NIH PARTS WITH FLANIGAN

Press Release

A new leadership team is in place at the Northern Inyo Health-care District Board of Directors, the Board voted 5-0 to terminate the employment of Dr. Kevin S. Flanigan, MD MBA as Chief Executive Officer pursuant to his Employment Agreement, without cause, effective May 4, 2020.

Board Chair Jean Turner said the District wants to clarify that any reports that alleged Dr. Flanigan was accused of embezzlement are false and untrue. The investigation focused on financial and operational issues, and was never about embezzlement. The District is moving in a new direction and wishes Dr. Flanigan the best in his future endeavors.

Kelli Davis will continue to serve the District in the role of Interim CEO alongside Interim Chief Medical Officer William Timbers, MD; Chief Nursing Officer Tracy Aupel; and Chief of Staff Stacey Brown, MD. In a message released to the staff earlier today, Turner noted the challenges staff faced since the Board placed Dr. Flanigan on paid administrative leave February 13.

"While the last few months have been incredibly challenging for our entire workforce, I note the steady and unrelenting teamwork that has become a trademark of this NIHHD staff," Turner wrote. "On behalf of the Board, I thank each of you for your many emails, phone calls and visits to provide input, while simultaneously taking care of yourselves and our community through this COVID-19 pandemic. You have equipped the Board with your information and insights about challenges and opportunities ahead. I am confident that we will get through all such challenges and find even greater opportunities for problem solving.

4TH AND LONGING ...

Mammoth punts on Independence Day celebration

By Page & Hite

O n a Wednesday April 29, Mammoth Lakes Town Council held yet another special meeting over zoom to discuss the path forward — including a status update on Fourth of July festivities. The meeting started with a long discussion regarding what opening up the state, and the Eastern Sierra, will look like.

Town Manager Dan Holler emphasized comments Governor Gavin Newsom made at a press conference. "The Governor said California is ‘weeks, not months, away’ from entering stage 2," said Holler. According to Governor Newsom, stage 1 is, “Improving testing and tracing, procuring personal protective equipment and ensuring hospital surge capacity.” And we are apparently ‘weeks’ away from, “Opening, with adaptations, school and child care facilities and lower-risk workplaces like retail stores, manufacturers and offices. Park and trail restrictions.”

The staff presentation mentioned that Newsom emphasized state government, not local officials, will decide when to enter the second stage. Mayor Bill Sauser agreed, “I want to reiterate ... we are under the state. We can not do less than the state orders. You are hearing it [all] over town that the governor doesn’t have the power to do what he did. Well, he does have that power until someone challenges him in court.”

The process will be gradual and cautious but the Town is preparing for the post-quarantine world. See 4TH & LONG, page 4

McCLEAN LIVING

A PEER ELSEWHERE

How other resort destinations are strategizing/reacting to the pandemic

By Page & Hite

N avigating the COVID-19 pandemic and abiding government directives on gathering and staying at home runs counter to the goals of resort areas, like the Eastern Sierra, whose economies rely on bringing in visitors. With a lack of visitors, local businesses and marketing entities like Mammoth Lakes Tourism have had to reorient and rethink strategies going forward.

The Wood River Chamber of Commerce, director of the Wood River Visitor Center, has kept up attention for its high number of cases both within the county and from tourists who had visited the region’s ski slopes. Mike McKenna, executive director of the Wood River Valley Chamber of Commerce, reported that they had to “pull the plug last” in terms of shutting down. McKenna said that the state of Idaho, the area’s largest source of advertising funding, asked that they hold off on marketing for the time being. He expressed optimism from survey results that indicated people were more interested in coming to small town areas, with a caveat of protecting the area from being hit hard again.

“The consumer is gonna decide what happens here,” McKenna said. “We’re really gonna find out what people want and what they’re looking for.”

Sun Valley’s tourism agency, Visit Sun Valley, has kept up some of its marketing efforts, albeit with a slightly different spin.

According to Scott Fortner, Executive Director at Visit Sun Valley, the non-profit was doing things to “keep people dreaming,” while simultaneously working with the community and government agencies to build towards a reopening.

“We’re there trying to provide things for them to be inspired [by],” Fortner said. See PEERS, page 15 Anything but free parking Big pharma spat PPP crapshoot The face of corona Mask fashion

p. 3/ p. 6, 8, 13/ p. 2/ p. 14/ p. 10/
Jack of all Lunches

IF

My dad was always fond of Kipling’s poem “If” and had several favorite stan-
zas. There was the opening couplet:

If you can keep your head when all about you/
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you

There’s some of that happening right now - a fair amount of hysteria. A dwin-
dling bank account is no friend of reason.

As a result, average class sizes at MHS are expected to increase from 17 in 2019-
20 to 22 in 2020-2021.

As Mammoth Unified School Superintendent Jennifer Wildman said Thursday,
“I knew coming in [Wildman took the job last year] that we had a big deficit to
work, telling people to stay away from South Lake Tahoe. “It was counterintui-
tive for a destination marketing organization to say please don’t come here, “ said
Chaplin.

Meanwhile, the high school will be welcoming a relatively large class of 9th
graders this fall - more than 100 students.

My dad was great about this one, because the first fifteen years of my career fea-
tured multiple disasters and scant few triumphs.

One thing that I don’t believe Mammoth met with very well over the past few
years was Triumph. We were all a bit too self-congratulatory and a little too certain
that we had unlocked the magical marketing formula to infinite future wealth.

So one had the guts to take money off the table. Because no one wanted to
touch the magic formula. Don’t mess with success was the mantra. Best part about
that mantra - not messing with something means not having to expend any mental
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And Elizabeth’s fabulous welcome signs.

