YEAR IN REVIEW
She’s Kidding, Right?

From: Emily Bryant <ebryant@VisitMammoth.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 29, 2020 12:00 PM
Subject: Occupancy Reporting

Good afternoon everyone,

We know this week did not provide the good news we were hoping for, but that also we do have a number of owners coming up to enjoy the new snow we have received. Knowing how many of those owners may be in town will help our restaurant and retail businesses prepare for the traffic.

So just a quick reminder about how reporting should be done:

- Available Rooms - your report should be your total available rooms, available for occupancy. If you have rooms unavailable for occupancy due to maintenance, subtract them from your overall total room count. 100 total rooms – 10 unavailable due to renovation = 90 Available rooms for this reporting period.
- Projected Paid Rooms - these are rooms available for rent to the general public.
- Projected Unpaid Rooms - These will be your owners stays, owner guests, comps or rooms that are projected to be occupied but that you are not receiving revenue on.

Additionally, if any of you are having any issues with reporting or if you know anyone who is not currently reporting but would like to, please let me know.

Thank you to everyone for all your efforts this year,

Emily Bryant
Mammoth Lakes Tourism

The above was forwarded to me by a local lodging operator, with a terse message attached: “She is fu#&ing kidding, right? About all of it including what fu#&ing occupancy lady. Read the room!”

The second piece of mail I received (convenient, as it means I’m not writing editorial this week) was from local businessman Eric Wasserman and appears as follows.

Jack of all Lunches

Ted Carleton ........ Jack of all Lunches
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“Why would we lie to ourselves?”
- Bill S. Preston Esq.

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Dear Ted,

After last Wednesday’s special meeting with Mammoth Town Council, Mono County Supervisors and other local policymakers, I feel compelled to share with the public the lack of leadership we’re getting from this group. I’ve shared a previous email I sent to many of these people on Sept. 12, 2020 and the only official who had the decency to respond was Stacy Cordless. Her response was “good people are working on this in an organized fashion.” While I appreciate the efforts of these “good people” it would seem no progress was made since we’re included in the Southern California region and are part of their shutdown order.

In the spring, I was 100% behind the shutdown. We didn’t understand Covid the way we do now and it made sense to keep us safe by turning away tourism and staying isolated. On a personal note, I take Covid very seriously. Covid the way we do now and it made sense to keep us safe by turning away tourism and staying isolated. On a personal note, I take Covid very seriously. After breathing in smoke during the fall, I’ve been forced to take asthma medication daily and the thought of getting a virus that attacks your respiratory system is quite daunting when you already have trouble breathing. I’ve had friends who were hospitalized for months and barely survived; unfortunately I know someone in their 20s who died from Covid. I have family in New York who work on the front lines and have shared horror stories of how entire families were ravaged by this terrible virus. I share this because my position is the health, safety and well-being of our community should come before business and profit. Always.

That being said, what is the lodging ban doing to prevent Covid from coming into our community? Are we stopping people from coming to the Eastern Sierra? Have our cases dropped since this went into effect? Do we have Covid patients overrunning the ICUs in our local hospitals? The answer is no to all of these questions. We are being told this is for our safety, we must do this to beat the virus. Albert Einstein’s definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. All that is happening is people are finding ways to come here and our elected officials and decision makers have forced businesses (particularly lodging) to stay closed, thus causing severe adverse consequences for other businesses. Studies have shown this latest surge is from private gatherings in the home. This lodging ban is just forcing more people to rent illegally where there is no requirement to stay up with current health codes.

Most other destinations in our Southern California region are not enforcing this stay-at-home order; they are claiming they don’t have the resources to enforce this and are permitting lodging to operate as it did in the purple tier. Why is the Town of Mammoth Lakes working so diligently to enforce these rules while the majority of our state and region aren’t? Why are they going through such lengths as to have a job classified posted for enforcement officers? We are completely dependent on seasonal tourism and yet while many other areas in California aren’t, yet they remain open for guests. I went on several apps to try and book hotels in Southern California and wasn’t prevented from making any reservations. If Tom Parker were to say our hospital is full of Covid patients and has a diminished capacity, I’m the first person to say shut down lodging, however, so long as that isn’t the case we should be allowing lodging to remain open under guidelines of the purple tier. We need our officials to lead us and instead of focusing on enforcement, focus on getting us into our own region in the Eastern Sierra where we have plenty of hospital capacity and aren’t lumped in with the dense urban areas and their
Over the course of the past week, concern about COVID-19 (coronavirus) has reached fever pitch around the globe. On March 11, a number of major points in the evolution of the coronavirus outbreak took shape: President Trump suspended travel by foreign nationals to the United States from 26 European countries, the World Health Organizations (WHO) declared the coronavirus a pandemic, and the National Basketball Association suspended its season indefinitely after a player tested positive for the virus.

In addition, the attending physician of Congress and the Supreme Court, Brian Monahan, informed Senate staff of his confirmed case of the virus. Monahan stated a belief that at least 80% of major points in the evolution of the coronavirus outbreak took shape: President Trump suspended travel by foreign nationals to the United States from 26 European countries, the World Health Organizations (WHO) declared the coronavirus a pandemic, and the National Basketball Association suspended its season indefinitely after a player tested positive for the virus.

Abroad, some governments have taken some drastic measures. Italy has effectively shut down, with some governments closing all non-essential stores remaining open. The Italian government has banned all non-essential travel and closed schools until

April 3; this comes on the heels of nearly 200 deaths in the course of 24 hours, and more than 1,000 deaths total in the country.

In the United States, the stock market has been in freefall this week, with the Dow Jones Industrial average seeing levels it hasn’t seen since the summer of 2017. In California, the state government has placed a ban on all gatherings of more than 250 people, and an increasing number of colleges and universities have halted in-person class and closed campuses.

By Thursday morning, neither Inyo nor Mono County has reported a confirmed case of the virus. Nevertheless, local events have been canceled as well, including next weekend’s Elevation Mammoth, which typically draws 2,500 skiers.
Among the biggest stories that didn’t involve Covid or fire were the removal of Dr. Kevin Flanigan as Northern Inyo Hospital’s CEO, the hordes of summer visitors in Mammoth and businesses struggling to hold on during the second shutdown in December.

“He’s the highest compensated Food Bank CEO in the history of Food Banks.”
-Lunch on John Urdi

“A divisive leader is always a red flag.”
-Heleen Welvaart on Kevin Flanigan

They Said It:

The Year in Domaille

2020 came and went. Dennis Domaille and the Tioga Inn Project both grew another year older.

There is still nothing to show for it. A quick summary; it’s a hotel, restaurant, and community housing project, proposed for the Mobil Mart site just outside of Lee Vining.

Domaille has been trying, since 1993, to get the project fully approved so that construction can begin.

The restaurant and hotel aspect have already been approved by the Mono County Board of Supervisors; all that remains is the workforce housing project.

After a 7-hour county planning commission board meeting resulted in a 4-0 vote for approval, the project then went on to the Board of Supervisors in June.

It’s been an impressive special teams effort from there, with continuous puntting on the part of the supervisors in lieu of making a decision.

In October, the board approved the environment impact plan by a 3-1 vote, but opted to withhold final approval on the project until the cultural demands of the indigenous Kutzadika’a tribe have been met.

When the parties came together again in December, the tribe requested a delay, which was granted after a lengthy board meeting at which a number of supervisors expressed frustration that last minute changes/info have hampered...
While a final decision evaded the council, the two members most op- posed to dispensaries at the time, Chris Costello and Laura Smith, will not have a say on the matter as they will no longer sit on the Council in 2021.

The Year in Goodbyes

The biggest and most controversial goodbye was bid to Dr. Kevin Flanigan by the Northern Inyo Hospital Board of Directors. He was placed on administrata- tive leave in February and dismissed in May. A timeline of Sheet stories appears below.

At Wednesday evening’s special meeting of the Northern Inyo Health 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.

In a message released to the staff ear- lier 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 NIHD staff, ” Turner wrote. "I am surprised he still has a pos- ition,” wrote Dr. Stuart Souders, “after promoting the EMR (Emergency Medi cal Records) system the hospital has been struggling with for over two years in spite of multiple, very bright people telling him it was not going to work. Some of them were fired or encouraged to resign. Hundreds of dollars and wasted man hours were spent in trying to engineer this system to work ...

From Bryan Harper: “During the time of the Athena selection, I, along with Ben Mitchell ... began to question the shortfalls of cloud-based systems that Athena had no answers for. It was at this time that Dr. Kevin S. Flanigan became visibly upset with the questions and concerns. Afterward, Ben and I were told in no certain terms to ‘get on board, sit down and shut up or get out.’ After that, Ben and I were removed from most of the Athena meetings.

From Dee Booth: “Dr. Flanigan pre- fers to make decisions in small exclusive groups of like-minded individuals. This resulted in NIHD purchasing possibly the worst suite of software available ... I questioned his integrity and honesty when he denied any responsibility for the failed Athena project, and protected others who were not competent to ad- vise him in the selection of the vendor.”

They Said It:

"Within reason, we'll enforce the health orders, but we can't enforce the mask order." -Inyo Sheriff Jeff Hollowell

While Mono and Inyo Counties do play host to commercial cannabis operations in the form of dispensaries, 2020 marked a year of indecision and setbacks for the industry in the region. In February, Mono County Board of Supervisors rejected, by a 3-2 vote, a proposal for a commercial cannabis farm in Walker.

The decision came despite the appli- cants, Colitas Farros, meeting every re- quirement asked of them by the county. The meeting that decided Colitas’ fate was held at the Walker Commu- nity Center; more than 70 community members turned up for meeting, many of whom were vocal in their opposition to the farm.

Although Colitas brought the issue back before the board once again later in the year, it was once again rejected.

Supervisors also opted to flat-out ban commercial hemp operations in the county, citing a lack of interest/demand as reasons to avoid introducing new policy on the matter.

The Bishop City Council debated allowing cannabis dispensaries within city limits. All dispensaries in the Bishop area on tribal land or are in unincorporated Inyo County.

While the final decision evaded the council, the two members most op- posed to dispensaries at the time, Chris Costello and Laura Smith, will not have a say on the matter as they will no longer sit on the Council in 2021.

