

the sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra



A kid after Lunch's heart with the mis-aligned buttons at the Mammoth and Lee Vining Elementary Strings & CMU's Honors Strings Winter Concert Wednesday evening.

Saturday, December 20, 2025

FREE

Vol. 23, No. 51



Santa's helpers busy at work at the annual Railroad Express event at Laws Museum last Saturday, captured by photographer Gayla Wolf. More photos, p. 19.

KAUK SENTENCED

By Fisher

Professional climber Lonnie Kauk will not serve time in state or federal prison despite being convicted earlier this year of felony domestic violence strangulation, criminal threats, and vandalism, Mono County Superior Court Judge Gerald Mohun ruled Monday at a long-delayed sentencing hearing.

Instead, Mohun sentenced

Kauk to four years of formal probation and 180 days in the Mono County Jail, along with mandatory domestic violence counseling, alcohol treatment, community service, and a decade-long criminal protective order barring any contact with the victim.

"I know this has been a

more KAUK, pg. 6

AN UNAGREEABLE AGREEMENT

By Klusmire

The testy labor dispute is over, but the anger and bitter feelings are still festering between union employees and the Northern Inyo Hospital District board and leadership.

Nurses and technical workers at NIHD voted overwhelmingly to approve new contract terms on Thursday, Dec. 11. The NIHD board then approved the new deal on Dec. 17. Those two approvals staved off a strike by hundreds of NIHD union workers and stopped plans by the district to spend up to \$900,000 to ship in nurses to maintain operations for a week if the

strike occurred.

Although the union said it was "pleased" with the new agreement, the labor negotiations did not end on a conciliatory note.

"These negotiations were symptomatic of larger problems which need to be addressed. Morale will only improve once employees and our community can depend upon a District Leadership that demonstrates good judgement, makes better decisions, and respects its front-line employees," stated a press release from the union, Local 315 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal

Employees (AFSCME).

"I've been on every single RN Negotiating Team since the formation of the Union in 2015," said Heleen Welvaart, an RN in the Rural Health Clinic. "This has been the most difficult round of negotiations I can remember. Until this year, we have never had to take a strike vote at Northern Inyo."

That vote was met with a strident response by the NIHD board during a special meeting on Dec. 5. The board met in executive session and essentially handed CEO Christian Wallis a \$900,000 blank check to bring

more NIHD, pg. 7

STEEL GOING STRONG



Construction workers shake hands as the final beam on the Southern Mono Hospital District North Wing project is placed on Friday afternoon, adorned with a tree and a flag per Scandinavian tradition.

Tax Trauma

p. 2/

Finally at Ease

p. 4/

Bring in the Lawyers

p. 5/

Extreme Birdwatching

p. 11/

Yosemite Takes a Hit

p. 18/

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COMPASS

THE NAME’S BOND. GO BOND

Bishop resident Randy Short may be long in the tooth, but he’s never been short in the brains department.

So when he looked at his property tax bill this year, he immediately knew something didn’t look right.

Not that he could actually see many of the numbers without a magnifying glass, but he could see the bottom line, and the bottom line indicated his tax bill was \$1,000 more than it had been a year before.

As a Californian, and staunch supporter of Proposition 13 (passed in 1978 which sets a base rate of 1% of home valuation at the time of purchase and places a cap on property tax increases of 2% per year), Short would accept a \$1,000 increase if he owned a \$5 million home.

Alas, he does not.

A closer look showed the new Bishop School Bonds approved by voters in November, 2024 for school facility improvements took a chunk out of Randy.

But a comparison of bills also showed he was paying 70% more year-over-year for the Northern Inyo Hospital General Obligation (GO) bonds passed by voters and issued in 2005 and 2009.

So he called Northern Inyo and ultimately got ahold of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Andrea Mossman.

Mossman explained that the hospital district tells the county every year how much it plans to pay on these voter-approved bonds.

In recent years, the district has not been receiving enough in tax revenue to cover these bond obligations.

The County Assessor, Amy Shepherd, verified the bond repayment schedule and approved the new rate.

“We’re aware it’s a significant increase,” said Mossman.

A la Paul Revere, Short decided to sound the alarm to the wider public. After all, many people’s property taxes are folded into their loan payments, so oftentimes, people don’t even look at the bills.



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sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra

“I won’t insult your intelligence by suggesting that you really believe what you just said.”

-William F. Buckley Jr.

JACK LUNCH

PUBLISHER

He drove down to Independence to give public comment at the Inyo County Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday.

The Board’s reaction was underwhelming.

Board Chair Scott Marcellin, who makes Flash the Sloth in the Zootopia movies appear positively rambunctious, cut off Short just as he was getting started (three minutes!). This despite the fact that every meeting Supervisors spend 45 minutes on new employee introductions, employee appreciation milestones and the like. Those are never cut off and are paralyzingly awkward.

Jeff Griffiths chimed in that, well, what do hospital bond payments have to do with us?

Short figured as putative community leaders, Supervisors would at the very least wish to do some public education and outreach on bond debt. Because these GO

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Year Ending June 30,	General Obligation Bonds		Revenue Bonds		Direct Borrowings		Totals	
	Principal	Interest	Principal	Interest	Principal	Interest	Principal	Interest
2024	\$ 1,815,855	\$ 1,453,098	\$ 1,335,000	\$ 526,547	\$ 1,325,314	\$ 49,278	\$ 4,476,169	\$ 2,028,923
2025	1,162,909	1,281,468	690,000	326,140	142,130	19,546	1,995,039	1,627,154
2026	1,221,947	1,369,243	710,000	304,060	129,767	15,306	2,061,714	1,688,609
2027	1,331,891	1,473,387	735,000	281,340	134,037	11,036	2,200,928	1,765,763
2028	1,345,490	1,543,462	755,000	257,820	123,610	6,800	2,224,100	1,808,082
2029-2033	8,968,341	9,004,783	3,780,000	910,540	121,862	3,383	12,870,203	9,918,706
2034-2038	5,912,035	11,742,507	3,220,000	201,075	-	-	9,132,035	11,943,582
2039-2043	472,447	2,947,937	-	-	-	-	472,447	2,947,937
Subtotal	\$ 22,230,915	\$ 30,815,885	\$ 11,225,000	\$ 2,807,522	\$ 1,976,720	\$ 105,349	35,432,635	\$ 33,728,756
Premium on Bonds							203,263	
Accreted Interest							16,540,170	
Total							\$ 52,176,068	

This graphic is from the 2023 independent audit. Note the \$16.5 million in accreted interest, which is basically interest on the interest we haven’t paid.

Bonds are exhibit A as to what can go wrong when you give a special district carte blanche to raise money.

Alas, Supervisors responded with a collective, slackjawed “Duhhhh”

The Sheet spoke with Mossman and Hospital CEO Christian Wallis on Wednesday morning.

Wallis, said Mossman, has been “digging into the bonds” ever since he arrived at the district earlier this year. “Until Christian got here, no one had ever even looked into it.”

What he found is that, basically since 1998, the district has been borrowing money and then successively delaying its repayment through multiple refinancings.

But the \$8 million bond taken out in 2009 (and then refi’d in 2016) to finish off the Hospital’s construction/seismic retrofit project has been the killer.

That loan has functioned, Wallis explained, like an ARM (adjustable rate mortgage). Nothing due at the outset but starting in 2020, progressively steepening interest rates.

This year, that rate is a stunning 259% - and that is not a misprint.

The rate will balloon to as much as 600% before it’s paid off in 2038.

So that initial \$8 million loan will ultimately cost the district around \$30-35 million.

That’s expensive money.

Sheet: Is that even legal [money loaned at that rate]?

Wallis: Not anymore

Wallis immediately sought to refi the loan but the terms are pretty ironclad. “It is not an option for this type of product,” said Wallis.

So he’s trying to negotiate an early payoff with the bondholder (DTC) via the trustee (Bank of New York).

“If we can’t payoff the bond,” he said, “we are at their mercy.”

Wallis did not wish to armchair quarterback previous hospital leadership, because during the midst of the Great Recession in 2009, maybe those were the best terms NIHD could get.

But if any lesson is clear, it’s this: Don’t borrow money from the mafia.

On a positive note, now that that bond rate has been reset for taxpayers, Mossman said she anticipates the payment this year will be similar to what it will be going forward.

Wallis and Mossman plan to give a presentation to the hospital board on the bonds, their history and their impacts at the regular January board meeting.



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LOCAL NEWS

COUNCIL SQUELCHES 54 MONO DEBATE

By Libre

Bipin Morari, owner of 54 Mono Street, can rest easy. Mammoth Lakes Town Council voted on Wednesday night to uphold the decision made in October by the Planning and Economic Development Commission (PEDC) granting Morari approval to move forward with his development.

This decision came after four months of heated debate over the rights to the easement on his property, but used by Kim and Keith Erickson to access their property, 56 Mono Street.

Morari, a local business owner, plans to build six units of housing for his employees on his currently empty lot. Morari's project includes an underground garage with seven parking spaces and three exterior spots. The Ericksons fought tooth and nail against his plans, stating they would not share what they saw as their legally granted "exclusive" easement.

The easement dilemma was first presented at a Planning and Economic Development Commission (PEDC) meeting in August. During that meeting, PEDC decided to extend the issue until their October meeting. When October rolled around, PEDC voted in favor of Morari, granting him approval

to move forward with his building plans. The Ericksons then appealed this decision, which resulted in a public hearing at the Nov. 19 town council meeting, during which both parties were accompanied by legal counsel.

In November, the town council voted to extend their decision on the matter for another month, with the hope that the parties would seek an expedited legal process and come to a decision on their own.

The Ericksons and their lawyer, Paul Rudder, tried to take Morari's legal team to court, but they refused. Instead, Morari's team sought to solve the problem with two different settlement proposals, given to the Ericksons on Nov. 25 with an expiration date of Dec. 5.

"If anybody's ever gone to court, they know there's no such thing as filing a lawsuit and having a resolution achieved within 60 days, unless you're watching a tv show," said Hanif Hirji, Morari's lawyer. "We engaged in good faith settlements and they engaged in go to court and see you later."

The first proposal offered to pave and maintain access to the easement, which included employing strategies to ensure the easement remained

clear. The second proposal offered to sell the property on 54 Mono Street at the cost Morari paid to acquire it, plus the holding and development costs up to that point. The Ericksons refused both.

"Are the Ericksons going to be impeded in the ingress and egress to the property by this development? No," Hirji emphasized. "They're going to have the same ability to ingress and egress to their property."

Another point of tension: Rudder and Hirji on Wednesday accused one another's clients of seeking legal retribution against the town.

"A most recent letter ... contains some threats against the town that I believe is what someone does when they realize they don't have a good case," Rudder said during his public comment. He did not elaborate on what these threats were. "But we have no intention of suing the town."

This was a false statement, Hirji retaliated.

"If you go back to the last meeting, Mr. Rudder specifically stated that if the project goes forward, then his clients are going to sue to the city," Hirji said.

The council did not respond directly

to these statements, but did allude to them during their deliberation.

