

the sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra



An explosive new use for drones in snow country? Find out more on p. 6-7.

Saturday, April 25, 2026

FREE

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SPRINT TO THE FINISH



Amaya Hays (Jr) & Eliie Solomon (Fr) battle it out against Rosamond. For more, see p.15.

A LITTLE JUDGE-MENTAL

By Klusmire

Forget sparks, there was barely any heat generated when the four lawyers running for Inyo County Superior Court judge nestled into the Independence Legion Hall Wednesday night for a rather polite question and answer session hosted by the Independence Civic Club.

The closest thing to a bit of a fire came in delayed responses to challenger Taylor Fitzmaurice's assertions that the current court operation was not run very well and needs some changes.

But the responses were muted. Even judicious.

Some were addressed by current Inyo County District Attorney Dana Crom, who is running for the same judicial spot as Fitzmaurice. Ironically, sidelong responses also came from the

two other candidates running against each other, incumbent Judge Stephen Place and challenger local attorney and public defender Gerard Harvey.

Fitzmaurice said the court should always be fair and show "no bias." People should not be "judged" by "who you are, your family and who you know." She said the facts and evidence are impartial.

Crom noted that as DA she makes charging decisions based on a police or crime report that does not include the accused's name, age, gender, and other details. Each case is considered only by the evidence presented to the DA's office, she said. Later, if other facts or factors arise, the initial charges can be adjusted, she added.

Fitzmaurice's opening state-

ment included comments she repeats on social media and interviews.

Namely the court needs to be "fair and efficient" and there is a valid concern about delayed cases and providing access to the courts. When cases take too long to be resolved, it places an "emotional and financial burden" on the people involved. She said she would like to restructure the current civil and criminal court calendars to make the courts more efficient.

Fitzmaurice said she has experienced out-of-town lawyers "running roughshod over the court" which is unacceptable.

Criticizing the current court pretty much means criticizing the incumbent judge. So Place commented during

more JUDGES, pg. 8

SLOCUMS SOLD

By Fisher

For six years, Slocums restaurant on Mammoth's Main Street has stood boarded up, an untouched time capsule. Everything inside exactly as former owners Cindy and Tom Avena left it.

But on April 3, that era came to a close. It finally changed hands.

The buyers, Mary Beth and Todd Ericson, are a local couple stepping into one of Mammoth Lakes' most visible restaurant spaces with no clear plan and a long list of unknowns.

For the Ericsons, that uncertainty is part of the equation.

"We're in listening mode right now," Mary Beth said. "We're listening to what people think would work well there, the town, and the fire and health departments."

Whatever their approach, the Ericsons know they are bound to get feedback on the old Slocums building. For many in town, it wasn't just another restaurant.

Built in 1966 and renovated in the early 1980s, the space evolved from a waffle house into "Captain's Table," and eventually into Slocums, a longtime local favorite. Its happy hour was consistently packed, and getting a spot at the bar at 4 p.m. on a Saturday

was, as some remember it, nearly impossible.

The restaurant ultimately closed in March 2020 at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, ending a 37-year run. Later that year, the property was sold to an out-of-area investor, yet repeated attempts to lease or sell it fell through, leaving the site in limbo for years.

"Out-of-area investors just don't see the intangibles," Mary Beth said. "It's a beloved part of the community."

The Ericsons' connection to Mammoth Lakes began more than a decade ago, when Todd, then serving in the U.S. Air Force, was stationed at Edwards Air Force Base. The family began visiting regularly, returning often enough that the town began to feel like home.

In 2019, they made the move permanent.

Since then, their roots have deepened. Two of their children have graduated from Mammoth High School, with a third graduating this year. Mary Beth, who works in property management, has become involved in local volunteering and the MHS booster club.

As a result, she found herself "increasingly interested in investing in this community."

The sale, priced over
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Definitely More Drugs

Beast of the East

Hire a Madam

Mine in the Sky

A Royal Flush

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DO WE NEED MORE DRUGS?

I am still working through the Orwell biography on my nightstand by DJ Taylor.

Everything about the man's life was improbable. His health was never good and he was constantly being hospitalized for respiratory infections. He was shot in the trachea while fighting the fascists in Spain the late '30s, the bullet missing his carotid artery by a few millimeters.

When he was shot, he was standing watch. "What had saved him was his great height; an average-sized Spaniard who had stood in the same place would have been shot through the head."

He lived just 47 years.

Though he grew up in privilege and attended Eton, a boarding school whose former pupils include 19 prime ministers, he spent most of his adult life in poverty, writing books which had niche audiences and sales. Until the publication of *Animal Farm* in 1945 created an "all but instantaneous shift in his reputation." And finally made him financially secure.

Giving him five years to enjoy it. He'd earn more in the last five years of his life than he did in the first 24.

But back to Spain. What was interesting about the resistance to Franco and fascism is that it wasn't uniform - you had people there for all sorts of personal and political reasons.

"As to most members of the Marxist left, the need for a united front against Fascism dwarfed all other considerations."

Orwell wasn't on board.

For him, "what was at stake, as well as his desire that Spain should be free of [General] Franco, was his distaste for the strong-arm tactics of left-wing political movements bent on the suppression of unorthodox views."

I wonder what Orwell would think today about a variety of issues which are presented as settled orthodoxy with conformist approaches.

The issue that springs immediately to mind is housing. Lack of/cost of housing is described as a crisis and presented as a human right. And you're regarded as a monster if you don't agree that we must build (baby build) more housing, regardless of cost, of zoning, of quality-of-life, of carrying capacity.

But it makes me pause. What if the crisis is temporary? Demographics would certainly suggest that once the wealthiest of human generations, the Boomers, pass through the python, that you may suddenly find yourself with a whole lot

the sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra

"In a time of deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act."

-Orwell

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more supply. The U.S. birthrate is also in a downward spiral.

From an April 9 story on NPR: Lead researcher Brady Hamilton, a demographer with the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, said the latest one percent drop in "general fertility" from 2024 to 2025 is part of a long-running downward trend.

"Since 2007, there's been a decline in the general fertility rate [in the U.S.] of 23%," Hamilton told NPR.

And then there's the question of carrying capacity.

Back in the 2000s, during General Plan debates, Mammoth fought bitterly over PAOT (Persons at One Time). What was the max PAOT that should be contemplated.

At the time, the Advocates for Mammoth came up with their very clever slogan, "How Dense Can We Be?"

The answer after some wrangling was 48,000 (down from an initial number of 60,000).

And now that all the hotels are finally getting built, people are up in arms wondering how the hell so much density got approved.

It's one thing when density is just a distant number. It's quite another when the people actually show up.

Ask yourself:

To what degree is housing a gateway drug?

How many drugs do you want at the party?

What will the hangover look like?

Is it a "crisis" that we're throwing a party and don't have enough beer?

From Klusmire's desk:

Caltrans has backpedaled on its proposal to put bike lanes on South Main Street in Bishop. Here's the official word from Caltrans' Public Information Officer Micheal Lingberg: "After considering feedback from the community and Bishop City Council (See the April 18 Sheet), Caltrans will not move forward with the bicycle lanes on U.S. 395 from Line Street to Jay Street within the Bishop Pavement Project."

Ah, but a bureaucratic machine never gives up, especially when there is a high-dollar, plan created by bigger brains than the local riffraff who rely on "common sense."

The final word from Lingberg: "Please note that this proposal is identified in the 2022 Downtown City of Bishop Plan."

Meaning there is a good chance that at some time in the future, a wild-eyed Dr. Frankenstein at Caltrans will wave that plan in the air and declare, "It's Alive."

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LOCAL NEWS

RE-CREATING RECREATION?

By Fisher

How do you quantify something as expansive as recreation in the Eastern Sierra?

That's the task facing consulting firm ECONorthwest, which this week invited residents in Inyo, Mono, and Alpine counties to weigh in on the places they use and the pressures those places face.

Inyo County's meeting, held in the Eastern Sierra Business Resource Center in Bishop, drew the largest crowd. In total, 20 climbers, business owners and longtime residents attended virtually and in person.

