A NEW LEASH ON STRIFE
Mammoth leash law to be enforced beginning in April
By Lunch
Saturday, March 20, 2021

As the Town of Mammoth Lakes continues to focus on quality-of-life measures in the aftermath of the great Summer Overrun of 2020 and the anticipated Summer Overrun of ’21, some Town residents, particularly dog owners, wonder whether the negligent actions of a few will impact the serenity and enjoyment of the many.

Specifically, they are wary of a law scheduled to go into effect beginning in April which will require all dogs to be on leash within Town limits.

The law comes in the wake of a significant uptick in dog-related attacks (on other dogs, as well as people) and even a death a few months ago, where a leashed dog escaped his owner and attacked an on-leash dog, a tiny little Sheltie, apparently puncturing its heart.

As Police Chief Al Davis observed, “We’re not the Mammoth of 10-15 years ago … as Dan Holler observed about Horseshoe Lake in the summer, it’s “full-contact recreation.” And every new person/new dog we introduce into the mix is a variable, he added.

According to data provided by MLPD Records Supervisor Krystle Stewart, there were 44 documented dog bite incidents between 2018-2020. More than half of those involved dogs biting human beings who were unknown to them - the unluck of the draw, so to speak.

The message from Mammoth Trails Coordinator Joel Rathje is pretty succinct. “People need to take personal responsibility for their pets. Bottom line … I don’t say this mean-spiritedly. Quite the contrary. It’s our basic responsibility as pet owners in developed recreation sites.”

And if Rathje can get a bit frustrated when speaking about pet-owner responsibility, you can forgive a guy his frustration when he’s spent the past several springs haul- ing hundreds of pounds of dog waste out of Shady Rest Park.

Each spring, he and other volunteers spend two whole days out there.

And his description of the “water” pooling at the Shady Rest Volleyball court in late spring (a mixture of snow runoff and melting dog feces) will make you swear off volleyball for life (at least at Shady Rest).

Rathje was among ten or so people The Sheet contacted on and off the trail this week to ask their opinion of then new leash law.

Three people interviewed said they or their dogs have previously been subject of a
GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

I enjoyed a wide-ranging conversation with Mammoth Lakes Tourism Executive Director John Urdi this week as he spoke about the organization and some of the alterations in mission that have occurred as a result of not only the Pandemic, but the consequence of success and record visitation. As he said succinctly, “Our messaging for summer is: When you come to Mammoth Lakes, don’t be an asshole.”

I’ll address the bulk of that conversation next week because I want to focus particularly on a trend/concern Urdi brought up: the labor pool. He alluded to the fact that several lodging properties have continued to maintain the 24-hour gap between stays (even though they are permitted to book at 100%). The reason: They don’t really have the housekeeping staff to service their properties at 100%.

He also said that he knew of 3-4 properties which planned to charge winter rates come summer. The focus is no longer on 100% capacity so much as yield, he said.

Lunch: Are you suggesting an imminent bidding war for housekeepers? Urdi smartly dodged that question. He did say, “The #1 missing piece for us is, where will our housekeepers [and out workforce] live?”

I then followed up with Meghan Stevens, owner of Sierra Employment Services. She said that until lodging properties return to 100% occupancy, that will tamp down the labor shortage somewhat, but, “I believe it’s gonna be crazy here,” she said. “And very hard [for lodging operators].”

She said that pre-pandemic, there were already some labor issues and she was getting ready to pay $18/hour for housekeepers.

“I believe the new normal will be there at $21 or $22 [dollars per hour],” said Stevens. “We’re limited based on help, “ said Stacy, adding “Reality is, a lot of people have left town ... We don’t know what to expect, and may keep the 24-hour gap between stays.”

Stacy and Kirk Schaumbmayer of the Alpenhof Lodge said they are keeping back-to-back stays at a minimum (less than 10%), primarily keeping the 24-hour gap between stays.

They currently have just three housekeepers.

“We’re limited based on help,” said Stacy, adding “Reality is, a lot of people have left town ... We don’t know what to expect, and may keep the 24-hour gap between stays through the summer.”

“We’re at a crossroads for our community,” she added. “We need to bring more people in at fair wages.”

Kirk added that the next article should be on restaurants, which are facing a similar plight.

A final observation: “I hadn’t had a non-Hispanic person come to clean rooms in a long time.”

Finally, I spoke to John Morris of Snowcreek Resort.

Morris said Snowcreek continues to keep the 24-hour gap between stays for a few reasons.

1. He’d first like to get his staff fully vaccinated
2. Owners/guests have expressed some desire to maintain the gaps,
3. The cleaning protocols require more work, and staffing levels are just 60-70% of what they were pre-pandemic.

Both Snowcreek and Alpenhof have instituted minimum-stay requirements to alleviate the turnover in rooms. Snowcreek requires three-night stays; the Alpenhof requires two nights.

What this has done is boosted margins to compensate for the decrease in room nights. Snowcreek’s rack rates remain unchanged from last year.

“It’s a good market for labor,” Morris observed, who said he’d heard some housekeepers were getting as much as $25/hour.

And from Page’s desk...

Judge Evelio Grillo, of Alameda County, ruled this week that the Los Angeles Department of Water Power must continue to provide irrigation water to lessees in Long Valley, rejecting the utility’s claim that climate change has made the area’s watershed unreliable.

The case was filed by Mono County and the Sierra Club in response to LADWP’s proposed leases in 2018 that Long Valley ranchers should expect little to no water for irrigation when they renew.

The lessees argued that altering the lease agreement without undergoing an environmental review was a violation of the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Assurance Act.

Grillo ruled that LADWP continue providing water, to the tune of about 3.2 acre-feet of water per acre, until such an environmental review can be completed.