"It's disappointing the parties have not been able to engage in a more productive, amicable solution," councilmember John Wentworth said. "As council members, our responsibilities are based on our decision on the applicable code and administrative record before us, rather than on speculative legal scenarios that may arise in its process ... if you want to go to court, go to court, but that isn't anything we have jurisdiction over."

Councilmember Chris Bubser echoed Wentworth's sentiments. The council spent a lot of time and energy trying to understand this issue, she said.

"I really went deep on [exclusive easements]," Bubser said. "They are rare, narrowly constructed, and cannot be enforced by the council in the absence of much more information."

To close his statement, Wentworth administered a warning.

"I'm leery of the process that was used in how this was presented to the council," Wentworth said. "We were delivered a kind of burning fire."

Mammoth Hospital

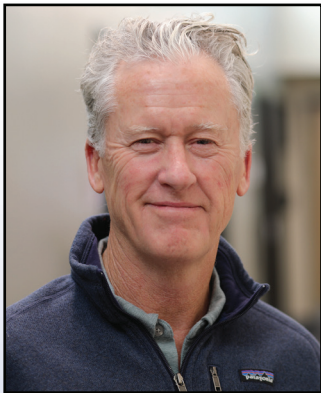
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SUBTERRANEAN BLUES

By Fisher

A few weeks ago, three dozen people gathered in the Chalfant Community Center to talk about groundwater, packing every seat and lining the walls.

On the agenda: a discussion of a proposed agreement between the Tr-Valley Groundwater Management District (TVGMD) and its former partner, and a presentation on a modeling project that could end up validating concerns raised before the split.

Some attendees were there on behalf of Fish Slough, a rare high-desert wetland west of Chalfant that is home to endangered pupfish, unique micro-fauna, and Indigenous petroglyphs. Fish Slough has been a flashpoint in Tri-Valley groundwater debates for years, especially now that one of the springs feeding the wetland has dried up.

Others came because the wells supplying their homes are dropping. Chalfant resident Denver Billings is one of them: his well has fallen five feet in five years, and he's bracing for the cost of redrilling.

Many residents blame alfalfa farming in Hammil Valley, as local growers have historically resisted any limits on pumping.

And that's the crux of it. The question of whether to pass the agreement has surfaced before: the same people, the same tension, but now under increasing pressure from a shrinking water supply.

At issue is whether the TVGMD will rejoin a basinwide groundwater plan or continue to operate on its own as state scrutiny intensifies. If the basin's priority is upgraded, the district could be forced to produce an expensive Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) on its own, or accept outside oversight it has so far resisted.

A related debate in 2021 prompted TVGMD to leave Owens Valley Groundwater Authority (OVGA) after the state downgraded the basin's priority, eliminating the legal requirement to submit a plan.

OVGA had been tasked with creating a GSP for the entire basin under California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). But during the process, the state downgraded the basin's priority status, meaning a GSP was no longer legally required.

According to Carol Ann Mitchell, who has served on the TVGMD board for 38 years, ranchers saw proposed pumping restrictions in the draft plan and decided they wanted out before anything became binding now that their participation was no longer required by the state.

That decision was reinforced by political dynamics that often placed Tri-Valley's concerns behind those of better-funded agencies, such as Inyo County. Mono County bowed out at the same time. The Sheet covered the breakup in the Oct. 16, 2021 issue.

On paper, the exit didn't matter much. Low-priority basins don't have to submit GSPs, and OVGA wasn't penalized. But in practice, it carved a deep divide between residents and growers in the TVGMD, ultimately shifting the board's priorities toward the growers.

In the years following the split, TVGMD struggled to set its own course, trying to balance competing demands from across the community, residents and growers alike.

The tension culminated in a bitterly

contested 2023 election to fill the seventh seat on the board that would break a deadlock between domestic representatives and agricultural members.

While it's not uncommon to have a GSA largely managed by growers, the lines can be blurred in a region like Tri-Valley as everyone depends on wells for their livelihoods, not just those in agriculture.

The pro-agriculture candidate ultimately prevailed, and the board has remained divided since, Mitchell said. The Sheet covered that race on April 29, 2023.

Meanwhile, after the split, OVGA opted to complete a GSP anyway. It was purely voluntary, but, in its view, was better than being caught flat-footed later. The authority submitted the plan in 2022.

Then, this summer, the state sent it back with an "incomplete" rating. Without Mono County and TVGMD, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) said the plan could legally cover only part of the basin. Fish Slough and the entire Tri-Valley region were left outside the management framework.

If the basin's priority ever increases, OVGA would be out of compliance, or TVGMD could suddenly be responsible for producing its own, very expensive, standalone GSP. Many believe that priority shift is imminent, especially as Fish Slough continues to dry up.

"TVGMD is most likely going to be subject to SGMA," said Kristen Stipanov,

more GROUNDWATER, pg. 8

GETTING INTO THE WEEDS

By Klusmire

Local environmental groups have sued the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) alleging it has tried and failed for years to comply with legal agreements to revegetate hundreds of acres of land in the Laws area, north of Bishop.

The suite was filed by the Eastern Sierra Water Alliance, which is made up of the Friends of the Inyo, the Owens Valley Indian Water Commission, and the Sierra Club Range of Light group.

The group charged that by failing to successfully complete the mandated revegetation project, LADWP has violated the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Laws Irrigation Project was approved in 2003 under the terms and conditions laid out in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

In simple terms, the project directs LADWP to revegetate about 253 acres of previously irrigated pastures which had been abandoned for years by the ranch leasing the property from LADWP. The land is east of Highway 6 and north of the McNally Canals. The revegetation work was supposed to be completed by 2013.

In return, LADWP was granted a number of changes to the Inyo Los Angeles Long Term Water Agreement, including the ability to create pastureland in other areas of the valley. The proposed Laws Irrigation project was properly added as a change to the Water Agreement, and approved by Inyo County, LADWP and the courts overseeing the agreement.

However, the lawsuit does not attempt to dive into the legal swamp created by the

Water Agreement or its supporting documents. It only asks the courts to rule on whether LADWP has violated CEQA and the EIR. It then asks the court to compel LADWP to successfully complete the vegetation work.

For years, the old pastures in question have been mostly dry and sporting the usual array of weeds and non-native plants common in the area, the groups said. Instead of creating "a biodiverse upland desert scrub community," as promised, LADWP "disregarded its plans in many ways. The result has been "near monocultures of common plants like rabbitbrush and saltbrush while missing deadlines," the group said in a press release.

"We know there is adequate water and expertise for LADWP to satisfy its obligations, it is high time they treated compliance with obligations to the Owens Valley as a higher priority," said Wendy Schneider, executive director of Friends of the Inyo.

Negotiations with LADWP about the project started two years ago with the Sierra Club and others pointing out the "Laws revegetation projects were not properly implemented and have not been successfully completed, said Mark Bagley, Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter member who also represented the Sierra Club during the adoption of the Water Agreement.

"LADWP has disregarded our concerns, so we have been forced to ask the Court to order LADWP to live up to their obligations" under CEQA.



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KAUK

continued from page 1

political case for everyone," Mohun said as he administered his final ruling.

Kauk was convicted by a jury in April of crimes stemming from a June 2023 domestic violence incident involving his then-girlfriend, Riley Hancock.

Prosecutors alleged Kauk strangled her until she lost consciousness and threatened to kill her, her dog and her father.

Jurors found Kauk guilty of felony domestic violence strangulation, felony criminal threats, and felony vandalism. The jury reduced a fourth charge related to an injury to the victim's lip to a misdemeanor.

He faced a potential sentence of up to 8 years and 4 months in state prison.

In Monday's sentencing hearing, Mohun struck a "great bodily injury" enhancement attached to the domestic violence charge, reducing that count to a misdemeanor for sentencing purposes. He left the felony convictions for criminal threats and vandalism intact.

Mohun had originally scheduled the sentencing for June, but the defense postponed it through a series of continuances and post-trial motions. In the interim, Kauk replaced his trial attorney and filed a motion for a new trial, arguing ineffective assistance of counsel.

That motion, filed by Irvine-based attorneys Dan Wagner and Scott Simmons, argued that Kauk's former attorney failed to pursue mental health diversion based on alcohol use disorder.

Mohun denied the request for a retrial but weighed the diagnosis heavily in his sentencing decision.

In explaining his decision to strike the great bodily injury enhancement, Mohun cited Penal Code section 1385(c), which allows courts to dismiss sentencing enhancements in furtherance of justice when certain mitigating circumstances are present.

Mohun said the most significant mitigating factor was Kauk's diagnosis of alcohol use disorder, which he found contributed to the offense. He also emphasized that Kauk had no prior criminal record and no history of arrests or convictions.

"While not diminishing the victim's injuries or trauma, or minimizing the defendant's criminal act of choking the victim," Mohun said, the facts of the case were similar to other domestic violence cases in which probation is commonly granted.

He said the victim's physical injuries did not require medical treatment and were resolved without long-term complications, factors he said weighed against treating the case as among the most severe domestic violence offenses.

Mohun also pointed to character letters submitted on Kauk's behalf and said he attributed Kauk's limited expressions of remorse to legal advice rather than an outright refusal to accept responsibility.

"I do not find that dismissal of the

enhancement would endanger public safety," Mohun said. "The character references submitted in support of the defendant show that he is generally a kind and peaceful person."

Mono County Deputy District Attorney Lauren Ryerson urged the court to leave the enhancement in place, arguing the jury found it true beyond a reasonable doubt and that the evidence of strangulation was severe.

Ryerson described trial testimony proving the victim lost consciousness and suffered visible bruising consistent with expert testimony on strangulation injuries. She argued alcohol use should not mitigate conduct involving sustained choking and death threats.

"This was not the first time [he laid hands on her]," Ryerson said, referencing the victim's testimony about prior abuse in the trial. "This was the first time he was caught, that he was being held accountable."

Ryerson also criticized what she characterized as Kauk's failure to acknowledge wrongdoing, pointing to statements made during a pretext phone call, the trial, the probation interview, and his evaluation with the diagnosing doctor.

"To be rehabilitated, you have to admit you've done something wrong," she said. "That is not what we have before us."

Defense counsel argued probation would better serve public safety by requiring treatment and supervision,

rather than incarceration.

They described the incident as an aberration in an otherwise crime-free life and said probation would allow Kauk to address alcohol use and anger issues while being held accountable through strict conditions.

Mohun ultimately rejected the prosecution's request to impose the enhancement and denied defense motions to reduce the felony criminal threats and vandalism convictions to misdemeanors.

He sentenced Kauk to 48 months of supervised probation, suspended imposition of sentence, and ordered him to serve 180 days in the Mono County Jail, with two days credit for time served. Kauk was allowed to report to jail after the holidays, no later than Jan. 2, 2026.

Additional conditions of the probation include the completion of a 52-week domestic violence program, enrollment in alcohol treatment through the Toiyabe Indian Health Project, total abstinence from alcohol with chemical testing upon request, 100 hours of community service, a lifetime ban on firearms, and a criminal protective order barring contact with the victim until Dec. 15, 2035.

The court also imposed a total of \$2,118.91 in fees on Kauk but declined to impose any discretionary fines after defense counsel said that "his business has dried up as a result of this case."