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Looking ahead

Dear Editor:

Tom Cage offered a plan last week on how to reopen our town. Among his many justifications is “There has not been a flood into our Hospital.”

This is true, but the virus did not magically disappear. Rather, our town shut down and nearly everyone practices social distancing, wears masks, and our heroic merchants instituted strict protective measures.

While these practices flattened our local infection curve, they don’t eliminate the virus. Someone might arrive with a new case.

One of the concerns I’ve heard about since the four-hour zoom meeting is that 120 people attended to voice their concerns or complaints about the proposal. Some believe their voices were not heard and/or ignored.

The meeting was four hours long.

Another one of the concerns that I have read about is the school situation. As a current student of Lee Vining High School, I feel I can provide some insight into that.

Our school has an enrollment that fluctuates between 40-60 students across the entire school body. The project analysts predicted a 50% enrollment rate in the high school enrollment. At the higher end, this projects to an increase in enrollment of 20 to 30 students. This is hardly a large increase. The school may have to adjust and adapt but these changes can be made.

As for place-based education trips that some schools do not have. The trips could still take place but would have to be adjusted to the new numbers but the school has held larger enrollments in the past.

On the topic of population, a concern that I have both read and heard about is that the population would quadruple. This concern seems highly unlikely to come true as the population of Lee Vining is roughly 250. That would estimate the new population to be 1,000. If we assume that the Tioga Inn will hire 100 new people from outside the area and that each worker will bring 2 people with them - a highly likely scenario. Even if the population doubled, it would help local business and the county through increased tax revenue.

Another reality that needs to be addressed; just because the Tioga Inn project has been approved does not guarantee it will happen, and neither is guaranteed. There will be time to adjust to the change when the project starts.

As a person who was born, raised, attends school and is a local employee in Lee Vining, I look forward to the new faces and diversity that will come in the future and to see something new happen to the area I have grown up in and love.

India Mollett
Lee Vining

The following letter was initially sent to Mammoth Town Council and Town Manager Dan Heller before being submitted for publication.

Lobbying for the Basin

To Mammoth Town Council/Dan Heller:

Thank you all for your tireless public service on behalf of Mammoth Lakes! After listening to the marathon calls online last week, I became concerned about a seeming lack of awareness or concern among the assembled decision-makers for summer businesses like ours in the Lakes Basin, and thus I feel I must write to you all to ask you to advocate for us.

It appears to me that there is a possibility that businesses in downtown Mammoth would be allowed to reopen before the Lakes Basin and summer businesses in the Basin would reopen. This seems like a bad idea to me. And not at all fair.

I don’t know what else I can do besides write you all—on behalf of our employees, our customers, and our service providers in town—to request that we have the opportunity to re-open in a safe and responsible way as soon as downtown Mammoth has that opportunity—by June 1st if possible.

Yes, I understand that the USFS and state government both have a lot to say about the subject of reopening the Lakes Basin, but the extent to which TOML does or does not support the opening of the Basin—or at least us summer businesses—at the earliest responsible time—IS HUGE.

We really need all of you to see us Lakes Basin summer businesses as part of the solution and to support us, not to forget about us. Ignore us, or let us perish as collateral damage to a desire by some to leave the Lakes Basin road closed to the public. Please.

From my perspective, the Lakes Basin summer businesses like Crystal Crag Lodge are excellent businesses to re-open responsibly. Here’s why:

1) Guests stay in their own cabins. Miles outside of downtown. Spaced out over ten acres. Socially-distanced family units. Just like Mammoth residents, except miles from downtown.

2) Guests can cook their own meals in their own cabins—if town restaurants aren’t able to accommodate them safely. Just like Mammoth residents.

3) CCL will implement strict transmission prevention measures for staff and guests.

More LETTERS, page 14
One initiative mentioned at the meeting was the Fourth of July celebration. According to Holler, all of the normal activities have been cancelled. That means the annual parade, fireworks, Pops in thePark (Felici Trio concert), or any large gatherings. The Town Council discussion revolved around creative solutions to achieve some semblance of a celebration.

A press release from the Town states, “This decision does not come lightly to any of the partnering entities. These measures are being taken to protect the health and well-being of all Mono County residents and our many loyal visitors.”

In the same release, Mono County Health Officer Tom Boo said, “This is a very serious situation and now, more than ever, we must be vigilant about following guidance and directives in order to flatten the curve and to decrease the strain on our local health care system. Physical distancing and other mitigations must continue even after the Stay At Home Order is lifted. We are experiencing pressure to approve some type of celebration in place. This town has gotten behind its Fourth of July celebration going all the way back when I was a little boy. It is not just about the tourists, it is one of the best local events of the season. So anything we can do to help shore that up [would be great],” said Sauser.

“It sounds like something that we can get around. If we begin to soften things, maybe we will have a little bit of a taste of how it is going to go,” said Mayor Pro-Tem Lynda Salcido.

The Town of Mammoth Lakes is very cognizant of the image it’s portraying. In order to be a tourist destination post quarantine the Town wants people to believe we are a safe destination. And part of that is to make the rules very clear as things begin to open up. “If we are going to skip it, we move forward with the parameters that we have to live with,” said Councilmember Kirk Stapp.

In an email to The Sheet, Holler gave an example of what this could look like. “We could set up a Mammoth Lakes Lions pancake breakfast that has a limit of 50 people - no more than 4 per table (ideally with family members) with 6” gaps between tables, hand washing, etc. If we could add 5-10 places in Town we may be able to work something out. Also we do have a bit of a cease fire, but the war isn’t over.”

