free champagne toast at 7 p.m. and midnight. Prime rib dinner available 5 p.m. ‘til they sell out!
- **Morrison’s:** 4 p.m. – close. Four-course preset menu. $85. Kids under 11 half-price. Reservations required. 760.934.7427/Morrisonrestaurantandbar.com.
- **Bleu:** New Year’s Eve Dinner & Champagne
  - "Four Course Dinner $55/Person
  - "Champagne Tasting $30/Person
  - Info/reservations: 760.914.2538.
- **Rafter’s:** Live music with Safety Orange (SoCal Beach Rock & Reggae). $25/person. Starts 10 p.m.
- **Red Lantern:** The legendary DJ RodneyO spins. $100 ticket, but the drinks are included.
- **Lakaluki:** Three-course set menu from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. $75 adults and $40 for children under 12. Includes champagne.
- **Clocktower Cellar:** $25 cover. Party starts 8 p.m. to continue afterwards!

**Town Stuff**

**Tuesday, December 31**

Close Out 2019 With an Alpin-Glow Sunset in the Lakes Basin. Depart at 4:35 p.m. for a 2.5-hour guided snowshoe tour, then gather for drinks in front of the fireplace back at Tamarack Lodge. Price is $65 per person and includes equipment. Tour is 1.5 miles and of moderate difficulty. Space is limited. Call 760.934.2442 to book your tour. Tour is subject to change, weather and conditions permitting.

**UPCOMING**

**January 12**


**January 16**

Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association’s Thursday night Winter Adventure Series starts. Location: USFS Auditorium in Mammoth. Time: 7 p.m. Tix: $15. Leadoff presenter on the 16th: Local professional climber Kate Rutherford.

**January 17-19**

A Night of Broadway @ Edison Theater in Mammoth. Spend an evening with some of the best Broadway tunes in history. Showtimes 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 4 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets online: $20/18/$10. Tickets at the door: $22 No discounts. VIP pre-show cocktail hour: Tickets $35 - starts at 6pm Come and join the actors at an appetizers and wine cocktail party - price also includes reserved seating.

**January 29-February 1**

Plan a return trip to Mammoth for the Land Rover U.S. Snowboard and Freeski Grand Prix. The best of the best skiers and snowboarders will compete in the Unbound Main Park and 22-foot halfpipe in slopestyle and halfpipe events. Check out this nationally televised contest up close and personal with prime viewing from Main Lodge.

**January 7**


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Sierra Employment Services, Inc. is hiring FT & FT for: Bilingual HR Assistant $15 to $17 MCDW Asst Engineer $32.10 - 42.62 FC Bookkeeper Bishop $DOE Tow Truck Driver ML $16-18 Housemen ML $15-16 General Laborers ML $15-20 Snow Shovelers ML $20-22

Sierra Employment.com

MAMMOTH ROK N BOWL

Mammoth Rock N Bowl has immediate openings for 2 Assistant Pinsetter Mechanics who will perform maintenance and repairs of Qubica/AMF Bowling Equipment. We currently have linen strippers to do heavy lifting. We are happy to train the right person. Email resumes to mammothrocknbowlandbar@gmail.com.

MAMMOTH ROCK N BOWL

Vacasa is hiring full and part-time housekeepers in Mammoth for a starting salary of $17/hour. Apply at vacasa.com/careers. We are looking for a person with great customer service and clean driving records. We are looking for office staff for the right person with great organizational skills and customer service background. Please inquire with Scottie at 760-941-7430, www.mammoth-taxi.com.

Vacasa

Town of Mammoth Lakes (Alpenhof Lodge) is looking for applications for the position of Assistant Finance Director. Salary: $32.10-42.62. This is a mid-management position reporting to the City Administrator. Responsibilities include ensuring that the City's financial statements and audits; forecasting; Budgeting; record and financial transactions; research and development of the Finance Department; assist with the preparation of the City's annual budget; perform responsible technical accounting and budget work in the preparation, maintenance, and processing of accounting records and general financial reports; coordinate and research and development of revenue and expenditure forecasting; assist in the preparation of the City's annual budget; perform responsible technical accounting and budget work in the preparation, maintenance, and processing of accounting records and general financial reports; coordinate and research and development of revenue and expenditure forecasting; assist in the preparation of the City's annual budget; perform responsible technical accounting and budget work in the preparation, maintenance, and processing of accounting records and general financial reports; coordinate and research and development of revenue and expenditure forecasting.