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NIHD

continued from page 1

in temporary traveling nurses to replace NIH nurses during the planned four-day nurses’ strike. The meeting minutes did not break out how that money would be spent to muster a “contingency” force of up to 100 nurses.

The pay for the nurses was not disclosed. Nor did the minutes outline how the district would get the replacement nurses to Bishop, either via plane or bus or a combo of both, and how much it would cost to house and feed them in town for five days. There was no indication the district would seek to replace tech staff, which were going to strike for only one day.

In the ten days from the vote to the planned strike, the union had been prepared to negotiate a process that would have allowed a group of union nurses to work during the strike to provide essential and emergency care and services. That offer was rejected and NIHD adopted the plan to bring in enough nurses to avoid any interruption of care in the hospital and clinics.

Union representatives took offense, again, to the repeated claim by NIHD that it provides a 2.5% annual raise to all employees. As previously reported in The Sheet, employees at the final step of their salary scale do not get the 2.5% raise. That policy was confirmed by a memo obtained by The Sheet from the NIHD personnel office to non-represented workers about the pending pay changes. The memo states, the annual 2.5% “step increase” is only paid to “eligible employees ... not at the top of their pay scale.”

Negotiations between NIHD and the union stalled in October over the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA). The union requested the 3.5% COLA slated to take effect in November. The district didn’t want to pay any COLA, and sought to delay any COLA or salary negotiations until spring of 2026 because of its shaky financial position caused by running a \$6 million budget deficit and unknown impacts of cuts to federal healthcare funding.

Eventually, both sides agreed to a 2.5% COLA for each of the next three years, which AFSCME called “modest.” The negotiations were mediated by representatives from the state and took all day. The union negotiating team and attorneys from NIHD’s outside law firm were at the table.

The final agreement also led to the union withdrawing its Unfair Labor Practices complaint with to the California Public Employment Relations Board.

Union concerns about nurse staffing levels and ratios that led to the Unfair Labor Practices complaint were “partially” addressed by acknowledging “the importance of the bedside RN’s voice in decision making,” AFSCME said.

The agreement ends the practice of forcing employees to cash in paid-time-off hours the new agreement.

“
Union leaders have serious concerns about the District’s behavior in bargaining and the consequences for the workforce and community at large

-AFSCME

”

“While the Union is pleased with the agreement, union leaders have serious concerns about the

District’s behavior in bargaining and the consequences for the workforce and community at large,” the AFSCME press release states. “We made reasonable

proposals, which should not have been this hard or taken this long to achieve.”

An NIHD press release stated, “the District appreciates the union’s participation throughout this process and recognizes the significance of this step toward restoring stability for patients, staff, and the community.”

AFSCME represents separate bargaining units for roughly 100 nurses and about 230 tech workers, a group that includes medical assistants, admissions clerks, kitchen staff, lab and radiology techs, licensed vocational nurses, certified nursing assistants, environmental services staff, and specialty clinic technical staff.



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SPLIT DOWN THE MIDDLE

By Libre

On Wednesday morning, the Mammoth Lakes Planning and Economic Development Commission (PEDC) voted in favor of a map which would split the property of 102 East Bear Lake Drive into two parcels. Nolan Bobroff, Mammoth Lakes community and economic development director, and Michael Peterka, associate planner, presented the application. Jeff Dagan, the applicant, sat in the audience.

The property was developed as a single family residence with an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), nestled within the eight lot single-family residential Gray Bar III subdivision, created in August 2017. With PEDC's approval, the lot in question will now be split between the primary single family residence on a 10,446 square foot parcel, and the existing ADU on another 7,510 square foot area. This lot split will result in a single family residence on both parcels.

During their presentation, Bobroff and Peterka focused on two questions: was the proposed project consistent with the State Subdivision Map Act? And did it align with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)?

PEDC's vote Wednesday affirmed that yes, the application complied with the State Subdivision Map Act. This means the site is physically suitable for the type and intensity of development, and bisecting the lot will not restrict access to existing easements for the road, utilities, and snow storage. Even better, the subdivision will likely not cause substantial environmental damage or serious health problems (thank God).

Further, PEDC found the application

did not fit within CEQA, but was exempt from it, due to the Minor Land Divisions exemption clause. The exemption applies to the division of property in urban zones for residential areas. Luckily for Dagan, his property perfectly aligns with this exemption.

Dagan has no intention to make the soon-to-be single family residence a short term rental property. Instead, his goal was to prepare for his future, in case Dagan and his wife decided to leave, but his 43-year-old son, who lives in the ADU portion of his property, wanted to stay.

"I don't think he's going anywhere," Dagan said. "He loves Mammoth."

Dagan's personal connection to the property and his desire to keep it within his family reassured some commissioners.

"It did hurt my heart a little bit thinking that the secondary unit is going to be rented out nightly when they're originally intended for locals," commissioner Cynthia Fleming said. "But your son is a local, and he's living in it."

The ADU on Dagan's property was built in 2018, before the state of California made drastic changes to ADU legislation. Meaning, this particular ADU needed to comply with the Lodestar Master Plan: Mammoth's area specific long-term development plan. Under the Lodestar Master Plan, the ADU had to maintain setbacks of 10 feet on the rear, 10 feet on both sides, and 20 feet of the access road.

"Unlike modern ADU rules which allow you to do whatever you want, basically," Bobroff said.

GROUNDWATER

continued from page 5

a local attorney who has studied the issue extensively. "If they were ranked medium priority, they would be obligated to work under their own GSP or work under the OVGA sustainability plan. [...] My read is that they don't have enough funding to create their own GSP."

To avoid that scenario, OVGA reached out to TVGMD and Mono County with a proposed memorandum of understanding to stitch the fractured basin back together under a single management structure.

"If such an agreement was reached, the GSP would be modified accordingly, adopted by the three GSAs, and resubmitted jointly," wrote OVGA executive director Holly Alpert in a July 8 letter.

In theory, the agreement could take many forms. In practice, it likely won't take any. Mono County declined quickly, deferring to Tri-Valley's position.

"If there was a desire from Tri-Valley [to join the agreement], we would support that," Mono County Supervisor Rhonda Duggan said.

TVGMD has not issued a formal response, but board members have indicated they're skeptical the benefits (access to a hydrologist, a streamlined state process) outweigh the costs and increased oversight. At last month's meeting, the board tabled the item.

In the meantime, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) submitted a neutral, separate comment to DWR on Dec. 4, explaining that the two basins (Tri-Valley and Owens Valley), deserve separate distinctions because they are geographically different.

"CDFW encourages DWR to consider that Fish Slough and the Tri-Valley area should be established as a single sub-basin, separate from the greater Owens Valley, to better address the continued impacts of ongoing groundwater level declines to fish and wildlife resources," it stated.

That letter also outlined evidence and data that groundwater depletion was related to Hammil Valley agriculture, which is something conservationists are working independently to prove.

To support these efforts with more concrete information, Mono County received a state grant to hire a groundwater modeling consultant to improve understanding of the region's hydrology last year. Most Tri-Valley data has been historical or anecdotal, and this project aims to bridge that gap.

OVGA oversees the modeling effort because Mono County doesn't have its own hydrologist (Inyo County has one), but TVGMD will ultimately de-

cide what, if any, policy actions to take based on the results.

The modeler provided a first look at the project during last month's meeting in Chalfant. The science was preliminary (the full model is due this summer) but the audience's questions largely focused on what the model didn't cover.

For one, three new monitoring wells near Fish Slough will not be included unless Mono County or the board finds additional funding to expand the scope.

Chairman Greg Allen, who also owns a pack station in Bishop, denied the possibility of gaining additional funding.

"Right now, the money we have is the money we have. There's no other money," he said. "Unless we put a pot at the back door and have people drop money in it, where's the money coming from?"

Some residents interpreted the resistance differently.

"If those wells proved that Hammil Valley was affecting Fish Slough, it would reasonably affect the ranchers in Hammil Valley," boardmember Mitchell said. "It's taken a long time to prove it, but eventually it will be unmistakably proven."

Some speakers tiptoed around this implication; others were blunt, pushing the board to take more initiative. Nick Buckmaster, CDFW employee in attendance in his personal capacity, was among the blunt.

"You are a groundwater sustainability agency," he said. "That gives you authorities more than just what you say you can do."

In his view, no one had adequately explained to the board how its powers changed once it became a state-recognized groundwater authority, including the authority to manage its own funds and adopt policies to rein in growers.

Chairman Allen bristled at the suggestion, saying it asked too much of a volunteer board.

The next TVGMD meeting in Chalfant is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026. There is no formal deadline for responding to OVGA, but Alpert said she hopes the board gives direction soon.

"I'm definitely on the hook to report back to the OVGA board at its next meeting, probably February or March," she said. "But that isn't a deadline for them to have an answer. I just need to say what I know at that point."

Even if TVGMD declines the agreement, OVGA can still move forward with the portions of the GSP that fall within Inyo County, even in its incomplete state.

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SPORTS

BRONCOS FALL IN STATE FINAL

Calaveras High School used a power running attack and a strong defensive effort to pull away from Bishop Union High School for a 42-21 victory in the California Interscholastic Federation Division 5A State Championship Saturday, Dec. 13.

The loss closes out the 2025 Bronco football season, the Broncos finishing with a 12-4 record and their fourth division title in school history.

“This was truly a historic season,” head coach Arnie Palu said. “We wanted to win the school’s first state championship but fell one game short. We were blessed to have a full 16 games with this great group of coaches and players. The 2025 team certainly left its mark.”

The Red Hawks built momentum early and maintained control throughout the game, scoring on both the ground and through the air, taking a 21-7 halftime lead. Bishop’s lone first half touchdown was scored by quarterback Emory Dondero, who scrambled five yards up the sideline and dove for the end zone.

The Broncos showed resilience in the second half by finding the end zone on a pair of drives, but Calaveras answered each score to keep the margin intact. Down 35-7 in the fourth quarter, Dondero connected with Carlos Sualez for a 28-yard touchdown pass. Bishop’s third and final touchdown came on a 60-yard pass to Levi Derr with less than four minutes to play.

Following the loss, the Broncos thanked and sent off their senior class, in a tradition carried forward from former coach Bill Egan. The team lines up its seniors, and each player and coach has a chance to give them a hug and thank them for their contribution to the program. This year’s seniors include Niko Poole, Miguel Elizarraraz, Elliott Douda, Chucky Delgado, Levi Derr, Carlos Sualez, Emory Dondero, Jaxon White, Karsen Hohenstein, Richie Talavera, Isaac Keller, Noah Castellanos, Malachi Orrick, Brody Berkovatz, Sage Conners, Tavien Davis, Darrick Cortez, Michael Spratt, Jason Rinehart, and David Smith.



Left, Carlos Sualez reaches for a pass from Quarterback Emory Dondero (right), shown scoring during the championship game.

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STARS OF THE SHOW



The Mammoth Stars, the Mammoth Lakes Youth Hockey under 10 travel team, won the Winter Classic hockey tournament on their home ice on Dec. 7.

The team’s victory in the championship game against the Jr Ducks from Irvine was impressive – coming from behind in the 3rd period to win in overtime.

“The coaches, families, and fellow Mammoth Stars are proud of what these players have accomplished,” head coach Keith Weiland said. “We are excited to watch them play with grit and determination through the rest of the hockey season!”