The Year in the Parcel

The Parcel, a large-scale workforce housing project in Mammoth Lakes, is moving toward a construction phase in 2021 after Mammoth’s Planning and Economic Development Commission unanimously approved phase 1.

Pacific Companies, the Town’s development partner for the project, also gave a brief presentation on the matter, highlighting two key concerns from workshops: parking and the onsite daycare facility.

In Phase 1, the project will have around 113 parking spaces, both on and off the street, with designated parking under a number of buildings. Planners also updated the project to include bus stops in close proximity to the development.

The first phase will comprise 81 units, one of which is designated for a care- taker, and will be comprised of a mix of indivi- dual and family units. The site will not allow short-term rentals.

The Town, which has already scored a $20 million state grant for project infra- structure, hopes to apply for even more funds this spring.

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The Year in Asociating

The Mammoth Lakes restaurant community had a rough go over the course of 2020. Two local institutions, Siocums and Nevados, closed their doors forever in March rather than deal with the pan- demic, with Ramenya following later in the year, along with Samurai.

It didn’t help that the industry was a scapegoat of sorts when it came to Covid-19. It was the only local industry subject to mandatory employee testing.

Further exacerbating the issue: restaurants were largely independent entities, with no clearly defined entity to subject to mandatory employee testing.

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no one’s private investigator nor did I believe this to be ethical.

Speaking of Campos-Diaz, once Flanigan figured out how to get rid of her, he then held her up [her being exiled] to other staff as a cautionary tale.

Says one staffer, “On multiple occasions, Dr. Flanigan would refer to Kevin Dale and Evelyn Campos-Diaz as prime examples of what happens to people ‘if they don’t get the job done.’”

Board member Mary Mae Kilpatrick acknowledged that one area where Flanigan may have overstretched his bounds is in exercising his spending authority.

Any expenditure of more than $40,000 requires Board approval, and yet Flanigan apparently exceeded that limit in his fun- neling of money to Pioneer Boccia were let go from the Mammoth Lakes Fim Festival and as a result, opting to retire ahead of the cut.

The Foundation announced that it no longer owns or operates the Mammoth Lakes Repertory theater or the Mammoth Lakes Film Festival and as a result, would be cutting the position of Artistic Director.

Dubrovner has reconstituted the Repertory and Film Festival under the Eastern Sierra Arts Alliance banner. In Bishop, Police Chief Ted Stec retired from duty in late October.

In an interview with The Sheet, Stec explained that he would be traveling to see family in retirement, adding that he still has much to consider in regards to both professional and personal goals. And Bear Whisperer Steve Searles was let go as a result of budget cuts (see below).

Caroline Casey also left her job as Events Coordinator at Mammoth Lakes Tourism.

The Mountain View Fire, which ripped through Walker in November, was the culmination of an exhausting fire season for both the Eastern Sierra and the state of California.

The Mountain View Fire was the first fire to ravage an Eastside community in nearly six years, and resulted in nearly a quarter of Walker being burned. Later surveys revealed that many of those who lost homes and buildings were uninsured.

Record-setting wildfires broke out throughout the state, burning millions of acres in land and destroying thousands of buildings and homes. In the Sierra, the Creek Fire played the part of unwelcome guest for much of September and October, inundating the region with smoke and skyrocketing air quality numbers.

That fire ended up being the largest single blaze in California history and burned within 10 miles of Mammoth Lakes. A tourism industry already set upon by the early woes of Covid-19 took a further hit. Hotels and parks were closed to the public and lodging operations shut their doors.

The Mountain View Fire, which was the culmination of an exhausting fire season

More Goodbyes

The Town of Mammoth Lakes bid adieu to Mammoth Lakes Recreation Director Matt McClain in September. While MLR will continue to exist, board members have expressed frustration with what the non-profit is being asked to do by the town. Which is raise money for an ice rink project that never seems to have a defined go-ahead.

Both Shira Dubrovner and Rich Boccia were let go from the Mammoth Lakes Foundation in May, with Boccia opting to retire ahead of the cut.

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The Year in Fires

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C

coming off a fairly dry winter, the local bear population was active earlier than usual this spring.

And Mammoth Lakes has been jammed with tourists ever since travel restrictions were lifted a month ago.

These are the typical ingredients which keep Town Wildlife Specialist Steve Searles busy 24/7 during a typical summer. But this is an atypical year.

And Steve is no longer busy this summer.

The Town of Mammoth Lakes and Mr. Searles parted ways last Friday when Mr. Searles objected to proposed changes in his contract.

Searles used the term “blindsided” to describe his meeting with Town Manager Dan Holler.

The offer

Searles is one of the few contract employees in town. Compensation-wise, he’s a relative bargain. $75,000/year but no benefits.

The employee unions have all rejected Covid-related salary adjustments. Town Manager Dan Holler offered to take a salary cut this spring but Council refused him.

The Town offered Searles a 50% cut in pay and hours. Work through December at full salary, and then be forced to take a six-month unpaid furlough. Searles declined.

Allowing the Town to claim he “voluntarily resigned.”

The Sheet asked Police Chief Al Davis how the MLPD planned to handle wildlife calls moving forward.

Steve Searles

Bearly Aware

Town cuts ties with wildlife specialist

By Lunch

“"No change in how we deal with bears. The team has been trained by Steve and they all have bear kits that include less than lethal items to scare off bad bears. Just call 911 like most people do, and don’t call Steve directly as many have done in the past,” he said.

Searles said he’s still receiving several wildlife calls per day since his resignation.

Lunch then offered the following commentary on page two:

As for the Searles debacle ... I can’t believe the Town is letting the guy go over what amounts to $37,500. Think about this. He’s literally paid the same as a junior level administrative assistant when you factor in that the admin. asst. receives employee benefits.

But he’s actually out there engaging with the community and visitors, at a time when the town desperately needs ambassadors in the field. I’ll take boots on the ground over a paper pusher. And how much paper is there to push these days, anyway?

And it seems like a massive disconnect, the Town dictating to Mammoth Lakes Tourism this week that it needs to do less (or at least revised) marketing and more Covid-awareness and resort management, while the Town itself chases off one of the few members of the organization who’s out there mingling with, you know, actual visitors.

I asked Town Manager Dan Holler if there had been any discussions with MLT as to perhaps sharing the Searles contract as one can certainly argue a good portion of his job had been public relations. Holler said no.

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COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS

For the unintiated, most government boards and councils report for their meetings where members can emote about all the outreach they’ve done since the last time we saw them. A lot of palaver. Which they insist is “interesting” though they rarely explain why it’s interesting (and they use “interesting” a lot). I could write the following about any board in the Eastern Sierra. Lucky for Mammoth’s Town Council, I just happened to be at their meeting Wednesday. While this conversation below did not actually occur, it may as well have.

Mayor Sauser: Okay folks, now it’s time for Councilmember reports. These are the reports we give to our constituents to let them know how hard we’ve been working on their behalf. John?

Councilman Wentworth: Well, let’s see here. On January 16, I attended a housing meeting and as you all know, housing is important. Very important. And the meeting was quite interesting. Dare I say fascinating? I dare. Fascinating and productive. Very productive. You know the start of Billy Joel’s “Allentown” where you can hear all that ruckus in the steel factory? That’s exactly what it felt like - like I was a foreman on the job. A very big and interesting job. With worker ants crawling all over the place in bright yellow hard hats. Then, on January 19, just three days later, I attended a Recreation Commission meeting. And that was interesting too. We all like to recreate on public lands, and private lands, and even in the privacy of our own homes. You know, I just bought a Peloton bike and I actually brought it with me to the meeting so I could multi-task and ride and participate at the same time. Actually achieved my PR that day.

Councilmember Hoff: Paul Rudder was there!

Councilman Wentworth: Personal Record, Cleland. Then, on January 21, I attended an airport meeting. You want to know what I thought of it? You guessed it. Interesting! So interesting, I made a joke at the start. Really had folks laughing. I pointed above Clint Quilter’s head - Clint is from Inyo County and he’s got a nice head of hair. I wasn’t pointing at the hair. I was pointing above the hair. And I yelled out, “Da Plane! Da Plane!” Everybody laughed. And I yelled out, “Da Plane!” Everybody laughed. And productive. Very productive. And I actually brought it with me to the meeting - because we all like to recreate, too, because we all like to recreate in the privacy of our own homes. Even in the privacy of our own homes.

Days later, I attended a Recreation Commission meeting. That stands for Local Transportation Commission. But nothing really acronymous happened there. We all got along and it was very nice. Very interesting. Transportation’s really important, you know, because without it, you have to walk, and sometimes it can be rainy or windy or cold and you know, a bus is such a better way to get around when you gotta [signaling quotation marks] “bust a move”.

Then on January 29, I attended a Measure F meeting. Measure F, if you aren’t aware, is a ballot measure which will appear on the ballot in the March 3rd primary to raise money to support the Fire Department. We brainstormed a bunch of slogans. You know, F is a really useful letter. Lot of stuff goes with F.

I suggested Pass F for U. They didn’t like it. I suggested Vote Yes to getting F’d Up! They didn’t like it. You remember that Def Leppard song? I suggested No F-F-F-F-F-Foolin’. But they thought that would be confusing. The No F at the front. But I meant it as in No Foolin’ about it. It was a very lively discussion. Very productive. And I really like that Fire Chief Frank Frievalt. Talk about dedicated … I just need to ask. Did he change his name so his initials would be FF? In order to support Measure F? I mean … that’s super cool.

Mayor Sauser: Kirk?

Councilman Stapp: I didn’t attend anything last week. I just stayed home and read old agenda packets and worried. And I worried and worried because our housing needs assessment says we need to build 4,386 units over the next four decades and we’ve slashed development and we’re understaffed and we’ve got this big funding gap for the first phase of the Parcel and you know, I visited London once, and when you’re down in the Tube - that’s what they call the subway in London, the Tube - they tell you to “Mind The Gap” when you get on the train. The Gap is that space between the train and the platform. And I just don’t think we’ve been Minding the Gap well enough and there’s that gap we have between housing units. I would point to that housing needs assessment. It says we’ve got to build 4,386 units over the next four decades. And are we really going to believe that when we’ve slashed developer fees …

Mayor Sauser: Kirk … Councilman Stapp: Yes, Mayor Sauser: I think the record’s skipping. Mayor Pro-Tem Salcido (jumping in) I agree with Kirk. And I agree with John. And I agree with Cleland. And everyone in Suite Z. So many interesting observations tonight. Lot of stuff to think about.