LADWP followed up with a statement outlining it’s concern that the ruling would be setting a precedent that all water agencies must tangle with when navigating water allocations and environmental needs. The worry being that CEQA could now be utilized as a tool to disrupt development or change around the state, possibly to the detriment of residents.

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JACK LUNCH

PUBLISHER

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promises of better pay and hours.

Good cleaning people, especially those who own their own vehicles, can make $300-400/day if they’re motivated.

Stevens says she’s even having trouble filling the white-collar jobs, and “The people we are getting are unqualified and require training ... and some may get trained.” A lot of operators are stuck with the unenviable choice of taking a chance on a wildcard or just continuing to work hard and hope something better shows up later.

A final observation: “I haven’t had a non-Hispanic person come to clean rooms in a long time.”
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*may 1st move-in date
Hi Ted,

I enjoyed the update and your thoughts on Inyo County’s new office building.

Just an FYI that I went back and looked at, as I suspected, when it approved the project, the County adopted as a scenic mitigation measure the screening of the building provided by the big rigs that park in front of it along Highway 6 (not really, but maybe it should have!). Genius!

Allen Berrey
Bishop

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PASSPORT TO RUIN

Jack:

So now our “health” experts are talking about a vaccine passport for all travel events. Why not? It’s about safety and science! Er, well maybe not so much science as the exercise of authority, and they’re practically the same thing! Who cares about the First Amendment (which includes the freedom of assembly among others), the Fourth Amendment (which confers no advantage, when locked down and that a host of other factors must be weighed, now and in the future, against fear of a bug with a 99% survival rate. Science = following empirical evidence. When the sole gold standard trial on the topic of masks vs. Covid still the Danish one published in November showing no statistically significant advantage in wearing high grade surgical masks compared to wearing surgical masks at all? (Nothing on the face, I mean. However, knowing the Nordic thoroughness of Danes, the RCT may have been more rigorous.)

Is it hot in here? Where was I? Oh yes, Covid, and why is it that even the highest “tier” – yellow – has us all in masks? There is no “tier” that is mask-free. Public service: a proposition for an all-new chartreuse tier, defined as follows. Normalcy. An adult understanding that life is neither risk-free nor disease-free, and that a host of other factors must be weighed, now and in the future, against fear of a bug with a 99% survival rate. Science = following empirical evidence. When the sole gold standard scientific test (an RCT) proves masks confer no advantage, when locked down states and countries have no better outcome than those not locked down or only minimally so, why are any of these functions provably manifest themselves as a result of government Covid policy, a scientist – a real one, not a computer modeler – might question the prevailing theory. Even if it means relinquishing unearned, self-aggrandized authority.

John Rogitz
Redington Shores, Fl.

S. Tyagi
Mammoth Mountain
Elevate Your Health

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John Rogitz
Redington Shores, Fl.
Mono County officially made the move into the red tier of Covid-19 guidelines on Sunday March 14 after trending just high enough to remain in the purple tier for the previous week.

The changes come as the result of two factors: California hit an equity benchmark of 2 million vaccines administered to at-risk residents, and the county successfully adjudicated a Covid-19 case at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training center.

The latter dropped the county’s case rate below the 7 new cases per day per 100,000 residents threshold for entering red tier while the former eased the overall restrictions for getting to red tier.

Now, counties with 10 new cases per day per 100,000 residents are eligible for red status.

Emergency Command Center Representative Chris Mokracek spoke about these changes at a meeting of Mammoth Lakes’ restaurant operators on Monday.

Given the tenuous nature of the tier system and how easily counties can slide backwards, Mokracek explained that the threshold for moving back into the purple tier is less substantial than some may think.

In the new set of guidelines ushered in by the state’s equity metrics, a county in red tier would need to have 35 new cases per day per 100,000 residents to qualify for the purple tier again.

“Right now our case rate is 6.1,” Mokracek said, “If we saw numbers like that, then we’re looking at a real serious spike here in Mono County.”

“I don’t see why we would get there,” he added.

Mokracek also expressed optimism that the orange tier could be closer than initially thought.

The next equity benchmark that would move the goalposts closer is 4 million vaccines in the at-risk population. Once that milestone is met, the orange and yellow tiers will become more accessible.

For orange, counties would have to record between 5.9 and 2 new cases per day per 100,000 residents. For yellow, that number would have to be below 2.

If the county can keep the case rate consistently low until that point, a move to orange tier could happen within a matter of weeks.

Mokracek also reported that 919 county residents were vaccinated at the county’s vaccine clinic on March 13, further bolstering the local effort to suppress spread of the disease.

So far, just about half of Mono County residents have received at least one dose, with about 4,600 fully vaccinated. Mokracek added that there is no sign of a shortage on the horizon, and “we're pretty much at the point where we’re vaccinating any Mono County resident that shows up.”

Approximately 1,800 people are still on the registration list and have been contacted to sign up for a vaccination clinic.

There are currently no first dose clinics remaining on the county’s docket, although there’s a possibility for one in mid-April.

Between then and now, Mokracek said, there are three big clinics that’ll mark a significant push in fully vaccinating residents.

1,100 people are signed up for the April 3 clinic, 600 for the April 5 clinic, and 500 for the April 10 clinic.

Once Mokracek wrapped his update, he did his best to answer questions from restaurant operators attempting to navigate the red tier guidelines.

The long and the short of it: patrons don’t have to buy food in order to get a drink at a bar, although bars must offer food to remain open. Capacity is set to 25%, although operators were encouraged to get in touch with the fire department to figure out what true maximum occupancy would be for their buildings, not simply existing seating arrangements.

In theory, that means a restaurant’s 25% capacity limit might look similar to pre-Covid seating levels.

Parties are still restricted to a maximum of six patrons at one table.