The meeting is part of a broader effort by the three counties to measure the region's recreation economy and map out its future. Supported by state funding through the Sierra Jobs First initiative, the study operates on a tight August 2026 deadline and aims to quantify everything from visitor spending to trail use.

Yet, both in the room and in early survey results, the takeaway is less decisive than planners might hope. Many residents either aren't sure what they want the future of recreation to look like, or say they'd prefer to keep things as they are.

And some, like Aspendell resident Randy Short, aren't settled on just one possibility.

"I don't trust surveys, because every time I take a survey, I feel like I'm being

put in a box," he said. "I'm only given this option, this option, and this option... I feel like you miss a hell of a lot."

Amid these discussions, others pointed to blind spots in how the data is being collected. For example, one attendee noted that the survey results lacked a clear category for seasonal workers, who make up a significant portion of the region's recreation workforce.

Despite these critiques, ECONorthwest's survey analysis yielded a predictable finding; both visitors and residents are largely satisfied with the area's recreation amenities, except for accommodation or housing costs and availability. Also unsurprisingly, locals found these challenges more severe than visitors.

In conversation, residents consistently emphasized the need for better stewardship and clearer information for visitors. Illegal parking, in particular, surfaced as a major and recurring concern.

Residents described overcrowded trailheads and inconsistent enforcement, with illegal parking as a recurring issue, particularly at popular spots like Rock Creek.

"If you don't get there before 7:30 a.m., you're not parking at Mosquito Flat. You're way down the road," one Paradise resident said. "And then you'll see

people parked in the meadow anyway. My partner and I will move boulders to block it off, and two weeks later someone has moved them and parked an RV there."

One person noted that long-term parking for John Muir Trail and Pacific Crest Trail hikers impacts day users at popular trailheads like Whitney Portal.

Given these problems, participants across the board called for better infrastructure and alternatives to driving.

"We need better parking, bathrooms, and clearer markings," one resident said. "But also more reliable shuttle systems. Something frequent enough that people don't feel like they have to drive."

Road access was another point of frustration.

"A lot of the passes... I can't even access them in my Subaru," one resident said. "It really comes down to road quality and maintenance."

One speaker lamented the wear and tear of the Coyote Flats OHV area due to its popularity, and suggested a volunteer program to maintain the roads.

Across comments, that theme of stewardship kept returning.

"We've probably all almost gotten into fights with people in the back country trying to start a fire," one resident said, prompting nods and murmured agree-

ment across the room.

Climbing, in particular, was raised as both an economic driver and a management challenge, with residents calling for consistent funding for ranger programs in heavily trafficked areas like the Buttermilks, the Volcanic Tablelands, Owens River Gorge, and Pine Creek.

"I think specifically trying to find funding or more funding for partner organizations that are contributing to stewardship and management of the areas, acting as partners for government agencies that have limited staffing," one person said.

Several called out the Bishop Climbing Ranger program, which hires staff to clean up trash, educate climbers on minimal-impact climbing and local ethics, and ensure responsible camping and parking practices.

Looking beyond infrastructure, some participants argued that the recreation economy should extend more intentionally into town centers.

"I'd like to see downtowns that are more welcoming and capture tourist dollars," one resident said. "More performance spaces, concerts, and cultural events."

"We have a really unique history here," another attendee said. "There's more we could be doing."

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SLOCUMS

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\$1 million dollars, included furniture, fixtures, equipment, and a restaurant-specific liquor license.

It also came with significant issues. After years of vacancy and decades since its last major renovation, the building has a failing roof and asbestos that will need to be addressed before anything can reopen.

In other words, the barrier to entry isn't just financial.

It's also logistical and experiential, especially since the Ericsons have no background in restaurant operations or large-scale commercial renovation. Todd, now Senior Advisor to NASA's Administrator, brings decades of aerospace experience, but not in hospitality.

"We're not restaurant people," Mary Beth laughed.

Even so, they see a clear demand.

"A main complaint I get on the property management side is that there aren't enough restaurants in town," she said. "All the local feedback I get is that everybody would love to see another restaurant... something that reflects what they remember, but in a modern application."

The couple aims to settle on a concrete plan within the next month, while making it a priority to honor what Slocum represented to the community.

Because inside, little has changed since the day it closed. Tablecloths still drape the tables. Candles sit where



Todd and Mary Beth Ericson stand in front of the old Slocums building.

they were left. Salt, pepper, ketchup. Cash boxes labeled with servers' names. A chalkboard menu, still marked in former owner Tom's careful handwriting.

In the coming weeks, the Ericsons plan to open the space for a community night, inviting those with connections to the restaurant to take home pieces of its past. Donations will go toward a new culinary scholarship for a Mammoth High School senior to support further education in gastronomy.

Updates and event details will be shared on the Ericsons' Instagram, @whatsnextatslocums.

BEAST OF THE EAST

By Fisher

Something akin to Japan's famed 7-Eleven-style convenience marts could be landing in Mammoth soon, alongside a kitchen that's pulling from just about every corner of Asia.

The dual-concept space, tentatively called "Beast of the East" and "Little Beast," is the latest venture from Toshiko (Aki) and her husband, BJ James, the owners of Gojira Ramen and Sushi in Mammoth and Bishop. The new restaurant is slated to open June 1 in Gateway Plaza, which houses the new breakfast joint, Bird and the Biscuit, and Looney Bean.

While "Beast of the East" will focus on a full-service, dressed-up dining experience, "Little Beast" draws inspiration from Japanese convenience stores, known for their surprisingly high-quality, ready-made food.

"In Japan, you can get egg salad sandwiches, bento-style meals, things like that," BJ said. The quick shop will also have Gojira's sushi burritos and poke bowls, which they serve in Bishop.

The idea was a way to use the full two-unit space while offering cuisines Mammoth doesn't currently have.

The restaurant itself will serve a blend of Thai, Japanese, Korean and American Chinese influences. The menu is still being finalized, but dishes will likely include pad Thai, curries, Japanese katsu, and Korean bulgogi.

"There's no Thai food here, no Chinese food," BJ said. "We thought, let's just bring it all."

Most of the dishes will lean traditional,



Toshiko (Aki) and BJ James owners of Gojira and soon-to-be owners of Beast of the East.

though others embrace Americanized versions of Asian cuisine to offer familiar comfort dishes. Their chef, who comes from Ventura, recently trained in Thailand in order to bring that authentic flavor back to California.

Unlike Gojira's fast-casual model, the new restaurant is designed to be more of a sit-down experience, with an emphasis on atmosphere. They plan to serve beer, wine and sake at the restaurant's bar, and expect a slightly higher price point for the dine-in service than Gojira.

The interior will feature tilework, a bar, a projector screen on the back wall, and walls lined with artwork from local and regional artists.

Diners will also be able to purchase the art.

"There'll be a menu for the food, and a

more BEAST, next page

RESTAURANT WEEK

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BEAST

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menu for the art,” BJ said.

He’s been working with artists, near and far, to stock their art ahead of the opening, including art curated by people behind the apparel brand, 1910, and fashion designer Sticky Shaw.

The project has been years in the making. Aki first set her sights on the location more than two years ago, waiting for two adjacent units to become available so the concept could work as envisioned and accommodate the kitchen.

But even after securing the lease, it took over a year to receive permits and begin construction.

“Mammoth is a very difficult place to find a location,” Aki said.

The couple first entered the Mammoth restaurant scene in September 2020, opening Gojira in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. But what could have been a setback instead helped shape their business model.

“About 80% was to-go at first,” Aki said. “That worked for us.”

In 2023, they expanded to Bishop, adapting that location to a faster, more casual format with Americanized versions of their Japanese cuisine, partly in response to staffing challenges.

“It’s really hard to find sushi chefs in Bishop,” BJ said.

Now, with their third venture, the duo is trying something new again, bringing together multiple cuisines, a more elevated dining experience, and a quick-service option under one roof.

NOT SNOW BAD

By Klusmire

In a slight nod to a miserable snow year and below-average runoff predictions, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) plans to export a little less water from the Eastern Sierra compared to last year, and will also drop groundwater pumping in Inyo County in 2026-27. Even with those slight reductions, the Eastern Sierra will supply about 47% of Los Angeles’ water in the coming year.