PLASTIC WATER BOTTLE BAN

SINGLE-USE PLASTIC WATER BOTTLES ≤500ml

Phase 1 – January 1, 2025:

Town Operations & Special Events

- Sale or distribution of plastic water bottles ≤500ml will be prohibited at all special events that require a permit from the Town.
- The Town government and Town affiliated events will be prohibited from purchasing or distributing single-use plastic water bottles ≤500ml.

Phase 2 – January 1, 2026:

Water Bottle Sales

Businesses or individuals will be prohibited from selling or distributing single-use plastic water bottles ≤500ml within the Town beginning January 1, 2026.

Prohibited Items

Single-use plastic containers of 500 milliliters or less containing non-sparking, unflavored drinking water.

Alternative Items

Learn more about other Town sustainability initiatives:
townofmammothlakes.ca.gov/451/Solid-Waste-Recycling-and-Sustainability

For more information, please contact Emily Zujewski, Sustainability Coordinator
760-965-3621 • ezujewski@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov

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www.thesheetnews.com

LOCAL NEWS | 9

CHAMPAGNE PROBLEMS

Mammoth Lakes' Transient Occupancy Tax numbers down over the summer.

By Libre

“We see the champagne crowd in the winter and the Budweiser crowd in the summer,” John Urdi said in his last meeting ever as CEO of Mammoth Lakes Tourism, referring to the big spenders during the ski season.

This consolation (explanation?) came as he presented the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) rates from a financial report completed in October. Although TOT is still adding to the town's budget, it's down by 1%, the equivalent of \$50,000.

Current total assets from both TOT and TBID: \$9,659,492 (2025) vs \$9,805,642 (2024). This gap in TOT funds was reflected in summer time visitation rates, according to an air service update presented by MLT interim CEO Sarah Winters. In 2025, the percentage of first time visitors was 37%, compared to 42% in 2023. Repeat visitors increased from 58% in 2023 to 63% in 2025.

Visitors' spending per day is also lower than usual. In 2023, visitors were spending an average of \$467.95 per day. In 2025, this number was \$428.35.

“People don't have the discretionary [funds] to pay for a restaurant,” Urdi said.

Rest assured, these numbers are on par with visitation rates around the country, Winters said.

“I looked briefly at comparable

markets such as Aspen, Telluride, and North Lake Tahoe,” Winters said. “[Thier] performance reflected a similar pattern.”

These markets also have small regional airports, similar to the one in Bishop. They are also seeing rates of first time visitors decrease, while their repeat visitor rates remain relatively stable, Winters added.

The lack of snow certainly isn't helping.

“The forecast changes day to day,” said Eric Clark, President and COO of Mammoth Resorts. “That's part of our problem.”

Booking -- and cancellation -- rates are directly connected to the amount of snow on the ground. In the beginning of December, Clark said, the mountain was ahead in booking pace compared to last year.

“Now we're significantly behind,” Clark said. “We've seen a lot of big cancellations. However, that kind of switched right when snow came into the forecast, we saw cancellations stop and started to see bookings come back here.”

Some good news from Clark: June Mountain will open this week with one run. He optimistically hopes to open the Eagle side of Mammoth on December 26.

“It ain't as bad as other places,” cheered John Morris, MLT chairman.

INYO ASSOCIATES MEET

The December meeting of Inyo Associates, an informal, non-political networking group was held at the Bishop Elks Lodge. The meeting attracted a festive group of community members and elected officials such as Inyo County District Attorney Dana Crom (bottom left) and Inyo County Sheriff Stephanie Rennie.



World-Class Longevity Training

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Ted and Tammy Dardzinski, internationally recognized strength and conditioning specialists, have brought their combined 70 years of experience and knowledge to Mammoth Lakes with their world-class training center, TEDD High Altitude Longevity Training Center (TEDD Fitness). The TEDD training center is among the first of its kind in the US to focus on older athletes and longevity. TEDD is a gym specifically designed for those over 40 years of age. It is important to note that the methods utilized at TEDD have evolved over many years of practical, hands-on experience. Every piece of world-class equipment has been specifically and carefully selected for individuals with multiple physical issues, including new joints, back problems, and years of compensation and wear-and-tear. This center isn't a health club designed to sell memberships and cater to a younger crowd; it's a hybrid. It is not merely a restorative center; it is an innovative program that integrates the science of longevity and health span with sports strength and

conditioning. The TEDD focus is on reconditioning and transforming older bodies into rejuvenated and youthful versions by using advanced techniques.

As for the owners, Ted and Tammy, you couldn't ask for two more experienced and knowledgeable coaches. Their careers span over decades and include extensive training and teaching in neuromuscular re-education and active nervous system recruitment (The Dardzinski Method). Ted and Tammy were pioneers in spinal cord injury recovery, founding and growing Project Walk Spinal Cord Injury Recovery Center into facilities all over the world. They have been interviewed on TV and in print highlighting their successes. Researchers from all over the world visited their corporate center in Carlsbad, CA to observe and learn The Dardzinski Method. Once, during a national television broadcast, Anderson Cooper inquired if Ted possessed expertise akin to that of a witch doctor due to the remarkable results he was achieving.

The results garnered by the Dardzinski's continue to generate discussion. Over the years, Ted and Tammy have focused their extensive experience and knowledge of the body into longevity training. And now, they are offering the TEDD program to Mammoth! Clients who have consistently participated in the TEDD training program have experienced significant transformations. Individuals in their 70s have regained athletic abilities comparable to those a decade younger; chronic pain issues have been resolved; and their bodies exhibit better mobility than 90% of their peers.

You owe it to yourself to visit the TEDD High Altitude Longevity Training Center. See firsthand how it can benefit you and help you achieve a longer, healthier, happier, more functional health span.

Contact Ted today for a tour of the center and a free consultation. TEDD is located: Outpost Mall, 126 Old Mammoth Rd. 760.716.8773 | info@teddski.com

FILM REVIEW

LISTERS: A GLIMPSE INTO EXTREME BIRDWATCHING

By Fisher

I can't stop talking about birdwatching. Wow. How's that for a sentence I never thought I'd write?

I owe this unexpected obsession to "Listers: A Glimpse Into Extreme Birdwatching," a documentary by St. Louis brothers Owen and Quentin Reiser. The film follows the two as they attempt a "Big Year," a birding challenge to see as many species as possible in a single year across the contiguous United States, all while living out of a minivan.

The idea for the film, as Quentin explains, began when he got high and opened a bird guidebook.

"I thought about how crazy it would be if you knew all of the birds in that book," he said. "Just how insane that is."

At the time, neither brother had any birdwatching experience. Like many non-birders, they assumed that any small brown bird they'd encountered throughout their lives was probably just a chickadee. That innocence is part of what makes the documentary work so well.

Much of "Listers" appears to be shot on a camcorder, giving it a casual, sometimes vulgar, vlog-style look at life on the road and the persistence it takes to actually chase down a bird. There are scenes filmed in Cracker Barrel parking lots and during long treks through marshlands.

Swarms of mosquitoes. Endless driving.

But it's more than a vlog. For one, the production value of the bird footage is genuinely astonishing. Owen is an exceptional wildlife photographer, and he captures crisp, tantalizing images of the birds they see, even when, over the camcorder footage, the brothers admit they only caught a fleeting glimpse. The contrast works beautifully.

It's also, quietly, a pretty impressive piece of journalism. As the film progresses, so does the brothers' knowledge.

Not just of birds, but of the birdwatching community itself, a world I had no idea existed with such intensity. There are rankings, rivalries, rare-bird alerts, and a shared obsession that hovers somewhere between the absurd and the deeply sincere.

And there are rules. The film introduces them gently, using graphics and interviews with avid birders and conservationists, so you never feel like you're reading an eBird manual. Still, it becomes clear how much structure governs the birding world. There are hard no-gos, expectations of perfect integrity, and vast gray areas in between.

As an extreme example, the brothers investigate a major controversy in the birding community: a teenager who was



banned from competition after one of his sightings was ruled false. He stood by his observation. The fallout triggered a full-blown meltdown within the birding world. The brothers interview all of the players.

One of those gray areas? Replaying a bird's recorded mating call on a phone to

lure it closer. The Reiser brothers use the tactic sparingly, and only when they're completely frustrated.

The film occasionally pokes fun at birders for their obsession, but never cruelly. For the most part, it treats them with curiosity and respect. It profiles a wide range of people, from young birders to retirees, urban enthusiasts to hyper-competitive listers who spend tens of thousands of dollars on the hobby.

It also balances the ethical implications of pursuing the hobby -- whether the impulse to claim something wild for personal achievement, or to burn fossil fuels chasing a single sighting is selfish. Or if it's more selfish to never notice the birds at all as their populations decline.

The brothers oscillate between devotion and disillusionment, exhilaration and boredom. The result is a portrait that feels unusually well-rounded and unpretentious.

And it's funny. Much of the dialogue is stoned spitballing, which might make the film feel unserious if it weren't so consistently hilarious and self-aware.

To underline that it's truly a movie for the people, "Listers" is fully crowd-sourced and available for free on YouTube. So there's really no excuse not to watch it.

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OP/ED

PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

By Libre

On Nov. 12, 2025, the U.S. Mint produced its last pennies. The free-market icon was 232 years old.

Few items have ingrained themselves into the cultural fabric of America the way the penny has.

Penny loafers. A penny for your thoughts. The immortalized Abraham Lincoln on the front and in recent years, the Union Shield on the back, serving as constant reminders of freedom and fairness.

But the penny simply cannot be used to buy anything anymore. It's been rendered useless in the persistent cycle of inflation. These days, the copper-colored coin collects dust in the "take a penny, leave a penny" plastic dishes at businesses, or worse, in the bottom of trash bins.

The penny finally died at the hands of a Trump administration order.

"For far too long the United States has minted pennies, which literally cost us more than 2 cents. This is wasteful!" President Trump wrote. "I have instructed my Secretary of Treasury to stop producing new pennies. Let's rip the waste out of our great nation's budget, even if it's a penny at a time."

The penny costs 3.69 cents to make,

due to the smelting process of 97.5% zinc and 2.5% copper in order to create the coins. According to the Federal Reserve, at 3.62 cents, it costs less to print a one dollar bill.

In the aftermath, businesses will now be forced to round to the nearest nickel when asking for change. The approximately 240 billion pennies lying around the United States will only continue to fade to irrelevancy.

The penny will join its cousins in the graveyard of discontinued coins: the half cent (1793-1857) and the Canadian penny (1858-2012). Somehow, the British penny coin survives it.

I'm not here to argue that killing the penny doesn't make sense. I get it. Expensive little thing.

Cash stays king to the merchant, but the average customer doesn't carry cash in their back pocket. The majority of transactions are automated now through credit, debit, and cash apps.

I am here, however, to stand for nostalgia and the way we teach financial literacy.

In my earliest memories with the penny, I am sitting cross-legged on the carpeted floor of my childhood bedroom. My little brother and I have emptied our respective ceramic piggy

banks, counting all the money we had to our names.

"17 dollars and 32 cents," I'd say.