City of Bishop A/Finance Director

City of Bishop is accepting applications for the position of Finance Director. The City of Bishop is currently seeking a Finance Director who will perform journey-level work in the fields of current and environmental analysis. The position requires a high level of responsible technical accounting and budget work in the preparation, maintenance and processing of accounting records and general financial reports. The selected candidate will develop and maintain financial information and develop and maintain information. For more information, visit: www.bishopcity.com. Tel. 760-873-5863 Ext. 22. Applications will be accepted until 4 p.m. on Friday, October 10, 2020. EOE.

City of Bishop

Side Door/Join come an amazing team. We are looking for cooks, dishwashers, expeditors, bartenders and more! Stop by and see us in The Village and ask for Jason Limnios or email your resume to sdfood@hiltoncreekcsd.com. Inyo County Office of Education seeks a Full-Time Mental Health Therapist Salary: $81,750 - $75,944.80 Hours: 8 hours per day, 190 days per year Job Summary: Under the supervision of the Director of Special Education, the Mental Health Therapist is primarily responsible for helping students to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally by providing individual, group and family counseling and collaborating with educators, parents, and other professionals to create a safe, healthy, and productive learning environment. Compliance with Federal and State laws and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a priority.

Inyo County Office of Education

MAMMOTH COMMUNITY WATER DISTRICT’S General Manager’s Office is currently recruiting for one permanent Water & Wastewater Maintenance Superintend- ent position in the Maintenance Department. For Application Information/ TO APPLY: Please see the District website http://www.mcwd.dst.ca.us/employment. html.

MAMMOTH COMMUNITY WATER DISTRICT’S General Manager’s Office is also recruiting for one part-time Water & Wastewater Maintenance Systems Administrator position in the Information Services Department. See above for application information.

MAMMOTH LAKES

CITY OF BISHOP SEES SENIOR PLANNER

The City of Bishop is accepting applications for the position of Senior Planner, a mid-management position reporting to the City Administrator/Planning Director who will perform journey-level work in the field of current and environmental analysis, city zoning code revision and updates, and managing a variety of housing grant programs. Planning related work includes: Project management; representing the city in intergovernmental relations; supervising professional planners and aides in the fields of current and advance planning, including economic and environmental analysis. The City of Bishop offers a generous benefit package that includes health, dental, vision, vacation and retirement benefits. The salary is currently fixed at $7,389 per month. A detailed job description and application forms are available at City Hall, 377 West Main Street, Bishop, CA 93514 or at www.cityofbishop.com. Forms are available at City Hall, 377 West Main Street, Bishop, CA 93514 or at www.cityofbishop.com. Tel. 760-873-5863 Ext. 22. Applications will be accepted until 4 p.m. on Jan. 3, 2020. EOE.

CITY OF BISHOP

For Rent
Seeking Lodgers for my spare bedrooms in Mammoth Knolls. Upscale home and neighborhood located three-tenths of a mile downhill from the Village. 31 days or longer contract required by zone. Possible master bedroom upgrade during Christmas holiday. Inquire at bowesdavid1@gmail.com for photos, rates and calendar possibilities.

3BDR, 2BA unit located in Lee Vining garage, WD, stove, Bridge, $1,600/mo. Call Dennis at 760.914.0492

The Carson Peak Inn in June Lake is looking for a new lead cook. Pay DOE. Hours available for the right person. Contact Matt, 760-914-1704 call or text.
Terry Whitman:

Terry was very much a Whitman - in the tradition of the great poet and namesake Walt. Pull up a few Walt Whitman quotes and you hear both the brilliance and the constant examination and re-examination which drove yet plagued both Terry (who passed away last Friday at his home in Bishop) and Walt.

For the past eight years, Terry worked as a manager at Yamatani Restaurant in Bishop. Before that, he was a longtime right-hand man of Tim Dawson’s at Nevada’s Restaurant in Mammoth. Dawson knew him for forty years. Her "He was dependable as the day is long," said Dawson, who told the following tale involving Chip White, one of Terry’s original mentors in Mammoth. Terry had gone home to visit family in Indiana when Mammoth received early snow. White, according to Dawson, called Terry and said he had to get back home - they’d be opening right away.

Marty Burgenbauch (b. 1948):

"It's fairly ironic that the last band (of many bands over the years) Marty Burgenbauch was a part of was called "The Jaded Haters," as Marty was as far from "jaded" and "hater" as a man could possibly be."