On January 20, I attended the Women in Business seminar at the Fort. Very interesting. There are a lot of women in business in Mammoth, and they face a lot of challenges. Because doing business in Mammoth is a challenge. No matter if you’re a woman or not. Although I didn’t really talk to any men about that. Because it was a Women in Business meeting.

But now, I’ve got a little earworm in my head. I can’t help but think of Ethel Merman singing “there’s no business like show business.” But changing the word so it’s “there’s no business like snow business.”

Councilmember Hof: Those darn earworms!

Mayor Pro-Tem Salcido: On January 26, I attended the CRC meeting with John. Very interesting. I have a whole report for the town. So I’m not going to talk more about the project.

Councilman Wentworth: Funny Mayor Pro-Tem Salcido: I’m not being funny.

Councilman Wentworth: Tenza … (she’s not getting it).

Mayor Pro-Tem Salcido: John, please stop interrupting. You had your turn. I am very interested about the project. Staff has worked very hard to turn this $9.5 million dream into a $14 million reality, and all the thanks goes to Halslip, Grady, the whole team. That’s my report.

Mayor Sauser: I have nothing to report. I’m tired and I’m hungry and this meeting has gone way too long.

As long as we all agree that my name is listed first when the CRC plaque is unveiled, we’re good. (Bangs gavel). We are adjourned!

FROM THE SHEET FEBRUARY 8/7

SHORT TAKES …

On life expectancy

The three media pros that I considered really top-notch when I started in the Eastern Sierra - George Shirk, Benett Kessler and Bob Todd - are all gone now. Average age of death for the three of them: approximately 60.

The only other profession I can think of that has such bad life expectancy prospects is law enforcement. A 1998 study determined the average life expectancy of a police officer to be 66 years. So I guess this is no time to ditch those life insurance policies I have over at State Farm.

Meanwhile, I figure the life expectancy of administrators who work in government - because if it takes ever to get anything done professionally, I doubt they’re going to get things done any faster in their personal lives.

Whereas us media folks are accustomed to meeting deadlines.

FROM THE SHEET JANUARY 25/7

On resort investment

MMSA issued a press release this week saying it’s spent $1 million on Covid-related infrastructure in preparation for the 2020-2021 ski season.

This is $1 million more than it’s spent on Eagle Lodge in the past two decades.

FROM THE SHEET SEPTEMBER 19/7

The She Said It:

“Firefighters aren’t like cops. They can’t live somewhere else and commute to fires. In that scenario, we wouldn’t be calling them fire-fighters. We’d be calling them ash samplers.”

-Lunch
LUNCH
continued from page 7
... Contemplate this for a minute as you look outside at the hordes of visitors traipsing up and down the sidewalks on Main Street. If we had budgeted $4 million for marketing this year as opposed to $6 million, the town could be saving $40,000 a week. Just one week’s savings would be enough to pay for eight years of car storage for MTL Executive Director John Urdi.

On Trump
I can’t resist one observation about the nation’s Chief Executive. We have reached the point where you can pardon convicted white collar criminals like Blagojevich, DeBartolo and Milken with hardly a whimper. I never imagined the republic, rule of law, the office of the presidency — that it could all erode so quickly. And no matter who follows after Trump, precedent has been set. Doesn’t matter which political party.

Trump is the first president we’ve had in my lifetime where it’s unclear as to whether he’ll vacate office voluntarily if he loses/when his term limit expires.

... Contemplate this for a minute as you sometimes would never pay for a paper with such a total lack of truth as you sometimes try to read.

True—True—True!

Dear Mr. Lunch,

You are in the newspaper business. Do you ever care if what you print is the truth or not?

It is a good thing your paper is free. I never imagined the republic, rule of law, the office of the presidency — that it could all erode so quickly. And no matter who follows after Trump, precedent has been set. Doesn’t matter which political party.

Trump is the first president we’ve had in my lifetime where it’s unclear as to whether he’ll vacate office voluntarily if he loses/when his term limit expires.

... Contemplate this for a minute as you sometimes would never pay for a paper with such a total lack of truth as you sometimes try to read.

Bob Woodson
Bishop

Editor’s note: True plus True = True.

Crap. Why didn’t someone tell me that 18 years ago?

But hey, Mr. Woodson, let me drop this mathematical concept on you. Subtracting a negative equals a positive. Maybe the voters will apply it in this year’s presidential election.

THE LESSONS OF ‘18
Collette Gaal was nice enough to forward me a link to a recent story in the L.A. Times by James Rainey and Ronong Lin called “Heed the Lessons of 1918” about the Spanish Flu which killed 50 million people worldwide, including 675,000 Americans.

The article states: “The really important lesson of 1918 is to keep interventions in place as long as possible,” said Alex Navarro, assistant director of the Center for the History of Medicine at the University of Michigan. “Because once the controls are removed, it’s very difficult to reinstate them.”

The Michigan center, along with the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, compiled and analyzed historical accounts of the 1918 plague. Their research found “a strong association between early, sustained and layered use of [non-pharmaceutical interventions] and mitigating the consequences of the epidemic.”

It then talks about how San Francisco and Los Angeles each responded.

The first signs of the pandemic became apparent in mid-September 1918. San Francisco quarantined from October 18-November 16. L.A. quarantined about three weeks longer, from October 11-December 2.

The article suggests that quarantining longer and social distancing was more effective than wearing masks (San Francisco “obsessed on a singular response to the disease: face masks.”)

Both cities suffered a second wave of infections. San Francisco’s was more severe.

Overall, CDC research estimated that L.A.’s “excess” death rate (the number who died of influenza above the normal yearly expectation) was 494 per 100,000 residents. San Francisco’s rate was 673 per 100,000 residents.

With that as a backdrop ...

California’s stay-at-home order was issued March 19. To match L.A.’s response a century ago, our current order would be lifted May 10.

To heed Navarro’s advice and "keep interventions in place for as long as possible," perhaps the current orders remain in place until May 31. That would literally keep orders in place 40% longer than they were in place a century ago.

And on June 1, you open. Because honestly, that’s as long as possible - though not long enough, perhaps, for those who are still collecting a paycheck or maybe don’t need one - and you have a summer. The general idea of distancing is a good one. You don’t have large events. Maybe relax the rules so restaurateurs can seat even more people outside when the weather is nice.

But we need to have a summer. And people need to work and feel useful. And us ants need to replenish our stores. As Alterra Resorts CEO Rusty Gregory is fond of saying, “Don’t let perfect get in the way of good.”

Like it’s gotten in the way of workforce housing development and placing roofs on ice rinks.

There’s no perfect, risk-free plan. Life is not risk free. It’s about playing the percentages. If we dicker and dawdle and have no summer and then get a second wave in November, Mammoth may wake up and realize Bridgeport is the rightful county seat because it has a larger population.

CORONAVIRUS FINDS TIMMY LUPUS
The Bad News Bears (1976) was one of the seminal movies from my childhood, and I think of it this week during the worldwide coronavirus meltdown because it really does prove the old adage that you can’t hide your worst player. Eventually, the ball will be hit to that person. And they’ll have to make a play.

In the Bad News Bears, Timmy Lupus, pint-sized rightfielder and tagged by his teammates as a “booger-eating spaz,” gets to the championship game against the Yankees having not caught a ball all season. In the top of the final inning, a rival team steals a base and Lupus’s teammates cover their eyes. The Bears are clearly doomed. Lupus ducks away, averts his eyes, sticks his glove out … and the ball magically settles in his glove.

There’s no perfect, risk-free plan. Life is not risk free. It’s about playing the percentages. If we dicker and dawdle and have no summer and then get a second wave in November, Mammoth may wake up and realize Bridgeport is the rightful county seat because it has a larger population.

THE SHEET Saturday, January 2, 2021

They Said It:

“Has anybody at the Town or MLT ever considered the growth-inducing impacts of excessive marketing?”

—Paul Oster
DOLLYWOOD WEST

If there’s one thing about Mammoth, it’s that we have a knack for doing things and celebrating things which inevitably fall out of fashion or become utter relics. There’s the new Mono County Civic Center. Thank God we’ll be paying that off for the next three decades, now that we’ve determined most folks can just work from home.

Or consider the monument signs we have at the entrance to town featuring the John Muir quotes. That was the brainchild of former Planning Commissioner Elizabeth Tenney, who opined that Mammoth needed something at the entrance to town which would suggest a “sense of place.”

Never mind it would make a good photo op. And people would send their selfies all over the world.

Fast-forward to this week, when Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune, issued a long letter condemning the Club’s racist past and its founder, John Muir (see related news brief p. 4).

So this got me to thinking. While it’s certainly a disappointment to have Muir discredited, it also provides us as a community the opportunity to adopt slogans which better reflect our town and beliefs.

Let me present a few finalists before revealing my suggestion as Muir’s replacement.

Martha Stewart: “So the pie isn’t perfect? Cut it into wedges, stay in control and never panic.” This seems like excellent governing advice for our local leaders. And an admonition to our guests that they’re here on vacation. Relax. You’ll get your piece of the Sierra, and you don’t have to litter the forest or park in a stream to get it.

Yogi Berra: “You’ve got to be very careful if you don’t know where you are going, because you might not get there.” This neatly sums up 18 years of my career covering the Mammoth Lakes Town Council.

Dave Chappelle: “I’m cool with failing so long as I know that there are people around me that love me unconditionally.” Some encouragement here to Mammoth’s Town Council, which is absolutely terrified of failing, so it remains resolute in its determination to do nothing. Cleland, Kirk, Lynda, John … I love you unconditionally. I really do. Love you too, Bill, but refreshingly, you’re too old and curmudgeonly to give a shit about failure/change your mind. Now that you know I love you - do something!

Arnold Schwarzenegger: “Money doesn’t make you happy. I now have $50 million but I was just as happy when I had $48 million.” Perhaps someone can forward this editorial to Alterra senior management. A good post-it note for the corporate offices when you resume making money hand-over-fist.

Mike Tyson: “Sometimes I put on a ski mask and dress in old clothes, go out on the streets and beg for quarters.” This could be a good reminder for our legions of corporate executives when you resume making money hand-over-fist.