"17 dollars and 33 cents," he'd retaliate, triumphant.

Back then, our pennies mattered.

They were the dictators of our financial success. We'd pick them up in the cracks of the sidewalk and slip them into our shoes like they were nuggets of gold.

My penny-driven greed continued into the classroom. In second grade, my class held an open air market in which we exchanged goods for cardstock pennies we created and painted by hand. One kid sold stickers. Another brought handmade bracelets. My dad helped me bake cookies.

We were each allotted 25 cents and told we could price our goods however we wanted. Some of us (like myself) ran out of our cents immediately. The stickers really caught my eye and I just couldn't sell enough cookies to make a sustainable profit. Others walked home with both cardstock pennies and little goodies in their pockets.

Even though my classmates and I didn't exchange "real" money that day, the lesson remained. Save your pennies and the dollars will make themselves.

With the penny gone, I wonder if

these types of lessons will continue.

Some questions I ask myself: Will the penny just be replaced by the nickel? What happens when the nickel, too, disappears? Is a completely cashless reality imminent?

In an era of Apple Pay and Apple Cash, I wonder how we will teach our children financial literacy. Kids no longer ask their parents for a five dollar bill. Instead, they reload their cash apps and scan their apple watches. Watching money drain from an account doesn't have the same tangible effect as counting your cash.

What's more, children are already diabolically addicted to their screens – think of the parent who sits their kid in front of an iPad at a restaurant. It scares me to think that with the death of the penny, and the cultural irrelevancy of the nickel, children are attaching their financial worth to their digital pacifiers. I worry how this will affect the self-esteem of future generations.

In all honesty, I haven't spent a penny in years. But bidding farewell to the copper Abraham Lincoln feels like I'm saying goodbye to the little girl with a piggy bank. I miss her. I wish her well.



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HARTLEY

GRAVY AND TALLOW SHAKES

The season rolls on. But what the hell? The Chiefs are eliminated? Wow. And Mahomes tore his ACL. That is awful. But the Chiefs had a great 8 year run. Now they will get a high draft pick and a chance to reload a bit. They still got Mahomes and Reid. Kelce is still serviceable but they need his replacement NOW.

The Raiders are a terrible team. I can't believe Pete Carroll is putting that shit on the field. You cannot roll forward with him as coach. And I was for him coming and setting a new culture there.

What you see is that the Raiders culture is so pathetic, it broke his culture-building. Move back to Oakland. They are pathetic.

Theeeeeeeeeee games... that matter.

Los Angeles Rams 1.5 point DOG to the Seattle Seahawks. O/U 42.5. This should be a good game. Rams have some injury concerns but are the better team. Comes down to trust to me. I DON'T TRUST Sam DARNold. DARN is what you will think a few times a game when Darnold tosses one to a defender. Rams 23- Hawks 20. Eagles crush Commanders. Don't matter Jayden Ichabod Crane Daniels. I love Daniels but he is so skinny he can break a rib sneezing. They might have a problem. Put him on a gravy and

tallow shake diet.

Packers 1.5 point dog to the Bears. O/U 46.5. Pity the Packers. They are beat up. Micah got plenty of time to podcast now. Wonder if he will do his podcast from the sidelines of games.

Bears 30- Packers a valiant effort- 23.

Chargers laying 2.5 to Cowboys. O/U 49.5. Over is the Cowboys playoff hopes. Cowboys try to play spoiler. But George Pickens slaps Dak in the face for fun and to waste more money.

Jerry says there is nothing wrong with Pickens and Dak needs to know how to lead his troops. Schottenheimer simply says George was just worked up. Schottenheimer also said to Steelers reps when advised that Pickens misses meetings and shows up late for games "WE ALL SLEEP IN SOMETIMES." Seriously. He actually said that. Chargers 32- Cowboys 27.

Schottenheimer also said to the media about Pickens' lack of effort that everyone noticed in a game. "We talked about it a bit." Hilarious. So he is not the coach for Pickens. This ends poorly.

Giants laying 2.5 to the Vikings. O/U 43.5. No one cares. The interesting thing is Jaxson's Dart career might be OVER soon. He has played less than a season and has been in the Blue Tent 5 times for concussions? Uhh.....better tell him he is NOT a RB. Get your tail out of bounds

son.

Bills Vs Browns. No.

Jets vs Saints. Hell No.

Panthers laying 3 to the Bucs. O/U 45.5. Remember the Baker for MVP chants..... good times. Did that really happen? And why are they dogs to the Panthers? Bucs 27 - Panthers 20.

Bengals vs Dolphins. Absolutely not. What is going on with Joe Burrow. He is going through a mid-twenties crisis. I will say to him the same thing I say to Myles Garrett...You signed the extension, shut up and take the money and the pain. No one made you sign that extension. Shut UP.

Chiefs vs Titans. Why? Titans are favored. LOL. Why is Gardner Minshew in the league then? He can't beat the Titans? Cut him. The point of these VETERAN CAPABLE backups is to keep the team afloat if the starter is hurt. If he ain't favored of that dumpster fire in Tennessee he is useless. You might as well start me then.

Broncos laying 3 to the Jags. O/U. 46.5. The Broncos are going to lose to the Jags 27-23. BoNix had the game of his life last week. He will not this week.

Falcons vs Cards. No care. Cardinals and Falcons. They are the whole reason for this rant. Maybe they can swap bum QBs.

Steelers vs. Lions. Don't watch the line. Lions 50, Steelers 19. Jamyr Gibbs has to get an IV and oxygen after running for 257 yards. David Montgomery spells him and runs for 145 yards. Amon Ra St Brown makes the Steelers linebacker retire after torturing them all game. Jamison Williams burns Joey Porter Jr for 139 yards receiving and 2 TDs. Joey Porter sues the officials saying "THEY WON'T LET ME HOLD HIM." Tomlin says again "Keep Watching."

Yeah coach, would love to watch you get fired.

Raiders vs Texans. Only thing you need to know. Texans defense might be best in the league.

Raiders offense is the worst in the league. You figure this one out. Texans 35- Raiders (-9) points. They are so bad the league penalizes them points.

Pats laying 2.5 to the Ravens. O/U 47.5. In Crabcake land, Ravens RISE UP and beat the Pats 24 - 22. I only say that because I HOPE the Ravens catch the Steelers and eliminate them from the playoffs. And eliminate Rodgers, Joey Porter Jr and Aaron Rodgers from the city of Pittsburgh and Steeler uniforms.

Niners vs Colts. Come on... Philip Rivers. Are they calling Matt Ryan this week, just doing revolving QB by game instead of season now?

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This winter, Eastern Sierra locals get unreal flight discounts. Save up to 40% off Advanced Air with service from MMH four days a week, starting November 26. Or save up to 10% on United with daily service from BIH to SFO starting December 11 and DEN starting December 18. And this season, United Airlines expands its Bishop schedule — with double weekend service to make your trip even smoother.

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BARS & MUSIC

Happy Hour/
The Liberty Sports Bar and Grill
Pursuit of Happiness Hour Daily 3-6 p.m. Live Music. Best viewing spot in town for **live sports**, other than across the parking lot @ **Main Street Pizza and Tap**. *More Liberty info, see ad p. 2*
Outlaw Saloon Happy Hour Monday through Friday from 4-6 p.m. *More info: See ad p. 15. And remember to catch all the NFL games right here!*
The Mogul happy hour 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the bar. Food and drink specials.
Main St. Pizza - *See ad p. 13 for deets*
Distant Brewing happy hour Monday-Thursday from 3-5pm. \$1/off beer/wine/cider/seltzer/kombucha
Bar Sierra happy hour from 4-5:30 p.m. Thursday through Monday.

Friday, December 19/
Bishop Funk Collective plays Mountain Rambler Brewery in Bishop. Time: 7:30 p.m. No cover.

December 19-20/
Collectivity (Bay Area's finest funk & fusion) plays Liberty. Starts 9:30 p.m. No cover.

Sunday, December 21/
Cassie Dunn plays **Distant Brewing** in Mammoth. Time: 7-9 p.m.

Wednesday, December 24/
The rebooted **Wild Wednesday @ Liberty** is just what you need to get into the holiday spirit! This is the way to welcome Christmas.

December 26-27/
ZB Savoy (country) plays **Liberty** in Mammoth. Time: 9:30 p.m. No cover.

TOWN STUFF

Friday, December 19/
Martinis and Mistletoe Christmas Show @ the Bishop Elks Lodge. Doors: 5:30 p.m. Show: 6:30 p.m. \$\$\$ Info/tix: 760.873.3221 or eventbrite.
Mammoth Hospital hosts **free Blood Pressure clinics** for patients seen in the last year. Time: 8-12 and 1-4. Call 760.924.4045 to schedule a visit. Walk-ins also welcome.
Bishop High School Basketball hosts Frazier Mountain. Varsity Girls play 5 p.m. with Boys to follow at 6:30.

Saturday, December 20/
June Mountain Projected Opening Day. Lifts start 8 a.m. As always, kids 12 and under ski free. Bonus: Enjoy Bucky's Bonfire @ 2 p.m. in front of the Chalet with live music.
Holiday Pet Portraits at Limelight Hotel lobby in Mammoth. Time: 3-5 pm. Enjoy apres and get a professional photo of your pet! Free, but paid valet parking only.

December 20-21/
Lantern making workshop & Solstice night walk courtesy of C5 Studios. Make your lantern at a Saturday morning class and then register for the solstice walk scheduled for Sunday @ 5. *Info/register @ c5studios.org. \$\$\$.*

Sunday, December 21/
So-Li Solstice celebration in Bishop to support your favorite local small businesses south of Line Street. Time: 3-8 p.m.
Yoga and Sound Bath Pack Fire Fundraiser @ Apres Zen. \$\$\$ Time: 4-5:30 p.m. Register @ apreszen.com.

TOWN STUFF

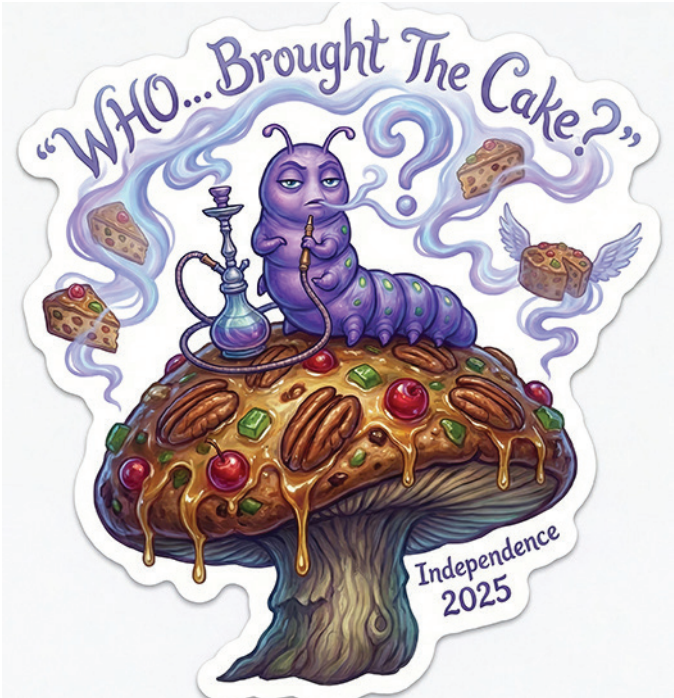
Tuesday, December 23/
Meet Santa and Woolly @ Mammoth Sports in the Village at Mammoth. Time: 5 p.m.