There was no clear answer on how restaurants should treat bar top service, provided an establishment can adequately distance guests.

In Inyo County, the path forward is a bit murkier.

The county remains in purple tier, one of only eleven counties remaining in purple and still has one of the highest case rates in the state.

That being said, the current case rate sits at 17.8 new cases per day per 100,000 residents, according to the state.

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Lesley Blanco and her dog, Leiilani

DOGS
continued from page 1

dog attack.
One of those, Lesley Blanco, nevertheless said she is more concerned about the dog waste issue than the out of control/aggressiveness issue. She also questioned whether a leash law might have the unintended consequence of exacerbating problems by limiting dog socialization.

Two pet owners who asked to remain anonymous were frustrated at the prospect of a good walk spoiled, a phrase normally attributable to a round of golf.

“Until they give us a dog park or something where a dog can be off-leash, this is bullshit,” said one.

“For me, it sucks. I have a happy dog who gets along with everybody. And most people out here are good dog owners who pick up after themselves,” said another.

On Wednesday, The Sheet struck up a conversation with Randy Fransway, a 20-plus year local, throwing a stick to his dog Buddy on one of the softball fields. Fransway was holding a leash in one hand.

“I knew it was coming,” he said when asked about the imminent leash law.

“People get out of control. Bring their dogs out and let ‘em run.”

While he agrees with reining things in a bit, he said, “I don’t see how they’ll enforce it fairly ... I disagree with going straight to ticketing.”

DocuPet

At Wednesday’s Mammoth Lakes Town Council meeting, MLPD’s Krystle Stewart proposed a program to help the Town keep a better database of its pets - a partnership with a company called DocuPet.

The Town, back when it employed an Animal Control Officer some 15 years ago, maintained a pretty decent dog-licensing program - it literally issued thousands of licenses. Now, there are perhaps 180 active licenses. Why? Stewart literally featured a photo of a shoebox in her PowerPoint presentation.

Yup. That’s the Town’s animal license file.

DocuPet will offer a way to automate renewals and establish a database and provide electronic tags for the dogs for easy identification. “We get quite a few dogs in the station,” said Stewart, who says the dogs often have to be brought to Whitmore because there’s no other option.

And Stewart said she negotiated a favorable deal with the company because this would be a pilot program of sorts for DocuPet targeting a smaller community.

When put on the spot to guess the size of the Town’s dog population, Stewart figured between 2,000-4,000.

Mayor Bill Sauser said he believes dog ownership has been shrinking over the past few years because landlords are less enthused to rent to those with pets.

*But how Sauser came up with this theory from his home Barcalounger is anyone’s guess.

Council was in unanimous support to give DocuPet a try.

Silver Lining

Joel Rathje said at the most recent Trails Meeting, a volunteer announced that for the first time ever last weekend, he made a swing through Shady Rest and didn’t spot a single dogshit pile.

Progress. And a byproduct of a really focused effort by Rathje’s Ambassador program to target dogshit at Shady Rest.

“Having shit all over the place is not a good reflection of our community,” he says.

As for the leash law, the goal, said Davis, is education. “If we threaten enforcement, maybe we can get people to comply.”
Early this week California governor Gavin Newsom acknowledged that the ongoing recall campaign against him would most likely be on the ballot at some point in the next year, and that the deadline for signature collection on the petition was Wednesday, March 17.

Proponents of the effort point to Newsom’s handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, which shuttered businesses and schools for months, as well as critiques of the state’s high tax rates, immigrant-friendly policies, and a move to halt executions.

This is the sixth attempt to recall Newsom since he assumed office in January 2019; previous efforts failed to gain enough traction to force a ballot.

January 2019: previous efforts failed to move to halt executions.

By early February, they had collected nearly 900,000 signatures across the state’s 58 counties.

By the deadline, 1.7 million Californians have signed onto the recall effort. Due to rigorous vetting by the leaders of the effort, the validity rate of those signatures is trending in the mid 80s.

Jeremy White, co-editor of Politico’s California Playbook, discussed the recall effort on last week’s episode of Hometown California, a podcast run by the Rural Counties of California service organization.

“People in the world of California politics are treating this like it’s going to happen,” White told host Paul Smith, adding that “it’s safe to say they are not actually going to know for weeks after [the deadline].”

“Given the stakes on this, they are going to take their time to ensure [the validity] one way or another.”

By late March, White said, there should be a good sense of whether or not the effort will go to the ballot.

California is one of only two states to have a successful recall of a governor; in 2003, Governor Gray Davis was ousted with a 55% majority vote. Arnold Schwarzenegger won the ensuing election with 49% of the vote.

The only other time a governor has been successfully recalled was in 2018 in North Dakota, when incumbent Lynn Frazier was voted out of office.

That’s not to say there isn’t a more recent precedent for the move.

In 2016, Democrat Josh Newman won an election in north Orange County. In summer 2018, local Republicans mounted a recall effort based on Newman’s support for an increase in the state gas tax and, bolstered by a strong showing from Republican voters, was recalled and Republican Ling Chang was voted into office.

Newman did later reclaim his seat in 2020.

So what makes a recall different from your average election? For one, if 50% or more of voters opt to toss out the governor, he cannot run in the follow ing election. If the election is governed by much looser rules than would be allowed for a typical governor’s race.

Another thing: there is no limit on the number of candidates who can run to replace the governor and whoever wins the majority wins the election, regardless of the amount of votes for other candidates.

In 2003, Schwarzenegger won out over a field of 135 candidates.

In addition, limits on donations and campaign finance are extremely lax, which would allow out-of-state groups and individuals to invest as much money as they would like to back their favored candidates.

Newt Gingrich and Mike Huckabee are two prominent supporters of the recall effort, despite neither being a California resident.