Those are the big-ticket items in the recently released Draft LADWP Owens Valley 2026-27 Operations Plan. The 206-page document outlines the status of aquifer levels, planned pumping by wellfield, reviews vegetation conditions in the Owens Valley and details in-valley water uses. It also recaps numerous mitigation measures and other legal requirements laid out in the Inyo-LA Long-Term Water Agreement and other related documents and court orders.

Some light reading, in other words, broken up with plenty of charts, graphs and satellite photos.

The big-picture look shows only slight variations from last year’s operations plan.

A bit surprising was the Owens River Basin runoff forecast hitting about 79% of normal, despite an Eastern Sierra snowpack coming in at about 24% of average. The difference, as the footnotes reveal, is the runoff forecast is based on having “median precipitation” for the entire water year, which runs from

April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027. Another meager snow and rain year would drop the runoff estimate to around 65% of average.

The “most probable” runoff for the Mono Basin would be about 84,300 acre feet (AF), which is 71% of average, with the Owens River Basin runoff at 79% of average with 322,300 AF (that includes

“

This year’s exports will represent about 47% of the city’s annual water supply, which comes to 457,000 AF.

”

the Owens, Long and Round valleys). The estimated runoff total of 406,600 AF is about 66,000 AF less than last year’s runoff from what was basically an average snow and runoff year.

The Los Angeles Aqueduct will carry about 227,000 AF of Eastern Sierra water to Los Angeles. A slight drop from the 269,000 AF exported last year. This year’s exports will represent about 47% of the city’s annual water supply, which comes to 457,000 AF. Aquifers in the city will contribute another 13%; recycled water 3% and water purchased from the Metro Water District about 37%.

Mono Lake was recently measured at 6,382.75 feet above sea level, which

allows LADWP to export 16,000 AF of water from the basin. The Operations Plan indicates the department will take that full allotment.

Estimated Inyo County groundwater pumping in 2026-27 would range between 54,310 and 81,360 AF, which is roughly 10,000 AF less than last year’s proposal.

Using such wide ranges has been criticized by Inyo County and environmental groups. The Operations Plan notes that under the terms of the Long-Term Water Agreement, about 225,000 AF would be “available for groundwater pumping.”

Groundwater levels in the entire Owens Valley are predicted to drop between 1 and 2 feet, based on pumping amounts and less than average runoff. However, changes in groundwater differ in each of the seven wellfields in the valley. Laws could see groundwater decline by more the 3 feet, with Big Pine, Independence Oak and Symmes-Shepherd also seeing significant drops that could hit several feet.

City-owned land in the Owens Valley will be supplied with about 95,000 AF of water, with more than half devoted to agricultural uses. Irrigation account for 46,790 AF, with stock water coming in at another 11,200 AF. Enhancement and Mitigation measures will receive 12,350 AF; the Lower Owens River Project, 18,100 AF; Recreation and Wildlife, 6,600 AF.

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BOMBS AWAY!

By Libre

Alternative avalanche mitigation strategies are an intense topic of discussion this year, in the aftermath of devastating snow deaths throughout the Mountain West.

Mammoth Mountain has been working to minimize risk to patrollers through installing gas-powered remote avalanche control systems (RACS).

But a potential new strategy has entered the scene.

The player is Drone Amplified, a Nebraska based company with an avant-garde model: triggering avalanches via drone. This new wave technology allows the person controlling the drone to be miles away from the avalanche path, so long as the operator can still see the machine.

The drone would let ski patrollers sit in their office and drink coffee while mitigating avalanche risk at the same time.

“With the drone, we are removing the people from risk,” said Carrick Detweiler, CEO of Drone Amplified, during an interview with The Sheet on Monday.

His company’s design, called MONTIS, works by an electronic ignition detonator, deploying explosives directly above the snow pack. The detonator can only be activated within a pre-set



A ski patroller prepares the MONTIS payload on the ground prior to avalanche mitigation.

“geo-fence” – where the drone’s driver wants the avalanche to be triggered. The machine is adaptable for any type of explosive a ski patrol or highway crew might have, be it ANFO (ammonium nitrate/fuel oil), packaged emulsion, or cast boosters.

“Our system is adapted to whatever kind of explosive the customers are already procuring,” said Daniel Justa, Drone Amplified’s Vice President of Business Development, during the same interview. “We don’t really want to be involved in the explosives aspect of it. [The customers] just have to use the electronic detonator.”

The system also comes with a visual and an infrared camera, allowing the controller to see up close where they are deploying explosives as well as avoid living creatures.

MONTIS will not replace other tools like the Wyssen towers, a popular explosive-based RACS used in many Utah ski resorts, or the old fashioned way of having ski patrollers deploy explosives by hand. Instead, Drone Amplified’s device will complement these existing systems.

“The drone would fill in the gaps [on locations] where [mitigators] might not want to spend money to install RACS, or where there are environmental concerns due to sight lines and impact on location,” Detweiler said. “Even where there are RACS, the systems often have

more DRONES, next page



The MONTIS drone successfully triggers a remote explosion.



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JUDGES

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concluding remarks regarding electoral “politics.”

“Be cautious about statements about how the court system functions” and promises about how to make changes, he noted.

He acknowledged that in the courts, “the last eight years have not been ideal.” A reference to former Judge Brian Lamb who was reprimanded by the state judicial council, then lost re-election to current Judge Susanne Rizo, who also got reprimanded by the state judicial council and did not seek reelection.

But at this point, Place said, “I’m proud of what we do.”

Instead of considering political statements and promises, voters should look at how a judge will do the job and work with the other judge. An elected judge has to have the “courage to do what’s right,”

despite expectations and politics, he said.

To questions about conflicts of interest, Fitzmaurice said too many times local judges recuse themselves over slight conflicts, which means bringing in outside judges which is time consuming and expensive. In general, judges “need to be prepared and make a decision and resolve the case.”

Harvey agreed with Place and Crom that in a small county conflicts are inevitable. The current courts “deal with conflict issues well” and visiting judges, “like to come here because we are a civilized bunch and know what we are doing” Harvey said.

The candidates also offered background info and a bit of a sales pitch. (Note: all four candidates have about 30 years of legal experience primarily in Inyo County.)

Crom vs Fitzmaurice

Crom noted she grew up in Bishop, has been practicing law for 35 years, worked for Inyo County counsel’s office, was in private practice, started with the DA’s office in 2014, appointed DA in 2025. She said she knows the county and the system and has handled juvenile, civil and criminal cases.

Fitzmaurice came to Bishop in 2003 and started a successful private law practice that had her working mostly on civil, family law and juvenile cases along with criminal cases.

She said she wants to serve and help improve the courts, has high ethical standards and wants to “do the work” to improve the court system.

Harvey vs Place

Harvey said he is primarily a criminal defense attorney and has been for most of his career, with 75 jury trials under his belt, but has done enough civil and juvenile law to be prepared for those cases.

He said he was running as “an alternative to Judge Place,” who is doing a good job, “but some things can be done better.”

Place was appointed Superior Court Judge in 2018 and was unopposed and reelected in 2020. The job is challenging and “I’m good at it,” he said.

His seven years on the bench have given him the skills, knowledge and demeanor to handle all manner of criminal and civil cases from “day one.” He said he represents stability.



Dana Crom



Taylor Fitzmaurice



Gerard Harvey



Stephen Place

Mono County Children's Memorial Flag Raising Ceremony

Please join us for a statewide, commemorative ceremony to honor the young lives lost to violence. Remarks from community leaders and advocates, followed by a flag raising ceremony.

Hosted by Mono County Child Abuse Prevention Council, in partnership with Mono County Health and Human Services, Mono County Office of Education, and First 5 Mono.

April 30, 2026
9:00 AM | Mammoth Lakes Courthouse

Condado de Mono Ceremonia de Izamiento de la Bandera en Memoria de los Niños

Acompáñenos en una ceremonia conmemorativa a nivel estatal para honrar las vidas jóvenes perdidas a causa de la violencia. Habrá palabras de líderes comunitarios y defensores, seguidas por una ceremonia de izamiento de la bandera.

