

the sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra

Saturday, January 31, 2026

FREE

Vol. 24, No. KG



Carolyn Balliet, founder of Mono County's first volunteer Hospice program and "Feed the Needy" program, won the 2025 Mono County Community Spirit Award last Tuesday.

ON TO ITALY



Kate Delson (center), former Access Mammoth participant, officially qualified to represent the United States at the Milano Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games in Para Snowboard this week.

A NEW ERA-MARK

By Fisher

As administrative changes take place within Yosemite National Park, gateway communities in Northern Mono County are left wondering what the Spring/Summer season will look like once the road reopens to visitors.

When Tioga Pass closed for the season on Nov. 12, it put an end to a long stretch of frustration, understaffing, and miscommunication for East-side gateway communities. In the months leading up to the closure, the federal administration authorized mass firings

of park employees, rehired some of those workers, saw employees unionize, endured a government shutdown, and announced a new reservation system with little warning.

Since the gates have closed, a new wave of policies has taken hold - including changes to the America the Beautiful Pass that, for the first time, forgo the traditional nature imagery in favor of a cropped photo of President Donald Trump.

Most recently, earlier this month, Aramark, the

more YOSEMITE, pg. 6

CHAMBER REFRAMES POSITION

By Fisher

Months after the Bishop City Council voted to demolish the A-Frame that formerly housed the Chamber of Commerce and visitor center, the Chamber has formally called for a dedicated visitor center to remain in Bishop City Park - either by saving or rebuilding the building - as the city prepares for a lengthy environmental review.

Though the Chamber is actively relocating its offices to a new building on Main Street, its board unanimously adopted a Jan. 14 resolution urging the City to maintain a physical visitor information space in the park.

The resolution emphasizes that the park is the "most central, accessible, and highly visible location" for visitors, warning that losing a presence there would affect both a

beloved community landmark and Bishop's tourism-driven economy.

Chamber Board President Robert Sharp explained the reasoning behind the resolution during Monday's City Council meeting.

Following that presentation, multiple council members suggested that the process could have, and should have, played out differently, implying that earlier communication or planning by the Chamber might have prevented the current standoff.

"My frustration comes from the idea that we spent many months asking and asking the Chamber what they wanted to do," Councilmember Karen Kong said. "I would have loved a resolution like this back in September or October when we were really having the conver-

sations. That would have meant something different than it does now."

Mayor Stephen Muchovej said the resolution as written didn't make clear that the Chamber intended to be a partner in solving the issue.

"It just comes off as we [the Chamber] encourage you [the City] to build it, and then we'll move in," he said.

When Sharp reassured the council that the board intended to work with the City, Muchovej added that he would have liked if the resolution had a statement "of the relationship that we've had going back 50 years into now where the city has supported the chamber and the Visitor Center to the tunes of millions of dollars over those decades."

The A-frame has been a

more A-FRAME, pg. 7

WHY SO SLY?



PHOTO: GAYLA WOLF

Participants pose during the Murder Mystery Elks-Betting on Death at the Elks Lodge in Bishop on Saturday.

SF in the Gilded Age

Lobb-ying in the Park

Savor the Harvest

Candles against ICE

This Land is Their Land

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ALL'S FAIR ...

Following up on his early histories of Chicago (City of Scoundrels) and Los Angeles (Mirage Factory), author Gary Krist published “Trespassers at the Golden Gate: A True Account of Love, Murder and Madness in Gilded-Age San Francisco” last year.

Krist places a high-profile murder case at the center of his early history of San Francisco, which covers the onset of the Gold Rush through 1880 or so.

And what was San Francisco like in those Rush years? Visiting Englishman John David Borthwick sums it up best, “In the course of a month or a year ... there was more hard work done, more speculative schemes were conceived and executed, more money was made and lost, there was more buying and selling, more sudden changes of fortune, more eating and drinking, more smoking, swearing, gambling and tobacco chewing, more crime and profligacy ... than could be shown in an equal space of time by any community of the same size on the face of the earth.”

It was happening! And the place was young! In one 1851 headline, the Daily Alta Californian announces the ‘Death of the Oldest Inhabitant of San Francisco.’ It was merchant Nathan Spear. He was 47.

Into this scene steps A.P. Crittenden, a Kentucky-bred lawyer who leaves wife and children behind on the east coast while he scopes out California in 1849.

He arrives first in Los Angeles, which then boasted a population of just 1,500.

With California’s first general election coming up that November, Ctitenden decides to run for a seat in the new state legislature, figuring this will provide him a name or some status when he arrives in San Francisco. He wins a seat with 258 votes, becoming one of two assemblymen from L.A.

Over the next few decades, Crittenden’s stature rises with that of his adopted home. Eventually the town becomes “civilized” enough where he can import wife and children.

There are a few years spent in Nevada upon the discovery of the Com-stock Lode (mining of that era = AI in terms of financial speculation). And it is during ths time in the early 1860s when Crittenden meets his mistress, Laura Fair, who runs a lodging house in Virginia City.

Of course, this is where we get our inevitable Twain interlude, where the erstwhile Samuel Clemens is writing for the Territorial Enterprise.

“Rather than focus on the facts that any fool could observe and report, Sam reported facts that would have occurred in a better and more interesting world.”

Other guest appearances in this book include Bret Harte, considered the first great California writer. It’s Harte who launches The Californian, San Francisco’s answer to the Atlantic Monthly. With the goal of “waging all-out war against mediocrity, materialism and the middle-brow.”

There’s the preacher Thomas Starr King, who is credited with convincing California to vote Lincoln and pro-Union in 1860 (Lincoln won the state by a mere 1,000 votes). I’d never heard of Starr King until this book. He was a force.

And how about William Tecumseh Sherman? The man who would later famously march on Atlanta and ultimately become the Commanding General of the U.S. Army moved to San Francisco in 1853 to open the West Coast branch of a St. Louis-based bank. Really.

But now let’s get to the thematic crux - which is the impact of civilization on Wild West communities.

This next paragraph, written about Gold Rush San Francisco, could just as easily apply to Mammoth at any time prior to the social media age:

DISTANT BREWING HAS BEER AND CIDER AND SELTZER AND KOMBUCHA AND WINE AND BEER AND SODA AND SOUPS AND SALADS AND PIZZAS AND COOKIES AND SANDWICHES AND APPETIZERS AND BEER AND COFFEE AND LIVE MUSIC TWICE A WEEK AND AN OPEN MIC EVERY MONDAY AND BEER AND A POOL TOURNAMENT EVERY WEDNESDAY AND A MONTHLY VINYL NIGHT AND OH YEAD DID WE FORGET TO MENTION ALL THE BEER?

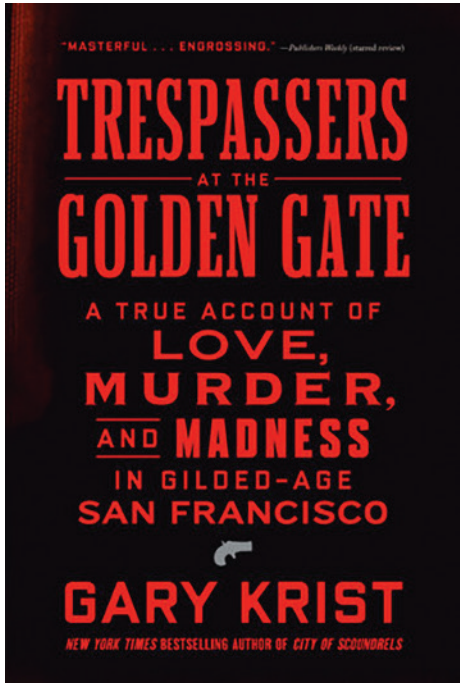
the
sheet

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



a taming of the wildness, more certainty. They wanted it to look and feel familiar.

The Chinese, for example, were tolerated as a novelty and small minority.

“In August 1850, the city sponsored a ceremony ... honoring the Chinese population, and also invited the “China Boys,” (the patronizing local nickname for the community) to participate in public celebrations of Independence Day and California statehood.”

But when more and more Chinese immigrants showed up and started competing for jobs, their legal rights were summarily usurped.

By 1854, “the California Supreme Court ruled definitely that the Chinese be included in the law barring Black and Native Americans from testifying against whites in court.”

Circling back to A.P. Crittenden, his adultery in the Nevada Territory was one thing: people hardly batted an eye. But to bring it home to San Francisco society was, in short, frowned upon.

Crittenden, however, couldn’t make a choice between his wife and his mistress Laura Fair. So he kept putting off the mistress (who hoped that marriage to Crittenden would elevate her and her son into polite society) with promises - for years.

Until one fateful day where Fair stalks/spies on Crittenden (who had long pledged to kiss no other). She watches him warmly greet his wife at the Oakland Ferry (she had just returned from a long trip to the east coast).

Overcome with jealousy and rage, Fair pulls a shotgun out of her handbag and shoots her lover in the chest.