December 23-26/
Sunset Snowshoe Tours departing from Tamarack Lodge. \$\$\$ Info/register @ mammothmountain.com.

Wednesday, December 24/
Mammoth Christian Fellowship

LET THEM EAT FRUITCAKE!

Independence's Internationally Acclaimed Fruitcake Festival will take place **Saturday, December 20th** at 5:30 pm at the Legion Hall.
The 18th annual event is an opportunity to bake your prize-winning fruitcake, as well as dress in costume and participate in the costume contest.
This year, Sandy and the High Country will be playing!
You must bring a fruitcake or eggnog to go down the rabbit hole. Fruitcake judges will evaluate entries for the following categories: oldest, travelled the farthest, best of theme, most solids, and judges' award. And, introduced last year, is the most popular fruitcake, as rated by attendees. Yes, YOU get to judge this category. For the other prizes, our fruitcake judges employ mechanical, empirical, and philosophical techniques to select winning fruitcakes in those categories.



Most people participate by wearing theme-oriented costumes. Not only do many people dress up their fruitcake, but they like to wear a costume as well.
This is a **FREE** event if you bring a fruitcake or eggnog (with or without alcohol) to gain entrance to the Festival, and it is a family-friendly gathering. Homemade fruitcake or eggnog is preferred. The eggnog can be transported to the Festival in a milk jug. We have refrigeration on site. The eggnog is always served in elegant punch cups at the bar. It is worth the trip to Independence for that alone.

Meet Rusty!

A winsome young lad popular with the volunteers, and if the other shelter dogs and the puppies could vote, he'd probably be class president. No issues.

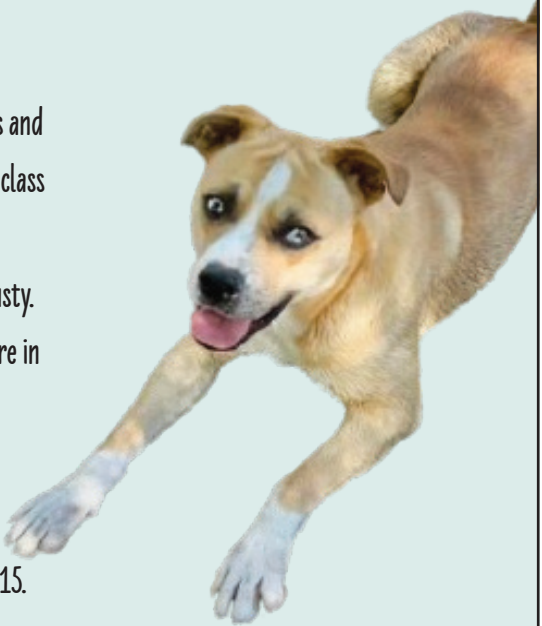
Please consider adopting or fostering Rusty. You can also meet others like him that are in search of their forever home – at the

Inyo County Animal Shelter, located at 1001 County Road in Big Pine.

For more information, call (760) 938-2715.

To see more dogs available for adoption, visit www.easternsierradogrescue.com

 Save a life.
Adopt a shelter dog.



WOOF!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE, BECOME A VOLUNTEER TODAY!

NO CLASS-IFIEDS

Help Wanted



Wild Iris is hiring for an Operations Coordinator! We're looking for an organized, motivated person with good attention to detail and ability to meet frequent deadlines who can help us keep our offices running in Mammoth Lakes and Bishop. **HIGHLY PREFERRED:** Bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish

Pay Range: \$26.25-\$32.55/hr.
Job Type: Full time, hourly, non-exempt
Benefits: Employee retirement with employer contributions, medical insurance, paid holidays, vacation, and sick accruals. (*Benefits available after successful completion of introductory period.)

Job Description: Primarily responsible for facilitation of day-to-day agency operations and support of agency operational functions. Not eligible for remote work.

Essential Job Duties:

- Coordinate staff meetings, events, and informational materials.
- Coordinate staff, volunteer, and donor appreciation/recognition, track donations.
- Provide orientation, training, and support to staff with technology, equipment, and facilities-related needs.
- Train, schedule, and supervise indirect service volunteers.
- Purchase and maintain inventory of office supplies, program materials, and staff uniforms.
- Provide day-to-day logistical support to staff in the absence of the Executive Director and Programs leadership.
- Oversee maintenance and cleaning of agency vehicles.
- Coordinate cleaning, maintenance, and repair of agency facilities and office equipment.
- Coordinate purchase, use, maintenance, and repair of agency phones and computers.
- Manage facilities security systems.

Shilo Inn is accepting applications for FT housekeepers, FT maintenance worker and Front desk/night auditor. Immediate Front Desk opportunity starting at \$18/hour. Please call Human Resources (Sarina Quintero) at 925.813.2331 or email your resume to squintero@marquishotelsgroup.com.

Country Glass seeks carpenters for window and door installation. FT & year round for the right applicant. Excellent pay DOE, with benefits/vacation. Will train the right hire with no experience. Must be solid, trustworthy and have a drivers license. 760-934-3587 or email your application to: Taylor@country-glass.com

Help Wanted



Elevate Your Career At Mammoth Hospital! We have an immediate need for the following positions:

- Preschool/Associate Teacher
- Maintenance Technician
- Housekeeper
- Environmental Services Tech
- Registered Nurse - Pediatrics

Mammoth Hospital offers; success sharing incentives program; staff development program; generous retirement match and PTO Accrual.

For questions, please email hr@mammoth. To view more positions and apply, pls.visit www.mammothhospital.org/jobs



Footloose Sports is hiring Bootfitters and Demo Ski Technicians for the upcoming winter season. We are looking for outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy skiing and prefer working in a fast paced, team-oriented environment. We are searching for individuals with experience but also provide paid training to entry level candidates demonstrating reliability, enthusiasm, and excellent customer service skills. This is a great opportunity to join a legendary Mammoth ski shop. Please submit a current resume to footloose@footloosesports.com.



Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District (GBUAPCD) seeks an Information Technology Administrator to lead and oversee all information technology activities of the agency and work as part of the management team to fulfill the agency's mission to protect public health and the environment from the harmful effects of air pollution. The position is full-time and in-person based in Bishop. The annual salary for the position is \$105,072 to \$140,832 per year plus generous benefits. For more information, please visit www.gbuapcd.org/employment. Recruitment is open until January 4, 2026.

Help Wanted



Reservations Desk Clerk immediate opening at the Double Eagle Resort and Spa in June Lake CA (20 min from mammoth). Must have excellent customer service and computer skills. Full or part time, health benefits, fitness membership and PTO. Great place to work! Email Lodging@doubleeagle.com

Creskide Spa and Fitness Desk at the Double Eagle Resort and Spa, immediate opening for enthusiast team member. Help in creating a wonderful experience for our spa and fitness center guests. Customer service, computer, cleaning, food service. Full or part time, health benefits, fitness membership and PTO. Great place to work! Email Lodging@doubleeagle.com

Sweetwater Plumbing Inc. FT position for Journeyman Plumber and/or Apprentice Plumber. Full Benefits. Job is located in Mammoth Lakes. Contact 760-914-1266 info@sweetwaterplumbing.com

Help Wanted

Restaurant Server for Eagles Landing Restaurant at the popular Double Eagle Resort and Spa in June Lake CA. Experience in restaurant service, computers and working as team member are essential. Full and part time available, health benefits, fitness membership and PTO. Great place to work. Email Lodging@doubleeagle.com

Restaurant bartender for Eagle's Landing Restaurant at the popular Double Eagle Resort and Spa. Experience in restaurant bartending, computers and working as a team member are essential. FT and PT work available. Health benefits, fitness membership, PTO. Great place to work. Email Lodging@doubleeagle.com

Cooks and Prep Cooks jobs available at the famous Eagles Landing Restaurant in June Lake. We offer health benefits, fitness membership and PTO. A great place to work! Email lodging@doubleeagle.com



Mammoth Lakes Tourism is seeking a part-time, seasonal Winter Airport Field Surveyor to welcome visitors to Mammoth Yosemite Airport and encourage participation in a brief QR code survey. Shifts align with flights Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays. Interested candidates should send an email to truax@visitmammoth.com with the subject line: Winter Airport Field Surveyor with a short intro, availability and any relevant experience.

PERSONALS

I imagine I'll see you ... at the Independence Fruitcake Festival. Because you are such an acquired taste.

I heard you ... are taking your dog up to the Limelight for a pet portrait. If he starts humping one of the photographer's legs, don't take that as an invitation to hump the other.

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At mono County, we're always on the lookout for talented individuals to join our team. We pride ourselves on offering exciting career opportunities and a workplace where you can thrive.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice of Resolution and Ordinance

R25-091 AND ORD 25-005

A RESOLUTION AND ORDINANCE OF THE MONO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPTING GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (GPA) 25-0 AND MODIFICATIONS OF MONO COUNTY CODE (MCC) CHAPTER 5.65, AMENDING THE POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND STANDARDS FOR SHORT TERM RENTALS; MAKING THE REQUIRED FINDINGS; AND FINDING THAT THE PROJECT QUALIFIES AS AN EXEMPTION UNDER CEQA §15301 (EXISTING FACILITIES)

WHEREAS, Mono County enacted an emergency moratorium on new short-term and transient rentals in single-family residential units in all land use designations (ORD22-03 and ORD22-05) from May 3, 2022, to April 29, 2024, to study the impacts of short-term rentals on long-term housing for residents; and

WHEREAS, during the moratorium, the County completed the “Mono County Short Term Rental Housing Study” (February 12, 2024); an online survey of impacts to housing and potential solutions and options (December 21, 2023, to February 1, 2024); and public input through the Regional Planning Advisory Committees (RPACs) in March 2024, including meetings in the Antelope Valley, Bridgeport Valley, Mono Basin, June Lake, and Long Valley, and a workshop with the Planning Commission (March 21, 2024); and

WHEREAS, data, information, and analysis were presented to the Board of Supervisors at public meetings in 2024 on February 20, April 2, April 16, and June 18; and

WHEREAS, at those meetings, the Board received public input; discussed potential changes to policies, regulations, and standards; and provided direction regarding amendments; and

WHEREAS, a resolution providing direction for processing short-term and transient rental permits while new policies and regulations were under development (R24-038) was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on April 16, 2024; and

WHEREAS, revised policies, regulations, and standards were developed based on the foregoing work and Board direction; and