Organizado por el Consejo de Prevención del Abuso Infantil del Condado de Mono, en colaboración con el Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos del Condado de Mono, la Oficina de Educación del Condado de Mono y First 5 Mono.

30 de abril de 2026
9:00 AM | Palacio de Justicia de Mammoth Lakes

Contact: Annaliesa Calhoun | acalhoun@monocoe.org | (760) 924-7626

Contact: Annaliesa Calhoun | acalhoun@monocoe.org | (760) 924-7626

LOCAL BRIEFS

Fish Stocking in Crowley?

Crowley Fish Foundation (“CFF”) is proud to announce its inaugural trout stocking event has been scheduled for Tuesday, May 5, 2026, from approximately 8-9 a.m. A stocking truck will deposit the fish into Crowley Lake at Hilton Bay. The inaugural trout stocking is the result of donations raised from the CFF’s generous supporters, and will include approximately 1,600 pounds of one to three pound trout delivered into the water. These quality fish are raised at the Desert Springs Trout Farm in Summer Lake, Oregon.

“The Foundation is thrilled to have finally raised enough funds from our selfless supporters to put fish in the lake. The quality of fish raised at Desert Springs is top notch. This is only the first of a few stockings that we will do this year, based on the financial support of those who believe in us. It’s awesome to see that we are moving the needle,” says CFF Board Secretary Chris Leonard.

Among the released trout will be ten specially tagged trophy trout, weighing roughly five pounds each. Any tagged trout that is caught will be redeemable for a special prize, to include guide trips and gift cards to local establishments. Further details and rules of the tagged trophy trout challenge will be available on the CFF’s website. Please note that tags can be safely removed from the fish for catch and release anglers.

Crowley Fish Foundation was established in May 2024, and under the leadership of its all-volunteer Board of

Directors and Board of Advisors has grown immensely in two years. The foundation works with several public and private organizations to ensure that future generations can enjoy world class trout fishing in Southern Mono County.

Please come celebrate this special event with the CFF team. Everyone is invited. You can find more information about CFF or make a donation at www.crowleyfishfoundation.org.

Funds for Farmers

Mono County has been designated as a contiguous disaster area by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) due to agricultural losses caused by ongoing drought conditions impacting California.

The designation follows a Secretarial disaster declaration issued on April 6, 2026, which identified Inyo, Riverside, and San Diego counties as primary disaster areas. Mono County’s inclusion makes local agricultural producers eligible for federal disaster assistance programs.

The drought event began on October 1, 2025, meeting federal thresholds for severe to exceptional drought conditions during the growing season.

Eligible farmers and ranchers in Mono County may apply for USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loan assistance to help recover from drought-related losses. Producers have eight months from April 6, 2026 to apply, with a deadline of Dec. 7, 2026.

Emergency loans may be used to:

- Restore or replace essential property
- Cover production costs associated with the disaster year
- Refinance certain debts
- Support essential family living expenses

Each application is evaluated individually based on losses and repayment ability.

CEO Van Winkle

On Thursday, the Mammoth Hospital Board of Directors announced the appointment of Melanie Van Winkle as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), transitioning from her role as Interim CEO to lead the organization on a permanent basis.

Van Winkle assumed the role of Interim CEO in January following the retirement of former CEO Tom Parker.

Over the past few months, she has guided the organization towards a critical leadership transition while maintaining operational stability, navigating workforce challenges, and advancing key priorities of the hospital.

These complexities of leadership were sustained by her while continuing to progress the hospital’s largest capital investment to date—the North Wing expansion project. This project would not have been achievable without her expertise and maximizing her skills as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

Van Winkle brings deep healthcare leadership experience and a strong understanding of the organization. She has been with Mammoth Hospital for over 16 years, serving as CFO, where she strengthened the hospital’s financial position and helped guide long-term strategy and stability.

During her tenure, the hospital doubled the number of healthcare providers and significantly expanded access to care by adding key services, including spine care, otolaryngology, dermatology, neurology, cardiology, rheumatology, and urology. Previously unavailable locally, these service lines reduce the need for residents to travel for specialty care.

Van Winkle has served in hospital leadership positions for over 35 years and has accumulated a depth of knowledge on the complexities of healthcare.

“I am honored to step into the role of Chief Executive Officer and continue serving this community,” said Van Winkle.

“Mammoth Hospital plays a vital role in the Eastern Sierra, and I take that responsibility seriously. My focus is on ensuring access to high-quality care close to home, supporting and retaining our staff, and being open and transparent with our community as we make decisions about the future of healthcare in our region.”

ALL ACCESS FUN



MAMMOTHMOUNTAIN.COM

 FACILITIES OPERATED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH INYO NATIONAL FOREST

SUMMER ADVENTURE PASSES ON SALE NOW—ONLY \$399

A Summer Adventure Pass gets you season-long unlimited access to make unforgettable memories at Woolly’s Adventure Summit on the climbing wall, zip line, bungee trampoline, ropes course, archery, mountain coaster, tubing, and more. Plus, enjoy Scenic Gondola Rides.

SUMMER ADVENTURE PASS—ONLY \$399 AT WOOLLY’S ADVENTURE SUMMIT



C5 Studios Community Arts Center

Downtown Spring Art Walk

Saturday April 25, 2026

5:30 - 8:00pm

Free community event for all ages

We invite you to walk an art trail featuring live street performers, artists, musicians, hands-on crafts and festive refreshments at participating downtown businesses all in celebration of our community!

Get your art trail map @ C5 Studios or in one of the Warren St. pocket parks

Art in Storefronts self-guided tour

“Spring into Action” Scavenger Hunt

Visit local businesses for art & goodies

Enter our RAFFLE to win prizes!

C5 Studios Community Arts Center
210 S Warren St. Bishop CA

This event is sponsored by 


Community Arts Center
Art by Courtney teNyenhuis

Scan to learn more and pre-register for the scavenger hunt



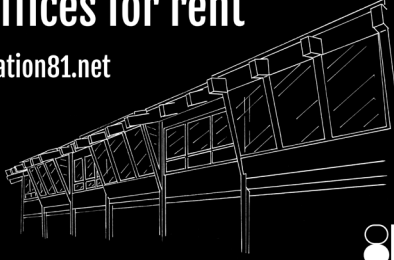
calendar of events

B&B Advisors

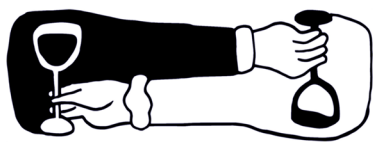
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Sean Flavin, Owner

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LIC# 923994

mammoth GEAR EXCHANGE

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www.NomadnessOffices.com

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.14*
Outlaw Saloon Happy Hour Monday through Friday from 4-6 p.m. *More info: See ad p. 5*
The Mogul happy hour 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the bar. Food and drink specials.
Main St. Pizza - *See ad p. 12*
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.
Minaret Club happy hour daily 'til 6:30 p.m. Weekend wine bottle specials.

April 24-25/ E.N Young and Imperial Sound (Reggae) **plays Liberty** this weekend. Time: 9:30 p.m. no cover.
Honky Tonk on the Hill apres parties @ The Mill (MMSA) from 12-3 p.m. Live music.

Sunday, April 26/ Sunday Apres Series @ Limelight Mammoth. Time: 3-6 p.m. Linger in the lounge with Live DJs, tiny 'tinis and more.
Mill Creek Station presents Blu Egyptian and the Bishop Funk Collective. Doors 5 p.m. \$\$\$ *Tix online @ millcreekpresents.com or available at the door.*
Soul 2 Soul plays a matinee show at Mountain Rambler Brewery in Bishop. Time: 3 p.m.

Monday, April 27/ Open mic night @ Distant Brewing. Time: 6-9 p.m.

Friday, May 1/ The Faux Paws (Folk) play C5 Studios in Bishop. Time: 7 p.m. Location: 210 S. Warren St.
Patio Party season kickoff at Bishop Country Club with Giacomo Timbrello. A happy hour to start your weekend!