The last part of the book covers the murder trial of Laura Fair. I won’t give away the outcome - that would be unFair (har har).

One of the more amusing details of the trial regarded members of the Women’s Suffrage movement showing up every day to support the defendant, whom they felt had been unjustly persecuted by the male-dominated press since her arrest.

But that’s not the amusing detail.

It’s the report in the Daily Alta Californian which stated, “Strange as it may seem, several of them [Suffragists] were very good-looking.”

Support your local bookstore and pick up a copy at the Booky Joint in Mammoth or at Spellbinder Books in Bishop.

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“In such a dynamic and chaotic environment, where virtually everyone was a transient new arrival from parts unknown, individuals could easily remake themselves as anyone or anything they liked. Regrettable pasts could be erased or edited, failed marriages, bankruptcies and old unpunished felonies could be easily forgotten ... and the boundaries of race, class and gender could be subtly crossed by people whose stated backgrounds were all but impossible to verify.”

What this meant: Asian citizens, black citizens ... everyone had more freedom and rights in San Francisco’s pioneering infancy.

But as big money sniffed opportunity, what big money wanted was

LETTERS

Extraordinary Paul

Dear Editor,

Thanks for the great piece on the incredible life of Paul Oster. I met Paul when I was the news editor of the Mammoth Times in 1989. He was an exceptional person and a great friend. We fished off Baja in the '90s after he advised me on my campaign and in office while I was a county supervisor in Mammoth from 1990-1995. We often went to see bands at Toms Place and Whiskey Creek and elsewhere. He marveled at just how great I could strike out with the ladies on a nightly basis! More recently, I was lucky enough to stay with him in Mammoth. We talked about the great lithium rush in Nevada and the need for housing in Mammoth. Paul always had a standing invite in Virginia. On one trip he rented a bike and rode for hours beside the Potomac River. He also saved me a lot of money thanks to discouraging me from buying a house in Sacramento in 2008. Paul was an exceptional cook of Asian food. I miss his wise counsel already. My thoughts are with his wonderful family and friends during this difficult time. He was so proud of his siblings and their children. It is a good thing to remember those like Paul who spent countless hours guiding our lives and planning our communities. I miss you my good friend! God bless!

Michael T. Jarvis
Virginia

Extraordinary Joes

To the Editor,

I am writing to share with readers in Mammoth Lakes the extraordinary kindness my father and I experienced during a recent visit to Bishop, Lone Pine and Mammoth.

Upon landing at the Bishop Airport, it quickly became apparent that my father would need a wheelchair for the duration of our stay. Several members of the community stepped in to help.

The extraordinary Joe Pollini from the Bishop Chamber of Commerce and Ashley Helms from Bishop Airport demonstrated tireless determination and great compassion in finding us a solution. They connected us with Glenn at Air-Way Medical, who graciously opened his doors outside of normal business hours so we could obtain what we needed. Then Joe strategized and drew upon community connections to ensure the wheelchair was delivered to our Lone Pine address.

Their collective efforts turned a moment of uncertainty into a moving example of the welcoming, small-town hospitality that characterizes the Eastern Sierra, appreciated by visitors far and wide. We are profoundly thankful for their assistance.

Catherine E. Brown
Little Falls, New Jersey

Hazardous bureaucracy

To the Editor,

I am writing on behalf of community members impacted by the Pack Fire to raise concerns about the current debris removal process.

Recently, Mono County announced that Phase I debris removal is complete and that a Board decision is forthcoming regarding Phase II. While we recognize the complexity of coordinating recovery across multiple agencies and appreciate the work being done, many affected residents are struggling with uncertainty, inconsistent messaging, and a lack of clear guidance at a critical moment.

Timing is everything. In our area, snow melt typically begins in March. Without debris removal clearly authorized or underway before then, many property owners risk losing an entire construction season—further worsening housing shortages, business disruption, and prolonged displacement. One community member, over 80 years old, lost the home he lived in for decades and has a replacement home scheduled for delivery this spring; he is displaced and hoping to return to his property quickly. Others already have house plans underway and contractors ready to build as soon as cleanup is approved. Decisions made now will determine whether recovery can begin this year or be delayed yet another season.

Several aspects of the County’s messaging remain unclear. Officials have stated that hazardous materials have

been removed, yet property owners are being told that only certain licensed contractors can perform cleanup work. If hazardous waste has already been addressed, it is unclear why capable local contractors—who are ready to proceed immediately—are being sidelined in favor of out-of-area firms. It is also unclear what “hazardous materials removed” means in practice: does it refer only to household hazardous waste, or does it include ash, contaminated soil, foundations, and other fire-related debris?

Additionally, while Phase I is described as complete, there is no clear plan or timeline for Phase II. Many property owners are insured and ready to use their own funds to begin cleanup, yet remain unsure whether they are permitted to move forward or must wait for a State- or County-run program that may be delayed.

Our community is asking for clear cleanup plan templates or written guidance outlining what an acceptable debris removal plan includes. This would allow homeowners and contractors to prepare responsibly, reduce delays, and ensure health and environmental safety—while easing the burden on the County.

We are not asking the County to do more. We are asking to be included. Our community is capable, organized, and ready to help. With clear guidance and collaboration, recovery can begin this year and families can return home.

Andrea Walker
McGee Creek

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LOCAL NEWS

MAKING A RACKET

By Fisher

Bishop City Park is in a full-on turf war. Or, rather, a court war. Monday night at City Council, tennis and pickleball players went at it again over who gets to swing where.

The city is planning to resurface the park's four courts after 15 years of wear and tear, giving officials a chance to re-think how the courts are used. Right now, the lower courts are marked for both tennis and pickleball, while the upper courts remain strictly tennis territory.

Back in November, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended striping both upper and lower courts for shared use, which sparked a volley of complaints from both sides, with players arguing over whose sport is somehow more deserving.

The Sheet covered that showdown in its Nov. 22, 2025 issue (p. 12) and suggested that County-owned courts at Millpond could ease the issue, though they remain in a state of disrepair. As of the publication of this article, that hasn't changed.

The athlete complaints resurfaced at the Nov. 24 and Dec. 8 City Council meetings, and by Monday, the two groups were putting their sports practice to work in lobbing complaints at one another.

Tennis players argued that the upper courts are perfectly fine as they are and that adding pickleball lines would create

unnecessary conflicts. They pointed out that tennis matches take longer than pickleball games, and during peak hours, courts are already in use, so cramming two sports into the same space could lead to chaos.

Plus, the high school tennis teams use the lower courts to warm up for their practices.

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it," Tennis player Rob Klinger put it simply.

They want dedicated space for tennis to avoid distractions and preserve the quality of play.

"It's like hiking and mountain biking, skiing and snowboarding, fishing and jet skiing," tennis player Hans Wendl said. The two sports just don't mix.

Beyond the sport itself, there are some political factors keeping the groups from mingling effectively. We have tourists that are coming through town and they find out we have pickleball and they come and join us for a few hours or even days," she said.

"The behavior of the pickleballers has not given us confidence that we can coexist in harmony," Wendl added.

Pickleballers, on the other hand, wielded their numbers as a strength at the meeting. Why should they have to squeeze into two measly courts when

pickleball is surging in popularity?

Robert Jellison, a Bishop resident and representative of Bishop Pickleball, presented self-collected data showing significant demand for the sport. Over a two-month survey, he counted 2,637 hours of pickleball play compared to 615 hours of tennis. The lower courts, which accommodate up to 16 players, exceeded capacity 27% of the time, while the upper tennis courts exceeded capacity only 7% of the time.

Irene Yamashita, another pickleball advocate, explained that the sport is important for locals and tourists alike.

"Some people have extended their trips because they've had such a great time playing," she said.

Moreover, Cerro Coso Community College has started offering classes, further boosting demand, she said.

In the midst of the squabble, one resident suggested, logically, that the lower courts could be repainted to fit more pickleball courts, leaving the upper courts dedicated to tennis.

This idea was taken quite well, and resurfaced during deliberation, as Mayor Stephen Muchovej tried to steer things toward compromise.

"We're faced with, I think, a short-term solution and a long-term solution," he

began, only to be interrupted by a voice from the audience calling out, "For which group?"

"I could see there being a shared use and then one of each," he replied, hesitantly.

He acknowledged the pickleball association's 501(c)(3) status, which means they could raise funds for future expansion, but said the city's master plan process could provide more long-term solutions.

Councilmember Jose Garcia added a uniquely... earnest perspective. "I think we have to use diversity, equity, and inclusion," he said. "We've practiced all of those by striping the pickleball lines not many years ago, and if we see the need to build new pickleball courts, we will include them in the master plan," he said.

Oh yes. Pickleball. So often a test of diversity.

Ultimately, staff were directed to investigate whether more courts could fit on the lower courts, get feedback from the pickleball community, and consider high school tennis impacts. Everyone agreed resurfacing the courts was overdue, but made no final decision on exact striping or court layout.