The release also quoted the Town’s Parks and Recreation Director Stuart Brown, “Cancelling this generational event was an extremely difficult decision, but in our current environment of uncertainty, safety is our top priority.” Council was supportive of the conservative approach but did desire some type of celebration in place. “This town has gotten behind its Fourth of July celebration going all the way back when I was a little boy. It is not just about the tourists, it is one of the best local events of the season. So anything we can do to help shore that up [would be great],” said Sauser.

“This decision does not come lightly to any of the partnering entities. These measures are being taken to protect the health and well-being of all Mono County residents and our many loyal visitors.”

As a reminder, many roads that access these areas may also be closed for winter conditions. All visitor centers are closed. All campgrounds are closed. South Tufa (Mono Lake), Convict Lake, Hot Creek, and June Lake Beach day-use areas are closed. All campground restrooms, trailhead restrooms in those areas, and day use restrooms are closed.

Customers needing information may call during regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, closed on Saturdays, 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm). Please be patient since call volume is significant.

• Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center:760-924-5500
• White Mountain Ranger Station and Bishop Supervisor’s Office: 760-873-2400
• Eastern Sierra Visitor Center, Lone Pine: 760-476-6200

If you do plan on visiting the Inyo National Forest, please be aware that:
• No trash removal is currently offered - please pack out all trash and waste
• All toilet facilities are currently closed - please plan accordingly
• Avoid high-risk activities – law enforcement and search and rescue operations may be limited
• If an area is crowded, please search for a less occupied location

Closing any site for any reason is not an action we take lightly, but protecting our visitors and employees remains our highest priority. We are working with our state and local partners to determine the best path forward to safely reopen closed sites.

We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our national forests safe and healthy for everyone’s use.

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USFS Extends Closures

The USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, announced that most developed recreation sites will remain closed through May 15. All Inyo National Forest campgrounds, trailheads, and general forest areas; these areas remain accessible for public use. However, the Inyo National Forest has cancelled the issuance of wilderness permits, including Mt. Whitney day use and overnight permits, through May 15.

Typically, the wilderness quota system begins for the forest on May 1 and reservations for permits are issued via recreation.gov. Inyo County has advised that people do not engage in high risk activities. Mt. Whitney, especially this time of year, is an area where rescues and recoveries are common. People who have been awarded a permit reservation for Mt. Whitney or any other trailhead on the Inyo National Forest will receive a notice from recreation.gov that notifies them that their reservation has been cancelled and a refund has been issued. Additionally, all Inyo National Forest campgrounds are closed.

Providing financial solutions for all aspects of your life.

4TH AND LONG continued from page 1

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OBITUARY

Wade Meade 1990-2020

Former Mammoth Lakes resident Wade Meade, who spent seven years of his childhood in the Eastern Sierra, died in a climbing accident in Big Cottonwood Canyon outside Salt Lake City, Utah on April 8. He was 29.

The son of Beth and Greg Meade, Wade was born in Westlake Village and grew up in Malibu.

The family had had a cabin at Tom’s Place since the 1950s and father Greg visited the area throughout his youth. Beth and Greg later established a foothold of their own when they purchased a Chateau Blanc unit in the late ’80s.

Wade’s parents were both climbers. Half their honeymoon was spent climbing all over the western U.S.

By the time the family had left Mammoth in 2006, Wade was a member of the Mammoth Mountain Ski Team, the cross-country ski team and the Mammoth Sharks swim team. He also studied martial arts in Mammoth and even had a role in the MHS theatrical production of “Seussical.”

He finished high school in Morro Bay and then attended Cal-Poly San Luis Obispo, where he majored in kinesiology. At the time of his death, he was enrolled in nursing school.

According to his father Greg, Wade really got into climbing post-college as he spent his first two years after graduation in Yosemite Valley cleaning rooms.

Wade then moved to Utah where he worked for the Elements Wilderness Program, which specializes in therapeutic intervention for boys ages 13-17.

He also got into working ski patrol at Park City. 2019-2020 was his fourth patrol season.

Wade was a very experienced backcountry enthusiast - a skier, rock climber, ice climber and certified wilderness EMT.

In 2019, his father recalls, Wade trained in the Eastern Sierra for a trip to Peru to climb a 20,000-foot peak. His training schedule:

- Day one: Climb Whitney
- Day two: Rest
- Day three: Lone Pine Peak
- Day four: Rest
- Day five: Williamson

Wade was freakishly athletic and strong. As his close friend from Morro Bay, Robbie Kellett (who now works at Footloose in Mammoth), attests, “He was a huge guy. 6’4” 220 lbs. He could’ve played college football if he wanted.”

In Utah, his main adventure partner was roommate and fellow ski patrolman Tyler Grundstrom, a Salt Lake City native. Grundstrom was Meade’s climbing partner for his final, fateful climb.

And I’ll give you the brief version here because, really, Michael Levy put together a fine tribute to Meade in Rock and Ice that offers keen insight and full accounting of the event at https://rockandice.com/climbing-news/friends-remember-wade-meade/

Wade reached up to pull on a flake and one-foot by three-foot sized rock came loose. It just happened to come down and slice the 10.5mm belay rope in half, sending Wade tumbling 50’ to the ground and then a further 25’ bouncing over talus until he came to a stop.

Grundstrom initiated life-saving measures and Wade was conscious for some period after his fall, but he did not make it.

Grundstrom, who said he “saw it all in perfect clarity,” actually apologized for not being able to talk about it too in-depth. “I’m definitely in therapy,” he said.

A group of 22 ski patrollers hiked up for a naked ski in honor of Wade post-accident.

As Greg Meade said, “I can safely say 10-15 people told us Wade was their best friend,” in the aftermath of his death.

“Wade was freakishly athletic and strong. As his close friend from Morro Bay, Robbie Kellett (who now works at Footloose in Mammoth), attests, “He was a huge guy. 6’4” 220 lbs. He could’ve played college football if he wanted.”