WHEREAS, tribal consultation was invited pursuant to Senate Bill 18 and public input was received on the proposed revised policies, regulations, and standards in May 2025 at the RPACs (Antelope Valley, Bridgeport Valley, Mono Basin, June Lake, Long Valley) and Planning Commission (May 15, 2025); and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission toured June Lake on June 13, 2025, to visit short term rental neighborhoods to better understand local character and issues; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held public hearings on August 21, 2025, and September 30, 2025, to consider GPA 25-01 and modifications to MCC Chapter 5.65, receive public input, and deliberate amendments and alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission approved Resolution R25-01 on September 30, 2025, recommending that the Board of Supervisors make the required findings and adopt GPA 25-01 and amendments to MCC Chapter 5.65 as modified and finding that the amendments qualify as an exemption under CEQA §15301; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the revisions to the Mono County General Plan and MCC Chapter 5.65 are to 1) prioritize personal residential use in residential units, regardless of land use designation; 2) continue to support a “sharing model” whereby a resident property owner with excess capacity may supplement his/her income, which is different from purchasing assets with the primary intent of generating income; 3) prevent the loss of residential housing to a visitor lodging business model; and 4) prevent the commodification of residential housing due to the inclusion of an income-generating use like visitor rentals, however indirectly, in the sales price; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors held a workshop on October 21, 2025, to review the recommendation of the Planning Commission, receive public input, and provide direction to staff; and

WHEREAS, alternatives and options in response to public comment and opposition were identified, evaluated, considered, and incorporated as directed; and

WHEREAS, the amendments proposed would be consistent with a Class 1 Categorical Exemption under §15301 (Existing Facilities) of the California Environmental Quality Act because short-term rentals involve no expansion of existing or former use in residential units and are therefore unlikely to result in environmental impacts on neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors held a duly noticed public hearing on November 18, 2025, to consider adoption of the proposed GPA 25-01 and revised MCC Chapter 5.65, amending the policies, standards, and regulations for short-term rentals.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF MONO RESOLVES AND ORDAINS THAT:

SECTION ONE: Having reviewed and considered all information presented, including the staff report, Short-Term Rental Policy Update Report, presentation, public comments received during the comment period and Public Hearing, and the recommendation of the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors directed the following modifications on October 21, 2025, which have been incorporated into the revised policy package

in Exhibit A:

- Issue 1.A. Cap: Eliminate the cap.
- Issue 3.G. & H. Waiting Period: Reduce the waiting period to one year, maintain the provision about deed restrictions, eliminate the reference to ADU s and only apply the exemption if the owner has a long-term rental, and remove Interlaken from the exemption list.
- Issue 3.L. Incentive Program: Adopt both policies (I.D.9. and I.D.10.) as recommended by the Planning Commission.
- Issue 6.0. Alternatives for condominium complexes: Adopt as recommended by the Planning Commission. The condominium complexes shall be subject to the standardized two-permit process (use permit and short-term rental activity permit), waiting period, and non-transference of the permit upon sale to a new owner. Individual condominium units may qualify for exemptions.
- Other Recommendations: Modify housing terminology for consistency, add a general exemption from standards and regulations provided specific findings can be made, and add text to the general exemption indicating it only applies if other exemptions have not already been provided.

SECTION TWO: Having reviewed and considered all information presented, including the staff report, Short-Term Rental Policy Update Report, presentation, public comments received during the comment period and Public Hearing, and the recommendation of the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed amendments are consistent with a Class 1 Categorical Exemption under § 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. Visitor rentals are used in a manner not substantially different from occupancy by full-time residents, whether owners or long-term renters and will be subject to MCC Chapter 5.65, which addresses aesthetics, noise, parking, utilities, and other concerns. Whether a unit is used for long-term or short-term/nightly occupancy does not change or expand the residential activities occurring on the property, which includes sleeping and eating. Thus, use of a residential unit on a short-term basis is not more intensive than the conversion of a single-family residence to office use.

SECTION THREE: Having reviewed and considered all information presented, including the staff report, Short-Term Rental Policy Update Report, presentation, public comments received during the comment period and Public Hearing, and the recommendation of the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors finds that:

A. The proposed amendment to the text is consistent with this General Plan. The General Plan Land Use Element directs Mono County to retain existing housing stock and increase the supply of housing but focuses regulations on residential land use designations. The modifications more closely align the Land Use Element with the Housing Element. The Housing Element recognizes that the demand for short-term rentals is a constraint on the supply of long-term housing. The amended land uses policies encourage the retention and development of residential housing units, which is consistent with the following Housing Element goals and policies:

Goal 1: Increase Overall Housing Supply, Consistent with County’s Rural Character. The amended land use policies encourage Mono County to explore opportunities that would support housing development through the STR permitting process and/or financial incentives. However, the policies recognize that the regulation of short-term rentals is not intended to directly create new units.

1. 9. Continue to allow for residential development in the commercial land use designation and approve at least one mtxed-use development to more efficiently and economically utilize the county’s limited land base for housing. The amended land use policies continue to allow for residential development in the commercial land use designation and indicate that visitor lodging should be intentionally permitted and built as such. Projects permitted and built as residential housing to be converted into visitor lodging are disfavored. A mixed-use project, such as visitor lodging with a long-term residential host, would be permitted and, if three long-term units are provided for every STR, would be viewed favorably.

Goal 3: Retain Existing Community Housing. The amended land use policies extend STR regulations from only residential land use designations to every residential unit in any land use designation. Thus, the more rigorous permitting and evaluation requirements that protect community housing stock are extended to every land use designation. The result is that units deemed appropriate for community housing may not be approved for short-term rentals, protecting community housing stock from being converted into visitor lodging.

3.5. Identify incentives for property owners to convert short-term rentals into long-term rentals, invite all short-term rental property owners to participate, and convert at least one unit. The amended land use policies encourage Mono County to research financial and owner/renter matching programs to incentivize the conversion of short-term rentals to long term rentals. Unfortunately, the survey indicated very few programs exist that would incentivize short-term rental owners to convert to long-term rentals. The proposed amendments to the text of area plans are consistent with the countywide General Plan. The STR policies in the Land Use Element primarily addressed neighborhood nuisance issues caused by STRs. The proposed amendments align STR policies, standards, and regulations more closely with policies in the Housing Element, particularly the goal of “retain[ing] existing community housing.” In addition, the amendments to the text

of area plans align STR nomenclature with the terms proposed in the countywide policy modifications. One change reflects a past decision and direction from the Board to discourage STR applications on Skyline Drive in June Lake due to safety/infrastructure conditions referenced in Countywide Action M.1.3.a.

SECTION FOUR: The Board of Supervisors approves and adopts General Plan Amendment 25-01 and revisions to Mono County Code (MCC) Chapter 5.65 which, collectively, amends the policies, standards, and regulations for short-term rentals and are attached hereto as Exhibit A. SECTION FIVE: Those matters resolved by the Board of Supervisors herein - specifically, revisions to General Plan policies in the Land Use Element - shall be effective upon adoption and those matters ordained herein - specifically, revisions to Land Use Designations and development standards in Chapters 2, 25, and 26 of the General Plan Land Use Element, and MCC Chapter 5.65 - shall become effective 30 days from the date of adoption and final passage, which appears immediately below. The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors shall

Fictitious Business Name Statement

The Following Entity Is Doing Business As:

Grooms by Axel

Rachel Theresa Allcock

258 Ridge Way

P.O. Box 100, PMB 101

Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein. This statement was filed with the Mono County Clerk on Nov. 7, 2025

File Number 2025-0152

TS #2025-0131 (11/29, 12/6, 12/13,12/20)

Fictitious Business Name Statement

The Following Entity Is Doing Business As:

Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra

Access Mammoth

1 Minaret Rd.

P.O. Box 7275

Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

This business is conducted by a non-profit 501(c)(3). The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein in November, 2003. This statement was filed with the Mono County Clerk on Nov. 19, 2025

File Number 2025-0161

TS #2025-0133 (12/6, 12/13,12/20, 12/27))

Notice of Ordinance

ORD 25-004

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MONO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CREATING THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

WHEREAS, Mono County has a mandate to provide counsel to indigent individuals in cases where they cannot afford their own attorney; and,

WHEREAS, Cases where indigent litigants are entitled public defense services include criminal cases, conservatorship matters, and child welfare litigation; and,

WHEREAS, Mono County presently provides mandated indigent defense through the use of contract counsel; and,

WHEREAS, Mono County now wishes to join the thirty-four counties in the State of California that have an institutional public defender’s office by creating the Office of the Public Defender.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF MONO ORDAINS that:

SECTION ONE: Mono County Code Chapter 2.05.030: “Departments managed by Board-Appointed department heads” which is set forth in its entirety, as amended, in Exhibit A, is hereby adopted.

SECTION TWO: Mono County Code Chapter 2.86: “Public Defender” which is set forth in its entirety as Exhibit B, is hereby adopted.

SECTION THREE: This ordinance shall become effective 30 days from the date of its adoption and final page, which appears immediately below. The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors shall post this ordinance and also publish it in the manner prescribed by Government Code Section 25124 no later than 15 days after the date of its adoption and final passage. If the lerk fails to publish this ordinance within said 15-day period then the ordinance shall not take effect until 30 day after the date of publication.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 12th day of August, 2025, by the following

AYES: Supervisors Duggan, Kreitz, McFarland, Peters, and Salcido.
NOES: None.

post and publish this resolution and ordinance in the manner prescribed by Government Code section 25124 no later than 15 days after the date of this ordinance’s adoption and final passage. If the Clerk fails to publish this ordinance within said 15-day period, then the ordinance shall not take effect until 30 days after the date of publication.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED R25-091 this 18th day of November 2025 and ORD25-005 on this day of December 9, 2025, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES: Supervisors Duggan, McFarland, Peters, and Salcido.
NOES: Supervisor Kreitz
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None
Lynda Salcido, Chair Mono County Board of Supervisors
ATTEST: Clerk of the Board Danielle Patrick
APPROVED AS TO FORM: County Counsel Emily Fox

TS #2025-0140

Fictitious Business Name Statement

The Following Entity Is Doing Business As:

Gold Stone Notary

Katalin Kerekes

404 Lupin St.

P.O. Box 8225

Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein. This statement was filed with the Mono County Clerk on Nov. 19, 2025

File Number 2025-0159

TS #2025-0132 (12/6, 12/13,12/20, 12/27)

Fictitious Business Name Statement

The Following Entity Is Doing Business As:

Second Chance Thrift Shop

Access Mammoth

501 Old Mammoth Rd.

P.O. Box 7275

Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

This business is conducted by a non-profit 501(c)(3). The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein in November, 2003. This statement was filed with the Mono County Clerk on Nov. 19, 2025

File Number 2025-0160

TS #2025-0134 (12/6, 12/13,12/20, 12/27)

ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: None.
Lynda Salcido, Chair Mono County Board of Supervisors
ATTEST: Clerk of the Board Danielle Patrick
APPROVED AS TO FORM: County Counsel Emily Fox

ATTACHMENT A

2.05.030 - Departments managed by board-Appointed department heads. Each department or office listed in this section is managed under the direction of a department director or department head appointed by the Mono County board of supervisors and serving at the plea ure of the board. The terms and conditions of employment are set forth in a contract of employment with each individual director approved by the board of supervisors and subject to applicable law and policies. Each of these departments may contain department divisions under the supervision of the department director.
A. County administration.
B. County counsel.
C. Agricultural commissioner’s office (see also, Section 2.05.050).
D. Veterans’ services’ office (see also, Section 2.05.060).
E. Public Defender

ATTACHMENT B

Chapter 2.86 - Public Defender

2.86.010 - Public Defender-Office created. There is created the office of the Public Defender in and for the county pursuant to California Government Code Section 27700. The office of the Public Defender shall be managed by the Public Defender, who shall be appointed by the board of supervisors, and serve at will.