Afterall, "paint is relatively cheap, right?" Muchovej shrugged.



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ADVANCED AIR



YOSEMITE

continued from page 1

concessionaire that operates Yosemite's restaurants, gift shops, and lodging facilities, notified employees that its housing policy had become stricter, throwing yet another curveball at people who rely on the park for their livelihoods.

According to a notice posted on the doors of employee housing units, workers now live under a "housing license agreement" rather than a "lease," SFGate reported last Sunday.

In bold lettering, the policy states that the agreement does not constitute a lease and defines the relationship between Aramark and its employees as one of "licensor and licensee," rather than landlord and tenant.

That distinction significantly reduces housing protections for employees.

Without tenant rights, Aramark has broader authority to remove workers from housing more quickly and with fewer procedural safeguards than a traditional renter would receive.

The policy stipulates that if an employee violates the agreement in any way, Aramark may revoke occupancy rights at any time, effectively evicting the employee without prior notice.

Granted, Aramark is not asserting that it intends to remove workers arbitrarily, but rather reiterating that housing is conditional upon continued employment. It's not entirely different from the policy Mammoth Mountain

Ski Area uses to house its employees.

Even so, reduced housing availability and mounting frustration inside the park could increase demand for housing in communities like Lee Vining, where supply is already strained.

Mono County Supervisor Paul McFarland said it's too soon to tell yet, but that any new pressure would be a lot on the small, already strained community.

"I always welcome people wanting to move and live in our county," McFarland said, "but there's simply nowhere for folks to go."

While most of the housing rules remain unchanged, the revised policy includes several notable differences

beyond the language shift from renter-tenant to licensor-occupant.

Previously, employees who damaged their rooms could be charged a maximum of \$100; under the new agreement, Aramark reserves the right to charge the full cost of repairs.

Because most Aramark facilities are located in Yosemite Valley, which is more than two hours from the East-side, it's unlikely that many employees would seek housing in Mono County. Still, McFarland worries about the broader implications for the visitor experience.

"If housing becomes ever more difficult in the park, will the concessionaire be able to retain and attract quality folks?" he asked.

Those concerns pile onto a growing list of complaints at a time when the park is already under strain, and Aramark's reputation is already spoiled.

Aramark has faced repeated scrutiny since taking over Yosemite's concessions in 2015, including a federal norovirus investigation in 2020, a 2024 Bloomberg report detailing hazardous employee housing conditions, and recent criticism over rodent activity and maintenance issues at the Ahwahnee Hotel.

At the same time, Yosemite has drawn negative national attention. Just this week, the New York Times reported that "rangers are scarce and visitors have gone wild."

"The negative news could impact visitation," McFarland said. "Are you going to book a destination stay somewhere you've read a lot of bad things about?"

Policy changes add another layer of uncertainty.

Beginning Jan. 1, non-U.S. residents were charged an additional \$100 fee to enter most national parks, but data has yet to show how the fee will affect businesses or visitation during peak season.

"I'm already hearing anecdotal evidence that it's having a negative impact on destination resorts on the west side of the park," McFarland said.

Meanwhile, the National Park Conservation Association estimates Yosemite staffing has declined by roughly 25% since Trump took office, leaving fewer rangers to manage visitor behavior. Changes to locality pay have also lowered wages for some park laborers, potentially compounding staffing challenges.

Taken together, these pressures make Aramark's housing policy change particularly delicate.

In an effort to improve communication and support gateway communities, counties surrounding Yosemite recently formed a "Gateway Charter," intended to serve as a platform for the park service to share updates with neighboring jurisdictions. The group, however, is still in its infancy and has met only once.

For now, communities remain reliant on Yosemite's enduring natural beauty, hoping it will be enough to sustain visitation despite mounting challenges.



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VAN LIFERS LEFT IN DARK

By Fisher

The corners of the Eastside that rarely venture into the world of affordable housing are beginning to do so. Just very slowly.

Progress has largely stalled, though not been abandoned, on the “safe parking area” concept, a joint effort between the County, Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA), and the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The proposed project would create a designated place for local van-lifers to park and live, complete with showers and bathrooms.

But as it turns out, more partners isn't always better. All three agencies are now pointing fingers at one another to make the next move. The County is ostensibly responsible for the first phase (securing entitlements and navigating CEQA) while the Town would handle infrastructure, and MMSA would likely operate the site.

At the moment, however, the County appears to be dragging its feet, while the Town is eager to expedite the process.

"It isn't as easy to just deploy a safe parking site as maybe some people might think," said County Administrative Officer Sandra Moberly during last Tuesday's Mono County Supervisors meeting. "There are a lot of things that you need to think about -- enforcement, who's checking people in and out, who's managing the sites."

Even so, the County hasn't given up on the idea.

“This is how people are living now, and we need to figure out a way to accommodate it while ensuring they are safe and not contributing to a waste and fire problem,” County Supervisor Paul McFarland told The Sheet. McFarland, who has spent significant time living out of a vehicle in the Eastern Sierra to be able to work, added, “I don’t think it’s something we can judge as a positive or a negative—it’s just a reality.”

Meanwhile, Mono County is exploring a middle-income down payment assistance program aimed at households that fall between traditional low-income programs and the open market (80–120% of AMI). The concept is still being researched and remains in its early stages.

By contrast, the County's Bridge program has made tangible progress.

The program, which allows the local government to buy and sell properties to place them under deed restrictions, was launched in August 2024 and resulted in its first purchase at 85 Kirkwood in April 2025.

Now, the County is preparing to sell that home. Engineers are finalizing foundation and electrical plans, after which the property will be listed.

Elsewhere in the County's program, two units at the Bridgeport Apartments are currently available for rent, and the County is in the process of recruiting a property manager.

In Bishop, Eastern Sierra Community Housing (ESCH) Executive Director Patricia Robertson gave an update on the Valley View Apartments Monday night at Bishop City Council.

The 19-unit apartment complex currently houses people who make 30% of the area median income (AMI), mainly seniors and people on disability who make less than \$1,000/month. The rent payments are under \$400 and include utilities.

It was developed in the 1980s by the Inyo-Mono Advocates for Community Action (IMACA), a local nonprofit that provides social services across the Eastern Sierra.

Long story short, the development went awry when IMACA executives misunderstood a state loan and wound up in debt.

In attempt to keep the apartments affordable, ESCH sought to resign the loan under new terms and now is currently in escrow to acquire the 19-unit property from IMACA, with plans to rehabilitate it.

In 2024, ESCH secured a \$4.8 million grant toward what it anticipates will be a \$9.4 million project; roughly half a million dollars per unit.

"It's more than maybe we thought it would be," Robertson said.

She noted that the project would require temporarily relocating existing residents and securing a construction loan, and estimated that an additional \$3 million in fundraising would be needed to make the project feasible.

A-FRAME

continued from page 1

flashpoint since the city evicted the Chamber this fall after an engineering report revealed major structural problems, including an unsafe second floor and deteriorating south additions. In late October, the Council voted to demolish the building, largely for financial reasons.

The city estimated demolition would cost roughly \$150,000, while building a new visitor center would cost at least \$1 million. A partial demolition, keeping the A-Frame but removing the south additions, could exceed full demolition costs due to the complexity of preserving the remaining structure. Muchovej noted that the city's annual capital improvement budget is typically \$1-2 million, making a \$1 million project difficult to justify.

Regardless of what happens, any work, from repair to rebuilding to demolition, requires a full environmental review under California's Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This is because the building sits on land leased from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, and its south addition extends over the South Fork of Bishop Creek, which runs through the park.

On Monday, the Council approved a contract with Helix Environmental Planning to provide CEQA support services, which could take up to a year and cost more than \$50,000, excluding permit fees. The review will consider both the existing site and nearby locations where a replacement facility could be built.

Ideally, the city could avoid the CEQA review with a categorical exemption,

which would make the various studies moot and reduce costs.

But residents wearing “Save the A-Frame” stickers saw this as the City trying to “dodge” certain requirements that would otherwise pause demolition.

A couple of residents hoped that the building, at over 50 years old, could qualify as eligible for historic listing, and therefore protect the building under CEQA analysis.

"Nobody's considering keeping the addition," one resident said. "It's kind of ugly anyway. But the A-Frame, certainly."

Unfortunately for the speakers, the Council wasn't too interested in entertaining this hope, and clarified that CEQA was simply for environmental review and had no political intentions.

"CEQA is an environmental report," said councilmember Jose Garcia. "Not a rebuilding report."

Besides, the economic position of the City has not changed.

“If the City were the Town of Mammoth Lakes, with \$20-plus million in TOT coming in every year and they were looking for ways to burn funds, this would be a completely different discussion,” Muchovej said. “The reality is that the City of Bishop is not that. Our budget is very limited.”

In the meantime, the Chamber's phased relocation is expected to conclude in early 2026, and it intends to hold a grand opening once renovations are finished.