“There’s a group chat going,” he continued, weeks after his death, because Wade was just so inspiring and memorable. “He was constantly breaking into song, reciting poetry, telling campfire stories ... I remember talking to him one day and he told me he planned to ride horses in Kazakhstan that summer. I asked him if he’d ever ridden a horse. He said no, but ... that was Wade. Everything was in play.”

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How’d Robbie meet Wade? “We’d watch Jackie Chan movies and then reenact the fight scenes after.”

In Utah, his main adventure partner was roommate and fellow ski patrolman Tyler Grundstrom, a Salt Lake City native. Grundstrom was Meade’s climbing partner for his final, fateful climb.

“I celebrate that these kids are doing things of consequence and living life to the fullest,” added Pacal.

Wade is survived by his parents and his younger brother Keegan.
TOIYABE PHARMACY STAFF STATES ITS CASE

The Pharmacy Staff has attempted to rectify these issues.

Furthermore, there have been numerous audits over the years by Indian Health Services (IHS) and none of these audits have discovered any illegal or fraudulent activity in the Pharmacy. The Pharmacy has been constantly commended for its compliance to policies and procedures. As the Pharmacy Staff, we take these policies very seriously.

Please understand that with any audit, there have been discrepancies detected, but these discrepancies do not affect patient care in any way and they can be easily fixed. Due to warranties, the Pharmacy can replace the products, medications, and medical files being assessed. As the Pharmacy Staff, we have respected the culture because we are guests of this great community. We have always insisted on maintaining the highest core functions of the pharmacy. To have the CEO blatantly lie to you is highly illegal. It is not a sham used to cover up some activities of suspicious activity. There must also be a compelling reason to conduct quality assurance. To do anything less than this creates a conflict of interest. In which an Administration can access patients’ information at any time you please, thereby nullifying the purpose of HIPAA.

In order for Health Administrations to comply with TPO, policies and procedures that reasonably limit the disclosures of, and requests for, health information for payment and health care operations are required at minimum. Patients’ information must be protected.

This Administration has claimed that if it is true that we are doing more than what is required by law, then why is the Pharmacy not being audited? We can understand how the Pharmacy Department would have discovered numerous violations of HIPAA. For those who are unaware of this, HIPAA is the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information. This is why we, as a Staff, feel compelled to tell you what we have not been telling you. None of the terminated Pharmacy employees were ever given the opportunity to refute these claims or allegations. Not one individual was given due process despite many requests to speak before the Administration and the Board. We want the Native Community to know what is going on at their clinic. Most of the Pharmacy staff, which are of non-native descent, have expressed that they do not know the facts from this Administration so they can hide the damage they have caused.

The Pharmacy Staff has never been lied to by this CEO. We are simple workers who have worked under the Native Community to know that they will always be respected and treated with unsurpassed accuracy. Patient consultations and questions were always answered no matter how many times a question was raised. To have the CEO blatantly lie to you through fear mongering is unprecedented and uncalled for.

As of now, there are hundreds of Native American patients having their prescription and medical files being accessed through the Administration’s nefarious methods. IHS, when contacted by the Toiyabe Pharmacy Staff, has expressed any notion of investigation regarding the possible HIPAA violations should be conducted by an independent body. The Administration has made serious allegations against us, Toiyabe Indian Health Clinic, Kori Novak, the Pharmacy Staff discovered numerous violations of HIPAA. For those who are unaware of this, HIPAA is the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information. This is why we, as a Staff, feel compelled to tell you what we have not been telling you. None of the terminated Pharmacy employees were ever given the opportunity to refute these claims or allegations. Not one individual was given due process despite many requests to speak before the Administration and the Board. We want the Native Community to know what is going on at their clinic. Most of the Pharmacy staff, which are of non-native descent, have expressed that they do not know the facts from this Administration so they can hide the damage they have caused.

As members of the Pharmacy Department, we have always tried to find ways to increase profit efficiency which benefits the Native Community. As a formulary pharmacy, we strive to maintain the highest amount of care while keeping medication costs down by utilizing our 340B purchasing ability. As a formulary pharmacy, we have respected the culture because we are guests of this great community. We have always insisted on maintaining the highest core functions of the pharmacy. To have the CEO blatantly lie to you through fear mongering is unprecedented and uncalled for.

As of now, there are hundreds of Native American patients having their prescription and medical files being accessed through the Administration’s nefarious methods. IHS, when contacted by the Toiyabe Pharmacy Staff, has expressed any notion of investigation regarding the possible HIPAA violations should be conducted by an independent body. The Administration has made serious allegations against us, Toiyabe Indian Health Clinic, Kori Novak, the Pharmacy Staff,
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minimal changes. It is noted that any changes by IHS were implemented.

14. Why have individuals with over 20 years of experience in departments such as behavioral health been terminated?

15. Did the Native Community know that this Administration is trying to open the Pharmacy to non-native patients?

16. Have any of these acts been approved by the Tribal Council, Tribal Members, or Tribal Board?

17. Do you believe as a Tribal Member that your health care has gotten better or worse?

18. Do the Tribal Members know that this Administration, otherwise known as Kori Novak, Ethan Dexter, Jeron Kelly, and David Kelly still have access to ALL private patient information on their computers? As a reminder, none of these individuals have medical training.

These are questions that we have all been asking this Administration, but have been ignored. What’s worse is these questions are only the tip of the iceberg. We, as former employees, are seeing this once proud clinic be ripped apart from the seams. This Administration, which is single-handedly responsible for bleeding this clinic dry, is treating the Pharmacy as its latest scapegoat.