TOWN STUFF

Friday, April 24/ Fishmas Eve Party @ Limelight Mammoth from 4-6 pm with guest speaker, Mark Drew (Exec Director at Eastern Sierra Land Trust). Beer specials, raffle for dinner at The Limelight Lounge and free parking for locals when they pick up their Local Perks Card at the Front Desk.
Foodie Fiesta sponsored by the City of Bishop. Time: 5:30-8:30 p.m. Live music. Location: Church St. downtown.

April 24-26/ Sierra Classic Theatre's production of "I and You" final weekend starring Jack Orozco and Brooke Miller. Showtimes 7 p.m. Friday-Saturday and 4 p.m. Sunday. Location: Event Center at the Sierra Center Mall. *More info: See ad p. 3*

Saturday, April 25/ 57th annual Manzanar pilgrimage @ Manzanar Nat'l Historic Site off Hwy. 395 just south of Independence. Time: Noon. This year's theme: Vigilance is the price of Democracy.

TOWN STUFF

Saturday, April 25 (cont.)/ Family Lift Day sponsored by H.E.A.R.T.S Connection and Mono County HHS. Time: 11 a.m. 'til 3 p.m. Location: Mammoth High School MPR.
Moderate Bishop Bouldering meets for **Druids Day @ the Druid Trailhead.** Time: 4 p.m. *Info via Instagram at @Moderate_Bishop_Bouldering*
Downtown Spring Art Walk. Pick up your map at C5 Studios (210 S Warren St. Bishop) and explore art from 5:30-8 p.m. *See ad p. 9.*
Monster Truck event @ the Tri-County Fairgrounds. 475 Sierra St. in Bishop. Time: 3-8 p.m.

April 25-26/ Fishmas BBQ @ The Lakefront in Mammoth. Time: 11 a.m. 'til 4 p.m. both days.
Inyo County Free Tire Disposal event at the local landfills. Both days at Bishop and Lone Pine. Saturday only at the Big Pine Transfer Station and Sunday only in Independence. Time: 7:30 a.m. 'til 3:30 p.m.

Monday, April 27/ Bishop City Council meets. Time: 6 p.m. Location: Council Chambers at 377 West Line St. or online via cityofbishop.ca.gov.

Tuesday, April 28/ Inyo County Board of Supervisors meets. Public session starts 10 a.m. Location: Board Chambers at 224 No. Edwards in Indy or online via inyocounty.us.

Thursday, April 30/ Mono County Children's Memorial Flag-Raising Ceremony @ the Mammoth Courthouse. Time: 9 a.m.



Join Now

We Are Hiring!

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.

Why Work with us?

- Endless Opportunities
- Exceptional Benefits
- Professional Growth
- Working as part of a team
- Be part of something extraordinary

Ready to take the next step in your career? Visit our careers page to explore the current opening and apply today!

Visit:
<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/monocountyca>

TOWN STUFF

Thursday, April 30 (cont.)/ Bishop Unified School District Student Art Exhibition opening reception at C5 Studios in Bishop. Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Location: 210 S. Warren St.
White Mountain Research Center lecture series continues with Michele Slaton of the Inyo National Forest talking about high elevation white pines. Time: 6-7:30 p.m. Location: 3000 E. Line St. Free!

Saturday, May 2/ Eastern Sierra Land Trust's Gardenfest! Native plant sale, live music, seeds and more. Time: 11-2. Location: ESLT backyard & Church St. parking lot. More info: eslt.org/events.
Biannual Choo Choo Swap Meet @ the Tri-County Fairgrounds (475 Sierra St.) in Bishop. Starts 9 a.m.
Chili, Cars and Cerveza event @ the Tri-County Fairgrounds (475 Sierra St.) in Bishop. Time: 10 a.m. 'til 5 p.m.

UPCOMING

May 6: Spellbinder Books book group meets to discuss "When The Moon Hits Your Eye" by John Scalzi. Group meets @ the store, 124 So. Main in Bishop

May 6: Candidate night for the Inyo County District 3 Supervisor race. Time: 6 p.m. Location: United Methodist Church in Bishop.

NO CLASS-IFIEDS

Help Wanted



Footloose Sports is 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



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF MONO
invites applications for the position of
Fiscal Clerk
in the Mammoth Lakes Courthouse
Salary Range:
57A \$25.34 - 57G \$33.95
Application and job description available at:
<https://mono.courts.ca.gov>
or call the court at (760) 923-2321 or email hr@mono.courts.ca.gov
Open Until Filled
The Mono County Superior Court is an equal opportunity employer

Business Opportunity

Well established catering company for sale. Includes commercial kitchen & supplies, vehicle, rentals, and more. Please enquire at 562-480-3647.

Have a problem with Alcohol ?
We can help

Eastern Sierra Alcoholics Anonymous

Reunión en español Para más información: (760) 937-5772
Todos los domingos a las 4:00 p. m. Conéctate por Zoom y en vivo en Mammoth Sierra Wellness Center, 181 Sierra Manner Rd.

 Mammoth talk to a member(760) 914-4327
Meetings: and information

 Bishop talk to a member (760) 873-6700
Bishop meetings: and information

 aa-intergrup.org find a meeting 24hrs a day any Language.

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

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.

Hilton Creek Community Services District in Crowley Lake is seeking a **Full-Time Wastewater Treatment Plan Operator II**. Hourly Range: \$33.43 to \$40.64 with benefits. For more information visit <https://www.hiltoncreekcsd.com/employment> or email info@hiltoncreekcsd.com

JOB OPENINGS

 **FULL-TIME**
Full-time total compensation includes competitive benefits package (scan QR or visit website for details).

 Public Works Inspector
\$61,996 – \$102,292 annually

 Arts & Culture Manager
\$83,625.00 - \$108,714.00 Annually

 **TEMPORARY & PART-TIME**

 Summer Seasonal Positions
Parks & Recreation
Outdoor Recreation
\$19.63 – \$31.82 hourly

For more information, to subscribe to job alerts, and to apply:

(760) 965-3604
townofmammothlakes.ca.gov

For Rent

Newly built Hilton Creek 1 BDR /1 BA ADU contiguous to main home, on serene private wooded lot with brooks on property. \$2,250/mo. Photos & further info on Zillow.com. Search for 267A Juniper Dr., Crowley Lake. Contact: steve@stephenpappas.com

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



Mammoth Roots now hiring for a Bud-tender. Must have references. Pls. email resume to info@mammothroots.com

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

MAMMOTH PEAK STAYS & HOSTING

Diana Victoria Vaz
58 Goldhill – P.O. Box 8835
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 April 9, 2026

File Number 2026-0047
TS #2026-0043
(4/25, 5/2, 5/9, 5/16)

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

FT, year-round e-commerce position processing and fulfilling online and telephone orders at **The Troutfitter** in Mammoth. The job has advancement potential including creating and maintaining product listings on Amazon, eBay and our website, and ordering product for the store. Willing to train the right person.

Candidate must be organized, have good computer skills, excellent communication and be a competent fly angler.

If you love to fly fish, you can make it your profession.

Please come by the store and fill out an application, call Todd at (760) 934-2517 or email todd@thetroutfitter.com.

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

JUNE LAKE MARINA

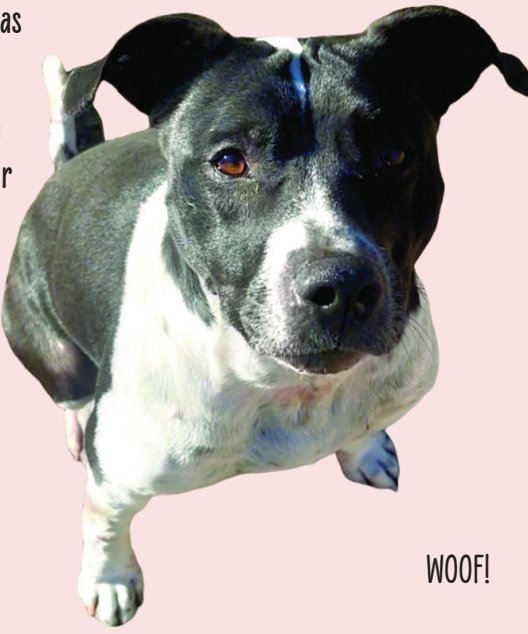
Sierra Recreation Associates
1149 S. Landing Rd.
Crowley Lake, CA 93546

This business is conducted by a corporation. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein on April 30, 2022. This statement was filed with the Mono County Clerk on March 30, 2026

File Number 2026-0041
TS #2026-0038
(4/4, 4/11, 4/18, 4/25)

This is Riley!
She's a favorite, very loving and the best ballplayer! Medium sized, enjoys her walks but would be forever grateful as your best friend.