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FOR THE LAND OF THE GREEN

By Libre

It's no secret President Donald Trump wants to seize control of Greenland. It's a seemingly strange obsession, and it's not a fleeting one for the president – he's been talking about buying Greenland from Denmark (which the small Arctic Island is a part of) since his first term in office.

In recent weeks, the conversation around Greenland has escalated.

"I don't want to use force," Trump said during a recent speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos Switzerland. "We probably won't get anything unless I decide to use excessive strength and force where we would be, frankly, unstoppable. But I won't do that."

Trump points to the island's rich mineral resources, including cryolite, which aluminum is derived from, and strategic prowess as his reasons to control the land.

But the US already has influence in Greenland, via military presence since the Cold War. In wanting to own the territory, the president risks the United States' longstanding alliance with Denmark and an end to NATO.

Read any article about Greenland from Foreign Policy or The Atlantic and they'll all say the same thing: Trump's desire to capture Greenland is bizarre and catastrophic to global security.

The problem I see with distilling Trump's desire to overtake Greenland

to an issue of global security is that it centers the voices of the American and Danish governments.

This eliminates the perspective of the Inuit population that has resided in Greenland for thousands of years and ignores colonial history between Greenland and Denmark.

I know because I've been there. I wrote my undergraduate thesis about Greenland. I spent countless hours researching Greenland, thinking about Greenland, traveling to the capital, Nuuk, and interviewing the people who call the island home. I became obsessed with the relationship between Greenland and Denmark, and the way a colonial dynamic manifested between the two.

My work focused on the spiral case, named for the enormous spiral shaped IUDs the Danish government mass inserted IUDs into the bodies of thousands of Greenlandic girls and women during the 1960s and '70s without their consent or knowledge.

During my time there, I spoke with over thirty people, including women who had been fitted with IUDs and a Danish OBGYN who had been practicing medicine at the time.

My favorite conversations were with Greenlandic young people at Daddy's, the only pub in Nuuk. What struck me was how similar I felt to them, how they

were yearning for a good time, just like I was.

It seemed like everyone I spoke to had a different opinion on the case. Some said the Danish government was only doing what they thought was right. Others pointed to the current population of Greenland as roughly 57,000, and estimated this number could be 300,000 if it wasn't for this mass sterilization campaign.

Many called it genocide, and advocated for Greenland to be free from Danish rule.

A little background: Denmark ruled Greenland as a colony until 1953, and remained in control of its healthcare system until 1992. In many ways, the island still operates as a colony. The Danish government still contributes roughly \$511 million to the island. I was struck by the Greenlandic high school system which operates in Danish, rather than Greenlandic. Not everyone in Greenland speaks Danish well enough to attend.

"How can we have educated people if our systems only serve a certain population?" one woman I spoke with implored.

The Greenlandic government is slowly gaining freedom from Denmark. In 1979, Greenland was granted home rule, which included control over its own healthcare system. In 2009, the

Greenlandic government gained control over many of its domestic affairs, excluding foreign and security policy. Last March, one woman told me that the pressure from the United States is forcing Denmark to adhere to Greenland's needs.

In 2024, nearly 150 Inuit women sued the Danish government for violating their human rights.

The case persisted for nearly two years until Dec. 2025, when the Greenlandic women were granted victory in the Danish parliament. In April 2026, an estimated 4,500 women who were forcibly sterilized by the Danish government between 1960 and 1991 will be able to apply for federal financial compensation.

I don't know what would happen to these women if Trump were to take over Greenland. The majority of the women who were fitted with an IUD refuse to speak with the press; I'm not sure if they would continue to receive the financial compensation they deserve.

Regardless of outcome, Greenlanders will continue to make their voices heard. Earlier this month, thousands of Greenlanders took to the icy streets of Nuuk to protest against Trump, carrying signs with the message: we are not for sale. Greenland should belong to the Greenlanders.

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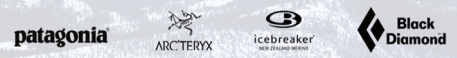
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SILENCE IS GOLDEN

People started arriving at dusk. They walked alone or in small groups as the sun slowly settled behind the Sierra and spilled its final glow on the Whites.

They were Sunday evening quiet. The first cluster gathered at the southwest corner of Main and Line streets in Bishop. Dozens of small candles were on the ground at the base of a light pole. People picked them up, held them against the dark.

The candlelight vigil had begun. More came. They positioned themselves on all four corners of the intersection. By about 5:30 p.m., the corners were crowded. People started stringing out on the sidewalks up and down Main Street. Holding the small candles offered by organizers. Holding larger candles they had brought. The line of handheld candles dotted the darkening streetscape with flickering light.

The last shard of sunlight faded and a cool chill fell over the roughly 300 people on the sidewalks.

They were quiet.

No speakers. No chants. No shouts at the stream of passing cars and trucks. In the gaps when the stoplights stopped traffic, headlights from four all directions fell on the people on the corners.

They were sentinels. Witnesses to a shared humanity. Expressing the complexity of rageful hope. Grieving. Unable to stay on the sidelines. Unwilling to cede the moral high ground.

Muted greetings. Hushed conversations. They had become a diverse, unified community after being together on the local streets for a string of recent demonstrations. Nods were exchanged. Small hugs. A few handshakes. Determined looks that said, “here we are again.”

There were fewer signs. But they were quietly screaming.

“Inhumane.”

“Callous.”

“Evil.”

“Shoot Me Next.”

“It’s No Longer A Difference Of Political Opinion. It’s A Difference In Morality.”

“Stand With Minnesota.”

The somber candlelight vigil mourned the shooting deaths of US citizens Alex Pretti, an ICU Nurse at a Minneapolis Veteran’s Administration Hospital, who was shot and killed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents on Saturday, Jan. 24, and Renee Good, a Minneapolis mother, who was shot and killed by ICE agents on Jan. 7.



Life and death. Captured on phone-held video. Shown on computer screens, television, phones. Inescapable. Undeniable.

Sunday’s Jan. 25 evening event came together in one day. A quick idea translated into a poster spread by the digital web of local activists, bolstered by the network of nurses and healthcare professionals supporting, grieving nurse Pretti, one of their own. A caregiver.

By 6 p.m. it was dark, the little candles had burned down and out. Hundreds of people started walking back to their regular lives.

“See you next time?”

Endnote: “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.”



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Outlaw Saloon Happy Hour Monday through Friday from 4-6 p.m. *More info: See ad p. 11. 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 this page for deets
Distant Brewing happy hour Monday-Thursday from 3-5 p.m. \$1/off beer/wine/cider/seltzer/kombucha
Bar Sierra happy hour from 4-5:30 p.m. Thursday through Monday.

Friday, January 30/ Par Avion (surf rock) plays Liberty in Mammoth. Time: 9:30 p.m. No cover.

January 30-31/ Weekend apres parties @ Canyon Lodge. DJ. 21+. Starts 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 31/ Buck Shot (outlaw country) plays Liberty. Time: 9:30 p.m. No cover.

Sunday, February 1/ Cassie Dunn plays Distant Brewing. Time: 7-9 p.m.

Monday, February 2/ Open mic night @ Distant Brewing. Time: 6-9 p.m.

Wednesday, February 4/ Cassie Dunn plays Shelter Distilling in Mammoth. Time: 6-9 p.m.
Karaoke @ Mammoth Rock 'n Bowl with MC Maurice. Discounted bowling! Starts 8 p.m.

TOWN STUFF

Friday, January 30/ Mammoth HS basketball hosts Bishop. Girls play 5:30 with Boys to follow at 7.

Saturday, January 31/ The 21st Annual Backcountry Film Festival (BCFF) returns to Mammoth at Mammoth Mountain's Main Lodge. Doors open at 5 p.m., show starts at 6. Film Festival tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door. Register early to ensure your seat!
Seed swap @ the Owens Valley Paiute Shoshone Cultural Center @ 2300 West Line in Bishop. Time: 10 a.m. 'til noon. Hands on seed-starting workshop begins 11 a.m. You do not need to bring seeds to receive or participate.
Ranger Pop-Up table @ the Mobius Arch trailhead in the Alabama Hills courtesy of Sierra Forever. Time: 11 a.m. 'til 3 p.m.
Free Guided Snowshoe Hike with Sierra Forever from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Meet at the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center.
Woolly's dance party @ the Village at Mammoth. Music, cocoa & photos. Time: 3:45-4:30 p.m.

January 31-February 1/ Full Moon Snowshoe Tours @ Tamarack Cross Country Ski Center in Mammoth. 1.5 hour guided tour. \$\$\$.
Info: mammothmountain.com.