If you don’t believe us, contact the Dental Department and Medical Department of Toiyabe and ask them what this Administration has forced them to do.

This Administration’s acts of corruption have caused great damage to this clinic and they have violated the Native Community’s trust as the various protests from tribal members have demonstrated. The Administration’s actions have also deeply hurt us emotionally and mentally. We have felt like we were treated like criminals. Never have we seen an Administration so vindictive and so determined to permanently damage our reputations. To have them exploit the Native Community in this manner is disturbing and just another example of the horrible mistreatment Native Americans have experienced for far too long. This Administration has always tried to tell you that they are on your side and are serving you. But now that you have read this, you know that is not true. People of the Native American Community, stand up and tell this Administration: “Enough is enough!”

Q & A WITH DR. KORI NOVAK

The Sheet spoke with Dr. Novak on Thursday. She believes her untimeliness as CEO is due to the fact that she’s holding people accountable. “There are an awful lot of things that are not matching [including signatures],” she said of the Pharmacy investigation, which she says has uncovered violations dating back to 2016. “Unfortunately, I’m the messenger,” she said.

She says $100’s of thousands of dollars are missing, and that what’s missing is still being evaluated because the inventory is so unreliable.

She dismisses the idea that she’s being vindictive, or that she’s manufacturing a problem that otherwise might not exist. “I’d be the dumbest person in the world if I were going to the state [regarding an investigation] with staff that are not cooperating,” she said.

Come June, Novak will have been CEO for two years.

Sheet: The pharmacy letter was signed by individuals who say their jobs were terminated. Do you believe there was a huge cost to the clinic?

TOIYABE continued from page 6
John’s PIZZA WORKS

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Matthew Lehman
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Ashley Toups
REALTOR
DRE# 02057867
C (760) 914-0066

Matthew Lehman
BROKER
DRE# 01149776
C (760) 622-5845

explore
Due to the latest fashion trend, The Sheet asked folks around Town: What does your mask say about you?

-Mine is for convenience
-Dustin Hicks

-That I like sleeping in during these uncertain times
-Kevin Snyder

-I like to shred pow
-DJ Sendit

-That we had a box of masks in the cupboard
-BJ Gray

-My mask is what is left of me skiing in Mammoth
-Marty R.

-Wearing the mask is to show respect to the health of others.
-Kathi R.

Community and potential visitors to protect the Lake Tahoe area.

On what she learned, Chaplin told The Sheet, “I wouldn’t have done much differently. I guess we could have taken it more seriously at the beginning. We didn’t understand the impact of the infection.”

If you can fill the unforgiving minute/With sixty seconds’ worth of distance run

There is hardly a better common denominator than work, regardless of its nature, and a dinner table, where the worries of the day, the month, the year are hopefully set aside for a few moments.

For that matter the town might like to organize a volunteer cleanup day or 2 or 10. The town can pick a street or sections of town and ask people to volunteer to walk around 10 feet apart and pick up trash.

As of Thursday eve, Mono County reports 26 confirmed cases of Covid-19 and one death. Inyo: 19 confirmed, one death

From Matthew Lehman’s latest market report:
• Average # of Home sales for April over the past 10 years is 7.8 vs. 4 sales in April 2020, -45% year over year
• Average # of Condo sales for April over the past 10 years is 27 vs. 9 in April 2020, -67% year over year
• We may not see a real impact of pricing (if any) for a couple of months, but current prices appear to be holding better than expected

As for 4 Paws has helped our local vets give the animals the care they deserve. Let’s not let any of our precious babies go without!
Mammoth Spa Creations is looking for an additional member for its team. We currently have an immediate opening for a spa receptionist. This is a Full Time Position (Monday through Friday). This position offers vacation accrual, healthcare, and paid holidays. Experience is preferred, but not required. Heavy lifting is required. Please call 760-924-3091 or stop by the store located at 1401 Tavern Road, Mammoth Lakes for more information and to pick up an application. Resumes can be e-mailed to mammothspa@aol.com.

Vacasa is hiring full and part-time housekeepers and housekeepers. Apply online at vacasa.com/jobs. Please apply in person at 6080 Minaret Rd, Mammoth Lakes for more information and required forms. Please call 760-924-3091 or stop by the store located at 1401 Tavern Road, Mammoth Lakes for more information and to pick up an application. Resumes can be e-mailed to mammothspa@aol.com.

Notice to Vacasa:
A person claiming to be employed by Vacasa is renting a Town of Mammoth Lakes property and is charging for the use of personal property. The Town of Mammoth Lakes requests that you cease such activity immediately. For more information, contact the Mammoth Lakes Police Department at 760-924-3091.

The Alpenhof Lodge is accepting applications for full-time & part-time, year round positions. Applicants must be available for work weekends and holidays. Front desk, daily and evening positions are available as well as food and beverage positions. Please apply in person at 6080 Minaret Rd, Mammoth Lakes.

Mammoth Tax is accepting resumes for experienced drivers with great customer service and clean driving records. We are also accepting resumes for experienced front desk person with great organizational skills and customer service background. Please apply in person at 6080 Minaret Rd, Mammoth Lakes.

For Rent:
2BD home in Bishop available for nightly rental. Creek, views, livestock on premises so no dogs, please. Locals/healthcare workers preferred. Call, email or inquire. 760.917.4613. Remaining month rental for location. W/D, ref, pellet stove, forced air $1800/mo/yearly lease. Call Tiffany 760.632.4733.

For Sale:
TOWN STUFF

Saturday, May 2/ Mammoth Lakes Film Festival (MLFF) will have a special on-line preview screening of STALKING CHERNOBYL. The screening will take place at 2 p.m. at https://www.facebook.com/mammothlakesfilmfestival/ followed by a live Q&A with the film's producer, Iara Lee. STALKING CHERNOBYL is one of this year's official selections of the Mammoth Lakes Film Festival that has been rescheduled for Sept. 16th-20th.