Dolly Parton: “It costs a lot of money to look this light. The rest of the staff can be hired back at that time. I hardly see a “ramp up” period required. Your staff knows their jobs. And you know they’re not going elsewhere. Elsewhere has no work.

Keep them on the sidelines until you’re back running. And save the $25,000/week in payroll.

No explanation required.

A RUN ON THE BANK

This was one of the most controversial pieces I published this year. It was perceived as anti-Food Bank and anti-community. What’s interesting to me is that during this second lockdown, the Food Bank was entirely offloaded to IMACA while the Town focuses on Business Assistance grants.

Like everyone else, I suppose, I am watching the corona drama unfold with a mixture of horror and fascination. All the while looking at my own books and trying to determine how long I can hold my breath underwater.

And recognizing, of course, that it’s only just started. The first few miles of a lengthy marathon.

Mistakes made at the outset can be forgiven. There’s adrenaline at the start. Maybe you go off too fast. Maybe you overestimate the depth of your resources. I get it.

But once that euphoria wears off, it’s time to make the hard decisions. Take, for example, the Food Bank being run by Mammoth Lakes Tourism. You’re feeding people. It feels good. You’re keeping the employees busy. You’re emphasizing community. You’re tamping down the initial shock of displacement.

All important.

But now it’s time to settle into the marathon. And by settling into the marathon, I mean offloading the Food Bank to the professionals at IMACA and the like, and laying off the entire staff until May 15 at the earliest.

That or keep people on and reduce salaries 50% through the end of the year.

Keep them on and reduce salaries 50% through the end of the year.

In the leisure industry, such a move is the norm right now.

Marriott CEO Arne Sorenson’s salary will be suspended the rest of the year. His top executives are all taking 50% cuts.

Roger Stone: “Unless you can fake sincerity, you’ll get nowhere in this business.” A good reminder for our harried front-line employees - at least the ones who still have to work versus stay at home and collect the CARES $600.

But the winner, clearly, is Dolly Parton: “It costs a lot of money to look this cheap.”

No explanation required.

/on The Sheet July 25/
Bob Todd (b. 1962): Bob Todd was a drinker, a toker, a gambler, a slob, a Deadhead, an avid sports fan. He was loud, outspoken, caustic and funny. He didn’t broker dummies and fools. He was a lifelong bachelor. He lived life on his terms. As his friend Chuck Scatolini said, “He taught me what living unapologetically is about. In all situations, he was always the real Bob. Utterly authentic.”

And beloved.

And the best friend one could have - whether you were a person or a dog.

Bob Todd died on Sunday, January 12 clad in his Forty Niner pajamas. He was 57.

Bob was the longtime morning host of the Bob Todd Show on Sierra Wave radio. So even if you didn’t know him, you knew him. You knew his booming voice. You knew his musical tastes. You knew his sense of humor - particularly when he’d get rolling during 10:20 Trivia with sidekick Catherine Hurdle. You knew him because he cared.

About you. About your kids. He was the guy who’d drive down to cover a high school football game in Kern Valley on a Friday night and have the game up on television by Saturday morning.

And the best friend one could have could - whether you were a person or a dog.

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About you. About your kids. He was the guy who’d drive down to cover a high school football game in Kern Valley on a Friday night and have the game up on television by Saturday morning.
And one more person reffiling the till to finance the next adventure. The next project. He plowed every penny back into the resort. Seeking to win over that next smile.

As a close friend who knew Dave for 50 years observed, “Money didn’t buy Dave a $100,000 Mercedes Benz. Money bought him a flannel shirt.”

And you joined him in his endeavors because he looked like you, sounded like you, bled like you. And he didn’t care about your background or your pedigree. He just cared about your ideas, your heart and whether or not you were gung ho in helping pursue his lofty visions.

That was one aspect of who he was. And then there was another aspect which was ... not quite mortal. There was the young hydrographer hired by the City of Los Angeles in 1936 who skied through the deep snow (up to 50 miles a day) in the isolated and forbidden Sierra, taking snow surveys. There was the top of Chair 23 with Heimo Lardi, a local who drew up a rough sketch of the truest sense of the term. He had a spirit and was always looking for new business opportunities.

Buster later developed a manufactured home park (Creekside) in Phoenix, Ore. He forever possessed an entrepreneurial spirit and was always looking for new business opportunities.

Buster was a renaissance man in the truest sense of the term. He had numerous passions and interests and developed real expertise in many of his pursuits.

For example, he was a licensed private pilot and owned his own plane for many years. He was also a very accomplished and passionate photographer. He traveled much of the world taking thousands of photographs. He was very knowledgeable and well read about Africa and took one of his favorite trips there in 1982 for a six-week photo safari by himself.

Mary Pipersky (b. 1953): When Mary was a young child, her father affectionately called her “My Little Bulldozer.” So from a young age, she was clearly determined, knew what was right, and knew how to manifest it.

As sister Charma said, “I admire her so much. She was so strong and so clear in her decision-making ... she had a kind heart and a brave spirit ... and she was a keen observer of people and knew how to nudge them along.”

Which made her an effective public servant. She not only served as Mono County Supervisor, but also served as a Mono County Planning Commissioner and a board member of the Eastern Sierra Land Trust.

With partner Susan, she created Anything Goes in the ‘80s, which was both a restaurant and a catering company. And as Byron Walters, owner of the State Farm insurance agency which was located across the hall from the restaurant, observed, “When it [Anything Goes] opened, there was nothing else like it. It was like going into your mom’s kitchen. It was that friendly. And it literally pushed Mammoth Lakes [from a culinary standpoint] into the 21st century. And while this may seem like a fetched impossibility to anyone under 40, Craig Schrager noted that Anything Goes was the, “first place in town where you could get a scone and/or a latte.”

Jack Copeland (b. 1951): He was the type of guy who still wrote thank you letters. A guy who made it a point to remember people’s names. And if he were in line at Vons, address the checker by name and ask him/her about their day. “A true gentleman.” That’s how former Mammoth Hospital CEO Gary Myers aptly described him.

But don’t mistake gentleman for stick in the mud. He wasn’t a stick in the mud. He was the guy whom you thought might be able to outlast the mountains themselves.

I mean, who didn’t hear of Dave’s passing and look up just to make sure the mountains were still there?
IN MEMORY
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Jack returned home.
And he stewed for about ten days (they lived in the same house), growing more jealous by the minute.
Finally, one night, Kathy and Eisert return home from the bar in her 1954 Chevy truck. Eisert’s drunk as a skunk. As they pull into the driveway, Jack comes storming out of the house in a bathtub, opens the passenger door, and shoves Eisert towards the middle of the bench seat.
Jack then pours his heart out and professes his undying love to Kathy and proposes right there.
They kiss (leaning over Eisert to do so).

Amy Cutter (b. 1961):
There’s a reason why Amy Cutter was never content to simply be a “weekend” warrior.
Because the adjective was too limiting.
She was a warrior for seven days a week, and traveling the country with Jorge on a wide-range of assignments.

Gary Berger (b. 1940):
Gary Berger was a little bit like E.F. Hutton.
When he spoke, people listened. Even Sam Walker.
As Tom Cage said this week with a laugh, “Gary was one of the few people where, when he started to talk, Sam Walker would shut up.”
Gary Berger, who excelled at so many things - as a father, husband, ski instructor, restaurateur, soccer coach - passed away on July 24 at his home in Mammoth. He was 80 years old.
... His attention to detail manifested itself in everything Berger did, from teaching to business to even a choice of words.
Craig Albright, who now serves as Mammoth Mountain’s Vice-President of Skier Services, not only worked as a ski instructor under Berger, but also cooked for him at his restaurant.
“He would get ticked off at waitresses if they said we had run out of the special. We never run out, he’d say. We sell out. There’s a big difference.”
As an instructor, former proteges Albright, Gary Posekian (four-year member of the PSA - Professional Ski Instructors Assn. - Alpine Team), John Armstrong (former Race Dept. Director and Corporate Trainer) and Julie Brown (current Vice-President, June Mountain Operations) all touched upon similar

From an outside perspective, he was remarkable. Until one considers the arc of his life - and the elements even his children were not fully cognizant of until he passed.
As a friend of his from high school once told his ex-wife Nancy, “For what Mike went through as a child, he far exceeded [in his life] what you’d normally expect.”
Michael grew up in La Canada. His mother died when he was seven. His younger sister Kathy was four.
His father was a drinker - wasn’t equipped to handle two young children at home. Michael and his sister bounced away on July 24 at his home in Mammoth. He was 80 years old.
He wasn’t particularly worldly, nor did he aspire to be. He liked his small-town community. He was a man who liked to go on walks with his dogs. And he was thrifty. He didn’t need much.

Gary Berger (b. 1940):
In her final days, no less than four of her Disney bosses over the past two decades visited her in her hospital room.
Tragically, she was unable to make the Tragically, she was unable to make the

She was that good. That respected. She was a gorgeous skier. And perhaps because of her Disney affiliation, Fast Ski Sports shop owner Matt Finnigan, who knew Cutter for thirty years, dubbed her “Tinker Bell.”
And she was tough. As illustrated by a cross-country ski trip she took in Yosemite with her brother. They got caught in a heavy snowstorm, but not before rescuing a few others who were not quite as prepared. The result: Four people stuck inside a two-man tent for three days.
Michael O’Kelly (b. 1944): As long-time friend Ralph Lehotski observed, “He wasn’t a showman. He was just a guy. Always willing to help. He was somebody you liked being around.”
He wasn’t particularly worldly, nor did he aspire to be. He liked his small-town community. He was a man who liked to go on walks with his dogs. And he was thrifty. He didn’t need much.

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IN MEMORY
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themes when recalling “taskmaster” Gary Berger. An amalgam of their observations would read something like this:

“He had no patience for you if you weren’t striving to improve yourself. And he had a sixth sense for sniffing that out. His prickliness steered away the unworthy. But once you proved yourself to him, he was great.”

But even if he loved you, he was always sure to keep you humble.

Gary Posekian recalled a time he was skipping down Broadway and Gary had a group coming up the T-Bar with him. And as Posekian says, Broadway was showtime. You knew everyone on the T-Bar.