Given the state’s strong Democratic leanings, strategists have posited that a recall is the most likely path to getting a Republican elected to statewide office.

As for who is gunning for Newsom’s job, the list isn’t complete. John Cox, who lost to Newsom in the 2018 gubernatorial election, is back for a challenge, as is former San Diego mayor Kevin Faulconer. Former U.S. ambassador to Germany and noted Trump ally Richard Gerrell has also expressed interest in the recall election.

At the California GOP convention, party Chairperson Jessica Patterson said, “No governor in California’s history is more deserving of a recall, and we’re going to give it to him.”

Recall organizers have repeatedly called the endeavor a non-partisan effort, and referenced a number of Democratic signatures as evidence that unpopular views of Newsom are not limited to one party.

Recent polls indicate that despite a drop in approval, Newsom’s numbers are trending higher than Davis’s were in 2003.

The Public Policy Institute of California reported a 52% approval rating for Newsom at the end of January. Davis was polling below 30% ahead of the recall election in 2003.

For his part, Newsom appears to be gearing up for what will be an expensive and hard-fought battle. He discussed the recall on The View and at a news conference on Tuesday.

This despite elections officials formally putting an election on the calendar.

“Well, the reality is it looks like it’s going on the ballot, and so we’re ready to go... We will fight it. We will defeat it,” Newsom said Tuesday.

He also secured a number of prominent endorsements from nationally recognizable names including Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and Cory Booker (D-NJ). All three were candidates in the 2020 presidential election.

Newsom has also criticized the financial burden of a recall election, saying “This is a sideshow. This is a circus. It’s going to cost 100-plus million dollars.”

But he’s made clear that he’s taking the attempt very seriously, as the zero-sum nature of the election could have substantial consequences for the state.

“I have to do my job every single day, but I’m gonna fight this thing because I’m gonna fight for California values and the things I hold dear,” Newsom said on The View.

On Hometown California, White said that the law allows for consolidation of the recall election date with the next scheduled election provided that it takes place within 180 days.

Given the current progress of the recall effort, he theorized that there could be an election in mid-to-late fall of 2021, as the Secretary of State has certified the recall effort.

The 2022 statewide primary is scheduled for June, to allow for redistricting efforts delayed by the unveiling of the 2020 census data.

“In theory,” White said, “the legislature could be back and set the election for March [2022] and consolidate it with the primary.”

“I just don’t see how that could be possible,” he continued, “given that the legislature is on record [saying that they don’t have the census data].

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25 Years at Mammoth Brewing

Mammoth Brewing Company, Mono County’s first craft brewery, celebrates 25 years of brewing award-winning beers in the Eastern Sierra this year. A variety of activities are planned to celebrate this exciting milestone throughout the Spring and Summer starting with the release of their latest limited edition 25th Anniversary Sky Bear Ale on March 19.

“We love our bears here in Mammoth; they’re part of our culture, so it seemed only right that we create our elevated Sky Bear Ale to help us celebrate our 25th Anniversary,” said Sean Turner, owner of Mammoth Brewing Company. “Reaching 25 years is a lofty achievement and at fine retail establishments in their Tasting Room in Mammoth Lakes through the Spring and Summer.

Scholarly Endeavors

Each year Mammoth Hospital Auxiliary awards college scholarships to residents of Mono County who are pursuing a career in a medically related field. The Scholarship Fund was established in 1985 and since that time we have awarded $617,000.00 to deserving locals. Applications for 2021-2022 Scholarships will be available April 1 and can be picked up at the Cast Off or Mammoth Hospital.

Eligibility requirements are:
1. Pursuing a course of study in a medically related field.
2. Be a current resident of Mono County and resided there full time for a minimum of two years, or currently working in Mono County full time for a minimum of two years.
3. Completed two years of prerequisites in a medically related college curriculum with a minimum 3.0 grade point average, or worked for two years in a medically related field in Mono County.

Applications must be postmarked no later than June 30.

Trim Carefully

It’s almost springtime in the Eastern Sierra. Birds, squirrels and other animals are nesting and preparing for their newborn and newly-hatched babies in your trees, shrubs and hedges. Every spring and summer, hundreds of baby animals are injured and orphaned, many of them victims of tree-trimming and pruning accidents. Sometimes they can be returned to their nest or an artificial nest. Others can be be reunited with their parents. Always be nest-aware when pruning and trimming! Animals will be using your trees, bushes, shrubs and hedges as a nursery until late October!

Most wild animals have their first brood of babies in the spring, between March and June. However, our erratic winter has led many birds and mammals to nest much earlier. Nests are camouflaged intentionally, so they can be missed, even by the most careful inspection. Many species will have a second brood in July or August if food supplies are sufficient, meaning that “baby season” often stretches into October in many areas.

Be on the lookout for animal homes elsewhere as well. Other wild animals nest, den or burrow in brush, grass, stumps or rock piles. Call Wildcare Eastern Sierra at 760-872-1487 for help or advice.

La Casita Closes for good

Late last week, the owners of La Casita Mexican Restaurant in Bishop announced that the restaurant would be permanently closing its doors after a nearly 40 year run.

The following is from the owners, posted to the La Casita Facebook page.

It is with great sadness that we announce the permanent closure of La Casita. We will not be re-opening.

We would like to thank our loyal customers, our trusted vendors, and, most of all, our staff, many of whom are more like family to us.

We thank our mother for her vision in opening La Casita, and our families for their unwavering support for over almost 40 years. Forty years — well, we almost made it.

We wish other area restaurants well and hope they are able to come out of the pandemic whole. Know that your spirit inspired us in many ways, but the financial hits were just too much. Please, friends, support them and all small business in Bishop in any way you can. We know it’s been overused, but as neighbors who love the Eastern Sierra we truly are in this together.