As wife Judy Burgenbauch said, Marty appeared in a 1969 issue of Time Magazine after a series of riots in Santa Barbara, Calif. He was photographed in his hippie hair and playing a flute. Nearly a half century later, he dyed his hair purple for "wacky hair day" as a Mammoth schoolbus driver. In between, there was a wife of 33 years (37.5 if you count the courtship). Three children. Countless gigs as a drummer. Countless smiles. And it’s Marty’s relationship with his children that struck people. As Josh Mann, a bandmate in the Jaded Haters, observed "His relationship with his kids was like nothing I’ve ever seen. They were all best friends, and they all always smiled while they played. It was attractive."

Kathleen Bernasconi (b. 1955):

Kathleen Bernasconi, registered nurse, mother of four, member of the Fort Independence Tribe and a mainstay in the Mammoth Hospital Emergency Room for two decades, died on December 29, 2018 after a brief illness. She was married for 41 years to Peter Bernasconi, whom she met in the 6th grade when Kathleen’s family moved from Lone Pine to Independence. As Peter’s sister Jayne recalled, when her brother and Kathleen were at band camp in 6th grade, her father, who was Superintendent of Schools of Inyo County at the time, caught the pair heading out to a distant field on a “walk.” "Dad said that when he asked them where they were going, Kathleen replied, ‘We’re going to talk about getting married and having four kids.’ Which is exactly what happened.

Rodger Guffey (b. 1943):

Rodger Guffey moved to Mammoth in 1969 and founded Perry’s Pizza in 1971. Owned and operated several local restaurants over the years. Deeply engaged in community. Charter member of Rotary. And as friend Sam Walker recalled, "Rodger was never stuck for an answer, and never shy about offering his opinion.”

Judge Edward Denton (b. 1926):

Judge Edward Denton served Mono County for 43 years as a District Attorney, a County Counsel and as a Superior Court judge. Denton grew up in the Mojave Desert, between Ramsburg and Trona. He graduated from the University of Nevada Reno.

Interesting people tend to migrate to the Sierra - drawn by the beauty, the remoteness, and by the camaraderie of tight-knit communities. The tight-knit part... that’s what makes each of these names feel like a punch to the gut.

They Said It:

"It’s a good thing sushi doesn’t get cold."

-Robbie Tani on Terry Whitman’s penchant for storytelling on the job.
John Wayne? When he was shooting a film on location in Bodie, he asked Jean to bring him lunch one day. He wanted her famous chicken. So Jean prepares the meal and sets out for Bodie, but ... the road to Bodie is rough and her car breaks down and she ends up getting there 90 minutes late.

The director comes rushing up when she arrives and starts to give her the business. You’re killing the shoot, he says. Wayne won’t work until he’s had his lunch. Then the Duke saunters up. He doesn’t mention a thing about her being late. All he says is, “Did you bring the chicken?” Then they went off, the two of them, to a private little spot where John Wayne liked to take his lunch.

Rocky Audenried (b. 1958):

Rocky Audenried, longtime local and heart of the Mono Cone, met his wife Cara at Mammoth High School and were inseparable since. Their two children, Carrie Reynolds and Joey Audenried, were born and raised in Mammoth as well. Rocky was also well known as the owner of Audenried’s Tile during his days in the construction business.

In 1995, Rocky and Cara bought the Mono Cone Restaurant in Lee Vining. Every year from April until October you could find Rocky making the best burgers in the Sierras. His wife, Cara, was the face at the window taking the orders for the restaurant.
If you're looking for love in all the wrong places, that means you're probably reading The Sheet personals. Here's a sampling of the year's best.

**The Pamper Pedal**

**Saturday, December 28, 2019**

**YEAR IN REVIEW: PERSONALS**

I hope to see you ... at a locals NYE party. If you buy the drinks, I’ll provide the favors. In search of ... place to eat out? Try my warming hut. I saw you ... think the Chargers will finally beat the Patriots in the playoffs this year. Did you know Billy Joel even wrote a song about it? River of Dreams.

In search of ... new sport? How about lawn bowling? I’ll be hosting tryouts this weekend on my finely trimmed Brazilian grass.

I saw you ... stuck in your driveway, but I didn’t bother to stop and help, because you never let me get stuck in your garage. In search of ... a backhoe to clear my alley, but really, any how do. I have a resume which demonstrates 16 years of bullshit in, bullshit out!