Berger literally flagged Posekian down and instructed his group to get off half-way. Posekian was swarming with pride. He thought Berger would hold him up as a paragon of skiing excellence.

Berger, addressing Posekian: Gary, you stay here while we ski down a bit so we can observe you. I wanted to give my class an example of a truly dysfunctional pole plant.

Thaddeus Taylor (b. 1946): An avid outdoorsman and fly-fisherman, he became the Inyo County manager for California Trout. In 1985, he was appointed to the Inyo County Water Commission and helped negotiate the 1991 long-term water agreement between Inyo County and City of Los Angeles. He pushed to include the Lower Owens River restoration project.

Greg James, former Inyo County Counsel and Water Department Director, recalled, “Thaddeus was particularly forceful when one of LADWP’s negotiators claimed, ‘It’s our land and our water and we can do what we want with it.’ He never hesitated to call ‘BS’ even if the claim was made by the Mayor of Los Angeles…”

“He could be outrageous when expressing his opinions—occasionally causing all in the negotiating room to roll their eyes—but it was done in the service of seeking to protect the valley. He was an extraordinarily valuable team member and a very forceful negotiator who always sought to protect the Owens Valley from LADWP’s groundwater pumping, water exports and other water activities. He donated a huge amount of time and energy to the County and its citizens. We owe him a debt of gratitude.”

Thaddeus served as Chairman of the Inyo County Republican Party, twice, from 1996 to 2005 and 2007 to 2016.

Tom Stehlik (b. 1955): Stehlik worked for Dempsey Construction from 1970 (while he was in high school) until 1998, serving as a Project Superintendent for numerous projects. Trivia note: Stehlik’s younger brother Jay holds the distinction of being the last construction employee of the company.

Some of his career with Dempsey wasn’t always etched in stone. In 1974-1975, Tom attended West Hills College to study accounting and play football. But he ultimately chose work and money in the banking sector, continuing his education.

He met his wife Teri at the Mill City Bar. They celebrated their 40th anniversary in June.

As a father, Brie said her dad was the type of guy who could fit in seamlessly in a gathering with her friends, and that he was not the lecturing type. “He gave no lectures about how I should live my life,” said Brie. “He would only give advice if prompted.”

Roxanne Tallman (b. 1946): Horseman, philanthropist and steadfast friend Roxanne Tallman died September 25 after a long bout with cancer. She was 73.

Tallman was the owner of Hidden Creeks Ranch in Bishop, the boarding home for scores of area horses. Her eldest daughter Amanda will inherit the operation.

Tallman is also the namesake for the Tallman Pavilion at the Tri-County Fairgrounds.

How she met her husband: She had gone on a ski club trip to June Mountain and broken a ski. Back home, she wandered into the Holiday House, a ski shop in Pasadena, to get it fixed. The owner was named Chuck Tallman. And he fit the description. He was 6’5”.

The running joke between mom and dad, recalls youngest daughter Kristen, was that anything could be fixed with duct tape and zip ties.

“A problem was never a problem,” added Kristen. “Mum believed it’s all solvable. there’s always a way to get things done, and giving up was never an option. She had no patience for quitters.

And “if you’re stuck, ask” was one of her mantras.

“I may not be an A student,” Roxanne herself said, “but I’m a MacGyver.”

The previous four pages are not comprehensive. And some who passed, including Sally Joseph, who died in the Walker Fire, and “Mr. Bishop” Chuck Kilpatrick, who died this week, will have obituaries appear in upcoming issues.

Some who died in late 2019 but were written up in 2020 are not included here: Tony Colasardo (Jan. 4, 2020 issue) and Bob Schotz (Feb. 22, 2020). Obituaries appearing within the past two weeks (Rodney Wiley, Dec. 19) and Nick Gunter (Dec. 26) were also omitted due to recency. Any of these profiles can be accessed via the online edition archives at www.thesheetnews.com.
People of all ages took to the streets this year to protest a variety of causes. Black Lives Mattered. Blue Lives Mattered. Protest/rally photos appeared in the June 6, June 13, and August 22 issues.

They Said It:

“It’s weird when you have to leave Mammoth to go to Yosemite to get away from the crowds.”

-Corinne Brown
When my reporters tell me they don’t know what to write about, I tell ‘em to just walk down the street and talk someone up. The Eastside is full of interesting characters. The most interesting one I met this year? Dick Burbine

-Lunch

Burbine (far right) with Robert Chuck Reed (center) and Earnal Spurgeon “Spud” Campbell back in 2003. At that time, they were the three remaining survivors. The other remaining survivor circa 2020 is Campbell, 98.

When you meet Dick Burbine, the first thing that crosses your mind is, “This isn’t Dick Burbine.”

Because there’s nothing about him that seems 94. He doesn’t look 94. He doesn’t move like 94. He’s in incredible shape. As his doc, James Witmer, at the V.A. hospital in Gardnerville joked after putting him through his last physical, “Get out of my office. You embarrass me.”

When you walk in the house and he offers you a drink, the drinks he prefers tend to come in 1.5 oz. servings. And then he leaves the bottle on the table. And you’re always welcome to stay the night if you pour yourself one too many.

He hands me a bottle. Pusser’s Royal Navy Rum. “This is the reason I’m alive,” he says.

And as I was soon to discover, he wasn’t kidding.

“We ran into one of the most severe storms ever recorded in the area. It was so strong it went right off the barometer - completely off the scale. Winds of over 130 miles per hour, 45 to 60 degrees below zero. We lost the convoy. The rough seas sheared the steel pins holding the mainsprings on the steering mechanism.

And it was in this compromised condition that the S.S. Henry Bacon was discovered by 23 JU-88 German planes.

Burbine said that the Bacon put up a fight. It shot down a confirmed six planes, and damaged another four before the ship was hit by a torpedo which blew a hole in its magazine near Hold #3.

She sank in less than an hour.

Immediately after the ship was struck, Burbine says “My Chief Engineer ordered me to cut loose one of the lifeboats with a fire axe because the cables were frozen. But the sea hit me and took me and the lifeboat right over the side. I came up under the life boat. It had hit me on the back of the neck and knocked me out. I had to kick off my sea boots in the tangle of lines in the water, and somehow I rolled the life boat upright. How I did it, I don’t know. Witnesses who saw me do it couldn’t say how I did it by myself... it saved some crew by doing that.”

Only two lifeboats were serviceable following the torpedo strike. In one boat were placed 20 Norwegian women and children, war refugees who had boarded the Bacon in Murmansk.

The second lifeboat took as many crew members as it dared.

In an act of heroism that Dick Burbine alluded to again and again during our time together, the ship’s 50-year old Chief Engineer, Donald Haviland, gave up his seat on the lifeboat to one of his 18-year old sailors.

Haviland subsequently went down with the ship.

Ringleader

But what of Dick Burbine? He’s in the water. It’s cold and dark. You can’t see a thing. The waves are swelling 100 feet.

A life ring floats by. Seriously. A little ring maybe a few feet in diameter. He’s able to grab it.

He hears a few friends close by. There’s Woodrow Wilson Pozzon. They connect. Pozzon hangs onto a piece of the ring. Then they hear William “Blackie” Willridge and swim toward him, connect. He grabs a piece of the ring. And finally, they also save Warren Bachelor, who is in and out of delirium. They put Warren’s head through the ring, and then wrap their legs around Bachelor’s to secure him.

And they wait, they hope, for a rescue.

It’s somewhat ironic that being in the water may have improved their chances. The relatively warm sea current heat exposure to the arctic air. Tragically, some men who were able to access the dunage, the floating detritus from the ship, died because the sea spray actually froze them to the timbers.

Those in rafts were okay - so long as they stayed dry.

According to Burbine, he was conscious during the whole ordeal. In fact, at one point, amid the swells, he saw the “Christmas Tree.”

Huh?

“The Christmas Tree is the top of that mast where the running lights are... at one point, I saw it moving on the horizon and five minutes later I could make out the shape of the hull.”

Meaning that they were floating in the first place a rescuer would look.

During the nearly three hour ordeal, there wasn’t a lot of talking. Nor a great deal of time devoted to existential thought.

“We were cold and hurting,” says Burbine. “You didn’t want to waste energy talking and letting heat out of your body. It was just all about survival. How to save our asses.”

When help finally arrived in the form of the H.M.S. Zambesi, a British destroyer, the assumption was that it was a recovery mission as opposed to a rescue mission.

The typical survival rate for a person submerged in such frigid water temperatures is 10 to 15 minutes.

A sub-lieutenant on the Zambesi, Ian Rodney Bowen (later knighted), “tied a hearing line around his waist and jumped in to hook us up and take us aboard,” said Burbine. At the time, they thought we were dead because we were covered with ice when they brought us on the dock - but when they dropped us on the deck my eyes opened and rolled back and they said, ‘My God, they’re still alive.”

“What they did once they brought us aboard... our clothes were frozen to our bodies. So they laid us on the mess hall tables, covered us with sheets and packed us in sea ice. They covered us with sea ice, let the sea ice melt room temperature as our bodies thawed out with it.”

But there was no medication. They’d picked up so many survivors there was none left. All they had left: Pusser’s Royal Navy Rum. They had barrels of it. So the doctors (who was actually not a medical doctor but a veterinary doctor) provided a steady supply over the next four days.

“He kept us on a mellow glow,” recalls Burbine.

And at the end of four days, the verdict: “I had frostbite but didn’t lose any extremities. The doctors checked us out and said we were fine.”

Burbine’s keys to longevity

1. Pusser’s Rum
2. Own and use a chainsaw frequently.
3. No rabbit food - Dick’s no fan of vegetables
4. Don’t use sugar and salt. Eat it how it comes. He prefers meat and potatoes.

Attacked by fire axe because the cables were frozen.
They Said It:

“Travel is our lifeblood, and we’re literally in need of a desperate transunion.”

- Alicia Vennos

PEOPLE
continued from previous page
Daniel O’Connell

The legal process can be extensive, arduous, and immensely tricky to navigate for anyone who isn’t a lawyer. Legal disputes can go on for months and even years, with significant costs incurred and no guaranteed positive outcome. For those seeking to avoid the headache of settling a dispute or disagreement in court, Daniel O’Connell of Alpine Dispute Resolution offers an alternative: save time, money, and sanity by settling before things even reach the point where court dates are set.