Sincerely, Richard, Robert, and Paul Laughon

Back to CAMP

Sierra CAMP is hosting a public workshop on planning for increased visitation and climate change. During the public health crisis of the last year, the Sierra Nevada has seen a rise in visitorship that reflects the growing need for people to get outside. Tourism and recreation have long been an economic lifeblood for our region, but high visitation rates are also unique ecological and social stresses that may only grow as climate impacts accelerate. At the same time, it’s more important than ever to ensure that folks have the opportunity and ability to experience and connect with our region’s landscapes. Join Sierra CAMP and our panelists as we dive into the relationships between visitation, climate change, and building sustainable and resilient communities and ecosystems.

Those interested can access the workshop via the Sierra Business Council webpage and/or signing up for their newsletter.
Mammoth Mountain’s Nordic Ski Team wrapped their season earlier this month with competitions in Jackson Hole, WY, for the Development team and Soldier Hollow, UT, for the Competition team. U12 Luken Senior took home 4th place in the classic race and 7th in the freestyle, with top 20 finishes from Greta Kohler and Beckett Page in the freestyle as well.

At Soldier Hollow, conditions were different for each of the three races: Coach Anna Ceruti said that courses ranged “from a warm and slushy Sprint Freestyle to an icy-fast Classic distance to 3” fresh snow on the Freestyle distance course.” Dane Karch took home 4th in the freestyle race, with teammate Cabot Godoy picking up 16th in the same race. Karch also placed 17th in the Spring Freestyle.
I don’t know why they call them FREE agents. The money teams are pay- ing for players their own teams don’t want always astounds me. And most of the big money free agents turn out to be less-than-expected (see Le’Veon Bell, et al). But every year they continue to toss around money like dollar bills at a strip club.

Kirk Cousins has made 192 million dollars since 2016 - the most by any player in the NFL. How ridiculous is that? Hauling in Monopoly money and can’t even take the team past Go. He is average. If you look up the word average, there’s his photograph.

The Seattle Seahawks recently sent their season ticket holders the annual offseason letter. Conspicuously unmen- tioned: QB Russell Wilson. This squabble is out of control. Basically, Coach Pete Carroll is saying I AM THE MAN and I will do what I want. I hope they do trade Wilson so Pete can be exposed. Wilson has carried that miserable roster for years and Carroll knows it. That’s why he won’t trade him. To top it off, Wilson’s biggest contract has been his line and that he gets hit too much. All these OL changing hands during free agency and Carroll has signed NONE of them. How’s that for a first rate flip-off?

Raiders Coach Jon Gruden is clueless. I wonder if Raiders owner Mark Da- vis now looks at Gruden and calls him DADDY. He gave Gruden 10 years for $100 million and complete control and Gruden is playing Russian Roulette with his money and his roster. Every time you turn around, he is signing some old play- er for too much money. And then they are gone in a year or two. He overpaid Trent Brown two years ago, gave him like $38 million already and traded him back to New England the other day. New England got him to take a 1-year contract for less money just to complete the trade. Gruden just cut 3 or 4 of the offensive linemen, including starting center Rod- ney Hudson who still had 2 years left on his big contract. Gruden loves OLD play- ers so he replaced WR Nelson Agholor with John Brown. The one original thing Gruden did was cut Richie Incognito, yes that jackass is still in football, but they replaced him with another old bastard ... by re-signing Richie Incognito. Some- how I imagine Gruden found a way to lose money on that transaction. Gruden is playing TINDER with his roster every day. Swipe right, money shot, swipe right. He is just waiting to sign Richard Sherman’s old ass. Next year SWIPE LEFT.

JJ Watt signed in Arizona. He said it was important to play for a contender. Well, he lied. Because Arizona’s not that good. The Cards are tearing up free agen- cy - they signed JJ Watt and AJ Green. If this was 2018, they just got some great players. For 2021, they get some old ass, washed up players.

The NFL is considering enacting a rule whereby teams cannot hire new coaches until AFTER the Super Bowl. Smart. Why should competent coaches be at a dis- advantage because their teams are going deep in the playoffs while idiot owners go through premature ejaculation to hire a coach from a BAD team that isn’t in the playoffs because they just can’t help themselves?

Imagine if teams had waited until after the Super Bowl was over and saw how Todd Bowles had dismantled the Chiefs and Packers in the playoffs and hired him in, let’s say, San Diego, where he would get to go after the Chiefs offense twice a year. It amazes me these owners and GMs that feel like they cannot wait to hire Nick Sirianni and Dan Campbell.

While every year some coaching hires hit and some fail and you never know, I am gonna say right now that Dan Campbell is going to be an abject disaster. The guy looks and sounds like you should SWIPE LEFT immediately if visiting a Tinder NFL Coaching site. And I think he got a six-year contract.

The Patriot Way is dead. I don’t wanna hear about it anymore. They must have signed 10 free agents. You don’t bring in that many players and claim there is a Pa- triot Way, especially with Brady gone. My man Jack Lunch says IN BILL WE TRUST. Unless he is drafting WRs or developing RBs. Belichick hasn’t drafted a Pro Bowl skill player since Rob Gronkowski. Think about that. He has the WRs, RBs and TE’s to count as skill players and hasn’t drafted a Pro Bowl player since Gronkowski. That is almost IMPOSSIBLE to do. In fact if you leave out the punter, they haven’t drafted ANY PRO BOWLERS since Jamie Collins in 2013.

Now look at the guys he paid in free agency: TE Hunter Henry. Talented but always hurt. Can’t blame them since they had no TE’s on the roster last year. I mean they had guys, but can you name them? Thought so.

TE Jonnu Smith. Good player. I think the Titans misused him and he will be great on the Pats if … the bungee cords in Cam Newton’s left shoulder and the clothesspins holding his foot together work out.