TOWN STUFF

Sunday, February 1/ Allan Bard Memorial Classic @ Tamarack Ski Center will start once the Junior National Qualifier races complete but not earlier than the following times. Mass start format. Men & Women's 20km Classic: 11:30 Men & Women's 10km Classic: 11:35 Men & Women's 5km Classic: 11:40 U14/U12/U10 Girls and Boys 5km Classic: 11:45. **Spectators can access course on foot or on trail with ski pass.*

Monday, February 2/ Eastern Sierra Pride monthly meet-up at the Mountain Rambler Brewery in Bishop. Time: 6-8 p.m.

Tuesday, February 3/ Mammoth's Parks and Recreation Commission meets. Time: 2:30 p.m. Location: Suite Z, Minaret Mall or online via townofmammothlakes.ca.gov.
Inyo County Supervisors meet. Public session generally begins 10 a.m. Location: Board Chambers at 224 No. Edwards in Indy. *Find agendas/watch remotely at inyocounty.us*
Mono County Supervisors meet. Time: 9 a.m. Location: Bridgeport Courthouse or online via monocounty.ca.gov
Bishop Soccer hosts Rosamond. Girls play 3 p.m. with Boys' to follow

Wednesday, February 4/ Mammoth Lakes Town Council meets. Time: 4 p.m. Location:

TOWN STUFF

Wednesday, February 4 (cont.)/ Suite Z, Minaret Mall or online via townofmammothlakes.ca.gov.
BUSD Parent Series continues. **This week's topic: Developmental Stages.** Location: Bishop Elementary Library. Time: 5:30-6:30 p.m. Childcare provided.

Thursday, February 5/ Town of Mammoth Lakes/Mono County Liaison Committee meets. Time: 3 p.m. Location: Dana Room at the Mono Civic Center. 1290 Tavern Rd.

Friday, February 6/ Mono County Search and Rescue recruitment open house. Time: 6 p.m. Location: 1315 Meridian Blvd. in Mammoth.

UPCOMING

The Inyo County Clerk's office will be open on Valentine's Day if you feel like getting married. Time: 10 a.m. 'til 4 p.m. Call 760.878.0224 for appt. *More info: See Klusmire column p. 14*

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Footloose Sports is hiring Bootfitters and Demo Ski Technicians. 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.

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

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 Taylor@country-glass.com



Forest Health Project Manager
Whitebark Institute is hiring a manager to coordinate and oversee all aspects of forest restoration and fuels reduction projects. Salary \$62,400-\$80,000/year, benefits, hybrid work. Apply at whitebarkinstitute.org/careers

Forest Health Seasonal Field Technician
Whitebark Institute is hiring seasonal technicians for its 2026 Forest Health Program. Duties include field-level support for program operations. Hourly rate \$24-\$28; housing may be available. Apply at whitebarkinstitute.org/careers

Help Wanted



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

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- Maintenance Technician
- Housekeeper
- Environmental Services Tech
- Registered Nurse - Pediatrics

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

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.



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PERSONALS

I saw you ... were not selected as a first-ballot Hall-of-Famer. But don't let it get you down. After all, finishing 3rd in the Miss Maine competition didn't stop your 24-year old girlfriend from nabbing the greatest coach of all time!

I saw your team ... made the Super Bowl again. Woohoo for Team Owner Bob Kraft! San Francisco has plenty of Rub and Tug joints he can visit during Super Bowl week.

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

Crescent 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

Mammoth Five Star Lodging is seeking a skilled and reliable Maintenance Tech/Inspector to join our dynamic team!

We're looking for team players who are eager to learn, with strong attention to detail, problem-solving abilities, and familiarity with consumer electronic systems, including audio/video/home theater, iOS mobile devices, and wifi/Internet troubleshooting skills. Maintenance and repair experience is a strong plus, but not required - we're willing to train. Weekend availability required. A current driver's license with a clean, insurable driving record is also required. Our company provides all equipment required, including vehicles.

Pay for this position will begin at \$25/hr, depending on experience.
If you're ready to join our team and help

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



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PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice Inviting Bids

The **CROWLEY LAKE MUTUAL WATER COMPANY** is soliciting bids for: **WATER SYSTEM VALVE & FIRE HYDRANT REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

The Bid Package, which include the Notice Inviting Bids, Bid Proposal Forms, Contract and Bond Forms, Special Provisions, and Plans, may only be The Project Manual are available from the project engineer. Contact Tim Rudolph at 760 798-4292 or e-mail TimRudolph@cox.net for a Project Manual and Project Plans. Bidders who obtain Bid Packages over the internet are responsible for notifying The Project Engineer that they are plan holders. Bidders who fail to notify the Engineer that they are plan holders may not be notified should any Addenda be issued. If the Engineer issues any Addenda to the Bid Package that is not acknowledged, the Bid Proposal may be rejected. This project is subject to the State of California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) prevailing wage labor rates. Bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked with the bidder's name and address, the word "BID", and the Project Title: WATER SYSTEM VALVE & FIRE HYDRANT REPLACEMENT PROJECT

To be considered, bids must be received at the Engineer's office located at Tim Rudolph, 181 Dewey Street (mailing address P.O. Box 652) Big Pine CA 93513 at or before 4:00 P.M. (PDT) on Thursday February 26, 2026 at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. No oral, telegraphic, telephonic, or fax proposals or modifications will be accepted.

General Work Description: This project consists of the work installing replacing water system valves and tee's on the potable water system distribution system. The project will be on an operational water system, so it includes disinfection of the new pipe & valves. The project includes valve group replacement in 4 locations, remove & replace 3 fire hydrants. Most of the existing pipe is asbestos cement pipe 6 inches in diameter. It includes cutting and repair of AC pavement & restoration the sites to original condition. The project is state funded under the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Act of 2014.

Mandatory Pre-bid Site Visit: No Pre bid conference will be held. The bidder is required to visit the site and attest to the site visit as part of the bid submission. The contractor can request a site pre-bid job walk with the Engineer. All project work is more particularly described in the plans and special provisions. All of the work shall be in accordance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws, codes, and regulations. Technical questions related to project work, site conditions, or other related inquiries should be directed to Tim Rudolph PE, TimRudolph@cox.net (voice phone: 760-798-4292). Bids shall conform to and be responsive to the Contract Documents. Bids are required for the entire work described in the Contract Documents. Each Bid must be submitted on the Bid Proposal Forms furnished as a part of the Bid Package. Each Bid must be accompanied by a Proposal Guarantee in the amount and form described in the Bid Package, in an amount not less than 10% of the amount of the bid, made payable to the order of the Crowley Lake Mutual Water Company. The check or bond shall be given as security that the bidder will enter into the Contract with the County and furnish the required Faithful Performance Bond, Labor and Materials Payment Bond, Certificates and/or original endorsements of insurance, or other required documents. The check or bond may be retained by the County for sixty (60) days or until the Contract is fully executed by the successful bidder and the County, whichever first occurs.

The successful bidder shall be required to furnish a Faithful Performance Bond and a Labor and Materials Payment Bond on the forms provided in the Bid Package and in the amount of 100% of the Contract amount. The successful bidder must be licensed as required by law, and consistent with the Contract Documents, at the time the contract is awarded, which license shall be a current California Class A - General Engineering Contractor license or a combination of all specialty classifications that will be required for complete performance of all of the work in accordance with the Contract Documents, and if applicable, a joint venture license as defined in the Business and Professions Code, Section 7029. Failure of the bidder to obtain proper and adequate licensing for an award of a contract shall constitute failure to execute the contract and shall result in the forfeiture of the security of the bidder.

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Notice Inviting Bids, all bids shall be subject to the requirements set forth in the Special Provisions, Contract Documents and other applicable law. The Contract is subject to the State Contract nondiscrimination and compliance requirements pursuant to Government Code, Section 12990, and other applicable law. The Contract is also subject to and incorporates by reference the provisions of Public Contract Code, Section 22300, pursuant to which, the Contractor is permitted to substitute securities for earned retention or have them placed in escrow at the Contractor's expense, as also set forth in Section 1150.15 of the Standard Specifications.

Pursuant to Section 1725.5 of the Labor Code, the bidder is required to certify that they, and all subcontractors listed on the submitted Bid Form documents, are registered with the California Department of Industrial Relations.

Pursuant to Section 1773 of the Labor Code, the general prevailing wage rates in Inyo County have been determined by the Director of the State Department of Industrial Relations. These wage rates appear in the Department of Transportation publication entitled "General Prevailing Wage Rates," in effect at the time the project is advertised. Future effective wage rates, which have been predetermined and are on file with the State Department of Industrial Relations, are referenced, but not printed, in said publication. Such rates of wages are on file with the StatDepartment of Industrial Relations and the Crowley Lake Mutual Water Company and are available to any interested party upon request.

Crowley Lake Mutual Water Company reserves the right

at any stage of these proceedings to reject any or all Bids or to waive any immaterial defect in any Bid if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the Company.