After leaving the LA practice, he branched out into real estate investment, which led to the project that would bring him to the Eastern Sierra permanently, Mammoth Rock ’n Bowl, where he spent eight and a half years as the tall quiet source, practicing law, “said O’Connell.

“Zach Yates

He is now the shop’s co-owner. If Oregon’s Mt. Hood Meadows ski area to local racers as the tall quiet source of sophisticated race tunes, Zach Yates started out in the rental shop at Footloose in 1995. He is now the shop’s co-owner. If Oregon’s Mt. Hood Meadows ski area had rented snowboards in the 80’s, Zach’s path might have been very different. But they only rented skis.

“We didn’t grow up in a ski family. I was skateboarding a lot, and if anything I wanted to snowboard. But my mom got a job at Mt. Hood Meadows so we got free rentals. They didn’t rent snowboards at the time, so that was it.”

He got a job as a busboy at Mt. Hood at fourteen, saving up all winter to buy his first pair of skis: “‘82 Extremes. 207’s. I slept with them for a while.”

Zach became one of the youngest certified instructors at fifteen, teaching at Hood through high school, and then moving to Kirkwood where he met future co-owner Silver Chesak, a fellow instructor.

At Kirkwood he got his first chance to ski more technical terrain, and ski with heroes of the time like Glen Plake and Darren Johnson. But it was short lived: “Basically, we got kicked out of Kirkwood for partying too hard in the employee housing,” he says, laughing, “so we went to Mammoth”

Yisroel and Mushky Gordon:

For the first time, maybe ever, Mammoth Lakes will have a Rabbi living here supporting the Jewish community and spreading kindness to anyone who needs it.

Rabbi Yisroel Gordon recently moved here with his wife Mushky Gordon to open up a Jewish Center not just for Mammoth Lakes but anyone in Mono or Inyo county that is interested in the services offered. Rabbi Yisroel grew up in Melbourne, Australia.

While Mushky is originally from Connecticut, he came to Mammoth Lakes last December to check out the area and moved here on Tuesday, March 3 all the way from Brooklyn, New York.

“The people here are really nice. We have met so many of them already,” Rabbi Yisroel said in a conversation with The Sheet, “We are here to serve the Jewish community here that is currently underserved. There is no infrastructure available for this growing community.”

Working with the Jewish organization Chabad, Rabbi Yisroel and his wife were in touch with Rabbi Shlomo Cunin, the director of Chabad-Lubavitch of California, who was aware of the lack of a Jewish presence in Mammoth Lakes.

Caliese Linnastruth

Caliese Linnastruth, a Mammoth Lakes native, has been a nurse at Mammoth Hospital for the past 2.5 years after starting out at Swedish Medical Center in Denver.

“It was a privilege to come back and work with the individuals who have known me since I was a wee tot,” Linnastruth said with a laugh. When news first broke of about COVID-19, local authorities began the process of planning for its spread to the Sierra.

From the beginning, the disease coming here seemed inevitable given the high amount of winter tourist traffic to the region from all over the United States and the world. Linnastruth described the hospital’s approach as

“proactive,” noting that “Prior to our first confirmed positive, we already had designated quarantine and ‘clean’ areas to optimize safety for all. The cafeteria removed the salad bar and arm of seating, and a greeter was placed at every entrance to check for fever, cough and shortness of breath prior to entrance inside.”

“There was even a criteria in place for healthcare workers who have traveled in the last two weeks to check for symptoms on a daily basis,” Linnastruth said.

Newspaper the virus has been decidedly dire and grim but hospital staff are handling it well.

“Honestly, the mood is resilient ... and united,” Linnastruth told The Sheet.

Team Sew Forth (Jeanne Oakeshott, Terry Lee)

It was everyone’s favorite neighbor, Fred Rogers, who encouraged us to look for the helpers during trying times.

And some Mono County residents have answered the call by utilizing their skills to become helpers in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Operating under the name Team Sew Forth, this coalition of sewing mavens and organizers formed in late March when Terry Lee, a retired court commissioner for both Inyo and Mono Counties, reached out to Jeanne Oakeshott to see if Oakeshott would be interested in sewing masks for Mammoth Hospital’s protective equipment drive.

“I said, yeah, of course, do you need other people to sew,” Oakeshott told the Sheet, “Within hours, I had like 18 people.”

Oakeshott eventually took the lead on communications and supplies gathering for the sewing for Sew Forth, ordering yards of elastic and picking up sheets from the Cast-Off.

“Instead of diamonds being a girl’s best friend, it was elastic,” Oakeshott joked. She explained that elastic is in extremely short supply worldwide for a number of reasons, including expense of material and shipping costs.

Abby Troy

Abby Troy, a Mammoth Lakes resident, worked as a server at the Liberty Sports Bar and Grill and as a junior race team coach at Mammoth Mountain.

Troy had applied for unemployment after tearing her ACL/MCL last year and still had a claim open. She had a low base of $561 but is now receiving $661 a week.

“My perspective was, I saved good money through the winter. And I thought, it’s not going to hurt anything [to collect],” said Troy. “But this has already lasted longer than I expected, so the money is going straight into my savings.”

When Troy was let go from Liberty, she was told she’d be working by May. Which became June. And at this point, even Troy thinks that date could be pushed all the way back to July.

“My life hasn’t changed that much. I don’t spend a ton of money so I have been living pretty much the same,” said Troy.

Troy was backcountry skiing at first. “There is the same family. And now she wants to take a roadtrip up the California coast. Troy reflected on the moment.

All this made me appreciate being with my family [in L.A.] at a time like this. Still, the lack of productivity is bothersome for Troy, “I don’t like collecting unemployment. I hate not working,” she said.

Rich and Jan McAteer

Rich McAteer grew up in Southern California. He graduated from Whittier College, studying history and political science, and then went into teaching.

He was living in Whittier post-college. And driving home one day, he thought to himself, so many never leave Whittier once they finish school there. They stay in the area the rest of their lives. He wanted something different.

He knew a nurse who was going back to Massachusetts for a few months. He thought, well, if I try the east coast, at least I’ll know someone when I get there.

He applied for four jobs. Landed one in Westford, Mass. teaching English and Social Studies.

He met and began dating Jan Hanlon while he was there.

And then got drafted in 1966.

see PEOPLE, page 17
PEOPLE continued from previous page

He was subsequently sent to Vietnam. Got lucky and was assigned to a Field Depot and didn’t see combat.

Got luckier still and asked Jan to marry him during his hitch while he was stationed outside Saigon. She said yes. They got married in Hawaii while he was on a seven-day leave.

And luckier still when he finished his tour and left Vietnam one month before the Tet Offensive would’ve placed him in harm’s way.

/Kendra Atleeework

While many summer events and activities have been canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic, there’s one throwback summer activity that’s eminently portable and perfect for social distancing.

Reading. And Bishop’s own Kendra Atleeework’s first book, a memoir, qualifies as one of this summer’s must-reads.


A graduate of Mammoth High School who went on to attend Scripps College in L.A., Atleeework (who carries an umbrella around during the summer to shield her fair skin) told The Sheet this week, “I always wanted to be a writer. But I didn’t know what I wanted to write about.”

Her “a-ha!” moment came when she attended a lecture by the writer Ian Frazier. Frazier, a regular contributor at the New Yorker magazine, was discussing his book “The Great Plains.”

/Tina Fortune

Believe it or not, there is one restaurant that is opening in the middle of a pandemic: Dish Bistro.

Festival-goers in Mono County might recognize the name from “One Dish Bistro,” the Food Truck seen at June Lake Jam or the Mono Arts Festival.

The owner and chef. Her name is Tina Fortune.

“I called it One Dish Bistro because you should have one dish you make really well,” said Fortune on the difference you should have one dish you make really well. “It was 2006. I was on a camping trip with a bachelor’s degree and spent some time as a technical writer, mostly writing proprietary software for different clients, “he said. “It was 2006. I was on a camping trip with my dog. I remember thinking to myself ‘there is no way I can go back and sit at a desk anymore.’”

Bells graduated from Cal State Fullerton with a bachelor’s degree and spent some time as a technical writer, mostly writing proprietary software for different clients.

“It was 2006. I was on a camping trip with my dog. I remember thinking to myself ‘there is no way I can go back and sit at a desk anymore.’”

The true artists. The art-for-art’s-sake artists.

The artists who walk away from the sure thing for the more compelling, hardy-sure thing.

The artists who march to a drumbeat which the rest of us often don’t hear. They are the Hortons who hear whos. They are the artists who hear whos. They are the artists who hear whos. They are the artists who hear whos.

Bruce Licher

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**Public Notice of Hearing**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that on Wednesday, January 6, 2021, starting at 3:00 p.m. and continuing until such time as the hearing is concluded, at the Town Council Chambers, Suite 2 within the Inyo County Courthouse, 437 Main Street, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 and via Zoom online, the Mammoth Lakes Town Council will hear an application for the following:

**Application Request:** Public hearing and consideration for the following:

1. District Zoning Amendment (DZA) No. 04-01 to adopt the Mammoth Lakes Downtown/Basin Master Plan and creating new site-specific zoning and affordability requirements for The Parcel.

2. Temporary Permit (TRP) 20-040 requiring a 100% density-bonus pursuant to Zoning Code Chapter 17.138 (Inyo County’s Rezoning Zone) to allow for 80 affordable housing units to be constructed in phases on the 25-acre property, during the permit period, the maximum number allowed by the underlying RMF-1 zoning district;

3. Designs Review (DR) 20-040 for the first phase (Development of 16 of The Parcel affordable housing development), which includes initial infrastructure improvements and construction of up to 81 units (80 affordable and 1 family housing units and 1 manager unit) along with a design plan for a junior caretaker dwelling.

**Purpose of Hearing:** To consider approval of the application.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that interested persons are invited to attend the hearing to present oral testimony in support of or in opposition to the application.

All interested persons are requested to provide written comments to the Town Clerk at Town Hall, P.O. Box 1609, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 prior to the hearing.