I guess the Pats are trying to revive the Gronk/Hernandez two tight end offense. Oh, they tried that last year when they drafted 2 TEs in the third round … Swing and a miss.

DB Jalen Mills. Now this guy sucks. I can’t believe he paid him. WR Nelson Agholor. This guy sucks. He averages like 40 receptions a year for about 500 yards. I won’t even look him up because I play fantasy football every year in 5 to 6 leagues and never have I said, even in leagues where we start 4 WRs, I gotta have some Nelson Agholor.

Kyle Van Noy and Trent Brown. This is just the Pats thing. They bring back two guys that left them for more money to play for other teams and never finished their contracts. Just a way to smack those players in the face after they fail else- where so they can say GET RACK HERE AND SHUT THE HELL UP.

WR Kendrick Bourne. I actually think this guy will be better than people expect … but they paid too much for him. His career year last year was 699 yards receiv- ing. He’s okay, but big money? NO.

LB Matthew Judon is a great player. Belichick had to go out and sign a more HARTLEY, page 11
bunch of free agents because he can’t draft anymore. All these players they signed might have improved them one game with this load of average talent. Now they have several defensive players coming back that opted out last year so that will help. But they were slow on offense and defense and that didn’t change that much. The TEs I get it, the want big targets close to the line of scrimmage to catch the shotgun ladder passes Cam throws but damn. Brady 1, Belichick 0. And this year, the way it is going looks like Brady 2, Belichick 0.

The Chicago Bears are a mess. How GM Ryan Pace is employed should be featured on one of those mystery shows. He just paid Andy Dalton to be the starting QB. So the last 4 QBs this jackass has brought in are Dalton, who was washed up when he was in his prime, Nick Foles, Mitch Trubisky, whom he traded up to get when NO ONE else was gonna draft him within 15 spots, and Mike Glennon. This is the best part. Glennon was the one he traded up when he was in his prime, getting QB. So the last 4 QBs this jackass has signed QB to a contract. This is the worst thing for the WTF.

Free Agency Fodder.

- WTF. Washington Football Team signed QB Ryan Fitzpatrick to a contract. This is the worst thing for the WTF. They’d be fools to let this bearded gnome lead them to 8-8 or 9-7 a couple years and maybe make the playoffs. He can keep them just out of range in the draft position to get a QB every year. Just good enough to keep the coach employed. I guess that’s the point.

The Titans signed LB Bud Dupree. Waste of money. That guy spent last year running around until someone running away from TJ Watt would land in his arms for an excuse-me sack. The Texans signed like 19 free agents. Two of them are actual NFL players. I think the Texan’s Cult Leader Jack East-erby recruits from a National Religious Athletes of America website.

The Jets signed WR Corey Davis and everyone said great move. Don’t get it. Davis is still living off being a number 5 overall pick, even though he has never played like one. He averages 31 receptions, 700 yards and 3 TDs per year.

The Jaguars tried to mimic the Texans. They have a ton of free agency money, yet signed no one of talent for the Family Dollar like they were broke.

Romeo Okwara signed a 3 year $39 million dollar deal. Never heard of him. He is apparently a pass rusher for the Bears.

Brown QB Baker Mayfield said he saw a UFO recently. My guess? The unidentified flying object was Odell Beckham Jr. actually playing football instead of being injured or whining on some TV show somewhere.

Can’t stand broadcaster Joe Buck. There is no more pretentious or judgmental duckweed than Buck. He has crushed people for the most harmless celebrations, usually black folks.

But now he comes out and admits that he and broadcast partner Troy Aikman used to drink in the booth while calling games. So why would you do that but be so snotty about in-game celebrations by players? Punk. Then, after his revelation creates an uproar, he comes out all self-righteous and basically chastises people for saying it’s a big deal.

One thing for sure: the liquor didn’t work. He sucks and is a complete a$$hat. More NFL Salary Cap idiocy. Pat Mahomes signed a 10-year contract recently, right? He’s restructured it already to save some more mystery cap space. After 1 year? What is the point of the cap? The Saints were reportedly $70 million over the cap. They just re-signed one of their prized free agents somehow. They should stop it with this cap nonsense. They are making up stimulus money like the government.

Steelers QB Ben Roethlisberger took a pay cut. He is still overpaid. And now I have to watch his crap for another year. Another year of TOMLIN HAS NEVER HAD A LOSING SEASON. Yeah, every season since they lost the Super Bowl in 2010 has been a losing season. If losing playoff games to Tim Tebow, Blake Bortles and Baker Mayfield don’t qualify as losing seasons, the Steelers need to reevaluate their idea of success.

Doo-Doo Pass Dropper, aka, Julio Smith Schuster, is a free agent and is supposed to get like $16 million a year. What? Who pays number 2 WRs that much? Apparently everyone. Any team falling all over itself to pay him is insane.

Okay, the Steelers just made a move. They just signed Mike Tomlin’s best friend’s brother to be their assistant head coach and defensive consultant. He has never coached in the NFL but he is what the Steelers like - someone close to the program.

Damn. There are supposedly 6 pending lawsuits against DeShaun Watson for sexual assault. No wonder he wants to be traded and out of Texas. I guess he’s seen more ass than he needs in Texas and he needs more turf to roam. I know, give him his time to clear his name. But an observation. Dog, you are filthy rich. Hire some upscale ass. Stop groping massage therapists.

Have you wondered about the group of people who are Convenience Store Regulars? I am not talking about just stopping in when you need some gas and you had a long night of drinking and need to run in to grab a Gatorade to replenish all that you drained from your system all night. I am talking about the odd cast of characters for whom a Circle K or AM/PM or 7/11 is their Walmart. You know you see them. The one at the car getting gas and says to the other person hopping out ... Hey grab me a Bang, the Arctic Blood Pump, and one of my regular Beef/Egg Pizza rolls from the hot dog roller. I watch sometimes when they walk in and they know where EVERYTHING is. When you know exactly where the beer and the condoms are that’s one thing. When you know exactly where the Twinkies are, sure.