I hope to see you ... at the Pamper Pedal. I heard you ... are all about Planning the Future. I hope to see you ... at the Mammoth Lakes Film Festival. Now I know why you drive a Subaru - you just can’t handle a Cadillac.

**In search of ... someplace to eat out? Try my warming hut.**

I hope to see you ... at Liberty on Saturday. I hope you ... are at Not Your Grandma’s Fair this weekend, because I know your team is in for a shoot out. I hope to see you ... at The Parcel workday. I hope you ... are involved in a performance this weekend for National Public Lands Day. Despite how you tend to get around, I don’t think you’ve been declared the National Public Land - yet, at least.

I saw you ... participating in the Mammoth Film Festival this weekend. Since I hear the focus of the festival is on nature photography, how about you come by my place for a shoot we’ll call “Still Life With Hot Ass.”

I heard you ... had sex in the library. Was this before or after you took out the kama sutra? I hope you ... have sex in the library. Please note: It’s not the Do-Me Sexual System.

I heard you ... have March Madness. If you let me penetrate your zone, I’ll come over and spin my jumper.

I see you ... don’t like the new fishing regulations because you’re worried about too much catch and release. But enough about Lakunaki.

I hope to see you ... at Gomez’s for Sunday brunch. I’ll buy you a Mammoth Margarita if you’ll come back to my place afterward and show me your sexy pants.

I saw you ... set up a customer service desk. Does your team have a chance? No. I wouldn’t eLi to you ...

I heard you ... received a $36,000 raise. IT personel.

Parcel. Myself, I’m all about Planting one on your Arse. I hope to see you ... at the Tri-County Fair this weekend, because I know your favorite is the pig. I hope to see you ... at the Demolition Derby, because there’s nothing better than an evening of rear-endings and blown gaskets.

I saw you ... are riding in the Gran FondO. I hope to see you ... in the Peloton, because there’s nothin’ Gran or Fondo about it.

I saw you ... are concerned about all the IPCC. I hope to see you ... at Liberty on Saturday. I hope you ... are at Not Your Grandma’s Fair this weekend, because I know your team is in for a shoot out. I hope to see you ... at The Parcel workday. I hope you ... are involved in a performance this weekend for National Public Lands Day. Despite how you tend to get around, I don’t think you’ve been declared the National Public Land - yet, at least.

I saw you ... got out of a customer service tent to answer questions about the power outage and to charge phones and hand out little candy bars. Nice try, but how about some binkis, beer a portable hot tub and 50% off my next bill?

I saw you ... at Sierra Sundance during Monday’s outage. Because the last thing the world needs is an overflowing pile of limp cucumbers.

I saw you ... in trouble asking for a favor. I guess this is what happens when you attempt to Di-Biden conquer.

I hope to see you ... at a performance of the theater company down the street. Maybe afterwards we can recruit some audience members back to my place for an impromptu screening of the latest John Magenerie.

I hope to see you ... in search of ... a foursome to play with for the Lakegum golf tourney. Well, technically, I guess I’m searching for a three-some - no surprise there!

I hope to see you ... volunteering this weekend for National Public Lands Day. Despite how you tend to get around, I don’t think you’ve been declared the National Public Land - yet, at least.

I saw you ... in search of ... someone to go to the baseball game. I hope to see you ... at the Women in Business Conference. Shocking. I thought for sure you were interested in some tranny action.

I saw you ... during the democratic debates this week. I think there’s a market for just about any interest in being my own personal Pumped Storage project?

I saw you ... row, row, rowed your boat, gently into oblivion. Is it because you spent too much time in the Schade?

I saw your team ... is playing in the co-ed softball tourney this weekend. Not sure how your team will do, but based upon the time we’ve spent together, you’ve got to be the best catcher in the tournament.

I hope to see you ... at Not Your Grandy’s Bingo night @ the Warming Hut. If we choose our cards right, we can play Oh 69 all night!

I hope to see you ... at the Kids Fishing Festival Saturday - unless your name is Jeffrey Epstein.

I hope to see you ... at Blusens, because I don’t care if you popa Chubbly is a Trombone Shorty, so long as you can hold a note.

I saw you ... at the Women in Business event Wednesday. Here’s a hint: Spanx always produces results.

I hope to see you ... during the democratic debates this week. I think there’s a market- ing opportunity in here somewhere for Hammer Punch.