**Mammoth Spa Creations** is seeking an assistant with a background in customer service and clean driving records. We are also looking for office staff for the right person with great organizational skills and customer service background. Please inquire with Scottie at 760-914-7433. www.mammoth-taxi.com

**Eastern Sierra Transit Authority Operation Supervisor** - Mammoth Lakes, ESTA is recruiting for an Operation Supervisor for its Mammoth Lakes location. This fulltime, year-round position will manage operational and support staff for all of ESTA’s operations in the Mammoth Lakes area. ESTA is responsible for the vehicles and depots’ supervision to 25 or 45 drivers depending on the season. Job description and application are available online at www.estranintrast.com/jobs. First round of application review will be January 15, 2021.

**Salary And Benefit Information:** The hourly salary range is $26.44 - $31.57 plus $50.00 per month. Mammoth Premium Benefits include:
- PERS retirement: 2% @ 55;
- SSDI 7500;
- CHP 9249;
- Medical;
- Vision/Prescription Reimbursement;
- Lifeline Program;

Eastern Sierra Transit is an Equal Opportunity Employer, bilingual applicants encouraged.

**Work With The Best, Footloose Sports,** nationally recognized as a top 60 retailer, is hiring for the upcoming season. We are seeking energetic, social, and driven associates who can work hard and play. We’re looking for responsible individuals, passionate about winter sports, and motivated to provide the best customer service. We have full and part-time positions open to our sales, rental, and ski repair departments. We are offering great pay DOE, discounts and flexible hours, in progressive work environment. Call us at 760-934-2088. Go to our website at www.footloosesports.com or e-mail your resume to footloose@footloosesports.com to schedule an interview.

**Mammoth Lakes Fire Department is hiring** for a housekeeper. Condos paid by piece. Please call 760-934-0489.

**Mammoth Sport Creations** must be able to safely lift 50 lbs., have exceptional front line retail with potential to grow. General info/employment.htm.

**Superior Courts. The Child Support Commissioner** is hiring in the Bay Area and includes those visitors to the town of Mammoth Lakes. It can potentially become a full time job.

**Mammoth taxi cab company is hiring** for experienced drivers with great customer service and clean driving records. We are also looking for office staff for the right person with great organizational skills and customer service background. Please inquire with Scottie at 760-914-7433. www.mammoth-taxi.com

**Experienced real estate agents/brokers** are needed. For Rent:

- 2020-0208 (12/26, 1/2, 1/9, 1/16)
- File Number: 17-095
- MMSA Food & Beverage, LLC.
- Limited Liability Co.

- This business is conducted by an Limited Liability Co. The registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above or ceased to transact business under such business name.
- Pursuant to Government Code Section 60090(b), if this business is ceased to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above, the registrant is required to give written notice to the County Clerk of Mono County on Dec. 3, 2020. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on Dec. 8, 2020. To obtain a copy of a business name registration or renew a name, please visit: https://www.mono.ca.gov/CountyClerk

- For Rent:
- 2020-0209 (12/26, 1/2, 1/9, 1/16)
- File Number: 20-0209
- MAMSA Food & Beverage, LLC.
- Limited Liability Co.

- This business is conducted by an Limited Liability Co. The registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above or ceased to transact business under such business name.
- Pursuant to Government Code Section 60090(b), if this business is ceased to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above, the registrant is required to give written notice to the County Clerk of Mono County on Dec. 2, 2020. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Mono County on Dec. 8, 2020. To obtain a copy of a business name registration or renew a name, please visit: https://www.mono.ca.gov/CountyClerk
**TOWN STUFF**

**Wednesday, January 6**
Mammoth Lakes Tourism board meets via Zoom. 1 p.m. Log on via www.mammothlakes.granicus.com.

**Mammoth Lakes Town Council meets**
via Zoom. 4 p.m. Log on via www.mammothlakes.granicus.com.

**Thursday, December 31**
New Year’s Eve party @ Wanaaha Casino in Bishop. Free party favors and $500 cash drawings every 30 minutes. Location: 2742 N. Sierra Highway.

**Friday, January 1**
June Mountain opens for the season. We expect to operate chairs 1, 2, 3, and 7 with access to Bucky’s, River Run, Chalet, Babyface, Matterhorn, Schatzi and Sunlight. Rentals, lessons and retail will be available, but please note there will be no scenic rides available at this time. Social distancing measures will be enforced; masks required indoors, in lift lines, on chairlifts.

**Monday, January 4**

- **Mammoth Lakes Lodging Round Table** meets 10 a.m. Viewing available thru Zoom at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8867051007.
- **Mammoth Lakes Restaurant Assn. meetings via Zoom. 3:30 p.m. Log on via www.mammothlakeschamber.org.**
- **Mammoth Lakes Housing Board** meets via Zoom. 6 p.m. Log on www.mammothlakes.granicus.com.

**Tuesday, January 5**
Mammoth Recreation Commission meets via Zoom. 10 a.m. Log on via www.mammothlakes.granicus.com.

**Inyo County Supervisors meet**
Public session begins 10 a.m. Log on via the County website @ www.inyocoounty.us. Inyo County Supervisors meet.

**Wednesday, January 6**
Mammoth Lakes Tourism board meets via Zoom. 1 p.m. Log on via www.mammothlakes.granicus.com.

**Mammoth Lakes Town Council meets**
via Zoom. 3 p.m. Log on via www.mammothlakes.granicus.com.

**Saturday, January 9**
Eastern Sierra Audubon Society

**Cosa Bird Walk.** Time: 8:30-10:30 a.m. Join ENAS and volunteers on an easy walk around the Bishop Paiute Tribe’s Conservation Open Space Area (COSA). Meet behind the U.S. Forest Service/Bureau of Land Management building (351 Pacu Lane, Bishop). A limited supply of binoculars are available. Info: www.easaudubon.org.

**Ongoing**

- **Mono County Libraries - Winter Reading Challenge.** From January 1-31. Mono County Libraries will participate in Beanstack’s Fourth Annual Winter Reading Challenge. The theme is Book Like Us, encouraging participants to find a book in which they see a reflection of themselves. Participants can log their reading on our Beanstack site at monocolibraries.beanstack.org. #WinterRead2021 #BookLikeUs #MonoReads
- **There is an unscheduled vacancy on the Bishop Planning Commission.** This appointment will be in effect until April 9, 2021. All interested persons may contact Bishop City Hall @ (760) 873-5863 Ext. 24. Applications and descriptions of duties and responsibilities are available at City Hall and on the City’s website at http://www.cityofbishop.com. Applications accepted until 4 p.m. on Jan. 8, 2021.

**Monos Art Council’s “Howling at the Moon” art show** is currently on display at the MAC Gallery inside the Minaret Mall across the way from Minaret Cinemas. Hours: 12-5, Friday-Monday.

**Laws Museum,** located just outside Bishop off Highway 6, is open Friday-Monday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Mono County Libraries Storytime Live!** Join Ms. Chelsea for a story and fun activities on the Mammoth Lakes Library Facebook page. Time: 10:30 a.m. on Wednesdays. Or start your week off with a community storytelling. Fridays at 10:30 a.m. on the Mono County Libraries Facebook page.

**All Visitor Centers (Mono Basin, Mammoth, White Mountain, Lone Pine) are closed**, but visitor questions are being answered via phone daily, 8-4:30.

**Mono Basin: 760.647.3044**

**Mammoth: 760.924.5502**

**White Mountain: 760.873.2500**

**Lone Pine: 760.876.6200**

**Mono County Libraries currently operating under Call Ahead for Pickup Service. Patrons not permitted inside library facilities.**

**Covid testing/ Bishop:** Tri-County Fairgrounds, Tamarack Pavilion on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday - participants must be in a vehicle to get tested. Mammoth Lakes testing Tuesday and Fridays at Sierra Star Golf Course 1 am-12:45 pm and Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at the M.L. Community Center 10 am-1 pm.

**Walker/Coleville testing Fridays at Walker Community Center 9 am-12:45**

**TOWN STUFF**

**Reading Challenge.** The theme is Book Like Us, encouraging participants to find a book in which they see a reflection of themselves. Participants can log their reading on our Beanstack site at monocolibraries.beanstack.org. #WinterRead2021 #BookLikeUs #MonoReads

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**Lone Pine: 760.876.6200**

**Mono County Libraries currently operating under Call Ahead for Pickup Service. Patrons not permitted inside library facilities.**

**Covid testing/ Bishop:** Tri-County Fairgrounds, Tamarack Pavilion on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday - participants must be in a vehicle to get tested. Mammoth Lakes testing Tuesday and Fridays at Sierra Star Golf Course 1 am-12:45 pm and Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at the M.L. Community Center 10 am-1 pm.

**Walker/Coleville testing Fridays at Walker Community Center 9 am-12:45**

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EDITORIAL
continued from page 2
problems.
Back to Wednesday’s meeting. In this age of Zoom meetings it has allowed our government to operate without the public having any ability to comment on their leadership and hold them accountable. Yes, they take questions however, once you ask your question, you are muted and don’t get answers. I specifically stated that I’d like my questions and concerns addressed yet I along with dozens of others on the call didn’t get the courtesy of any response from our elected officials. Bryan Wheeler did take time afterwards to say I was incorrect about the inability for anyone to get a quick response Covid test in Mono County. Well Bryan, it would seem that I’m right and you are wrong. On Monday at 1:59 p.m. I called our 211 hotline and specifically asked how I can get a quick response test. I was told that because I’m not symptomatic a test wasn’t available for me. I then stated “Bryan Wheeler said these tests are available” and was once again told they weren’t. If the reason for enforcing the stay-at-home order so strictly is that we’re concerned about the spread of Covid, why aren’t there actions in place to do just that? For example, why aren’t rapid tests readily available to tourists away under this stay-at-home order for example, under this travel ban as a hotel check-in. It’s quite clear our government doesn’t care about our health and well-being but only about following orders and doing what they want. Why aren’t they looking at the right facts like the stress of having one’s life’s work forced to close … possibly forever? Guaranteeing economic hardship, high stress levels, and mental anguish. Dr. Boo, don’t you think these people are suffering as much as you are? Well, we’ve all been in this together; well let’s see if that’s true. I propose all people in the decision-making loop furlough their salaries and freeze their benefits during this lodging shutdown. Better yet, donate your salaries to a fund for economic relief to those you’ve put in duress. Property taxes, sales tax, all forms of tax should be waived during this time. If you’re going to force businesses to close and have zero revenue perhaps you ought to walk a mile in others’ shoes before claiming you understand what they’re going through. Businesses have this little thing called overhead; they have employees depending on pay-checks so they can feed their families and pay their rents and mortgages. Not to mention the added expenses incurred to get Covid-ready. They can’t just float a bond or pull all the levers the government can to raise capital. Once they miss out on these revenues they’re gone and can’t be made up. I’m happy to give a financial seminar to all of you who don’t seem to understand this concept; or perhaps you’d rather pay an out-of-town consultant $50,000 and deem them essential to come up here?