When you know where the toothpaste, tampons, kitchen and motor oil are you’ve got a convenience store problem. I have seen people go in and buy sugar, mayonnaise, matches, toilet paper and pickles. What are you doing? I can see the clerk calling them by their first names.
Sierra Employment Services, Inc. is hiring for the following positions:

**Men's Full and Part Time Positions (Monday through Friday).** These positions offer vacation accrual, benefits and paid holidays. Experience is preferred, but not required. Heavy lifting is required. Please apply online at [www.mammothspa@aol.com](http://www.mammothspa@aol.com) or by phone at 760-934-6298. Successful candidates may be required to complete an application and undergo a background check.

**Women's Full and Part Time Positions (Monday through Friday).** These positions offer vacation accrual, benefits and paid holidays. Experience is preferred, but not required. Heavy lifting is required. Please apply online at [www.mammothspa@aol.com](http://www.mammothspa@aol.com) or by phone at 760-934-6298. Successful candidates may be required to complete an application and undergo a background check.

**Mammoth Taxi is accepting resumes for experienced drivers with great customer service and clean driving records. We are looking for a full-time driver to fill an immediate position.** Please apply online at [www.mammoth-taxi.com](http://www.mammoth-taxi.com) or by phone at 760-934-4244. Successful candidates may be required to complete an application and undergo a background check.

**Mammoth Spa Creations is looking for an Eastern Sierra musician who is currently available for an opening.** We are looking for someone who has the ability to work weekends and holidays. Applicants must be full and/or part time team member to fill an additional member for its team. We currently have a position open for a jazz guitarist, or pianist. Comping and tips are paid. Must be able to play jam sessions and be familiar with grand piano and other jazz standards. Must be willing to work weekends, early mornings and holidays. Please email your resume to crowleylakefishcamp@gmail.com or call 760.937.3967.

**Crowley Lake Fish Camp has jobs available for the upcoming season! We are looking for full-time and part-time Deckhands, as well as cooks. We offer an exceptional work environment in a beautiful setting. Please help keep guests and boats in tip-top shape!** Please email your resume to crowsleylakefishcamp@gmail.com or write to us to learn more.

**The Holiday Haus Motel is hiring maintenance staff, starting at $21/hour DOE and housing positions, starting at $14/hour DOE.** Call 760-934-2414 or send resume to holidayhausmammoth@gmail.com, you can also stop by the office at 3905 Main Street.

**Mammoth Cremoni Chevrolet is seeking experienced car/credit customer service associate. Must be honest, personable and enjoy making customers feel comfortable. Some evening and weekend shifts available.** $400 first hour starting pay & vacation benefits for qualified applicants. Apply in person or call 760-934-8111.

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**March 19-21/**
Laws Museum is pleased to announce the reopening of its grounds and outdoor exhibits. Museum hours are 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Thursday through Sunday. Visitors are required to follow pandemic protocols. The Reception Center/Gift Shop at the museum's indoor exhibits will reopen when Inyo County returns to the red tier or below. Info: 760.873.3950 /lawsrailroadmuseum@gmail.com

**Monday, March 22/**
Mammoth Lakes Lodging Round Table meets 10-11 a.m. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8867051007. Mammoth Lakes Customer Service Meeting meets 2-3 p.m. Contact the chamber for Zoom link

**Wednesday, March 24/**
Mammoth Hospital Spring 2021 Trail Running Series. Free lecture. Time: 6 p.m. Info: See ad p. 3

City of Bishop Virtual Community Workshop as part of the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update. Time: 5:30 p.m. Participants can join the virtual workshop to learn more/provide input on proposed strategies for ensuring equity, and diverse housing options in Bishop. Zoom meeting information is available on the City’s Housing Element Update webpage.

Eastern Sierra Area Agency on Aging (ESAAA) meets at 10 a.m. Join via Zoom https://zoom.us/j/99517465087 Mammoth Lakes Recreation Programs Allocations Committee meets 9:30 a.m. Viewing available through Grandview.

C5 Studios in Bishop offers “Spring Birds - Very Beginners’ Sewing Workshop” with Erin Boehme. 2:45-3:45 p.m. In this sewing workshop, participants will learn how to thread a needle, use basic stitches and work with wool felt to produce a small bird to take home. This workshop is for children aged 3+. Register @ www.c5studios.org. Info: 760.258.1059.

**March 24-28/**
Mammoth Lakes Film Festival Best of the Fest Shorts. Revisit some of the best films from the 2020 Mammoth Lakes Film Festival for Free! Visit https://mlff20bestofthefestshorts.eventive.org for information and to register for your pass.

**Thursday, March 25/**
Mammoth Trails Community meeting to discuss the Shady Rest-Inyo Craters Trail Project begins at 5:30 p.m. Go to https://mammothlakesrecreation.org/SBIC/for Zoom link

Long Valley RPAC Special meeting meets at 6:30 p.m. See Mono County website for link and info Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association’s History Book Club meets

**SUNDAY, MARCH 21/**
**at 6:30 p.m to discuss David Carle’s book, Monro, a Novel, a book about LADWP’s local developments in the 1930’s and 40’s. Register at sierraforever.org.

**Saturday, March 27/**
C5 Studios in Bishop offers an “Introduction to Cyanotypes: An Adventure in Alternative Photographic Processes” workshop with Joe Profita. Time: 1-3 p.m.