Please give her a chance, and you can meet others like her 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



WOOF!

 Save a life.
Adopt a shelter dog.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE BECOME A VOLUNTEER TODAY!

PUBLIC NOTICES

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

MAMMOTH PEAK

Diana Victoria Vaz
58 Goldhill – P.O. Box 8835
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 April 9, 2026

File Number 2026-0047
TS #2026-0044
(4/25, 5/2, 5/9, 5/16)

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

Mammoth Summit Rentals

Chase Realty Advisors, Inc.
1934 Meridian Blvd. #279.
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

This business is conducted by a corporation. 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 April 1, 2026

File Number 2026-0042
TS #2026-0042
(4/18, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9)

PERSONALS

I hope to see you ... for fishing opener. But please don't show me your Mussel.
I hope to see you ... at the Art Walk on Saturday. Because like the Venus de Milo, I won't get handsy with you so long as you hold my beer.

Notice of Vacancy

The Mono County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is soliciting interested residents to serve as a Public Member Alternate.

LAFCO is a seven-member commission comprised of representatives of the Mono County Board of Supervisors, the Mammoth Lakes Town Council, Special Districts (fire, water, public utility, community services, etc.) and the public, and is charged with ensuring orderly growth and development, logical boundaries, efficient services and preserving agricultural lands and open space.

Nominations must be received at the LAFCO offices by Monday, June 1, 2026. Nominations received after that date will not be considered.

For more information and to download the nomination form please visit the Mono County LAFCO website at <http://www.monocounty.ca.gov/lafoo/page/resources>. If interested in serving as a Public Member Alternate, contact Brent Calloway at bcalloway@mono.ca.gov.

TS #2026-0045

Notice Inviting Bids

NOTICE INVITING BIDS FOR PUBLICATION OF LEGAL NOTICES

The Town of Mammoth Lakes is inviting bids from newspapers of general circulation in Mammoth Lakes for a contract for publication of all legal notices from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. The Town Clerk will email the bid proposal packet to those that request it at jgray@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov.

SEALED BIDS can be delivered to the Town Offices at Minaret Village Mall, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite 230; or mailed to the Town Clerk at Post Office Box 1609, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546. Bids must be clearly marked "SEALED BID: Bid for publication of legal notices" on the front of the envelope. Bids will be accepted until 11:00 a.m. on Monday, April 27, 2026.

Dated: April 13, 2026
Jamie Gray, Town Clerk
TS #2026-0041

HARTLEY

DRAFT A MADAM

The NFL draft is tonight (Thursday). I can't wait because I don't have to hear another mock draft or see Mel Kiper for awhile again. Every expert has projected five different players for each team so they can say they were right. And they will still be wrong.

A few things about this year's draft:

The Cowboys, more specifically Jerry Jones, have been quiet. You usually know exactly who Jerry Jones loves cuz he never keeps his mouth shut. Has the old dog learned a new trick?

It has been refreshing not having to see Mike Tomlin at every Pro Day like he knows what he is looking at. All that time on the road to draft Devin Bush and Artie Burns. I am glad he is gone.

Okay, the Cliff Notes to my Straight No Chaser Evan Williams 101 Mock Draft:

Raiders. Trade your owner to Chuck E Cheese. Then trade the first pick for the entire Jets draft. They'll do it.

Jets. Trade your coach. Abolish your owner. And get your own stadium. Wait, who owns that stadium?

Cardinals Titans, Giants, Browns. Don't draft. Don't play football anymore.

Chiefs. Draft the best Edge rusher. You need help.

Cowboys. Draft a psychologist. WR George Pickens is going to go OFF now that the Cowboys have said they will not give him a long term contract.

Steelers. Draft a self-esteem coach so you don't wait around for a 43-year old has-been (Aaron Rodgers) to lead your

team to the same mediocrity.

Bills. Draft a camp counselor to lead the Josh Allen summer camp the coach is building. A QB with no one to push him. I can see him crying in January.... I GOTTA BE BETTER. Yes you do.

Niners. Draft a WR. They always do. Shanahan cannot help himself. How is Aiyuk doing?

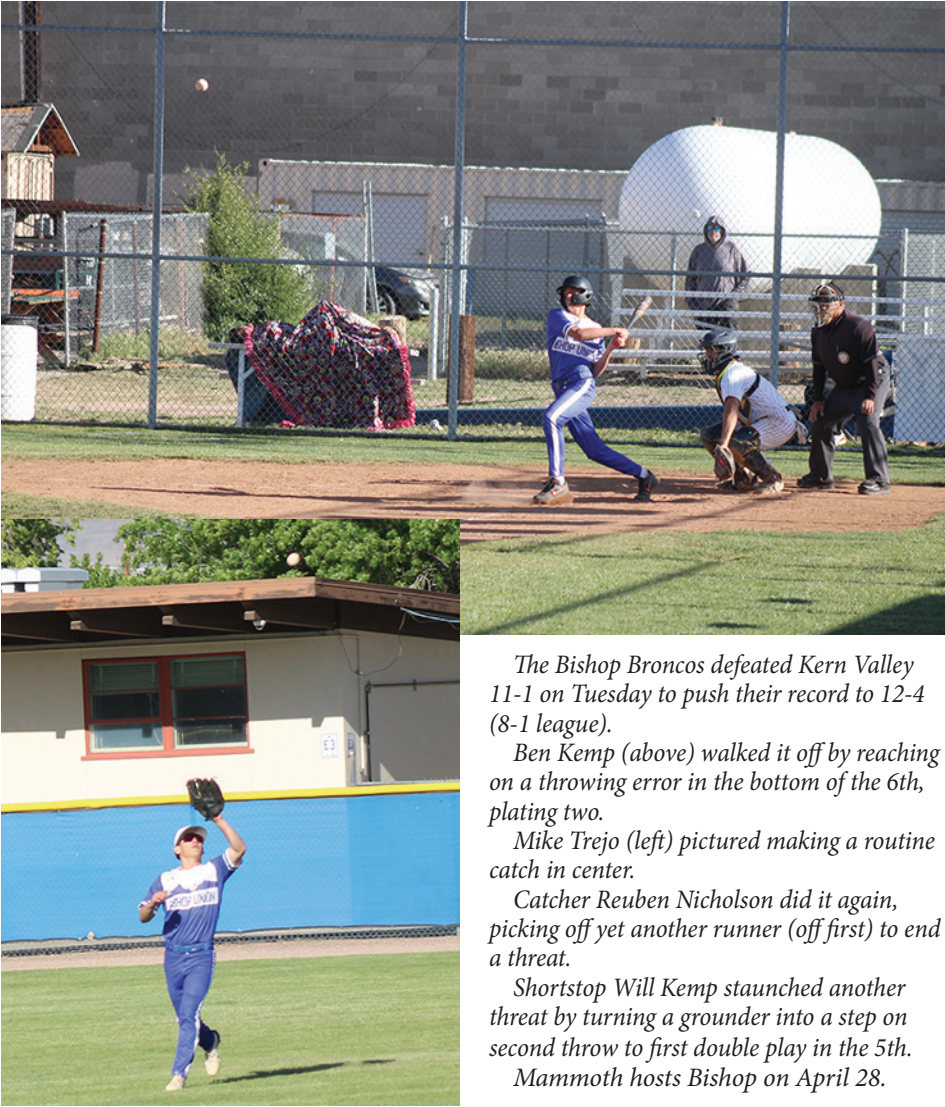
Patriots. Draft a brothel madam and a PR person for Mike Vrabel.