What is your plan to operate in the future with Transient Occupancy Tax revenue likely reduced by 50% or even more for the year? Those of you who work for the County and Town may want to think about how your salaries will get paid with a sharp reduction in the budget. Will your job be eliminated? I’m concerned for all of you. This is about right versus wrong. It isn’t right to go out of your way to enforce these orders when most municipalities are not. It’s downright wrong not to represent us and you really need to think about the lives you are certainly destroying versus the effectiveness of enforcing this draconian order.

I urge everyone reading this to contact those people on Council, Board of Supervisors, Town manager Dan Holler and Public Health Officer Dr. Tom Boo and plea for them to come to their senses and do what other communities are doing; permitting their citizens to earn a living. We are a tough breed in the Eastern Sierra, we don’t want government handouts; we want to earn our money. Please allow us to do so.

Here’s to the crazy ones. The troublemakers. The patriots. The ones who see America differently. They’re not fond of tyranny. And they have no tolerance for corruption. You can disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can’t do is ignore them, because they change things. They defend the constitution & push the nation forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, I see courage. Because the patriots who are crazy enough to think they can change America, are the ones who do.

- ROGAN O’HANDLEY

Mammoth Lakes Official Lawsuit to End Closures

Calling all locals, restaurant owners, rental companies, small business owners and property owners in Mammoth Lakes, Ca! We will no longer watch our town be destroyed and closed down and watch our fellow neighbors suffer and lose their businesses permanently. We the people of Mammoth Lakes are standing up for our constitutional rights!

PLEASE DONATE @ https://gofund.me/42853e8e
One murder solved, one shooting and a double homicide. That equals action in the Eastern Sierra.

On January 30, 2020, after a three-year investigation, the Mono County District Attorney’s Office, with the assistance of the Mammoth Lakes Police Department, (MLPD) and the Mono County Sheriff’s Department, (MCSO) arrested 28 year-old Josue Adalberto Corea-Vasquez of Mammoth Lakes for the 2016 murder of Mammoth Lakes resident Jose Omar Hernandez Sanchez, also known as Omar Hernandez.

After a complete review of the facts and circumstances surrounding the crime and the suspect, as well as consultation and input with the victim’s family, the District Attorney will decide whether to seek the death penalty in the coming months.

Over the last three years since the murder of Mr. Hernandez, the Office of the District Attorney has continually investigated this murder and considered solving it a top priority. Investigators for the District Attorney’s Office have received hundreds of tips throughout the investigation and have followed up on numerous items of evidence.

Over this past year, the Office discovered new information that ultimately led to additional evidence and the identification of Mr. Corea-Vasquez. Mr. Corea-Vasquez has been a resident of Mammoth Lakes for over 10 years and was an employee at the local Vons. The victim Mr. Hernandez was his supervisor at the time of the murder.

On January 6, 2020, at approximately 5:14 p.m., the Bishop Police Department’s Dispatch Center began receiving ‘911’ calls regarding a shooting with multiple victims at the Shell Gas Station on North Main.

BPD Officers located an adult male on the ground in the parking lot with multiple gunshot wounds. He was unable to speak. A handgun was nearby. Medics attempted to save the adult male but he died shortly after they arrived.

BPD quickly learned from witnesses that the deceased had arrived in a vehicle with a female driver. The female driver fled immediately after the shooting.

A week later, Inyo County District Attorney Tom Hardy announced that his office has filed multiple felony charges against forty-six year old Brandee Trujillo of Los Lunas, New Mexico, all arising out of the January 6, 2020 shooting incident at the Shell Wye Mart in Bishop.

“We received the Bishop Police Department’s initial reports on Tuesday afternoon, January 14, and based on those reports and briefings from investigators, we determined that it was appropriate to file formal criminal charges.

The complaint charges her with Attempted First Degree Murder, Conspiracy to Commit Robbery, Conspiracy to Commit Carjacking, Attempted Robbery, Attempted Carjacking, and being an ex-Felon in possession of a firearm.

"Additionally, Ms. Trujillo has been charged with being personally armed with, and discharging, a firearm during the commission of the crimes. If convicted of all charges and enhancements, Ms. Trujillo could be facing as much as 20 years to life in state prison.”

On November 9, 2020, just before 6:30 a.m., a Caltrans snowplow driver observed two bodies on the shoulder of Highway 395, approximately 10 miles north of Bridgeport.

It was determined that a man and woman had been murdered - later identified as husband and wife, William Adrian Larsen, age 35, and Yesenia Larsen, age 30, both from Burbank, California. Mono County Sheriff Ingrid Braun described approaching the scene as straight out of the Coen Brothers film Fargo.

Later, authorities (Redding and Carson City police) speculated on a potential link between the Larsen homicide and the disappearance of a 26-year-old Redding man this past June. Jere Stefansky left Redding on June 19, 2020 driving a rental car and headed to Carson City for a marijuana transaction with William Larsen.

The price tag of the deal was apparently $400,000. Stefansky was apparently going to pick up cash from Larsen that would be used to purchase marijuana and ship it to Pennsylvania. Larsen and his wife, then known as Yesenia Arriaga, were both arrested in 2018 in Pennsylvania for possession of 84 lbs of marijuana and 1,200 THC vape cartridges. Larsen served 6 months of a year deal while Arriaga entered and completed a drug diversion program.

In June, Larsen told investigators that Stefansky never showed up for their meeting.
I saw ... that the dynasty is over. Baloney. It’s only the third quarter in my life. What would it take for me to plant my #1 seed in your bracket? I bought a two-week quarantine with a mask, which I thought was really unfair, since I haven’t been farting nearly as much of late.

In search of ... some toilet paper, but it’s sold out everywhere. How come everybody else gets to use Charmin?

I saw ... that you’re earning up for March Madness. What would it take for me to plant my #1 seed in your bracket? I bought a two-week quarantine with a mask, which I thought was really unfair, since I haven’t been farting nearly as much of late.

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PERSONALS continued from page 22

I saw you...are open for indoor dining. Which I’m excited about—as soon as salons reopen, too.

I heard you...believe the coronavirus is a hoax and refuse to wear a mask. Sounds like we’d make a good couple, since I have all the social distancing skills of a porn actress. How ’bout we meet at Vons later so we can fondle the produce and breathe on each other?

I saw you...are all about Distant learning. But maybe it’s time to leave the brewery and log into a class or two.

I see...Labor Day has arrived just in time, especially since you haven’t worked a day since March.

I saw you...preparing for evacuation. What can I say, other than that life is a colonoscopy. In search of...a place to go if there’s an evacuation? You’re welcome to stay with me, but only if you’ll agree to parade around the condo in floss underwear on Sunday mornings during football season.

I see you...are concerned about the Creek Fire. Would you be less concerned if I offered you a firm, extended paddle?

I saw you...are excited about the NFL season starting this week. By the way, are you familiar with the recent rule changes? There will be no forward Covid passes. The penalty for this infraction is sideline quarantine with Booger MacFarland.

I saw you...no longer wish to donate land for the National Wounded Warrior Center. Which is a little disappointing, seeing as those vets were willing to donate blood for you.

I saw you...got kicked out of the U.S. Open for hitting a linesperson with a ball. Seems unfair. Now if you had hit her with both balls...

I would like to remind you...of our election on election day. With an ass like yours, I’d vote Trump.

I saw you...are worried about moving into a condo in floss underwear. In search of...a rink. With a roof. But all I found was rinky dink. In school, they grady to that as “P.”

I saw you...are really excited to throw a big New Year’s party. Well, even if Covid kills those leggings hazardous (to good taste). I would like to remind you...of our election bet. If Biden wins, I treat you to a romantic candlelight dinner. And if Trump wins, I get to grab you by the...

I saw you...are unsure about how to vote on election day. With an ass like yours, I’d vote Trump.

I saw you...are winless in your fantasy league. So what makes you think you can draft me for a one-night stand?

I heard you...are thinking of moving to Canada if Trump wins reelection. Maybe they’ll rename it Vancourgar.

I hear you...want the Attorney General to prosecute your enemies. Well, I don’t know if Barr has the courage to do it, but he does have the gut.

I saw you...have a thing for Japanese chicks. I hear they call it the Kimonovirus.

I see you...are really looking forward to ski season. I hear they call that the Bonovirus. I would have liked...to have been a fly on the wall at the Vice-Presidential debate on Wednesday, but it appears I was beaten to it.

I saw you...some very tight spanx the other day. Like the air quality, I would deem those leggings hazardous (to good taste). I would like to remind you...of our election bet. If Biden wins, I treat you to a romantic candlelight dinner. And if Trump wins, I get to grab you by the...

I saw you...are concerned about the recent rule changes. Which I’m excited about—as soon as salons reopen, too.

I hope you...will indulge my fetish for...ent? Come by my place and I’ll show you a free package!

I saw you...are quarantining. Sounds like quarantining to me.

I heard you...quarantining. Then I listened to the post-quarantining. That was pretty hot. I saw you...won’t be able to host any indoor dining. So maybe I eat you in the car?

I saw you...may Pardon your kids. I think you should apologize instead. Junior seems to have missed out on a lot of the IQ genes.

I heard you...plan to put up a Xmas tree this weekend. Great news! That’ll be the first erection in your house in months.

I would like to remind you...of our election bet. Seems a shame, as Vegas has got your thighs as a double-digit favorite for New Year’s Eve.

I saw you...are really excited to throw a big New Year’s party. Well, even if Covid kills those plans, I’d say we only need the two of us to have a “super spreader” event.

I saw you...trying to pass yourself off as an essential worker. Pretty damn funny to anyone who’s familiar with your work ethic.

I saw you...want to knock down the positivity rate. Here’s an idea. Read The Sheet!
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