2.86.020 - Public Defender-Duties The Public Defender shall discharge all duties as set out in Government Code Section 27700-27711. The Public Defender shall devote all of their time to the duties of the office and shall not engage in the practice of law except in the capacity as Public Defender.

2.86.030 - Public Defender - Salary and Benefits The salary of the Public Defender shall be fixed by the Board of Supervisors from time to time by board of supervisors’ resolution.

TS #2025-0141

LOCAL BRIEFS

Tourney Supports VFW

The Bob Waggoner Veteran's Memorial Golf Tournament organization held a very successful fundraiser earlier this fall for the benefit of local VFW Post 8988 in Bishop. This annual event, held at the Bishop Country Club, has enjoyed a sold-out field of players for several consecutive years.

This year's program opened with a moving bugle call to colors as several VFW members raised the American flag at the golf course. On Monday, Dec. 15, a check for \$20,000 was presented to Post Commander Sean McWilliams from the proceeds of this year's tournament (see photo right).

All funds raised remain in the Bishop community and are used by VFW Post 8988 to support facility maintenance and essential operational expenses. The Post currently serves 148 members who have honorably served in overseas conflicts.

Many local businesses also donated prizes for the event raffle, and dozens of community members purchased tee box sponsorships.

Body Recovered from Whitney

On Nov. 12, 2025, the Inyo County Sheriff's Office received a report of a possible deceased individual on Mt. Whitney. Due to the remote and hazardous location and multiple storms that

moved in just after, recovery operations were further complicated and required extensive planning and coordination over several weeks.

On Dec. 15, 2025, following multiple helicopter-assisted and ground operations, the deceased individual was successfully recovered.

Formal identification is pending with the Inyo County Coroner's Office. We will release further information as it becomes available. While identification is pending, we recognize the difficulty of this situa-

tion and extend our condolences to the family and friends of the deceased.

The Inyo County Sheriff's Office is aware that the public knows of the reported missing person in the area. Still, it cautions anyone from making conclusions until positive identification is made.

Breaking Bad

On Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2025, at approximately 7:15 AM, the Bishop Police

Department and the Inyo County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant at a residence in the city of Bishop related to the sale of illegal narcotics.

As a result of the operation, authorities located several bags of methamphetamine, along with scales and packaging materials. One individual was arrested for the sale of illegal narcotics and booked into the Inyo County Jail. The search and subsequent arrest were conducted without incident.

more BRIEFS, next page



L to R. Kelton Masterson, VFW Quartermaster Wes Walker, Judy Wada, Scott Swett, VFW Post Commander Sean McWilliams accepting check for \$20,000 from event hostess Vicki Waggoner, Ross Corner, Diane Hoffman, Karine Croft, Tani Tatum, Suzi Honrath, Arnie Gonzalez, Rick Pucci, Steve Shibley.

NOTICES

Notice of Petition to Administer Estate

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF ROBERT GEORGE STANG. MONO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CASE NO.: 25PRM20

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of ROBERT GEORGE STANG. A Petition for Probate has been filed by JOHN BREW and FREDERIC BRUCE DANIELSON in the Superior Court of California, County of Mono. The Petition for Probate requests that BREW and/or FREDERIC BRUCE DANIELSON be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of decedent.

The petition requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.

The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the executor to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows: January 8, 2026, 9:30 a.m., Mammoth Courthouse, Department 1, 100 Thompson Way, PO Box 1037, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546.

If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Petitioners: Gian Carlo Simonetti, Esq. (SBN.: 279468), Wood Simonetti, 126 Old Mammoth Road Suite 218, P.O. Box 3837, Mammoth Lakes, CA

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Mokracek Leaves Mono County

Chris Mokracek, who has served as Mono County’s first Director of Emergency Management, has left the role.

To ensure continuity of emergency management services, emergency management functions are being supported on an interim basis by the Mono County Sheriff’s Office.

This transition allows the County to maintain seamless coordination and preparedness while planning for the future.

Mono County will begin a robust recruitment process in 2026 to identify and appoint its next Director of the Office of Emergency Management.

Christine Bouchard, Assistant County Administrative Officer, will remain in charge of leading the County’s Pack Fire recovery operations, working closely with state and local partners to support impacted residents, businesses, and the broader community. Residents and partners with questions related to Pack Fire recovery are encouraged to contact Christine Bouchard directly.

Yosemite Gets a Pay Cut

The new year may bring significant pay cuts for workers at Yosemite National Park. Part-time staffers could see their hourly rates fall by several dollars.

New park employees hired after Jan. 1, 2026, could have their wages impacted. The changes stem from federal shifts in locality pay, a percentage added to federal employees’ base wages to account for cost-of-living differences in more expensive areas.

Yosemite National Park was previously

included in the San Jose–San Francisco–Oakland pay locality region, which offers a 46% increase over the federal base rate, according to the FederalPay.org tracking website.

But beginning Jan. 1, Yosemite will instead fall under the Fresno–Madera–Hanford locality region, where the increase over the base rate is just 17%.

The change will only affect wage-grade (WG) workers, who are hourly, blue-collar employees including janitors, trail workers, electricians, painters and mechanics.

“This really hits the 1039 employees, the strictly temporary, seasonal workers that are rehired year to year,” said Steven Gutierrez, a representative with the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE), which represents federal workers at Yosemite.

Some incoming workers could see pay drop by as much as 13%, according to figures shared with the union. The updated locality designations are part of changes to the Federal Wage System overseen by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

While most wage-grade employees nationwide will see pay increases under the new structure, Yosemite is among a small number of locations where the changes are expected to result in lower wages. Current permanent employees in the park will not see their pay reduced, he said.

“Overwhelmingly, everybody got a pay raise. [Yosemite] just happens to be one of the few places where it didn’t help,” Gutierrez said.

The changes could make it significantly harder to staff the park, particularly during peak tourist seasons.

“Good luck,” Gutierrez said when asked about recruiting under the new pay structure. “It’s going to be significantly harder to recruit and retain people.”

Union representatives are exploring options to push for changes in Washington, D.C., but acknowledge the outlook is uncertain.

To Gutierrez’s knowledge, Death Valley was not affected by the locality pay change and it will likely not see the same wage losses as Yosemite.

MCF Starts Cutting Checks

The Mammoth Community Foundation (MCF) has started to deliver checks and gift cards to those impacted by the Pack Fire, said Brianna Goico, President and CEO, during both the Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) and town council meetings on Wednesday.

“So far, we have given out checks and gift cards to 24 households,” Goico said. “The total amount that will be given out will be \$200,000.” MCF is the charity organization that operates with the same staff as the Mammoth Chamber of Commerce. In the aftermath of the fire, MCF organized a list of individuals who needed assistance and a list of businesses and foundations to offer support directly to those impacted.

Goico’s goal was to evenly distribute the funds.

“Disaster relief is not usually a part of my job,” Goico said. “It’s been really emotional, going to all of these households and people impacted. We’re just so grateful. Thank you for trusting us.”

LUNCH
continued from page 2

Don’t expect any of the county leadership to attend. They’re probably too busy cooking up their next round of salary surveys to justify the next big raise they give themselves.

And from Klusmire’s desk:

For obvious reasons, I’ve been tapping into the Northern Inyo Hospital District webpage more than usual these days. Unfortunately, I haven’t paid much attention to the contact information for board members.

That’s unfortunate because I can’t verify that the direct email link to board members allegedly disappeared at some point after the strike announcement by nurses and technical workers. What I can verify is the “contact” form to reach each board member sends you to a generic fill-in-the-blanks box, so it doesn’t provide a direct connection to the board members.

Fortunately, the internet and email programs never forget. Here are the NIHD-provided emails for the board members:

Board Chair Jean Turner: Jean.Turner@nih.org

Melissa Best Baker: Melissa.Bestbaker@nih.org

Laura Smith: Laura.Smith@nih.org

David Lent: David.Lent@nih.org

Maggie Eagen: Maggie.Eagan@nih.org

Although the recent labor dispute has been settled, taxpayers and patients might want to contact the board about how it plans to operate the district with a significant, growing budget deficit. At the end of September, the first quarter deficit was \$4.6 million and at the start of December put the red ink was at \$6 million.

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NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS

Ring in 2026 with a festive dinner and free fireworks show in The Village Plaza.





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EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

GAYLA'S GALLERY

Photographer Gayla Wolf was at the annual Laws Railroad Express event at Laws Museum last Saturday put on by the Bishop Chamber of Commerce.





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BEDS: 2
BATHS: 2
SQ FT: 1160



The Lodges, 1101 Pyramid Peak Dr. - \$1,095,000

Rare single-level condo with attached garage and dog-friendly access to nature. Features hardwood floors, fireplace, stainless kitchen, serene water views, and deck—effortless comfort living near outdoor adventures.

CONDO
BEDS: 2
BATHS: 2.5
SQ FT: 1867



Swall Meadows Lot, 569 Rimrock Dr. - \$179,000

Prime 2-acre Swall Meadows equestrian lot with approved plans for a 3-bed, 2-bath home. Enjoy sweeping views, underground utilities, community water, and easy access to Mammoth Lakes & Bishop.

LOT
SQ FT: 85,378

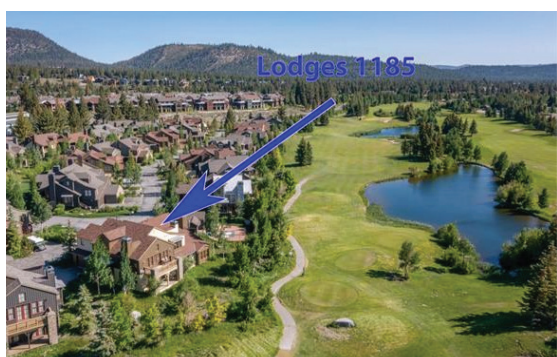


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CreekHouse, 1384 Timber Creek Rd. - \$1,825,000

Immaculate 3-bed + flex room, 3.5-bath CreekHouse townhome with 2-car garage, stunning mountain views, wood floors, two decks, and modern upgrades—sold furnished, blending rustic charm with contemporary comfort.

CONDO
BEDS: 3+flex
BATHS: 3.5
SQ FT: 2152



Lodges 1185



The Lodges, 1185 Pyramid Peak Dr. - \$1,799,000

Stunning townhome located on the Snowcreek golf course - spa adjacent. Like new condition with vaulted ceilings, gourmet kitchen, open views, primary suite with fireplace and large covered deck. Sold with furnishings.

CONDO
BEDS: 3/LOFT
BATHS: 3.5
SQ FT: 2762



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Snowcreek V, 819 Fairway Circle - \$1,950,000

Rare 4-bedroom + den, 4-bath Pinnacle floor plan in Snowcreek Fairway Homes. Features vaulted ceilings, dual primary suites, stunning mountain views, 2-car garage, and luxurious finishes—perfectly positioned for mountain living.

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BEDS: 5+
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