The whole Mike Vrabel/Dianna Russini thing is comical. They didn't even try to hide. You couldn't go to an IHOP? Instead, you're having breakfast at fancy resorts where all the media and other NFL people were? And now pictures surface which go back 6 years? Come on, man. His whole schtick about how it was nonsense? Then the media darling Vrabel coming out at his press conferences channeling his inner Belichick ... this isn't about football. Only football questions. Here is a football question. Did you "sack" Russini?

Now he is missing the 3rd day of the draft this weekend to go to 'counseling.' Huh? Well here is your counsel - don't screw a reporter covering your team. Done.

*Oh yeah, Browns hired Todd Monken and his press conferences are GOLD. He is completely clueless. He acts like a high school coach at the podium. The Browns are openly tanking. And they made a deal with the rest of the league to make him look so bad he never gets another job. Harbaugh set him up on this one.

BISHOP WINS 7TH IN A ROW



The Bishop Broncos defeated Kern Valley 11-1 on Tuesday to push their record to 12-4 (8-1 league).

Ben Kemp (above) walked it off by reaching on a throwing error in the bottom of the 6th, plating two.

Mike Trejo (left) pictured making a routine catch in center.

Catcher Reuben Nicholson did it again, picking off yet another runner (off first) to end a threat.

Shortstop Will Kemp stanchued another threat by turning a grounder into a step on second throw to first double play in the 5th.

Mammoth hosts Bishop on April 28.

MAIN STREET PIZZA & TAP

Superlative East Coast, Thin-Crust Pizza

LUNCH SPECIALS

Monday-Thursday, 11am-2pm

- \$2 Off All 10" Pizzas
- 1/2 Off All Salads

HAPPY HOUR

Monday - Friday
3-6 PM

- \$3 Cheese Slice \$4 Pepperoni Slice
- \$1 off all Pints & Tasting Flights
- \$1 off all Wines By the Glass

3399 Main Street, Mammoth Lakes, Family Friendly!
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OFF THE SLOPES

MINE IN THE SKY

By Hannah Saraisky

The Sierra Nevada has long held global economic significance, and you don't have to look far beyond Bishop to see why.

Over the course of a century, the Pine Creek Mine evolved from a site of geological beauty to one of national economic necessity and a place shaped by human connection and community.

In a recent lecture hosted by the White Mountain Research Center, geologist Joe Kurtak explored this history while discussing his newly reprinted book, "Mine in the Sky: The History of California's Pine Creek Tungsten Mine and the People Who Were Part of It."

Kurtak began by tracing the geological origins of the Pine Creek Canyon, which

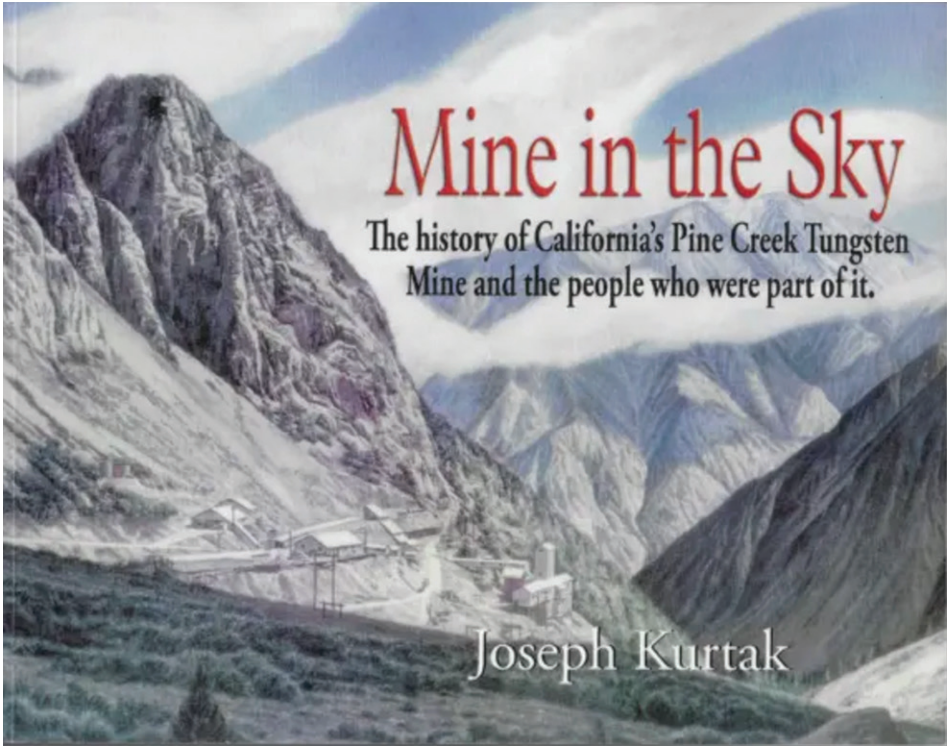
is home to the mine. The canyon itself was formed through tectonic activity, as colliding plates thrust massive rock formations upward and shifted sedimentary layers.

Although tungsten deposits in the area were first documented in the 1870s, it wasn't until the late 1910s that roads were constructed into the canyon, allowing mules and machinery inside to access and process the mineral.

The mine's nickname as a "mine in the sky" comes from the unique mining methods that were required to extract its ore. Early operations began with horizontal tunneling into the walls of the canyon and then shifted to mining vertically at very high altitudes. Throughout its decades of operation, production moved deeper into the canyon, descending through lower levels in what became a remarkable engineering feat.

Pine Creek's importance lies in its deposit of tungsten. Tungsten is an exceptionally durable metal, with a melting point of over 6,000 degrees, the highest of all metals. It is able to keep its integrity at high temperatures and is extremely valuable for military and industrial applications.

During World War I, Germany combined tungsten with other metals to produce munitions, armor, and tools that outperformed those of the Allies. In the United States, as Kurtak puts it, "the hunt was on" for a domestic resource that could match that of the Germans. Production surged during wartime, particularly in World War II, when the



federal government purchased large quantities of ore for defense. Over time, the mine's output closely tracked the nation's military engagements, like during the Vietnam War, when Pine Creek supplied roughly two thirds of the country's tungsten.

The mine was operational until the late 1990s. Today, China is the world's biggest producer of tungsten, and the domestic mining of the mineral is no longer economically viable.

Yet the most compelling part of Kurtak's talk was not the geology or economics, but the community that was formed because of the mine.

Kurtak shared vivid stories of life there: how a pet deer became the mine's mascot, the dramatic rescue of a baby trapped in a house after an avalanche, a 24-hour poker game that never seemed

to end, and the many winters that were spent exploring and skiing in the surrounding mountains.

Kurtak himself was born to a father who worked in the mines, and grew up near the mine in Rovana (a combination of Round Valley, the location of the mine, and Vanadium Mining Company, the company that owned the mine). He recalled his experience growing up in a diverse community and remembers Pine Creek as a "real melting pot" with Paiute, Hispanic, and Eastern European workers. Kurtak worked there himself during the summer as a college student.

The lecture drew more than 70 people on Zoom, and many of the attendees had personal or family ties to Pine Creek. During the discussion, participants shared their own memories about life working in the mine, recalling events from labor strikes to injuries and other hardships that occurred. The Pine Creek Mine was a major driver of economic prosperity in the Owens Valley and a site of national importance, but it also was a force that shaped a vibrant local world, and as Kurtak put it, was a truly "world-class mineral deposit."

You can learn more about Pine Creek in Kurtak's book, now available at Spellbinder Books in Bishop and at Eastern Sierra interpretive centers.



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DOWN AND OUT IN THE EASTERN SIERRA

By Libre

Down and Out in Paris and London
George Orwell
Harcourt, Brace and Co.
213 p.

A few weeks ago, Lunch tasked me with reading George Orwell's "Down and Out in Paris and London." He told me it was a response to my tendency to drift into "Ulla land" when I write.

Meaning, I often float away from a central thesis, and into my own little dreamscape. Something my college advisor would call "portal hopping." It's helpful for creative writing, but less so for local journalism. Orwell, Lunch claimed, is the master of the drift.