Monday, May 4/ Mammoth Lakes Housing Board meets @ 6 p.m. Visit the Town website @ www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov to attend via granicus.

Tuesday, May 5/ Mono County Board of Supervisors meets 5 p.m. over teleconference. For agenda and meeting: https://monocounty.ca.gov/meetings

Wednesday, May 6/ Mono County Behavioral Health hosts Storytime on Facebook Live at 10 a.m.

Mammoth Lakes Town Council Meeting @ 4:30 p.m. Visit the Town website @ www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov to attend via granicus.

Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board @ 1 p.m. Visit the Town website @ www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov to attend via granicus.

Thursday, May 7/ Mono County Virtual Community meeting every Thursday. 5:30 p.m. Find out more about the COVID-19 response effort and ask questions. Join through the portal at: https://coronavirus.monocounty.ca.gov or download the Zoom app on your mobile device and use Meeting ID 901.775.658

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday/ Community food bank open from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 3-5 p.m. sponsored by Mammoth Lakes Tourism for anyone financially affected by COVID-19.

Vons grocery store is reserving two hours in the morning, Monday-Friday from 7-9 a.m., for vulnerable shoppers, including senior citizens, pregnant women or those with compromised immune systems.

Mammoth Taxi Delivery
Bringing you Mammoth Taxi Meals FREE Mammoth Restaurant Deliveries! Licensed by the Town of Mammoth Lakes. Currently available from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. daily

1. Call Mammoth Taxi for availability 760-937-8294
2. Place your order and make the payment to the restaurant of your choice.
3. Let them know you are using Mammoth Taxi Meals!
4. Mammoth Taxi will pick up your order and deliver it to your address!
5. We are waiving all delivery fees until further notice!

Spellbinder Books is offering free delivery within a ten-mile radius. For more info: call 760.873.4511 or email spellbinderbooks@verizon.net.

The Booky Joint can help you by appointment. 760.914.1924.

Closed Until Further Notice: Mono County Superior Court. However, emergency matters, such as Ex-parte Temporary Restraining Orders: Domestic Violence, Civil Harassment and Requests for Gun Violence Restraining Orders; and self-represented litigants (in cases such as divorce, parentage, custody, child support, probate guardianship, domestic violence, limited civil cases) can contact Mary Dinius White, Mono County Family Law Facilitator and Self Help Program Coordinator, either by email at flf@mono.courts.ca.gov, or by phone at 760-923-2314 (leave a message and your call will be returned.

ALL TOML PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, SKATEPARKS AND FACILITIES CLOSED, EXCEPT FOR WHITMORE RECREATION AREA.

FISHING OPENER FOR INYO AND MONO COUNTIES DELAYED UNTIL JUNE 1.

*Mono County has a coronavirus relief website you can scour for all manner of services and to know which business are/are not open. Visit coronavirus.monocounty.ca.gov, click community and then local resources.
ORDINANCE NO. 35-20
AN URGENCY ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
OF THE TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DATED APRIL 17, 2020
THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:
Section 1: Recitals
2. The Members of the Town Council do hereby find that the焗...  
Section 2: AMENDMENT TO MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION
2.1. Section 3.12.080 of the Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

2.1. Section 3.12.080 OF THE MAMMOTH LAKES MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX REPORTING AND BUSINESS TAX CERTIFICATES
WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, the Governor declared a State of Emergency for the County of Mono pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 12032(a) related to Coronavirus Disease 2019 ("COVID-19"), and
WHEREAS, the Mono County Health Officer on March 17, 2020, declared a State of Emergency due to the imminent and proximate threat to public health of the COVID-19 virus as declared in California (COVID-19) in Mono County; and
WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, the Governor issued Executive Order N-28-20, suspending any stay-at-home order that may be in place by any state agency or any county within the State of California due to COVID-19, pandemics; and preventing all non-essential businesses from conducting business due to COVID-19, and essential workers performing functions necessary to maintain the business of maintaining the public health, safety, and welfare; and
WHEREAS, the Town has some lodging properties that continue to offer short-term rentals in the Town despite the COVID-19 emergency, which is also inconsistent with the Governor's stay-at-home order; and
WHEREAS, requiring monthly TOT returns and payment, the Town's operations to protect the public peace, health, and revenue to the Town which is necessary to fund the Town's operations to protect the public health, safety, or has been conducted in a manner that violates one or more applicable laws, regulations, and/or orders of governmental authorities (including without limitation orders of the Mono County Health Officer) the tax collector shall provide written notice to the operator of the apparent violation, which notice may be provided by electronic mail, facsimile, U.S. mail, e-mail or any other means. The tax collector's notice shall specifically identify the violation alleged by the tax collector and shall request the operator to provide for a new or reinstated business tax certificate for the same or a substantially similar business for a period of one year.

Section 4: Declaration of Urgency and Effective Date
The Town Council hereby declares that this urgency ordinance is necessary to provide immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety by reducing the number of people who are staying in short term rentals in the Town. The Town Council hereby declares that this is an emergency, under the authority granted to it by Sections 30543 and 30545[c] of the California Government Code, which allows the Town to make emergency ordinances, in order to protect the public peace, health, or safety. This ordinance shall take effect immediately as an emergency ordinance.

Section 5: Authority for Adoption
The Town Council hereby enacts this urgency ordinance by a two-thirds vote, and in the finding of facts set forth above, under the authority granted to it by Sections 30543 and 30545[c] of the California Government Code, which allows the Town to make emergency ordinances, in order to protect the public peace, health, or safety.