I hope to see you ... at the Mammoth Margarita Festival, because tequila has a wonderful effect on your wardrobe and the odds of a malfunction.

I saw you ... at the Mammoth Margarita Festival. Now I know why you drive a Subaru - you just can’t handle a Cadillac.

I hope to see you ... at The Parcel workshop. I assume you’re one of the Studio Pin-ups!

I heard you ... are all about Planning the
The year in Firings

No Morris

On February 9, John Morris was fired after seven years as head volleyball coach for Mammoth High School (MHS). This comes after Morris coached the 2018-19 team to Mammoth’s highest finish in the state tournament in nearly three decades.

Morris said that the reasons that Principal Chris Powell (who resigned his position two months later) gave for the firing were, “that some of the players weren’t happy - weren’t having fun - and that if I continued to coach some of them might choose not to play.”

One parent confirmed that a group of athletes approached Mammoth Principal Chris Powell and asked him to remove Morris as head coach.

Morris was not given any details as to why his athletes were unhappy with him.

Last year, William Bauman stepped down as head coach of the MHS Girls Basketball team. He was not asked to leave, but said that he felt that his situation was somewhat similar to Morris’s.

"John Morris and I had a similar style," Bauman said. "We are ‘tellers.’ People nowadays don’t like that.”

Bauman said that a ‘teller’ is someone who, “if you see something going on, you call it out.”

“The culture today, and especially in Mammoth, is if you look at someone the call it out.”

Mammoth, is if you see something going on, you call it out.”

John Morris and I had a similar style, “Bauman said. “People nowadays don’t like that.”

Our new Superintendent Jon Ray,” The stand matched Custer’s. Ray was fired November 1.

In Charles James’s post-mortem, he wrote, “According to the recent average statewide multi-year Smarter Balanced Scale Score (SBAC) in Math and English Language Arts, the Bishop Unified School District basically sucks—and has sucked for the past several years.

To address the concerns of less than satisfactory academic performance by the school district, the school board hired a new Superintendent, Jon Ray, formerly of the Klamath-Trinity Joint Unified School District, over the summer. He was supposed to serve as an “agent of change” to turn things around in the underperforming district. And now, only two months into the new school year, the school board announced in a letter to the community “that the BUSD board and the Superintendent, Jon Ray, have decided that it is in their mutual interest to amicably part ways.”

The school board, in bowing to intense pressure from the Bishop Teacher’s Association (teacher’s labor union) and parents vociferously voicing anger over MAP assessment testing that began at the beginning of the new school year, did what any courageous public officials do when in crisis: Find a scapegoat. And say goodbye to the ‘agent of change.’

Ray-Done

After a tumultuous three months, Jon Ray was removed as the Bishop Unified School Superintendent.

As Lunch reported on October 5, “Stacy Van Nest of the Bishop Teachers Association said 84% of the teachers she surveyed have no confidence in Ray’s leadership.”

And a plurality of teachers have no confidence in the School Board.

One 33-year veteran said she’s never seen morale so low and teachers so stressed.

Clearly, the letter to the community sent out by the BUSD Board (and reprinted on page two of last week’s paper) didn’t help. As Math teacher Barbara Fernandez said, just the first sentence, referencing an “epidemic” of academic under-performance, used strong language meant to elicit fear. An example of the communication issues which have led to this crossroads.

Many were offended at the letter’s implication that Bishop schools have been failing for decades - offending pretty much everyone who’s taught at or graduated from local schools during that time period.

So how did it get so sideways so quickly?

The infamous Board letter stated, “The Board of BUSD has taken a stand through our new Superintendent Jon Ray.”

Tom Smith, President of the Mammoth Community Water District Board of Directors, has announced that Pat Hayes is stepping down after six years as General Manager of the Mammoth Community Water District. This decision was reached after discussions between the Board and Mr. Hayes, which resulted in a mutual agreement that a change in leadership would be beneficial for the District. This change takes effect immediately.

The news was both surprising and not. Two letters which appeared in the May 11 and June 8 issues questioned Mr. Hayes’ use of a district vehicle.

While the use of the vehicle was part of his contract, the optics didn’t look good.

“I live near Palos Verdes. This weekend I saw a Mammoth Community Water District Ford Explorer vehicle at the Trump National Golf Course. I called the District. I was told this is the General Manager’s vehicle.

This is the second time in six months that I have seen the local water district’s vehicle…

Ray-Done

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