TS #2026-0006

Notice of Petition to Administer Estate

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF DANIEL DEWITT BACON. MONO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CASE NO.: 26PRM2

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of DANIEL DEWITT BACON. A Petition for Probate has been filed by JONATHAN BACON in the Superior Court of California, County of Mono. The Petition for Probate requests that JONATHAN BACON 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: February 5, 2026, 9:30 a.m., Mammoth Courthouse, 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 Petitioner: Gian Carlo Simonetti, Esq. (SBN.: 279468), Wood Simonetti, 126 Old Mammoth Road Suite 218, P.O. Box 3837, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546; (760) 934-5821.

TS #2026-0004

Fictitious Business Name Statement
The Following Entity
Is Doing Business As:

RE/MAX OF MAMMOTH

Mammoth Altitude Inc.
587 Old Mammoth Rd. #1
P.O. Box 100, PMB 577
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

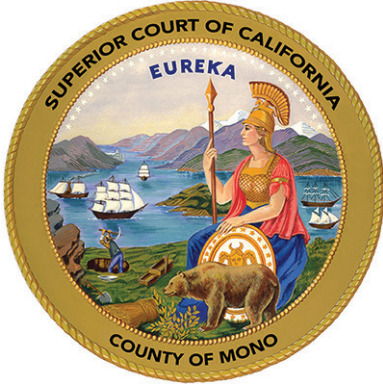
This business is conducted by a corporation. The registrant has yet to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein. This statement was filed with the Mono County Clerk on Jan. 16, 2026
File Number 2026-0006
TS #2026-0010
(1/31, 2/7, 2/14, 2/21)

Fictitious Business Name Statement
The Following Entity
Is Doing Business As:

REAL ESTATE OF MAMMOTH

Mammoth Altitude Inc.
587 Old Mammoth Rd. #1
P.O. Box 100, PMB 577
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

This business is conducted by a corporation. The registrant has yet to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein. This statement was filed with the Mono County Clerk on Jan. 16, 2026
File Number 2026-0006
TS #2026-0011
(1/31, 2/7, 2/14, 2/21)



Have a Concern About Local Government? Tell the Grand Jury!

Did you know Mono County has a Civil Grand Jury made up of local county residents who serve as independent watchdogs over county and city government?

The Mono County Civil Grand Jury is authorized to investigate complaints about government agencies, town operations, and special districts such as schools, utilities, and other local services.

Its role is to:

- Review complaints from the public regarding suspected mismanagement, inefficiency, or misconduct in local government.
- Examine whether public funds are being properly used.
- Recommend improvements to policies, practices, and processes to make local government more effective and accountable.

Each year, the Grand Jury publishes public reports with its findings and recommendations. Agencies investigated are required by law to respond, and those responses are also made public.

How to Submit a Confidential Complaint

Your input is important, and all complaints are kept strictly confidential.

You may submit a complaint in one of three ways:

- By Mail: Mono County Civil Grand Jury | P.O. Box 3994 | Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
- Online: Visit <https://www.mono.courts.ca.gov/general-information/grand-jury> to learn more and file a confidential complaint through the online form.

Your voice matters! The Mono County Grand Jury is here to listen. If you see something that concerns you in how your local government operates, let us know. Or consider applying to join the 2026-27 Grand Jury starting July 1, 2026 at <https://www.mono.courts.ca.gov/general-information/grand-jury/grand-jury-application>

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on **Wednesday, February 11, 2026, beginning at 9:00 a.m.** and continuing until finished, at the Town Council Chambers, Suite Z within the Minaret Village Shopping Center, 437 Old Mammoth Road the Mammoth Lakes Planning & Economic Development Commission will hear an application request for the following:

Application Request:

Variance (VAR) 25-003 seeks approval to reduce the required east side yard setback from 10-feet to 4-feet (a 60% reduction) to allow construction of a new detached accessory dwelling unit and two-car garage on a steep down sloping lot where no garage currently exists at 506 Lakeview Boulevard.

CEQA Determination: Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines this project is categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15303, *New Construction or conversion of Small Structures*.

Location: 506 Lakeview Boulevard (APN: [031-170-002-000](#))

Zoning: Residential Single Family (RSF)

Proponent: Mike Britton (Applicant) / Sydney Miller (Property Owner)

All persons having an interest in the proposed application request may appear before the Planning & Economic Development Commission either in person or represented by counsel and present testimony or may, prior to said hearing, file with the Executive Secretary written correspondence pertaining thereto. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence delivered to the Town of Mammoth Lakes at, or prior to, the public hearing. For additional information, or to obtain a copy of the staff report which will be published no later than February 6, 2026, contact Gina Montecallo, Assistant Planner, at (760) 965-3641 or email: gmontecallo@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov.

Mammoth Lakes Planning & Economic Development Commission
PO Box 1609
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

TS #2026-0012

TO CATCH A MORON

Press Release

Death Valley National Park is seeking the public’s help to identify the individuals responsible for illegal off-road driving on Eureka Dunes in Death Valley National Park on Dec. 17. More than five miles of unauthorized vehicle tracks caused significant damage to rare and sensitive desert plants.

The vehicle involved is believed to be a white 2021 Toyota Tacoma with California license plates, an equipment rack in the truck bed, and a black Fox Racing® cover on the tailgate. At least two individuals were in the vehicle when it was photographed driving on the dunes.

“Eureka Dunes are a special place meant to be enjoyed on foot,” said Superintendent Mike Reynolds. “They are protected from off-road driving by both park regulations and their designation as wilderness. Please help us identify those responsible for damaging these fragile resources. Some of the plants affected grow nowhere else on earth.”

At least 74 plants were damaged or destroyed, including one Shining Milkvetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *micans*), a rare species found only on sand dunes within Death Valley National Park.

In addition, vehicle tracks passed close enough to other rare plants that the weight of the vehicle may have cause underground root damage. These include Eureka Dunes Evening Primrose (*Oenothera californica* ssp. *eurekensis*) and Eureka Valley dune grass (*Swallenia alexandrae*), both species endemic to the park’s dune ecosystems.

Eureka Dunes are designated as a



Photograph of the offending vehicle.

National Natural Landmark due to their height, which rises to more than 680 feet, and their status as an “ecological island” that supports plant species found nowhere else.

Anyone with information about

this incident is encouraged to report it anonymously to the National Park Service Tip Line at go.nps.gov/SubmitATip, by email at nps_isb@nps.gov, or by calling 888-653-0009.

A FINE BALANCE



Sally Gaines sent this one in from The Pupfish Cafe this week with the caption: “You are such a stabilizing influence in our community.”

Notice of Public Hearing

GREAT BASIN UNIFIED AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT REVIEW OF 2026-2027 GENERAL FUND AND SB 270 BUDGETS AND ORDER

The Governing Board of the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District will conduct a public hearing for the purpose of reviewing the District’s annual budgets and proposed SB270 fee order for the 2026-2027 fiscal year and to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the proposed budgets.

The SB270 budget is funded through an order authorized by California Health and Safety Code Section 42316, which requires the City of Los Angeles to pay fees to the District based on an estimate of the actual costs to the District of its activities associated with the monitoring and analyzing of air quality impacts and the development of mitigation measures caused by the City of Los Angeles’ water-gathering activities.

A copy of the draft budgets is available for inspection at the District website, www.gbuapcd.org, under “What’s New” or at District office at the address shown below on or after February 3, 2026. The FY 2026-2027 General Fund budget may include adjustments to permit fees to account for changes in the California Consumer Price Index. The budgets will not be adopted at the same meeting during which this public hearing is conducted. Rather, the Governing Board will consider the adoption of the final budgets at its next regular meeting, scheduled for May 7, 2026.

The public hearing for the draft budgets will be conducted at a meeting of the District Governing Board to be held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 5, 2026, via teleconference and in person.

To attend in-person: (subject to change or cancellation)
Inyo County Administrative Center
Board of Supervisors Chamber
224 North Edwards Street (U.S. Highway 395)
Independence, California 93526
To attend via zoom:
Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85113531120?pwd=Taz9skBkBXWdGbnvsLlJFM3J3qW25.1>
Passcode: 634481
To call in: +1 669 900 6833
Webinar ID: 851 1353 1120

The public hearing on the District’s total annual budgets is set for 10:05 a.m. Written comments are invited, and should be addressed to Ann Logan, Air Pollution Control Officer, Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District, 157 Short Street, Bishop, California 93514. Written comments received by close of business on Thursday, February 12, 2026, will be included in the staff report. Comments made after that date will be summarized at the meeting. Public comment may also be made during the public hearing. For further information, call the District’s Board Clerk, Tori DeHaven at (760) 872-8211.

TS #2026-0008

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Wednesday, **February 11, 2026**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and continuing until finished, at the **Town Council Chambers, Suite Z, within the Minaret Village Shopping Center, 437 Old Mammoth Road**, the **Mammoth Lakes Planning and Economic Development Commission** will hear an application request for the following (*The PEDC meeting agenda includes a Zoom teleconference option to allow for remote public participation*) :

Application Request:
Variance application (VAR) 25-004 requests approval to orient the primary entrance of a proposed commercial building toward the interior of the property, rather than facing the public street as required by Zoning Code Section 17.24.040.b.1 (Commercial District supplemental standards). This request aims to avoid the need for a long access ramp along the Old Mammoth Road frontage, as the applicant is concerned that snow removal on adjacent sidewalks would deposit snow onto the ramp and create ongoing maintenance challenges for a commercial tenant.