If you are interested in going on an adventure to a place where science, photography and art come together in a magical, experimental process, this workshop is for you! Experiment with making your own Cyanotypes using this 170 year old photographic process! Register @ www.c5studios.org. Info: 760.258.1059

**Ongoing**
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 operating under Call Ahead for Pickup Service.

Upcoming
Inyo County Grand Jury is taking applications for the ‘21-22 cycle. Submit an application to the Office of the Jury Commissioner at PO Box 1508, Bishop, CA 93515. For a copy of the application or for further questions, please visit the Grand Jury’s website at http://www.inyocounty.ca.gov/generalinfo/jury_civilgrandjury.htm or contact the Grand Jury Assistant at 760.873.5157.

Covid testing/Bishop: Tri-County Fairgrounds, Tallman Pavillion on Monday and Thursday - participants must be in a vehicle to get tested. And at Statham Hall in Lone Pine on Tuesday and Friday. Time: 8-4.

Mammoth Lakes testing Mondays and Thursdays at the Mammoth Lakes Foundation, 100 College Pkwy. 11 a.m. ’til 2 p.m. No appt. necessary.

Walker/Coleville testing Fridays at Walker Community Center 9 am-12:45p.m.

Covid Vaccination Pre-register for your Covid-19 vaccination in Mono County. Go to coronavirus.mono county.ca.gov or call 211. Inyo County vaccine registration can be accessed via the county website @www.inyocounty.us.

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COVID
continued from page 5
On Monday, March 15, Inyo County expanded eligibility for the Covid-19 vaccine to include, in addition to all individuals aged 65 and over, county residents ages 16-64 who are at risk of severe reaction to the Covid-19 virus.

That group includes those with underlying health conditions (i.e. cancer, kidney disease, heart conditions, and diabetes) as well as individuals with disabilities.

All in addition to those who fall into tiers 1a and 1b of the state’s prioritization system.

At Tuesday’s Mono County Board of Supervisors meeting, Mono County Schools Superintendent Stacy Adler gave a presentation on school status throughout the county.

Mammoth Unified School District’s high and middle school students are expected to return to in-person learning on Monday, March 22 as part of a hybrid education platform, Adler told the supervisors.

TK-5 schools in the district have been open since the beginning of March and Eastern Sierra Unified School District and Mono County of Education schools are open as well.

Public Health Officer Bryan Wheeler gave the supervisors a rundown of the current Covid-19 situation at the meeting.

He touched upon the county’s low numbers and strong vaccination rate, which remains the highest in California.

There were some issues, he said, with switching over to the MyTurn vaccination program run by the state. There were so many logistical and technical problems with the software that the county has reverted to their original registration process until the MyTurn problems are fixed.

“At some point, the state is going to say ‘just vaccinate whoever shows up,’ that’s long been rumored,” Wheeler said, “We are close to a sort of saturation of individuals who are very excited and want to get the vaccine right away.”

Now the county needs to pivot to those on the fence and engage in an education program to encourage more residents to get the vaccine.

Supervisor John Peters also discussed his ongoing involvement with the California State Association of Counties’ rural working group.

He said that in his talks with Dr. Mark Ghaly, head of Health and Human Services for the state, there was an indication that there “will be some development or use of a vaccine passport.”

It would prove that an individual has been fully vaccinated and as a result can be allowed to be a part of large crowds or in an enclosed space.

Such an approach would in theory incentivize California residents to get vaccinated so that they can take part in or make use of a number of services/activities.

The board also approved a letter to be sent to the state that highlights the small portion of vaccinated residents. The goal being the further easing of Covid-19 restrictions and/or greater autonomy for the county.

DISPOSAL
continued from page 1
The Commerce St. household disposal area will remain, with additional space for customers to park and dispose of waste.

The area where the transfer station will be built is currently used for container storage. Those containers will be moved to a site out by Mammoth Yosemite airport.

Instead of making a trip out to Benton Crossing, Mammoth Disposal trucks will come to the transfer station to deposit their collections, which will then be moved elsewhere (likely Nevada for trash) by other trucks.

The office (currently to the left of the entrance) will be torn down and reconstructed closer to the transfer station.

Another part of the project is a dedicated recycling and buyback facility located 400 yards further up Commerce Street and on the other side of the road.

The aim in separating waste from recycling, Long explained, is to reduce traffic and ease congestion at the transfer station, especially with a greater volume of trucks coming through the property.

“To get ahead of this,” VanDelinder said, “we’ve already started sorting single stream [recycling].”

There is potential, she continued, to ramp up the scale of that sorting process and begin taking on material from outside the Town of Mammoth Lakes as well as other places around Mono County.

After sorting, the recyclables will be bailed and sent down to Southern California.

The biggest challenge in all of this?

“We need to keep operational while we’re under construction,” Long said, “as the facility will still have to meet demand from residents.

“We’re going to stage a lot of activity to reduce the conflict between contractors and our typical customers coming onto the property,” he continued, adding “We’ve done things like this before.”

Once the buyback and recycling facility is built and ready for operation, he said, it will immediately free up the traffic to and from the current property.

As for how the Benton closure will impact the transfer station operations, VanDelinder said “Our route charts (total tonnage) are the majority of what would change.”

Instead of heading out to Benton, the trucks will drop off their waste in town and then head back out.

“I think [the disposal process] will be much better inside a building vs outside a building,” she continued. “It’s just going to look a little more structured and it’ll be able to handle more volume.”

Mammoth Disposal also stands to save money on gas and overall maintenance costs, as trucks won’t be leaving town to complete their duties anymore.

“[The expansion] will take us into the future,” VanDelinder said. “This is a significant investment on our part and it’s very challenging to do while you’re still operating a facility…but it’s what we’ve committed to do.”

“That we can separate comingled recycling...that’s a huge benefit to the Mammoth community,” she concluded.

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