Section 6: POSTING
The Town Clerk shall, within fifteen (15) days after the effective date of this Ordinance, cause a copy of this Ordinance to be posted in a readily visible and easily accessible location, in English and in Spanish, in a place of business of or department wide raises in November and COLAs are given in Feb. not Nov.

Whereas the Ordinance is intended to provide for the preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, by reducing the number of people who are staying in short term rentals in the Town, the Town Council hereby declares that this Ordinance is necessary to provide immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately as an emergency ordinance.

Section 7: SEVERABILITY
If any provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or appli- cations, and in such case the tax collector shall be deemed to be severable.

Passed, approved, and adopted on the 22nd day of April, 2020.

William D. Meyer
Treasurer

ATTACH: JAMEY GRAY, Town Clerk

TS-2020-0772

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOVAK continued from page 8

to run the pharmacy now performed the investigation. Is this true?

Novak: There are two things getting confused here. In the last financial audits by Eide Baily, material findings were given that stated there was an issue with pharmacy inventory not being costed to sale. When I came on board we had to make efforts to rectify the finding or risk losing funding. So we had a third party auditor come in to perform the investigation. The other piece is the HR investigation. In the process of doing the prep for the inventory auditors, red flags were raised. As part of our policy we put staff in question on paid administrative leave to continue the investigation. During that there were allegations made against administration, so administration was put on leave with pay and investigated.

As per my knowledge, HR investigations were performed by the HR department. At the point those investigations were finished a final report and supporting evidence is presented. In this case I reinstated one of the pharmacists as well as admin based on the findings of the HR provided.

No, the people contracted to perform the investigation are not now running the pharmacy. They gave us the names of several people who could contact to work in the pharmacy. In fact we signed a document (standard) that says we would not employ any of the people who ran the pharmacy.

Sheet: Did administrators at any time access the pharmacy without staff present?

Novak: No, we have cameras that show the entrance and exits of the pharmacy as well as our key card system re- cords the key swipe of who is in and out at any time. No administrators even have key card access to the pharmacy. Now, we have been there in when staff was in there. It is illegal for ANYONE to be in the pharmacy without a pharmacist present.

Sheet: The letter says pharmacists were given pay hikes in November. Is this true?

NOVAK: Across the board? No, there were no unusual raises "across the board" or department wide raises in November and COLAs are given in Feb. not Nov.

Sheet: The letter referenced a Februa- ry, 2020 meeting (the inference being a public meeting) where you and your CFO stated the clinic held an $8 million debt and acknowledging that the HRSA grant was 

Novak: That would probably be the Board meeting? The meeting minutes are public. The HSA grant was lost before I became CEO by 12 years ago by a previous CEO. So if we acknowledged it in Feb it would have just been a confirmation of what happened a year prior myself or the CFO would have provided.

As far as being 8M in debt the people who are saying this do not understand how to read financial statements. Much of that debt was for the purchase of our building and medical equipment inside the building. As you know depre- ciation is "counted" in the numbers but not actually paid. We did not share with you our budget without my boards approval, I can tell you that we downsized to essential personnel on March 17, and since then all 171 employees includ- ing those on admin leave, have received a full 40 hour per week paycheck, continue to accrue vacation and sick leave and we did not lay off anyone until we had to furlough, however, as with any companies, as this crisis continues we may have to do so at some point. If we were 8M in the red, we would not be able to sustain that payment.

Fictitious Business Name Statement

Is Doing Business As:

Mammoth Lakes Laundromat

Creekside Services, LLC, 40 Evergreen St., P.O Box 100 PBM 254 in Mammoth Lakes Ca. 93546

This business is conducted by a limited li- ability company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on February 26, 2020. A copy of this Business Name Statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on March 20, 2020. File Number 20-077, 2020-0066 (4/25, 5/2, 5/9, 5/16)

Fictitious Business Name Statement

Is Doing Business As:

Dish Poutinerie

Tina Fortune 107 Pinon Dr.
Mammoth Lakes, Ca. 93546

This business is conducted by a Corpora- tion. The registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious busi- ness name listed herein.

The statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on March 23, 2020. File Number 20-077, 2020-0064 (4/18, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9)

Or Order To Show Cause For Change of Name

Present Name: Norman Bruce Keeler

Proposed Name: Bruce Keeler

Fictitious Business Name Statement

Is Doing Business As:

One Dish Bistro

Tina Fortune 588 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, Ca. 93546

This business is conducted by a Corpora- tion. The registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious busi- ness name listed herein.

The statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on March 23, 2020. File Number 20-077, 2020-0062 (4/18, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9)

Fictitious Business Name Statement

Is Doing Business As:

Dish

Tina Fortune 588 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, Ca. 93546

This business is conducted by a Corpora- tion. The registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious busi- ness name listed herein.

The statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on March 23, 2020. File Number 20-077, 2020-0063 (4/18, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9)
Homeowners, not villains

Dear Editor:

While I think most of us can certainly appreciate the stay-at-home order to “Flatten the Curve,” I think it is going to be a bit far. I am a bit appalled by the short-sighted attitude many locals are having toward second homeowners. There are many posts on social media discouraging second homeowners from coming to their home in Mammoth, I have heard equally as many locals verbally express their displeasure with those second homeowners wanting to flatten the curve from their Mammoth home. Many attitudes have turned angry and are making second homeowners no longer feel welcome, or safe, in a town they would typically call home.

Second homeowners are just what the term implies ... homeowners. These folks make up the largest sector of taxpayers in our community. They pay their share of taxes to receive a disproportionately small share of benefits and services in our town. If we do not provide for our residents (including second homeowners), then we should build them. If the government wants to issue orders telling second homeowners not to come to Mammoth, then perhaps it is the government that needs to waive property taxes.