"Down and Out in Paris and London" is semi-autobiographical, and centers on Orwell's experience with poverty in both cities. In Paris, he writes about his experience as a dishwasher, and in London, he chronicles his time as a tramp. In both places, Orwell immerses himself deeply in the people he meets. Two

characters in particular leave lasting impressions on him.

Boris, his right-hand man in Paris, with whom he finds dishwashing gigs, and Bozo, a tramp he meets in London, who introduces Orwell to the world of begging while grappling with notions of consciousness.

This novel traces the origins of Orwell's political philosophy. It's through his experiences with poverty in Paris and London that Orwell developed his nuanced understanding of class and power. In both cities, he finds poor people taking advantage of other poor people. He finds poor people who believe they should be rich people, and rich people who become poor people. All the while, he reports with unabashed honesty.

I loved this book. I loved it for Orwell's descriptions of the experiences he has and who he meets along the way: desperate, starving, and yearning for a good time. I loved it for the gristly living conditions he inhabited, and his analysis of the social hierarchies that exist in his jobs. I loved it because in 213 pages, he opened the door of empathy to his readers.

Secretly, I loved this book because I see myself in a young Orwell.

I am not a dishwasher. I am not a tramp. I don't live on the streets of Mammoth and pander for money.

But for the first time in my life, I am entirely on my own. In the eight months I've lived on the Eastside, I've lived in



three different housing arrangements. For two of those months, I couch surfed between an assortment of friends and shared a twin sized bed in employee housing with my boyfriend. I've done laundry three times since the end of January. I picked up a third job. I have one day off per week.

As I've traversed through this new reality, I find that seemingly everyone around me is in a similar situation. Many hold at least two jobs. Waitress and barista. Inyo National Forest biologist and bartender. Radiology techni-

cian and high-end server. Blame it on inflation, or capitalism, or the ski bum culture. It's what it takes to survive on the Eastside.

Through my time in the Sierra, I've found people to follow. Like Orwell's Boris or Bozo, I've found my beacons in youth and hardship.

Take my dear friend who works both at Vulcania and Black Velvet. She often opens the coffee shop at 5 a.m., then clocks into Vulcania for the evening, tirelessly toiling to make lattes and bus tables. This month, she worked for 20 days straight.

She lives for when she's not on the clock. A few weeks ago, when it was unseasonably warm, we banded together with two other friends to hike Reversed Peak in June. Afterwards, we picked through some items at the thrift store and then sat by the beach on June Lake and sipped homemade Shirley Temples. Pure bliss.

It's moments like these that make me think of Orwell's glimpses of luxury, when he and a fellow denizen scored and gorged themselves on an exquisite meal of bread, cheese, and fine wine. It's times like these that make me wonder how my youth in Mammoth Lakes will change me.

If you are a drifter, or a dreamer, or crave to reminisce, then Orwell's "Down and Out in Paris and London" is the book for you.





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PHOTOS: LUNCH



Clockwise from bottom left, Cuinn Green (So), Embry Aguilera (So), Clare Haverstock (Jr) & Ruby Fisher (Sr), Carlos Sualez (Sr) & Brady Johnson (So) on relay. Top right, Ellie Solomon (Fr), Amaya Hays (Jr); below, Hunter Dailey (So).

The Bishop Union High School track and field team celebrated Senior Day with a strong showing against Rosamond. The boys team dominated with a 108-16 victory, while the girls edged out a close 59-56 win.

In the 100 meters, Carlos Sualez (Sr) took 1st place in 11.7, with Hunter Dailey (So) right behind in 2nd, also in 11.7. On the girls side, Amaya Hays (Jr) won the event in 13.4, while Madyn Weller (Jr) placed 3rd in 14.00.

In the 200 meters, Sualez (Sr) picked up another win with a time of 24.2. Hays (Jr) also finished 1st for the girls in 29.5, with Leah Taylor (So) taking 3rd in 30.8.

The 400 meters saw Clare Haverstock (Jr) win in 1:10.1, followed by Ruby Fisher (Sr) in 2nd at 1:15.8. On the boys side, Caleb Fitt (Sr) won in 1:01.3, with Gavin Freeman (Fr) (1:01.7) and Zavion Cokeley (So) (1:03.8) finishing 2nd and 3rd respectively.

In the 800 meters, Fitt (Sr) took 1st in 2:35.7, followed by Fr. Caleb Chytka in 2nd (2:42.1) and Ezekiel Lundgren (So) in 3rd

(2:43.9). Haverstock (Jr) also claimed 1st in the girls race with a time of 3:00.4.

In the distance events, Tyler Norcross (Jr) won both the 1600 meters (5:31.7) and the 3200 meters (12:38.9), with Cuinn Green (So) taking 2nd in both races (5:34.8 and 12:58.8).

In the hurdles, Soren Davis (Jr) won the 110m hurdles in 19.0, followed by Tosa Schultz (So) in 2nd (20.7). Embry Aguilera (So) placed 2nd in both the 100m hurdles (20.7) and the 300m hurdles (1:12.1). In the boys 300m hurdles, Fitt (Sr) took 1st in 53.0, with Lucas Turner (So) finishing 2nd in 58.0.

In the field events, Sualez (Sr) placed 2nd in the shot put with a throw of 39'2", while Isabela Alarcon (So) took 3rd with 18'11".

In the discus, Wyatt Miers (So) won with a throw of 149'9", followed by Tim Crowder (Fr) in 2nd (95'6"). On the girls side, Temperance Gruwell (Fr) placed 2nd with 63'5", and Mia Peek (Fr) took 3rd with a throw of 61'1".

In the high jump, Schultz (So) cleared

5' to take 1st, with Davis (Jr) finishing 2nd at 4'10". Freeman (Fr) and Green (So) tied for 3rd at 4'8". Fr. Ellie Solomon won the girls event at 4'6", with Hays (Jr) placing 2nd at 4'4".

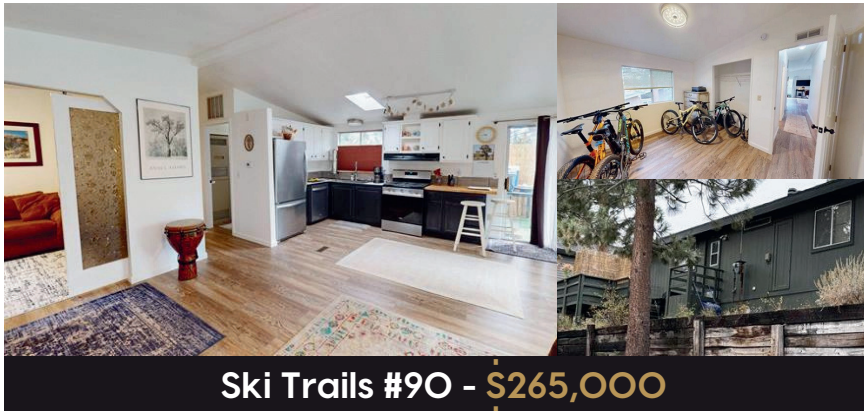
In the long jump, Dailey (So) won with a jump of 18'5", followed by Brady Johnson (So) in 2nd (16'8") and Fr. Oscar Henriquez in 3rd (15'7.5"). Weller (Jr) won the girls event with a jump of 13'2".

In the triple jump, Weller (Jr) took 1st with a mark of 30'2", breaking the junior class record by nearly two feet. Dailey (So) also won the boys event with a jump of 41'2".

The relay teams continued the strong performance. The boys 4x100 relay team of Brady Johnson (So), Carlos Sualez (Sr), Oscar Henriquez (Fr), and Hunter Dailey (So) took 1st in 47.2. The girls 4x100 team of Madyn Weller (Jr), Leah Taylor (Jr), Ellie Solomon (Fr), and Jr. Amaya Hays also placed 1st in 57.0. The boys 4x400 team of Gavin Freeman (Fr), Zavion Cokeley (So), Lucas Turner (So), and Caleb Fitt (Fr) finished 1st with a time of 4:43.5.



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CONDO
BEDS: 2
BATHS: 2
SQFT: 1143



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