CEQA Determination: The Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines this project is categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15332, *Infill Development Projects*.

Location: 540 Old Mammoth Road Lot 13A

Zoning: Old Mammoth Road (OMR)

Applicant: John Hooper / Gray Ridge, INC

All persons having an interest in the proposed application request may appear before the Planning & Economic Development Commission either in person or represented by counsel and present testimony or may, prior to said hearing, file with the Executive Secretary written correspondence pertaining thereto. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence delivered to the Town of Mammoth Lakes at, or prior to, the public hearing.

For additional information, or to obtain a copy of the staff report which will be published no later than February 6, 2026, contact Kim Cooke, Senior Planner, at (760) 965-3638 or email: kcooke@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov

Mammoth Lakes Planning & Economic Development Commission
PO Box 1609
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

TS #2026-0013

Notice of Summons

Notice is hereby given that on January 8, 2026, Mono County Superior Court granted an order for alternative service in case No. 25FLM32.

Steven Matthew Luke Meiers, Petitioner v. Aida Cecilia Ferguson, Respondent.

The Respondent, who was present in court, has made a request to modify a restraining order.

The alternative service is made in accordance with the court’s California Code of Civil Procedure.

The matter is set for March 5, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. in Mammoth Court Room #1.

TS #2026-0009

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Wednesday, **February 11, 2026**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and continuing until finished, located at the **Town Council Chambers, Suite Z, within the Minaret Village Shopping Center, 437 Old Mammoth Road**, the Planning and Economic Development Commission will hear an application request for the following (*the PEDC meeting agenda includes a Zoom teleconference option to allow for remote public participation*):

Application Request: Consideration of Variance application #25-002, requesting an 80% reduction of the required 20-foot front yard setback (*from 20 feet to approx. 4 feet at the northwest corner of the proposed garage*) and requesting an 80% reduction of the required 10-foot northern side yard setback (*from 10 feet to approx. 2 feet*). Variance application #25-002 is sought to allow the proposed construction of a new detached garage located at 436 Mammoth Knolls Drive. The subject property is a steep, down-sloping lot developed with an existing single-family residence; however, no garage or conforming 10’x20’ exterior parking spaces currently exist on the property.

CEQA Determination: Variance application #25-002 has been determined to be categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

Location: 436 Mammoth Knolls Drive

Zoning: Residential Single-Family (RSF)

Applicant: Mike Britton, Britton Architecture

Property Owners: Damon Conover, Danica McCoy

All persons having an interest in the proposed application request may appear before the Planning and Economic Development Commission either in person or represented by counsel and present testimony or may, prior to said hearing, file with the Executive Secretary written correspondence pertaining thereto. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence delivered to the Town of Mammoth Lakes at, or prior to, the public hearing.

For additional information or to obtain a copy of the staff report, which will be published no later than Friday, February 6, 2026, please contact Tess Houseman, Assistant Planner, at thouseman@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov or (760) 965-3619.

Town of Mammoth Lakes Planning & Economic Development Commission
PO Box 1609
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

TS #2026-0014

FINALLY, CHEAP WEDDED BLISS

The blessed day has been selected. On June 14 the lovebirds will make it official and tie the knot. Dozens of “save the date” announcements have been sent and the planning has begun. It will be a full-blown Mammoth Lakes wedding, with trelises, flowers, seating, catered food, DJ, three-days of parties, dinners, and outings with friends and family. Oh, and mountains, meadows, lakes and blue sky as the backdrop.

Lovely.

The engaged couple has contacted the numerous, professional wedding planners and facilitators in Mammoth. Preliminary costs have been tossed out



MEET
Ducky

Ducky is a delightful senior cat, about 10 years old, seeking a loving home after her owner's passing. Friendly and affectionate, she loves attention and companionship. With her sweet nature, Ducky promises to bring joy and comfort to a new family. A perfect companion awaits! Contact:
Whitmore Shelter (760) 935-4734

for renting the venue, accommodations, meals, the wedding crew, flowers, new clothes for bride, groom and the wedding party, and all the other ingredients for a dream day. Those estimates are relayed in round numbers. Big round numbers.

Doubt starts to set in as the couple realize their wedding will cost more than their used Subaru. The muttering has begun.

Fortunately for all involved and their bank accounts salvation and an escape hatch arrives from an unlikely source: The Inyo County Clerk's Office.

In a burst of entrepreneurial initiative, the Clerk's Office will be open on Saturday, Feb. 14, Valentine's Day. The only business conducted will be marrying couples in and around the historic Courthouse in Independence and handing out marriage licenses. (Note: this is real. Call the Clerk's Office at 760-878-0224 to make an appointment from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

Sighs of relief are audible. Quick, cheap and legal. Plus, getting married on Valentines Day is romantic times 10. Practical plus: one gift, romantic night out or special trip covers both the anniversary and Valentine's Day. A two-fer.

The only problem is explaining the decision to ditch the Mammoth destination wedding for a quicky in Independence.

Allow me to smooth any ruffled feathers coming from the quick change with suggestions for, “gee, change of plans” letters, cards or emails.

Wedding Team: Great news, you have plenty of time to open up the June 14 date and book another couple. Thank you for your time and input. PS: enclosed is a gift card to Grocery Outlet for your trouble.

Best Man and Groomsmen: Great news, we are ditching the Mammoth wedding and those color-coordinated sport jackets and ties for a wedding in Independence. Should take less than an hour on Valentine's Day, so it's a surefire girlfriend/wife mush fest and you don't have to do or buy anything. I know you all will still come since we have routinely driven four hours so we can drink beer and eat Slim Jims at a picnic table. PS: Bring the beer.

Maid of Honor and Bridesmaids: Great news, we've decided not to get married in a multi-day Mammoth wedding, which means you don't have to buy garish bridesmaids dresses and hiking boots for “activities.” Well, the hiking boots might be cute on the steps of the courthouse in Independence. It's on Valentine's Day, so bring dates, partners, husbands or potential husbands. A quick ceremony and then it's wine-o'clock back at the motel. PS: don't go near the beer drinkers on the picnic tables.

Parents, Option One: Great news, we've switched dates and places for the wedding. We're going with a short ceremony in Independence at the courthouse on Valentine's Day. That means you can stop sending 12 emails a day with photos and Instagram wedding

reels. That will take quite a load off your shoulders. Great ideas, though. Another relief is you're off the hook for hanging out with certain soon-to-be in-laws for a couple days. PS: we'll the first dance song from on our phones. Your pick.

Parents Option Two: Great news, we're getting married in Independence on Valentine's Day, not Mammoth Lakes in June. You're off the hook for hanging out with certain soon-to-be in-laws for a couple days. A romantic ceremony under the towering pines then we're married. PS: forget about helping pay for the wedding and gifts; just hand over cash and call it good.

Siblings: Great news, and no it does not involve coming to our senses by ditching the (pick one) loser, ditz, slacker, gold digger, wino, whiner, grunting ape, control freak, mouth-breather, scatterbrain, redneck, hippy. We're getting married on Valentine's Day in Independence at the courthouse. We know you will be there because you love us (our plus-one, not so much, but get used to it).

Friends: Just call them, tell them the news and laugh and remind them there will plenty of time to hang out 'till death do you part.

Jon Klusmire of Bishop is expecting a 10% commission/finder's fee from the Clerk's Office for every nuptial that comes about from this gushing little love letter.

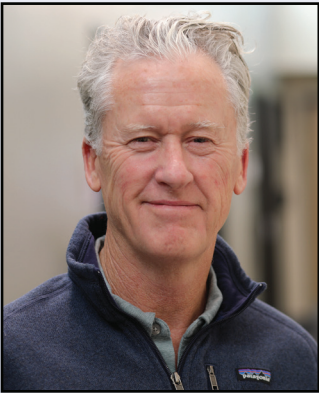
Mammoth Hospital

Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) Services

Patrick Fitzgerald, MD provides Otolaryngology services one week per month in the Specialty Clinic. Dr. Fitzgerald offers a variety of services to treat conditions of the ear, nose, and throat.



Sinus and Allergy Problems • Deviated Septum • Nosebleeds
Snoring and Sleep Apnea • Hearing Loss and Vertigo • Hoarseness
Swallowing Problems • Thyroid and Parathyroid Surgery • Ear Tubes
Head and Neck Surgery • Adult and Pediatric Tonsil and Adenoid Problems



Patrick Fitzgerald, MD



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Dr. Fitzgerald brings over 25 years of trusted ENT care to our team, offering expert treatment for both adults and children.