If we as locals are truly staying at home as governmental orders require, why care if a second homeowner is waiting to go to their second home. Perhaps this is more of a “pandemic” out in the safety of their home in a small town in the mountains. Mammoth to ourselves.

The picture from the fixture

Dear Ted,

I have lived in Mammoth Lakes since October 1, 1976.

The first person I met that month and year was Steve the bear guy. He lived at the condo project I managed.

If you missed Chris Erskine’s article and video in the LA Times on February 12, 2020, you should check it out.

I am a real sad Fishmas did not happen last Saturday for my son Jef Rahmeyer, nephews, brothers and sisters.

Our family has been doing this every last Saturday of April since 1964.

Now I hear the Fireworks/4th are cancelled.

I am retired from property management and rentals now and I have got to say I am feeling really bad for people like Tom and Teri Stehlik (Seasons 4), John Morris (Snowcreek Rentals), Steve and Carolyn Schwind (Central Reservations) to name a few. I also feel bad for the real estate people and restaurants.

One of our favorite restaurants Delious Kitchen looks like it is closed for good. I also miss Giovanni’s pizza.

It’s time for this Town to get moving again.

I understand where people like Clelad Hof are coming from; but if your husband or significant other is among those who mised you should continue to lock down.

I don’t want any of you to die. But this Town is tourist-based and we need to get tourists to work.

We can do this people.

Louise Dietz
Mammoth Lakes

The following letter was addressed to several local political and newspapers.

Let the music play

I want to thank you for serving the counties in my surrounding area. I lost most of my business because of the “pandemic” and so I’m eager to build it back up, but can’t do so until clients are able to come back to my studio. I teach music in Inyo County. Whatever you can do to help that process would be greatly appreciated. I also hope people are not being to rude to any of you. I’m sure you are working hard at this.

God bless you and keep you!

Fernando Ruiz
Bishop Guitar Lessons
760.920.9422
Fortner described two timelines that the Sun Valley community is working within: 1. the ability of the local community to be ready to welcome visitors and 2. the willingness on the part of visitors to travel to the area. "We’re trying to react to the momentum as it builds or doesn’t build," he said, "and dial things accordingly."

In terms of re-orienting efforts to something like a food bank, Fortner reported that while Visit Sun Valley has been involved in information distribution and filling in those gaps, he deferred other activities to "a lot of non-profits that have already been established ... all those things that were in place prior to this."

In Jackson Hole, similar to Mammoth Lakes in its accessibility to national parks and ski slopes, local officials have had to grapple with the juxtaposition between Wyoming’s relatively low case numbers and the fear that opening the town up too soon could quickly overwhelm it. Local Chamber of Commerce Director Anna Olson reported that when things do come back online, they will be markedly different.

Olson reported that, given social distancing guidelines, the parks and resorts may have to operate with a quarter of the employees they once had.

Bend, Oregon provides similar parallels to Mammoth: a tourism economy that relies on recreation in the summer and a quality ski season in the winter. Kevney Dugan, CEO of Visit Bend, told The Sheet how the organization operated as the pandemic unfolded, "We were probably not far off from other tourism departments. We cut all paid advertising, cut two employees [out of seven] with the intent to bring them back on, and everyone took between a 10-20% pay cut."

Visit Bend has an annual payroll of roughly $500,000 according to Dugan and that has been reduced by 25-30% during COVID-19.

"We cancelled all outbound spending and restricted everything to essential business functions. We acted early with the intent of saving as much cash as we could."

Visit Bend is funded similarly to Mammoth Lakes Tourism. Bend has a Transient Rental Tax (Basically a TOT). Bend’s TDR draws in $10 million and Visit Bend is allocated 31% of this as part of their contractual agreement. That means Visit Bend has roughly $3 million of annual revenue. Bend’s population is about 100,000. "Right now we are just keeping the lights on per se," said Dugan.

If things continue to flounder, Visit Bend does have a $300,000 rainy day fund. This fund was started in 2017 and allocated 5% of TRT revenue (roughly $100,000-150,000 a year) to this fund.

On what he learned, Dugan told The Sheet, ‘At first people thought we were overreacting. Being as conservative as we were served us well. It allowed us to save a little bit of cash. ’

Post Covid-19, Visit Bend plans to roll out a marketing campaign aimed at stimulating local businesses, “We are going to try and encourage people to keep their spending local. A lot of locals haven’t tried all the amenities. We want to start an ‘economic community stabilization campaign,’ ” said Dugan.

Dugan finished off the conversation by telling The Sheet, "These are unprecedented times. We have a huge opportunity to help our community. Adaptability, in this environment, is key."

Layoffs in the industry are widespread: In Spokane, Washington, the local tourism department has seen 70% of its employees laid off; Visit Portland saw a 40% staff reduction. Groups in California’s cities weren’t spared: the respective staffs at San Francisco Travel and Visit Anaheim were reduced by 60% via furloughs and layoffs with further pay cuts for remaining employees.

The effects of the Pandemic on tourism have been felt abroad as well. Tourism Whistler in Canada reported temporary staff reductions of 60%, with remaining funds from layoffs and budget cuts “invested into short-term necessary response efforts”, per CEO Barrett Fisher.

Said Travel Portland CEO Jeff Miller, “As we have watched the city we love and have the honor of promoting suffer the impacts of this pandemic, we have had to reevaluate how we do our work. The work we do now, both internally and externally, will define how Portland comes out of this when recovery begins. We are doing what we need to do now to ensure our ability to be poised and ready for this work.”
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