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HARTLEY

HOW'S THE WEATHER OUT THERE?

Bill Belichick didn't make the Hall of Fame this year. Just stop with awards. And here is the fundamental problem. You got a bunch of grumpy old white guys that work in a dying industry where all their newspapers are falling apart and their jobs are limited, voting on these awards. (Not you, Lunch, you attract hotties and have a thriving endeavor.)

Even the former GMs and coaches are grumps. I don't care what coaches had to wait for in the past, Belichick should be in the Hall of Fame last year. Stupid. Some mad about deflategate or because he was grumpy with the media. Get over yourselves. They should take away the vote from everyone that didn't vote for him. Go play bridge with your buddies or something. Bill Polian said he couldn't remember if he voted for Belichick or not one day. Then another day said he absolutely did. If he doesn't remember, then he shouldn't have a vote. Remember Polian is the same guy that said Lamar Jackson couldn't play QB in the NFL and should switch to WR. So he has been a dumbass for a decade or more.

You want to know a coach that probably knows he won't get another job. Normally a coach leaves a job and he just thanks them for the opportunity and wishes them luck in the future. They don't usually burn bridges. Here is one for you. A Jets fan tweeted that he hated the Jets. Scott Turner, a coach just fired by the Jets replied "Me Too." I could not stop laughing. He was like, I've been fired before, probably my last job ... screw it. Gotta love honesty.

Speaking of the Jets, the head coach fired like 6 coaches the other day. He fired the OC and the DC already earlier in the year. So he has almost cleaned out his coaching staff which he hired less than a year ago. Huh? So you selected all of the wrong coaches. I don't know how many were held over from the previous staff but how?? I am placing bets as soon as there are odds for the first coach fired. He might get fired on the sidelines during the week 1 game when they fumble the opening kickoff.

Brian Flores will never get a head

coaching job. One of his former assistants blasted him to the media the other day. His thoughts: Asked by the "Ultimate Cleveland Sports Show" for his thoughts on Vikings defensive coordinator Brian Flores, Pettine said: "Probably not many that I would prefer to share." He didn't feel he stuck the knife deep enough so.... Of Flores, Pettine added: "I mean, we didn't see eye to eye on a lot of things. That's why I spent this past year on offense. I was there in '23 and '24 on defense. I'll take the high road on that one."

Bitter much? Well Mike Pettine hasn't been a name worth talking about in years, so maybe you aren't good at your job anymore. Flores comes across as a jerk. It seems no one really likes him, so that is on him. But this guy attacking when Flores is searching for a job, that one is easy to figure out. Flores can forget about being a head coach. Better win that lawsuit - Flores is suing the NFL for racial discrimination.

Glad to see the Broncos lost. Feel bad for Bo Nix but screw Sean Payton. He deserved to lose and deserved to lose because of HIM making a stupid call. I don't disagree with him going for it on 4th down but the play call sucked.

A roll out to the short side of the field with Jared Stiffham who can't move and isn't very good. I would have kicked the ball and taken a 10 point lead in a game where No One could score. And the snow was coming in the second half. He lives there, he has an analyst for everything. I am sure some Quality Control assistant could watch the weather channel or check his cell phone and say.... SEAN THERE IS A BLIZZARD IN THE SECOND HALF. That was a mistake by Payton and he should eat that. Especially after blasting the previous coaching staff as the worst he has seen when he took the ball. You could have been in the Super Bowl if not for your own ego.

Rams vs Hawks. Man as bad as the first game was, this game was that good. It was tremendous. When I watch the Rams, Seahawks, Niners play offense it looks NOTHING like the Steelers brand of football. It is sad. But those coaches put on a clinic offensively. There are

players running free because of the scheme. The Rams could have won that game. But give Darnold credit. He has surprised me. He got one more to go. If he wins that one, I can't criticize him anymore. Sammy is balling. Stafford had a great year. He should be the MVP. Hands down.

The Super Bowl runup is on. I usually watch the two weeks to see which team is talking the most shit. The team talking shit is usually gonna lose. Haven't heard anything yet. Who will break the ice... that's the loser. If it was the Broncos I would say payton would be the first jackass talking shit, but thankfully Payton is on vacation.

I saw something where fans of Harry Styles are complaining that ticket prices to his concert are too expensive for them to afford to go, or if they do go, they spend too much money. One lady

was complaining she couldn't afford to go because her parents didn't have money and now that she is working she doesn't make enough to afford to go. Two things:

You need to get a better job.

You don't have to go.

You don't need to go to a concert. Turn on the TV and watch one. What is the infatuation with spending \$3500 to cry because you can see some clown jiggling around on stage? I don't get it. I love a good concert every now and then if it's a blues festival or blues show that costs me like \$60 and I see 2 or 3 different acts. But paying \$1000 to see a concert. Hell no. Learn to sing and hold your own concerts or something. Go to a free show in the park. You need to get another hobby. A look at a better job might be a good idea too.



JUNE
LAKE
BREW
ING

Liberty Sports
BAR
& Grill

FEBRUARY

FREE LIVE MUSIC

9:30 PM

6TH

LISSA DEE
CLASSIC COUNTRY

7TH

GOOD
NIGHT
CLUB

LA'S HOTTEST DJ LIVE BAND MASH UP

13TH & 14TH

TED Z
AND THE
WRANGLERS
INTERNATIONALLY
TOURING ROOTS ROCK

17TH @ 8PM

Fat Tuesday
Mardi Gras

THA EXCHANGE HORNS!

20TH & 21ST

RAY JAURIQUE
BAND
BLUES, ROCK & SOUL

25TH

WILD
WEDNESDAY

OLD SCHOOL HIP HOP

27TH & 28TH THE OFFICIAL ROAD TO JAMFEST
W/ JUNE LAKE JAM FEST

WEMPSTING
ORCHESTRA

Celebration of The Grateful Dead

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YOUR MOUNTAIN HOME IS CALLING



Ski Trails #90 - \$270,000

Beautifully updated 2-bedroom plus home in quiet Ski Trail Mobile Park. Perched on a hill with Sherwin views & privacy, featuring new paint, flooring, remodeled kitchen, perfect full-time or vacation retreat.

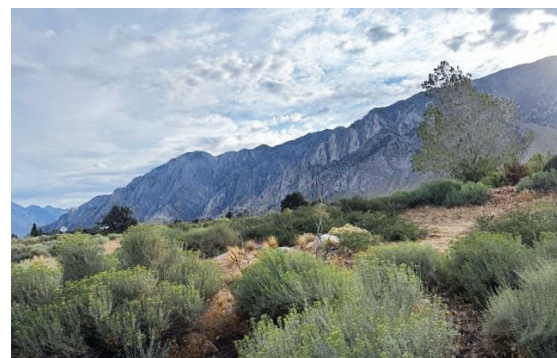
MOBILE
BEDS: 2
BATHS: 2
SQ FT: 1160



The Lodges, 1101 Pyramid Peak Dr. - \$1,069,000

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



Ski Trails #40, Mammoth Lakes- \$180,000

Affordable 3-bedroom, 2-bath double-wide on a large corner lot in quiet Ski Trails Park. Features Laurel Mountain views, low taxes, gardening space, attached shed, and strong value as the lowest-priced home in town.

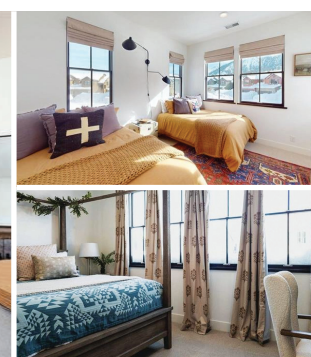
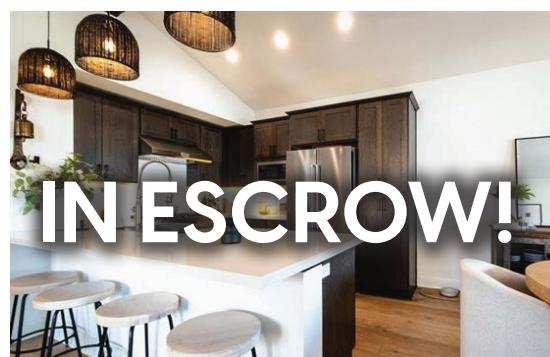
MOBILE
BEDS: 3
BATHS: 2
SQ FT: 1152



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



Creekhouse, 1461 Boulder Creek - \$1,815,000

Gorgeous, move-in ready, 2022 CreekHouse townhome offered fully furnished. Features 3 bedrooms plus flex room, 3.5 baths, upgraded finishes, EV charger, long driveway, HOA snow removal, and shuttle access to the slopes.

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



LISTING DETAILS!

The Snowcreek Property Company

5 Fairway Drive, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

(760) 934-3334

info@snowcreekproperty.com

www.snowcreekproperty.com

CA DRE #01812140



THE SNOWCREEK
PROPERTY COMPANY